Trinity College Dublin

Seeking Spinoza: The Spinozistic Origins of Early Psychological Theory in Wundt, James and Freud

Doctor in Philosophy in School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

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Declaration

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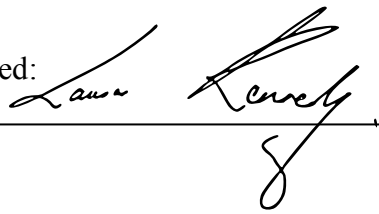
Signed:  Date: 29/01/19

Summary

This thesis takes a comparative approach, juxtaposing the psychological theory of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud with the philosophy of psychology expounded by Benedict de Spinoza within the broader holistic monism of his *Ethics*. While Wundt, James and Freud are widely credited within the discipline of psychology with contributing the foundational concepts and principles on which the field is built, this thesis argues that all three theorists display theoretical convergence with ideas articulated within Spinoza's *Ethics*.

In terms of methodology, I engaged with the primary texts of each of the three elementary figures at the inception of the field of psychology as they relate to the three areas of Spinoza which this thesis tracks into the early period of modern psychology – Spinoza's mind-body parallelism, his account of emotion, and his theory of causality and determinism. I dealt with the pre-existing secondary source literature on the three thinkers insofar as they relate to the major concepts encompassed within the body of this thesis. I also conducted research into the practical therapeutic approaches of modern psychology, and how these approaches connect to psychological theory, which in turn connects to Spinoza's philosophy of psychology.

More broadly, this thesis argues that psychology has taken a wrong turn and has created a separate field of study that often fails to connect to the wider ideas in philosophy which underlie its practice and theory. Therefore, whilst analysing the appearance of Spinozistic ideas within early psychology, this thesis continually connects Spinozistic concepts to the origins of psychology through Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud. I do this so as to provide a critical revisionist account of psychology that challenges the existing interpretation of the metapsychology of the discipline.

This thesis proves that there is a theoretical and philosophical convergence between Spinoza and the three 'founding fathers' of the field of psychology, a finding which has implications for both the philosophy of psychology and psychology itself. It clarifies that psychology – both theoretically and practically – is indebted to Spinoza's philosophy.

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Introduction

"Men can disagree in nature insofar as they are torn by affects which are passions; and to that extent also one and the same man is changeable and inconstant." (IV. P 33)[1]

The fields of psychology and philosophy, though treated as conceptually differentiated within academic theory, are not epistemically disparate. Psychology is to a large extent the applied and experimental wing of philosophy of mind. Ideas of mind, emotion, thought and their concomitant behaviours originate within the philosophical discipline. Applied methodologies necessarily always have their basis in ontology and theory based upon first principles. Within the discipline of psychology, Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud are cited as deserving fundamental credit for the foundational ideas and formation of the discipline of psychology as we currently recognise it, and were ranked the top three most influential psychologists in the history of psychology in the Historians' and Chairpersons' Rankings of the Importance of All-Time and Contemporary Psychologists.[2] However, the ideas that these thinkers are credited for, and which constitute the basis of the discrete field of psychological study, have a far longer lineage than anything developed during the middle and late nineteenth century. This thesis will put forward the argument that the three most influential thinkers in early psychology, responsible for the field as we know it today, all share theory and philosophical grounding which converges with the psychological philosophy of Spinoza.

[1] Spinoza, Benedict de, Curley, Edwin (ed. and trans.), *The Collected Works of Spinoza,* Princeton University Press, 1985

[2] See Korn, James H., Davis, Roger and Davis, Stephen F, 'Historians' and chairpersons' judgements of eminence among psychologists', in *American Psychologist*, 1991, Vol. 46, No. 7, pp. 789-792

Modern psychology has forgotten Spinoza, which is not particularly surprising, given that early psychology failed to credit him with either impact or commonality in the first place, and academics do not usually seek to answer questions about their own discipline by looking outside the bounds of that discipline. This is understandable, and yet the relationship between philosophy and the various articulations of the psychological discipline is somewhat unique, since the field of psychology did not spring from new ideas, but rather an uncredited or unconscious recasting of old ones. Spinozistic psychology is included within Spinoza's wider holism, which he accounts for in his *Ethics*. This thesis will track three key elements of Spinoza's monistic psychology – his account of mind-body parallelism, his account of emotion, and his account of causality – and trace these elements through the respective psychological theories of Wundt, James and Freud. It will do this in order to exhibit the confluence between Spinoza and all three thinkers, and consequently illuminate the Spinozistic concepts and principles fundamentally present in the theoretical grounding of psychological theory. The role of Spinozistic ideas in the foundation of these concepts and principles, which has given rise to psychological norms, has been forgotten. Not only does this inhibit scholarly study of both Spinoza (in terms of his manifold applications and potential applications in modernity) and psychology, it gives rise to potentially damaging outcomes within psychological theory and practice.

Once the applied practice of a discipline is established, it may be modified, informed by new perspectives, and consequently re-evaluated, but first principles are rarely carefully reconsidered (with the exception, perhaps, of philosophy), and the focus moves primarily to pragmatic considerations rather than principle. It behoves a field to encourage conditions under which scholars are encouraged to think about and evaluate the theory behind established techniques and practices, as well as the normative values behind those techniques and practices. This thesis aims to bridge the gap between those two aspects of psychology – its basis in philosophy and the practical implications of ideas and concomitant treatment methods arising directly from that philosophy – and to establish a link between the

two. After all, the pragmatic and therapeutic aspects of psychology flow directly from thinking about what it is to be conscious, the nature of mental states and processes which preceded the establishment of a science of mind. This is an important task because it is a means of restoring philosophy to its proper mantle within psychological thought. However, more broadly, this (as it were) genealogical process is important to conduct in order to go back and expose those first principles so that they might be more vulnerable to inspection, criticism and analysis. When we fail to look in on first principles, but rather continue to add to an ever-expanding canon rested upon them, crucial and injurious failures occur. This thesis focuses on theory and ideas, but has real and pragmatic relevance since the ideas herein have implications related to the connection between bad ideas and the practices that stem from them. To put it plainly – when bad ideas are materially executed, the world worsens in proportion to the impact of those practices.

This has particular relevance in a field like psychology, whose practical and therapeutic approaches pragmatically and powerfully impact upon the lives of individuals. A lack of understanding of the principles which give rise to the normative values and ideas that underlie, for example, the practice of prefrontal and transorbital lobotomy as a treatment for psychological and psychiatric disorders led to the irrevocable violation of thousands of minds and brains, as well as significant physical harm and in a proportion of cases, death. This barbaric practice had its basis in a misunderstanding of the basic tenets of psychological philosophy.[3] The utilisation of lobotomy as a treatment rested upon the belief that mental

[3] The practice of lobotomy also, of course, rested upon grievous misjudgements and assumptions in relation to rights versus duties, individual agency, and the nature of the mind-body relationship, among other factors. However, for the purpose of using the example to encapsulate the argument and purpose of this thesis, I will focus on the lobotomy example in an attempt to showcase the terrible consequences which arose from conflating minds and brain, and the positing of entirely physical solutions to problems with complex non-physical or, as it were, supraphysical elements.

disorders or conditions might feasibly fixed through surgical interference in the brain.[4]

Prefrontal lobotomy won the Nobel prize in 1949 for the man who designed the procedure, Dr. Egaz Moniz. Whitaker observes that prefrontal lobotomy was frequently used on patients who proved resistant to electroshock therapy, for the treatment of such disparate conditions and symptoms as schizophrenia and what today we would call social anxiety. "One is struck by the nonsense and destructiveness of this "therapeutic treatment" …Ironically, the destruction of self-respect and the ability to be empathetic, so notable in the lobotomised patients, seems to have been matched by the lack of respect and empathy in the practitioners who, unlike the patients, were able to engage in pseudoscientific rationalizations."[5] It was essentially a procedure which, when successful, pacified distressed or difficult patients, making them calmer and more cooperative. However, the cost to the individual was usually extremely high.

Dr Walter Freeman, the famed professor of neurology from George Washington University who specialised in prefrontal lobotomy, performed the procedure using his "ice pick" method on over three and a half thousand patients throughout his career after the first lobotomy he performed in 1937. Notably, one such patient of his was the then twenty-three-year-old Rosemary Kennedy, sister of Senator and later President John F. Kennedy. Kennedy was one of the many patients whose condition disimproved after the procedure, and she suffered significant postoperative complications when she lost the capacity to speak almost entirely and no longer had the ability to walk normally, or any sense of who she was.[6] Overall, around fifty thousand people underwent

[4] Aminoff, Michael J., and Faulkner, Larry R. (eds.), *The American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology: Looking Back and Moving Ahead*, American Psychiatric Publishing, 2012;
[5] Whitaker, Leighton C., *Schizophrenic Disorders: Sense and Nonsense in Conceptualization,* Springer Science and Business Media*,* 1992, p. x
[6] Robertson, Michael and Walter, Gerry, *Ethics and Mental Health: The Patient, Profession and* Community, CRC Press, 2013, p. 155

lobotomies, mostly between 1949 and 1952 alone. About a fifth of these procedures were transorbital lobotomies. The rest were prefrontal lobotomies.

Freeman, by all accounts a pioneer, but a pioneer operating upon misguided first principles and primitive neurology, advocated lobotomy as an effective treatment for anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, delusions, hallucinations, melancholia, panic states, nervous indigestion and paralysis, among a host of other conditions. Notably, several of the conditions on this list fall decidedly within the remit of the psychological rather than the strictly psychiatric, though the lines are often – and certainly were in Freeman's day – blurry. Regardless, both specialty areas have their basis in philosophical ideas about mind, consciousness and emotion. Freeman particularly advocated the use of lobotomy for psychotic patients, on whom he claimed the procedure delivered very good results:

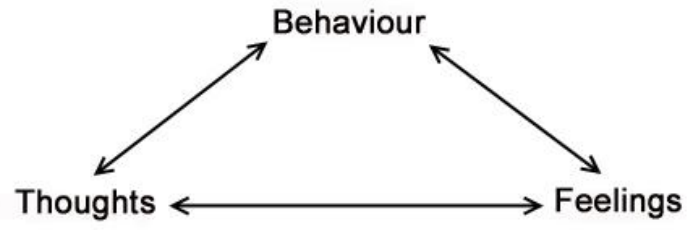
"Disturbed patients often become friendly, quiet, and cooperative. They retain their basic psychotic dissociation and often their delusion ideas, but they no longer react to them so vigorously. Hallucinations are reduced or suppressed in about half the cases… the results are usually quite good, especially from an administrative point of view."[7] The belief underlying such procedures was that physical interference in the structural integrity of the brain, or in its capacity to function within a disordered individual, or a person consistently exhibiting behaviours sufficiently anathema to the standards of the day, could change how we experience emotion and even in the mildest cases, relieve distressed persons of worry, and, perhaps most importantly, make them easier for others to deal with. Importantly, the presumption beneath this belief was not accompanied by the neurological understanding to support it.

[7] Whitaker, Leighton C., *Schizophrenic Disorders: Sense and Nonsense in Conceptualization, Assessment and Treatment,* Springer Science and Business Media, 1992, p. 21

Thankfully, the practice of lobotomy is almost never employed today, and nonetheless is a type of psychosurgery unrecognisable from the sort of procedure practiced by Freeman, whose method essentially involved hammering an ice pick into the chosen area of the brain and jiggling it about a bit. Regardless, the practice was based upon the idea that the behaviours doctors like those Freeman sought to neutralise were rooted or set within the patient's neurological connections, and that by damaging these connections, one could cure the patient's problematic behaviours.

In the modern context, there is a greater tendency to embrace therapeutic methodologies which tackle problems couched in the mental realm with solutions similarly located within the mental realm. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is based upon a theory of mind, mental functioning and wellbeing, and therapeutic process. That theory has a lineage both based on and expanding upon the premise that thoughts, feelings and behaviour influence one another in a sort of feedback loop, and that we can consciously intervene to alter the function of this process in particular ways.

The below simple diagram portrays the interrelationship between thoughts, feelings and behaviours as envisaged within cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). The underlying supposition is that cognition determines mood and behaviour, and that the latter two can consequently influence how and what we think.



[8]

[8] Source: National Library of Medicine at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0072481/ (last accessed 11/3/18)

As chapters one to three of this work will attest, this is essentially applied Spinozistic psychology in action; the idea that we can change a particular behaviour by understanding the emotions which lead to that behaviour, and the thoughts that arise from those emotions. CBT is a therapeutic method that has gained popularity and is widely used because it is effective.[9] This is the practical application of ideas branching from psychology, which in turn have their origins in philosophy of mind; practical treatment guidelines which have arisen from thinking about thinking. Of course, CBT is not a suitable treatment option for every case, and is often used in tandem with physical treatments like anti-depressants. However, many modern psychologists will recommend it as a treatment of a person who suffers with, for example, a social anxiety so intense that they feel unable to sit in a room with strangers. It seems evident that behaviours arising from misunderstood emotion or bad ideas might be treated with better ones, rather than, say, a surgical procedure which creates more problems than it treats.

This thesis locates the philosophy within psychology's early thinkers by providing context through the particular philosopher who established and or advanced many of the tangible basic concepts upon which those thinkers within psychology – Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud built their theory and work. Consequently, this throws into context the macro-influence upon all of the later psychologists following those three who in turn built upon *their* work. The early theoretical work for the philosophy of modern psychology, or the metapsychology, was done by Spinoza when he established theories of mind, emotion and causality. Spinoza is woven into the very roots of psychology – failure to recognise this leads to a misunderstanding of the nature and origins of that field's foundational concepts. This theoretical misunderstanding can – and

[9] Wiles, Nicola et al. Clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of cognitive behavioural therapy as an adjunct to pharmacotherapy for treatment-resistant depression in primary care: the CoBalT randomised controlled trial. Health Technology Assessment, 2014, Vol. 18, No. 31

has – led to bad practices arising from incomplete or opaque theoretical principles. In order to have an adequate sense of the applied aspects of psychology, we need to have a sense of the normative, and to understand the normative, we must understand the meta. We must understand the philosophy, and for this, we must look to Spinoza.

Despite Spinoza's decided originality and innovation in so many respects, the concept of a philosophical exposition of human passions did not start with Spinoza, and he cannot be credited with it. Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* covered similarly psychological territory in what Roger Scruton describes as "a style that is often close to Spinoza's, and with conclusions that display some of Spinoza's robust contempt for human self-deception... In range and penetration, however, Spinoza far surpassed his immediate predecessors, and it is precisely in its application to this fraught and disturbing area that the merits of Spinoza's metaphysical detachment are most clearly displayed."[10] This thesis will argue that the concept of Spinozistic understanding overlaps significantly with that liberation from debilitating emotion and championing of self-direction which is the aim of many modern psychological therapies.

This thesis focuses on the intellectual concepts within Spinoza's theory which connect psychology to its philosophical origins, and the extent to which that link has been forgotten or lost and unremarked upon within scholarship, despite its remaining important to an understanding of both psychology itself and the legacy of Spinoza's own psychology. My aim in this work is to bring specific aspects of Spinoza's psychology back onto the stage. They appear frequently in important works without any reference to Spinoza or the philosophers who influenced him, and have to a degree been resigned to a minor role in their own theatrical production. Particularly relevant to modern thinking – both within the academy and outside it – are Spinoza's ideas in relation to free will, and how it intersects with mind and the emotions. Modern writers appeal to Spinoza's ideas

[10] Scruton, Roger, *Spinoza,* Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 79

frequently without appealing to the man himself. I would argue that in many cases, this is because they are unaware that the ideas with which they are working are actually attributable to Spinoza.

For example, we might look to Daniel Dennett's 1983 John Locke Lectures at Oxford, which were published in his 1984 book 'Elbow Room'.[11] A generous quantity of the *Ethics* is devoted to examining what one might call the 'elbow room' for agency within Spinoza's determined universe. Dennett's ideas have become popular again, as evidenced by the 2015 updating of his 1984 book, which examines precisely this idea. The book shows much convergence with Spinoza, and yet contains just a single reference to him in its index, which does not materialise within the book itself.[12] The index directs us to page thirty-one, but Spinoza is nowhere to be found there. A quote from the *Ethics* is included (though not indexed) on page twenty-three, but not engaged with in any detail; it is a passing comment on the ideal relationship between reason and the will. Spinoza's ideas permeate the work, but he is not credited. Spinoza, known for being sanguine and above it all likely would not have minded all that much, but modern scholars of Spinoza are likely to mind, and so they should. We cannot adequately grasp the depth of ideas without an informed sense of their origins and influence. Influence and confluence are important. As the detailed example of lobotomy presented above illustrates – bad ideas beget malign practices.

While tracing Spinoza's own theory of causality in relation to psychology, the project of this thesis acts as a meta-commentary on the importance of tracing accepted knowledge back to its theoretical roots. This is a thesis on philosophy of psychology, or what some may term psychological philosophy, and philosophy of mind. It focuses on relocating philosophy within psychology as we recognise it today, and argues that that field has quite forgotten its origins, particularly in relation to the ideas of Spinoza.

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[11] Dennett, Daniel C., *Elbow Room: The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting,* MIT Press, 2015

[12] Ibid., pp. 226; 31, 20

This thesis maintains that the field of psychology has its basis partly in a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy. It traces psychology's conceptual origins in their pragmatic form back to its foundational figures – Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud. These three thinkers are the central influencers of the form and direction psychology has taken; a centre from which countless other thinkers have branched. Forgotten, however, is the philosophical root of that centre, to which Spinoza has deep theoretical relevance . Since the central thinkers – Wundt, James and Freud – are so often confused with the root, analyses of practical and experimental psychology's origins tend to halt at Wilhelm Wundt, or one of the other two above mentioned thinkers, resulting in a sort of circular reasoning which never quite gets to the true theoretical roots of modern psychology.

Though Wundt was indeed the first psychologist, with James and Freud following, psychology did not have its real beginning with the opening of Wundt's laboratory at Leipzig in 1879. The field as we recognise it today might trace its pragmatic birth to when it first branched off from philosophy and became a discrete discipline. This indeed is inexorably linked to the work of Wilhelm Wundt, and later James and Freud. However, this is an arbitrary starting point from which to look at psychological theory, which obviously had its far earlier origins in philosophy, and was not brought forth into existence by Wundt *ex nihilo*.

This thesis will argue that the essential, forgotten element within the philosophy of psychology, ignored or expunged in terms of his role by both fields respectively, is Spinoza. It begins by looking carefully at Spinoza's psychology in relation to three of its most essential elements – emotion, the mind/body relationship, and causality – then proceeds to track these elements as they converge with the relevant theories of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud respectively. This is done in an attempt to expose the clear seam of Spinozistic relevance and Spinozistic psychological theory which runs through the psychological

theory of all three key figures at the early stages of the formation of psychology as a distinct discipline.

The psychologists within the scope of this thesis, like most psychologists today, are interested in applied questions within their field. Psychology, after all, is in large part (at least its clinical and applied branches) a translation of theoretical ideas into practical ones, with the aim of constructing therapeutic methods which can treat and correct psychological issues from the mild to the severe. However, an interest in applied questions can lead to neglect of normative questions and abandonment of metapsychological questions altogether. To look from within the discipline of psychology at psychological practice or theory without reaching back to an understanding of the metapsychological questions that provide the foundation for that theory is to misunderstand psychology itself. It is also to make a false assumption in the form of a *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy; the assumption being that since psychology-proper 'started' with Wundt, James and Freud, we might comfortably attribute the foundational ideas upon which it is based to those thinkers. This is of course not the case – yet though philosophers of psychology are aware of this in a broad sense (though not specifically in relation to Spinoza), many psychologists are not, and it is psychologists who translate these ideas into therapeutic practices. Currently, they do this in the belief that temporal sequence suggests causality; since the field of psychology occurred with and after the foundational work of Wundt, James and Freud, we might attribute its key concepts to those thinkers, and work from there.

Indeed, these ideas can of course be found within the work of all three psychologists, and are focused upon with all of the import one would expect of the basic tenets of a field of study. However, none of those ideas as discussed within this thesis, are original to those admittedly incredibly important and innovative thinkers. They first appear in a much earlier thinker, who has the unfortunate characteristic of being frequently forgotten, though his ideas are in so many respects unique, and

consequently uniquely identifiable. Fundamental work in the theoretical grounding of the discrete field of psychology appears in Spinoza's *Ethics*, long before psychology branched away from philosophy and became a differentiated discipline in its own right. Semantics of psychology, ontology of psychology, epistemology of psychology – elements of all of these can be traced to Spinoza.

In order to have a sense of the applied, we need to have a sense of the normative, and to understand the normative, we must understand the meta. Spinoza is the metapsychologist with whom the distinct, systematic mental and emotional theory we see so distinctly in the ground-breaking work of Wundt, James and Freud converges. Since Spinoza was working on the philosophy of psychology long before psychology became a distinct discipline, we can only increase our understanding of psychology's theoretical and philosophical framework by recognising and studying the confluence between the Spinoza and the three influential early psychologists.

Research Questions

This thesis has three research questions at its centre, all of which are ultimately oriented around looking at the role of Spinoza in the establishment of early psychology, or more particularly, of bridging the gap between psychology and its philosophical groundwork with Spinoza's psychological theory.

1) The first asks 'To what extent is Spinoza relevant to understanding foundational concepts in early psychology?'

I have chosen to answer this question in what I think is the best way – through Wundt, James and Freud. Since these three are the most pre-eminent psychologists, from whom all psychology has branched (and this in the opinion of psychologists themselves rather than philosophers), they are the logical and the chronological place to begin searching for Spinoza.

As I hope this work will go on to show, the search is not a difficult one. Spinoza may be forgotten in this respect, but he is only hidden; not very well hidden at that. A careful look at the relevant major works of all three early psychologists with reference to the pertinent and important secondary literature will reveal distinct confluence with the ideas of Spinoza. Echoes of Spinozistic psychological theory and concepts can be seen in Wundtian psychological monism, Jamesian emotion and Freudian mind and causality, as this thesis aims to prove.

2) The second central research question of this work essentially focuses on a point with meta-ethical implications for psychology, asking 'Why locate philosophy inside psychology?'

Philosophy is the base upon which psychology (as the discrete field we now recognise it to be) is built. Of course, before this schism occurred, catalysed by the work of Wilhelm Wundt, psychology was subsumed under the philosophical umbrella. There is good reason for this. Psychology was largely considered to be philosophy of mind. In the period before Wundt's work prompted the separation of psychology and philosophy, the Kantian hypothesis that a distinct mental science or science of mind was logically impossible discouraged scholarship in psychology.

When Wundt embarked upon the task in earnest, followed by James and Freud, it was necessary to adopt the ontology of psychology, epistemology of psychology and semantics of psychology (taken from philosophy). This was essentially the adaptation of philosophy of mind and philosophy of psychology to psychology itself. Answering the first research question about the relationship of Spinoza's philosophy to psychology logically results in locating philosophy inside psychology with reference to Spinoza, giving rise to the second research question.

Attempting the task of this thesis through seeking philosophy in psychology alone would be too large an exercise for one person or one

thesis. I took one of the most important philosophers who dealt with psychological components – emotion, mind/body, and causality – and selected the three foundational psychologists, because they are to some extent considered the unmoved movers of the field of psychology. Before them, the atmosphere among interested parties was permeated by the predominant ideology that stemmed from Kant, which posited the impossibility of a true mental science and consequently impeded the formation of a discrete field of psychology. Locating important philosophical debates, concepts and interpretations in psychology logically necessitates tracing their origins back to philosophy, where they were first formulated, and consequently where they still have their basis. Doing this, it quickly becomes clear, is a task inextricable from Spinoza's psychological philosophy, which exhibits sufficiently unmistakeable overlap to make such an analysis important and worthwhile.

3) The third research question in which this work has its basis asks, 'Can Spinoza's holistic system be taken apart, or taken in part, in the form extracting his psychology from the rest of the system?'

There is a debate among Spinozists as to whether Spinoza's ideas can be digested or utilised by other systems only partially, given the systemic demands and basis of his holistic theory. Conceptually, perhaps the Spinozistic system cannot be rent asunder and his psychology, amputated from the body-proper, animated in isolation. However, conceptually feasible or otherwise, it is clear that, pragmatically, central figures in the history of psychology have been engaging in this selective deconstruction of Spinoza's ideas articulated within the *Ethics*, and the resulting theory is still utilised today in the form of practical therapeutic methods.

As a consequence, this thesis focuses on seeking out Spinoza's psychology as it relates to the work of Wundt, James and Freud, and looks at the form Spinoza's ideas take in the respective works of those thinkers. The resulting theory is unlikely to have been entirely approved of by Spinoza, and in some instances does not represent an identical

reproduction of Spinoza's ideas, but rather a representation of them (for example I will argue so in the case of Freud, examined in the two chapters within this thesis devoted to his ideas) that some theory which borrows from or overlaps with Spinoza is utilised quite differently within early psychological theory than might fit Spinoza's particular vision of psychology and concept of emotion.

Purpose and Scope

The particular purpose of this thesis is the (re)contextualisation of early psychological theory in light of what I aim to show is the serious omission of Spinoza from that body of work and the secondary philosophical literature and lexicon which seeks to understand and analyse it. This thesis is an attempt to establish Spinoza's relevance – or, to be more specific, the relevance of Spinozistic psychology – to the foundational period during which the discrete field of psychology was formed in the middle to late nineteenth century. This is done with a view to revealing the significant and essential link between Spinoza's ideas and the work of the three most dominant and influential thinkers within the field of psychology at its genesis.

The formation of psychology as a differentiated field necessitated a schism within philosophy such that a sub-branch of philosophy of mind which posited the feasibility of a science of mind broke away, aiming to develop its own theory (naturally rooted in the philosophy which preceded it) and to establish an experimental practice based upon and fuelled by empirical data based in scientific theory and observation of minds, emotions and their concomitant physical and behavioural symptoms.[13] Through this process, Spinoza's psychological theory and philosophy was foundational to the normative and applied psychological theories developed by Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud.

[13] See Leahey, Thomas Hardy, *A History of Psychology: Main Currents in Psychological Thought,* Prentice-Hall, 1987; Bermúdez, José Luis, *Philosophy of Psychology: A Contemporary Introduction,* Routledge, 2005, p. 3

It stands to reason that since this convergence between the theories of Spinoza and the three founding fathers of the psychological discipline as it inheres even today is so notable, something crucial to understanding the philosophy and history of psychology is lost entirely through the act of forgetting Spinoza. Not only does this omission attribute more philosophical credit and theoretical innovation to Wundt, James and Freud than is their due (despite the evident genius of all three men), it also results in a failure to see the picture as a whole, and consequently to look at psychology as not just functionally disparate from philosophy, but ontologically disparate. Without Spinoza, several of the key foundational concepts in psychology which are discussed within the scope of this thesis – the nature of an emotion, the mind-body relationship, and the nature of causality and will – are all without context. As a result, psychology as a discipline appears *causa sui*, and far further removed from philosophy than it actually is. This thesis seeks to address this mischaracterisation, and to relocate Spinoza at the heart of the modern psychological project.

Contribution to Knowledge

The primary research questions which direct this thesis are addressed chapter by chapter in an attempt to resituate Spinoza and the philosophy of psychology inside psychology proper as a functioning, modern discipline. No one prior to this project has established this sort of amalgamation of philosophy of psychology and psychological theory literature which reconceptualises the discipline of psychology and posits fundamental misunderstandings about its very foundation. In addressing the research questions at the centre of this thesis, I have brought new information to light, or rather uncovered information which exposes a major seam of unmined knowledge running throughout the formative period of psychological work and theory. This information is of academic and theoretical value because it represents a gap in our existing knowledge of philosophy of psychology, but also a pre-existing gap in the knowledge

of psychologists about the origin of some of their field's foundational concepts.

Though links have of course been extensively drawn between philosophy and psychology before – it is widely understood that psychology originated inside the philosophical environment and discipline– the failure to recognise the enormous role of Spinoza within the foundational work and period of psychology has led to widespread and fundamental misunderstanding of the nature and origins of that discipline's underlying concepts and theories. Without a knowledge of where ideas come from, it is impossible to fully understand them. Consequently, this thesis addresses one corner of what is essentially a *tabula rasa* in relation to potential future research questions in the philosophy of psychology.

On a less abstract, theoretical level, this work also has tangible, applied value since it establishes a new, reinforced and currently relevant link between philosophy and psychology, which has repercussions for the theory behind how practitioners think about psychological disorders, and how they deal with and treat real patients on the front lines of psychological practice.

Approach

Having identified the primary goal of this thesis, which is to locate Spinoza within the psychological philosophies or theories of Wundt, James and Freud with a view to highlighting the Dutchman's central role in contextualising the foundational concepts of modern psychology, it remains to identify a means of fulfilling this objective. As noted above, the three basic research questions which, chapter by chapter, this thesis will seek to answer are:

1. To what extent is Spinoza relevant to understanding foundational concepts in early psychology?
2. Why locate philosophy inside psychology?

3. Can Spinoza's holistic system be taken apart, or taken in part, in the form extracting his psychology from the rest of the system?

These questions will be looked at within the context of each individual chapter, the first three of which will look carefully at (1) Spinoza's psychology in relation to his theory of emotion; (2) his account of the mind/body relationship with regard to psychology and emotion; and (3) his account of causality and will respectively. I will then move in chapters four to nine to examining these same elements insofar as they relate to Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud, always with reference back to Spinoza, and frequently with reference between the three psychologists also, insofar as such reference is pertinent. There were just ten years between the births of Wundt and James, who were rivals and contemporaries, and fourteen years between the births of James and Freud, who in many ways both utilised a Wundtian psychological base and took it in starkly different theoretical and methodological directions.

Each of the chapters on the four thinkers included within this thesis merely seeks out what is already clearly there within their work. As Wittgenstein suggested "the problems [of philosophy] are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known."[14] This thesis identifies what it considers to be three essential components of Spinoza's complex psychological system, and then identifies them where they have lain largely ignored or unnoticed within the work of early psychology's formative theorists. By collating this information, and providing analysis and context, the aim of this thesis – bringing Spinoza back into psychological relevance, and attributing credit to him within psychological theory where it is due – is executed. Finally, in the conclusion to this work, I will condense the information gleaned and presented throughout the chapters into a brief overview, provide suggested answers where they might remain absent, and theorise on why it is that Spinoza has hitherto been forgotten by the history of psychology,

[14] Wittgenstein, Ludwig, *Philosophical Investigations*, Blackwell, 2010, §109

and modern philosophy of psychology, when his echoes are so plainly evident to those who care to identify them.

Resources Consulted

Naturally, I have focused on primary source materials – the works of Spinoza, Wundt, James and Freud themselves, with reference where relevant to the bodies of secondary analytical material within the literature.[15] Since a substantive work within the English language qualifying as philosophy and drawing upon Spinoza's confluence with the foundational tenets of psychology does not currently exist, there was no such source from which to draw. Consequently, I have concentrated on various of the works of Spinoza, Wundt, James and Freud. Since Spinoza's psychology is systematised within his *magnum opus*, *Ethics*, as part of a holistic theory of everything, I have drawn almost entirely from that, with some reference to his correspondence and other sources where relevant. I have used Edwin Curley's translation, widely considered the best, but have provided my own translations from the Latin where Curley's interpretation may be called into question, or in instances where a relevant scholar under discussion opts for a translation which contravenes the equivalent passage within Curley's edition of Spinoza's works.[16]

William James thankfully wrote in distinct, legible and often rather sparkling prose, which make for a clear (and pleasurable) read. All of the works by James included herein are directly referenced throughout the two chapters devoted to him. In the case of Freud, good translations are readily available, though I have chosen the standard Strachey edition of his translated works from which to reference wherever possible.[17]

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[15] With respect to Spinoza, Wundt and Freud, this refers to English translations of their work, though in the case of Spinoza, where any apparent disparities between translations bear upon the aims of this thesis, I refer to the original Latin text.
[16] Spinoza, Benedict de, Curley, Edwin (ed. and trans.), *The Collected Works of Spinoza,* Princeton University Press, 1985
[17] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976

Of all of the theorists included within this thesis, Wilhelm Wundt undoubtedly poses the greatest methodological challenge to the thesis. As will later become clear within the two chapters which directly address Wundt and his ideas– despite being the foremost foundational figure within psychology, and despite the literature consistently naming him the first psychologist – he has not been recognised or studied sufficiently by scholars working through English. He was also an incredibly prolific producer of written material; only a small quantity of the approximately fifty-three thousand pages of Wundt's written work have been translated from the German. However, there is a sufficient amount of information available to English-speaking readers of Wundt to make study of his work and subsequent interpretation an intellectually profitable enterprise. Such material by Wundt does exist in adequate quantities to provide ample evidence necessary to track Spinoza's overlap with the Wundtian system, not least because, unlike James or Freud, Wundt is quite vociferous in crediting Spinoza directly as the source of essential elements of his position.

In looking at Wundt, this thesis focuses on his earlier work in psychology for three reasons. Firstly, because this is the work that formed the basis of the schism that resulted in psychology becoming a discrete field outside the bounds of philosophy. Secondly, this is the work to which Spinoza's ideas are most relevant, most mentioned and most impactfully demonstrable. Thirdly, on a purely practical level, Wundt's work within this period is more widely translated into English than his later, and slightly more obscure work. Wundt's philosophy of psychology more than merits a thesis of its own. Since this work has a different, and more far-reaching aim, it cannot look at the entirety of Wundt's psychological work, but instead focuses on such translated works as are relevant to the stated aims of this project.

Key Concepts

It is necessary, before proceeding with this work, to establish what I mean by particular terms and concepts. There is particular potential for confusion related to interpretation of terminology in a work such as this, where two disciplines, each with overlapping interests but different lexicons, are being discussed in relation to shared key concepts.

Convergence

The basis of this work is the argument that Spinoza's psychology converges with the psychological theories of those key thinkers – Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud – who are considered by wide agreement within the psychological literature to have formulated the elementary concepts and methodologies which established the psychological discipline. These same concepts and ideas have persevered through the history of psychology and form the theoretical basis for the field of psychology as it still exists. Though Freudian psychoanalysis has dissipated, psychoanalysis based upon Freud's original model still exists today. Jamesian emotional theory exhibits significant overlap with modern neuropsychological theory, and Wundt's experimental method and establishment of a feasible 'science of mind' is the fundamental basis of the field of psychology, which now takes for granted that a science of a non-physical entity is a viable and beneficial endeavour.[18]

It is helpful, however, in the context of the overall project of this thesis, to establish what I mean when I say that Spinoza exhibits clear convergence with Wundt, James and Freud, and that consequently this represents a kind of influence upon the philosophy and epistemology of the entire psychological discipline. In the course of this thesis, I will prove that not only did Wundt, James and Freud read the work of Spinoza, but

[18] On James and neuropsychology, see Borod, Joan C., *The Neuropsychology of Emotion*, Oxford University Press USA, 2000, pp. 35, 46, 143

that their various theories of psychology all converge with elements of Spinoza's psychology in a variety of aspects. Wundt, and to a lesser extent James, admitted to this openly. Freud was less clear on the matter, yet the documentation exists to prove that he had more than a passing familiarity with Spinozistic psychology. Freud nonetheless includes some small reference to Spinoza within his work and correspondence.

Wundt credits Spinoza openly and models his psychological system after Spinoza's monistic holism, which certainly makes the task of this thesis more straightforward. James is neither openly admiring of Spinoza to the glowing extent of Wundt, nor opaque on the subject like Freud, but somewhere in the middle, where he also chronologically belongs. James read and admired Spinoza, and his body-first theory of emotion and indeterministic account of causality fundamentally resemble Spinoza's theory on the same subjects, which the two chapter on James later in this thesis will clearly demonstrate.

When I claim that Spinoza converges with Wundt, James and Freud, I am arguing in essence that their ideas exhibit such consistent overlap as to make coincidence impossible, and that consequently, with the knowledge that all three read Spinoza carefully, it would be myopic to presume the appearance of ideas which originated in his psychology within their own respective theories to be anything other than demonstrable evidence of his theoretical impact upon concepts in psychology. Chapter by chapter, I will provide evidence and argument in favour of this reading while examining the relevance of Spinoza's psychology to the works of Wundt, James and Freud. This will entail specifically highlighting evidence within Wundt, James and Freud of Spinoza's mind-body theory, his account of emotion, and his theory of causality.

Psychology

It is beneficial to recognise in advance the problems which may arise from semantics through the course of this thesis. It is essential for the clarity of

my argument that the meaning of the term ‘psychology’ is distinctly illustrated. However, the term, used in the context of this thesis to refer to various concepts and ideas which span not merely decades, but centuries, is not straightforward.

One might refer, in using the word, to the field of study that is the psychological discipline, or to the concept of the same name which refers to the theoretical – in other words philosophical – study of minds and mental phenomena, or to the understanding that most psychologists today would take on hearing the term – as a reference to the formal science of mind. One could understand the term ‘psychology’ to refer to the clinical practice of that science of mind, or to any particular theory of mind entirely unrelated to that practice.

This thesis begins by looking at Spinoza’s psychology, and consequently applies that word as a descriptor to Spinoza’s theory of mind and mental phenomena within the context of his monism. It moves onto Wilhelm Wundt, who changed the definition of the term ‘psychology’, largely extracting it from its philosophical context and redefining it as a scientific field of study and also as the attendant experimental practice of that scientific study. William James was interested in the theoretical, normative and applied concepts of psychology in what appears to have been equal measure, while Freud, suspicious of philosophy, yet not entirely formally scientific either, transmuted psychology into an altogether different theoretical practice.

Given this diversity of definition and content, and the consequent potential for confusion and misunderstanding, each chapter engages with the concept of psychology as utilised by the thinker it discusses in reference to the account of Spinoza’s psychology which is the focus of chapters one to three. This is clearly indicated within each chapter; the thesis as a whole does not make an argument for an objective definition of the word ‘psychology’, considering its variations all to refer useful concepts. However, the thesis does defend the idea that psychology is not

completely disparate from philosophy, given that the two share an epistemological grounding and a theoretical history.

Emotion and Feeling

Similar problems arise in relation to the definitions of 'emotion' and 'feeling' as those terms arise in different context through the course of this work. Where the contrary is not distinctly stipulated, by 'emotion', I refer to a purely cognitive concept indicating a conscious mental state, though not necessarily a conscious mental state of whose nature we are consciously aware.

Unless stated otherwise, I take 'feeling' as necessarily connoting an element of physicality playing a role in tandem with that purely cognitive content of emotion. 'Feeling' refers – insofar as I use it – to a phenomenological state which possesses both physical and mental components. This is of course a very loose description, but a loose description is required to accommodate the flexibility of the common concepts variously treated within the theories of Spinoza, Wundt, James and Freud.

Emotions and feelings are broad terms within this thesis. Their broader contours and specific uses in various contexts will be explored in detail in subsequent chapters, beginning with Spinoza's account of emotion in chapter two.

Summary

This introductory chapter has introduced the central purpose and research questions which fuel this thesis, and established how I intend to go about pursuing that purpose and answering those questions. With a view to locating the philosophy of Spinoza within early psychology, consequently looking at that formative time in the establishment of the psychological discipline in terms of its philosophical grounding, I will begin by looking

at Spinoza himself, or rather Spinoza's philosophy of psychology as outlined within his *Ethics*.

The first three chapters of this thesis will comprise an analysis of Spinozistic psychology specifically in relation to his theory of emotion and mind, his account of the mind-body relationship in the context of emotion, and his account of causality as it relates to our internal and external worlds, with reference to the Spinozistic concept of will. Chapter one will look at Spinoza's account of the relationship, or rather the lack of one, between mind and body in relation to his wider monism, establishing the importance of his parallelism to his psychological theory. Chapter two will focus on Spinozistic emotion, the difference between passions and affects, and the role of emotion in relation to Spinoza's doctrine of striving, or *conatus*. Chapter three will close the section of this thesis devoted directly to Spinoza by examining his concept of monistic causality with a particular focus on Spinozistic determinism.

Having established the aspects of Spinozistic psychology that are relevant to the purposes of this thesis and looked at them carefully, I will then move on to the 'first' psychologist, Wilhelm Wundt. Across two chapters, I will track these Spinozistic ideas as they appear within Wundt's theoretical work, providing analysis and context. Wundtian Monism is, as those chapters will establish, bears direct resemblance to Spinoza's monism. Wundt's parallel theory of emotion will be examined, as well as emotions in relation to discrete causation. I will then do the same with William James, allotting him two chapters also, establishing similarities between Jamesian 'body-first' emotion and Spinozistic emotion. I will also establish within those chapters that Jamesian emotional theory has been widely misinterpreted and consequently misunderstood since its inception, and contrast Jamesian indeterminism with Spinozistic determinism, establishing the connections between the two. Finally, this work will turn to Freud, accounting for the Spinozistic overlap with his work despite his conflicting accounts in relation to its similarity to Spinoza's psychology. I will provide an account of Freud's therapeutic

theory and concept of emotion, identifying the intersection of both with some key elements of Spinozistic psychology, before moving to the conclusion of the thesis. Insofar as any of the above mentioned central elements of Spinoza do or do not appear within or bear direct relevance to the ideas of any of these three thinkers, I will compare and contrast as the chapters proceed, providing context with a view to uncovering Spinoza where evidence of his philosophical and theoretical convergence may be found.

Chapter 1: Spinozistic Psychology and Parallelism

"…the Mind and the Body, are one and the same Individual, which is conceived now under the attribute of Thought, [15] 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." (II. P 21/S)

This thesis will attempt, chapter by chapter, to advance its central argument that Spinoza's psychology has relevance at the very heart of modern psychology, both theoretically and as a result, practically. It will show that evidence of this is clearly visible within early psychological theory, that Spinoza's psychology (and the sad reality that it has been largely forgotten or overlooked by the field) has consequences for both psychology itself, and for the philosophy which informs its fundamental theoretical outlook. In the second half of this work, I will seek to advance this central argument by exhibiting this philosophical convergence with Spinoza within the core theories of psychology's founding fathers – Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud. These three are considered within the field of psychology itself to be the most influential thinkers within that discipline's comparatively short history.

However, before it can locate elements of Spinozistic ideas within the works of these three integral psychological theorists and practitioners, it is necessary to identify and expand upon those elements of Spinoza's psychology which will be tracked forward into early psychological theory in later chapters. I will focus in these first three chapters on the three aspects of Spinoza's psychology which I consider to be its most fundamental characteristics, as well as those which closely resemble the theory of Wundt, James and Freud. Having examined numerous translations of the *Ethics*, I have decided to use Edwin Curley's

translation, long considered by many scholars to be the best, in conjunction with Spinoza's original Latin text. All references to the *Ethics* herein refer to Curley's translation except in those instances where another translation is explicitly referenced. This first chapter will provide an account of Spinoza's theory of the relationship between mind and body. The two to follow will focus on his theory of emotions, affects and passions, and his account of causality as it relates to minds.

It may appear that the best place to start when addressing a philosopher's theory of psychology, prima facie, would be that thinker's theory of emotion. However, as any Spinoza scholar can appreciate, and every undergraduate student reading his work in fits of frustration for the first time will know, Spinoza is a little different. In his case, we must start with a wider lens and then choose which aspects upon which to direct our focus. There are several reasons for this. The most obvious of these is the fact that Spinoza's philosophy within the *Ethics* is holistic, or, to put it more crudely, a theory of everything. Not one to ease us in gently through the shallows, he pitches us into the deep end from the outset, opening the *Ethics* with his account of God, nature or substance.

Given that Spinoza begins with his account of a monistic whole, only later contextualising the place and role of human minds and bodies within the small pocket of that whole to which they have intellectual and physical access, this is where this thesis must start. However, since this work focuses on Spinoza's psychology, the central topic of this chapter will be Spinoza's monistic account of the parallel relationship, such as it might be called, between body and mind. Clarifying aspects of this relationship insofar as they relate to the overall aim of this thesis will digest the fundamentals and wider context of Spinoza's psychology so that we might move, in the next chapter, to an analysis of his emotional theory.

As a consequence of the complexity of the geometric system Spinoza utilised in the *Ethics*, unpacking his psychology as outlined in Parts Three, Four and Five requires reference to the two preceding parts. It is necessary

to understand Spinoza's theory of God or Nature in order to grasp his particularly complex parallelism of body and mind, which I will argue later in this thesis converges in an important and influential way in the work of later thinkers who were fundamental to early psychological theory, most notably Wilhelm Wundt, William James, and Sigmund Freud.[1] An understanding of Spinoza's parallelism is in turn vital to understanding the rest of his psychology, three major elements of which I will elucidate in the first half of this thesis; the body/mind dichotomy of the passions; the nature of passions, or feelings; and the complex relationship of passions to Spinoza's theory of causality within his monistic structure of reality. More specifically, that section will look at passions in relation to free will and determinism in Spinoza, an issue that still causes some division within Spinoza scholarship.

I will then track those three fundamental ideas as they arise again in the three most important thinkers within psychology who followed after Spinoza, in an attempt to underpin his remarkable and largely underappreciated relevance to how we think – both pragmatically and theoretically – about emotion and mind, not only through history but also in terms of how those ideas have found expression in more recent thinking on emotion.[2] To comprehend Spinoza's theory of our relationship to the system of the world and how we function within that system, it does not make sense to start in *media* res; rather we must look at aspects of his philosophy whose connection with the primary purpose of this chapter may not be immediately self-evident.[3] However, the manner in which the

[1] For a wider understanding of Spinoza's God and the extent to which his theory represented a ground-breaking departure from more directly theistic representations, as well as a sense of the environment in which Spinoza's theories were considered so controversial, see: Nadler, Steven, *A Book Forged in Hell,* Princeton University Press, 2011; Israel, Jonathan, *A Revolution of the Mind,* Princeton University Press, 2010

[2] I refer here to the theories of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud, considered the fathers of psychology as we recognise the field today. Wundt, James and Freud (in that order) were ranked the top three in the Historians' and Chairpersons' Rankings of the Importance of All-Time and Contemporary Psychologists in Korn, James H., Davis, Roger and Davis, Stephen F, 'Historians' and chairpersons' judgements of eminence among psychologists', in *American Psychologist*, 1991, Vol. 46, No. 7, pp. 789-792

[3] For more on Spinoza's theory of how the human body is both part (this is his own word, despite its seeming disparity with a monistic system) of and wholly dependent

Ethics was constructed mirrors the theory outlined within – Spinoza purposefully prevents us from looking at any one area of the philosophy he outlines in the *Ethics* in isolation from the rest. This is in just the same way that experience, for him, is always connected to other elements of the natural system or world – he will not permit us to make what he describes in the preface to Part Three of the *Ethics* as our frequent mistake – *"...to conceive man in Nature as a dominion within a dominion."* (III. Preface)[4] The process of attempting to digest Spinoza's work is precisely as systematic a process as he intended, and echoes the vast and interconnected wider system of the *Ethics* itself. Nothing within the *Ethics* is as straightforward as Spinoza would doubtless have liked to think it, and looking at any one aspect invariably involves careful reference and cross reference. With this in mind, this chapter, which aims to give an account of the relationship between body and mind (or lack thereof, as Spinoza would see it) will start by making an attempt to clarify his theory of parallelism.

Though it has been argued that Spinoza accepted a slightly altered form of Cartesian dualism in his early writings[5], it is evident that by the time he sat down to write the *Ethics* between 1664 and 1665, his monism and attendant parallelism had fructified into maturity.[6] When he writes in the early pages of Part Two that *"the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things"* (II. P 7), he is articulating – with his signature combination of seeming simplicity and sometimes frustratingly open-ended nebulosity – the entirety of his theory of parallelism. Della Rocca best unpicks this crisp but complex statement articulating Spinoza's 'causal chain of modes of extension':

> "2p7 asserts that, for any extended thing, x, which is caused by another extended thing, y, there is an idea of x that is about x or

upon the natural system as a whole, see his famous 'Worm in the blood' example in his *Letter XXXII to Oldenburg* in Wolf, Abraham (ed. and trans.), *The Correspondence of Spinoza,* George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1928, pp. 210-214

[4] Curley, Edwin, *The Collected Works of Spinoza,* Princeton University Press, 1985

[5] See Jarrett, Charles 'On the Rejection of Spinozistic Dualism in the *Ethics*', in *Southern Journal of Philosophy,* Vol. 20, No. 2, 1982, pp. 153-175

[6] Della Rocca, Michael, *Spinoza*, Routledge, 2008, p. 90

represents x. This idea is caused by the idea of y which, in turn, is caused by the idea of y's cause."[7]

According to Spinoza's ontology, singular things, including things insofar as they are perceived by human minds (including any particular body – a sleeping cat, a disgruntled postman, my idea of the postman, and so on) are simply various 'affections' or modes of God's attributes. It is the lack of apparent connection between body and mind in Spinoza that makes his theory interesting in terms of what he calls the passions or affects, but also in other applications and extrapolations of his ideas[8]. Substance is necessarily constituted of various attributes - An attribute being *"what the intellect perceives of a substance, as constituting its essence." ("... quod intellectus de substantia percipit tanquam ejusdem essentiam constituens")* (I. D 4). In this way Spinoza sees substance as constituted of a combination of essences, though he rather surprisingly delays providing us with a definition of essence until II. D 2 –

> "*I say that there belongs to the essence of a thing that which, being given, the thing is necessarily posited, and which, being taken away, the thing is necessarily negated: or that without which a thing can neither exist nor be conceived without the thing."* [9]

God consists of an infinite number of attributes. Inherent to each of these is an infinite essence, according to I. P 11 – *"God, or a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exists."* Each of these essences, according to I. P 10, can be understood only through itself. [10]

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[7] Ibid.

[8] What precisely the relationship between Spinoza's passions and more modern conceptions of emotion is will be examined later. For now, the focus is on the role of the relationship between mind and body in Spinoza, which is essential to the way that we experience the passions under the attributes of both thought and extension.

[9] The interpretation of Bennett (1984, p. 61) offers helpful clarification – "the essence of x is that property which must be possessed by x and cannot be possessed by anything else – it is a qualitative necessary and sufficient condition for something's being x". See Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 61

[10] "Each attribute of a substance must be conceived through itself."

Those essences which are most directly relevant to, and hence within the bounds of, human intellection are naturally thought and extension. As Spinoza sees it, all substance conceived in relation to the attribute of extension provides a full explanation of bodily things. The same goes for substance considered in relation to the attribute of thought – our thinking is both composed of this substance and subject to the function of the causal connections the substance gives rise to. *"God is the immanent, not the transitive, cause of all things. Dem.: Everything that is, is in God, and must be conceived through God (by P15), and so (by P16C1) God is the cause of all things which are in him...then outside God there can be no substance (by P14), that is (by D3), thing which is in itself outside God...God therefore, is the immanent, not the transitive cause of all things."* (I. P 18) Thus when we move between attributes, we move from one attribute exclusively, to the next, exclusively. The attributes represent two explanations of the one reality just as they are two separate filters through which we experience the world, but neither in isolation can give a complete picture of reality, since each is incapable of encompassing the features of the other attribute. Spinoza's certainty and clarity on this issue are difficult to misinterpret – *"Hence, so long as things are considered as modes of thinking, we must explain the order of the whole of nature, [or] the connection of causes, through the attribute of Thought alone. And insofar as they are considered as modes of Extension, the order of the whole of nature must be explained through the attribute of extension alone. I understand the same concerning other attributes."* (II. P 7/C) Each attribute provides a distinct explanation, or rather a distinct set of explanations for the workings of the world.

Because the attributes are disparate, I can learn nothing about thought through the extended or bodily world. *"the thinking substance and the extended substance are one and the same substance, which is now comprehended under this attribute, now under that."* (II. P 7/S) Spinoza states that it is possible to perceive the universal substance through infinite attributes – many to which we have no access (since we have access only to two – thought and extension). By making this assertion, he is attempting

to ensure that his system provides an explanation for all the causal relationships we encounter under the physical and mental attributes, but also theoretically *could* provide an explanation for causal relationships of which we are too limited to have any conception.

> *"the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things ... [so that] ...a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, but expressed in two ways."* (II. P 7/S)

This pleasingly symmetrical correlation is not to be found only between a thing and its idea. To refer again to the many attributes to which we have no access, Spinoza maintains that under his system, every mode of every attribute has an expression under the attribute of thought.[11] Describing this as God's intellect, Spinoza is revealing just how far the web of his system extends – infinitely beyond human comprehension. Since all attributes have an instantiation in thought (in the form of an idea), it follows for Spinoza that all things are also ideas. Consequently, because my shoe exists within God's intellect, it is an idea. The idea of my shoe, corresponding with the object that is my shoe (a collection of physical components – laces, leather and so on – which comprise the body of my shoe), is not too complex. I, however, am a complex body, so the corresponding idea is also complex. Spinoza argues that this complexity accounts in turn for the intricate manner of my mind's function, and provides an explanation for my consciousness of the world of objects and ideas around me as well as of myself as a thinking object. Thus, the quotation (II. P 7/S) above, neatly corresponds to Spinoza's view on the body and the mind as parallel constituents of the whole – "*...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, namely thought."* (II. P 21/S)

[11] Steinberg, Diane, 'Knowledge in Spinoza's Ethics', in Koistinen, Olli (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 141

This explanation makes Spinoza's famous statement that 'the mind is the idea of the body' more comprehensible. It follows for Spinoza that what happens in the body is perceived by the mind.[12] It does not follow from this that the mind possesses adequate knowledge of the body whose idea it is, however. It possesses understanding (or adequate ideas, as Spinoza would term it) neither of itself, nor of its place within the wider causal chain of God's infinite intellect. Spinoza stipulates that to understand effects, we must grasp their causes – *"the knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of its cause."* (I. A/4) Though the human mind is, within Spinoza's system, a microcosmic but entirely finite version of God's infinite intellect, many of the ideas it processes are confused, or rather incomplete. This aspect of Spinoza's theory will be the focus of chapter three.

The most confused and inadequate of these ideas are the passions, the nature of which I will focus on in chapter two. Though it contains corresponding 'ideas' of the processes underway within my body, my mind does not necessarily possess understanding of the causal chain acting on my body, whose idea it is.[13] My body is in perpetual interaction with other finite bodies, which inflict change. The resulting images or affections are inadequate, representing only a partial reflection or understanding of the interaction which has taken place. These changes are 'confused' because they necessarily represent their causes only in terms of how they affect a body and not as they really are in themselves. As a result, this sort of experience, which is random in that it is not subject to reason or deeper understanding, can never give rise to an understanding of the essences of those external bodies with which we interact. [14] Our

[12] See Chapter 6, where William James' bodily theory of how we experience emotion is examined. I will argue that the roots of that theory can be found in this idea of Spinoza's. See also chapter 2 for the link between body and *conatus* or power of action in Spinoza's *Ethics*.

[13] See p. 41, and Michael Della Rocca's 'Pancreas Problem'.

[14] The role of experience is extremely important. This sort of experience is determined by (what appear to us to be) chance encounters which give rise to *"...these notions which are called common, and which are the foundations of our reasoning."* (II. P 40 S/1) It is solely through this sort of experience that we know the existence of (contingent) things, including our own bodies – *"...it follows that man consists of a*

comprehension of the world is formed on the basis of information it gives us only about our own bodies, which are our sole method of receiving and translating such data. Our experience is, in this arbitrary experiential sense, predetermined, and includes sensory images, qualitative sensory information and perceptual information.

There appear to be several objections that might pose a problem for Spinoza's theory that the mind is the idea of the body.[15] For example, the suggestion that many ideas associated with our bodies do not find their origin within our body. The texture of the bark of a tree, one might argue, is giving me information about the tree and not about my body. Not so. To think this, according to Spinoza, would be the result of residing without conscious awareness in what Husserl would later term 'the natural attitude'. Our senses do not produce ideas of an external thing as it is in itself[16], but only of my physically grounded relationship with the external thing. My touching the bark of the tree tells me far less about the tree than it does about my body as a sensory object; to think otherwise is a miscalculation – *"the idea of each mode in which the human body is affected by an external body involves the nature of the human body and of the external body... It follows... that the ideas which we have of external bodies indicate the condition of our own body more than the nature of the external bodies..."* (II. P 16/C2). Thus, what I am experiencing when I touch the tree is more about the idea of my relationship with the tree and my capacity to receive and process data relating to it than it is about the tree as it is in itself.

