

This article was downloaded by: [Timothy Yenter]

On: 02 October 2014, At: 12:06

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954  
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,  
UK



## British Journal for the History of Philosophy

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rbjh20>

### Clarke Against Spinoza on the Manifest Diversity of the World

Timothy Yenter<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of Mississippi

Published online: 28 Mar 2014.

To cite this article: Timothy Yenter (2014) Clarke Against Spinoza on the Manifest Diversity of the World, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 22:2, 260-280, DOI: [10.1080/09608788.2014.900606](https://doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2014.900606)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09608788.2014.900606>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly

forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

## ARTICLE

# CLARKE AGAINST SPINOZA ON THE MANIFEST DIVERSITY OF THE WORLD

Timothy Yenter

Samuel Clarke was one of Spinoza's earliest and fiercest opponents in England. I uncover three related Clarkean arguments against Spinoza's metaphysic that deserve more attention from readers today. Collectively, these arguments draw out a tension at the very heart of Spinoza's rationalist system. From the conjunction of a necessary being who acts necessarily and the principle of sufficient reason, Clarke reasons that there could be none of the diversity we find in the universe. In doing so, Clarke potentially reveals an inconsistent triad in Spinoza. Responses to this inconsistency map onto a deep division in the contemporary Spinoza literature. I conclude that Clarke's arguments provide a new approach to the recently revived debate over acosmic interpretations of Spinoza and point to new interpretive possibilities.

**KEYWORDS:** Samuel Clarke; Spinoza; principle of sufficient reason; necessity; acosmism

## INTRODUCTION

The early eighteenth-century philosopher, Anglican bishop, and partisan of Newtonian science Samuel Clarke was one of Spinoza's sharpest eighteenth-century critics. Clarke attacks Spinoza's philosophical system from a number of angles, but I will be focusing on one. Could a world that is necessary (in some very strong sense, which we will investigate) exhibit the manifest diversity of this world? Ours is a world of trees and raccoons and billiard balls and thoughts about each of those things. At least, it appears that way to

I am grateful to helpful comments on very early drafts of this article from many people, including George Bealer, Tim Clarke, Troy Cross, Michael Della Rocca, Alan Nelson, Mary Beth Willard, and Ken Winkler. Two anonymous referees provided very useful comments, especially on the second section and on Clarke's reading of Spinoza. Drafts were presented at a working group at Yale University and the Midwest Seminar for Early Modern Philosophy at Marquette University. This article was completed with the help of a Summer Research Grant from the University of Mississippi.

us. The problem, according to Clarke, is that if everything exists for a reason, and that reason is either a necessary being or what follows necessarily from that being, then there could never be the diversity that we find in our world.

There are three stages to this argument. In the first stage, Clarke argues that diversity needs an explanation (the second section). In the second stage, we consider the options that Clarke thought were available to explain diversity (the third section). We also examine the argument for why absolute necessity, while qualifying as an explanation, fails to explain the particular fact of interest to us: the manifest diversity that our world exhibits. Clarke argues that only if there are agents who freely choose (in a strong sense) could we explain the diversity of the world. This approach faces a serious difficulty, as we shall see (the fourth section). I conclude with some observations about how Clarke's argument can help us better understand divisions within recent Spinoza scholarship and the debate over acosmism (the fifth section).

### DIVERSITY NEEDS AN EXPLANATION

Clarke, Leibniz, and Spinoza each attempt to explain the existence of the plurality of things that apparently exist. Leibniz and Spinoza both believe that numerical non-identity must be explained by qualitative non-identity. That is, if A and B are non-identical, then there must be some property that A has that B does not, or vice versa. This is the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles. Weaker versions of this principle allow for (*de re*) properties of the sort 'is identical to A'. Stronger versions of the principle do not. Spinoza and Leibniz accept the strong version. Among the consequences of the strong version of the principle is the denial of absolute space, one of the many points of contention in the Leibniz–Clarke correspondence (L 3.5.).<sup>1</sup> Spinoza also asserts the Identity of Indiscernibles (E 1p4). Because there must be a reason why A and B are non-identical, there must be some property that distinguishes them.

Clarke has an interesting response to this approach. Unfortunately, I do not see him making the case for this approach very well in his correspondence with Leibniz, but it does arise elsewhere with greater clarity and rigour. For Clarke, the illuminating question is not why two things are numerically distinct. That question might have an answer, but we also need to answer the question, why do two numerically distinct things have different properties? That is, given that A and B are non-identical, in virtue of what does A have the properties it has and B have the properties it has? Clarke can agree with Spinoza and Leibniz that the fact that there are non-identical things is in need

<sup>1</sup>References to the Leibniz–Clarke correspondence are in the following form: 'C' for a letter by Clarke or 'L' for a letter by Leibniz, followed by the number of the letter (1–5) and the section number (first included by Clarke and repeated in most editions).

of an explanation, but the more pressing quandary for him is why there should be any difference in properties at all. Why is one rock larger than another? Why does one tree exist before another? Why does one region of space have a body in it and another does not? This sort of question plays a central role in Clarke's thinking about explanations.<sup>2</sup>

Clarke, following Newton, conceives of space as infinitely extended with a surprisingly small amount of matter clustered into bunches. His question is why there should be these bundles of atoms, these physical bodies, in some spots but not in others. Why is this region of space the one that has a tree and that one not? Clarke is not worried (at the point we are picking up in his story) with the question of how there could be distinct regions of space, which is the concern motivating the Identity of Indiscernibles. His concern is that there is nothing in the nature of this region of space that explains why it is filled rather than not, since this region of space is in essentials the same as any other. There is nothing in the nature of, for instance, an oak tree that seems to explain it either. Why are there things over here and not over there? Why does someone exist now and not later? In short, why does anything that only exists for a finite time or in a finite space do so for that duration or in that place? This is the question that Clarke proposes to answer. Throughout this paper, I will call this the problem of diversity. Diversity, as I will use it (it is my term, not Clarke's), should not be understood as numerical non-identity. The problem of absolutist space and its conflict with the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles (which was a major sticking point in the Leibniz–Clarke correspondence) is not the problem of diversity. The problem of diversity is explaining the *qualitative* difference between any two things. That there is such diversity is taken to be obvious to us from our experience of the world. The problem of diversity, then, is not the problem of non-identity but a separate problem, that there are qualitative differences between things finite in extension or duration.

