

# The Selected Works of Arne Naess

## Deep Ecology of Wisdom

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Explorations in Unities of Nature and Cultures  
Selected Papers

Edited by Harold Glasser and Alan Drengson  
in Cooperation with the Author  
and with Assistance from  
Bill Devall and George Sessions

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## Spinoza and the Deep Ecology Movement

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One of the strangest tasks in which a professor of philosophy can engage—voluntarily or more or less involuntarily—is to write a history of philosophy. My own, about 1,000 pages, is “neither fish nor fowl” because I could never solve the question of how to combine *history* of philosophy and *philosophy* of history.

*Methodology* of historical research is an entertaining subject. One learns, for example, how a historian’s account of a happening based on only one eyewitness account is more detailed and written with more confidence than the account of a happening covered by two or more witnesses. What the witnesses have said or written *normally* differs so much that a highly responsible historian’s account renounces some interesting details and is heavy reading because of “if,” “perhaps,” “perhaps not,” “unclear,” “contradictory,” “uncertain,” and a host of more complicated *reservations*.

*Philosophy* of history is a discipline of another character. It has no definite methodology, consisting of abstract discussion on the essence of history, of time and change, but also discussion about the dependence of philosophy of history on general philosophy. Good historians often repeat that they somehow must avoid being influenced by any definite philosophical system. That is impossible. In this century the vast discussions on the relation of dialectical materialism to philosophy of history and to actual historiography (the writings describing historical development) are at least as interesting and important as *historical* material on the metalevel persua-

This article was written in 1982 and was revised in 1991. It is being published here for the first time.

sively manifesting the general philosophical positions of, say, Aristotle, Shankara, Thomas Aquinas, Spinoza, Hegel, or Marx.

Established historians tend to say something like the following: the historical works by the ablest historians, who are from a general point of view more or less convinced dialectical materialists, do not reveal their doctrinal adherence to any definite general philosophical system. As one historian (Sverre Steen) said to his colleagues in a great humanist faculty, "You are fortunate: you can use your different and complicated professional jargons, and you even improve your standing by sticking faithfully to them. We historians (*id est*, historiographers) must somehow renounce all that."

The historian of *philosophy*, focusing on general philosophy, *not* on history of ideas as a part of the historiography of ideas, cannot or should not avoid asking himself or herself, When writing an account of the history of philosophy, from the point of view of which kind of general philosophy do I write? In particular, what kind of a philosophy of history, as a genuine part of general philosophy, do I subscribe to?

Obviously, my account of a philosophy, say that of Spinoza, will depend upon my own philosophy and my own general philosophy of history, my view of historical causality, and so on. As a philosopher, not a professional historian, I am not interested in hiding the dependence of my interpretation of the *Ethics* on my general philosophy, including my philosophy of history.

If there ever were a tendency of textbooks of history of *philosophy* toward agreement, not to speak of an asymptotic nearness of accounts, it would signify the disappearance of deep cultural differences, of deep differences in *Weltund Lebensanschauungen*. (I cannot avoid the German words for this. The English "differences in worldview and outlook on life" makes what is meant not serious, dramatic, and world-shaking enough.)

Because of the plurality of the basic views about what history *is*, and because these views are part of philosophy, there can be no definite history of philosophy. We easily get into interesting logical paradoxes if we proclaim that such and such is the only correct interpretation of Spinoza's texts, because one needs a solution of the problems in the philosophy of history. There are different fundamental premises of what history is, and hermeneutics or the philosophies of interpretation are many. Only if you say that only *your* philosophy is correct, without reasons at all, can you pro-

ceed to offer the “correct” view of what Spinoza intended to say in the *Ethics*. A different way of saying this: philosophy has no definite history.

Which philosophers of the past deserve to be called great? This question leads to another: who is competent to judge? Which philosophy do we use as a frame when answering? I am among those who do not feel competent even to answer what the question means, but let me use two possible indicators of greatness.

One indicator is that of being rediscovered and highly appreciated by successive generations of philosophers in different cultures. Another indicator is the persistent richness and diversity of interpretations of their texts. Spinoza’s texts are constantly reinterpreted by philosophers, poets, scientists, and others. Among the nineteenth century’s well-known influential interpretations we may mention those of Goethe and Hegel. I do not feel competent to pick out anyone in particular among the many distinguished interpreters in the twentieth century, but there is an encouraging variety—encouraging in spite of a certain tendency to appreciate conformity. Of course, we would all like to avoid textual and purely factual, historical disagreement, but by interpretation, I mean philosophical agreement.

In what follows I speak as a life philosopher, not as a historian. Study of the life and time of Spinoza is essential for any close study of the textual material, but for my purpose it can only be a necessary instrument. Also, strict systematization of Spinoza’s formulations in the *Ethics*—for example, sentences such as “. . . means the same as . . .”—can only be an instrument, a methodological technique, but my background is such that I find it natural to work systematically.

The history of interpretations of Spinoza’s texts shows the intimate relations to changing traditions. The religious character of his philosophy makes the history comparable to what Albert Schweitzer tells us in his *History of the Research on the Life of Jesus (Geschichte der Leben Jesu Forschung)*. Four periods are fairly clear. The first, the time soon after Spinoza’s death, focuses on his atheism and his critique of the historicity of the Bible—the work of a pioneer in this field. Then we have the wonderful period when “everybody” declared themselves Spinozists—with Goethe as the greatest luminary. In the history of ideas, that period is usually called Romantic, but from an ecosophical point of view it should be called realistic. The Kantian inter-



pretation, heavily colored by its distinction between dogmatic and critical, should be mentioned. It was a useful distinction within professional philosophy at the time, but later it became clear that Kant had introduced, as all great philosophers do, a new form of “dogmatism” in the sense of proceeding from sets of unquestioned assumptions—presuppositions in the sense of Collingwood. Spinoza’s metaphysics was interpreted by Kantians as based on illusions. I do not think it is proper to speak of a Kantian tradition in interpreting Spinoza. A new, third period of interpretations, alive even today, started with Hegel and tended to find that, for Spinoza, the single, particular beings somehow drowned in the mighty substance. The long series of modern attacks on substance started with interpreting Spinoza as a substance-philosopher rather than a process-philosopher, like Whitehead. “The real is unchangeable, no dynamism, no time.”

