

ENDING THE EXILE OF DESIRE IN SPINOZA AND HEGEL

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ABSTRACT

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The main objective of this master's thesis is to analyze the place assigned to the phenomenon of desire by Hegel and Spinoza, and to show that the main difference between two philosophers in terms of their understanding of desire and human phenomenon consists in their understanding of the relation between the substance and particulars. In order to fulfill the requirements of this objective, what is focused on is, as different from a certain philosophical thought excluding desire from a true account of human phenomenon due to two aspects of desire, namely being an immediate drive and being purely self-referential, which are not regarded as being capable of explaining the specific distinctness of human being, how Spinoza and Hegel give an account of desire, and

how they conceive mentioned aspects of desire. Throughout the thesis, first Spinoza's ontology, as it is elaborated in the *Ethics*, and the place of the phenomenon of desire in this ontology are explained. Then through an analysis of the fourth chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, it is argued that Hegel's conception of desire enables one to conceive the distinctive human institutions such as sociality, morality, and etc., as derivatives of desire. Finally it is argued that, since Hegel conceives the relation between the substance and particulars as a total detachment, he is able to give the spiritual dimension of human phenomenon in terms of desire. In this way moreover the specific distinctness of the human phenomenon is preserved in the philosophy of Hegel.

Keywords: Desire, Spinoza, Hegel, Ontology, Substance, Particular, Spirituality

ÖZ

SPINOZA VE HEGEL'DE ARZUNUN SÜRGÜNÜNÜN SONU

Cengiz, Övünç

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Bu yüksek lisans tezinin temel hedefi Spinoza ve Hegel'in arzuyu yerleştirdikleri konumu çözmek ve arzu ve insan görüngüsü açısından bu iki filozof arasındaki farkın töz ve tikeller arasındaki ilişkiyi kavrayışlarından kaynaklandığını göstermektir. Bu hedefi gerçekleştirmek için öncelikle, arzuyu, insan varlığının özgül ayrımını göstermeye yeterli bulunmadıkları varsayılan iki özelliği – dolayimsız bir yönelimlilik ve öz referanslılık – dolayısıyla insan görüngüsünü açıklamaya yönelik herhangi bir çabadan dışlayan belirli bir felsefi düşünceden farklı olarak bu iki filozofun arzu görüngüsünü ve bu görüngünün bahsedilen iki özelliğini nasıl anladıkları üzerine odaklanmıştır. Tezde ilk olarak, *Etik* içinde ortaya serildiği biçimiyle Spinoza'nın ontolojisi ve arzunun bu ontoloji içindeki yeri açıklanmış ve

tartışılmıştır. Ek olarak, her ne kadar, Spinoza'nın ontolojisine dayanarak, arzunun insan görüngüsünün en temel düzeyine ait olduğunu iddia etmek mümkün olsa da, Spinoza'nın felsefesinin insan görüngüsünün özgül farklılığını niceliksel bir farklılık olarak anlama tehlikesini içerdiği savunulacaktır. Daha sonra, *Tinin Görüngübilim*'nin dördüncü bölümünün bir analizine dayanarak, Hegel'in arzu kavramının, toplum, ahlak vb. gibi özgül insan kurumlarını arzunun bir türevi olarak anlamaya olanak sağladığı iddia edilmektedir. Son olarak, Hegel'in, töz ve tikel arasındaki ilişkiyi aynı zamanda toptan bir kopuş olarak da anladığı için, Spinoza'nın aksine insan görüngüsünün tinsel boyutunu arzu dolayımıyla açıklayabildiği, ve insan görüngüsünün özgül ayrımının Hegel'in felsefesinde korunduğu iddia edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Arzu, Spinoza, Hegel, Töz, Tikel, Tinsellik

To My Parents

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

When we consider human phenomenon we take this phenomenon to have various dimensions such as moral, aesthetical, social, and spiritual, which we do not encounter within the rest of the realm of existents. Consequently, since these mentioned dimensions show themselves to be exclusively human, that is, they show themselves to be peculiar to the life of human, we say that human being is a distinct mode of being amongst the other modes of existence. This distinctness mainly consists of the fact that we consider a deed to be a human deed only if this deed is mediated with mentioned dimensions. In other words, for example we say that a deed is a moral and thus 'human' only if this deed is mediated with some moral value; or, what is the same, only if this deed is performed for the sake of moral value. Finally when philosophers are to give an account of this specific distinctness of human being we encounter with two different types of philosophical understanding in general. A certain philosophical understanding does not regard the human phenomenon to be explained in an exhaustive manner with recourse to the mechanism of nature. In other words, we may claim that for a certain philosophical understanding since what nature offers, solely by itself, is not capable of explaining human phenomena, nature

cannot be regarded as a sufficient source to give a full account of these specific dimensions of human life. Moreover, since desire is regarded as belonging to the course of nature, it is mainly neglected and banished from a 'true' account of human phenomenon, which is supposed to delineate the emergence of mentioned dimensions. As a consequence, if one is to give the account of these various dimensions one has to look beyond of that what nature offers. Thus, all these sorts of explanations, if not always rest on a dualistic understanding, generally tend to transcend the life of nature, and desire is hardly regarded as an essential element of the distinct human aspects. However, there is another type of philosophical understanding which rests on the conception of unity. According to this philosophical understanding, a phenomenon, whatever it is, must be understood through the unity of which this phenomenon is a part. So if one is to give an account of the phenomenon of human, since it is a part of nature, one has to give this account also by referring to the phenomenon of desire; that is, one has to evaluate desire as an essential element of human being. Thus, what this understanding demands is that human phenomenon should be accounted within this world. However such an understanding brings us the question of the qualitative difference of human life. In other words, if one is to account human life within this world then one has to choose one of these two options: either one has to evaluate human phenomenon solely as a complex form of life of nature and thus renounce its supposed qualitative distinctness, or one has to find a way to explain human phenomenon remaining within the boundaries of the life of nature, and without suffering from this renunciation.

In this thesis I will discuss the phenomenon of desire with reference to two important philosophers, Hegel and Spinoza, who philosophize with such a conception of unity and who denies dualistic understanding. I will propose that for these two philosophers, desire is an essential element of all the specific peculiarities of human being. I will further propose that the

difference between Spinoza and Hegel, with regards to the phenomenon of desire, emerges from their understanding of the relation among the substance and the modes; that is whether there is a genuine detachment among the substance and modes. I will argue that this relation determines the way in which Spinoza and Hegel, each in their own way, venture to give an account both of spiritual dimension of human being in terms of desire and of the qualitative distinctness of human phenomenon.

Within the scope of this thesis, in the first chapter, I will try to delineate a philosophical approach, which may overlook desire as a secondary aspect of human phenomenon. In this perspective, desire is exiled from a full account of human phenomenon because it is regarded as an immediate drive and as purely selfish given its character. In the second chapter, I will discuss the role of the phenomenon of desire in the philosophy of Spinoza, and assert that desire is an essential element of Spinoza's philosophy, since desire is the necessary drive of mobility of modes. Therefore, I will argue that, depending on Spinoza's philosophy, one can assert that whatever comes about in the world is an outcome of the movement of desire. Hence, it is possible for one to evaluate all these mentioned aspects of life of human as products or derivatives of desire. For example one can regard sociality as a successful strategy for the satisfaction of the desire towards self-preservation. Likewise one can also regard morality, and our concern for the rights of others as a successful strategy for securing our own rights. Moreover, in the second chapter, I will discuss Spinoza's ontology, as it is elaborated in the *Ethics*, and assert that in this ontology particulars do not have a genuine self; and remained strictly within the limits set by Spinoza, one would fail to give account of the qualitative distinctness of human phenomenon. That is, though the philosophy of Spinoza enables us to regard the mentioned peculiar aspects of human being as the products of the course of the satisfaction of human desire, since

according to Spinoza the difference among the modes of existence is a quantitative difference, that is all the modes expresses a basic motion, namely self-preservation, the philosophy of Spinoza involves a danger of rendering these aspects of human being as mere complex strategies for self-preservation and renounce the specific distinctness of human being. In the second chapter I will finally propose that concerning Spinoza's understanding of desire, it is not possible to determine a necessary relation between spirituality and desire. In other words, I will propose that if the necessary endeavor of human being is self-preservation then this endeavor does not necessitate a spiritual striving. So, I will finally argue that Spinoza fails to demonstrate the necessity of the fifth part of the *Ethics*, in which he asserts that the knowledge of the substance and the knowledge of the unity of the human mind with the substance, which is frankly a spiritual knowledge, is a necessary endeavor of human mind.

In the third chapter, I will propose that the movement of self-consciousness described in the fourth chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is a movement of desire, and I will discuss the relation between the substance and self-consciousness as a particular. Thus I will try to give an account of these passages with regards to the desire of the self-consciousness. I will further argue that this chapter ends up with a certain form of sociality and morality, namely "Lord and the Bondsman", and I will propose that since the movement of self-consciousness is a movement of its desire, mentioned moral and social institutions can be considered as outcomes of the course of the satisfaction of the desire of self-consciousness. In other words, I will argue that it is only through the mediation of these institutions the desire of the self-consciousness is satisfied. Therefore, in the philosophy of Hegel one can regard the phenomenon of desire as a necessary constituent of human phenomenon. Finally in the last chapter I will discuss the similarities and dissimilarities between the philosophies of

Spinoza and Hegel, and propose that where Spinoza fails to show the spiritual dimension of human being and he renders the specific distinctness of human being an issue of complexity, it is Hegel who is able to show why spirituality is a necessary dimension of the being of human since it is Hegel who considers the notion of self as a negation, that is, as a detachment from substance. Yet since the sentiment of 'self' arises as a detachment from substance, we can understand why the desire of the self is to re-unite with the substance, namely why the desire of the self-consciousness is basically spiritual; since spirituality of human being mainly consists in the fact that the being of human stands in need of mediation of the external for its actualization, and both moral and social dimensions of human being are spiritual institutions through which this mediation is achieved. Moreover, I will argue that through Hegel's philosophy one can understand the element of which the specific distinctness of human being consists. In other words, whereas in the philosophy of Spinoza morality and sociality emerge as 'strategies' for self-preservation, in the philosophy of Hegel these institutions are necessary moments of the 'actualization' of the being of human. Briefly if these institutions are mere strategies for self-preservation, then one can conceive the being of human without these institutions. However, since in the philosophy of Hegel, they are necessary moments in the emergence of the being of human, one cannot even conceive human being without the existence of these institutions.

1.1. Desire and Reason

When philosophers consider human nature – what it is, and what is the primary properties of man's constitution – they, in general, confine themselves primarily to two major aspects of human being among others; namely, human being as a biological being and as a rational being or as a

cognitive subject. One can address the biological being of man in terms of his desires and their satisfactions, and the cognitive functions of man in terms of his rationality. Assigning all cognitive functions solely to reason is problematic given that sense-data acquired from sensation and perception do not depend on the faculty of reason, and that there is a strong connection between belief and desire. However, when I assign cognitive functions to the faculty of reason I do not mean the ones which are more passive in character but the ones through which we are able to know things with their causes, namely the ones that are more active. At this point, we may refer to an approach, which may conceive powers of man, namely desire and reason, as always in tension given that they do not seem to share much.

Indeed, some philosophical approaches, not all of them for sure, tend to assign a positive value to reason whereas desire appears to have negative implications. On the one hand, the significance of reason can be emphasized by claiming that it stands for the faculty which distinguishes man from animals and from the process of life through its ability to know causes, to lead beyond the appearances to comprehend what lies beneath, to 'grasp' the nature of things, and moreover to open a new and superior perspective for a more comprehensive vision of the world. Seen from this perspective, universe is not a meaningless totality, nothing is arbitrary, and most importantly, existence is not just a matter of existing or survival. Given that man is able to question the nature of existence, his own existence and where he stands would not be an exception; man's rational capacities urge him to look for something other than what the life of nature provides.

On the other hand, desire can be viewed in such a way that since it lacks cognitive powers, it stands for the unconscious and blind drive, being stuck in the world of appearances, and being subject to the process of life which is indifferent to the 'privileged' position of man implied by reason. From this perspective one may claim that desire is pure intentionality and lacks any

purpose. Its sole purpose is to satisfy its needs or to fill up an insatiable deficiency and thus it is the sole purpose, i.e., it is its own purpose. Contrary to reason, which posits uniformity and definite forms, desire assigns man to the reckless process of life which continuously dissolves forms, which is indifferent to this or that individual, and in which all individuality becomes provisional. In other words, whereas reason lifts up man from the continuous flow of life to the divine world of intelligibles, forms, universals or whatever peculiar to reasoning, desire pulls back man to the very mud of world, making him drifted in this flow, and thus equating him with his animal nature: “As immediate, arbitrary, purposeless, and animal, desire is that which requires to be gotten beyond.”¹

In this chapter, I will consider two implicit reasons for conceiving desire as secondary, or even as an obstacle on the way to give a full account of the peculiarity of human phenomenon. First reason consists in the fact that one may conceive desire as representing the lawless activity of body – “an immediate drive” – which is incapable of deliberation. Second reason consists in the “self-referential” character of desire, which may be interpreted as yielding selfishness, a characteristic which can taint the moral action. On the basis of these two reasons, I claim that the exile of desire from a philosophical account on the specific character of human phenomenon could take place. In this way, I will discuss the ways in which this exile can be interpreted in different ways, – as limiting or guiding desire by reason, or as the divorce of reason and desire, and consider the tensions which arise out of this exile of desire. Obviously philosophers do not neglect these tensions and try to give an account of them. However, my purpose, in this chapter is not to give an account of how philosophers tried to resolve the problems emerged from these tensions. Rather, I shall commit to an inquiry by focusing on the

¹ Judith Butler, *Subjects of Desire*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 1.

following questions: a) what does motivate the distinction between desire and reason? And b) what are the implications of this distinction? Our guiding question is, then, whether reason and desire should be regarded as distinct, or as involved in an antagonistic relation or whether there can be an immanent rationality of desire through which we can give an account doing justice to the qualitative distinctness of human phenomenon.

1.2. Desire: An Immediate Drive

If we consider desire as an immediate drive or orientation, it is clear that such an immediate activity cannot exhaust what it means to be an individual human being since if we regard an individual human being solely as a desiring agent, we will conceive it only in terms of its biological constitution and/or animality. Indeed, even the common sense conception of the human being does include more than a desiring body. When we consider the common sense concept of the individual human being, we take this concept to address an individual that is more than that which solely desires natural objects such as food and drink for survival and sex for reproduction; that is, human being is something more than its natural inclinations, though what constitutes this 'more' is ambiguous and controversial. On the one hand, an ordinary materialistic position can assert that this common sense construal is not true at all because majority of people is living solely in terms of those basic functions and the supposed qualitative differences, which are in fact only quantitative differences, that underlie the peculiarities of human life as nothing but more complicated ways which are themselves only complex means for mentioned basic functions. On the other hand, what is implied in the term 'individual human being' is its formal recognition in various cultural, social, and religious institutions, not this or that 'individual'. In addition, what can be considered as complex means is, at the same time, what gives human

action new dimensions, aesthetical, social and moral. In other words, the word 'complex' leads to qualitative differences rather than quantitative differences. For example, if we consider act of eating, this act in its final meaning is consuming food just as every animal does but thanks to complex means it gains an aesthetical dimension when we *cook* the food according to special recipes, and a social and moral dimension when we eat with our friends. Although the act of eating can be regarded as purely biological in its content, it has different dimensions in its form.

Briefly, we take an individual human being to be more than a member of a species, '*Homo sapiens sapiens*' in this case, unlike, say, an individual lion, existence of which can be consumed by being a member of the species of '*Panthera leo*'. This 'more' has several implications, but particularly, its moral implication is our ability to distinguish good from evil and to be able to choose it freely, and in some instances, to choose the good only for its own sake.

The distinction between desire and reason can be articulated first by referring to desire as the source of contradicting affections. Thus, human beings can at the same time both desire for and averse to one and the same thing. Since reason, or at least the true object of reasoning, is considered to be uniform, it cannot be the source of contradicting affections. It appears that is desire is defined as the source of contradicting affections here, then reason is indispensable for guiding, governing, and limiting desire.² By this means reason is capable of overcoming contradicting orientations in sensual life and guides them by means of its principles. Reason, as the capacity for deliberate reflection and reasoning which yields either knowledge of causes or a correct evaluation, overcomes what may be called as the blind power of desire. In

² For example in the philosophy of Plato the result is the division of soul into three parts. In this division the appetitive part is the lowest part, the 'brute', which must be controlled by the 'rider'.

this overcoming, reason would be the significant factor in acknowledging the origination of moral, social institutions which define human phenomenon in its most peculiar characteristics. Although it is impossible to ban desire totally from a philosophical account of human phenomenon, one type of approach may conceive its role as solely residing in its being the source of immediate drives, and contradicting orientations in sensual life. In this perspective, the role of desire in the process of life suggests some determinations of individuals, which are not strong enough to delineate the human character and are in need of governance by reason, which supposedly reflects the true being of human.³ This governance, as in Plato's *Republic*, may take the character of providing a true harmony among the conflicting orientations in human life.

1.3. Desire: A Pure Self-Referential Activity

The self-referential character of desire consists in the fact that it is its sole purpose. To be more explicit, when we think of the process of life we can easily assert that the main purpose of life, if there is any, is not this or that species or this or that individual. The process of life, taken in general, is just

³ In the philosophy of Plato, the appetitive part is regarded as an inessential part of the human soul, a path leading to animal life, and it will dissolve as the bodily parts dissolve in which it is located, leaving nothing behind, as does every individual animal. Here, the appetitive part of human soul is subjected to the process of life which is indifferent to individual determinations, and in which all individuals come and pass, and thus lose their existence. What will distinguish man from this indifferent and dissolving flow of natural life and what will give us the true nature of him is the rational part which is capable of rising above the life of nature since it belongs to a supersensible world. Indeed, according to Plato, reason is the only immortal part of human soul unlike appetite and spirit. Thus what is essential for the man and what is the true nature of the man is neither the appetite nor the spirit. Reason alone, when detached from them, is the true essence and the reality of man. The appetitive part is rendered inessential in the philosophy of Plato, but it is not totally excluded from good life which requires a harmony among the parts of the soul, though it is not so clear whether this is a true harmony or a martial law under the command of reason. (See Hendrik Lorenz, *The Brute Within (Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle)*, (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2006), p. 38.

being alive or a striving to survive but not particularly in a definite form (species, individuals etc.), i.e., the main purpose of life appears to be life itself, though this does not mean that form is of no use, say, for example only definite forms can survive while others cannot. This definition of life can be seen as nothing but a clumsy rhetoric. However a closer look, I believe, may help us to see that it is not the case.

In modern sciences, our general explanation of facts depends on external causation. In other words, if we are to explain an object's movement, we seek for the cause of this movement not in the object moving but in something else exterior to the object in question. Now in the case of liveliness, when we ask the reason of the mobility of a specific object, that it performs protein synthesis and that it endeavors to exchange material with its environment, the reason we come up is nothing but that the object in question tries to preserve its life. In short, the reason that an animate object moves in a specific way is to preserve its being animation, that is the causation of the movement is not exterior to the object but interior to it. However things get more and more complicated when we ask a further question: Why does an object produce offspring? There may be several explanations to this question; however I want to focus on one important outcome of the process of producing offspring which forces us to explain the process of life not through animate individuals but through life itself. First, we should consider the fact that being alive is basically an economics of energy, and producing offspring is a loss of energy. Second, in many species there is a competition for the ability for procreation, and this competition ends up with some several damages for the individuals competing, and in some cases even with death. In other words, individuals die for the sake of the continuum of the life

process.⁴ Thus, when one considers the life process of an animate being one can easily come up with the conclusion that this process is not for the sake of the being of the animate object, but for the sake of life process. So when one says that the process of life is indifferent to individual determination one means nothing but this peculiar characteristics of the process of life.

A desiring body is a living body and seen from this perspective it recapitulates the process of life in the individual domain. This recapitulation involves, mainly, being indifferent to other individuals and forms. Hence, a desiring body, whether of an animal or a human, is purely self-referential; it solely seeks to fill up the lack posed by desire, and in the case of human being, desire does not seem to be able to pursue any other end such as those set by reason. At this point one can assert that these two aspects of desire, namely its being purely self-referential and being a blind drive, are not two different aspects, or at least one can be deduced from other since that which is immediate refers solely to itself. However, though this assertion is true in some sense, being self-referential has further implications primarily in a dimension.