Intriguingly, he argues that Spinoza cannot answer this question. While neither Spinoza nor Leibniz accepts Clarke's Newtonian absolutism about space, if they accept that there are at least two things that exist and are different from each other, then this problem is for them as well. Leibniz's answer changes over time but frequently involves the individual's belonging to the best possible world.<sup>3</sup> Spinoza's answer involves an explanation relating a

<sup>2</sup>E.g.

Absolute necessity, in which there can be no variation in any kind or degree, cannot be the ground of existence of a number of beings, however similar and agreeing, because without any other difference even number is itself a manifest difformity or inequality (if I may so speak) of efficiency or causality.

(*Demonstration d7*, 2.541, 35)

<sup>3</sup>The discussion of Buridan's ass in Leibniz (*Theodicy*, section 49) suggests that at that time Leibniz thought that there could not be two qualitatively identical but numerically distinct

finite thing to other finite things, and perhaps also its eternal existence in God, the sole substance. We now turn to Clarke's purportedly exhaustive list of possible explanations.

Lurking in the background of the demand for an explanation of diversity is the principle of sufficient reason (PSR). In its baldest form, the PSR states that there is always a reason. Does something exist? There is a reason why it exists. Is that thing blue? There is a reason why it is blue. There is a reason for everything. This principle is most commonly associated with Leibniz, but the particular sense and scope of the PSR in his writing is not always clear. Consider L 2.1, 'I mean the principle of sufficient reason, namely, that nothing happens without a reason why it should be so rather than otherwise.' Should we take Leibniz to be restricting the PSR to events and not truths?<sup>4</sup> Does his application of the PSR to contingent truths in *Monadology* 36 imply that it does not apply to necessary truths?<sup>5</sup> What is the relationship between the PSR and the Principle of the Best? For the purposes of this paper, these questions need not be settled. That Leibniz accepts some form of the PSR and applies it to what exists or happens in the world is supported in the text and sets up the problem of diversity.

Clarke also explicitly and repeatedly asserts the PSR (C 2.1; C 3.2; *Demonstration* d1, 2.524, 8; *Demonstration* l6, 2.751, 113.; to name a few).<sup>6</sup> More controversially, the principle has been attributed to Spinoza. Given 'What cannot be conceived through another, must be conceived through itself' (E 1a2) and his identification of *conceiving* and *explaining* (E 1p10s, E 1p14d), it seems that Spinoza accepts the claim that everything is explicable. However, even if one worries about this attribution, Spinoza clearly tells us, 'For each thing there must be assigned a cause, or reason, both for its existence and for its nonexistence' (E 1p11d). A central issue in the problem of diversity is what needs explaining and what satisfies this requirement. There are three related *explananda*: what exists, why what exists contains a diversity of finite things, why this particular diversity of finite things exists. Clarke and Leibniz demand explanations for all three. Spinoza in E 1p11d at least requires the first, and centuries of readers have believed that he recognizes the second (but puzzled over how he can do so), on the basis of passages such as

situations actually existing, thus requiring a sort of diversity. Although not explicit, this could be an instance of Leibniz's appeal to the principle of sufficient reason.

<sup>4</sup>Compare to L 5.125, where it seems to apply to events and truths.

<sup>5</sup>Compare to Leibniz (*Theodicy*, 14), where it seems to apply to contingent and necessary truths.

<sup>6</sup>References to Clarke's *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God* give the number of the proposition or appended letter (e.g. d9; l2), the volume and page number of the authoritative Benjamin Hoadly edition of 1738 (e.g. 2.523), and finally the page number in the more widely available Vailati edition.

E 1p16. The problem of diversity, as I discuss it, focuses on this second *explanandum*, but a few of Clarke's arguments shift towards attacking Spinoza on the third *explanandum*.

To say that these three figures all employ the PSR is not to say that they all endorse an equivalent formulation. Indeed, this is one of the profound disagreements of the Leibniz–Clarke correspondence (C 2.1; L 3.2; L 5.125–130; C 5.124–130). Rather, they share a commitment to explanations for what exists or what is true, in some (or perhaps all) domains. What counts as an explanation differs, whether the scope is completely unrestricted may differ, but there is some shared commitment.

If, however, one remains unconvinced that Spinoza requires an explanation of the diversity of the finite world, then Clarke's assumption of the PSR in his arguments against Spinoza will seem like an imposition rather than an elucidation. In this case, two options remain open. Perhaps Clarke's claim that the principle is 'agreed on all hands' (C 5.124–130) is not limited to himself and Leibniz, but extends to all philosophers, in which case Clarke could reasonably expect Spinoza to accept it. It often seems that Clarke's appeals to the PSR do not depend on a textual case. Clarke's most fundamental methodological commitment in philosophy is that the PSR is true and is the principle from which we should begin our philosophizing. Clarke writes at times as if there is no need to find the PSR in Spinoza. He is a philosopher, so he should be judged by his adherence to the principle.

This interpretive approach will strike most contemporary readers as too blunt and inappropriate. Leaving aside how charitable Clarke is being, it is still worthwhile to entertain how his demands for an explanation expose an important issue at the heart of Spinoza's system. To motivate the problem, Clarke needs only that the diversity of the world requires an explanation, not a broader claim about the legitimacy of the PSR. If Spinoza accepts at least this narrower form (as he perhaps does at E 1p11d), then the problem is acute. If Spinoza does not require an explanation, this is worth recognizing, too, for it exposes how he will respond to a pressing problem from a very early critic, albeit one with whom he has a deep disagreement about methodology.

#### ABSOLUTE NECESSITY CANNOT EXPLAIN DIVERSITY

What could explain our world's diversity? Clarke sees three possibilities on the table: chance, absolute necessity, and the choice of a rational agent. We will now work to understand the first two of these three possibilities and evaluate their viability as explanations of diversity. The third is discussed in the next section.

Can chance explain diversity? To say that things come about by chance is to say that they have no explanation, thinks Clarke. 'Chance' is an empty

notion. It is to give up on explaining.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps, *pace* Clarke, there is no explanation for why this is here and why that is there. This would be bad, but how bad would it be? To say that something exists yet deny that there is any reason why it exists is absurd, says Clarke.

Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that any thing (or any circumstance of any thing) is, and yet that there be absolutely no reason why it is, rather than not. It is easy to conceive that we may indeed be utterly ignorant of the reasons, or grounds, or causes of many things. But, that any thing is; and that there is a real reason in nature why it is, rather than is not; these two are as necessarily and essentially connected as any two correlates whatever, as height and depth, &c.