A fourth tradition made headway early in the twentieth century with “the *immanence* of God (and substance)” as a key expression.<sup>1</sup> This is the tradition to which I belong. The most radical version might be thus formulated: “Without modes (singular beings) no God nor Substance.” Of course, a tradition of interpretation includes much more than interpretation of the first part of the *Ethics*, but unfortunately, I think, that part has been by far the most thoroughly studied within professional philosophy.

What is the major thing to be learned from history in this case? What can we learn from the wealth of significantly different interpretations by intensely engaged, learned Spinoza researchers? For me, it primarily suggests that new interpretations will occur in the future and that my own will be only one of a long series—forgotten in due time. What also seems to be learned from this history is that the interpretations ostensibly expressing “what Spinoza really meant,” or at least suggesting this, can be viewed as interesting *reconstructions* of his philosophy—interesting because they make his texts meaningful for contemporaries of the authors of the interpretations. Reconstructions, as here understood, take the texts, sentence for sentence, as seriously as does the historian, and the reconstructor is supposed to use all historical materials, but he or she need not take seriously the question, If Spinoza could read the construction, what would he think of it?

Many people who are engaged in the ecological crisis have been in-

spired “by Spinoza.” They read some of Spinoza’s texts or his comments on those texts. Some even read about Spinoza himself, but this does not mean that they try to find out exactly what Spinoza meant. Why should they? They make use of his image and his texts in their lives. What more could or should Spinoza expect of them?

Spinoza does not write about the beauty of wild nature. Perhaps he never talked about it—the coastline of the Netherlands, the storms, the varieties of light and darkness, the seabirds. There were people around him, Dutch landscape painters, who appreciated all this. Maybe he did also, but it scarcely influenced what he says in the *Ethics*. What he says about animals does not suggest he had any wide or deep sense of identification with any of them. Nevertheless, his *kind of* philosophy of life, its structure, is such that he inspires many supporters of the deep ecology movement.

One of the most inspiring aspects of the text *Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata* is this: it outlines a total view. It outlines a set of ultimate premises in our thinking about ourselves and of the greater reality of which we are a part, and he applies it to concrete situations. There are other great thinkers who try to do the same: Aristotle, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hobbes. Spinoza remains a unique source.

What is a total view? Here I speak of what might be called a general orientation with concrete applications. The general orientation will include basic attitudes, and the applications are at its most important level decisions to act in a certain way in concrete situations. It is *not* a philosophy in an academic sense. Any verbal articulation of a total view must inevitably be fragmentary, but include praxis.

The term *premise* is important. The relation of premises to conclusion, in order to be valid, must be logical at least in a broad sense of that very ambiguous word. For reasons and through motivations historians do not quite agree about, Spinoza chose an exposition of his total view with great stress on the relation premise-conclusion—analogueous but not very similar to Euclid’s exposition of geometry.

In the *Elements* of Euclid, important and interesting theorems occur far from the axioms. These can be modified—like ultimate premises in systems of formal logic. There are many options. One need not start with a

principle of contradiction. The same applies to the *expositions* of the *Ethics*. If there seem to be inconsistencies between a sentence in part *x* and one in part *y*, a modification of the interpretation of the sentence in *x* is as relevant as that of the sentence in *y* even if *x* has formal logical priority over *y*, that is, even if *x* may be part of the system of premises from which *y* is derived. In what I have to say, this way of looking at formal priority and relevance is often made use of. We must not succumb to any irrational reverence for what is chosen as a premise. There is a metalogical theorem that is generally underestimated: a given conclusion *y* can always be derived from different sets of premises, even rather odd ones. For example, the conclusion “All whales are warm-blooded” can be derived from the premises “All whales are fish” and “All fish are warm-blooded.”

Increasingly, academic philosophers are reflecting the ecological crisis in their writings. The sources of philosophic inspirations are many: the works of Aristotle, Spinoza, Bergson, Heidegger, Whitehead. . . . Since I was seventeen years old I have had a special relation to Spinoza’s *Ethics*, but that does not imply that I believe his work can be of help to all who wish to articulate their basic attitudes. I believe there is need for deeply different verbal articulations of a total view, including the poetic.

Several terms in the *Ethics* are to my mind extraordinarily helpful when we try to express the fundamental views that have motivated the environmental activism of some of us. I shall in the next sections focus mainly on one of those terms, namely *amor intellectualis Dei*, “the understanding love of God.” The verb *intelligere* I translate as “understand.” The adjective *intellectualis* should not be translated as “intellectual”—a too intellectual term today.

The term *amor intellectualis Dei* and closely related terms had for centuries been theological terms within the rich tradition Spinoza modified in his own particular direction.

Among the wise historians who have studied Spinoza, I wish to point to Harry Austryn Wolfson. His account of the spiritual genesis of the famous fifth part of the *Ethics*, “on the power of the understanding or on human freedom,” is so far unsurpassed, as far as I know. He mentions many authors studied by Spinoza and presumably influencing him. Among them were Saint Thomas Aquinas and Leo Hebraeus. Wolfson says:

A model classification of love in which intellectual love is included is given by Thomas Aquinas. He distinguishes between (a) natural love (*amor naturalis*) which exists even in inanimate objects, (b) sensitive or animal love (*amor sensitivus animalis*), and (c) intellectual, rational, or spiritual love (*amor intellectualis, rationalis, spiritualis*). It is this classification of Thomas Aquinas which seems to be the origin of Leo Hebraeus' three-fold classification of love into natural, sensitive, and rational and voluntary (*naturale, sensitivo, et rationale voluntario*). The last kind of love is also called by him mental love (*l'amore mentale*), or, as in Thomas Aquinas, intellectual love (*l'amore intelletivo, intellettuale*).

(Wolfson 1958: 303–04)

Love of God being the highest goal in the religious life of man, Spinoza—carefully following the old tradition—furnishes this love with an appropriate place in part V of his *Ethics*. We might ask, though, if the so-called rationalist system invented by Spinoza allow him to put so much “theology” into it? His supreme intention seems to have been to stick firmly to reason but nevertheless to furnish his religious contemporaries with a strong faith as satisfactory, or more satisfactory, than theirs. This was a project that was unlikely to succeed as far as I can see. The result: a use of the term *amor Dei* that certainly admits various interpretations (see Naess 1986d). I shall stick to my consistently immanent interpretation of *Deus* and hold that *amor intellectualis* is directed toward “God, *not* as infinite” (*Deus non quatenus infinitus*, as in *Ethics*, VP36.) It is directed toward individual finite beings. My minimum thesis here is that at least for one hermeneutically justifiable interpretation, the understanding of God, as part of the third and highest way of cognition, is directed toward individual finite beings. This position requires discussion of the term *Deus*. I shall need to discuss the thesis of immanence before returning to the *amor intellectualis*.

