

Spinoza and Parallelistic Interpretation

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Abstract

One of the popular interpretations of Spinoza's mind-body theory is parallelism. Parallelism is based on the distinction between the mind and the body which results from the distinction between the attributes of thought and extension. I shall describe the general outlook of the traditional parallelistic interpretation and compare it with Spinoza's parallelism, in order to show how Spinoza's theory differs from the former position. I shall explore Bennett's more sophisticated arguments in which parallelism can seem to entail identity of mind and body. The main issue I shall consider is the problems of the parallelistic interpretation by appeal to the identity of the mind and the body.

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1. Introduction

This paper investigates Spinoza's mind-body theory with the discussion of the parallelistic interpretation. One of the popular interpretations of Spinoza's mind-body theory is parallelism. Parallelism is based on the distinction between the mind and the body which results from the distinction between the attributes of thought and extension.

Spinoza's argument of the relationship between the mind and the body should be understood as holding that there is a non-causal relationship between the mind and the body and that they have equal weight. Although the parallelistic interpretation is compatible with the above understandings, we cannot ascribe traditional parallelism to Spinoza. His parallelism is derived from his argument of identity between the mind and the body, which is based on his substance monism and attribute dualism. We should therefore understand Spinoza's mind-body theory as an identity theory which leads to a parallel relationship between the mind and the body.

Furthermore, owing to the fact that Spinoza maintains substance monism and attribute dualism (assuming an objective view of the attributes of thought and extension, which are distinct), there is, in Spinoza's theory, an identity between mental and physical events while there is no identity between mental and physical properties: the mental and the physical events are one and the same event described under mental and physical properties, respectively.

I shall, in this paper, describe the general outlook of the traditional parallelistic interpretation and compare it with Spinoza's parallelism, in order to show how Spinoza's theory differs from the former position. I shall also explore Bennett's more sophisticated arguments in which parallelism can seem to entail identity of mind and body. The main issue I shall consider is the problems of the parallelistic interpretation by appeal to the identity of the mind and the body.

2. Traditional Parallelism and Spinoza's Parallelism

Writing of parallelism, J. Shaffer states: "[T]he mind and the body are too utterly different to be able to interact causally with each other. So the parallelist holds that the mind and the body are like two clocks, each with its own mechanism and with no causal connection between them, yet always in phase keeping the same time."¹⁾ Literally, parallelism posits that the mind is parallel with the body because they are entirely different in nature and they have their own activities unfolding at the same rate. Therefore the basis of parallelism is that the mind is distinct from the body.

At this stage, one may think that it is impossible to regard Spinoza's theory as parallelism owing to the fact that for him the mind and the body are identical. However, for Spinoza, parallelism ought rather to be argued within an identity doctrine. Unlike traditional parallelism, Spinoza's mind-body theory presents the identity of mind and body.

1) Jerome A. Shaffer, *Philosophy of Mind* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pp. 37-38.

Spinoza does not conceive that the mind and the body are mysteriously unfolded inducing a parallel process with each other. There exists one process alone which appears to be thought (inwardly) and to be extended (outwardly). Whereas traditional parallelism argues that the mind and the body are parallel because they are entirely different in nature, Spinoza argues that the mind and the body are parallel because they are identical with each other. Parallelism arose from dissatisfaction with Descartes' interactionism between mind and body, and is historically associated with a dualistic position. Thus, it is initially surprising that parallelism is argued for within an identity theory, and that it can be used to support an identity theory.

The following problem may arise: parallelism has to be argued for as relating to two substances or two orders of events, but if the mind and the body are identical then there exists only one thing: how is it possible to argue parallelism while arguing an identity theory? It is clear that traditional parallelism needs two things or two orders of events. But in Spinoza's realm of thought, it is not necessary for parallelism to be argued in two substances or two orders of events. Although the mind and the body are one and the same thing, since they have their different properties or descriptions we can still argue the parallelistic relationship between these two concepts: one thing which is given a mental description and the very same thing which is given a physical. More significantly, the mind and the body must be identical for a parallel relationship to exist between them. For Spinoza's parallelism it is integral that the mind and the body are ontologically identical with each other, since their parallelistic relationship is derived from the fact that they are identical.