(*Demonstration* 16, 2.752, 113)

The connection between existence and the explanation of existence is as tight as any connection can be. To deny a cause for what exists is a contradiction, because you are saying that something is ‘produced out of nothing’.<sup>8</sup> This strong stance on explanation shows how deeply Clarke is committed to the PSR. Chance cannot explain diversity because it is not an explanation at all.

To answer whether absolute necessity explains diversity, we must first get clear on what ‘absolute necessity’ is. Clarke asserts that absolute necessity is ‘the same necessity that is the cause of the unalterable proportion between 2 and 4’ (*Demonstration* 16, 2.751, 113). Absolute necessity is the only necessity worthy of the name. ‘In philosophical contexts “necessity” always refers to *absolute* necessity’ (C 5.1–20). This seems to rule out any metaphysical necessity that could be distinguished from logical necessity. Importantly, Clarke does not restrict absolute necessity to propositions or statements or truths, but it can be extended to existences. There is a ‘self-existent’ being (God), which is one that exists ‘by an absolute necessity originally in the nature of the thing itself’ (*Demonstration* d3, 2.527, 12). So there can be an absolute necessity ‘in the nature’ of a thing, by which Clarke seems to mean that the explanation for why a self-existing being exists is to be found in the nature of the thing, a point of agreement with Spinoza.

There are in Clarke other uses of the word necessity, as in ‘hypothetical necessity’ and ‘moral necessity’, but he goes to pains to make clear that

<sup>7</sup>The stronger version of Clarke’s claim is, ‘Chance is nothing but a mere word, without any signification’ (*Demonstration* d2, 2.527, 12). He also makes a weaker version of the claim, which is that his atheistic opponents ‘have now given up’ the claim that chance is an explanation (*Demonstration* d3, 2.531, 19).

<sup>8</sup>‘For since something now is, it is evident that something always was; otherwise the things that now are must have been produced out of nothing, absolutely and without cause, which is a plain contradiction in terms’ (*Demonstration* d1, 2.524, 8). Also, ‘Now to arise out of nothing absolutely without any cause has been already shown to be a plain contradiction’ (*Demonstration* d3, 2.527, 12).



these are not *really* necessities. Clarke's clearest description of hypothetical necessity comes in his last letter to Leibniz. Hypothetical necessity is necessity of the following form: 'Given that x exists, or that it will exist, does it follow that it must exist?' This, Clarke claims, is not the necessity that is at dispute in philosophical quandaries over issues like the freedom of the will. Neither are questions of moral necessity, which take the following form:

Is it true that a good being cannot do evil while continuing to be good? that a wise being cannot act stupidly while continuing to be wise? that a truthful person cannot act tell a lie while continuing to be truthful?

(C 5.1–20)

Moral necessity is what follows from an agent acting according to the best reasons. Moral necessity does point to a contradiction, but it rests on the supposition *that there is a good being* (or truthful or wise being), and the contradiction arises from claiming that the good thing is not good. Similarly, hypothetical necessity rests on the supposition *that a thing exists*, and the contradiction arises from claiming that the existing thing does not exist. 'The phrases "hypothetical necessity" and "moral necessity" are mere figures of speech; what they refer to is not, strictly speaking, any kind of necessity' (C 5.1–20).

With this clarification, we can understand Clarke's argument that *absolute necessity* cannot explain the diversity of finite things. Clarke attributes to Spinoza the view that everything that exists follows of absolute necessity from a self-existent being. Clarke and Spinoza agree that this absolute necessity is contrary to freedom of the will, so it cannot be that God freely wills of absolute necessity to create the world as it is. Spinoza's 'main purpose', according to Clarke,

was to make us believe that there is no such thing as power or liberty in the universe, but that every particular thing in the world is by an absolute necessity just what it is, and could not possibly have been in any respect otherwise.

(*Demonstration* d7, 2.542, 37)

So showing why this is impossible is a crucial step in Clarke's response to Spinoza.

Our attention now turns to whether absolute necessity can explain the diversity observed in the world. Clarke claims, 'But whatever is self-existent, must of necessity exist absolutely in every place alike, and be equally present everywhere' (*Demonstration* d6, 2.540, 34). Rooting around for a reason why things are different from one place to the next, and having ruled out chance as a putative explanation, he now claims that something 'self-existent' (that is, something whose existence is necessary given its nature) must be the same everywhere (and always). Clarke's God is

‘self-existent’, but with the additional power of counter-causal freedom; in this context, saying that what is self-existent exists in every place alike, he means the ways which follow necessarily from the necessary being.

Versions of the central claim appear in numerous places throughout the *Demonstration* and in the materials that Clarke appended to later editions. The frequency with which Clarke returns to it in the *Demonstration* and the amount of attention it gets from his correspondents speaks to the importance and the perhaps surprising character of this argument. We will now turn to three very closely related ways that Clarke argues. In fact, while the intuitive pull we feel might vary from argument to argument, in the end they all connect to the same underlying principle, the PSR.

The first argument I shall call *the externality argument*. It appears in at least two different passages, the first of which is in the sixth proposition of the *Demonstration*.

Now this necessity being absolute in itself, and not depending on any outward cause, it is evident it must be everywhere as well as always, unalterably the same. For a necessity, which is not everywhere the same, is plainly a consequential necessity only, depending upon some external cause, and not an absolute one in its own nature; for a necessity absolutely such in itself, has no relation to time or place, or any thing else.

*(Demonstration d6, 2.540, 34)*

A second version is given at the beginning of the seventh proposition, where he repeats that an external cause must be responsible for any ‘variety or difference of existence’ (*Demonstration d7, 2.541, 35*). This passage suggests that if something is absolutely necessary then it has no relation to space, time, or other (existing) things. In contrast, something that is different in one place or time than another, or exists in one place or time rather than another, has a relation to times and places.

Why think that something absolutely necessary cannot have any relation to time or space? I do not see a reason here for Clarke to deny that there cannot be *any* relation to time or space, as long as the relation it has to one point is the same as it has to every other point. The problem is clearer when we consider what would happen if something absolutely necessary had a certain relation to some places or times but not to others. Clarke considers this in his third letter to Joseph Butler.

Determination of a particular quantity, or particular time or place of existence of any thing, cannot arise but from somewhat external to the thing itself. For example; why there should exist just such a small determinate quantity of matter, neither more nor less, interspersed in the immense vacuities of space, no reason can be given; nor can there be any thing in nature which could have determined a thing so indifferent in itself, as is the measure of that quantity, but only the will of an intelligent and free agent. To suppose matter, or any other substance, necessarily-existing in a finite determinate

quantity, in an inch-cube for instance, or in any certain number of cube-inches and no more, is exactly the same absurdity as supposing it to exist necessarily, and yet for a finite duration only; which every one sees to be a plain contradiction.