The *Ethics* is full of occurrences of the term *Deus*. How is it that Spinoza was conceived as a diabolically clever atheist? It is very understandable. It was at his time inevitable.

God is said to be maximally perfect (*perfectissimus*). God is the cause of everything, even himself. Nothing at all can be conceived except through God. This might be thought to be enough to calm the theologians, but they were not led astray by Spinoza's terminology. They knew, for example,

that Spinoza was using the adjective *perfect* (*perfectus*) in an old way in which it basically meant “complete” (from Latin *per*—and *FAC*; see *Ethics*, part IV, preface). Wolfson (1958: 222–23) mentions “the original use of the term ‘perfection’ in the sense of ‘completeness’ and of not lacking anything required by one’s own particular nature.” The nature or essence or power of Spinoza’s God is complete to the greatest possible extent—by sheer definition. (However, Spinoza does not say anywhere that “He” is good, and there is nothing personal about “Him”!)

*Perfection* is not a term that is introduced in the *Ethics* by means of a separate definition. When not applied to Nature, it admits of degrees. Joy is an emotion through which mind is said to become “more perfect” (IIIP11Sch), more whole through more activeness and power. Whatever its connotation, “more perfect” cannot be separated in denotation from “more powerful.” Compare the proof of proposition 61: “Joy . . . is the emotion through which the power of the body to act, increases or is furthered.” The relation to activeness, and to understanding, is not only intimate, it is internal. The more perfect, the more active and the less passive (VP40). In short, “more perfect than” cannot, in denotation, be completely separated from a number of other basic “in itself” relations. Among basic kinds of sentences that Spinoza used to express his system in the sense of an interconnected set of expressions—sentences such as “*x* is in itself,” “*x* is conceived through itself,” “*x* causes *y*, partially or totally,” and “*x* is more perfect than *y*”—there is no place, so far as I can see, for a God that has completely different properties from those of the “in itself” family. On the other hand, the theorems 5P32–5P35 seem to me difficult to understand from the point of view of immanence. They are too close to transcendental religious views entertained by Spinoza in his younger years. The *Ethics* is not a finished work, not a crystal.

There is an expression that more than any other has supported the concept of the immanent God: “God or Nature” (*Deus sive Natura*).

Some Spinoza students have supposed that Spinoza simply identified God with nature in a modern sense. This is clearly untenable, but the expression needs discussion, which will be offered in a later section. Suffice it here to mention a conclusion: the God of the *Ethics* may be identified essentially with Nature-as-creative (*natura naturans*)—the creative aspect of a supreme whole with two aspects, the creative and the created (*natura natu-*

*rata*). The latter are the existing beings in their capacity of being there, temporarily. There is creativity but not a creator. The verb “to nature” (*naturare*) covers both forms in its dynamic aspect. A comparable verb today would be “Gaia-ing,” a term suitable for those who accept the most radical versions of the Gaia hypothesis: that the planet Earth is a self-regulating living being. Clearly, such ideas are inspiring for radical environmentalists.

Immanence of God was, of course, unacceptable to the theologians of Spinoza’s time. The term *atheist* referred to the denial of the God of the Old and New Testaments, not of every kind of God, and Spinoza was correctly classified in their terminology as an atheist, and a diabolical one insofar as his constant eulogy of God masked his basic terrifying aberrations.

When I contemplate the life of Spinoza I have, like many others, a suspicion that he never completely gave up his Jewish faith, the transcendent God he loved in his youth. As a result, he may not have managed to develop a system in which God clearly and consistently occurs as immanent in the particular beings we meet in our daily experience.

From God’s essence follows his existence, but *only* “existence” as essence: “. . . God’s power is nothing except God’s active essence” (*Ethics*, IIP3Sch). Its manifestations are the “modes,” the individual beings. This is implied by his system, but sometimes Spinoza seems to feel he needs more of God’s power than mere essence, however eternal. The transcendent God of religion seems to appear from time to time in his texts and threatens the consistency of his consistently philosophical thinking and articulation. The threat is most conspicuous in part V of the *Ethics*.

It is in accordance with the immanence theory that every actually existing being partakes in the infinite power of God. This power, the only power that exists, is distributed unequally among natural beings, with human beings having the most power. As we shall see, this inequality plus the theorem of equivalence between power and right implies inequality of right (or rights), with human beings having “more right” than other beings. Without careful delimitation of the terms *potentia* and *ius*, there is a source here of incompatibility with certain radical environmental views.

The textual basis of the theory of immanence may be said to start in part I, with IP25 and IP26. According to IP36 nothing exists from whose nature some effect does not follow. The proof of IP36 relates every single

thing to God. “Whatever exists expresses in a definite and determined way (P25Cor) God’s essence or nature, that is (IP34), whatever exists expresses in a definite and determined way the power of God. . . .”

The texts of the *Ethics* furnish no basis for assuming that God expresses a nature, essence, or power in any other way than through each existent being.<sup>2</sup> From this, and what has already been said, I draw the following conclusion: *amor intellectualis Dei* is a kind of love of the existent particular beings, that is, parts of the total richness and diversity of life-forms on Earth, and in other regions of the universe.

In a sense, God as *natura naturans* is nothing else than a term expressing the unequally distributed, intimately interrelated creativity manifested by particular beings. The creativity of these beings, however modest, justifies calling them living beings. Spinoza’s so-called panpsychism does not say much more, as I see it.

Would not the above interpretation render God finite, and would it not go directly against a way Spinoza would accept? No, because of the infinite creative aspect of the whole, which embraces *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. Most students of Spinoza would presumably answer in the affirmative, but then they overlook a number of statements in the text of the *Ethics*. In IIP9, Spinoza talks about God “not as infinite” (*non quatenus infinitus*). If finite, however, God will have an aspect of “modes”? Surely Spinoza talks of the modified God (*Deus modificatus*), of God being affected (cf. Naess 1981). (See especially IIP9 and IIP11Cor.) God as *natura naturans* does not exist as something separate from *natura naturata*.

In short, the term *Deus* in the *Ethics* has two functions. One is to point toward an infinite whole with infinite dimensions of creativity, not *in* time, but making time possible. The second function is to point to the manifold of finite creative beings manifesting and expressing the parts of that whole. At least, this is one way to conceive and feel what the text of the *Ethics* suggests. The finite, temporal beings are creative, *causa adequatae*, insofar as they are in themselves, *in se*.

