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Spinoza: Freedom, psychotherapeutics and politics

Grahame Lock

There is a large and rapidly increasing scholarly literature on the work of Spinoza; but, in the Netherlands at least, his own homeland, there have been relatively few attempts to measure the contemporary political-philosophical and political-scientific relevance of his thought.¹ Yet it surely has such relevance. Let us attempt to illustrate this point by a brief examination of his conception of freedom: a central notion in modern thought. For what Spinoza seems to do, by means of a demystification of the everyday concept of freedom, is (1) to pose the question of exactly why we value freedom; and (2) to refocus attention on the specifically political significance and implications of this concept.

1. Spinoza's two paths to freedom

Spinoza defines freedom in *Ethics* (Part I, Definition 7) as follows: 'That thing is called free, which exists solely by the necessity of its own nature, and of which the action is determined by itself alone.' In contrast, 'that thing is necessary, or rather constrained, which is determined by something external to itself ...' and so on.²

What does he mean by these apparently rather esoteric formulations? What is freedom? It is not so much – so it appears, if we read on in Spinoza's text – the absence of coercion, as it is in the contemporary, more or less liberal sense.³ Nor is it the possibility of acting in accordance with one's own free will: this it cannot be, since free will is on Spinoza's view a fiction. It is rather (the capacity for) self-causation – and thus (for) independence: another important 'political' notion.

According to Spinoza's metaphysics, the physical states, ideas and actions of any human individual will be partly self-caused and partly caused 'from outside'. That is why some of his or her ideas will be clear and distinct; others will be confused, i.e. operate at the level of 'imagi-

nation'. A human individual is only one small part of nature and is thus very much subject to external influence. So there is a limit to the degree of freedom which any such human individual can enjoy. At *Ethics* Part 4, Proposition 3, Spinoza writes for example: 'The force whereby a man persists in existing is limited, and is infinitely surpassed by the power of external causes.'

But there are two ways in which one can increase the measure of his freedom. The first is what might be called 'psychotherapeutic'; the second is political.

2. The psychotherapeutic path to freedom

I begin with the first. In *Ethics* Part 4, Proposition 66, Scholium, Spinoza remarks that we may readily grasp 'the difference between a man who is led solely by emotion or opinion, and a man who is led by reason'. What is this difference? It lies, he continues, in the fact that

'the former, whether he will or no, performs actions of which he is utterly ignorant; the latter is his own master and only performs such actions as he knows are of primary importance in life, and therefore chiefly desires; wherefore I call the former a slave, and the latter a free man.'

To be free is to be self-caused; to be self-caused is to be free from external influence, therefore from the influence of – among other things – opinion or emotion. A twentieth-century reader might be inclined here to interpret opinion as other people's ('public opinion' or something similar) and emotion as one's own. Whether for Spinoza 'external' means 'external to the body' (i.e. to the individual) or 'external to the will' (therefore possibly not external to the individual, as when my will is too weak to resist my own body) is a matter of controversy, which I shall not enter into here (see Bennett 1984: 326).

In any case, an obvious strategy for a human individual would thus be to attempt to gain *control over* these two factors, namely opinion and emotion. This is apparently, on Spinoza's view, possible to some degree. In *Ethics* Part 5, Preface he tells us 'how much more powerful the wise man is than the ignorant'. He is more powerful, because he has the power of reason. What can reason do? It can in particular tame the emotions by causing them to cease to be passions, i.e. merely suffered by us: 'An emotion', says Spinoza, 'which is a passion, ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it' (*Ethics* Part 5, Proposition 3). And we can indeed form such a clear and distinct idea.

So 'everyone has the power of clearly and distinctly understanding himself and his emotions, if not absolutely, at any rate in part, and consequently of bringing it about that he should become less subject to them' (*Ethics* Part 4, Proposition 4, Corollary). To this extent, a person increases his freedom.

Reason here plays, as Jonathan Bennett remarks, a double role: 'Just as in a revolution where the new president is also the man who led the coup, so reason whose "dictates" replace the influence of the affects in our lives is also the faculty which dislodges or quietens the affects in the first place.' (Bennett 1984: 329) As long as we are 'assailed by effects contrary to our nature', we lack 'the power of arranging and associating the modifications of our body according to the intellectual order' (see *Ethics* Part 5, Proposition 10). But we can do something to change this state of affairs. Thus we also become less susceptible to the snares of (public) opinion.

