THE METAPHYSICS OF IMAGINATION IN SPINOZA

by

NASTASSJA PUGLIESE

(Under the Direction of Edward C. Halper)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an investigation into the nature and role of imagination in the philosophy of Spinoza. The motivation for the research is the apparent paradox that occurs when Spinoza's monism is combined with a negative interpretation of his theory of imagination in which ideas of imagination are considered only as sources of mistakes and as ideas that have no real being. If there is only a single infinite and self-caused substance that is perfect where everything that follows from it is also perfect, then everything that there is, including imaginations, is real and true. However, imaginations do not give the essence of things and the objects they refer sometimes do not exist. If this is the case, either it is false that everything that follows from the substance is perfect or there is some kind of perfection and virtue in imaginations. In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the second option is the case. The dissertation has two parts. First, I show that Spinoza's notion of imagination is, in fact, a complex theory that was being carefully constructed since his early works. In the second part, I present the paradoxes of monism and imagination in the *Ethics*. I suggest that imagination is best understood if addressed as an activity that has causes in the body and causes in the mind. By dividing imagination into its expression in extension and in thought, it becomes possible to analyze further the various objects it produces such as images, ideas of affects, fictions,

and beings of reason. I conclude by showing that all of these objects are positively existing beings and that each of them has a distinctive role in knowledge.

INDEX WORDS: Seventeenth Century Philosophy; Spinoza; Metaphysics; Monism; Imagination

THE METAPHYSICS OF IMAGINATION

by

NASTASSJA PUGLIESE

B.A. Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, 2007.

M.A. Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, 2010.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2016

THE METAPHYSICS OF IMAGINATION

by

NASTASSJA PUGLIESE

Major Professor:	Edward C. Halper
Committee:	Céline Hervet
	Richard D. Winfield
	Elizabeth Brient

Electronic Version Approved:

Suzanne Barbour
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
December 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is the result of my research in early modern thought conducted at the University of Georgia. I am grateful for the opportunity to have taught talented students who, together with my ingenious advisor, challenged me academically and inspired me intellectually during many years. I am also thankful for the encouragement of all my professors and colleagues at the Department of Philosophy, and for the travel and research support received from the Graduate School. I would like to give a special thanks to my committee members and the community of Spinoza scholars in Brazil, United States, France, Netherlands, and Argentina for the stimulating conversations and invaluable feedback. Finally, I am forever in debt with my family and my life partner for their care and emotional support. This beautiful journey of intellectual growth was only possible because of your love and patience.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

ABBREVIATIONS

The following standard abbreviations are used through the dissertation:

Works of Spinoza:

TIE	*Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* -1660
KV	*Short Treatise* (*Korte Verhandeling*) - 1662
PPC	*Principles of Cartesian Philosophy* (*Principia Philosophiae*) - 1663
CM	*Metaphysical Thoughts* (*Cogitata Metaphysica*) - 1663
TTP	*Theological-Political Treatise* (*Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*) - 1670
Ep	*Letters* followed by Arabic number (*Epistolae*)
TP	*Political Treatise* (*Tractatus Politicu*s) - 1675
E	*Ethics (Ethica) - 1677*

Internal references for the *Ethics*:

app - appendix

ax = axiom

c = corollary

d = definition

dem = demonstration

exp = explanation

gens = General Scholium

l = Lemma

p = proposition

post = postulate

pref = Preface

prol = Prologue

proof = Proof

s = scholium

The works of Spinoza are cited from the edition of *Spinoza Opera*, edited by C. Gebhardt, Heidelberg 1925, denoted by the letter G, followed by Arabic numerals of the volume, page, and line. For the *Ethics*, the most common form of citation is used. That is, the part of the book is indicated, followed by the proposition, and additional information. If the reference in the *Ethics* does not capture precisely the citation, such as, for example, in the case of the appendixes or longer *scholia*, the Gebhardt's pagination is also provided. The translation to English is Curley's (1984 & 2016) .

Works of Descartes

RDM *Rules for the Direction of the Mind - 1628*

DM *Discourse on Method - 1637*

Med *Meditations on First Philosophy - 1641*

PPH *Principles of Philosophy - 1644*

Rep *Replies to Objections*

PW *Philosophical Works* (Cottingham, Stootholff & Murdoch translation)

Descartes's works being used are the translations from Cottingham, Stoothoff & Murdoch in the *Descartes: Selected Philosophical Writings* (Cambridge, 1988).

Works of Aristotle

DA *De Anima*

The *De Anima* translation being used is by Jonathan Barnes, Princeton / Bollingen Series LXXI1984.

INTRODUCTION

INVESTIGATING IMAGINATION: PHILOSOPHICAL AND EXEGETICAL MOTIVATIONS

Spinoza wrote on metaphysics, epistemology, language, philosophical psychology, social psychology, criticism of religion, and political philosophy. However, only a few of his theories became widely known. One of the most important is substance monism: there is only one being and everything that exists is a mode of this primary, but non-transcendent being, which he calls nature, God or substance.[1] Other conceptions that somehow depend on the acceptance of his monism, such as his theory of imagination and theory of fiction, are poorly known. This is largely because most of the exegetical work done so far by scholars is centered around disputes concerning the viability of substance monism and not on its consequences or other aspects of Spinoza's metaphysics.[2] However, at the same time that disputes over monism explain why Spinoza's theory of imagination, as part of what follows from substance monism, has been neglected over the

[1] Monism itself is not an original claim, but the identity between God, nature and substance is Spinoza's original contribution to monism.

[2] There is more than 350 years of scholarship on Spinoza, so it seems very simplistic to make general claims. However, looking at the repercussion of Spinoza's philosophy in the 18th and 19th century and his influence on Hume, Locke, Hegel and the German Romanticism, most of the discussions on Spinoza concern the consistency and the truth of his monism (Israel 2001). Other than monism, Spinoza's critique of religion and political claims are widely discussed and disputed. When it comes to the 20th and 21st century, the topics of scholarship change due to a revival of Spinozism in Europe in the early 20th century (Knox 2014). Spinoza's theory of imagination is neglected not only by scholars of Spinoza's philosophy but by Early Modernists and historians of philosophy in general. His theory of imagination is taken as a unoriginal copy of Descartes' theory that does not offer further contributions to the debate. The current work aims to prove otherwise.

centuries, those same disputes give good reasons for studying the topic and for why scholars have been focusing on Spinoza's theory of imagination.

