

SPECULUM SPINOZANUM, 1677-1977

Edited by
Siegfried Hessing

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Foreword

Huston Smith, Syracuse

Benedict Spinoza died in 1677; these essays are being published in 1977. Obviously they are a tribute. The book is a way for philosophers to say, on the occasion of this tricentennial, that they remember. They remember a man who continues to live vigorously in their classrooms and on the pages of their journals, a man no history of human thought would dream of omitting.

The book is a tribute, but for philosophers the highest tribute is not praise but engagement: engagement with the thought of the person being honoured. So it should be added that this collection constitutes a *philosophical* tribute. Each of the essays in the volume attests to that fact. Together, they test and probe, winnow and knead, and try once again to extract meaning from what is obscure, all in the interests of keeping alive and virile in man's ongoing consciousness the mind that was Spinoza's.

I should like for my Foreword, too, to conform to this pattern, so I shall touch on a substantive issue. As Forewords are not the place for details, I choose a topic that is global and inclusive. I shall call it 'the Spinoza anomaly', and formulate it, simply, as follows: Why is Spinoza so loved and respected, yet so little followed?

The love and respect need scarcely be argued. What teacher, in introducing Spinoza to his students by way of the epithet 'the Blessed Spinoza', sees himself as merely translating 'Benedict', the latinized equivalent of the Hebrew *Baruch*, meaning blessing or benediction? He lingers over the name-turned-epithet because the grounds for doing so are overwhelming; it fits the man as if it had been preordained. Bertrand Russell comes close to speaking for all of us when he wrote in *A History of Western Philosophy* 'Spinoza is the noblest and most lovable of the great philosophers.' But this only accentuates the paradox: Why then is he so little followed? Thomists, Kantians, and Wittgensteinians abound, but how often does one run across a Spinozist?

There is an easy way to resolve this anomaly, which I shall note only to put it behind us. According to this superficial resolution, Spinoza is loved because his life was so exemplary, or alternatively because his system is architectonically so impressive; he is not followed because he was mistaken. If he was not mistaken in trying to construct a metaphysical system in the first place, as many

philosophers today would contend, he was clearly mistaken in the way he went about building it. Given the excitement attending the birth of modern science in the seventeenth century we can understand why the geometrical method excited him, but too much has happened in the three hundred years that have intervened to allow us to take it seriously. Geometries have become multiple, logic turns out to be wedded to paradox,¹ and all efforts to find bed-rock foundations on which logic's ladder might be planted unshakably have led to quicksand. Percepts shift with their contexts (Gestalt psychology), facts reflect the theories that sponsor them (science, and cognition generally), and there appear not to **be** any elementary particles from which nature is constructed (particle physics).

I call the foregoing resolution of the Spinoza anomaly superficial because it trivializes the truth component in what we esteem, a move that is particularly unseemly for philosophers. It assumes that the not-less-than-holy life Spinoza lived² was unrelated to the truth he saw. Or if we prefer to hew to the cognitive grounds for our admiration, it assumes that coherence alone suffices to win our respect, whereas outside the formal sciences we know that it does not suffice – if it did we would applaud paranoids, for as a rule there is nothing wrong with their logic, its only flaw being that it is out of touch with reality. To reduce metaphysics to a game well played is to rob it, and ultimately all philosophy, of its basis and importance. The mind that is fed 'wholly with joy... unmingled with sadness' (*On the Improvement of the Understanding*) is not a mind applauding a logical joust. We need an explanation of the Spinoza anomaly that avoids the travesty of disjoining the respect we accord a philosopher from the question of whether he was right.

I suggest the following: we sense that Spinoza was right,³ but we don't follow him – don't consider ourselves Spinozists or think of ourselves as his followers – because we don't see how he got where he did. The argument that carried him to conclusions we sense to be true don't carry us there; we don't find them compelling. This way of putting the matter may seem as paradoxical as the anomaly it is introduced to resolve, but of course it isn't. Right and left our instincts for truth outstrip the reasons we adduce to justify them – in Michael Polanyi's formula, we know more than we can tell. In so far as we claim (or would like to claim) the opposite, we exhibit 'the European mistake'; the mistake of thinking that it is the role of the sage to explain things from zero, whereas in fact his vocation is first to 'see' and then to 'cause to see'; that is, to provide a key. The classic error of Western rationalism is to assume that metaphysical conclusions are no stronger than the arguments adduced to support them and that they collapse the moment weaknesses in those arguments are exposed, an

exposure that is easily accomplished because the premises of metaphysical proofs invariably elude everyday (which is to say unanimous) experience. The truth is the reverse. Rather than being the causes of certainty, metaphysical arguments are their results. This makes the certainty in one sense subjective, but at the same time it is objective if it is in fact a prolongation of realities that are independent of our minds.

In calling the mistake just cited 'Western' I mean, of course, that it is the recent Western mistake; our very word 'theory' derives, as we know, from *theoria*, a term originally drawn from the theatre and implying vision. Like Plato, Spinoza saw something. Had his mysticism been ecstatic we might be inclined to say that he experienced something, but because it was in fact immaculately intellectual – gnostic, or *jnanic* as the Vedantists would say – it is better to say he saw, or perhaps sensed, something. ('Saw' captures the *clarity* of his controlling insight, 'sensed' its *intuitive character* – the difficulty of conveying it to persons who have had no direct contact with it.) A moment ago we were citing Gestalt psychology and particle physics to document the mind's inability to arrive at ultimates. For the phenomenal world this is plain fact, awash as that world is in relativity and change – in *maya*, to reach again for a Vedantic term. But beneath this remorseless flux Spinoza discerned something permanent. This is not a place to try again to say what it was, or rather what it is. It is enough to say that he saw as clearly as man ever has what Substance is and what is its relationship to accident, grasping at the same time that every single thing participates in both while being always accident in relation to the one and only Substance that empowers it. In doing so he understood in principle the meaning, not only of all religion, but of all metaphysics in the true and etymological sense of that word. As for ourselves, we sense that he had hold of that meaning, however little we may be able to follow his approach to it or blaze an alternative route.

This is my suggestion regarding the Spinoza anomaly. We do not call ourselves Spinozists because the way he articulated his insight is, for the most part, not the way we would do so; it is too coloured by thought patterns of a period that is not our own. But metaphysical systems are not mirror-images of reality; they are symbols – fingers point at the moon, as Ch'an Buddhists would say.⁴ And Spinoza's finger, we sense – many, many of us do, at least – was precisely and accurately angled. That is why we honour him. He points us toward truth of a mode which, to the degree that we succeed in encompassing it, can free us as it freed him.

I speak of degree, and this is important, for truth that is as existential as the kind Spinoza was involved with is not simply accepted or rejected; it is appropriated incrementally. Sufis liken three stages in the acquisition of gnosis

to hearing about fire, seeing fire, and being burned by fire. Comparably one can respond affirmatively to Spinoza by assenting to what he says, seeing what he says, and being consumed by what he says – George Eliot seems to have been on to something like these distinctions when she wrote that ‘Spinoza says from his own soul what all the world is saying by rote.’ Not many reach the last stage (being consumed by Spinoza), for it involves recognizing one’s individuality as a ‘cosmic accident’. But Spinoza was himself living proof that it is possible to catch sight of something majestic – a Good beyond all goods – that at the mere sight of it one loses personal desires completely, forgets oneself in its contemplation, and adds a new dimension to the treasures of the soul. Spinoza has been faulted because his *Deus sive Natura* is impersonal. His audience is a different breed; persons whose taste is for the Absolute, for that cold, remote, emotionless beyond where nothing stirs, where there is no agitation, there is just that immaculate, almost unreachable height of the aloneness of God.

In writing what I have I may have presumed on the invitation accorded me to enter this Foreword, for the points I have made are personal ones and are not to be charged against the book’s contributors. So let me close by turning to the book itself.

It is at once a work of insight, devotion, and extraordinary range.

I feel as if its authors – and especially its editor, Siegfried Hessing, who has poured the latter years of his life into this project (actually the third tributary Spinoza project he has effected), first into conceiving it and then seeing it through to completion – have, as I suggested in my opening paragraph, performed a service for us all, the entire philosophical community and in larger sense its surrounding intellectual community.⁵ By virtue of their labours we can all feel better about 1977.

NOTES

- 1 Bertrand Russell admitted that the Theory of Types, concocted to deal with self-referential paradoxes (‘This sentence is false’) was not really a theory but a stop-gap. ‘Similar self-referential paradoxes ... are considered quite acceptable in the ordinary theory of equations’ (G. Spencer Brown, *Laws of Form*, p. ix).
- 2 By birth a man of exile, by temperament a recluse, he showed not the slightest bitterness in spite of his excommunication and his inherited memories of centuries of persecution and fanaticism. Whatever his subject, he always brought to it a mind free of attachment to self, party, or nation.
- 3 Not all of us sense this, of course, and among those who do there is a significant difference in degree. To the latter point I shall return in a moment.
- 4 This association of Spinoza with an oriental outlook is not fortuitous. A contributor to this volume, Paul Wienpahl, has called my attention to the fact that Pierre Bayle in the

article on Spinoza in his dictionary said that there was nothing new in this man's philosophy, comparing it to that of a certain sect of Chinese theologians. Wienpahl feels certain that he was referring to Ch'an Buddhism and details the parallelism as follows: What, according to Spinoza, we erroneously take to be a plurality of substances corresponds in Ch'an to the deluding fabrications of the ego; Spinoza's imagination is Ch'an's bifurcating intellect; Spinoza's understanding or intuitive knowing is Ch'an's enlightenment, and Spinoza's Substance is Ch'an's non-dual *sunyata*. Siegfried Hessing touches on Wienpahl's point in his Prologue to this book while adding other Eurasian parallels.

- 5 Poets are the only writers Spinoza quotes, and it was poets and novelists, in turn, who first appreciated him. Among them were Wordsworth, Schelling, and above all Goethe, who on completing his second reading of the Ethics reported: 'I have never seen things so clearly, or been so much at peace!' George Eliot's tribute I have already quoted; to her name can now be added, among others, those of: Gustave Flaubert, Romain Rolland, Renan, Novalis, Lessing, Jacobi, Schiller, Schlegel, Schleiermacher, L. Feuerbach, Grillparzer, Heine, Nietzsche, Brandes, Dehmel, F. Mauthner, Fritz Droop, Jakob Wassermann, Arnold Zweig.

Pathfinders pointing the rare way for pathseekers

Arranged and adapted by Siegfried Hessing

If the way, which I have shown leads hither, seems very difficult, it can nevertheless be found. It must indeed be difficult since it is so seldom discovered, for if salvation lay ready at hand and could be discovered without great labour, how could it be possible that it should be neglected by everybody? But all noble things are as difficult as they are rare.

Baruch de Spinoza

It is a great joy to realize that the path to freedom which all Buddhas have trodden is ever existent, ever unchanged and ever open to those who are prepared to enter upon it. Precepts of the Gurus

When the pupil is ready, then the Master will appear before him.

Light on the Path

Thou canst not travel on the path before thou hast become the path itself.

The Voice of Silence

When this path is beheld... without moving, is the travelling on this road. In this path to whatever place one would go, that place one's self becomes.

Jnaneshvari

The path is one for all, the means to reach the goal must vary with the pilgrims. As there is neither any traversing nor any traverser of the path, the expression 'PATH' is merely figurative.

Precepts of the Gurus

'PATH' is merely a metaphor descriptive of the method of realizing spiritual growth of progress.

W. Y. Evans-Wentz

On this path we have to find our own touchstone of truth, independent of academic or theological approval. What we want is one's own perception of the truth, not one taken on ready made.

Anyone who so desires can move into the vitalizing study [of the path] and dig in his own mind indefinitely making his own discoveries and can be a point of consciousness to which revelation comes.

Carlo Soares

'I am' [is] that 'I am' – 'I am' [is] the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. (I and the father are one!)

Exod. 3: 6, 14

... that ye may know that 'I am' [is] the LORD!

Ezek. 6: 7

'I am' [is] unique: every-thing and no-thing. Ani=Ayin. Aham = Maha. *Causa sive ratio: vel sui vel alius...* the indeterminate.

Meta-Esoterics

If 'I am 'I' because 'you' are 'you' and if 'you' are 'you' because 'I' am 'I' – then: I am not [really] I and you are not [really] you.

