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Guerotult on Spinoza and the *Ethics*

TAD M. SCHMALTZ

In his introduction to the first volume of his commentary on the *Ethics*, the French scholar Martial Guerout distinguishes the rationalism of Spinoza from the other forms of early modern rationalism in the work of Descartes, Malebranche and Leibniz. Whereas Spinoza embraces a *rationalisme absolu*, the other forms of rationalism are compromised since they all admit of some “obscurity subsisting in God and in things” and some “mystery that surrounds reason or remains adjacent to it.”¹ Thus in Descartes, there is the incomprehensibility of the divine power responsible for the creation of eternal truths and of the substantial union of mind and body; in Malebranche, the incomprehensibility of the action by which God produces all effects as well as the confusion of our comprehension of our own soul; and in Leibniz, the incomprehensibility of an infinite universe that outstrips our finite powers of analysis and the impossibility of something similar in us to the intuitive grasp of reality in God.² By contrast, Guerout finds in Spinoza the view that “our intellect attains to absolute knowledge [*savoir*], because pure understanding is, according to its nature, the same in man and in God,” and that such knowledge includes a clear and distinct cognition of the nature of God as well as of the natures of mind, body and the mind-body union.³

We can relate these remarks about the different forms of rationalism to Guerout’s distinctive conception of methodology in the history of philosophy. This conception is reflected in the title he chose for the post to which he was appointed at the Collège de France in 1951: “the chair in the history and technology of philosophical systems”. Both the importance of systems and their plurality are noteworthy features of his historical method, which he labeled

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1. Martial Guerout, *Spinoza, I : Dieu (Ethique, I)*, Paris, Aubier, 1968, p. 9.
 2. Guerout, *Spinoza, I*, pp. 9-10.
 3. Guerout, *Spinoza, I*, pp. 11-12.

Dianoématique, the “study of doctrines” (from the Greek *dianoema*: doctrine).⁴ This method requires that the historian treat doctrines as inseparable parts of a system, to be evaluated only in terms of that system. In turn, systems themselves are answerable only to their own distinctive logic, and in this sense are wholly autonomous. One of Gueroult’s students, Ginette Dreyfus, has described this methodology as a form of *idéalisme radical*, according to which the great philosophical systems offer a rigid and internally determined “Idea of the Real”.⁵ We have here a pluralism of “realities” deriving from the distinctive conceptual structures of different systems. Thus Descartes’s system requires one sort of incomprehensibility, Malebranche’s system another, Leibniz’s system yet another. As Gueroult sees it, it is only in Spinoza that incomprehensibility is to be banished entirely, yielding an “absolute rationalism”.

Gueroult’s *Dianoématique* is similar in certain respects to a methodology in the history of philosophy that Alan Nelson has recently defended. Nelson recommends an approach to historical texts in which the historian “strives to interpret important historical figures in philosophy as presenting philosophical *systems* of thought.”⁶ Nelson highlights as a central assumption of this approach that “*key concepts tend to be tightly linked conceptually and not subject to independent analysis.*”⁷ I take this to be a version of Gueroult’s emphasis on the autonomy of different systems, a point that is crucial for his pluralism.

In one respect, however, Nelson’s discussion indicates a potential problem with Gueroult’s methodology. Nelson is clear that his systematic methodology is just one among several different methods. He mentions in particular “interpretations that emphasize contextual analysis of texts and those emphasizing instead rational reconstructions of argument.”⁸ Nelson’s argument is not that systematic interpretation is superior to other methodologies, but only that such a method should be included among the legitimate forms of historical inquiry.

4. Gueroult’s grand work on historical methodology was published only posthumously; see Gueroult, *Dianoématique, Livre I: Histoire de l’histoire de la philosophie, I, en Occident, des origines jusqu’à Condillac*. Paris, Aubier-Montaigne, 1984; *II, en Allemagne, de Leibniz à nos jours*, Paris, Aubier-Montaigne, 1988; *III, en France, de Condorcet à nos jours*, Paris, Aubier-Montaigne, 1979; *Dianoématique, Livre II: Philosophie de l’histoire de la philosophie*, Paris, Aubier-Montaigne, 1988. For a comprehensive introduction to Gueroult’s method and its various applications, see Christophe Giolito, *Histoires de la philosophie avec Martial Gueroult*, Paris, L’Harmattan, 1999.