Human life is distinguished as 'human' via its moral dimension, which amounts to the fact that human agents are considered to act in virtue of some moral ends other than survival. In general, especially in the rationalist modern epoch, we conceive a moral deed as that which is performed not through the compulsion of life but rather for the sake of something other than this compulsion, namely virtue. At this point the immediacy of desire is already banished from the plain of moral deed, since it is immediate it cannot mediate itself with the virtue, but what is intended is that desire should be completely eliminated from the domain of morality. That is, when we consider a virtuous

⁴ I am aware of the fact that this explanation involves a teleological attitude which is very questionable. However, my aim is to show the uniqueness of life process, and that it escapes from our general path of explanation, which rests on concrete individual objects and external causation.

act, we define this act as virtuous if and only if it is performed for the sake of virtue, not for personal benefits, namely selfishness, nor the satisfaction which arises from being conscious of the fact that the very 'self' of the agent is the 'bearer' or 'performer' of a praised deed; a satisfaction which arises from mediation of the act with the self. Briefly, on the one hand, we want individuals to perform virtuous deeds but, on the other hand, we want them to perform these deeds just because they are the right things to do and do not want these agents to relate themselves with those acts. Thus, it is clear that if desire involves in a moral action its self-referential structure will 'taint' the moral action with the mark of selfishness or narcissism.⁵

The act should not be referred to the self, in a way that a self enjoying the act because it is the 'self' who performs the act, but to a maxim which equally obligates this or that individual. This fact becomes clear when we consider Kant's first formulation of categorical imperative that is 'act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.' We can easily see that what is important in a moral deed is not the subject who performs the deed in question but the deed that should be performed. Yet things get complicated at this point since as asserted above the act should not be referred to an empirical 'self', though, as it is obvious, the collocutor of the imperative is definitely a 'self' as moral person: '*you* can at the same time will that ...' However, the self is the collocutor of the imperative not in so far as it is a desiring self referring the act

⁵ We can consider an example, in which C. C. W. Taylor argues about the Aristotle's claim that virtuous person is 'self lover' :

"On the other hand, the discussion of self-love in IX 8 cited above (where it seems difficult to interpret 'laying claim to the fine' and 'assigning the fine to oneself totally de re) leaves an uneasy feeling that perhaps Aristotle's theory is self-regarding to a degree bordering (to the modern eye) on narcissism, and that the total selflessness of the saint or hero is something foreign to his ethical outlook."

In, Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books 2-4. Translated with a Commentary by C. C. W. Taylor, (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2006), pp. 89-92. Hereafter this book will be referred to as NE.

to the very self in a way that 'It is the 'I' who performs it' or it is a self living in definite social, cultural and historical contexts thus having some limitations, but in so far as it is an intellectual individual capable of moral reasoning through its individual mind, thanks to the use of pure practical reason, as the sole legislator in the highest faculty of desire, i.e., pure will independent from any empirical determination: 'This is the right thing to do since reason demands it and I somehow happened to be the one who has to perform it, even if it is against my happiness or natural inclinations.'

Yet, rationality detached from this world can only attain abstract and formal principles and rules. Thus such abstract and formal rules become problematic when they face the uniqueness and novelty of the process of life. We are well familiar with such problems via questions raised in the form of 'what if the conditions are such and such.' For example, to the principle that 'one ought to tell the truth' the process of life offers resistance with its uniqueness in the form 'what if one is imprisoned by a tyrant and if one tells the truth one's family or friends will be in danger.' Here, the form 'what if' tacitly tells us that the process of life is too unique that it cannot be subsumed under abstract and general principles. The outcome is that such general principles cannot be always welcomed and accommodated in life that always raises the particularity of situation. For example, according to Aristotle the moral deed is not just a matter of acquiring the true knowledge of good or a precise principle but rather is an act:

But the majority of people does not perform those actions, but take refuge in theory, thinking that they are studying philosophy and that thereby they will become good, and so behaving like sick people who listen carefully to their doctors but do none of the things they are told to do.⁶

An act, which involves the particularity of the moment and which is to be performed by concrete individuals:

⁶ *Ibid*, 1105b 12-6.

And the discussion of general principles being of that kind, it is even more the case that the discussion of particular cases does not have precision; for it does not fall under any skill or manual of instruction, but to those who act must themselves always have regard to the particular circumstances, as is also the case in medicine and steersmanship.⁷

Hegel also points to this fact:

... a general principle is of no help, and it is not enough to look back on similar situations [in the past]; for pale reflections are powerless before the stress of the moment, and impotent before the life and freedom of the present. (... No two instances are exactly alike; they are never sufficiently identical for us to say that what was best on one occasion will also be best on another...)⁸

One can assert that the mentioned imperative does not exclude the 'stress of the moment' since it is purely formal i.e., it does not give any content to act in advance to the very act but just gives form of it: 'act only on that maxim through *which*'. This imperative does not advice us to be honest in every case without regarding the uniqueness of the case. It only tells us that, given the context of the act, 'act only on that maxim through which'. One can also assert that the word 'which' carries the burden of the 'life and freedom of the present' in Kant. However problems are not resolved since in this conceptualization reason, which is to be the sole legislative power for morality, is limited with form but the content seems to be left to the contingency of life, which is the domain of empirical desires and thus which is supposed to be excluded from morality. Though the form is important, in the case of morality it seems to tell nothing, or as Hegel conceives of it, it is valid just because it is a tautology. The problems emerging from the total detachment of reason from desire, and from the domain of activity and production become most explicit in Kantian morality.

⁷ *Ibid*, 1104a 5-10.

⁸ Cited in, Gary Pendlebury, *Action and Ethics in Aristotle and Hegel*, (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), p. 20. Hereafter this book will be referred as *Action and Ethics*.

In the following passages, I will give a brief summary of Hegel's criticisms of Kant's ethical theory. My aim is not to assert that Hegel is fully right in his criticisms, rather my aim is to introduce what Hegel sees in this morality, and what he objects in this morality. This introduction, I hope, will provide an initial understanding of what desire comes to mean for Hegel, and how he understands individual human being as an agent capable of acting.

1.4. The Moral View of the World: The Exile of Desire

To modern rationalist view, in which we witness the total detachment of desire and reason from each other, Hegel charges severe criticisms in the section 'The moral view of the world' in the *Phenomenology*.⁹ In this section Hegel's criticism mainly aims Kantian morality and defines this sort of morality as 'misery' and 'hypocrisy'. According to Hegel the 'substance', i.e. the reality, of this ethical world is an 'individual self', however "This *legal person* ...has its Substance and fulfillment outside of this world."¹⁰ The individual legislator should regulate the world it lives in, but the authority of its regulative force does not depend to this world. This, I think, is a reference to Kant's understanding of freedom which is the necessary condition of morality:

Consequently, if we would save [freedom], no other way remains but to consider that the existence of a thing, so far it is determinable in time, and therefore its causality, according to the law of physical necessity, belong to *appearance*, and to attribute *freedom to the same being as a thing in itself*.¹¹

⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Translated by A. V. Miller with Analysis of the Text and Foreword by J. N. Findlay, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977) pp. 365-409. Hereafter the book will be referred to as *Phenomenology*, and the sign '§' refers to paragraph numbers.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, § 596.

¹¹ Cited in, W. T. Jones, *Kant and Nineteenth Century (A History of Western Philosophy)*, 2nd ed., revised (Harcourt Brace Janovich, Inc., 1975), p. 85.

Thus, man is free not in so far as he shows himself to be free in his action, but in so far as his pure being is free from physical determination. Hence, if the necessary condition of morality rests in a timeless domain, then things that take place in time become irrelevant for morality. The result is the banishment of desires, inclinations and actions from moral domain. This division goes parallel with the division between reason and desire, and between the moral domain and nature. According to Hegel this division completely undermines any possible mediation between morality and nature:

But because this consciousness is so completely locked up within itself, it behaves with perfect freedom and indifference towards this otherness; and therefore the existence of this otherness, on the other hand, is left completely free by self-consciousness, an existence that similarly is related only to itself. The freer self-consciousness becomes, the freer also is the negative object of its consciousness. The object has thus become a complete world within itself with an individuality of its own, a self-subsistent whole of laws peculiar to itself, as well as an independent operation of those laws, and free realization of them—in general, a Nature whose laws like its actions belong to itself as a being which is indifferent to moral self-consciousness, just as the latter is indifferent to it.¹²

However, Nature, in one sense, is necessary for morality because of the simple fact that morality has to take place in this nature as a deed, or in other words, in fact in Hegel's own words, nature provides the ground for moral performance.¹³ In addition, moral subject is not only guided by pure reason but it is a natural being which has its own personal goals to be achieved in the nature. But since it is a natural creature, according to Kant, it is morally imperfect:

If a rational creature could ever reach the stage of thoroughly liking to do all moral laws, it would mean that there was no possibility of there being in him a desire which could tempt him to deviate from them, for overcoming such a desire always costs the subject to sacrifice and requires self-compulsion, i.e.,

¹² *Phenomenology*, § 599.

¹³ *Ibid*, § 601.

an inner constraint to do that which one does not quite like to do. To such a level of moral disposition no creature can ever attain. For since he is a creature, and consequently is always dependent with respect to what he needs for complete satisfaction with his condition, he can never be wholly free from his desires and inclinations which, because they rest on physical causes, do not themselves agree with moral law, which has entirely different source.¹⁴

Then for Kant, we, as moral subjects, are imperfect beings. But the passage offers a more curious point. It seems that, at one point, nature emerges not only indifferent to morality but also as the very cause of it. What the first sentence of the passage proposes is that if we had no 'desires' we would be perfectly moral since there would be nothing in us non-moral to overcome. However, if we had no desires there would be no place for morality since there would not be such a thing non-moral. That is, our moral obligations arise from the fact that we have non-moral inclinations. That we are natural creatures implies a sort of 'original sin', the basic condition of sinfulness, against which we have to struggle through pure duty. According to Hegel, however, as far as I understand, this understanding has several important implications. First of all this detachment of morality from nature is the main reason of the impossibility of the happiness of moral subject. If moral action falls into phenomenal domain, yet the moral worth of action and the will behind the action fall into noumenal domain, the harmony or the bridge between two domains remains an issue of faith and hope. Moreover, if the moral law is itself indifferent to natural inclinations of the performer of the moral deed in a way that rendering it unworthy and neglecting its concrete individuality, then the outcome is misery, which can be compensated only by a 'beyond':

Just as, in regard to its knowledge, it [moral consciousness] knows itself as a consciousness whose knowledge and conviction are imperfect and contingent; similarly, in regard to

¹⁴ Cited in, *Action and Ethics*, p. 43.

its willing, it knows itself as a consciousness whose purposes are affected with sensuousness. On account of its unworthiness, therefore, it cannot look on happiness as necessary, but as something contingent, and can expect it only as a gift of Grace.¹⁵

Secondly, moral end is postponed to infinity for two reasons. First of all, as mentioned above, if our moral obligations are occasioned by our non-moral inclinations and if the end of moral action is to act in virtue of pure duty rather than in virtue of one's inclinations and desires, then the accomplishment of moral deed will be the termination of moral necessity since in its accomplishment the moral action "itself is ruled out, for action takes place only on the assumption of a negative which is to be set aside by the action"¹⁶, and thus "if it [morality] to be *actual*, the final purpose of the world cannot be fulfilled; rather the moral consciousness must exist on its own account and find itself confronted by a Nature *opposed* to it."¹⁷ Secondly, since we cannot put happiness as the end of our moral action since the moral action must be performed for the sake of virtue alone (for example not for self-love which can generate the happiness in question through its satisfaction, as argued above), and since happiness in a Nature, which does not itself 'agree with moral law', it is not the necessary outcome of moral action but is contingent, and finally since we cannot completely forego happiness at all because we cannot eliminate our sensitivity as it is the real element in us,¹⁸ happiness and morality can intersect only in the beyond; in other words, the harmony between morality and nature can be established only in the beyond; or in Kant's words:

The possibility of such a command as, 'Love God above all and thy neighbor as thyself' agrees well with this.... The

¹⁵ *Phenomenology*, §608.

¹⁶ *Phenomenology*, §620.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, §622.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, §603.

command which makes this rule a rule cannot require that we have this disposition but only that we endeavor after it.... The law of all laws, like every moral prescription of the gospel, thus presents the moral disposition in its complete perfection, and though as an ideal of holiness it is unattainable by any creature, it is yet an archetype which we should strive to approach and to imitate in an uninterrupted infinite progress.¹⁹

The necessary outcome of this morality is a sort of 'insincerity' because what is posited as the end of moral action is not posited as actual but only as a motivation for moral deed, an 'ought' to take place in the beyond: "Since action does take place, the lack of fitness between purpose and reality is not taken seriously."²⁰ In addition, since one cannot deny one's empirical desires and purposes, if one asserts that one is acting solely in virtue of pure duty, then one is a hypocrite.²¹

Some commentators object this general overview of Kantian morality offered by Hegel. For example according to Judith N. Shklar²² Hegel totally disregards *Foundation of Metaphysics of Morals* and deliberately choose to consider *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. *Foundation of Metaphysics of Morals* is considered to be an important element in Kantian morality because as Mark Packer puts it:

There are occasions, rare though they may be, when Kant's usual chilly attitude toward the emotions warms up a bit. One such welcome respite occurs at the conclusion of the *Foundations*, where he claims that it is necessary for a feeling of pleasure to accompany the prescription of duty if moral agents are to fulfill their obligations.²³

¹⁹ Cited in *Action and Ethics*, p. 42.

²⁰ *Phenomenology*, §19.

²¹ Judith N. Shklar, "The Phenomenology: Beyond Morality", *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 4. (1974), 604

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Mark Pecker, "Kant on Desire and Moral Pleasure" in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 50, No. 3. (1989), 429.

In addition, Shklar claims that Hegel does not offer a detailed analysis of Kantian philosophy but just a “bird’s-eye view of Kantian moralism as a quite general state of mind.”²⁴ She also asserts that Hegel’s main problem is more with the tradition which raises reason above desire less than peculiarly with Kantian moralism, and he caricatures Kant’s moral philosophy to emphasize the defects of this tradition.²⁵ However, I believe that what Hegel pursues in those pages is to give a logical structure of Kant’s moral philosophy and to show how desire is excluded as the negative of pure practical reason and what consequences this exclusion would bring. The passages where Kant struggles with the problem of emotions can be seen as how the excluded other, namely desire, haunts the paradigm. That Kant speaks of a sort of “intellectual pleasure” which issues from reason²⁶ does not necessarily mean that he is trying to throw a bridge over the breach between desire and reason or that desire can be evaluated as an essential element in this structure; on the contrary it may show that how the excluded other leaks into the structure because of the impossibility of maintaining such a one-sided division. Before anything else, at least, there must be something other than a putative ‘beyond’ to motivate the moral subject. As also Joseph Katz observes:

One of the best proofs for the untenability of the dichotomy [between desire and reason] comes from the traditional theories upholding it; for, in asserting the supremacy of either reason or desire, traits from the opposing factor are usually borrowed. Advocates of reason make it a “drive”. Advocates of desire tend to speak of the “*raisons du cour*”, or the wisdom of instinct.²⁷

²⁴ Shklar, p. 604.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Pecker, p. 434.

²⁷ Joseph Katz, “Desiring Reason”, *Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 53, No. 26. (1956), p. 838.

According to Hegel passions are not mere psychological impulses, which are to be excluded from the sphere of morality, on the contrary: “Passion is the prerequisite of all human excellence, and there is accordingly nothing immoral about it.”²⁸ Hegel also, along with Aristotle and Spinoza, contends with the division of reason and desire as two different and impermeable faculties:

... But it must not be imagined that man is half thought and half will, and that he keeps thought in one pocket and will in other, for this would be a foolish idea. The distinction between thought and will is only that between the theoretical attitude and the practical. These however, are surely not two faculties.²⁹

Moreover, what Hegel contends is not just the abstract division between these two faculties but also the ontological pretensions implied by this division. This distinction renders human being unnatural by detaching it from its concrete social, cultural, and historical contexts. In other words, as Spinoza says this division manifests man as an entity “to be situated in nature as a kingdom within a kingdom.”³⁰ This distinction depicts man as an autonomous individual and always refers to a ‘beyond’, either a beyond of ‘Holy Legislator’ or a beyond of ‘reason’. Indeed, for Shklar, Hegel was never tolerant to such a beyond:

There was one element in Kant’s moral theory that Hegel hated even more than its passivity: its vestigial Christianity and craving for a “Beyond” ... Hegel was simply less pious than

²⁸ Cited in *Action and Ethics*, 21.

²⁹ Cited in *Action and Ethics*, p. 78.

³⁰ Spinoza, *On The Improvement of Understanding, The Ethics, Correspondence*, Translated from the Latin with an Introduction by R. H. M. Elwes, (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1955), 128. Hereafter this book will be referred as *Ethics*. When I refer to the book I will first give the number of the part (as in: E2, which means that *The Ethics*, Part 2), then I will give the number of proposition (as in: E2 p4, which means that *The Ethics*, Part 2, proposition 4). If necessary, I will also state whether I refer to a Definition, Corollary or Note with the number of the definition, corollary or note (as in: E1 d3, E2 p4 C or E2 p4 N2, respectively).

Kant and these concessions to Christianity evidently repelled him.³¹

Thus what is important in Hegel's approach to Kantian morality is not whether or not he is fair in his criticisms, as I mentioned before, but rather how he understands desire and human being.

In the following chapters I will assert that according to Spinoza self-referentiality of desire is not a fault to overcome, but it is a necessity since desire is the prerequisite of the mobility of self consciousness. Also I will assert that since desire has to refer to self, it is not that immediate given that Hegel's concept of self. According to Hegel, self is that which splits itself from substance and finds itself in the bare abyss of 'I am I' and thus to overcome this cavity demands to re-join with substance. Thus desire of this self is not an immediate drive but has metaphysical dimensions:

... for Spinoza and Hegel, the metaphysical place of the human subject is articulated through the *immanent rationality* of desire, for desire is at once the fundamental striving of the human subject and the mode through which that subject rediscovers or constitutes its necessary metaphysical place.³²

³¹ Shklar, pp. 605-606.

³² Butler, p. 5

CHAPTER 2

Desire in The *Ethics*

According to Spinoza, desire is another name for *conatus*,³³ which is a key term in *The Ethics*: “This endeavor [i.e., *conatus*], when referred ... to the mind and body in conjunction it is called appetite” and:

Further, between appetite and desire there is no difference, except that the term desire is generally applied to men, in so far as they are conscious of their appetite, and may accordingly be thus defined: Desire is appetite with consciousness thereof.³⁴

Does being conscious of one’s appetite make a difference? Apparently, at least in the second and third part of the book, according to Spinoza, it does not, since we do what we are conditioned to do. Thus, we can say without hesitation that, desire is the term used for *conatus* of human beings.³⁵

The term *conatus*, which is rendered as ‘endeavor’ when being translated into English, first appears in the Part Three of *The Ethics* titled as “On the Origin and Nature of the Emotions”: “Everything, in so far as it is in

³³ This term refers to the totality of the strivings of a mode for self-preservation. See also below.

³⁴ E3 p9 N.

³⁵ However, in the fifth part of the book the human *conatus*, or endeavor, will be different from the one depicted in the third and the fourth part of the book. In that part, the human endeavor will be a striving to partake in the eternal, which can be called as a metaphysical endeavor.

itself, endeavors to persist in its own being”.³⁶ This endeavor, whereby every individual thing strives for perseverance in being, is nothing else “but the actual essence of the thing in question”.³⁷ Since this endeavor is related to particulars, and since I will assert that it is also related with the process of individualization, I think that before examining this term it will be helpful to give a brief recapitulation of the first two parts of *The Ethics*, through which Spinoza depicts the main outlines of his metaphysics. This recapitulation will help us to understand how Spinoza sees particulars (which are modifications of the substance, or in other words modes) and the relation between modes and the substance.

2.1. Substance Monism

As put in the first part of *The Ethics*, Spinoza’s metaphysics has three important aspects: substance monism, modes or particular things, and absolute determinism. Substance monism is the backbone of Spinoza’s metaphysics, and it is the basic moment according to which every other existent should be explained, therefore it should be discussed first.

The argumentation of substance monism, as also formulated by Bennet³⁸, goes like this: a) God or substance consists of infinite attributes.³⁹ b) There is no substance without any attribute.⁴⁰ c) There cannot be two

³⁶ E3 p6.

³⁷ E3 p7.

³⁸ Jonathan Bennet, “Spinoza’s Metaphysics” in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, edited by Don Garrett, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 61-88.

³⁹ E1 p11.

