

Some Texts from the *Ethics* on Consciousness

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E1App: ...men think themselves free, because they are conscious of their volitions and their appetite, and do not think, even in their dreams, of the causes by which they are disposed to wanting and willing, because they are ignorant of [those causes]. [Cf. E2P35S, E3P2S, E4Pref]

E2P11: *The first thing that constitutes the actual being of a human Mind is nothing but the idea of a singular thing which actually exists.*

E2P11C: ...when we say that the human Mind perceives this or that, we are saying nothing but that God, not insofar as he is infinite, but insofar as he is explained through the nature of the human Mind, or insofar as he constitutes the essence of the human Mind, has this or that idea...

E2P12: *Whatever happens in the object of the idea constituting the human Mind must be perceived by the human Mind, or there will necessarily be an idea of that thing in the Mind; i.e., if the object of the idea constituting a human Mind is a body, nothing can happen in that body which is not perceived by the Mind.*

E2P13: *The object of the idea constituting the human Mind is the Body, or a certain mode of Extension which actually exists, and nothing else.*

E2P13S: ...in proportion as a Body is more capable than others of doing many things at once, or being acted on in many ways at once, so its Mind is more capable than others of perceiving many things at once, And in proportion as the actions of a body depend more on itself alone, and as other bodies concur with it less in acting, so its mind is more capable of understanding distinctly. And from these [truths] we can know the excellence of one mind over the others...

E2P16: *The idea of any mode in which the human Body is affected by external bodies must involve the nature of the human Body and at the same time the nature of the external body.*

E2P19: *The human Mind does not know the human Body itself, nor does it know that it exists, except through ideas of affections by which the Body is affected.*

Dem.: For the human Mind is the idea itself, or knowledge of the human Body (by E2P13), which (by E2P9) is indeed in God insofar as he is considered to be affected by another idea of a singular thing, or because (by Post. 4) the human Body requires a great many bodies by which it is, as it were, continually regenerated; and [NS: because] the order and connection of ideas is (by E2P7) the same as the order and connection of causes, this idea will be in God insofar as he is considered to be affected by the ideas of a great many singular things. Therefore, God has the idea of the human Body, or knows the human Body, insofar as he is affected by a great many other ideas, and not insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human Mind, i.e. (by E2P11C), the human Mind does not know the human Body. But the ideas of affections of the Body are in God insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human Mind, or the human Mind perceives the same affections (by E2P12), and consequently (by E2P16) the human Body itself, as actually

Propositiones de conscientia ex *Ethica* extractae

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E1App: ...homines, se liberos esse, opinentur, quandoquidem suarum volitionum, sui que appetitūs sunt conscii, & de causis, à quibus disponuntur ad appetendum, & volendum, quia earum sunt ignari, nec per somnium cogitant. [Geb II 78]

E2P11: *Primum, quod actuale Mentis humanæ esse constituit, nihil aliud est, quàm idea rei alicujus singularis actu existentis.*

E2P11C: ... cùm dicimus, Mentem humanam hoc, vel illud percipere, nihil aliud dicimus, quàm quòd Deus, non quatenus infinitus est, sed quatenus per naturam humanæ Mentis explicatur, sive quatenus humanæ Mentis essentiam constituit, hanc, vel illam habet ideam...

E2P12: *Quicquid in objecto ideæ, humanam Mentem constituentis, contingit, id ab humanâ Mente debet percipi, sive ejus rei dabitur in Mente necessariò idea: Hoc est, si objectum ideæ, humanam Mentem constituentis, sit corpus, nihil in eo corpore poterit contingere, quod à Mente non percipiatur.*

E2P13: *Objectum ideæ, humanam Mentem constituentis, est Corpus, sive certus Extensionis modus actu existens, & nihil aliud.*

E2P13S: Hoc tamen in genere dico, quò Corpus aliquod reliquis aptius est ad plura simul agendum, vel patiendum, eò ejus Mens reliquis aptior est ad plura simul percipiendum; & quò unius corporis actiones magis ab ipso solo pendent, & quò minùs alia corpora cum eodem in agendo concurrunt, eò ejus mens aptior est ad distinctè intelligendum. Atque ex his præstantiam unius mentis præ aliis cognoscere possumus...