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mind and a body, and that the human body exists, as we are aware of it." (II. P 13/C) This mechanism bears heavy relevance to the method by which we experience affects, or emotions.

[15] See Homan, Matthew, 'Spinoza and the Problem of Mental Representation', in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 1, 2014, pp. 75-87; and Keizer, Henk, 'Is There a "Pancreas Problem" in Spinoza's Theory of the Human Mind?', in *Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy,* Vol. 20, No.1, 2015, pp. 65-80

[16] This phrase is not to be understood in the more complex Kantian sense, but rather as representative of objects in the world as they exist independently of the sense-data provided to us upon interaction with them.

Spinoza anticipates another objection to the theory that the mind is the idea of the body when he says that *"The human mind does not involve adequate knowledge of the parts composing the human body."* (II. P 24) He acknowledges that my body as an object is composed of many other objects which work in tandem to produce normal bodily function. It is certainly true that I cannot hope ever to consciously understand the way in which these parts *"communicate their motions to one another in a certain fixed manner"* (II. P 24) fully at any given time.

This does not pose a problem for Spinoza. He is not primarily concerned with the minutiae of bodily function, preferring instead to focus on the whole body as it corresponds to its idea. I do not need to have ideas of my body as a sensory gateway to other things in the world. Though, physically, my body *is* that gateway between myself and my conscious experience of objects, I gain as much knowledge of myself as object as I do of external objects in the world. [17] So my idea of my body is not limited to the physical thingness of myself in isolation; rather I have the idea of my body as something that is part of and subject to the overall causal order of the world (II. P 14-23).[18] My body finds its representation (in terms of idea) in its relationship as connected with other objects under the attribute of thought or extension. This explanation does not truly offer a reason to

[17] Nadler, Steven, 'Spinoza and Consciousness', in *Mind,* Vol. 117, No. 467, 2008, pp. 576-601

[18] *"The human mind is capable of perceiving a great many things, and is the more capable, the more its body can be disposed in a great many ways"* (II. P 14*); "The idea that constitutes the formal being [esse] of the human Mind is not simple, but composed of a great many ideas."* (II. P 15); *"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."* (II. P 16); *"If the human Body is affected with a mode that involves the nature of an external body, the human Mind will regard the same external body as actually existing, or as present to it, until the Body is affected by an affect that excludes the existence or presence of that body."* (II. P 17); *"If the human Body has once been affected by two or more bodies at the same time, then when the Mind subsequently imagines one of them, it will immediately recollect the others also."* (II. P 18); *"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."* (II. P 19); *"There is also in God an idea, or knowledge, of the human Mind, which follows in Godin the same way and is related to God in the same way as the idea, or knowledge, of the human Body."* (II. P 20); *"The idea of the Mind is united to the Mind in the same way as the Mind is united to the Body."* (II. P 21); *"The human Mind perceives not only the affections of the Body, but also the ideas of these affections."* (II. P 22); *"The Mind does not know itself, except insofar as it perceives the ideas of the affections of the Body." (*II. P 23)

accept Spinoza's theory. It is difficult to accept that we have ideas of all aspects of our bodily experience, including ideas that correspond to all the interactions between our bodies and things in the world.[19] However, Spinoza can rely on God's intellect to defend his position. These ideas exist within God's unbounded intellect, even if I am too limited to grasp them myself. Spinoza's theory of ideas specifies that there might be my feeble idea of my body, and also, God's complete idea – of which I am not aware. *"...so long as the human mind perceives things from the common order of nature, it does not have an adequate, but only a confused and mutilated knowledge of itself, of its own body, and of external bodies. For the mind does not know itself except insofar as it perceives ideas of the affections of the body."* (I. P 29/D)

The human mind is, according to Spinoza, God's idea, and its object is the human body. *"The object of the ideas constituting the human Mind is the Body,* or *a certain mode of Extension which actually exists, and nothing else."* (II. P 13) By II. P 7/S (*"the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things ... [so that] ...a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, but expressed in two ways."*), we understand what Spinoza refers to as "the union of Mind and Body" as a particular instantiation of the modes of thought and extension. The cognitive function and potential of the human mind can consequently be understood in terms of its relationship with the mind's object, the body.[20]

Though Spinoza takes a somewhat Stoic view of the human mind as particularly prone to misunderstanding and misjudgement, as well as being diluted (at least insofar as we might consider the mind to be an instrument of reason), as the idea of the human body, and consequently an expression of God's infinite intellect, the mind is still forceful. Though

[19] See Alanen, Lilli, 'Spinoza on the Human Mind', in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy,* Vol. 35, No. 1, 2011, pp. 4-25

[20] *"Ex his non tantum intelligimus mentum humanam unitam esse corpori sed etiam quid per mentis et corporis unionem intelligendum sit."* (II. P 13/S)

the mind as Spinoza envisages it is finite, flawed and limited, it is an instantiation of God's power of thinking. So, despite its diminished capacity (at least compared to God's infinite one) to operate and have thoughts only within the limited bounds of its own sphere, it also has the capacity, if not to fully grasp those thoughts, at least to arrange them (as best it can) in a causal order that mirrors nature in microcosm.[21]

Spinoza's emphasis on the relationship between mind and body allows us to explain cognitive function in terms of mental events or phenomena which 'parallel' events and processes in the physical body.[22] This constitutes a sophisticated form of self-awareness, but not necessarily understanding. [23] It is evident that the manner in which we experience the affects or passions is, for Spinoza, experientially bipartite. We perceive ourselves as having an experience which is both physical and cognitive or mental, or to put it another way, we observe our own experience as both embodied and disembodied. The dual manner in which we experience emotions, or what Spinoza would refer to as affects, is the same. In just the same way that the pain of touching a naked flame involves both the stimulation of sensory receptors and the message they send to the brain, roughly translated as 'Ouch! Move my hand, quick!', so the emotions have both a physical and a cognitive content. There is the sensation of tears welling up and the emotion that accompanies it – sadness or grief.[24]

Spinoza defines an 'affect', or emotion (*affectus*) as a state (*affectio*) of the body by which its power of acting is decreased or diminished, assisted or restrained, along with that state's corresponding idea. *"By affect I*

[21] A detailed exposition of Spinoza's complex theory of knowledge is not my focus here, though it will come up again in Chapter Three. For a more thorough, knowledge centred account of Spinoza, see Parkinson, G.H.R., *Spinoza's Theory of Knowledge,* Clarendon Press Oxford, 1954

[22] Steinberg, Diane, 'Knowledge in Spinoza's *Ethics*' in Kristine, Olli, *The Cambridge Companion to Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 141-142; In Chapter Two, I will argue in the case of emotions that our experience is not (experientially speaking) 'parallel', but physical first.

[23] "*Hinc sequitur hominem mente et corpore constare et corpus humanum prout ipsum sentimus existere" ("From this it follows that man consists of a Mind and a Body, and that the human Body exists, as we are aware of it")*

[24] This will be revisited in much more detail in chapter two.

understand affections of the body by which the Body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections. Therefore, if we can be the adequate cause of any of these affections, I understand by the Affect an action; otherwise, a passion." (III. D 3)

It is his parallelism in action; a process by which inadequate ideas have the power to diminish the body's power of action, or represent the disembodied aspect of diminished power of action.[25] According to Harris, "we act when something either within or outside of us is accomplished of which we are the "adequate cause" – that is, what is done follows from our nature and is clearly and distinctly explicable through that alone".[26] However, when we are only partial causes and are acted upon by something external to us, we fall prey to passion[27]: *"Our mind does certain things [acts] and undergoes other things, viz. insofar as it has adequate ideas, it necessarily does certain things, and insofar as it has inadequate ideas, it necessarily undergoes other things."* (III. P 1) It is clear that for Spinoza, feeling which does not constitute a primarily physical or bodily experience, but feeling in terms of emotions, constitutes being acted upon.[28] Our mind 'does' insofar as it has adequate ideas, and is 'done to' insofar as it has inadequate ideas.

In order to express the ideas that Spinoza is getting at linguistically, we must reference a sort of dichotomy in talking about Spinoza's parallelism at all. It is clear that though (according to Spinoza) we experience reality

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[25] This connotes the *conatus* doctrine, which will be examined in Chapter Two.
[26] Harris, Errol E., *Salvation From Despair: A Reappraisal of Spinoza's Philosophy,* Martinus Nijhoff, 1973, p. 110
[27] *"I call that cause adequate whose effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived through it. But I call it partial,* or *inadequate, if its effect cannot be understood through it alone"* (III. D 1); *"I say that we act when something happens, in us or outside us, of which we are the adequate cause, i.e. (by D1), when something in us or outside us follows from our nature, which can be clearly and distinctly understood through it alone. On the other hand, I say that we are acted on when something happens in us, or something follows from our nature, of which we are only a partial cause."* (III. D 2)
[28] i.e. feeling which is (comparatively) not cognitively or emotionally complex, but rather more sensation-based or kinaesthetic, such as the sensation of scratching a mild itch, or of having a headache.

in terms of the attributes of thought and extension in both a cognitive or mental and a bodily way, these experiences are in actuality unitary at base. What scholars refer to as Spinoza's 'Parallelism' might better be referred to as the experientially parallel activity of unitary experience. [29] For him, our experience of the universal substance is parallel in name only. His monism necessarily limits him to what can only be a cursory bisection of reality. The world of body and idea is not in itself bisected under the attributes of extension and thought. Spinoza made this clear when he took pains to allow that there are infinite other attributes under God to which human beings have no access. The parallelism is an experiential expression of a limited human understanding of reality. For Spinoza, the extent of our knowledge is bounded by the realms of thought and extension – these are the only data which can be collected and interpreted by us, given the tools at our disposal – body and cognition.

When Spinoza makes the most central statement giving rise to his doctrine of parallelism at II. P 7 – "*The order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things"*, he justifies it by reference to Axiom Four of Book One of the *Ethics*. Axiom Four is generally translated as follows - *" the knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of its cause."*(I. A 4)[30] Though *cognitio* is often translated as 'knowledge', Bennett quite legitimately translates it as 'cognition', used interchangeably with 'concept'.[31] Bennett articulates his idea of Spinoza's parallelism as follows: [32]

> *"The parallelism thesis says that if* x *resembles* y *the I (x) resembles I (y), and if* x *causes* y *the I (x) causes I (y)."*[33]

Though I interpret my experience as giving rise to both mental or cognitive and physical data, these are in fact what we might consider

[29] Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 142
[30] This is Edwin Curley's commonly used translation from the original text – *"Effectus cognitio cognitione causæ dependet et eandem involvit."*
[31] Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 127
[32] here *x* is a physical object and its correlated idea is symbolized by *I (x)*
[33] Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 127

lenses through which I interpret the same data. Spinoza presents a mind as a thing which desires, thinks, and interprets data cognitively (II. D 3). He presents a body as a thing which has mass and dimension and exhibits motion (as well as being an object which expresses God's essence as an extended thing (II. D 1)). Under Spinoza's system, the thinking thing and the moving thing are precisely the same individual.[34]

Spinoza's theory of body and mind serves as both symbol and interpretation of his monism itself – it is the very means through which we interpret reality; indeed, our only means of doing so. When he declares in Part Three of the *Ethics* that *"The actions of the mind arise from adequate ideas alone; the passions depend on inadequate ideas alone"* (III. P 3), he is making a specific statement which bears heavily on the passions – since many of our ideas are inadequate, they are not ideas of things in the world as they are in themselves, but rather of things as they effect and interact with our bodies.[35] Consequently, the understanding of the world to which they give rise is muddled and must necessarily always be somewhat obscure. Information never presents itself to us as it is in itself. In a departure from most interpretations of the period, which acknowledged mind as a uniquely human concept with categorical primacy, Spinoza's mind is universal. We are minds in a realm of minds objectified by bodies.

Spinoza articulates his famous panpsychism at II. P 13/S –

> *"For the things we have shown so far are completely general and do not pertain more to man than to other Individuals, all of which, though in different degrees, are nevertheless animate. For of each thing there is necessarily an idea in God, of which God is the cause in the same way as he is of the idea of the human*

[34] See Moreau, Pierre Francis, 'Imitation of the Affects and Interhuman Relations', in Hampe, Michael, Renz, Ursula, and Schnepf, Robert, *Spinoza's Ethics: A Collective Commentary,* Brill, 2011, p. 167

[35] James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy,* Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 145

Body. And so, whatever we have said of the idea of the human Body must also be said of the idea of any thing."

Had Spinoza not introduced this doctrine of panpsychism – though he did not elect to use that term – he may have fallen into a commitment to materialism which would have required him to justify aberrations or pockets of mentation via the physical laws that dictate the workings of nature itself. With the doctrine present, Spinoza's cognitive theory remains intact.[36] Indeed, the doctrine of panpsychism is necessitated by Spinoza's parallelism. He freely admits this in the proposition directly preceding the one cited above – *"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."* (II. P 12)

The concept that Spinoza articulates here is in turn necessitated by the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR), dictating that all bodily states be accompanied by corresponding ideas. Spinoza first mentions the Principle of Sufficient Reason in his 1663 *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy,* Part One, Axiom Eleven – *"Of every thing that exists, it can be asked what is the cause or reason why it exists. See Descartes, Axiom 1. Because to exist is something positive, we cannot say that it has nothing for its cause (AX. 7). Therefore, we must assign some positive cause or reason why it exists. And this must be either external (i.e., outside the thing itself) or internal (i.e., included in the nature and definition of the existing thing itself.)*[37]

Michael Della Rocca best articulates the potential issues with this via his 'Pancreas Problem'.[38] It suggests that since *the body "...is composed of a great many highly composite individuals"* (II. P 15/D) that undergo many

[36] Pauen, Michael, 'Spinoza and the Theory of Identity', in Hampe, Michael, Renz, Ursula, and Schnepf, Robert, *Spinoza's Ethics: A Collective Commentary,* Brill, 2011, p. 84
[37] See Spinoza, Baruch, Samuel Shirley (trans.), *The Principles of Cartesian Philosophy and Metaphysical Thoughts,* Hackett Publishing, 1998, p. 23
[38] Della Rocca, Michael, *Spinoza*, Routledge, 2008, pp. 108-109

changes and experiences several states, so too must the mind. It follows that my mind must contain ideas representing the many changes going on in my pancreas at this moment, as well as equivalent changes in other organs, which seems ridiculous. It seems clear that I cannot perceive all of the changes that my body undergoes at any given time. I possess no awareness of what is going on in my leg on a cellular level, and I do not have a sense of my hair growing in real time simultaneous to its growth.

However, II. P 13/S above allows for degrees of mentation or cognition, saving Spinoza's theory from any significant charge that it is not truly a theory that extends to the mental. Just as it seems ludicrous to suggest that my desk or the herbs on the kitchen counter have minds, it seems ludicrous to suggest that I should have a specific idea of every process going on in my body. If there are degrees of cognition, it stands to reason that only the ultimate mind – God – possesses adequate ideas in every respect. However, Spinoza merely suggests that objects like my desk or the herbs on the kitchen counter have corresponding ideas under God. This can indeed purport to be a sort of mind, but nowhere does Spinoza posit such a mind to be functionally equivalent to a human mind, or even that of a cat. Nor does he equate a human mind with the mind of God.

It should be noted that one relatively ground-breaking aspect of Spinoza's philosophy of universal mentation was his readiness to acknowledge that animals have a mental life at all.[39] This was a significant departure from his predecessor Descartes, who considered them mere meat-automata without consciousness or mental content. The mental is, for Spinoza, truly universal. This does open his system up to accusations of giving the mental realm such wide parameters as to come full circle back to a theory that is not really a theory of the mental at all.[40] However, it is this very scope which allowed Spinoza to reconstruct theories of the passions in a

[39] This phrase is intended to reflect the concept of mentation by degrees (some of which are so comparably lowly that they may not qualify as mentation in the manner in which we generally use the term) contained within II. P 13/S

[40] See Wilson, Margaret Dauler, *Ideas and Mechanism: Essays on Early Modern Philosophy,* Princeton University Press, 2014, p. 346

way that was unprecedented even in the midst of the lively dialogue around the passions that was so common during the period of his lifetime.

Spinoza – with a habit for bisection so ironic in a monist – acknowledges two types of affects – actions and passions, and the second half of Part Three of the *Ethics* is devoted to his account of their production and imitation. These ideas will be looked at more closely in later chapters, but it is important to note that though he describes two kinds of emotional experience, they are not given equal weight. Those affects Spinoza terms 'actions' are acknowledged as having greater proximity to reason than the passions; those affects which he describes as 'passions' are prompted by things external to us, and caused by inadequate ideas. They bring to mind Plato's Chariot Allegory[41], threatening to overwhelm the straight course of reason and send us crashing toward a lower echelon of being.

Spinoza closes Part Three of the *Ethics* with a list of forty-eight 'Definitions of the Affects' before embarking on Part Four, which contains the behavioural maxims one might expect from a philosopher who considered the passions with a level of circumspection which was indeed Platonic in terms of their threat to virtue. That list of definitions at the end of Part Three is abutted by a clarification of Spinoza's definition of the affects first introduced in III. D 3.[42] It states, *"An affect that 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, greater or lesser force of existing than before, which, when it is given, determines the Mind to think of this rather than that."* (III. General Definition of the Affects)

[41] Plato, Robin Waterfield (trans.), *Phaedrus,* Oxford University Press, 2009, section 246a-254e

[42] *"Per affectum intelligo corporis affectiones quibus ipsius corporis agenda potentia augetur vel minuitur, juvatur vel coercetur et simul harum affectionum ideas. Si itaque alicujus harum affectionum adæquata possimus esse causa, tum per affectum actionem intelligo, alias passionem." ("By affect I understand affections of the body by which the body's power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections.* Therefore, if we can be the adequate cause of any of these affections, I understand by the Affect an action; otherwise, a passion."

This chapter has attempted to show the fundamental position of Spinoza's 'Parallelism' and place it, as it were, at the very root of the vast and sprawling tree of his system in an attempt to lay the groundwork for an analysis of his psychology. [43] The mental realm of Spinoza's *Ethics* is uniquely mirrored under the attribute of extension, creating a universe of ideas and objects in which one is never a more accurate or true representation than the other. According to Spinoza's exposition of the passions, we experience passions as obfuscation, distraction and impotence, in that they directly reduce our power of action both mentally and physically - *"the passions are not related to the mind except insofar as it has something which involves a negation,* or *insofar as it is considered as part of nature which cannot be perceived clearly and distinctly through itself, without the others."* [44] (III. P 3/S) Spinoza does not merely articulate a theory of the passions, but rather, as Moreau expresses it, he "reconstructs their genesis" and places them firmly within the bounds of both thought and extension. [45] For Spinoza, as the mind is the idea of the body, emotions are at their root embodied as well as cognitive and should be considered as such from an explanatory perspective. It follows that an emotion *is* its physical expression just as it is the cognitive process involved in the feeling of it. This was a revolutionary theory in its time, and, as later chapters will show, appeared again in some of the most impactful early psychological theory, shaping the very contours of psychological theory and practice as they are understood and applied today.

[43] See p. 10.
[44] This exposition of the passions will be covered in detail in Chapter Two.
[45] See Moreau, Pierre Francis, 'Imitation of the Affects and Interhuman Relations', in Hampe, Michael, Renz, Ursula, and Schnepf, Robert, *Spinoza's Ethics: A Collective Commentary,* Brill, 2011, p. 167

Chapter 2: Spinoza's Theory of Emotion

"An affect which is a passion ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it." (V. P 3)

Spinoza's psychology did not exist in a vacuum within the *Ethics* alone. This thesis focuses on his theory of emotion and mind primarily within the *Ethics* because that is the text in which Spinoza considers the passions, and their role within his universal system, in the most intricate and extensive detail. However, he was also an important political philosopher. In Parts Three and Four the *Ethics* in particular, Spinoza looks at the nature of the passions, and their potential power to mislead or enrich us, for pragmatic as well as philosophical reasons. He does not wish merely to understand the contemporary concept of emotion as a means of gaining understanding for its own sake, though that was surely part of his motivation as a philosopher. Rather, he seeks to understand and utilise his knowledge of the affects in order to theorise on the construction of a pragmatic and political system in which 'passion and reason strive to balance each other within a perspective of general liberation.'[1] For Spinoza, more is at stake in how we understand the passions than man's individual internal landscape. This is perhaps in part why he has maintained such lasting pragmatic relevance which, as we shall see, has its expression (at least in part) in modern concepts in psychology.

This chapter will examine the fundamental role within Spinoza's psychology of adequate and inadequate ideas, and the kinds of thoughts or cognitive events which arise from them. It will look at the role of Spinoza's *conatus* doctrine, or doctrine of striving, as the fulcrum of emotional experience within his system and the extent to which our passions arise as a result of our being 'acted upon' by external objects. It will then analyse the mechanism by which, as a result of the central

[1] Giancotti, Emilia, 'The Theory of the Affect in the Strategy of Spinoza's Ethics', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu, *Desire and Affect Vol.3: Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, p. 130

conatus doctrine, our power of action is fuelled or impeded with reference to Spinoza's three 'primary affects'; desire [*cupiditas*], joy [*laetitia*] and sadness [*tristitia*]. Finally, it will examine some of the potential malfunctions to which Spinoza's account of psychological functioning is vulnerable, as well as their physical and mental consequences.

Spinoza's parallel theory of body and mind, which was the central focus of the last chapter, eliminates the necessity – at least as far as Spinoza is concerned – to pursue a complex understanding of what causally connects the two, and shifts the focus to attempt to gain an understanding of how two discrete descriptions can apply to one object.[2] The notion that a thought is an idea of a physical process or a bodily event allows Spinoza to posit a psychological system of the passions (or affections) which makes passions another sort of thought or discrete mental event with a corresponding bodily counterpart. We can trace the passions' mental or psychological origins as well as explaining individual passions' physical symptoms of which, say, sadness, is the idea. For Spinoza, all thoughts have a form of embodied counterpart even though he goes on (in Part Four of the *Ethics*) to promote a primarily mental existence through a behavioural maxim which counsels against interpreting the passions as a form of revealed truth.

It is evident from Spinoza's account of cognition that the mind's being the idea of the body will have very significant bearing on what a passion is within his wider theory. As the first chapter of this thesis will demonstrate, nothing in Spinoza's system as expounded in The *Ethics* may be considered in total isolation from anything else – his philosophy should be considered holistically, in line with his monistic position. According to that logic, the passions will have both a physical and mental manifestation, which bears decidedly on the central argument of this thesis – namely that Spinoza's psychological system and theory distinctly converges with

[2] Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 60

psychologists and philosophers of psychology whose work provides the foundation for modern understandings of human emotions and mind as well as their attendant theories and practice. To begin unpacking this, it is necessary to look at the third Part of the *Ethics*, and Spinoza's psychology.

Spinoza demonstrated at III. P 3 that our ideas can be woefully inadequate, providing more information on how a thing affects the body than data relating to the thing in itself.[3] This makes our understanding of the world somewhat unreliable.[4] My thoughts necessarily arise from my *perception* of the world as contributed to by sense data and my memory. Thus, there is a passive element to my experience; an extent to which I am *acted upon* by objects in the world.[5]

This is one of the fundamental areas in which Spinozistic psychology locates itself decidedly outside of the Cartesian framework which preceded it, and arguably brings Spinoza systematically closer to Leibniz than Descartes. Margaret Dauler Wilson argues that "With respect to particular finite things human ideas derived from ordinary experiences are always inadequate, because the human mind is limited to perceiving its own body, and external things through their effects on that body only."[6] This is accurate – I am the filter of or for my experience, and therefore am unable to separate the thing in itself precisely from how it appears to me during and after the filtration process. Clearly, I am not the only factor in translating my experience of the world under the attributes of both thought and extension. Marshall expresses this important aspect of Spinoza's account of emotional mentation perhaps most succinctly: "…our

[3] 'Mentis actiones ex solis ideis adæquatis oriuntur, passiones autem a solis inadæquatis pendent.' (The actions of the Mind arise from adequate ideas alone; the passions depend on inadequate ideas alone.)
[4] Again, here I merely refer to objects in the world as they are (or could be) independently of our sensual perceptions of them e.g. The texture of a tree's bark as it is in itself rather than melded with data about my hand as I touch the bark in order to experience its tactile elements.
[5] This concept will be examined further in chapter three, which will cover, among other subjects, the role of causality in Spinoza's psychology.
[6] Dauler Wilson, Margaret, *Ideas and Mechanism: Essays on Early Modern Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, 1999, p. 346

inadequate ideas of external things involve the essences of those things, but only through their effects on our bodies."[7]

So, when I see a dog there is both the manner of my seeing him (in terms of the content of my idea) and the physical data or apparatus (in terms of bodily extension) to consider. So, the dog must be, as it were, *giving me something to process* in order for me to experience him in Spinoza's dichotomous fashion. He renders some element of my experience passive in the process of 'act[ing] on' (III. D 2) me. Since my thinking is only partially responsible for the state that results from these various processings, I am obviously not the full cause of that state. *"I call that cause adequate whose effect can be clearly and distinctly perceived through it. But I call it partial,* or *inadequate, if its effect cannot be understood through it alone."* (III. D 1)

My reliance on the dog for my experience and idea of the dog make me a partial or inadequate cause. But this is not true passivity, according to Spinoza, by virtue of the fact that we are required in turn to react to that which acts on us, which is why we are certainly a partial cause. According to Susan James, "…because our reaction is a necessary condition of the effect it is part of the cause".[8] It is important to note that Spinoza overtly states that a passion is a state that is achieved directly as a result of one's causal inadequacy. I can only experience a passion if I am a partial cause. Any state brought about by adequate cause is an action (by III. D 3). Spinoza states that a thing is active (as opposed to passive) when it is the 'adequate' or single cause of the resulting state, which Spinoza would term an 'effect'. *"...insofar as it has adequate ideas, [the mind] necessarily does certain things, and insofar as it has inadequate ideas, it necessarily undergoes other things."* (II. P 1)

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[7] Marshall, Eugene, *The Spiritual Automaton: Spinoza's Science of the Mind,* Oxford University Press, p. 13

[8] James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy,* Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 145

It is clear then that we must be acted on in order to experience what Spinoza considers passions. These passions are ideas of the manner in which things in the world affect us, brought about, according to Susan James, by our natural capacity to react to stimuli. Thus *"from this it follows that the mind is more liable to passions the more it has inadequate ideas, and conversely, is more active the more it has adequate ideas."* (III. P 1/C) Here we are introduced to Spinoza's central doctrine of *Conatus* - or striving.[9] Spinoza maintains that our passions represent the striving to persevere in our being that is present in all things. The entire system and substance of nature presents such a striving or *conatus* in which lies the essence of the substance – both of its entirety and of its various expressions.[10] *"The striving by which each thing strives to persevere in its being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing."* (III. P 7)

Since the passions are the primary focus of this chapter, I will place less emphasis on the body's striving to preserve its being than I will place on the striving of the mind.[11] The functional relationship between body and mind within Spinoza's system was clarified in chapter one, so the striving of the mind can take precedence for the purposes of this chapter. The love, anger, fear etc. that we feel are demonstrative of our natural inclination to maintain and increase our power of action. This, according to Spinoza, constitutes our essence.[12] So, I experience things around me, according to

[9] Jonathan Bennett translates *Conatus* as "'endeavour' or 'trying'" (Bennett, 2001, p. 217) and Jean-Marie Beyssade translates it as 'effort'. See: Beyssade, Jean-Marie, 'Can an Affect in Spinoza be 'of the Body'?', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.*), Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, p. 114) , but I prefer to use 'striving' in line with Curley's translation of III. P 6 of The Ethics – '*Unaquaeque res, quantum in se est, in suo esse perseverare conatur'* as *"Each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being".*

[10] See Schliesser, Eric, 'Spinoza's Conatus as an Essence-Preserving, Attribute-Neutral Immanent Cause: Toward a New Interpretation of Attributes and Modes', in Allen, Keith and Stoneham, Tom, *Causation and Modern Philosophy*, Routledge, 2011, p. 66

[11] For a thorough look at the concept of Conatus and Spinoza's argument for it, see Garrett, Don, 'Spinoza's *Conatus* Argument', in Koistinen, Olli and Biro, John (eds.), *Spinoza: Metaphysical Themes,* Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 127-158

[12] For Spinoza's account of desire as essence, see III. P 9/S; Karolina Hübner takes issue with this interpretation of Spinoza, instead positing that we should interpret Spinozistic essences as 'intrinsically determinable, with affects supplying the determinations, and as consisting not in rigid sets of determinate properties, but in ranges of variable properties'. See Hübner, Karolina, 'The Trouble with Feelings, or

Spinoza, in terms of their ability to influence my power to 'persevere in [my] being', either positively or otherwise i.e. I experience things around me in terms of their capacity to either increase or decrease my power of acting, which will be looked at in more detail later in the chapter.[13]

This perceptual experience of the qualitative capacity of objects in the world is, crucially, *not* a perception as far as Spinoza is concerned. Rather, it is a particular sort of idea – *"By idea I understand a concept of the mind which the mind forms because it is a thinking thing. Exp.: I say concept rather than perception, because the word perception seems to indicate that the mind is acted on by the object. But concept seems to express an action of the mind."* (II. D 3) As clarified in chapter one, our perceptual experience of objects in the world gives us information about ourselves (and our bodies) rather than translating any objective externality for our understanding. Spinoza characterises the mental counterpart to our physical experience as an idea in II. D 3 above. Physical interaction with our external environment, according to Spinoza's parallelism, cannot give rise to cognitive experience, therefore he will not use the word 'perception', but insists on 'idea', since minds cannot be acted upon by objects. It quickly becomes clear to the reader of Spinoza that, in an act that mirrors the structure of reality as he sees it, he adopts separate vocabularies for the physical and mental domains, and the disparate concepts within each.

The striving of the mind in isolation is referred to as 'will', whereas the combined striving of mind and body is 'appetite'. *"this appetite...is nothing but the very essence of a man, from whose nature there necessarily follow those things that promote his preservation...Between appetite and desire there is no difference, except that desire is generally related to men insofar as they are conscious of their appetite..."* (III. P

Spinoza on the Identity of Power and Essence', in *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* Vol. 55, No. 1, 2017, pp. 35-53

[13] In the meantime, see Armstrong, Aurelia, 'The Passions, Power and Practical Philosophy Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra The Stoics', in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies,* Vol.44, No.1, 2013, p. 11

9/S) So our desire is nothing more than our consciousness of our own appetite.[14] It is in my interest, then, to take a desire-oriented position toward interaction with the world around me in the interest of maintaining my power. Spinoza wants to clarify here that my desire has nothing whatever to do with desiring good things – for Spinoza, we orient the judgement that a thing is good entirely based on the fact that we strive for it; we do not make a value judgement determining that something is good and therefore desire it. It is this 'desire-orientation' which makes us as humans uniquely suited to striving for or toward things which increase our power of action and maintain our being.[15]

Importantly, this striving force and predisposition toward maintaining our being can only be destroyed, according to Spinoza, when encountered by a destructive force which outweighs it. It is clear then that desire is a basic affection or cognitive event which influences our manner of experiencing and interpreting passions. The conatus doctrine is consequently the foundational theory within Spinoza's psychology. Here we encounter a significant weakness. Spinoza insists that we must equate seeking our own advantage with seeking to remain in existence.[16] He makes a very unsuccessful attempt to address the issue of suicide at IV. P 20/S, which branches from his account of self-preservation outlined in III. P 4 (*'Nulla res nisi a causa externa potest destrui' ('No thing can be destroyed except through an external cause'*)) and III. P 5 – *"Those who do such things are compelled by external causes... that a man should, from the necessity of his own nature, strive not to exist, or to be changed into another form, is as impossible as that something should come from nothing."* [17] Spinoza's

[14] Garrett, Don, 'Spinoza's *Conatus* Argument', in Koistinen, Olli and Biro, John (eds.), *Spinoza: Metaphysical Themes,* Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 127
[15] For more on Spinoza's *conatus* doctrine with specific reference to self-preservation, see Jarret, Charles, 'Teleology and Spinoza's Doctrine of Final Causes', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.*), Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, pp. 3-25
[16] Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 221-222
[17] 'Res eatenus contrariæ sunt naturæ hoc est eatenus in eodem subjecto esse nequeunt quatenus una alteram potest destruere.' ('Things are of a contrary nature, i.e., cannot be in the same subject, insofar as one can destroy the other.')

attempts to justify this assertion undoubtedly fail; he ends his discussion of striving and suicide by saying *"Anyone who gives this a little thought will see it."* (IV. P 20/S). This is clearly not the case.[18] However, for the purposes of this chapter, I will adopt Spinoza's position of equating seeking one's advantage with seeking (to maintain) one's existence because this is the way that we are inherently motivated to behave in the vast majority of cases.[19]

Nonetheless, in striving for self-maintenance I also very frequently encounter joy and sadness. These two seem self-evidently equally fundamental to what Rice calls 'Spinoza's behaviouristic account of activity-passivity reciprocity'[20]. As Spinoza sees it, I associate joy with an increase in my power, and I associate sadness with a decrease. It need not follow that I consciously feel more or less inclined toward action as a result of these affects; though I may indeed feel more or less consciously motivated to do something (or not to do it) as a result of my current joyful or miserable state. My capacity to act, according to Spinoza, is meddled with by my feelings regardless of my conscious awareness or lack thereof.

These three basic influences on my power of acting– desire [*cupiditas*], joy [*laetitia*], and sadness [*tristitia*], Spinoza calls 'primary affect[s]' (III. P 11/S) but he discusses joy and sadness in relation to 'perfection' of mind, which is representative of power to act. *"By joy...I shall understand in what follows that passion by which the mind passes to a greater perfection...by sadness, that passion by which it passes to a lesser perfection."* (III. P 11/S)[21] So every passion I undergo or experience (we

[18] For more on this, and a glossing of Jonathan Bennett's attempt to save Spinoza from inconsistency in relation to suicide and self-preservation, see Rice, Lee C., 'Action in Spinoza's Account of Affectivity', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.), *Desire and Affect, Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, pp. 163-164

[19] James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 147

[20] Rice, Lee C., 'Action in Spinoza's Account of Affectivity', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.), *Desire and Affect, Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, p. 163

[21] This English rendering above is Edwin Curley's translation, which I believe to be most accurate. The original Latin passage reads *'Per lætitiam itaque in sequentibus intelligam passionem qua mens ad majorem perfectionem transit. Per tristitiam aurem passionem qua ipsem ad minorem transit perfectionem.'* In line with Curley's

might now say 'every emotion I feel'[22]) represents an internal logging of my overall power in relation to what my overall power was at the point of the *last* emotion I felt. Consequently, any diminishing of my power will result in my feeling sadness even if my overall power is greater than that of someone else whose overall power is much lower, but was just fractionally increased by a feeling of joy. My overall power is therefore the direct consequence of my emotional experience as dictated by my interactions with the external world, and the extent to which I possess the power to reason about my emotions within my internal landscape.[23] This aspect of Spinoza's psychology, as we shall see in later chapters of this thesis, is one which would translate very comfortably to early psychological theory in the mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

To look briefly at Spinoza's characterisation of some other common passions – he expresses all passions in relation to the 'primary' three i.e. in relation to joy and sadness, and the extent to which we strive toward things that will bring about joy and strive to avoid things that will diminish our power by bringing about sadness. So, we see how the following might be possible - *"Love is nothing but joy with the accompanying idea of an external cause, and hate is nothing but sadness with the accompanying idea of an external cause."* (III. P 13/C) If this is correct, love is joy that we focus on an object which is external to us, and hatred is sadness transposed onto another body. There is still abiding confusion as to how this works, however. Susan James states that envy, for Spinoza, is 'hatred of other people whose happiness makes us sad because it lessens our power'.[24]

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translation of III. P 11/S, I read this passage thus: 'By Joy, therefore, I shall understand in what follows that passion *by which* the Mind passes to a greater perfection. And by Sadness, that passion by which it passes to a lesser perfection.' [my emphasis]

[22] The relationship between what Spinoza defines as a passion and the role of his theory of passion/emotion in early psychology will be examined later in this thesis.

[23] See chapter four for detailed exposition of the intersection between passions and reason in the *Ethic*s.

[24] James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy,* Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 147

This seems to involve a confusion – rather, I think that for Spinoza, it would be equally valid to suggest that envy is a hatred of other people whose happiness lessens our power *because it makes us sad*. This is also in line with a slightly different but common translation of III. P 11/S (to the one used above) as seen in Bennett which cites Spinoza as defining 'pleasure', rather than joy, as "*that* passion *in which the mind passes to a greater perfection"*. [25] Here, the phrase 'by which' is substituted for 'in which'. Despite the difference, the core idea of the passion being the vehicle which invokes a change in power by making us *feel,* inheres. The adjustment in our power comes about as a direct result of the passions we feel – it is not the case that an adjustment in our level of power brings about a particular passion.[26]

Stuart Hampshire's assessment appears to be in line with that of Susan James, suggesting that emotions are a symptom of alterations in our power, rather than a cause of that alteration – "The catalogue of the emotions, and Spinoza's analyses of them in terms of pleasure, pain and desire, serve mainly to show that the emotions can be understood and interpreted on his principles, and as ultimately arising from the *conatus*, the tendency to self-preservation, which is common to all things in nature…"[27] Spinoza says at III. P 3 that *"...insofar as the mind has inadequate ideas (by P1), it is necessarily acted on. Therefore, the actions of the mind follow from adequate ideas alone; hence, the mind is acted on only because it has inadequate ideas q.e.d."* He goes on to say at III. P 12/D, *"so long as the Mind imagines those things that increase or aid our body's power of acting, the Body is affected with modes that increase or aid its power of acting (see Post. 1), and consequently (by P11) the Mind's power of thinking is increased or aided."* So we are acted upon by things

[25] Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 257

[26] See Hoffman, Paul, 'Three Dualist Theories of the Passions', in *Philosophical Topics* Vol. 19, No.1, 1991, p. 164 for an interesting if limited parallel with Descartes' theory of the passions, where the comparison between passions' power to influence will bears a resemblance to the passions' direct influence on our power of action.

[27] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism*, Oxford University Press, 2005, EBook, loc. 1922

external to us, and the inadequate ideas that arise from this interaction cause a lowering of our power of action. Insofar as we imagine those things which, for example, we love, giving rise to adequate ideas "*the images of things that posit the existence of a thing loved aid the mind's striving to imagine the thing loved, that is (by III. P 11/S), affect the mind with joy*".

It is not, as Susan James suggests, that envy (the example she uses), for Spinoza, is 'hatred of other people whose happiness makes us sad because it lessens our power. This implies a chronology of events, of which emotional experience is an outcome, and alteration in power the cause. It seems a more faithful interpretation of Spinoza, based upon his account in Part Three of the Ethics as referenced here, that the envy is representative of the drop of power of action rather than a result in it. A lessening of power of action is not the cause of my envy. I am envious, and this envy is representative of the damage done, as it were, to my *conatus*; it is a correlate. Emotions are a feature of power fluctuation, and power fluctuation is a feature of emotions.

Typically for Spinoza, however, his focus in elucidating the method by which our power is increased or diminished is not clarification of the human experience per se. Rather he uses our experience as an exemplar of the overall inclination of things toward their own preservation. Human emotion is, typically of Spinoza, not a special category. Even on the meta-level of man's own cognitive experience, he cannot be *imperium in imperio.*

Since we are but one part of the God-substance and ultimate cause, the passions as we experience them are, for Spinoza, just another factor in the overall process of causality within which we – and all other things – function. If Spinoza is correct when he says, *"The mind as far as it can, strives to imagine those things that increase or aid the body's power of acting"* (III. P 12) then he is confirming for us that our passions incline us toward self-preservation. Much more importantly, however, he is

confirming that the affects are *thoughts* which happen to have bodily connotations (or a mode of bodily expression) which can help us to identify those emotions in ourselves and others.[28] My emotions are indicative of my natural disposition to strive toward the preservation of my own being. It follows from this that though Spinoza's focus in discussing the passions in general is not bodily, in my striving to preserve my being I am striving toward its preservation in its entirety – i.e. both the thought and extension of my being. I am drawn to anything that I judge to be good as a result of my supposition that it will either preserve, or aid in preserving, my being by maintaining my power to act.[29]

If we are motivated to strive toward what is good for us, and we experience passions under the same attribute of thought, then how does Spinoza account for the fact that two people might undergo (or feel) directly opposing passions when confronted by the same stimulus? He accounts for it very simply through individual experience; by its correlates and by the default assumptions we have made about objects in the world as a result of our experience. Spinoza demonstrates just how pertinent this is when he discusses resemblances. If I experience a passion in relation to an object in the world under some circumstances (e.g. extreme circumstances or when young), I will forever associate the thing with the passion originally felt. *"If the mind has once been affected by two affects at once, then afterwards, when it is affected by one of them, it will also be affected by the other."* (III. P 14) This is all too true – a man seriously frightened by a dog as a child will impose that fear on all the dogs he might meet – thus creating an irrational association between fear and dogs. When I use the word 'impose' in relation to the fear, I am referring to Spinoza's thought that my experience has much more of my body in it than it has of the external body (the dog) toward which it is directed. *"The*

[28] This will become particularly relevant in later chapters on Spinoza's convergence with William James.
[29] See Armstrong, Aurelia, 'The Passions, Power and Practical Philosophy Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra The Stoics', in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies,* Vol.44, No.1, 2013, p. 9

imaginations of the mind indicate the affects of our body more than the nature of external bodies (by IIP16C2)" (III. P 14/D)

This accounts for the fact that the man's fear of all subsequent dogs is not rational, but purely associative – each meeting with a new dog *should* involve a new assessment of the new object in relation to the man's *current experience* of it. The fact that he is associating all of *these* individual experiences with *that one* powerful experience of an earlier time means that he gains a false idea of the object based on a faulty assessment of it. This does not apply only in the case of error. Because an object and a passion are simultaneously experienced, it is possible that when next I encounter what is only a similar object, the associated passion will come to light. For example, I might feel inclined to like someone simply because he reminds me of, say, my brother, whom I already like –

> *"From the mere fact that we imagine a thing to have some likeness to an object which usually affects the mind with joy or sadness, we love it or hate it, even though that in which the thing is like the object is not the efficient cause of these effects."* (III. P 16).

The cynophobic man might take fright at a shape in his peripheral vision which merely looks like a dog, but is in fact a shrub, or some other innocuous object. We might clarify this by saying that Spinoza recognises that the like-object should not be *sufficient* to give rise to the emotion (which is really associated with the original object, and not the like one), but that this happens all the same and is a feature of our experience.[30] This predisposition to associate objects with affections usually works quite well to perform a pragmatic function – it is clear that feeling fear of the big aggressive dog who is actually acting on me to produce fear *now*, which relates to this instance is indeed helping to preserve my being. Indeed, it is a function of mind which Sigmund Freud would borrow centuries later in relation to his theory of the unconscious and its

[30] Ueno, Osamu, '*Res Nobis Similis:* Desire and the Double in Spinoza', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.), *Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, pp. 81-89

workings, as shall be seen in later chapters. The fact that I might go on to associate all dogs with fear may be testament to the fundamentally traumatic nature of my experience.

Whatever the reason, the fact that my predisposition to associate passions with objects sometimes goes awry due to inadequate ideas does not mean that it is not theoretically very helpful in my striving to preserve my being. We are after all mere elements within the Spinozistic system and are hence not objectively central to it; we are central to the overall system only insofar as we ourselves seek to understand it i.e. I can only seek to understand the system from my limited human perspective, of which I myself am the omphalos.[31] Wartofsky clarifies our (human) role in Spinoza's system – *"*[Man] *is not a disturbance or a break in the continuity and unity of nature ... there is no realm in which man has absolute dominion."* [32]

Let us turn to Spinoza's explanation of how it is that we can relate to one another on an emotional or passional level. How is it that you know I am angry when I am angry? It is clear that we recognise others' emotions by virtue of those emotions' physical manifestations. It is generally the case that our features will contort in similar ways when we are happy, angry etc. The generality of this forms a pattern which allows us to identify individual instances. Our responses to the feelings of others are generally predictable. It is likely that my passions will be influenced by yours – if you are visibly upset, I will likely pity you; we will feel sad upon witnessing another person's sadness. *"If we imagine a thing like us* [i.e. a

[31] Armstrong, Aurelia, 'The Passions, Power and Practical Philosophy Spinoza and Nietzsche Contra The Stoics', in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies,* Vol.44, No.1, 2013, p. 13

[32] Wartofsky, Marx, 'Action and Passion: Spinoza's Construction of a Scientific Psychology', in Grene, Marjorie (ed.), *Spinoza: A Collection of Critical* Essays, Anchor Books, 1973, p. 342. It is not my intention here to give a detailed account of the friction that exists between Spinoza's determined system and his seemingly contradictory statements about the possibility for limited freedoms. He addresses these issues in Parts Four and Five of The Ethics. This issue will resurface in more detail in the next chapter.

human object], *toward which we have had no affect, to be affected with some affect, we are thereby affected with a like affect."* (III. P 27)

This statement requires a bit of unpacking. When Spinoza refers to 'imagining' a thing, he is talking specifically about the formation of an idea under the attribute of thought, which we know represents the maximal potentiality to which we might know a thing. The idea instantiates the thing as a physical 'reality' and vice versa. So, imagining is no more than accepting the existence of a physical thing; no more than possessing the thing's idea.[33] Spinoza is arguing that the emotions of a person upon whom my actions have had no effect are still likely to affect me – literally in terms of producing an affect. This does not seem very useful.

On the one hand, while someone else's happiness might produce happiness or happiness-related affects in me and so increase my power of acting, sadness will have the opposite effect. By these lights, one might look on pity in the Nietzschean sense by which pity is a degenerative state which purposefully saps an individual's power.[34] The German word for pity, the same as the word for compassion, 'Mitleid', translates to 'suffering with', and Nietzsche puts forward the argument that suffering with someone is not helpful to them and degenerative to me. [35] Spinoza maintains however that when another person's sadness moves me to pity, I will immediately want to restore my power by alleviating their suffering. Spinoza might express this differently as my wish to destroy the object of the other person's sadness in order to restore my power to act. *"Whatever affects with sadness what we pity, affects us also with a like sadness...and so...we strive to think of whatever can take away the thing's existence,* or *destroy the thing, that is... we shall want to destroy it, or shall be*

[33] Della Rocca, Michael, 'The Power of an Idea: Spinoza's Critique of Pure Will', in *NOÛS*, Vol. 37, No. 2, 2003, p. 202
[34] See: Nietzsche, *The Antichrist,* 1980
[35] 'Compassion' (from Latin) and 'sympathy' (from Greek) also literally (etymologically) mean 'suffering with'.

determined to destroy it. And so we strive to free the thing we pity from its suffering [and consequently ourselves also], q.e.d" (III.P 27 C3D)

Thus, if I encounter a hungry person, and their abject situation moves me to pity, I might buy the person some food so that, in relieving their suffering, I myself might feel happier and consequently restore my own power. Even though my pity might result in altruistic actions, there is nothing inherently altruistic in my striving. It is ultimately selfish, if we take that term in the consequentialist sense and not as relating to intent. This is further proven by Spinoza's comment at III. P 28, when he says, *"We strive to further the occurrence of whatever we imagine will lead to joy, and to avert or destroy what we imagine is contrary to it, or will lead to sadness."* My inherent constitution, then, is programmed more for envy for its own sake than for pity for its own sake. As in the case of two toddlers where one appears to be greatly enjoying a particular toy (let us imagine that I am one such small child), I am predisposed to want *that* toy rather than countless others that might be scattered about, unclaimed. *"If we imagine that someone enjoys some thing that only one can possess, we shall strive to bring it about that he does not possess it."* (III. P 32) This statement certainly does not flatter our nature. I imagine the other toddler's using the toy as 'an obstacle' to *my* potential joy. So, in this case my striving would be directed toward divesting my oblivious companion of the toy he so enjoys.

Spinoza also uses the particular example of young children in this instance because they are the purest example of this behaviour. Again, Spinoza is not interested in our *comprehending* the causal process in which we have a role (or, more specifically, he simply does not hold that we are all capable of attaining this sort of understanding); he is interested merely (in functional terms) in the way in which we are subject to that causal process. Naturally, this applies to everything and, in this instance, everyone – even those least consciously self-aware members of our species. This example is a testament to our natural sensitivity to others' feelings, but it also goes a long way to explaining just why that sensitivity

does not necessarily result in any inherent altruistic leanings. If anything, according to Spinoza we are naturally ready to harm those around us in the aim of maintaining and increasing our power.[36]

While many of the passions we experience seem to be 'automatic' responses to what is happening around us, some are more analytical and are to an extent volitional because they are not emotions that happen 'to' us in any passive sense. Rather we assist their occurrence by contributing to the process of feeling in some way and thus we are undertaking an action. According to Gideon Segal *"It... turns out that to have an idea is to conceive of a cognitive content, or simply to cognize, and this should be taken to signify an activity rather than the mere having or inclusion of a content as part of some static mental inventory."*[37] This brings us back to Spinoza's argument that a 'conception' is a thought which is a particular kind of idea. Consider again the 'will', which is, according to Spinoza, the striving of the mind to increase its power of acting. *"The will...is only a certain mode of thinking....so...each volition can neither exist nor be determined to produce an* effect *unless it is determined by another cause, and this again by another, and so on...So in whatever way it is conceived, whether as finite or as infinite, it requires a cause by which it is determined to exist and produce an effect...it cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary or compelled one, q.e.d."* (I. P 32/D)

Here Spinoza clarifies that volitions are expressions of the ultimate substance (along with everything else) but is clarifying what sort of thing a volition is. Since a volition is a finite mode of thought, it is dependent on other finite modes which contribute to the pattern that ultimately represents the causal order by which substance operates within the overall system. It is important to note that volitions in themselves are causally determined.[38] This works by the same method as our passions. Since all

[36] Spinoza's conception of the affects as negative influencers worthy of our circumspection has roots in Stoicism, see Kisner, Matthew J., 'Spinoza's Virtuous Passions', in *Review of Metaphysics,* Vol. 61, No. 4, 2008, pp. 759-783
[37] Segal, Gideon and Yovel, Yirmiyahu (eds.), *Spinoza*, Ashgate, 2002, p. 268
[38] I will return to this concept in detail in chapter three.

naturally occurring events within substance are causally determined, not even God is free to will. *"The mind is a certain and determinate mode of thinking...and so... cannot be a free cause of its own actions,* or *cannot have an absolute faculty of willing and not willing. Rather, it must be determined to willing this or that (by IP28) by a cause which is also determined by another, and this cause again by another, and so on..."* (II. P 48 D) As we have already clarified, even the substance itself is subject to the overarching systematic function of the substance.

It is clear that a volition is a sort of thought with a determined place in the causal order of events, but what it *is* requires further elaboration. Spinoza takes pains to show that a volition is not a form of desire. Of his triangle example, he says *"...what we have said concerning this volition (since we have selected it at random), must also be said concerning any volition, namely, that it is nothing apart from the idea..."* (II. P 49/D) i.e. there are no pure volitions for Spinoza. Contrary to the preceding Cartesian perspective, Spinoza argues that affirmation is inherently present when I perceive something – *"In the mind there is no volition,* or *affirmation and negation, except that which the idea involves insofar as it is an idea.*" (II. P 49)[39] So the very action of perceiving the desk is testament to its affirmation because it is a judgement about what the desk is (or is not). This affirmation is obviously only an affirmation, however, insofar as it is affirming an idea. It is as a consequence of this logic that Spinoza states that *"The will and the intellect are one and the same"* (II P 49C) All of my mental actions – thoughts, passions and memories etc. as well as the correlates of my experience such as sensory data are a unitary kind of thing. This thing, then, is a judgement about what I perceive such that when I perceive (an idea, or the thing of an idea) I am also affirming or forming a judgement. This is mirrored in my affections (passions). When I hate a thing, I am simultaneously forming a judgement about its capacity

[39] See Reed, Edward S., 'The Trapped Infinity: Cartesian Volition as Conceptual Nightmare', in *Philosophical Psychology,* Vol. 3, No. 1, 1990, pp. 101-121

to harm my power to act. So there is no aspect of desire to my perceptions, and will and perception are not separable concepts.

A passion must necessarily be experienced as long as one strives to persevere in one's existence. When we cease to strive, we cease to be, so we must always experience passions in our striving in that we are constantly seeking the good that will increase our power to act. The fact that *my* passions are operating in the context of *my* experience and personal history ensures that my experience of my own passions will be individuated and unique to me. Your passions operate in the context of your experience, which is composed of the same substance as mine, but differently formulated in terms of chronology and potency of varying influences or external factors. Thus, though we feel the same things and experience the world through the same mental and physical apparatus, that experience is sufficiently modulated to ensure that you and I are different from one another. This accounts for how it is that you know how I feel by virtue of my doing such and such a thing, but understand the concept of 'mine' and 'yours' under the attributes of thought and extension.

A further factor which influences the differences between discrete individuals and everything else within Spinoza's monistic structure is the extent to which reality as we experience it is strictly determined. The relationship between mind, emotions and causality, having important implications for questions of free will but also therapeutic approaches, both in Spinoza's era and today, will be the focus of chapter three. It will also be the final area of Spinoza at which this thesis will look before moving into the era of modern psychology, and Wilhelm Wundt.

Chapter 3: Causality, Determinism and Emotions in Spinoza's *Ethics*

"Most of those who have written about the Affects, and men's way of living, seem to treat, not of natural things, which follow the common laws of nature… Indeed they seem to conceive man in nature as a dominion within a dominion. For they believe that man…is determined only by himself…To them it will doubtless seem strange that I should undertake to treat men's vices and absurdities in the Geometric style, and that I should wish to demonstrate by certain reasoning things which are contrary to reason, and which they proclaim to be empty, absurd and horrible…[However] the Affects… of hate, anger, envy etc., considered in themselves, follow from the same necessity and force of nature as the other singular things. And therefore they acknowledge certain causes, through which they are understood, and have certain properties, as worthy of our knowledge as the properties of any other thing…" (Preface to Part III)

There are few philosophers whose reputation for complexity match Spinoza's. This statement is particularly applicable to the *Ethics*. In showing that human beings are as subject to an overall causal system as all other natural 'things', Spinoza argues that his philosophy, mirroring the nature of reality as we perceive it, is necessarily subject to the careful, systematic structure of reference and cross-reference that he has created. The structure Spinoza utilised within the *Ethics* is largely responsible for its intimidating reputation. This is unfortunate, as it can deter potential readers. Bergson referred to the *Ethics'* structure as "that complication of machinery, that power to crush which causes the beginner in the presence of the Ethics to be struck with admiration and terror."[1]

Spinoza's *Ethics* would have been forbidding even had it taken a more standard structure simply because its language, and more importantly the

[1] Quoted in Bennett, Jonathan, *Learning from Six Philosophers: Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Vol. 1,* Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 112

scope of its elusive and difficult conceptual and metaphysical content is vast, and casts a long shadow. Added to this is Spinoza's general lack of popularity at various points in history due to what were seen as his subversive ideas. The term 'Spinozist' was flung about as a pejorative among intellectuals even in the nineteenth century and beyond. Indeed, his ideas on free will, which will be part of the focus of this chapter, still render his readers uncertain, and when produced in a modern context, still stimulate heated debate. The mere suggestion that human beings do not possess free will elicits powerful reactions. However, careful reading of the *Ethics* reveals a psychology (and an overall philosophical system) which is as practical as it is sophisticated, and as will be outlined in later chapters, still has relevance to psychological theories and their various pragmatic applications today.