By definition—or better, almost by definition—those who support the deep ecology movement are, like Spinoza, in part motivated by basic premises of philosophical or religious kinds and feel that all living beings have intrinsic value. It makes sense to care for these beings for their own

sake, as creative beings. Clearly, the supporters may appreciate something like the above verbal articulations of deep attitudes.

Acting with part of the power of the immanent God, and knowing their own action, human beings know God adequately. “The human mind has an adequate knowledge (*cognitio*) of the eternal and infinite essence of God.” Interpreters have difficulty here. What is “adequacy”? If God is the creative power completely distributed among living beings, and human beings know, are conscious of, this creativity itself, one may say that their knowledge of God is adequate (cf. IP34). Since the only things to be known as actual existing beings are the finite particular things, “the more we understand (*intelligimus*) individual things, the more we understand God” (VP24).<sup>3</sup>

From the point of view of immanence, human understanding of the highest “third, intuitive kind” not only has a cognitive aspect but is more specially a relation of love. It is a special kind of intuitive understanding of particular things that involves an internal love relation. The second kind, culminating in scientific knowledge, does not have that relation to love, at least not as an internal rather than an external relation.

In his eagerness to convince his contemporaries that his philosophy furnishes all the satisfaction of the Jewish and Christian faiths, Spinoza perhaps stretches too far. The reader easily gets the impression that a life centered around the love of God must be a life of unworldly contemplation, a life different from one centering around the loving understanding of particular things, as was, for example, the life of Rachel Carson. *Amor intellectualis Dei* implies active loving concern for all living beings.

Spinoza was a socially and philosophically active person. One need not, of course, be interested, as Rachel Carson was, in every living being along the shoreline. One may concentrate on human beings, as Gandhi did. The essential point is that the third kind of knowledge concerns particular beings, and that every one of them in a basically egalitarian way is an expression of the immanent God, part of *natura naturans*, Nature with a capital N, as well as of *natura naturata*.

One may say that the understanding love of God, and the third (intuitive) way of cognition, concentrates on the content of reality, not its abstract structure.<sup>4</sup> The abstract structure is investigated through the second



way of cognition. Einstein and others obviously delight in God's thoughts in the form of abstract, but beautiful, laws of nature. Mathematicians delight in still more abstract structures. Spinoza, presumably, was delighted to study Euclid. In all this, reason operates, but it is also a form of reason that leads us inevitably to the third kind of cognition (VP28): the third way is rational in the sense that reason and reason alone leads us to this third way.

A supremely important rule, which fits neatly with the deep ecology slogan "Rich life with simple means!" has to do with the function of reason as a servant of the third way: what is done that is not in harmony with ultimate goals of life cannot be reasonable. It is not enough to be reasonable and effective as means toward a subordinate goal. One must ask, Is this subordinate goal consistent with, or better, conducive to, the realization of ultimate goals—situations with meaning in themselves?

Love of the immanent God is love of God's expressions, not of a separable God. A being expresses God's nature or essence; therefore, love of God cannot be different from love of such a being. What, though, is God's nature or essence? Proposition 34 in part I answers: "God's power is God's essence itself"—as already said. In the proof Spinoza says that through God's power God and every being exist and act more or less freely. Because God is not separate from God's expressions, causality from God to God's expressions is immanent, not the causality of our natural science. When a human being loves God "intellectually," it cannot but be a love of one expression directed toward another expression as an expression of God, and as such of intrinsic value.

There is a basis for assuming that the particular beings understood the third way are understood in the light of a great, infinite whole, the creative aspect of that whole. The general structure of the *Ethics* is such that what is said about human beings basically applies to what is said about beings in a fairly general sense. Note the use of "consequently" (*consequenter*) in the proof of IVP4: "The power through which particular beings, and consequently human beings, conserve their being, is God or Nature's power itself, not in so far [God or Nature] is infinite, but in so far [God or Nature] can be made explicit through human actual essence."

Supporters of the deep ecology movement like to say that they support ecocentrism, not anthropocentrism, and Spinoza certainly offers high-level

premises for what has sometimes been labeled biocentric or ecocentric egalitarianism. I think these Latin and Greek terms are useless in serious discussions, but they may be helpful in offering some vague idea of a kind of basic attitude. Spinoza tried something immensely difficult, namely, to articulate with some preciseness certain basic attitudes.

Spinoza's holism, implied—vaguely implied?—all through the *Ethics*, is secured through his use of the term *God*, and by the generality of his theorems. There is a sentence in his work *On the Improvement of the Understanding* that many people try to use as a key to understanding Spinoza's system: he says explicitly that he strives to attain a stable mental state characterized by the knowledge of the union that the mind has with the whole of nature. This is together with others, not alone: "to strive that many acquire it with me." He envisages a society conducive "to the attainment of this character (state) by the greatest number with the least difficulty and danger." It necessitates a healing of the way we understand things. A way of caring understanding? In a sense, a movement toward "green communities"? His statements are not incompatible with such a movement. Of course, if supporters do find something inspiring here, it is not in the belief that Spinoza as a person would be supporting what they do, but rather that a kind of philosophy like his could support them.

Is the foregoing the *most plausible* interpretation of the text of the *Ethics*?

There cannot be any *most plausible* interpretation of the *Ethics*. Hermeneutics, as I understand it, precludes that. My job amounts to a reconstruction of parts of the system rather than to finding out exactly what the complex person Spinoza in a certain period of his life intended his words and sentences to mean. The development and structure of the *Ethics* are very complicated, to say the least. We get a good impression of this by reading the excellent, but formidable volume by M. Gueroult (1968) on how to interpret part I—one-fifth of the *Ethics*. It is difficult for the reader to "feel at home" with Spinoza at such a level of complication. The whole is lost. The level of complication of some of Bach's fugues does not destroy the possibility of their being experienced as an integrated whole. Bach was a genius, as was Spinoza. The fugues are short; the *Ethics* is short. (Written in terms of Gueroult, the *Ethics* would be at least ten times as long.)