⁴⁰ E1 p9.

substances that have an attribute in common.⁴¹ Therefore, there cannot be two substances.

The first question to be asked about this argumentation is that how Spinoza derives existence of the substance, or God. In other words, how we can query the nature or the essence of God without taking its existence as a problem? It seems that before discussing whether there are more than two substances having an attribute in common or there is only one substance having infinite attributes, we must be sure about the existence of substance(s). The *Ethics* is not very helpful in this sense since it seems to derive the existence of God from its definition [Which is a paralogism].⁴² An important point we must keep in mind, to overcome this ambiguity in Spinoza, is that Spinoza uses the terms God, Substance, and Nature as interchangeable; in other words, his God is not the God of the traditional Judaic or Christian theology. His God is not a putative personalized entity persisting in his existence in a different plane out of the existents and dominating these existents from outside but rather closely related with existents. Hereby, the answer comes from his correspondences with de Vries.⁴³ In these correspondences, Spinoza distinguishes two kinds of definition. The first is the one “which serves to explain a thing whose essence is only sought, as the only thing there is doubt about” and the second one is that which is “proposed only to be examined.”⁴⁴ For the second kind of definition, Spinoza gives the example of an imaginary temple which someone plans to build. This kind of explanation does not have a determinate object and, does not demand any truth since it is only a chimera. Whereas for the

⁴¹ E1 p5.

⁴² E1 d1-d3

⁴³ Cited in Genevieve Lloyd, *Routledge Companion to Spinoza and the Ethics*, (New York: Routledge Press, 1996), p. 33.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 33.

first type of definition Spinoza gives the example of description of the Temple Solomon, about the existence of which there is no doubt, since it is a determinate object given to our senses.⁴⁵ The definition of the substance, he says, is of the first kind. Thus, we can see that when Spinoza speaks about the God or Substance he, in fact, speaks about determinate objects, because of the fact that if there is no doubt about the existence of God then God should be given to us through our senses. What is given to us through our senses is nothing but the determinate objects. Then, it means that Spinoza conceives God or substance when he sees finite objects. Thus, he does not derive the existence of God from its concept analytically; rather the existence of God is already synthetically added to it, because of the fact that determinate objects are nothing but the expression of the God. At this point this may be sound as non-sense and it is necessary to explain how things express the God. I will briefly mention the fact that, as more comprehensively stated by Warren Montag⁴⁶, Spinoza's main problem is to develop a new way of thinking with the long time existing concepts belonging to the theological tradition. Thus, when he speaks of God, he speaks of existents. However, God is not a simple aggregate of particular things; God or Nature, has an existence and essence of her own. Hence, diversity in modes is not a hindrance, at least for Spinoza, to consider them in the unity of substance. Indeed, on the contrary, what is problematic arises when we encounter the question whether particular existents have genuine existence of their own. I will try to discuss this question more comprehensively in the following sections.

Even if we take for granted the existence of God, there remains a necessity to explain the structure of the argumentation. The article 'b' seems

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 34.

⁴⁶ See Warren Montag (1999), *Bodies, Masses, Power*, (New York: Verso Publications, 1999).

valid because of the following. The substance, according to Spinoza, is that which is in itself.⁴⁷ In other words the substance does not accept any externality and external causation, and what comes about in the substance have an explanation only through that substance. Thus if two substances have an attribute in common, then they can interact through that attribute. Even if we do not accept this definition, since it is a mere definition, Spinoza has more to offer us. According to him, substance and its modifications (namely modes) “form the sum total of existence”.⁴⁸ This is, I believe, same as asserting that the universe forms the sum total of the existence and whatsoever comes about in the universe has an explanation with the laws of the universe and within the universe.

Likewise, there does not seem to be any problem with the article ‘c’. Spinoza says that an attribute is that “through which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance”.⁴⁹ This explanation comes to mean that if intellect perceives substance, it perceives it through one of its attributes; thought, extension, etc.. In other words, one can also define an attribute as the ‘expression of substance’ and a thing without any expression does not exist.

However, for some commentators the article ‘a’ is problematic since it seems that there is no reason for us to assign infinite attributes to one substance. Indeed, as Bennet asserts, if there is only two attributes, extension and thought, and if the substance and its modes form the sum total of the existence, we can easily assert that substance has *all* the attributes.⁵⁰ Likewise, there may be another substance with an attribute quite different

⁴⁷ E1 d3.

⁴⁸ E1 p15.

⁴⁹ E1 d4.

⁵⁰ See “Spinoza’s Metaphysics” section 3.

from extension and thought. Yet Spinoza insists that the substance has infinite attributes, though throughout the book he speaks of only two of them.

Regardless of Spinoza's success in showing that there is only one substance, one should keep in mind that the substance monism is the backbone of Spinoza's philosophy out of which his naturalism and anti-humanism advent. In other words, importance of his argumentation of substance monism should not be assessed with its success; rather it should be assessed with its outcomes. Substance monism is the prerequisite of materialism in such a way that, what it tells us is that there is nothing beyond the existents. If there is nothing beyond, then there is nothing to direct existents to an end set in advance, nor are we able to define an entity through which things achieve their meanings. Moreover, as one can see from the structure of the argumentation, Spinoza gives primacy to substance rather than modes. Substance is the only active entity (*natura naturans* that is nature naturing).⁵¹ Therefore, to understand a mode, as I will try to show below, is to understand it within the unity of substance, to which it belongs.

2.2. Particulars: Modes or Combination of Simple Parts?

As mentioned before, modes, or particular things, are one of the three elements exposed in the first part of the book. However, the first part of the book is not the sole section where Spinoza explains the nature of particulars; in the second part, Spinoza uses a different approach to depict particulars and to do this he uses a kind of physics, which is quite different from the one he uses in the first part. The difference between these two approaches lies in the constitution of the particulars: Are they modifications of substance whether as qualities of the substance or merely dependent

⁵¹ E1 p29 N

entities, or individual bodies composed by the combination of simple parts, where for every combination a unique ratio of motion and rest is obtained? Moreover, both explanations that Spinoza offers in the first and second part of the book yield a kind of ontology, in which main stress is made to relations rather than *relata*. I will discuss first the meaning of being a mode in sub-section (I) and I will further discuss the simple parts in sub-section (II) and whether the second explanation makes a real difference.

The definition of modes has been already given in the beginning of the book: “By *mode*, I mean the modifications of substance, or that which exists in, and is conceived through, something other than itself”.⁵² At this very moment, from this definition, we can see that a mode is a dependent entity. However, the term mode implies much more than that. According to Bennet, Spinoza uses this term as does his contemporaries, which comes to mean that a mode is a property or a quality of a thing of which it is a mode.⁵³ For example, Bennet goes on, when a face blushes, this blushing does not form a completely separate entity but is a mode of the face. In other words, when we say that a face is blushing, we do not talk about two things, but only a face and its activity. Therefore, likewise, when we talk about modes we are, in fact, talking about the substance and its activity. This may help us to understand how modes express the substance.

However, some other commentators contend with this comment, and assert that the term mode has also a second meaning and that to say that something is a mode is to say that it is a dependent being.⁵⁴ One can easily derive this meaning from the above quoted definition; furthermore, that a mode is a dependent thing, as also mentioned above, is already included in

⁵² E1 d5.

⁵³ Bennet, p. 67.

⁵⁴ Bennet, p. 68. See also *Routledge Companion to Spinoza and the Ethics*, pp. 55-63.

the first illustration. Yet, what this account of mode yields is more complicated. As I have tried to show above, if a particular thing is a mode, this means that there is no room for genuine particularity on the side of particular thing since when we discuss a particular thing, we, in Spinoza's metaphysics, discuss only the substance. However, when we define a thing as dependent, we do not necessarily assert that the thing's existence can completely be consumed by the entity on which the dependent thing depends. That is, for example, a ball remaining fast depends on me to move, I kick it, but the distance it will traverse partly depends on the ball; its shape, its weight, etc.. Yet I think that the relation between modes and the substance is of the first kind, at least in the first part of the book, and I will offer some textual evidence to show my point.

If one is to understand what Spinoza means by defining particular things as modes, whether they are dependent things or qualities of substance, one should understand the character of the relation between modes and substance. To return ball analogy, if modes are dependent things, then God is located in the moment of kicking. He kicks the ball and the rest partly depends on the ball. If not, if modes are qualities of God, then the rolling down of the ball is actually the rolling down of the God. In other words only God rolls down but not the ball. Simply put, the difference between a thing that is a mode and a thing that is dependent lies in the fact that whether the existence of the mentioned thing is completely consumed by substance or not, or what is the same, whether the thing also exists in its own account. Let us consider the following proposition: "God is the indwelling and not the transient cause of all things".⁵⁵ If he is so, then it is obvious that God penetrates in things, and what things perform are actually God's acts: "God is not only the cause of things coming into existence, but also of their continuing

⁵⁵ E1 p18.

in existence”;⁵⁶ “A thing which is conditioned to act in a particular manner, has necessarily been thus conditioned by God; and that which has not been conditioned by God cannot condition itself to act”;⁵⁷ “A thing, which has been conditioned by God to act in a particular way cannot render itself unconditioned”.⁵⁸ One can see the fact that all the relations that modes involve in are external, and at this very stage, we cannot talk about any internal determination for modes. In other words, Spinoza depicts modes in such a way that modes fall prey to the unity of external conditions conditioning them, and we cannot determine an internal determination for a mode, which, at least, will tell us to what extent a mode can be consumed by external determination because of the frank fact that modes are not the moment of conditioning or unconditioning. Thus, as all these propositions imply, the existences of modes are completely consumed by the substance. I think it is now clear how modes express the God, since modes are depicted as the activity of one substance. Yet these modes exist anyway, and in the following I will briefly depict how modes relate to substance as a blushing does to face.

According to Bennet, if one refuses the possibility of a vacuum, as does Spinoza, then when one says that there is a Pebble (P) in the region R, there should exist either P or R.⁵⁹ In other words, if one takes space to be the extended substance (some kind of ether), and since two extended entities, R and P in this case, cannot be in the same coordinates at the same time, since this would contradict with the very basic nature of a corporeal body that is being impenetrable, then one of them should be eliminated as secondary. Bennet asserts that while Leibniz explains away the region, Spinoza and

⁵⁶ E1 p24 C.

⁵⁷ E1 p26.

⁵⁸ E1 p27.

⁵⁹ Bennet, p. 70.

Descartes eliminate the pebble. Thus, when Spinoza says that there is a pebble at such and such coordinates, he means that that part of the extended substance becomes 'pebbly'.⁶⁰ And when a pebble moves to another part of the extended substance, then the former part ceases to be pebbly and another part becomes pebbly instead. When a mode ceases to exist, nothing really annihilates, rather some parts of the extended substance modifies in a different way. Simply put, we can consider one substance as an infinite face capable of originating infinite mimics in infinite ways; and the reality of modes is the same as the reality of these mimics.

2.3. Simple Parts

Spinoza introduces simple parts in the second part of the book. Though these simple parts are introduced to explain constitution of individual bodies, Spinoza's main aim is not to offer an alternative to the theory of modes explained in the first part. Rather his aim is to define the nature of an individual human mind.

2.3.1. Emergence of simple parts

As is well known Spinoza is famous for his parallelism and what he asserts with his parallelism is that there is no interaction between the attribute of thought and the attribute of extension.⁶¹ Thus, if one is to understand an idea, one has to understand it through how that idea caused by another finite idea or ideas. Likewise, if one is to understand a corporeal finite thing, one has to understand it within the causal relations to which this finite thing

⁶⁰ Bennet, p. 70.

⁶¹ E2 p6.

belongs along with other extended finite things. However, the order and the connection of ideas, which are modes of the attribute of thought, are the same with the order and connection of extended things, which are modes of the attribute of extension.⁶² Simply put, when we examine nature under the attribute of thought we will find exactly the same relations with those, which we would find if we examined nature under the attribute of extension. In addition, knowledge of a thing depends on the knowledge of its cause⁶³ and since all the attributes springs from the one substance, according to Spinoza, their cause is the same, and thus an extended thing and the idea of the thing are the same. Thus, since human mind is the idea of the human body,⁶⁴ human mind and human body are the same thing, with a single difference that one is to be understood under the attribute of thought and the other under the attribute of extension.

All these seem as a bold projection, since we are naturally accustomed to distinguish mind from that which is corporeal. However, this understanding of body and the mind accompanying to that body has two important consequences. First, one can easily see that this understanding yields a sort of pansychism. If wherever a body exists, there also exists a mind accompanying that body, then it is clear that Spinoza should think that thought is inherent all matter.⁶⁵ Second, the capacity and quality of an individual mind is same with the capacity and the quality of an individual body to which that mind is accompanying. As Spinoza says:

⁶² E2 p7.

⁶³ E1 a4.

⁶⁴ E2 p13.

⁶⁵ Such a pansychism enables Spinoza to discuss the issue of mind, and human mind, with respect to quantitative terms, in such a way that the difference between human mind and the mind of a lowest form of living organism or even difference between the human mind and the mind of a stone is not qualitative. So when one asks the peculiar distinguishing aspect of human mind, the answer will be a quantitative one such that it is more complex.

I will only say generally, that in proportion as any given body is more fitted than others for doing many actions or receiving many impressions at once, so also is the mind, of which it is the object, more fitted than others for forming many simultaneous perceptions; and the more the actions of one body depend on itself alone, and the fewer other bodies concur with it in action, the more fitted is the mind of which it is the object for distinct comprehension.⁶⁶

Finally, to show how complex human mind is, Spinoza goes on to explain the complexity of human body through the physics of simple parts. Due to the relation among these simple parts, where a fixed ratio of motion and rest is maintained, individualization of an entity is obtained:

When any given bodies of the same or different magnitude are compelled by other bodies to remain in contact, or if they be moved at the same or different rates of speed, so that their mutual movements should preserve among themselves a certain fixed relation, we say that such bodies are in union, and that together they compose one body or individual, which is distinguished from other bodies by this fact of union.⁶⁷

Human body is an individual of the same kind depicted above but extremely complex.⁶⁸ Another important thing in this quotation is that, according to Spinoza what differentiates an individual from another, or what gives a specific manner of existing to an individual is a 'certain fixed relation' preserved by simple parts' 'mutual movements', which will called by Deleuze as 'characteristic ratio'. However, the issue of simple parts in Spinoza's metaphysics is a curious one because he does not bother himself to explain what these simple parts are. Yet an ingenious explanation comes from Deleuze.

⁶⁶ E2 p13 N.

⁶⁷ E2 Definition to Axiom 3.

⁶⁸ E2 Postulate 1.

2.3.2. Infinitesimals

Deleuze uses the theory of infinitesimals to explain simple parts.⁶⁹ A simple part is an infinitesimal and an infinitesimal is that which is infinitely small. That is, it is a quantity, but an indefinite one because of the fact that whenever we try to determine a value or quantity for it, we can easily find a value or quantity, which is smaller, and so on to infinity. Though these simple parts are infinitely small and indeterminate, their combination yields a definite individual. But how come this happens? The answer Deleuze gives to this question is the differential equations. In differential equations, an infinitesimal is equal to zero and is denoted by d . That is, let x be an infinitesimal, then it is denoted as dx and $dx=0$. However, the relation between two infinitesimals is not necessarily equal to zero. That is we can define an entity z in such a way that z is not equal to zero and z is an outcome of the relation between two infinitesimals such as $dx/dy=z$.

This explanation yields a very different ontology in which one can define an individual as the locus of relations. In this ontology, we are not able to define *relata*, since, as we have seen above, *relata* are assigned to infinity and it is impossible to define one. Thus an individual is itself a locus of a set of relations in which there is no *relata*. An individual entity is not defined by definite limits entailed by its form or essence; rather what characterizes an individual is the characteristic ratio of movement and rest involved in the relation of which the individual is the locus:

There is no longer a form, but only relations of velocity between infinitesimal particles of an unformed material. There is no longer a subject, but only individuating affective states of an anonymous force.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza Üstüne On Bir Ders*, translated and edited by Ulus Baker, (Ankara: Öteki – Körotonomedy, 2000), see 'Yedinci Ders', pp. 135-154

⁷⁰ Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza, Practical Philosophy*, (San Francisco: City Light Books, 1988), p. 128.

2.3.3. Simple Parts vs. Modifications of substance

At this point one may consider that whether there is a real difference between theory of simple parts and of modes, since in both approaches particulars reflect everything but themselves. In the theory of modes a particular is an expression of God without any internal determination. Likewise, in the theory of simple parts a particular is an expression of a net of relations still lacking internal determination. Whether nature is composed of simple parts or it is some sort of ether does not make any difference when seen from the perspective of particulars. Even assigning a unique ratio of motion and rest to a particular does not yield any difference since one can assert that same uniqueness can be found in the theory of modes in such a way that a mode is a unique modification of substance. In other words, every mode is a modification of substance but every mode is also an exclusive instance of modification; that is, substance does not modify itself in the same way. Therefore I do not see any difference between two explanations.

In either of the theories Spinoza's naturalism is at work. A particular in the nature is to be explained within the nature and in the nature regardless of its being a modification of substance or an individualization of relations. Moreover, there are no entities in the nature, which are superior to the nature; nature is always prior to particular. That is, a particular is not a beginning point to which relations of that very particular will be addressed; rather it is an outcome of some set of relations.

2.3.4. Different Perspectives

Though Deleuze's commentary of simple parts is brilliant, there remain two simple problems about this commentary. First, I am not even sure that Spinoza does indeed know the theory of infinitesimals and differential

equations.⁷¹ Second, Spinoza does not believe the existence of atoms and denies the possibility of a vacuum.⁷² Thus, if there is no vacuum, there is also nothing to provide the simplicity of these parts. That is, we cannot discuss them as fundamental particulars since we do not know how they acquire their fundamentality. Even though Deleuze also asserts that these simple parts are not atoms,⁷³ still we do not have any reason to believe that Spinoza intended to replace these simple parts with his theory of modes. As also Bennet puts, simple parts do not belong to the most primary level of Spinoza's metaphysics.⁷⁴

However, as I tried to show above, both explanations have same affects, and thus I believe that the difference is just a technical one and what it brings us is just different perspectives to look at the same thing. The former is the broader perspective, which is to be used to see the substance and which is too broad to see modes; whereas the latter provides a narrower perspective to investigate particulars in their own particularity. In other words, seen within the network of relations, only the relations are primary, and if one is to discuss a particular taking place within these relations, one has to look from a narrower perspective. The theory of simple parts, though it belongs to a more superficial level of Spinoza's metaphysics, provides us to see particulars within their complexity. Simply put, on the one hand when seen from the window of the one substance, particulars appear as mere modifications of that substance and yet secondary, on the other hand, when seen from the window of particulars, they are a world in a world, which move

⁷¹ The theory of infinitesimals is developed simultaneously by Leibniz and Newton. However, Spinoza met with Leibniz only once and in the meeting Spinoza was the speaking party and Leibniz was the listening party.

⁷² E1 p15 N.

⁷³ *Spinoza Üstüne On Bir Ders*, p. 136

⁷⁴ Bennet, p. 73.

and rest with characteristic ways of their own, yet still secondary. However, I believe that in neither of the theories there is a genuine particularity, and a genuine particularity can only be provided by some sort of internal determination. When I say internal determination, I do not mean some sort of abstract will or faculty of consent, which directs acts of a particular and which is not a part of the nature as the way it is depicted by Spinoza. I believe that it is possible to remain within the naturalistic boundaries set by Spinoza, and still find something that can work as some sort of internal determination. In the next section I will assert that we can indeed find such an internal determination, at least a nucleus of it, and I will further assert that this is the very same thing with the so-called 'characteristic ratio'. I think that one can assign 'characteristic ratio' of a particular thing the role of some sort of a form or essence which determines to which relations the mentioned thing will involve and to what extent. In other words, things with definite 'characteristic ratios' are more apt to involve in definite relations, whereas they are incapable of involving in some other relations. Likewise it is the 'characteristic ratio' which can tell us why a frog and a turtle involve in and capable of different relations, that is why they are qualitatively different. Finally, 'characteristic ratio' of a thing can help us to understand why some particulars give different responses to the same chain of causation.

2.4. Problem of Internal Determination

“Bodies are distinguished from one another in respect of motion and rest, quickness and slowness, and not in respect of substance”.⁷⁵ It is clear that bodies cannot be distinguished substantially since there is only one substance; furthermore what this 'lemma' implies is that there is no qualitative

⁷⁵ E2 Lemma 1.

differences among simple parts because of the fact that if we consider two bodies as compounds of simple parts, there would be still no difference with respect to parts composing them. All that matters is motion and rest, and thus all that matters is activity. So, according to Spinoza, what will distinguish this particular from another one is its activity, which is different from the activity pertaining to other particular. However, what is important here is that the entire activity taking place in the universe is of the same kind, since all the activities are derivatives of a basic motion. Before discussing whether this provides a genuine difference among modes I will first assert that we can discuss *conatus* as this basic motion.