Hassidic Saying

I am not only I, I am also you, he, she and it. – *Ego=id=idem*. Then: how to learn to reidentify with the seemingly or para-other (the so-called 'parallel' meeting each other otherless in the infinite according to Euclid!)? How: with that Tat twam asi?

Siegfried Hessing

'I am' [is] because 'I think' [of] 'I am': *cogito ergo sum*.

Rene Descartes

The uni-verse is a play: as if an empty shell wherein 'your' mind [as 'I am'] frolics infinitely. – As (I-less) waves come with water and (I-less) flames with fire, so uni-versal waves come with 'us' [as 'I am' – awareness] – I (am) can toss [one-sided] attachment for body aside realizing 'I am' (is) every 'where' [and every 'when']. One who is every 'whereness' is joyous ('everness'). [Conclusion: he is not *alone* but all-one or one-all as 'I am' via omni-awareness.]

Lakshamanjoo revitalizes Tantra

'I am' [is] the Way, the Truth and Life.

John 14: 6

The way up and the way down is the very same way! [to thy own otherless self.]

Heraclitus

The undefinable omni-present is the 'way' called *Tao*. *Tao* is that which lets now the dark, now the light.

Lao-Tse

To know (other) men: is to be wise. To know one's self is to be illumined. To conquer (other) men: is to have strength. To conquer one's self is to be stronger ... and to know when you have enough [of having and of knowing – ed.].

Lao-Tse

[Conclusion: The goal is to re-verse the omni-versal habit and co-habit, namely: *know thy neighbour!* and *love thyself!* by transmuting into: *know thyself!* and into: *love thy neighbour!*]

Know therefore this day and consider it in thine heart that Yahweh is the Elohim in heaven above and upon earth beneath: there is none else. Thus hear, o Israel: Yahweh is our Elohim! Yahweh (and Elohim are not two but) *is one!*

Deut. 4: 39

The sole object with which the Holy, blessed be He, sends man into this world is: to know that Yahweh is the Elohim! [That is man's WAY.]

Zohar Pt. II

There are [apart from the One Way] three ways which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: the way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon the rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea, and the way of a man with a maid.

Prov. 30: 18, 19

Philo-sophia abducit et reducit.

Bacon of Verulam

Philosophy is the dis-ease for which it should be the cure.... No-thing empirical is knowable.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Let your mind be re-made and your whole nature thus trans-formed: meta-noiete [not: para-noiete – ed.]!

Rom. 12: 2

Renew a right spirit in me!

A revulsion or re-volution must take place by self-realization in the deepest recess of your being: paravrittasraya.

Lankavatara Sutra

Scriptura non docet sed experientia. Ergo doctissima ignorantia et arrogantia. Ego experientia: vivos voco, mortuos plango, fulgura frango. Sic.!

Dixi

Experience is the bald man's comb [Never able to be used].

Chinese Saying

Apart from the experience of the subjects there is nothing, no-thing, bare nothingness.

Alfred North Whitehead

There is simply experience. There is not 'something' or 'someone' experiencing experience. You never were aware of being aware.

Alan Watts

Experience is like self-alchemy. The enlightening ex-perience is the self-'X'-perience of your own otherless and 'ex'-less unknown, the mysterious 'X': *causa sive ratio vel sui vel alius*: the indeterminacy!

Siegfried Hessing

Alchemy is not armchair philosophy or speculative science. It is the *practice* of inner unity on all levels of consciousness: separately and conjoined.

Ralph Metzner

The essence of life and nature, the secret of immortality cannot be found by dry intellectual work and selfish desire: but *only* by touch of undiluted life in spontaneity of in-tuition.

Lama Anagarika Govinda

Let him who seeks [the path] not cease seeking until he finds and when he finds, he will be troubled, and when he has been troubled, he will marvel.

Gospel of Thomas

SUMMUM BONUM

Yes, let us all marvel:

lonely or all-oney-together!

Whitehead points to the importance of

what man does with his aloneness! How to escape from self-separation?

How to attain self-unification and be again back in Eden with access to the Tree of Life?

Yes, let us marvel

at the enigma of life!

Although unknowable, because unknowable,

it remains for ever so marvellous!

In messianic expansion of consciousness

exoteric knowledge, *cognitio alius*, will turn into esoteric one, *cognitio sui*

In messianic urge life and knowledge,

like self and other are not two, but a pair-concept for the twoless self-same ONE!

Kabbalists convince us:

it is the very same tree in the center of Eden. Only for those in exile it seems split:

Life versus knowledge or self against other.

Readmitted from Diaspora in the gathering of longing re-turn home,

Pseudo-twoness, para-otherness becomes:

quasi-twoness, pseudo-otherness and quasiness is revealing the salvation of Advaita. Twolessness, otherlessness, one-allness, all-oneness!

One not a number but the countless indeterminate:

ratio sive causa vel sui vel alius!

'Vel' is a velum to veil the ECHAD ... !

Yahweh and the Elohim (are not two but) is the very self-same, otherless ECHAD!

Le Chayim! To life or to Eden with nostalgia!

Le Daath! To knowledge or to death of deadening dichotomy:

of quasi-knower versus quasi-known.

Knowledge expelled us from Eden, keeps us in exile ...

is lifeless and never self-experienceable. Life although unknowable is experience of omniality, with oceanic feeling of the bubbling oceanic drop and re-aware with cosmic-divine orgasm the ex-less mystery of our 'X':

to marvel at, to wonder and then

to ponder only in order to marvel again, to wonder again and again back in Eden...

IN SPINOZA'S OWN WORDS:

forma sive essentia ...

essendi fruitio (percipiendi fruitio ?) omnia animata (sumus) ...

sentimus experimurque nos - omnes - aeternos esse.

Deus sive Veritas sive Natura: vel naturans vel naturata.

vel deificans vel deificatus.

Amor Dei sive Naturae intellectualis!

Causa sive ratio vel sui vel alius!

Perseitas non est de-monstrabilis: Q.E.D.!

Spinozistic pegs, makeshifts, expedient means to express the inexpressible ...
sive, vel, quatenus

quamvis,

In symbols also serving as pegs, makeshifts and expedient means:

$$\begin{aligned}
0^0 - 0^x - 0^\infty - 0^\star &= \sqrt[0]{0} - \sqrt[0]{x} - \sqrt[0]{\infty} - \sqrt[0]{\star} \\
x^0 - x^x - x^\infty - x^\star &= \sqrt[x]{0} - \sqrt[x]{x} - \sqrt[x]{\infty} - \sqrt[x]{\star} \\
\infty^0 - \infty^x - \infty^\infty - \infty^\star &= \sqrt[\infty]{0} - \sqrt[\infty]{x} - \sqrt[\infty]{\infty} - \sqrt[\infty]{\star}
\end{aligned}$$

CABBALAH

NUGATORES CABBALISTAE=NUGATORES PHILOSOPHICI!

MAGNUM ARCANUM:

$$\star^0 - \star^x - \star^\infty - \star^\star = \sqrt[\star]{0} - \sqrt[\star]{x} - \sqrt[\star]{\infty} - \sqrt[\star]{\star}$$

יְיָ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים

INVITA LATINITATE

INVITA LINGUA

INVITA COGITATIONE

Idea vera cum suo ideato con-venire debet

Ordo et connexio idearum idem est ac ordo et connexio rerum ...

ego = id= idem

e(r)go identificabilis sum via omnia animata ...

omnia naturata ... omnia deificata ...

$$\sqrt{x}: \sqrt{\star} = \infty^{\infty}$$

Prologue with Spinozana – parallels via East and West

Siegfried Hessing, London

Scriptura non docet sed experientia, ergo doctissima ignorantia et arrogantia.
Sic: ego, experientia, vivos voco, mortuos plango, fulgura frango. Dixi.

Not to study the scriptures, not to expound them, not to explain them while the plain message eludes us but rather to experience them plainly 'in' us and 'as' us. Experience thus is not reduced to word-experience as a lifeless spirit of the letter in a paper existence. The word was the beginning of life: to speak out what is in the unspeakable.

What God was, was the word.... The Lord gave the word and great was the company of those who made it public.

The word naming a thing and the thing named are the very same. This identity is demonstrated in Biblical language where 'davar' means: word, matter and thing. Job was capable of 'seeing that the root of matter (word, thing) is found in me', and therefore 'me' and 'everything' involving experience leads to one's root-awareness. Experience, the magic of life, 'happens' only in the instant *now* and *here* as 'instasis' or 'enstasis' and cannot be *understood* but has to be *lived*, bringing one back to the Tree of Life as if into the midst of the Garden of Eden. There the Etz Chayim impartially stands and withstands the grand trial and dilemma arriving from the Tree of Knowledge always in relation to it. Knowledge tries to separate with discrimination and dichotomy a quasi-knower from a quasi-known via knowing, as though they were two separate entities *per se*, while life unites and reunites again via experience those with a longing for the otherless self-realization.

I am fully conscious that not being a literary man, certain presumptuous persons will think they may reasonably blame me; alleging that I am not a man of letters. Foolish folks! Do they not know that I might retort as Marius did to the Roman Patricians by saying: that they who deck themselves out in the labour of others will not allow me my own. They will say that I, having no literary skill, cannot properly express that which I desire to treat; but they do

not know that my subjects are to be dealt with by *experience* rather than by words. And (experience) has been the mistress of those who wrote well. And so as mistress, I will cite her in all cases.¹

The experience, and especially the experience of Spinoza's teaching as essential to life, cannot be the exclusive property only of academic scriptural studies remote from real life, which often declare the timeless and unfashionable as occult, only to find it later hailed by posterity. Experience remains the one and only challenge. A challenge to attract to Spinoza exceptional men above the prosaic average such as the Geheimrat von Weimar, Jacobi, Lessing, Herder, Novalis, Heine and all those sharing alike the god-thirsty and god-intoxicated Apollonian mission. From the very early days of my youth and my thinking² I admired Spinoza with an innate lyrical affinity. And like Spinoza I despised the fading myth of the graduate with a fading craving for life and life-experience using the *philosophia perennis* as a guide. While trying to follow Spinoza's footsteps I discovered that he rejected for himself any academic umbrella as a legal protection for his (illegal) philosophy and refused an invitation to take a chair of philosophy at the University, of Heidelberg, knowing only too well that he would never ever be able to sit comfortably in such a chair; to think only for thinking's sake: *causa sui sive ratio sui!* And now as I happily bask in Spinoza's radiant sunshine, I am sure I also need no umbrella as protection against the sunlike splendour of his teaching, especially now as I try again to testify in the witness-box for the third time during my life. Spinoza's path, so rare and so difficult, remains a challenge indeed only for those who have the urge and surge of vocation; and is very seldom accessible to that craving profession whose only aim is a brilliant mediocrity.

Once I discovered with great satisfaction that an international journal *Art and Science, Leonardo*,³ dealing mostly with scholarly approaches to the conceptualization of grasping art and creativity alike, had found it necessary to claim a controversial motto by Leonardo da Vinci himself. I then admired da Vinci much more than before for so well defending his non-academic status, and I felt proud indeed as only a successful partisan of Spinoza could feel towards an army ready to grade ranks for the majority of platitudes they uttered under the dictatorship of regimentation. It was just this that Charles Luk warned me to be aware of, when he told me to 'redouble my efforts to make Spinoza's philosophy known in the West' in my own way; unbiased and free from any 'isms', as it were. And I felt proud indeed when I saw others joining me again in my Spinoza-quest – me, an outsider concerned with the inside and in-sight of man and mankind as the very mission in life.

Even in the very early stages of my adolescence the *Ethics* was like a Bible to me, and at that time I did not dream that one day the first verse of Bereshit would become as significant to me as the first axiom in Spinoza's *Ethics*; to grasp genesis via gnosis and gnosis via genesis. Sic! To study such a book as the *Ethics*, sealed with concealed mysteries, for me was as if I looked beyond myself; i.e. beyond my I-mindedness into my own unknown: circumscribed best with *causa sive ratio sui* or the indeterminate.