A question arises here: when do we write about Spinoza as professors of

academic philosophy and when do we write as philosophers on our own—however modest in our pretensions of originality? The great philosophers we write about in our textbooks on the history of philosophy inspired each other, often in a negative way: they felt a contrast and a need to articulate their own vision. Their freedom, or license, of interpretation of the others is astonishing from an academic point of view. The way leading Stoics interpreted Epicureans and vice versa, the way Hegel interpreted Hume, Marx and Kierkegaard interpreted Hegel, Kant interpreted Hume, Heidegger interpreted metaphysics—do scarcely bear pedestrian academic scrutiny. Kant would probably have flunked any current university examination on Hume. He read very little, and he ignored the *Treatise of Human Nature*. Undergraduates could have corrected him.

I am not defending one-sidedness and wildly implausible interpretations, but I am insisting on the supreme value of working out things *under the inspiration of the texts*. As philosophers, it is our obligation to try out tentative answers to the questions we find urgent and inevitable to answer. This means ultimately to work out reconstructions rather than detailed interpretations of the great philosophers. Gueroult should be studied carefully, but he cannot function as a guru.

Philosophical and religious sources have played and will continue to play a role in environmental activism. The close relation to decision in concrete conflict situations precludes highly technical and complicated interpretations. One of the most characteristic, short answers to “Why is it so important to protect such and such from extinction here in your neighborhood?” runs like this: “They belong here.”

In the deep ecology movement, as in the other two great contemporary movements, the peace movement and the social justice movement, progress in part depends on the active participation of a minority able to use part of their time and energy to serve a great cause. Reliable news about the ecological crisis is nearly always bad. It is difficult not to become frustrated and join the many who passively deplore the ongoing destruction. Among the many sources of inspiration to enter and continue *activism* we have at our disposal the teaching of Spinoza.

Activeness—a better term than *activity*—makes for joy, according to Spinoza. It expresses the nature of the active being, the being as far as it is

in itself (*in se*), and the more directly it expresses its unique nature, the greater the joy. Sorrow comes from passivity, *lack of* active expressions. There is an accident, you spontaneously engage all of yourself, wholeheartedly, and your own pain is not felt; there is a joy if the activeness is intense and comprehensive. The grave frustration and sorrow that millions feel today concerning the ecological situation can be overcome, and is being overcome, by jointly entering into active relations, taking part each according to his own capacity and special interest. In the deep ecology movement the activeness is supposed to be directly motivated by our *ultimate* attitudes toward life and meaningfulness (“level 1”), an activeness that follows *from our very nature as a whole*.

Crucial here from a systematic point of view is the definition of activeness in part III of the *Ethics*: “I say we act, when something in us or outside us happens, of which we are adequate cause, that is (according to the foregoing definition) when something follows in us or outside us from our nature, something that can only be understood clearly and distinctly from it alone. . . .”

The term *alone* is crucial here. It is a supreme manifestation of freedom and creativeness. When we are active and free (*liber*) in this way, we are determined in our action by our (innermost) nature. We do something that is determined, completely determined, but freely, because determined by our *own* particular, unique nature. We do it exercising part of the power of God or Nature, and we *cannot escape* being joyful, whatever the tragic circumstances. The whole of part V centers on how this activeness or freedom can be expanded, increased, and deepened. There is no freedom without activism, no activism without freedom.

In the expression *Deus sive Natura*—Nature written with a capital *N*—the connotation of the two words is not the same, but the denotation is. There are not two separate entities, two existent somethings, not even one. Sameness of denotation does not imply general substitutability of the two terms, but sometimes substitution offers new insights. Let us substitute “Nature” for “God” in VP15: “He who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his affects, loves Nature, and the more so the more he understands himself and his affects.” It is the passive affects—hatred, jealousy, baseless hope, mindless anger or sorrow (*tristitia*)—that are the obstacles, the immaturity of human beings.

The same substitution makes the introductory passage of the proof of proposition 20 run as follows: “This love of Nature is the highest good we can strive for in harmony with the dictate of reason, and it is common to all human beings, and we desire that all would enjoy it.”

We cannot, of course, identify Nature (with a capital *N*) with the set of particular physical and nonphysical things, including suffering human beings and animals. Such an atomistic view forgets that *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* together make an integral whole: the creative and the created are internally (insolubly) related. We are not invited to love the cruelty in nature.

Gestalt thinking and the concept of “internal relations” are useful in making precise the interconnectedness of parts and whole. However, I cannot go into that here.

Every single being deserves understanding love—this can be plausibly inferred from theorems in the *Ethics*. Spinoza, like other great philosophers, changed attitudes and terminology through the years, however, and there are still passages in the *Ethics* suggesting that the unchanging, permanent, eternal is the supreme and most satisfactory object of love and veneration. Thus, a sequence of theorems in part V, beginning with theorem 17, seems to belong to a fairly early period of Spinoza’s thinking. Love of God was in the early periods probably seen in contrast to love of finite, “mortal” particulars. In some sections of part V, love of God is still somewhat similar to the love of a transcendent God, a God that has a power of his own, beyond and apart from the limited power of individual beings.

Let us substitute “God or Nature” for “God” in the proof of VP17: “The highest virtue (*virtus*) of the mind is to understand God or Nature, or to understand beings in the third way.” The translation of *virtus* as “virtue” is today misleading, but there are no one-word translations available. The term has to do with capacity, like the Greek *areté*. Spinoza shunned moralizing.

Some might say: Spinoza wishes to contribute, as a green activist, to organizing people and to contribute, using nonviolent means, to the establishment of a green society. The consciousness of the members will be characterized by awareness of their unity with nature, and they will live according to that insight.

This is going too far, but clearly the words of Spinoza do not diminish the feeling that a total view having important analogies to his own is com-

patible with contemporary total views in part inspired by the ecological crisis—that is, analogous to an ecosophy. What would Spinoza in heaven say to this? Perhaps he would make a scornful remark. His personal applause, however, is not *necessary* for us.

The very famous passage in his early work on human understanding, specifically his utterance about the union of the mind with nature as a whole, has led many to interpret Spinoza as an advocate of *unio mystica*, that is, as a “mystic.” In the *Ethics*, on which I am focusing, there are no similar utterances. I find it plausible that in his later years he experienced less mystical nearness to a supreme whole.

Nature as conceived by many ecologists, and expressed philosophically by James Lovelock and others, is not the passive, dead, value-neutral nature of mechanistic science but is akin to the active, “naturing” nature of Spinoza. It is all-inclusive, creative (as *natura naturans*), infinitely diverse, and alive in the broad sense of Spinozistic so-called panpsychism. It manifests abstract structure, namely the laws of nature, simulated by such models as Einstein’s field equations. Goethe reaches deeper, perhaps, when he warns us: “Die Natur hat weder Kern noch Schale, alles ist auf einem Male.”