In this chapter, I will provide an account of Spinoza's theory of causality, which encompasses several key areas, in relation to the emotions. To do this, I will provide an account of Spinoza's causal system, clarifying the substantial role of his God-substance, God or Nature, and elucidating the role of – and the problem with – free will as Spinoza envisages the concept. After looking at Spinoza's accounts of contingency and adequate ideas, I will move on to causality as it applies to the emotions, which naturally falls under the monistic umbrella of Spinoza's wider causal system. Spinoza saw a geometry of the passions as fundamental to his metaphysics, and consequently endeavoured to treat of the emotions just as he treated of God, or mind, or any other important element of his system. He considered "*human actions and appetites just as if it were a Question of lines, planes, and bodies."* This approach is anathema to modern conceptions of human feeling, or even how we conceive of and discuss human feeling in common parlance today. Indeed, we live in a time in which biological and neurological theories of brain function in relation to the emotions clash – even within popular culture – with

conceptions of emotion within philosophy and the social sciences.[2] Spinoza's psychological theory foreshadowed a science of emotions that was not conceived of again until centuries after his death as well as an approach ultimately validated by the earliest and most resonant thinkers in the field of psychology, as this thesis aims to show.

If they are to be understood as Spinoza intended, emotions within the *Ethics* cannot be taken out and looked at in isolation, or solely upon their own merits. Though emotions and feelings clearly represent a special category for Spinoza—he returns to them again and again throughout the *Ethics* as well as in his correspondence and other work – they are not insulated, nor could they logically be, from his wider monism. Indeed, Parts Four and Five of the *Ethics* are largely dedicated to a discussion of emotion, and together they present emotion as both the root of and the solution to the plight of man, in terms of his vulnerability to emotion or destructive, unreasoned behaviours. In Part Four, 'Of Human Bondage', it is feelings which are our cruel jailors, unpredictably punitive and sometimes arbitrarily conciliatory, but always mysterious and subjecting us to their whims. In Part Five, 'Of Human Freedom', emotions and feelings are the key on the jailer's belt, a tool which, once wisely utilised, can reveal our liberty to us. As later chapters will illustrate, these ideas resurfaced in the earliest years of psychology as a discrete discipline, and underpin that field's philosophy, at least in terms of pragmatic, therapeutic approaches.

Spinoza's psychology and theory of emotion, despite rooting much of its prescriptive management strategy for emotions in Stoicism, was ground

[2] For more on the relationship between philosophy of mind and emotion and the neuroscientific perspective on the same, see Panksepp, Jaak, *Affective Neuroscience: The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions*, Oxford University Press, 2004; Adolphs, Ralph, 'How Should Neuroscience Study Emotions? By Distinguishing Emotion States, Concepts, and Experiences', in *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, January, Vol. 12, No. 1, 2017, pp. 24-31; Bennett, Maxwell, Dennett, Daniel, Hacker, Peter, Searle, John, *Neuroscience and Philosophy: Brain, Mind & Language*, Columbia University Press, 2007

breaking in its way and not entirely Stoic.[3] The Stoics advocated circumspection in relation to the emotions, and were motivated in their endeavours by a distrust of feelings and their potential motivation and content. Spinoza shared their cautious distrust and suggested a considered methodological practice in relation to the emotions which does have a decidedly Stoic flavour. In Plato's Chariot Allegory, which was mentioned in the previous chapter, the charioteer is representative of reason, while each of the two horses represents our rational and moral impulses, or reasonable passions. The other represents our appetitive, emotionally driven and potentially darker nature. Spinoza and the Stoics both argued that the key to freedom and the good life is understanding one's emotions so as to ensure that the actions we undertake are volitional and not poorly considered impulses on the basis of the animalistic whims that intense feeling can give rise to.

They part, however, at what is perhaps the most interesting bisection between the two theories of feeling – the Stoics believed fundamentally in man's dominion over his emotional landscape, or rather, the capacity to wield dominance over it through the use of reason, which they viewed as a sort of antidote to feeling, particularly irrational, unproductive or powerful feelings. Spinoza's emotional theory has its application within a determined world in which no element operates in isolation from the others, nor is there any evidence favourable to the idea that Spinoza did not consider emotion to be an integral, potentially beneficial and perhaps most importantly, necessary element of even reasoned cognitive experience. Also, Spinoza emphasised the role of emotions in personal liberty or understanding. For Spinoza, it is by understanding and curating emotions rather than abjuring them that we achieve true knowledge of self and world. This, by the account laid out within the *Ethics*, is freedom.

[3] See DeBrabander, Firmin, *Spinoza and the Stoics: Power, Politics and the Passions,* Continuum Books, 2007

Regardless, it should be noted that though Spinoza was fond of the Stoics and certainly shared their self-discipline and strategies for pragmatic application of reason in some respects, including advocating training ourselves in the experience of negative emotions the way kickboxers harden their shins to limit pain, he was critical of the Stoic belief that the emotions could ever be entirely overcome or effectively mastered –

> "*Here, then, as I have said, I shall treat only of the power of the Mind, or of reason, and shall show, above all, how great its dominion over the affects is, and what kind of dominion it has for restraining and moderating them. For we have already demonstrated above that it does not have an absolute [20] dominion over them. Nevertheless, the Stoics thought that they depend entirely on our will, and that we can command them absolutely. But experience cries out against this, and has forced them, in spite of their principles, to confess that much practice "and application are required to restrain and moderate them."*
> (Preface to Part Five)

Spinoza did not accept a theory of human reasoning which operates in isolation, or which is in any sense insulated from the emotions. In that respect, he is far more in alignment with modern neurological theories of emotion and mind than the Stoics.[4] Operating within a determined system but still advocating a Stoic level of intense personal responsibility for what we do with our emotions, Spinoza is left to sew together what, at least at first, can look like the ragged edges of two incompatible concepts. As I attempt to show in this chapter, these concepts are in fact compatible. At least Spinoza believed this to be the case, and his psychological and causal systems intersect at precisely this point.

It is clear that according to Spinoza's view, everything in Nature is a form of substance.[5] One of the first axioms in part one of the *Ethics* states that *"The knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of*

[4] Ibid., pp. 17-22
[5] See Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 60

its cause." (I. A 4) Thus in seeking knowledge we must move always backwards from effect to cause all the way to an ultimate cause (not to be confused with a 'first cause'). Without an ultimate cause, we would be faced with an infinite regress. This is incompatible with Spinoza's view, so his regress ends in what we will refer to as an 'ultimate substance'.[6] The ultimate substance is necessarily causally self-sufficient and is also causally sufficient to explain all of the effects which stem from it. This causal chain, ending (or beginning) in the ultimate cause, is for Spinoza providing us with a substantial *cause* for everything embodied or otherwise to replace causal systems that were prevalent when he wrote the *Ethics*. Primarily posited was the idea that God wills the creation and maintenance of the universe, though this does not refer to a conscious or volitional will as we might understand it.

This theory is insufficient for Spinoza specifically because it posits at least one stage in the causal process that is totally inaccessible to us – I can theorise that God may create and maintain the universe, or indeed that he is a separate entity to his creation, but I have no explanation for *how* he might do this. Even the Cartesian theory of extended substance depends on God as its ultimate explanation. Consequently, the chain does not end in a theoretically comprehensible substance. Spinoza's ultimate cause is a substance – it provides both an ontological and a causal account of knowledge and nature: *"By substance I understand what is in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing, from which it must be formed."* (I. D 3) This also provides further clarification to what Spinoza means in that initially confusing third axiom – *"From a given determinate cause the effect follows necessarily; and conversely, if there is no determinate cause, it is impossible for an effect to follow."* (I. A 3)

[6]For more on Spinoza and infinite regress, see: Spinoza, Baruch, 'Letter XII to Ludovicus Meyer, P.M.Q.D on the Nature of the Infinite, 20 April 1663', in Wolf, Abraham (ed. and trans.), *The Correspondence of Spinoza,* George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1928*,* pp. 115-122*;* also see See Shein, Noa, 'Causation and Determinate Existence of Finite Modes in Spinoza', in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie,* Vol. 97, No.3 pp. 334-357

Questions about the nature of this ultimate substance naturally arise. I do not intend the term 'ultimate substance' to suggest more than one substance; rather, it is intended to indicate the supreme form of the one monistic substance that Spinoza sees everything inhering within. On a pragmatic level, we are obliged to use language that suggests the existence of more than one substance – Spinoza would see this as fallacious. The term 'ultimate substance' is intended to disallow the pragmatic conception of substance we use in a casual setting, in which we see substance as diverse and limited to the various modes of expression of what Spinoza would see as a larger, unitary and monistic whole. So, if this Spinozistic substance is to provide a fundamental explanation for causal processes, it must necessarily be infinite – any finite substance must have a cause, the explanation of which would give rise to an infinite regress.

> *"Every singular thing, or any thing which is finite and has a determinate existence, can neither exist nor be determined to produce an effect unless it is determined to exist and produce an effect by another cause, which is also finite and has a determinate existence ; and again, this cause also can neither exist nor be determined to produce an effect unless it is determined to exist and produce an effect by another, which is also finite and has a determinate existence, and so on, to infinity."* (I. P 28)

Spinoza argues that his ultimate and infinite substance (as cause) eliminates the possibility of regress – and so it does; his causal chain ends with a form of substance which does not rely on anything but itself for justification.[7] It causes both itself and everything else. Spinoza calls this ultimate substance God, though it is not such a God as could be interpreted theistically as a personal God or cosmic creator, necessarily invested or otherwise in the workings of the universe –

[7] Shein, Noa, *Causation and Determinate Existence of Finite Modes in Spinoza,* Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie, Vol. 97, No. 3, 2015, pp. 334-357

> *"By God I understand a being absolutely infinite, that is, a substance consisting of an infinity of attributes, of which each one expresses an eternal and infinite essence."* (I. D 6) (An attribute is *"what the intellect perceives of a substance, as constituting its essence."* (I. D 4))[8]

For Spinoza, this God-substance constitutes the surcease of questioning in relation to causes essentially because *this* substance cannot be differentiated from *the* substance. The substance-God and its 'creation' are one entity. So, the causal chain that is subject to the order of the overall system also serves to instantiate the system i.e. the system is self-causing and self-regulating (in terms of causality). Wartofsky offers clarification – "...a monism of self-active substance, whose modes of activity are differentiated but whose principle activity is not. Such a self-active principle must be such that its existence and its activity are one and the same."[9] He cites that succinct phrase of Giordano Bruno's – "wholly in the whole, and wholly in every part of the whole."[10]

The symmetry of theory complements the geometric structure of the *Ethics* overall. Hence the relationship between things in the world reveals an overall web of causal connections which, when considered together, give rise to scientific (as Spinoza would have seen it) laws dictating how the world functions. In this way, according to Spinoza, we can arrive at certainty about the principles that govern literally everything. His system is designed to eliminate misunderstanding and to open to us an explanation of the workings of the world; this applies both to the simplest and the most complex processes. We can work back from effect to cause and reach an ultimate explanation through understanding. According to

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[8] For traditional accounts interpreting IP28 as an account of infinite regress of efficient causation relating to bodies or events, see Curley, Edwin, M., *Spinoza's Metaphysics: An Essay in Interpretation,* Harvard University Press, 1969, p. 66; Della Rocca, Michael, *Representation and the Mind Body Problem in Spinoza,* Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 69)

[9] Wartofsky, Marx, 'Action and Passion', in Grene, Marjorie (ed.), *Spinoza: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Anchor Books, 1973, pp. 332-333

[10] *De Immenso et Innumerabilibus,* II, xiii, cited by Wartofsky, Marx, 'Action and Passion' in Grene, Marjorie (ed.), *Spinoza: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Anchor Books, 1973, p. 333

Spinoza, we have no need to ask what explains the ultimate cause because it provides and represents its own explanation. Of course, Spinoza guides us rather imperfectly through these ideas, which accounts for why they are still not particularly easy to grasp, but he is holding that his method is the one to adopt in order to reach understanding.

"The knowledge of an effect depends on, and involves, the knowledge of its cause." (I. A 4) Axiom four – one of the first we encounter on reading *The Ethics*— clarifies that the pursuit of knowledge or understanding for Spinoza involves looking backward along causal chains to understand the causes of various effects. If Spinoza is to be successful in his claim that we can reach a level of adequate understanding about God or Nature, the regress of causes that our search sets into motion must end somewhere. Not only this, the somewhere or something in which the search ends must necessarily (according to Spinoza's logic) be self-sufficient causally. It must also be self-explanatory, since it cannot exist by dint of, or in reference to, anything else.

As a monist, Spinoza requires this regress to end in substance. The Cartesian notion of extended substance is insufficiently self-explanatory to complete our understanding of bodies, since Cartesian extended substance relies for its explanation upon God, so that it is an insufficient stopping-point for Spinoza's chain of causality. Neither can we insert into that end-point in the chain a mysterious anthropomorphic God. Our inability to adequately grasp how such a being might operate results in a muddied concept of causality which ultimately dooms us to resign causal connections to something beyond the bounds of human rational capacity. Spinoza requires a sort of unmoved mover; an ontologically self-sufficient and self-explanatory first cause which can provide us with a comprehensible explanation of God or nature itself— "*By substance I understand what is in itself and is conceived through itself, i.e., that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing, from which it must be formed." (*I. D 3)

Spinoza's articulation of substance as "a single explanatory point of closure" necessitates a break from the Cartesian conception of distinct, interrelated substances whose relationships it would be difficult to explain through a finite conception of substance.[11] In this sense, the conceptual vagueness (though he would likely not appreciate that term) frees Spinoza to posit the very concept of substance as being itself the causal order to which all modes of substance are subject. It is 'the most general – and from an explanatory point of view the most powerful – set of causal concepts which govern the totality of everything that exists'.[12]

Substance bears no external causal relation to the concept or idea of substance. Rather, substance is represented or instantiated by things in the world. It does not itself bear relation to natural objects by being causally linked to them; it is itself the causal link. It is causality itself. It is composed not of distinct, causally related individual instantiations, but of the set itself. Spinoza's God, then, is a complex, indivisible entity wherein the terms 'God', 'Nature' and 'Substance' are variously used to name the same thing. Spinoza uses the term *'God,* or *Nature...'* (IV. P 4) twice in Part Four and twice in the preface to Part Four of the *Ethics*.[13] God is not only the origin of the causal chain or order to which all things are subject; God *is* that abiding causal order because as the ultimate substance, God is everything. The use of the word 'God' to describe this complete substance of nature is perhaps unfortunate as it does tend to confuse Spinoza's concept and lend an unwelcome (as far as Spinoza himself was concerned) tincture of the theological to his philosophy.[14] This may have been a

[11] James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 137
[12] James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 137
[13] In other words, Spinoza's God does not fit with traditional theistic ideas of divine simplicity. For a short history of the concept, see Ortlund, Gavin, 'Divine Simplicity in Historical Perspective: Resourcing a Contemporary Discussion', in *International Journal of Systematic Theology,* Vol.6, No. 4, 2014, pp. 436-453
[14] I refer here not to any theology which may be drawn from Spinoza's God or Nature, but rather to Spinoza's suspicion of revealed religion as discussed throughout the *Theological-Political Treatise.* A detailed account of Spinoza's theory of God is not the primary aim of this project. For more on Spinoza's critique of revealed religion, see Strauss, Leo, *Spinoza's Critique of Religion,* University of Chicago Press, 1997; Bagley, Paul, *Philosophy, Theology and Politics: A Reading of Benedict Spinoza's*

deliberate vagueness on Spinoza's part, given the ideological and religious climate during this lifetime.

Whatever the reason for his choosing to refer to his substance as 'God', it is clear that he means little traditionally theistic by the term. God is indeed infinite, perfect, necessarily existent etc.; however, this is only insofar as the ultimate substance can be described in these ways. Though it is not entirely incompatible with the theistic tradition, the ultimate substance is not intended to be compatible with a theistic position – Spinoza is positing that God exists. In other words, Spinoza's God is so unorthodox within traditional conceptions of God that one could claim the only meaningful overlap between Spinoza's God and traditional conceptions of God is semantic.

Regardless of the manner in which we refer to Spinoza's God, it must be able to account for all forms of experience. Spinoza places such heavy emphasis on our understanding the causal relations between things in the world that (an understanding of) his God-substance must provide explanations for all that we might not (but theoretically do have the capacity to) grasp about the function of the world.[15] Spinoza does not dispute that we live in an extended world. Of course, he specifies that it is only *our experience* of the world that is divided into mental and physical form under the attributes of thought and extension. The world in itself is not divided in this way. There is but one substance, and this we experience or interpret (practically speaking) in both a cognitive and a physical form. Spinoza recognises that this physical experience of the body is detached from our mental life i.e. our experience of the self as a thinking being and our thoughts about the world as a perceived externality to the self. His

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Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, Brill, 2008; Nadler, Steven, *A Book Forged in Hell*, Princeton University Press, 2011 and Gildin, Hilail in Kennington (ed.), *The Philosophy of Baruch Spinoza*, Catholic University of America Press, 1980, pp. 155-71

[15] For elaboration on the Cartesian challenge to Spinoza's substance monism – which is not my focus in this chapter and would require a significant detour to discuss here, see Levin, Yakir, 'Spinoza's Substance Monism', in *Logical Analysis & History of Philosophy / Philosophiegeschichte und Logische Analyse,* Vol. 15, 2013, pp. 368-386

explanation is quite interesting. Our experience is not simple or unitary – we interpret it as practically dichotomous (though Spinoza maintains that it is not) – a person in her entirety must necessarily consist of extended elements and non-extended elements, i.e. body and mind, though these are interpretations of one substance. *"Things that have nothing in common with one another also cannot be understood through one another,* or *the concept of the one does not involve the concept of the other."* (I. A 5)

It is because we cannot separate the God-substance from the effects it produces that Spinoza posits God as an 'immanent cause' at I. P 18 – "*God is the immanent, not the transitive, cause of all things.* Dem: Everything that is, is in God, and must be conceived through God (by P15), and so (by P16 C/1) God is the cause of [NS: all] things, which are in him".[16] When Spinoza talks about 'modes', he is essentially accounting for the infinitude of the nature of the God-substance – *"By mode I understand the affections of a substance,* or *that which is in another through which it is also conceived ."* (I. D 5)*"*. He goes on to say that *"particular things are nothing but affections of God's attributes,* or *modes by which God's attributes are expressed in a certain n and determinate way."* (I. P 25/C) For Spinoza, then, *"the formal being of ideas is a mode of thinking (as is known through itself), that is [according to the previous citation] a mode which expresses, in a certain way God's nature insofar as he is a thinking thing."* (II. P 5/D) It follows from this that the formal idea of, for example, the human body, is a mode of extension. These modes, when perceived in relation to particular attributes, correlate with other attributes. For example, modes of extension correlate with modes of thought. This is what Spinoza means when he says that *"the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things ... [so that]...a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, but expressed in two ways."*(II. P 7/S) Everything within Spinoza's interconnected system is understood by us and expressed for us under the

[16] *"Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be or be conceived without God.*" (I. P 15); "From this it follows that God is the efficient cause of all things which can fall under an infinite intellect." (I. P 15/C1)

attributes of thought and extension. It is through this filter that we understand the world. This has substantial consequences for Spinoza's causal theory, as well as his theory of mind and, in particular, the emotions, which play a surprisingly significant lateral role within the causal system.

A deep sense of confusion justifiably arises for readers of Spinoza when they reach what we might consider the psychological branch of his causal theory, for good reason. His conception of the role of adequate ideas in the causal process appears to fling a spanner forcefully into the mechanism of the *Ethics* machine.

Spinoza dismisses the idea of a free will which acts as an independent, autonomous or spontaneous cause. "*The will cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary one.* Dem: The will, like the intellect, is only a certain mode of thinking. And so (by P28) each volition can neither exist nor be determined to exist and produce an effect unless it is determined by another cause, and this cause again by another, and so on, to infinity… And so (by D7) it cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary or compelled one."[17] (I. P 32, I. P 32/D) A series of determined or necessary acts follows upon the preceding act, and each of these is entailed by the one which came about prior to it. In Spinoza's system, nothing can be spontaneously brought about, or be brought about by any force outside the ultimate substance, since there is no such force. God is nature, and is instantiated by nature, and therefore works only within nature and according to those rules or laws by which nature functions. Since this is

[17] "Every singular thing, or any thing which is finite and has a determinate existence, can neither exist nor be determined to produce an effect unless it is determined to exist and produce an effect by another cause, which is also finite and has a determinate existence; and again, this cause also can neither exist nor be determined to produce an effect unless it is determined to exist and produce an effect by another, which is also finite and has a determinate existence, and so on, to infinity." (I. P 28); "That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone. But a thing is [10] called necessary, or rather compelled, which is determined by another to exist and to produce an effect in a certain and determinate manner." (I. D 7)

so, there is no will of God that can exist outside of nature or the monistic substance. As with all divine activity, volitional activity must be immanent to the world. According to Spinoza, the mistaken belief that there is a will of God arises from the belief that there is God *and* the world, where in reality there is only God *in* and *as* the world. [18] If we dispense with this erroneous thinking and accept the monistic explanation of God-substance as cause rather than divine will (if we understand that will as requiring or necessitating a consciousness of any kind), the overall picture is less confusing. In doing this, we dispense also with what Spinoza considered the myth of contingency, for if God exists within the world rather than outside of it, and does not possess will but rather inheres in a determined causal process in which each step or act is necessitated by the one preceding it, then there can be no other possible state of affairs than the one with which we are presented. We live in the only possible world.

Contingency, by this logic, is what Emily Dickinson described as 'a certain slant of light', a conceptually loaded illusion of perspective that leads us to misjudge the nature of reality, or the projection of what Spinoza saw as unenlightened (or insufficiently enlightened) human perspective onto the world. By a lack of understanding of causality and how things came to be as they are, we believe distinctly in the possibility that different outcomes were or are possible. We believe this, Spinoza thinks, through ignorance. Leon Roth captures this neatly – "Human beings… like everything else and in spite of the fact of self-consciousness, work out from conditions which are already set, not towards ideals which are to be realised. In the words of the decisive 4d7: 'By the end for the sake of which we do anything I understand appetite.' What is appetite? Blind impulse. We follow ends and ideals, but these ends and ideals are projected from behind us…"[19]

Spinoza accepts that in common parlance and everyday forms of

[18] See Hampe, Michael, Renz, Ursula, and Schnepf, Robert (eds.), *Spinoza's Ethics*: *A Collective Commentary*, Brill, 2011, p. 62
[19] Roth, Leon, *Spinoza,* Ernest Benn, 1929, p. 114

communication, we talk about and allude to concepts which involve or hinge on the notion of contingency. We informally accept the concept of contingency as valid. However, Spinoza would likely consider this further proof of our relative cognitive inadequacies. "*In nature there is nothing contingent, but all things have been determined from the necessity of the divine nature to exist and produce an effect in a certain way*." (I. P 29) For Spinoza, it is understanding, i.e. the possession of adequate ideas, which gives us a sense of causal actors that lead to the way in which things are as we currently perceive them. It is this same understanding which brings us, as I will argue later, to accept necessity as Spinoza saw it. When we truly rationally understand the causal factors influencing, for example, a decision we must make, or an action we must take, we grasp that only one course of action (the necessary one) is appropriate. According to Spinoza, when we talk about contingency, we are merely gesturing at the gaps in our knowledge; a belief in contingency exists only in the absence of understanding that outcomes are causally determined. "Things could have been produced by God in no other way, and in no other order than they have been produced." (I. P 33). Contingency by this logic is limited to an epistemic category. For Spinoza, there exists in the world a fact of the matter, which can and may often be independent of and unobtainable by the limitations of bounded human cognition. Had we a clear and distinct understanding, Spinoza suggests, we would understand that everything is in fact necessitated, and consequently, determinism is true. Of course, this brings with it immense challenges. Even today, determinism is considered an unpalatable theory. It is surprising, fascinating, and even a little comforting to look back through history to see that this reaction was also common in Spinoza's own time.

In a letter to Spinoza dated December 1675, Henry Oldenburg, the German theologian known for founding modern scientific peer review as we know it, describes the reaction of the first readers of the *Ethics* to Spinoza's causal theory. It is a reaction modern readers still have, both to Spinoza's causal theory and to arguments against free will and in favour of determinism generally, and is consequently most striking:

"I will tell you what it is that causes them most distress. You seem to assert the fatalistic necessity of all things and actions: and they say that if this is admitted and affirmed, then the nerves of all laws, of all virtue and religion, are cut through, and all rewards and punishments are empty. They think that whatever compels, or involves necessity, also excuses; and so, they think, no one would be inexcusable in the sight of God. For if we are driven by fate, and all things, turned by a strong hand, follow a definite and inevitable course, then they cannot see what place there is for blame or punishments. What wedge can be applied to this knot, it is extremely difficult to say. I should very much like to know and to learn what help you can supply for the problem."[20]

Clearly, Oldenburg's closing question was never sufficiently answered by Spinoza, at least according to his critics, since these reservations and problems are precisely the ones which still arise to confound and worry us today, and have lingered, loitering around discussions of free will for centuries. These initial reactions to Spinoza's work reflect the same fears and concerns held by modern defenders of free will – if everything is necessitated by some thing or things that came before it, then we have no free choice in the actions we undertake. Our desires do not feature in the causal equation, and moral responsibility or culpability is not a relevant factor either. We act as we must, not necessarily as we wish or will. Even if we do wish or will our actions, that willing and wishing too is determined. It is natural that human beings feel a sense of futility and frustration when confronted by this idea. Spinoza, however, remains hopeful and positive in the face of a determinism that might frighten most people. Hard determinism does not, he maintains, outlaw freedom. Always a thinker who appeared able to make seemingly contradictory ideas and states of affairs slot together comfortably, Spinoza was a radical individualist. This is in part what makes his psychology so transferable to

[20] Spinoza, Baruch, 'Letter LXXIV, Henry Oldenburg to Benedictus de Spinoza, 16th December 1675', in Wolf, Abraham (ed.), *The Correspondence of Spinoza*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1928, p. 345

modern psychology.

In a monistic system, the concept of radical individualism seems bizarre. However, freedom within this wide-reaching necessity is available, he tells us, to individuals. Through understanding the causal process and the role of our emotions within the overall system, we can become what Spinoza sees as truly free. The key to this freedom, though it again seems contradictory, is adequate ideas, which we understand largely through the emotions that potentially serve to impede them.

Adequate ideas are addressed by Spinoza in Part Two of the Ethics – *"By idea I understand a concept of the Mind that the Mind forms because it is a thinking thing."* (II. D 3) He elaborates – *"By adequate idea I understand an idea in which, insofar as it is considered in itself, without relation to an object, has all the properties, or intrinsic denominations of a true idea."* (II. D 4) Spinoza tells us that adequate ideas are realistically and genuinely attainable to us, and that we are their adequate causes. Surely then, the feasibility of possessing adequate ideas such that we as causes give rise to them represents a glitch in Spinoza's universally determined system. If this is not the case, then Spinoza appears to be suggesting that understanding causality through adequate ideas is a form of freedom in itself.

Some unpacking is required in order to clarify whether this form of freedom is in fact a freedom, rather than simply some kind of semantic workaround which does not represent any traditional, that is to say volitional, form of freedom of action. If Spinoza is indeed positing (and there are various interpretations within the literature) that understanding in itself can be qualified as a freedom, it is not surprising that readers often struggle to interpret his causal system smoothly. Freedom by this interpretation may mean 'the state of not being in unconscious thrall to our emotions', but it could not necessarily meet the necessary and sufficient conditions, if such there be, of freedom of action. Freedom, by this interpretation of Spinoza, is wholly disparate from the concept of

volition, or self-directed action. Yet it does appear that, at least to some degree, adequate ideas provide an opportunity for individuals to have a conscious role in causality through the exercise of will. How should this will be considered, if not free? Surely, it cannot be free (as we usually understand the term) if it is determined, and it cannot be determined if it is free. Freedom, after all, is a conceptual absolute. If I am at any juncture in Spinoza's chain the cause of my actions, then I cannot be 'sort of' free. That Spinoza does not accept the existence of 'free will' in any simple sense is made clear early on in the *Ethics* –

> "*The Will cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary one. Dem: The will, like the intellect, is only a certain mode of thinking…So in whatever way it is conceived, whether as finite or as infinite, it requires a cause by which it is determined to exist and produce an effect. And so (by D7) it cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary or compelled one, q.e.d."* (I. P32; I. P 32/D)

As clarified above, adequate ideas are the key to understanding as they are indicators of internally caused or motivated action, while inadequate ideas, conversely, are indicators of passion – *"Our Mind does certain things [acts] and undergoes other things, insofar as it has adequate ideas, it necessarily does certain things, and insofar as it has inadequate ideas, it necessarily undergoes other things"* (III. P 1).[21] Spinoza appears to be in no doubt that we can have adequate ideas as he accounts for them— *"The human mind has an adequate knowledge of God's eternal and infinite essence"* (II. P 47) He elaborates, to make this assertion even more explicit – *"And since all things are in God and are conceived through God, it follows that we can deduce from this knowledge a great many things which we know adequately…"* (II. P 47/S)

Clear and distinct understanding in the form of adequate ideas are the key, for Spinoza, to the only freedom we can truly have within his system – the

[21] 'Passion' here indicates not simply passions as understood to be emotions and feelings, but also passivity, or being acted upon by external causes.

freedom over our internal landscapes; the freedom to understand the causal process that leads us to such and such outcome rather than some other, and the freedom to influence these outcomes by force of will. This latter point is a matter of robust discussion within Spinoza scholarship.[22] There is textual evidence within Spinoza's works and within the *Ethics* in particular which might be called forth to support both the claim that he was a hard determinist, and the claim that he was not. The *Ethics* makes for extremely forbidding reading; it is easier to read with a sort of confirmation bias, overlooking or dismissing those elements of Spinoza's holism which do not confirm whatever interpretation the reader wishes to verify. Given the intensely complex structure, content and historical context of the *Ethics*, the fact that it was Spinoza's *Magnum Opus* and by far his most accomplished work, it can be convenient to overlook its contradictions as mysterious and dismiss them as evidence of internal inconsistency. Harold Bloom, in a New York Times review of Rebecca Newberger Goldstein's *Betraying Spinoza*, described the *Ethics* as Spinoza's "supremely cryptic masterwork".[23] This description seems both fair and unfair to the Dutchman, whose Euclidean geometric structure was designed to create an effect quite the opposite of Bloom's description. However, since disputes abound, it is appropriate to interpret parts of the *Ethics* as cryptic if the reader is charitable, and internally inconsistent if they are not.

Hampshire takes an interesting angle on Spinozistic determinism, or compatibilism, which allows a modicum of free choice within Spinoza's

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[22] For a variety of perspectives on Spinoza's treatment of free will, see Kisner, Matthew J., *Spinoza on Human Freedom: Reason, Autonomy and the Good Life,* Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 51-52; Goldenbaum, Ursula and Kluz, Christopher, *Doing Without Free Will: Spinoza and Contemporary Moral Problems,* Lexington Books, 2015; Bennett, Jonathan, *A Study of Spinoza's Ethics,* Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 315-324; Griffin, Michael V., 'Necessitarianism in Spinoza and Leibniz', in *Interpreting Spinoza: Critical Essays,* Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 71-93; Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Ebook, loc. 2858

[23] Goldstein, Rebecca Newberger, *Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity*, Schocken Books, 2009; Quote from Bloom, Harold, 'Deciphering Spinoza, the Great Original', in *The New York Times*, June 16th, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/06/16/arts/16iht-idside17.1986759.html Accessed 3/1/18

determined causal structure. He argues that an individual who is operating cognitively under adequate ideas *must necessarily* follow a particular train of logic and thought. In this way, the outcomes of our thought processes are internally determined by the thought process itself – "The mind is active and free when, and only when, the argument is strict, when the conclusion of a passage of thought is internally determined by the thinking process itself… if he fully understands, he has no choice. If he has a choice, and if he can doubt and hesitate until he settles the matter by a decision, his conclusion will be determined, at least in part, by something that is external to the thinking process itself."[24]

Hampshire argues for a tidy necessity within Spinoza, which can masquerade as individual free choice, but only when our ideas and understanding are inadequate. Amid an infinite regress of causes, he maintains, we will make the intellectual error of choosing one such cause from the temporal sequence of events, and identify it as a primary cause, positing that if this one point in the chain were somehow different, 'its' outcome would also be different. This, Hampshire believes, is a basic intellectual error brought about by our limited understanding or, as he phrases it, 'weakness of mind'.[25]

He articulates Spinoza's position on free will approximately as follows: Most human beings spend their mental lives in a situation of constant flux, the victims of shifting desires and whims, following appetitive drives and responding in an appetitive sense to external stimuli without enlightenment or dispassionate consideration. Consequently, the states of mind which follow are not the result of an individual's own 'activity of thought', but rather they are the direct, responsive consequences of that individual's interaction with their external environment. In this case, an individual's state of mind is externally determined, and not internally necessitated by mental processes given rise to by adequate understanding.

[24] Hampshire, Stuart, 'Spinoza and the Idea of Freedom', in Grene, Marjorie (ed.), *Spinoza: A Selection of Critical Essays*, Anchor Books, 1973, p. 299
[25] Ibid. p. 302

Through adequate understanding, we determine our free choices by understanding that they are the necessary course of action. By adequately understanding what must necessarily follow, we take ownership of our will:

"…the only evaluative distinction finally recognized in [Spinoza's] philosophy, other than the distinctions between true and false, and between adequate and inadequate, ideas, is the distinction between freedom and servitude… These are the terms in which a wise man reviews and criticizes his own conduct, his own emotions and attitudes, and it is by reference to this contrast that he will, if he is wise, make his own decisions… and he will unavoidably agree that the distinction between freedom and its opposite is the distinction between active reasoning, internally determined, and the mind's passive reception of ideas impressed upon it from without."[26]

This version of Spinoza, seen through Hampshire's lens, is reminiscent of the subject of William Ernest Henley's famed poem, *Invictus*; he is an individual who, though not necessarily in control of outcomes, understands that there is independence from determinism in understanding the process and taking ownership of one's own attitudes and decisions. Henley's 'unconquerable soul' is Spinoza's rational understanding, compounded in the poem's final verse –

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.[27]

[26] Ibid. p. 298
[27] Henley, William Ernest, 'Invictus', in *A Book of Verses,* Charles Scribner New York, 1893, EBook, loc. 545

This freedom is genuine for Hampshire, but might be considered unsatisfactory by those expected to own it when accounting for or explaining their decisions to themselves or others. It is a sort of semantic or nominal free will, whereby we are free for having come around to the right way of thinking about our own necessitation, and there is by this account only one right way. By understanding our enslavement to the causal process, and intuiting the logical actions that necessarily follow them, we prove ourselves to have possessed adequate ideas. We cannot lament outcomes that make good causal sense to us. Nor can we reel, blind and led by emotion like a donkey thundering after a carrot on a string, from outcome to outcome without realising how and why it came about.

In opposition to Hampshire, Antonio Damasio gives an account of Spinoza that would place him comfortably within a compatibilist camp. It is without doubt that, by Damasio's account, Spinoza accepted a form of personal freedom which does not slot comfortably into historical discussions of free will, though it may be more at home in discussions of free will among neurological scholars like Damasio, who considers Spinoza's freedom to be '…radical: a reduction of dependencies on the object-emotional needs that enslave us.'[28] Damasio places Spinoza's psychology within a modern neurological context with concision and acuity, clearly reflecting an insight many readers of Spinoza have when examining the *Ethics* – that Spinozistic emotional theory articulates emotion and feeling as we currently consider these concepts within the modern context. It is not surprising that Spinoza's ideas would provide the groundwork for modern psychological theory of mind. Indeed, under the attribute of extension, Spinoza's emotions might even be understood to be compatible with biology:

"Seen through the light of modern biology, the system is conditioned by the presence of life; the presence of a natural tendency to preserve that life; the fact that the preservation of life depends on the equilibrium of life

[28] Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza*, Vintage Books, 2004, p. 276

functions and consequently on life regulation; the fact that the status of life regulation is expressed in the form of affects –joy, sorrow—and is modulated by appetites; and the fact that appetites, emotions, and the precariousness of the life condition can be known and appreciated by the human individual due to the construction of self, consciousness, and knowledge-based reason."[29]

However, this symbiosis between Spinoza's early modern philosophical theory of emotion and modern scientific theory is not what is extraordinary about Spinoza's accounting of our individual ability to intervene in the causal functioning of our own internal landscapes. There is no doubt that Spinoza regularly espoused the exertion of conscious control over our behaviour, and specifically control over our emotions – which ones to nurture and which to bear without action, or actively counter. This does seem to suggest what Spinoza famously denied, that we may be, even to some small extent, "a dominion within a dominion". Damasio certainly holds that Spinoza considered our emotions and the behaviours that arise from them a special category – "…Spinoza never denied that we are aware of making choices and that, for all intents and purposes, we *can* make choices…His entire strategy for human salvation depends on our making deliberate choices."[30] The issue which arises, according to Damasio, is that deliberate behaviours can potentially be explained away by reference to what he refers to as "prior conditions of our biological constitution".

The primary difference between Hampshire and Damasio's accounts of freedom in Spinoza ultimately seem to hinge on a definitional or semantic disagreement, which is many readers' primary issue with Spinoza's concept of freedom. If we take freedom to be an absolute concept (such that one is either free or not-free, with partial freedom representing a logical impossibility), and its definition to apply to Spinoza's philosophy

[29] Ibid. p. 174
[30] Ibid. p. 175

in some pure form, if such a thing can be said to exist; a non-inferentially instantiated freedom, then we are certainly not free, and free will is an illusion in the formal and clear sense of the word. If, on the other hand, we can allow freedom to mean anything from what I see as the concept reflected in Spinoza's account and captured by Hampshire, an understanding of that which constrains us and consequently loosens the restraint hence freeing us from the appetitive realm, to that considered by Damasio to be a very restrictive and potentially illusory level of individual choice about mind states which makes us feel more 'free', then we might consider ourselves to have access to a certain kind of freedom.

It seems most useful to bridge the distance between the two interpretations by minimising the burden placed upon the term 'free will'. It is clear from Spinoza's choice to refer to nature as 'God' that he did take commonplace terminology and apply it to concepts that would generally be interpreted as having little association with the label. His 'God' is so non-traditional in every respect that it seems an odd choice to use the term at all. The same might be applied to Spinoza's conception of free will, or freedom more generally. When he refers to a conception of freedom, he is not discussing the idea of uninhibited self-determination, but, as we have seen within this chapter, a limited 'sort of' freedom which does not overlap with the traditional concept very much at all. It may have been easier for readers of his work if Spinoza had chosen a different term.

However, what is clear from Spinoza's own work, as well as the interpretations of Hampshire and Damasio above, is that Spinoza rejects any conception of freedom that suggests it is indeterminate, or uncaused. He makes this clear early on – *"That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone"* (I. D 7) *"…God alone exists only from the necessity of his nature…and acts from the necessity of his nature…Therefore (by D7) God alone is a free cause q.e.d."* Only God is free in the traditional sense of that word, and therefore when Spinoza discusses human freedom or the possibility of it through understanding, he is necessarily referring to something quite

different. God is free because it is its own cause, necessitated by itself. Human beings can be their own causes only insofar as they have adequate ideas.

It is undoubtedly, according to both Hampshire and Damasio, ignorance which is abhorrent and restrictive for Spinoza. Through a failure to understand ourselves and the world, we are enslaved by emotion and eschew intellectual clarity and the sublime, which is achieved by the ultimate understanding – communion with God. Through understanding the nature of necessity, we free ourselves from the lasso of passion and transcend into the realm of action, harnessing nurturing and constructive emotions and moving past those which deplete our power of action. Through understanding, we become virtuous, and through virtue, we become happy. Happiness comes ultimately from the freedom from negative emotion and its leaden power to sink and slow us. "Happiness is not a reward for virtue, it is virtue itself."[31] This, for Spinoza, is freedom within a determined system.

This very conception of freedom as a dominion of understanding would be an essential basis for the formation of early psychological theory as it appeared within the works of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud. All three thinkers would accept some degree of determinism, and all three conceived of the understanding of emotions and causes as the truest potential freedom within that determinism. The first to take up Spinoza's conception of individual freedom in a psychological context was Wilhelm Wundt – the first psychologist. Consequently, it is with Wundt that the next section of the thesis, examining Spinoza's relevance and overlap in terms of his mind-body theory, his account of emotion, and his theory of causality, will begin. In the next chapter, Wundt's overt Spinozistic influences – which would orient the direction of modern psychology – will be examined.

[31] Ibid. p. 175

Chapter 4: Wilhelm Wundt, The Foundations of a Monistic Psychology

"Older psychology, following the method of Spinoza's famous doctrine of emotions, generally offered all kinds of logical reflections about emotions, for a theory of emotions or even for a description of them. In recent times, on the other hand, the expressive movements and the other concomitants of emotion in the changes of innervation in pulse, respiratory organs, and blood-vessels, have attracted the most attention. Still, these phenomena… are often used in a very wrong way as a means of investigation of the psychological nature of affective processes. This has in turn led to a classification of emotions based entirely upon physical characteristics…"[1]

In the latter half of the above quotation, Wilhelm Wundt, the first and potentially most notable figure in the history of modern psychological theory, is undoubtedly referring to the American psychologist and philosopher, William James. We will turn to James in the next section of this thesis, where Wundt's comments will be put into context. However, the above quotation is sufficient to elucidate the purposes of this chapter, which aims to situate Spinozistic philosophy within Wundt's work and thought in relation to his project of formulating a discrete psychology, and to emphasise Spinoza's relevance to the wider context of philosophy of mind and psychology which characterised the period when psychology began to break off from philosophy into a field of its own in the mid to late nineteenth century. Undertaking a monistic psychological theory so similar to Spinoza's own, Wundt would act as the catalyst for the establishment of a new and discrete 'mental science' of psychology, establishing the foundations of the field as we recognise it today.

As this chapter will attempt to prove, Wundt's ambition as a psychologist was to establish a psychological science independent of the field of

[1] Wundt, Wilhelm, Judd, Charles Hubbard (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897, p. 174

philosophy in which it was originally rooted. He was only partially successful in this endeavour. Though Wundt is accepted within the literature as the first psychologist – as this chapter will show – his psychology never established itself as a science in the clinical vein of the natural sciences, and it continued to rest heavily upon conceptual and philosophical foundations as opposed to a combination of these and empirical ones. However, though as we shall see, Spinoza provided the conceptual basis for Wundt's monistic philosophy of mind, Wundt brought Spinoza and his psychology back into relevance during the nineteenth century, and subsequently set the scene for psychologist-philosophers like William James and experimental mavericks like Sigmund Freud to build on this foundation. These three figures are considered by scholars within psychology to be the most important; the most impactful, and the most responsible for the modern field of psychology as we are all familiar with it.[2]

Running through all three major figures is the philosophy of Spinoza; more specifically, central to the theoretical outlook of all three is theory which converges with Spinoza's philosophy of psychology and mind, or essential aspects of it. This thesis endeavours to emphasise the Spinozistic overlap with the thought of all three with the intent to prove that psychology in its modern form, based on theory and methodology which rests in large part upon the original work of Wundt, James and Freud, would not exist without Spinoza's philosophy. Scholarship within psychology has committed the same error as much philosophical scholarship since the early modern period – it has made the mistake of forgetting Spinoza. My intent herein is to locate him at the very heart of psychology in an attempt to prove that Spinoza has more lasting relevance and pragmatic impact than much of the modern response to his complex and dense philosophy generally gives him credit for. Spinoza is not deeply concealed within the work of Wundt, James or Freud. Sometimes, their

[2] Korn, James H., Davis, Roger and Davis, Stephen F, 'Historians' and chairpersons' judgements of eminence among psychologists', in *American Psychologist*, 1991, Vol. 46, No. 7, pp. 789-792

references to him are direct, unambiguous and full of admiration. Despite this, the secondary literature has somehow forgotten Spinoza. This thesis represents an attempt to remedy this wrong. To do this, we must begin at the earliest theoretical stages of psychology in its modern iteration – with Wilhelm Wundt.

As the quotation at the beginning of this chapter suggests, Wundt saw the merit of a Spinozistic psychology which did not obfuscate psychological, or as Wundt might call them, psychical concepts through conflation with the physiological. Somehow, despite this, Wundt scholarship fails to draw the philosophical connection between Spinoza and Wundt. Wilhelm Wundt is generally, and justifiably considered to be one of the most influential and important figures in the history of psychology, and the 'founder' of experimental psychology.[3] Hence the connection between he and Spinoza is potentially the most important in establishing Spinoza's fundamental relevance to early psychological theory.

Wundt established the first psychological laboratory at the University of Leipzig in Germany in 1879. In stark contrast to the later position of Freud, who insisted throughout his career that his work was scientific despite moving away from empirical experimentation and rigorous data collection quite early on, Wundt contended that scientific experimentation was essential to the practice of serious psychology. This methodology was largely successful, and drew curious students, many of whom, like Titchener, would go on to make significant contributions to the field of psychology themselves. Wundt himself utilised the introspective method, which would later fall out of fashion for its nebulosity and lack of consistent, reliable results, but would enormously influence psychologists who were influenced by Wundt, one of whom was William James.[4]

[3] A survey published in American Psychologist in 1991 ranked Wundt's reputation in first place regarding "all-time eminence" based on ratings provided by 29 American historians of psychology. William James and Sigmund Freud were ranked a distant second and third; see footnote 2; See also Boring, Edwin G., *History of Experimental Psychology,* Prentice Hall New York, 1950, p. 316

[4] See Boring, Edwin G., *History of Experimental Psychology,* Prentice Hall New York, 1950, p. 328

Wundt's student Edward Bradford Titchener, who apart from a distinguished psychological career of his own, translated Wundt's *Principles of Physiological Psychology* into English in 1904, said the following of Wundt – "…I believe that when Wundt's special theories have utterly perished his fame will still endure; it will endure because, for all the hampering influence of the past, he established a new point of view and from it surveyed the whole scientific and philosophical domain. In this sense, I am prepared to say that Wundt is the founder, not of experimental psychology alone, but of psychology."[5] This sentiment was mirrored by Edwin Boring, who studied and worked under Titchener as Titchener had under Wundt. Boring observed– "…[Wundt] promoted the idea of psychology as an independent science and that he is the senior among 'psychologists'"[6]

It is worth pointing out that Titchener was in some respects a controversial figure in relation to his mentor. He translated some of Wundt's more major works into English, and Structuralism, the theory that Wundt and Titchener developed together, and upon which Titchener expanded in his own later work, was according to Titchener based upon a faithful interpretation of Wundt's own ideas. However, more recent scholarship disputes this outright, accusing Titchener of presenting Wundt's ideas as more in line with his own thinking than they actually were.[7] The previously prevailing representation of Wundt's work by Titchener and his student, E.G. Boring, have been discredited as incomplete or at least not sufficiently faithful to the original intent of Wundt's own original writings.[8] However, it is still useful to take the perspectives of Boring and

[5] Titchener, Edward B., 'W. Wundt', in *The American Journal of Psychology,* Vol. 32, No.2, 1921, p. 177
[6] Beenfeldt, Christian, *The Philosophical Background and Scientific Legacy of E.B. Titchener's Psychology: Understanding Introspectionism*, Springer, 2013, p. 28
[7] Hergenhahn, B.R., *An Introduction to the History of Psychology,* Cengage, 2008, p. 272
[8] For more on the seeming disparity between Wundt and Titchener and Boring's representations of Wundt, see Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 135; Leahey, Thomas H., 'The Mistaken Mirror: On Wundt's and Titchener's Psychologies', in *Journal of the History*

Titchener into account, not least because good resources on Wundt in English are scarce. This, along with potential muddying of how Wundt has historically been interpreted, may go some way to explaining why Spinoza's philosophical confluence with Wundt has been overlooked.

It is surprising that the influences of a figure generally agreed to be so pivotal to the evolution of experimental psychology and psychological theory might be so ignored. This thesis seeks to ground Wundt in his rightful place at the genesis of the discipline of psychology, and to situate Wundt, as presented above in Titchener's perception of him as a change maker (widely agreed upon by historians of psychology and supported within the wider psychological literature) at a nexus. Wundt is to be the bridge between Spinoza, whose psychology impacts the very centre of this thesis, and the two major thinkers who would closely follow him: William James, born ten years later than Wundt, in 1842, and Sigmund Freud, born in 1856.

While Freud and Freudian theory would later represent a methodological and perspectival departure from the rigorous psychological philosophy of Spinoza and William James, as we shall see in later chapters, it was Wundt who opened the circle. Like William James, Wundt was a true philosopher psychologist, and a polymath as well. Intellectually, Wundt was undoubtedly the most accomplished of the three psychologists included within this thesis, with the possible exception of Spinoza, whom it would certainly be a stretch to call a psychologist at any rate. Spinoza was a metapsychologist, or to phrase it more accurately, a philosopher of metapsychology and psychology. While James was interested in normative questions, and Freud in applied questions, Wundt was interested in both metapsychological and normative questions, though he was closer to James than to Freud in terms of his outlook on philosophy, and closer to Spinoza than both.

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of Behavioural Sciences, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1981, pp. 273-282; Danziger, Kurt, 'The History of Introspection Reconsidered', in *Journal of the History of Behavioural Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1980, pp. 241-262

All three were extremely prolific writers. Wundt produced an estimated fifty-three thousand pages of text throughout his career. Most of this has not been translated from the German. In this chapter, I will focus on some of his more major works, which are the most relevant to the purposes of this thesis, with specific emphasis on what are largely considered Wundt's *magna opera;* the *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie* (Principles of Physiological Psychology, 1874) in three volumes, and to a lesser extent, his *Völkerpsychologie* (Cultural or Folk Psychology, 1900-1920) in ten volumes. Despite his having been a polymath, Wundt disregarded the idea that his work was interdisciplinary or pluralistic, though its interdisciplinary nature would ultimately contribute to his founding the field of psychology as we currently recognise it; his ambition and achievement was the establishment of a scientific and philosophical epistemology and its pragmatic application. Like Spinoza, James, and to a less significant extent, Freud, Wundt was a system-builder.

The scope of Wundt's system is closer to Spinoza in terms of its ambition and success than to either of the other two psychological theorists who will be included in this thesis, but Wundt's system is significantly less comprehensive than Spinoza's, which is itself imperfect, a fact which is acknowledged within this thesis. This comparison to Spinoza is partly an outcome of Wundt's prolificacy and the duration of his career, which spanned over six decades; there is no consistent Wundtian doctrine that can be called forth from the chaos of such a vast quantity of diverse work. Wundt is considered the most influential theorist in the history of psychology, and for good reason, since James, Freud and their successors would not have had a field to speak of had it not been for the foundations laid by Wundt's work. However, Wundt's canon is also one of the first (according to consensus within scholarship, *the* first) within psychology-proper.

Though Wundt preceded both James and Freud by one and just over two decades respectively, and though the period of their careers did overlap

somewhat, he was to some extent more accomplished than they in the context of this thesis. Wundt was, of the three scholars examined herein, the closest to Spinoza in terms of the span of his career. Spinoza was one of many philosophers within Wundt's library.[9] Wundt considered Spinoza's philosophy carefully, and was familiar with his psychology. He was widely read and possessed diverse intellectual interests, characteristics he shared with Sigmund Freud; Wundt's writings cover a diverse range of fields and topics including physiology – both human and non-human, poisons, politics, history, philosophy and psychology, as well as linguistics, ethics, logic, religion, along with more abstract topics like hypnotism and spirituality. Wundt and Freud both shared a passion for Shakespeare, who Wundt first read in translation as a young boy. His greatest contribution to knowledge, however, despite having begun his career as a physiologist, was establishing a systematic modern psychology with an empirical, scientific wing in the form of experimental psychology.[10]

Wundt's psychological project on the whole was the one in the early history of the discipline of psychology which most closely resembled Spinoza's own – he sought, under a monistic umbrella, to bring philosophy and science together in an amalgamated discipline which would in many respects be distinct from both those fields, but would make sense of individual experience. This discipline would be recognisable as the field of psychology which still exists today, and shares many of the Wundtian principles and maxims which were formulated at its beginning. These principles, and the Wundtian metaphysics which informs them, are fundamentally and recognisably Spinozistic. Luckily for the purposes of this thesis, Wundt did not (unlike his later successor Freud, who will be

[9] Takasuna, Miki, 'The Wundt Collection in Japan', in Rieber, Robert W., and Robinson, David K., *Wilhelm Wundt in History: The Making of a Scientific Psychology,* Kluwer/Plenum New York, 2001, p. 257

[10] Wundt's early experimental method, based upon introspective or self-observational method, is not scientific in the manner of the natural sciences, and is leagues away from the advanced methods of modern psychological experimentation. However, insofar as those methods have their grounding in history, Wundt was the first to somewhat situate psychology as a mental science and to operate a laboratory with the express purpose of undertaking experimentation in psychology.

addressed in later chapters) make any attempt to deny or obfuscate in relation to this fact.

Wundt's ideas are of course not entirely in tandem with Spinoza's in every respect. However, there is more than sufficient evidence, even within such translated editions of Wundt's various works as exist in English (which are not plentiful, and are hard to come by) to ground the theory than Wundtian psychology exhibits significant similarity to Spinozism, and that elements of Spinoza's psychology appear regularly within Wundt's translated works. There is unfortunately no single official edition of Wundt's works from which to work and from which to reference consistently. For this reason, I will draw from such translated works and reliable secondary sources as are most relevant to the overall topic of this thesis, that being Spinoza's relevance and overlap in relation to concepts of emotion, emotions and feelings as they pertain to the mind-body relationship, and the role of emotional theory in causality.

Fundamentally, Wundt's aim was to create a system which embodied what he considered to be a new iteration of philosophy. He sought to recast philosophy in order enable its symbiotic interrelation with the sciences. Wundt lived, as did James and Freud, during a period of scientific naissance and sudden, drastic modernisation. The philosophy of the time, dominantly influenced by German idealism, had instituted a philosophical practice which operated in isolation from the sciences. With the advance of scientific development, Wundt sought to reconcile the two, to what he saw as the advantage and progression of both. As he saw it, "…the progress of particular [scientific] investigations has already brought to light many results of philosophical significance, elements of coherent knowledge of the world, whose final order and nexus will be the task of philosophy."[11] Wundt's clear ambition was to formulate a unified scientophilosophical epistemology. The one, he held, necessarily entailed aspects

[11] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 150

of the other. The system that Wundt envisaged will look familiar to readers of this thesis, for we have encountered most of the constituent ideas within previous chapters on Spinoza. The Wundtian philosophical/scientific system was a *Weltanschauung*, monistic, and idealist

Wundt considered it necessary for a modern philosophy to take into account scientific perspectives, taking a view that encompasses the more traditional tenets and methodologies of metaphysics, as well as empirical scientific data. This is little more than *Weltanschauung* itself. Kant first used the term in his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, though he used it in the particular context of magnitude and the concept of the sublime. Wundt used the term in reference to the meaning which it later developed, "to refer to an intellectual conception of the universe from the perspective of a human knower."[12]

Moreover, Wundt was interested not just in a *Weltanschauung*, but in a *monistische Weltanschauung*, or monist worldview. It is insufficient in itself simply to say that Wundt was a monist. Araujo correctly observes that Rappard, while correct in identifying the importance of Wundt's monism, fails to assign sufficient attention or importance to the undeniably and essentially philosophical nature of Wundt's monism. It is easy, given the context of the middle and later nineteenth century, to misinterpret Wundt's monism, since "the term monism was used, to refer to different, perhaps incompatible, philosophical positions, despite their common goal of achieving a unitary world conception".[13]

However, Wundt's monistic worldview provided the theoretical context for his psychological system and, as he saw it, for the evolution of science itself. The development and progress of various scientific fields and practices required their theoretical-conceptual integration into a

[12] Naugle, David K., *Worldview: The History of a Concept,* Eerdmans, 2002, p. 59
[13] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 128

foundational system of higher-order knowledge. This was complicated by the fact that Wundt's psychological theory – his theory of emotion and his very account of human mental function – depended upon his dispensing with every known iteration of philosophical dualism. For a monistic account of mind function, there must be a mind-body parallelism such as Spinoza's at work. Any dualism must be only in appearance, relative to human experience under the attributes of thought and extension. In reality, these must not reflect the nature of anything beyond the manner in which human beings understand the world, as opposed to saying anything concrete about the world as it is in itself. In a letter to Ernst Haeckel, dated in September 1899, Wundt elaborated on his ideas in relation to monism–

> "*Monist* is, in fact, every philosophy that is not an eclectic patchwork. Therefore, I gladly admit to you that I myself consider my positions even *more monist* than yours, because I try to give my monism a broader extension, following as far as possible the example of the greatest of all monists: Spinoza."[14]

It is evident at a fundamental level that Wundt's monism is unambiguously modelled on the Spinozistic conception of God or nature, and that he considers this an appropriate philosophical basis upon which to rest a pragmatic psychological theory of his own. Mirroring the wider argument of this thesis, which stipulates that to varying degrees, James, Freud and Wundt all held views which drew heavily from various aspects of Spinozistic psychology, Wundt's philosophy of psychology, and consequently his psychology itself, can be described as being, to a significant degree, Spinozistic.

