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ARTICLE

AFFECT, DESIRE, AND JUDGEMENT IN SPINOZA'S ACCOUNT OF MOTIVATION[1]

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Two priority problems frustrate our understanding of Spinoza on desire [*cupiditas*]. The first problem concerns the relationship between desire and the other two primary affects, joy [*laetitia*] and sadness [*tristitia*]. Desire seems to be the oddball of this troika, not only because, contrary to the very definition of an affect (3d3; 3 General Definition of the Affects), desires do not themselves consist in changes in one's power of acting, but also because desire seems at once more and less basic than joy and sadness. The second problem concerns the priority of desires and evaluative judgements. While 3p9s and 3p39s suggest that evaluative judgements are (necessarily) posterior to desires, Andrew Youpa has recently argued that passages in Ethics 4 indicate that rational evaluative judgements can give rise to, rather than arise out of, desires. I aim to offer solutions to these problems that reveal the elegance and coherence of Spinoza's account of motivation. Ultimately, I argue that whereas emotions and desires stand in a non-reductive, symmetrical relationship to one another, evaluative judgements must be understood as asymmetrically dependent on, and reducible to, emotions or desires. This interpretation sheds light on our understanding of Spinoza's cognitivist account of emotion. For Spinoza, while emotions are representational, they are not underpinned by evaluative judgements. Rather than inflating emotions to include evaluative judgements, he deflates evaluative judgements, treating them as emotions, or valenced representations, and nothing more.

KEYWORDS: Spinoza; affects; moral motivation; cognitivism; desire; moral judgement; emotions

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1. TWO PRIORITY PROBLEMS

Two priority problems frustrate our understanding of Spinoza on desire [*cupiditas*]. The first problem concerns the relationship between desire and the other two primary affects, joy [*laetitia*] and sadness [*tristitia*] (hereafter referred to as 'emotions', so as to distinguish them from affects that are desires). Desire seems to be the oddball of this troika, not only because, contrary to the very definition of an affect,[2] desires do not themselves consist in changes in one's power of acting,[3] but also because desire seems at once more and less basic than joy and sadness. The second problem concerns the priority of desires and evaluative judgements. While 3p9s and 3p39s suggest that evaluative judgements are (necessarily) posterior to desires, Andrew Youpa has recently argued that passages in *Ethics* 4 indicate that rational evaluative judgements can give rise to, and not merely arise out of, desires (Youpa, 'Spinoza's Theory of Motivation' and 'Spinoza's Theories of Value').

I aim to offer solutions to these problems that reveal the elegance and coherence of Spinoza's account of motivation. Ultimately, I argue that whereas emotions and desires stand in a non-reductive, symmetrical relationship to one another, evaluative judgements must be understood as asymmetrically dependent on, and reducible to, emotions or desires. This interpretation sheds light on our understanding of Spinoza's cognitivist account of emotion. For Spinoza, while emotions are representational, they are not underpinned by evaluative judgements. Rather than claiming that evaluative judgements are the explanatory basis of emotions, Spinoza deflates evaluative judgements, treating them as emotions, or valenced representations, and nothing more.

2. PROBLEM ONE: EMOTIONS AND DESIRES

Since the subject of this paper is emotions and desires – how they relate to evaluative judgement and how they relate to one another – it will be helpful to open with a brief delineation of the umbrella concept of an affect for Spinoza. Affects are defined as 'affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and

[2]See 3D3 and 3 General Definition of the Affects. References to English translation of the *Ethics* [*E*] are to Benedict de Spinoza, *The Collected Works of Spinoza*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Edwin Curley (1985). I adopt the following abbreviations for the *Ethics*: Numerals refer to parts; 'p' denotes proposition; 'c' denotes corollary; 'd' denotes demonstration; 'D' denotes definition; DA denotes Definition of the Affects; 's' denotes scholium (e.g. 3p59s refers to *Ethics*, part 3, proposition 59, scholium). All references to the Latin are to *Spinoza Opera*, edited by Carl Gebhardt.

[3]For a thorough discussion of this point, see LeBuffe ('Anatomy of the Passions').

at the same time, the idea of these affections' (3d3).[4] Considered under the attribute of thought, affects are, like all ideas, representations. In fact, they are doubly representational: they directly represent a change in one's power of acting; and, since they piggyback on other modes of thought that provide the object towards which the affect is directed (2a3), they also represent some object associated with the production of this change.[5] So for instance, love is not only an idea of the body's increased power of acting (joy), it is directed toward something that is loved (and hence represented in the affect). Affects are thus valenced (positive, negative) modes of thought that are directed at some particular object.

On Spinoza's account, there are three primary (classes of) affects: joy, sadness, and desire.[6] Joy and sadness neatly fit the definition of affect above. Joy is an increase in one's degree of perfection or power of acting [*potentia agendi*]; and sadness is a decrease in one's degree of perfection or power of acting (3p11s).[7] It is less clear, however, how desires fits into this general account, as species of desire [*cupiditas*] are not themselves changes in one's power of acting, but are, it would seem, responses to changes in one's power of acting.[8] While I am concerned to understand the relationship between desire and the other primary affects, the question

[4]Cf. *E*3:

> An affect which is called a passion of the mind is a confused idea, by which the mind affirms of its body, or of some part of it, a greater or lesser force of existing than before, which, when it is given, determines the mind to think of this rather than that.
>
> (General Definition of the Affects, Gebhardt ii.203)

[5]Since there must be a cause of this affection and since the affect will necessarily 'involve' [*involvere*] and thus represent the cause, it is not clear that there can actually be anything like pure joy or sadness that is not some species of love or hatred. Spinoza seems to imply as much in 2a3:

> There are no modes of thinking, such as love, desire, or whatever is designated by the word affects of the mind, unless there is in the same individual the idea of the thing loved, desired, and the like. But there can be an idea, even though there is no other mode of thinking.
>
> (2a3)

[6]Spinoza cuts Descartes's list of primary passions in half. Love and hatred are treated as species of joy and sadness, respectively. And wonder is treated as a form of ignorance. In Chapter 6 of the TTP, for instance, he draws a tight connection between wonder [*mirari*] and miracles, both of which bespeak only one's *lack* of knowledge.