Does there come, as Bennett's terminology of revolution suggests, a decisive moment at which power shifts (from emotion to reason)? I think so: this is the logic, it seems to me, of Spinoza's use of the well-known terminology of *levels of knowledge*: imagination, adequate ideas and intuition (the lowest, higher and highest types of knowledge). Now just as there are lower and higher types of knowledge, so there seem to be equivalent types of beings, and therefore classes of such beings. *Ethics* Part 4, Proposition 37 speaks of the man 'guided by emotion only' who 'acts solely by impulse', and in contrast of the man who lives 'according to reason'. Similarly, so Spinoza argues in *Tractatus Politicus*, chapter 5, some men are fit for citizenship and some are not. The true goal of legislation, he remarks in *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, chapter 4, 'is only perceived by a few, and most men are almost incapable of grasping it': that is to say, few men are sufficiently rational to comprehend that goal an interesting political judgement.

It is not surprising that Spinoza should move from the idea of the existence of three levels of knowledge to that of three classes of beings: *viz.* the irrational, the rational and God. To live 'by the guidance of reason' is to *have a propensity* to live rationally. In other words, the free man possesses a certain rational character trait. Every individual thing, as we know, tends on Spinoza's account to strive for its own self-preservation. Whatever individual thing (human beings are the obvious example) tends to do this by rational means, has a rational disposition. Spinoza does not, as we know, oppose reason to cause; he opposes freedom to constraint. 'That thing is called free', we saw, 'which exists from the necessity of its nature alone'. Just as God's character determi-

nes God's actions,⁴ so does each man's character determine his actions. There is no free will. Rational behaviour which proceeds – which proceeds with necessity – from a rational disposition does not on that account forfeit its title to rationality: on the contrary, it is rational *just because* it proceeds with necessity from the agent's rational disposition. And to that extent its possessor is free. A rational disposition is displayed by a man whose mind is already so organized that the ideas which it contains display a certain degree of (logical) coherence.

Stuart Hampshire notes that Spinoza 'does not clearly explain what is the equivalent in physical terms of the transition from the illogical association of ideas to logically coherent thought' (Hampshire 1962: 126). Similarly, Spinoza does not explain what is the equivalent in physical terms of the possession of such a rational disposition.⁵ But, as Hampshire suggests, an explanation will probably make use of something like the notion of the 'internal stability' of the body, which renders it relatively immune from disturbance by external causes.

There is no free will, we noted. Spinoza writes, more precisely, in the well-known Appendix to *Ethics* Part 1: 'Men think themselves free inasmuch as they are conscious of their volitions and desires, and never even dream, in their ignorance, of the causes which have disposed them so to wish and desire.' What does this mean? Does it for example mean that, when I make a so-called free choice, I *could not* in fact have chosen otherwise? Hampshire remarks:

'If a human action is shown to be deducible from a law of nature, that is, is exhibited as the effect of a cause, there is at least one sense in which we must say that the agent could not in this case have acted otherwise, or that no alternative action was possible; and if no alternative action was in this sense possible for him, it seems unreasonable to allow a sense to saying that he could have acted otherwise if he had chosen.' (Hampshire 1962: 150)

But this is actually not so obvious. *If* he had chosen otherwise, surely, he not only *could* have acted otherwise but could not have helped acting otherwise; so if he had chosen otherwise, he *would* have acted otherwise. And yet a Spinozist might argue: although, if he had *per impossibile* chosen otherwise, he could not have failed to act otherwise, he could nevertheless not have acted otherwise, *because* he could not have chosen otherwise.

This is not just a verbal quibble. The matter cannot be resolved without reference to Spinoza's theory of necessity. The answer to the question whether someone could have chosen otherwise than he did (where the notion of choice contains no suggestion that the choice was

free) depends on the answer to a more general question, namely whether anything (which happens) in the world is contingent.

At *Ethics* Part 1, Proposition 33 Spinoza argues:

'All things necessarily follow from the nature of God, and by the nature of God are conditioned to exist and act in a particular way. If things, therefore, could have been of a different nature, or have been conditioned to act in a different way, so that the order of nature would have been different, God's nature would also have had to be different from what it now is; and therefore that different nature also would have perforce existed, and consequently there could have been two or more Gods. This is absurd.'