As it is well known, Descartes' mind-body theory is of a substance dualism, which regards the mind and the body as two distinct substances. Descartes explains their relationship by interactionism, and by doing so, he tries to argue the union of the mind and the body. Owing to the fact that he regards the mind and the body as substances, he falls into difficulty in establishing the union of the two. Spinoza sees this problem in Descartes' mind-body theory, and establishes the relationship between the mind and the body in a different way.

Now we can see how Spinoza's parallelism differs from traditional parallelism. According to the traditional view, parallelism is basically a dualistic position, but in Spinoza's view, it is a monistic position. That is to say, traditional parallelism is substance dualism, while Spinoza's parallelism is conceptual or property dualism within substance monism. It follows that we ought not to consider Spinoza's parallelism in an ontological sense, but in a semantic sense, since for Spinoza the relationship between the mind and the body is ontologically one and the same and therefore we cannot claim that they are parallel. Spinoza's parallelism is derived from one substance and one order of events, so his parallelism should be understood in the sense that the mental description of one event is parallel to the physical description of the same event.

3. The Sources of the Parallelistic Interpretation

Some commentators understand that the relationship between the attributes of thought and extension in Spinoza is that they are strictly

parallel to each other. Hence, according to them, this implies that the mind and the body which are modes under the attributes of thought and extension respectively, are also parallel to each other. Joel Friedman describes Spinoza's mind-body theory by saying that "whatever happens modally in the physical world must have an exact parallel in the mental world, and conversely."²⁾ That is to say, he apparently takes it that in Spinoza's mind-body theory, the mental process is strictly (non-identical but) parallel to the physical process. This might suggest that the relationship between the mental realm and the physical realm in Spinoza's metaphysics is to be regarded as one of parallelism.³⁾ Now if this parallelism is taken to be an accepted fact about the world, it seems highly remarkable, a strange coincidence, which would need to be explained.

Fundamentally, a parallelistic interpretation relies on Spinoza's assertion that there is no causal relationship between the mind and the body while there is a causal relationship within each of the mental and physical realms. The main theses of parallelism are that (1) there is no causal relation between mental events and physical events, (2) mental events exist in a causal relation with mental events, and, similarly, physical events with other physical events, and (3) there is a one-to-one correspondence between mental events and physical events. Spinoza's assertion of the causal relationship is compatible with points (1) and (2). Concerning this, Spinoza, states that "[t]he body cannot determine the mind to thought, neither can the mind determine the body to

2) Joel Friedman, "Spinoza's Problem of Other Minds," *Synthese*, vol. 56 (1983), p. 103.

3) In fact, Friedman is arguing for property parallelism.

motion nor rest, nor to anything else if there be anything else” (E, III, Prop 2). As to point (3), this interpretation is based on the following statements, which are not good sources in my view since the statements strongly suggest identity rather than mere parallelism.

A mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing expressed in two different ways. (E, II, Prop 7, Schol)⁴⁾

The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things. (E, II, Prop 7)

The mind and the body are one and the same thing, conceived at one time under the attribute of thought, and at another under that of extension. (E, III, Prop 2. Schol)

Let us consider the parallelistic interpretation in relation to these quotations. Regarding the second and third statements, Hubbeling asserts that “This is rooted in his doctrine of parallelism. For although thinking does not influence extension and *vice versa* and the body does not