The fate of Spinoza's philosophy, just like that of any other philosopher, depends on the influence he has on readers, scholars and, more specifically, on philosophers that came immediately after. For better or worse, Hegel is one of the latter.[3] Hegel's interpretation of Spinoza had a tremendous impact, functioning - until today - like a final sentence looming above generations of thinkers. Hegel's criticism of Spinoza can pass as a merely methodological suggestion: first, evaluate the metaphysics or the foundations, then move forward to analyze the other parts of the philosophy. However, this systematic method of philosophical analysis, if mixed with the conclusion Hegel arrives at when applying it to Spinoza's case, can prevent the reader from taking everything else from Spinoza's philosophy seriously. According to Hegel, because Spinoza's monism fails to be a good foundation to explain the relationship between the one and the many, he cannot offer a good philosophy of multiplicity either. That is, he cannot offer a good theory of human mind, of language, of religion, of forms of government, and of everything that is related with the finite and the multiple. This Hegelian strategy is, indeed, an accepted method of approaching a philosophical work; if the whole theory cannot be seen to be consistent, then there is no point in investigating its parts. The consequence for Spinoza's theory of imagination is then clear. Since Spinoza cannot offer a good theory of being, so

[3] See G.W. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* Volume 3, trans. Haldane and Simson (New Jersey: Humanities Press. 1983) pp. 257-258; Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* (3:282); and Hegel, *The Science of Logic.* Miller (London:Allen and Unwin, 1969), 84 and 94-95. The story of Hegel's participation on the edition of Spinoza's works can also be found in Friedrich Ueberweg, *A History of Philosophy: History of Modern Philosophy* (London: Hodder and Stought,1826-1871), 56 and in Gebhardt, *Spinoza Opera* (Heidelberg, 1925), II, 343, IV, 437-438. Hegel testifies his contribution to the Paulus edition in *Beitrag zur Spinoza-Edition von H.E.G. Paulus* GW 5:513-16) For secondary literature on the topic, see G.H. R. Parkinson, "Hegel, Pantheism, and Spinoza", *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 38, no.3 (Jul - Sep. 1977), 449-459 In this seminal paper, Parkinson discusses the one and many problem in Spinoza in the way that it is posed by Hegel, as the doctrine of the "Everything-God" not the "God who is all" (*die Allesgitterei, nicht Allgitterei*). Hegel's objections to Spinoza are important to be addressed because they are an influential framework in the traditions of interpretations on Spinoza.

his theory of imagination, because it is a theory of non-being, of error, of fictions, it is mistaken in its most basic foundations. Given the widespread acceptance of Hegel's criticism, Spinoza's theory of imagination has not been thoroughly studied until very recently.[4]

There is, however, another way of dealing with a complex and systematic philosophy like Spinoza's: first, investigating its parts, then evaluating whether the parts can stand together as a whole. Monism, being an essential piece in Spinoza's philosophy, is also a fundamental key to interpreting the parts. Instead of rejecting the whole due to an apparent problem in its foundation, one can start by the analysis of other parts so as to evaluate whether these pieces can solve the apparent problem in the foundations. Using this second approach, scholars have examined Spinoza's theory of the modes (or the theory of multiplicity), and found powerful political, psychological, ethical, physical, religious, and aesthetical conceptions.[5] It was through those investigations on the reality of the multiple that other interpretations have found the meaning and value of Spinoza's metaphysics. Sidestepping the intricacies of monism, interpreters have begun to investigate Spinoza's theories of the finite things as an approach towards addressing the complexities of his metaphysics.

The current research on imagination, however, is guided by the intuition that there is a double movement in Spinoza's metaphysics: that there is a causal regime that belongs to the substance, and a causal regime of finite and infinite modes. This research begins with the presupposition that, although there is a single substance and everything that there

[4] See Mignini. "Fictio/ Verziering (e) in Spinoza's Early Writings" in *The Young Spinoza. A Metaphysician in the Making*. (Ed. Melamed) OUP, 2015. pp.33-52

[5] These methods here are general ways of characterizing the ways to interpret Spinoza. The scholars do explicitly say that they are using these methods and some more than others might be a good fit to this description. The idea here is to explain the curious fact that the scholarship in English focuses mostly on his metaphysics while the Continental literature (non-English literature) focuses mostly on his political philosophy and critique of religion.

is are modes of this substance, Spinoza is distinguishing two kinds of causal regimes entailing two modes of being: the being of substance, and the being of modes. This presupposition means that whether or not there is an adequate explanation of the relationship between the being of the substance and that of the modes, Spinoza philosophizes about these two levels of being. Whether and to what extent these beings are really distinct are questions to which there are competing answers with each end up with further metaphysical problems.

For example, if they are not distinct and being is said only in one way, then there is only one being, the being of the substance, and Spinoza will have difficulty giving an account of plurality and the individuation of multiple individuals. This metaphysical difficulty with respect to monism entails another one: if there is only one big being of which we are parts, and if this being is perfect and necessary, then how is it possible that we make mistakes? If every act (including modes of thought) is a result of a given cause that is necessary and perfect, where do mistaken perceptions come from? If our perception is a mode of the substance, then it should follow that everything that we perceive is correct. So it seems that everything that we perceive and think exists is - at least in some sense - true.

It is interesting to see what happens when we consider the other alternative. If we grant that substance and modes are distinct and being is not univocal, and if there is more than one kind of real being, then one could claim that Spinoza is not really a monist but a pluralist. Now the problem of multiplicity has been solved, but if the being of every individual thing is different from the being of every other individual thing and of substance, then they share no common property or ground. If individuals do not have a

fundamentally common ground, then one individual cannot perceive the other as it is because of the lack of conditions. If there is no commonality in the being of modes and of substance, then there is nothing that prevents all our ideas - including the adequate and true ones - from being strictly imaginary because there is no guarantee that these ideas are about any external object. It seems that in this case, if none of our ideas are real ideas about external objects, then all our ideas are false.

Indeed, the question of the difference between the being of the substance and the being of modes always plays a role in discussing any aspect of Spinoza's philosophy - especially topics of his theory of finite modes such as human knowledge, human freedom, and human emotions. Although we can study the topics in the theory of finite modes independently of the metaphysical disputes concerning monism, neither one nor the other should be left aside in an investigation about the nature and origin of imagination. Hence, the best route to take in approaching Spinoza's philosophy is to use a third method of interpretation: evaluating whole and parts at once. Therefore, this investigation will analyze the theory of imagination from within monism starting from paradoxes, or apparent paradoxes, to which the simultaneous acceptance of the above theses give rise. The goal is not necessarily to solve the paradoxes, but to explain the exegetical challenge and proposing possible readings.

In this work, we will see that Spinoza's metaphysics, when analyzed together with the standard interpretation on imagination, leads to paradoxes that demand a new interpretation of the nature of imagination. This new understanding of the imagination has important implications for the rest of Spinoza's metaphysics. However, the current work focuses only on Spinoza's metaphysics of the imagination. Properly assessing the

nature of the imagination is necessary because this activity plays a key role in knowledge acquisition. The imagination is also important because it is an activity that, for Spinoza, immediately follows from the definition of a human being. Defined as finite and rational modes of the substance, human beings are understood as being, essentially, at least two things. By being finite, human beings are limited and perceive reality through the partiality of the experience of other finite - and limited- things. By being rational, human beings strive to see through the partiality of the experience of the finite and are able to conceptualize the infinite. These two facts together make human beings imaginative beings: finite things that perceive and have ideas about their relation with other finite things. Since we only imagine insofar as our body endures, imagination is an activity that is in duration, belonging to finite modes. Being human, however, in not reducible to being imaginative, and as rational finite beings, humans perceive and conceive how they are, and how they together are part of a kind of infinite. Imagination and reason interpose one another at some point, sharing objects of knowledge, and being used to answer the same philosophical questions. Because we are finite, imagination is always at play. Imagination is an activity that includes various experiences such as sensory perception, dreaming, and fantasizing. Because imagination is also sensory perception for Spinoza, it is constantly interfering (or collaborating) with reason. For this reason, any study on Spinoza's theory of finite modes, be it political or epistemological, has to take into account his theory of imagination. If imagination is not properly understood in its weaknesses and powers, it will be easy to confuse an image with a thought, a true idea and a false idea.