2.4.1. Basic Motion

If we recall the E2 Lemma 1, we can see that Spinoza names this basic motion as *conatus* or endeavor, since *all* bodies endeavor to persist in their being. That is, this striving (or endeavor, these two terms can be used transitively) is common to all bodies, whereby bodies act throughout their existences. Also, as I will assert in III that, *conatus* is not peculiar to modes but it is the activity of the substance and all modes express this activity in their own way.

Bodies are distinguished through their activity and their activity is to endeavor to persist in their being. Thus an individual is distinguished from another individual due to its endeavor. According to Don Garret *conatus* is the solution to the problem of metaphysical individualization posed by the substance monism.⁷⁶ However, there is one point here to be explained. On the one hand, we take motion to be an activity, which is entirely mechanical

⁷⁶ Don Garret, "Spinoza's ethical theory" in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, ed. by. Don Garret, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 267-315, p. 271.

and which does not presuppose any final cause or thinking. On the other hand, the word endeavor implies being conscious of an end and striving to acquire that end which is thinking. Moreover, Spinoza's pansychism, as we have seen above, supports the idea that to every mode of extension there also exists a mode of thought. Yet, this does not necessarily mean that, according to Spinoza, every mode of extension indeed thinks. On the contrary, the first part of the book strongly suggests that things act due to external conditions that exert force upon them and thus condition them. Second, what Spinoza's naturalism tells us is that if one is not to conceive human being as a 'kingdom within the kingdom', then one is to understand human behaviors through principles that also govern other bodies in the nature, because of the fact that "nature's laws and ordinances, ..., are everywhere and always the same".⁷⁷ Therefore when Spinoza says that all bodies strive, his aim is not to assign a feature that we are used to address to human beings, but rather to show how men are parts of nature and why their actions should be understood with the general laws of nature. Indeed, a closer look will help us to understand that when Spinoza names an activity as striving he does not mean that this activity involves thinking.

2.4.2. Mechanical Striving

'Striving' is a Cartesian term, which is used by Descartes to express what a thing does in a given situation:

When I say that globules of the second element strive to move away from the centers around which they revolve, it should not be thought that I am implying that they have some thought from which this striving (*conatus*) proceeds. I mean merely that they are positioned and pushed into motion in such a way that they will in fact travel in that direction, unless they are

⁷⁷ E3 Preface.

prevented by some other cause. (*Principles of Philosophy* 3.56)⁷⁸

We can see that in the Cartesian usage *conatus* is a mechanical term rather than a psychological one. This is also what Spinoza means when he says that bodies endeavor:

By striving for motion we do not understand any thought, but only that a part of matter is so placed and stirred to motion, that it really would go somewhere if it were not prevented by any cause. (*Descartes's "Principles of Philosophy"*, 3d3)⁷⁹

To say that something is striving to move is to say that given that several external causes conditions one thing to move in a definite way, that thing will continue to move in the same way unless it is prevented by some other external causes. This is entirely mechanical, and thus, striving for perseverance in being simply means that unless prevented by some external causes, a thing is such conditioned that it will continue to persist in being. Now, we have two questions: What does it mean that a thing persists in being? and how come this thing conditioned to persist in being? After all, if a thing persists in being, then it should be conditioned to do so, because of the fact that, as we have seen above, finite things are not the moments of conditioning or unconditioning. There is a single answer for both questions.

According to Spinoza, existence is a matter of power: "The potentiality of non-existence is a negation of power, and contrariwise the potentiality of existence is a power as obvious".⁸⁰ Substance, as the pure actual being, is the pure force and the pure movement of this force (by movement I mean *conatus*), and the modes, since they express the substance, are some degrees of this pure force. Hence each mode is a

⁷⁸ Cited in Michael Della Rocca, "Spinoza's metaphysical psychology" in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, pp. 192-267, p. 195.

⁷⁹ Cited in Rocca, p. 196.

⁸⁰ E1 proof to p11.

modification of this pure force to exist, and each mode is moving (striving) to exert its force to continue in its existence. This, I believe, is what Spinoza means when he asserts that every mode strives for perseverance in being. What does all these mean is not very clear, but it is clear that if existence is a matter of power, then the whole universe is a flow of force and movement, and it is the unity of this flow, which is expressed by finite modes (however, I skip the law of inertia for the sake of clarity). This also shows us why *conatus* is the basic activity. This is the Spinozistic universe, which relies on the image of an absolute mechanical flow.

2.4.3. Characteristic Ratio as Form

In this pure flow of force and movement, modes are distinguished from each other through their movement or endeavor. However, Spinoza, right after asserting that movement is the moment of distinguishing among modes, asserts the following:

A body in motion or at rest must be determined to motion or rest by another body, which other body has been determined to motion or rest by a third body, and that third again by fourth, and so on to infinity.⁸¹

This 'lemma' brings us back to the problem of internal determination, because of two reasons. The first one is this: Since the movement in which modes partake is a single motion, the difference among moving bodies can be only quantitative, and just a quantitative grading does not seem to yield a genuine individualization. Quantitative difference is of the same thing with a difference of muchness and fewness. However, Deleuze tells us that the *Ethics* tells us two different things. The first is that existents are considered to be as enumerated in a 'quantitative ladder', and the second thing is that there

⁸¹ E2 Lemma 3.

are qualitative differences among 'existence modes'.⁸² I think that, the 'quantitative ladder' is an analogy Deleuze uses to depict the Spinozistic ontology that there is a single motion and all the modes partake in this motion in various quantitative degrees. However if these quantitative differences are to yield qualitative differences among 'existence modes', then we are to be informed with some sort of a dialectical movement between quantity and quality. However, the whole course of the *Ethics* is a non-dialectical mechanical ontology. Indeed Deleuze does not inform us about the mechanism working between quality and quantity.

The second problem is that, one object is distinguished from another by its movement but when one asks that why it moves in such a way, the answer will be that it is conditioned to do so. However, another body would move just like the same way if the sole qualification to move so is to be conditioned by an external cause to move so. So, given necessary external causation, it seems that every mode is capable of involving in every kind of relation. On the other hand, it is a plain fact that same causes do yield different effects in different objects. For example, if I push a tree I would not move it; if I push a lion it would eat me; if I push my mom she would get angry with me and etc.. Thus, along with external determination we have to assign an internal one to genuinely distinguish particulars and explain the fact. I believe that, the "characteristic ratio" pertaining to each individual may help us to assign an internal determination, though Spinoza himself does not assert such a thing. "Characteristic ratio" can work as a form by specifying to what extent and how the mentioned thing responds external conditions, and indeed when Deleuze speaks of qualitative differences among 'modes of existence' I believe that he uses the term 'characteristic ratio' just as another

⁸² *Spinoza Üstüne On Bir Ders*, p. 114.

name for form. Two different things with two different “characteristic ratios” involve in different relations, and give different outcomes, when being conditioned by the same cause. They are conditioned by an external cause to move, but the way they move and the quality of relations they involve in depend on their “characteristic ratio”. Finally, *conatus* of a body, the basic motion to which all bodies partake, is not just a movement conditioned by an external condition to which the body encounters somehow, but it is a movement in a definite and characteristic way. I think that unless provided with such internal determination, one cannot show us how metaphysical individualization takes place in Spinoza’s metaphysics.

This understanding may help us to resolve a conflict about the issue of self-preservation and an adequate knowledge of the substance. At least some commentators see it as a conflict, in Spinoza’s philosophy. It might also help us to understand why desire has to be self-referential. I will first discuss the conflict and offer my own solution at 2.4.5. and then discuss the former 2.4.5.

2.4.4. The Conflict

The conflict arises from the fact that Spinoza defines the good as that which is advantageous for self-preservation: “Whatsoever brings about the preservation of motion and rest, which the parts of the human body mutually possess, is good; contrariwise whatsoever causes a change in such proportion is bad”.⁸³ This proposition is understood as that what is good to human being is that which helps him/her to survive long.⁸⁴ The stress here is made to the preservation part. However, Spinoza also defines the highest

⁸³ E4 p39.

⁸⁴ According to Don Garret E4 p39 holds that “whatever is conducive to continued life is good.” See Garret, p. 290.

good of human mind, as it is put through propositions 26 to 28 in the fourth part, as the understanding or adequate knowledge of the substance. Thus, as Delahunty expresses, a conflict arises:

The kind of power we must be after if we want to stay alive in a hostile world does not seem to be the power which consists in, or follows from, an enlarged understanding. A cool, controlling type of man, or a man who bows before every change in the wind, has at least as good a chance of survival as a dedicated thinker or scientist: who would reckon the odds on Spinoza to be better than those, say, on Cromwell? It is not so much that Spinoza goes wrong in saying that we must pursue more and more power in order to survive, as he misdescribes the *sort* of power we must have more and more of.⁸⁵

Indeed why do we need an enlarged understanding? It is not that understanding does not have anything to do with survival, of course it has. Yet even animals possess such an understanding. Every animal 'knows' which food is useful to it, which animals are its natural enemy and which environments are advantageous or disadvantageous for it; and all these are related with survival. However, as one may assert, an enlarged knowledge cannot be compared to basic cognition of animals, and indeed human beings technical and scientific capacities have help them to survive in the world. This is a legitimate objection to Delahunty's comment. On the other hand, what Spinoza means by adequate knowledge is not a sort of technical knowledge. Adequate knowledge, according to Spinoza, which is the highest blessedness of human mind, is the knowledge of one substance and the union of human being with this substance.⁸⁶ In other words, the knowledge Spinoza demands is a metaphysical one that is far from being a technical one. Therefore, Delahunty seems to be right, and if the issue is survival, adequate understanding, which yields such a metaphysical knowledge of union

⁸⁵ Cited in *ibid.*

⁸⁶ Margaret D. Wilson, "Spinoza's theory of knowledge" in *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza*, pp. 89-142, pp. 90-91. Also see the entire section I.

between subject and substance, does not necessarily provide longer duration in existence. Also, as Garret reminds, after all, Spinoza himself died at the age of 45.⁸⁷ Does this mean that the author of the *Ethics* was not that virtuous?

Garret has an interesting solution to this conflict. He asserts that there would be no conflict if one is able to show that such adequate knowledge can indeed provide a kind of perseverance in being. This solution is related with the fifth part of the book where, put very briefly, Spinoza asserts that the more mind has adequate knowledge, the more part of mind becomes eternal, and thus the more it partakes with the eternal. Thus, adequate knowledge can indeed provide a kind of “perseverance in being.” This may be the true solution to this conflict, and indeed remained strictly within the boundaries of Spinoza’s philosophy this may be the only solution. However I will offer another solution to this conflict.

If I am right in assigning the characteristic ratio a role of internal determination, and also if I am right to say that *conatus* is not just a movement but a movement in a peculiar way necessitated by the characteristic ratio, then it is possible for me to assert that the issue of self-preservation is not limited with the part of preservation; that is the self to be preserved is as important as preservation. In other words, stress should be made to the self, and every self demand to be preserved in a peculiar way necessitated by its “characteristic ratio.” In other words, self-preservation becomes realization of the very self. So, perhaps the characteristic ratio of human being demands such a metaphysical knowledge, in such a way that this characteristic ratio allows him to detach itself from this unity of substance, since he is aware of the fact that he is a self and thus a negation of substance, and because of this detachment it demands such a unity again.

⁸⁷ Wilson, p. 91.

Indeed Spinoza, in the E4 p39 does not say that whatsoever helps to increase the duration of human body is good; he says “[W]hatsoever brings about the preservation of motion and rest, which the parts of the human body mutually possess, is good.” In addition, this understanding of *conatus*, or desire, yields an interesting way of looking the problem of union among men in the philosophy of Spinoza.

In the fourth part of the book, Spinoza, through the propositions 29 to 31, asserts that nothing useful to a man than a man. This is because only things that agree with our nature can increase our power of activity⁸⁸ and “[I]n so far as a thing is in harmony with our nature, it is necessarily good”;⁸⁹ hence there is nothing useful to a man than another man with whom he agrees in nature. In other words, each man strives for self-preservation and seeks what is advantageous for self-preservation, and union among men is the most advantageous to man because this union increases his power of activity.⁹⁰ At first sight union among bodies may be seen as a mere problem of strategy, and if we consider self-preservation just as a matter of longevity indeed it is. However, I believe that, and I will assert in the next chapter that, when desire for self-preservation is understood within the requirements necessitated by the state of being a self, this natural tendency of a man towards another acquires deeper metaphysical levels, such as a desire for the realization of self, which I believe to be exposed by Hegel with his theory of recognition.

All these may be controversial assertions, and I am not sure even I can defend them by remaining within the boundaries of the *Ethics*. Moreover if this would be done so, it will need a much more comprehensive work than I

⁸⁸ E4 p29.

⁸⁹ E4 p31.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 297.

do here. However, my aim is not to stay within the boundaries but to show the affinities and some major differences between Hegel and Spinoza. If we consider the desire in the *Phenomenology* towards a knowledge of the self and if we also consider that knowledge, both for Spinoza and Hegel, is a matter of act and becoming, but not solely a matter of contemplation, and finally if we consider how this knowledge necessitates presence of another self consciousness and a sort of union with that self consciousness, then Spinoza may be brought closer to Hegel. I have to repeat that, when I assert that *conatus* is related with the self more than preservation, I do not assert that this is Spinoza's main point; rather my aim is to show that when seen from this perspective one can propose that Spinoza's metaphysics has some deeper aspects which are evaluated by Hegel in their full meanings. Also, I believe that stressing the self more than preservation in the self-preservation does not entail one to leave the Spinozistic territories. We are still within the substance of Spinoza yet seeking a self, which has some curious demands.

2.4.5. Self Referentiality

If desire is a striving for self-preservation, whether in this act the stress is made to preservation or to self, it is a frank fact that it has to be self-referential. In both of the situations, desire appears as the condition of mobility, and this comes to mean that if a body moves, this certainly has something to do with self. As I have asserted that if one makes the stress to the self, then desire for self-preservation becomes a desire for self realization; a realization of that which is demanded by the characteristic ratio of the mentioned self.

Briefly, self-referentiality of desire is a necessary outcome of what we can call as being an existent, and it is definitely not a fault to overcome. This understanding seems to yield a sort of egoism, since it always refers to a self

and leaves no room for altruism. However, in the next chapter I will assert that Hegel is free from such a charge not because he does not take desire to be self-referential but because of his conception of self.

So far I have tried to depict substance monism and the relation between modes and the substance in Spinoza's philosophy. I also have tried to show that, when considering desire, if we assign a sort of internal determination to 'characteristic ratio' and if we make stress to self rather than preservation, that is, if we take existence as a matter of realization rather than preservation, this desire would acquire deeper metaphysical meanings. In the following section I will give a brief recapitulation of how Hegel sees Spinoza, since I believe that this would be the best way to move from one philosopher to another.

2.5. From Spinoza to Hegel: There is too much God

In his lectures on the history of philosophy, Hegel begins his lecture on Spinoza with a fulgent eulogy:

It is therefore worthy of note that thought must begin by placing itself at the standpoint of Spinozism; to be a follower of Spinoza is the essential commencement of all philosophy. For as we have seen above (Vol. I. p. 144), when man begins philosophize, the soul must commence by bathing in this ether of the One Substance, in which all that man has held as true has disappeared; this negation of all that is particular, to which every philosopher must have come, is the liberation of the mind and its absolute foundation.⁹¹

This is not an ordinary praise of Spinoza stating that he is an important figure in the history of philosophy. Hegel explicitly defines Spinozism as the necessary prerequisite for thinking. A bath taken in the monism of substance will prepare us for a genuine philosophy since

⁹¹ <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/hp/hpspinoz.htm> Cited at 11 August 2007

substance monism familiarizes us with the idea that there is no beyond or a supernatural entity to which we are supposed to direct our attention, but whatever we are to find or realize we have to do this within the unity of substance.

However, after stating Spinoza's importance for philosophy, Hegel enumerates his serious criticisms. The main outline of Hegel's criticism can be recapitulated in a single sentence: Philosophy of Spinoza lacks a genuine grasp of individuality. Modes are exiled from substance in such a way that the relation between the substance and the modes is a one-way relation, that is it is solely external. There is no synthesis between modes and the substance. Rather, whole process is all about the substance and its activity. Moreover, as I have tried to show above, there is nothing for a mode that will provide a genuine individualization; that is, in Spinoza's philosophy there is no internal determination: "True individuality and subjectivity is not a mere retreat from the universal, not merely something clearly determinate; for, as clearly determinate, it is at the same time Being-for-itself, determined by itself alone."⁹² Here it may be seen as if Hegel is defending some sort of abstract will but he is not. An individual is not determined solely by itself, but it is, *at the same time*, determined by itself. That is, there is external determination, but also there is an internal one, and philosophy of Spinoza lacks such a determination, and thus "[T]here is therefore no such thing as finite reality, it has no truth whatever."⁹³

"Therefore the allegations of those who accuse Spinoza of atheism are the direct opposite of the truth; with him there is too much God."⁹⁴ This sentence is Hegel's response to atheism accusations charged against

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

Spinoza, especially by Jacobi. However, we have a double irony here. As we have seen above, Spinoza uses the term God entirely for different aims. The term God belongs to theological tradition depicting an external creator. However, Spinoza uses this term to depict the unity of existents. If there is a God, he is this unity immanent in all existents. Likewise, Hegel uses this very same irony, and against the charges of atheism he asserts that, far from being an atheist discourse, Spinoza's philosophy is full of God. I believe that Hegel uses this irony to tell us that Spinoza's naturalism, or better put his immanency is so immanent that difference between immanence and transcendence dissolves in his philosophy.

The difference between transcendence and immanence is not limited with a conflict between idealism and materialism. In transcendence there is always an entity beyond existents, whether a God, logos, reason or whatever it is. And the relation between existents and this entity is always a one-way relation in such a way that it is only that entity which is supposed to be the moment of reality. On the contrary, in immanence, the reality moment is supposed to be transformed to existents, and whatever there is, it is produced through the relations among these existents. However, in Spinoza's philosophy, we find the same relation between a mode and the substance with the relation we have in transcendence. Whenever a mode is to return the substance it always finds a net of relations extending to infinity. In other words, Spinoza offers us a world within a world functioning as the above mentioned transcendent entity. There is not a genuine production of modes, since all production belongs to the substance. What is left to a mode, which is conscious of itself and of the substance, is nothing but a forced consent to whatever exists. Briefly, Hegel's point here is that without offering a synthesis between substance and mode, which will provide a two way relation between these two, it will not make a difference whether this substance is immanent or transcendent.

In the next chapter I will assert that Hegel's account of desire and self-consciousness provides such a synthesis between the mode and the substance. Briefly, what Hegel does in his account of desire and recognition is that he simply mixes a pinch of negation and mediation to the recipe offered by Spinoza, yet this addition leads to a radically different account of substance and mode.

CHAPTER 3

Desire in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

In the previous two chapters I have tried to show how desire is excluded from a 'true' account of human phenomenon because of its two main untenable peculiarities, and how Spinoza tries to give an account of human being as a mode of one substance, and desire not as peculiar to mankind but as a fundamental drive for mobility for all modes. Moreover I have tried to emphasize some defects of such a thoroughgoing naturalism we have witnessed in Spinoza such that this sort of naturalism involves the danger of rendering the obvious different aspects of human phenomenon solely a matter of quantitative complexity. In this chapter I will try to investigate the concept of desire in the *Phenomenology*, though limited with the section "B. Self-Consciousness." Before I proceed I should give an account of the book, both its course and inner structure.