4) *Ethics* is cited by the following abbreviations: E = *Ethics*, and indicates (1) Number of the Part, (2) Number of Axiom, Definition, Proposition or Postulate, (3) Where appropriate, Demonstrates, Corollary or Scholium, with the following abbreviations: Ax = Axiom, Corol = Corollary, Def = Definition, Demon = Demonstration, Post = Postulate, Prop = Proposition, Schol = Scholium. Thus, for example, “E, II, Prop 13, Schol” stands for the scholium to proposition thirteen of part two of *Ethics*, and “E, II, Prop 16, Corol 2” stands for the second corollary to proposition sixteen of part two of *Ethics*. Unless otherwise indicated in the footnotes, passages from Spinoza’s *Ethics* in this thesis will be quoted from: Spinoza, Benedict De. *Ethics*. Translated by James Gutmann. New York and London: Hafner Press, 1949. Although James Gutmann translates the Latin term “Scholium” as “Note”, I shall in this thesis use the term “Scholium”.

influence the soul and *vice versa* the processes in each attribute (mode) run parallel, so that the quantitative magnitudes in the attribute of extension have their exact parallels in the attribute of *cogitatio*.”⁵⁾ This kind of interpretation might be correct if it were argued with the view that Spinoza’s parallelism is rooted in the doctrine of identity between the mind and the body.

With respect to the first statement, Friedman does precisely this. He claims that “Given this passage, I argue that there can be no exceptions whatever to the parallelism. *For there is only one substance, together with its modifications, each expressible in infinitely many ways, i.e., under infinitely many attributes*” (my italics).⁶⁾ Thus the modification of substance, the set of events, which is expressed as my body is also expressed as my mind. However, some parallelistic interpreters merely ascribe parallelism to Spinoza without explaining the basis of the parallelism: identity. Further, they infer parallelism from statements in Spinoza which imply identity rather than simply parallelism, like Hubbeling above. We can see that the third quotation explicitly asserts “identity” (mind and body as one and the same thing) and the first also talks of “one and the same thing.” The second quotation is perhaps more ambiguous, but compatible with there being one set of events. Furthermore, Spinoza mentions “identity” in many places in *Ethics* and in his other writings. Therefore, it is clear that parallelistic interpreters are confronted with strong evidence of Spinoza’s belief in identity of mind and body, and they should not ignore it. If commentators assert parallelism without considering identity of mind

5) H. G. Hubbeling, *Spinoza’s Methodology* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1964), p. 25.

6) *Ibid.*

and body, their interpretations are not adequate when applied to Spinoza's system. However, some commentators, like Friedman, explain the parallelism by appeal to identity (one substance doctrine). This seems to me correct.

Traditional parallelism holds the view that the mind and body run parallel with one another and never converge nor diverge. However, when we consider Spinoza's mind-body theory we should do so along with his ontological theory. We should not discuss Spinoza's mind-body theory without considering his whole metaphysical system, especially substance monism, and we should strive to make his mind-body theory compatible with his whole system.

4. Justification of the Parallelistic Interpretation

1) Bennett's trans-attribute modes

Bennett thinks that mind-body parallelism needs justification. If mental events and physical events are distinct and not causally linked, however, what keeps them in step? Why assume that mental events and physical events are synchronised, unless we can show causal connections between them? If they are not kept in step by causality, it seems to be a huge coincidence; it is easier to deny the synchrony or to assume that there is causal interaction. However, Bennett thinks that Spinoza's theory offers a better justification of parallelism. Let us examine the most important steps in his interpretation.

There are three theses which Bennett takes as central in Spinoza's theory. They are (A) the one-substance doctrine, (B) the mode identity

thesis, and (C) parallelism. (A) is based on the statement that “substance thinking and substance extended are one and the same” (E, II, Prop 7, Schol). (B) is based on the statement, “a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing” (E, II, Prop 7, Schol)□which Bennett thinks cannot be taken at face value. (C) is based on the statements, “the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things” (E, II, Prop 7), or “whether we think of Nature under the attribute of extension or under the attribute of thought, ... we shall discover one and the same order or one and the same connection of causes” (E, II, Prop 7, Schol).⁷⁾

Bennett argues that Spinoza used (A) substance monism and (B) the mind-body identity thesis□suitably interpreted□to explain (C) parallelism. In other words, for Spinoza, the reason why (C) is true is because (A) and (B) are true. Bennett infers this argument from the following passage.