Imagination can be a challenge for all of Spinoza's philosophical theses: the method, monism, his theory of affects, his psychology, and his politics. What are the criteria through which thoughts of substance, of modes, or of objects of our experience and so forth can determined not to be fictions of the imagination? The difficulty of answering this question suggests that understanding the imagination is a prerequisite to work in other areas of Spinoza's philosophy. An analysis of the metaphysics of imagination helps to explain the criteria that establish the nature of non-beings, fictions, inadequate ideas, false ideas, chimeras, and all other kinds of imaginative things. That is, the analysis of the metaphysics of imagination allows for the distinction between imaginative and non-imaginative ideas generating the conditions for a proper treatment of the different kinds of ideas that can be found in Spinoza's metaphysics of the mind. My dissertation is an attempt to describe and develop this "zoology" and find out the different kinds of "animals" that Spinoza is conceiving when he is characterizing ideas as ideas of imagination.[6] My hope is that in providing a taxonomy we will be able to have a better grasp of what it means to be a finite being in Spinoza, and whether there can be a real science of finite beings, particulars, or the so called *natura naturata*. Finally, the aim here is not to understand imagination in order to have better means to control it or suppress it, but to understand imagination so as to improve it and help it perform its role in the attainment of knowledge. As claimed in E4p1s (II/211.21-22), we can eliminate error in

[6] The expression comes from Melamed's acknowledgement during his course on the *Cogitata Metaphysica* at the ENS-Lyon in the Summer of 2016.: "there is a whole zoology that can be made on the kinds of fictitious beings or beings of imagination in Spinoza". Melamed did not publish on the issue yet. As Richard Winfield points out, to label a taxonomy of ideas as a "zoology" is misleading and confusing because it indicates that those ideas have a conatus or a self-sustaining power in themselves. I agree with the criticism, but decided to leave the expression as it is because it captures the complexity of the problem and of my attempt of solution. Zoology here does not mean that ideas as like animals that have a life of their own. I do think that ideas of imagination once they are shared by many individuals, they gain some level of objectivity - but they are not like organic life in the sense that they can sustain themselves and have an autonomous life. Ideas of imagination are different from one another and can be distinguished into categories that resemble that of family, genus, and species. I am offering here the beginning of a taxonomy, not a zoology *strictu sensu*. The analogy is supposed to be illustrative of the complexity of the issue.

our thinking, but we cannot eliminate our imagination. In order to accomplish these goals and set the basis for a metaphysics of imagination in Spinoza, we have to revisit the standard interpretation of imagination and analyze the paradoxes that appear when contrasting the standard thesis with Spinoza's monism.

CHAPTER 1:

ON SPINOZA'S THEORY OF IMAGINATION

The standard interpretation of imagination

In a rationalistic metaphysics like Spinoza's, any mental action that is non-rational or distinguished from reason could be considered an obstacle to knowledge development and acquisition. This supposition is defended by some traditional commentaries on Spinoza that see him as a Cartesian philosopher influenced by Ancient Rationalism. In some of these traditional commentaries, Spinoza's theory of knowledge is understood as a version of Plato's early theory of ideas. According to Plato, observations coming from sense perception do not constitute knowledge because of the contingent, subjective, and particular character of its content. For Plato, assuming that sensory-perception is knowledge leads to insurmountable contradictions as expressed in the *Theaetetus.*[7] Consequently, only the intellect is able to access the true nature of things, a nature which is universal, objective and eternal. Hampshire (1951), for example, considers that Spinoza arrives at the same Platonic conclusion. He claims that the ideas of imagination or the confused experience coming from sense-perception is "Spinoza's peculiar version of the ancient doctrine of rationalist philosophers that knowledge wholly derived from sense-perception is not genuine knowledge, but is in some sense subjective and uncertain." Hampshire explicitly attributes a Platonic influence in Spinoza's theory of imagination:

[7] *c.f.* Plato's objections to Protagoras' thesis that knowledge is perception in 151-187a9.

> Following Plato and the rationalist tradition, he distinguishes in the *Ethics* three levels of knowledge (…) knowledge wholly derived from sense-perception is assigned to the lowest level (*cognitio primi generis*), and (in the Platonic tradition) is called 'opinion'.[8]

Hampshire adds that Spinoza is highly influenced by the Platonic tradition with the difference that the order of exposition of Spinoza is deductive, following from his definition of human nature, and his initial assumption is that "only logically necessary propositions represent genuine knowledge".[9] But there is, however, a more fundamental terminological distinction that Hampshire is missing which indicates that there is a considerable difference between the theories of knowledge of Plato and Spinoza. For Spinoza, ideas are not independent and completely separated from their images. In this sense, imagination should have a foundational role in the structuring of knowledge and in the very possibility of knowing: imagination, for Spinoza, is the first and it is a kind of *knowledge* [*cognitio primi generis*] (E2p40sch2). Henceforth, there is a status that Spinoza ascribes to perception and imagination in general that is significantly distinct from Plato's treatment of the relationship between perception and knowledge. But Spinoza's naming imagination as a kind of knowledge (*cognitio*) does not strike his interpreters as an indication that imagination plays a positive role in knowledge, because it is through *ratio* and *scientia intuitiva* - the second and the third kind of knowledge - that the mind can have adequate ideas of the property and the essences of things.

[8] p.73 Hampshire, S. (1951) *Spinoza An Introduction to his Philosophical Thought.* Penguin Books. New York, 1987. It is important to note that this claim that "only logically necessary propositions are genuine knowledge" does not bear the usual sense that Hampshire attributes to it, because for Spinoza logically necessary propositions are only genuine knowledge in so far as they are also metaphysically necessary propositions. Spinoza's notion of modality is not standard given that he rejects logical possibility as an indication of metaphysical possibility.
[9] *ibid.*

Hampshire and other scholars evidently suppose that if imagination generates false ideas, then calling imagination a type of "knowledge" is more honorific than descriptive. How can imagination be a type of knowledge and at the same time give rise to false ideas? In this sense, it is not clear how imagination could be a type of knowledge.[10]

The role of Spinoza's classification is, thus, underestimated by Hampshire, and by others as well. Indeed, traditional interpreters such as Joachim (1940) interpret imagination as an activity that should be neglected or one that should be discarded by the intellect[11] in favor of reason and intuition.[12] Such interpretations follow from the assumption that knowledge is divided in kinds that are hierarchically ordered according to its level of importance and that one kind is independent from one another. For example, Joachim (1940) claims that

> reason, the knowledge of the second kind, can only be considered a preparation to the highest stage, that of intuitive knowledge, in so far as it does away with the knowledge from experience which by nature is defective and confused, and in so doing paves the way to the highest knowledge.[13]

The claim that experience is defective is the presupposition that leads the interpreter to conclude that attaining higher stages of knowledge is only possible when the ideas of

[10] It seems that this classification of the kinds of knowledge is more important than most traditional interpreters consider it to be. The focus on the importance of naming imagination as *the first kind of knowledge* is one of the motives that lead to the current investigation where the goal is to find out in which sense imagination is knowledge. DeDeug and other recent commentators also stress the importance of the given taxonomy of knowledge.