Wundt goes on to say: "[E]very experience is first of all *inner* experience. Therefore, if a monist worldview is the goal of science, this can only be the one that recognizes the priority of inner experience: *idealism*"[15] This quotation is extremely enlightening because it reveals Wundt's early

[14] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Araujo de Freitas, Saulo, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 128
[15] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Araujo de Freitas, Saulo, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 129

thinking in relation to the content of our inner experience. His original outlook on Idealism, which evidently was influenced by the wider tradition of German Idealism and is captured nicely in his words above, was to suggest an idealism not related to ontology, but rather to epistemology; Wundt strenuously resisted the apriorism of German Idealism. He considered German Idealism in the traditional sense, to refer to that philosophical movement which started with Kant and ended with Hegel.

Araujo clarifies – "Wundt's monism had also to be Idealist…Here, again, one should be very careful with the meaning of the term 'idealism… In this specific context, Wundt had two things in mind: the priority of inner experience (*innere Erfahrung)* and a critical evaluation of German Idealism."[16] Wundt was conscious of the possibility of misunderstanding arising from his use of the term 'idealism'; so much so that he would later abandon the term altogether.[17] However, at this juncture, Wundt's epistemology and theory of the interrelation of experience and the individual was immature. He would later move deeper into territory Spinoza also operated within, and come to consider inner or internal experience, and external experience as two modes of analysis (to use Spinoza's term) of precisely the same empirical experience or content, which, crucially, is unitary. This is a truly monistic interpretation of the nature of reality, and at bottom, indistinguishable from Spinozistic monism, which acknowledges human experience of the ultimate substance to be possible only under the attributes of thought and extension.

This parity is curious in light of Wundt's wider thinking and ideas on substance. The conception of inherent infinity which Spinoza attributed to

[16] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 129

[17] for more on Wundt's earlier thinking on Idealism, which, though illuminating, is not the focus of this particular project, see: Leary, David E., 'German Idealism and the Development of Psychology in the Nineteenth Century', in *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* Vol. 18, No.3, 1980, pp. 299-317

his ultimate substance was considered by Wundt to be bad metaphysics, and logically unscientific.[18] However, it did not follow by Wundt's estimation that any imperative arose from this which would encourage us to dispense with metaphysics altogether, or indeed to consider metaphysical input into scientific understanding to be deceptive or useless. Araujo observes – "For Wundt, it was necessary to recognize the historical fact that the need for a unitary conception of phenomena appeared for the first time within philosophy. Furthermore, all particular sciences originated and extracted therefrom their general assumptions that made possible the exploration of experience. The solution, for him, was to invert the relationship between science and philosophy, the latter's task being a new elaboration of the concept of substance from the scientific determination of the empirical sciences…"[19] It is clear that any Wundtian metaphysics (if such we might call it), must work within the epistemological bounds of science. Unlike Spinoza's metaphysics, which Wundt judges to make claims beyond the potential of the bounded scope of rational scientific enquiry or epistemology, Wundt's theoretical outlook directs us to solve what he sees as the problem of substance without deferring to what he considered the concepts of an older form of metaphysics which necessarily excludes concepts of substance validated by the scientific project.

Wundt considered it the mission of psychology to provide the basis for a discrete science of our mental or internal lives. Essentially, however, psychology was, at its Wundtian beginnings, still very much a branch of philosophy, though one which would become increasingly distinct from the philosophical canon as time progressed, and psychological theory diversified and encroached on experimental, scientific practices. The foundation at the outset, however, for people like Wundt, was philosophical, but one to which the practice of scientific experimentation provided an element of rigour and falsifiability. The concept of a

[18] Wundt, Wilhelm, *System Der Philosophie,* Leipzig, 1889, p. 214
[19] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 147

philosophy of psychology was quite anathema, and did not enter the consideration of Wundt – philosophy and psychology were, as far as he was concerned, both necessary tools for answering questions about minds. If anything, psychology was for Wundt a *type* of especially scientised philosophy, more concerned than other branches with a methodology of rigorous experimentation and collection of data. This perspective, while rather baffling if considered from a perspective of presentism, was commonplace in Wundt's time. For the most part, the German philosophers of his era considered philosophy to be the highest scientific endeavour.[20]

In determining this, and in order to better understand Wundt and the importance of his contribution to philosophy of psychology and psychological knowledge, it is essential to gain a sense of the ideological and intellectual context in which Wundt laboured to formulate a psychological science in a manner that had never been done before. Psychology as it was understood during this period was a branch of philosophy. Wundt was not considered to be a psychologist; he was, at least at first, as well as a physiologist, a philosopher. Indeed, he could not *but* have been a philosopher; psychology quite simply did not yet exist in any discrete sense. He was the first 'psychologist'. In Leipzig alone, Wundt was very successful both as an academic lecturer and as a thesis supervisor. Six hundred and thirty students and visitors attended his afternoon lectures in 1912 and he supervised one hundred and eighty six dissertations at Leipzig.[21] Many of the names on that long list are figures composing the bibliography of the history of modern psychology.[22] The *practice* began with Wundt, though of course I argue that the *theory* of Wundtian psychology did not begin solely with Wundt – Spinoza was looking at many of the philosophical and psychological elements

[20] Kim, Alan, 'Early Experimental Psychology', in Symons, John and Calvo, Paco, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Psychology,* p. 42
[21]Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 127
[22] Beenfeldt, Christian, *The Philosophical Background and Scientific Legacy of E.B. Titchener's Psychology: Understanding Introspectionism*, Springer, 2013, p. 28

associated with the Wundtian system centuries before the first psychological lab became a possibility.

Wundt is not just an important thinker within the history of psychology; his role within the history of philosophy and work on ideas within philosophy of mind and psychology should not be underestimated. Due to the fact that translations of Wundt's work into English are uncommon relative to the scale of his vast body of work as a whole, his philosophical stature tends to go unappreciated, underestimated and often unreferenced by scholarship within the English-speaking world. This is an oversight rather than a reflection of Wundt's philosophical merit and contribution to theory within philosophy of mind and emotion. Time spent studying Wundtian theory is important and beneficial for philosophers of mind and psychology. Though it was written more than a century ago, Wundt's work in asserting the feasibility of a non-reductionist conception of consciousness represent a significant contribution to philosophy of mind and to psychology in its own right. Even those philosophers and psychologist who might dispute this account of Wundt's importance within those two areas of study will be forced to concede that Wundt represents an important bridge at a critical point within the recent history of philosophy, parsing the schism between philosophy and psychology, when psychology branched off into a field with its own distinct parameters and theory.

It was Wundt and his enthusiastic acolytes who conceived of the empirical methodology which distinguished psychology as a differentiated field, distinct from philosophy, which had formerly subsumed psychological theory, and provided psychology with the identity which still inheres today. Though the field has changed in the interim, it occupies similar territory still, and many of its fundamental areas of enquiry and methodological principles remain the same. If this is insufficient foundation upon which to couch the philosophical heft and relevance of Wundtian thought, he also exerted substantial influence, though arguably

largely in the sense of a negative motivating force, upon the founders of Pragmatism, Phenomenology, and neo-Kantianism.

Though I argue within the context of this chapter that Wundt brought elements of Spinozistic thought and theory back into the context of applied psychology and psychological methodology, and did this with awareness of Spinoza's metapsychology, the more temporally imminent causal influence on Wundt was Kant. Much of Wundt's Spinozistic theory of psychology was constructed in the context of resistance to Kant's ideas about the natural sciences. Kantian theory of mind provided the context to Wundt's initial theory, and ironically it was the rigidity of that very Kantian psychology which brought Spinoza's psychological theory back into awareness and pragmatic relevance through Wundt and experimental psychology. Kant wrote of his objections to any form of psychology other than his "transcendental" strain in his *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*.[23] He strenuously argued against the feasibility of an empirical psychology, but also of a rational psychology, that is, a psychology based upon introspection of subjective experience, or a psychology founded upon metaphysical first principles.[24] Introspection was a particular bugbear for Kant, and for good reason, given that he asserted the act of introspecting necessarily alters or distorts the phenomena it is intended to observe, by virtue of being an indivisible part of that very experience.[25]

Kant also asserted – again quite reasonably – that sciences tend to be notable for their quantifiable exactitude. In order for a science to articulate its propositions in mathematical terms (something Kant saw as a necessary condition), the objects of that science must be capable of being subjected to some objective form of measurement. By this logic, a rational or empirical psychology was incapable of being a science because of its

[23] Kant, Immanuel, Friedman, Michael (ed., trans.), *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science,* Cambridge University Press, 2004
[24] Ibid., p. 7
[25] Ibid., p. 7

inherent nebulosity and immeasurability – it could not be subject to mathematical expression; there is no mathematical unit of measurement which might be applied to the outcomes of introspective experimentation, or indeed to the workings of phenomena of mind. Alan Kim remarks, "Physics can operate "exactly" because it possesses various exact units of measurement, such as joules or meters, but how could psychic phenomena (the "manifold of inner observation," as Kant calls it) be measured? What unit of measurement could a psychologist employ in determining (mathematically) the ebb and ow of consciousness?" [26]

Insofar as it existed in the early nineteenth century, psychology, which was really a branch of philosophy at that juncture, was limited by this dominance of Kantian ideas over the orthodox philosophical dialectic within Germany at that time.[27] The Kantian idea that a science of empirical or rational psychology is not possible in principle was dominant, and dictated the intellectual terrain that prospective psychologists had to cultivate. A careful Kantian dismissal of even the possibility of a discrete psychological science with sound theoretical foundation was no small obstacle.

It appears odd, particularly in retrospect, that such a declaration of impossibility would so wholly discourage those with an interest in a science of mind and emotion. It is now completely acceptable for psychologists to dismiss philosophical challenges to psychological theory and concepts without even looking at them all that seriously, just as a

[26] Kim, Alan, 'Early Experimental Psychology', in Symons, John and Calvo, Paco, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Psychology,* Routledge, 2009, p. 42

[27] Though Kantian concepts of psychology were the major influence of prevailing opinion among philosophers of mind in Wundt's time, there is not sufficient scope within this thesis to look in great detail at Kant, whose ideas are included only insofar as they provide the atmosphere, as it were, to the genesis of Wundtian experimental psychology. For more on Kant's theory in relation to psychology and its wider context and historical impact, see Kitcher, Patricia, *Kant's Transcendental Psychology*, Oxford University Press, 1990; Woodward, William R. and Ash, Michael G. (eds.), *The Problematic Science: Psychology in Nineteenth-Century Thought*, Praeger, 1982; Kant, Immanuel, Friedman, Michael (ed., trans.), *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, Cambridge University Press, 2004

neuro-radiographer would likely ignore the input of a philosopher in examining a CT scan of a brain for anomalies. The fields are now considered so discrete as to merit such a comparison, though there are questions one might ask as to whether psychology is actually as sovereign a scientific field, or as independent from its philosophical roots as other disciplines under the scientific umbrella.

This is much too vast a question to look at here, and does bears only peripherally upon the content of this thesis. It is sufficient for our purposes to observe that the serious philosophical obstacles to psychology were mostly ignored, or at least consciously avoided, by early psychologists like Wundt. Issues like introspection, quantifiablity and psychic measurement were sidestepped – psychology did not begin its business as a discrete, non-philosophical discipline by positing solutions to the problems raised by Kant. Rather, it ignored them for all the field has its ancient roots in the methods and principles of philosophical questioning and speculation. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, many philosophers considered the psychological question more or less answered by Kant's criticisms. Psychology, it was thought, was moribund; a sinking ship for stubborn philosophers to go down with. Some abandoned the vessel altogether. Those who remained to defend the concept of a psychological science were not yet psychologists; the discipline would not fructify until Wundt began his work in earnest. Until then, psychologists would continue to be little more than philosophers with something to prove.

Psychology, as a sub-category of philosophy, had already undergone a sort of conceptual and categorical evolution of its own. Concepts like mind, mentation, mental substance and soul or essence had not remained fixed within philosophy or philosophy of mind by the advent of the discrete discipline of psychology, which we can formally but loosely date to the opening of Wundt's psychological laboratory in 1879. Long before this, however, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, psychology was widely considered (though not necessarily under the

designator ‘psychology’) to be the territory of consciousness or subjective ‘internal experience’. Even at that time, before any strict psychological discipline was understood to be separate from the body of philosophy, these sorts of concepts were understood to be distinct from natural, scientific accounts of the external, extended reality with which our bodies interact. Having felled any possibility for the notion of a speculative, rational, *a priori* psychology of essence with a *killing blow*, Kant turned to eliminating the possibility of empirical study of the nature or workings of consciousness. In the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, he argued that empirical psychology cannot be an exact science because the phenomena it seeks to explain are not mathematically expressible.[28] Moreover, it can never become an experimental science “because it is not possible to isolate different thoughts”.[29]

In a strong argument which Wundt was very aware of, and which would heavily influence the experimental methods within the science of psychology that Wundt later endeavoured to construct and defend, Kant suggested that our only possible form of access to the phenomena of inner experience – introspection – necessarily alters those phenomena. By the Kantian analysis, if I should attempt, while sitting at my desk, to observe the mild sense of anxiety that I feel while writing about Wundt’s psychology, and my concern to depict his ideas accurately, those phenomena mutate under my own secondary gaze (presuming indeed that such a secondary gaze from a unitary entity like myself is even possible). As I observe it, it becomes something else. No longer a vague sense that dances on the boundary of my awareness like a blurred image in my peripheral vision. When I focus upon it, the blur transforms into something else, and looks quite different. Kant’s argument was convincing, and consequently many would-be psychologists and philosophers of mind were discouraged from the project of what Wundt would later christen ‘self-observation’, having found their object

[28] Kitcher, Patricia, *Kant’s Transcendental Psychology*, Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 11
[29] Ibid.

determined beyond the boundary of feasible investigation, and their methods insipid and wrong-headed.

Thankfully for psychologists as they exist in their current form, Kant's arguments were not sufficiently effective to persuade all of his more ambitious and psychologically inclined successors that their goal of a mental science was impossible, and their proposed methods for achieving it myopic. However, for individuals studying mental and cognitive phenomena (or the relationship between the two) during the middle of the nineteenth century, the prospect of developing an authentic psychology – particularly one based outside the bounds of physiology – in the future appeared rather bleak. That is, it appeared this way until Wundt found a *via media* to take psychology down through a monism akin to Spinoza's. In order to establish the possibility of a science of mind, Wundt had to eliminate any possibility of dualism. He began by establishing a mind body parallelism in the model of Spinoza's parallelism, first examined in his *Principles of Physiological Psychology* published in 1874.

Interestingly, we can trace Wundt's transition from physiologist to experimental psychologist to one particular publication. In his *Beiträge zur Theorie der Sinneswahrnehmung* in 1862, Wundt asked the question that would ultimately give rise to the field of psychology as we presently recognise it – "Why does not psychology follow the example of the natural sciences? It is an understanding that, from every side of the history of the natural sciences, informs us that the progress of every science is closely connected with the progress made regarding experimental methods."[30] Such a science is not without its challenges however, and Wundt recognised them, since his experimental field is located directly at the theoretical intersection between physiology and psychology –

> "Physiology is concerned with all those phenomena of life that present them selves to us in sense perception as bodily processes, and accordingly form part of that total environment

[30] Wundt, Wilhelm, *Beiträge zur Theorie der Sinneswahrnehmung,* 1862, p. XI

> which we name the external world. Psychology, on the other hand, seeks to give account of the interconnexion of processes which are evinced by our own consciousness, or which we infer from such manifestations of the bodily life in other creatures as indicate the presence of a consciousness similar to our own."[31]

Wundt's *Principles of Physiological Psychology*, one of the most important texts in the history of psychology, aimed to bridge, or rather clarify, the divide, as he saw it, between physiology and psychology. "Physiology is concerned with all those phenomena of life that present them selves to us in sense perception as bodily processes, and accordingly form part of that total environment which we name the external world. Psychology… seeks to give account of the interconnexion of processes which are evinced by our own consciousness…"[32] It was Wundt who first understood and established the necessary correlation between the metaphysical concept of consciousness and the bodily processing and expression of emotion to form the distinct field of psychology.

Like Spinoza, Wundt argued that our emotional and conscious experience is experientially unitary; despite the fact that countless disparate physiological and psychological process are at work in, for example, the feeling and subsequent expression of anger, the experience is not reducible to any single component part. Wundt argues that physiological psychology is really just psychology as it should be – a discipline which subsumes the varied physical and mental experience which, in aggregate, constitute our conscious processes, and our experience of emotion – "…just as one and the same thing, e.g., a tree that I perceive before me, falls as external object within the scope of natural science, and as conscious contents within that of psychology, so there are many phenomena of the physical life that are uniformly connected with conscious processes, while these in turn are always bound up with

[31] Wundt, Wilhelm, Titchener, Edward Bradford (trans.), *Principles of Physiological Psychology,* Blackmask Online EBook, 2002, p. 1
[32] Ibid, p. 1

processes in the living body."[33] Wundt's assertion that our conscious experience is not completely reducible to either of its physical or mental attributes, and the consequent theory of that conscious experience amounting to more than merely the sum of its parts suggests what Wundt himself would later confirm with indisputable clarity – not only was he a monist; he was a monist in the model of Spinoza. The physical and mental are for Wundt merely divergent roads which run parallel to one another. He sought to create a science which not only acknowledged this observation about the ultimate construction of reality, but also to navigate it in a way which could utilise both physical and psychological data without conflating the two, or perceiving overlap where in fact there is only synthesis and, to some degree, symbiosis.

"Physiological psychology, on the other hand, is competent to investigate the relations that hold between the processes of the physical and those of the mental life. And in so far as it accepts this second problem, we may name it a psychophysics. If we free this term from any sort of metaphysical implication as to the relation of mind and body, and understand by it nothing more than an investigation of the relations that may be shown empirically to obtain between the psychical and the physical aspects of vital processes, it is clear at once that psychophysics becomes for us not, what it is some times taken to be, a science intermediate between physiology and psychology, but rather a science that is auxiliary to both."[34]

Wundt saw his psychology as fundamentally philosophical. Though he was a respected and successful physiologist, his interests took a decidedly more philosophical bent. In his correspondence, Wundt is in many ways the most guileless and perhaps even the most forthcoming thinker addressed in the course of this thesis. He lacked Spinoza's deep theoretical systematisation, James' distractingly expressive writing style, or Freud's

[33] Ibid, p. 1
[34] Wundt, Wilhelm, Titchener, Edward Bradford (trans.), *Principles of Physiological Psychology,* Blackmask Online Ebook, 2002, p. 3

more opaque mode of expression. Wundt was refreshingly clear in communicating his processes, intent and motivations. In the following letter to his then-fiancée and later wife, Sophie-Mau, the shift of Wundt's interest from physiology to philosophy is clear, as early as 1872. He expresses dissatisfaction with his reputation as a ''famous' physiologist'–

> "Regarding my reputation among physicians, it really does not mean much. They know me through my textbooks, which are to me what lens polishing was to the great philosopher Spinoza. I have to do this as a secondary occupation, necessary to sustenance. [...] But my proper scientific works, namely, those related to science and not to my livelihood, lie mainly in a border area, regarded as suspect by respectable experts, between physiology and philosophy, in which is not possible to win much honor for now. Do not believe, how- ever, that I want to give the impression of not being ambitious. On the contrary, I am *very* ambitious, and I have big plans in my pocket. I myself consider physiology only as a preparatory stage, in order to make various bridges out of corporeal life, with which this science is concerned, to reach the side of mental life"[35]

If there could be any remaining doubt as to whether Wundt's monism disallowed any real link between mind and body, he shatters it when he states that "no connection of physical processes can ever teach us anything about the manner of connection between psychological element".[36] This is an extraordinary statement from Wundt, and would benefit from much analysis. It originates from his 1894 *Philosophische Studien* article entitled *Über psychische Kausalität und das Prinzip des psychophysischen Parallelismus.*Wundt unequivocally rejected what he

[35] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 127; The above cited translation from the original German, taken from Kusch, can be traced as far as Mischel, who provided the translation himself. This translation is frequently used throughout the literature on Wundt. It is even cited within the Stanford Encyclopaedia entry on Wundt. Given its ubiquity, and the unfortunate dearth of English translations of Wundt, I too will work from this translation.

[36] Wundt, Wilhelm, "Über psychische Kausalität und das Prinzip des psychophysischen Parallelismus", in *Philosophische Studien*, 10, p. 43, cited in Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 131

referred to as 'psycho-physical' materialism. In his *Über psychische Kausalität und das Prinzip des psychophysischen Parallelismus,* Wundt targets the James-Lange theory for derision, which will be the focus of later chapters.

He dismisses psychologists who consider problems to be eradicable by appeal to physical factors like reflexes or facial expression, or the evolutionary theory of natural selection – "those two excellent remedies against superfluous thinking (or should I say against unpleasurable sensations of tension in the muscles of the forehead)."[37] It is very much worth noting here that Mischel, who translated the above comment from Wundt and provides very useful insights into the Wundtian perspective on the mind/body dichotomy in relation to emotion, falls prey to a widespread and common misinterpretation of William James' theory of emotion in his important 1970 paper, Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology.

Mischel is fundamentally incorrect when he says, "In the 1880's James and Lange held that an emotion is a set of sensations arising from bodily changes, while Wundt and others argued that something else is also present in consciousness".[38] This error (made widely within the literature to the extent that it largely remains the standard impression of Jamesian emotional theory) is one of the primary focuses on later chapters, of whom James is the subject, in this thesis. It is not the focus of this chapter to assess the relationship between James and Wundt, or to look at James except insofar as minor references are expedient to exposition or analysis of Wundt himself.

However, it is worth noting that this comparison is also misused within

[37] Wundt, Wilhelm, "Über psychische Kausalität und das Prinzip des psychophysischen Parallelismus", in *Philosophische Studien*, 10, p.63, cited in Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 4

[38] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 17

the body of literature on William James, in order to situate he and Wundt in complete opposition to one another. This critical paradigm does not fit the reality or the nuance of the James-Lange theory of emotion. James certainly did not hold that "an emotion is a set of sensations arising from bodily changes", or at least, that was only partially representative of his theory of emotion.[39] The two are often presented in juxtaposition for the apparently pleasing cleanliness of a Jamesian emotional theory which is wholly 'of the body', set against a Wundtian theory which is entirely 'of the mind'. The reality is less tidy and comfortably divisible, but certainly both significantly more lastingly relevant, and as a consequence, significantly more interesting.

Let us return to Wundt's quite remarkable statement observing that "no connection of physical processes can ever teach us anything about the manner of connection between psychological elements". He appears to be suggesting herein, despite his avowed monism, that the physical mechanisms and connections of the body, and the equivalent apparatus of the mind, are entirely distinct from one another. Even upon a charitably monistic interpretation, one might at best argue Wundt is suggesting here that the extended and mental aspects of our being are at best wholly divergent branches of a unitary experience. To put a Spinozistic outlook upon it, it reads as though he is arguing that the attributes of thought and extension, being experientially distinct, cannot teach us one about the other.

The context to this is Wundt's concern that a scientific form of materialism could rob emotional and mental theory of the idea that cognition is more than the sum of its physical components. He firmly held that physical processes were insufficient explanation for psychological phenomena, and considered psychology to be a branch of 'mental sciences' (*Geisteswissenschaften*) which "are concerned with "man as a willing and thinking subject"…and "a form of psychology which has been

[39] See Chapter 6 on William James's theory of emotion, p. 155

turned into a hypothetical brain mechanics that can never be of any service as a basis for the mental sciences" [40] It simply is not the case, Wundt argues, that mental phenomena (among them emotions) might be fully or even adequately explained through recourse to physiology – "…even if the connection of brain processes were as clearly before our eyes as the mechanism of a pocket watch. For psychology ... finds in each of its problems a peculiar mode of psychological connection which remains incomparable to the physical relations and connections which are parallel to it."[41] In this respect, Wundt is cleanly Spinozistic, at least insofar as he considers the division between our experiences of the physical and mental division of reality.

He is, in this respect, a psycho-physical parallellist, which is a term we might also apply to Spinoza. Alan Kim describes Wundt's psycho-physical parallelism quite nicely as "the theory that mental and physical events run on rigorously corresponding but irreducible tracks."[42] In terms of our understanding of minds and emotions, Wundt is interested in a fundamentally and purely psychological interpretation of mental experience; an interpretation which is reliant upon apperception.

There does seem to be a confusion then, around the fact that Wundt, like most experimental psychologists, focused his investigative and experimental research on sensation and perception. Indeed, the relationship between physiology and psychology was the focus of his famous book in two volumes, *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie* (*Principles of Physiological Psychology*). Wundt saw sensation ultimately as a psychic phenomenon; the intersection between the body and the mind, or more particularly, between the physical and psychological paradigms –

"The alternative (physical *or* psychical) is often presented as if

[40] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 4
[41] Ibid., p. 5
[42] Kim, Alan, 'Early Experimental Psychology', in Symons, John and Calvo, Paco, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Psychology,* Routledge, 2009, p. 45

> the one concept necessarily excluded the other, as, indeed it did, in the metaphysical dualism of DESCARTES. But this is misleading. The close interconnection of the phenomena of the physical life and the processes of consciousness makes the relation 'physical *and* psychical' on the face of it, much more probable. We should, as a matter of fact, admit at once that, e.g., a sensation is a psychical quality, without meaning to deny that it is accompanied by a physical process in the sense−organ and the sense−centre. And such a coexistence of the two kinds of vital processes is, in many crises, beyond all dispute."[43]

Wundtian psychology took a dual approach to enquiry, controlling and manipulating external or physiological stimuli in order to garner information about those stimuli's internal portrayals, or corresponding (parallel) internal stimuli from the introspective data provided by the subject. Since sensation for Wundt is the communicative medium between mind and body, this approach makes sense, and is dependent upon the idea that the mental representations of our consciousness have their basis in sensation. However, we cannot apperceive these sensation-stimuli in an uncompounded form – inner or internal representations of stimuli always take form within the mind in composite or synthesized form – the resulting representation or idea must therefore necessarily be an abstraction of sorts.

Consequently, it was very necessary to develop an experimental method that could analyse data about psychical experience and sensation without conflating the two. Wundt reformulated Weber's Law, then considered the cornerstone of experimental psychology, and formulated in 1834 after advances in the physiology of sensory systems. According to Boring, Weber himself never formulated a law as such, but merely observed that the smallest perceptible difference between two weights can be stated as a ratio between the weights, …independent of the magnitudes of the

[43] Wundt, Wilhelm, Titchener, Edward Bradford (trans.), *Principles of Physiological Psychology,* Blackmask Online EBook, 2002, p. 23

weights.[44] It was actually Fechner who later christened this relationship "Weber's Law", and condensed it into an equation, though it is a different equation ($\Delta I/I=k$) which Boring observes should be referred to as "Weber's Law".[45] In relation to his experimental methodology, Wundt used his own interpretation of "Weber's Law"–

> "We can formulate [this law] as follows: A difference between any two stimuli is estimated [*geschätzt*] to be equal if the relationship between the stimuli is equal. Or: If in our apprehension [*Auffassung*] the intensity of the sensation is to increase by equal amounts, then the relative stimulus-increase must remain constant. This latter statement may also be expressed as follows: The strength of a stimulus must increase geometrically if the strength of the apperceived sensation is to increase arithmetically."[46]

Wundt characterises feelings as simple, impermanent affective states which typically never pass an experiential intensity he describes as 'medium'.[47] Emotions, on the other hand, he characterises as significantly more complex: "Where, on the other hand, a series of feelings succeeding one another in time unite to an interconnected process which is distinguished from preceding and following processes as an individual whole, and has in general a more intense effect on the subject than a single feeling, we call the unitary succession of feelings an *emotion*."[48] It is not the subjective content of a psychical or psychological experience which distinguishes emotion from feeling, but rather "the effect which comes from a special combination of particular affective contents… there is no sharp line of demarcation between feeling and emotion. Every feeling of greater intensity passes into an emotion, and the separation between the

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[44] Boring, Edwin G., *History of Experimental Psychology,* Prentice Hall New York, 1950, p. 113
[45] Boring, Edwin G., *History of Experimental Psychology,* Prentice Hall New York, 1950, p. 287
[46] Wundt, Wilhelm, *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie,* Leipzig: Engelmann, 1893, p. 359
[47] Wundt, Wilhelm, Hubbard Judd, Charles (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897, p. 169
[48] Wundt, Wilhelm, Hubbard Judd, Charles (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897, p. 169

two depends on a more or less arbitrary abstraction."[49] Wundt believed that the rhythm of feeling was relevant to the transition between feeling and emotion, citing the affective powers of the mathematical rhythms of cadence within both music and poetry – "Feelings of rhythm are for this reason important aids both in music and poetry for portraying emotions and arousing them in the auditor."[50]

This claim is not satisfactorily evidenced. Wundt, like Freud as we shall see in later chapters, has an occasional tendency to reason from apparent abstraction in a manner which is anathema to a scientific or even a philosophical method, particularly when he is talking about concepts related to philosophy of mind. That is to say, Wundt's reasoning about mental phenomena did not always meet his own scientific standards. Titchener described Wundt's tendency and partiality towards advancing expansive and systematic but unsubstantiated hypotheses (a habit that he shared with Sigmund Freud) as an "imperative need to systematize the unripe".[51] This does present some challenges for the purposes of this thesis.

Though Spinoza's influence can be overlapped with relative ease through the contours of Wundt's theory of mind and emotion, the subtleties of his conceptual analysis can be subject (though less so) to the same ragged edges that later chapters will show Freud is prone to leave waving nebulously in the breeze. The reference to rhythm above, for example, is left at that – Wundt does not enlighten us further as to what he means by it, and though the theory is inherently an interesting one, he leaves it ultimately to dangle. Juxtaposed with Spinoza and James, who were men of clean, definable edges, the writings of both Wundt and to a greater extent, Freud, can have a sprawling lateral feel, which is not inconsistent with the fact that they were both generalists interested in questions of

[49] Ibid., p. 169
[50] Ibid., p.170
[51] Diamond, Solomon, 'Wundt Before Leipzig', in Rieber, Robert W., and Robinson, David K., *Wilhelm Wundt in History: The Making of a Scientific Psychology,* Kluwer/Plenum New York, 2001, p. 10

applied psychology and experimentation, while Spinoza and James were specialists who were more focussed on a theoretical analysis.

However, Wundt's Spinozistic monism extends beyond just his system as a whole and into the very concept of what a Wundtian emotion is: "An emotion is a unitary whole which is distinguished from a composite feeling only through the two characteristics that it has a definite temporal course and that it exercises a more intense present and subsequent effect on the interconnection of physical processes."[52] By this, Wundt means to observe that an emotion is a higher-order physical and psychological process than the ambiguity and low level intensity of an individuated feeling. Emotions are characterised in part by their content being composed of successive feeling-experiences which, in composite form, unify into a complex but discrete (from the original feeling or feelings) physical and psychical experience. To put it plainly, the emotion, though composed of several feelings, or kinds of feelings, becomes a separate experience in its own right, processed and understood by us in terms of its physical and mental elements. These combine in simultaneous or concurrent experience to form what we think of as a unitary body-mind experience.

Wundt, like Spinoza, knows better – if a bear were to shamble noisily through my office door at this moment, the sensible response would be one of fear. The fear is neither the sensation of a blast of cold air down my spine, nor the contortion of my face, nor the powerful impulse to run, nor the images that come to mind of the bear rending me to pieces. The fear is all of these physical and mental experiences, along with a host of other such similar ones. As Wundt puts it:

> "The names of different emotions, like those of feelings, do not indicate single processes, but classes in which a large number of single affective processes are grouped on the ground of certain

[52] Wundt, Wilhelm, Hubbard Judd, Charles (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897*,* p.170

> common characteristics. Emotions such as those of joy, hope…and anger, are accompanied in any concrete case by peculiar ideational contents, while their affective elements… may vary greatly from time to time."[53]

According to Wundt, emotions always have as their beginning what he describes as "a more or less *inceptive feeling* which is immediately characteristic in its quality and direction for the nature of the emotion, and is due either to an idea produced by an external impression (outer emotional stimulation) or to a psychical process arising from associative or apperceptive conditions (inner stimulation)."[54] This stage of Wundt's process mirrors Spinoza's own. Emotions are caused by external stimuli, or by internal stimuli. Of course, Spinoza argues it is best that we function as cause for ourselves, and categorises passions externally stoked as the product of inadequate ideas. By this he does not mean that responding emotionally to events which are external to us is always weak or misguided, but rather that all such instances should be subject to an internal filtration process, so that our resulting emotions are based upon adequate ideas, and consequently are a rational response to that original external stimulus.

The next step in the formation and execution of Wundtian emotion is *ideational process*, which he somewhat ambiguously describes as being characteristically varied depending upon the emotion in question. However, it is uncontroversial to suggest that the experience of emotions necessarily involves some form of ideational content, and that this content is subject to context and the individual undergoing the experience. Following this is what Wundt calls *terminal feeling,* which appears to be the feeling equivalent of a sort of background soundtrack to the emotion. When I feel joy, for example, the emotion is accompanied throughout by an underlying feeling of wellbeing and contentment, which has its own attendant sense of warmth to it. These feelings persist after the initial burst

[53] Ibid., p.170
[54] Ibid., p. 171

of joy has faded. In this sense, the *terminal feeling* is a sort of emotional footprint, involved in the original emotional experience and remaining for a time after it ceases. The emotion is naturally also accompanied by physical precursors, symptoms and manifestations – changes in facial expression, gestures, complex internal processes like blood pressure, pulse, respiration and so on.

However, Wundt evidently prioritises what he refers to as the psychical elements of emotion over the physical ones. "Though important constituents of emotions, the physical concomitants stand in no constant relation to the *psychical quality* of the same…It may sometimes happen that emotions with very different, even opposite kinds of affective contents, may belong to the same class."[55] This, in a sense, appears rather an odd characteristic in an account of emotions conveyed by a monist. However, Wundt's prioritisation of the psychological elements – those he referred to as psychical – over the physical is merely about the degree of complexity. He elaborates – "…the physical effects…of emotions… are general symptoms, but of such equivocal character that, though they are of great value when connected with introspections controlled by experimental methods, alone they have no value whatsoever."[56] Wundt is evidently suggesting here that physical symptoms or outward expressions of emotions do not tell us anything essential about what emotions are, or even the particular emotion or emotions being experienced by an individual at any given time. Rather, emotions are complex aggregate experiences processing a variety of physical and mental data. Indeed, Wundt overlaps to some extent in this belief with William James.

In his essay, *What is an Emotion?* which appeared in *Mind* in 1884, James says – "…the emotional brain-processes not only resemble the ordinary sensorial brain-processes, but in very truth *are* nothing but such processes variously combined."[57] Neither the bodily or mental aspects of the

[55] Ibid., p. 175
[56] Ibid., p. 176
[57] James, William, 'What is an Emotion?', in *Mind*, Vol. 9, No. 34, 1884, p. 188

emotional process and experience are sufficient conditions for emotion itself, or the understanding of it. For both James and Wundt, an emotion is necessarily embodied. In the case of James, a focus on this aspect of emotion combined with an occasionally careless writing style led to a misunderstanding of Jamesian emotional theory which to a large extent still persists in scholarship. This will be the focus of the next section of this thesis, which focuses for two chapters on William James.[58]

Wundt's primary focus on mentation when looking at the emotions saved his work from falling prey to any such misunderstanding. His consideration of the physical aspects of emotion as secondary to introspective data in terms of their reliability and consistency did not mean that he was dismissive of the physical effects of emotion. Rather, like James, Spinoza, and Freud, Wundt understood that the physical and mental aspects of emotions are two arms of the same body; each essential to understanding the complexity of a unitary experience. An emotion cannot be either physical or mental. It must be both. Wundtian emotions are in part 'psychical compounds' – "By "psychical compound" we mean any composite component of our immediate experience which is marked off from the other contents of this experience by particular characteristics, in such a way that it is apprehended as a relatively independent unity and is, when practical necessity demand it, designated by a special name."[59] Critically, and in true Spinozist fashion, an emotion as a psychical entity cannot be understood through an appeal to physiological concepts. The body can tell us about the body. The mind can tell us about the mind. The two are never, ever reducible; only correlated. They only present themselves to us as a unitary experience subjectively processed under the attributes of thought and extension. Central to that unitary experience is the role of ideas.

What an emotion is and how we might understand it from a Wundtian

[58] See pp. X-X
[59] Wundt, Wilhelm, Hubbard Judd, Charles (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897*,* p. 90

perspective is quite a different question from whether any experimental process involving the interpretation of both physiological and psychological raw data can tell us anything purely psychological. In order to examine the possibility of this, and to contextualise it within Wundt's wider causal theory in relation to his psychology, we must look at his experimental methodology as it bears upon his theory of causality. This in turn raises questions in relation to free will (like it did for Spinoza), which must be considered also. This will be the work of the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Wilhelm Wundt, Spinozistic Parallelism and Causality

"…The internal or psychological causation of our mental states cannot be touched directly by a law which only has reference to masses and their reciprocal action... Hence arises the important psycho- logical postulate, *that the internal causation of our mental states, and the external causation of our movements can never conflict with one other*."[1]

Scholarship on the philosophy of Wundt's psychology is not readily available. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, there was no good book at all dedicated to the subject until the publication of A. Arnold's *Wilhelm Wundt? Sein Philosophisches System* (Wilhelm Wundt - His philosophical system) in 1980.[2] It was not until Saulo de Freitas Araujo's 2012 journal article in *History of Psychology* and his subsequent 2015 book *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal* that English language scholarship in Wundtian philosophy of psychology was enlivened with renewed vigour.[3] The latter is an extremely thorough look at Wundt's philosophy within the context of psychological theory during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and opens up the possibility to scholars in the English-speaking world of gaining a sound understanding of Wundt as philosopher. With this in mind, this chapter endeavours to provide an account of Wundt's experimental theory and his causal theory, particularly in relation to mind and emotion. It will do this with a view to examining Spinoza's confluence with Wundt's account of causality, which, as we shall see, exhibits and mirrors the Spinozistic parallelism which was the one of the focuses of the previous chapter.

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[1] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 198

[2] Arnold, Alfred, *Wilhelm Wundt? Sein philosophisches System* [Wilhelm Wundt-His philosophical system], Akademie-Verlag, 1980

[3] See Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, 'Why did Wundt Abandon His Early Theory of the Unconscious? Towards a New interpretation of Wundt's Psychological Project', in *History of Psychology,* Vol. 15, No. 1, 2012, pp. 33-49; Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015

The basic theoretical shortcomings that could be asserted in relation to Wundt's experimental theory are the same today as they were in his own time. Wundt was not ignorant of scepticism and objections which suggested the impossibility of psychological experimentation. The notion that exclusively psychological data might be gleaned from physiological stimulation and experimentation of the mind-body unit seemed absurd prima facie, particularly given Wundt's hypothesis that the physical and mental realms are closed causal systems. Indeed, the legitimacy of this and other objections was in part responsible for the falling from favour of introspection as an experimental method some time after its Wundtian provenance. However, in considering the disembodied contents of the mind to be impermeable to physiological enquiry, Wundt was not so very controversial. He suggests that when a scientist induces twitching in the nerve fibre or muscle tissue of a dead frog using acid or electric shock, nothing is learned about internal awareness or consciousness of the sensation or succession of sensations. Such experimentation can give rise only to physiological knowledge, but tells us nothing about the nature or workings of minds.[4]

Wundt's principle of mental causality (*das Prinzip der psychischen Kausalität*) sets the scene for a theoretical epistemic synthesis between psychology as he envisages it, and the natural sciences. This is despite the by now obvious fact that Wundt considered mental and extended or physical phenomena to be fundamentally and essentially disparate. Indeed, the first recorded use of the word 'parallelism' on Wundt's part can be traced to his article *Central Innervation and Consciousness,* published in *Mind* in 1876.[5] In talking about the relationship (or rather lack of one) between mind and body, or the mental and physical in relation to methods of experimentation, he says –

[4] Wundt, Wilhelm, Titchener, Edward Bradford (trans.), *Principles of Physiological Psychology,* Blackmask Online, 2002, EBook, p. 43
[5] Wundt, Wilhelm, 'Central Innervation and Consciousness', in *Mind*, Vol.1, No.2, April 1876, pp. 161-178

> "It may happen that in certain stages of our investigations only the one or the other side of the event is open to observation; but a real solution of the problem is in every case attained only when we succeed in exhibiting both series of phenomena in their mutual penetration. In point of fact the whole of recent psychology is pervaded with a disposition to satisfy this postulate, and every step which it takes in this direction transforms the bare postulate into the actual proof of a complete parallelism between the internal and the external phenomenon."[6]

It was on the basis of these ideas that Wundt developed his idea of a psychological causality that is independent of physical causality. The first mention of the principle of mental causality in his work can, along with his first mention of parallelism, be traced to 1876, and *Central Innervation and Consciousness*. He explains the principle, and its centrality to his theory of what I will call discrete causation, here –

> "The internal or psychological causation of our mental states cannot be touched directly by a law which only has reference to masses and their reciprocal action. Thus it would be futile to seek to apply this law to the synthesis of compound perceptions out of simple sensations, or to the association of ideas, or to the determination of the will, that is to say, to the principal instances of psychological causation. At the same time, as soon as these internal mental states lead to external movements, these latter fall under this principle. Hence arises the important psychological postulate, *that the internal causation of our mental states, and the external causation of our movements can never conflict with one another*. Every movement which has an internal cause (e.g. in conscious motives) necessarily has an external cause as well."[7]

Wundt's ambition was to show how the principle of the conservation of

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[6] Wundt, Wilhelm, 'Central Innervation and Consciousness', in *Mind*, Vol.1, No.2, April 1876, p. 175

[7] Wundt, Wilhelm, 'Central Innervation and Consciousness', in *Mind*, Vol.1, No.2, April 1876, p. 175

energy—a fundamental principle of the natural sciences developed by his mentor Hermann von Helmholtz—leaves space for a type of causality outside the bounds of physicality, and that it is the psychophysical which asserts this:[8]

> "We must, no doubt, bear in mind that the principle of the Conservation of Energy has to do only with motor forces, and that consequently the movements which proceed from psychological causes are subject to this principle only so far as they are *external*. The internal or psychological causation of our mental states cannot be touched directly by a law which only has reference to masses and their reciprocal action…"[9]

The principle of the Conservation of Energy, sometimes also referred to as the law of the conservation of force, was first out forward by Helmholtz in his address *The Conservation of Force,* given to the Physical Society in July 1847. According to Helmholtz's use of the term 'force' (Kraft) is considered equivalent to the modern term 'energy'.[10] Bevilaqua clarifies the nature of the principle, or law–

> "The principle of conservation of force implies that the maximum quantity of work available from a system is a determined, finite quantity if the acting forces do not depend on time and velocity; if they do so depend, or if the forces act in directions other than that joining the active material points, the "force" can be gained or lost ad infinitum; and under non-central

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[8] "The deduction of the propositions contained in the memoir may be based on either of two maxims; either on the maxim that it is not possible by any combination whatever of natural bodies to derive an unlimited amount of mechanical force, or on the assumption that all actions in nature can be ultimately referred to attractive or repulsive forces, the intensity of which depends solely on the distances between the points at which the forces are exerted. That both these propositions are identical is shown at the commencement of the memoir itself…"; See Koenigsberger, Leo, Welby, Frances A. (trans.), *Hermann Von Helmholtz,* Dover New York, 1906, p. 39; von Helmholtz joined the Berlin Physical Society in 1845. The society had been set up by du Bois Reymond and Brücke for the sole purpose of deconstructing the vitalism which permeated the medical perspective of the time, and was a central tenet of Du Bois Reymond and von Helmholtz's mentor, Müller.

[9] Wundt, Wilhelm, 'Central Innervation and Consciousness', in *Mind*, Vol.1, No.2, April 1876, p. 174

[10] See Helmholtz, Hermann, Tyndall, John (trans.), *On the Conservation of Force,* Scientific Memoirs, London,
1853

> forces, a system of bodies at rest could be set in motion by the effect of its own internal forces…"[11]

Extrapolating from a theory which views disparate systems as energetically self-contained and incapable of exchange or meaningful interaction, Wundt observes the fundamental futility of any attempt to establish a causal relationship between physiological and psychological phenomena, given the fact that meaningful comparison between the two is impossible. To illustrate the essential difference between what he describes as two kinds or versions of causality, Wundt seeks to show the futility and bad logic of juxtaposing our mental and physical experience –

> "…cerebral processes give us no indication at all about how our mental life comes into being. For the two series of phenomena are not comparable. We can conceive how one motion may be transformed into another, at most also how one sensation or feeling is transformed into a second. But no world mechanics can reveal to us how a motion can pass over into a sensation or feeling."[12]

Here Wundt tracks the transformation, as the uninformed (by Wundtian standards) argument would posit, from physical process into non-physical process; from the firing of synapses and the stimulation of neurons to the non-physical conception of an essentially disembodied thought. There is no direct path to follow in these instances, Wundt believes., which begins inside the bounds of physicality and ends outside of it. There is no dual language or dual conception that might universally apply to events under the attribute of extension *and* outcomes under the attribute of thought. If we follow the physical road to explaining the mental, we are pitched over a cliff – there is no outcome of physical process which can, through explanation in physical process, deliver us safely to immaterial thought. A mental event can never be explained through physical processes. As Araujo phrases it – "Wundt argued that a mental event can only be

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[11] Bevilacqua, Fabio, 'Helmholtz's *Ueber die Erhaltung der Kraft*: The Emergence of a Theoretical Physicist', in Cahan, David, *Hermann von Helmholtz and the Foundations of Nineteenth-Century Science*, University of California Press, 1993, p. 315

[12] Wundt, Wilhelm, cited by de Freitas Araujo, Saulo, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 198

explained by another mental event and that this is exactly the task of psychology."[13] Wundt is not, however, seeking to deny the close correspondence between mental and physical processes, which is empirically evident to us all. Rather, he seeks to explain the relationship without appealing a concept of causal interaction at all. Wundt solves the problem in the same manner that Spinoza chose to do so. He does not seek to disprove the existence of a relationship between physical and mental causality so much as he seeks to suggest a correlation or correspondence without interaction between the experiences under the attributes of thought and extension (though he does not, for whatever reason, use such Spinozistic terminology). This is the very heart and essence of Spinozistic parallelism, and of psychological causality within Spinoza's theory –

> "the motion and rest of the Body must arise from another body, which has also been determined to motion or rest by another; and absolutely, whatever arises in the body must have arisen from God insofar as he is considered to be affected by some mode of Extension, and not insofar as he is considered to be affected by some mode of thinking (also by IIP6), i.e., it cannot arise from the Mind, [20] which (by IIP11) is a mode of thinking. This was the second point. Therefore, the Body cannot determine the Mind." (III. P 2/D)

However, Wundt understood that the principle of the Conservation of Energy, by entailing an irreducible dual causality, entails a relationship (thought certainly not an interrelationship, and certainly not a causal relationship) between the two attributes. In building a science of the mind, Wundt saw the importance of keeping this essential separation firmly in mind; as Spinoza clarified above, the physical can never explain the mental, or vice versa. However, these two coextensive branches of perception and causality can be considered cooperative insofar as we seek to gain knowledge under these two divisions of what Spinoza would call ultimate substance. This insight allows Wundt, in looking at physiology

[13] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 198

and building a scientific psychology, to supplement gaps in knowledge related to the one with comparative knowledge of the other – "certain aspects of visual perception can disappear beyond the reach of psychological perspective, but their physiological parallels can still be found. In such cases, psychology should resort to physiology, and vice-versa. Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that it is not the absent element that will be given, only its correspondent…"[14]

It helps in attempting to understand this to look to Spinoza's notion that the mind is the body's corresponding idea. Everything under the attribute of extension possesses a corresponding idea (which may or may not be accessible to human perception). In seeking to better understand the mind, Wundt suggests, scientists might look to physical brain processes on the understanding that brain function is not the same as thought, and that looking at the physical correlate of a psychical event or outcome is not the same as looking at the outcome itself. Of course, Wundt did not engage in the metaphysics of psychology with the same view to theorising everything as Spinoza, having been more pragmatically and empirically inclined. There is, in Spinozistic parallelism, a metaphysical sense in which brain function and thought could be considered the same, or dual representations of the one monistic entity. However, Wundt was focussed on the conceptual independence of the two terms, which is also instantiated in Spinoza's monism.

One could interpret Wundt as departing from Spinoza on the subject of monism on account of Wundt's dual causality theory arising from Helmholtz's principle of the Conservation of Energy, but this would be a serious misinterpretation:

> "…so long as things are considered as modes of thinking, we must explain the order of the whole of nature, or the connection of causes, [25] through the attribute of Thought alone. And

[14] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 199

> insofar as they are considered as modes of Extension, the order of the whole of nature must be explained through the attribute of Extension alone. I understand the same concerning the other attributes." (II. P 7/S)

Though Spinoza strongly argues for one substance subject to one causality, he accepts that this is divided into two branches insofar as it relates to human perception. The attributes of thought and extension cannot overlap as we perceive them –

> "Therefore, whether we conceive nature under the attribute of Extension, or under the attribute of Thought, or under any other attribute, we shall find one and the same order, or one and the same connection of causes, i.e., that the same things follow one another." (II. P 7/S)

Consequently, for Wundt's purposes in establishing a monistic science of mind, semantic short cuts which talk about the mind's influence on the body, or the body's influence on the mind, are pragmatically and epistemologically acceptable. However, we must always operate upon the deep understanding that, insofar as a causal intersection between the two is logically impossible, that only the corresponding parallel process or outcome is brought into being. If I tap my foot under my desk, I am not creating the tapping through an act of my will but by the very physical cerebral process which correlates with it.

This aspect of Wundt's position is rooted in pure Spinozistic monism, and this is not coincidental. More so than either of the other two early psychologists included within this thesis, Wundt acknowledged a theoretical and psychological affinity with Spinoza, especially in relation to Spinozistic monism – "I try to give my monism a broader extension, following as far as possible the example of the greatest of all monists: Spinoza."[15] This acknowledged convergence makes navigating Wundt's

[15] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 128

ideas, despite the difficulties of accessing his written work through English, more straightforward to navigate in the search for confluence with Spinoza. The quotation above proves unequivocally not only that Wundt was familiar with the workings of Spinoza's philosophy and psychological theory, but also that his monistic outlook was informed by Spinoza's theory.

The *Principles of Physiological Psychology* can be challenging to read because the very conception of a physiological psychology appears quite the opposite of a system where body and mind are irrevocably irreducible. However, the suggested interaction between mentality and physicality is actually just an empirically cooperative relationship between corresponding attributes and their respective causal structures. As Spinoza made clear, our physical and mental experiences, though separate, give rise to an illusion of being a unified psychophysical experience in the immediate sense. Experiential data arising from immediacy is all that psychology has to work with, and this involves an individual processing corresponding simultaneous physical and psychological processes. However, in Wundtian psychology there is no causal relationship between the mind and the brain, only a correlative one. Despite our comfort with using language which suggests that the physical and mental domains overlap or are conceptually reducible, Wundt asserts the fundamental inaccuracy of the fuzzy epistemology which inevitably arises from holding that this sort of language asserts a truth about the world as it is in itself.

Wundt considers that it is essential, in order for empirical science to achieve its goal of investigating the 'nature and reciprocal relations' of 'certain particular facts of experience', to encompass "*general supplementary concepts* that are not contained in experience itself, but are gained by a process of logical treatment of this experience".[16] He

[16] Wundt, Wilhelm, Judd, Charles Hubbard (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897, p. 310

described causality as the most general such supplementary concept, reflected by its place, as Wundt observed, across all of the empirical sciences. Insofar as we can process or access reality, it is structured this way – "It comes from the necessity of thought that all our experiences shall be arranged according to reason and consequent, and that we shall remove, by means of concepts of a hypothetical, all contradictions that stand in the way of the establishment of a consistent interconnection of this kind. In this sense, we may regard all the supplementary concepts that serve for the interpretation of any sphere of experience, as applications of the general principle of causation."[17] For psychology to offer any new insight, it must necessarily – so Wundt argues – transfer the rigorous experimental method of empirical science – namely physiology – into the realm of the internal, subjective experience. The creation of an exclusively psychological experimental methodology and procedure is essentially Wundt's great contribution, and the roots from which modern psychology grew – introspection.

As Boring interprets Wundt, 'inner' or internal experience can be recognised as differing from "external" experience through its immediacy. All psychology and psychological practice must therefore begin with introspection or self-observation – the use of physiological experimentation is therefore supplementary to introspection itself.[18] There are problems with the introspective method, and common objections in relation to the methods of the theory of introspection were the same in Wundt's time as they are now. On a basic scientific level, there is an issue of non-falsifiability. Not all individuals are suited to the practice of self-observation, and criteria for those who may be are not scientific. The major philosophical objection is the very reasonable criticism that self-observation appears to inescapably require that the test subject inhabit the dual role or identity of observing subject and observed object. Wundt was

[17] Wundt, Wilhelm, Judd, Charles Hubbard (trans.), *Outlines of Psychology,* Wilhelm Engelman Leipzig, 1897, p. 310
[18] See Boring, Edwin G., *History of Experimental Psychology,* Prentice Hall New York, 1950, p. 320-321

entirely conscious of this objection, and sought to disarm it by differentiating his concept or theory of self-observation from other theories within the practice of empirical psychology, which he rather uncharitably considered uniquely subject to self-delusion and inaccuracy.

> "Since in this case the observing subject coincides with the observed object, it is obvious that the direction of attention upon these phenomena alters them. Now since our consciousness has less room for many simultaneous activities the more intense these activities are, the alteration in question as a rule consists in this: the phenomena that one wishes to observe are altogether suppressed [i.e., by the activity of focused attention upon them]."[19]

Wundt suggests here that the lab environment might assist the subject in focussing their attention distinctly on the process of careful self-observation, and that what we might think of as clinical conditions, in which stimuli might be artificially controlled and manipulated, are most conducive to good experimentation and reliable results. In this way, Wundt maintains that it is possible for the experimenter, using whatever apparatus is necessary within the context, to guide the experimental subject, impelling strictly predetermined phenomena of consciousness. As Wundt makes eminently clear throughout *Principles of Physiological Psychology*, the domain of the *psychologist* (or at least of a psychologist after the Wundtian model) is not interested in what Wundt refers to as the *psychophysical* connections between the somatic or nervous sense-mechanisms and the internal processes or phenomena that they evoke. Rather, the psychologist is looking to understand (and insofar as it might be possible, to measure) the purely *psychological* uniform or regular reactions and responses to the stimulus taking place that such experiments can elicit and reveal.