Now, how to find the door, that magic door of direct perception or intuition bypassing quasi-otherness *per se* via ex-tuition? How? Otherness is only quasi-otherness, para-otherness soon becoming pseudo-otherness when quasiness is not intuited and when one is ready to divide a quasi-perceiver and quasi-perceived as though *per se* evolving into a double *perseitas*. Sic! I was too eager and ready then to enter that door and face there my faceless face, the egoless (and otherless) Self. Paul Repts⁴ has introduced an immanent experience via Zen flesh and bones and presents an odd and old text with 112 ways to open the invisible door of consciousness for direct self-experience. And such doors are like gateless gates to marvel at.

As a rule, with such rare and marvellous exceptions, academics and priests, both commanding 'ism'-infested keywords for fossilized dogmas can very seldom provide a real key to such a real invisible door leading into such real beyondness. Lacking self-experience, they cannot have any empirical approach, save only with a dia-'lectic' access to that door, while they themselves are banned and exiled into the 'otherness' of words to disguise their failure with dignity. They can never even attract true followers, apart from quoters of their dogma, unless they show how they themselves were attracted to accept self-confrontation with the riddle of the own, otherless unknown; because they dare not avoid the deviations, via quasiness, of quasi-otherness *per se* as salvation. One can only feel the challenge to become a follower, a disciple, when seeing before oneself exemplary self-discipline driven by unceasing fervour, inspiring an equal fervour to self-commitment and to self-involvement. Not a teacher himself, seeking refuge in the asylum of imperatives: you (the 'other') should! Always you, but never I, never I, that unique co(s)mic exception which so freely accepts the universal exception as the rule.

And now we are witnessing the spiritual revival of the Cabbala and alchemy alike, it becomes so convincingly clear when we see how all the misty patchwork (which the lazy multitude takes for the real work, the *magnum opus*) has been swept aside so that the basic essence could be heard and the re-affirmation of every basic equal essence of teaching recognized. Fulcanelli, the last living alchemist of our present time, has something to add to this message. I was very

glad that I was able to meet his pupil, Eugene Canseliet, who not only published his master's manuscripts but continues to follow him in his way. I was also glad to find here, on the same (p-)latitude that I live on, the living commentator of *Le Mystere des Cathedrales*, Walter Lang in alchemical disguise so to speak. A strong personality trying through his universality to help diffuse the perennial hidden meaning of alchemy better than the specialists, who in their overzeal confuse us so often. The old occult message of alchemy – unfortunately presented to Spinoza himself only in the crass exoteric meaning then – was not to transmute common base metal into common gold, but rather to point to such uncommon transmutation of dualistically seen layers of consciousness. This becomes clear only when the revivalists of alchemy dare to point openly to the oneness of experimenter and the quasi-object of experimentation, which is the very same quasi-otherness of self. *Em-peiron* means 'in the trial', i.e. of the self-committed with the *a-peiron*. The worker identified with the work.

In my own contributions to this book I further expound how I was already attracted via my own unknown or unconscious side to that famous text in Spinoza's *Ethics*, namely to that

truth which some of the Hebrews appear to have seen as if through a cloud, since they say that *God, the Intellect, and the things which are the objects of that Intellect are one and the same thing* (2P7) (my italics).

Further, Spinoza finishes his *Ethics* with the dawn of liberation from self-bondage when he points to the wise man who, when he becomes conscious of himself, of God, and the world (of *things: omnia animata*) just crowns this glorious *leitmotif* which has inspired Cabbalists and alchemists alike to (otherless) self-experience. It is the self-realization of the all-oneness of God, God's intellect and God's intellected world of quasi-otherness *per se*, i.e. things or objects, so to speak. It took me years and years of seeking, and seconds of enlightenment to discover the very same signposts pointing to that occult or mysterious all-oneness or one-allness via quasi-otherness *per se* which leads to the verification of that same: Know Thyself! *Tat twain asi!* Such verification includes the self-identification with the 'ordo et connectio idearum sive rerum'='causa sive ratio (vel sui vel alius)'. And you? You are not only you, but me, him, her, and it as well – but regrettably you do not know it. You are not aware, self-aware of it 'as' you and 'in' you until self-realization begins to dawn. Such signposts are to be found in the various teachings of the East, but also in the Esoterics of the Cabbala, such as Moses Cordovero, to whom Spinoza makes some allusions as quoted above. Among so many and often repetitive themes about Spinoza only a

single paper by David Kahana is to be found in Jean Preposiet's *Bibliographie Spinoziste* (Paris, 1973), namely Moshe Qordobhero u Barukh Shpinoza, Ha Shiloa, 1897, in Hebrew. No one would have thought then that Cordovero had found re-affirmation via alchemy and the Cabbala and also via Eastern doctrines of that magic all-oneness or one-allness to which I propose to return later, in my own papers.

And Carlo Soares, in his revision of the *Qabala* using the newly discovered key, points to the direct perception or identity of knower, known and knowing, and thus continues the rare way of Cordovero indeed with the main aim in mind elucidating otherless self-experience. In my own paper (Proton Axioma kai Proton Pseudos) I consider it as my own homage, to the primordial message of Spinoza (abolishing quasi-otherness *per se* and accepting quasiness instead) to approach the discriminative, binary, alternating view of multi-dimensionality of cosmic consciousness from the amoeba via man to the galaxies....

And while still on the subject of the contemporary revival of alchemy let us hear what Fulcanelli has to say when appealing to man to prepare for the self-experience of such divine-cosmic all-oneness which seems as odd as the transformation of base metal into noble gold.⁵

The mysterious science requires: no one may aspire to possess the great secret, if he does not *direct* his life in accordance with the research he has undertaken.... It is not enough to be studious, active and persevering, if one has not firm principles, no solid basis, if immoderate enthusiasm blinds one to reason, if pride overrules judgement, if greed expands before the prospect of a golden future. The mysterious science requires: great precision, accuracy and perspicacity in observing facts, a healthy, logical and reflexive mind, a lively but not overexcitable imagination, a warm and pure heart. It also demands the greatest simplicity and complete indifference with regard to *theories, systems and hypotheses*, which are generally accepted without question on the *testimony of books or the reputation of their authors*. It requires the candidates to learn to *think more with their own brains and less with those of others*. Finally, it insists that they should check the truth of its principles, the knowledge of its doctrines and the practice of its operations from nature: the mother of us all (my italics).

If such a stern warning cannot bring about the dawn of one's aim and endeavour, then this door of direct perception via self-confrontation is closed and blocked by oneself. If it is to be re-opened and unblocked, then the stumbling-block must be removed by no 'other' than oneself. *Ergo: Know Thyself!*

Although you might think you already know everything or ‘almost’ everything, you will still have to learn to know thyself as the quasi-knower of the quasi-unknowable (otherless) self. Such knowledge does not know the so-called, ‘known’ via a heterological method of separating quasi-knower from quasi-known via knowing though they were two (*entia per se*). Self-knowledge comes via an auto-logical (or ‘illogical’ *sine causa sive ratione*) method of in-tuition: re-uniting or rather re-identifying ego and id as idem again. These quasi-two are actually a ‘pair-concept’ impressing and expressing wholeness, and they could be likened to parallels (never known by grammar as singular but only as dual or an extended dual, and therefore as plural), or para-others with quasiness endowed: as coming from no-‘where’ and going to no-‘where’, i.e. to the very same unknown: *causa sive ratio sui*, or the indeterminate (a better word for void or no-‘thingness’). And you, the quasi-knowable (to others or quasi-others) and unquasi to yourself, you are always in the no-man’s land of no-‘where’, no-‘when’, no-‘why’, as if on a universal island called *here and now*. As an islander in the great ocean (with individualized drops and waves *per se* or *quasi-se*) you as you could be tempted to think that your unknowable must be known once at least, and therefore becomes ‘knowable’ to match your ‘wishful’ expectations. This can ‘happen’ only when you become ‘it’ or when you become aware that you ‘are’ it and have overlooked or disregarded the cosmic identity which occurs on the ‘way’ of ‘I am’. Of every ‘I am’ it is said that it is the Way, the Truth and the Life. I am’ [is] the Way and no other, and this waits for you when you experience for yourself such otherless-self-identity as self-realization. Then you ‘know’ *that* you live in the oneness of ‘I am’ = Way = Truth = Life! Sic!

The mind is the author of all work and the body the sufferer of all ills. Do not blame ‘others’ plaintively for what properly belongs to you!

So did Yoka Daishi attain enlightenment with such sudden in-sight in the quasi-in-side of that ‘I am’, the otherless self, which is beyond any partisanship. When you suddenly realize ‘no otherness *per se*’, then the dilemma of the body-mind as a pair-concept is solved and dissolves the quasi-twoness into oneness and indeed it becomes possible to live the indivisible wholeness of life with no dichotomy whatever under the rule of *causa sive ratio (alius)*. In such a silence of self-awareness then the ‘Voice of Silence’ reveals to you, ‘that the mind is the great slayer of the real. Let the disciple slay the slayer! The Psalmist tried in the very same way to captivate his own captivity (of such discriminative thinking). One of the contributors to this third symposium, Jon Wetlesen, remarkable in his field for his scholarly admiration of Spinoza, nevertheless dares to point to the

Achilles heel of reason and rational approach of that which *per se vel praeter causam sive rationem est*, which is still so fashionable in academic circles. I will come back to it later; but I must say it reminds me of Martin Luther calling reason the 'great whore' perhaps in rhyme with 'treason', betraying itself when absolutizing otherness *per se*. What has Wetlesen to say?⁶

It seems to me that when we approach the philosophy of Spinoza there is always a certain danger of becoming overinvolved in the technical apparatus of definitions, axioms, propositions, demonstrations, and so forth. Our approach may easily become *more intellectualistic or academic than was intended by Spinoza himself*

Wetlesen will be glad to see how he echoes Lama Anagarika Govinda:⁷

The use of logic in thought is as necessary and justified as the use of perspective in painting – but only as a medium of expression, not as a criterion of reality. If, therefore, we use logical definitions, as far as possible, in the description of meditative *experiences* and of centres of consciousness, with which they are connected, we must regard the understanding of the dimensions of consciousness of a different nature, in which the various impressions and experiences of different planes or levels are combined into an organic whole.... Intuitive feeling as well as intellectual understanding are transformed in to *living reality through direct experience*. Thus intellectual conviction grows into spiritual certainty, into a knowing in which *the knower is one with the known*.

And earlier Eastern witnesses for 'experience' add their voices, for example, Dih Ping Tsze, when commenting on a note by the Dhyana Master Hui An to the famous Sutra of Hui-Neng, feels that this is the moment to hint and hit at the Pandits.⁸

Scholastic Buddhist scholars can never give an explanation as satisfactory as this. For this reason Dhyana Masters are superior to the so-called Scriptural Expounders.... The most important point in the teaching of the Dhyana School lies in 'introspection', which means the turning of one's own 'light' to reflect inwardly.

This corresponds fully with Spinoza's aspiration to let the mind reflect on itself, contemplate on itself excluding all fake-otherness *per se*. And in our day Joe Miller⁹ continues to expound in our own language with exceptional skill and

verve this precious and rare tradition for us to marvel at. A tradition exerting, in our disillusioned and frustrated world of Western writers and readers, an impact never to be forgotten again, namely to look to the East and to the Eastern Way of thinking. There man's bondage and salvation can find a solution not in explanations (which is our strong monopoly in weakness) explaining away quasi what seems to be an obstacle or stumbling-block in man's way to himself with no witness to his stress and no feelings of distress. And not allowed to confess to anybody any inferiority nor able to run away from himself in despair:¹⁰

What is it that Buddha wished to teach? Was it sagacity, was it *brilliant academic understanding*? Was his aim to encourage the reading of the scriptures, or asceticism, or austerities? In reality it was none of these. He simply wished to show all living beings how to set in order body and mind. The method of doing this is given in the classic on meditation called *Zazengi*: 'Think of not thinking of anything at all. How is one to *think of not thinking of anything at all*? Be without thoughts – this is the secret of meditation.