(*Demonstration 13*, 2.745, 105)

The problem that Clarke claims to identify is that if anything is of determinate, finite quantity – or in any way limited in extent – then nothing internal to it can explain why it is limited. This broadly stated, the claim is highly dubious. Pick some finite, contingent thing, like a tennis racket or a magnolia tree. Why think that anything other than the nature of the tennis racket or the magnolia tree limits it? But this is not the issue at stake. If we stick to things that are absolutely necessary – and this is ultimately what we are worried about in this passage – then it does seem that Clarke is on to an interesting argument. If something is necessary, then it must exist at every time. After all, what could stop a necessary thing from existing? But, Clarke is claiming, the case is the same for spatial extent. What could stop a necessary thing from existing here? Or there? Or over there? No reason can be found in the nature of a necessary being that explains why it should exist in some location rather than another or at some time rather than another.

Clarke draws a parallel between the proportion between two and four, which holds everywhere, and an absolutely necessary being, whose manner of existence must likewise be the same everywhere.

To exist at all, and to exist everywhere, are one and the very same thing, where the cause or ground of the existence is not either confined to, or operates only in, some particular place. For 2 and 4 to have at all a certain proportion to each other, and to have that same proportion everywhere, is the very same thing; and the like is true of every thing that is necessary in itself.

(*Demonstration 16*, 2.752, 114)

The point is that all absolutely necessary truths hold in the same way in all places. Everywhere you go, two is half of four and the necessary being exists. How, then, could Spinoza say that the necessary being is different here than it is somewhere else? That is tantamount to saying that two is half of four in some places but not others. On the basis of absolute necessity alone, there can be no difference between the properties that a necessary being has in one place rather than another.

The second argument I will call *the priority argument*. Why must something absolutely necessary exist ‘in every place alike’? Because what is absolutely necessary is ‘antecedent (in order of nature) to the existence of any thing, nothing of all this [talk of something necessarily existing but finite in extent] can have place; but the necessity is necessarily everywhere alike’ (*Demonstration 12*, 2.743, 103). The argument here is not easy to reconstruct, but I believe the reasoning is similar to one aspect of the

externality argument. Something absolutely necessary is prior ‘in order of nature’ to any contingently existing thing.<sup>9</sup> So the nature of the necessary thing is already fixed, we might say, before there is any contingent thing for it to be in relation to. So it cannot be a part of the nature of an absolutely necessary being that it have any relation to a contingent thing. Because space and time are necessary, according to Clarke, it would take additional work to show that there are some necessary things that are ‘antecedent (in the order of nature)’ to other necessary things, but I think Clarke probably does hold this. For instance, in another place where he makes the priority argument, he claims,

When I say that necessity, absolutely such in itself, has no relation to time or place; my meaning is, that it has no relation to, or dependence upon, any particular time or place, or any thing in any particular time or place; but that it is the same in all time, and in all place.

*(Demonstration 16, 2.752, 114)*

It is explicit here that the priority is not just over other existing things in space and time, but to regions of space and durations of time as well. The upshot of this priority argument is that an absolutely necessary thing has its nature settled before it is in relation to any other thing; therefore, it cannot be related to one place, time, or finite thing differently than another.

Thirdly, we have *the absence argument*. This takes elements of the previous two arguments and goes further in making explicit that Clarke thinks there is a contradiction in a necessary being which is present in one place and absent in another.

Whatever therefore exists by an absolute necessity in its own nature, must needs be infinite as well as eternal. To suppose a finite being to be self-existent, is to say that it is a contradiction for that being not to exist, the absence of which may yet be conceived without a contradiction; which is the greatest absurdity in the world. For if a being can, without a contradiction, be absent from one place, it may, without a contradiction, be absent likewise from another place, and from all places: and whatever necessity it may have of existing, must arise from some external cause, and not absolutely from itself; and, consequently, the being cannot be self-existent.

*(Demonstration d6, 2.540, 33–4)*

According to this argument, if a thing is self-existent then it is a contradiction for it not to exist. But if a thing is finite, then, for every particular place we consider, there is no contradiction in its not existing at that place. And if there is no contradiction in a finite thing not existing at each place we consider, then there is no contradiction in it not existing in any place whatsoever.

<sup>9</sup>Logical priority does not entail temporal priority. There could be a contingent thing that is cotemporal with a necessary thing.

Therefore, every finite thing can be conceived not to exist. But no self-existent thing can be conceived not to exist. So no finite thing is a self-existent thing.

This argument seems remarkably bad. Clarke gives us no reason to think that if something can be absent from any place it can be absent from all places. Fortunately, Butler raises objections to this argument, and Clarke's responses help clarify what is going on here. Butler invites us to imagine a man that necessarily lives for a 1,000 years. It is necessary that he exists, but for any place he could be conceived not to exist there. Where is the contradiction? Clarke's response turns out to be the priority argument combined with the externality argument. To say that there is a man who necessarily lives for a 1,000 years is to say that there is some limitation to his duration and place, but an absolutely necessary being has no internal limitations, and any external limitation is a relation to some other existing thing; both of these possibilities are ruled out by the previous arguments.<sup>10</sup> So a self-existent thing cannot be absent from any place or fail to exist for any time.<sup>11</sup>

Although I have offered them as three different arguments, following the distinctive language that Clarke uses in various formulations, I think that these arguments are variations on a single worry that Clarke has, a worry that goes directly to the heart of Spinoza's metaphysics. Each of Clarke's arguments asks for a reason why things would be different in one place or time rather than another. There are many candidate reasons that could explain why things are different at one time rather than another or in one place rather than another. The interesting aspect of his argument is that this demand for a reason is at odds with a certain strict understanding of necessity. Absolute necessity, combined with the PSR, with nothing else added, cannot give you any differentiation. That way lies Parmenides.<sup>12</sup> If we accept, as Clarke does, that there is diversity in the world and furthermore that the PSR is true, we will be forced to give up the Spinozistic claim that the only legitimate explanation is one of absolute or logical necessity.

That is Clarke's negative argument against Spinoza. It is one among many that he offers, but it is particularly intriguing because it is not the frequently repeated objection that Spinoza's necessitarianism shocks common sense. It shares some similarities with Bayle's critique of Spinoza, but does not

<sup>10</sup>We should note that such a person could necessarily exist, but this would have to be a consequential necessity.