[19] Wundt, Wilhelm, *Logik: Eine Untersuchung der Prinzipien der Erkenntnis und der Methoden wissenschaftlicher Forschung*, Stuttgart: Enke, 1921, p. 162

In other words, psychologists are primarily interested, rather non-controversially, in the psychological data that experimentation might provide them with. Wundt is confident that psychological experimentation of the type he advocates can transfer the effectiveness and benefits of similar experimental methods in the natural sciences into the domain of the psychological. Consciousness is a mystery that Wundt believes we can penetrate by, as it were, placing it under the isolation and duress of controlled experimental conditions, and forcing the focus of the subject onto the questions and methods of the experimenter.

An in-depth analysis of Wundt's experimental method as outlined in his *Principles of Physiological Psychology* is beyond the scope of this thesis, which is interested in Wundtian experimental method only insofar as it bears upon an understanding of his wider causal theory. It is enough for our purposes to say Wundt understood that in order for him to construct a physiological psychology – notably different from a physiological interrogation of sensation – the insights of introspection, also referred to as self- observation, were required. These were the only data, Wundt believed, that could illuminate nebulous and complex human psychical experience. In order to make sense of such data in a scientific context, Wundt maintains that it must be the case that these internal phenomena of consciousness are subject to some independent principle of what he would call psychical causality.

Wundt distinguished causality within human psychology from the external causality within the natural sciences, considering the two to be qualitatively different. This seems prima facie at odds with his Spinozistic monism, however it is anything but. Wundt merely distinguished between 'physical' and 'mental' forms of causality, saying 'no connection of physical processes can ever teach us anything about the manner of connection between psychological elements'[20] This is nothing if not a

[20] Wundt, Wilhelm, cited in Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 131

neatly condensed interpretation of Spinoza's mind-body parallelism. Though Spinoza argues that causality is part of and subject to the superstructure of ultimate substance, he also recognises that the attributes of thought and extension are relative to human consumption of reality in a raw, humanly unknowable form. The physical and mental realms are processed by us and the data presented within our experience as unitary, but this is not reflective of the reality external to our bodies and minds. Wundt's differentiated physical and mental causality is simply another way of stating what Spinoza was getting at when he wrote –

> "*The Body cannot determine the Mind to thinking, and the Mind cannot determine the Body to motion, to rest or to anything else (if there is anything else).* Dem.: All modes of thinking have God for a cause, insofar as he is a thinking thing, and not insofar as he is explained by another attribute (by IIP6). So what determines the Mind to thinking is a mode of thinking and not of Extension, i.e. (by IID1), it is not the Body. This was the first point. Next, the motion and rest of the Body must arise from another body, which has also been determined to motion or rest by another; and absolutely, whatever arises in the body must have arisen from God insofar as he is considered to be affected by some mode of Extension, and not insofar as he is considered to be affected by some mode of thinking (also by IIP6), i.e., it cannot arise from the Mind, [20] which (by IIP11) is a mode of thinking. This was the second point. Therefore, the Body cannot determine the Mind, etc., q.e.d." (III. P 2/D)

At III. P 2, Spinoza articulates his idea that, because the mind and body function in parallel, the one cannot furnish us with understanding of the other. In short, he thinks that we do not, and arguably cannot, possess knowledge about what a body can do –

> "For indeed, no one has yet determined what the Body can do, i.e., experience has not yet taught anyone what the Body can do from the laws of nature alone, insofar as nature is only considered to be corporeal, and what the body can do only if it is determined by the Mind. For no one has yet come to know the

> structure of the Body so accurately that he could explain all its functions8—not to mention that [10] many things are observed in the lower Animals that far surpass human ingenuity, and that sleepwalkers do a great many things in their sleep that they would not dare to awake. This shows well enough that the Body itself, simply from the laws of its own nature, can do many things which its Mind wonders at." (III. P 2/S)

Since minds and brains are ontologically different entities, the mind cannot be altered by solely material or physical intervention under the attribute of extension. Instead, we must understand the mind under the attribute of thoughts. We will return to this idea land its relationship to Wundt's experimental philosophy later in this chapter.

When Wundt was active during the latter half of the nineteenth century, advances within the natural sciences prompted a re-evaluation of the accepted idea that psychology, as the science of mind, is notably different from both physiology and from physics, since it is concerned fundamentally with entirely dissimilar phenomena. Johannes Müller, mentor to von Helmholtz (under whom Wundt would later develop some of his essential early work and from whom he would notoriously differ and part ways) was still a vitalist. Vitalism, the biological doctrine suggesting that the life of living organisms is caused and sustained by a vital principle which itself is distinct from all physical and chemical forces, was at this time falling prey within the sciences to a form of physical reductionism.

It is interesting to note that Müller, like von Helmholtz and his own student Wundt after him, was aware of Spinoza and saw the logical links between Spinozistic philosophy and the rapidly progressing scientific theory of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[21] By 1845, the changes and advances within the field of physiology set the scene for a critique of

[21] See Hagner, Michael and Wahrig-Schmidt, Bettina (eds.), *Johannes Müller und die Philosophie,* Akademie Verlag Berlin, 1992

vitalism on behalf of several of Müller's students, including DuBois Reymond, who described the attack on vitalism as designed to reveal that "no other forces than common physical chemical ones are active within the organism",[22] and von Helmholtz, who would exert more influence on Wundt than perhaps anyone else. Of course, In formulating principle of the Conservation of Energy in 1847, to this day fundamental to physics, von Helmholtz made the case that that this principle applies equally to living organisms. If physiology is thus relevant to the workings of theoretical physics, then it follows that we might potentially conceive of the physical world in its entirety in terms of a closed material system whose energy is constant under the principle.

As we have seen earlier in this chapter, the attempt to explain any behaviour (rather than to contextualise it by reference to its correlate under the 'other' attribute) as due to an action of will or a disembodied mind is a violation of the Principle of Conservation of Energy. As Mischel puts it, the violation arises since "it seems to entail that the mind has produced a change in the configuration of a material system, thus doing work and increasing the energy of the system, without there being a corresponding decrease of energy elsewhere in the system."[23] It is precisely this sort of thinking which Wundt formulated his psychology to reject.

The pivotal role of Darwinian evolutionary theory during the nineteenth century, and its vast and ground breaking implications for both the natural sciences and the burgeoning field of psychology, permeated the intellectual and ideological milieu in which people like Wundt formulated their theories. Such was the intellectual context to the period in which Wundt embarked upon creating a field of experimental psychology. William James and Sigmund Freud, the two other central early psychologists at whom this thesis looks, were both fundamentally

[22] Reymond, Estelle DuBois, cited in in Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* 1970, Vol. 31, No. 1, p. 2

[23] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 2

influenced by evolutionary theory. Since the theory of evolution disallows the possibility of a miraculous or spontaneous development of a mind within the human species, the scientific study of man must accordingly disallow any such miraculous interference in the context of an individual mind influencing an individual body. Instead, physical outcomes must necessarily be explained in terms of physical explanations. Wundt articulates the changing direction of science in the latter half of the nineteenth century in startlingly Spinozistic terms when he observes that–

> "the principle of closed natural causality ... contains for physiology the requirement that a final explanation for any physical life process has only been given when the latter is completely derived from other physical processes inside or outside the organism."[24]

As Wundt sees it, psychology is largely concerned with individual experience of the self not as object, but as subject. The subject, insofar as they are the one who knows, the one who does etc. deals in immediate experience. It is partially this which makes psychological experimentation so fundamentally difficult. There is no helpful comparison to be drawn, in Wundt's opinion, between this sort of experience and the causal connection of events to which it is subject, and external objective occurrences in the world, which fall under the purview of the natural sciences. There is, after all, no connection of physical processes which could ever teach us anything about the nature of the connections between psychological phenomena.

As Mischel remarks – "To say that the natural sciences study the physical is to say that they study, e.g., a color in its relation to other phenomena without reference to a perceiving organism; to say that psychology studies the mental is to say that it studies, e.g., a color in relation to the bodily organism that perceives it. But a special science of mental phenomena, different in principle from the natural sciences, does not exist.

[24] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 2

For the explanation of psychological phenomena - e.g., of the color I see - is physiological, and physiology is a physical science."[25] Titchener held that psychology can still be considered to be a "mental science" since "the subject matter of psychology is mind, the direct object of psychological study is always a consciousness,"[26] Rather than serving an equivalent role to methods employed within the natural sciences, self-observation or introspection as advocated by Wundtian psychology only works to describe psychical or psychological phenomena –

> "Reference to the body does not add one iota to the data of psychology, to the sum of introspections. It does furnish us with an explanatory principle for psychology; ... mental science explains by reference to those nervous processes which correspond with the mental processes that are under observation."[27]

Of course, though Titchener was a student of Wundt and is widely considered a 'Wundtian', Wundt utterly rejected a psychophysical approach to psychology. Following the path of Spinozistic monism, he held firmly that physical data can never supplement psychical data, and would undoubtedly have considered Titchener's interpretation above as wholly wrong. Physiology simply cannot, insists Wundt, explain mental phenomena "even if the connection of brain processes were as clearly before our eyes as the mechanism of a pocket watch. For psychology ... finds in each of its problems a peculiar mode of psychological connection which remains incomparable to the physical relations and connections which are parallel to it."[28]

Arguably, Spinoza's monistic interpretation of the mind body relationship, and its preclusion of the one form of being or experience giving us access to the other, makes him a sort of early introspectionist.

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[25] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 3
[26] Titchener, Edward B., *A Text-Book of Psychology,* Macmillan, 1910, p. 19
[27] Titchener, Edward B., *A Text-Book of Psychology,* Macmillan, 1910, p. 19
[28] Wundt, Wilhelm, *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie,* Leipzig: Engelmann, 1893, p.754

He advocates the utilisation of psychical self-assessment in our search for and determination of adequate ideas. Essentially, as will be covered more thoroughly in the sections of this thesis on free will and determinism, Spinoza considers the pursuit of reason and circumspection about emotion to be ultimate freedoms. In this way, he imbues the individual with immense powers in relation to introspection, and places the individual at the nexus of enlightenment and its opposite. Only by our own adequate ideas, and by thinking about thinking, can we understand ourselves and the world (insofar as Spinoza deigns anyone can understand it) and lead good, meaningful lives.

Wundt places the same primacy on introspection, in that his experimental philosophy entails the subject engaging in introspection, but the leaving it to the psychologist or analyst to interpret their introspective data. Spinoza's psychology gives ultimate power to the subject, making their pursuit of understanding an ultimately solitary endeavour. With Wundt, we find a very early instantiation of the basic modern psychological method in which the subject reports on his or her own experience, and the psychologist, interpreting the data systematically or empirically, decides its meaning and represents a necessary but external route to self-understanding. William James would take this yet further, approaching the collection of psychological data yet more empirically than Wundt.

Wundtian emotional theory could hardly have been more different from William James's, given the essential role of physicality in the emotions of Jamesian theory, as the chapter to come will show. As Wundt sees it, emotions are psychological phenomena accessible to us only, as Spinoza would have expressed it, under the attribute of thought. Consequently, the Wundtian emotion is a phenomenological state of consciousness with corresponding physical events which can vary in their levels of complexity. It is not, however, as it is for James, through the correlative physical symptoms of our emotions that we might learn to recognise them, or through which we instinctively recognise them. Rather, for Wundt, psychological outcomes have psychological causes and can only be

understood by psychological means.

The experimental method that he championed was a carefully controlled series of stimuli conducted by an experimenter in the psychological equivalent of the sort of clean room in which immunocompromised persons might be kept in order to minimise their risk of contracting a bacterial or viral illness. The physical aspects of our emotional experience are at best supplementary, at worst irrelevant. Nothing that is mental can be understood by appeal to physical concepts. The Wundtian aim is a separation of emotion from the body – not pragmatically, that would of course be impossible – but only in terms of how we talk and think about emotion intellectually. To understand emotion in this way – our experience of which is of course a unitary physical and non-physical in terms of its immediate actuality – we must look to Wundt's Spinozistic parallelism, which applies not only to our experience of mind and body in terms of what emotions are and how we experience them, but also to the wider causality of Wundt's monistic system, the model for which is largely representative of Spinoza's monistic system. This is an easier task in theory than in practice, since the literature on Wundt ignores Spinoza almost entirely.

Araujo, whose book on the intersection of Wundt's philosophical background and theory with his psychological theory is the best and most thorough available to scholars in the English-speaking world, makes a fundamental error in his account of Wundt's work and philosophy. In fact, he makes the same error that this thesis posits is endemic to early scholarship within philosophy of psychology and psychology-proper – forgetting Spinoza. There are a rather paltry four mentions of the Dutchman's name within the book's two hundred and fifty-four pages, yet an extensive account of Wundtian monism, emotion and psychology. Of course, it is possible that this is because Spinoza simply was not influential at the time or present in the nineteenth century context of theory of mind. It would be most logical to look for Spinoza's influence and name in the scientific disciplines where his ideas would have had most relevance at

the time.

However, he is also not often to be found within works of biology, cognitive science or works within other scientific fields where a Spinoza enthusiast might argue strongly in favour of his direct relevance and influence. It is essential to remember that Wundt made his start as a physiologist and later moved, with his mentor Hermann von Helmholtz, to establish a mental science or science of mind. Yet both Wundt and von Helmholtz can be found on a list of international scientists who came together in 1876 to erect the statue of Spinoza that even now sits in The Hague.[29] We know from citations in the previous chapter on Wundt within this thesis that Wundt certainly read Spinoza and was influenced by certain of his ideas. In the modern context, Antonio Damasio can be credited with situating Spinoza as "a forerunner of modern biological thinking" and linking him in particular to theory within neuroscience.[30]

Araujo's significant oversight in relation to Spinoza arises partially from a focus on the influence on Wundt of Kant. This is understandable, given that the Kantian perspective that a mental science is not a feasible endeavour dictated the territory in which Wundt conducted his work and formed his ideas. As the previous chapter on Wundt clarified, a Kantian ideological perspective was the very context in which Wundt formulated the idea of physiological psychology and was the primary conceptual problem that Wundt had to work around and in some respects, resist in order to construct a worthwhile theory of mental science. Without a reasonable and defensible theory of science of the mind, there would be no space for the introspective experimental method of, as it were, controlled self-observation.

Largely, however, Araujo simply falls into the trap that this thesis works to correct – he is another theorist in a long line of those who pathologically

[29] Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain,* Vintage, 2004, p. 259
[30] Ibid., p. 239

overlook the immense relevance of Spinoza. This could be due to a lack of familiarity with Spinoza's work. Indeed, this would appear to be the case, particularly when Araujo makes the surprising error of identifying what he believes appears to be an inconsistency in Wundt's parallelism – "To the extent that the notion of parallelism excludes the possibility of an interaction, this would represent an internal contradiction in his system" – and going on to iron it out without any reference to Spinoza, who solved the problem in the first place, and who Wundt was certainly inspired by as we have seen from the first section of this chapter.[31] Araujo takes pains to provide a workaround for the 'inconsistency' of parallelism in Wundt's monistic system when no such inconsistency exists – Wundt is simply thinking like a good Spinozistic monist, who recognises that the attributes of thought and extension are merely branches of the one unity, and this this parallelism applies to psychology as well as externalities. Psychology and the natural sciences thus cannot be reducible one to the other, and Wundt's defence of independent and autonomous psychological research methods and science remains sound in its differentiation of the two.

Wundt identified three characteristics which characterised mental and physical causality as being distinct processes.[32] He could not have been clearer about the incompatibility of causal theories in relation to mind and body, and the assertion that a mental science cannot look like or follow the traditional processes of the natural sciences – "the main reason why there are not, and will never be, Galilean or Keplerian laws in the domain of the mind is not the enormous complexity of the conditions of mental life, as is usually assumed, but its qualitatively different character and, in consequence of this, the completely different nature of the causal problems."[33]

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[31] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 197
[32] Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 131
[33] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 199

While cause and effect were, within the domain of the natural sciences, 'separate experiences, *disjecta membra*', insofar as the causal link between events "comes only from the conceptual connection and treatment of experience"[34] psychology does not work in the same manner. The causal connection between psychological elements or events is not merely theoretical, but is 'a fact of immediate consciousness'.[35] 'we immediately perceive these contents as causally related in the connection of our inner processes.'[36]

Kusch observes – "Wundt suggested that, in the natural sciences, our knowledge of a causal connection between two events was based on invariant regularity on the one hand, and a theory connecting these—separate and distinct, Humean—events on the other. However, when, as psychologists, one knew a reason for an action, one relied neither on observation of a regular conjunction between two events nor on theories which established a conceptual connection"[37] In Wundt's view, it is a mistake to approach psychological causality, or as a Spinozist might term it, causality considered under the attribute of thought, with the expectation that it should adhere to the apparent regularity and mode of process that applies to physical causality. Mischel refers to psychological causality as 'human activities' and physical causality as 'occurrences'. For Wundt, thinking and perceiving are actions which we undertake, and are not to be understood merely as the outcomes of a series of bodily occurrences, automatic or otherwise. Though perception does certainly involve physical processes, or what Mischel would call 'occurrences', the physical occurrences which are necessary for perception are not, as Wundt sees it,

[34] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 6
[35] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 6
[36] Wundt, Wilhelm, cited in Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 6
[37] Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 131

sufficient to explain it. It takes an 'act of our consciousness' to transform a series of occurrences or sensations into a perception qua psychological action or state.

For Wundt, physical causation results always in the sum of its parts. This is why it fits comfortably within the capacity and conservative predictive capability of the natural sciences – there are empirical data which we might use to predict processes and likely occurrences in the future. I can reliably predict that, all things being equal, a piece of litmus paper will turn from blue to red if I dip it into an acidic liquid. Psychological causality does not operate in the same fashion. Wundt describes perception in particular as "a creative synthesis".[38]

Secondly, Wundt maintains that mental causality is not reducible to its causal physical counterpart because explanations of psychological processes appear necessarily to entail value determinations. Value determinations of this sort are never brought to bear in causal explanations within the context of natural science. Mischel reads Wundt as articulating both the necessity of a psychology through psychological means, for psychological ends and the impossibility of understanding the mental through the physical –

> "…our knowledge that El caused E2, instead of merely being followed by it, depends on an invariant regularity in their [physical events] occurrence and the only way we can connect these events is conceptually - i.e., by developing theories according to which these apparently separate events are really connected. Thus we cannot know that water rusts iron apart from observing that these occurrences regularly follow each other, and the connection between these separate occurrences can only be understood in terms of chemical theory. But knowing the reason for an action - e.g., that being insulted is a reason for

[38] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the Conceptual Foundations of Psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 7

> anger, or being jilted a reason for seeking revenge - does not depend on observing a regular conjunction between the phenomena in question and no theories are needed to see that there is a connection between them."[39]

We make a fundamental error in seeking within psychology similar patterns and causal connections to those we observe within the function of physical processes or events and their causes. We can rely on universal maxims to serve a fundamental role within the empirical natural sciences in that we accept the processes and outcomes subject to them to exist independent of observation. In other words, science operates such that principles like the principle of causality pre-exist the methodological work, hypotheses or experimentation of the scientist him or herself. This is not to say that such principles exist a priori. It is clear that they emerged within the course of human experience, and are consequently subject to it in terms of their form and content. However, such principles as we understand them in relation to physical causation in terms of the inductive process of gaining scientific knowledge, are not conscious–

> "All knowledge is prepared in the unconscious, but knowledge can never reach its end through that preparation in the unconscious. The selection is left for consciousness, but this selection is the most important act for the safe apprehension of the truth. If induction itself always occurs in the unconscious, for consciousness is left that important task, which we have characterized as *inductive method*, and which consists in the *proof* of the results instinctively acquired."[40]

Because Wundt asserts that knowledge has its origin in the unconscious mind, he holds that those laws which appear to be a priori or innate only appear so because we are unaware of their formulation or origin within the unconscious mind. Those laws and maxims are however the general principles that inform and direct our very concept of scientific knowledge.

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[39] Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the Conceptual Foundations of Psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 7

[40] Wundt, Wilhelm, quoted in Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 63

It seems that logic exists outside the bounds of Wundt's psychologism, at least in its earliest and most purely Spinozistic form, since he accepted the a priori nature of the laws of logic. "Wundt submitted that both psychology and the natural sciences were empirical sciences, but that psychology studied 'the given' in its immediacy whereas the natural sciences looked at it merely 'as a system of *signs* on the basis of which one has to form hypotheses of the real nature of the objects.'"[41]

Wundt also maintained that psychological causality is distinct from its corresponding physical causality due to the fact that 'the formation of mental products which indicate a conscious purposive activity, in which there is a choice between various possible motives, requires a real consideration of purpose'[42] As a result, it was essential to any feasible psychology that in understanding and explaining human action and behaviour, Wundt saw it as necessary for the psychologist, to bring take into account the goals and will of the individual agent.

Wundt believed himself to have distinguished general laws of mental causality. He regarded these laws as the most general explanatory principles in psychology, and accordingly divided them into four principles.[43] These were 'the principle of creative resultants' (which maintained that a complex mental phenomenon is more than the sum of its constituent parts); 'the principle of connecting relations' (every mental content is related to others from which it derives its meaning); 'the principle of increasing contrasts' (antithetical experiences intensify each other); and 'the principle of the heterogeneity of ends' (purposes and goals that human beings achieve often develop and arise within the attempt to achieve other, further goals).

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[41] Wundt, Wilhelm, cited in Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 131

[42] Wundt, Wilhelm, cited in Mischel, Theodore, 'Wundt and the conceptual foundations of psychology', in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* Vol. 31, No. 1, 1970, p. 8

[43] Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 132

Wundt was not at all unaware of the criticisms or the shortcomings of his psychological experiment based on self-observation. It was partly in light of the perceived limitations of his experimental method that Wundt, a polymath with varied and wide interests anyway, laboured to point out that experimental psychology was just one aspect of what he believed to be the mental science of psychology. He also worked within his theory of *Völkerpsychologie*, a German term for which there is not an established English translation, but is usually translated as 'folk' or 'cultural' psychology. The concept of *Völkerpsychologie* was sketched by the Herbartian philosopher Moritz Lazarus and the linguist Hermann Steinthal in 1860, in an article that featured in their journal *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft.*[44] Wundt's own *Völkerpsychologie* was indebted to these authors, although, like his Spinozistic monism though even more so, was an adapted version of the original. Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* focussed its research in three contexts – language, myth and custom.[45] *Völkerpsychologie* was an attempt by Wundt to look at cultural psychology's collective concepts, in a sharp move away from the focus of his previous work in psychology.

Wundt's work is vast and takes in a wide range of specialities, even within the relatively niche confines of psychology itself. He was highly sceptical of the value of 'introspection' undertaken outside of the carefully constructed laboratory environment as a basis for psychological knowledge.[46] However, he did consider 'inner perception' of lower-order mental processes such as sensation and perception to be reliable as long as these processes were observed to occur under the strictly controlled experimental conditions of the laboratory. Despite his early perspective, Wundt later came to identify some areas of psychology – most notably processes of thought, volition and emotion – to be difficult; in relation to

[44] Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p. 133
[45] See Wundt, Wilhelm, Schaub, Edward Leroy (trans.), *Elements of Folk Psychology: Outlines of a Psychological History of the Development of Mankind,* Macmillan, 1916
[46] See Danziger, Kurt, 'The history of introspection reconsidered', in *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1980, pp. 241–62

these processes and outcomes, the experimental method of self-observation areas was not an effective or reliable method.[47]

The vastness of his career even within the confines of psychology alone makes detailed analysis of the evolution of Wundt's psychological perspective over time too large a task for the scope of this thesis, so the focus herein is on his earlier theory, which in any case is where the Spinozist roots of his theory of emotion, mind-body theory and parallel causality are best showcased and have their theoretical origins. English language scholarship in philosophy of mind and psychology would be benefitted considerably by a wider project tracking Wundt's philosophical evolution. This was to some extent the task of de Freitas' *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal*, and to a much lesser degree, of Kusch's *Psychologism: A Case Study in the Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge*. However, the general dearth of ambitious and larger scale philosophical material on Wundt's psychology in English poses a real challenge for anyone searching in earnest for Wundt's philosophical origins, particularly with a view to noting the relevance of Spinoza's philosophy to Wundt's work. Nonetheless, it is evident that the origins of Wundtian monism can indeed be linked to Spinoza. Wundtian monism is a form of Spinozistic monism, and its parallel function Spinoza's model reworked for the second half of the nineteenth century. Wundt's emotion is a Spinozistic emotion imagined under the attribute of thought, experienced in reference to its embodied corollary.

This takes Spinoza out of his traditional place in early modern philosophy, and catapults his philosophy of psychology – evidently devised long before its time – into the very genesis of modern psychological theory. To talk about psychology as we currently understand it without referencing Spinoza, or at the very least, without crediting him with laying a solid foundation within what had hitherto been a conceptual bog land, is to see

[47] See Danziger, Kurt, 'The history of introspection reconsidered', in *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 16, No. 3, 1980, p. 247

an incomplete picture. It is also to fail to understand the history and philosophy of psychology in its full richness, and to attribute that field rather too much credit for the formulation of sophisticated theories which originate, in fact, with Spinoza and the seventeenth century, and not to Wundt, James, Freud and the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries alone. To further expand on this hypothesis, we will move in the next chapter to William James, whose theory, quite different from Wundt's but probably more similar in some respects than both men realised, would be another intellectual step away from psychology's philosophical (and Spinozistic) origin.

Chapter 6: William James, Reinstating the Attribute of Thought in Jamesian Emotional Theory

"A theory that has been reduced to a single phrase is easy to demolish; refute the phrase and there is nothing left. Cannon's work was a brilliant refutation of the idea that emotion is nothing but the sensation of autonomic processes. That this idea was not James' theory is irrelevant; it was the idea that was in the air and that was believed to be James's theory."[1]

William James' theory of emotion, as first outlined in his 1884 journal article 'What is an Emotion?', would heavily influence theories of emotion which followed it, and not always for the better, given that it would be widely misunderstood, and oversimplified in the literature to the point of misrepresentation.[2] That very year, Carl Lange would publish his own theory. [3] James later described Lange's ideas as asserting "the same theory of emotional consciousness" contained in "What is an Emotion?". [4] The two theories would eventually be amalgamated into what is now

[1] Ellsworth, Phoebe, 'William James and Emotion: Is a Century of Fame Worth a Century of Misunderstanding?' in *Psychological Review,* Vol. 101, No. 2, 1994, p., p. 225

[2] James' primary publications on emotion are as follows, though discourse on emotions and the wider concept of emotion generally is relatively common throughout his publications:
James, William, 'What is an Emotion?', in *Mind*, Vol. 9, No. 34, 1884, pp. 188-205;, James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, pp. 442-485; James, William, 'Talks to Teachers on Psychology and to Students on Some of Life's Ideals', in *William James: Writings 1878-1899*, Harvard University Press, 1975, pp. 705- 880; James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review,* Vol. 1, No.5, 1894, pp. 516-529

[3] There is confusion related to the precise date of the publication of Lange's essay. In *The Principles of Psychology,* James references the German translation from 1887, but in 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', a clarification of his original theory published in 1894, James dates the paper by Lange as being published in the same year as 'What is an Emotion?', 1884. In his *The Thought and Character of William James*, Ralph Barton Perry cites the date of publication as 1887. See: James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, p. 443; James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 101, No.2, 1994, p. 205; Barton Perry, Ralph, *The Thought and Character of William James,* Harvard University Press, 1948

[4] James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, pp. 205-210. The work was originally published in *Psychological Review,* Vol. 1, No.5, 1894, pp. 516-529

considered the James-Lange theory of emotion.[5] Though he was a prolific writer, and produced original work in a number of areas, James' work on emotion is and was in his own time by far the most popular area of interest for readers, which may go some way to explain why it has to some extent been co-opted, albeit unintentionally, by a pervasive and popular misunderstanding.

This chapter aims ultimately to show the confluence between Spinoza's psychology and theory of emotion in the work of William James, and to prove that the James-Lange theory as we know it generally, but the Jamesian conception of emotion more specifically, has its philosophical and theoretical genesis in the kind of emotional theory Spinoza outlines within the *Ethics*. Spinozistic feelings, or rather passions, in turn have heavy Platonic and Stoic influences, as well as Cartesian and others, to thank for their inception. Emotions have classically represented a problem in philosophy. They have traditionally been considered something to suppress, come to terms with by dint of understanding, ignore, encourage, or conquer with reason. Given their centrality in our mental and physical life (though it was really Spinoza who first comprehensively understood the physical rootedness of the passions as being pragmatically and influentially equivalent to their mental aspects), it is easy to see why most of those we consider the great figures in the history of philosophy developed unique emotional theories. Plato separated the emotions in from what he saw as the other two main components of our mental lives, the reasoning and desiring parts.[6] Aristotle did not consign the emotions to their own separate mental territory, but considered them essential to moral life and, in contrast to Plato's suspicion of them as slavish and potentially misleading, characterised them as experiences we should train ourselves to have (or rather feel) in the right circumstances, and in the

[5] Given that William James' work on emotion is the focus of this chapter and the one to follow, I will not focus on Lange or his work here. For more on Lange, see Finger, Stanley, *Origins of Neuroscience: A History of Explorations into Brain Function,* Oxford University Press, 2001

[6] Plato, Hamilton, Edith and Cairns, Huntington (eds.), 'Phaedrus', in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato,* Pantheon New York, 1963, 253e-254e, p. 500

right way.[7] Descartes considered emotions essential to self-knowledge, but also the cause of potential failures of self-understanding. [8]

Spinoza, as is hopefully clear by now, did not assign the emotions as a broad category a separate seat from rationality in the body or mind, but rather considered them affections which increase a person's power of action, or passions which diminish it. In this way, as for Descartes and Aristotle, understanding emotions is key for Spinoza to living a good and honourable life, and to knowing oneself. Hume famously considered that reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions.[9] Kant, ever dutiful, considered emotions to be conative phenomena, but with the potential to improperly motivate us and lead us on a path away from deontological responsibility.[10] This is not a huge departure from Spinoza, for whom conatus was the driving force of life which could be interfered with by the passions. However, the immoral shirking of duty was not the opportunity cost to leading an appetitive life for Spinoza.

However, as was clarified in chapters one to three, it is essentially in breaking away from the concept of Cartesian dualism and placing the affects at the centre of his monistic psychology that Spinoza contributed to the concept of a bipartite yet unitary experience of emotions which heavily influences how we understand the evolution of emotional theory and how we conceptually apprehend emotions and feelings even now. [11] While his predecessor Descartes, in line with many classical

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[7] Aristotle, W.D. Ross (trans.), 'Nicomachean Ethics', in *The Complete Works of Aristotle, Vol. II,* Book IV, 1126a3-1126a8, Princeton University Press, 1984, p. 1777

[8] Descartes, René, 'The Passions of the Soul', in Cottingham, John, Murdoch, Dugald and Stoothoff, Robert (trans.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes,* Vol. 1, 1984, Cambridge University Press

[9] Hume, David, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, Longmans, Green and Company, 1874, p. 48

[10] Kant, Immanuel and Mary Gregor (trans. and ed.), *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 208

[11] Though this phrasing is seemingly contradictory (an occupational hazard when discussing Spinoza), it refers to the bipartite nature of our lived experience as we process emotion, like everything else, under the modes of thought and extension. The consequent emotion, say, anger, is a unitary experience that is recognisable to the subject – a strong feeling of displeasure, belligerence, or having been wronged, accompanied by physical markers which vary in individuals, like reddening of the cheeks, sweating, and or increased heartbeat.

interpretations, considered the mind fundamentally a reasoning machine, maximally operated through the mechanism of reason and derided or potentially derailed by the passions, Spinoza was the first to plot a psychological architecture which would take a couple of centuries to be recognised for its merits, but even then, be elided by most mainstream philosophers of emotion and psychological theorists. He was the first to recognise the pragmatic implications of the non-dualistic operation of the mind – Spinoza saw that there is no reasoning without emotion, or in isolation from it. Rather than viewing emotion as a threat to the mechanism of higher-order thinking, he recognised the pragmatic role of the passions within our rational processes, as well as differentiating the sorts of emotions which are complete ideas, as opposed to the uninformed, appetitive and whim-driven feelings which are not rationally instantiated.

In a manner that would have resonance much later in the emotional theory of William James, on whom this chapter will focus, Spinoza constructed a theory of human feeling which places the body at the cradle of our emotional process. His system is a complex one with its basis in an essentially indivisible mind-body relationship. Antonio Damasio captures that relationship with regard to the role of emotion in Spinoza – "…the essential content of feelings is the mapping of a particular body state; the substrate of feelings is the set of neural patterns that map the body state and from which a mental image of the body state can emerge. A feeling in essence is an idea – an idea of the body and, even more particularly, an idea of a certain aspect of the body, its interior, in certain circumstances."[12] The influence of this Spinozistic process found new expression in James, which these two chapters will track. The mind is, after all, 'the idea of the body' according to Spinoza, and consequently the two are caught in a sort of feedback loop which anticipated modern neuroscientific ideas of emotion.[13] Uniquely, and in direct opposition to

[12] See Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain,* Vintage Books, 2003, p. 88
[13] See Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain,* Vintage Books, 2003

Descartes, whose rational precept necessarily shaped the course of the history of philosophy after him, Spinoza does have a body-first interpretation of emotions in that the affects for him are not primarily reactions to external stimuli (though that can of course be an integral part of their causal process). In Spinozistic psychology, emotions and feelings are primarily about the body in that they ultimately fuel or stymie our power of action in the world. While he holds in a more formal sense than James that the mind and body are differentiated expressions of a single unity which we incorrectly consider experientially bipartite, it was indeed Spinoza who preceded the James-Lange theory of emotion, portraying emotion as rooted within the body and, experientially speaking, body-first. [14]

Spinoza's passions and James' emotions are both complex physical and mental processes, in which the attributes of thought and extension (as Spinoza would see it) provide the interpretative tools to allow us to understand emotions as visceral, physical processes with attendant or correlated cognitive content. James advanced this idea in his time, and brought our relationship with the body back into emotional theory. He also redefined the concept of emotions within the literature, necessitating a move from viewing the passions as purely cognitive (or possibly conative) content with attendant physicality, to viewing the passions as at least equally physical processes with attendant cognitive attributes, or rather as comprehensible to us only when considered under both the attributes of thought and extension. Though the history of philosophy has to a large extent side-lined emotion to the realm of the appetitive, it was Spinoza who laid the theoretical groundwork for people like James and Lange to articulate the complex interplay between body and mind which comprises human feeling. Though in stark contrast to Wilhelm Wundt, James thought Spinoza's monism 'barren', it was Spinoza who rewrote

[14] See Ethics Book IV, V and James, William, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*, Oxford University Press, 2012 for a general account of the unified 'religious' experience or feeling of the sublime, which is a notable exception and the epitome of human emotion for both Spinoza and James.

emotional theory to depict the passions as unitary experiences with both physical and mental or conceptual branches, and bring to the fore questions around causality and the causal chain in relation to the mechanisms of emotion.[15]

Sadly, James' unique theory would be widely misunderstood and misrepresented, and indeed continues to be so. Indeed, Ellsworth claims that "This simplistic formulation [of James' position], reinforced by the advent of behaviourism, severely restricted research and theory on emotion for decades."[16] This section aims to characterise emotion according to the James-Lange theory, so as to dispel common and inaccurate interpretations of James' ideas and bring the interpretation of this thesis into accordance with William James' intent as he himself expressed it, before establishing links between Jamesian and Spinozistic emotion in the next chapter. The section on James as a whole will also aim to show why William James is one of the three emotional theorists included in this thesis, by showcasing his historical heft, and the deep and lasting impact of his contribution to emotional theory. In short, the aim is to prove James' relevance as a theoretical heavyweight in the fields of psychological philosophy, psychology-proper and emotion, and establish theoretical links to Spinoza, hence placing the Dutchman in his rightful place as a theorist about emotion whose philosophical legacy reached expansively beyond his lifetime, but who is not recognised for his important and influential contribution in this respect.

William James was an academic as unusual in his own time as he would be in ours. After James' death in August 1910, a variety of tributes

[15] James, William, 'The Sentiment of Rationality', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy,* Dover Publications, 1956, p.67; The relationship between emotions and causality, or rather the importance of the latter in the functioning of the former, will be examined in the next chapter. Here, the focus is on examining the role of the body and the passions in Jamesian emotion, with particular interest in their convergence with similar theories within Spinoza's philosophy.

[16] See Ellsworth, Phoebe, 'William James and Emotion: Is a Century of Fame Worth a Century of Misunderstanding?' in *Psychological Review,* Vol. 101, No. 2, 1994, p. 225

reflective of James' unique reputation were offered. John Dewey said of James:

> "By common consent he was far and away the greatest of American psychologists – it was a case of James first and no second. Were it not for the unreasoned admiration of men and things German, there would be no question, I think, that he was the greatest psychologist of his time in any country – perhaps of any time."[17]

James achieved something that most academics even now never do – he reached the status of public intellectual, commanding both professional and popular audiences, all while maintaining the respect of his peers in the academy, for the most part. As a Pragmatist, James believed intensely that practice and theory went together (much like Spinoza, who was known to actualise his theoretical beliefs even to his own detriment at times), and was surprised that his ideas captured the popular consciousness.[18] It is possible that his appeal among the educated masses contributed somewhat to the fact that his theory of emotion was fundamentally misunderstood in his lifetime and beyond, though there were other blatant contributing factors to James' communicative shortcomings. With a Swedenborgian theologian father and the famed author Henry James for a brother, William James was not at all averse to linguistic flare. He would frequently sacrifice linguistic precision in

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[17] Dewey, John, 'William James', in *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods,* Vol. 17, No. 19, 1910, pp. 505-508

[18] Despite his less than secure financial position, Spinoza famously, and tactfully, as was his wont, turned down a comparatively lucrative position at the University of Heidelberg offered in the name of Karl Ludwig, Elector Palatine, in the belief that he would not be granted academic freedom there. Instead he chose to continue making his living by grinding lenses, a line of work that would ultimately cause his premature death in 1677, aged forty-four. Turning down the job offer, he wrote: "If I had ever had any desire to undertake a professorship in any faculty, I could have wished for none other than that which is offered me through you by the Serene Highness the Elector Palatine, especially on account of the freedom to philosophize that this most gracious Prince is pleased to grant, not to mention my long-felt wish to live under the rule of a Prince whose wisdom is universally admired… I do not know within what limits the freedom to philosophize must be confined if I am to avoid appearing to disturb the publicly established religion.... So you see, most Honorable Sir, that my reluctance is not due to the hope of some better fortune, but to my love of peace, which I believe I can enjoy in some measure if I refrain from lecturing in public." in Newberger Goldstein, Rebecca, *Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity*, 2009, Schocken Books, p.7

favour of style, a habit that dismayed some of his academic peers. Russell characterised James' writing style as "…insinuating, gradual, imperceptible, it is like a bath with hot water running in so slowly that you don't know when to scream. If this comparison seems not worthy of the dignity of philosophy, I can only plead in extenuation that it is quite in the manner of William James."[19] Though humorous, Russell makes a useful point here – James' style is not typical of philosophy. This made his work digestible for popular audiences, but insufficiently rigorous – at times – for professional ones.

Despite stepping on a few toes with his penchant for embellishment and occasional prolixity, James' credentials were undeniable and he was widely respected. When he published *The Principles of Psychology* in 1890 after twelve years of intensive work, philosophy and psychology were still not considered strictly separate disciplines, despite Wundt's groundwork. James was well established as a Professor at Harvard, as well as an internationally renowned psychologist and philosopher. What he did in *Principles* had not been done before. It was more than a textbook. In it, he tackled immense philosophical topics like the mind-body problem, free will and our perception of reality with explanations of brain function and physiological diagrams, all while maintaining a relatively accessible read to amateur enthusiasts as well as psychologists and philosophers. Even Russell himself was charmed by it, and called it "the most delightful and readable book on its subject".[20]

As Spinoza's *Ethics*, completed two hundred and twenty-five years before the publication of *The Principles of Psychology* exemplified, a thorough emotional theory is central to any account of human psychology. Though James touches on emotions and the much more general concept of feeling regularly in both *Principles* and his wider writings, its placement within

[19] Russell, Bertrand, Moore, Gregory H. (ed.), *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell: Toward Principia Mathematica 1905-1908*, Vol. 5, Routledge, 2014, p. 472
[20] Russell made this comment in an obituary notice for James, quoted in Myers, Gerald E., *William James: His Life and Thought,* Yale University Press, 1986, p. 2

that work is important. The chapter on emotion directly follows the one on instinct, and precedes the one on will. Much of James' original 1884 paper 'What is an Emotion?' is reproduced exactly as it originally appeared within the chapter on emotions in *The Principles of Psychology.* There, he expanded upon the ideas within 'What is an Emotion?' and extended the breadth and ambition of his theory of emotion. Unfortunately, James also expressed himself rather sloppily in that incredibly important chapter. At least, James himself later thought so. Dismayed to find himself receiving waves of counterargument to a theory that did not match the one James believed himself to have recounted and defended within *Principles*, he published an essay called 'The Physical Basis of Emotion' in 1894, seeking to clarify his original argument and reorient its detractors by convincing them of his original intent in *Principles*. For a variety of reasons, this effort did not work, and the pasquinade version was calcified within the popular understanding and among James' academic readers to such an extent that many people still view James as declaring emotion to inhere entirely in physical experience even today.[21]

There is one famed passage within *The Principles of Psychology* which James can thank for the communicative derailment which led people to farcically misinterpret his theory of emotion. Though on examination the expression is insufficiently detailed or accurate for adequate understanding, he could never have realised how inadequate the resulting understanding would be. That passage, of course, is the one containing his now famous bear example:

> *"My theory… is that the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur* IS *the emotion.* Common-sense says we lose our fortune, are sorry and weep; we meet a bear, are frightened and run; we are insulted by a rival, are angry and

[21] Roeser, Sabine, *Emotions and Risky Technologies,* Springer Science & Business, 2010, p. 217

> strike. The hypothesis here to be defended says that this order of sequence is incorrect, that the one mental state is not immediately induced by the other, that the bodily manifestations must first be interposed between, and that the more rational statement is that we feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, afraid because we tremble, and not that we cry, strike, or tremble, because we are sorry, angry, or fearful, as the case may be."[22]

For whatever reason, the bear became the focus for critical readers of this passage, and the majority of attacks on James' theory during his lifetime which came from legitimate sources oriented themselves around the problematic bear. W.L. Worcester's literalist response was relatively characteristic of readings of the above passage at that time –

> *"...neither running nor any other of the symptoms of fear which he enumerates is the necessary result of seeing a bear. A chained or caged bear may excite only feelings of curiosity, and a well armed hunter might experience only pleasurable feelings at meeting one loose in the woods. It is not, then, the perceptions of the bear that excites the movements of fear. We do not run from the bear unless we suppose him capable of doing us bodily injury. Why should the expectation of being eaten, for instance, set the muscles of our legs in motion? "Common sense" would be likely to say it was because we object to being eaten, but according to Professor James, the reason we dislike to be eaten is because we run away"*[23]

This careful a deconstruction by someone like Worcester of an idea so patently ill-considered, published in *The Monist,* is in some respect indicative of the lofty position William James held as a philosopher and psychologist. Given the widespread level of misunderstanding, the bear passage would simply not have been entertained at all by serious scholars

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[22] James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, pp. 449-450; emphasis James' own.
[23] Worcester, William L., 'Observations on Some Points in James' Psychology II, Emotion', in *The Monist*, Vol. 3, No. 2, Jan. 1893, p. 287

had it come from a less illustrious source than James, particularly after the publication of his Magnum Opus. Sadly, the predominant influence of James' theory of emotion for the last hundred and twenty-seven years originates in this one misunderstood and widely misused paragraph from a vast publication which took twelve years to write.

This was hardly an egregious misinterpretation on the part of critical readers. After all, James would come to regret his use of the phrase "…our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion", which rightly made him vulnerable to the sort of attacks he received after the publication of *The Principles of Psychology*. His attempted retraction of that phrasing and clarification of his originally intended meaning in the form of 'The Physical Basis of Emotion' gained far less traction than 'What is an Emotion?' and *Principles*, and continues to do so. According to Ellsworth, "The Physical Basis of Emotion is little cited, was not cited at all between 1969 and 1988, and as far as science was concerned, James' theory of emotion was the theory in the famous paragraph".[24] This in itself goes some way to show how little progress James made – at least in any lasting sense – in his effort to clarify his ideas.

Responding directly to Worcester's criticism, James says –

> *"Dr. Worcester finds something absurd in the very notion of acts constituting emotion by the consciousness which they arouse… I think that all the force of such objections lies in the slapdash brevity of the language used, of which I admit that my own text set a bad example when it said 'we are frightened because we run'. Yet let the word 'run' but stand for what it was meant to stand for, namely, for many other movements in us, of which invisible visceral ones seem by far the most essential; discriminate also between the various grades of emotion which*

[24] Ellsworth, Phoebe, 'William James and Emotion: Is a Century of Fame Worth a Century of Misunderstanding?, in *Psychological Review,* Vol. 101, No. 2, 1994, p. 223

we designate by one name, and our theory holds up its head again."[25]

The obvious objection to raise here is to point out the potential trouble arising from James' seeming inconsistency, and to suggest that James realised his error after writing *Principles* in 1890 and scrambled to fill the gaps in his position in 'The Physical Basis of Emotion' in 1894, without admitting openly to such a major oversight in his theory of emotion. However, there is plenty of reason to believe that James was not inconsistent, but linguistically haphazard, and was indeed authentic about his intent and original meaning when he wrote his far less popular clarification in 1894. We need not look far for evidence that James did indeed always intend the interpretation of his emotional theory as he clarified it in 'The Physical Basis of Emotion'. The most concise and apt example of this can be found within *Principles* itself, in the section of 'The Emotions' entitled *Objections Considered* where James actually anticipates the emotion-as-bodily-reaction theory and responds to that objection to his theory of emotion:

> *"Second Objection:* If our theory be true, a necessary corollary of it ought to be this: that any voluntary and cold-blooded arousal of the so-called manifestations of a special emotion ought to give us the emotion itself. Now this (the objection says) is found not to be the case. An actor can perfectly simulate an emotion and yet be inwardly cold… *Reply:* In the majority of emotions this test is inapplicable; for many of the manifestations are in organs over which we have no voluntary control…"[26]

Here, James touches on our associative relationship with emotion. The fact that we associate particular outward actions or expressions with certain emotions does not mean that these actions or expressions constitute the emotions themselves, but rather merely part of them. The true content of, say, grief, cannot be simulated by the mere mimicry of grief's outward

[25] James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 206
[26] James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, p. 462

symptoms (as we see them). There are attendant physical components of emotional processing and expression over which we have no agency. Involuntary neurological processes would be the easiest modern example to turn to, though James did not have those to rest upon in his time, and regularly cited various muscular and vascular processes as examples of those over which we have no conscious agency, and consequently cannot ever fully or reliably imitate.

"An actor can perfectly simulate an emotion and yet be inwardly cold" not merely because they do not have control over all the physical processes involved in the construction and execution of emotion, but because a simulation does not accurately mimic the cognitive or mental substance of an emotion either. The one, however complete or incomplete, does not compensate for the lack of the other. No matter how much like a genuine emotion any performance may appear, it simply does not constitute the full ontological reality of emotion unless it contains authentic substance under the attributes of both thought and extension.

This is not to say that emotion is not performative to an extent. The management of emotions involves performing the attendant or associated actions and behaviours of the emotion we would prefer to experience (over the one we are experiencing now), for example 'performing' behaviours we associate with a calm demeanour when we are angry. We might halt before saying something in anger, take a breath, and try to regulate our breathing and heartbeat. We are thus 'performing' the behaviours associated with a sanguine disposition despite feeling angry. We can do this, according to both James and Spinoza, because emotions do not operate in isolation from reason. I can be angry without wishing to be so, and make a rational decision to attempt to alter my emotional state by performing the physical expression of a different emotion, in the hope that behavioural association will dissipate the current emotion in favour of the chosen one. This in turn involves understanding our current emotional scenario – we cannot reason our way out of an emotion we ca not recognise or see no need to alter: "…if we wish to conquer undesirable

emotional tendencies in ourselves, we must assiduously, and in the first instance cold-bloodedly, go through the *outward movements* of those contrary dispositions which we prefer to cultivate."[27] To use Spinozistic language, poor behaviour as a result of our emotions stems from an insufficient understanding of their causes, mechanisms and content. In order to feel and behave differently in whatever situation, we must come to a full understanding. We must have a complete idea of the causes of our emotions in order to change them. After all, if emotions arise as a result of, or in relation to understanding, they must necessarily be an appropriate response to whatever stimulus we are experiencing. These sorts of emotions are considered, volitional responses, as opposed to the purely reactive, cognitively insufficient response of emotional whim.

James understood that the subtlety of his ideas around emotion was largely lost in the bear passage in *Principles,* and attempted to focus his critics on the highly individual and individuated nature of emotional experience. Of course, he chides, referring to Dr. Worcester's criticism, and likely also the disparaging critique of Wilhelm Wundt, fear of getting wet in the rain cannot be equated with the fear one might feel on encountering a bear.[28]

> *"It* [fear] *may limit itself to a prevision of the unpleasantness of a wet skin or of spoiled clothes, and this may prompt either to deliberate running or to buying an umbrella with a very minimum of properly emotional excitement being aroused. Whatever the fear may be in such a case is not constituted by the voluntary act. Only the details of the concrete case can inform us whether it be, as above suggested, a mere ideal vision of unpleasant sensations, or whether it go farther and involve also feelings of reflex organic change. But in either case our theory will cover all the facts."'*[29]

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[27] James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, p. 463
[28] Finger, Stanley, *Origins of Neuroscience: A History of Exploration into Brain Function,* Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 276
[29] James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 206

Like Spinoza, James accepted a theory which is now almost casually held to be obviously true: that emotions are an integral part of every element of mental experience, including how we think and form rational judgements. There is no Platonic sense of assigning emotions their designated corner and leaving them there in isolation from the rational faculties. Like the Stoics, Spinoza accepted the profound influence of emotion on how we think and mentally process the world, to the extent that we construct our own emotional environments, rendering ourselves more or less capable, more or less intellectual, and more or less moral in our actions as a result. In the above passage, James rejects the interpretation of his theory of emotion as simple, which it certainly was not. Emotions, as he accounts for them in 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', are far more than their physical symptoms. In his desire to prove "how much our mental life is knit up with our corporeal frame", James slightly clumsily left readers with the impression that emotions inhere in that corporeal frame, and are wholly without any real or complex mental or disembodied content at all. [30]

In reality, he believed the passions to operate on a spectrum and to be influenced by a variety of shifting causal factors, making the essence of one emotion, for example anger, almost impossible to define: "Surely there is no definition of 'anger' in an 'entitative' sense".[31] Hence both my intense fear upon meeting a bear in the woods and my mild, portentous dread of inevitable rain when I am out in the elements without an umbrella might both be called a sort of 'fear', though in reality they have little causally or experientially in common. Little apart, perhaps, from their focus on an external object and the anticipatory feeling of an undesirable outcome experienced or 'felt' under the attributes of both thought and extension, i.e. having both bodily and mental components which combine into a unitary or simultaneous experience that I, the subject, interpret as 'fear'.

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[30] James, William, 'What is an Emotion?', in *Mind*, Vol. 9, No. 34, April 1884, p. 201
[31] James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 206

According to R.W.B Lewis' biography, James first read Spinoza in 1888 when researching a new course he had planned to give on the philosophy of religion at Harvard.[32] This course formed the origins of *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, and though James and Spinoza overlap considerably in their thinking in relation to religion and their shared characterisation of the sublime, or communion with God, as pure feeling, James approached Spinoza's psychology with more circumspection. [33] It is worth noting that this reference is repeated throughout the literature on James and Spinoza, in recent years most notably within Antonio Damasio's *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain.*[34] However, Lewis does not cite a source for this claim, and there does not appear to be either evidence for or challenge to this assertion in the wider literature. Consequently, we cannot know precisely when James was first exposed to Spinoza, but can remark on the nature of the philosophical and theoretical overlap between them. James was thrown, as many readers of Spinoza still are, by the Dutchman's salvo in Book Three of the *Ethics* on declaring his approach to emotion – *"I shall treat the nature and power of the Affects, and the power of the Mind over them, by the same Method by which, in the preceding parts, I treated God and the Mind, and I shall consider human actions and appetites just as if it were a Question of lines, planes, and bodies."* (Preface to Part III) They have more in common, however, than is standardly recognised. Despite referring to Spinoza's strict monism as "his barren union of all things in one substance", James himself utilised a monistic interpretation of a body-first form of emotion which possessed no substance without cognition and no cognition without substance.[35] Both men located God within rather than necessarily without, and considered such a being to be cosmically, functionally and

[32] Lewis, Richard W.B., *The Jameses: A Family Narrative*, Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1993, p. 10
[33] James, William, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Matthew Bradley (ed.), Oxford University Press, 2012
[34] See Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain,* Vintage Books, 2003, p. 280
[35] Crosby, Donald A., *The Philosophy of William James: Radical Empiricism and Radical Materialism,* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2013, p. 93

systematically indifferent to human thought or feeling. Both men were radical individualists who considered the essential maintenance of psychological balance and control to be, as Antonio Damasio describes it, "an individual and internal task, something to be achieved when sophisticated thinking and reasoning provoke the appropriate emotion and feeling. Both rationalized the process by acknowledging that human beings are mere occasions of subjective individuality in a largely mysterious universe.*"*[36] Both their psychologies, while philosophical in construction and execution, contain a therapeutic mandate aimed at the individual.

Though Spinoza's monism unified the extended and cognitive aspects of the emotions in a theory that came before those of people like William James, it was Descartes who first gave the body's role in the experience of the passions any real, if not lengthy, consideration –

> "…the last and most immediate cause of the passions of the soul…is simply the agitation by which the spirits move the little gland in the middle of the brain. But this doesn't enable us to distinguish one passion from another… They can be and sometimes are caused by… objects that stimulate the senses…these objects are their principal and most common causes. To discover all the passions, therefore, we need only to consider all the effects of those objects."[37]

Here, Descartes presaged but did not expand upon an idea that Spinoza and later James seized upon more clearly; that emotions are inextricably linked to their physicality. Descartes recognised this as 'sometimes' being the case; Spinoza considered it to be foundational to all emotional experience. James took the theory further – *"If we fancy some strong emotion, and then try to abstract from our consciousness of it all the feelings of its bodily symptoms, we find we have nothing left behind,* no

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[36] See Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow and the Feeling Brain,* Vintage Books, 2003, p. 283

[37] Descartes, René, 'The Passions of the Soul', in Cottingham, John, Stoothoff, Robert and Murdoch, Dugald, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes,* Cambridge University Press, 1985, Art. 51 p. 349

'mind-stuff' out of which the emotion can be constituted, and that a cold and neutral state of intellectual perception is all that remains."[38] As Spinoza had stated two centuries before, so Jamesian emotional theory recognised the impossibility of purely cognitive emotion. Disembodied emotion is not purely disembodied emotion, it is emotion without a "mind-stuff" (as James phrases it, though Spinoza might say something like 'without a physical correlate') – disembodied emotion is as devoid of conative or cognitive content as it is lacking is physicality.