So things could not have been of a different nature. A thing, he adds (in Note I) 'can in no respect be called contingent, save in relation to the imperfection of our knowledge'. Spinoza seems to have held that every true particular proposition (that is, every proposition expressing a particular event or state of affairs) is causally necessitated by antecedent states of the universe.⁶ Everything in nature would on this account be both necessary and inevitable. Everything true is necessary; but from the necessity of everything (what Spinoza calls 'the necessity of the divine nature') follows 'an infinite number of things in infinite ways – that is', Spinoza writes, 'all things which can fall within the sphere of infinite intellect' (*Ethics* Part 1, Proposition 16, Demonstration). All things which *can* fall within the infinite intellect, he says: that is to say, everything in any possible world. So if everything true is necessary, then everything possible is necessary (cf. Bennett 1984: 122).

From this it seems to follow that if I make a choice, I could have made no other choice. For if I *could* have made another choice, than I *did* make that other choice. But I did not in fact make another choice; so I could not have made another choice.

My choice is in that sense not free. But I am free (at least, I might be – some people at least are to some extent free). So it might be said that, although my choices are never free, I am sometimes free in making my choices. Individuals are free (in Spinoza's terminology) in the sense and to the extent that they have a clear and distinct idea of the causes of the states of their body and mind.

This freedom is not what has been called 'radical' freedom, that is to say: "freedom" in some radical sense which involves rising above causal influences' (Bennett 1984: 13). Recall Spinoza's definition of freedom, which I already quoted: 'That thing is called free which exists solely by the necessity of its own nature, and of which the action is determined by itself alone.' In proposing this definition, Spinoza borrows one ele-

ment of the common-sensical or everyday notion of freedom, namely that someone acts freely *if*, when acting, he acts 'out of himself' (rather than for example being constrained by someone else – what lawyers call 'duress' – or being obliged by *force majeure*). That is to say, Spinoza transforms a necessary condition of free action into a necessary and sufficient condition. For in the everyday sense, the condition here stated, though perhaps necessary, is by no means sufficient. In the everyday sense, we require not only that someone's act should be his own, but that it should be a *voluntary* act, an act 'freely willed': that is to say, we require that someone could indeed have chosen and acted otherwise – something which, as we saw, Spinoza excludes. How much does this difference of views matter to us, with our twentieth-century outlook?

Let us for a moment consider the question of freedom from another angle. What is it that *non-determinists* require of an act of (what they call) free will? Robert Nozick says: on their view, 'a free action is an undetermined one with something more' (Nozick 1981: 292). Why 'something more'? Because otherwise every undetermined act would be called free. Yet an undetermined act might be a *random* happening; and a random happening lacks any dimension providing it with that 'human value' – and indeed, in some interpretations that political value – which we attribute (rightly or wrongly) to freedom of choice. We value freedom of the will, free choice, not because it is random (i.e. not because, being uncaused, it produces random results) but – presumably – because of the 'something more'.

This 'something more' must surely have to do with the factor of rational choice, in the sense of a process in which *reasons* play a role in determining the outcome of the process. But in what way do they play a role?

Perhaps – as Donald Davidson thinks – reasons are themselves causes.⁷ But if reasons are causes, we might already have our 'something more', while abandoning the original presupposition that an act of choice is undetermined. Might we not then suppose that a 'free' act is one which is performed 'out of the agent' himself, i.e. for reasons which are the agent's own – these reasons however being at the same time causes of his performing the act in question? The concept of a 'free act' would in that case not imply any notion of free will (in the sense in which Spinoza rejected that notion). But it would allow us to draw a line of distinction between those processes whose outcome depends in some sense on the invocation and effectivity of 'reasons for action' and those (like for example the processes treated in modern physics) where it does not.

Nozick thinks that free choice has a certain 'human value', because it

is made for reasons. Must these reasons, in order to have the kind of 'human value' to which Nozick refers, be *good* reasons?

From a Spinozistic point of view one might say: there is indeed nothing special about reasons. Reasons are just the mental correlates – the correlates under the attribute of thought – of physical causes. What is special in this connexion is not reasons but *good* reasons: that is to say, what is important is that an individual should learn to think and act in accordance with the principles of rationality – and, on Spinoza's view (*Ethics* Part 5, Preface), 'no slight practice and zeal is needed' in order to acquire this 'power of the intellect', capable of wielding 'dominion over the emotions'.