E2P16: *Idea cujuscunque modi, quo Corpus humanum à corporibus externis afficitur, involvere debet naturam Corporis humani, & simul naturam corporis externi.*

E2P19: *Mens humana ipsum humanum Corpus non cognoscit, nec ipsum existere scit, nisi per ideas affectionum, quibus Corpus afficitur.*

Dem: Mens enim humana est ipsa idea, sive cognitio Corporis humani (*per Prop. 13. hujus*), quæ (*per Prop. 9. hujus*) in Deo quidem est, quatenus aliâ rei singularis ideâ affectus consideratur; vel quia (*per Post. 4.*) Corpus humanum plurimis corporibus indiget, à quibus continuò quasi regeneratur; & ordo, & connexio idearum idem est (*per Prop. 7. hujus*), ac ordo, & connexio causarum; erit hæc idea in Deo, quatenus plurimarum rerum singularium ideis affectus consideratur. Deus itaque ideam Corporis humani habet, sive Corpus humanum cognoscit, quatenus plurimis aliis ideis affectus est, & non quatenus naturam humanæ Mentis constituit, hoc est (*per Coroll. Prop. 11. hujus*), Mens humana Corpus humanum non cognoscit. At ideæ affectionum Corporis in Deo sunt, quatenus humanæ Mentis naturam constituit, sive Mens humana easdem affectiones percipit (*per Prop. 12. hujus*), & consequenter (*per Prop. 16.*

existing (by E2P17). Therefore to that extent only, the human Mind perceives the human Body itself, q.e.d.

E2P21S: ...the Mind and the Body are one and the same Individual, which is conceived now under the attribute of Thought, now under the attribute of Extension. So the idea of the Mind and the Mind itself are one and the same thing, which is conceived under one and the same attribute, viz. Thought. The idea of the Mind, I say, and the Mind itself follow in God from the same power of thinking and by the same necessity. For the idea of the Mind, i.e., the idea of the idea, is nothing but the form of the idea insofar as this is considered as a mode of thinking without relation to the object. For as soon as someone knows something, he thereby knows that he knows it, and at the same time knows that he knows that he knows, and so on, to infinity.

E2P23: *The Mind does not know itself, except insofar as it perceives the ideas of the affections of the Body.*

Dem.: The idea, or knowledge, of the Mind (by E2P20) follows in God in the same way, and is related to God in the same way as the idea, or knowledge, of the body. But since (by E2P19) the human Mind does not know the human Body itself, i.e. (by E2P1C), since the knowledge of the human Body is not related to God insofar as he constitutes the nature of the human Mind, the knowledge of the Mind is also not related to God insofar as he constitutes the essence of the human Mind. And so (again by E2P1C) to that extent the human Mind does not know itself. Next, the ideas of the affections by which the Body is affected involve the nature of the human Body itself (by E2P16), i.e. (by E2P13), agree with the nature of the Mind. So knowledge of these ideas will necessarily involve knowledge of the Mind. But (by E2P22) knowledge of these ideas is in the human Mind itself. Therefore, the human Mind, to that extent only, knows itself, q.e.d.

E3P6: *Each thing, as far as it can, strives to persevere in its being.*

E3P7: *The striving by which each thing strives to persevere in its being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing.*

E3P9: *Both insofar as the Mind has clear and distinct ideas, and insofar as it has confused ideas, it strives, for an indefinite duration, to persevere in its being and it is conscious of this striving it has.*

Dem.: The essence of the Mind is constituted by adequate and by inadequate ideas (as we have shown in E3P3). So (by E3P7) it strives to persevere in its being both insofar as it has inadequate ideas and insofar as it has adequate ideas; and it does this (by E3P8) for an indefinite duration. But since the Mind (by E2P23) is necessarily conscious of itself through ideas of the Body's affections, the Mind (by E3P7) is conscious of its striving, q.e.d.

E3P30D: ...man (by E2P19 and E2P23) is conscious of himself through the affections by which he is determined to act..."

hujus) ipsum Corpus humanum, idque (per Prop. 17. hujus), ut actu existens; percipit ergo eatenus tantum Mens humana ipsum humanum Corpus. Q. E. D.

E2P21S: ...ostendimus ... Mentem, & Corpus unum, & idem esse Individuum, quod jam sub Cogitationis, jam sub Extensionis attributo concipitur; quare Mentis idea, & ipsa Mens una, eademque est res, quæ sub uno, eodemque attributo, nempe Cogitationis, concipitur. Mentis, inquam, idea, & ipsa Mens in Deo eadem necessitate ex eadem cogitandi potentiâ sequuntur dari. Nam reverâ idea Mentis, hoc est, idea ideæ nihil aliud est, quàm forma ideæ, quatenus hæc, ut modus cogitandi, absque relatione ad objectum consideratur; simulac enim quis aliquid scit, eo ipso scit, se id scire, & simul scit, se scire, quòd scit, & sic in infinitum.

