

Appendix

In the paper I mentioned a number of reconstructions that supplement my arguments. In this appendix I will provide the relevant reconstructions.

Terminology

Many of the reconstructions reflect my interpretations of Spinoza's terms. Rather than introduce these interpretations one-by-one, I will introduce them all at once. I think that this gives one a better sense for how they relate.

x is conceived through y and y is not conceived through itself if and only if x is *partially conceived* through y .

x is conceived through y and y is conceived through itself if and only if x is *completely conceived* through y .

x is conceived through something that it not conceived through y if and only if x is *conceived without* y .

y is conceived without anything else if and only if y is *conceived through itself*.

It is not possible to conceive of x without y if and only if x is *necessarily conceived* through y .

Spinoza never uses 'necessarily conceived'. Instead, he just uses 'conceived'. I'm nonetheless introducing 'necessarily conceived' to bring out an implicit feature of how he uses that term. Let's now introduce some more terms. I take Spinoza to accept (where by stipulation $x \neq y$):

x is necessarily conceived through y if and only if x is a mode of y .

y is necessarily conceived through itself if and only if y is a substance.

x is partially and necessarily conceived through y if and only if x is a *partial mode* of y .

x is completely and necessarily conceived through y if and only if x is a *complete mode* of y

Let's now consider the relevant reconstructions.

1P25D

Let's begin with a reconstruction of 1P25D that does not require the backward direction of 1A4:

p₁ Everything has a cause.

- p₂ Therefore, the essence of a thing has a cause. (p₁)
- p₃ Suppose that God does not cause of the essence of a thing.
- p₄ If something inheres in God and causes that essence, then God causes that essence.
- p₅ Therefore, something that does not inhere in God causes that essence. (p₂-p₄)
- p₆ Therefore, something that is not conceived through God causes that essence. (p₅, ‘conceived through’)
- p₇ Therefore, cognition of that essence depends on cognition of something that is not conceived through God. (p₆, 1A4)
- p₈ Therefore, the essence of a thing can be conceived through something that is not conceived through God. (p₇, ‘conceived through’)
- p₉ Therefore, the essence of a thing can be conceived without God. (p₇, ‘conceived without’)
- p₁₀ Nothing can be conceived without God. (1P15)
- p₁₁ Therefore, God is the cause of the essence of each thing. (p₃, p₉, p₁₀)

(p₁) is something that he takes for granted in a number of places, including 1P11D. While Spinoza never explicitly argues for (p₄) I think that it is in the background of 1P26 and 1P29, among other places. It is also extremely plausible. For instance, when *my legs* kick then *I* kick.

Granted, this reconstruction has its costs. In particular, it would be much shorter if 1A4 were a bi-conditional. But, except for (p₁), all of the extra steps reflect the way that Spinoza uses terms, so this is a somewhat misleading indicator. Plus, Spinoza often uses (p₁) implicitly in arguments (see 1P5D), so it wouldn’t be surprising if he were using it implicitly here. Finally, note that 1A4 isn’t formulated as a bi-conditional, and none of the other demonstrations require the backward direction of 1A4, so the opposing reconstruction has a significant cost.

This reconstruction of 1P25D is neutral between the two interpretations of 1A4 (*viz.* 1A4ⁱ and 1A4^t). The only difference is that if 1A4 is equivalent to 1A4ⁱ then we need to strengthen (p₁) to:

- p₁^{*} Everything has an immanent cause.

But this is something that Spinoza must accept. First, given how Spinoza uses ‘conceives’, if one thing is *conceived through* another then the first thing *explains* the second thing. Second, given how Spinoza uses ‘cause’, if one thing *explains* the existence of another, then the first thing is a *cause* of the second (see 1P11D). Third, given how Spinoza uses ‘conceived though’, if one thing is conceived through another, then the first thing inheres in the second

thing. Therefore, if one thing is conceived through another thing, then the first thing is an immanent cause of the second thing. Since everything is conceived through something (2A2), it follows that everything has an immanent cause.

Axioms

In the paper I mentioned that several axioms can be derived from definitions and other axioms. Let's start with 1A2:

- q₁ x is either in itself or in another (1A1)
- q₂ If x is in itself then it is conceived through itself. (1D3; see 1P4D)
- q₃ If x is in another then it is conceived through another. (1D5; see 1P4D)
- q₄ Therefore, x is either conceived through itself or conceived through another. (q₁, q₂, q₃)
- q₅ Therefore, if x is not conceived through another then it is conceived through itself. (q₄)

Here's a plausible derivation of 1A7:

- r₁ Suppose that x is conceived as not existing.
- r₂ Therefore, the essence of x is conceived as not existing. (r₁)
- r₃ Therefore, the essence of x does not involve existence. (r₂, 1D1)
- r₄ Therefore, if a thing can be conceived as not existing, its essence does not involve existence. (r₄)

It is plausible that we would endorse the inference from (r₁) to (r₂) because he thinks that if we conceive of a thing's essence as existing then we conceive of the thing as existing (see 2D2) and because he uses 'nature' and 'essence' interchangeably (e.g. see 1D1).

Here's a plausible derivation of 1A5:

- s₁ Suppose that x and y have nothing in common.
- s₂ If x and y were conceived through the same thing then they would have something in common.
- s₃ Therefore, x and y are not conceived through the same thing. (s₁, s₂)
- s₄ If x was conceived through y then x and y would be conceived through the same thing. (see note below)
- s₅ Therefore, if x and y have nothing in common then x is not conceived through y . (s₃, s₄)

s_6 Therefore, if x and y have nothing in common then x is not understood through y .
(s_5)

Note that (s_4) does not assume that y is a substance; it relies only on the transitivity of ‘conceived through’.

1A3 and transitive causation

One might worry that 1A3 must extend to transitive causation due to its use in 1P27D. But here’s a plausible reconstruction of that demonstration that does not require it to extend to transitive causation:

- t_1 For arbitrary m and n , suppose that God immanently causes (m causes n)
- t_2 If S immanently causes x then necessarily S immanently causes x . (1A3)
- t_3 Therefore, necessarily God causes (m causes n).
- t_4 Therefore, necessarily (m causes n). (t_4 ; factivity of ‘causes’)
- t_5 Therefore, it is not possible that m does not cause n . (t_4)
- t_6 Therefore, If God immanently causes (m causes n) then it is not possible that m does not cause n . (t_4 , t_5)

One might worry think that (m causes n) is not a mode of God. One might infer that God cannot immanently cause (m causes n), in which case the conclusion is trivial due to a vacuous antecedent. However, all that is important is that (m causes n) *inheres* in God, which it presumably must because God is absolutely infinite (1D6) and therefore m , n and all their relations inhere in God.