[11] Sometimes Spinoza's epistemology is even neglected. See, for example, the influential book of Curley *Behind the Geometrical Method* that does not even mention the topic.

[12] Darbon (1946) in *Études Spinozistes* claims that to grasp Spinoza's epistemology it is not necessary to give too much attention to the first two modes of cognition that constitute the first kind of knowledge: "Cela a d'autant moins d'importance que Spinoza ne leur attribue aucune valeur de vérité, et ne les mentionne que pour les écarter. Toute notre attention doit se porter sur les deux derniers genres, que l'*Etique* appelle la Raison et la Science intuitive" p.88 Later, DeDeug (1966) will claim that Darbon's argument is being given in a context of introduction to Spinoza and does not have scholarly value. Moreover, DeDeug (1966) argues that the claim is somewhat dated and wrong because "even if it were true that Spinoza "ne leur attribue aucune valeur de vérité" one would have to bear in mind nonetheless that such a negative attitude on the part of a speculative philosopher does not necessarily imply that in his thinking the phenomenon in question dwindles into insignificance" pp. 6-7

[13] Joachim, H. (1940) *Spinoza's Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione A Commentary.* Oxford University Press, 1940.

imagination are eliminated.[14] The claim of the defectiveness of experience and consequently the elimination of imaginary ideas had also been sustained by Gore (1902). Gore offers an even more radical interpretation:

> Much as the early Christian monks treated the world, the flesh, the devil, so did Spinoza treat the imagination; only that he rejected it, not for the sake of other-world salvation, but for the sake of salvation in the eternal present of this world.[15]

But this is a very unfortunate analogy, given that Spinoza is recognized as a philosopher who rehabilitated the importance and perfection of the body denying the positive existence of evil. His radical view, however, illustrates the intensity and the long lasting influence of the interpretations that attribute a negative role to imagination.

Other scholars take a different approach to Spinoza's theory of imagination. DeDeug (1966), in his influential work on the first kind of knowledge, argues that to Spinoza imagination generally means knowledge coming from sense-experience and that the distortions coming from the senses can be remedied given that imagination and reason are closely allied. DeDeug does not ignore the negative role imagination has in knowledge, but considers that imagination and reason are not separated by an unbridgeable gap, and that the first kind is so important in Spinoza's system that it is of greater significance than the third. The hypothesis that imagination has an indispensable role in knowledge had been first offered very early in the 20th century by Charles Apphun (1926) in "Note sur la théorie de l'imagination dans Spinoza". Apphun poses the

[14] Joachim defends the view that finite modes are ideal and because of that all ideas of finite modes are false and illusory.
[15] Gore, W. *The Imagination in Spinoza and Hume; A comparative study in the light of some recent contributions to psychology*. Chicago, 1902. p.31

problem by recalling traditional interpretations of famous passages (such as E2p17sch) and points out that:

> Les auteurs qui ont traité de l'imagination selon Spinoza n'ont guère vu en elle q'une source d'erreurs, une servitude de l'esprit. (…) Notre désir, dans cette courte note, est d'appeler l'attention des lecteurs sur d'autres textes qui, sans contredire les précédents, montrent que Spinoza conçoit et connaît une autre forme d'imagination, non plus passive mais active, non plus asservie au corps mais capable au contraire de lui imposer sa maîtrise.[16]

Apphun's note shows a change of perspective that influenced every other interpreter and it became one of the most important pieces in scholarship with respect to the topic of imagination. His hypothesis appears at the end of the note where he claims that imagination can be turned into an active activity that is also free and rational: "nous croyons trouver dans ce passage l'ébauche d'une théorie de la création artistique libre et rationnelle, bien qu'elle soit l'ouvre de l'imagination."[17] Apphun supports this interpretation on the reading of E5p10-15 where, allegedly, Spinoza describes a different sort of imagination than the one in the former parts of the *Ethics*. In the last part of the *Ethics*, imagination is not an activity that generates the servitude of the mind, but one from which the mind builds its strength. These evidences in *Ethics* 5 pointed out by Apphun will also be part of our investigation.

DeDeug, however, considers that Apphun's note is an example of "how thoroughly Spinoza's conception of imagination can be misconstrued."[18] Although

---

[16] Apphun, C. "Note sur la théorie de l'imagination dans Spinoza" in *Chronicon Spinozanum IV* (1924-1926), pp.257-260

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] See DeDeug, *op. cit.* p. 260. DeDeug considers that Apphun is extending the implications of E2p17sch too far. But Apphun's claim that it is possible to derive a theory of artistic creation from Spinoza's imagination is not directly

DeDeug himself contributed to the development of a new interpretative tradition on imagination's role in knowledge, he rejects Apphun's hypothesis that imagination is active, rational, free and the basis of a theory of artistic creation.[19] Nonetheless they agree that the tradition of commentaries on Spinoza neglects imagination and that more holistic studies on the nature of imagination are needed. The work of Apphun and DeDeug is indisputably compelling with respect to the necessity of revisiting imagination and its role in knowledge. Gueroult (1974) cites them in his massive work *Spinoza II-L'Âme* as authors responsible for showing the importance of the first kind of knowledge. In the appendix of his book, Gueroult also argues against the claim that imagination is a faculty that can be understood as free in the way that Apphun suggested. Apphun's argument in favor of a free faculty of imagination is grounded in the analysis of neglected

---

derived from the scholium cited by DeDeug. It is very unlikely, however, that imagination is a rational activity and that it is free. Most probably, if it is free, it is in the only possible sense of freedom that can be found in Spinoza's system, that is, free in so far as one understands and recognizes the necessity of the laws of nature that determine our beings and actions. Mignini (1981) will take Apphun's hypothesis of the existence of an aesthetic theory in Spinoza further in his book *Ars Imaginandi Apparenza e rappresentazione in Spinoza (1981)* where he sketches a Spinozistic theory of art.

[19] This discussion about whether imagination is free or not has its origin in the enigmatic claim of the scholium of E2p17: "the mind does not err from the fact that it imagines, but only insofar as it is considered to lack the idea which excludes the existence of those things which it imagines to be present to itself. For if the mind, in imagining non-existing things to be present to it, knew at the same time that those things did not exist in fact, it would surely impute this power of imagining not to the defect but to the strength of its own nature, especially if this faculty of imagining were to depend solely on its own nature; that is (def.7, I), if this faculty of imagining were free." Some interpreters consider the conditionals in "if this faculty of imagining were to depend solely on its own nature" and "if this faculty of imagining were free" to mean that the faculty of imagination does not depend solely on its own nature and it is not free. But if we investigate E5, it seems that the conditional does not express a characteristic that is impossible for imagination. E5 is the part of the Ethics where Spinoza characterizes the extent of human freedom. The descriptions of the path to construct this virtue seem to fit perfectly in a recognition of the nature and power of imagination. For example, in E5p2, Spinoza claims that an emotion can be separated from the thought of its external cause and in E5p3 he claims that passive emotions can become active. These claims serve as premises to the conclusion that "there is no affection of the body of which we cannot form a clear and distinct conception" (E5p4). So it seems, given the developments in E5, that the passive state of imagination is transitory. It also seems that imagination has distinct degrees of freedom and they can be improved when the nature of the activities of the mind are adequately understood. But the completeness of this argument depends on further analysis on the topic. In any case, if there is any kind of freedom of imagination, it has to be compatible with the metaphysical principle that, for every effect there has to be a cause. Certainly, this freedom is not synonymous with free-will. Similarly, creation here can never mean creation *ex nihilo*, but a kind of generation that is caused by something already in existence. I thank Céline Hervet for requesting further clarification on this point.