[7]In 3p11s and 3 DA II – III, Spinoza explicates joy and sadness in terms of changes to one's level of perfection, rather than to one's power of acting. But since perfection is equivalent to reality (2d6), and one's 'degree of reality' is expressed by one's causal power, an increase or decrease in one's level of perfection is equivalent to an increase or decrease in one's power of acting.

[8]This point, concerning the unique status of desire among the primary affects has been noted by other scholars, including, recently, LeBuffe ('Anatomy of the Passions', 203–10). It should be acknowledged, though, that while contemporary philosophers distinguish between emotions and desires, it was not uncommon for early modern philosophers to group together

of how desire is supposed to fit with the general definition is not my principal worry. Rather, my concern is this: while joy, sadness, and desire are all taken to be primary, or non-derivative, desire appears to be at once more *and* less basic than the affects of joy and sadness. Let me start by considering the reasons for thinking that desire is prior to the primary emotions.

2.1. The Apparent Priority of Desire

In his contribution to the third volume of the *Spinoza by 2000* series (*Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist*), Dutch psychologist and philosopher of emotion Nico Frijda distinguishes between hedonist and hormic theories of motivation: the former take the experience of pleasure and pain (or joy and sadness, we might say) as the root of desires; the latter posit a primordial function or desire that grounds the very experience of pleasure and pain, joy and sadness.[9] Frijda praises Spinoza for adopting a hormic approach:

> Hormic views, of which Spinoza's is one, posit the emotions of desire as the expression of the goals or concerns that make up the nature of the organism. Neuropsychological and animal research tend to side with the hormic, non-hedonist viewpoint, and with recognizing desire as a basic emotion.
> ('Spinoza and Current Theory of Emotion', 253)

According to Frijda, hormic views not only have the advantage of allegedly fitting the 'neuropsychological and animal research' better, they are also explanatorily richer, since they can shed light on the 'provenance of pleasure and pain' itself ('Spinoza and Current Theory of Emotion', 253). He writes:

> Recognizing desire as a basic emotion has important theoretical implications … It is a necessary element in constructing a coherent view of human motivation, in which anticipation of pleasure and pain is not the prime mover of human or animal organism. Pleasure and pain are results, not causes.
> ('Spinoza and Current Theory of Emotion', 252–3)

Frijda seems to imply here not just that desire is *a* primary affect, but further that it is *the* primary affect, more basic than joy and sadness (pleasure and pain), which arise only because one's basic functioning has been aided or thwarted. As he baldly puts it, 'emotion is explained by motivation' ('Spinoza and Current Theory of Emotion', 254).

emotions and motive tendencies under the rubric 'affects'. See James ('Explaining the Passions').

[9]There is a wealth of literature on the sense in which Spinozistic desire is or is not teleological. The terms of contemporary interpretative debate have been set largely by the exchange between Curley ('On Bennett's Spinoza') and Bennett ('Spinoza and Teleology'). Several good essays on the topic were written in the wake of the Bennett–Curley debate, including: Don Garrett ('Spinoza's Ethical Theory') and John Carriero ('Spinoza on Final Causality'). See also Justin Steinberg ('Spinoza on Human Purposiveness and Mental Causation').

Frijda's reasons for attributing such a view to Spinoza are relatively straightforward. At the root of Spinoza's account of motivation is, of course, the concept of striving [*conatus*]. This striving to persevere in one's being is in fact the 'actual essence' of any thing (3p7); and emotions (forms of joy and sadness) are but changes to one's essential power of acting or striving.

Frijda takes this hormic view to entail the primacy of desire, since he identifies striving with desire. This finds some textual support. After demonstrating that one's striving is one's actual essence, Spinoza proceeds to define appetite as striving 'insofar as it is related to the mind and body together' (3p9s) and desire as 'Appetite together with consciousness of the appetite' (ibid.). Some scholars, like Jonathan Bennett, have assumed that the difference between appetite and desire is merely notional, that 'consciousness' is pleonastic here.[10] Spinoza encourages this interpretation by dropping the qualification of consciousness in some instances ('desire is the very nature, *or* essence*, of each* [individual]' [3p57d]) and by explicitly identifying desire with appetite in some passages (e.g. 3 DA I explication: ' … I really recognize no difference between human appetite and desire'). If desire is one's striving, one's essence, it is certainly more basic than the affects of joy and sadness, which are but modifications of this essence.[11] This basis for the priority of desire finds some direct textual support in 3p57d: 'So joy and sadness are the desire, *or* [sive] appetite, itself insofar as it is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, by external causes.' On this account, joy and sadness are explicable only as modifications of one's primordial desire.[12]

2.2. The Apparent Priority of Emotion

Typically, though, Spinoza does not identify desire with striving *simpliciter*. As already noted, Spinoza defines desire in 3p9s as:

[10]Bennett (*A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*, §60).

[11]The claim that emotions like joy and sadness are explanatorily posterior to one's striving is entirely non-controversial, since the affections (affects etc.), or modifications of a thing, are necessarily posterior to its essence. Spinoza relies on the priority of essences to affects, for instance, in 3p57: 'each affect of each individual differs from the affect of another as much as the essence of the one from the essence of the other'. This suggests already that there is something odd about the straightforward identification of the affect of desire with one's striving, since desire is supposed to be an affect, not one's essence.