<sup>11</sup>John Carriero finds a similar structure in Spinoza's argument for monism, as well as a predecessor in John Duns Scotus. The version he considers explicitly extends only to necessary beings, so it is less general than the argument in Clarke, but similar to Butler's imagined case (see Carriero, 'Theological Roots', 627–8).

<sup>12</sup>Yitzhak Melamed has argued persuasively that Spinoza was interpreted as an Eleatic monist from very early on in Germany (see Melamed, 'Salomon Maimon', 76; Melamed, 'Acosmism or Weak Individuals?', 78–83; Melamed, 'Omnis Determinatio Est Negatio', 177–80). Clarke seems to be making the same point even earlier.

include the interpretive commitments to God being the soul of the world or to the extended parts of the world (or other modes) being identical to God, which generates the contradictions that Bayle ('Spinoza, Note N', *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, 300ff) addresses.

In turning to Clarke's positive account, we are left with one option remaining from our original three attempts to explain diversity: the choice of a rational agent.

### EXCURSIS: A PROBLEM FOR CLARKE

Clarke is fond of the following approach: lay out all the options (in a dilemma, trilemma, etc.), show that all but one of the options is contradictory, and conclude that even if the one remaining option is not clearly understood, we can still take it to be true. We could take that approach here: we know it is not chance, we know it is not absolute necessity, so it must be the choice of a rational agent. But we want, and I think Clarke can offer us, more. Perhaps calling it an 'explanation' demands that we go further. This section is an attempt to understand the extent to which Clarke can appeal to the choice of a rational agent to explain the manifest diversity in the world, and whether these choices can themselves be explained.

Before doing that, however, we should consider another putative explanation that is not on the above list: the laws of nature. Could not laws of nature explain the diversity of things? They might serve as an 'intermediary' – a nomological necessity that is not as strong as absolute necessity, but still strong enough to scratch the itch left from our overexposure to the PSR.

Clarke's strategy is to show that such putative explanations will bottom out in one of the other three. Laws of nature could be a pseudo-scientific name for chance, completely arbitrary and random, and thus not an explanation. They could describe how things necessarily come about, in which case they reduce to absolute necessity. Finally, they could describe the way that agents (or perhaps a single agent: God) continue to act over time.

This is not yet an argument. We have seen why it does not help to reduce laws of nature to chance, so we will focus on the supposed dilemma of reducing laws of nature to absolute necessity or an agent's will. Clarke is certainly saying nothing too implausible when he claims that our world does not seem like one that is absolutely necessary. The natural laws

might possibly have been altogether different from what they now are. ... The number of the planets might have been greater or less. Their motion upon their own axes might have been in any proportion swifter or slower than it now is.

(*Demonstration* d9, 2.550, 49–50)

He goes immediately a step further and draws a much stronger conclusion than that our world appears to contain a good deal of contingency.

Every thing upon earth is still more evidently arbitrary; and plainly the product, not of necessity, but will. What absolute necessity for just such a number of species of animals or plants? or who, without blushing, dare affirm, that neither the form, nor order, nor any the minutest circumstance or mode of existence of any of these things could possibly have been in the least diversified by the supreme cause?

(*Demonstration* d9, 2.550, 50)

Only a will, claims Clarke, could give the world the diversity it has. Why do not laws of nature constitute a fourth category of explanation along with absolute necessity and will? Because the combination of orderliness and arbitrariness that we see operative in the laws of nature is best explained as resulting from the will of a rational agent. This argument comes after Clarke has established that there must be a self-existent being that has a free will. Because in this passage, when Clarke searches for something that could exhibit the contingencies that appear to us to be all over our world but that still could be explained, he finds a perfect candidate in the will of a creative being. Without independent argument for the existence of a God with a free will, this argument is not very convincing; we would make the unmotivated leap from the combination of orderliness and arbitrariness supposedly exhibited by natural laws to there being a creator of this world. It is far more plausible if Clarke's earlier cosmological argument forms the basis for this design argument, because then this argument does not have to establish that there is a God and that this God created the world with the diversity and contingency we experience, but only the weaker claim that the being who necessarily exists and created the world is responsible for the diversity and contingency it exhibits. This argument can then be construed as appealing to a form of Ockham's razor: if laws of nature did not reduce to God's volitions, then there would be an additional category of things (nomological laws), but adding this is under-motivated because there is already something on hand to do the work.

If we have been carried along by Clarke's arguments so far, we are left with only agency to explain the diversity of finite things in the world. The challenge for Clarke now becomes how to give an account of agency that does not collapse into either chance or absolute necessity – that is, how to give an account of agency that does not leave choices either unexplained or necessitated. Without fully describing Clarke's theory of the will, I will discuss one important problem for any theory of the will that Clarke proposes: a pressure to collapse into absolute necessity that comes from the PSR. Leibniz in his letters often presses Clarke to admit that for an agent to choose to act, there must be a sufficient reason to choose that action rather than another. If an agent's reason explains the volition, then Clarke and Leibniz seem to agree that it justifies saying it causes the volition. Clarke recognizes that resisting this claim is the heart of his positive project (C 5.124–130).

Leibniz wants Clarke to admit that if a choice is explained, then it is explained by the agent's reasons for the choice (L 3.2). Clarke resists this because he thinks it would turn the chooser into a 'passive agent' – a contradiction in terms, says Clarke. But how can 'the bare will of God' (or any other agent) be an explanation? If it is legitimately possible for an agent to choose A and possible for an agent to choose not-A, and the explanation for A is the will of the agent, and the explanation for not-A is the will of an agent, we have a problem. What we are trying to explain is why the agent chose A instead of not-A, and if the same will is active in both cases, how can this explain the difference? In giving his account, Clarke thinks he has explained everything that needs explaining. To the extent that we worry with Leibniz that we do not yet have an explanation, Clarke has not given a satisfactory solution to the problem of diversity.

### CLARKE'S ARGUMENT AS TRILEMMA

In the third section, I recovered intriguing arguments that Samuel Clarke levelled against Spinoza. Clarke assumes that the world is a diverse place, with many different things in it. This is argued to be incompatible with Spinoza's claim that the only explanation is that there is a necessarily existing being that is the necessary cause of everything else that exists. I now connect these arguments to debates in the current secondary literature on Spinoza.

Clarke finds the existence of real diversity to be unshakeable. Perhaps the reader disagrees, and she finds the other two principles so appealing that she would be willing to give up on diversity. Let's consider Clarke's argument in this new light. If his arguments are successful, he shows that these three propositions are inconsistent:

- (1) Everything that exists either is or necessarily follows from the one necessarily existing being.
- (2) The PSR is true.
- (3) The world contains real diversity.