To be without a single, singularizing self-existing thought is to be without duality and plurality as well which every 'I am' in his I-mindedness projects via *cogitandi*. It is to be without any-'thing', any single, dual or plural view of quasi-thingness *per se*. With Spinoza *ideae singulares sive res singulares, particulares* in the very same *ordo et connectio idearum sive rerum sive causarum*. I asked Edward Conze, the well-known Buddhist scholar, who thinks and writes about such paradox-like thoughtless thinking, to contribute to this volume as I was eager to learn about his connection with Spinoza since I had already learned about his connection with Buddha. David Ben-Gurion was another man I knew also attracted alike to Buddha and Spinoza – he was among the pioneers (and joined me 1962 in *Spinoza – 300 Jahre Ewigkeit*, my former and second symposium about Spinoza under the aegis of M. Nijhoff, The Hague) to 'right the wrong (doing) against Spinoza'. Conze now responded to my invitation as he desired to show me – and via me – my readers here how his Western academic teacher estranged him from Spinoza by forming a very final opinion (long before having had a very final beginning one!) on Spinoza and Spinozism:

In my youth Spinoza was my favourite philosopher. In 1925 I suggested a thesis on him to Prof. Heinrich Scholz in Kiel. He said that *everything possible had been said about Spinoza so far...* and offered instead the dusty folio of F. Suarez' *Disputationes Metaphysicae* which he had that very morning fetched from the cellar of the library. This led to my 1928 doctoral thesis: 'Der Begriff der Metaphysik bei F. Suarez S. J.' and a lifelong interest in the perennial

philosophy which took concrete form first as Aristotelianism, then as dialectical materialism and then as the Wisdom Philosophy of Buddhism. In doing a great deal of work in connection with all this I have now become exhausted and suffer from serious heart disease. My writing days are over, and I have no longer the energy, at the age of 71, to say, or even to know, what I think of Spinoza's place in perennial philosophy. I still prize him greatly as one of the few European philosophers *who lived like one*, and have often gone to the Spinozahuis as to a kind of shrine. But as for the intellectual effort involved in looking at his ideas once again in the light of what I have learned over the past 50 years, I just cannot do it! I do therefore hope that I will one day be able to read what all these interesting people you mention have contributed to your *Speculum Spinozanum*, but as for myself you have come too late in the day. I have shot my bolt and cannot be of any use to you. With my best wishes, I am, etc.

Now, how does one attain (intentionally) the realm of non-thought, to which Conze helps to point the way, which leads to enlightenment? How, if not by first removing the dust, not from the cellar of old libraries (The Mecca for Scriptural Expounders), but of old dusty concepts of thinking without self-experience? Yes! – What I am just doing here, is to remove the old and new dust from Spinoza during the perennial *scriptural* approach, with no self-approach as sincerely as Spinoza himself did it to himself.

Perhaps Saraha, the ancient poet, has the prosaic answer and remedy in unprosaic capsules when he says: 'The world is enslaved by thought and no one has known this non-thought.'¹¹ No one has known this non-form and non-thought (form). It is the sub-stant, instant which is the basis of every standing and every understanding of I and I-mindedness. The world is enslaved by purely *intellectualistic or academic approaches* (puzzling my friend Wetlesen), excluding self-experience while including *per se* or *per quasi-se* via singular and dualistic discrimination of the indivisible wholeness. Life demands the full surrender to direct experience of indiscrimination of *causa sive ratio sui sed non alius....*

And here, John Blofeld, another expert in Buddhism and Taoism (with no bondage to any Western 'ism' involved) speaks along the very same lines:

I feel at once honoured and puzzled by your kind invitation to contribute to a work on Spinoza. The truth is that I know nothing whatever about him, beyond what the average schoolboy might be expected to know. I have never read one of his works, having seldom taken much interest in Western philosophy, which seems dry to me because confined to speculations, usually

based on certain assumptions and logical processes derived from the Greek, which I believe to be invalid. Any philosophy I may have acquired comes from living among Taoists and Buddhists with but limited respect for the written word, who make of their *philosophy a way of life*, so that it permeates not just their thought but also their activities. In all I know, Spinoza may have been such a man and thus *a rare exception among philosophers reared in the European tradition*. So please accept my thanks for the honour you have done to me and permit me to decline. I wish you all success with the book....

And when pointing to Spinoza as 'a rare exception among philosophers reared in the European tradition', I ought to mention here the thoughts of Lu K'uan Yü (also known as Charles Luk) who 'devotes himself to presenting as many Chinese texts as possible so that Buddhism can be preserved in the West'.¹²

I have not read the works of Spinoza but I have found in a book of references this: 'Spinoza formulates one sole and infinite substance of which extension and mind are attributes, all individual beings being changing forms.' Larousse says this: 'Spinozisme: Systeme panthéisme de Spinoza suivant lequel Dieu est une substance constituée par une infinite d'attributs dont nous ne connaissons que deux: la pensée et l'étendue. Le monde est l'ensemble des modes de ces deux attributs. L'homme est une collection de modes de l'étendue et de la pensée. Il n'y a entre Dieu et le monde qu'une différence de point de vue.' Spinoza was, therefore, a great man, and you will find consolation in Ch'an master Lin Chi's words which say: 'Since olden times, my predecessors were expelled everywhere they went because people did not believe them; for this hostility alone, they were held in great honour. As to one who is accepted everywhere, what is he worth? Hence the ancient saying: "A lion's roar can burst the brain of a wild dog.'" [Cf. Luk, *Ch'an and Zen Teaching*, 2nd series (San Francisco, Shambhala, 1971), p. 121]. I am only a small fry as you know, but I have been viciously criticized, ridiculed, attacked, humiliated and insulted by some reviewers of my books, but I have never paid attention to their stupidity. You should redouble your efforts to make Spinoza's philosophy well known in the West if you want to put an end to the platitude of ignorance and its regimentation. Assuring you of my deepest sympathy for the last Spinoza symposium of yours, Yours etc.

I also find it of some value to add here Lama Anagarika Govinda's thoughts on Spinoza as he, too, comes from the East. For many years I have held a rich correspondence with him as we have the same affinity for the East, and he recommended me to Tibetan centres in England when I arrived there from

Australia. Among other interesting topics he had this to say about Spinoza:

I admire Spinoza so to say from the afar like a mighty mountain giant. Philosophical abstractions leave me as cold as snow on icy mountain tops. I am interested only in that which is *experienceable* and here I do agree with Alan Watts, whose *Wisdom of Insecurity* and *Way of Zen* I hold in high esteem....

Because of a lack of written evidence about mystic experience, no such experience could be ascribed to Spinoza, although he might have followed a certain tradition and trend which forbids any disclosure of self-experience of inwardness. In this book there is an article by a Western man pointing to the 'Logical and Experiential Roots of Spinoza's Mysticism', H. G. Hubbeling, who is so deeply and sincerely involved with Spinoza. I give him a special place of honour as he is my esteemed friend through Spinoza. I was very moved when he recognized my own efforts focusing on Spinoza:

I consider it a great honour to cooperate with a great representative of an older generation of Spinoza scholars. I hope that you will consider the work of my colleagues and myself as a continuation of your scholarly work on Spinoza so that generations may pass Spinoza's wisdom through the centuries....

I will go on to quote from others who come from the East or who speak of the East with reference to Spinoza. Herbert V. Guenther, a new shining star on the Tibetan academic horizon, expresses his feelings about Spinoza thus:

It is true that there are points of contact between Spinoza and the little known (up to now) and yet most influential rdzogs-chen teaching which in certain respects resembles Spinoza's *sub specie aeternitatis*. I must admit *I do not know of any other work in Western Philosophy that can come up to Spinoza's Ethics*. After all, as Bertrand Russell said, Spinoza is supreme in his *Ethics*. I do hope that with so much inhumanity around its (i.e. your former *Festschrift's*) fate will be happier and certainly some, and if they only be a few, will take renewed interest in one of the *greatest philosophers*....

Similar encouragement came from other contributors and non-contributors, all admirers of Spinoza. Erich Fromm, although he was among the very first of those willing and eager to join the ranks in offering their common homage to Spinoza, unfortunately had to withdraw later because of a sudden and serious illness, which prevented him against his own wish from fulfilling certain commitments involving physical activity. I, nevertheless feel, I must mention

how he replied to my invitation with such great enthusiasm:

I appreciate your invitation to join the other authors in homage to Spinoza, since my own thinking is to a considerable extent influenced by Spinoza. Nothing could be more welcome than to honour him....

Then from Huston Smith came the jubilant message about another Paul, this time an apostle of Spinoza, who 'is bursting with enthusiasm for Spinoza by way of having, he is convinced, unearthed new insights into the man by going back to the Latin. 'The full name of this apostle is Paul Wienpahl from Santa Barbara and he hopes to finish the apostolic task: 'to translate the entire writings of Spinoza and commenting on them' by 1977. Indeed only such great enthusiasm can save Spinoza from great fossilization of those who think they do him full justice by storing him with other curious antiquities, covered with archaeo 'logical' dust and dirt instead of re-storing his timeless validity. And these are the people who as co-witnesses will try to testify in the same witness-box with me. The very same thing happened with the Cabbala when Baron Spedalieri in 1884 (at a time when Cabbalist teaching was so fashionable among scholars, Christian more than Jewish) declared boldly with scholastic ignorance and arrogance alike, in accordance with the ancient proverbial *doctissima ignorantia*¹³

I consider that from henceforth the study of the Cabbala will be considered but an object of curiosity and erudition like that of Hebrew Antiquities.

I hope this book will be a break with the merely scholastic (school-) master-approach to the letter and the spirit of the letter rather than to the spirit itself: for both the Cabbala and for Spinoza. The spirit needs from time to time a breakthrough and not a breakdown to remove the barriers which divide the outsiders, keeping them for ever outsiders, even when 'speaking' and commenting as if on the inside which they reach via verbalization. Finally I must mention a man about whom Spedalieri had to wait so long to hear and then via posterity. And there are also many among our contemporaries who will have to wait, together with Spedalieri, for one only hears perfectly such a message via posterity, when distance returns to the stars their starlike splendour. I invited Carlo Soares to write a foreword to this collective homage to Spinoza, because he already knew from our close proximity, how I have learned through introspection and retrospection to see Spinoza via Soares and Soares via Spinoza. Unfortunately due to his advanced age (well into his eighties) his physical strength does not permit any stress, which is very regrettable indeed. But I am happily able to quote here from a letter of his on some revolutionizing

hints on a new and quasi-apocalyptic approach to Spinoza via Cabbala *rediviva* with the new key Suarez has discovered. So here he can say in his own words, much better, what I as his ambassador in my enthusiasm might only hint at:

My dear Siegfried, many thanks for having gone through such a job as writing your very long letter of Nov. 2, 75. I am grateful and honoured. And if you do mention my contribution to the Principle of Indeterminacy, yes, that would point in the direction of one of my 'openings'. It would be valuable if you could say that that view results *directly* from the original code of the letter-numbers (that came to be used as a simple alphabet) as I discovered it. Because that is the original code, without which the Bible, and particularly Genesis, is erroneously read. The vernacular Hebrew is just mistaken as any other idiom. Whereas the science of the structure of cosmic energy, as revealed by that original Qabala, is a factor of enlightenment of what Spinoza tried to say without knowledge of that code. With that code, when we come to read such combination of letter-numbers as *Elohim and Yahweh*, for what they are: *equations* of different aspects and processes of the one and double cosmic energy, we throw a light on Spinoza that such abstract metaphysicians as Jean Lacroix and other contributors will only dim with their mental and very complicated approach. Dear Siegfried, I do not feel qualified to join your learned contributors. Any text I would attempt to give you would first of all take me weeks of hard work, or *months* – and my brain is exhausted beyond repair when such a job is considered. And I must candidly tell you that Spinoza did what was possible 300 years ago with the scientific method of that time. We are far beyond it today and Spinoza will appear obsolete when treated by metaphysicians and philosophers. I see that you have scientists in a flow of metaphysics. But whatever you could say in the way of modern scientific approach of Spinoza, based on the *revival* of Qabala, as I am trying to expose, would appeal to a number of physicists, especially American. Spinoza's vocabulary would need to be translated into modern scientific terms. What a job! I have too clear a view of what to do, to imagine that I could, even in a modest way, help. Yours with much affection.