In the infamously complex and obscure "Preface" to *Phenomenology* Hegel declares his aim as "[T]o help bring philosophy closer to the form of Science, to the goal where it can lay aside the title 'love of knowing' and be *actual* knowing".⁹⁵ Hegel sets this aim before himself because, as we learn

⁹⁵ *Phenomenology*, §5.

from the very next paragraph, “true shape of truth is scientific”.⁹⁶ So, first of all, if one is to understand Hegel’s claim, one has to give an account of what is in Hegel’s mind when he entitles philosophy as science. According to Heidegger, since from Descartes, (and even we may count Plato as involved in this tradition,) the main goal of philosophy is entitled to provide “the existing or possible sciences with their foundations, i.e., with a determination and possibility of their fields, as well as with the justification of their procedures.”⁹⁷ Thus, since philosophy cannot be something less than that which it provides legitimate foundations, philosophy is entitled as science or science of sciences (ibid). However this is not the case for German idealists and Hegel: “The real reason lies in impulses more radical than that of grounding knowledge: they are concerned with overcoming finite knowledge and attaining infinite knowledge, ..., namely, how philosophy unfolds of itself as absolute knowledge”.⁹⁸ In other words, when Hegel uses the term “science”, what he has in his mind is the most essential knowledge, the absolute knowledge. Thus, the term ‘science’ refers to the exposition of the philosophical truth, namely absolute knowledge. What is meant with the term ‘absolute’ here, according to Heidegger, is that which is “not relative”.⁹⁹ Relative knowledge involves two meanings: a type of knowledge which is of something but is not of anything else, and a type of knowledge which knows something about its object but does not know other aspects of its object. However it is important not to understand the term ‘absolute knowledge’ as a sort of knowledge that knows everything (not this or that entity but the entirety of the realm of entities), or as a sort of knowledge that utterly consumes its

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, §6.

⁹⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (USA: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 10.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 14.

object. All these are 'quantitatively' absolute knowledge. In other words, absolute knowledge does not address to a sort of knowledge of a thing which includes every possible bit of knowledge that are to be known about the mentioned thing. Rather, as Heidegger reminds us, we have to understand the term 'absolute' as qualitatively.¹⁰⁰ In order to understand the difference between qualitative and quantitative knowing we must first understand the quality of quantitative knowing:

Carried over and across, this knowledge [relative knowledge] remains knowingly in what is known. It knows it precisely so as to be held fast by what is known. Thus, as a knowing of that which is known, this knowledge is consumed by it, surrenders to it, and is knowingly lost in it.¹⁰¹

So, a quantitative absolute knowledge either knows everything that is to be known about an object but remains stuck within this object, or knows the entirety of the realm of existents (knows each and every existent) but knows them as an aggregate of indifferent entities and again stuck within the aggregate of these entities. It fails to grasp the genuine unity of this realm. On the contrary, qualitatively absolute knowledge does not stick into the object of knowledge, it moves from the object of knowledge to the subject of knowledge, and to the unity of these apparently distinct two moments. In other words, absolute knowledge is not a specific kind of knowledge, as mentioned before, that knows every possible object of knowledge or that knows everything about an object that is possible to know. Absolute knowledge is a character of knowing, which moves through the apparently distinct moments of knowledge, and grasps them in their unity. All these imply a sort of union between the knower and the known, or thought and being, and an affirmation of a unifying unity among beings. Secondly, we can see that absolute knowledge already reveals itself as a process, as something which

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 14.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 14.

has a 'history', since it moves. Moreover what will unite all these distinct moments of the process of knowledge is the fact that they will reveal themselves as parts of a totality. In other words, whenever one tries to hold a moment as the true shape of reality, one will have to move beyond this moment and grasp this moment as included in a totality of corresponding moments.

Such knowledge reminds one the third kind of knowledge Spinoza depicts in the *Ethics*, which is a scientific intuition and which "proceeds from an adequate idea of the absolute essence of certain attributes of God to the adequate knowledge of the essences of things".¹⁰² In other words, to gain an adequate knowledge of a thing, one should first possess the idea of the God, the substance or the unity of the totality surrounding the thing, and then proceed from the totality to the particular. Yet the idea of God is a matter of intuition, though a scientific one, as if the totality is given us through some sort of intuitive faculty just as other determinate particulars are given to us through our senses. However, Hegel, through paragraphs six to ten, immediately draws the distinctions between his understanding of absolute and others who base the knowledge of absolute on intuition or feeling. As he says in paragraph six "truth has only Notion as the element of its existence," that is, it is only conceptual work which will grant us the knowledge of the absolute. All other understandings, which demand the absolute immediately, lack the 'true element' of truth. Another important point here is that absolute "is essentially a *result*, that only in the end it is it what truly is".¹⁰³ So, if absolute is a result, then we cannot proceed from an intuition or feeling and judge any form of knowledge *via* this alleged knowledge of the unity.

¹⁰² E2 Note II to p39.

¹⁰³ *Phenomenology*, §20.

Another crucial difference of Hegel's idea of absolute is his assertion that the True, namely the idea of absolute or the unity of thought and being, should be expressed "not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*".¹⁰⁴ This simply means that the moment of truth cannot be either an inert being in-itself or a thinking subject as inert as the former:

If the conception of God as the one Substance shocked the age in which it was proclaimed, the reason for this was on the one hand an instinctive awareness that, in this definition, self-consciousness was only submerged and not preserved. On the other hand, the opposite view, which clings to thought as thought, to universality as such, is the very same simplicity, is undifferentiated, unmoved substantiality. And if, thirdly, thought does unite itself with the being of Substance, and apprehends immediacy or intuition as thinking, the question is still whether this intellectual intuition does not again fall back into inert simplicity.¹⁰⁵

With this paragraph, with tacit references to Spinoza, Kant, and Schelling respectively, we can see what Hegel means with 'Subject'. This term does not address to a thinking individual conceptualized as 'pure thought', since thinking subject conceptualized as pure thought is, according to Hegel, another sort of substance posited against the substantiality of being. The term 'Subject' refers to a process and becoming; that is, a subject, of whatever kind it is, either an individual human subject or the substance as subject, is a process of positing itself, or unfolding itself, through a progressive chain of connected moments of positing, as what it is: "[Substance] is being which is in truth Subject, or, what is the same, is in truth actual only in so far as it is the movement of positing itself, or is the mediation of its self-othering with itself".¹⁰⁶ This sentence stands in need of some

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, §17.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, §17.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, §18.

clarification and I believe this clarification will provide us a brief sketch of the course of the book.

First, we must keep in mind that, if Absolute is also a subject, then a knowing subject cannot attain its knowledge, unless it (the Absolute as subject) reveals itself. As mentioned before, being subject implies positing or disclosing itself by itself. So, according to Hegel, if absolute is to disclose itself, it has to disclose itself through a medium, which, again according to Hegel, as observed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, is consciousness. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the story of how Absolute unfolds itself (or at least how some certain shapes of consciousness are evaluated as the unfolding of Absolute by Hegel, and how this unfolding is reconstructed in the mind of Hegel). Throughout the book, Hegel observes how shapes of consciousness, from its most basic level to more comprehensive levels, necessitate each other and disclose themselves as moments of a whole. So when Hegel says that Absolute mediates itself with its self-othering, he, I believe, means that in some level of consciousness thought posits being as its ultimate other and the sole moment of truth, and by doing this so, Absolute as thought grasps itself as it is posed to itself (itself as being). However, consciousness, in its own activity, grasps the one-sidedness and untenability of its initial posture and moves to a more comprehensive shape of consciousness which is free from initial defects, yet harbors new ones and in turn is forced to move to a more comprehensive shape and so on. This loop continues to the end of the book where all the one-sidedness of the shapes of consciousnesses is sublated and these seemingly contradicting shapes are reconciled within the whole. Briefly, Hegel conceives of the “form of dialectical rationality as immanent within consciousness,”¹⁰⁷ which means a phenomenological survey

¹⁰⁷ Stephen Houlgate, *Hegel, Nietzsche and the Criticism of Metaphysics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 167.

of the shapes of consciousness will necessarily bring us to the idea of Absolute. In other words, Hegel does not prejudge these forms with an idea of Absolute which he formed beforehand, rather it is the very activity of shapes of consciousness (activity of consciousness refers to the testing of consciousness' own assertion with its own criteria) that necessarily moves to a more comprehensive form of knowledge. Finally the 'Science' is the unifying activity which grasps this exposition of Absolute in its unity.

3.1. Emergence of Desire

Phenomenology begins with the section "Sense-certainty: or 'This' and 'Meaning'". In this section Hegel depicts the most immediate form of knowing, which can be called as the 'sensory realism' .¹⁰⁸ This consciousness claims to know its object in its pure particularity, that is, in its pure immediacy or givenness. Moreover, this consciousness believes this to be the most essential truth of its object. However when consciousness tries to give a content to its object it can say nothing but 'this', or it is 'here' and 'now'. I believe that we can think this section with the Aristotelian formula, according to which all individual entities have a 'thisness' and 'whatness'. Whatness designates the common properties of an individual entity, which it shares with other individuals. Whereas 'thisness' is that which makes an entity 'this but not that' entity; that is, it is a peculiarity of an entity, which it does not share with other entities. So, in this section, sensory realist consciousness sticks to 'thisness' or immediacy of its object as the truth of its object. However, when consciousness tries to give content to being 'this', 'here', and 'now' it experiences that all these terms do not belong to the object but rather they

¹⁰⁸ Houlgate, p. 168.

are parts of a movement, a movement of 'nowness' and 'hereness'.¹⁰⁹ Briefly, having experienced that it cannot give content to its object just by pointing the object, consciousness moves to a further stage that is 'perception'. This movement of consciousness continues till it reaches to a level, which can be called as scientific consciousness, namely 'Force and the Understanding'. Towards the end of this section Hegel says that consciousness, while trying to reach the secret of the 'inner world of appearances' it sees itself behind the curtain.¹¹⁰ With this paragraph, according to Pippin,¹¹¹ we witness one of the most ambiguous transition problems in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

The 'curtain' analogy, that seeing of consciousness itself while trying to acquire the knowledge of 'inner world of appearances', simply tells us that consciousness experiences its own activity in the process of knowledge; that is, consciousness experiences that it does not simply receive what appearances are impinging on it, rather it is exporting its own structure to the world of phenomena. In other words, as Pippin explains, although throughout the first three chapters, consciousness conceives truth as something other than itself, with the end of third chapter consciousness experiences that "what makes knowledge-claims true or false, is internal too, not other than consciousness itself."¹¹² If this is the case, that is if Hegel rightly shows that the 'truth of knowledge-claims' are to be searched also within the consciousness, then it is clear that we are on a way to a study of understanding's faculties and how these order the phenomenal world. However *Phenomenology* takes a very different path and in the forth chapter

¹⁰⁹ *Phenomenology*, §108.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, §165.

¹¹¹ Robert B. Pippin, "You Can't Get There from Here: Transition Problems in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*", in *Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. by Friedrich C. Beiser, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 52-86.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 62.

we encounter a self who is a purposive agency, who involves in struggles for recognition, who labors, briefly who 'acts'. The apparently object-oriented and thus theoretical first three chapters are followed by a subject-oriented and practical fourth chapter, and as a result subject is not the subject of cognition but subject of social agency.

According to Pippin, Hegel's point here is that to give an account of any knowledge, one should also give the account of the intentionality of consciousness; that is why consciousness knows this object but not that:

... Hegel believes he has just revealed the equally abstract one-sidedness of an independent, subject-determining sensible world, and that there must be some considerable measure of independence involved in how the subject takes up and orders its world. Since he is assuming that such independence means that such a contribution by the subject is *actively* contributed, and is not causally, even if remotely, dependent on its interaction with the world, he now assumes such activity is genuinely or internally self-directed, *purposive* in some sense.¹¹³

Therefore a comprehensive study of 'consciousness' must involve also an investigation of the 'consciousness' as a purposive agency.

Indeed, a study of the faculties of understanding will yield to a conception of subject as 'pure thought', and as we have seen above according to Hegel, this subject is another sort of substance. Moreover, as I have mentioned before, throughout the book we witness more comprehensive shapes of consciousness, and now we are at the stage of consciousness of the self, namely self-consciousness. Hegel cannot investigate this self solely in terms of cognitive subject since this will be an abstraction. On the contrary, this consciousness experiences itself as embedded within the world, of which it endeavors to acquire knowledge, and a comprehensive account of this consciousness has to involve its being embedded in this world. Therefore, at this stage, consciousness will begin to

¹¹³ *Ibid*, 64.

recognize itself as a part of the world it is living, as an alive entity as a part of the process of life, and most important of all as a self that is unique among others entities. Yet, as mentioned before, from the very beginning of the fourth chapter the issue of the knowledge of the self turns into an 'act' rather than contemplation. This is the second aspect of the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness. Self-consciousness cannot be simply an object of cognition but it should be revealed as what it is in its own act. The knowledge of self revealed in self's act is also an interesting common point between Hegel and Spinoza.

According to Spinoza mind achieves the idea of body through body's acts: "The human mind has no knowledge of the body, and does not know it to exist, save through the ideas of the modifications whereby the body is affected".¹¹⁴ So, self knowledge is only possible when the self is involved in some relation, both with itself and with the external world. Indeed, according to Spinoza our knowledge of ourselves and the external world goes parallel with each other; that is we know external world through our own constitution and in this knowledge we come to know something about ourselves.¹¹⁵ Briefly, the issue of the knowledge of ourselves that is what we are capable of and what we are incapable of necessitates an exposition of ourselves, namely an act. So, likewise, if the *Phenomenology* is to tell us the story of the consciousness which experiences itself as living for the first time, the book has to demonstrate how this consciousness experiences its truth through its interaction with its surrounding environment. It can be only a retrospective investigation which provides the vantage point of investigating subject-matter solely in terms of contemplation. However this cannot be the case in the *Phenomenology* since, as mentioned before, the course of the book is the

¹¹⁴ E2 p19. Also see *Spinoza Üstüne On Bir Ders*, pp. 76-78.

¹¹⁵ E2 p16.

course of the consciousness. Though this consciousness is not a blank page having no idea about itself, it has to experience itself as a part of the process of life, it has to realize its initial posture, or it has to experience the failure of realization of its demands, to understand, or to grasp what it is and what it is not. Finally within the course of fourth chapter self consciousness will reveal itself as 'Desire', which is a 'mode of being' (similar to the conceptualization of Desire we have witnessed in Spinoza) or a 'general attitude': "Desire here designates the original attitude of the 'I' towards existents, it does not refer to a psychic act or the like but primarily to a mode of being."¹¹⁶

3.2. Becoming a Self

With the very beginning of the fourth chapter Hegel recapitulates the previous moments, primarily in paragraph 166 and 167, and explains why a cognitive relation with the object cannot give rise to the phenomenon of a concrete 'Self', and why 'Self' can only raise from the domain of 'Life', in paragraphs 167, 168, and 169. Moreover, the phenomenon of self will not be regarded as an utterly distinct entity among others, but it will be regarded as mode of the category of life, and thus Hegel, initially, will delineate the category of life as a process.

3.2.1. "I am I"

In paragraph 167, Hegel reminds us that in the previous moments of certainty, where certainty is a mode in which consciousness is certain about what its object is and has no doubt about that, truth "is something other than

¹¹⁶Herbert Marcuse , *Hegel's Ontology and the Theory of Historicity*, trans. by Seyla Benhabib, (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1987), p. 243.

itself [consciousness].” However this understanding in its own experience shows itself to be untrue. All the previous shapes of the object, a mere being to sense-certainty, a concrete thing to perception, and a Force to Understanding, show themselves not to be the truth of object at all; and the independence that consciousness appoints to the object, as the moment of truth, shows itself to be a mode “in which the object is only for an other”.¹¹⁷ Being ‘in-itself’ is only possible as being for an other. In other words, since it is consciousness that which appoints independence to object, namely object is in itself only for consciousness, independence turns out to be being for consciousness. Therefore the ‘Notion’ of the object, as independence carrying the moment of truth, is ‘superseded’, or as Hegel says “certainty gives place to truth”.¹¹⁸ The truth is that all these shapes of object, of which consciousness is certain, are themselves shapes of consciousness. In the previous moments consciousness made distinctions between the modes of in itselfness and being for an other, namely being in its full reality and being an object of knowledge. However, since it is consciousness which makes this distinction, that is since this distinction takes place within the consciousness, this distinction is not a real, or at least legitimate, distinction for consciousness. Yet, since the object loses its independence, the distinction between the object and consciousness also vanishes.

All these amount to the fact that being in itself and being for an other are “one and the same”. Moreover, according to Hegel, it is the ‘I’ which is “the content of the connection [connection between being in itself and being another] and the connecting itself”;¹¹⁹ that is the identity between being in itself and being for an other necessitates an awareness of the fact that it is

¹¹⁷ *Phenomenology*, §167.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, §167.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, §167.

consciousness that makes this difference. In other words, awareness of this identity necessitates an awareness of the fact that this distinction happens for consciousness, namely an act of consciousness. Briefly this awareness is the consciousness of consciousness, or what is the same, it is a self-consciousness, namely 'I'. Put very briefly, this paragraph tells us that as consciousness recognizes its own activity it returns to itself as the moment of truth, and becomes 'self-consciousness'. Although, according to some commentators,¹²⁰ the sentiment of 'I' cannot arise from the cognitive relation between the object and the subject, it is clear that here this relation is a necessary prerequisite of such a sentiment.

Therefore, Hegel says in paragraph 168, with self-consciousness, as 'the content of the connection and the connecting itself' we are now in the "native realm of truth." Now, Hegel continues, if "we consider this new shape of knowing, the knowing itself, in relation to that which precede, viz. the knowing of an other," then we can see that the other has vanished yet its moments have been preserved. In other words, object ceases to be the moment of truth; namely consciousness does not regard object as the source of truth. However, the moments of object, or its shapes, have been preserved; that is they are appropriated by consciousness as its own shapes, since, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, these shapes were assigned to object by consciousness. Briefly these were constructions of consciousness, and self consciousness, as the awareness of consciousness' act, appropriates these shapes as its own moments, or as the elements constituting the path to itself.¹²¹ At this point 'the initial moment', the 'simple self-subsistent existence for consciousness' is lost. In other words, object, as

¹²⁰ According to Kojève, for example, the cognitive relation between the subject and object "reveals the object, not the subject". See Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, trans. by James H. Nichols, ed. by Allan Bloom, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 3.

¹²¹ *Phenomenology*, §168.

the object of cognition or the object for consciousness, is no more an independent object. Self-consciousness experiences all the qualities of the object, such that it is there and exists independently, as abstractions of consciousness. However, by no means this comes to mean that according to Hegel the external world is nothing but a mere production of mind or that the object exists in so far as it is perceived by a mind. Here Hegel simply means that, since in a cognitive relation with the object, all the qualities assigned to the object are constructions of consciousness, self-consciousness grasps that in so far as the object is the object of the cognition it has no independence in this cognitive relation.

Having recapitulated previous moments and showed the lack of independence on the side of the object, Hegel immediately passes to the issue of 'Self' and says that: "But in point of fact self-consciousness is the reflection out of the being of the world of sense and perception, and is essentially return from the *otherness*".¹²² I propose that we should understand this sentence in line with the above mentioned Aristotelian formulae of 'thisness' and 'whatness'. As I have already mentioned before the problem of the state of 'thisness', a state which gives a thing its 'individuality', is with the 'content' of this state, and this problem will also be recapitulated, now in regards to being a 'Self', throughout this chapter.

Being a self, or calling one's oneself as an 'I', indicates a state of uniqueness. An 'I', in perspective of the one, is a unique entity among the realm of existents and thus it has no peer. Moreover this posture, or point of view, is powered since the 'I' is the 'I' that knows. As we have already seen, the 'I' is the knowledge of the fact that objects lose their independence when they are in a cognitive relation with consciousness. Put simpler, as we also experience in our daily lives, we do not perceive ourselves as we perceive

¹²² *Ibid*, §168.

external objects. A subject is a 'seeing eye' that sees everything but not itself.¹²³ In other words, within the course of our relation with external objects, since our perspective makes us to perceive ourselves as the center of this relation, we do not tend to list the 'I' with the rest of phenomenal beings. Still, as obvious, being a 'self' or an 'I' suffers from lack of a concrete content. Therefore, the emergence of 'self' rests solely on a negative moment, which is being not 'this' or 'that'. The 'I' posits itself only by negating an other. However in this negative moment it defines itself with this other since it is only that which is not that 'other'; that is the state of being 'Self' is transported out of the self, and since the self is not identical with itself in this moment (it is in the other, or what is the same, it is out of itself) now in the second moment the Self returns from this otherness to itself in order to find its self in itself. Therefore self is "essentially the return from *otherness*" and it "is a movement".¹²⁴

Even in its notion, the being of self exposes itself as an act, as a movement.¹²⁵ Yet this movement, first negating the other and secondly returning to itself, yields two important outcomes. First outcome is that self consciousness experiences the fact that the objectivity (the external world) is a necessary moment of its becoming, since the first moment of this becoming is negating this world. On the other hand, as we have seen above, since the distinction between consciousness and object is not a real distinction that is since the object of cognition reveals itself as the construction of consciousness, in so far as the object remains solely as the object of

¹²³ This analogy belongs to Terry Eagleton. See Terry Eagleton, *Estetiğin İdeolojisi*, trans. by Hakkı Güner, (Ankara: Doruk Publishing), pp. 99-102.