Clarke assumes that (2) and (3) are unshakeable, so he objects to Spinoza's insistence on (1).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>As an anonymous referee for this journal has noted, sometimes Clarke argues that Spinoza cannot account for (3) *The world contains real diversity*. At other times, he argues that Spinoza cannot account for (3\*) *The world contains diversity that appears to be the effect of wisdom and choice* (e.g. *Demonstration d9*, 2.550, 49–50). I have focused on the former to highlight how Clarke's argument interestingly connects to contemporary debates about Spinoza and because I think arguments for the former are in Clarke but have not received due attention. Also, (3\*) seems to beg the question against Spinoza, although Eric Schliesser ('Spinoza and the Newtonians', 445–6) has recently argued that Clarke smartly employs



It is rare to see an interpreter today observe that Spinoza might have accepted either (1) or (2) but not both. The reason for this is likely that one of the most important arguments for (1) is that it allegedly follows from (2). In addition to the textual evidence that is offered for (1), many scholars argue first that Spinoza accepts the PSR and on this basis argue that he must accept necessitarianism (see Allison, *Benedict de Spinoza*, 55; Della Rocca, *Spinoza*, 4–10). To put it in slogan-like terms, Spinoza's rationalism entails his necessitarianism. Thus, the secondary literature is often divided between those who think that Spinoza accepts (1) and (2), such as Henry Allison, Michael Della Rocca, Don Garrett, Yitzhak Melamed, and Steven Nadler, and those who claim he denies one or both, such as Bennett (*A Study*, 111–24) and Curley and Walski ('Spinoza's Necessitarianism Reconsidered', 241–62).<sup>14</sup>

Clarke is interesting as a critic of Spinoza in part because he distinguishes (1) and (2), which opens up an avenue of research for those sympathetic to the PSR yet who find it too implausible to deny that there are really existing, diverse objects in the world. As we saw, a Clarkean must surmount the (extremely high) hurdle of developing an account of sufficient reasons in which they are less than a logically or conceptually necessary connection between cause and effect. Setting aside the plausibility of Clarke's own system, if any of Clarke's arguments are successful, they push the majority of interpreters today, who think Spinoza accepts (1) and (2), to deny that Spinoza accepts a real plurality of finitely existing things, on pain of inconsistency. Put differently, Clarke predates by eighty years the Hegelian or

Newtonian theories of motion, particularly that it is quantitative, to show that Spinoza cannot explain motion, which suggests there might be more than mere question-begging at work. The issue is difficult because the arguments against (3) and (3\*) are intertwined in Clarke's writings. For instance, in arguing that the self-existent being that caused the universe must be intelligent, Clarke sets up the problem by addressing 'the order, beauty, and exquisite fitness' of the world and its parts, but includes as a sub-argument that if motion were necessary in itself, then 'the determination of this self-existent motion must be every way at once', leading to perpetual rest (*Demonstration* d8, 2.547, 44–5). The sub-argument is clearly against (3), even though Clarke nestles it in an argument against (3\*). For more on Clarke's appeals to theories of motion in his arguments against Spinoza, see Schliesser ('Spinoza and the Newtonians', 443–9, 451–5). While Schliesser's article is very useful in showing the Newtonian elements of Clarke's arguments, Clarke offers arguments (from 1704 onward) that necessity is uniform and thus cannot produce diversity that predate Newton's 'General Scholium', which first appeared in the 1713 edition of the *Principia*, contra Schliesser's claim ('Spinoza and the Newtonians', 455) that Newton's argument is 'independent', which I take to mean not in Clarke or Henry More.

<sup>14</sup>Interestingly, Bennett believes that while Spinoza accepts the PSR (2), which he calls 'explanatory rationalism', he denies that Spinoza accepts (1), even though (1) follows from (2). Spinoza, claims Bennett, is inconsistent on this point. Bennett's field metaphysic interpretation of Spinoza also seems to deny (3). David R. Lachterman's version of the field metaphysic interpretation definitely denies (3) (Lachterman, 'Physics of Spinoza's "Ethics"').

'acosmic' interpretation of Spinoza. Hegel colourfully declares that Spinoza must deny (3).

As all differences and determinations of things and of consciousness simply go back into the One substance, one may say that in the system of Spinoza all things are merely cast down into this abyss of annihilation. But from this abyss nothing comes out; and the particular of which Spinoza speaks is only assumed and presupposed from the ordinary conception, without being justified. Were it to be justified, Spinoza would have to deduce it from his Substance; but that does not open itself out.<sup>15</sup>

(Hegel, *Lectures*, 288)

Spinoza, according to Hegel, assumes that extended and mental things as ordinarily conceived do exist. This is incompatible with his claim that they cannot be deduced from the one existing substance. Thus, the consistent Spinozist denies that all but God exist.

Hegel belongs to a tradition of readers who deny that Spinoza accepts the existence of finite things, often called 'acosmism'. The term goes back to Salomon Maimon, and the interpretation is carried on by interpreters deeply influenced by Hegel, such as Harold Joachim. Joachim claims that Spinoza is caught in inconsistencies because of his occasionally unfortunate expressions, but that the tendency of his thought is to dismiss finite things as 'mere illusions' (*Study of the Ethics*, 114). For instance, when considering God as *Natura naturata*, Spinoza talks of substance in such a way that it is 'a unity which has overcome and taken into itself the distinctness of its diverse elements, and this absorption is so complete that in it there remain no "elements", no distinctness, no articulation' (Joachim, *Study of the Ethics*, 108). Succinctly, Spinoza denies (3), and passages where he seems to affirm (3) must be dismissed or simply recognized as an unfortunate inconsistency in the thought of a great philosopher.<sup>16</sup>

More recently, Michael Della Rocca defends a version of acosmism in his 2008 book *Spinoza*. Of Spinoza's readers over the last 350 years, Della Rocca most emphasizes the role of the PSR in Spinoza's writing. Della Rocca also claims that Spinoza accepts the first proposition, that everything

<sup>15</sup>Steven Nadler is a more recent interpreter who claims that Spinoza simply assumes the reality and individuation of finite things.

Experience tells us that there are finite things in the world around us. So the problem is not how to deduce that there is a plurality of finite things. Rather, the problem is to determine what exactly the ontological status of those finite things is.