Now I will try to condense the essentials of Suarez's teaching, and the advanced Spinoza scholar will have to find parallels with Suarez's message, together with the intuitive affinity for the unbiased mind. I myself will, in my own paper, focus on the first verse of Genesis and on the first axiom of Spinoza's gnosis, as it were. As we have had a wrong image of the imageless unknown when seeing it via the quasi-known, so Suarez encounters it as the very indeterminate or say, self-

determinate principle *via causa sive ratio sui*:¹⁴

The Qabala is always in touch with the unknown, the Great Unknown: as a presence.... The unknowable unknown is a presence. The knowing of that presence is the unknown. There is no other revelation.... We have to allow the unknown to operate *directly* in our minds.... As long as we are not in *direct* contact with that which transcends the human mind, the fundamental significance of life escapes us. The revelation is always there but for its being witnessed. There is no other transcendence than our intimacy with the unknown as the unknown. Seeking it is avoiding it. It is an everlasting present in an ever present Genesis.... The other key is for the mind, the contained, the human and cosmic germ of life, unconditioned which can only 'be' when it is indeterminate: the Qabala... for therein lies the prodigious mystery of all that is determined by indetermination.... We live and do not *know* what life is [we know with Spinoza 'that' it is; it as 'us' and 'in' us the same]. The principle of indeterminacy is at stake which allows all that can be to become. And complete awareness is the fact that anything at all exists (and) is a total mystery (my italics).

Here, in the Cabbala, you find awestruck ordinary life as your own plain, unexplainable, unknown, and you become aware or re-aware of it by being it (yourself) via your otherless self: *causa sive ratio sui*. With Suarez came the epoch-making breakthrough. With him came the key to the Cabbala and via the Cabbala the key to self-salvation. He did not try to replace old 'isms' by new more odd and fashionable ones in order to rob the plain enigma of life of its plainness; explaining away the unexplainable, the ex-less 'X' indeed. Sic!

the interplay of those energies in the Universe and in Man, we are then subjected to an amazing mental exercise which can modify our way of thinking to the extent of uniting us with those energies ... and that, that only is revelation. (*ibid*)

The very same revelation is attained by self-alchemization and spiritual transmutation of which Spinoza speaks at the end of the *Ethics* as the grandeur of expansion of (the otherwise so narrow I-minded isolation in an omniverse as uni-verse!) consciousness, namely of God, of self and of things as the very same oneness and all-oneness.

Suares, like Spinoza, does not promise a new word-salvation with a paper existence, but he reveals a magic innerness as a revelation in omni- or self-awareness of *omnia animata sumus* in that substant, constant, instant *now* and

here with *instasis* or *enstasis* to enlighten us. With no 'before', with no 'after' and thus with no 'when' to ask for, no instant 'once' of indeterminacy missed as in a cosmic-divine tale in the style of the Garden of Eden. You will never ever resurrect the missed and lost 'once' and its constant 'onceness' so unique and so magic. Missed and lost for ever on a cemetery of fossilized yesterdays and yesteryears. No coming and no be-coming of any 'other' now, except that very same instant *now* which has no knowledge of knowing but has knowledge of life. Not knowing *what* it is, but living *that* it is indiscriminate *causa sive ratio sui*: with so much quasiness of eitherness or otherness (as if) *per se* to puzzle us and then to marvel at. Now we understand why all divine commandments in the Bible refer to the constant, instant, today. Today, or 'this day', this very day is a special signpost to trans-understand (with *metanoia*) '*sine causa sive ratione alius sed sui. Vivat suitas!*' Today has its own existence – it is not just a day 'between' yesterday and tomorrow. '*Dies per se sive dies sui*' Hke '*causa sui!*' The day of 'between' (quasi-otherness and other quasi-otherness) in the midst of quasiness *per se* to marvel at the present, ever-present, omni-present unknown. *This* is the day when the Messiah will come. Any day can be for Him 'this' day. He does not discriminate like us between this or that, good or evil, as sinning worshippers of knowledge do with the negative legacy from paradise. The Messiah remains untouched by knowledge (of quasi-otherness *per se*) and attracts us to the unknowable life. *Le Chayim!* When you hear His voice—as a revelation during the 'other' quasi-unrevealed days – *then one* day will become for you *this* day, when you see Him coming, after 'hearing His voice today'. Our sages say I should go and meet Him half-way, some say I should run all the way to meet Him sooner, still in 'my' life as quasi last incarnation (i.e. last discrimination between carnate and discarnate). So I have the first insight into the divine commandment:

to know today and to take it to your heart, that Yahweh is Elohim in the heaven above and on earth below and no-'thing' else [no otherness of Acher *per se*].

I then realize through the *Zohar* why 'God has sent man into this world to understand (that what stands 'under' or sub-stands) that Yahweh is Elohim! *Deus sive Natura. Deus sive Veritas. Deus sive Amor.* Such revealable under standing can only and only suddenly take place today or 'this' day as if coming with the Messiah (or you be-coming Him as not 'you' anymore). This day will help to remove causal or rational borders of a quasi-beginning and quasi-ending; i.e. of quasi-birth and quasi-death, which is not an; expression of 'otherness *per se*', otherwise Echad *per se* would not deserve the name of Echad. Not as a number

but as the indeterminate, indefinite the unknown, the ex-less 'X'=life.¹⁵ Yes. Revelation reveals the magic of quasiness and opens the vista of the so-called First Days, the same as the so-called Last Days, when the prophet Elijah¹⁶ shall come to

'turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.' (At the 'beginning' I said: 'My spirit shall not always dwell with man because (in their body) it is only flesh' (and not spirit as in Me).

God speaks of turning the 'beginning' to reconnect it with the 'end' and vice versa, and universa. He speaks of re-turning home to the original state of indiscriminative thinking as before, or as beyond good and/or evil, which means beyond eitherness = otherness, to let the human mind cling to the alternating binary dichotomy which splits the whole into quasi-knower and (another?) quasi-known via knowing.¹⁷

The essence of mind belongs neither to death nor to rebirth; it is uncreated and eternal. If the mind could be kept free from *discriminative thinking*, there would be no more arbitrary thoughts to give raise to appearance of forms, existences and conditions.

The divine spirit.- in Biblical language – will continue to dwell 'in' the human mind and not become 'flesh' or body *per se* divided from mind *per se* as if two *per se*: Yahweh *per se* and Elohim *per se*. 'Natura naturans *per se* and natura naturata *per se*', to use Spinoza's wording for it. *Idea per se* and *ideatum per se* or 'knower' *per se* and 'known' *per se* divided and separated by the pseudo-assumption of otherness (*per se*).¹⁸

Omnia sunt Deus. Deus est omnia. Creator et creatura idem. Ideae creant et creantur. Deus ideo dicitur finis omnium, quod omnia reversura sunt in ipsum, ut in Deo immutabiliter conquiescant, et unum individuum atque incommutabile permanebunt. Et sicut alterius naturae non est Abraham, alterius Isaac, sed unius atque ejusdem: sic dixit: *omnia esse unum et omnia esse deum*. Dixit enim. Deum esse essentiam omnium creaturarum.

In the newly found Spinoza letter one finds for the very first time Spinoza speaking of the identity of father and son, in order to ponder on it and on its connecting link via the Cabbala.

Among Spinozists, I found the enthusiastic Paul Wienpahl was attracted like

myself equally to Spinoza and Zen-Buddhism, while referring to Peter Bayle's article, 'Spinoza'. 'You will be amazed to hear from Bayle 'what his (Spinoza's) new method had in common with other ancient and modern philosophers, European and Oriental', when mentioning one particular Chinese sect. This – Wienpahl is quite right – has 'gone unnoticed in the literature on Ch'an Buddhism', but also unnoticed in the literature on Spinozism – such parallel thinking is amazing. I myself would like to emphasize this – as I have already by quoting – in order to see Spinoza better seeable indeed. The same applies when seeing him via Cordovero and especially such laconic allusion in the *Ethics* 2PVII which I will discuss in more detail in my own paper. The mainstream of my urge and affinity cannot wait until then, it demands its right to flow with spontaneity and indeterminacy of *causa sui*.... Sic! Only to pick out one sentence: 'Ideae creant et creantur.' This is another version for 'ideae et ideata' of which Spinoza demanded: 'convenire debent,' although it is not so convenient for the discriminative quasi-otherness *per se* which attracts us and divides 'us' from 'it'. But still more is to say that this sentence stems from: *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* which, in accordance with the equation of *Deus=Natura*, would mean also: *Deus deificans = Deus deificatus*. Only for the serious indiscriminative mind the copula 'et' or 'and' should be replaced by 'sive = or' in order to show better the binary, alternating way of thinking.

In our own time Carlo Suares with his new revelation as revolutionizing as those I mentioned before and to which Spinoza made so many magic hints, as it were, contributes to salvation quasi via self-alchemization when observer and observed via self-observation are both serving the same work. They have to abandon their quasi-otherness and then bring illumination, samadhi, satori. Surface-existence has surface-problems and dilemmas and is often happy with surface-solutions of pseudo-salvation via words and explanations by other words and by other explanations again. This does the opposite of helping man to turn from discrimination (to *convenire debent!*) and to re-turn to the primordial state of indiscrimination, i.e. of life *per se* via living (not via thinking of living instead as a substitute). Man returning will become himself again, the very otherless, causeless, reasonless *same* in his knowable and unknowable aspect, level or dimension of self-awareness into omni-self-awareness. Man is whole and when self-aware of wholeness, he cannot be half-me and half-it, but whole, otherless himself. And this as if a quasi-knower of a quasi-known is always on the via knowing in order not to know otherness *per se*, but himself. To know himself *per* quasiness, as it were, so that on the 'via knowing' he becomes the via himself – knowing only for knowing sake, with no division of me or it, of knower or of known as (if) two. Western thinkers sometimes feel attracted by parallels

between East and West, but only seldom can hints be seen which point to common affinities between East and Spinoza (as Wienpahl does) or between East and Cabbala while there are still voices to be heard or re-heard with fresh and unnoticed attraction between Spinoza and Cabbala. When speaking of 'Kabbalah To-day' I must mention Herbert Weiner.¹⁹ He brings Rav Kook's teaching nearer to us and connects us also with Rabbi Nachman's message, not only to transcend man's ephemeral existence and existential awareness (just at a time when Transcendental Meditation entered the scene of man's need for help!), he also re-opened the (closed or blocked) door to perception: to man's direct (otherless) perception of his own unknown while ignoring or not knowing of Suares. While Timothy Leary tried to 'turn' on from outside that closed door, Jewish Esotericism had the key to safe 're-turn' as if coming home safely from cosmic orbit when traversing the same path of the quasi-universe or inner multi-verse with multi-dimensional consciousness....

'That burning thirst for inner substance' that matters so much when followed by the 'vision that transcends [in Kook's words] the sur-face of existence'. All that waits to be experienced as yearning for salvation, not by brooding over scholastic scholarly definitions with dangerous dialectic acrobatics talking one 'in' or 'out' of an itching problem with no remedy at all against itching other than by scratching, and scratching with the consolation of healing. This yearning is such longing to expand innerness and its self-awareness of the many mansions of the Lord, now called multi-dimensionality and by Spinoza called infinite attributes self-attributing infinite or absolute infinity leading to 'essendi fruitio' and 'experientia essendi sive aeternita-tis'.... Sic! That is to express our own absolute infinity as ∞^∞ Such longing becomes stronger when men are disappointed with lifeless philosophizing, called by Spinoza *Cabbalistsae nugatores*²⁰ and it provoked Rabbi Moses of Bourgos to exclaim about *nugatores philosophici*:

where you philosophers are at an end, there we (the true Cabbalists) are only to begin,
namely to begin to point the way (of direct otherless perception) in order to experience that otherless riddle of: Know Thyself! Transcending egomorph-ous limitations must lead to the expansion of consciousness as predicted by Spinoza for the wise man, not only

to be conscious of himself, but also of God and of the world [of a multiplicity of things].

The grand cosmic-divine consciousness is equated with a quasi-co-consciousness

on three levels, aspects or dimensions. This in accordance with Cordovero does point to the experienceable identity of God, God's Intellect and (the quasi-intellected) objects. Thus the infinite intellect is the infinite quasi-knower identical with the infinite quasi-known via infinite knowing. *Ergo intellectus sui* or *causa sui* like *ratio sui*, like *existentia sui* (equal with eternity!) *sine alio*. Here we would recognize Cordovero, Cabbala and Spinoza, all of them blending with and paralleled by the East.