Because “everything affects every other thing,” we cannot predict the long-range effects of our particular actions and policies. This is in harmony with Spinoza’s warning that we should not think human beings capable of ever fully understanding the “common order of nature.” Very much less is needed to appreciate the overwhelming creativity of Nature. The *practical* importance of the intrinsic-value principle of deep ecology owes mainly to the imperfection and fragmentariness of our knowledge of the common order of nature. Calculations of “usefulness” are uncertain.

Nature (with a capital *N*) is intuitively conceived as perfect in the sense that Spinoza and ecologists hold more or less in common. It is not a narrowly moral, utilitarian, or aesthetic perfection. Nature is perfect “in itself” and not insofar as it serves specific human needs. Nor is it moral or immoral. It is amoral.

“Perfection” in Spinoza’s medieval Latin means *completteness* of some sort. Does this include suffering in nature? There is no reason to deny or underestimate suffering, but neither should its relation to perfection be overestimated. Stephan Lackner (1984) has published a highly stimulating

book concerning that. Some ecologists seem to ask us to refrain completely from intervening to help needlessly suffering animals. As human beings, however, we have obligations, primarily toward suffering human beings, but also toward nonhuman beings. There are, of course, inevitable clashes of norms in this area, but some norms in the sense of general guidelines are fairly clear. We may refuse to passively witness what we consider unnecessary suffering. The predators kill, but we are free to intervene in some cases.<sup>5</sup> I don't know how the text of the *Ethics* may lend itself to this question of the deep ecology movement.

Spinoza made use of all the central philosophical terms of his time but defined them in his own way, and he has the tendency to relate each of them to each of the others in a characteristic way. Without studying that very special way, I do not think that one can form an adequate picture of his *system*. To act in the sense of expressing one's own nature is to act freely, determined only by one's own nature and not arbitrarily or by chance—but of course not determined in the sense of fatalism.

An act causes something adequately, and every being causes something this way. That is, every being shares, as we have pointed out earlier, in the creativity of God or Nature. Every being is not wholly in something other (*in alio*) in the terminology of Spinoza. Power is power to act, that is, cause adequately, and an increase of this cannot but increase the level of virtue. (Here Spinoza fundamentally differs from Hobbes.) The relation of *virtus* to other key terms is fixed through seventeen equivalences.<sup>6</sup>

In contemporary philosophy of politics, a distinction is often made between “power over” (coercive power) and “power to.” Spinoza's term clearly refers to a kind of “power to.”

To be, and therefore to act, in oneself (*in suo esse*) is one of the basic notions in the *Ethics*. It has a clear connection with self-preservation, but for important reasons Spinoza prefers a different term, *perseverare in suo esse*. The relation of the ecosophically important notions of self-realization to the Spinozist *perseverare* justifies a closer inspection of terminology and the significantly different concepts at hand.

The principle of self-preservation as exemplified and as defined by philosophers and biologists at least since the Stoics had a main component

of defense against external threats. However, it also covers behavior and structure adopted to maintain inner equilibrium under changing environmental conditions. Conceived in this way, the principle has acquired renewed importance through the deep ecology movement.

The notion of “persevere in one’s (particular) being” is useful in argumentation against arbitrary manipulation of genes in animals and human beings. The more or less “instinctive” reluctance, developed through millions of years, to interfere with the particular beings may find philosophical justification at this point. Affinities between Stoic philosophy and deep ecology attitudes have often been noted, but the differences are clear: the latter implies social and political activism directed toward conditions significantly different from those in all or most countries. There is no quietism, and no lack of passion in the deep ecology movement. Insofar as it has affinities with Spinoza, it favors the strong positive emotions required to advance in the level of freedom. Of course, most supporters of the movement have never heard about Spinoza, and some might dislike what they hear.

The increased *level of* perseveration seems to be proportional to the increase in the eight or more *in se* predicates: power, freedom, virtue, and so on. The expression *quantum in se est*, “in so far (the being is in itself),” is central, not only in the *Ethics*, but also in the *Theological-Political Treatise* (cap. 16): “It is a law of all nature (or: a highest law . . .) that every being endeavors (*conatur*) to persevere in its state, in so far as it is in itself.” The translation “to preserve” is misleading.

Wyld (1932) has formulated the dictionary meaning of the English term *persevere* as follows: “to persist doggedly and with determination, diligence and patience, with the object a) of completing a task; b) of overcoming difficulty or opposition; c) of attaining a purpose, securing an aim, etc.” C. T. Lewis (1951) translates the classic Latin term *perseverare* as “to abide, adhere strictly, continue steadfastly, persist, persevere.” An example is *navis perseveravit*, “the ship kept on its course.” We choose a course and persevere.<sup>7</sup>

The term *perseverare* in the *Ethics* must, of course, be conceived more abstractly and generally, but I think the English term furnishes an adequate basis. The dynamic character of Spinoza’s thinking is better served than by use of, for example, *preservation* or *conservation*.



Human power to act is proportional to the extent to which we are the adequate cause of something, which again, according to the definition of adequate causation, is *proportional to the extent* to which what is done follows from our nature or essence *alone*, and not from any *pressure* upon us. When we act in the sense introduced, we persevere in our being or essence. A thing that perseveres in its being “in so far as it is in itself” perseveres in its essence.

“To persevere in one’s being” is the same as “to persevere in one’s essence” and not to persevere in someone else’s essence, says Spinoza. Altruism in the sense of caring for others or doing things for the sake of others does not imply shedding one’s essence and jumping into the essence of something else. A being is freer the more it acts out of, or is caused by, *its own nature alone*. It is a question of maintaining identity, not of strengthening ego or egocentricity. Spinoza’s doctrine at this point, with its undermining of the standard conception of altruism, furnishes an excellent *kind of* basis for a deep ecology concept of identification with every living being. I say “kind of” because of the opportunity for a variety of conceptualizations.

The term *perseverare* acquires its function from its position within a structure that is unique to Spinoza’s system and different from the function of related terms in other philosophers’ systems. It would lead us astray, though, if we adopted *self-perseverance* as a fundamental term of Spinoza’s system. No single term is fundamental in his system. There are at least a dozen that are ultimates from a systematic point of view. Therefore, we cannot overemphasize the importance of keeping the internal relations of a manifold of terms in mind. If we do not, the system falls apart and becomes a disorderly heap of postulates.