propositions in the *Ethics* and also on Ep 17 from Spinoza to Pieter Balling (1664). Gueroult argues that during the period that this correspondence took place, Spinoza was still much influenced by Descartes and his ideas on the *Ethics* were not mature. Based on this historiographic contention, Gueroult claims that both the letter and Apphun's hypothesis should be held in check:

> On doit donc rester prudent en ce qui concerne les commentaires conjecturaux auxquels cette Lettre peut donner lieu, en particulier ceux de Ch. Apphun dans le *Chronicum Spinozanum*.[20]

For Gueroult, there is no sense in which imagination can be taken to be a free faculty[21] but he acknowledges with Apphun and DeDeug the importance of this kind of knowledge in Spinoza's system. These three authors were very influential in reshaping the discussion on imagination. Continuing these discussions, scholars felt the need to rethink the theme. It was in the 1990s and early 2000s that imagination became a prominent topic of study among Spinoza scholars. Vinciguerra (2001) introduces his book on the topic with a similar wonder:

> Si l'on considère la longue histoire des études consacrées à Spinoza, force est de constater que l'intérêt pour sa doctrine de l'imagination est relativement récent. Le problème de l'imagination a été, quoique souvent mentionné, longtemps négligé, pour demeurer, dans l'ombre de la plus noble connaissance *sub species aeternitatis*. (…) L'intérêt pout cet aspect du spinozisme n'a cessé de s'accroître depuis l'étude désormais classique de Cornelis De Deug (…). Les études qui ont

[20] Gueroult, M. *Spinoza II-L'Âme*. Aubier Philosophie, 1974. p.577

[21] The question of whether there is any space for freedom in Spinoza's metaphysics is important but should be addressed elsewhere.

> suivi sont résolument allées dans le sens d'une réevaluation du statut de l'imagination.[22]

It is this recent interest in reevaluating the status of imagination that this dissertation will pursue. According to Vinciguerra, although the *status quaestionis* had been advanced and contemporary scholars are in a better position to understand the dynamics of Spinoza's theory of imagination, we are still far from comprehending the underlying notions that are the basis of the theory.[23] On the same line as Vinciguerra, Steenbakkers (2004) also claims that interpretations neglecting the first kind by considering that Spinoza was only interested in the higher levels of cognition are hardly tenable. Steenbakkers claims that "the imagination is an essential feature of the way to human freedom and salvation as envisioned by Spinoza".[24] Steenbakkers, like Vinciguerra and others, understand Spinoza's theory of imagination to be one of the most important themes of his philosophy. Macherey (1997) has the same hypothesis and offers a principle of approach to the reading of Spinoza:

> La philosophie de Spinoza, s'il fallait lui attribuer un thème privilégié, serait d'abord une philosophie de l'imagination, cette dernière constituant l'activité principale, et on peut dire aussi l'activité humaine en tant que celle-ci est idée

[22] Vinciguerra, L. *Spinoza et le Signe La Genèse de L'imagination*. Vrin, 2001. p.7 Vinciguerra considers that DeDeug's work was motivated by the increasing importance of the epistemological problems of Spinozsim, a fact resulting from the influence of the philosophy of language.

[23] Recent scholarship includes various important works: Gilead (1994) and his claim for the indispensability of the first kind of knowledge; Bostrengui (1996) who offers an overview on the doctrine of imagination on the *Ethics*. In her book on the form and virtue of imagination, she discusses the problem of imagination as a science and the *libertas imaginandi*. Steenbakkers (2004) who claims that "imagination is an essential feature of the way to human freedom and salvation as envisioned by Spinoza". And others that will be later presented and discussed.

[24] Steenbakkers, P. "Spinoza on the Imagination" in *Imagination in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern Times*. (ed. Nauta & Patzold), Groningen Studies in Cultural Change. Peeters, Leuven, 2004. p.176

> d'un corps. Il faut aller plus loin encore…on ne doit pas philosopher contre l'imagination, mais avec elle.[25]

This dissertation will try to go "plus loin encore", thinking about the role of imagination plays as the first kind of knowledge. In this work, I will analyze Spinoza's theory of imagination in the early works and in the *Ethics* in light of these recent discussions about the nature of the activity with the goal of evaluating the extent to which imagination contributes to knowledge.

My hypothesis is that imagination, once understood in its positive metaphysical nature, is an indispensable part of the process of knowledge contributing positively and being necessary to it. In order to evaluate the hypothesis that imagination is indispensable and a positive constituent of knowledge, it is first necessary to understand the nature of imagination. For this reason, this dissertation will cover the metaphysical problems associated with each activity that is considered to be an imaginary act, and will provide a way to understand imagination that is consistent with Spinoza's monism. This dissertation is an attempt to contribute to the recent discussions on the positive aspects of this cognitive activity by providing the metaphysical basis that justifies the epistemological contributions of imagination. My proposal for this dissertation is to analyze Spinoza's theory of imagination and offer an interpretative model that will allow us to map the arguments on the metaphysical nature of imagination. I work with the assumption that because imagination is a very general and complex category, it is better understood if divided into its component parts and that each of these parts should be analyzed according to its own proper problems.

[25] Macherey, P. *Introduction à L'Éthique de Spinoza: la deuxième partie: la réalité mentale*. PUF. Paris, 1997. p.184

The problem and the goal of the dissertation

The goal of the dissertation is to reconstruct Spinoza's theory of imagination in order to show that there is a positive metaphysics of imagination, and also to show in which sense imagination is a kind of knowledge that has an indispensable role in the construction and development of true and adequate ideas.[26] The reconstruction of arguments that makes explicit the relationship between imagination and knowledge is important because this relationship is not evident. In fact, one can argue that although Spinoza attributes to imagination the status of a kind of knowledge he rejects the claim that imagination has a positive and indispensable role in knowledge. Since the rejection is only true in some cases, extending it to the whole of imagination is the result of a misunderstanding of its nature and role.

The confused understanding comes from the fact that in E2p41 Spinoza claims that imagination or the knowledge of the first kind is the only cause of falsity and that all ideas which are inadequate and confused belong to the first kind. Moreover, given that Spinoza claims that it is not the nature of the activity of imagination to distinguish what is true from what is false (E2p42), then, in so far as the human mind imagines, to that extent it does not have adequate knowledge (E2p26 cor). However, from these claims it does not follow that imagination plays no role in knowledge or that imagination only causes false or inadequate ideas. In fact, imagination plays an essential causal role in the formation of true ideas by providing the knowledge about the actual existence of the particular object and some of its properties. The role of imagination in knowledge has been mistakenly

[26] That there is a positive metaphysics of imagination in Spinoza's works is something that was demonstrated in chapter 1 but it will be further developed in part 2 in the analysis of the *Ethics*.

understood because Spinoza uses the concept ambiguously. For this reason, it is important to reconstruct his theory of imagination, distinguishing its component parts, and treating each of them separately. These parts help make clear how imagination arises and why it is, properly understood, always true. Without this distinction of parts we could not overcome the interpretation that imagination is in opposition to higher forms of knowledge, and that it is a kind of knowledge that should be transcended or be substituted by reason or *scientia intuitiva*.