For example, the circle existing in Nature and the idea that is in God of an existing circle are one and the same thing which is manifested through different attributes; and, therefore [*ideo*], whether we think of Nature under the attribute of extension or under the attribute of thought or under any other attribute whatever, we shall discover one and the same order or one and the same connection of causes, that is to say, in every case the same sequence of things. (E, II, Prop 7, Schol)

According to Bennett, the term “*ideo*”⁸⁾ suggests that Spinoza is

7) Jonathan Bennett, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*, p. 142.

8) Bennett takes “*ideo*” as meaning “for that reason” or “on that account” so that

offering an explanation of parallelism from the identity thesis (and substance monism), since the statement before this term stands for the doctrine of identity, the statement after this term implies parallelism and this term links the two doctrines, the former being the reason for the latter. It seems that Bennett treats parallelism as being derived from identity of mind and body (together with one substance doctrine), and thus his interpretation explains the above three doctrines in a reconcilable manner. In this context, Bennett is more progressive than some commentators who interpret Spinoza's theory as either parallelism or identity theory. In my view, since Spinoza claims both identity theory and parallelism, we should interpret Spinoza's mind-body theory as retaining both doctrines rather than as dropping one or the other. Bennett seems to interpret Spinoza as retaining both doctrines and also argues that one substance doctrine is related to mind-body theory as Spinoza argues. But Bennett finds this defence of parallelism implausible and (B) the mind-body identity above incredible, taken at face value, and thinks it needs a better justification. Bennett in effect rejects the mind-brain identity doctrine and claims a partial qualitative identity. He rejects numerical identity of mind and body in Spinoza, on the grounds that such an identity would threaten the separation of attributes: "I submit that is Spinoza's doctrine: his thesis about the identity of physical and mental particulars is really about the identity of properties. He [Spinoza] cannot be saying that physical P_1 = mental M_1 ; that is impossible because they belong to different attributes."⁹⁾

Bennett hopes to provide a better justification for identity and

his translation of it is "that is why" (*ibid.*).

9) *Ibid.*, p. 141.

parallelism by introducing the term “trans-attribute differentiae” which are the most fundamental modes. Now, I shall describe Bennett’s interpretation, as I understand it.¹⁰⁾

(1) The most basic properties of the one substance are not attributes but the trans-attribute modes, since the attributes do not constitute the essence of substance but merely express it.

(2) Trans-attribute modes are combined with the attributes. Consequently there are two kinds of modes, i.e. trans-attribute modes and attribute-confined modes.

(3) The former are modes which are not modes of extension, of thought or of any other attribute; that is to say, trans-attribute modes are combinable with the attribute of extension and are also combinable with the attribute of thought.

(4) Therefore, according to Bennett, if a trans-attribute mode, F, combines with extension, it becomes “extension and F”: a mode combined with the attribute of extension. And if a trans-attribute mode, F, combines with thought, it becomes “thought and F”: a mode combined with the attribute of thought.

(5) Consequently, the mind is “thought and F” and the body is “extension and F.” Mode-identity turns out to concern identity of properties.¹¹⁾ Here, it comes out that F not only explains the identity of the mind and body but also gives the reason why attribute-confined modes i.e. “thought and F” (mind) and “extension and F”(body) are parallel to each other. There is a common property possessed by the

10) *Ibid.*, pp. 143-151.

11) *Ibid.*, p. 141.

underlying reality, substance, which keeps them in step.

(6) It is impossible for any mind, however powerful, to have the concept of F, a trans-attribute mode, in abstraction from thought or extension or any other attribute. No-one can grasp or conceive the trans-attributive differentiae.