We are, it is true, now back to our starting-point: we now know that freedom is equivalent to reason, or that free thought and action are equivalent to rational thought and action. But we now also have a better idea of just why this is so. And it is apparently so, even though we are said by Spinoza to be – to the extent that we are *free* – '*governed*' by reason. Reason, he remarks, has its 'dictates' (*Ethics* Part 4, Proposition 18, Scholium).

To think and act as a free individual is to think and to act in such a way that the causes of one's thoughts and actions *lie within oneself*. But why – in general – should it be good news to discover that some cause lies within oneself? What consolation is it for instance for you to know that you are dying from a failure of your own internal organs rather than from attack by bacteria from outside your body? Similarly, why is it better to have ideas which are 'your own'? Why is it better to vote liberal or socialist (or whatever) on the basis of your own ideas rather than on account of propaganda material to which you have been subjected? Political parties themselves certainly have no objection to obtaining votes on the latter basis, judging from the sums of money which they invest in political advertising.

Spinoza's answer to these questions lies presumably, at least in part, in the notion that each of us constructs a *system of ideas* – a system which is constantly being (or at least is capable of being) improved and refined, but which is disturbed by interventions from outside – except in so far as we are capable of actively incorporating those interventions into our own system, that is, of making someone else's reasons genuinely our own, of being rationally persuaded.

Still, it remains true that, on Spinoza's view, we do not simply *make use of reason*: we 'live in obedience' to it – this is also the definition of 'true virtue' (*Ethics* Part 4, Proposition 35). In so far as we obey reason, we live in harmony with (or according to the laws of) our own nature.

Is it that we human beings have an obedient nature? Spinoza would say rather that our nature is characterized by the tendency to self-preservation; and that our self-preservation is best secured by living according to the dictates of reason.

Do we then have any choice? Could we fail to obey the dictates of reason? Could we refuse? Spinoza must be of the view that we cannot refuse nor can we resist; we can only fail. Most people, indeed, will fail, or at least be fairly unsuccessful. But whoever is capable of living according to the dictates of reason should do so or will do so. Spinoza's terminology is therefore in one sense misleading; reason does not so much prescribe or dictate or demand obedience: it *causes* us to act rationally.

Suppose that Spinoza is generally right about the way the world is: or suppose, as Nozick puts it (Nozick 1981: 334), that 'the physical world is deterministic, closed, and unified in that no causal relations concerning human behavior are emergent relative to more general physical principles. Even within such an austere environment', Nozick claims, 'we can try to find a place for (...) an action's being dependent upon rational considerations qua rational considerations'. How?

Well, it might well be the case that rational considerations do affect beliefs and actions in a closed deterministic world if these beliefs and actions are related in the appropriate sense to the rational content of the reasons for someone's believing what he believes or doing what he does (see Nozick 1981: 317).

If we maintain the Spinozist equivalence between rationality and freedom, this position seems to become a version of what is sometimes called 'compatibilism' – the theory which holds that freedom is reconcilable with determinism. Anthony Kenny asks whether I may 'have the ability and opportunity not to do X if I am in a physiological state from which, in conjunction with physiological laws, it can be deduced that my body will move in such a way that I will do X'. His answer is that I may have this ability (Kenny 1978: 31). If – slightly modifying Kenny's example – I am in a physical position to strangle my political enemy, but my current physiological state is such that I will not strangle him, can I really be said to have an opportunity to strangle him? Yes, indeed: there is nothing external to me preventing me. But isn't there something external to *my will* which prevents me (namely my physiological state)? No, because that something, external to my will, would have to be a state of such a kind that, if I did want to do X, (my being in) that state would prevent me from doing so. But, *ex hypothesi*, if I did want to do X, I could not be in that state. So this kind of determinism does not conflict with freedom.

3. The political path to freedom

Let us now turn, in the light of the above considerations, to the *political* conception of freedom or liberty. In the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* the goal of the State is taken to be liberty; in the *Tractatus Politicus* it becomes 'peace and security'. But in both cases the goal is taken to be a good thing. Why however should we suppose that an individual has an interest in the establishment or maintenance of State power? Is it not the case that the greater the power of the State, the more restricted the power of the individual citizen? Why then should the latter welcome or even accept this state of affairs?