(Nadler, *Spinoza's Ethics*, 103)

<sup>16</sup>For further discussion of the British Idealists' acosmic reading of Spinoza, see Newlands ('Idealist Readings of Spinoza', 113–14).

that exists either is or necessarily follows from the one necessary being. On the basis of these two, Della Rocca claims Spinoza maintains consistency and denies that the world contains real diversity. However, there is a variation to Della Rocca's acosmism, which is that existence comes in degrees, so finite things do exist *to some degree*. Thus, there is real diversity to some degree: to the degree that these things exist, which for every finite thing is less than total existence (see Della Rocca, *Spinoza*, Chapter 7, especially 268ff.). Della Rocca can be seen as defending the conclusion that Clarke uses for his *reductio ad absurdum*: the diversity of the world we experience is not fully real. In a more recent article, Della Rocca, using Jonathan Schaffer's distinction between 'existence monism' (acosmism) and 'priority monism', claims that

*in a way* Hegel is right in this reading of Spinoza. And this is, in part, because the PSR commits its proponents to something like existence monism or, rather, the PSR cannot countenance a monism as weak as priority monism.

(Della Rocca, 'Rationalism, Idealism', 17)

However, he goes on to argue that Spinoza's commitment to the PSR should have led him to deny existence monism and support the claim that nothing exists. ('Beyond monism' is Della Rocca's optimistic phrasing.) Setting aside his divergence from Spinoza, Della Rocca claims that Spinoza accepts 'something like existence monism', but modifies the acosmic interpretation to say that finite things do exist to a degree (Della Rocca, 'Rationalism, Idealism', 20–1).<sup>17</sup>

Yitzhak Melamed, more than any other recent Spinoza scholar, takes seriously the traditional acosmic interpretation and argues against it. He asserts that the acosmic reading is incorrect, so the task becomes how to best interpret Spinoza in light of this (Melamed, 'Inherence, Causation, and Conception', 384–5). Crucially for Melamed, 'the acosmist reading of Spinoza conflicts with several crucial doctrines of the *Ethics*. If we accept these doctrines, we will have to re-interpret Spinoza's claims about metaphysical individuation so that the latter fit the former' (Melamed, 'Acosmism or Weak Individuals?', 89). Of the many doctrines that Melamed believes to be inconsistent with the acosmic denial of individuals other than God, the second and third come closest to Clarke's concerns; in 1p16 of the *Ethics*, Spinoza claims that the modes necessarily follow from God's essence, and the discussion of the parallelism of the attributes in 2p7s assumes there are many things (Melamed, 'Acosmism or Weak Individuals?', 90). If Melamed succeeds in showing that the acosmic reading is false, we must consider which of the other two propositions are wrongly attributed to

<sup>17</sup>For responses to Della Rocca, see Melamed ('Inherence, Causation, and Conception') and Garrett ('A Reply', 252–6).

Spinoza. Given that he claims that finite modes follow necessarily from God's essence (Melamed, 'Inherence, Causation, and Conception', 384) – the central point at stake in establishing the textual case for (1) – Melamed must restrict the scope of the PSR (2) to maintain the consistency that he prizes in interpreting Spinoza's system. Melamed's response to the acosmists' arguments is focused on an interpretive point made by many of the German Idealists regarding 'determination is negation'. By distinguishing three potential readings of this expression, he argues that only the one on which negation allows for the existence of finite modes is also the only consistent with all of Spinoza's writings (Melamed, 'Omnis Determinatio Est Negatio', 184–96). Note that this potentially refutes the central interpretive reason presented by the German Idealists for the acosmic interpretation, but does not speak to Clarke's arguments.

Finally, Steven Nadler considers that Spinoza simply assumes the existence of finite things as an obvious and given feature of experience, but sets it aside because it will not satisfy an idealist or acosmic interpreter of Spinoza (Nadler, 'Spinoza's Monism', 231–2). Nadler's partial solution to how Spinoza is entitled to the existence of finite modes is elegant, textually supported, and very plausible. However, on a key point, Clarke's argument speaks directly to a weakness in Spinoza's argument, on Nadler's reconstruction. Because 'Spinoza is a faithful Cartesian on the question of the individuation of bodies', bodies are distinguished by motion and rest; thus, the attribute of extension plus the introduction of motion and rest (which is guaranteed by the activity of God, which follows from God's essential perfection) 'are alone sufficient to generate (conceptually) all possible bodies' (Nadler, 'Spinoza's Monism', 234).<sup>18</sup> However, the necessary introduction of a necessary principle cannot by itself explain how diversity arises, Clarke has argued. If motion and rest are necessary features of extension, then all matter must move uniformly or not at all; in any other case, the PSR is violated. Indeed, even moving uniformly is a violation of the PSR because there is no reason for it to go one direction rather than another (see *Demonstration* d3, 2.531, 19). As a Cartesian with regard to physics, Spinoza cannot even consider this possibility, but the point still holds within Cartesian physics: why does some matter have one proportion of motion and rest and other matter another proportion? Clarke does believe, with Nadler's Spinoza, that the introduction of motion into the world is

<sup>18</sup>Nadler clearly reads Spinoza as following Descartes on matters of physics, particularly on the claims that matter is extension and that motion and rest individuates material bodies. Against these two claims, see intriguing new papers by Schliesser ('Spinoza and the Newtonians') and Peterman ('Spinoza on the "Principles"'). Assuming a fairly narrow definition of Nadler's 'faithful Cartesian', I do not believe that Spinoza was one. However, on the relevant points, it does seem likely that Spinoza identified extension and body (but perhaps not mass) and that he believed the principles of motion and rest are at least a *method* to distinguish bodies, even if Peterman is right that they cannot *explain* the individuation of finite bodies. I call Spinoza a 'Cartesian' only in this limited sense.

both necessary and sufficient for individuation of bodies. However, because ‘Motion itself and all its quantities and directions with the laws of gravitation are entirely arbitrary, and might possibly have been altogether different from what they now are,’ motion only individuates because it is different at one place and time from another (*Demonstration* d9, 2.550, 49).<sup>19</sup> Were it not so, it would not individuate. It is precisely this differentiation of motion (and rest) to which Spinoza cannot help himself, says Clarke, because there is no reason why motion and rest should individuate in one way rather than another. Spinoza’s argument, on Nadler’s reconstruction, assumes the very point in contention.

Della Rocca, Melamed, and Nadler take seriously the possibility of acosmism. Della Rocca adopts a variant of acosmism, because his reading of Spinoza is that to some extent finite things do not exist. Nadler takes on acosmism by providing part of the argument for the deduction of finite modes from the existence of God; in doing so he shows precisely where Clarke’s argument can connect to Spinoza’s metaphysical deduction. Melamed attempts to refute acosmism on interpretive grounds, but this approach faces a problem we will now discuss.