[12]In making the case for the posteriority of the emotions, one might also point to Spinoza's claim that joy, or at least some forms of joy, can be understood in terms of the satisfaction of some longing [*desiderium*], longing being defined as 'a desire, *or* appetite, to possess something which is encouraged by the memory of that thing, and at the same time restrained by the memory of other things which exclude the existence of the thing wanted' (DA xxxii; cf. 3p39s).

> (A) *Desire* can be defined as *Appetite* ['striving related to the mind and body together'] *together with the consciousness of the appetite*.
>
> (3p9s)

The crucial issue for understanding this formulation concerns the role that consciousness is playing here. Against those who think that consciousness adds nothing to the formulation, I want to suggest that this is a very telling qualification, and one that, when properly understood, actually contributes to the appearance that emotions are in some sense prior to desires. To see this, we may compare the definition of desire in 3p9s with two other formulations that Spinoza takes to be interchangeable:

> (B) Desire is man's very essence, *insofar as it is conceived to be determined, from any given affection ofit*, to do something.
>
> (3 DA I, Gebhardt ii.190, my emphasis)

> (C) Desire is the very essence, *or* nature, of each [man] insofar as it is conceived to be determined, by *whatever constitution* [constitutione] *he has*, to do something.[13]
>
> (3p56d, my emphasis)

The first definition (A) of desire in 3p9s builds on the preceding demonstration, which shows that irrespective of whether or not one's ideas are adequate, one necessarily strives (for an indefinite duration) and is *conscious* of this striving. Here he appeals to 2p23 in order to show that 'the mind (by IIP23) is necessarily conscious of itself through ideas of the body's affections' [*Cum autem mens (per prop. 23. P. 2.) per ideas affectionum corporis necessario sui sit conscia, est ergo (per prop. 7. huius) mens sui conatus conscia. Q.E.D.*] (3p9dem.). On the face of it, 2p23 appears to establish the converse: 'The mind does not know itself, *except* insofar as it perceives the ideas of the affections of the body' (2p23). But the demonstration reveals that in fact Spinoza aims to establish the biconditional: the mind is only conscious of itself insofar as the body is affected (first half of 2p23d) and the mind *necessarily perceives the ideas of these affections* of the body (from 2p12, 2p13, 2p21, 2p22) (second half of 2p23d). So, on the basis of 2p23 and 2p23d, Spinoza claims that one is conscious of oneself *if and only if* one's body is affected.

Spinoza relies on this biconditional formulation (from 2p23) in 3 DA I, where Spinoza aims to establish the interchangeability of these three formulations of desire. Here he justifies the transition from defining desire as one's essence (or striving) *insofar as one is conscious of it* to 'one's essence *insofar as it is conceived, from some given affection of it,* to be determined to do something' on the grounds that one is conscious if and only if one is

[13]All of the italicized phrases in passages (A)–(C) reflect my emphasis.

affected.[14] He appeals again to 2p23. Spinoza thus appears to be committed to the view that one is conscious of oneself and one's striving if and only if one's body is affected, in which case (A) and (B) are coextensive.

The very same explication also reveals that (C) is supposed to be equivalent to (B), since it shows that what it means for one's essence to be constituted in a particular way is for one to be affected by some species of joy or sadness. Here he replaces the phrase 'by whatever constitution he has' in the definition of 3p56d quoted above ([C]) – 'the very essence, *or* nature, of each [man] insofar as it is conceived to be determined, by *whatever constitution* [constitutione] *he has,* to do something' (3p56d) – with the phrase 'from any given affection of it', explaining that 'by an affection of the human essence we understand any constitution of that essence, whether it is innate [NS: or has come from outside]' (3 Definitions of the Affects; II/190). For one's essence to be constituted in some way just is for one's essence to be affected, and vice versa.[15]

Putting these formulations together, we may define desire as one's essence or striving insofar as that essence is constituted or affected in a particular way, whereby one is consciously determined to do or think (3 GDA) something. The language of determination – in this comprehensive formulation, as well as in the formulations in 3p56d and DA I – here suggests that desire is causally posterior to affections. And since all emotions are affections or ways in which the body is constituted, it would follow that desires are posterior to emotions.[16] Spinoza signals this when he claims that desires covary with emotions because desires are determined by emotions.

> Desire is the very essence, *or* nature, of each [man] *insofar as it is conceived to be determined,* by whatever constitution he has, to do something (see P9S).

[14]I could have said that desire is man's very essence, insofar as it is conceived to be determined to do something. But from this definition (by IIP23) it would not follow that the mind could be conscious of its desire, *or* appetite. Therefore, in order to involve the cause of this consciousness, it was necessary (by the same propositions) to add: insofar as it is conceived, from some given affection of it, to be determined, and so on. (DA I, explication)

[15]Lest one worry about transitivity here, we may simply note that Spinoza also indicates that he intends (A) and (C) to be interchangeable, since he appeals to (A) alone in order to justify formulation (C).

[16]In 3p18d, Spinoza identifies 'affect' [*affectum*] with 'the constitution of the body' (3p18d). While Spinoza is not always especially careful to distinguish 'affects' [*affectum*] from 'affections' [*affectio*] (see 3p18), 3d3 suggests that the concepts of 'affects' and 'affections of the body' differ in a couple of different ways. First, 'affects', unlike 'affections of the body' include the ideas of these affections, and so they may be understood as the mental correlates to one's physical affections. Second, 'affects' are only a subset of 'affections', since one may be affected by things that leave unchanged one's power of acting (3 post. 1), in which case one undergoes an affection without experiencing an affect. These differences, however, are irrelevant here, since, as he indicates in the demonstration to 3p56, the way in which one's nature is constituted is equivalent to the way in which one is *affected* with some species of joy or sadness.

