Review: [Untitled]

Also, he uses them only to determine *how*—not *whether*—the various demonstrations should be made out to be valid. This may be to misrepresent Spinoza's intentions. He offered his demonstrations as giving reasons for his doctrines, and as making them hang together; but it is not clear how far he saw them as possessing what we would recognize as strict validity. If that is how he saw them, then he failed more than he succeeded, and many of those failures are not profitably viewed as misexpressed successes.

Consider the proposition that two substances cannot share an attribute. Jarrett rescues Spinoza's argument for this by giving it the premiss—which is awkward for Spinoza's metaphysics—that if substance x has attribute A then $x = A$. From this it follows *trivially* that if x has A and y has A then $x = y$, which means that no two substances can share an attribute. Jarrett, however, gives Spinoza a *circuitous* argument from that premiss to that conclusion, and one wonders why a philosopher who is so bad at economy and non-redundancy should be thought to be good at sheer validity.

It is not that we agree that Spinoza thought that an attribute *is* the substance which has it. Jarrett constructs the following argument for this out of materials in the *Ethics*: By the definition of "attribute," if substance x has attribute A then $x = A$. From this it follows *trivially* that if x has A and y has A then x is conceived through A; and by the definition of "substance," a substance is conceived only through itself. These entail that if substance x has attribute A, then $x = A$.

But not everyone agrees that Spinoza's Part I definition of "attribute" does imply that attributes are essential to substances that have them. Even if it does, is that the same sense of "essence" that is given in the official definition? If so, why is the definition postponed until Part II? And the definition itself should raise suspicions. We agree with Jarrett that although Spinoza states the definiendum as "A is part of the essence of x" he probably meant to be defining "A is the essence of x." The fact that Spinoza went out of his way to state the definiendum wrongly bodes ill for a purely logical investigation of his thought. It is not that Jarrett overrates Spinoza; but we question his apparent view about where Spinoza's greatest strengths lie. JONATHAN BENNETT and PETER VAN INWAGEN

JOEL I. FRIEDMAN. *Was Spinoza fooled by the ontological argument? Philosophia* (Ramat Gan), vol. 11 no. 3-4 (1982), pp. 307–344.

Friedman says that Spinoza's ontological argument for God's existence conflates causal with logical or metaphysical necessity, and that this conflation is what is wrong with the argument. Friedman seems unsure whether the conflation should be regarded as a "modal fallacy" or merely as a false and undefended premiss. Either way, the conflation he speaks of is not the one that is familiar to students of Spinoza. Rather it is between, in Friedman's words, "x is a causally necessary being" and "x is a logically (metaphysically) necessary being." Despite the wording, these two do not differ as 'It is causally necessary that P' does from 'It is logically necessary that P' for the same P. This latter distinction—the bare difference between the two sorts of necessity—is what Spinoza is customarily (and rightly) said to have rejected; that rejection does not figure in Friedman's account.

Yet this distinction has a vital role in Spinoza's ontological argument, a role that is not captured in Friedman's reconstruction. Start with the defensible premiss that a substance cannot be caused to exist by anything else, add Spinoza's assumption that whatever exists is caused by something, and it follows that a substance must be its own cause. It is hard to make sense of the idea of something's being its own *cause*, but the causal/logical conflation at least gives a prima facie understanding: Something is its own "cause" if it contains within itself all the resources for a complete *logical* explanation of the fact that it exists, and that is the case if the thing has a nature which must be instantiated—for then we can explain its existence by appealing only to (the nature of) the thing itself. When Spinoza defines 'cause of itself' by equating it with something he takes to mean "having a nature that must be instantiated," this is not a stipulation made merely to cover a muddle. Rather, the definition embodies Spinoza's assumption that 'is the cause of itself' means "contains the materials for a complete explanation of its own existence," and his thesis that such an explanation will have to be logical rather than what we today would call causal.

Friedman's Spinoza, however, is not even trying to make sense of the notion of being *self*-explanatory. In Friedman's reconstruction, 'x is cause of itself' is said to have two meanings, one causal and one logical. The causal one equates 'x is cause of itself' with 'x is sempiternal and not caused by anything else'; and this, since it ignores the reflexive pronoun and does not have the form C(x, x), does not raise the question of how something could possibly be self-causing or self-explanatory.

One result is that Friedman must find a fresh route for Spinoza to take from (1) 'x is a substance' to (2) 'x is cause of itself.' The natural route is from (1) to 'x is not caused by anything else' and from that, via the

unstated assumption that everything is caused, to (2), with this being understood as having the form C(x, x). Friedman's version of the argument, however, goes from (1) to 'x is not caused by anything else and x is in itself,' and from that to 'x is not caused by anything else and x is sempiternal,' which is taken to mean the same as sentence (2). The move from 'x in itself' to 'x is sempiternal' is based on the "suppressed but plausible [Spinozist] premise that anything... which is in itself is sempiternal" (p. 316)—an obscure doctrine which Friedman defends a little and then endorses on the ground that it "seems analytic" (p. 328). Considered as philosophy or as exegesis, this move compares poorly with the move from 'x is not caused by anything else' to 'x is cause of itself' (reflexively!) via the suppressed Spinozist premiss that everything is caused. This premiss is intelligible, and is palpably at work all through the *Ethics*, serving as Spinoza's version of explanatory rationalism, his principle of sufficient reason, and his assumption that there is a good answer for every "Why?" question.

Friedman's energetic exercise in argument reconstruction, though it reflects an impressive knowledge of Spinoza's text, does not help much to display the real structure of Spinoza's ontological argument.

Friedman's use of formal logic is unexceptionable and unexciting, consisting as it does of standard quantifier logic plus a few metalogical notions and some very elementary modal logic. Not surprisingly, one of the suppressed premisses attributed to Spinoza is equivalent to the assertion that God (absolutely infinite substance) is possible.

One point deserves close attention. Friedman defines 'Nx' ("x is a logically... necessary being") as follows: "There is a 1-place formula D of the *object language* such that x uniquely satisfies D [and] $\Box(\exists x)D(x)$ is true" (p. 324). (Thus one of the predicates of Friedman's object-language makes reference, on its intended interpretation, to the object-language. This definition plays no role in Friedman's demonstration of the validity of his formal reconstruction of Spinoza's reasoning; it serves only to explain what 'N' means.) Friedman says that "this definition shows that *de re* necessity reduces to *de dicto* necessity" (p. 325). But it is hard to see how Friedman's definition avoids the well-known objection that a predicate may have a non-empty extension at every possible world, even though its extension at some or all worlds comprises only contingent beings. Consider, for example, the predicate 'x is the tallest man if there is a tallest man, or, if there is no tallest man, the number 0.' This predicate is, in all probability, satisfied (uniquely, of course) by some man or other. But, whoever he may be, he is not a logically necessary being.   JONATHAN BENNETT and PETER VAN INWAGEN