Technically, Clarke does not argue that, all things considered, Spinoza is an acosmist, as Maimon and Hegel did and Della Rocca (in a way, to an extent) does. Instead, Clarke argues that Spinoza’s principles lead to acosmism, which he takes to be obviously false. This is worth noting because Clarke’s interpretive point is consistent both with the view that Spinoza is an acosmist and also with the view that Spinoza is simply inconsistent. For Clarke, it does not matter which of these two accurately represents Spinoza; because two of Spinoza’s commitments lead to such a manifest absurdity, there is no point in pursuing the matter further. Clarke, always at his best when on the offensive in a public debate, is not an especially charitable reader. He has no interest in determining how best to understand Spinoza, which puts him at odds with the methodological approach of many scholars today. To take one example, Melamed refutes the acosmist interpretation primarily on textual grounds (Melamed, ‘Why Spinoza Is Not’, 211–12). Thus, Clarke’s accusation that Spinoza is committed to acosmism on the basis of his necessitarianism and the PSR is not rebuffed, because Spinoza could simply be inconsistent. He could be committed to acosmism and still believe in the existence of the finite modes. Even if the best interpretive principle is to render a figure’s views consistent, Clarke’s arguments must be considered and refuted on their own merit and not by whether Spinoza accepted the result.

Clarke argues that Spinoza’s commitment to all things necessarily following from a necessarily existing being, combined with the PSR (or some

<sup>19</sup>Note that in Clarke ‘arbitrary’ does not denote something based on chance but something based on the will of rational agent (as in the Latin *liberum arbitrium*), so this is not a violation of the PSR, as understood by Clarke.

restricted variant of it), jointly lead to the conclusion that the diverse world of finite things we seem to experience must be illusory. For Clarke, this serves as a *reductio ad absurdum*. By recasting Clarke's arguments as a trilemma, I have shown that three of his arguments against Spinoza reveal a new approach to a foundational question that is once again prominent in the secondary literature on Spinoza. We can learn from Clarke's uncharitable attacks, and indeed I have argued that a reconsideration of Clarke's arguments reveals an important division in the contemporary scholarly literature on Spinoza. If Clarke's arguments are convincing, and not merely interesting, then the triad truly is inconsistent and interpreters must come to terms with which proposition to deny in order to preserve consistency in Spinoza.

Submitted 6 July 2013; revised 25 February 2014; accepted 1 March 2014  
University of Mississippi

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allison, Henry E. *Benedict de Spinoza: An Introduction*. Revised ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987.
- Bayle, Pierre. *Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selections*. Translated and edited by R. H. Popkin. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1734 [1991].
- Bennett, Jonathan. *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1984.
- Carriero, John. 'On the Theological Roots of Spinoza's Argument for Monism'. *Faith and Philosophy* 11, no. 4 (1994): 626–44.
- Clarke, Samuel. *Works*, edited by Benjamin Hoadly, 4 vols. London: John and Paul Knapton, 1738.
- Clarke, Samuel. *A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God and Other Writings*, edited by Ezio Vailati. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1738 [1998].
- Clarke, Samuel, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. *A Collection of Papers, Which Passed Between the Late Learned Mr. Leibnitz, and Dr. Clarke, in the Years 1715 and 1716*. London: Printed for J. Knapton, 1717.
- Curley, Edwin, and Gregory Walski. 'Spinoza's Necessitarianism Reconsidered'. In *New Essays on the Rationalists*, edited by Rocco J. Gennaro and Charles Huenemann, 241–62. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Della Rocca, Michael. *Spinoza*. New York: Routledge, 2008.
- Della Rocca, Michael. 'Rationalism, Idealism, Monism, and Beyond'. In *Spinoza and German Idealism*, edited by Eckart Förster and Yitzhak Y. Melamed, 7–26. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Garrett, Don. 'A Reply on Spinoza's Behalf'. In *Spinoza and German Idealism*, edited by Eckart Förster and Yitzhak Y. Melamed, 248–64. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

- Hegel, George Wilhelm Friedrich. *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3. Translated by E. S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1837 [1896].
- Joachim, Harold H. *A Study of the Ethics of Spinoza (Ethica Ordine Geometrico Demonstrata)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1901.
- Lachterman, David R. 'The Physics of Spinoza's Ethics'. In *Spinoza: New Perspectives*, edited by Robert W. Shahan and J. I. Biro, 71–111. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978.
- Leibniz, G. W. *Theodicy: Essays on the Goodness of God, the Freedom of Man and the Origin of Evil*. Translated by E. M. Huggard. La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1710 [1985].
- Melamed, Yitzhak Y. 'Salomon Maimon and the Rise of Spinozism in German Idealism'. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 42, no. 1 (2004): 67–96.
- Melamed, Yitzhak Y. 'Acosmism or Weak Individuals?: Hegel, Spinoza, and the Reality of the Finite'. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 48, no. 1 (2010): 77–92.
- Melamed, Yitzhak Y. "'Omnis Determinatio Est Negatio": Determination, Negation, and Self-negation in Spinoza, Kant, and Hegel'. In *Spinoza and German Idealism*, edited by Eckart Förster and Yitzhak Y. Melamed, 175–96. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Melamed, Yitzhak Y. 'Spinoza on Inherence, Causation, and Conception'. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 50, no. 3 (2012): 365–86.
- Melamed, Yitzhak Y. 'Why Spinoza Is Not an Eleatic Monist (Or Why Diversity Exists)'. In *Spinoza on Monism*, edited by Philip Goff, 206–22. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.
- Nadler, Steven. *Spinoza's Ethics: An Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Nadler, Steven. 'Spinoza's Monism and the Reality of the Finite'. In *Spinoza on Monism*, edited by Philip Goff, 223–43. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.
- Newlands, Samuel. 'More Recent Idealist Readings of Spinoza'. *Philosophy Compass* 6, no. 2 (2011): 109–19.
- Peterman, Alison. 'Spinoza on the "Principles of Natural Things"'. *The Leibniz Review* 22 (2012): 37–65.
- Schliesser, Eric. 'Spinoza and the Newtonians on Motion and Matter (and God, Of Course)'. *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 50, no. 3 (2012): 436–58.
- Spinoza, de Benedict. *Ethics*. Vol. 1 of *The Collected Works of Spinoza*. Translated and edited by Edwin Curley. 1677 [1985].