Spinoza has an answer to this question. His argument makes use of notions developed in his general metaphysics. We are told, to begin with, that everything – including human beings – strives for self-preservation. This self-preservation is best served by maximizing the measure of independence, i.e. of self-causation. But a human being is, as we know, only one tiny part of nature and is for that reason weak and vulnerable. Spinoza however argues that 'if two men come together, and unite their strength, they have jointly more power, and consequently more right over nature than both of them separately; and the more there are that have so joined in alliance, the more right they all collectively possess' (*Tractatus Politicus*, chapter 2, §13). It is therefore arguably rational for men to agree to set up or to maintain a civil State.

But the establishment of a civil State is the creation of a *new individual*, with its own *conatus*, its own passions and its own rationality – and its own irrationality. Just as men tend to imagine themselves 'free' in an illusory sense, just as they tend to fall victim to (exaggerated or fallacious) feelings of love and hatred, and thus to develop a misguided relation of love or antipathy toward that authority whose power they embellish in phantasy and which they hold responsible for their well-being or ill-being, so the same is true of States in their relation to those forces on which their self-preservation depends – that is to say, to other States and similar institutions. It holds too, *mutatis mutandis*, of their relation to the people, which they also fear. The State, like a human individual, must attempt to secure its self-preservation. And to the extent that it is within the *power* of the State to cause its citizens to obey it, it has the right to use whatever means are necessary to that end.

Certain things are however beyond the power of the State. It can sometimes influence opinions, and therefore presumably has the right to do so. But it cannot *control* them; it therefore has no right to do so. In

this sense *freedom of opinion* ought to be guaranteed – even if some states foolishly try to suppress it. But they are moved by passion, especially by fear.

That is however not the whole story. Balibar argues (Balibar 1985: 113) that Spinoza's arguments about obedience to the civil State 'have no sense at the level of isolated individuals, except by provisional abstraction'. When an individual is passive, it is because his mind is dominated by the circulation of affects and by the 'general ideas' of the collective imagination – by opinion. But:

'When an individual is active, it is (...) because the meetings of his body with other bodies are organized in a coherent manner, because the ideas in his mind are linked in a way which conforms to "common notions" – in the double sense of: common to all men, and: common to men and to nature as a whole.'⁸

Freedom or liberty is for this reason not, most fundamentally, a property of any individual (of an individual human being or whatever), but a power capable of self-expansion through what Balibar calls 'communication', the communication between individuals – and (this is the important point here) the consequent emergence of new individuals.

Now what this would seem to mean (though I may be distorting Balibar's intention) is that there is no standpoint – for example that of 'the human individual' – from which the question of (metaphysical) freedom or of (political) liberty can be definitively resolved. An individual is free, we might suppose, just to the extent that it exists solely by the necessity of its own nature. But an individual is never simply *given* as such: it is constructed (it is self-constructed) by an activity which however always tends to create the conditions for the emergence, out of the old, of a new and larger (or sometimes smaller) unit in the order of nature.

Spinoza says little, in his *Ethics*, about the consequences of this process, or about what it would look like in everyday life. In his political writings, however, he provides a few examples, especially when he talks about alliances and about the civil State or Commonwealth. Thus he writes in *Tractatus Politicus* chapter 3 that the right of the supreme authorities (of governments) 'is nothing other than simple natural right', limited by the power of the multitude, 'which is [itself] guided, as it were, by one mind'.

One mind – one individual. So our provisional characterization of power must be corrected: power is not so much a relative property of some given individual, but more like a property of a subject which

tends to reconstitute itself – to expand or to contract – in function of an increase or decrease in its power; a process which thus transforms it into another individual.

Here are two political analogies, which might even be applications of the doctrine. The first: Prussia, on account of the extension of its power, 'becomes' in the nineteenth to twentieth centuries another, more inclusive individual: Germany. The second: with the establishment of the European Community, the powers of the 'collective' individuals known as nation-States are being weakened; in the long run these States might even disappear. Should that concern us? It depends in part on whether we identify with some nation-State. But might it be rational for us to switch allegiance to the European Union? What rational criterion could there be for answering this question? Ought each of us to consider in this connexion the relative consequences of the alternatives for the expansion or contraction of his or her own powers? But does this criterion not presuppose that our *own* personal individuality is an invariant datum? It was a characteristic of the totalitarian ideologies that they attempted to persuade us to abandon our anthropocentric individualism and to 'fuse' with the larger, social unit. The question here is not whether we like the idea of a such a process, but whether it is conceivable. Spinoza would have opposed totalitarian theory. But his theory raises questions which still remain to be answered by contemporary political scientists, especially the methodological individualists among them.