Accepted theory in James' time, most notably articulated by his contemporary and ideological opponent Wilhelm Wundt, did not recognise this, and contended that perception of an object which stimulates an emotional response from us results in an essential and, importantly, non-corporeal, feeling of an emotion like fear, anger etc.[39] James, on the other hand, put forward the idea that not just expressing, but feeling emotion necessitates bodily sensation. Indeed, James considered physical feeling and bodily response an inherent part of an emotion *is*, as opposed to merely constituting an inherent part of the mechanism by which we feel emotion. For James, our emotions *are* our physical and emotional experience of them – "I now proceed to urge the vital point of my whole theory, which is this. If we fancy some strong emotion, and then try to abstract from our consciousness of it all the feelings of its characteristic bodily symptoms, we find we have nothing left behind, no " mind-stuff" out of which the emotion can be constituted, and that a cold and neutral state of intellectual perception is all that remains."[40]

Despite popular interpretations of James' work on emotions as positing that the physical attributes of the emotion constitute the emotion itself, James stated in 1890 that this distinctly is not the case – "Without the bodily states following on the perception, the latter would be purely

[38] James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, p. 451, author's own emphasis.
[39] By essential here I simply mean 'pure' in the sense of a Platonic essentialist form of particular emotions like anger, fear etc.
[40] James, William, 'What is an Emotion?', in *Mind*, Vol. 9, No. 34, April 1884, p. 193

cognitive in form, pale, colorless, destitute of emotional warmth. We might then see the bear, and judge it best to run… but we should not actually *feel* afraid…"[41] It seems clear enough from this passage that James did not eschew the importance of purely cognitive experience in emotion. However, given the accomplished size of *The Principles*, a tome exceeding thirteen hundred pages, and James' occasional substitution of style over substance when he wrote, the misinterpretation abounds.

Jamesian emotion is neither a brutish collection of bestial functions, nor the high-minded poetic stuff of cognition, but rather a tangled and uniquely human confluence of the two. Though kinaesthesia does not account for the cognitive complexity and context of what it is to experience emotion, it does, for James, account for the emotionality of that experience. Without that physically grounded emotionality, which reflects the intensity and specificity of the emotion we are experiencing, there is mere perception and a sort of emotionally absent or emotionally neutral assessment of the appropriate behavioural outcome. It is in the transmutation from perception to a rounded cognitive and physical experience that the full emotional content of the action is felt. Perception of the exciting object "alter[s] the condition of muscle, skin, and viscus; and these alterations, perceived, like the original object, perceived in as many portions of the cortex, combine with it in consciousness and transform it from an object-simply-apprehended into an object-emotionally-felt."[42] An emotion without its physical experience is not an emotion at all.

The reaction of contemporary critics was to lay a charge of prescriptiveness at James' door. However, James's concept of emotion

[41] James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, p. 450

[42] Ibid, p. 474. This quotation is from the sub-section entitled 'No Special Brain-Centres for Emotion' of James' chapter on Emotions, in which he posits the entirely incorrect assertion made in the section's title. This error, in keeping with neurological research as undertaken and understood in James' era, does not harm his thesis that perception is involved in a causal process which combines cognitive and physical processes and data to produce emotions as we experience them.

was highly nuanced an individualised. It is not the case according to James that when we experience emotion, a rigid set of cognitive experiences overlap in a sort of Venn diagram with a prescribed set of muscular, hormonal, autonomic and so on responses, dictating the 'sort' or 'grade' of emotion being experienced.[43] The role of the body in emotion gives rise to highly differentiated experience which varies between individuals. Each swift change in cognitive perception or feeling has an attendant physical sensation or reaction. On seeing a bear, John might start to sweat, shake, cry, and freeze on the spot where he is standing, while Mary might feel nauseated and lightheaded, but run away. Both are experiencing 'fear', but Jamesian fear, as experienced by individuals, has no essential symptoms; no necessary and sufficient physical articulation.[44]

Rather, the essential experience that we signify as fear is a complex set of cognitive and bodily responses which combine to create a feeling we designate as the nevertheless universally recognisable concept of fear – "Not even a Darwin has exhaustively enumerated *all* the bodily affections characteristic of any one of the standard emotions. More and more, as physiology advances, we begin to discern how almost infinitely numerous and subtle they must be."[45] There is no prescribed, universal emotional response to particular stimuli, or at least not one the physical symptoms of which can be universalised – "the same bear may truly enough excite us to either fight or flight, according as he suggests an overpowering 'idea' of his killing us, or one of our killing him".[46] James does not take issue with the subjectivity of emotion, or seek to reroute or submit it with reason

[43] James would have considered muscular responses to include the sorts of movements entailed in communication or expression, as well as those movements entailed in wider action, like shaking, or running from a bear.
[44] "How can any definite emotion, [Mr. Irons] asks, exist under such circumstances, and what is there then left to give unity to such concepts as anger or fear at all? The natural reply is that the bodily variations are within limits, and that the symptoms of the angers and of the fears of different men still preserve enough *functional* resemblance, to say the very least, in the midst of their diversity to lead us to call them by their identical names. Surely there *is* no definition of 'anger' in an 'entitative' sense." From James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 206
[45] James, William, 'What is an Emotion?', in *Mind*, Vol. 9, No. 34, 1884, p. 191
[46] James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 206

in the manner of a more classical approach. Rather, he seeks to account for the subjectivity, particularly within *The Principles* and his clarificatory essay 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', by approaching emotion through philosophy, psychology and physiology in a manner that remains qualitatively unrivalled within philosophy.

What is clear throughout James' works on emotion is that the emotional process begins with perception of an exciting object. In the section of *Principles* on emotion, heavily influenced by James' original 1884 paper 'What is an Emotion?', the role of interpretation in the causal chain between perception and actualised emotion is somewhat taken for granted. As is his habit from time to time, James glosses over a step in the process which is essential to the emotional procedure, and the reception of his theory suffered for it. Once again, he has that fateful paragraph to thank for the misinterpretation of his thesis – *"...the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact, and ... our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion."*[47] Given the expression used here, it is unsurprising that Jamesian emotion is often considered to wholly exclude the role of interpretation of that initial 'exciting' stimulus from its process. It does seem self-evidently ridiculous to interpret a psychologist and philosopher as accomplished as James as essentially purporting to hold that my emotional process goes *directly* from its inception (seeing a bear during a walk in the woods) to running (away from the bear), and that this running instantiates the hypothesis that I am afraid. Yet this interpretation is, on the most charitable possible interpretation of what James is getting at in the famed paragraph, at the very least facilitated, if not encouraged by his chosen mode of expression.

James was keenly aware of the misunderstanding, and took pains to correct it in his much lesser known (and read, as well as lesser cited) 'The Physical Basis of Emotion'. He understood the question that he had left

[47] James, William, 'The Emotions', in *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 2, Dover Publications, 2016, p. 449

dangling rather awkwardly – 'Does the emotional excitement which follows the idea follow it immediately, or secondarily and as a consequence of the 'diffusive wave' of impulses aroused?' In other words, does interpretation or some form of inherent, fleeting cognitive analysis play a role in the causal chain between perception and (emotional) action?[48]

To answer this question, we must turn to James' ideas on emotion and causality and the role of will, which will be discussed in the next section. Spinoza's convergence with Jamesian emotion extends beyond the experiential monism which reoriented classical theories of emotion to realise the fundamental role of the body in feelings and cognition. While this chapter has sought to establish the similarities between what Jamesian and Spinozistic emotion are, the next will seek to examine the relationship between Spinozistic conatus and Jamesian will in our experience of emotions, and how causality operates amid Jamesian and Spinozistic mind/body parallelism.

[48] James, William, 'The Physical Basis of Emotion', in *Psychological Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1994, p. 206

Chapter 7: William James, The Spinozistic Basis of Jamesian Indeterminism

"The only consistent way of representing a pluralism and a world whose parts may affect one another through their conduct being either good or bad is the indeterministic way…What sense can there be in condemning ourselves for taking the wrong way, unless we need have done nothing of the sort, unless the right way was open to us as well? I cannot understand the willingness to act, no matter how we feel, without the belief that acts are really good and bad. I cannot understand the belief that an act is bad, without regret at its happening. I cannot understand regret without the admission of real, genuine possibilities in the world. Only *then* is it a mockery to feel, after we have failed to do our best, that an irreparable opportunity is gone from the universe, the loss of which it must forever after mourn."[1]

In this chapter, it is my intention to continue the work begun in chapter three, and draw theoretical and philosophical connections between Spinozistic causal theory and the Jamesian account of free will. There are several essential areas in which James parts quite radically from Spinoza, but there is, as in other parts of Jamesian theory, some distinct overlap. James, devoted as he was to the concept of free will, and unsettled as he was by the notion of a hard determinism like Spinoza's, nevertheless argued for a form of freedom which blossomed in a landscape of restrictive determinism. Where Spinoza champions understanding and adequate ideas, James relies upon the notion of chance as an extrapolation of Darwinian evolutionary theory to justify the contingency he requires for our decisions and cognitive experience to have meaning. For Spinoza, understanding in itself represents an enlightenment which possesses meaning. James believes in the ability of human beings, under specific circumstances and within an otherwise determined causal system, to make decisions and change the course of events. In looking at Jamesian causal

[1] James, William, 'The Dilemma of Determinism', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, Dover New York, 2017, p. 176

theory, I will discuss James in relation to contingency, the mechanism of chance as he saw it, and the similarities (and notable disparities) between the Spinozistic and Jamesian systems. Though there are important and mechanistically fundamental differences between the two, both skirt the purest form of determinism in their own way through human understanding, and both come out the other side without fully convincing the reader that they have done what they set out to do.

Prior to William James, many theologically inclined philosophers were dualists about free will (Spinoza being one notable exception), considering free will to be causally distinct from the world in which it is applied. Will is, under such an outlook, a cognitive reality which we freely exercise when presented with options during the course of our experience, and in pursuit of our desires. Such a form of free will was, at least for those who commonly espoused it during Spinoza's lifetime, considered to be God-given in a literal sense; a bastion of humanity untouchably ensconced outside the physical realm, and both unique and essential to human beings. Under this interpretation, free will was among other things a metaphysical weapon against the evils of appetitive decision-making, and a means of holding ourselves and others accountable for their thoughts and actions in a world where human action is the result of free choice. The latter interpretation has continued relevance and has widespread pragmatic application. For Spinoza, the exercise of free will is impossible within an enclosed, self-perpetuating and determined monistic system. For James, the idea of determinism does not in itself necessitate predeterminism. This is the important dissimilarity between the causal theories of the two; Spinoza's determinism is strict and absolute, James' is not, and leaves room for human volition to have an influence upon the course of events. There is still, however, much in common between the two. Both are interested in the role of emotions, and the consequences for emotions, in free will. Both accede that there is an interplay between our emotional and rational capacities in decision-making, and that these have psychological effects. Both highlight the importance of nurturing honourable, or virtuous emotion rather than solely eschewing destructive

emotion in a quest for personal betterment and enlightenment, and both acknowledge the role of the individual in therapeutic methodology – for both James and Spinoza, the key to both individual liberty and freedom from tyrannical emotion (as opposed to constructive, rational emotion) lies in understanding.

The function of human societies in modernity as we recognise them is predicated on the existence of free will, and this was no different during Spinoza's lifetime. Henry Oldenburg's letter, cited in chapter three of this thesis, clarified the potential consequences during his and Spinoza's lifetime of a world without free will which permeated debate.[2] They are the same consequences feared and referenced by those who discuss the potential results of scrapping free will (in a pragmatic, social context) today – an abdication of the concept of personal responsibility and a sense of trapped purposelessness, among others. Such reliance on the doctrine of free will was hardly less dominant in William James' era.[3] In James' lifetime, debates around free will came thoroughly back into fashion and open discourse on the subject entailed fewer potentially negative social consequences than had been the case for theorists who worked around the same time as Spinoza. The relevance of the free will debate was reinvigorated for James and his contemporaries through advances in the philosophy of psychology and psychological theory generally. James' generation had the benefit, in a way that Spinoza's did not, of a wider literature and longer lineage of free will debate, and the burgeoning field of psychology provided a new theoretical outlook from which to consider and theorise about free will.

By the time James began to work on causal theory and the questions about free will which naturally arise from it, he would take pains to discredit the notion of free will considered "the absence of external coercive causes…

[2] See p. 79

[3] For a thorough account of free will through history, and for more on its role during the period in which Spinoza and his contemporaries were writing, see Frede, Michael, *A Free Will: Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought*, University of California Press, 2011, p. 103

freedom of action, not freedom of will."[4] Compatibilism, the perspective that a certain degree of volitional or voluntary action is possible within a determined (or more accurately, a predetermined, universal structure) aimed to reconcile free will with determinism, arguing that there is room for a combination of, or any one of the following – events, actions or outcomes without causes, those without deterministic or predetermined causes, and events caused by agents or substances. This concept left wriggle room for thinkers like James to argue a limited role for volition within a wider system of determinism, essentially placing him within a sub-category of compatibilism which he referred to, perhaps a little untidily, as indeterminism. James and his contemporaries would look closely at the relationship through which our rational capacity and emotions interact in relation to the will. In doing so, James was carrying on and branching off work on free will and determinism that Spinoza had originally made a new and unique contribution to. Indeed, James' belief that there is no act of will, volition or desire which is wholly rational, or wholly appetitive solidified Spinoza's idea that that our rational and emotional apparatuses do not and cannot function in complete isolation from one another.

Unlike Spinoza, who, despite the ambiguity and problems in his causal theory outlined in chapter three in relation to compatibilism, is still largely considered a 'hard determinist' by scholars today, James was a stalwart and overt defender of the concept of free will and its fundamental role within human psychology.[5] He and C.S. Peirce (the colleague and friend to whom James dedicated *The Will to Believe*) were both influenced in this respect by Charles Darwin and the role of chance in the Darwinian theory of evolution, adapting the theory (at least as James saw it) to a

[4] Doyle, Bob, 'Jamesian Free Will, 'The Two-Stage Model of William James', in *William James Studies*, Vol. 5, 2010, p. 3

[5] The terms 'hard-' and 'soft determinist' were first used by William James in his address to the Harvard Divinity School. See James, William, 'The Dilemma of Determinism', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, Dover New York, 2017, p. 149

theory of causality.[6] Peirce argued for consideration of the idea of chance-spontaneity not as a notion that conflicts with the idea that the universe is governed by universal laws or principles of necessity but rather as what Calcaterra calls 'a metaphysical conjecture' that might be robust enough to serve an explanatory role instead of determinism.[7] Peirce saw this as particularly pertinent given that Darwinian evolution – at least as he and James saw it – is largely incompatible with or on the most charitable interpretation, problematic for deterministic theories. [8] As far as Peirce is concerned, spontaneity which comes about as a result of chance constitutes a pattern which we can identify in the ever-changing complexity of reality. The inclination of nature toward spontaneous change, which is not best explained by the anarchy of organic and pure randomness, accounts for alteration in the world around us. In the Jamesian sense, each change or course of events can be explained in relation to the causal order after the fact, which is also in line with his idea of Darwinian theory. "We have seen what determinism means: we have seen that indeterminism is rightly described as meaning chance; and we have seen that chance, the very name of which we are urged to shrink from as from a metaphysical pestilence, means only the negative fact that no part of the world, however big, can claim to control absolutely the destinies of the whole."[9]

As anyone interested in constructing a counter argument to determinism tends to be, James was deeply concerned with the notion of contingency. In relation to free will and his psychological theory, it was important for James to establish a reasonable account of alternative choices and behaviours in order to solidify the possibility of alternative outcomes and states of affairs. Our decisions and actions must have organic

[6] See Peirce, Charles S., 'The Doctrine of Necessity Examined', in *The Monist*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1892, pp. 321-337, and Peirce, Charles S., 'Evolutionary Love', in *The Monist,* Vol. 3, No. 2, 1893, pp. 176-200
[7] Colcaterra, Rosa M., 'Varieties of Synechism: Peirce and James on Mind-World Continuity', in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 2011, p. 414
[8] Ibid., p. 417
[9] James, William, 'The Dilemma of Determinism', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, Dover New York, 2017, p. 159

consequences which impact the chain of causality in order for free will to be feasible in the Jamesian sense. In other words, James saw that for our will to have an impact on the nature of reality, there need to be possible alternative futures. Within his work, this idea took the form of chance in the Epicurean understanding of the term – a sort of randomness that allowed for contingency within the causal order of nature, thus allowing for undetermined events and or outcomes in direct contravention of what we might call Spinozistic necessity.[10]

James considered the sort of determinism advocated by people like Spinoza to elide an essential aspect of human cognition and life – the ability to think, or do, differently to the way that we currently do; the ability to make adjustments, internal and external to us, by acts of volition. James believed that the decisions we believe ourselves to have (when presented with external stimuli from our environment) in a cognitive sense are in fact legitimate mental experiences reflective of a reality; genuine options with direct influence on outcomes and the potential to go one way or another, making a change or changes to what could otherwise have been, had we made a different decision or pursued a different course of action. Though predeterminism makes sense in the context of a holistic system like Spinoza's, Jamesian psychology champions the role of ambiguous possibility and consequently choice as brought about by chance. For this to have meaning, we must be able to respond organically to the course of events. As we shall see late in this chapter, James allows for some determinism in the sense that our actions are largely determined by our feelings, desires, experience etc. In other words, our decisions are determined by our minds, but are not necessarily predetermined.

If x thing happens when I am feeling jolly, I may take one course of action. My response to x thing reacts may be very different if x thing happens when I am sad. If it is a notable long-term characteristic of

[10] Long, Anthony A., 'Chance and Natural Law in Epicureanism', in *Phronesis*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1977, p. 66

Jimmy's personality that he is reluctant to try new things, then he is probably unlikely to want to try a Morris dancing class regardless of his mood, and so on. His action in this respect might be partially determined by what we know to be his character, but it is not necessarily predetermined in the Spinozistic sense. It is possible that a set of circumstances could exist in which Jimmy would consent to give Morris dancing class a go. If we have legitimate choice, then outcomes cannot be decisively fixed. Chance presents us with what James characterises as 'alternative possibilities', and our freedom of will exists in possessing the option to consent or otherwise to any one of these possibilities. Chance does not determine our choice of action or its resulting outcome. If it did, it would qualify more as a turn of events we simply failed to accurately predict than an instance of genuine chance. As far as James is concerned, the direct outcomes of decisions we make as a result of chance (whether understood by us or not) are determined by our own free choice. This is precisely what is missing from the prescriptive account of determinism that James gives in *The Dilemma of Determinism* –

> "[Determinism] professes that those parts of the universe already laid down absolutely appoint and decree what the other parts shall be. The future has no ambiguous possibilities hidden in its womb: the part we call the present is compatible only with one totality. Any other future complement than the one fixed from eternity is impossible. The whole is in each and every part, and welds it with the rest into an absolute unity, an iron block, in which there can be no equivocation or shadow of turning."[11]

Indeterminism, with which James aligns himself, on the other hand, "…admits that possibilities may be in excess of actualities, and that things not yet revealed to our knowledge may really in themselves be ambiguous. Of two alternative futures which we conceive, both may now be really possible; and the one become impossible only at the moment when the other excludes it by becoming real itself. Indeterminism thus denies the world to be one unbending unit of fact. It says there is a certain ultimate

[11] Ibid. p. 151

pluralism in it; and, so saying it corroborates our ordinary unsophisticated view of things. To that view, actualities seem to float in a wider sea of possibilities from out of which they are chosen; and, *somewhere*, indeterminism says, such possibilities exist, and form a part of truth. "[12]

Jonathan Bricklin captures something important about James' bounded freedom model with the following description: "James' psychological indeterminism does not…rule out determinism, only a determinable determinism."[13] Jamesian Indeterminism injects a model like Spinoza's black and white determinism with a palette of various greys. It is predicated on contingency, and in a way which is comparatively Spinozistic – though of course operates by an entirely different mechanism – it relays significant power on the individual. Choices, granted or presented to us by the regular but arbitrary mechanism of chance, are our own to make, and possibilities, where presented, might be analysed and their desirability and potential consequences deliberated upon until a decision is made and enacted. According to Doyle, James was the first "to enunciate clearly a two-stage decision process, with *chance* in a *present* time of random alternatives, leading to a *choice* which grants consent to one possibility and transforms an equivocal ambiguous *future* into an unalterable and simple *past."*[14] This process involves a 'temporal sequence' of non-determined possibilities, followed by a choice which is determined by the cognitive faculties or profile of the chooser and then consequently no longer subject to chance. The undetermined (and thereby 'free') factor in the Jamesian process is nothing more than chance itself. The choices we make when presented with chance are to some significant extent determined, in that they follow necessarily from the character and behavioural patterns and inclinations of the chooser. Values, mood at the time of making a decision and general experience will determine our

[12] James, William, 'The Dilemma of Determinism', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, Dover New York, 2017, pp. 150-151 [original emphasis]
[13] Bricklin, Jonathan, *the Illusion of Will, Self and Time: William James's Reluctant Guide to Enlightenment,* State University of New York Press, 2015, p. 65
[14] Doyle, Bob, 'Jamesian Free Will, The Two-Stage Model of William James', in *William James Studies*, Vol. 5, 2010, p. 7

responses. Doyle observes "James' two-stage model effectively separates chance (the indeterministic free element) from choice (an arguably determined decision that follows causally from one's character, values, and especially feelings and desires at the moment of decision."[15] Hence Jamesian indeterminism is still comparatively restrictive, though much less so than Spinozistic determinism.

Perhaps most importantly, and in a theory which brings James back somewhat in the direction of Spinoza, there is a legitimate role for reason in the process of Jamesian decision-making. This indeterminism is very far indeed from the concept of the sort of anarchistic randomness that so unsettles both determinists and compatibilists. James does not allow for the actions and decisions we so fundamentally feel to be our own to be consigned to random forces, but also prevents us from being trapped (for such is the sense in which strict determinism seems to impact people) in a rigidly determined universe. For James, it is not the world around us which is determined; rather we are determined. Or, to be more precise, the way that we feel, think and respond is determined by experience. This in turn naturally impacts the choices we make, by acting as a good (but not perfect) predictor of our likely inclinations. This is not an alien concept. Indeed, one doesn't have to look far to find it even today. It would not be inappropriate to suggest that a man raised in hardship by wolves is less responsible, due to his experience and possessing less agency, for biting someone than a man raised in relative comfort in London, by attentive parents. We will suggest that the first man's experience determined his behaviour – when wolves feel threatened, they attack, and his experience is consistent with reacting to stimuli like a wolf. There is, we will argue, little to no room in this causal chain for another outcome.

Though it seems almost antagonistic to Spinozistic causal theory, Jamesian indeterminism has some overlap with Spinozistic determinism in that Spinoza allows for what could be considered an element of rogue

[15] Ibid. p. 8

volition in his system in the form of adequate ideas or understanding, which makes it psychologically richer (and frankly less forbidding to envisage living under). However, it also creates the sort of logistical problems that were considered in Chapter Three. For James, the point in the causal chain at which the possibility for real volition is introduced is when chance occurs. Since Spinoza did not hold, as a 'Hard Determinist' (at least to use Jamesian terminology), that there is any role at all for chance within the causal chain, there seems to be a certain inconsistency in his theory, particularly when considered in the context of statements like that he made at II. A 1. It says: *"The essence of man does not involve necessary existence, i.e. from the order of existence it can happen equally that this or that man does exist, or that he does not exist."* This axiom from part two has prompted a number of readings, and is generally held to represent an inconsistency within the *Ethics*. Spinoza appears to be suggesting here that existence is not part of a human being's essence. Consequently, whether the particular human beings John or Sarah exist appears to be contingent, though this does indeed to appear to represent a very challenging inconsistency for Spinoza. It looks here as though there can potentially be contingency in relation to objects within the substance, but not to the entity of the substance itself.[16]

On the one hand, Spinoza's monistic causality is well characterised by James' general description of hard determinism –we and our experiences are mere links for Spinoza in a causal chain. However, we become enslaved by causal forces only when we possess inadequate understanding of the causal factors which influence us. Yet James' and Spinoza's positions on contingency and free will are closer than they may at first appear. Spinoza does leave scope for a psychological understanding of choices as dominated by inadequate ideas. In other words, he permits an interpretation of human minds as operating within an external world of which full understanding is impossible. This can confuse his readers, who

[16] Perler, Dominik, 'The Problem of Necessitarianism (1P28-36)', in Hampe, Michael, Renz, Ursula, Schnepf, Robert (eds.), *Spinoza's Ethics: A Collective Commentary*, Brill, 2011, p. 59

presume that Spinoza's strict ontological determinism precludes epistemic possibility or contingency in the realm of psychology. In fact, Spinoza's determinism about ontology contextualises his concept of human reliance upon or subjectivity to inadequate ideas, and consequently explains our subjective feeling that various options or choices are available to us – that they are contingent, or possible within a world that Spinoza tells us is strictly deterministic. As he touches upon within the *Theological-Political Treatise* and expands upon in significant detail within the fourth part of the *Ethics,* the human species is largely motivated and ruled by the affects—

> "Now if human beings were so constituted by nature that they desired nothing but what true reason points them to, society would surely need no laws; men would only need to learn true moral doctrine, in order to do what is truly useful of their own accord with upright and free mind. But they are not so constituted, far from it. All men do indeed seek their own interest, but it is not from the dictate of sound reason; for the most part they pursue things and judge them to be in their interest merely because they are carried away by sensual desire and by their passions (which have no regard for the future and for other things)."[17]

Our experiential belief in contingency in turn evokes further subjective emotional response. Our emotional instability has the potential within individuals to interfere with what we can know, and how we identify knowledge. Consequently Spinoza advises us, first within the *Theological-Political Treatise* and then, as clarified in chapter two of this thesis, within the *Ethics*, to be circumspect about emotion, and to pursue reasoned understanding rather than one constructed via the passions. "The wise alone therefore in Solomon's view live with a peaceful and stable

[17] Israel, Jonathan (ed.), Silverthorne, Michael and Israel, Jonathan (trans.), Spinoza, Benedict de, *Cambridge Texts in Philosophy: Theological-Political Treatise,* Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 72-3

purpose, not like the impious whose minds fluctuate between different passions, and therefore (as Isaiah 57.20 also says) possess neither peace nor calm."[18]

Since it is the passions which increase or decrease our power of action, it is only understanding our own ideas (better described as possessing adequate ideas) and emotions in relation to causes that allows us to *feel* differently about them, and consequently have greater or lesser power of action. Rice draws a connection between James and Spinoza in this respect through B.F. Skinner's clarification of the chronology of this process – "There is no important causal connection between the reinforcing effects of a stimulus and the feelings to which it gives rise. We might be tempted to say, following William James' reinterpretation of emotion, that a stimulus is not reinforcing because it feels good, but feels good because it is reinforcing." This interpretation is an interesting one when considered in the context of Spinoza's statement in Part Three of the *Ethics*– "it is clear that 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."[19] However, Skinner's observation makes the same common misinterpretation of

[18] Israel, Jonathan (ed.), Silverthorne, Michael and Israel, Jonathan (trans.), Spinoza, Benedict de, *Cambridge Texts in the Philosophy of Pscyhology: Theological-Political Treatise*, Cambridge University Press, p. 66

[19] Skinner, B.F., *Beyond Freedom and Dignity,* Walden, 1971, pp. 101-102. This connection between James and Spinoza is suggested by Rice in Rice, Lee C., 'Action in Spinoza's Account of Affectivity', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.), *Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press, 1999, p. 167. Rice erroneously mislabels the Spinoza reference above (III. P 9/S) as II. P 9/S. I have chosen Edwin Curley's translation in line with the rest of this thesis rather than the translation referenced by Rice in *Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist* as I think it more faithful to the original text – *Hic conatus cum ad mentum solam refurtur, voluntas appellatur sed cum ad mentem et corpus simul refertur, vocatur appetitus, qui proinde nihil aliud est quam ipsa hominis essentia ex cujus natura ea quæ ipsius conservationi inserviunt, necessario sequuntur atque adeo homo ad eadem agendum determinatus est. Deinde inter appetitum et cupiditatem nulla est differentia nisi quod cupiditas ad homines plerumque referatur quatenus sui appetitus sunt conscii et propterea sic definiri potest nempe cupiditas est appetitus cum ejusdem conscientia. Constat itaque ex his omnibus nihil nos conari, velle, appetere neque cupere quia id bonum esse judicamus sed contra nos proptera aliquid bonum esse judicare quia id conamur, volumus, appetimus atque cupimus.*

Spinoza that we ran into in Chapter One of this thesis, and which was made by Susan James.[20]

Spinoza clearly states at III P 11/S, using the examples of joy and sadness, that *"By Joy, therefore, I shall understand in what follows that passion by which the Mind passes to a greater perfection. And by Sadness, that passion by which it passes to a lesser perfection."* The passion is the vehicle for betterment. Skinner draws a connection between James and Spinoza where such a connection does not necessarily exist by suggesting that both Spinoza and James hold that a stimulus makes us feel good specifically because is good for us. The reinforcement happens first, and then the feeling. James does indeed hold this view, but it might be considered causally quite opposed to Spinoza. For Spinoza, emotions are the vehicle and the trigger 'by which' we move from one level of power of action to another. Since they are the means to the end that is an alteration in power of action, they logically cannot also be its consequence. For James, in line with his own body first theory of emotion, the stimulus acts upon us in the bodily sense, and our emotional interpretation, or rather the emotional consequences of that 'acting on' happen second. Emotions are, among other physical and cognitive outcomes in response to a stimulus, the consequence of the process, and therefore cannot also be the means by which that process occurs. Skinner's observation – that a stimulus 'feels good because it is reinforcing' and not the other way around unintentionally serves to clarify the contrasting view in James and how incompatible it is with Spinoza's outlook on emotion and power of action. There is no direct causal role for Spinoza– though there is a strong and unique associative one – between the impact of some stimulus or other which increases or decreases our power of action, and the feelings that come about in sync with this process.

[20] See Chapter One, p. 54, see also James, Susan, *Passion and Action: The Emotions in Seventeenth Century Philosophy,* Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 147; The original text states: *Per lutetium itaque in sequentibus intelligam passionem qua mens ad majorem perfectionem transit. Per tristitiam autem passionem qua ipsa ad minorem transit perfectionem.*

> *"…these image affections or ideas form a certain state (constitutio) of the affected body and mind, which implies more or less perfection than the preceding state. Therefore, from one state to another, from one image or idea to another, there are transitions, passages that are experienced, durations through which we pass to a greater or a lesser perfection… These continual durations or variations of perfection are called "affects" or feelings (affectus)."*[21]

There is, for Spinoza, some element of volitional action (if only in the form of volitional thought, rather than will) in the causal chain which leads to our choices and consequent actions, even if he does not allow for uncaused or undetermined events, or save any role at all for chance. Doing so would cause the entire machine of his monistic structure to malfunction. Chrysippus indicated that one uncaused cause would annihilate the universe, spurring it to be "disrupted and disintegrate into pieces and cease to be a unity functioning as a single system…"[22] In the case of Spinoza's system, this would be a true statement. The system is and must be entirely self-contained; its function is predicated on its causal self-containment. Everything is, inheres in and comes from God; there is no room for rogue causality. Though adequate ideas and understanding represent liberty and freedom to an extent Spinoza considers both important and highly legitimate within the context of individual experience, this is only insofar as one understands the restrictive nature of causality. Spinoza theorises that we cease to be enslaved when we recognise the truth of determinism, and that this recognition promotes positive emotions like joy, which increase our power of action, and consequently, our freedom. As with his concept of 'God', Spinoza's concept of 'freedom' does not necessarily overlap comfortably with traditional interpretations of the word.

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[21] Deleuze, Giles, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, Robert Hurley (trans.), City Lights Books, 1988, p. 48

[22] Cited in Berofsky, Bernard, *Nature's Challenge to Free Will,* Oxford University Press, 2012, p.7

The same essential problem features within the causal theories of both James and Spinoza with regard to their psychologies, which is that there is this element of seemingly unaccounted for, or at least formally unexplained, choice, a self-motivated or fuelled overtly volitional break in the causal chain which appears to change (or at least appears to have the potential to change) outcomes or the course of events.[23] For Spinoza, this appears ironically to be *more* volitional than it is for James, since virtuous or noble feelings (as distinct from a feeling of virtue or nobility) are associated with a change in our power of action, and this volitional interruption allows us to make our ideas more complete, or rather to formulate more complete and adequate ideas, thus resulting in increased rather than decreased power of action. In James, the same problem is there, except instead of inhering only in the cognitive aspects of the process, it also opens us up to potential overt behavioural responses, though not of course in the opportunities for action externally presented to us. Both men maintain that influences external to us are outside our control – there are things which happen 'to' us, and these we cannot change.

The only element of choice would potentially present itself in the form of a decision about how to respond to this stimulus, or chance, or whatever else one might call it. Spinoza argues that the opportunities for 'choice' we may encounter are causally determined by the universe. There is some small and slightly ambiguous (despite the work of Parts Two, Four and Five of the *Ethics*) element of volition in our psychological response. In James, chance can determine the opportunities for choice we may encounter, but our reactions (psychologically speaking) are causally determined by our experience, character, desires and so on. Jamesian freedom is the absence of predeterminism, but can still be construed as a sort of psychological determinism. Will has an important power within

[23] Use of the word 'volitional' here may appear controversial, however, though volition in this respect at least appears to be a factor within a determined system, as discussed in Chapter Three, and will be looked at further in this chapter, this is not in fact the case for Spinoza, though it is indeed the case for William James.

the Jamesian cognitive superstructure. Indeed, it has a fundamental power to the extent that our decisions do belong unambiguously to us as individuals, and we alone possess ultimate responsibility for them. This does bear some resemblance to Spinoza, who also assigns special power to the individual within his system, and also to Wundt, as we have seen already within the context of this work. I alone possess the ability to liberate myself from the shackles of appetitive emotion through the power of adequate ideas. For both Spinoza and James, the fate of the individual lies within his own potential. However, only for James is this freedom straightforwardly a matter of will.

In the chapter on will within *The Principles of Psychology*, James devotes a mere ten pages of the book's thirteen hundred to looking at free will, and decides at the end of them that the free will question is not one it is necessary to engage with in the context of that work. He states almost glibly – "We can therefore leave the free-will question altogether out of our account."[24] However, James makes it unequivocally clear within that limited ten-page account that he holds free will to be legitimate, that we make free choices and that our actions are subject directly to those choices. There is no ambiguity in his account of human power to influence or change the course of events through chance and choice –

"Will you or won't you have it so?" is the most probing question we are ever asked; we are asked it every hour of the day, and about the largest as well as the smallest, the most theoretical as well as the most practical, things. We answer by *consents* or *non-consents* and not by words. What wonder that these dumb responses should seem our deepest organs on communication with the nature of things! What wonder if the effort demanded by them be the measure of our worth as men! What wonder if the amount which we accord of it be the one strictly underived and original

[24] James, William, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. Two, Dover Publications, 1890, p. 576

contribution which we make to the world!"[25]However, six years before, in an address to Harvard Divinity students in Lowell Lecture Hall later published in *The Unitarian Review* in September 1884, James laid out his own position on the free will debate very clearly – "I thus disclaim openly on the threshold all pretension to prove to you that the freedom of the will is true."[26]

James, like Freud, who will be the focus in later chapters of this thesis, was influenced by Darwin's evolutionary theory, and concepts which bear relevance to it such as chance and instinct. With the advent and success of s, the 1920s and 1930s would see a move away from Darwinian and evolutionary theory in psychology, which of course would return in the form more familiar to us today, within fields like evolutionary psychology. This resurgence in a much more advanced form began to take shape during the 1970s with the establishment of evolutionary biology as a legitimate field. Evolutionary psychology within the natural and social sciences began to gain a foothold in academic consciousness during the 1980s, and was quite different to the field at its genesis, as espoused by thinkers like Wundt, Freud and William James and before it was a distinct area of the discipline of psychology. The driving force or impulse of being, which Spinoza called *conatus,* Freud called *libido* and James called will or effort was essential to James' conception of free will.

Jamesian effort bears some resemblance to Spinoza's concept of conatus or striving within the causal structure, though there are notable differences between the two. Though will does play a relevant role within both systems, will within monistic Spinozism is not free, and cannot constitute a cause in itself. There is a sort of irony to this, given that Spinoza's prescriptive solution to the tyranny and blindness of negative passions is a strong dose of Stoic styled self-discipline to promote positive emotions

[25] James, William, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. Two, Dover Publications, 1890, p. 579
[26] James, William, 'The Dilemma of Determinism', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, Dover Publications, 2017, p. 146

like joy (notably different from mere pleasure, and more fundamentally constructive and meaningful), which improve our power of action. It is understanding alone through adequate ideas which allows us to moderate our responses to stimuli, but only in affective terms – *"the Mind has no other power than that of thinking and forming adequate ideas, as we have shown (by IIIP3) above."* (V. P 4/S)[27] Within Jamesian psychology, the power of will or effort, as this chapter aims to show, is quite different to the account of will within Spinoza.

Effort might feasibly be either active or passive for James, but the striving toward certain thoughts, actions or decisions in an almost Stoic attempt to change or understand our emotions or environment is an active process. It articulates in a new way the point in Spinoza's causal structure at which we can bring ourselves to an enlightened comprehension of our own thoughts and feelings by working to have complete ideas/understanding. Just as in Spinoza, the invocation of will, the taking ownership of our intellectual processes (insofar as we can) and the seeking of enlightenment influence our power of action. We can better ourselves by force of will, or disimprove via a consensual methodology of passivity and permitted ignorance. The less we know and understand, the more we are led by powerful and capricious emotions which present themselves as truths, or truth statements about the world around us. The more unanalytically emotional we permit ourselves to be, the more we resemble a donkey blindly and hungrily following a carrot, without paying heed to what lies beyond it. To put it plainly, and in a sentiment that mimics Spinoza's system, the less we understand our place and our emotions within causal processes, the more truly determined our actions will be.

Jamesian effort seems to arise in two forms – active and passive – or rather, it exists in only one form, that being active, but we mistakenly believe the passive to constitute a form of effort. James argues that it is

[27] III. P 3 states: "The actions of the mind arise from adequate ideas alone; the passions depend on inadequate ideas alone."

not, since the passive variety has little or nothing of the volitional to it. Passive effort is exercise almost without consciousness, and is consequently difficult to characterise as an act of will in the same vein as a conscious act of will which entails some level of striving and conscious effort. Effort, James tells us, inheres in a conscious act of will through which we both knowingly or consciously strive toward an outcome and invest conscious energy (even if it be the mere work of a moment) in the act of achieving this outcome. One of the examples he uses to elucidate how will works, and what its absence looks like, is very relatable to most all of us, though possibly not to the Stoic spirit of the likes of Spinoza, whose self-discipline was legendary, and calls to mind Marcus Aurelius' encouragement in Part Five of his *Meditations* that his reader should get out of bed in the morning ready to work and reject any urge to linger in the warmth. James, always relatable and thoroughly human in his mode of expression, describes in his unmistakable style the comfort of being warm in his bed, knowing that he should of course get up and go about the day, but lacking the will to push himself into the action. He lies there "…with full consciousness of the *pros* and the *cons,* the warm rest and the chill, the sluggishness and the manliness, time lost and the morning's duties…"[28]

He contrasts this with volitional action, which again is most recognisable in everyday experience. Half an hour passes as he lies there warm in his bed, "engrossed in some revery or other, when suddenly the notion strikes me "it is getting late", and before I know it, I am up in the cold, having executed without the smallest effort of resolve, an action which, half an hour previous… I was utterly unable to decide upon."[29] The passive action is one which we execute almost as if on autopilot. It is not an action to which we do not consent, per se – it does not 'happen to us' as if the action is external to us, but we are not aware of any volition which prompts us to

[28] James, William, 'The Feeling of Effort', in *Essays in Psychology,* Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 103
[29] Ibid., p. 103

undertake the action. The thinking that sets the action into motion does not involve any overt act of conscious volition on our part.

Like bending to pick up a piece of string we spy on the ground at our feet during a conversation without evening realising until the action is underway, we are not expending cognitive effort in actions which James would consider examples of passive effort. "Effort, attention and volition are, in fact, similar elements of Feeling differing all in the same generic manner from its receptive, or simply sensational elements; and forming the active as distinguished from the passive parts of our mental nature"[30] Even when actions involve our conscious consent and active effort, they are a complex interplay between mind and body. James, a champion of pluralism in a manner that could hardly be less Spinozist no matter how one looks at it, took for granted the interactive relationship between body and mind, which Spinoza believed entirely illusory. That acts of will, for example, propel the body into motion is a true reality for James – "The difference between a simply passive sensation, and one in which the elements of attention and volition are found, has also been recorded by popular speech in the difference between such verbs as to see and to look; to hear and to listen; to smell and to scent; to feel and to touch."[31] The layering of mental, bodily, internal, external and contingent influences result for James in what appears legitimately to be the presentation of choice. Rather than labelling himself either a determinist *or* a defender of free will, however, James found a comfortable middle position encompassing both, and neither.

James was very conscious of the arguments against determinism, and looks at some of them in *The Dilemma of Determinism*, but was particularly dismissive of what he considered that weakness in determinism which mandated full necessity. One undetermined cause, just one which is unaccounted for within the formal mechanism of a

[30] Ibid., p. 83
[31] Ibid., p. 83

deterministic system, is sufficient to scuttle the formal mechanism of necessity, as Chryssipus made clear above, and pull the whole thing down. Of course, as far as Spinoza and other 'hard' determinists are concerned, this does not represent a problem – there is no remit for such a causal wild card within his deterministic apparatus, even if some inconsistencies within the *Ethics* suggest that contingency may be possible in certain contexts. James, however, was less inclined to grab his smelling salts at the first sign of contingency or unpredetermined events. Provided we scrap what he thought of as the barren and prohibitively restrictive monism of philosophers like Spinoza, there is plenty of room for the fertile opportunities of chance and indeterminate future outcomes and events. "Pluralism… has no need of this dogmatic rigoristic temper. Provided you grant *some* separation among things, some tremor of independence, some free play of parts on one another, some real novelty or chance, however minute, she is amply satisfied."[32]

Indeterminism, James argued, leaves comfortable space for contingency giving rise to volitional human action. James suggests that indeterminism and determinism might operate in conjunction within the same universe. The world, he essentially tells us, will continue to spin on its axis. "Nevertheless, many persons talk as if the minutest dose of disconnectedness of one part with another, the smallest modicum of independence, the faintest tremor of ambiguity about the future, for example, would ruin everything, and turn this goodly universe into a sort of insane sand-heap or nulliverse…Since future human volitions are as a matter of fact the only the only ambiguous things we are tempted to believe in, let us stop for a moment to make ourselves sure whether their independent or accidental character need be fraught with such direful consequences to the universe as these."[33] James argues that an element or version of human freedom made possible through the mechanism of

[32] James, William, 'Lecture IV: The One and The Many', in *Pragmatism,* Hackett Publishing, 1981, p. 73
[33] James, William, 'The Dilemma of Determinism', in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy*, Dover Publications, 2017, pp. 154-155

chance is not in fact such a fundamental, world-rending threat to determinism on the whole.

Chance, according to James, simply refers to 'indeterminate future volitions'. A choice, once made, is after the fact sealed in perpetuity, and will have a solidified place within the causal chain that cannot be called into question. It will appear when looked back upon to be the only possible course of events which of course, in retrospect, it certainly is. Neither determinism nor indeterminism allow for alternative pasts. However, before the fact, whether James walks home via Oxford Street or Divinity Avenue seems like an open choice. Spinoza suggests that this choice is an illusion, and James does not completely disagree with that interpretation of the options laid before him. In a sense, his choice will be determined by contributing factors which are unique to himself as an individual like his personality as it currently is, his mood, his level of physical fitness. Other factors, such as whether or not he remembered to bring an umbrella with him to work that morning, will also factor into the decision. However, James argues that the fact that there is an element of indeterminate future volition involved in the choice before he makes it, and since he knows that he *could* go home by either route, he possesses 'no effective claim' on the outcome before he makes the choice which will bring it about. He cannot know in advance which decision he will make, and can imagine different circumstances and contributing factors which could potentially influence him to choose the Divinity Avenue route home over Oxford Street, or vice versa.

Jamesian indeterminism essentially lies in, and is predicated upon, a sort of practical mystery. If my mind is a computer, it is insufficient to run the software of the wider reality outside my body, which is too advanced, complex and expansive for me to process. A mind which could process all of that could theoretically understand the system of causality down to the tiniest and most seemingly drab or unimportant choices we make each day (such as whether to have mushroom soup or tomato soup at lunch time). But no, James intervenes. This cannot be so. Chance is a causal spanner

in the gears for which we cannot feasibly account. It is the mystery in life, the causal ambiguity, the foundation of contingency; the thing that tips your boat over when you thought you had accurately predicted a nice calm trip across the seemingly smooth lake.

It was Spinoza who first presented an account of rational emotion of the sort that we see within the work of William James. It is within Spinoza's account of passions and affects that the root of Jamesian body-first emotion – an account of emotion which makes it impossible to fully account for in purely disembodied terms – has its philosophical origin. In terms of his position on determinism, William James is the bridge between Spinoza, a 'hard' determinist, and Sigmund Freud, to whom we will turn in the next chapter. Jamesian indeterminism is an attempt at a functional workaround, grounded in chance, to the Freudian determinism which resembles the bounded necessity of the Spinozistic system, but, like James, dispenses with the monistic perspective to create a view of the world that looks significantly different from that built by either James or Spinoza, though undoubtedly informed by the ideas Spinoza contributed to psychology, and likely James also.

Chapter 8: Sigmund Freud, The Unintentional 'Philosopher' and a Spinozistic Therapeutic Approach

"I confess without hesitation my dependence regarding the teachings of Spinoza. If I never cared to cite his name directly, it is because I never drew the tenets of my thinking from the study of that author but rather from the atmosphere he created."[1]

Within the discipline Freud fathered, much of his own foundational thought and theory has been disregarded or dismissed by those who succeeded him, and consequently modern iterations of psychoanalysis look quite different to the version that sprang from Freudian roots.[2] Though aspects of Freudian psychoanalysis are still considered intellectually respectable to defend, the system as a whole has fallen from favour, and is considered unreliable in both a scientific and therapeutic context. Indeed, an article in *Psychological Science* declared that "…there is literally nothing to be said, scientifically or therapeutically, to the advantage of the entire Freudian system or any of its component dogmas".[3] This is an extraordinary statement to make about the ideas of one of the founders of the field of psychology; a man who certainly profoundly influenced the creation and development of that field as we recognise it now, and remains one of (if not *the*) most recognisable names to come out of the discipline. However, there are few who argue in favour of the Freudian therapeutic method today, and fewer still who would suggest that Freudian theory is supported by advances in psychological and scientific knowledge which have been made since Freud.[4]

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[1] Freud, Sigmund, quoted in Hessing, Siegfried, 'Freud et Spinoza', in *Revue Philosophique de la France Et de l'Etranger, Vol. 167, No 2, 1977*, p. 168, cited in Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza,* Vintage Books, 2003, p. 260

[2] See Gelfand, Toby and Kerr, John (eds.), *Freud and the History of Psychoanalysis,* Routledge, 2015; Burnham, John (ed.), *After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America,* University of Chicago Press, 2012

[3] Crews, Frederick, 'The Verdict on Freud', in *Psychological Science,* Vol. 7, No. 2, 1996, p. 63

[4] See Munchow, Michael and Shamdasani, Sonu (eds.), *Speculations After Freud: Psychoanalysis, Philosophy and Culture,* Routledge, 2002

The wider purpose of this thesis is to locate and outline the confluence between Spinoza and the founding fathers of psychology during the discipline's earlier development around and during the mid to late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As well as furthering that overall project of this thesis, this chapter will attempt to examine the relevance of Spinoza to Freud's written work and theory, but also to elucidate some key differences. In an attempt to achieve this, this chapter and the one which follows it will work to uncover Spinozistic convergence with Freudian theory. It will then work to clarify how those elements of Spinoza's philosophy shared by Freud were applied, with the resulting theory bearing little resemblance to Spinoza's intended psychology.

Freud stated, to the probable confusion of any sensible reader: "*I readily admit my dependence on Spinoza's doctrine*. There was no reason why I should expressly mention his name, since I conceived my hypothesis from the *atmosphere* created by him, rather than from the study of his work. Moreover, I did not seek philosophical legitimation."[5] This chapter aims to make it clear that more than the mere shadow of Spinoza is present in Freud, but that fundamentally, the other elements within Freudian theory crowd out the possibility of any purely Spinozistic interpretation, resulting in a sort of hybrid psychological theory which, though exhibiting overlap with Spinoza to a significant degree, has only a semblance of similarity to Spinozistic intent.

While the aim of the second half of this thesis has been to locate Spinoza's philosophical legacy within the early stages of modern psychology during the mid-to late nineteenth century, and the aim of the thesis overall is to clarify Spinoza's psychology and prove its relevance and legacy within the fundamentals of contemporary psychological thought, the mission of this particular chapter is to clarify the distinctions between Spinoza and

[5] Freud, Sigmund, quoted in Mack, Michael, *Spinoza and the Specters of Modernity: The Hidden Enlightenment of Diversity from Spinoza to Freud,* A&C Black, 2010, p. 198

Freud. Had he been alive to do so, Spinoza would probably have recognised the basics of Freudian psychology partly in his own fundamental ideas, and considered Freud to have taken them in a very different direction. Spinoza, Wilhelm Wundt and William James took a theoretical approach to their work which was largely philosophical in nature. Freud is the clear outlier in this respect. The two chapters within this thesis which focus on Freud will address three areas within Freud's theory in an attempt to assert these claims. The Freudian theory which is the primary subject of this section has a specific focus on the mind's relationship with the body, the nature of emotion, and the role of mind and emotion within the causal process as sharing some aspects of Spinoza addressed within the first three chapters of this thesis, and tracked through the work of Wundt and James.

It would hardly be controversial to assert that Sigmund Freud did not consider himself a philosopher. On the contrary, he considered science to be far more epistemologically relevant not just to his psychoanalytic theory, but in general. Freud nursed a circumspection – perhaps even a dislike— for philosophy generally which never left him:

*"*Philosophy is not opposed to science, it behaves itself as if it were a science, and to a certain extent it makes use of the same methods; but it parts company with science, in that it clings to the illusion that it can produce a complete and coherent picture of the universe. Its methodological error lies in the fact that it over-estimates the epistemological value of our logical operations… But philosophy has no immediate influence on the great majority of mankind; it interests only a small number even of the thin upper stratum of intellectuals, while all the rest find it beyond them."[6]

[6] Freud, Sigmund, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis,* New York: Carlton House, 1933, pp. 219-220

Despite having been what one might describe as a child genius, and a vigorous scholar throughout his life, constantly taking up new interests in the pursuit of learning, and maintaining his characteristic self-discipline and drive in his work well into his old age, Freud had little time for philosophy and directly claimed that psychoanalysis was little influenced by it – a claim which this thesis aims to soften by juxtaposing Freud's psychology with Spinoza's.[7] Though some have argued that Freud was indeed a philosopher, it is generally agreed that he was an unintentional, reticent or reluctant philosopher.[8]

Freud was a prolific writer; one of the volumes to his name is a translation of J.S. Mill, published in 1880, when Freud was just twenty-four years old. This indicates that, as well as Mill himself, Freud at least had solid knowledge of British empiricism and psychological philosophy tracing back to Hume and Locke, and to some extent Plato, Mill's essay on whom Freud also translated. Incidentally, Freud was an accomplished translator ever before embarking upon his career in psychoanalysis. His volume of Mill – the twelfth edition of Mill's works, was published in Vienna in 1880. Among Freud's other translations into German were the third volume of Charcot's *Leçons sur les maladies du système nerveux* (1886), and *Leçons du Mardi à la Salpetrière* (1887-88); Bernheim's *De la suggestion et de ses applications à de la thérapeutique* (1886) and *Hypnotisme, suggestion et psychothérapie* (1892). Apart from these, he also translated a section on Samuel Butler in Israel Levine's *The Unconscious* (1923). Years later, Freud would translate Marie Bonaparte's *Topsy* with his daughter Anna, the only one of his six children to follow him into the field of psychoanalysis.[9] In a passage illuminating Freud's translation style, Jones reveals the loose methodological approach (inconsistent with philosophical work) which perhaps presages Freud's

[7] Lipsett, Don R., *Foundations of Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry: The Bumpy Road to Specialization,* Routledge, 2016, p. 45
[8] See: Tauber, Alfred I., *Freud, the Reluctant Philosopher,* Princeton University Press, 2010; Rieff, Philip, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist,* University of Chicago Press, 1979, pp. 3-27
[9] Mahoney, Patrick J., 'Freud and Translation', in *American Imago,* Vol. 58, No. 4, 2001, p. 838

attitude toward the philosophical theories which would underpin his psychoanalytic theory years later – "Instead of laboriously translating from the foreign language, idioms and all he would read a passage, close the book, and consider how a German writer would have clothed the same thoughts."[10] This habit of Freud's extended beyond the bounds of translation and has relevance to the nature of his theoretical work.

The chapter will aim to show, with a view to proving that Freudian theory is in part based upon similar ideas to those espoused by Spinoza, that Freud was a cutter of corners in more than just his translation work. Known for his work ethic and focus, he was nevertheless by his own lights not a philosopher, and is notably different from his contemporaries William James and Wilhelm Wundt in one major respect – James and Wundt were equally interested in both normative and applied psychological questions, and drew from the metapsychological foundational work of philosophy within their own work and respective theoretical approaches. Freud's primary interest was in applied questions. Psychoanalytic theory is designed primarily as a theory with functional applicability in the treatment of patients, and Freud was consequently less interested in questions based in the 'how?' than he was in the 'what?'.

Despite constructing a theoretical sub-section of psychoanalysis which he described as his metapsychology, Freud frequently sacrificed philosophical rigour in both the construction and application of his theoretical outlook.[11] This chapter aims to identify how this was done in relation to Spinozistic philosophical ideas which reappear within Freudian theory. In general terms, Freud was neither particularly interested in philosophical and conceptual rigour nor indeed was he respectful of philosophers in general, or their discipline (though he had a deep and

[10] Jones, Ernest, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud,* New York Basic Books, 1953, p. 61

[11] For more on Freud and the refractory relationship of psychoanalytic theory to philosophy, see Ricoeur, Paul, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation (The Terry Lectures Series)*, Yale University Press, 1977

admitted fondness for Arthur Schopenhauer).[12] However, Freud was also known for making seemingly contradictory statements throughout his career without ever taking pains to reconcile them, which this chapter will demonstrate. One thing, at least, is clear. In a time when the contrast between philosophy and science was becoming established, Freud unquestionably saw psychoanalysis as a science, and continued to defend it as a scientific discipline throughout the course of his career.[13] Philosophy, insofar as it featured within Freud's thinking about his field, was at best a distant second in terms of its application to psychoanalytic theory. It is consequently unsurprising that the theoretical foundations of Freudian ontology are a little blurry in parts.

At several points throughout his career, Freud made reference to philosophers like Nietzsche, Plato and others, though he often referred to those thinkers only to declare a lack of familiarity with or interest in their work. As this chapter will elucidate, Freud's philosophical influences are challenging to track, not because their imprint cannot be clearly found throughout his psychoanalytic theory (it often can), but rather because, for whatever reason, he made a habit of dissembling on the matter, as will become evident later in this chapter. Consequently, in order to locate and clarify the significant overlap that does exist between Spinoza and Freud, this chapter will first clarify some of the relevant the inconsistencies in this respect to be found within the work and correspondence of Freud himself, and then locate elements of Spinozistic psychology throughout psychoanalytic theory with particular reference to the three elements of Spinoza which are the focus of this thesis – the nature of emotions or passions, mind-body and emotional theory, and the relationship between emotions and causality.