5. Ginette Dreyfus’s characterization is from her preface to Gueroult, *Dianoématique, Livre II*, pp. 10-11.

6. Alan Nelson, “Philosophical Systems and Their History”, in *Philosophy and Its History: Aims and Methods in the Study of Early Modern Philosophy*, ed. by M. Laerke, J. E. H. Smith, and E. Schliesser, New York-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 236.

7. Nelson, “Philosophical Systems”, p. 240.

8. Nelson, “Philosophical Systems”, p. 237.

What is interesting is that Nelson is taking up here a kind of pluralistic approach to historical methodologies that does not have a clear counterpart in Gueroult. Whereas he allowed for a plurality of systematic realities, Gueroult treated his method as the only one that has legitimate historical application. This yields what Daniel Parrochia has called the *paradoxe de Gueroult*, according to which Gueroult's method "posits itself both as a 'system of all the systems' and as one system 'like the others'."⁹ An advantage of Nelson's version of systematic methodology over Gueroult's is that the pluralism of the former is fully reflexive.¹⁰

Perhaps one reason for Gueroult to take a pluralistic stance toward methodology is that among all the rationalist systems, his *Dianoématique* seems to be tailored especially for Spinoza's system.¹¹ Gilles Deleuze, who followed Gueroult's lectures at the Collège de France, expresses this point, in his review of the first volume of *Spinoza*: "Spinozism ... does not represent for [Gueroult's] method one application among others, but ... constitutes for it the term or the object the most adequate, the most saturated, the most exhaustive."¹² Among the various early modern rationalisms, Spinoza's version alone is to be established entirely *more geometrico*, with consequences akin to mathematical theorems. In principle, at least, there is to be no doctrine in Spinoza that cannot be rendered fully intelligible by relating it to his system as a whole. This sort of system is ideally suited to the sort of structuralism that is a dominant feature of Gueroult's historical methodology.

To be sure, Gueroult had earlier attempted to present Descartes's system in a similar structuralist manner. Thus in his *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons*, published fifteen years prior to the first volume of his *Spinoza*, Gueroult presents Descartes as "a thinker of granite" who offers a system in which "no single truth

9. Daniel Parrochia, *La Raison systématique. Essais de morphologie des systèmes philosophiques*, Paris, Vrin, 1993, p. 29.

10. One can understand Gueroult's rejection of methodological pluralism in terms of the suggestion in his writings that dianoematics reflects necessary conditions for any properly philosophical investigation of the history of philosophy. The challenge would then be to the adequacy of this sort of Kantian transcendental conception of the history of philosophy. Thanks to Mogens Laerke for drawing my attention to this aspect of Gueroult's position.

11. There is a contrast here with Gueroult's work on Malebranche. As Denis Kambouchner has noted, there is "particularly in the three volumes on Malebranche the over-accumulation of conceptual/technical problems, which provides evidence not only of the specificity of the internal constraints of each system but also of the difficulty of attaining the coherence and systematicity required while considering all of the details" ("Thought versus History: Reflections on a French Problem", in *Teaching New Histories of Philosophy*, edited by J. Schneewind, Princeton, NJ, University Center for Human Values, 2004, p. 247). The reference here is to Gueroult, *Malebranche, I: La vision en Dieu*, Paris, Aubier, 1955; *II: Les cinq abîmes de la Providence. L'ordre et l'occasionalisme*, Paris, Aubier, 1959; *III: Les cinq abîmes de la Providence. La nature et la grâce*, Paris, Aubier, 1959.

12. Gilles Deleuze, "Spinoza et la méthode générale de M. Gueroult", in *L'Île déserte et autres textes : textes et entretiens 1953-1974*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 2002, p. 216.