In such prologue to a Spinoza Symposium I think I have to mention, as Jean Preposiet did, a pleasant coincidence when two contemporary Spinozists have both found that Spinoza could offer the key (not only as key-word!) to salvation. F. H. Hallett, who soon became my personal friend via Spinoza, has not only been with me in my former witness-box: *Spinoza- 300 Jahre Ewigkeit*,²¹ but has also published at the same time and with the same publisher his own work: *Creation, Emanation and Salvation*, A forerunner in his inspiring mission for Spinoza, he anticipated some new insight, and I am sure Spinozists have only started to quote him again so often.

Salvation always involves bondage as a bipolar concept with relational meaning and significance. Hallett brings the whole dilemma into the limelight and within the graspable anecdotal framework so handy to everyone's understanding in 'vulgar phrasing':

The 'natural' man like Sancho Panza, *must scratch where it itches*, the 'civilized' man, like Kai Lung, *learns to itch where, he. can scratch*, the morally 'obedient' man, like Goethe's 'gentleman' *refrains from scratching where it itches*, and the 'enlightened' man has so far *ceased to itch*.²²

'Even such words (about itching and scratching) are like raising waves in a windless sea or performing an operation upon a healthy body. If one clings to what "others" have said and tries to understand (Zen) by explanation, he is like a dunce who thinks he can beat the moon with a pole or *scratch an itching foot from outside of a shoe*. It will be impossible after all.'²³ Thus the causal or rational relationship between itching and scratching has to be seen in the right light to know what relief could be expected at all. Should salvation apply to itching or to scratching to become effective? The Salvation Army for the masses is only concerned with the regi-mentation (of mentation!) of saving the ignorant man when his bondage is only seen under regimentation. Where there is no bondage to itching or scratching, there is no need for salvation to bring pseudo-relief. Man with his burning yearning confesses to his God: I have waited for Thy salvation! And in the waiting-room for salvation is revealed the urge, alertness

and awareness as vital as life itself. It is in the very same *here* and *now* that every here-after (or before-here) shows its re-identification via quasi-otherness *per se* in the constant instant, or co-instant and substant 'it'. Standing 'in' it, being 'it' and not understanding 'it' as the very otherless self-same unknown (substance) standing 'under' every standing and under every under-standing also.... Yes! Why is salvation after all so rare and so difficult? Why? As even Spinoza, aiming all his life in one direction, confesses at the end of his life-work, the *Ethics*, when he has completed the whole path unwaveringly became the path himself: seeker and finder, you must confirm 'I am' (is) the Way, the Truth and Life! Because no rational and no causal approach can help to attain what one contains in his innermost unknown, but is regrettably so often unaware of it as him, himself. Sudden illumination as Hui-Neng experienced and taught with no intention or bias, comes from the confidence in our unknowable, the indeterminacy of *causa sive ratio sui*. That is what both Spinoza and Suarez speak about so convincingly to us. And this makes so many see indeterminacy as nothingness (Ayin, shunya, void, i.e. devoid of human determinability, causality, rationality). This indeed is like a divine Grace, *chen Adishtana*. Spinoza holds such grace in esteem:

sola revelatio doceat, id ex singulari Dei Gratia quam Ratione assequi non possumus fieri.... (TTPXV)

No calculation can work for it, nothing can work out what is not figurative, not calculable. No fathom can measure the unfathomable of our own unknowable, otherless self: life *per se sine ratione, sine causa, sine alio*. No eitherness = otherness *per se* is thinkable any more save via quasiness or in Spinoza's terms via *tamquam, quamvis, sive, quatenus*, etc. Yahweh=Elohim =Echad! Such oneness is assessed or re-assessed again and again when letting the mind contemplate on itself, re-flect itself and expand itself to grasp the arcanum of otherlessness. Thus have Gersonides and Cordovero condensed its challenging truth indeed. This is why Spinozists long for the revelations via true Cabbala and, vice versa, why Cabbalists sometimes crave to re-affirm the same truth via Spinoza. It is amazing to find how A. Jellinek, in his equal link with Cabbala and Spinoza, gave an enthusiastic emphasis to Spinoza's way of *mos geometricus*. And S. L. MacGregor Mathers was so much enchanted about it that he reprinted the whole text, which Christian D. Ginsburg has incorporated already in his 'Kabbalah',²⁴ namely the lucid analysis of the erudite A. Jellinek about the sephirotic ideas according to the *Ethics* of Spinoza, to mould the cabbalistic content into Definitions, Propositions, Proofs and Scholions as if to become more handy for Spinozists too. Sic! To make it more palatable for one's own taste one could see it

in 'Kabbalah Unveiled' like another Euclidian veil.

I should also mention here Henry Walter Brann, who offered a theme for the common homage to Spinoza 'Spinoza and the Kabbalah', while reviving in such excellent manner the perennial approach of Gelbhaus as if this had gone unnoticed in the dusty libraries to herald again a renaissance of Cabbala and Mysticism via Eastern or via Western thinking on the very same path to the own unknowable, otherless Self.

At the end of the *Ethics* final freedom has been attained by Spinoza from one's own bondage (which stems from one's assumed quasi-otherness *per se*, that horrifying phantom appearing as other, other than me, namely as you, him, her or it) and three levels of consciousness of the wise man are pointed at. And 'the wise man thus is scarcely ever moved in his mind'. He is in *se ipso*: in his otherless self, and with Hui Neng he is 'realizing inwardly the imperturbability of the essence of mind'. If there is no real otherness *per se*, what then should or could actually ever perturb the mind of the wise man-'scarcely ever moved in his mind'? Having thus realized no otherness *per se* (only quasiness but having experienced self-realization to testify the self-affirmed truth, the so-called self-consciousness must then mean: self-omni-consciousness or co-consciousness of self (introverting as) of God and (extroverting as) of the world of things called external or externalized: *omnia animata sumus!* Or in other words: aware of the way to identify with singularity, plurality and omniality as the self-sameness. And Spinoza then continues with his own words about such a wise man:

being conscious by a certain eternal necessity of himself, of God (allself) and of things (quasi-other selves) and never ceases to be – and always enjoys true peace of soul.²⁵

Necessity better contemplated not as coercion but as no-cessation of being, involves no beginning and no ending, thus must quiet or co-quiet the wise man to delight in his otherless self-realization as final salvation attained. '*Acquiescentia in se ipso vel in se ipsa means: in se ipso vel in Deo vel in mundo (rerum): ipse vera acquiescentia sui like causa sui like ratio sui. Vivat suitas!* The wise man never does think that he ceases to be, as he never ever thinks that he ever started once to be or to become, when already conscious of life as causeless, reasonless and plain: ex-less'X'. So otherless self-reflection expands into God-reflection via world-reflection, in the way Cordovero is heralding the oneness of such apparently threefold reflection. Yes! The experience of cosmic divine universal self-reflection points to: *Deus sive Natura Sui! Suitas* is thus deifying or naturing itself via quasi-otherness with levels, aspects or dimensions of

consciousness leading to enlightenment in the dark ignorance of otherlessness: *essendi fruitio, fiendi delectatio!* Non cognoscendi.... The wise man never believes in any 'before' nor 'after' nor 'when'. So Spinoza himself never believed it and so we believe him such now – belief as great relief from great grief.... The wise man – after Spinoza and Spinoza himself as an example of it- is not ignorant of God and things, of creator and creatures (as created world) as being otherless the very same. And *Amor Dei* or *beatitudo* – Spinoza equates both as the very same divinization or blessedness. The wise man always feels the blessing of the creator when not extro- nor when intro-verted but re-verted and re-turned to the root-source where he can experience the *Amor Dei* or *Amor Naturae* as universal self-love or self-blessing via infinite selves and quasi-non-selves until the quasiness is unmasked to reveal salvation.... And such *Amor Dei* is identified by Spinoza with virtue, namely *ipsa virtus* or *virtus sui* like *causa sui*, like *ratio sui*. Everything tends to *suitas* although it in-tends *alteritas*. *Suitas* excludes *omnia alia*. So the wise man is not 'alien' to himself, not a stranger to God, nor alienated from the world (of things so strange and odd, to us in their at-homeness!). Everything belongs to the wholeness and when aware of it one as totalitarian is longing for such re-awareness again and again, to partake of totality as cosmic-divine co-consciousness. No 'mad obsession of introspection or extrospection' and no onesidedness for ex-tuition or intuition is there to split the wholeness into quasi in-side or out-side or into quasi in-sight or out-sight. It took me decades of wandering through many platitudes of books and latitudes of the globe: of wondering and wandering, of wondering and pondering until the *Ethics*, this wonder-book, suddenly became an open book for me. So I could then wander freely through this wonder-land of God, mind and human emotions either to see their superiority or their inferiority when man becomes wise and conscious of himself, of God and the world (of motions and emotions). My clouded mind in a flash of illumination became an open mind: vast like the ocean and the sky. Yes, the wonder, *tauma* for the Hellenes, was the very first step into the wonder-land of philo-sophia, of love for wisdom. To follow the wise man for wisdom and harvest, like him, the fruits described in the finale of the *Ethics*. Previously Spinoza dealt at the last stage of the path with the power of the intellect or with the human freedom as an inner strength. He tries first in the preceding stages to familiarize man as a thinking being not yet with his strength before confronted successfully with the strength of his e-motions as if not his own but others than his. This comes when thinking adequate and clear ideas to avoid such own puzzling bondage. Own freedom can only be attained, when unblocking the stumbling-blocks of his own ego-narrowed mind or I-mindedness in order to expand such narrow consciousness: from I-consciousness to God- or

All-consciousness and to the quasi-plurality of things not as (if) three things different from each other, but as of different aspects of the otherless same, same oneness via quasi-otherness *per se*. From awareness of such oneness stems salvation and illumination as self-experience and never via dia' lectic' explanations of the unexplainable, of the exless 'X': our own unknown, *causa sive ratio sui!* For Spinoza and for those to follow him on such rare and difficult path, it means to learn about God or substance infinite in infinite ways, when having dissolved otherness and ab-solved the di-lemma of the indeterminate 'in' us and 'as' us but *quasi* as if 'non' us.... Then man has to learn about the nature and the origin of the mind with no beginning (nor end!) but only hypothetically supposed so for better self-reflection and self-contemplation, God and mind (*ens: mens*) the very same source: *causa sive ratio sui*. Mind for Spinoza therefore is auto-maton (i.e. self-learning, self-revolving) self-contemplating, self-reflecting self-observations via quasi-otherness *per se* and accepting the mediation of quasiness as in Bible language the godlikeness of man or the manlikeness of God: 'Creator et creatura idem'! Then to learn about human emotions which could become a bondage when 'bound' by *causa sive ratio alius* or by otherness *per se* under the prey of pseudoness *per se*: the phantom of unidentifying quasiness: as if, *tamquam, quamvis, quatenus*, etc.

All these are like pegs or makeshifts as expedient means (*upaya*) to express the unexpressible of *causa-suitas*, or *ratio-suitas*. Yes! And at the end of such learning to reach initiation, the learner is not clinging to inadequacy deriving from causality or rationality and thus can be confronted with quasi-otherness of himself, the exless 'X': the divine cosmic Unknown, the universal totality as ocean with oceanic feeling to bestow.... This unknown is for the learner either he, himself, God, the all-self, the things around which sur-round quasi such narrow I-minded self in order to expand it by longing via the *Amor Dei sive Amor Naturae, Amor Veritatis*. Then one can witness as it were the divine Intellect in the very sameness as quasi-knower or as quasi-known: as God, the divine Intellect and the intellected objects, self-intellected by God, the All-self to become re-deified so to speak or re-naturalized as it were on the 'facies totius universi' facing the same *natura naturans and/ot natura naturata*. Only human thought singularizes and separates, particularizes before illumination and before awareness of *omnia animata sumus* is experienced. The very same instrument discriminates or indiscriminates, separates or unites again and again when intellecting quasi-otherness as God does himself to co-experience divine quasiness in the light of the first axiom of the *Ethics*.