The first step for showing in what sense imagination is knowledge consists in setting out the different ways in which imagination is characterized. What Spinoza understands by imagination is a complex activity that involves the generation of images, ideas of images, composition of ideas, memory, dreaming, hallucinating, prophecy, misunderstandings and illusions. Instead of treating each of these activities separately, Spinoza calls all these different phenomena "*imaginatio*". Spinoza does not define these kinds, parts and functions of imagination. However, the foundational steps of his theory of imagination can be gathered from different writings and reconstructed. If we look further and analyze the correspondence, for example, on the Ep 17 to Pieter Balling that we mentioned before, we can see that Spinoza sketches a distinction between two kinds of imagination:

> The effects of the imagination arise from the constitution either of body or of the mind. To avoid prolixity, for the present I shall prove this simply from what we experience. We find by experience that fevers and other corporeal changes are the cause of delirium, and that those whose blood is thick imagine nothing but quarrels, troubles, murders, and things of that sort. We also see that the

> imagination can be determined simply by the constitution of the soul, since, as we find, it follows in the wake of the intellect in all things, linking together and interconnecting its images and words just as the intellect does its demonstrations, so that there is almost nothing we can understand without the imagination instantly forming an image.

If we analyze this excerpt having in mind the metaphysical foundations of the *Ethics* where thought and extension are two different attributes that are causally independent from one another, then we can see how this excerpt indicates that Spinoza considers that imagination can be understood through these different attributes. Just as any individual or modification in nature, imagination can be understood through thought and extension. It is important to have in mind that the different attributes are not different substances, but ways of regarding the same and unique substance. Consequently, imagination is not two completely different activities that occur in the body and the mind separately. On the contrary, it is a single activity complex that pertains to human individual constitution, and can be understood either by means of its bodily expression or through its mental counterpart. Then, the excerpt above does not tell us that there are two different activities of imagination, but that there is only one imagination that expresses itself in the body and in the mind. That is, the excerpt tells us that there is an understanding about imagination that is related with the constitution of the body and an understanding about imagination that is related with the constitution of the mind. My proposal here is to read the theory of imagination of the *Ethics* with this distinction as a main exegetical key.

Differentiating between an imagination of the mind and an imagination of the body gives us a general distinction, but one that will help in accounting for the different

components of imagination such as vestiges, images, chimaeras, ideas of reason, ideas of images, opinions, emotions and general notions. One might argue that this strategy does not do justice to Spinoza's idea that imagination is not a faculty, but an activity that is fully actualized in its expression. Spinoza argues that imagination is not a faculty by the same argument that reason is not a faculty. The concept of faculty allows for the distinction between will and intellect, and Spinoza does not want to give room for such distinction. For Spinoza, will and intellect is one and the same thing. This entails that the objects of imagination that are being distinguished here are not objects that the mind can chose to believe or to assert. On the contrary, when the mind imagines one or two of these objects, the mind at the same time is constructing those objects and asserting their existence. This can be shown by the first definition of imagination which appears in E2p17sch:

> we will assign the word "images" [*imagines*] to those affections of the human body the ideas of which set forth the external bodies as if they were present to us, although they do not represent shapes. And when the mind regards bodies in this way, we shall say that it "imagines" [*imaginari*][27]

There are four important parts in this sentence that we should carefully analyze: (1) "affections of the human body" [*corporis humani affectiones*], (2) "the ideas of which set forth the external bodies as if they were present to us" [*ideae corpora externa velut nobis praesentia repraesentant*], (3) "although they do not represent shapes" [*tametsi rerum figuras non referunt*], and (4) "when the mind regards bodies in this way" [*cum mens hac ratione contemplatur corpora*]. According to this definition, imagination is a kind of

[27] In the original, "*ut verba usitata retineamus, corporis humani affectiones, quarum ideae corpora externa velut nobis praesentia repraesentant, rerum imagines vocabimus, tametsi rerum figuras non referunt. Et cum mens hac ratione contemplatur corpora, eandem imaginari dicemus.*"

"regard of the mind" [*cum mens hac ratione contemplatur*], that is, it is a form of consideration or of observance. In fact, it is a very special kind of consideration: it is a way to consider the ideas of external bodies as if [*velut*] they were present to us. This act of considering as present constitutes the assertive aspect of the act of imagination: the regard. The other aspect that is present in the action of imagining is the emergence of the objects that imagination constructs.

Since it is the individual that constructs the imaginations at the same time that he is regarding these imaginations, then object and the regard are parts of the same action of making ideas of imagination present to the mind. From the perspective of the individual who is imagining, imagination is a single action of construction and assertion because the object emerges simultaneously with the relation of regard. However, it is possible and desirable to treat the objects of imagination separately from the regard (or the assertion). This dissertation is an attempt to map the different objects of imagination and their origin; evaluating the various effects of the assertion of the existence of those objects.

The emergence of ideas of imagination occurs together with affections of the human body. Those ideas, however, do not refer to the shape of things (or do not represent shapes). That is, ideas of images are not representations because an idea in the mind is not a secondary appearance of the external object or a representation of exactly the same object that had been presented in experience. Ideas are objects in their own kind and have properties that are different from the objects of experience. Ideas of images do not reproduce the figure of things because the idea is independent of the object that it is the idea of, and as an object in the mind, it cannot fail to be what it is. Since an idea of an image is not supposed to mirror an external object, it cannot fail to present the

characteristics of what it was supposed to represent. The idea of an image is an idea, and in so far as it is an idea, it is a mental object that is complete in its kind. This makes ideas of imagination objects that exist regardless of being representations of something external.

In addition to constructing its own objects, imagination is a kind of regard. The regard is not simply a look or an observation that occurs from the outside of the act. Imagination is an activity that constructs ideas of external objects while "calling to mind" these objects, that is, it constructs the object while affirming it or asserting it as something that is the case. It is "calling to the mind", this "way that we perceive things" or "ways of regarding things" that is called knowledge of the first kind, opinion or imagination; we can see it in the second important excerpt E2p40sch:

> From all that has already been said it is quite clear that we perceive many things and form universal notions [*notiones universales formare*]:
>
> 1. From individual objects [*ex singularibus*] presented to us through the senses in fragmentary and confused manner without any intellectual order [*mutilate, confuse et sine ordine ad intellectum*] (See Cor.Pro. 29, II); and therefore I call such perceptions "knowledge from casual experience" [*experientia vaga*].
>
> 2. From symbols [*ex signis*] For example, from having heard or read certain words we call things to mind and we form certain ideas of them similar to those through which we imagine things.
>
> Both these ways of regarding things [*contemplandi modum*] I shall in future refer to as "knowledge of the first kind", "opinion" or "imagination" [*cognitionem primi generim, opinionem, vel imaginationem*].