[...] can be correctly interpreted without reference to the place it occupies in the order."¹³ Gueroult is reacting here to the interpretation of Descartes in the work of his French colleague, Ferdinand Alquié.¹⁴ In particular, there is an emphasis in Alquié on the primary in Descartes of an ontological experience of the *cogito* that cannot be fully captured in conceptual terms.¹⁵ Gueroult responded that this view of the *cogito* imports a kind of "occult quality" into Descartes's thought that in fact consists in a kind of "negation of Descartes, who fought all his life against those who would place an occult quality either in exterior things or in oneself."¹⁶ By the time of his work on Spinoza, however, Gueroult came to emphasize Descartes's own introduction of occult qualities, in the form of the incomprehensible power of God and the incomprehensible union of mind and body.¹⁷ In light of his later remarks on Spinoza's rationalism, one can retrospectively view Gueroult's initial presentation of Descartes as overly "Spinozised".¹⁸

In one way, however, Gueroult's presentation of Spinoza is similar to his earlier presentation of Descartes. In reaction to Alquié, Gueroult downplayed the contingencies of Descartes's context and personal idiosyncrasies in order to focus on the order of reasons dictated by his system. So also in his consideration of Spinoza it is only the internal requirements of his system that matter, and not, for

13. Gueroult, *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons, I: L'âme et Dieu*, Paris, Aubier, 1953, pp. xx, 6.

14. Alquié's work on Descartes was published prior to Gueroult's in Ferdinand Alquié, *La Découverte métaphysique de l'homme chez Descartes*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1950. For more on the relation between the two interpretations of Descartes in Alquié and Gueroult, see Knox Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavallès to Deleuze*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2014, ch. 2, and Tad M. Schmaltz, "PanzerCartesianer: The Descartes of Martial Gueroult's *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons*", *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 52, 2014, pp. 1-13.

15. At one point during the famous confrontation between Gueroult and Alquié at the 1955 colloquium on Descartes at Royaumont, Alquié claims: "My whole thesis consists in affirming that, with Descartes, being is not reducible to the concept. [...] I believe that being [and] existence reveal themselves to thought that is familiar but untranslatable. The evidence of the *sum* is primary and exceeds the idea of thought" (*Cahiers de Royaumont, no. II, Descartes*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1957, p. 42).

16. From the discussion at the Royaumont colloquium cited in note 15; *Cahiers de Royaumont, II*, p. 39.

17. See Gueroult's emphasis on the fact that the forms of early modern rationalism other than Spinoza's, "far from radically exorcising occult qualities, are content to repress them" (*Spinoza I*, 9). It seems that one could fairly claim that in his polemical exchanges with Alquié, Gueroult tends to repress the occult aspects of Descartes's rationalism.

18. I borrow this characterization of Gueroult's earlier interpretation of Descartes from Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology*, p. 66. To be fair, Gueroult's commentary on the *Meditations* does not fail to acknowledge the points in this text where Descartes has recourse to incomprehensibility. For instance, there is his admission that Descartes must appeal to the incomprehensibility of divine power in order to explain the fact of the interaction between the human mind and its body that is itself "inconceivable and contradictory"; see *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons, II: L'âme et le corps*, Paris, Aubier, p. 84. However, this sort of admission tends to be merely in the background when Gueroult is emphasizing his interpretive differences with Alquié.

instance, his Jewish background or the Dutch theologico-political context for his work.¹⁹ Just as the Descartes of Gueroult tends to be an abstraction conceived in terms of the order of reasons alone, so also his Spinoza tends to be an abstraction conceived entirely in terms of what follows from the identification of nature with the divine attributes, and ultimately, with God as absolutely infinite substance.