¹²⁴ *Phenomenology*, §168.

¹²⁵ I believe that the difference between the terms "Self" and "Subject" in the philosophy of Hegel lies in the fact that whereas the term "self" refers to a sentiment of independence and essentiality, being a "subject" stands for actualization of this essentiality and independence within certain social and moral contexts.

cognition, self consciousness cannot even negate this object to become a concrete self with concrete content:

[B]ut since what it distinguishes from itself is *only itself* as itself, the difference, as an otherness, is *immediately superseded* for it; the difference is *not*, and *it* [self-consciousness] is only the motionless tautology of: 'I am I'; but since for it the difference does not have the form of *being*, it is *not* self-consciousness.¹²⁶

There should be independence on the side of the object if the self is to make a real distinction between itself and the object; that is the object must have 'the form of *being*'. In other words, if a definite sort of objectivity is the condition of the subjectivity, then as long as the subject subjectifies the objectivity, that it endows objectivity the necessary conditions of being an object and that it renders the objectivity a mere cognitive construct, it also undermines the objective conditions of its own subjectivity; it becomes contentless, or a tautology of 'I am I'. With the next paragraph the object will become 'Life', and as 'Life' it will be endowed with independence, though self-consciousness is not aware of this fact yet.

Hegel now returns to the movement of self, and with the rest of the paragraph 168 we have the second important outcome of this movement:

This antithesis of its appearance and its truth has, however, for its essence only the truth, viz. the unity of self-consciousness with itself; this unity must become essential to self-consciousness, i.e. self-consciousness is *Desire* in general. Consciousness, as self-consciousness has a double object: one is immediate object, that of sense-certainty and perception, which however *for self-consciousness* has the character of a negative; and the second, viz. itself, which is true *essence*, and is present in the first instance only as opposed to the first object. In this sphere, self consciousness exhibits itself as the movement in which this antithesis is removed, and the identity of itself with itself becomes explicit for it.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ *Phenomenology*, §167.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, §168.

The second outcome is twofold. One aspect of the above-quoted passage is that Hegel gives us a hint about the character of the second moment of the movement of becoming a 'Self'. At the first moment the other is negated and has a character of negative, yet in this negation self-consciousness posits itself out of its self. Now, if the return from this otherness happens just as a mere negation of this negation i.e., if the self immediately negates its object for the second time and release it as what it is in the first moment or as intact, namely just as a 'negative', then the return would be unsuccessful because of the fact that the self will find itself in the very beginning, the position before negating the object; and it will fail to acquire a content. Such a return will be a vicious circle for the self, which is a loop between the 'external' and 'internal'. In addition, as long as the self fails to unite both these two moments, it will traverse between these two moments without accomplishing anything. To acquire a concrete content and thus to complete the movement of becoming a self without falling prey to such a vicious circle, self consciousness must unite these two moments. The unity of these two moments is at the same time the unity of external and internal. However both this 'internal' and the 'external' are 'I's self, and the unity between the 'internal' and the 'external' is also the "unity of self-consciousness with itself," or "the identity of itself with itself" because of the following.

At this point we should consider the 'internal' as the demand of the 'I'. The 'I' has a demand to become a concrete subject, an independent being since it intuits itself as an independent being, and in the cognitive relation it indeed experiences itself as different from the rest of the world, yet this demand is not realized yet; that is there is a lack on the side of the 'I' which forces it to move further and not to stay as what it is. Thus we can regard the 'internal' as the 'form' (since this demand is a demand towards acquiring something), yet a form without any content (since this demand is not realized). This form can acquire content only through the external, or the

external is the content. Acquiring content means the realization of the demand of the 'I', or realization of the independence within the external. Thus this realization is at the same time appropriation of the external, breaking its being negative and its independence, and *forming* it in such a way that when self-consciousness looks at this external it can see its own independence. Finally, since the 'internal' and the 'external' are both 'I's selves as its form and content, their unity is at the same time unity of the self-consciousness with itself. However, within the course of this movement self-consciousness will experience that to acquire content the form has to lose its initial absolute posture, namely the 'I' has to sacrifice its initial posture to posit itself as a concrete being. This point will be revealed in the section of 'Recognition'.

The second aspect, which is directly related with the object of this thesis, is that Hegel explains us the drive of the mobility of 'I': "this unity must become essential to self-consciousness, i.e. self-consciousness is *Desire* in general." This quotation alone is sufficient enough to show that in these sections of the book the term 'Desire' does not refer to a blind, immediate animal drive; it is a drive to realize the "identity of itself with itself", to become a concrete realized subject. Thus it is a metaphysical drive for mediation. As also Hyppolite observes: "The end point of desire is not as one might think superficially, the sensuous object—that is only a means—but unity of I with itself."¹²⁸ However at this point this desire seems to be peculiar to self-consciousness and the *Phenomenology* seems to become an anthropological investigation. However, as Marcuse says, this is not the case: "In this work human Life is not treated as an ontological mode alongside others; it is not an independent object of analysis at all."¹²⁹ Human life is a mode of the process

¹²⁸ Jean Hyppolite, "Self-Consciousness and Life: The Independence of Self-Consciousness" in *Hegel's Dialectic of Desire and Recognition*, ed. by John O'Neill (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), p. 71.

¹²⁹ Marcuse, p. 228.

of 'Life' and it will acquire its own structure within the course of this process. This point will be considered more comprehensively in the next section.

3.2.2. Life as a Process

With the paragraph 168, the object for consciousness becomes the Life: "But *for us*, or *in itself*, the object which for self-consciousness is the negative element has, on its side, returned into itself just as on the other side consciousness has done. Through this reflection into itself the object has become Life." Consciousness is no more the consciousness of object. It is certain about the inessentiality of the object and now turns into itself as the most essential, and becomes 'self-consciousness'. However, Hegel says that this returning of the object to itself and becoming Life is '*for us*' not 'for consciousness' because of the fact that, as we have seen above, being Life is having independence, yet the self-consciousness has not experienced this independence on object's side. It still remains its initial posture and is sure about the inessentiality of the object.

The object is life and the definition of life has been already given in the previous chapter:

This simple infinity, or the absolute Notion, may be called the simple essence of life, the soul of the world, the universal blood, whose omnipresence is neither disturbed nor interrupted by any difference, but rather is itself every difference, also their supersession; it pulsates within itself but does not move, inwardly vibrates, yet is at rest. It is self-identical, for the differences are tautological; they are differences that are none.¹³⁰

It would be better to regard all these splendid chain of words as a poem. Hereby we could enjoy the tremble formed by the contrast in antithetical expressions. Yet all these sentences are parts of a philosophical exposition of

¹³⁰ *Phenomenology*, §162.

'Truth', which is supposed to be 'exoteric'. In other words, its rationality should be grasped by any one who intends to achieve it. So we have to give an account of this definition, which involves seemingly contradicting expressions such as vibrating and at the same time standing still. To understand this definition of life better, I believe that it would be helpful to refer to Spinoza.

The similarity between the category of life and Spinoza's one substance is obvious even at the first sight. Life is the 'universal blood', it pervades the whole universe and it is the animating principle, the 'soul of the world', and it is omnipresent. Briefly it is the power inherent in existents, it is *the* substance. Despite these similarities the category of life and the one substance are not identical. Whereas in Spinoza's substance movement is a matter of physical interaction among modes, -basically pushing-, the category of life indicates an animating movement; and thus it is organic rather than mechanic. Before further investigating the similarities between the one substance and category of life it would be helpful to recall one point in Spinoza's philosophy.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, according to Spinoza the issue of 'Identity' is a matter of 'relation', a matter of *motion* that is moving in a definite manner, rather than 'material'. Identity of an individual being rests on the peculiar relation among the simple parts composing this individual and how this relation conditions the individual to move in a peculiar way. Yet even if the parts are changed with other parts with same nature, as long as the peculiar relation among parts is preserved, the identity of the individual remains the same, since it continues to move in the same way due to preserved relation among parts.¹³¹ Briefly an individual is a peculiar relation

¹³¹ E2, Lemma 4-5.

and movement. Now let us consider the following passage again from the *Ethics*:

If we further conceive a third kind of individual composed of individuals of this second kind [an individual composed of several individuals of diverse natures], we shall find that they may be affected in a still greater number of ways without changing their actuality. We may easily proceed thus to infinity, *and conceive the whole of nature as one individual, whose parts, that is all bodies, vary in infinite ways, without any change in the individual as a whole.*¹³² (Emphasis added)

So, nature, say the expression of the one substance within the attribute of extension, can be regarded as an individual. Nature, as an individual, does not suffer from the differentiations taking place within it. It is able to retain its unity and thus its identity through these differentiations. Moreover substance is not a simple aggregate of these modes, and thus it is not a simple ratio among them. It is the source of the mobility of these modes; it is a power of existing and movement of positing itself. Modes express this power and movement, or what is the same, the being of modes is the way how substance posits itself.

Now, I think, all these can shed light on the issue. Category of Life is a movement, and power. All its parts, namely living things, express its own activity. It “is neither disturbed nor interrupted by any difference, but rather is itself every difference, also their supersession”, because all these differentiations are its self positing, or namely, its expressions. In other words, life is a peculiar movement, and living beings are modes of this movement or instances of this movement, and thus all the differences among these instances point something other than themselves, namely this movement. Briefly, the ‘material’ (living beings) may change, yet as long as the characteristic movement of the material is preserved (that is as long as the state of being alive is preserved), Life preserves its identity as an individual

¹³² *Ethics*, p. 96

process. Regardless of this or that living being, or regardless of whatever this or that living being does, as long as the movement remains same it remains intact. In other words, within the process of Life many interactions take place among living beings, yet the process still remains the same as life. In Hegel's words: "it pulsates within itself but does not move, inwardly vibrates, yet is at rest."

These are the characteristics of the Life as a 'pure flux'. However, Life, as a pure flux has the 'significance of abstract being', that is this flux does not have material form, and to take a concrete form it has to split up within itself in terms of individual beings; since only an individual being is the most concrete entity. The 'determinateness' of individual beings are at the same time 'determinateness' of this flux. Briefly this flux is concrete only as an individual being:

Being [as an individual being] no longer has the significance of *abstract* being, nor has their [individual being's] pure essentiality the significance of *abstract* universality; on the contrary, their being is precisely that simple fluid substance of pure movement within itself. The *difference*, however, *qua* difference, of these members with respect to one another consists in general in no other *determinateness* than that of the moments of infinity or of the pure movement itself.¹³³

This pure flux is concrete in so far as an individual being, yet it is at the same time the essence of individual beings. Thus, it is clear that we now have a two-fold relation between this pure flux and the individual beings, since individual being is also Life with determinateness. This relation is also the relation of Life with itself. This two-fold relation is the story of the actualization of this pure flux.

Life is the pure flux. It is only 'for itself' yet it does not take a concrete form, or it is abstract. To be concrete, Life, as the pure flux, is divided within

¹³³ *Phenomenology*, §169.

itself, and it becomes 'determinate'.¹³⁴ Yet by this division it posits itself as an other, since the individual is an other for this pure flux, and the continuity of this flow becomes "a dividedness within itself, or of the supersession of its being for itself".¹³⁵ In this first moment Life is the 'enduring form' or it is a determinate living being. This individual exists on its own account and is 'for itself'. In other words "individuality maintains itself at the expense of universal".¹³⁶ This individual is a separate entity among the manifold of entities, which are at the same time Life on their own account. To endure, or to preserve its self, it consumes this other, and it endures solely by consuming, or negating this other. However, this individual is also consumed by an other. However, dissolution of these shapes, that is individual beings, is at the same time creation of shapes, since, as mentioned above, this consuming is the condition of preservation. At this moment the individual itself is negated, or Life becomes a process of perpetual loop of dissolving and forming shapes: "Thus the simple substance of Life is the splitting-up of itself into shapes and at the same time the dissolution of these existent differences; and the dissolution of the splitting-up is just as much a splitting-up and a forming of members".¹³⁷ Thus this final moment is the dissolution of the individual shape, as which in the first moment, Life, as pure flux, posits itself, and this dissolution is a return from otherness; since the individual is an other of the pure flux. Life is not the abstract flux, nor is it the finite determinateness in the shape of an individual; it "consists rather in being the self-developing whole which dissolves its development and in this movement simply preserves itself".¹³⁸ These are the moments of Life. Life both as a pure

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, §170.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, §170.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, §171.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, §171.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, §171.

flux and as an individual living being undergoes these moments. As a pure flux, as we have just seen, it posits the individual as its other, and it returns from this other and attain its own unity; yet this return amounts to dissolving of the individual. A living being posits the continuity of the flux and other individuals as its other, and thereby posits itself as an individual. Its self-preservation rests on the negation of this other, or simply the consumption of this other, namely Life. By consuming this other, the individual retains its unity with itself; however its genuine unity with other is the dissolution in the other.

With paragraph 173, Hegel returns to self-consciousness, and says that self-consciousness, as a mode of Life, will “undergo the unfolding which we have seen in the sphere of Life.” This means that the ‘I’ will recapitulate the moments of actualizing, which we have observed within the course of the actualization of the category of Life, both as pure flux and as individual living thing. So, the ‘I’ which is at first only a potential or abstract reality, will posit itself as an other of this flux as the first moment, then return from this otherness, as the second moment, and finally establish its unity with itself. Another point is that, though the ‘self-consciousness’ will repeat the moments we have witnessed in the sphere of Life, this unfolding will not be exactly identical with the unfolding of Life. Being conscious of the fact it is a self, namely the state of being *for itself*, is the basic difference between modes of Life and Self-consciousness; and therefore the unfolding of self-consciousness will be different. Briefly, this mode will refuse to dissolve within the unity of the process of Life, a process in which all the other modes eventually lose their differences, and will attain its unity with itself and this other by forming this other and by being formed by this other. This unity will be radically different from the general course of Life.

3.3. Satisfaction of Desire

As mentioned before, being a self, even in its concept, involves a negation, that is not being an other. Self-consciousness has already made this distinction since it *knows* that it is an 'I'. In the sphere of Life, positing individuality, similarly, also involves a negation; however this negation is an act, namely consuming the other. In other words, for an individual to posit itself as an individual, that is, in order to preserve its being amongst the realm of other living beings, it negates the other, it consumes the other. In the sphere of Life, this is also the first moment Self-consciousness is now in. It consumes and supersedes the other. However, since Self-consciousness is for itself, that is since it knows itself as a self, this consumption is at the same time accompanied with a certainty of self. It is certain of itself "only by superseding this other that presents itself to self-consciousness as an independent life; self-consciousness is Desire".¹³⁹ At this very point, it may sound that Desire, as depicted in these lines, is a desire towards consumption of any object. It is, say, hunger, thirst, etc., but it has nothing to do with a metaphysical derive towards seeking one's own individuality, and seeking this individuality within the totality of Life; not as detached from it. However, as we will see just below, since desire in the *Phenomenology*, though it is now oriented towards the consumption of the object at this stage, is not a simple biological drive, and thus in this relation desire of self-consciousness cannot find satisfaction. Yet, because of this very reason, self-consciousness will leave this stage behind itself and move to a forward stage in order to fulfill its desire; that is to say the lack on the side of self-consciousness has not been fulfilled properly. Self-consciousness is not able

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, §174.

to fulfill its desire in this stage because of the fact that, in this mode the certainty is realized “in an objective manner”.¹⁴⁰

Consuming the other, and hereby maintaining individuality, as we have seen above, is the general course of the process of Life. Every individual living being, including Self-consciousness, recapitulates this process of negation within the course of their individual lives. Yet the second moment, as mentioned above, is the return to this unity, or the dissolution of the individual within the process of life. No matter what negates what, the outcome is always the same. Briefly, what is left from this lasting process of negation is always the Life as a process. Being alive, or being a mode of Life (as a living individual) always expose itself as being for another, either for Life as a process, or for an another individual as an object for consummation; that is to say being alive amounts to being an object for an other. On the other hand self-consciousness demands its own self from this interaction. However, in a one-by-one relation with Life self-consciousness is necessarily objectified. Yet being objectified within the course of Life is not that for which self-consciousness is looking for. Moreover in this dissatisfaction self-consciousness also experiences the independence of its object. The object is already independent from the very beginning of this chapter in the sense that it is not the object of cognition; that is it was not appropriated by consciousness and it has a free existence of its own. Moreover, at this stage, self-consciousness' experiencing the independence on the side of object includes one more meaning: the object is indifferent to the demands of self-consciousness. In other words, when self-consciousness confront this object, it is unable to re-cognize itself within this object since the object belongs to the objectifying course of the process of Life; that is it is shaped by the course of Life and this shape reflects anything but self-consciousness. Another

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid*, §174.

important thing self-consciousness experiences is that it is unable to overcome the independence of its object, since annihilating the object is not overcoming the independence of the object. Self-consciousness consumes this or that object, it annihilates them, however it is immediately confronted by the object again, since the object is Life and Life is the reckless process of reproducing itself. Within the course of consumption self-consciousness is unable to reflect back to itself, and it finds itself submerged in the process of life more and more. To overcome the independence of the object, self-consciousness should affect the object in such a way that the object carries the effect in itself, and when consciousness looks at this object it should see that the object is in-itself the same thing which it is for consciousness. In other words, consciousness should cognize its own mark within the object, and in this way should be able to reflect back to itself and re-cognize itself by appropriating the object as its own moment. However self-consciousness will experience that forming the object is possible only through the process of labor, yet at this stage the necessary conditions of labor has not emerged.

At this stage self-consciousness realized that the object is independent, and the consumption of the object does not provide the satisfaction that it is looking for. Moreover it also experienced that in a one-to-one relation with Life it is incapable of overcoming the independence of its object. However, “at the same time it is no less absolutely for itself, and it is so only by superseding the object; and it must experience this satisfaction, for it is the truth”.¹⁴¹ Independence on the side of the object hinders this satisfaction, yet self-consciousness, as Desire, is impelled to move beyond. This movement is also the alteration of the object:

On the account of the independence of the object, therefore, it can achieve satisfaction only when the object itself effects the negation within itself; and must carry out this negation of itself

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, §175.

in itself, for it is *in itself* the negative, and must be *for* the other what it *is*. Since the object is in its own self negation, and in being so is at the same time independent, it is consciousness ... *Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness.*¹⁴²

The most crucial point in this transition from the Life as an object to self-consciousness is the motive behind this transition. In the previous stages self-consciousness is accompanied with an awareness of 'I', yet this 'selfhood' is abstract, that is it stands in need of actualization. This desire for actualization is the main drive, which forces self-consciousness to confront the nature. Now, on the other hand, it is the same desire for actualization that gain impels self-consciousness to confront another self consciousness. The act of recognition, which will take start from now on, is not the putting aside the original desire. On the contrary it is a movement in which self-consciousness involved in order to satisfy the initial desire: "*Self-consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness.*" In other words:

As long as we are still within the experience of self-consciousness, "Desire in general" is its essential character, then the drama of recognition and labor must be seen as permutations of desire; indeed, what we witness in this chapter is the gradual specification of desire: self-consciousness as *desire in particular.*¹⁴³

The alteration of object is an ambiguous one. At this stage we know that self-consciousness can reflect back to itself only when the object of negation carries the negation in its self, and it is only another self-consciousness which is capable of carrying the negation in its self. However, self-consciousness, at this very moment, does not know this fact. Indeed, as we will see below, at the initial encounter both self-consciousnesses do not see each other as essential beings; rather they see each other as ordinary

¹⁴² *Ibid*, §175.

¹⁴³ Butler, p. 43.

objects submerged in the being of life. Therefore, one cannot assert that self-consciousness tends to another self-consciousness because it knows that the other self-consciousness will provide the satisfaction it is looking for. However, we can regard the emergence of the other self-consciousness as a necessary moment within the course of the life, since they have indeed encountered with each other and it is due to this very encounter Hegel was able to write this book, though this construal does not give us the genuine necessity of the emergence of the other self-consciousness. With the emergence of the other self-consciousness we are now in the realm of recognition. In this realm, according to Hegel, we have already the Notion of Spirit: "this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: 'I' that is 'We' and 'We' that is 'I'".¹⁴⁴

3.3.1. Struggle for Recognition

Self-consciousness, now, has before itself an other self-consciousness as its object. This confrontation of self-consciousnesses is the path leading to recognition. In this confrontation the process of becoming an actualized self will be reiterated. The conceptual structure of the state of being a 'self' has been already given in the very beginning of this chapter. Moreover we have seen the actualization of this structure in the domain of life as self-consciousness, which is itself a living individual being and the object of which is solely other living individual beings or life in general. In the beginning of this section, however, Hegel depicts this conceptual structure once again; since in this process of becoming a self, the other, or the object of negation, is also another self.