In this way, Bennett considers *parallelism* in terms of modes confined within attributes, whereas he considers the explanation of the parallelism of the mind and body to lie in the trans-attribute modes. As to the problem of the attributes and parallelism, he resolves it by treating trans-attribute modes (rather than the attributes) as the basic properties of substance, due to his view that the distinct attributes do not constitute the essence of substance but fix and express it. He says, "I say that Nature really has extension and thought, which really are distinct from one another, but that they are not really fundamental properties, although they must be perceived as such by any intellect." He offers an analogy. A circle is a figure *whose points all lie equidistant from a central point* (property F) in two dimensions. A sphere is the same property F in *three* dimensions. The different dimensions constitute the different attributes; the common F the trans-attribute mode. (In the analogy, but not in reality, F is knowable).

For Spinoza, each mode must be, as we have seen, conceived through each attribute, so how can there exist such a trans-attribute mode? Bennett was aware of this problem, but he argues that if we ascribe this concept to Spinoza, we can get an advantage, that is, we are able to remove conflict between identity between the mind and the body and the separation of the attributes.

However, even though we ascribe the concept of trans-attribute mode to Spinoza, this cannot justify Spinoza's claim of identity: since no one can grasp the trans-attribute modes, there is no possible concept of any such mode, and so they cannot mediate a connection between mind and body. Therefore, it seems that Bennett's interpretation can explain Spinoza's argument that the mental and the physical modes are one and the same thing, but only by appeal to unknowables. That is to say, since no one can have the concept of F, F cannot be applied to (mental) a and (physical) b where $a = b$.

Even if the mental and the physical are involved with the same trans-attribute mode, they cannot be numerically identical (one and the same thing) through the trans-attribute mode, since neither the mental nor the physical is identical to the trans-attribute mode. At best, as Della Rocca points out, this offers only a partial identity between the mind and the body.¹²⁾ Bennett takes the mind and the body to be attribute-confined modes and thus the mind is "thought and F" and the body is "extension and F." This does not give sufficient reason for their identity. The mental and the physical are still different kinds of attribute-confined mode, even if not fundamental properties. The fact that they have "F" in common does not lead to their identity but only to their partial identity.

One may argue, in favour of Bennett, that the common properties are not so much meant to secure identity between the mental and the physical properties as to keep them in step with each other and that the mental and the physical properties do not have to be numerically

12) Della Rocca, *Representation and the Mind-Body Problem in Spinoza* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 160.

identical in property parallelism (which requires one thing or one event with two sorts of properties, m-properties and p-properties). But, this is not Bennett's case: he does not argue for identity between the mental and the physical events. Bennett regards modes as properties of substance. Since Spinoza argues that the mind and the body are modes and that they are identical (Bennett accepts this), we have to explain identity in such a way that these two modes are identical. Now for Bennett's Spinoza, modes are properties. If, as Bennett claims, the mental properties and the physical properties (the mind and the body) are not identical, then Spinoza's argument that the mental and the physical modes are identical to each other cannot be justified by Bennett's interpretation.

Bennett's perspective is criticised by many commentators as being alien to Spinoza's thinking. For example, according to Edwin Curly, "I find his [Bennett's] explanation of the mind-body identity extremely implausible,"¹³⁾ and he goes on to say that "Bennett thinks he can explain why Spinoza affirms this identity, but I find his explanation (§§ 34 - 36) incredible. I cannot see Spinoza granting the existence of trans-attribute differentiae which cannot be grasped by any intellect"—even God.¹⁴⁾ Even if Bennett's concept of trans-attribute differentiae were compatible with Spinoza's position, this would not explain Spinoza's argument that the mental and the physical modes are *one* and the same, but would only explain a partial identity, as we have just seen.

13) E. M. Curley, *Behind the Geometrical Method: A Reading of Spinoza's Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 158, note 38.

14) *Ibid.*, p. 156, note 26.