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Gueroult's monumental commentary on Spinoza's *Ethics* derives from his lectures at the École Normale Supérieure-Lettres et Sciences humaines at Fontenay-St. Cloud, which Louis Althusser recalls as a *grand succès*.²⁰ Two volumes of the commentary, on the first two parts of Spinoza's text, were published in 1968 and 1974, respectively. Together the volumes comprise nearly 950 pages of text, with another 260 pages of valuable appendices.²¹ A third volume, on the last three parts of the *Ethics*, was planned but never completed. However, we do have a general introduction to this volume along with a portion of its first chapter.²² The introduction offers a view of the relation among the various parts of the *Ethics* that is difficult to glean from the discussion in the first two volumes of *Spinoza*. In particular, Gueroult denies the claim that the ontology of the *Ethics* "is given for an ethics. Indeed on the contrary, [ontology] founds the ethics: the latter depends on it, and not the other way around. It is why the ontology of Spinoza must be understood without reference to his ethics."²³ The suggestion is that the same goes for the "physics" of the human soul in the second part of the *Ethics*: though it derives from the ontology that precedes it, it grounds but does not depend on the ethics that succeeds it. Even so, Gueroult takes the internal logic of Spinoza's system to lead inexorably from the ontology, through the "physics", to the ethics. For this reason he concludes that "metaphysics [and] physics, on the one hand, and ethics, on the other hand, can constitute an indivisible whole," though this whole "consists

19. One can contrast Gueroult's portrayal of Spinoza with that of Wolfson, the latter of which places heavy emphasis on Spinoza's medieval Jewish background; see Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza: Unfolding the Latent Processes of His Reasoning*, 2 vols, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1934.

20. Louis Althusser, *L'avenir dure longtemps suivi de Les faits*, Paris, Stock/IMEC, 1992, p. 174. On these lectures, see also Jean Berhnhardt, "L'enseignement de Martial Gueroult à l'E.N.S. de Saint-Cloud", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, 166, 1976, pp. 508-509.

21. A particularly important appendix from the first volume of Gueroult's commentary (in *Spinoza, I*, 500-28) has been published in English translation, as "Spinoza's Letter on the Infinite (Letter XII, to Louis Meyer)", in *Spinoza: a collection of critical essays*, edited by M. Grene, New York, Doubleday/Anchor, 1973, pp. 182-212.

22. Published posthumously in "Le 'Spinoza' de Martial Gueroult", *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*, 167, 1977, pp. 285-302.

23. "Le 'Spinoza'", p. 286.

of one part [that is] fundamentally independent, and of another well founded part that depends on it.”²⁴

As one commentator has insightfully observed, Gueroult reads the *Ethics* “in ‘Spinozistic’ terms, as structured proofs devoid of teleology.”²⁵ Once again we can contrast Gueroult’s reading with that of his arch-nemesis, Alquié. In *Le Rationalisme de Spinoza*, published in 1981, and thus five years after Gueroult’s death, Alquié presents a view of the *Ethics* on which this text is directed throughout to the goal of providing a rational justification for the ethical promise of beatific salvation.²⁶ Far from following Gueroult in attempting to capture the “ideal reality” of Spinoza’s system, Alquié is concerned rather to show that Spinoza has failed to provide a proper basis in reason for his notion of beatitude.²⁷ One consideration here is that the infinity of the divine attributes and their modifications precludes the sort of absolute immanence and intelligibility of God on which Spinoza insists. As Alquié expresses the point, “the universal intelligibility that [Spinoza’s] rationalism affirms remains a promised intelligibility. The promise of intelligibility does not cause the transcendence of Being, which remains forever beyond our grasp, to disappear.”²⁸ A further problem is that the Spinozistic conception of God is a hopeless hybrid of the rational and the religious: “his God is at one time a Nature extended in infinite space and surviving our death, and [at another time] a Person who thinks of us, loves us and saves us.”²⁹

Even if these specific objections to Spinoza can be answered in his own terms, Alquié’s remarks nonetheless raise the question of whether we can follow Gueroult in thinking that the account of beatitude at the end of the *Ethics* is merely the inevitable byproduct of the foundations established in its first two parts. It may well be the case of some aspects of this account require certain notions, such as the “eternal part of the Mind” and the “intellectual love of God”, that Spinoza adds because they are required by his ethical goals rather than by the ontological foundations of his system. Perhaps Gueroult’s third volume of his *Ethics* commentary would have provided the material to argue that these

24. “Le ‘Spinoza’”, p. 287.

25. Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology*, p. 88.

26. Ferdinand Alquié, *Le Rationalisme de Spinoza*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1981, pp. 10-12.

27. My discussion of Alquié’s interpretation of Spinoza draws on the helpful discussion in Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology*, pp. 88-92.

28. Alquié, *Le Rationalisme de Spinoza*, p. 160.

29. Alquié, *Le Rationalisme de Spinoza*, p. 93. Cf. Alquié’s concluding remark that “it is difficult [...] to rise to the thought of a living God from the mathematical and intellectual construction by which the *Ethics* defines God” (p. 349).

notions are in fact the inevitable results of the earlier account in this text of God and the human soul. For in the introduction to this projected volume Gueroult promises to show how the third part of the *Ethics* offers a “genetic deduction” of the affects that is grounded in the account of the human soul, the fourth part an explication of the limits on our power required by such a deduction, and the fifth part an explication of the power that such a deduction allows to us.³⁰

Since we do not have the third volume, however, there is not much more to say about whether Gueroult could provide a sufficient response to Alquié’s more teleological reading of the *Ethics*. I propose that we turn our attention instead to the discussion in the first two volumes of Gueroult’s *Spinoza*. Since an adequate assessment of the comprehensive treatment in these volumes of the first two parts of the *Ethics* is not possible here, I restrict myself to a brief consideration of two noteworthy features of Gueroult’s interpretation of Spinoza. The first is reflected in Gueroult’s claim in his first volume that Spinoza holds in the first part of the *Ethics* that God as absolutely infinite substance consists in a union of infinitely many distinct substances that consist of a single attribute. The second is reflected in Gueroult’s claim in his second volume that Spinoza is committed by what he says in the second part of the *Ethics* to the conclusion that there are two different kinds of “parallelism” that hold among the divine attributes. I consider these two features in turn.

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According to a standard view of Spinoza’s monism, the existence of God as “absolutely infinite substance”, that is, a substance with infinite attributes, precludes the existence of any other substance. It is a striking feature of Gueroult’s reading of the *Ethics*, however, that the existence of God not only does not preclude the existence of other substances; it actually requires the existence of an infinity of such substances, one for each attribute.³¹ Gueroult takes the first eight propositions of the first part of Spinoza’s text to concern only “substances consisting of one attribute alone”, which are not “absolutely infinite” but only “infinite in their own kind”.³² These substances are subsequently identified with

30. “Le ‘Spinoza’”, pp. 288-89.

31. “The conception through itself [*par soi*] of the attributes, which founds their real distinction and by which we have posited them previously as substances of one attribute, far from rendering their union in one and the same substance impossible, is precisely what renders it possible, insofar as no being can pertain to a substance as one of its constituents that is not conceived through itself” (Gueroult, *Spinoza, I*, p. 161).

32. Gueroult, *Spinoza, I*, pp. 107-40. The distinction between being “absolutely infinite” and only “infinite in its own kind” is from *Ethics Idef6exp*, in *Spinoza Opera*, edited by C. Gebhardt, Heidelberg, Carl Winters, vol. II, 1925, p. 46.

the attributes, which are said in the demonstration of the tenth proposition from the first part of the *Ethics* to be “really distinct” from each other, that is to say, according to Gueroult, to be distinct substances.³³ This result is supposed to be compatible with Spinoza’s monism since the infinitely many substances of one attribute are incorporated into an absolutely infinite substance. Gueroult insists that although Spinoza’s monism precludes the existence of any substance *outside* God, this doctrine nonetheless requires that God has *within* an infinite number of really distinct substances that together constitute his essence.