> Therefore, as each [man] is affected by external causes with this or that species of joy, sadness, love, hate, and so on, that is, as his nature is constituted in one way or the other, so his desires vary.
>
> (3p56d, my emphasis)

Some sort of precedence is also suggested in 3p41s1, where Spinoza claims that: 'this *reciprocal love, and consequent* [consequenter] *(by P39) striving to benefit one who loves us, and strives* (by the same P39) *to benefit us*, is called *thankfulness, or gratitude*'. Other passages seem to indicate that this priority is causal in character. Here are just a few such passages:

> The desire which arises from [*oritur*] sadness or joy, and from hatred or love, is greater, the greater the affect is.
>
> (3p37)

> A desire which arises [*oritur*] from a true knowledge of good and evil can be extinguished or restrained by many other desires which arise [oriuntur] from affects by which we are tormented.
>
> (4p15)

> From a true knowledge of good and evil, insofar as this is an affect (by 4p8), there necessarily arises [*oritur*] a desire (by Def. Aff. I), which is the greater as the affect from which it arises is greater (by IIIP37).
>
> (4p15d)

> A desire arising [*oritur*] from either a joy or a sadness related to one, or several, but not to all parts of the body, has no regard for the advantage of the whole man.
>
> (4p60)

These passages provide at least *prima facie* evidence that desire is parasitic on, and causally posterior to, one's emotional constitution, which raises the question of how desire can possibly be a primary (category of) affect. They point to the hedonist character of Spinoza's account of motivation, whereby desires are fixed by pleasure and pain, joy and sadness.

2.3. Solution to Problem 1: Two Aspects of Same Mode

I want to propose an interpretation of the relationship between desire and the primary emotions that acknowledges and incorporates parts of the arguments cited above – the apparently hormic (appetite preceding and explaining emotion) *and* hedonic (emotion preceding and explaining desire) features of Spinoza's theory of motivation – while revealing how desire, joy, and sadness are all be understood as primary (underived) affects.

First, Frijda is right, of course, to note that joy and sadness are explanatorily dependent on striving (hormic dimension). But this does not show that joy and sadness are derivative *affects*; rather, it shows that a thing's

affects depend on its essence, which is precisely what Spinoza's metaphysics demands (3p57; 2A1″ [cited in 3p57d]). And it is a mistake to identify desire with striving *simpliciter*, because, as we have seen, desire is striving *insofar as it is determined by the affections or emotions*.

We may avoid the conclusion that particular desires are posterior to emotions by observing that the determination relationship here is not to be understood causally. Emotions give concrete orientation to one's striving and this concrete orientation just *is* desire. While it might seem as though the formation of the emotion and the orientation of one's striving are successive moments in a process, in fact the orientation, the desire, just is the way in which the emotion modifies one's striving. The emotion marks a kind of structural change; the desire is the functional effect of this change.

A simple reflection on the general character of striving reveals why it would be a mistake to think of the emotion and the desire as distinct, successively formed modes. Since our striving, as our essence, must necessarily be expressed in all of our affections – it is not something that needs to be *added* to the affections. Rather there must be a conative side to any emotion, and this conative side just is the desire.[17] This explains why the proofs that relate emotion to desire are so thin, appealing only to the *conatus* doctrine itself – the fact that striving is part of one's essence – in order to show that emotions entail desires.

The relationship between affects and desires can be illustrated in the following way. Imagine a trumpet through which air is perpetually blowing. The ceaseless force of wind represents one's striving. If a valve is then pressed down, this act may be conceived in isolation from the sound produced, as a kind of structural change to the instrument. That would be equivalent to the emotion. However, we can also conceive of the depression of the valve *in light of the wind* being forced through trumpet, as a change in the sound produced. That would be equivalent to the desire – the way in which one's striving is constituted. The changing of the note (i.e. particular desire) *just is* what the pressing of the valve (i.e. emotion) does to the wind that is necessarily being forced through it (i.e. one's general striving).[18]

[17]As Don Garrett puts it,

> the *conatus* doctrine that explains how, when an individual perceives an object as something advantageous or beneficial to it, that very perception can constitute a desire for it. Spinozistic desire is not something that must be *added* to a mind … it pertains to the very *essence* of minds to desire whatever they can perceive (adequately or inadequately) as conducive to their own advantage.
>
> ('Spinoza's Ethical Theory', 296)

[18]We get further support for my reading in 4p8d, where Spinoza claims that the consciousness of an affect – that is, the desire – is 'not really distinguished from the affect itself … . it is only conceptually distinguished from it' (4p8d).

So, on Spinoza's account, when, for instance, I am enjoying lazing around in bed in the morning, this joy does not generate a distinct mental state, which is the desire to stay in bed. The desire to stay in bed just is the *motivational* side of the joy itself; it is the form that my striving takes when I am affected with this particular kind of joy.[19] While one can conceptually separate the joy from the desire (see, once again, 3DA; G ii.192), forms of joy and particular desires are formed together, since forms of joy give concrete orientation to one's striving.[20]

3. PROBLEM TWO: DESIRES AND EVALUATIVE JUDGEMENTS

3.1. The Apparent Priority of Desire

The second priority problem concerns the relationship between desires and evaluative judgements. The bold suggestion of 3p9s – which many regard as the foundation of Spinoza's account of moral motivation – is that desires are prior to judgements of goodness and evil:

> … we neither strive for, nor will, neither want, nor desire anything because we judge it to be good; on the contrary, we judge something to be good because we strive for it, will it, want it, and desire it.[21]
>
> (3p9s)

This passage establishes two things: (1) evaluative judgements depend *in some way* on desires, and (2) this dependence is asymmetrical.[22] These same points are highlighted, if not clarified, in the deductive progeny of 3p9s, like 3p39s:

[19]Here, I am in general agreement with LeBuffe, who writes:

> The terms in the catalog [of passions] that represent desires do not necessarily pick out items that are essentially different. A single psychological state may be characterized equally well, for example, as an instance of sadness, or of attempted perseverance, or of aversion. To call the state either an instance of desire or an instance of passion, then, is merely to emphasize features of interest to some particular context rather than to mark that state as different in kind from others. The catalog of passions, under this conception of it, is a collection of terms that are of pragmatic rather than metaphysical significance.
>
> ('Anatomy of the Passions', 210)

[20]Importantly, the conative expression of joy need not take the form of an active pursuit of more of the object of joy; rather it may simply be expressed as a form of 'satisfaction [*acquiescentiam*] in the lover on account of the presence of the thing loved' (3 DA, vi exp.).