The reason that Bennett interprets Spinoza's identity of mind and body as a partial qualitative identity is to save Spinoza from the threat of collapse of attribute dualism. However, there is no reason to suppose that Spinoza saw any such threat. Although his interpretation can hold a kind of identity without collapsing the separation of the attributes, it has costs: Spinoza's claim that the mode of extension and the idea of that mode are the same becomes difficult to interpret and justify. To say mode identity is property identity makes Spinoza's mind-body theory worse, not better, from Bennett's point of view. One way of maintaining identity could be to argue that thought and extension are not really distinct, but just mistakenly different ways of seeing the one F. This is what Wolfson thought, but Bennett specifically rejects this, and insists on the reality of the attributes. Bennett argues that mind and body must be kept causally distinct because causation implies an intellectual grasp of a connection.¹⁵⁾

2) The Problems of the Parallelistic Interpretation

Apart from Bennett's arguments on parallelism, I shall consider whether Bennett's concept of trans-attribute modes is compatible with Spinoza's doctrine of identity between the mind and the body. Bennett's position is that we can better explain Spinoza's doctrine in terms of the concept of trans-attribute modes, even though Spinoza did not mention this concepts. Bennett is trying to see how Spinoza could *both* accept mind/body identity *and* also treat mind and body as both causally and conceptually separate. He is trying to explain how given

15) *Ibid.*, p. 145.

identity, we can keep the attributes as distinct as Spinoza wants; that is, how we guarantee that parallelism holds without the collapse of the attributes, as identity threatens to do. Spinoza may not have even seen the problem, so we have to guess how he would have handled it or even could have handled it, (*if* he was not just inconsistent). Although, Bennett's attempt to get Spinoza out of trouble is ingenious and worthwhile, I think that trans-attribute modes do not exist and that there is not a partial identity but a numerical identity between the mental and the physical modes (things).

Furthermore, The problem arises from the fact that he attempts to infer identity from parallelism. Parallelism cannot be the reason for identity, since the sameness of the order and connection in two series, the sharing of the neutral properties does not guarantee identity. Suppose there are two clocks which indicate the same time at every moment, the order of connections within clock A being the same as the order of connections within clock B. However, this sameness of order and connection does not imply the identity of clocks A and B, but only offers the fact that the two orders are parallel to each other and A and B have a one-to-one correspondent relationship. It might be objected that Spinoza's doctrine is not the case of two clocks, but one clock, so that the case of two clocks ought to be ruled out. However, when one infers identity from parallelism, one cannot presuppose that there is one clock. Since the conclusion one wants to prove is the existence of one clock (identity), one cannot presuppose this fact as the premise of the inference without circularity.

Considering this explanation and the clock analogy above, it is evident that we cannot infer identity from Spinoza's parallelism without

presupposing identity, whereas we can infer parallelism from identity without presupposing parallelism. The reason why we can infer identity from *Spinoza's* parallelism (property parallelism) is because his parallelism is derived from his identity theory i.e. because identity is already presupposed in his parallelism. We cannot infer identity theory from parallelism in Spinoza without circularity; for Spinoza, identity theory is prior to parallelism since parallelism is the consequence of identity theory. It follows that we cannot explain Spinoza's mind-body identity without relying on his one substance doctrine. The claim that we can infer identity from parallelism still looks suspect, unless we can see how Spinoza might have inferred identity from parallelism. Thus the sameness of order and connection only provide a sufficient ground for *parallelism*, and identity theory makes parallelism necessary, since the sameness of order and connection is inferred from the fact that the mental and the physical events are one and the same thing and that the mental and the physical properties express the same essence of a thing (the essence of the same thing) in an orderly way.

One may argue that we can infer identity from parallelism, so long as the identity of indiscernibles holds, and Spinoza seems to say that where there are two things there must be a difference in quality between these two things: the identity of indiscernibles. Hence, we can infer identity from Spinoza's parallelism in conjunction with the identity of indiscernibles, whereas we cannot do this from traditional parallelism alone.