The same year that Gueroult died his account of Spinoza’s monism drew a critical response from André Doz, who protested that “never in the *Ethics* has Spinoza either established or wanted to establish that there are as many substances as attributes.”³⁴ However, Alan Donagan isolates what is perhaps the most serious problem for Gueroult’s interpretation of Spinozistic substance when he charges that “it excludes every possible explanation of how the union of the really distinct substances of one attribute into an indivisible absolutely infinite being can be necessary.”³⁵ This problem is exacerbated by Gueroult’s own denial that Spinoza can allow for different substances of one attribute to express one and the same divine essence.³⁶

Recently A. D. Smith has insisted that Gueroult’s claim that God as absolutely infinite substance consists of infinitely many substances of one attribute has considerable support in the text of the *Ethics*. Smith further proposes that Gueroult could have avoided the problem of divine unity simply by dropping the “incompatibility thesis”, that is, the thesis that a substance with one attribute cannot express *both* the

33. *Spinoza Opera*, vol. II, p. 51-52. For Gueroult’s reading of *Ethics* Ip10, see *Spinoza*, I, pp. 160-76.

34. André Doz, “Remarques sur les onze premières propositions de l’*Éthique* de Spinoza (à propos du Spinoza de Martial Gueroult)”, *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 167, 1976, pp. 221-61. Ginette Dreyfus responded to Doz on Gueroult’s behalf in “Sur le Spinoza de Martial Gueroult : réponses aux objections de M. Doz,” *Cahiers Spinoza*, 2, 1978, pp. 7-51, which drew a response from Doz in “Réponse à M^{lle} Dreyfus à propos du Spinoza de Martial Gueroult”, *Cahiers Spinoza*, 3, 1979-80, pp. 209-37. Cf. the recent defense of Gueroult’s interpretation against Doz’s objections in A. D. Smith, “Spinoza, Gueroult, and Substance”, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 88, 2014, pp. 670-72. I have more to say presently about other aspects of Smith’s defense of Gueroult.

35. Alan Donagan, “Substance, Essence and Attribute in Spinoza, *Ethics* I”, in *God and Nature: Spinoza’s Metaphysics*, edited by Y. Yovel, Leiden, Brill, 1991, p. 21 n. 18.

36. See, for instance, Gueroult’s claim: “Since each attribute (*unumquodque*) expresses a certain essence of substance—or the essence of a certain substance—it is clear that it cannot by itself express the essence of the divine substance, which is constituted by an infinity of essences of substance” (*Spinoza*, I, 69). Gueroult’s own response to this problem is that different attributes “are absolutely identical as to the cause (i.e., the causal act) by which each produces itself and produces all its modes” (p. 238). As Donagan correctly observes, however, this response “divides the causal act of substance from its essence in a way that is totally foreign to Spinoza” (“Essence and the Distinction of Attributes in Spinoza’s Metaphysics”, in *Spinoza*, ed. M. Grene, p. 176).

essence of its particular attribute *and* the essence of absolutely infinite substance. The conclusion here is that once this thesis is set aside, “Gueroult’s interpretation has nothing to fear from the issue of the unity of Spinoza’s God.”³⁷

Yet there remains something unsettling in the suggestion that substances of one attribute express two distinct things: the essence as conceived by its own attribute and the distinct essence of absolutely infinite substance. There needs to be some explanation of why the expression of the one essence would require the expression of the other essence.³⁸ One possible explanation is that the essence as conceived by the particular attribute *is the same thing as* the essence of absolutely infinite substance, with the only difference being in the ways in which this essence is conceived. In light of this explanation, one could say that a substance with one attribute, say, extended substance, expresses the essence of absolutely infinite substance by expressing *that same essence* as it is conceived through the attribute of extension. Moreover, one could say that two different substances of one attribute, say, thinking substance and extended substance, have attributes that express the same essence of absolutely infinite substance as conceived through the different attributes of thought and extension. The “real distinction” of these attributes requires not that they constitute really distinct substances, but only that they count as distinct conceptions of the same substance, namely, God as absolutely infinite substance. Indeed, Spinoza himself appears to indicate as much when he notes in the second part of the *Ethics* that “the thinking substance and the extended substance are one and the same substance [*una eademque est substantia*], which is now comprehended under this attribute, now under that.”³⁹

37. Smith, “Spinoza, Gueroult, and Substance”, p. 686.

38. There is also the question whether Smith’s suggestion that the essence as conceived by a particular attribute is distinct in reality from the essence of absolutely infinite substance creates problems for the unity of the substances of one attribute. My counter-suggestion below is that the distinction of the essences is only in conception, and not in reality.