[21]Compare this with Hobbes in *Leviathan*: 'whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth *Good*: And the object of his Hate, and Aversion, *Evill*' (39).

[22]See Youpa ('Spinoza's Theory of Motivation') for a range of interpretations.

> For we have shown above (in P9S) that we desire nothing because we judge [*iudicamus*] it to be good, but on the contrary, we call [*vocamus*] it good because we desire it. Consequently, what we are averse to we call evil. So each one, from his own affect, judges, or evaluates [*judicat seu aestimat*], what is good and what is bad, what is better and what is worse, and finally, what is best and what is worst.[23]
>
> (3p39s)

While the exact nature of the asymmetrical dependency of evaluative judgements on one's affects (specifically, desires) is not spelled out in these passages, the mere fact that the affects in some sense ground evaluative judgements challenges a certain model of moral motivation according to which judgements of goodness – including rational judgements – have the power to initiate action unbidden by any antecedent affect.

Moreover, if all of the causal work is being done at the level of affects, and if evaluative judgements are separate from and dependent on such affects, then it looks like the judgements themselves are epiphenomenal, in which case reason is idle. On this stronger reading, Spinoza is denying the causal efficacy of (rational) judgement altogether.

3.2. The Apparent Priority of Judgement

In response to the worry about epiphenomenalism, there is reasonably strong evidence that Spinoza thought that evaluative judgements – in particular rational judgements or adequate ideas – can be causally efficacious. Throughout *Ethics* 4, Spinoza writes of acting 'from the dictate of reason' [*ex dictamine rationis*] and 'from the guidance of reason' [*ex ductu rationis*], indicating that rational evaluative judgements can influence action. Indeed, a number of passages – most of which are concentrated in *Ethics* 4 – not only attest to the causal potency of reason, they ostensibly allow for the reversal of the very priority relationship spelled out in 3p9s and 3p39s.

These passages, which Andrew Youpa has rather methodically tabulated, include 3p59s, which introduces the active affects of tenacity [*animositas*] and nobility [*generositas*], which are defined as desires that arise 'solely from the dictate of reason' [*ex solo Rationis dictamine*] (cf. 4p61; 5p7), and 4p15, which posits a 'desire which arises from a true knowledge'. But the passage that serves as the fulcrum for Youpa's interpretation is 4p19:

> From the laws of his own nature, everyone necessarily wants, or is repelled by, what he judges to be good or evil.
>
> (4p19)

[23]The shift from 'judging' [*iudicare*] to 'calling' [*vocare*] can, of course, be explained by the fact that we call something good precisely because we *judge* that it is good, assuming sincerity, etc.

On Youpa's reading, this proposition suggests that we can desire something simply because we judge it to be good, contrary to the claim of 3p9s. To strengthen this interpretation of 4p19, Youpa highlights how Spinoza uses it in 4p59 alt. dem.:

> Any action is called evil insofar as it arises from the fact that we have been affected with Hate or with some evil affect (see P45C1). But no action, considered in itself, is good or evil (as we have shown in the Preface of this Part); instead, one and the same action is now good, now evil. *Therefore, to the same action which is now evil, or which arises from some evil affect, we can (by P19) be led by reason*.
>
> (4p59 alt. dem.)

According to Youpa, 4p59 alt. dem. reveals that 4p19 reverses the priority of 3p9s, since it shows that true or rational evaluative judgements can, on their own, give rise to desire, rather than being rooted in an antecedent desire. On this reading, Spinoza provides two distinct accounts of motivation: one for the unenlightened (presented in *Ethics* 3) and one for the enlightened (*Ethics* 4).[24] 3p9s describes how most (unenlightened) people form evaluative judgements – namely, on the basis of their desires – while 4p19 describes how people *ought* to be motivated, or how we *are* motivated insofar as our evaluations are grounded in reason.

While Youpa's interpretation is resourceful and original, it forces one to interpolate a scope restriction on the account of motivation offered in Part 3 for which there is no direct textual evidence, and it saddles Spinoza with an inexplicably dualistic account of motivation. Why, we might ask, should *true* judgements of good and evil have causal powers that other judgements do not? Isn't Spinoza, after all, keen to point out that the truth of a judgement does not endow it with any special causal powers (4p14)? Maybe, though, this is the best that can be hoped for, given the apparently conflicting claims about the priority of desire and evaluative judgements offered in *Ethics* 3 and 4.