Imagination then is a way of regarding things [*contemplandi modum*] and of forming certain ideas or universal notions [*notiones universales formare*].[28] Described in these ways, Spinoza provides a general mechanism for imagination: imagination constructs imaginative objects at the same time that it asserts their existence.

These initial characterizations on the general properties of imagination constitute the exegetical hypothesis and the method according to which imagination will be studied: through the dissertation, the parts of the imaginative act will be separately considered so that they can be studied in their own specificities. Hence, the dissertation will be structured by using two keys: the distinction between the imagination of the body and the imagination of the mind, and the distinction between the different objects that imagination constructs and considers as present. With these distinctions in mind, I will map Spinoza's characterization of imagination in the *Ethics*. The first half of the dissertation will concern imagination as an activity of the body, and the second half will concern imagination insofar as it is an activity of the mind. With this distinction, we will be able to define what kind of activity imagination is and map the positive role it has in knowledge.

My interpretation is distinguished from prior scholarship in two ways. First, scholars acknowledge that imagination includes a wide-range of operations such as sensation, memory, language, hallucinations, mistakes, etc., but there is no analysis yet of how Ep 17 and the theory of attributes brings consequences to the understanding of the nature of these imaginative objects. Secondly, contemporary scholars that are trying to show how imagination is positively related with higher kinds of knowledge ignore all

[28] Universal notions are a special kind of ideas of images. General notions are imaginary entities formed by amalgamation of large quantities of ideas of images in a idea that displays characteristic generalized from the ideas of images of the experienced particulars.

other kinds of objects of imagination focusing their analysis only on sense-perception (or the bodily aspect of imagination). I will try to show that the standard interpretation of imagination is not enough to account for the intricacies of Spinoza's theory. I will argue that imagination is a complex activity that creates various objects, some of them belonging to the body and some of them belonging to the mind. In so far as objects of imagination are modifications of the attribute of thought, they are real and objective (that is, they are not mere subjective projections or empty names). Specifically, I will claim that imagination constructs entities that are necessary for the apprehension of the essences of particulars. There are two main claims that I will make in the second part of the dissertation where I will analyze the mental imagination. First, I will claim that it is only through imagination that the mind can reconstruct the objects of experience as objects of thought. Secondly, I will claim that ideas of images carry a special kind of information that is actually the source of rational thinking. This special information is the formal essence of objects, a set of properties that are responsible for the existence of objects as such and without which a rational understanding of the object is impossible. But before reconstructing Spinoza's arguments, it is important to analyze the conditions of interpretation of Spinoza's works and evaluate which theory of imagination we are talking about since he wrote on the topic in almost every work.

PART 1

IMAGINATION IN SPINOZA'S WORKS

The conditions of interpretation: reading the complete works of Spinoza

There is no single text of Spinoza devoted only to the metaphysics of imagination. One of the first difficulties in organizing this research is deciding where to focus and what strategy to use to gather together Spinoza's writings on the topic. Although imagination appears in almost every work, each book has its particular condition of readability and context of interpretation. For example, some works are finished (*Ethics, Theological Political Treatise, Principles of Cartesian Philosophy,* for example), whereas others are unfinished (such as the *Political Treatise, Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*). Two works were published while he was alive (TTP and PPC), and all others - including the *Ethics* - were only published in the *Opera Posthuma.*[29] Some of the letters

[29] When Spinoza died in 1677, his friends organized the *Opera Posthuma* in Latin and the *Nagelate Schriften* in Dutch containing only the unpublished works. According to Moreau (2009), Spinoza's friends did not have the intention to organize the works in chronological order, but in order of importance and according to whether the work was finished. On these volumes, the TIE was not numbered in paragraphs, wheres the TP and CM were. Spinoza's reception on the following century was through this initial edition, their translations (to Dutch, English, French and German), the article of Pierre Bayle (in the *Dictionnaire historique et critique*), the clandestine manuscripts discussing, using or defending Spinoza. In the 19th century, in an effort to reorganize the complete works, some editions that included the *opera posthuma* and the published works appeared. Among those, it is important to name three: Paulus 1802-1803, Bruder 1843-1846, and Van Vloten & Land 1882-1883. The Paulus edition was organized with the help of Hegel and is important for this particular reason. The Bruder edition adds enumeration of paragraphs to the TIE and the TTP (Apphun also changed the paragraphical numeration of the TIE and turned it into 72 paragraphs instead of 110). The further editions of the TTP did not conserve the paragraphical numerations. Van Vloten's edition, the only one to appear in the Netherlands, is the most controversial and in some circles is not considered as a basis for a rigorous study of Spinoza (Akkerman 2005 and Moreau 2009). (See Salem, Tosel & Moreau (éd.) Spinoza au XIXe Siècle. Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris, 2008.) After those, the Gebhardt edition is only complete one in the 20th century. Published in Heidelberg in 1920, the edition provided a system of citations for the complete works. The pagination is a standard that is used until today. As Akkerman (2005) shows, the text of the complete works as edited by Gebhardt can be criticized because it mixes philological with interpretative decisions. Although there is a very extensive marginalia

have been lost, and one work, the *Short Treatise* - considered to be the first and non-geometrical version of Spinoza's *Ethics* - was only found in the 19th century. There is agreement that Spinoza wrote the manuscript, but there are still controversies about its date of composition. The perilous conditions under which Spinoza was writing made it difficult to gather his works for publication. The collection of Spinoza's works survived various attempts of destruction, and it was being read by the author's contemporaries under a ban.[30] These material difficulties contribute to the exegetical problems that arise when reconstructing Spinoza's arguments.

The problem of the unity of Spinoza's complete works and its condition of interpretation can be seen as merely a historiographical issue that only stirs the curiosity of those interested in historical context and the history of ideas. But that does not seem to be the case. The decision about what texts to include and not to include in an interpretation of Spinoza's theory of imagination is methodologically important and has philosophical implications. There is a shift, for example, from the early writings to the *Ethics,* with respect to the passive or active nature of the intellect (Renz 2015). In chapters XV and XVI of the *Short Treatise* (KV), Spinoza argues that the intellect is wholly passive, that reason is the ability to passively perceive ideas of objects that exist outside of the human mind, and that fiction occurs when the mind is actively creating entities that do not have an actual existence outside of the human mind. In the CM (*Cogitata Metaphysica*), these distinctions are not clear. Although Spinoza is operating with the concept of fictional entities (*ente ficto*), ideas of imagination are considered to be

---

in this edition, Akkerman (2005) argues that Gebhardt is not worried with authenticity of passages and he tends to correct Spinoza's Latin, changing the text deliberately. Moreau (2009) argues that the interest in Gebhardt edition should be limited to figuring out the context of interpretation of the 19th reception of Spinoza (such as those from Meinsma, Freudenthal, Leopold, Gerhardt and Dunin-Borkowski).