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[12] For an interesting and useful analysis of the extent to which Freud was influenced by and interested in Schopenhauer, see Gupta, R.K., 'Freud and Schopenhauer', in *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. 36, No. 4, 1975, pp. 721-728

[13] For a history of the relationship between philosophy and science, and the changing nature of science during the nineteenth century, see: Ede, Andrew and Cormack, Lesley B., *A History of Science in Society: From Philosophy to Utility*, University of Toronto Press, 2012, p. 242; See also Heller, Michael, *Philosophy in Science: An Historical Introduction,* Kemp, Kenneth W. and Maślanka Kieroń, Zuzanna (trans.), Springer, 2011

Freud placed himself within the 'obsessional personalities' category of his own devising, indicators of which he described as "especially *orderly, parsimonious and obstinate*".[14] He was singularly disinterested in philosophy in any formal sense, for a theorist who was, ultimately, like Spinoza and the other two men who are the focus of this work, a system-builder. Freud's ambition extended beyond the bounds of psychology-proper and well into the realm of ideas and theory outside his own field. Like Spinoza, he attempted to construct a theory of mind; a human psychology in its entirety, not just empirical, but metaphysical. Early on, Freudian psychoanalytic theory stepped outside itself to borrow from fields like philosophy, literature, art, and even the occult. Psychoanalysis was not a mere psychological theory, but made incursions into ideological grounds. It became a *Weltanschauung*.

Freud and Spinoza are indeed both pessimistic in some respects. However, this label is at least adhered to both as a result of their disinterest in the concept of happiness as an ultimate good, or a worthy aim. Spinozistic psychological theory therefore bears a striking resemblance to Freudian psychoanalysis in several respects. Freud and Spinoza are both sceptical of the idea that complete happiness is achievable; indeed, neither suggests that the metric by which we have a tendency to assess our lives, which prioritises conceptions of happiness, is even the best one. Freud asserts that the psychoanalytic cure for neurotic misery entails dispensing with the naïve idea that we can ever be really happy.[15] Both Spinozistic and Freudian models of therapy assert as requirements to entry a certain resignation in relation to our existential condition, according to DeBrabander. He notes that "Freud observes that his patients often object in frustration that analysis only reveals how their sufferings are due in large part to their own 'relation and destinies', which can never be changed. Freud says he always answers the same: 'I do not doubt that it

[14] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* Volume IX, Vintage, 2001, p. 1940
[15] Becker, Ernest, *The Denial of Death,* The Free Press New York, 1973, p. 57

would be easier for fate than for me to remove your sufferings, but you will be convinced that much will be gained if we succeed in transforming your hysterical misery into everyday unhappiness, against which you will be better able to defend yourself with a restored nervous system.'"[16] This has reverberations of Spinoza's theory of human freedom; though Spinoza is ultimately optimistic about the human condition. Freud, as the above quotation demonstrates, is not.

Spinoza's psychology was unique. Before him, no one since perhaps Plato had so ambitiously or fastidiously embarked upon a systematic philosophy which endeavoured to encompass a theory of everything. He was unprecedentedly innovative in both thought and method, and his influence upon later thinkers is evident and can be seen through the history of ideas after him, as this thesis aims to prove in just one narrow corner that Spinoza's work touched upon. However, a certain atmosphere of touchiness about saying this outright seemed to extend well beyond the seventeenth century, with the twentieth century seeing a fresh upturn in reluctance to attribute credit or influence to Spinoza. One of the more famous exceptions to this blacklisting was of course Albert Einstein, who was open about Spinoza's impact and influence on him.[17]

Despite this notable exception, acknowledgement of Spinoza as an influence or a relevant source generally seemed to have fallen out of fashion. Not, of course, that it had remained steadfastly fashionable in the centuries after Spinoza's death. Proving significant relevance of most any philosopher on Freud, with the possible exception of Schopenhauer, for whom Freud had a deep and enthusiastically expressed affection, is in some sense a challenge.[18] This is not because the ideas of major thinkers cannot be found generously marked across his work, but rather because

[16] DeBrabander, Firmin, *Spinoza and the Stoics: Power, Politics and the Passions,* Continuum Books, 2007, p. 55
[17] See Einstein, Albert, *Out of My Later Years: The Scientist, Philosopher and Man Portrayed Through His Own Words,* Open Road, 2011, EBook, pp. 302; 337
[18] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, pp. 1463; 3615

he gave such conflicting accounts of his thoughts on both philosophy as a discipline and individual philosophers as to confound a researcher whose aim is to trace the clear context, origins of and influences on his thought. Take, for example, Nietzsche, by whom Freud was without doubt heavily influenced. When his students pointed out the connections, Freud ignored them, but later wrote this passage in *An Autobiographical Study* –

> *"…The large extent to which psycho-analysis coincides with the philosophy of Schopenhauer – not only did he assert the dominance of the emotions and the supreme importance of sexuality but he was even aware of the mechanism of repression – is not to be my acquaintance with his teaching. I read Schopenhauer very late in life. Nietzsche, another philosopher whose guesses and intuitions often agree in the most astonishing way with the laborious findings of psychoanalysis, was for a long time avoided by me on that very account; I was less concerned with the question of priority than with keeping my mind unembarrassed."*[19]

It reads here as though Freud avoided looking seriously at Nietzsche to dispel any inconvenience arising from what he might find to be almost identical theories, predating his own, within Nietzsche's work. However, the links are too direct to ignore. The term 'id', now famously associated with Freud, was coined originally by Nietzsche in the context of mind. Cybulska observed that, like Freud, Nietzsche "often used the German pronoun *das Es* ('the it', but Freud's English translator used the Latin word *id*) to denote the unconscious, instinctual forces of the psyche, and the personal pronoun *das Ich* ('the I', translated as *ego*) to denote the conscious part of the mind. Freud's *superego* (*Über-Ich*) – the moral censor of the psyche – seems to match Nietzsche's concept of 'bad conscience'."[20] According to Nietzsche –

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[19] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* Volume IX, Vintage, 2001, p. 4234

[20] Cybulska, Eva, 'Psychoanalysis and Philosophy (II)', in *Philosophy Now*, No. 68, 2008

"All instincts which are not discharged outwardly turn inwards – this is what I call the internalization of man: with it there now evolves in man what will later be called his 'soul'… Those terrible bulwarks with which state organizations protected themselves against the old instincts of freedom – punishments are a primary instance of this kind of bulwark – had the result that all those instincts of the wild, free, roving man were turned backwards, against man himself. Animosity, cruelty, the pleasure of pursuing, raiding, changing and destroying – all this was pitted against the person who had such instincts: that is the origin of 'bad conscience'."[21] The similarities make it exceedingly unlikely that Freud was unfamiliar with the work of Nietzsche before having formulated similar concepts within psychoanalytic theory.

Indeed, according to Sulloway in *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend*, during his time as a university student, Freud was a member of a Reading Society of the German Students of Vienna (Leseverein der deutschen Studenten Wiens) for five years. This group discussed in depth and at length the views of, among others, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche.[22] This sort of 'coincidental' affinity is a trope in Freud's work; possibly, it becomes unavoidable in a theorist like Freud who wrote so prolifically. It is unclear whether the significant theoretical overlap between aspects of psychoanalysis and certain philosophers – Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Spinoza to name just a few – was unconscious on Freud's part. His own accounts vary to such degrees that they can be quite confounding. Consider this strange statement on philosophy and psychoanalysis – "For philosophers accustomed to putting abstract concepts (or, as unkind tongues would say, hazy words) in the forefront of their explanations of the universe, and it would be impossible that they should object to the extension of the sphere of psychology for which psycho-analysis had paved the way…The philosopher's idea of

[21] Nietzsche, Friedrich, Ansell-Pearson, Keith (ed.), Diethe, Carol (trans.), *On the Genealogy of Morality,* Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 57
[22] Sulloway, Frank J., *Freud, Biologist of the Mind: Beyond the Psychoanalytic Legend*, Harvard University Press, 1992, p.468

what is mental was not that of psychoanalysis. The overwhelming majority of philosophers regard as mental only the phenomena of consciousness. For them the world of consciousness coincides with the sphere of what is mental."[23]

This reads as though Freud had little familiarity with philosophy of mind, but this does not appear to have been the case. Philosophers, Freud argues, are closed to his empirical outlook and methodology. As Freud sees it, the philosopher's notion of consciousness (he provides no evidence that philosophy generally holds and defends a single, unitary conception of consciousness) is vague, does not accommodate empirical data or allow for the scope of individual experience. Freud considers the unconscious to precede the conscious mind, while it is anathema to conceptions of mind to view consciousness alone as comprising the substantive mind.

In the case of Spinoza, Freud appears to acknowledge philosophical convergence with the Dutch philosopher, while also stating not to have been influenced by him – "I confess without hesitation my dependence regarding the teachings of Spinoza. If I never cared to cite his name directly, it is because I never drew the tenets of my thinking from the study of that author but rather from the atmosphere he created."[24] This statement is rather difficult to parse, as it appears to both make an assertion and retract it within the span of a couple of sentences. As in the case of Nietzsche, trawling Freud's written work throws up less direct reference to Spinoza himself than to signposts of his ideas. Freud cites Spinoza directly only once within his published work, in *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*.[25] However, he appears to have little to say about him in general, which contrasts with the Spinozist echoes that ring through psychoanalytic theory and the Freudian therapeutic methodology.

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[23] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* Volume XIX, Vintage, 2001, p. 216
[24] Freud, Sigmund, quoted in Hessing, Siegfried, 'Freud et Spinoza', in *Revue Philosophique de la France Et de l'Etranger, Vol. 167, No 2, 1977*, p. 168, cited in Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza,* Vintage Books, 2003, p. 260
[25] Ortony, Andrew, Clore, Gerald L., and Collings, Allan, *The Cognitive Structure of Emotions*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 60-62

Indeed, there are similarities between the persons of Spinoza and Sigmund Freud, as Stuart Hampshire remarks – "…points of comparison could profitably be found between the two great Jewish thinkers, Freud and Spinoza, each so isolated, austere and uncompromising in his own original ways of thought."[26] The overlap, however, is more than merely cosmetic.

Those markers of Spinoza can be seen with particular resonance in, among other elements, the distinct resemblance between Freud's *libido* and Spinoza's account of *conatus*, in the similar function of the affects as both men account for them (Freud's affects operate within a determined system similar to that of Spinoza's monistic nature).

> "*We have defined the concept of libido as a quantitatively variable force which could serve as a measure of processes and transformations occurring in the field of sexual excitation. We distinguish this libido in respect of its special origin from the energy which must be supposed to underlie mental processes in general, and we thus also attribute a qualitative character to it."*[27]

His considered position on Spinoza, as expressed by Freud himself, is difficult to make out definitively – "I have had, for my entire life, an extraordinary esteem for the person and for the thinking of that great philosopher. But I do not believe that attitude gives me the right to say anything publically about him, for the good reason that I would have nothing to say that has not been said by others."[28] It is clear then that Freud himself is not a completely reliable – or at all consistent – source on the relevance of Spinoza's philosophy to psychoanalytic theory. We must ourselves search for the markers of Spinozism that ripple through psychoanalysis.

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[26] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, 2005, Ebook, loc. 1968

[27] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, p. 1531

[28] Hessing, Siegfried, 'Freud et Spinoza', in *Revue Philosophique de la France Et de l'Etranger, Vol. 167, No 2, 1977*, p. 169, cited in Damasio, Antonio, *Looking for Spinoza,* Vintage Books, 2003, p. 260

Freud contributed a number of revolutionary ideas to the study of mental function (and consequently to the study of emotion) toward the end of the nineteenth century. Included among them are the concepts of the unconscious, repression, resistance, childhood sexuality, and transference. A system-builder like Wundt, James and Spinoza, Freud constructed theories of mind, psychotherapy and of human development. His theory of emotion, influenced by the zeitgeist of Darwinism which held tremendous significance at that time, and was reflected heavily in the scientific and psychological theory of the day, posited that emotions are partly an expression of our biological legacy, but are heavily influenced and potentially transformed through the course of our experience. It is we, through experience, who subvert our own emotions; transforming and distorting them. We suppress and repress them, misunderstand and misinterpret them, and modify them in an attempt to adapt to our environment. This attitude toward understanding mind and emotion is fundamental to Freudian psychoanalytic theory. It is not surprising that, since Freud used elements from various fields to build his psychology, it impacted and gained momentum outside of his own discipline.

Like William James, Freud was a theorist whose theories extended outside the relatively narrow enclosed radius of his own field and perforated the popular consciousness, and continues to do so. As in the case of James, this safeguarded Freud's lasting relevance within popular academic theory, but it also ensured – again, as undoubtedly occurred in the case of William James – that Freud's theory was likely to be distilled or diluted into an altered version of itself which barely resembled the reality. This tends to occur when the complex theory of a specialist makes its way out into the world of non-specialists and gains traction within popular thought. This is inevitable if a complex, specialised and nuanced theory (or disembodied aspects of it) is to be digestible in the popular consciousness and imagination. Versions of the theory will become dispersed which are anything from a shadow-puppet theatrical representation of the original, to something more akin to parody, to a charitably-intended but incomplete interpretation – after all Freud was a prolific writer, and produced a

significant quantity of material. Much of it is not altogether accessible to readers who are not already well acquainted with the fundamental features, language and principles of psychoanalysis. While William James's great shortcoming was a certain lack of care in the mode of his expression, to which he freely admitted himself after it resulted in widespread misunderstanding of his theory of emotion, Sigmund Freud's was to insist with rigidity that the field of psychology he spent over five decades building as an alternative to traditional therapeutic approaches belonged indisputably within the borders of scientific theory and practice, despite the friction between some of the less straightforward, empirically instantiated aspects of Freud's theory, and the less tangible metapsychological tenets, like his account of the unconscious.

What all faithful accounts of Freud's ideas will include is that most fundamental and interesting Freudian theory; the notion that our psychology, the mental functioning of our 'self' is dominated and dictated by largely unconscious processes.[29] Added to this is the idea that this unconscious, insofar as it might be considered distinctly 'of me', does the majority of its work in forming 'me' during the first few years of my life. Since this work operates, and its outcomes calcify, on a largely sub-conscious level, it hardly matters that much of my future self is determined by experiences which necessarily predate the formation of my memory as a retrospective tool over which I have some agency or control. The theory is a little dispiriting – rather than an easily digestible form of blank-slatism, which would suggest that we are born like fresh pages awaiting text, Freud's theory suggests that, as well as the biological predispositions to which we are subject, the unconscious indelibly alters us before we are of an age to process information efficiently on a conscious level.

The brain and genetic predispositions we are born with are a sort of functional hardware. Throughout the formative years, the unconscious adds software in the form of our experience, emotions, and so on. That

[29] Freud, Sigmund, *The Unconscious,* Penguin, 2005

same unconscious then works throughout our lives to run the programme it had written so early on. We continue to be operated upon and altered by our subconscious mind, and in adulthood, can only attempt to understand it retrospectively. While we are engaged in that work, which Spinoza, James and Freud all considered a noble step toward personal freedom, the impact the unconscious has on us is tremendous in both scope and nature. It leads us to misinterpret and misunderstand the essence, origin and quality of our own thoughts, intentions, desires and actions. It prompts us to attempt to satisfy desires which may run directly contrary to one another, and to mistake the trivial for the important, while overlooking things which really are important, or ignorantly dismissing them as mere trivialities.

Psychoanalytic theory dictates that we are doomed to spend much of our lives either pursuing or escaping past experiences, or people associated with them. We do this by instantiating proxies for these past people or experiences in the present; we then pursue or avoid them as the vagaries of the unconscious necessitate. Present also in any summary of Freudian theory is his extrapolation of certain concepts of sexuality; those elements of the unconscious mind which tend to be most forceful are those which predispose us to emotions (or affects) which have their origins in early erotic experience or fantasy, according to Freud.[30] His *libido* concept represents the fundamental drives of human beings.[31]

These are not the only pertinent elements of Freudian thought. He maintained that though understanding, increased emotional balance and self-control are the ideal therapeutic outcomes for patients with a marked imbalance or discrepancy, no mind is normal. Every individual either fits into the neurotic category, or will fit into that category at some point or points during his or her lifetime. Freud touched on a wide variety of topics

[30] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, p. 415
[31] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, p. 1531

within his work, in varying levels of detail. Consequently, readers of Freud will find something on the occult, the arts in general (he was an enthusiastic lover of literature; particularly Shakespeare and Goethe), a careful if somewhat sententious theory on religion, and more. Freud was also extremely attentive to advances within his own field, as well as sensitive to any form of dissent which challenged the Freudian orthodoxy in psychoanalytic theory. Occasionally, he changed his mind about aspects of psychoanalysis, particularly with regard to certain therapeutic practices, though he never saw need to assess the fundamentals of his psychology or metapsychology as he had originally laid them down.

Despite Freud's general lack of philosophical gravitas, and his reputation for the existence within his expansive body of work of more than a little decidedly unscientific methodology, his place within this thesis is deserved. Singlehandedly, Freud changed the face of psychology in a manner so fundamental that elements of Freudianism (some of which is not taken seriously or is rendered outdated by current therapeutic theory) are still found to profoundly influence various therapeutic disciplines and approaches today. It was psychoanalysis which first seriously posited a psychological approach in the applied sense to problem-solving and wrested some of the authority on behavioural disorders and psychological conditions from the historical grip of psychiatry. Freud's suggestion that psychological aberrations and conditions could have at their roots purely psychological causes, rather than psycho-physiological causes, as had been the orthodox doctrine at that time, was ground breaking. Mental illness by the Freudian account was not necessarily a mental symptom of a physical problem, in the brain or elsewhere, but an expression of a maladjusted unconscious, and a tormented conscious mind. This is not to say that he omitted the crucial role of the body in how we feel emotion. Freud's concept of the ego was primarily a body ego, of the body, while Spinoza's concept of the mind entailed the mind being the idea of the body. Both thinkers depict extended or physical and mental manifestations of objects and ideas as being representative one of the other. However, Freud differed fundamentally from Spinoza and from

Wundt in that he was not a monist. He considered emotions to be reliant upon the physical apparatus, and not to be wholly disembodied facets of experience – "Freud proposed that the critical neurological mechanisms involved in emotion are neurochemical and derive from body stimulation (the endogenous paths) that affects a certain portion of the brain."[32] He considered psychoanalytic theory to be couched within the science of its era, with particular input from Darwinian theory.

The Darwinian link that inheres in Jamesian theory is present within Freudian thought also. Indeed, Spinoza himself is not necessarily self-evidently incompatible with elements of Darwinianism either. Peter Garratt observes that: "By refusing to recognise a purposeful design in nature, and by conceiving of bodies and minds as made up of components that could be combined in varied patterns across different species, Spinoza was compatible with Darwin's thinking on evolution."[33] Darwin's evolutionary theory became dominant among theorists at the beginning of the twentieth century, when Freud was doing the work of formulating some of his best-known and most lastingly resonant theories. Darwin had given an account of man as little more than the most highly evolved, and consequently the most successful, primate. This gave psychologists like Wundt, James and Freud leave to contribute to the founding of a psychology and a theory of the mind that moved away from being based solely upon philosophy of mind, theology, learned behaviour or perception to become an independent discipline of its own. This new psychology, interestingly, had its basis in man as an animal, and his origins, development and role within the structure of nature as a whole. This was a psychology predicated, in part, on the thesis that, to quote Spinoza, man is not 'a dominion within a dominion', and its dominant interest was in the primarily biological drivers (or causal forces) that explained and motivated human behaviours.

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[32]Pribram, Karl H., 'The Biology of Emotions and Other Feelings', in Plutchik, Robert and Kellerman, Henry (eds.) *Emotion: Theory, Research and Experience, Volume One: Theories of Emotion,* Academic Press, 1980, p. 257

[33] Garratt, Peter, *Victorian Empiricism: Self, Knowledge, and Reality in Ruskin, Bain, Lewes, Spencer, and George Eliot,* Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010, p. 139

This was a movement which extricated theories about minds from philosophical territory and opened up the possibility of productive conversation about brains giving rise to non-physical phenomena like thoughts and emotions. The new psychology saw itself (I argue, wrongly), as a science. Freud couched his psychology within the realm of scientific knowledge and endeavour. Indeed, he presented a paper in Vienna in 1896 entitled 'The Aetiology of Hysteria', in which he concluded that at the bottom of every case of hysteria (an interest in that now defunct 'condition' is what essentially started his career in psychology) is sexuality, most notably a premature sexual experience.[34] This is a view he would later retract, but this was the last piece of research for which he supplied numerical data, and no control was used. Freud abandoned any semblance of scientific methodology relatively early into his career as a psychologist; yet still referred to himself as a scientist and to psychoanalysis as a science with a focus on therapeutic practice.

The Spinozistic therapeutic method aims to elevate individuals into a sort of divine enlightenment. At least, this is the sublime peak to which Spinoza suggests we might aim, an element of his philosophy which saves him from falling victim in any real sense to the accusations of pessimism which have been levelled at him. This would likely strike Freud as fanciful and rather overly optimistic. Yovel maintains that the highest ideal of psychoanalysis is, by contrast, a rather lowly one – 'to produce a normal person'.[35] Juxtaposed with Spinoza's borderline mysticism when he writes about sublime union with God through understanding, the highest outcome of psychoanalysis looks not only far more practical, but perhaps even modest. However, both Freud and Spinoza advocate a strikingly similar therapeutic method or means to their disparate ends, however likely an outcome that end may be.

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[34] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, pp. 407-434
[35] Yovel, Yirmiyahu, *Spinoza and Other Heretics: Volume II: The Adventures of Immanence,* Princeton University Press, 1989, p. 155

DeBrabander observes "Spinoza's philosopher is separated from the common people's unhappiness by mere degrees of intellectual clarity, and is certainly no stranger to their sufferings: he is unique among the masses only insofar as he resolutely faces up to his modal existence and the ramifications thereof."[36] There is a will to understand and contextualise emotion which separates the Spinozistic thinker from the masses. The same applies to Freud's neurotic – it is through a considered approach to pursuing freedom from debilitating neuroses that separates the Freudian individual from those who, trapped in the internal landscape terraformed by their unconscious, merely accepts their fate and ignorance. It is clear then that for Freud as for Spinoza, James and to a slightly lesser extent Wundt, emotions can be both a key and an impediment to understanding, and consequently to mental health or wellbeing itself.

Like Spinoza and William James, Freud found that creating a theory of emotions and their function within psychoanalysis necessitated coming to some conclusions, and attempting to solve some problems, in relation to the mind-body problem. He would essentially suggest a causal relationship between the mind as progenitor to emotion and its bodily articulation which was functionally opposite to that of William James. The mind, Freud maintained (and by extension the affects or emotions) have the power to exact changes within the body. In a therapeutic sense, the mind has the power to create physical symptoms. The chronology of this theory is neatly Spinozistic. Emotions are the precursor, in such instances as these, to physical changes within the body. Hillman observes that "…Freud notes the significance of the idea (representation) in relation to emotion…he looks at emotion as a kind of physiological quantum… he notes a double function of emotion – that it be felt in consciousness and that it internally alter the body…he holds that it is opposite to object reference and to motivated behaviour in regard to the outside world… and

[36] DeBrabander, Firmin, *Spinoza and the Stoics: Power, Politics and the Passions,* Continuum Books, 2008, p. 55

Freud stresses the value of emotion…"[37] As in the Spinozistic model, it is the emotion by which the power of action, or in Freud's case, by which the physical symptom or symptoms indicating an increase or decrease in self-control (and consequently a change in understanding, and therefore in Spinozistic terms, power of action or vitality) occurs.

The opposition between intensity of emotion and self-restraint characterised by Thomas Aquinas persisted through the nineteenth century. It found meaningful expression in the opposition between intense, uncontrolled emotion and reflective reason until Freud reassessed this relationship and its role within accepted knowledge by arguing that the restraint which is the natural product of reason, exercised as repression, caused rather than cured normal as well as chronic unhappiness and mental illness.[38]

Darwin's thinking impacted discussions of emotion and the passions so deeply, particularly in European discourse, because he introduced factors that have been ignored by analysts who came before him. Chief among these was the new theory of biological connotation between humans and (other) animals, prompting new research into animal behaviour with the aim of learning more about human origins and behaviour and emotion, a link which would have been considered absurd in the extreme during, for example, Spinoza's lifetime, at least in the context of European thought at the time.

Darwin's Book, published in 1872, *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals,* put forward the theory that emotional states or condition were expressed by specific arrangements of the facial muscles incited by a "nerve force". This theory "implied that emotions were potentially localizable in brain activity."[39] Freud's theory of anxiety built

[37] Hillman, James, *Emotion: A Comprehensive Phenomenology of Theories and their Meanings for Therapy*, Routledge 1960, p. 56
[38] See: Kagan, Jerome, *What is Emotion? History, Measures and Meanings,* Yale University Press, 2007, p. 12
[39] Ibid, p. 13

upon these concepts in Darwinianism, with important additions. Many physicians during the nineteenth century attributed the common symptoms of conditions like depression and psychosis to a problem in brain function, viewing the symptoms of diverse mental conditions or aberrations as qualitatively distinct from one another.

In this way, such conditions were considered physiologically, like bodily diseases, and their treatment was likewise approached from this perspective. Between the brain and the symptom of a condition, "Freud inserted an undifferentiated state of "neurotic anxiety" between brain and symptom and implied that this state, which could range from mild to intense, was provoked when the person repressed sexual urges or encountered a threat reminiscent of an earlier experience of "loss".[40] Since this process is the means by which minds function in relation to memory in the present, we are all potentially susceptible to the development of potential malfunctions like delusions, phobias or disordered mood. Freud maintains that aversive events spawn anxiety. Anxiety, in turn, is the progenitor of symptoms of neurosis.

It is clear that Freud exhibits elements that converge with Spinozistic thinking in terms of the relationship between mind and body, and in the positing of psychological solutions (seated in self-understanding) to psychological problems. Like Spinoza, Freud did not conflate brains and minds and ultimately appreciated the potentially catastrophic consequences of inadequate ideas. However, there is significantly more to the relationship between Spinoza's psychology as outlined within his *Ethics,* and Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. This will be the focus of the chapter to follow, which will examine the nature of Freudian emotion and the role of causality within his psychological system.

[40] Ibid, p. 13

Chapter 9: Sigmund Freud, Determinism and Spinoza's Wider Impact Within Psychoanalysis

"'It is not lack of intellect but lack of character that prevents most writers from being better than they are. . . . Sincerity is the source of all genius, and men would be cleverer if they were more moral. . . .'
Thus it seems not impossible that this hint may have brought to light the fragment of cryptomnesia which in so many cases may be suspected to lie behind apparent originality."[1]

In this chapter, I will build upon the work of the previous chapter, which touched on Freudian emotion and the mind body relationship. To do this, I will identify links between Freud's psychoanalytic theory and Spinoza's philosophy of psychology. This will be done while clarifying the unique position of psychoanalysis and noting the differences between the two where, as prefaced in the previous chapter, Freud converges with elements of Spinozistic psychology but utilises them quite differently. It is worth reiterating that Freud is an outlier in the context of this thesis. As the previous chapter made clear, Freud did not consider himself a philosopher, and did not take pains to follow the sort of logical processes or set down clear premises before proceeding to his conclusions in the way that Wundt, James, and Spinoza did.

For that reason, linking Freud to Spinoza presents its own sort of methodological challenge – his theory is meandering, inconsistent, internally conflicting, neglectful in failing to credit its forebears and in several respects, unclear. With that firmly in mind, this chapter will establish and develop such philosophical connections between Spinoza and Freud as I have identified in the course of my research before moving to the area of perhaps the most significant overlap between the two – causality and determinism. It has been established within this work that

[1] Freud, Sigmund, 'The Psychopathology of Everyday Life', in Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, p. 3938

Freud drew from the work others without clear attribution. Indeed, given that Freud has been accused of outright plagiarism within the field of psychology, it is necessary that he be approached differently to Spinoza, Wundt and James in the context of this thesis.[2]

This chapter will seek not only to establish the Spinozistic convergence Freudian determinism, but will explore other evidence of Spinozistic relevance to psychoanalytic theory where I have identified it in the course of my research. This is worth doing for two reasons – firstly, it shows the wider evidence of Spinoza's bearing upon concepts in modern psychological theory; secondly, it is appropriate, given the lesser clarity within Freud's work, to give him, as it were, less benefit of the doubt. Reading Freud from a philosophical perspective is a more difficult exercise than approaching a thinker like Wundt or James, given that, as this chapter will elucidate, Freud is not particularly interested in carefully elucidating his metapsychology. Compounding this, Freud generally does not give his reader a clear sense of how he came to the ideas he articulates; were Freud a mathematician, he would not show his working out, instead presenting his reader with a tidy number, leaving them impressed by his answer, but unsure as to how he came to it. In light of this, it makes sense to seek out not just what Freud thought, but how he came to think it, particularly where there is evidence to suggest that Spinoza may have provided Freud with philosophical context to the answers he sought.

Throughout this chapter, I will build upon the position set down in Stuart Hampshire's *Spinoza and Spinozism*. Hampshire gives one of the clearest and most penetrating accounts of the relationship between Spinoza and Freud, but stops short of examining in detail the convergence between Spinoza's psychology and psychoanalysis. This is hardly surprising –nor a flaw—within a work dedicated to Spinoza rather than to psychoanalysis. Freud is necessarily not a primary concern. This chapter aims to build

[2] Allen, Bem P., *Personality Theories: Development, Growth and Diversity,* Psychology Press, 2015, pp. 47-48; Vannoy Adams, Michael, *The Fantasy Principle: Psychoanalysis of the Imagination,* Routledge, 2004, p.2

upon Hampshire's important observations on the Spinoza-Freud relationship, while grounding my own analysis of Freud within Hampshire's, in the hope that he might act as Ariadne, assisting the reader, like Theseus, through the Freudian labyrinth.

There is a similarity between Spinoza and Freud in terms of their approach to and understanding of what feelings are, as well as the fundamental tenets they discuss, upon which to build a therapeutic approach. Hampshire observes that "They have both provoked the hatred which visits anyone who would regard man as a natural object and not as a supernatural agent, and who is concerned impassively to understand the nature of human imbecility, rather than to condemn it. In reading Spinoza, it must not be forgotten that he was before all things concerned to point the way to human freedom through understanding and natural knowledge."[3] Both thinkers acknowledge the potential of the passions to create chaos and confusion in an individual's life, and to be misleading.

However, affects themselves are considered by both Freud and Spinoza to be value-neutral in terms of their morality. This is important, particularly in relation to Spinoza, who even now has an undeserved and unjustified reputation for aversion to emotion, which it is clear by this point of this thesis, is not grounded in sound understanding of his theory of emotion. In the work of both Spinoza and Freud, some affects are more destructive than others, and some, like hatred, have very little if anything appropriate or constructive about them at all. However, they are not considered by Spinoza or by Freud to be vices in the classical sense. They require management in order to obtain balance and promote the creation and experience of constructive emotions over destructive ones. For Spinoza, successful application of his therapeutic method leads, in the ideal case, to union with God through sublime understanding. For Freud, it leads to another result altogether – sufficient emotional balance to enable an

[3] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook, 2005, loc. 1973

individual to manage their emotions without being overcome by them. However, this is – though not the highest ideal of Spinoza's psychological method – also a consequence of utilising that method; we benefit from being our own cause, and are thus more balanced, more content, and maximally free (insofar as it is possible for us to be so). Emilia Giancotti discusses the role of striving in respect to affects:

> "Thus if the affects are rooted in the *conatus* – insofar as they occur when an individual establishes relations with others in the course of his existence, whereby the individual *conatus* may be enhanced or reduced – one must conclude, as Spinoza actually does (EIVp4), that man is always, during all of his life, at risk of being overwhelmed by a more powerful individual (i.e. an individual with greater striving to persevere in his being), and therefore of being subject to affects that are passions. Given this fact, two consequences follow: first, the affects are not *vices* of nature, but rather natural things, i.e., necessary effects of the relations in which man is engaged due to its ontological status (EIVp4c); second, it makes no sense to detest or mock the affects – one should rather try to understand them…"[4]

Neither Spinoza nor Freud were 'anti-emotion', as it were, but advocates of liberation from the lower or unconstructive passions (and consequently from the leading of an uncontrolled life guided by inadequate ideas) through understanding of external actors and internal motivations.

The means by which we ascend from a typical life of passive emotion and inadequate or confused ideas to the free life of active emotion and adequate ideas is, as this thesis argues overall, a method which rather uncannily resembles many of the methods of modern psychology; these methods, and the contours of the field generally were of course fundamentally and profoundly influenced by the work and theories of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud. In modern branches

[4] Giancotti, Emilia, 'The Theory of the Affects in the Strategy of Spinoza's Ethics', in Yovel, Yirmiyahu (ed.), *Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist,* Little Room Press New York, 1999, p. 134

of applied psychological theory, the approach supposes that the route to liberation from feedback loops of negative emotion and behaviour lies in helping the patient to become more self-aware (essentially more self-conscious or self-analytical in the simplest interpretation of the term).[5] Not just this, but in helping him or her to recognise the (largely unconscious) inherent struggle that we all undergo within to attain a balanced emotional state of mind.[6] Through various therapeutic approaches, including those with widespread modern popularity such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, modern psychology maintains that it is this continuous struggle for balance which articulates itself in our pleasures and pains, our desires and our evasions.[7] Treatment is always geared toward restoring balance (insofar as this is possible) in various respects where a patient's mental resources are less than the demands upon them, or imbalances in mood and or behaviour indicate an imbalance in a patient's mental health.[8]

Love and hatred, as well as all the other emotions which we are capable of feeling across a vast spectrum, are revealed to the patient as the compensations necessary to restore a loss of vitality. Depending on the strain of psychology directing the therapeutic approach, this vitality might be expressed as a form of physical energy, or mental engagement. Always, however, the approach seeks to rebalance the emotional resources

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[5] Becvar, Dorothy Stroh and Becvar, Raphael, *Systems Theory and Family Therapy: A Primer,* University Press of America, 1999, p. 27

[6] I do not use the term 'unconscious' in the formal Freudian sense here, but rather use it in terms of a state denoting a lack or absence of current awareness or intellectual focus; for resources on methods in psychological treatment, see: Cohn, Hans W., *Existential Thought and Therapeutic Practice: An Introduction to Existential Psychotherapy,* Sage, 1997, p. 119; Thompson, Marie L., *Mental Illness,* Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007, pp. 49-68; Layard, Richard and Clark, David M., *Thrive: The Power of Evidence-Based Psychological Therapies,* Penguin, 2014; Jones, Wilfrid Llewelyn, *Ministering to Minds Diseased: A History of Psychiatric Treatment,* William Heinemann Medical Books, 1983

[7] Sweezy, Martha and Ziskind, Ellen L. (eds.), *IFS: Internal Family Systems Therapy, New Dimensions,* Routledge, 2013, p. 35

[8] O'Donohue, William T., Fisher, Jane E. and Hayes, Steven C. (eds.), *Cognitive Behavior Therapy: Applying Empirically Supported Techniques in Your Practice,* John Wiley & Sons, 2004 p. 328; Hughes, Colin and Herron, Stephen, *Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Mild to Moderate Depression and Anxiety,* McGraw-Hill Education, 2014, p. 194

expending this internal energy.[9] It does this by engaging (or perhaps re-engaging) the patient with this process by seeking to make them aware of their emotional condition, and create an understanding of the passivity with which human beings function as a default.[10] This undoubtedly has its theoretical origin in the work of Spinoza, and is present within Freudian theory also. As Hampshire suggests of Spinoza and Freud, "Neither crudely suggested that all men consciously pursue their own pleasure or deliberately seek to extend their own power; but both insisted that people must be studied scientifically as organism within Nature, and that only by such study could men be enabled to understand the causes of their own infirmity."[11] Through awareness, we can understand the means by which emotions passively act upon us, and replace them with active emotions which are not confused. Spinoza would describe these as adequate ideas. Freud would describe the means by which we transform passive emotions to active ones as a pulling forth that which is unconscious into consciousness.

It seems clear that Freud's 'science' remains today as indeterminate as ever, if not even more so, given advances in other scientific fields (such as neuroscience) in the interim. Though he consistently defended psychoanalysis as a science and considered the ironing out of any wrinkles within the theory which made people question the scientific status he attributed to it inevitable, those wrinkles never quite dispersed into a smooth theory. There is still very little within psychoanalytic theory to recommend the field as a science, per se – certainly less now than there was during Freud's lifetime. However, Freud's resounding success (or rather, one of his resounding successes) was the establishment in popular, as well as professional awareness, the theory that behaviours in the present

[9] Chigwedere, Craig; Tone, Yvonne; Fitzmaurice, Brian and McDonough, Michael, *Overcoming Obstacles in CBT,* Sage, 2012, p. 88
[10] Shirk, Stephen R. and Russell, Robert L., *Change Processes in Child Psychotherapy: Revitalizing Treatment and Research,* Guilford Press, 1996, p. 13; Kennedy, Fiona; Kennerley, Helen and Pearson, David, *Cognitive Behavioural Approaches to the Understanding and Treatment of Dissociation,* Routledge, 2013, p.184
[11] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook , 2005, loc. 1968

(both healthy and pathological) are determined by particular experiences in the past, which we can theoretically isolate and identify, or rather, which we can bring from an unconscious level of influence into the light of conscious awareness, so that we may better understand these causes.[12] By understanding their causes, i.e. the causal influences acting upon us, we can alter the behaviours they bring about. This idea, first appeared in a philosophy of psychology context within Spinoza, and Freud's therapeutic application of it was revolutionary.

Categorising himself as a scientist, despite the unstable methodologies of psychoanalytic theory and lack of reliable data or consistent empirical testing, Freud remained devoted to his mission to prove that human behaviour was, as Bricklin phrases it, "as reducible to laws of interaction as matter."[13] This account of Freud, who did indeed maintain that human behaviour is subject to 'laws of interaction', savours powerfully of Spinoza's preface to Part Three of the *Ethics* – "The Affects, therefore, of hate, anger, envy, etc., considered in themselves, follow from the same necessity and force of nature as the other singular things…Therefore, I shall treat the nature and powers of the Affects, and the power of the Mind over them, by the same Method by which, in the preceding parts, I treated God and the Mind, and I shall consider human actions and appetites just as if it were a Question of lines, planes, and bodies."

In his first introductory lecture on psychoanalysis, Freud describes his relatively new field as "a method of treating nervous patients medically".[14] He follows this statement by himself inadvertently pointing out the tenuous use of the term 'medically' in comparing medical and psychoanalytic treatment. Medical treatment is often characterised by confident references to the safety and the reliability of the treatment itself,

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[12] Ffychte, Matt, *The Foundation of the Unconscious: Schelling, Freud and the Birth of the Modern Psyche,* Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 215
[13] Bricklin, Jonathan, *The Illusion of Will, Self and Time: William James's Reluctant Guide to Enlightenment,* State University of New York Press, 2015, p. 54
[14] Freud, Sigmund, Hall, G. Stanley (trans.), in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, EBook, Digireads, 2013, loc. 108

and this only after a definitive and usually falsifiable diagnosis has been rendered. Its aim in most cases is to restore health and or quality of life to a patient as quickly and efficiently as possible. In contrast, Freud waxes lyrical on the relative unpleasantness of psychoanalytic treatment in almost every respect. It is methodologically difficult, perhaps even deliberately unkind to the patient in some respects. The duration of treatment tends to be extended, and requires significant financial and personal sacrifice on the part of most patients. After all this, there is no guaranteed or even highly likely outcome. "…as to the result…", Freud declares, "...we tell him [the patient] that we make no definite promises, that the result depends on his conduct, on his understanding, on his adaptability, on his perseverance."[15] So much of the outcome of psychoanalytic treatment rests upon complete faith in one's analyst, and yet the responsibility for the treatment's success or failure lies ultimately with the analysand.

Dismissive of psychiatry's closed, self-referential approach, as well as mainstream attempts to diagnose and treat disorders of the mind, Freud believed that such 'psychic disturbances' were considered by the majority of psychiatrists to be treatable – indeed, only considered to exist at all – once "they [could] be identified as secondary phenomena of an otherwise organic affection."[16] Psychoanalysis aimed to provide an explanatory psychological foundation to what were considered aberrant behaviours and mental states, an approach which Freud considered wholly absent from the psychiatry of the time. His aim was to prove that psychic causes based in experience were as valid as physical ones in establishing diagnoses in relation to psychiatric disorders, and that no therapeutic approach or psychological theory could be wholly applicable unless it encompassed a methodological and theoretical approach which made comprehensible the "constant correlation of bodily and psychic

[15] Freud, Sigmund, Hall, G. Stanley (trans.), in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, EBook, Digireads, 2013, loc. 116
[16] Ibid, loc. 198

disturbances".[17] This parallel approach (though essentially Freud was not a monist) mirrors those of the other two psychologists whose theory is included within this thesis, but also that of Spinoza.

According to both Spinoza and Freud, our feelings and our behaviours are always explicable within a determined system by reference to fundamental drives, of which our feelings and behaviours are consequences. These drives represent an impetus which lies outside the bounds of conscious will. According to Stuart Hampshire, this explains the therapeutic approach shared by Spinoza and Freud – "Consequently both Spinoza and Freud represent moral problems as essentially clinical problems, which can only be confused by the use of epithets of praise and blame, and by emotional attitudes of approval and disapproval. There can in principle be only one way of achieving sanity and happiness; the way is to come to understand the causes of our own states of mind."[18] Such a perspective is no more than the very one on which the basis of modern therapeutic methodologies rests, in which one of the aims is to assist a patient in understanding why they think or behave in this or that manner, enabling them to correct the problem or problems which led them to a professional in the first place.

Spinoza and Freud both have been the target of dismissals for positing that man is not a dominion within a dominion, but a biological organism about whom as much might be learned through clinical study and dispassionate observation as might be learned through such study of any other biological organism subject to the laws of nature. Today, this perspective might be characterised as mainstream, but this was far from the case in Spinoza's era. The controversy lies in Spinoza and Freud's assertion that human behaviour and emotions might be studied in the same manner, and do not represent a special category. In Spinoza, it is evident that Freud has a predecessor who shared fundamental elements of his own world view.

[17] Ibid, loc. 203
[18] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook, 2005, loc. 1956

Hampshire observes that "…there is a similarity, evident but more difficult to make precise, in the grave, prophetic, scrupulously objective tone of voice in which they quietly undermine all the established prejudices of popular and religious morality: there is the same quietly ruthless insistence that we must look in every case for the natural causes of human unhappiness, as we would look for the causes of the imperfections of any other natural object; moral problems cannot be solved by appeals to emotion and prejudice, which are always the symptoms of ignorance."[19] There is an evident commonality in the outlook of Spinoza and Freud's theories – this particular brand of circumspection and respect in relation to the power and scope of emotion is particular to Spinoza's philosophy.

From a philosophical perspective, looking at the work and ideas of Freud engenders an appreciation for thinkers like William James, who straddled the sometimes ambiguous borderland between philosophy of mind (and emotion) and psychology-proper with such epistemic and ontological elegance. Indeed, originally a member of Harvard University's philosophy department, he later founded the psychology department there. While James is considered by many of his more casual readers only in his capacity as a psychologist, he is a philosopher first. Adopting a strong philosophical methodology, James (despite a slight linguistic sloppiness which could make more work for him in communicating his theoretical outlook than he would have preferred) was interested in concepts and metapsychology. He created a theory of mind and emotion with normative connotations, but then examined its practical application in therapeutic treatment and psychological enquiry. He rarely left conceptual ends to hang ragged, or essential words without definition or context, which would have lent an untidy appearance to the whole affair.

[19] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook, 2005, loc. 1970

Freud, on the other hand, though his work is philosophically highly relevant, did not consider himself a philosopher – as the previous chapter made clear – nor did he have any wish to be one. There is a polish and philosophical care to the work of James (and naturally, in the context of this thesis, to the works of Wundt and Spinoza) which is not present in Freud's work. This leaves the philosophical reader to stumble a little through a certain quantity of implied definitions and concepts, rather than explicitly stated ones, as well as a sense that there are aspects of the metapsychology of Freud which lean a little heavily upon his wider explanatory structure, occasionally pitching the whole thing lopsided. Many elements can be justified only inferentially through reference to other somewhat specious claims within the theory. The following passage from Freud's autobiography provides unique insight into his attitude toward a philosophical approach–

> "Psycho-analysis regarded everything mental as being in the first place unconscious; the further quality of '"consciousness"' might also be present, or again it might be absent. This of course provoked a denial from the philosophers, for whom '"consciousness"' and '"mental"' were identical and who protested that they could not conceive of such an absurdity as the '"unconscious mental."' There was no help for it, however, and this idiosyncrasy of the philosophers could only be disregarded with a shrug. Experience (gained from pathological material, of which the philosophers were ignorant) of the frequency and power of impulses of which one knew nothing directly, and whose existence had to be inferred like some fact in the external world, left no alternative open. It could be pointed out, incidentally, that this was only treating one's own mental life as one had always treated other people's. One did not hesitate to ascribe mental processes to other people, although one had no immediate consciousness of them and could only infer them from their words and actions. But what held good for other people must be applicable to oneself. Anyone who tried to push the argument further and to conclude from it that one's own

> hidden processes belonged actually to a second *consciousness* would be faced with the concept of a consciousness of a thing of which one knew nothing, of an '"unconscious consciousness"' – and this would scarcely be preferable to the assumption of an '"unconscious mental."'…The further question as to the ultimate nature of this unconscious is no more sensible or profitable than the older one as to the nature of the conscious."[20]

In terms of the epistemology of the unconscious mind, it is clear that Freud considered knowledge in relation to the unconscious to be accessible to us in two forms, or rather via two methods – firstly, through the study of the analysand and their behaviour, an in-depth investigation of which permits the analyst to build a conception of the state of the analysand's unconscious as a causal influence. More simply, on the basis of reports relating to the behaviour and or accounts of the analysand, the analyst will construct an explanatory narrative in which behaviours of which the analysand is conscious are caused by factors 'known' only to the unconscious e.g. it was by dint of the unconscious mind that the analysand miscommunicated x, or misinterpreted y, or forgot z. The second means of access to knowledge about the unconscious within psychoanalysis is via dreams, fantasies and, though the concept is a vague one, through what the analyst identifies as behavioural or other symptoms. Through the interpretation of this sort of data, which Freud believed to be representative of the state of the unconscious, we can theoretically gain access to information about the unconscious itself, and the nature of unconscious states in general.

There is an assumption at the base of psychoanalysis that each of the multifarious affects with which we are all familiar (such that they can be found in a dictionary, for example fear, disgust, or anxiety) are capable of being qualitatively and descriptively differentiated one from another

[20] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *Autobiography,* Kindle Edition, p.39, loc. 386

despite their relation and considered analytically by an investigator insofar as they appear or present in an individual. Such emotions as these have a universal quality in both experience and external recognition. They are qualitatively similar across individual cases. In short, in the same way that the vast majority of people can qualitatively differentiate a smooth texture from a rough one, most people can identify and experientially, at least, understand the difference between, for example, horror on seeing a large spider suddenly scuttle up their leg, and anxiety about the possibility of a large spider being somewhere in the room in which they are standing. However, the emotions themselves are merely articulations of experiences and motivations located within the unconscious; the frothing and roiling on the surface caused by the thrashing of eels in the murk beneath.

William James, among others, considered the concept of unconscious mentality to be unintelligible and saw it as contributing a layer to consciousness which was ultimately redundant simply because it was not required to explain mental phenomena. Dismissing Freud's conception of the unconscious, he asserted that "…we seem not only to have ascertained the unintelligibility of the notion that a mental fact can be two things at once, and that what seems like one feeling, of blueness for example, or of hatred, may really and 'unconsciously' be ten thousand elementary feelings which do not resemble blueness or hatred at all, but we find that we can express all the observed facts in other ways".[21] There is considerable philosophical scholarship mirroring James's concern about the Freudian notion of the unconscious, relating to whether or not the idea of, as it were, a second consciousness represents a *contradictio in adjecto.* That issue is not the focus of this chapter, however, as it does not reflect in a significant way on Spinoza's relationship with, or overlap with, Freud.[22]

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[21] James, William, *The Principles of Psychology,* Vol I, Dover Publications, 1950, p. 175

[22] For more on the problem of dual, or double consciousness in Freud and the philosophical problem some philosophers assert that it poses, with particular emphasis on the criticisms levelled by William James, see Gardner, Sebastian, 'The Unconscious' in Neu, Jerome, (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Freud,* Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 136-160

For the purposes of this chapter, it is enough to point out that many esteemed philosophical thinkers have pointed out and peered inside the chasm of the unconscious, which Freud considered a fruitless endeavour, and found that Freud himself had not been sufficiently rigorous. Bertrand Russell also asserted, in his inimitable prose, the impracticality and shaky non-falsifiability of Freud's theory of the unconscious, saying that it "becomes a story of underground prisoner, living in a dungeon, breaking in at long intervals on our daylight respectability with dark groans and maledictions and strange atavistic lusts. The ordinary reader, almost inevitably, thinks of this underground person as another consciousness, prevented by what Freud calls the 'censor' from making his voice heard in company, except on rare and dreadful occasions when he shouts so loud that everyone hears him and there is a scandal. Most of us like the idea that we could be desperately wicked if only we let ourselves go. For this reason, the Freudian 'unconscious' has been a consolation to many quiet and well-behaved persons."[23] To an extent, the unconscious can become both an explanatory scapegoat and a bogeyman in Freudian theory.

In attempting to understand the nature of the philosophical and theoretical connection between Freud and Spinoza, Freud's linguistic opacity can be challenging. However, it is sufficient to rely on the somewhat unclear statement of Freud himself, in which he argued that he was not influenced directly by Spinoza, but rather by 'the atmosphere [Spinoza] created'. It is extremely difficult to know what this might mean, since Freud does not claim to have been inspired directly by Spinoza's legacy, nor name anyone he considered particularly influenced by Spinoza to account for what he meant by this 'atmosphere'.

It is sufficient to argue that Spinoza generated the theoretical foundations upon which Freud rested psychoanalysis, and that without Spinoza,

[23] Russell, Bertrand, cited in Sand, Rosemarie Sponner, *The Unconscious Without Freud,* Rowman and Littlefield, 2014, p. 108

psychoanalytic theory must necessarily have taken a very different shape. Spinoza established a domain of pure, determined mentation in which analytic therapeutic methods like Freud's made logical sense. There is much in psychoanalysis which converges with Spinoza's psychological theory, and this did not go unrecognised, even by those in Freud's orbit – one of Freud's many disciples, Lou Andreas-Salomé, described Spinoza as "the philosopher of psychoanalysis. Think far enough, correctly enough on any point and you hit upon him; you meet him waiting for you, standing ready at the side of the road."[24] Indeed, images of Spinoza's thought in key areas can be identified throughout Freudian theory.

If we take emotions in the spirit of the Freudian interpretation (and, arguably the Spinozistic version also) to be some breed of thought or idea with attendant simultaneous feeling (both in terms of kinaesthetic or 'felt' sensation and a more complex, cumulative mind-and-body combination state), it makes sense to advocate or institute Spinoza's analytic method of therapy. The same held for William James and Wilhelm Wundt. Though Spinoza and James both maintained that what James would call an introspective method could be sufficient for the therapeutic process – a method by which individuals might come to understand their own motivations, thoughts and emotions better through personal inquiry, Freud believed that a trained analyst was required for any progress to be made toward an objective interpretation of an individual's subjective unconscious. Wundt similarly espoused the necessity of a psychologist conducting the experimental method which facilitated controlled introspection in order to prevent what we would call armchair psychology and consequently inconclusive or unreliable results. Broadly, however, in light of Spinozistic theory of mind, the introspective – or partially introspective – approach to a therapeutic methodology makes good sense. It is feasible that an individual's outlook and sense of happiness or

[24] Andreas-Salomé, Lou, cited in Neu, Jerome, *Emotion, Thought and Therapy: A Study of Hume and Spinoza and the Relationship of Philosophical Theories of the Emotions to Psychological Theories of Therapy,* University of California Press, 1977, p. 151

wellbeing might be overhauled through concentrated inquiry into their experiences and memories, and the beliefs which stem from them.

Spinoza's psychology is marked by its dynamism, which prompts appropriate comparison between the Spinozistic *conatus,* the force by which we are impelled to strive toward self-preservation, and Freudian *libido,* provided we interpret *libido* as referring to all such impulses, rather than just sexual impulses. Jerome Neu notes that "The two notions mark the main driving forces behind human action, and fit into comparable economic models of mind as a homeostatic system seeking to maintain equilibrium in its interaction with the world outside its finite boundaries."[25] Neu notes, however, that the two concepts cannot simply be straightforwardly equated with one another. This is legitimate – insofar as *libido* might be considered in relation to *conatus*, it is a distortion of Spinoza's original concept. *Conatus* is distinctly unitary as a force. *Libido* is decidedly otherwise, fundamentally subject (as were all elements of Freudian theory) to Freud's dualism. In his earlier work, he distinguishes distinctly between *libido* and ego or our instinct(s) toward self-preservation. Deterministic dualism remained fixedly central within Freud's thinking through his career, and he never came close to asserting the sort of deterministic monism which is so fundamental to Spinozism.

Nevertheless, Freud's concept of *libido* does feature considerable similarity to Spinoza's *conatus*. *Libido* within psychoanalytic theory is a driving force, and one which is purely instinctual, its impetus circularly justified. This bears significant resemblance to Spinoza's theory of *conatus* which is also a force which propels itself, for its own sake. Both consider our emotional experience to be symptomatic or indicative of an all-encompassing tendency towards the preservation of our own being. Freud and Spinoza agree, though through different means, that any

[25] Neu, Jerome, *Emotion, Thought and Therapy: A Study of Hume and Spinoza and the Relationship of Philosophical Theories of the Emotions to Psychological Theories of Therapy,* University of California Press, 1977, p. 149

hindrance which arrests this fundamental impulse will result in conscious, emotional pain.

As Hampshire, who recognised the palpably Spinozistic echoes within Freudian theory, deftly phrases it "Every person is held to dispose of a certain quantity of psychical energy, and conscious pleasures and pains are the counterparts of the relatively uninhibited expression and frustration of this energy."[26] Through the experience of emotion, we are rendered more or less powerful in our capacity to act as agents. As a result of this, Freud resembles Spinoza in dispensing with the concept of assigning moral value, or negative moral value, to those things which bring about our emotions, be they lowly passions or nobler feelings. To assign value or blame in those cases would be to miss the point, and does not fit the pragmatic, secular frameworks of Freud and Spinoza's emotional theories; though of course there are elements of what one might call mysticism in Spinoza which he expanded upon in Part Five of the *Ethics*, and Freud had a certain fondness for the occult, as well as an interest in the concept of telepathy. Regardless, both their emotional theories are very clear on one point – the therapeutic methods of both Freud and Spinoza are oriented around the acquisition of freedom, and acquiring this freedom involves mastering a certain level of management of our emotions. Like Spinoza, Freud took a more modest (and less Stoic) view of management of emotions, and the freedom that followed from it. By understanding the true causes of our desires, we can reroute those desires; understanding prompts different emotional responses.

Initially, Freud considered *libido* to be on a par with ego and instinct(s), but over time his psychoanalytic theory expanded the concept of *libido*, such that it subsumed ego and instinct(s) and represented for Freud all the forces by which we must necessarily strive to preserve our own being.[27]

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[26] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook, 2005, loc. 1948

[27] Faye, Ahmed, F*reud's Other Theory of Psychoanalysis: The Replacement for the Indelible Theory of Catharsis,* Rowman & Littlefield, 2013, pp. 99-101

This description bears a striking resemblance to the *conatus* doctrine, but the marked divergence between the two lies in the fact that sexuality does not act as the filter and subtext of Spinoza's theoretical framework in relation to motivation. The role of sex within the Freudian theoretical structure has been largely rejected by the psychoanalytic theory that followed it.[28] Despite the similarities which exist between *conatus* and *libido*, *libido* became an umbrella term for Freud, eventually coming to represent all human drives – "As libido expanded to cover ever more and more, so that eventually it came to represent all the life forces, the theory continued to provide for a second set of instinctual forces to oppose and conflict with it. In the end, beside the life instincts stand the death instincts."[29] Spinoza's *conatus* does not entail a death instinct, but rather necessarily rejects the idea of such a drive, except as a misdirection resulting from inadequate ideas causing immense psychic pain.