4. SOLUTION TO PRIORITY PROBLEM TWO: EVALUATIVE JUDGEMENTS CONSTITUTED BY DESIRES

Pace Youpa, I think that we can render the remarks on motivation in *Ethics* 4 consistent with the account offered in *Ethics* 3 once we get a better handle on the precise nature of the dependency relationship expressed in 3p9s and 3p39s. When we see how Spinoza proceeds to spell out this relationship,

[24]Youpa ('Spinoza's Theory of Motivation'), 383. See also Youpa ('Spinoza's Theories of Value'). Della Rocca seems to agree with Youpa that 3p9s and the like (e.g., 1 app, Gebhardt ii.81) tell us only how people 'typically' or 'ordinarily' evaluate things, rather than how we *should* judge goodness according to the power of things themselves (*Spinoza*, 176).

we find that his claim is not that evaluative judgements are distinct from and *causally* posterior to desires; rather, evaluative judgements are constituted by desires, and that this constitution relation is strict. I will call this view – according to which, to form an evaluative judgement *just is* to be affected in one way or another and to represent some thing as the cause of this affect – the Constitution Thesis.[25] According to the Constitution Thesis, there is nothing more to an evaluative judgement than the affects that constitute these judgements.[26]

The roots of the Constitution Thesis may be found in 3p9s and 3p39s, which entail that desires are both necessary and sufficient for evaluative judgements. 3p9s establishes, minimally, that desires are necessary conditions for evaluative judgements, since they are the ground of such judgements. The claim of 3p39s, that 'each one, *from his own affect*, judges, or evaluates, what is good and what is bad', when read in light of the subsequent illustration – 'So the greedy man judges an abundance of money best, and poverty worst' – indicates that desires entail, or are sufficient for, evaluative judgements: greediness entails the judgement that money is good. From this we may conclude that desires and evaluative judgements are mutually implicative (stand in a biconditional relationship) and that desires are in some sense explanatorily prior to evaluative judgements, given the claim of asymmetry (3p9s).

The most explicit articulation of the Constitution Thesis, however, is to be found in precisely the same part of the *Ethics* where, according to Youpa, Spinoza reverses this very priority: *Ethics* 4. The proposition that I want to focus on is 4p8:

> The knowledge of good and evil is nothing but an affect of joy or sadness, insofar as we are conscious of it.
>
> (4p8)

The first thing to be clear about here is that 'knowledge' is a somewhat misleading translation of *cognitio*, or cognition. To have a *cognitio* of x is not to satisfy certain epistemic conditions in relation to x; rather, it is simply to *cognize* or represent x in some way. The demonstration of 4p8 makes this clear, since the cognition in question is that of (mere) perception. And further support for this can be found in the demonstration of 4p64, which explicitly draws on 4p8 ('knowledge of evil [by P8] is sadness itself, insofar as we are conscious of it') in order to show that '*cognitio* of evil is an inadequate *cognitio*'.

[25]This label is owed in part to Youpa, who considers, and ultimately rejects, this possibility.
[26]One quick terminological note here: since we saw in the first part of this paper that emotions and desires are really just two distinct ways of conceiving of the same modification of one's striving, we may revert to the umbrella term 'affect' here to designate that modification – be it conceived as emotion or desire – that constitutes the judgement.

4p8 thus does not purport to be a claim about the *knowledge* of good and evil in our sense (which Spinoza calls true knowledge of good and evil), but about *any* representation of good and evil. And to represent something *as* good or evil just is to evaluate it. So this is an explanation of the nature of evaluative judgements.

What we learn is that the representation of good or evil is *nothing but* [*nihil aliud*] an affect of joy or sadness, insofar as we are conscious of it. Drawing on the *reduction* of 'good' and 'evil' to joy or sadness in 3p39s, Spinoza argues here – however dubiously[27] – that the representation of good and evil can be nothing other than the very affect of joy or sadness itself, and the consciousness produced therefrom, which, as we saw above, is just the desire.

When Spinoza uses the expression *nihil aliud*, he is (typically) signalling some sort of explanatory reduction, explicating and rendering metaphysically reputable some confusedly understood concept by collapsing it into some more basic concept. The reductive claim here – that evaluative judgements are *nothing but* affects of joy or sadness and their corresponding desires – is deployed to ground the subsequent claim that '… if the human mind had only adequate ideas, it would form no notion of evil' (4p64c; cf. 4p68 and 4p68d.): because a judgement of evil is nothing but a particular form of sadness or reduction of power, and one who had only adequate ideas would never experience sadness or a reduction of power, one who had only adequate ideas would never form an idea or representation of evil at all. The Constitution Thesis and the explanatory reduction that it entails make determinate what was indeterminate in 3p9s. Desires are prior to evaluative judgements in the sense that the latter are constituted by the former: there is nothing more to an evaluative judgement than the affect itself.

Youpa considers the possibility that evaluative judgements are constituted by desires, but rejects it on the ground that this interpretation cannot make sense of 4p19 and its subsequent use. The first thing to note in response to Youpa is that 4p19 itself does not in any way compel us to reverse the priority claim of 3p9s as construed on the Constitution account. The explicit claim of 4p19 itself – 'From the laws of his own nature, everyone necessarily

[27]The demonstration itself is muddy, at best. Leaving aside the last clause ('insofar as we are conscious of it'), which is treated separately, the main argument runs something like this: good and evil are nothing but increases or decreases one's power of acting, and increases and decreases in one's power of acting are forms of joy and sadness, respectively. Consequently, good and evil are nothing but forms joy or sadness (see 3p39s). So, to represent something as good or evil is just to represent it as the source of joy or sadness. This last step is the really questionable one, since it assumes that we can substitute coextensive terms in an intensional context, *salva veritate.* Without trying to vindicate what looks like unsuccessful demonstration, I will simply note that Spinoza might not actually regard this as an intensional context. To see why, one must look at his multi-layered theory of representation (Steinberg, 'Imitation, Representation, and Humanity in Spinoza's Ethics').

wants, or is repelled by, what he judges to be good or evil' – is perfectly consistent with the Constitution Thesis: there is a desire or aversion whenever there is a judgement of good or evil (and vice versa) because judgements of good or evil are *nothing but* the desires or aversions themselves.[28]