Thought bound brings bondage and re-leased brings release! Of that there is

no doubt. By that with which fools are bound, the wise are quietly released.²⁶

Saraha speaks like Spinoza of the same man: when ignorant and when not ignorant (or fool!) of God, himself or the things. Ignorance makes us exclaim after illumination: We thought it was a snake we saw on the road which terrified us from afar. When seen nearer it was only a rope looking quasi like a snake from the distance (of ignorance!). What fools we have been to have complained about stumbling-blocks on our path! We complained and explained why we complained to feel unhappy. We failed to see into the very plain truth, that can shed light to let us avoid stumbling in the darkness (of ignorance), ignoring to see deeper and nearer than surface-existence and surface-awareness. To see into it via ourselves and into ourselves via it: as one and the same via. The *via per se*. *Via viae sive via sui!*

The other Spinozist pointing to Spinoza for 'salvation from despair' is Errol E. Harris and his work tends to be a 're-appraisal of Spinoza's philosophy'. Are these not two remarkable signposts: Hallett and Harris, both pointing with emphasis the way to the *path* where man suddenly discovers liberation from his self-imposed bondage after he has learned how to expose it as himself? While expanding the I-minded, singularizing consciousness, man no longer ignores the oneness and wholeness of God and the world: the very same own universal unknowable life. Le Chayim! 'Vivat vita sui!' Then extro-version or intra-version appear only as two versions of the same otherless self. Yes! Speaking of that *path* I have tried to voice a chorus of 'pathfinders' pointing at the rare and difficult way for pathseekers, with the intention of stimulating from the beginning of my homage for Spinoza in this book: urge, surge and yearning (for innerness and expanding re-awareness of it!) in order to reach salvation. Salvation is meant from the own unknown when dissolving quasi-otherness *per se* into instrumental quasiness so helpful for *causa sive ratio sui* and the principle of indeterminacy. Pathfinders emphasize the very odd and strange sameness of 'us' when 'on' the path and of the path 'as' us ourselves.

Thou canst not travel on the path before thou hast become the path itself (Voice of Silence). To whatever place one would go, that place one's own self becomes (Jnaneshvari). As there is neither any traversing nor any traverser of the path, the expression '*path*' is merely figurative (Precepts of the Gurus). '*Path*' is merely a metaphor descriptive of the method of realizing spiritual growth or progress (Evans-Wentz). On this path we have to find our own touch-stone of truth, independent of *academic or theological approval*. What we want is one's own perception of the truth, not one taken on ready made (Sri

Madhava Ashish). Anyone who so desires, can move into the vitalizing study [of the path] and dig in his own mind indefinitely making his own discoveries – and can be a point of consciousness to which revelation comes (Carlo Suares).

Suares emphasizes that point of consciousness which I contemplated upon to expand on Spinoza's path with his finger-pointings, to cease to remain ignorant of multi-dimensionality of cosmic-divine consciousness which as co-consciousness means con-sciousness of all-oneness or one-allness indeed! Then also it is to understand quasiness which only the ignorant takes for otherness *per se*, while the wise man recognizes (again?) his own divine, cosmic legacy from the very Old Testament and the Old Garden of Eden. There man, God, things (*omnia animata*) were all together in co-essence and co-existence either inspiring and aspiring omni-self-consciousness of *omnia animata (sumus)*! The wise man is going to regain admittance into the Garden of Eden. Not without any coincidence has the symbol of the garden captured thinkers when reaching salvation. Gan in Hebrew consisting only of two letters: G(imel) and N(un), is and stands for an abbreviation, namely for G(uf) and N(eshamah): body: soul, or in today's terminology, psychosomatic pair-concept. Garden or Pardess is also a symbol-word composed by the four abbreviated first letters PRDS (Pardes) and can be equated with four ways of knowledge or cognition. And there is also a story of four men: Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Akiba and Elisha Ben Abuya. They entered the (forbidden) Garden of Mysteries. Three of them were harmed and only Akiba was able to pass through such initiation and yet to return safely to everyday life from the own beyond as if from outerspace of otherness *per se*. Akiba, until his death and even with his death, was fully convinced of the otherless sameness to defy the phantom of ghostlike horror which cannot hurt the mature and wise man: to know himself via various quasi-otherness *per se* as temptations to deviate him from the *via viae*. The primordial state of indiscrimination as in the Garden of Eden does not dualize oneness as: heaven and earth, male and female, body and soul, but rather sees only quasi-twoness, quasi-otherness and in truth a pair-concept expressing wholeness and omni-awareness either as pairness or wholeness, the very same. The garden-simile as two or as four shows the squaring of the concept in accordance with the tetragrammaton, the tetraktys as if the quasi-two are lifted up to a higher level (of consciousness) of oneness via 2^2 or via *se^{se}*. Quaternity is often equated with divinity itself and the whole base of the numerical system as derived from Pythagoras. And all this 'happens' by self-experience when on the path and not by scriptural studies alone. One must have a key provided by a teacher who has

experienced self-realization himself to unlock the locked words in scriptural teaching leading to the bare wordless path and its essence beyond the layers of form and formlessness to the very substance: to that which stands 'under' everything and 'under' every thought, and which nobody can understand or even stand unless by otherless self-experience. Then quasi-knower and quasi-known are re-united again on the via knowing to become that very via, that way, that path itself. Ex-per-iri=going through 'it' and as coming from some-where (indeterminate, acausal, irrational!) 'I' am going via 'me' through 'it' and via 'it' through 'me'. Then 'me' and 'it' are dissolving each other altogether with their discrepancy of pseudo-twoness, namely of experiencer and experienced: subject and object. The 'going' becomes intransitive as a self-alchemization in a sudden revelation to reveal the identity of me and it, of ego and id as idem. Knower and known are both (with reciprocal receptivity!) on the same via knowing with a two-way traffic. The via me sive via id transmutes me and id into the via of idem: via viae sive via sui, like causa sui like ratio sui. Vivat suitas! After experience wholeness and the omni-awareness of it knows no more quasi knower versus a quasi known, but only via of knowing. Ire is to go. Iri to be gone, the person trans-personalizes quasi.... Sic! Now I know myself: not me it or it me. No more half-knowledge of that pair-concept of wholeness which is that otherless Self. Yes! It is a re-formation by such reciprocal receptivity. A trans-mutation in the true alchemical sense. All my little life I heard the great, the wise man postulate: know thyself! Not this nor that. Not that nor this, but thyself! Which is neither-nor and appears as either-or (a pair-concept) via quasiness simulating quasi-otherness *per se*. Quasiness will soon vanish to make room for the ripe self-realization of the quasi-unreal, namely the otherless 'it'. And that (it) you are. *Tat twam asi!* Now I know myself. And I know that I know. And I know that there is no otherness to evolve or involve anymore when speaking of quasi-knower and quasi-known. To know thyself is equal to know the unknowable – as a presence, omni-presence co-present as you – and without expecting that it ever become knowable. Its presence is convincing after Suares brought such message to us of our non-us. Us is 'what' we know of it 'as' us and 'it' is 'that' we know of it as it: itself. Yes. In the same way Maimonides and Spinoza speak both of knowing 'that' God is and 'what' God is. This is more in line with Sepher Yetzirah which rejects any anthropomorphous 'what' as whatness, *quidditas* and describes such undescribable rather beli-mah=without 'what', i.e. without dichotomy or discrepancy of me and not-me. As 'object' I am so used to object it (objectify) to my standing and under-standing but disregarding the *omni* sub-stant instant and co-instant, that despotically I make it 'subject' to my outsideness as quasi-other. Thatness implies rather indiscrimination and self-reflection inflecting

quasi-otherness belonging to the pair-concept self-other or other-self. The ultimate step on the path to know thyself! Then every-thing is like no-thing and no-'thing' is no longer absolute negativity *per se*, as negative-positive is again the very same pair-concept. Now I recognize it under any dis-guise. 'I am' (is) life to live (not to know). I know is to know: quasiness as knower *vis-á-vis* known until the identification with the *via* knowing dawns with transcendental magic. Then 'I am' (is) the *via*, the Way, *tao* and the Truth. *Ergo* life again. Spinoza does not express life like Descartes – so over-ego-conscious – he does not remain in the domain of egohood via ego-consciousness. He expands the ego into God (as trans-ego) via God-consciousness and into the world via world-consciousness: 'omnia animata sive omnia animantia sumus'! Descartes would have said: 'animatus sum' and said: 'ego sum'. 'Ego cogito.' Spinoza used the universalized ego: *sumus* pointing to omniality, totality. .And totality has no discrimination between knower versus known. Spinoza leant on 'Idea creant et creantur'. Not 'ego con-scius sum sed omnia animata' (not *animatos* personalized). Here is manifest *natura naturans and naturata* as idem. 'Participium presentis sive participium perfecti' via omni-presence of omni-consciousness which is timeless, causeless or synchronic with Jung (speaking and pointing at acausality). Ex-per-iri=as if coming from somewhere equal with no-where with no determinable 'whatness' but with indeterminable 'thatness' is allowed to speak out the whole truth: 'Veritas sui sine alio' with no pseudoness but quasiness. This is in accordance with the structure of multidimensionality of omni-consciousness. Experience makes self-realization self-experienceable of the unknowable 'thatness', namely 'that' I experience 'experiencing' ... with no elseness any more.... The *observer* becomes con-scius of 'serving' and not of looking, on-looking as an out-sider. Out-side or in-side have lost their loosable meaning as pair-concept, and lost any leaning via ex-per-iri i.e. via trans-ire which is encapsulated in the in-transitive verb and thus experience becomes a 'happening' of which never can be said: 'I' happen but only 'it' and I am always 'in' it and 'as' it: The pair-concept: acausal, irrational coming to the end of divisibility and becoming the indivisible wholeness as wholeness: 'omnia animata sumus' with no 'sumus' sive *egos*, with no 'animate', with no 'omnia', with no sayability of the Ayn, the Void, Shunya: the indeterminable, *causa sui* ...

Personally I consider it a divine boon like that of Nachiketas as described in the Kathopanishad. And just this special Upanishad became so dear and near to me via Sri Krishna Prem and his commentary. Further, Prem himself became a challenge to me with his person and personality pointing in his letters always to salvation 'while in the body' while re-assuring me as 'being on the path'.... After his death I continued the pleasant contact with his successor, Sri Madhava

Ashish, who finished Prem's last book and later added another one of his own on the same lines. That boon I mentioned before came to me not only for being so privileged to enter the witness-box three times in the cause of 'Spinoza', but also claim and proclaim the urge for salvation as a challenge. This time I feel immensely enriched with valid experiences of self-cultivation leading to self-realization quasi-permeated with the parallel teaching of the East. And this to such an extent that I often ponder about showing 'Spinoza in the Light of the East' while also revealing striking parallels pointing to 'the East in the Light of Spinoza'. Especially, when so familiar with the basic vital and vitalizing essence of Spinoza's message leading to *essendi fruitio* or to *fiendi delectatio* (if I may paraphrase...) but not to *cognoscendi fruitio, delectatio*....

Spinozists would feel like at home in the 'essentials of Buddhism' and vice versa. Buddhists would like to re-experience at-homeness via Spinoza like everywhere when man is estranged from his own unknown self (and its 'thatness'!) and is longing and craving to turn the mind to its own roots (and not to the branches!) and re-turn to one's root-awareness of being a home-comer from one's own 'quasi-afar' via quasi-otherness *per se* (and its 'whatness'!).

Jewish prophets, as self-appointed missionaries, feel the very same challenge to re-awake the nostalgia of home-coming by longing and by the odd feeling of be-longing to such longing.... To return to Yahweh and to experience after the Zohar why man has been sent into this world to understand this day that Yahweh is (no 'other' but the very same) Elohim. To 'under-stand' that there is no-thing to understand as some-'thing' other than me, a 'what', but rather to reverse it into 'stand under'.... Then to know is not to know, but to now, ever to now the own unknown instant, sub-stant, con-stant (*being*) as otherless, timeless and placeless: *causa sive ratio sui (non alius!)*. Echad! *Vivat suitas!*

Not only was such prophetic home-calling valid and a comfort when the Jews had no land anymore on earth, and for their God no house to 'house' the invisible, indivisible, exless 'X' since the destruction of the second temple by Titus Vespasian. Historians record that he had the shock of his life (similar to Alexander the Great on a similar occasion!) when, with the rioting army, he penetrated the sanctuary of the devastated temple to be 'puzzled' by the invisible 'holiness' while an odd awe shook his being.... For the first time the magic of invisible holiness penetrated into the recess of his mind as it did with the prophet to make him exclaim: Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh Tsebaoth! Full is the whole earth with His (heavenly) Glory! And Vespasian, did he feel such Glory which could not be destroyed together with the temple (made by man to house God in his godlikeness and to remember Eden and the togetherness with God the gardener of that Garden of Mankind!)? Did he feel that such Glory was not

housed only within walls and could not be destroyed, together with the ruins to remain an exile, but that the 'wailing wall' was wailing because of the quasi-exile of the quasi invisible, indivisible glory filling all the quasi-emptiness of the earth? Yes. The Jews now defend the wailing wall together with the few walls of their 'miniaturized' former homeland of their fathers given to them by the God of their fathers, the fathers of Israel to the Children of Israel, not only as a Biblical promise with testimonies in heaven and on earth – and now Spinoza's quasi-Messianic expectation and pseudo-contradictory but pre-dictory words of such re-turn become true in our days and before our eyes.