E2P23: *Mens se ipsam non cognoscit, nisi quatenus Corporis affectionum ideas percipit.*

Dem: Mentis idea, sive cognitio (per Prop. 20. hujus) in Deo eodem modo sequitur, & ad Deum eodem modo refertur, ac corporis idea, sive cognitio. At quoniam (per Prop. 19. hujus) Mens humana ipsum humanum Corpus non cognoscit, hoc est (per Coroll. Prop. 11. hujus), quoniam cognitio Corporis humani ad Deum non refertur, quatenus humanæ Mentis naturam constituit; ergo nec cognitio Mentis ad Deum refertur, quatenus essentiam Mentis humanæ constituit; atque adeò (per idem Coroll. Prop. 11. hujus) Mens humana eatenus se ipsam non cognoscit. Deinde affectionum, quibus Corpus afficitur, ideæ naturam ipsius Corporis humani involvunt (per Prop. 16. hujus), hoc est (per Prop. 13. hujus), cum naturâ Mentis conveniunt; quare harum idearum cognitio cognitionem Mentis necessariò involvet: at (per Prop. præced.) harum idearum cognitio in ipsâ humanâ Mente est; ergo Mens humana eatenus tantum se ipsam novit. Q. E. D.

E3P6: *Unaqueque res, quantum in se est, in suo esse perseverare conatur.*

E3P7: *Conatus, quo unaquæque res in suo esse per severare conatur, nihil est præter ipsius rei actualem essentiam.*

E3P9: *Mens tam quatenus claras, & distinctas, quàm quatenus confusas habet ideas, conatur in suo esse per severare indefinitâ quâdam duratione, & hujus sui conatus est conscia.*

Dem: Mentis essentia ex ideis adæquatis, & inadæquatis constituitur (ut in Prop. 3. hujus ostendimus), adeoque (per Prop. 7. hujus) tam quatenus has, quàm quatenus illas habet, in suo esse perseverare conatur; idque (per Prop. 8. hujus) indefinitâ quâdam duratione. Cùm autem Mens (per Prop. 23. p. 2.) per ideas affectionum Corporis necessariò sui sit conscia, est ergo (per Prop. 7. hujus) Mens sui conatûs conscia. Q. E. D.

E3P30D: ... homo (per Prop. 19. & 23. p. 2.) sui sit conscius per affectiones, quibus ad agendum determinatur...

E4P8: Knowledge of good and evil is nothing but the affect of Joy or Sadness, insofar as we are conscious of it. [cf. E4P8D, E4P64D]

E5P23S: ...we feel and know by experience that we are eternal. ... For the eyes of the mind, by which it sees and observes things, are demonstrations themselves.

E5P31S: Therefore, the more each of us is able to achieve in this kind of knowledge [i.e. the third kind of knowledge], the more he is conscious of himself and of God, i.e., the more perfect and blessed he is.

E5P34S: If we attend to the common opinion of men, we shall see that they are indeed conscious of the eternity of their Mind, but that they confuse it with duration...

E5P39: *He who has a Body capable of a great many things has a Mind whose greatest part is eternal.*

E5P39S: And really, he who, like an infant or child, has a Body capable of very few things, and very heavily dependent on external causes, has a Mind which considered solely in itself is conscious of almost nothing of itself, or of God, or of things. On the other hand, he who has a Body capable of a great many things, has a Mind which considered only in itself is very much conscious of itself, and of God, and of things.

E5P42S: ...the wise man, insofar as he is considered as such, is hardly troubled in spirit, but being, by a certain eternal necessity, conscious of himself, and of God, and of things, he never ceases to be, but always possesses true peace of mind.

E4P8: *Cognitio boni, & mali nihil aliud est, quàm Lætitiae, vel Tristitiæ affectus, quatenus ejus sumus conscii.*

E5P23S: *At nihilominus sentimus, experimurque, nos æternos esse. ... Mentis enim oculi, quibus res videt, observatque, sunt ipsæ demonstrationes.*

E5P31S: *Quò igitur unusquisque hoc cognitionis genere plus pollet, eò melius sui, & Dei conscius est, hoc est, eò est perfectior, & beatior...*

E5P34S: *Si ad hominum communem opinionem attendamus, videbimus, eos suæ Mentis æternitatis esse quidem conscios; sed ipsos eandem cum duratione confundere...*

E5P39: *Qui Corpus ad plurima aptum habet, is Mentem habet, cujus maxima pars est æterna.*

E5P39S: *Et reverâ qui Corpus habet, ut infans, vel puer, ad paucissima aptum, & maximè pendens à causis externis, Mentem habet, quæ in se solâ considerata nihil ferè sui, nec Dei, nec rerum sit conscia; & contrâ, qui Corpus habet ad plurima aptum, Mentem habet, quæ in se solâ considerata multum sui, & Dei, & rerum sit conscia.*

E5P42S: *... sapiens, quatenus ut talis consideratur, vix animo movetur; sed sui, & Dei, & rerum æternâ quâdam necessitate conscius, nunquam esse desinit; sed semper verâ animi acquiescentiâ potitur.*