¹⁴⁴ *Phenomenology*, §177.

Self-consciousness has failed to overcome the independence of its object in a one-by-one relation with nature. Yet it still remains in its initial posture, which is, a demand for absolute selfhood, that is, the self-consciousness' desire is to posit its essentiality. However without an act, or a movement, which will actualize this demand, what self-consciousness has is merely a 'feeling' of self. When the self-consciousness encounters with an other self-consciousness "it has come out of itself," since "it finds itself as an other being".¹⁴⁵ This encounter represents a loss for self-consciousness, and this loss, as mentioned above, corresponds to the first moment of the conceptual structure of becoming a self; since in the first moment self-consciousness is certain of itself by negating the other or by being not that. However, this negation is also a coming out of itself because of the fact that self-consciousness, in the first moment, posits itself in an other, or what is the same, it posits itself out of itself. However, the act of negation performed in the first moment has a 'twofold significance', since the object is also a self-consciousness. In other words, when it sees itself in this other it supersedes its state of being pure in-itself, yet at the same time it also supersedes the other's being pure in-itself since when it sees its own self in the other the other's essentiality is also superseded.

Self-consciousness, in the second moment, "must supersede this otherness of itself" ,¹⁴⁶ since it is pure in-itself. In other words, it has to return back to itself from this otherness because of the fact that, since finding its self in an other amounts to the loss of its essentiality, and since what is essential is to be able to find its self in itself, it has to overcome this state of being in an other. This return, however, is only possible through the supersession of the other. Briefly "it must proceed to supersede the other independent being in

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, §179.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, §179.

order thereby to become certain of itself as the essential being".¹⁴⁷ However this supersession of the other is at the same time the supersession of its own self, since at the first moment it was solely that which is not that other; in other words, "this other is itself".¹⁴⁸ Therefore the return to itself is an inefficient return. Self-consciousness supersedes the other and through this supersession it returns to itself. Yet since this supersession of the other is an immediate negation, it lets the other 'go free' (§181), and finds itself in the initial position; that is it is stuck within itself once again without accomplishing anything. Therefore, once again, self-consciousness should return to itself in such a way that the other would not be simply annihilated or be let go free, but formed so as to reflect the independence and essentiality of self-consciousness; briefly self-consciousness would be able to appropriate this other in such a way that the other would be a moment of self-consciousness.

We already know this path from the previous section. Indeed these were the moments self-consciousness experienced in the domain of life. Moreover, when the object of self consciousness was solely a living individual, self-consciousness failed to return to itself from the other, since the other was unable to carry the negation done by self-consciousness in its self. However, in this encounter the situation is quite different. For one thing, the object is not a mere living individual but is a self-consciousness. Therefore, first, both do the same thing to each other; that is, both see its own self in the other, both tries to negate the other etc. Briefly, the doing is deed of both. Second, since the object is a self-consciousness it is independent, and thus self-consciousness cannot do anything to other self consciousness unless the other self-consciousness does the same thing to itself.¹⁴⁹ Because of this

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, §180.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, §180.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid*, §182.

reciprocal character of this relation, the third moment of the process of becoming a self is radically different from the one we have witnessed in the domain of the life.

In this double movement, both self-consciousnesses realize that by letting the other go free they cannot accomplish anything. Therefore only through mediating themselves with the other can self-consciousnesses actualize what they are in themselves. Each of the self-consciousnesses must be for the other what it is in-itself. It is in-itself independent and essential, and also must be for the other independent and essential. Yet, it can be independent and essential for the other only if the other reflects this independence and essentiality. Hence, it must form this other so as to make this other reflect its own independence and essentiality; yet only by forming the other the self-consciousness can be what it is in-itself. However this is a reciprocal doing, and therefore each tries to do what the other does to its self. In other words, one, who is forming the other, is, at the same time, formed by this other in turn. Thus, we have two forms forming each other. Briefly: "They recognize themselves as mutually recognizing the other".¹⁵⁰

However self-consciousness has not experienced any of these moments, when the object of negation is an other self-consciousness, yet. Therefore, Hegel tells us, it is time to observe how this reciprocal movement of recognition appears to self-consciousness. However, as we will observe in the next section, self-consciousness, because of its initial posture, will fail to actualize the full notion of recognition, and the outcome of this movement will be an asymmetric recognition with two sides "opposed to one another, one being only *recognized*, the other only *recognizing*".¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, §184.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, §185.

3.3.2. Master and Slave

In its initial posture, when the self-consciousness confronts another self-consciousness, it is the absolute negativity, “simple being-for-itself, self equal through the exclusion from itself of everything else”.¹⁵² Self-consciousness has “come forward in antithesis to the universal substance, disowns this fluent continuity with it and asserts that it is not dissolved in this universal element”.¹⁵³ That is to say, self-consciousness is a sort of substance, say a monad, and it is certain of its substantiality. However, this certainty is a mere feeling and has not yet been raised to truth, or its feeling of substantiality has not been actualized yet. Moreover it has also experienced its being absolute negativity in the previous stage, when the object of desire was Life. In this stage, self-consciousness experienced itself as the ‘negative essence’ of things. Yet it is now confronted with another self-consciousness.

In the first appearance they do not cognize each other as independent beings existing in their own account, “they are for one another like ordinary objects, *independent* shapes, individuals submerged in the being of *Life*”.¹⁵⁴ Both of the self-consciousnesses are certain of themselves through an absolute abstraction, “by rooting-out all immediate being”.¹⁵⁵ They have root-out the objects of life, though they were unable to overcome the independence of these objects. However in this confrontation they have not “accomplished the movement of absolute abstraction” yet.¹⁵⁶ That is to say, they have not yet negated the other and thus become certain of themselves

¹⁵² *Ibid*, §186.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, §171.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, §186.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, §186.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, §186.

once more, this time in respect to the other. They have to experience the inessentiality of the other in order to consolidate the feeling of certainty: “Each is indeed certain of its own self, but not of the other, and therefore its own self-certainty still has no truth”.¹⁵⁷ This certainty would be raised to truth only if the object presents itself as the certainty of the self-consciousness; that is, the object should be in-itself what it is for the self-consciousness, namely the object should show its inessentiality and carry the negation done to it by self-consciousness in its self. Therefore each of the self-consciousnesses endeavors to negate the other in order to consolidate the feeling of certainty. Yet they experience that the other also does what they do. Moreover the other resists negation since the other is also an absolute abstraction in it-self. At this point, this confrontation becomes a vital struggle between two self-consciousnesses.

Self-consciousness’ desire is to show its substantiality, or to actualize its detachment from the continuity of the flow of Life. It presents itself as ‘pure abstraction’, it has not attached to any determinateness, even the Life, its own Life. Therefore this contest of negation turns into a struggle of life and death. Both have risked their lives and tried to negate the other and its life. Yet this ‘trial of death’ reveals a simple truth: “life is the natural setting of self-consciousness”.¹⁵⁸ Death simply shows that both has indeed insisted on their substantiality and thus risked everything to show their being absolute abstraction. However, nothing arises from death since it is the “natural negation of consciousness”.¹⁵⁹ Self-consciousness, in this struggle, experiences that “life is essential to it as pure self-consciousness”,¹⁶⁰ and steps back. It puts an end to itself and is “done away with as [an] extreme

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, §186.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, §188.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, §188.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, §189.

wanting to be for [itself], or to have an existence of [its] own".¹⁶¹ One of the self-consciousnesses, in order to survive, has given up its essentiality; it failed to show itself as the 'pure abstraction'. However, by no means this failure is a matter of cowardice or a matter of some sort of psychological conditioning. It is true, this step-back is a matter of fear, yet this fear arises from the wisdom; self-consciousness has grasped the importance of life, and this understanding made it to surrender in this struggle; that is, it has chose to cling to life. Therefore this fear is not a weakness of character; likewise the act of the other is not an act of courage. The other self-consciousness, on the contrary, having failed to grasp the importance of Life, went all the lengths, and refused to accept Life as an essential moment of self-consciousness. Therefore the outcome of this struggle is, on the one hand, a "pure self-consciousness" (the Lord), and a "consciousness which is not purely itself but for another, i.e. is a merely *immediate* consciousness, or consciousness in the form of *thinghood*".¹⁶²

With this outcome we have reached a very critical point in this chapter. Whereas, up to this point, in this chapter the movement of recognition has been a reciprocal movement, namely doing of each, with this point the Lord has completed its movement. It has risked its own life and showed that it is a pure for-itselfness; it has thus realized being an absolute abstraction of pure self-consciousness. It is, in itself, independent, and due to the struggle of life and death it is now also independent for the other. It has become for the other what it is in its own self. It has negated the other's independence (the servile consciousness), and it has formed the other in such a way that the other is nothing but a sign of Lord's independence: the slave is a being for another; it is the object of Lord's actualization of its

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, §188.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, §188.

independence. Thus, the Lord has mediated itself with servile consciousness and therefore actualized itself in a certain manner:

The Lord is the consciousness that exists *for itself, but no longer merely the Notion of such a consciousness*. Rather it is a consciousness existing *for itself* which is mediated with itself through another consciousness, i.e. through a consciousness whose nature it is to be bound up with an existence that is independent, or thinghood in general.¹⁶³ (Emphasis added)

The outcome is a type of recognition. However, though the Lord has completed its movement in this type of recognition, the slave's movement has not reached its final shape yet. In other words, Lord has somehow satisfied its desire, yet slave's desire remained unfulfilled; that is there is a lack on the side of the slave which will force him to move a further stage. However, this type of recognition involves a lack not only on the side of the slave, there is also a lack on the side of the Lord. That is to say, this type of recognition is an unfulfilled recognition both for the slave and the Lord. The lack on the side of the Lord is not a matter of dissatisfaction as it is for the slave. Rather here lack is the matter of the conditions of this very satisfaction. The Lord has demanded pure independence and its selfhood as an absolute abstraction. However in this relation the Lord is for itself only through the slave. It dominates and forms the external only through the slave's labor. Briefly, Lord's independence depends on slave's recognition. Therefore a difference that would take place in the slave will immediately impact the Lord and its independence. However the Lord fails to realize the fact that its truth is the 'servile consciousness'. As we have seen above the state of Lordship is a frozen one, it has completed its move, it negates everything, and it cannot step back since it is pure for-itselfness and cannot sacrifice its being for-itself. It will experience its truth 'outside of itself' or what is the same, through the act of servile consciousness. The Lord will remain in this story yet only as a

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, §190.

negative moment; it will be a threat upon the slave, forcing him to labor.¹⁶⁴ The drive to move further is on the servile consciousness' side, since it is only in this side the lack forces the slave to move further:

The *truth* of the independent consciousness is accordingly the servile consciousness of the bondsman. This, it is true, appears at first *outside* of itself and not as the truth of self-consciousness. But just as lordship showed that its essential nature is the reverse of what it wants to be, so too servitude in its consummation will really turn into the opposite of what it immediately is; as a consciousness forced back to itself, it will withdraw into itself and be transformed into a truly independent consciousness.¹⁶⁵

The slave is now the moment of moving further; however before this movement begins the slave has to re-cognize itself as a subject, as a substantial being for-itselfness. As we have seen above, the cost of survival is, for slave, giving up its own essentiality. In this relation, this giving up is a total loss for the slave. It is no more a self-consciousness, not a genuine subject, but a mere consciousness whose existence is consumed by being the object of the Lord. In this state of being purely for an-other, a mere object, servile consciousness has forgot an essential element of being a genuine self, namely negation. The servile consciousness will recall this other element through fear and labor.

Servile consciousness has realized that the Life is essential to self-consciousness and therefore it has clung to life, and thus been dominated by the Lord who was already ready to negate the Life; namely its attachment to Life has become its 'chains'. In other words, it was the fear of the natural negation of Life, namely the fear of death, which made it to obey the Lord. However, this same fear makes the slave to recall the negativity, which is a moment of self-consciousness, though only 'in principle':

¹⁶⁴ For a more comprehensive analyses of the impasse of mater and the mobility of slave see Kojève, pp. 46-52.

¹⁶⁵ *Phenomenology*, §193.

In that experience it has been quite unmanned, has trembled in every fibre of its being, and everything solid and stable has been shaken to its foundations. But this pure universal moment, the absolute melting-away of everything stable, is the simple, essential nature of self-consciousness, absolute negativity, *pure being-for-self*, which consequently is *implicit* in this consciousness.¹⁶⁶

Moreover, servile consciousness does not only experience negativity in death and independence in Lord, it also brings about these in the process of labor. In the process of labor, it first seemed that the unessential part of the relation falls to slave since it was unable to enjoy the object. This privilege belongs to Lord, and only the Lord enjoys the annihilation of the object. However, this was the same relation we have witnessed when the self-consciousness was in a one-by-one relation with nature. It has also enjoyed the annihilation of the object in that relation, but also experienced that this annihilation is not overcoming the independence of the object: "Desire has reserved to itself the pure negating of the object and thereby its unalloyed feeling of self. But that is the reason why this satisfaction is itself only a fleeting one, for it lacks the side of objectivity and permanence".¹⁶⁷ The slave, on the other hand, by working on the object "forms and shapes thing".¹⁶⁸ The object, since it is formed by the worker, becomes the bearer of the negation done to it by the worker. Therefore, when the slave looks at this object, it "comes to see in the independent being [of the object] its own independence".¹⁶⁹

With the fear of death, 'the absolute Lord', the servile consciousness has recognized the negation as an essential element of being a pure self-consciousness, though only in principle. Yet with labor it brings about this negation in the object, and the object becomes the sign of its negation and

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, §194.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, §195.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, §195.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, §195.

independence. Through work, once more, servile consciousness begins to realize itself as a free and essential being. The end of this path is the true recognition, which is 'I that is We, We that is I'.

This specific character of the movement of recognition, that it can be accomplished only through the doing of the slave, gives us the true nature of recognition, subjectivity and labor. As we have already seen above that, when Hegel was providing the conceptual structure of the recognition, recognition is a reciprocal movement. Yet the main meaning of reciprocity is the fact that, an individual, in order to be a genuine subject, should, at the same time, be an object for the other. In other words, subjectivity arises when the subject is subjected. Being an object is the loss of individual's initial posture, its initial demand. Yet this demand, or posture, is vain in itself, and to become concrete it has to sacrifice its being an absolute abstraction. To become a subject, the self-consciousness should be an object; to be independent, it should experience the dependence. It is the slave who has experienced this necessity, and who is already an object for another. The slave has learned to recognize the other and what is left is to be recognized through the course of its movement.

Briefly, the subject, in order to become actual, should also at the same time learn to be an object for another since confrontation of two absolute is an unbearable one (leading immediately to a life-and-death struggle). However, the importance of being able to be an object for another for the actualization of the self is not limited with just this. Moreover, being an object for another is the necessary condition of the emergence of labor, which is in turn an important moment of forming the external, and thus achieving the unity of self with itself, namely the unity of internal and external as two moments of self. As we have seen, a subject, in its initial posture, is a very strong demand for negation. It is only by negating is the certainty of self assured. Yet, when the self consciousness was in a one-by-one relation with

nature it was unable to form the object of desire, because, its immediate demand is the annihilation of the object in order to obtain self certainty. Therefore, labor emerges when the desire is held in check. In other words, since the consciousness, now, is for an other it cannot annihilate the object immediately for its self certainty, but works on it. Since the act of working on object is forming it, and since this act of forming is the necessary prerequisite for the unity between the self-consciousness and the external world, it is clear that “the unification of I and the object demands the unification among selves.”¹⁷⁰

The act of recognition, as it is depicted in these passages, has many innovative and radical insights, at least for Hegel’s time, into the nature of subjectivity, sociality, and labor. To put very briefly, first, the state of subjectivity, as it exposed itself, is possible only within a context of intersubjectivity, namely sociality. The unity of self is not a unity that can be attained only within the self; the self must confront with the ‘external’ to obtain its unity. However this confrontation with the outer is at the same time a loss on the side of the subject since with the end of this confrontation the subject has become an object, or what is the same, ‘the subject is subjected’. The unity of self is a complex unity involving many moments independent from and external to the self; however, since these moments are independent from the self, the outcome is that the self-hood is a matter of many folded construction, in which the self is not the sole subject. In regards to sociality and labor we have seen that, very briefly, the matter of becoming a social being is a matter of castration, or, a matter of loss. Moreover, the energy of sociality is derived from the energy of individuals since labor is ‘desire held in check’. Finally, a specific type of labor, on the other hand, presupposes a specific type of social organization, which will precede and make possible this

¹⁷⁰ Marcuse, p. 88.

specific type of labor as the mechanism holding desire in check. These insights have also manifold meanings, and deeper connotations, and therefore have attracted much interest especially in the 19th and 20th centuries. It is, of course, impossible to discuss all the important aspects of these passages and the attention they have attracted in these limited pages; however I will further discuss some important aspects of these passages as they are connected to the aim and scope of this thesis.

Desire, in general, is a state of lack; that is in the state of desire there is something missing, which has to be compensated somehow. Therefore, the main motive of the mobility in the state of desire is the lack. This state, the state of desire, cannot remain as what it is, since, as what it is, it involves a lack, and this lack, whatever it is, urges this state to move further. So, the state of desire, at the same time, involves a telos. However, what is important here is that, the telos of this state is getting rid of this lack, rather than the material, which will compensate this lack. This does not mean that the material is of no use; indeed it is the material which will eventually determine whether the lack is properly removed or not, and thus which will eventually end the movement of desire. However, I believe that, lack, as a drive for mobility, is superior to the material. Given sufficient experience, a subject, who is in a state of desire, can of course know what will satisfy its desire, and thus will remove the lack; yet such knowledge is possibly only retrospectively. In other words, to acquire an exact knowledge of the material, the subject in question should have experienced the satisfaction. Briefly, the main motive of a moving object that is in the state of desire is its own state rather than something external to it. Therefore the teleology involved in the state of desire is not an 'external' but an 'internal' teleology. Indeed, this is also what we have observed in the movement of self-consciousness.

Self-consciousness is an awareness of self-hood, or it is awareness of the fact that it is an 'I'. However, being an 'I', has further connotations, such

that it is a particular existing on its own account, that it is independent, and that it is also conscious of its independence and of its existing in its own account. However, such independence is acquired at the cost of detachment from the substance, and it is, unless actualized through mediation with substance and an other self-consciousness, vain. Therefore, being an 'I' is accompanied by a demand towards actualization of its essentiality; that is self-consciousness is "desire in general." Therefore, the movement of self-consciousness is a movement for actualization; yet the specific character of this movement is shaped by its motive, namely desire. In its first emergence, the lack on the side of the self-consciousness is that it is not actualized yet. It is certain of itself as an essential and independent entity, yet it has not shown its essentiality and independence in its own activity. Furthermore, unless it shows its independence and essentiality in its activity, its certainty of itself will not be raised to truth. So it is unable to remain in this state and it is urged to confront with the external. Yet, in its first confrontation with the external it failed to remove this lack, that is to actualize its essentiality and independence, because of the peculiar structure of the lack, since the material it has tried to remove the lack was not the proper material.¹⁷¹ Having failed to satisfy its desire and remove the lack, self-consciousness, once again, is urged to confront with another object, which is another self-consciousness. This confrontation has taken the form of recognition, in which the struggle of life-and-death has been initiated. The outcome of this struggle is an asymmetric social organization, in which the desire of the Lord has been satisfied, whereas the slave has remained unsatisfied. However, since the lack on the side of the slave remains, it will be urged to move further, and leave the state, in which its desire remains unfulfilled. Briefly, any state, in so

¹⁷¹ As we have seen, the fulfillment of this lack necessitates a union with the external and the internal. However, in a one-by-one relation with nature self-consciousness has failed to achieve this unity.

far as it involves an unbearable lack, will have to move a further stage. This necessity of moving further is at the same time the necessity of desire. In other words, desire shows its own necessity in its own activity. Therefore, the rationality of the movement of self-consciousness consists of nothing but the necessity of its desire. That is to say, when we say that such and such a state is not rational in regards to self-consciousness, we come to say that self-consciousness will not be able to remain in that state and will have to move beyond itself. Briefly the rationality of human activity is the necessity of its desire involved in this very activity.