As for the suggestion that 4p19 establishes the (independent) motivational power of evaluative judgements – that they *give rise* to desires – a close inspection of the demonstration of 4p19 shows that nothing of the sort is implied. In fact, the demonstration relies directly on the Constitution Thesis, which posits the explanatory posteriority of evaluative judgements. Here is the proof in full:

> Knowledge [*cognitio*] of good and evil (by P8) is itself an affect of joy or sadness, insofar as we are conscious of it. And therefore (by IIIP28), everyone necessarily wants what he judges to be good, and conversely, is repelled by what he judges to be evil. But this appetite is nothing but the very essence, *or* nature, of man (by the definition of appetite; see IIIP9s and Def. Aff. I). Therefore, everyone, from the laws of his own nature, necessarily, wants or is repelled by, and so on, q.e.d.
>
> (4p19d)

There are three steps to this demonstration. For the moment, I want to focus on the first two steps. The first step is just a restatement of 4p8, the clearest expression of the Constitution Thesis, according to which evaluative judgements are constituted by emotions themselves. The second step appeals to 3p28, which shows that we desire (the furtherance of) whatever we represent as conducive to joy, that is, whatever we love (desires covary with our emotions). The argument, thus, can be encapsulated as follows:

> Because to judge something to be good is just to love it [from the Constitution Thesis and the definition of 'love'], and because we desire whatever we love, one will necessarily desire what one judges to be good.

The appearance that evaluative judgements are prior to desires is just another case of *emotions* appearing to be prior to desires; and, as we saw it the first part of the paper, there is no real priority here: emotions and desires are co-formed, because they are two aspects of the same mode.

The third step of the proof helps us to overcome the concern about epiphenomenalism. In this move, which seeks to account for the first clause of 4p19 ('From the laws of his own nature … '), Spinoza simply unhelpfully cites the definition of appetite. What is interesting here, though, is not the demonstration, but the claim itself, since when Spinoza writes of acting 'from the laws of one's own nature' [*ex legibus suae naturae*], he means acting from *reason* or *adequate ideas*, which follow from one's nature alone.[29] Here

[28]Matthew Kisner makes this point effectively in 'Perfection and Desire', 101–2.

Spinoza is explicitly extending the account of motivation from Ethics 3 to cover rational action: both insofar as we are irrational and insofar as we are rational, we will desire that which we love, that is, (by the Constitution Thesis) what we represent as good.

Spinoza maintains that having adequate ideas entails experiencing joy. In 3p58, he argues that when one has an adequate idea, one acts (by 3P1) and one necessarily represents this activity and rejoices in one's power (3p58d; 3p53). Spinoza's somewhat opaque reasoning here seems to be that the joy that accompanies action is reflective, a joy that arises from considering one's ability to act (3p53). Another, somewhat tidier, explanation for why acting is joyful is that insofar as one acts, one expresses one's essence to a greater degree. And for an actually existing thing to realize its essence to a greater degree just is for its power of acting to increase. Consequently, acting, or having adequate ideas, *is* joyful. However the argument is reconstructed, it is evident that Spinoza thinks that knowledge is intrinsically empowering and empowerment is joyful.

When Spinoza writes of desires arising out of [*oritur*] reason (e.g. 4p61), he simply means desires arising out of the joy that is the affective side of adequate ideas. And, again, we saw in the first part of this paper that when Spinoza writes of desires 'arising out of' emotions (as he does in the preceding proposition [4p60]), he does not mean to imply that the latter are *prior* to the former.

The fundamental point here is that there is a joyful side and a corresponding *desiderative* side to adequate ideas. The relationship between adequate ideas and desires is well captured by Don Garrett:

> If, for example, one determines by reason that one's own advantage lies in the pursuit of knowledge, or in the institution of a well-ordered state, or in association with individuals like oneself, then the idea that constitutes this understanding will itself be a desire for the thing so conceived, in Spinoza's view. It will not simply stimulate such a desire; it will *be* such a desire.
>
> ('Spinoza's Ethical Theory', 296)

The interpretation that I am advancing can thus perfectly well account for the invocation of 4p19 in 4p59 alt. dem.: when Spinoza claims that we can be led to act from reason alone, the point is that the joy of adequate ideas entails desire or motivation. If I adequately grasp that someone agrees with me in their nature, I will love this person – and so, by the Constitution Thesis, I will represent them as good – and will desire to

[29]See, for instance, 4p35d, 4p35c ('… a man acts entirely from the laws of his own nature when he lives according to the guidance of reason [by IIID2]') and 4p24d ('Acting absolutely from virtue is nothing but acting from the laws of our own nature [by D8]. But we act only insofar as we understand [by IIIP3]').

join her in friendship. If this 'nobility' [*generositas*] (3p59s) is strong enough, it will be expressed in my behaviour, and I will act from a rational affect. So reason *can* move us to action; but it does so only because adequate ideas have an affective side. It is reason *qua* affect that motivates. And this account of reason's causal power is perfectly consistent with the view that evaluative judgements are constituted by, and reducible to, affects.