Taken at its crudest, the endeavor to continue somehow to survive is of little systematic interest. Moreover, taken to imply a resistance to change—a striving to keep on just as one always has done, it is clearly un-Spinozistic. There is an urge for change. Human beings, and others being, are always “on the way”—without change of essence. The dynamic, interactionist view of the self makes it inevitable to interpret a basic principle of *conatus* as a striving for self-causingness, activeness, power. We might connect it more specifically with the striving for perfection, for wholeness, completeness, self-madness, as suggested by the special use of the term in

the *Ethics*. The use of *conatus* in VP28 is instructive: “the *conatus* or desire to understand things in the third way of cognition.” Love of particular beings, *amor intellectualis*, is not a luxury indulged by the few, but a bone-hard human reality.

The proof of proposition 20 in part IV offers an excellent occurrence of grading *conatus*, perseverance, conservation, power, and virtue:

Virtue is the very power of man, and is defined solely by the essence of man, that is, which is defined through solely the striving by which man strives to preserve in his being. Therefore, the more each strives to conserve his being, and is able to do so, the more he is endowed with virtue. And as a consequence, to the extent a man neglects to conserve his own being, he is wanting in power.

And, of course, wanting in virtue. One is reminded of the Greek term *areté*, conventionally translated “virtue” but lacking the specific moral atmosphere of “virtue.” Spinoza’s antimoralistic attitude may remind one of that of Hobbes, but not the general gentleness and, in a broad sense, his ethical approach. In the ecosophy I feel at home with, a fundamental norm can be formulated using one word, “self-realization!” The nearest term in the terminology of the *Ethics*, *to persevere in one’s self*, can be interpreted in the direction of “express one’s self,” “self-fulfillment,” “realizing one’s potentials”—“self-realization.”

The self can be said to comprise that with which one identifies. The identification may be superficial or deep, the scope of identification narrow or broad. The person, I suggest, who is “all-round” mature cannot avoid identifying with every living being—seeing himself or herself in every being. If the two persons are Anne and Tom Taylor, clearly they do not see Anne and Tom in every being. There is *something* they see in themselves *and* in any other being. What something? It is tempting to mention one particular metaphysical theory specifying the *x*. I refer to the Bhagavad Gita’s announcement: “Those who are equipped with *yoga* look on all with an impartial eye, seeing *Ātman* (the Self) in all beings and all beings in *Ātman*” (chap. 6, v. 29; Gandhi’s translation).

Nine out of ten news items about the ecological crisis are potentially discouraging. It is understandable that some young supporters of the deep ecology movement despair, grow pessimistic and increasingly passive—

this in spite of their feeling of certainty that the goal of the deep ecology movement is in harmony with what they fundamentally and intuitively stand for. They try to “persevere in their being, in so far as they are in themselves,” that is, insofar as they are able to act as integrated, powerful people—in the Spinozistic sense of “power.”

People motivated by the positive (active) affects and not the negative (passive) ones have the same ultimate aim, taking part in the same highest virtue of the mind (VP25, proof), and are therefore capable of joining together in *peaceful communities*. The stronger these joyful affects are, the better. Spinoza is a rare bird among philosophers: he makes a significant advance along the road to freedom by relying on the strength of positive feelings! Reason points out the way to go, but only the strength of the feelings can do the job, as we travel along a long, difficult trail, each on a separate trail (*svamarga*), the way of one’s own self.

There are—perhaps I should add “of course”—some sentences in the *Ethics* that are difficult for supporters of the deep ecology movement to digest. A passage in part IV (P37Sch) seems to rely on a curious theorem: the less the nature of people is similar, the less easy it is to live together, and the less they are useful to each other. This, I think, can be inferred from what he says about the nature of different living beings. From such a point of view he talks about animals that have feelings but, he says, have such a very different nature from ours that they cannot be our friends and members of our communities. He does not say that they cannot be our friends because they are inferior or lower. Their nature is too different.

Part of what Spinoza says in this connection is different from what supporters of the deep ecology movement tend to say. What I refer to is Spinoza’s statement that animals have the *same* right in relation to human beings as human beings have in relation to animals, but that human beings have *more* right than animals. Many supporters of the deep ecology movement say that animals have as much right as human beings. There is an equality of right.

I tend to disagree with any quantification here. Animals and human beings may be said to have at least *one kind of right* in common, namely, the right to live and blossom. The concept I prefer if I use the term *right* in this

connection is such that it does not warrant quantification. If I intentionally kill a mosquito, I violate its right, but not because I, as a human being, have more right. If Spinoza relates to another being with *amor intellectualis*, can he nevertheless deny doing things for *their own sake*? In modern terminology, *intellectual* love would not imply attributing intrinsic value, but that is irrelevant here. Spinoza does not use the term *right* in such a way and he cannot avoid quantification.

I find it strange that some people seem to think it paradoxical that theorists of the deep ecology movement tend to cherish Spinoza. He talks about animals with so little respect, they say. The inspiration does not depend, though, on reading his texts as a holy scripture. We do expect him to be influenced by at least some of the dominant opinions among his contemporaries. We have the right to treat animals “as is most convenient for us,” he writes in one of his “notes,” not as part of a theorem. If, however, some of us have advanced farther than others on the way to the application of the third way of knowledge, *amor intellectualis*, the third way will have priority over conveniences. Animal factories that violate the dignity of animals cannot be operated in conformity with the active affect.

There is among Spinoza’s *terms* none that corresponds to the important term (*process of*) *identification* by which human beings attribute intrinsic or inherent value to every human being and to many, or all, categories of non-human beings. The structure of his system is such that all beings take part in the power of God. Because of the equivalences joining *power* with other terms, *the structure* is compatible with the intrinsic value and the self-realization views. The *content* of the note attached to IVP<sub>37</sub> is not. For my use of this note in Spinoza’s text, it is enough to add to it: what partakes in the creative power of God has intrinsic value and this applies to the total manifold of creatures. In this way the passage from the basic (“level 1”) announcements of Spinoza to the (“level 2”) eight points of my proposed Eight Points of the Deep Ecology Movement is not difficult (Devall and Sessions 1985: 70).

Supporters of the deep ecology movement have been increasingly involved in social and political conflicts. Since the controversies on pesticides, the pervasiveness of social and political obstacles has made supporters more pessimistic about the near future. The question must here be

raised, Can something be learned from seventeenth-century Spinoza about the frustrating political situation in the twentieth century? Not very much, I am afraid.