To sum up, I propose that, as one can see from the course of the movement of self-consciousness depicted in the *Phenomenology*, according to Hegel, the matter of society is a matter of desire, not only in negative sense that desire of individual is castrated for the sake of social community, but also in a positive manner such that it is the desire of individual which forces him to be a member of society. Moreover, the necessity towards restriction of desire to some extent is itself the necessity of desire. In other words, this necessity has emerged from the confrontation of desires, and this necessity is the necessity of confronting desires. Therefore, as we can see, the desire of the self-consciousness, as it is depicted in the course of the fourth chapter, is far from being a blind immediacy. The mediation of the agent with external is determined by the structure of the desire of the agent. Throughout this section, it is desire which motivates the self-consciousness towards sociality, and it is also desire which, again, forces self-consciousness to move further when there is a lack of such a social being. That is to say, in this passage we have observed that the self-consciousness, as "Desire in general" is itself a mediation. Therefore, we can conclude that, the mediation of social agent's acts with certain norms, which prevail in a certain sociality and which will give these acts their rationality in the context of that sociality, happens through the very desire of the agent. In other words, the production

or the emergence of these norms cannot be explained depending solely on the rational capacities of man. These norms, far from being constructions of a rational faculty detached from the course of the satisfaction of desire, are strategies which show their success within the course of the satisfaction of desire.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this thesis is to discuss Spinoza and Hegel in regards to the phenomenon of 'Desire', within the limited context of reading the two texts the *Ethics* and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and to propose that Hegel's contribution to Spinoza's account of desire mainly consists in the fact that it is only through Hegel's concept of 'Self' one can give an account of the spiritual dimension of human being in terms of desire, and understand in what element the qualitative distinctness of human being consists of. In other words, though it is possible to explain certain institutions prevailing human life, such as sociality, morality, and etc., as derivatives of human endeavor in the philosophy of Spinoza, which is another name for human desire according to Spinoza, it is only through Hegel one can understand why human desire necessitates a spiritual endeavor.¹⁷² Within the context of this purpose, I have, first, tried to describe the philosophical tradition which overlooks desire, and thus banishes the phenomenon of desire from a 'true'

¹⁷² When I say that human being has a spiritual dimension I mean that human being is a spiritual being since this mode of being requires mediation with the external for its actualization. Moreover, since this mediation is required for the sake of actualization not for preservation I understand the spiritual dimension of human being to be at the most basic level of the emergence of human being. Briefly we can say that human being is spiritual since it stands in need of testimony for its actualization.

account of human phenomenon, because of two reasons: first such a description, I believe, is a useful way to understand why desire is banished, and to drive certain aspects of the phenomenon of desire, namely desire's immediacy and self-referentiality, the reasons for which desire is banished. Secondly, the difference among Spinoza, Hegel, and this tradition would help one to conceive the connection between the philosophies of Spinoza and Hegel, especially concerning the way how these two philosophers argue on these two aspects of desire.

Man is regarded as a specific being amongst other phenomena since it involves further dimensions, such as spirituality, morality, sociality, and etc., which we do not encounter when we investigate the nature. Thus, when one considers these dimensions, one can conclude that these dimensions indicate the fact that the life of human being consists in something that is more than mere living. Thus, it is also supposed that if one is to give an account of human phenomenon, one has to delineate certain mechanisms which will explain why this phenomenon has these certain specific dimensions. Desire, on the other hand, since it is regarded as belonging to the general course of the life of nature, is cast out from such an account, because of the fact that that which belongs to nature cannot explain that which surpasses the nature. Finally, if desire is not capable of grounding these mentioned aspects of human being, it is assumed, then another peculiarity of human being must be the essential moment, namely reason, through which one can give an account of these further dimensions pertaining solely to human life. It is due reason alone, it is proposed, that human being tends to something that is more than that the life of nature offers, since reason, unlike desire, somehow surpasses or transcends what is 'here' and now. Briefly we encounter a clash between reason and desire, which acquires different forms depending on which aspects of the desire is to be controlled according to the norms set by reason.

As I have also tried to depict in the first chapter, one may claim that the main defect of desire consists in its immediacy. Thus desire, since it is an immediate drive, is unable to perform a deliberative act and reasoning. Moreover, desire turns out to be a problem for ethics when it is approached in a rationalistic, formalistic, and universalistic manner. This problematic character of desire arises from its self-referential character which is regarded as giving way to selfishness and ego-centered attitude. Since, it is only through reason one can decide what is the right thing to do in a given condition; yet desire, because it is an immediate drive incapable of mediating itself with an abstract rule, is already marked as being capable of putting a moral deed in danger. Yet, the problem about desire is that a desiring agent is always self-concerned: any act concerning the self, or any act taking the self as its starting point, cannot give rise to a moral and even to a social state. If an interaction among selves are to be moral and rational at all, this interaction should be guided by reason alone, not by the faculty of desire, the concern of which is the self.

The philosophers and their moral philosophies show a great deal of difference about the way in which the phenomenon of desire is articulated, and thus one can assert that it is not even possible to derive a tradition of thought consistent with regards to the status of desire. However, some philosophers, if not totally exclude desire from the human phenomenon, tend to derive or define certain mechanisms (these mechanisms appear to be rational faculties in general), which will control or suppress desire in order to explain mentioned institutions. If human being is moral, he is so due to his rational faculties, even if the goal of a moral life is to be happy. If human being is social, he is so due to the constraints set for desire by reason. Of course this does not mean the significance of desire is totally neglected. For example, some philosophers who set the end of life as happiness see desire as an important element for this end, since happiness has definitely

something to do with the satisfaction of desire. Moreover, desire also plays a role with regards to being a social being to some extent. For example, in the philosophy of Plato, the desire for fame, which is a function of spirited part of human soul, is a sort of desire which forces human beings to socialize, or at least to perform some deeds primarily concerning the society. However, these desires, if not controlled by the faculty of reason will eventually cause the dissolution of society. The relation between the human institutions and desire is always an ambiguous one, which is mediated by reason by either suppressing desire, collaborating with it, or by giving some concessions to it.

Another important point is that, as I have mentioned before, one may give an account by referring to a 'beyond' in order to justify the specific distinct character of the mentioned institutions. This beyond is either a beyond of reason or a beyond of universals or God to which one can reach through reason alone. This 'beyond' also gives meaning to human life; that is, it is due to this 'beyond', human life, even in the individual scale, unlike the life of nature, has a *telos*. Without reason, human life would be meaningless, since desire, because of the fact that it is an immediate drive and that it is purely self-referential, cannot set an aim for human life. However, as I tried to propose that for Hegel and Spinoza all the distinctive peculiarities of human life, that it is mediated with certain institutions and that it involves a *telos*, can be evaluated as derivatives of desire, and thus desire, far from being a secondary element, is an essential factor of the emergence of moral, social and spiritual institutions.

Desire, though it is discussed in a very limited passage in the *Ethics*, is an essential element of the ontology of Spinoza. As Spinoza puts it, all modes, in so far as they exist, strives to preserve their existence. This endeavor is the essence of all bodies, and thus the essence of human being

is his striving that is his desire.¹⁷³ Moreover, desire is also related with issue of the individualization, since modes are distinguished from one another through the specific way they act to persist in their own being. The conception of desire, therefore, has deeper meanings. First, human phenomenon is distinguished from other phenomena through his desire. In other words, all the institutions that are peculiar to human being is an outcome or derivative of human striving, and of desire. Secondly, desire's self-referentiality is not a problem to overcome, since all the actions that take place within this universe, according to Spinoza, necessarily take the 'self' as their starting point. Therefore, for instance, one can assert that, by following Spinoza, the concern for rights of others is necessarily connected with the 'self' along with other, since such concern cannot be selfless. In other words, we do indeed concern ourselves with the rights of others, since this is, a useful way to secure our own rights. This fundamental role of desire, that it is an essential constituent of human institutions, and that a concern for the self forces human being to develop those institutions, is also maintained throughout the movement of self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as I argued in the third chapter, when consciousness has realized that it is the essential moment in the cognitive relation with the object, it has returned to itself and has become self-consciousness. In other words, at this stage it is an 'I' which is aware of itself as an essential being due to this cognitive relation. With the emergence of 'I' as an essential being, the movement of 'I' has been initiated, since self-consciousness has realized that as long as the relation between itself and the object is solely cognitive, its essentiality will remain just as an 'intuition', and

¹⁷³ The definition of desire in terms of this basic endeavor is given in E3 p9 N, which reads: "Further between appetite [this endeavor referred to mind and body in conjunction] and desire there is no difference, except that the term desire is generally applied to men, in so far as they are conscious of their appetite."

never be actualized, and the lack of actualization is an unbearable lack for self-consciousness, which forces it to move beyond. Throughout this movement, as I proposed, consciousness as self-consciousness, passes through many moments. Finally consciousness, realizes that the actualization of itself as self-consciousness is possible only through another self-consciousness. Having pursued its essentiality, self-consciousness finds itself in a certain form of sociality. Concerning my thesis, I have argued that the most important aspect of this movement of self-consciousness is that it is a movement of desire. In other words, it is desire of self-consciousness towards itself that urges it to confront with nature and with another self-consciousness. So, since this movement leads to a social and moral life, i.e., that is desire of the self-consciousness is satisfied only within the context of sociality and morality, it is a plain fact that also for Hegel, desire is an essential constitutive of these institutions. Moreover, since the actualization of selfhood, as I proposed, is an issue of mediation that is this actualization necessitates a mediation, i.e., mediation with sociality governed with certain norms, desire, at least within the limits of the *Phenomenology*, cannot be regarded as an immediate tendency. In other words, norms that prevail in a certain sociality can be regarded as the products of the movement of the desire of human being to actualize itself, and likewise the necessity of mediating one's acts with these norms is the necessity of desire, since without this mediation satisfaction of desire is not possible.

I argue that the most important similarity between Spinoza and Hegel is that they do not accept the existence of a 'beyond' which will intervene 'here' from 'there', either a 'beyond' of reason or a 'beyond' of God. In other words, for both philosophers, what is in 'here' should be explained within the general course of 'here'. Thus, human phenomenon, with all its peculiarities, belongs to this world, and it is to be explained as it has emerged from this world. Desire, therefore, for Spinoza and Hegel, as a phenomenon belonging

to this world plays an important role in the emergence of human phenomenon. In the philosophy of Spinoza, all the deeds of human beings rest on desire that is an endeavor to persist in being. Therefore it is possible to reduce all the aspects of human being, social, religious or moral, to this endeavor; that is all the institutions and the practices that rest on these aspects are the outcomes of human endeavor to persist in its own being. Likewise, as we have seen in the fourth chapter of the *Phenomenology*, sociality is an outcome of the movement of the self-consciousness, which is motivated by self-consciousness' desire towards itself.

Another point concerning the decline of a supposed 'beyond' is the issue of teleology. As we have seen in the first chapter, since for some philosophers this world is temporary and cannot yield a human life which is supposed to be more than mere living, tend to derive the *telos* of human life from a supposed 'beyond'. Yet, since for both Spinoza and Hegel there is no beyond to which one can resort in order to set a goal for one's life, both philosophers decline any external teleology. However this does not mean that for Spinoza and Hegel life is a completely spontaneous process lacking any goal and thus meaning. Indeed human life involves a *telos*, yet this *telos* is provided within this life itself; that is to say it is due to desire that human life involves a *telos*. According to Spinoza, as we have seen, there is nothing beyond the nature which will set an end for human life. Moreover, for Spinoza "nature has no particular goal in view" and "final causes are mere human pigments".¹⁷⁴ However this does not mean that "teleology", not in a conventional sense, is totally banished from human life:

Wherefore, a cause which is called final is nothing else but human desire, in so far as it is conceived as the origin or cause of anything. For example, when we say that to be inhabited is the final cause of this or that house we mean

¹⁷⁴ E1 Appendix, p. 77.

nothing more than that a man, conceiving the conveniences of household life, had a desire to build a house.¹⁷⁵

In this example it is clear that the motive which forces the man in the example to move further, that is to build a house, is the absence of the advantages of household life. The man is in a state of lack, yet he knows the material which is to fill this lack since he has conceived “the conveniences of household life.” It is the lack, and the desire arising due to this lack, on the side of the agent which forces the agent to move further until the lack is removed, or what is the same the desire is satisfied. When the agent reaches this point, i.e., the point where the desire of the agent is satisfied, the movement is completed, and it is only after this completion one can set the ‘aim’ of this movement. Likewise, according to Hegel, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the *telos* of the self-consciousness is constituted by its desire to move further since the state it is in is unbearable; that is, the self-consciousness is perpetually forced to move further because of the lack involved in the states that it is in. The movement of self-consciousness will continue to the point in which the desire of the self-consciousness is satisfied. One more important point of this movement is that, the movement is not an arbitrary one. Self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology* will continue to move till it achieves its actuality, and thus till it achieves the unity of itself with itself. Likewise, the man in the Spinoza’s example will move further till he achieves the conveniences of the household life. Briefly, as we can see, the teleology involved in human life is a function of desire.

As we can see, since neither Spinoza nor Hegel accepts the existence of a ‘beyond’ through which the account of human being can be given, their understanding of human being shows important similarities, and desire plays an important role in this understanding. Despite these

¹⁷⁵ E4 Preface, p. 188.

similarities, however, I propose that, due to the difference between their understanding of the relation between the substance and particulars, whereas Spinoza fails to connect spiritual dimension of human being with desire, it is only through Hegel one can connect desire and spirituality.

As we have seen in the second chapter, the relation between modes and the substance is a consuming one; that is, the being of modes is consumed by the substance to the extent that the modes do not have a genuine existence. They are particulars indeed, yet their existence is the existence of the substance, and their activities are the activity of substance, as well. Therefore all these modes do nothing but reflect the substance and its activity, and thus they do not exist for themselves. In other words, there is not a genuine detachment among the substance and the modes. Since, as I have tried to show in the second chapter, the activity of substance is to exist, and preserve this existence, all the activity of modes, according to Spinoza, is the fundamental activity of perseverance in being. Thus all modes exist and preserve their existence in a peculiar way of their own. However the explanation that Spinoza provides to describe the way which modes exist in their own peculiar way renders the difference among the modes a matter of quantity; that is, a matter of muchness and fewness. In other words, all the modes try to preserve their being, and the whole difference among them is the quantity of the power of the substance they represent. On the other hand Spinoza says that a human being is motivated with the same goal that is to preserve its being. The peculiar difference of human being is that he is conscious of both this endeavor and himself. At the same time, according to Spinoza, being conscious of this endeavor does not seem to make any difference on the part of human being, primarily in the second and the third part of the *Ethics*. Therefore, like all other modes, the course of the life of human being consists in persisting in existence, even if he is conscious of this course. So, there is a danger of rendering the specific peculiarities of

human life merely complex strategies developed for perseverance in being. However, as Spinoza considers it in the fifth part of the *Ethics*, the highest good of human mind is the knowledge of the God, or the substance, and the unity of human being with the substance, which seemingly does not have anything to do with persisting in existence. Yet one of the important strivings of human life is to re-unite with the substance, though this union is solely in cognitive terms; that is it is a matter of knowledge. In other words, although throughout the book Spinoza delineates the human endeavor as persisting in being, the book leads up to a final chapter, which asserts that a sort of metaphysical endeavor, i.e., acquiring the knowledge of the substance and of the unity of human being with this unity, is one of the necessary endeavors of human mind. However, I propose that, since according to Spinoza, there is not a genuine detachment among modes and the substance, and even being conscious does not lead to such a detachment, it is not very clear why a knowledge of the unity with the self and the substance is a necessary endeavor of human mind. I believe that, on the other hand, Hegel is able to develop the meaning of being a 'self', namely being conscious of the fact that one is a distinct particular among other particulars, and thus he is also able to show that why such a state necessitates a spiritual endeavor.

According to Hegel, a particular is for itself, that is it exists on its own account.¹⁷⁶ It is the member of the substance (Life), yet it exists independently; that is, a particular is the negation of the substance.¹⁷⁷ In this sense, being a 'self', or being an 'I', is being 'for itself' in two senses: first it is a particular, which is a negation of the substance, and second it is aware of its being the negation of the substance and of the fact that it exists on its own account. This awareness of selfhood is at the same time awareness of its

¹⁷⁶ *Phenomenology*, § 170.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, § 170.

essentiality and independence. However, this independence and essentiality is acquired at the cost of a total detachment from the substance. This detachment is a state of vanity, or namely a state of lack on the side of self-consciousness. To remove this vanity, self-consciousness is compelled to reunite with the substance, yet an immediate unity with substance will lead to negation of self-consciousness' independence and essentiality, since, as we have seen, the general course of life is the dissolution of independent moments within the process of life. Therefore, self-consciousness confronts the external or what is other than itself in such a way that it would be able to both preserve its essentiality and independence, and actualize itself in the unity of substance. In other words, though the self-consciousness has an intuition of its essentiality and independence, this intuition is at the level of certainty, and has not been raised to truth yet; that is, self-consciousness has not actualized itself in its own action. To actualize itself is the desire of the self-consciousness, and it is due to this desire, that self-consciousness confronts with life and an other self-consciousness. Briefly, as we have seen in the *Phenomenology*, the movement of self-consciousness in the fourth chapter is determined by its desire towards itself, namely its essentiality and independence, and towards the object, namely the substance and an other self-consciousness through which it will actualize itself. Thus, whereas the unity with substance is a matter of knowledge in the philosophy of Spinoza, it necessitates an act, i.e., a becoming through forming and negating the external, in the philosophy of Hegel.

I further propose that, a 'free' interpretation of some of the themes in the philosophy of Spinoza will help us to bring this philosophy more closer to the philosophy of Hegel, at least in regards to the phenomenon of desire. In other words, some of the themes of Spinoza's philosophy have further connotations which I believe to be developed by Hegel in their full meanings. Whereas Spinoza focuses on determination, it is Hegel who sees the full

meaning of the 'negation' involved in determination, though this negation is also included in the philosophy of Spinoza, since he says that "final existence involves a partial negation".¹⁷⁸ In other words, Spinoza, though he defines partial existences as a matter of negation, does not take into account the full meaning of the negation involved in the determination. Therefore, in the philosophy of Spinoza, when we consider the relation among modes and the substance, we can see that there is not a genuine detachment, even if this relation is accompanied with a sentiment of 'Self'. However, I believe that it is only through Hegel, who conceives being an 'I' as a qualitative distinction, that is as a negation, one can understand why the desire for the actualization of the self necessitates the achievement the unity with the substance, and thus one can give an account of the spiritual dimension of human being through desire.

Briefly, as we can see that, for both Spinoza and Hegel, desire is the basic mechanism to explain human phenomenon. However, the difference between these two philosophers' conception of desire emerges from the difference in their understandings of the relation of particular and the substance. In the philosophy of Spinoza since the particular does not exist on its own account, or, what is the same, it is not for itself, the desire of the particular is the self-preservation, where the main stress is on the part of the 'preservation' as I also have tried to explain in the second chapter. In the philosophy of Hegel, however, the particular exists on its own account, and thus this existence is also a detachment from the substance. So, the desire of particular, if this desire is accompanied with an awareness of self, is towards actualization of the self rather than preservation, that is the stress is on the 'self' rather than preservation.

¹⁷⁸ E1 p8 N1.

Finally, we can now comprehend the element of which the specific distinctness of human phenomenon consists, and why the distinctness of the phenomenon of human being is an issue of quality rather than quantity. In the philosophy of Spinoza, as I proposed in the second chapter, there is a danger of rendering the distinctness of human being an issue of quantity that is complexness. As I argued above, in the philosophy of Spinoza, modes are distinguished from one another through the way they move. Yet this movement is a uniform one, that is, the movement of the particulars consists of expressing the substance, and every mode expresses the substance to a definite extent. Therefore, basically all the modes move in the same manner, which is an endeavor to persist in being. Finally, one, depending on Spinoza, can assert that all the peculiarities of human phenomenon are mere complex strategies for perseverance in being, since the main drive behind human endeavor is, just like the drive behind all the activity taking place within the rest of universe, is self-preservation. However, with Hegel, we can see that being a human being is being conscious of its own existence and self. Yet, as I argued in the third chapter, the state of being conscious of one's self necessitates a detachment from the substance, and this detachment, which happens through negation, in turn, necessitates an actualization of self through a re-unity with the substance. Thus, we can see that, the main endeavor of a human being is actualizing the self rather than preserving, and the distinctive peculiarities of the life of the human being, such as sociality, morality, and spirituality, far from being strategies for the preservation of self, are necessary institutions for the actualization of self.

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