I would *absolutely* believe that they, the Jews, once at a given *chance*, as things are submitted to *change* [*and: chance*] will again build their land and that God will s-elect them again.²⁷

In this word 'chance' or opportunity, the latent indeterminist in Spinoza, so hidden and occult for Spinozists, comes through not via *causa sive ratio alius, sed via causa sive ratio sui*, i.e. via *indeterminationis*. ... Sic! With no be-cause to ex-plain the plain ex-less being, while chance involves change and vice-versa or uni-versa. We have to think of it here and pause with reflection, contemplation, namely how Spinoza sometimes disclosed (against his former rationalized intention and attention) such deeper links with Israel and with the God of Israel, of whom he expects a second selection in 'time and space' so to speak. Was it perhaps to over-compensate in the deep recess of his (omni-) consciousness while always conscious of himself as conscious or co-conscious of God and co-conscious of the world (of *omnia animata sumus*)?

Was it perhaps to over-compensate the surface-disconnection, namely when saying that I would *dare* to say that I also agree with the *ancient Hebrews*? It shows that he did not so often 'dare' so. Sic! He saw already in his life and lifetime what he fore-saw for posterity, that a certain wishful re-Judaization would take place as a renaissance and as a nostalgia with the same charm as the 'second birth' of enlightenment described as experienced in his work of God, Man and His well-being. But let me first 'pause' with a little intermezzo of Spinoza's prediction of the rebuilding of Israel.

INTERMEZZO I

Gerschom Scholem let us relive again that tense period in history when the messianic fire of Sabbatai Sevi swept through the whole world and soon reached Holland. But there Spinoza was in his hermitage, quite unharmed, and immune from the events.... Some of his friends did ask him about his opinion, but

unfortunately his answer has not yet been found. Yet the way to posterity as the newly discovered Spinoza letter had. Nevertheless, certain remarks of Spinoza are ascribed to the echo of this messianic movement, and Jewish Historic salvation was on the agenda as it were. Such agenda is in our days again and again under scrutiny, especially with the focus on oil to make it an imperative to give more light and for some more lime-light to see the world-scenery of history biased by oil as an excellent turm-oil 'oiling' much better wishful shaping and shaking of history indeed.

As for the fact that they have survived their dispersion and the loss of their state for so many years, there is nothing miraculous – as a consequence – we must admit – no other election peculiar to Jews! And – since they have incurred hatred by cutting themselves off completely from all other people: and not only by practising a form of worship opposed to the rest, but also by preserving the mark of circumcision with devoutness. That their survival is largely due to the hatred of the Gentiles, has already been shown by experience [slavery in Egypt, exile in Babylon, Autodafe, pogroms, gas-chambers, etc.]. The mark of circumcision is also, I think, of great importance in this connexion: so much that in my view it alone will preserve the Jewish people for all time. Indeed did not the principles of their religion make them *effeminate*, I should be quite convinced, that some day when the opportunity arises – so mutable are human affairs – they will establish their state once more, and that *God will choose them afresh.... [Fiat voluntas Sua!]*

One must not be guided by hate against the Benedictus, as Hermann Cohen was with the purpose of exposing such crass self-contradiction of a second Balaam to bene-'dict' (as a Benedictus himself!) and to pre-'dict' some opportunity which was unpredictable and uncalculable under the ruling of *causa sive ratio (alius sed SUI!)*, i.e. by chance not seen *sub specie humana, ergo* not anthropomorphously but rather theomorphously... by *Deus sive Veritas, Deus sive Amor, Deus sive Natura: Yahweh=Elohim!* And admittedly Spinoza had perhaps written the words at the beginning of my quotation by impulse (tricky, itchy and provocative for the prickly Jewish neighbour, whom he was always so ready to love after the Decalogue of Moses, his teacher). Such re-election meant re-eligible again in time as it had meant before in timeless history with the very same chance! And when we re-read this sentence before ontrusting the whole text ripe for us, his posterity, we find Spinoza has had time enough to ponder and to reconsider in order to wipe out (or not!) any trace of rebukeable self-contradiction. In doing it, Spinoza would have had then to ostracize (in his own eyes with no outside

witness at all to interfere!) his own former ostracizing attitude towards his people. But Spinoza did not do it. He stuck to what he once said. His diction was no accusable contra-diction but laudable pre-diction instead, which in our days (A.D. 1948) – after the calendar started with one of Israel’s and God’s sons – became true history and which some will try in vain to distort or revert or pervert again, Sic!

My pores and cells still tremble with awe remembering the event which I have been so especially privileged to witness (as I witness now for Spinoza again!) under a special insular hospitable barbed wire ... until only much later I was found ripe for initiation to continue and to follow history and its course on the new-old soil. Now, when in the witness-box for Spinoza, I feel I have to mention my testimony to hail Spinoza’s prophecy which some still intend to trivialize. I cannot be persuaded that universality must be seen and shown as a noble compensation for the loss of statehood. Such talk was a farce, disguised by friend and foe as well, especially disguised as a consolation for the dispersion of Jews. And just at the time when new small states are springing up everywhere, claiming independence under the approval of the (Dis-)United Nations with a numerical approval of the multitude as it were which only Israel has never sought or found ... some day had to come when the opportunity arose (in Spinoza’s prediction!) for Jews to establish or reestablish their state once more. This is not only to say that they, the Jews, were able to survive where others (of their size!) would have vanished for good on our beautiful globe, but to demonstrate that global or universal significance cannot become a consolating substitute. And it is also to demonstrate that ‘the principles of their religion were not meant to make them *effeminate* Sic! It is to demonstrate again that their mission includes to become like other states with their statehood recognized again and to preserve unlike others their striking universality *vis-a-vis* other states and their statehood as well, only because God Himself willed to choose them afresh. One of my co-workers, Sylvain Zac, has a theme: Spinoza and the State of the Hebrews, and he likes to point to the quintessence and its focus on the ‘Hebrews as the Chosen People’. He continues:

this is one of the propositions of the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and does not have a spiritual meaning. It is rather a historical and political meaning. What are the foundations and the institutions of the Hebrew State? What was, in spite of its excellence, the primary cause of its decline and fall? In answering these questions, Spinoza draws lessons which throw a new light on the aims he pursues in his political works.

All beings strive to maintain *and gain* power. This need not be a striving to dominate, subdue or terrorize. The establishment of symbiosis, 'living together', rather than cut-throat competition marks a gain in power. At higher levels of self-realization, the self encompasses others in a state of increasing intensity and extension of 'symbiosis'.⁵ The freedom of the individual ultimately requires that of the collectivity.

9 If one insists upon using the term 'rights', every being may be said to have the right to do what is in its power. It is a 'right' to express its own nature as clearly and extensively as natural conditions permit.

That right which they [the animals] have in relation to us, we have in relation to them (*Ethics*, Part IV, first scholium to proposition 37).

That rights are a part of a separate moral world order is a fiction.⁶

Field ecologists tend to accept a general 'right to live and blossom'. Humans have no special right to kill and injure, Nature does not belong to them.

10 There is nothing in human nature or essence, according to Spinoza, which can *only* manifest or express itself through injury of others. That is, the striving for expression of one's own nature does not inevitably imply an attitude of hostile domination over other beings, human or non-human. Violence, in the sense of violent activity, is not the same as violence as injury to others.

The human attitude of violence and hostility towards some species of animals have made it impossible to study realistically their life and function within the whole. The field ecologist who deeply identifies with the species studied is able to live peacefully with any kind of wild animal. This attitude harmonizes with the view of Spinoza concerning free man (*homo liber*). Spinoza has a kind of doctrine about the development of affects (Parts III and IV of the *Ethics*), and makes the field ecologist's symbiotic attitude inevitable if the development proceeds far enough.

In what follows other Spinozist thoughts are mentioned which harmonize with those of field ecologists even if the latter do not often develop them consciously.

11 Every being has its unique direction of self-realization, its particular essence, but 'the greatest good' is the

understanding realization of the union [*cognitio unionis*] of our mind with the whole Nature (*On The Improvement of the Understanding*, Paragraphs 13–14).

12 The realization of union with the whole Nature is made through the understanding of the particular things as a manifold of expressions or

manifestations of Nature (God). But Nature or God is nothing apart from the manifestations.

Spinoza rejects the kind of *unio mystica* which results in a turning away from particulars and from nature.

The more we understand the particular things [*res singulares*], the more we understand God (*Ethics*, Part V, proposition 24).

Spinoza's concept of Nature and its manifestations lack the features which make nature (in the more common connotations) something inferior to spirit or to God.

Ecological thinking presumes an identification with particulars in their internal relations to each other, The identification process leads deeper into Nature as a whole, but also deeper into unique features of particular beings. It does not lead away from the singular and finite. It does not lend itself to abstract thinking or contemplation, but to *conscious, intuitive, intimate interaction*.

13 'Rationality' is wise conduct maximizing self-realization. It cannot be separated from perfection, virtue and freedom.

Since reason does not demand anything contrary to Nature, it demands that everyone loves himself, looks for what is useful,... and that he strives to obtain all which really leads man to greater perfection (*Ethics*, Part IV, proposition 18, scholium).

Since self-realization implies acts of understanding with increasing perspective, rationality and virtue increases with the development of understanding. The greatest understanding is 'an understanding love of Nature', *amor intellectualis Dei*. This implies acts of understanding performed with the maximum perspective possible, or loving immersion and interaction in Nature.⁷

14 Interacting with things and understanding things cannot be separated. The units of understanding are not propositions, but acts. To the content of ideas in the 'attribute of non-extehsion' there corresponds an act in the 'attribute of extension'. Ultimately these attributes are attributes of the same, but the human way of understanding is such that we have to treat them separately.

Increase of rationality and freedom is proportional to increase of activeness; each action having the aspects of understanding and of a behaviour or interaction. Not all acts need be overt.

15 Since a gain in understanding expresses itself as an act, it is in its totality a process within the extended aspect of Nature and can be studied as such.

This point is of prime importance to the methodology of etiology. The 'world'

of a living being is investigated through study of its manifest ('molar' not 'molecular') behaviour. Spinoza furnishes etiology with a frame of reference completely devoid of the kind of 'mentalism' and 'introspectionism' that has often obstructed the study of cognition in animals and men.

The framework of Spinoza and of general etiology is also well suited to counteract the tendency to conceive human knowledge as something existing independent of acts of particular human beings in particular situations – and stored wholesale in libraries.

The formulation of Spinoza does not point to any definite form of 'behaviourism'. We are free to inspect critically any contemporary version. There is no reason to identify the concepts of 'behaviour' with that of Watson or Skinner.

16 Most of the basic concepts used in the *Ethics* when characterizing the human predicament are such as can be used whatever the cultural context. They are furthermore adapted to general characterizations covering smaller or greater parts of the animal, plant and mineral kingdoms. Some of these concepts have already been mentioned.

Spinoza rarely touches upon questions concerning animals, but where he does, he shows that his main concepts are not only intended to apply to humans.⁸ He warns, however, against thinking that the joys of insects are the same as those of humans. Each kind of living being is content with and delights in what corresponds to its nature or essence.

Among the important concepts which have a wider application than to the human species one may note the following:

perfection (cf. point 2)

good and evil (cf. points 4 and 5)

striving to express one's nature or essence (cf. points 7 and 8)

self-preservation, self-realization (cf. points 7, 11 and 13)

power (cf. points 8, 9 and 10)

rationality (cf. points 13 and 14)

virtue (cf. point 13, cp. the expression *potentia seu virtus*)

freedom (cf. points 13 and 14)

understanding (cf. points 14 and 15)

feeling (3P57sch.)

emotion (cf. 3P57sch. The passive ones are confused ideas, cf. *Ethics*, 3aff. gen. df.)

confused idea

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