5. BETWEEN THE SCYLLA OF EMOTIVISM AND THE CHARYBDIS OF HIGH-COGNITIVISM

To see the significance of Spinoza's account as I have reconstructed it, it is helpful to contrast it with two alternative pictures of how affects and evaluative judgements hang together. One alternative view is emotivism. Several interpreters have read 3p9s as endorsing a form of emotivism (the view that moral judgements are *mere* expressions of one's emotions),[30] and it is tempting to understand my construal of Spinoza's account of moral (or evaluative) judgement, rooted as it is in 3p9s, in this light. But, in reducing evaluative judgements to emotions, Spinoza is *not* endorsing a form of moral expressivism. Affects are not raw feels;[31] they are truth-evaluable representations, either as inadequate (General Definition of the Affects, Gebhardt ii.203) or adequate ideas (3p58) of a change in one's power of acting and (typically) its cause. So, for instance, to love something is to associate it, perhaps confusedly, with the production of joy, which is, in turn, to represent it as good. And Spinoza is very much alive to the possibility, indeed the prevalence, of misjudgement, as one's affective representations are unreliable guides to the actual *goodness* of things, understood in terms of how that thing contributes to one's overall empowerment or joy-production.[32]

But if affects are *themselves* truth-evaluable representations, what is the significance of Spinoza's claim that judgements of goodness *reduce* to affects? Why not, for instance, just make an identity claim and leave it at that? Here I think we must bear in mind that for many fellow so-called cognitivists, affects are treated as causally or explanatorily dependent on judgements. For instance, Galen reports that many of the Stoics (citing Zeno in particular) 'do not take the soul's [evaluative] judgements themselves to

[30]See Scruton (*Spinoza*, 77); Rohatyn ('Spinoza's Emotivism').

[31]See Garrett ('Spinoza's Ethical Theory', 295).

[32]According to Spinoza, X is good relative to something, T, to the extent that X contributes to T's overall joy. X is evil to the extent that it contributes to T's overall sadness. Value is always fixed relative to some being. This thesis is compatible with his many statements to the effect that good and evil 'indicate nothing positive in things, considered in themselves [*in se*]' (4 Preface), which amounts to nothing more than the denial that things have absolute value. I spell out his account and examine how he allows for evaluative misjudgements in the first chapter of my forthcoming book, *Spinoza's Political Psychology* (Cambridge University Press).

be its passions, but identify these with the *results* of the [evaluative] judgements' (Sedley and Long, *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, §65K, p. 414). And even those, like Chrysippus, who construe passions *as* judgements take judgements to be explanatorily prior in the sense that it is the assenting to a false representation of value that explains passion (or the impulse), rather than the other way around.[33]

Closer to Spinoza's time, Descartes seems to embrace the priority of judgement in the *Passions of the Soul*, where he claims:

> When we think of something as good with regard to us, i.e. as beneficial to us, *this makes us have love for it*; and when we think of it as evil or harmful, this arouses hatred in us … this same consideration of good and evil is the origin of all the other passions.[34]
> (*Passions of the Soul* §2.56–57, in Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 1)

By denying that evaluations are explanatorily prior to affects, Spinoza distances his account from Stoic and Cartesian alternatives with which his account shares certain broad (anti-Augustinian) features. I take it that what Spinoza finds uniquely objectionable is the notion that there is an independent conception of what it means to represent value apart from the valence of the passion. Affects are complex representational states; and the specific feature that constitutes the evaluative part of an affect is just the valence. The error that most people commit is not in thinking that we make genuine evaluative judgements or that we act from them – we assuredly do! The mistake is to think that evaluative judgements are a thing apart from, and perhaps the ground of, our affects.[35]

Now there is something admittedly quite odd about the resulting account of moral motivation. It has, perhaps reasonably, been accused of being too reductive, too flat, failing to account for the different textures and dimensions of axiological judgement;[36] and it entails, maybe implausibly, that

[33]This also holds true of many cognitivists today. For instance, Nussbaum (*Upheavals of Thought*), for example, 19. See also Lazarus (*Emotion and Adaptation*).

[34]The original language reference may be found in *Oeuvres de* Descartes, Adam and Tannery [AT] XI: 374–5. Compare also his claim: 'all our passions represent to us the goods to whose pursuit they impel us as being much greater than they really are' (Descartes, Letter to Princess Elisabeth, September 15, 1645, in Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, Vol. 3; AT IV: 295). For a recent account of the relationship between the passions and judgement that I find generally persuasive, see Matthew Kisner, 'Descartes's Boniform Faculty' (draft).

[35]One might fruitfully compare his reductive treatment of evaluative judgements with that of his treatment of final causes: 'What is called a final cause is nothing but a human appetite [*finalis dicitur, nihil est praeter ipsum humanum appetitum*] insofar as it is considered as a principle, *or* primary cause, of something' (*E*4 Preface).

[36]Moses Mendelssohn, for instance, chafes against what he sees as Spinoza's collapsing of *feelings*, *emotions*, and *judgements*. Spinoza leaves unexplained 'the difference between

one's evaluations cannot come apart from one's affective responses, which in turn rules out the possibility of genuine *akratic* action.[37]

But, for all of its stripped-down strangeness, I would argue that there are a number of notable virtues of Spinoza's view: it neatly accounts for the motivating power of evaluative judgements; it helps to explain why judgements of value are so stubbornly resistant to revision (even when [*the*] conscious idea is revised); and it can account for the prevalent and profound dissonance one often finds between avowed and revealed judgements of value, since we are often confused about precisely what we are reporting – in other words, Spinoza can well account for the experience of feeling estranged from one's own implicit assessments.[38]

With this in mind, an important lesson of Spinoza's account of evaluative judgement might well be that if we are to remedy this situation, if we are to reduce the dissonance between who we are and who we would like to be, we must come to grips with the perhaps uncomfortable fact that our emotions – however passively or automatically formed – reveal our valuations, our values. This means that with respect to our appraisals of things, we can only change our minds if we find ways to change our hearts.

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good and evil, desirable and undesirable, pleasure and pain' (*Morning Hours* in Mendelssohn, *Last Works*, 96).

[37]I elaborate on this in another paper, the working draft of which is currently entitled, 'Two Puzzles Concerning Spinoza's Conception of Belief'.

[38]Spinoza's views on emotions and evaluative judgement may bear on contemporary analyses of implicit bias in illuminating ways. See Huebner ('Troubles with Stereotypes for Spinozan Minds').

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