We are in fact well acquainted in ordinary life with processes of this sort. Even atomistic liberals allow that the basic social unit might sometimes better be taken to be the family than the human individual. Lawyers standardly work with the notion of the legal or moral – that is 'collective' – personality, which functions as an individual, i.e. undivided subject of rights and duties.

Aristotle argued that man must be regarded as a political or social animal, because he is not self-sufficient. Spinoza generalizes this point: nothing in the universe, nothing short of the universe as a whole, is self-sufficient, either physically or mentally. The question is then: in our less than adequate understanding of this universe and its modes, under what individuating concept do we bring ourselves (regarding ourselves, presumably, as relatively self-sufficient) and with what consequences? This is a question with important political implications. It is for instance of direct relevance for the debate between individualism and communitarianism.

The point, in any case, is fairly clear in the abstract, even if its con-

crete implications are not elaborated in Spinoza's writings. The abstract point, as we saw, is that it is the self-causation of a thing which provides it with its individuality. I can cease to be constrained by something external to myself – that is, I can realize a greater liberty – either by increasing my own power and overcoming the constraint in question or by becoming a part – a member, a component part – of a larger whole, of a new organism, which might well include the constraining element external to the individual which I originally was.⁹ This message constitutes, on the present interpretation, Spinoza's second – double and paradoxical – account of the hazardous political road to greater freedom.¹⁰

Notes

1. There are of course exceptions; see for instance some of the publications of the *Vereniging het Spinozahuis* in Voorschoten. In Klever (1988), an article published some years ago in *Acta Politica*, the author treats a question – that of Spinoza's 'coupling principle', linking the personal interests of politicians and the well-being of the people – for which Klever claims both political-scientific relevance and a realistic status. Spinoza's assertions and conclusions, he writes, constitute 'the best formulae ever used to describe political life'. In my own introductory text on the philosophy of the political sciences, I include a section on Spinoza: see Lock (1987).

2. I have generally made use of the Elwes translation of the *Ethics* and of other works by Spinoza cited in the text (Spinoza 1951 and 1953), modifying that translation where it seemed useful or necessary to do so.

3. I use the term 'liberal' here in its broad sense; compare Lock (1993) on Spinoza's 'liberalism'.

4. Cf. Bennett 1984: 123. God, as eternal cause of Himself (i.e. of everything), is free, since He exists solely by the necessity of His own nature. No other cause is (fully) free.

5. On Spinoza's theory there is only one substance in the universe, each of whose 'modes' (the bits and pieces making it up) have attributes of both thought and extension. A human being, for instance, is both a mind and a body.

6. See Bennett (1984: 120). Bennett draws attention to what he considers the unclarity in and even contradictory character of Spinoza's various accounts of necessity. But some present-day political scientists, those addicted to explanation by causal laws, might hope that Spinoza is right.

7. See Davidson (1985: 9). If a reason could not be a cause, then to invoke a reason would not provide an adequate account of a human action: I might have a reason for doing something (for example, for voting socialist) but not act on that reason. Then my *not* voting socialist could hardly be accounted for in terms of the reason I had for voting socialist. But if I do vote socialist, my reason for doing so can account for the way I vote, if the reason is a cause of my voting

that way.

8. Spinoza's account of *activity* and *passivity* recalls, in one respect, Nietzsche's theory of *ressentiment*: *ressentiment* is typified by the situation in which passive forces prevail over active. An important difference is however that Nietzsche considers this unfortunate state of affairs to be exemplified by the 'man of thought', the priest or philosopher. It is expressed in a morality of self-adaptation, in which the active force, incapable of establishing a mastery over others, turns against itself.

9. Compare the old political adage: 'If you can't beat them, join them'. This is of course not quite the same thing – though the consequence of adopting it might illustrate Spinoza's point.

10. An earlier version of this paper was read to the Leipzig conference of the *Spinoza Gesellschaft* in September 1992.

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