Be this as it may, some passages strongly suggest that the inference goes from identity to parallelism:

[T]he mind and the body are one and the same thing, conceived at one time under the attribute of thought, and at another under that of extension. *For this reason*, the order or concatenation of things is one, whether Nature be conceived under this or under that attribute, and *consequently* the order of the state of activity and passivity of our body is coincident in Nature with the order of the state of activity and passivity of the mind. (E, III, Prop 2, Schol; my italics)

The passage supports identity as prior to parallelism. We should pay attention to the fact that Spinoza begins with identity and derives one order and concatenation of things from it, and also to his use of the term “consequently”: the fact that the order of the body is parallel to the order of the mind is consequent upon the identity (one order of things). Thus, we can see that for Spinoza, the doctrine of identity is more fundamental than parallelism, and that Spinoza’s mind-body theory should be treated as an identity theory which leads to parallelism.

Since Bennett regards modes as properties, he would have to suppose that when Spinoza said that my mind and my body are one and the same thing he had forgotten that they are only *partially* identical and that modes are only *properties*; this is why Spinoza says the mind and the body are one and the same thing. This is an implausible position. Despite Bennett’s excellent arguments, his attempt to derive identity from parallelism rests ultimately on the identity of indiscernibles, which is somewhat controversial.

5. Conclusion

Spinoza's mind-body theory is most often interpreted as parallelism and this interpretation is compatible with the two key conditions: that there is not a causal relationship between mind and body, and that he gives equal weight to mind and body. But it is crucial to recognize that Spinoza's parallelism differs from traditional parallelism. For Spinoza, parallelism ought to be argued within an identity doctrine. Unlike traditional parallelism, Spinoza's mind-body theory asserts the identity of mind and body. Whereas traditional parallelism argues that the mind and the body are parallel because they are entirely different in nature, Spinoza argues that the mind and the body are parallel because they are identical with each other. We can see how Spinoza's parallelism differs from traditional parallelism. According to the traditional view, parallelism is basically a dualistic position, but in Spinoza's view, it is a monistic position. Traditional parallelism holds the view that the mind and body run parallel with one another and never converge nor diverge. However, when we consider Spinoza's mind-body theory we should do so along with his ontological theory. We should not discuss Spinoza's mind-body theory without considering his whole metaphysical system, especially substance monism, and we should strive to make his mind-body theory compatible with his whole system. That is to say, Spinoza's parallelism is conceptual or property dualism within substance monism. Spinoza's parallelism is derived from one substance and one order of events, so his parallelism should be understood in the sense that one event with a mental description is the

very same event which can equally be given a physical description.

Bennett interprets Spinoza somewhat along these lines. So their interpretations seem to be closer to Spinoza. However, the problem is that Bennett minimizes Spinoza's argument for identity. On Bennett's interpretation, there is neither a numerical identity between mental and physical events nor a numerical identity between the mental and the physical properties; there exists only an identity of non-graspable determinables of which the mental and the physical are determinates.

But, given that Spinoza maintains substance monism and the real distinction between the attributes of thought and extension (and that his mind-body theory follows from his doctrines of substance and attributes), we should argue that for Spinoza there is a numerical identity between mental and physical things and that there is no identity between mental and physical properties: the mental and the physical things are one and the same thing described under mental and physical properties, respectively.

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스피노자와 평행론적 해석

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스피노자의 심신이론에 대한 일반적인 해석 중 하나는 평행론이다. 평행론은 사유 속성과 연장 속성이 서로 구별되는 별개의 속성이기 때문에 그 양태인 정신과 신체가 동일한 양태가 아니라는 점에서부터 출발한다. 이 논문은 전통적인 평행론과 그것에 기초한 해석을 소개한 다음, 스피노자의 평행론과 비교하여 스피노자의 심신이론이 이전의 입장과 어떻게 구별되는지를 보여 준다. 필자는 베넷이 평행론은 정신과 신체가 동일성을 포함하는 이론이라고 본다는 점에서 그의 해석에 동의하면서도 평행론으로부터 identity를 도출하려는 그의 시도가 궁극적으로 논란의 여지가 있는 identity of indiscernible에 의존해 있다는 점과, identity에 대한 스피노자의 논의를 축소시켰다는 점 등을 문제점으로 지적할 것이다.

주제분류 : 서양근대철학, 심신론

주요어 : 스피노자, 베넷, 정신, 신체, 평행론, 동일성

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