39. *Ethics* Ip7s, *Spinoza Opera*, vol. 2, p. 90. One problem with settling the dispute over whether distinct attributes express distinct essences is that the Latin of Spinoza’s *Ethics* lacks both definite and indefinite articles. Thus when Spinoza says in this text that attributes express essence, it is not clear whether he is saying that they express a particular substantial essence that is only infinite in its own kind, or whether he is saying that they express the single substantial essence that is absolutely infinite. I am convinced by Smith’s argument that *Ethics* Ipp31-32 requires the former sort of expression, whereas *Ethics* Ipp45-47 requires the latter sort of expression (Smith, “Spinoza, Gueroult, and Substance”, pp. 676-81). However, I do not think there is a problem here since the particular substantial essence is itself nothing other than the absolutely infinite substantial essence as conceived in a particular way. Likewise, one can say that though extended substance and thinking substance are *distinct in conception*, they are *identical in reality* since they are simply absolutely infinite substance itself as conceived in different ways.

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The passage I have just cited is from a scholium to the seventh proposition from the second part of the *Ethics*, in which Spinoza enunciates his “parallelism” doctrine.⁴⁰ In the introduction to the second volume of his *Spinoza*, Gueroult places particular emphasis on this doctrine.⁴¹ Spinoza’s own statement of the doctrine in the parallelism proposition is terse: “The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things” (*ordo, et connexio idearum idem est, ac ordo et connexio rerum*).⁴² The demonstration is equally abbreviated, appealing simply to the fourth axiom from the first part of the *Ethics*, according to which “cognition of an effect depends on cognition of [its] cause, and involves it” (*effectus cognitio a cognitione causae dependet, et eandem involvit*).⁴³ It is now widely recognized that this demonstration requires more than that axiom if it is to work.⁴⁴ However, Gueroult draws attention to the fact that the parallelism doctrine itself is deceptively simple. He takes Spinoza in fact to distinguish between two different kinds of parallelism: *extra-cogitativ*, which involves the parallelism of the chain of ideas with the chain of their objects outside of thought; and *intra-cogitativ*, which involves a parallelism internal to thought between ideas and the ideas of those ideas. Gueroult holds that ontologically speaking, the two parallelisms are on a par since both are “founded on the necessary conformity in God of ideas and things,” thus rendering possible “the truth in itself.” However, he insists that epistemologically (or, in his terms, “gnoseologically”) speaking, intra-cogitative parallelism has priority insofar as this sort of parallelism allows us cognitive access to the order and connection holding among objects by means of our ideas of the corresponding order and connection that holds among the ideas of those objects.⁴⁵

40. As Gueroult notes, this label for the doctrine derives from Leibniz rather than from Spinoza himself; see Gueroult, *Spinoza, II: L'Âme (Ethique, II)*, Paris, Aubier-Montaigne, 1974, p. 64 n. 39. It must be added that Leibniz introduced the label to describe his own view of the relation between mental and bodily states, not Spinoza’s.

41. *Spinoza, II*, pp. 14-19.

42. *Ethics* Ip7, *Spinoza Opera*, vol. 2, p. 89.

43. *Ethics* Iax4, *Spinoza Opera*, vol. 2, p. 47, cited in *Ethics* IIp7d, *Spinoza Opera*, vol. 2, p. 89.

44. For instance, the axiom establishes only that if there is a cognition of an effect then it must depend on the idea of its cause, and not that for every effect there must be an idea of it that reflects the causal “order and connection” that involves the effect. What is required further here is the result in *Ethics* IIp3 that for all effects in nature there necessarily is an idea of them in God (*Spinoza Opera*, vol. II, p. 87). Moreover, to get the exclusivity of the matching orders of ideas and their objects we need the results from *Ethics* IIp5-6 that effects can have as causes only those things that are considered under the same attribute as these effects (*Spinoza Opera*, vol. II, pp. 88-89).