An understanding of Spinoza's political opinion is clearly dependent on what he says in the *Ethics* and other works, and on the special social and political conditions in the Netherlands at that time. I shall here limit myself to some remarks on the relations between the *Ethics* and his social philosophy insofar as they are fairly independent of the special conditions in his time. They concern primarily some of the central terms mentioned in the foregoing.

Adequate ideas are available only through the second and third kinds of cognition, the rational and the intuitive. These two kinds do not conflict, but the rational teaches us only what is required in our quest to understand in the third way, that is, ultimately what is necessary individually, socially, and politically to reach a peaceful community.<sup>8</sup>

The social situation shows how far from reaching utopia we are: most people are, according to Spinoza, led by passive rather than active affects, and they choose leaders who seem to help them reach goals derived from these passive affects. This means that even a democracy may fail to change policies.

Spinoza grew increasingly pessimistic, and his opinions changed over the long period in which he worked on the manuscript of the *Ethics*. The last time was in 1674, two years after the politically catastrophic year of the assassination of Jan de Witt. Spinoza was politically active, and the depressing events of 1672 may have changed some of his ideas—he was led toward general pessimism about the future. It did not, however, influence the main structure of the *Ethics*, the propositions and their proofs. It is more likely that it affected some of the notes (*Scholiae*) put in between the propositions.

It is not the personal opinions, but the main body (and the general structure) of the *Ethics* that has inspired, and will in the future inspire those who, on the basis of their fundamental beliefs and attitudes, try to contribute, however modestly, to the solutions of the ecological crisis. It is clear to those who teach Spinoza at the universities that the appeal of Spinoza is close to universal. It is not astonishing that he is sometimes called THE philosopher.

Spinoza had a vision, a small set of intimately connected deep intuitions. He clearly saw that conveying the content of his vision, and of all main views dependent on it, would not be possible in a small number of words. The argumentation in the *Ethics* uses many words and many levels of the premise-conclusion relation. The intimacy of the relation between the key terms enables the careful reader to get a feeling of the basic intuitions Spinoza tried to elicit in us.

ference in appetites and joys between various kinds of animals, see IIP57Sch.

18. Spinoza does not say so directly, but I think he would deny rationality of any kind to beings other than human beings. He speaks, however, about the “virtue or power” of animals, and he more or less identifies virtue with rationality: “. . . to act virtuously is nothing else than to act according to reason” (*Ethics*, IVP56 proof). Although Spinoza may be interpreted in various ways regarding the relation of animals to man, we have been interested in the main trend of his reasoning.

### Chapter 38: Spinoza and the Deep Ecology Movement

1. Spinoza uses the term *causa immanens* only twice, in part I of the *Ethics* (IP18) and in Letter 73, where there is a positive reference to Saint Paul.
2. One may speak about the finite God (*Deus modificatus*) of Spinoza as well as about the infinite (see Naess 1981: 120–26) [in SWAN IX]. Researchers mostly take the first part of the *Ethics* more seriously than the last—the account of human freedom and power as genuine parts of God’s. Doing this, they seem not to be aware of the limitation of mere formal logical priority. They ignore *Deus modificatus* because it occurs only in the later parts. Deep ecology theorizing neither thrives on Man apart, nor on God apart.
3. It is important that Spinoza adds that VP24 follows from IP25Cor, that is, from the thesis of modes *expressing* God’s attributes. It supports a radically immanent interpretation of *Deus*.
4. The distinction between content and abstract structure is worked out in Naess 1985c: 417–28 (in SWAN IX).
5. For more on human intervention to decrease suffering, see Naess 1991 (in SWAN X).
6. In Naess 1974a, I quote 243 relations of equivalence among key terms.
7. I have commented on *perseverare* and its relation to Hobbes in Naess 1980. In what follows, some formulations are borrowed from that article. In part IV of the *Ethics*, the term *conservare* is sometimes used as a synonym for *perseverare*. (IVP18Sch: reason demands [*postulat*] that everyone endeavors to conserve its being [*esse*], in so far as it is in itself.) I think “conserve” is too passive; I shall accordingly write and talk as if *perseverare* were used consistently by Spinoza.
8. Some central places in the *Ethics* show the way from Spinoza’s *Ethics* to his political writings. Concerning reason, see IIP40Sch2. From the terminology there, IVP35 follows: “In so far men live under the guidance of reason, to that extent only do they always agree in nature.” This is queer if one does not take

into account Spinoza's somewhat special use of the term *ratio*. Concerning freedom, reason, mutual aid, peace, and friendship, he says: "Only free men are truly advantageous (*invicem utilissimi*) to one another and united by a maximally close bond of friendship" (IVP71, proof). Here the term *freedom* must be interpreted in accordance with what is said about adequate causation and activeness (IIIDef2) and the resulting close relation between the terms *freedom* and *reason*: "a free human being, that is, a man who lives under the guidance of reason" (IVP67Dem).

From these indications it is fairly clear that a *Spinozistic social utopia* is one conceived to furnish the best conditions of freedom for everybody—"freedom" being interpreted in his way. What, then, is the best kind of practical politics? The question is open. I do not think Spinoza's political work can offer much here.

#### Chapter 39: A Systematization of Gandhian Ethics of Conflict Resolution

1. Declaration published in all Indian newspapers, October 30, 1940.

#### Chapter 40: The World of Concrete Contents

1. I take Galileo as representative of the neither-nor answer because of his crucial position in the development of modern physics. There are, of course, a number of slightly or significantly different concepts of primary and secondary qualities. In the context of this paper, the essential aspect of primary qualities is their status as inherent in the objects themselves. Locke elaborates the "neither warm nor cold" answer in his *Essays Concerning Human Understanding*.
2. The crucial passage concerning Protagoras in Sextus's *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* I, chapter 32, runs as follows:

Now, this man says that matter is a state of flux. As it flows, continuous additions may arise to take the place of the effluxions, and the senses undergo transformation and alteration in accordance with one's age and with other conditions of the body. He says also that the grounds of all appearances lie in the matter, so that in itself its power enables it to be all those things which appear to all beings capable of apprehension. And men apprehend different things at different times because the conditions they are in differ. The man who is in a natural state, he says, apprehends those material substances which can appear to those who are in a natural state, and a person who is in an unnatural state apprehends those things which can appear to those in an unnatural state. And the same reasoning applies as well to differences depending on one's age, one's sleeping or waking state, and every kind of condition.