The hindrance of our central desires and drives results in pain. Both Spinoza and Freud associate some states of pleasure and pain with the activity of human instincts and their inherent capacity to impact upon our power of action. Spinoza understood painful or damaging emotions to be passive; feelings which arise as a result of our being acted upon by external causes, and based upon inadequate ideas. As a result, these emotions cannot represent or result in a death instinct, or an inclination toward death. Pleasure is an increase in *conatus*, but increase in *libido* is associated with pain. Freud makes this association because–

> "sensations of a pleasurable nature have not anything inherently impelling about them, whereas unpleasurable ones have it in the highest degree. The latter impel towards change, towards discharge, and that is why we interpret unpleasure as implying a heightening and pleasure a lowering of energetic cathexis"[30]

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[28] Quindeau, Ilka, *Seduction and Desire: A Psychoanalytic Theory of Sexuality Since Freud*, Karnac, 2013, p. 1

[29] Neu, Jerome, *Emotion, Thought and Therapy: A Study of Hume and Spinoza and the Relationship of Philosophical Theories of the Emotions to Psychological Theories of Therapy,* University of California Press, 1977, p. 149

[30]Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* Vintage, 2001, p. 3957

Instincts are what 'energise' the mind in Freudian psychology, and are the forces which motivate us under what Spinoza would have considered the attribute of thought. Though Freud intimates that there are an infinite number of possible instincts, he is predominantly concerned with a relatively small number, which are the most fundamental or basic human instincts. These, Freud categorised into two groups. The first, the life instinct, or *Eros*, includes all human instincts that might be considered the instincts toward self-preservation, as well as the erotic instincts. The second, *Thanatos*, the death instinct, refers to instincts toward self-destruction, aggression and cruelty. It is clear then that Freud does not suggest that *all* motivations have sexual origin. Actions which spring from motivations deriving from *Thanatos* are not sexually motivated. Rather, inherent to the concept of *Thanatos* in Freudian theory is an irrational urge to self-annihilate, and in doing so, to cause the destruction of the source of sexual energy.

However, the common misinterpretation of the importance Freud placed in sexual energy and drives has its basis, to some extent, in a correct observation. Freudian theory did appoint a central role to sexuality and sexual drives in the lives, behaviours and actions of human beings. His theory was ground breaking and unprecedented within Freud's lifetime, as well as shocking to popular sensibility, which to some extent and in some circles, it still is. His attribution of sexual drives even to children right from birth in the form of his theory of infantile sexuality was altogether too much for some psychologists and physicians at the time. Indeed, even his assertion that sexual energy in the form of libido constitutes the central motivating force in adulthood and human life in general, was not ever fully accepted within mainstream psychological discourse. It is worth noting, however, that perhaps akin in a loose sense to James, Freud's chosen mode of expression did not entirely help his cause, as a large degree of reasonable misinterpretation abounded. Indeed, Freud gives the impression in several of his written works, among them

The Unconscious (1915) of 'thinking with his pen'.[31] He took the word 'sexuality', which he redefined for his own theoretical purposes, to mean any form of pleasure which might be considered to be derived from or in the body. It would perhaps be a more accurate (as well as charitable) interpretation to suggest that Freudian theory suggests that human drives or instincts necessitate that a human being is energised (in other words, that human being's power of action is increased) from the moment of their birth by a desire to experience and enhance bodily pleasure.

The comparison between Spinoza and Freud in this particular respect is rather brittle. When Spinoza talks about pleasure, he is discussing it in relation to power of action, or the capacity of pleasure to increase the relative vitality of an individual. He is not talking about any sort of Freudian psychic tension, any "heightening [or]…lowering of energetic cathexis". Rather, he suggests – "We psychologists grounded in psychoanalysis have become accustomed to taking as our starting-point unconscious psychic processes… We consider these to be the older, primary psychic processes…The highest tendency obeyed by these primary processes is easy to identify; we call it the pleasure-unpleasure principle (or the pleasure principle for short). These processes strive to gain pleasure; our psychic activity draws back from any action that might arouse unpleasure (repression)."[32] The parallel physical expression and experience of this increase or decrease in power of action is not enough to meet the physiological overtures of energetic cathexis through alteration in *libido*, which appears to be based in physicality in a way that *conatus* certainly is not. However, Freud was heavily influenced, being a physician and working during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, by Darwinianism.

Darwin was the scientific colossus of the nineteenth century. His *Origin of Species* (1859) was published when Freud was just four years of age,

[31] Freud, Sigmund. *The Unconscious,* Penguin, 2005, XXV
[32] Freud, Sigmund. *The Unconscious,* Penguin, 2005, pp. 3-4

changing completely the scientific landscape and the environment which Freud would grow up to work in. Up to that point, scientists and theorists had failed to take Spinoza's advice, and continued to perceive mankind as 'a dominion within a dominion'. The doctrine of evolution destroyed the premises upon which that classical assumption had been based (apart from the concept of a soul), and pulled man (not altogether willingly) into the animal kingdom. What followed was a new opportunity for the scientific investigation of human beings. Their motivations, mental and physical functions and behaviours suddenly seemed theoretically susceptible to scientific inquiry, creating space within the scientific milieu for various new theories influenced by evolutionary theory – among them, Freud's psychoanalytic theory. He was also heavily influenced by Ernst Brücke, under whom he worked at the University of Vienna. Brücke's *Lecture Notes on Physiology* (1874) were influenced by the result of recent advances in physics. The Lectures asserted that living organisms are forms of energy systems. Freud in turn adopted a version of this theory in the form of 'dynamic physiology' and adapted it to support his claim that the human personality is an energy system, subject to 'psychic energy' which can fluctuate and be modified.

In light of the scientific atmosphere of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the determinism present within Freud's system (he did indeed consider it a scientific system, despite the problems with that assertion) was not at all aberrant for the time. He was not, after all, even the first thinker to apply the laws or principles of determinism to mental domain on a systematic level; Spinoza got there long before him. He was not unique either in asserting that the human behavioural spectrum is explicable relative to mostly unconscious (depending on how one interprets that word) or hidden mental processes or mental states which determine that behaviour. [33] Spinoza got there, too, before Freud, in his idea that those who are subject to inadequate ideas are prompted to action

[33] In this context, I use the word to indicate mental states and processes of which we do not have immanent awareness, but to which we are nevertheless subject.

by whims and urges rather than by reasoned consideration giving rise to adequate ideas. Freud's theory was heavily oriented around the treatment of what he referred to as 'neurosis', which he understood as the developments of behavioural or psychosomatic symptoms as a direct result of the resurfacing of repressed experience and emotion. Here, he gives an early account of neurosis in relation to hysteria, which was the focus of much of his early psychological study and clinical experience:

> "the recollection of the operative psychical trauma is not to be found in the patient's normal memory but in his memory when he is hypnotized. The longer we have been occupied with these phenomena the more we have become convinced that *the splitting of consciousness which is so striking in the well-known classical cases under the form of 'double conscience' is present to a rudimentary degree in every hysteria, and that a tendency to such dissociation, and with it the emergence of abnormal states of consciousness (which we shall bring together under the term 'hypnoid') is the basic phenomenon of this neurosis*."[34]

The neurotic, Freud tells us, rejects reality in favour of some form or other of fantasy – "We have gained some insight into this connection by introducing the process of repression into the aetiology of neurosis. The neurotic turns away from reality because he finds either the whole or parts of it unbearable. The most extreme type of this turning away from reality is exhibited in certain cases of hallucinatory psychosis where the patient attempts to deny the event that has triggered his insanity. Actually, though, every neurotic does the same things with some fragment of reality."[35]Instead of taking the traditional approach which physicians and early psychiatrists had taken – which was to presume that the behaviours and indeed the motivations of the neurotic were causally inexplicable –

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[34] Freud, Sigmund, *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vol. 1,* Strachey, James (ed.), Vintage Publishing, 2001, p. 15. This is an early reference to neurosis. Freud was not one for succinct, clarificatory definitions and instead employed his technical terminology rather in the applied context, leaving the reader to glean meanings from context. Obviously, some significant nuance is lost, but the quotation relays a sense of the importance of the concept of consciousness as early as 1893. The 'we' the citation refers to is Freud and Josef Breuer, with whom Freud collaborated in studying the phenomenon of hysteria.

[35] Freud, Sigmund, *The Unconscious,* Penguin, 2005, p. 3

Freud treated these behaviours and the hidden motives behind them as meaningful and indicative of, or gesturing at, an internal state which was not immediately translatable through experience.

As in the approach to physical illness, Freud sought to trace symptoms back to their causes by seeking a reasoned explanation for them. Causes are not evident to us prima facie, but operate in a disguised fashion. Hence the theoretical explanation (a source of some jocundity in popular culture since Freud) of minor errors as causally meaningful. The popular joke definition of a Freudian slip as 'saying one thing and meaning your mother' is quite entertaining, but also burrows down to the loadedness of disguised meaning in Freudian theory (as well as the theories rooting neuroticism in childhood and early childhood eroticisation of the parent figure). Errors of various kinds are one sort of indicator of the causal impulses rooted in the unconscious. It is the duty of the analyst to interpret and follow the signs back to the causes which lie in the analysand's unconscious mind, and pull them forth into consciousness. Once understood, they can be disarmed.

Indeed, Freud posits the existence of neurosis (as he sees it) at all as evidencing the truth of determinism. Since there is nothing traceable within the conscious mind which provides an explanatory cause of neurosis and neurotic behaviour, they must be determined by something else, and purely external causes do not go far enough, Freud asserts, to explain the origins of neurosis. Unconscious events are not accessible to us except through a lengthy course of psychoanalysis, because they do not refer merely to mental processes or events which are external to consciousness. They lie within the unconscious, and must be brought forth into the illumination of conscious awareness. It follows, of course, that there is far more to the Freudian 'mind' than mere consciousness. Consciousness itself is rather only the face of the mind, for Freud.

Freud and Spinoza's naturalism is not merely psychological; indeed, Spinozistic monism necessitates that it be applicable to a theory of

everything. This aside, Neu asserts that "the notions of 'determination' and 'determinism', let alone 'overdetermination', are in fact problematical, and especially problematical in relation to the thought of Spinoza and Freud. The models of explanation and the role of thoughts in explanation really need to be carefully considered. Freud insists that no psychological state is without meaning (which may not be the same as saying that it has a 'cause' in a narrow Humean sense). And while Freud maintains a faith in an underlying neurophysiological reality, he recognises that psychological phenomena must receive psychological explanations"[36] Freud did indeed assert that disembodied phenomena are not best understood through the semantics or paradigm of physicality – "Our psychical topography has *for the present* nothing to do with anatomy; it has reference not to anatomical localities, but to regions in the mental apparatus, wherever they may be situated in the body."[37]

Spinoza evidently considers the physical and mental, body and mind to be two articulations of the one ultimate substance. It follows from this that it only makes sense to consider the mental within the dominion of the mental, or to understand thought under the attribute of thought. Freud and Spinoza operate as if in a Venn diagram, with common concepts located within the space where the circles of their individual psychological systems overlap. Within that overlap lie certain conceptions of the physical aspects of emotion, the role of emotion in motivation, and shared similar notions of psychical determinism.

Also within that space is the recognition these two famed Jewish thinkers share of the important, change-making power of understanding and the role of reflexive knowledge in relation to individual freedom. Bringing that which is not conscious, the unconscious itself, into a place of consciousness, where conscious analysis becomes possible is

[36] Neu, Jerome, *Emotion, Thought and Therapy: A Study of Hume and Spinoza and the Relationship of Philosophical Theories of the Emotions to Psychological Theories of Therapy,* University of California Press, 1977, p. 151
[37] Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud,* Vintage, 2001, p. 2998

epistemically analogous to the transformation of inadequate or confused ideas into adequate ones. This act of illumination, far from being trivial, makes treatment and, potentially, cure of emotional disorders possible. Through understanding, we ameliorate mental distress and become (more) actualised agents. As in the case of Spinoza, Freud attempts to convince his reader of how this might be possible within a causally determined world.

Stuart Hampshire takes the determinism issue firmly in hand when he questions whether the label is one we should even apply to thinkers like Freud and Spinoza – "A determinist, as this label is commonly understood, has the single idea that any human behaviour is to be explained by well-confirmed natural laws which, taken together with a statement of initial conditions, exhibit the behaviour, whatever it may be, as always in principles predictable. This is not the kind of understanding, and of self-understanding, that is proposed by Spinoza and Freud."[38] Hampshire maintains that what we mean when we talk about determinism is not a comfortable fit for the concept espoused by Spinoza and Freud, though there is little doubt that their respective systems certainly do rely upon a concept of causal necessity.

By the assessment of both Freud and Spinoza, an individual is "a psycho-physical organism with a quantity of undifferentiated energy that appears in consciousness as desire and, below the level of consciousness, as appetite."[39] As individuals, we project our desires and appetites onto objects of love or of hate in the world which impact our power of action, either positively or negatively. Notably, we can also project in this way through the medium of memory, which will also result in a corresponding differentiation in power of action. Hampshire notes the parallelism in light of this between Spinoza's account of passive emotions and the laws which govern them as outlined in Part Three of the *Ethics*, and Freud's

[38] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook [Kindle Edition], 2005, location 3017
[39] Ibid

mechanisms of projection, transference, displacement, and identification in the formation of objects of love and aggression.[40]

There are many aspects of Spinoza's work (and indeed his life) which make him unusual. Just one of them is his focus on the power and experience of the individual despite the fact that he sees the order of nature as subject to his theory of monism. Freud shares this emphasis on the individual who, though arguably subordinate and thrashed about to some significant extent by the wave of a wider system (not to mention one's own unconscious), must nonetheless assert and safeguard their individuality counter to that force. For both Freud and Spinoza, there is but one means by which individuals may to some extent disassociate themselves, or render themselves distinct from the wider process. This means is through the pursuit of rational thinking; the sort of thought that leads to understanding and promotes rational action. When we understand something, we are less likely to act on the impetus of feeling alone. Consequently, we feel less rattled by the process of causality which, in the absence of adequate ideas or understanding, rockets us from emotional impression to the outcome of an action we neither understood nor had the means to anticipate or contextualise. When my actions are determined or necessitated by causes external to me, outcomes are unpredictable and neither processes nor outcomes are rationally explicable to us. When I understand the causal forces acting upon me, I take possession of my own thoughts and actions, and become a cause unto myself.

"When a man's thought follows the objective order of things in nature, he is, and knows that he is, for a time an autonomous individual, asserting his own power and independence of mind. I repeat 'for a time'. For neither Spinoza nor Freud were optimists. Freedom is at best only intermittent and partial, and the general condition of men, as parts of nature, is one of

[40] "Our Mind does certain things [acts] and undergoes other things, viz. insofar as it has adequate ideas, it necessarily does certain things, and insofar as it has inadequate ideas, necessarily undergoes other things." (III. P 1); "From this it follows that the Mind is more liable to passions the more it has inadequate ideas, and conversely, is more active the more it has inadequate ideas." (III. P 1/C)

fantasy and of passion determined by unconscious memory and therefore conflict and frustration."[41] This is how Hampshire characterises what he sees as Spinoza and Freud's shared pessimism, though he does allow that Freud was vastly more pessimistic. I maintain that Hampshire is not entirely accurate in describing Spinoza as a pessimist. It should be clear by now that Spinoza held a deep and sincere belief in man's capacity to liberate himself through understanding. He was also extremely conscious of the richness of everyday experience and consciously chose a quiet, ascetic life, turning down the opportunity to improve his social and financial position in favour of the pursuit of understanding. These are not the actions of a pessimist. Beneath Spinoza's written work and correspondence runs a seam of conservative optimism and hope for the potential of the human condition.

By contrast, Freud's greatest hope for the individual was a more manageable or average form of unhappiness. His attitude was Spinozistic, but not at all that of an optimist – "I have found little that is 'good' about human beings on the whole. In my experience, most of them are trash…"[42] In his dealings with the vast numbers of analysands with whom he conducted treatment throughout the course of his career, not to mention the analysts and acolytes with whom he worked, Freud found no evidence to convince him that intellect, reason and careful introspection we sufficient to free us from the clutches of self-ignorance and emotional enslavement.

Freud was clear about his determinism – "[F]aith in undetermined psychical events and in free will is quite unscientific and must yield to the demand of a determinism whose rule extends over mental life."[43] This

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[41] Hampshire, Stuart, *Spinoza and Spinozism,* Clarendon Press Oxford, EBook [Kindle Edition], 2005, location 3043

[42] Freud, Sigmund, *Psychoanalysis and Faith: The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Oscar Pfister,* Letter from Freud to Pfister, 10th September 1918, Forgotten Books, 2017, pp. 61-62

[43] Freud, Sigmund, 'The Psychopathology of Everyday Life', in Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, p. 3204

determinism is the root and the justification for Freud's theory that a chosen present moment might successfully be retrospectively traced back to its point of origin (even if the originating point in time is decades past, or theoretically outside memory, as events occurring in very early childhood might be) to its determining moment of origin. He was confident in his belief that there is no spontaneous generation of thoughts, and conducted experiments in what he termed 'free association' to prove that hypothesis. Not only was Freud suggesting that current conscious problems or issues have their roots in our unconscious past, but also that these roots might be dug out and consciously exposed in the present. – "…the behavioural determinants that Freud discovered were so distinct they were taken for uncaused or *absolute* first causes, separated, themselves, from other determinants. (This illusion of uncaused first causes was heightened by the unspoken assumption of psychoanalysis that dysfunctional behaviour is an aberration in the vast, normal course of the universe.)"[44] However, he also does not have all that much to say about ultimate causes, since he logically cannot posit the existence of absolute beginnings in relation to behavioural determinants, as those determinants themselves must necessarily have determinants which precede them. Freud was famed for fixity of mind when he had decided upon a theory, to the point that the departure of disciples and collaborators due to Freud's notorious intransigence were commonplace throughout his career. He fell out, as it were, with both Fliess and Breuer. Jung infamously broke ties with Freud altogether in 1912, as did Adler, Rank, Stekel and others. This intolerance of challenge to his decided-upon perspective was also noted by William James when the two met in 1909, who described Freud as follows:

> "I confess that he made on me personally the impression of a man obsessed by fixed ideas. I can make out nothing in my own case with his dream theories, and obviously "symbolism" is a most dangerous method. A newspaper report of the Congress

[44] Bricklin, Jonathan, *The Illusion of Will, Self and Time: William James's Reluctant Guide to Enlightenment,* State University of New York Press, 2015, p. 53

> said that Freud had condemned the American religious therapy…as very "dangerous" because so "unscientific." Bah!".[45]

Ultimately, Freud took something like the 'science' of Spinoza's determinism and applied it, as Spinoza did, to the territory of human psychology in its entirety, positing that we can identify key determinants in the causal chain that lead to aberrant or dysfunctional behaviour. By unearthing these causes, Freud thought, we might understand them sufficiently to contextualise and then alter the behaviours to which they lead. Unsurprisingly, the causal relationships that Freud attempted to establish between key past events and behaviours or mental states in the present proved impossible to verify with anything like the falsifiability, replicability or consistency which would be required for a field to justify itself as a strict science. The fact that this was a criticism levelled frequently at psychoanalysis and at Freud himself caused him considerable irritation. However, he mellowed a little with time, writing in 1938 that it would not be unexpected "…if the basic concepts and principles of the new science (instinct, nervous energy, etc.) remain for a considerable time no less indeterminate than those of the older sciences (force, mass, attraction, etc.)" [46]

Another element of Freudian determinism aligns him with Spinoza—Freud clearly denies contingency – in his second introductory lecture to psychoanalysis, he offers a reply to the field's potential and actual naysayers; those who dismiss psychoanalysis as focussing too much on trivialities. Freud talks through the potential response of such a dissenter when presented with a question about how else they might explain the minor errors, in speech or memory, for example, that we all commonly make – "His answer is sure to be, "Oh, they are not worth the explanation; they are merely slight accidents." What does he mean by this? Does he

[45] Simon, Robert I., 'Great Paths Cross: Freud and James at Clark University, 1909', in *American Journal of Psychiatry,* Vol. 124, No. 6, 1967, p. 831
[46] Freud, Sigmund, 'An Outline of Psycho-Analysis', in Freud, Sigmund, Strachey, James (ed.), *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vols. 1-24,* W. Norton & Company, 1976, p. 3728

mean to assert that there are any occurrences so insignificant that they fall out of the causal sequence of things, or that they might just as well be something different from what they are? If anyone thus denies the determination of natural phenomena at one such point, he has vitiated the entire scientific viewpoint."[47] It certainly is not sufficient explanation to dismiss as insignificant these sorts of unintentional behavioural outcomes, and still less so to presume them uncaused or in some way exempt from a causal chain simply because they do not seem imminently significant. Clearly, such errors are caused by something, and have a root somewhere, whether that root is psychologically important in the context of an individual's life or history, or not. Freud maintains that the roots of such outcomes lie within the unconscious, and that to claim that there is no root cause simply because it lies beneath the surface of consciousness, is intellectually irresponsible and not conducive to individual progress. The cause of such slips of the tongue – use of the wrong word for an object, forgetting the name of someone whose name we *know we know*, Freud suggests, is usually mundane. Tiredness is a common one, or distraction. However, to suggest that something is uncaused because it is insignificant goes against the spirit of psychoanalysis. Nothing, Freud argues, is exempt from the wider causal structure of things.

Spinoza recognised and decisively endorsed the causal role of unconscious determinants as unreservedly as any of the contemporary thinkers of his day. He endorsed the conception that a form of relative freedom might be attained through an act of mental clarification by means of understanding. This theory is comparable to Freud's therapeutic modus of illuminating the unconscious to bring it into the territory of consciousness; or to put it simply, to take forces working on and within our minds, and bring ourselves to understand them. This notable similarity justifies comparison between the two, and provides some fertile ground for the belief that Spinoza was indeed (among many other and more

[47] Freud, Sigmund, Hall, G. Stanley (trans.), in *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, EBook, Digireads, 2013, location 288

accomplished endeavours in his own right) a sort of harbinger of Freudian psychoanalytic theory, though psychoanalysis is not necessarily an interpretation of Spinozistic psychology.

Freudian determinism and drives are Spinozistic in their function, but are ultimately ontologically different. *Libido* is, rather than a conceptual competitor to *conatus*, an alternative interpretation of a similar concept. Freudian emotion is as powerful and potentially harmful to an individual's power of action as Spinozistic, and understanding of those emotions is as personally liberating. However, we must add to this the potential of Spinoza's understanding (as he saw it) to elevate the human condition to personal freedom, or even to a sublime union with God or nature, while Freudian understanding allows us at best to jut our chins above the water line. Its highest aim is to make individuals manageably unhappy rather than unmanageably unhappy – Freud is clearly more interested in the formal therapeutic application of emotional theory.

Even though we can to an extent correlate Spinoza's theory and philosophy with Freudian theory, and doing so is important and illuminating in the endeavour to understand Freud well, one thing is clear. Freud fundamentally applies the core concepts of his psychology differently to Spinoza. It seems that, despite the nebulosity of that quotation from Freud, in which he appeared actually to be saying very little, he was in fact making an honest and important statement about his intellectual relationship with Spinoza. Freud was not influenced by Spinoza, but by the atmosphere he created. This is to say that he was not impacted directly by Spinoza, but the atmosphere of Spinozism; his theory converged philosophically and theoretically with Spinoza, but the resulting theory, though certainly containing elements evoking Spinoza's ideas, is dissimilar in a variety of ways.

A successful outcome to Freud's therapeutic method is basic functionality for the afflicted individual, which Freud equates with personal freedom. Success in Spinoza's therapeutic approach is personal freedom of a more

meaningful sort, with the potential for enlightenment. Though it has been suggested correctly that to some extent both these great Jewish thinkers were pessimists, it is evident that Freud's psychology is fundamentally pessimistic. Within it, our unhappiness and friction within the world is simply determined; all we can do is ameliorate it to some relative degree. Within Spinoza's unified substance, though subject to what is undoubtedly a hard determinism, we do possess an option to free ourselves from the tyranny of irrational emotion, rather than simply loosening its hold on us. Spinoza also fundamentally believed in the capacity of man to liberate himself through understanding, while Freud considered only some people good candidates for psychoanalysis. Even then, their psychological advancement toward understanding was possible only with the help and through the educated guidance of a skilled analyst. The Spinozist is – in theory- the master, as it were, of his own fate, the captain of his own soul.

While many comparisons can be drawn between the ideas of Spinoza and Sigmund Freud, the differences between the two are perhaps even more striking. Freud, rejecting the utility of a philosophical approach, contrary to his desires, produced work with a far less 'scientific' (by which I mean faithful to the scientific method) legitimacy than Spinoza's. As a practitioner first, without an overt and consistent philosophical underpinning, Freud was more interested in practice than theory. This has its issues. A scholar of psychological theory based at a university is interested in the work and research of other psychologists, a philosopher of psychology is interested in how such theorists of psychology think about psychology. Clinical psychologists are interested in *doing* psychology based on what the theorist advises about the nature and function of minds.

Freud falls somewhere between the psychological theorist and the practitioner. Wilhelm Wundt and William James are located, in terms of their interest and approach, somewhere between the philosopher of psychology and the psychological theorist. All three – Wundt, James and Freud – converge in their own capacities by the psychological philosophy

of Spinoza. As a result, so are the three branches above in their modern versions – psychological theory, philosophy of psychology, and clinical psychology.

Conclusion

"Philosophers and psychologists today 'behave like the men and women in an orthodox synagogue. Each group knows about the other, but it is proper form that each should ignore the other'…Students of both psychology and philosophy have 'the frustrating experience of being discouraged from being psychological in their philosophy tutorials and philosophical in their psychology tutorials'"[1]

If a person is unaware of their own underlying philosophical assumptions when doing psychology, or indeed any kind of science, they are very likely to make illegitimate claims about how their psychology maps onto reality. Since psychology does technically fall under the scientific umbrella, it takes the authenticity of a realist world-in-itself as given, and is concerned primarily with questions about what *is* in an attempt to better understand and describe that reality. It holds that there is a fact of the matter in relation to what a mind is and how it functions, as well as its relationship with brain and body. However, as soon as a scientist or psychologist begins to theorise about their ideas, and the application of those ideas in a pragmatic context, as well as, for example, the individual or social merits of those ideas, they are branching outside of science or psychology, and into the domain of philosophy. In this sense, the relationship between philosophy and psychology is quite obvious, and speaks to the fact that the scientific method itself is an invention of philosophers. In the loosest sense, the theoretical wing of any subject or discipline in some respect qualifies as philosophy, or in the very least, philosophical. This should be an uncontroversial statement.

However, this thesis takes the relationship between philosophy and psychology yet further. It posits not only that the conceptual roots of modern psychological theory come from within philosophy itself, but that

[1] Kusch, Martin, *Psychologism: The Sociology of Philosophical Knowledge,* Routledge, 1995, p.8

the fundamental concepts of psychology, and even the idea of a science of mind being feasible, originate specifically within the philosophy and psychological theory of Spinoza and that this convergence has been wholly overlooked by the psychological discipline. The extent of the pragmatic legacy of Spinoza's psychology has also been largely forgotten within philosophy. It has argued that the three founding fathers of psychology – Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud – show considerable philosophical and theoretical similarity to Spinoza, and that as a consequence, Spinozistic psychology inheres inseparably within the theory and practice of psychology today, which branches without significant deviation directly from the work of those three founding fathers.

It follows from this that forgetting Spinoza – the thinker whose theory made the establishment of central psychological concepts possible – has inevitably impacted psychological theory as well as for practitioners. To return to the introductory paragraph above, a psychologist who is unaware of the true conceptual lineage of their field, and is not aware of their own philosophical assumptions when doing psychology, is likely to make errors in interpreting data or asserting how that psychology overlaps with theory. Indeed, they are likely to misapply that psychology in the context of reality. A field which is unaware of its own theoretical origins runs the same risks on a much larger scale. Without having a sense of the origin of psychological theory, or the philosophical positions or assumptions which underlie it, there is no possible way of correcting for errors which may arise as a result of those assumptions, or indeed of identifying the right theoretical questions to ask.

This is the precise issue regarding lobotomy, as discussed in the introduction to this thesis. There are practices we engage in now whose ontological, empirical and moral bases are taken for granted by practitioners. One of the most controversial examples in the current era would be the medical treatment of gender dysphoria in young children. Though there is not consensus among psychologists or the relevant

medical professionals who would be involved in this sort of treatment or intervention, there are advocates of delaying the onset of puberty to enable hormonal treatment of gender dysphoric young people, and those who maintain that such early intervention is premature and raises ethical questions.[2] While there is much debate on the subject, there are few if any solid claims to knowledge in this area.[3] To take a less controversial and timely example, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in veterans was regarded differently in the aftermath of the First World War to the way it was approached after the Second World War.[4] Both of those approaches differ from theories of the disorder and best practice as they are seen today, or even after the Iraq war, for example.[5] At every point in the history of treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder in veterans of war, psychologists believed the latest method to be the best one.

This is why careful consideration of objects in the world, language and emotion is particularly essential to both the application and formulation of psychological theory. The semantics of psychology, as well as the ontology and epistemology of psychology have real-world applications which impact how we think about or attempt to help a traumatised soldier, or a child who is either fundamentally confused or legitimately suffering with feelings of dwelling within the wrong body, or something else entirely. If that ontology and epistemology goes fundamentally unconsidered, the semantics overlooked or unclassified, errors are made which lead to more negative consequences than mere bad reasoning (which is in itself of course a significant negative consequence).

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[2] See Wren, Bernadette, 'Early Physical Intervention for Young People with Atypical Gender Identity Development' in *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry,* Vol. 5, No. 2, 2000, pp. 220-233

[3] Puszczyk, Monika and Czajeczny, Domink, 'Gender Dysphoria and Gender Variance in Children – Diagnostic and Therapeutic Controversies', in *Archives of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy,* Vol. 19, No. 3, 2017, pp. 34-42

[4] See Jones, Edgar and Wessely, Simon, *Shell Shock to PTSD: Military Psychiatry from 1900 to the Gulf War,* Psychology Press, 2005; Saigh, Philip A. and Bremner, Douglas A., *Posttraumatic Stress Disorder: A Comprehensive Text,* Allyn and Bacon, 1999

[5] Paulson, Daryl S. and Krippner, Stanley, *Haunted by Combat: Understanding PTSD in War Veterans Including Women, Reservists, and Those Coming Back from Iraq,* Praeger, 2007

Questions about the nature of a mind, its relationship with the body, whether there is a causal link between the two, and if so, in what direction it runs and what the nature of it is, are extremely pertinent. All of these questions must be answered by someone before, for example, a theory of post-traumatic stress disorder and its potential treatment strategy or strategies might be devised. In dealing even with a milder set of psychological symptoms, such as social anxiety, it is essential to have a solid epistemology from which to draw in order to know whether I am afraid to be in a crowd because I am anxious, or whether I am anxious to be in a crowd because I am afraid. Is that anxiety more than the sum of its symptoms, or does the condition inhere in the experience of sweating palms, increased heart rate, a roving gaze and goose bumps? Is it nothing to do with the nature and experience of these physical expressions at all, but rather something that does not exist in a tangible realm; a disembodied concept?

If we take this view, as a cursory knowledge of the history of psychiatric diagnosis and a glance at editions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) going back through time will show psychology and psychiatry to do, one point becomes obvious. Mental disorder diagnoses are always subject to the social environment in which they are made. Hysteria, a traditionally female condition characterised by uncontrolled expression of emotion and 'fragile nerves', does not exist today, despite comprising a substantial quantity of psychological and medical work for people like Freud, especially in the early stages of his career. Homosexuality was classed as a mental illness within the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual until it was removed from the manual by the American Psychiatric Association in 1973.[6] There are no mainstream psychologists or psychiatrists who would make such a claim today. On this view of psychological theory and treatment theory as specific to the place and time in which it is developed, post-traumatic stress disorder theory from the

[6] Drescher, Jack, 'Out of DSM: Depathologizing Homosexuality', in *Behavioural Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 4, 2015, p. 565

1950s may not even be applicable in the context of today's psychology. It may be difficult to extract theory from the period in which it is created or applied. We are, after all, always trapped within the current period of time in which we live, and subject to (or at the very least powerfully influenced by) its norms and attitudes. This is particularly the case because there is a definitive correlation between the many conditions throughout history up to today which fall loosely under the umbrella of 'insanity' or mental illness and the social norms which inhere during the period in which the diagnosis takes place. In order to better contextualise concepts of 'well' or 'healthy' and 'disordered' or 'unhealthy' minds, it is essentially to understand the fundamental concepts which contributed to these ideas in the first place, and on which they have their foundation. Not only would this straightforwardly lead to a better understanding of basic concepts in psychology, it would have pragmatic application generally. More specifically, this thesis has defended the view that those essential, load-bearing ideas within psychology which continue to inform and animate psychology today appear within the psychological philosophy of Spinoza.

While it has argued that modern psychological technique and practice, arising from the theory and work of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud are in keeping with the tenets of Spinozistic psychology, it has also identified the general lack of appreciation or understanding of Spinoza's psychological relevance within wider scholarship. This is particularly the case within psychological scholarship. As things currently stand, psychological practice appears to have stemmed from a sort of revelation channelled through Wundt and his two major successors. Yet psychology, while falling under the remit of science, is based neither upon revealed truth nor the genius of Wundt, James and Freud. While Spinoza is certainly not Moses, he might be considered in this respect an early prophet, and plays an essential theoretical role in the early formation of psychology.

In this thesis, I have argued that Spinoza's psychological system as articulated within his *Ethics* laid the epistemological groundwork for the

theories which primarily catalysed early psychology – those of Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud. This is a claim not currently present or examined within the literature. I have argued not just this, but also that the basis of psychology in the context of the history of ideas, rests within philosophy, and consequently that they share an epistemology to some extent, or rather the epistemological grounding of psychology emerges from the ontological approach of philosophy of mind, and that the epistemology of psychology converges with theory not just in philosophy, but in Spinoza's psychological philosophy. This thesis has aimed not only to locate Spinoza's philosophy at the theoretical genesis of the disparate field of psychology, but also to correct a common misinterpretation of his philosophy which perseveres even now within philosophical scholarship.

Many read Spinoza as belonging somewhere on a spectrum from indifferent to emotion to altogether hostile toward it. Martha Nussbaum observes, without causing much in the way of controversy, that "The Stoics and Spinoza dislike the emotions intensely."[7] This seems a rather unfair interpretation of Spinoza's philosophy of emotion as well as and inaccurate one, but such interpretations are so common as to be unremarkable. However, this reading of Spinoza contributes to the misconception of psychology's underlying concepts which this thesis has sought to correct. The fact that Spinoza's hidden prevalence within modern psychology is unknown is a problem in itself. Without an accurate understanding of Spinoza's account of emotion, this error is even more difficult to correct. It should now be clear from the account of Spinoza outlined within this work that not only were emotions absolutely central to Spinoza's psychological system, but the very vehicles by which our power of action is either increased or decreased – "*By Joy, therefore, I shall understand in what follows that passion by which the Mind passes to a greater perfection. And by Sadness, that passion by which it passes to a lesser perfection."* (III. P 11/S) As Chapter two clarified, it is through

[7] Nussbaum, Martha, *Sex and Social Justice*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 73

feeling that we increase our vitality. Consequently, though Spinoza is often unfairly and quite wrongly interpreted as being flinty or dismissive of emotion, he is in actuality deeply respectful of it. He assigns emotion a pivotal role within his psychology.

Spinoza also distinguishes higher order affects which are corollaries of what he sees as good action from debilitating passions. If, as Nussbaum asserts, he 'dislike[d] the emotions intensely', such a differentiation would not exist. Contrary to common misinterpretation, Spinoza treats the emotions with appreciation insofar as he accepts that they have an extremely important role within human thought, understanding and action, and consequently, in human freedom, insofar as he understands the concept. However, he does not treat them with indiscriminate appreciation, and sees unreasoned, atavistic emotion as both debilitating and dangerous. This may be the source of the misunderstanding which leads people to come away from the *Ethics* with the belief that Spinoza is a scholar without feeling, or appreciation for feeling. As this work has aimed to show, this is certainly not the case, and there is no evidence within the body of the *Ethics* to support such an interpretation.

Research Questions Revisited

The introductory chapter of this thesis introduced three major research questions which this work would seek to answer. They are as follows:

1. To what extent is Spinoza relevant to understanding foundational concepts in early psychology?

The convergence of Spinoza's psychology can clearly be uncovered in the theories of Wundt, James and Freud. It is evident in the case of Wundt, as this work has shown, that not just a generalised theory of monism – but Spinoza's particular monism – was the very framework for Wundt's conception of emotion and the mind-body relationship. Wilhelm Wundt put forward an account of mind-body parallelism in his theory of the

mechanism of mind-body interaction which was, for the most part, a mirror image of the Spinozistic original. He remarked – "I try to give my monism a broader extension, following as far as possible the example of the greatest of all monists: Spinoza."[8] Wundt's treatment of emotion and mind as though they are planes and bodies – indeed, the concept that one might scientise mind and emotion at all, given that they are arguably disembodied phenomena with bodily articulation – is put in context by Spinoza's geometric account of human psychology.

The Jamesian body-first account of emotion, which I have argued herein has been consistently misinterpreted within the literature since James first published it (despite his subsequent careful attempts to correct the misinterpretation), has been shown to bear resemblance to the Spinozistic account of passions and affects, with a focus on the mind-body relationship in both the experience and recognition of emotion. Also, Jamesian indeterminism exhibits significant overlap with Spinozistic determinism; both thinkers include space for a kind of freedom within their particular determinisms, and both place the concept of individual understanding within a special category in their therapeutic methodologies.

Sigmund Freud, the figure within early psychology who is certainly most widely known, and whose concepts penetrated outside the bounds of academia and therapeutic practice into the mainstream consciousness, also exhibits confluence with Spinoza's psychological philosophy. Spinoza created, as Freud articulated in the quotation presented on page 193, the intellectual environment or atmosphere within which Freud thought, and which enabled him to establish his theoretical outlook and therapeutic methodology. – "*I readily admit my dependence on Spinoza's doctrine*. There was no reason why I should expressly mention his name, since I conceived my hypothesis from the *atmosphere* created by him, rather than

[8] Araujo, Saulo de Freitas, *Wundt and the Philosophical Foundations of Psychology: A Reappraisal,* Springer, 2015, p. 128

from the study of his work."[9] As this thesis has endeavoured to prove, Freud utilised concepts which Spinoza established within his psychological philosophy. The similarities between Spinozistic *conatus* and Freudian *libido* are substantiated in this body of work. Freudian determinism resembles Spinoza's own, and Freud believed, as Spinoza did, that the psychological therapeutic method could redress behavioural imbalance and promote self-knowledge.

The three most influential figures in the history of psychology all show theoretical convergence with ideas from Spinoza's philosophy of psychology, as well as elements of his psychological system as set down in the *Ethics*. These ideas and principles were fundamental to the founding of psychology as a discrete scientific field based upon the idea that minds and emotions might be quantitatively as well as qualitatively examined like a femur or a case of the flu, or a problem in geometry. Such an approach, grounded in such concepts, is Spinozistic. It was the resurgence of concepts common to Spinoza's philosophy in the work of Wilhelm Wundt which allowed Wundt to find a workaround to Kant's theory that a science of the mind is impossible. This mantle was carried forward by James, and then Freud, resulting eventually in the diverse range of approaches and therapeutic methodologies which compose psychology today. This thesis has argued that such a route to the present – at least as we currently recognise psychology in its modern form – would not have been possible without Spinoza.

2. Why locate philosophy inside psychology?

Prior to the establishment of psychology as a discrete field distinct from its philosophical roots, roughly dated to the establishment of Wilhelm Wundt's laboratory of experimental psychology in Leipzig in 1879,

[9] Freud, Sigmund, quoted in Mack, Michael, Spinoza *and the Specters of Modernity: The Hidden Enlightenment of Diversity from Spinoza to Freud,* A & C Black, 2010, p. 198

psychology was not considered a science, but a branch of philosophy. Psychology was subsumed within the field of philosophy of mind, since it inhered within an intellectual tradition which stemmed from the theory that a science of mind was not possible, with Kant's rather effective argument against the establishment of such a science stymieing the inculcation of a scientific psychology until Wundt. As this thesis has proved, Wundt found the fuel for this theory and the catalyst for the schism that it caused within the ranks of mental theorists inside the psychological monism of Spinoza. By repurposing Spinoza's theory of mind-body parallelism and using it to construct a theory of the nature of mind as well as a method of testing and data collection, Wundt made a science of mind appear feasible, and the distinct science of mind as we now consider psychology branches chronologically speaking from this origin point.

However, the Spinozistic origins of Wundt's concept of mind and emotion permeate the fundamental principles of that discipline. Though psychologists today will largely trace the epistemological origins of their field to Wundt, and Wundt is indeed the first link in a definitively psychological chain, the philosophical and theoretical origins stretch back far earlier. Of course, Spinoza is not, in psychological terms, the unmoved mover. He was clearly influenced himself by the Stoics and by Descartes and others in formulating his own psychology. However, it is clear, as this thesis has shown, that unmistakable elements of the psychological philosophy developed by Spinoza find new relevance within the works of Wundt, James and Freud during the formative period of early psychological theory. Spinoza's philosophy of psychology was thus transported forward into the science of psychology as it is considered now.

Locating Spinoza at his rightful place within the epistemic and ontological heart of psychology involves, by necessity, uncovering the still-strong foundational links between philosophy and psychology in order to prove that Spinoza should in fact be there. Indeed, there is a greater purpose to the endeavour of locating philosophy within psychology-proper, which is

to highlight the fact that viewing psychology as a pure science, discrete and entirely separate from the philosophical discipline, does not make sense. It neither illuminates the true roots of psychology within the philosophical method and in relation to questions that were initially being asked by practitioners of philosophy of mind, nor enables current psychological theorists to ask the right questions and find useful answers. Without an awareness of Spinoza as the originator of both the intellectual spirit and various founding principles of the field of psychology, meaningful progress is impeded. Without internal understanding, and thereby questioning, of the foundational principles and ideas on which the field itself rests, the likelihood of faulty hypotheses and ineffective methods abounds.

3. Can Spinoza's holistic system be taken apart, or taken in part, in the form of extracting his psychology from the rest of the system?

The answer to this question is to some extent going to cause inevitable dissatisfaction, being both yes, and no. Spinoza's holistic system cannot in theory be deconstructed or partially analysed and retain its authenticity to the Dutchman's original intention. It also loses its structural integrity arising from Spinoza's carefully constructed geometric framework, which he constructed not only to maximise the logical content and method of the *Ethics*, but also in a sense to restrict potential misunderstanding by establishing from the outset exactly how the reader should experience and understand the *Ethics*.

Spinoza's geometrical order in the *Ethics* was modelled on the thirteen books of Euclid's *Elements.*[10] Spinoza had utilised a geometric method before in the only book published under his name during his lifetime and the one that he wrote in a period of just two weeks– his *Principles of*

[10] Heath, Sir Thomas L. (trans), *Euclid: The Thirteen Books of the Elements,* Dover Publications, 1956

Cartesian Philosophy.[11] Though he spent a considerable amount of time writing and talking about his disagreements with the most influential philosopher in his time, his geometric method correlates with what Descartes characterised as the 'synthetic' technique of substantiation:

> *"As for the method of demonstration, this divides into two varieties: the first proceeds by analysis and the second by synthesis. Analysis shows the true way by means of which the thing in question was discovered methodically…Synthesis, by contrast, employs a long series of definitions, postulates, axioms, theorems and problems, so that if anyone denies one of the conclusions it can be shown at once that it is contained in what has gone before, and hence the reader, however argumentative or stubborn he may be, is compelled to give his assent."*[12]

When we take Spinoza's ideas as laid out in the *Ethics* à la carte, an approach that he certainly did not encourage of his reader or intend to facilitate, the possibility of analysis as outlined in the quotation above remains relatively intact. We can take the machine of the *Ethics* apart in order to look closely at its components, and can learn much from doing this. It is synthesis which, by all formal accounts, is lost. When we detach elements of Spinoza's system from the geometric web that he constructed to support them, each axiom, proposition, corollary, demonstration, scholium etc. and indeed each part of the *Ethics* is required to stand by itself, and much of the context of that part in relation to its place and role within the functioning whole is lost in this practice. The holism is entirely sacrificed and certainly the text is not being read as Spinoza intended, so the reader inevitably forgoes an element of Spinozistic interpretative authenticity in this process. It is unlikely, when looking only at a part of a functioning structure or machine, that we can make a full and nuanced assessment of that part, and its larger role within the greater system.

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[11] Spinoza, Benedict de, Shirley, Samuel (trans.) *The Principles of Cartesian Philosophy,* Hackett Publishing, 1998

[12] Cottingham, John, Stoothoff, Robert, Murdoch, Dugald (eds. and trans.), *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes in Three Volumes,* Cambridge University Press, 1985

However, despite all of this, Spinoza's holistic system is and has been routinely deconstructed by interpreters for generations. Indeed, one could argue that this is the only way to read Spinoza's *Ethics* from the perspective of a modern specialist. Only a Spinoza specialist has the time and expertise to take Spinoza holistically as he intended the *Ethics* to be authentically understood. Pragmatic considerations necessitate that everyone else prioritise those aspects of his theory which overlap with their own area of expertise or interest. It is not surprising, really, that a philosopher who constructed a theory of everything should garner the interest of theorists and scholars outside of the strict contours of formal philosophy. Spinoza had much to say about psychology – a psychologist reading Spinoza is naturally going to focus upon his psychology, and is not going to take the same care to understand every axiom and piece in the vast web of the *Ethics* geometric structure. This is precisely what Wundt, James and Freud would have read Spinoza, and 'Spinoza taken piecemeal', for want of a more elegant expression, consequently converges with foundational concepts in modern psychology.

Technically speaking, Spinoza's theory within the *Ethics* should not be taken piecemeal. Certainly, important aspects of reading and understanding Spinoza are lost in the course of this process, among them a maximally authentic (if we take authentic to mean true to Spinoza's original intent) interpretation. However, when this thesis asks, 'Can Spinoza's holistic system be taken apart, or taken in part, in the form extracting his psychology from the rest of the system?', it seems necessary to answer that to some extent, the answer is yes. To some extent, given the convergence between elements of Spinozism and modern psychological theory, the discipline has its foundation partially in precisely this. Are the resulting theories true to the spirit of Spinoza's psychology in every respect? No. However, they are undeniably Spinozistic, given their confluence with elements of Spinoza's psychology extracted from their original context within the *Ethics*.

Contribution to Knowledge

What distinguishes this thesis from others are its various contributions to knowledge within the field of philosophy primarily, but also within the psychological discipline. This thesis has made four contributions to knowledge, which are as follows:

1) This work's primary contribution to knowledge is also its primary objective – to uncover, examine and clarify the role of Spinoza's philosophy of psychology in the founding of a discrete field of psychology. It has shown that many of the foundational concepts within psychology, included and articulated within the theory and work of the field's founding fathers, Wundt, James and Freud, in fact converge theoretically with Spinoza's philosophy of psychology. Specifically, they are linked with sub-categories of that philosophy of psychology – Spinoza's mind-body parallelism, his theory of emotion, and his account of causality.

It has been established herein that all three psychological theorists had read and considered Spinoza, and that the reappearance within their respective work of Spinozistic concepts and ideas, originating within his philosophy of psychology, is not coincidental or merely cosmetic. Spinoza's relevance is deep and his philosophical legacy can still be observed and felt. Spinoza has (at least until now) been more or less expunged from the historiography of psychology. This thesis has endeavoured to place him once again within the history of psychology – at its philosophical foundation. This work has argued that without the theory of Spinoza, psychology as we know it would look very different. Progress within both philosophy of psychology and psychology-proper can only benefit from an understanding of Spinoza's role within the development of modern psychology. Until now, the role of Spinoza in modern psychology has not been examined in any significant detail, while substantial connections between Spinoza and Wundt, James or Freud respectively have not been drawn at all.

2) What is seen within scholarship as a contrast between William James and Wilhelm Wundt – indeed a view which fuelled a certain rivalry between the two during their lifetime– is in fact based on the pervasive misreading of James presented in Chapter Six. Wundt and James are frequently compared for the purpose of setting Jamesian emotional theory which is incorrectly purported to be fundamentally 'of the body' against a Wundtian theory which is considered purely psychological, or entirely 'of the mind'. The reality is less clearly delineated and divisible on both sides. Wundt's monistic account of emotion prioritises the disembodied or psychological elements of emotion, while James' prioritises (at least sequentially speaking) what we normally consider the bodily articulation of emotion. However, neither psychologist presents an account of emotion in which the correlative mental or physical elements of emotion are irrelevant. This thesis clarifies that the differences between the emotional theories of these two psychologists cannot be simplified to an interpretation which suggests Jamesian theory is bodily, and Wundtian theory is mental.

3) This thesis clarifies that Spinoza is not hostile or averse to emotion in general, and does not put forward a Stoic theory encouraging the overlooking or repressing of emotions. Indeed, a very early precursor to modern neurological theory, Spinoza actively acknowledges the role of emotion within rational thought, and rejects the Platonic theory of bipartite thought processes which suggests that it is possible to annex emotion during rational thought. This is not a completely original contribution – Spinoza scholars have correctly interpreted Spinoza's emotional theory as not being against emotion in the past. However, it is a common misconception about Spinoza's philosophy of psychology which remains, and is worth addressing afresh. This work has undertaken this task as a secondary project to its primary theses.

4) Finally, psychological theory should be reconsidered within its own field in relation to its history within and persisting connection to

philosophy. The absence of Spinozistic theory in any role within the psychological literature indicates a disconnect between psychological theory – not just as it exists today, but as it has since its inception – and the philosophical ideas which prompted its inauguration. As the lobotomy example within the introduction to this thesis aimed to show, incomplete knowledge contributes directly to bad practices. The foundational tenets of philosophy are contributed to by what is – for psychologists at least – the unknown theory of Spinoza and possibly other thinkers also.

Spinozistic conclusions drawn by Spinoza were used by Wundt, James and Freud to build early psychological theory, from which modern psychological theory has evolved. This has constructed a set of assumptions (e.g. a mind is not the same as a brain) and first principles (individuals can change the course of their lives through will) which are taken for granted in the creation and augmentation of new and existing therapeutic methodologies. This is something that psychologists should be conscious of, and considered critically in an attempt to better understand the mind and emotions and improve the lives and wellbeing of individuals who are impacted by the work or research of those within the discipline of psychology.

Areas of Potential Research Arising from this Research

As a result of the philosophical and theoretical connections established between Spinoza and the three founding fathers of psychology by this work, several fertile and interesting areas of potential research have been highlighted:

1)This thesis has exposed a bountiful area of potential further study in terms of the influence of early modern philosophy on the founding principles of psychology. In this respect, the field appears to be a tabula rasa. I have conducted research in this respect with a view to seeking Spinoza within psychological theory, after observing that the foundational approach of many of modern psychology's modern therapeutic methods

(such as cognitive behavioural therapy) bore resemblance to elements of Spinoza's psychology. The lack of awareness within the literature of the particular philosophical origins of basic ideas within psychology suggests that much more of the sort of work within this thesis might be done. Such work, in terms of connecting early psychologists, but perhaps also twentieth and twenty-first century psychologists after Freud, to their philosophical underpinnings, would help to uncover other unexamined factors in psychology.

This research, in uncovering and emphasising the role of Spinoza's philosophy of psychology within the founding ideas and principles of early modern psychology, raises new questions about theories of meaning and concepts within psychology, as well as the unexamined philosophical theories which underlie its method. More thorough amalgamation of philosophy and psychology is merited – the two are less epistemologically disparate than they are currently believed to be. A larger-scale investigation looking at this would be beneficial to the scholarship of both fields. While many universities facilitate the study of philosophy and psychology, not many facilitate the study of the two in direct combination with one another. Study of philosophy *of* psychology is rarer. King's College London offers an MA course in Philosophy of Psychology, but such courses are not common – philosophy and psychology are usually approached in terms of study as discrete fields to be studied in conjunction with one another.

2) One major question has arisen as a result of this thesis to which it has not had sufficient scope to answer. While it is evident that Spinoza bears upon the historiography of psychology and the philosophy of psychology, a reader of this thesis will no doubt feel compelled to ask – "Why has Spinoza (prior to this work) been expunged from or forgotten by the historiography of psychology?" it is a question well worth asking.

There are several possible answers to this question. They include the possibility that Wundt, James and Freud did not sufficiently note the

overlap Spinoza (though Wundt certainly did), and thus the connection was lost; perhaps the holistic nature of Spinoza's psychology, couched within a wider system which he never intended to be taken in parts, tacitly encouraged those seeking him to do so within the strict bounds of philosophy. It is possible that those looking most closely at trends across psychological theory are psychologists rather than philosophers, and therefore in not seeking Spinoza, do not find him. These are only some of the possibilities. There would also be benefit in questioning the absence, not just of Spinoza, but of Early Modern philosophers generally, within the foundations of psychological theory. Spinoza did not exist in a vacuum. There would be benefit to Spinoza scholarship in a separate work theorising on why this conspicuous and damaging omission might be the case. Such a work would further the secondary goal of this thesis, in aiming to correct this transgression which has led to so much misunderstanding and confusion.

This thesis has sought to correct and expose several omissions within the philosophy of psychology, and as a consequence, within psychology itself. In undertaking this task, I have encountered several times in others that experience which those interested in Spinoza have when first discovering him – a sense of connection with a figure whose thought touches on everything there is. It is expressed eloquently here by Nietzsche:

> *"I am utterly amazed, utterly enchanted. I have a predecessor, and what a predecessor! I hardly knew Spinoza: that I should have turned to him just now was inspired by "instinct." Not only is his overall tendency like mine - making knowledge the most powerful affect - but in five main points of his doctrine I recognize myself; this most unusual and loneliest thinker is closest to me precisely in these matters: he denies the freedom of the will, teleology, the moral world order, the unegoistic, and evil. Even though the divergences are admittedly tremendous, they are due more to the differences in time, culture, and science. In summa: my solitude, which, as on very high*

mountains, often made it hard for me to breathe and made my blood rush out, is at least a dualitude"[13]

Yet through history, Spinoza has been consistently overlooked and undervalued. This work has been written with the intention of correcting this wrong in one important area of Spinoza's lasting relevance. There are, no doubt, other areas in which similar tasks might be undertaken, and Spinoza's ideas sought out where traces of his thinking can be seen to exist. This thesis has aimed to prove that the history of modern psychology cannot be well understood or contextualised – and by extension neither can current theories and practices stemming from them – without first considering the relevance of Spinoza to their philosophical foundation. Indeed, I maintain that there is no other philosopher in the history of the philosophy of psychology who has made such a vast and lastingly relevant contribution to the way that we think today about emotions, minds and their bodies, and free will particularly in relation to emotion. Wilhelm Wundt, William James and Sigmund Freud, as those who moulded psychology into its current dimensions, certainly deserve (and do receive) the credit for doing so. However, without Spinoza, there would not have been such robust a philosophical basis upon which they could build. The clay itself is Spinozistic.

[13] Nietzsche, Friedrich, Letter to Franz Overbeck, 30 July 1881, quoted *in* Bell, David M.*, Rethinking Utopia, Place, Power, Affect,* Taylor & Francis, 2017, p. 43

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