45. *Spinoza, II*, p. 18. Gueroult distinguishes seven *réplications* of parallelism, but he also suggests that these are different aspects of the two basic kinds and not themselves distinct forms of parallelism; see *Spinoza II*, p. 14. For the discussion of parallelism in the second volume, see *Spinoza, II*, pp. 64-92.

Guerout's suggestion of a double parallelism in Spinoza is reflected elsewhere in the literature, even though the other dualisms posited do not precisely match his own. For instance, in nearly contemporaneous work Deleuze distinguishes between an "epistemological" parallelism of the proposition itself, which holds between an idea and its object, and a different "ontological" parallelism reflected in the portion of the scholium to the proposition that I cited, which holds between all modes in different attributes that exhibit the same "order and connection". The former has the consequence that "one and the same individual is expressed by a given mode and by the corresponding idea," whereas the latter has the different consequence that "one and the same modification is expressed by all corresponding modes differing in attribute."⁴⁶ Though Deleuze's epistemological parallelism is similar to Guerout's extra-cogitative parallelism, his ontological parallelism in no way corresponds to Guerout's intra-cogitative parallelism, and indeed seems to indicate an important sort of parallelism that Guerout's taxonomy overlooks. For the scholium to Spinoza's parallelism proposition does indeed appear to introduce a new point when it indicates that the same casual order and connection is found in any of the divine attributes, and not just in thought and the attribute of the objects of ideas.

Yitzhak Melamed has recently offered yet a third version of Spinoza's dual parallelisms. According to Melamed, one must distinguish between the "ideas-things parallelism" of the parallelism proposition, according to which the causal order of ideas corresponds to the causal order of the "things" that serve as the objects of those ideas, and the "inter-attributes" parallelism of the scholium to this proposition, according to which there is an isomorphism among the order of "modes" in infinitely many attributes.⁴⁷ There are some obvious similarities here to Deleuze's distinction between epistemological and ontological parallelism.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, there are some crucial differences. For instance, Deleuze suggests that both kinds of parallelism establish the identity of the parallel items, whether of ideas and their objects, in the case of epistemological parallelism, or of parallel modes in attributes other than thought, in the case of ontological

46. Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, translated by M. Joughin, New York, Zone Books, 1992, pp. 113-14.

47. Yitzhak Melamed, *Spinoza's Metaphysics: Substance and Thought*, New York-Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 139-40.

48. Indeed, in his review of Melamed's book, Mogens Laerke has taken its author to task for failing to note sufficiently the anticipations of his analysis of parallelism in the work of Deleuze and Guerout; see "Spinoza's Metaphysics. Substance and Thought", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 22, 2014, pp. 621, 623.

parallelism.⁴⁹ In contrast, Melamed insists that Spinoza derives the identity of the parallel items only in the case of inter-attribute parallelism. This point is crucial since the *things* involved in ideas-things parallelism are not limited to *modes*, but can include as well both God as absolutely infinite substance and the divine attributes. But in these cases we cannot assert the identity of the idea, itself a mode, with its object, God or God's attributes.⁵⁰ So we do seem to have in Melamed a distinctive version of the thought, found in Gueroult as well as in Deleuze, that Spinoza embraces a dualistic conception of parallelism.⁵¹

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49. See for instance the indication in Deleuze that epistemological parallelism allows for "an *identity of being* between objects and ideas" (*Expressionism in Philosophy*, p. 117).

50. Melamed, *Spinoza's Metaphysics*, pp. 144-45. For Spinoza's appeal to the *idea Dei*, see *Ethics* II, pp. 3-4, *Spinoza Opera*, vol. II, pp. 87-88. He appeals to ideas "of the formal essence of certain attributes of God" in his discussion of the third kind of cognition, in *Ethics* II, p40s2, *Spinoza Opera*, vol. II, p. 122. One question raised here is how in these cases a modal idea, something that is caused through another, could be said to have the same causal order and connection as God as infinite substance or God's attributes, something that is caused by itself and not by another. But this seems to be a problem for any interpretation of Spinoza, and not just Melamed's particular interpretation.

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