[30] See Colerus (1705), Nadler (1999), and Israel (2001).

entities of reason *(ente rationis*). In the *Ethics,* however, it seems that the mind, and more specifically, the intellect, is always active; but it is not clear how much activity Spinoza saves for imagination. Some argue that imagination in the *Ethics* is always passive. But if the mind, as a mode of the intellect, is active, then imagination, as an activity of the mind, should be in some sense active as well. Depending on the work, Spinoza seems to offer different definitions of mind, intellect, and imagination, creating exegetical and philosophical difficulties. So, if the goal is to understand what imagination is for Spinoza, it is important to take into account the works that have been neglected so far and compare the *Ethics,* the KV and the CM. However, when the works are compared, it is important to consider their different contexts in order to decide how much weight to put on conflicting claims.[31]

There are two standard strategies for solving tensions of this kind: one is to ignore all works but the *Ethics*, and the other is to consider the whole of Spinoza's philosophy (including the correspondence) and make distinctions between the Spinoza of the early works and the Spinoza of the *Ethics.*[32] The strategy of this dissertation falls into the second kind, with the caveat that these distinctions are not obvious and can be disputed.

[31]There are other changes in Spinoza's views from the early works to the *Ethics*. With respect to substance monism, in the *Cogitata Metaphysica* (G I/219) substance is being characterized as a being that does not have necessary existence. In the *Ethics*, substance is the only being with necessary existence (E1d3, E1d6, E1d7). This kind of change in perspective indicates that at some point in time Spinoza was not a necessitarian, making us question standard interpretations that do not take into consideration, for example, the role, and nature of contingency in Spinoza's metaphysics.

[32] The standard procedure of interpretation of Spinoza's work is to focus in the *Ethics* and leave aside the other works and the correspondence. The *Ethics* is understood as the work which contains the "true philosophy" of Spinoza, because the conceptual instruments and framework is more well-defined and the critique of Cartesianism more clear. However, the *Ethics* was written in during a long period of time while he was writing other works. Although the *Ethics* was never published when Spinoza was alive, there is evidence in the correspondence that copies of parts of the *Ethics* were circulating among his friends. The decision to publish the *Ethics* as part of an *Opera Posthuma* was taken by Spinoza who expressed his plans to his friends. Since the complete works were published as an *Opera Posthuma*, it is only through the analysis of the letters that we can infer the dates of production of his writings. The fact that the dates are not clear and there is debate on how to organize the writings in chronological order lead to the question of the meaningfulness of the early works as a key to interpret the theses in the *Ethics*. Since it is through the correspondence that we can find the reflections and remarks of Spinoza on his writing stages as well as comments and criticisms from Spinoza's readers, the correspondence has a fundamental role in the strategy adopted here for reading the complete works.

The differences between the early and later works are also not consistently the same across topics. For example, one can argue that the concepts of substance, attributes, and modes gain some kind of stable and original meaning only in the *Ethics*, and that in the early works, since Spinoza is operating within a Cartesian-Scholastic framework, the metaphysical theses associated with this cluster of concepts do not represent Spinoza's thought. On the other hand, with respect to imagination, it seems that the Spinoza of the early works is consistent with the Spinoza of the *Ethics* and his theses complement each other. This conclusion is open to debate as it is open to debate how to read the complete works and what sense to make of the relations between the theses in those different texts. But the fundamental methodological decision here is that any interpretation of Spinoza has to consider his philosophy as a whole and not only the *Ethics* or parts of the *Ethics*.

In this sense, methodological decisions are also philosophical decisions. Pierre-François Moreau (2009) claims that the first one to have reflected on the way to organize Spinoza's texts was Spinoza himself. Moreau (2009) interprets Spinoza's system of referencing his own works as an indication that he thought about his works as a unified whole.[33] For example, in letters such as those to Oldenburg, Meyer, Blyebergh, Bouwmeester and de Velthuysen, Spinoza announces composition of manuscripts, the wish to translate part of the *Ethics* (Ep 28), and his plans for publications (Ep 6).[34] Not only in the correspondence that Spinoza talks about the production stage of his works, we can find in the TIE, the *Ethics* and in the TP references to other texts. For example, in the E2p40sch1 there is an implicit reference to the TIE, and in the E1p19sch there is an

[33] "Ainsi d'une oeuvre à l'autre se tissent des liens qui marquent l'unité de l'ensemble de la pensée spinozienne, par-delà les différénces de genre, d'achèvement et même de degré d'implication. On notera en particulier que Spinoza n'hésite pas à renvoyer à un écrit qui semblait destiné uniquement à exposer la philosophie d'un autre (le cartésianism) et ausi à un écrit publié anonymement." p.8

[34] In Ep6, for example, Spinoza says he wrote a "*integrum opusculum*" that might be KV or the TIE, in Ep 13 and 15, he tells his friends he composed the PPC; on the Ep 30 he announces he is writing the TTP, among others.

explicit reference to the PPC. In the TIE, Spinoza talks about "writing his philosophy"; which, perhaps, is a reference to the *Ethics*. In the TP, he refers to the *Ethics* and the TTP in chapter 2, and to the TTP again in chapter 7. According to Moreau, the cross-referencing system is evidence of Spinoza's awareness of the problems concerning the influence of historical contingency on the composition of books, the conditions of publication and the philosophical implications of methods, styles adopted, and how all these elements influence the readings and interpretations of the text.

Considering the biblical criticism present in the TTP, a work that is about the conditions of production of a book, the levels of meaning that are present given the historical context, language, and the background of the author, there is a sense in which Spinoza is offering in the TTP a strategy of interpretation for any kind of text. According to the TTP, the material difficulties of interpretation or the hermeneutical obstacles are part of the nature of written works in general, and are always present for interpreters. Philosophy as a category of text is not immune to this criticism even though philosophers claim the universality of their arguments. In this sense, classical philosophical works should be tackled with awareness and some kind of interpretative strategy that addresses those dimensions.[35] Moreau is correct in pointing out that Spinoza was aware of those difficulties, but it is also important to take into account that there is still work to be done with respect to the analysis of the consistency and the strength of Spinoza's arguments when considering them across writings. Hence, with the attempt show the connections

[35] "Pour Spinoza, l' 'élaboration d'un écrit comprend plusieurs niveaux, qui sont non seulement les étapes de sa rédaction, mais aussi les matériaux antérieurs qu'il véhicule (cf. la distinction, non thématisée mais effective, entre auteur d'une tradition et rédacteur d'un livre dans le TTP); les lectures erronées viennent de ce que l'on ignore les circonstances de sa rédaction, sa langue, la culture de l'auteur; autrement dit, les erreurs de lecture viennent non pas toujours d'un contresens direct, mais: a) d'une ignorance de ces circonstances; b) des interprétations que l'on projette sur le texte (vouloir à toute force retrouver Platon et Aristote dans la Bible, par example), c'est-à-dire des normes préétablies en fonction desquelles on essaie de le déchiffrer. (...) On pourrait dire que la réflexion de Spinoza sur l'écriture et la lecture construit quelque chose comme une notion d'obstacle herméneutique, qui engage à débarrasser le texte de ce qu'y ont accumulé les horizons d'attente des lectures et éditeurs précédents." p.9 in Moreau (2009)

between the texts and the internal logic of Spinoza's theory of imagination,[36] the first part of the current research will investigate the relevant passages in the early works.[37]

[36] According to Mignini (2009), Gebhardt's 1905 dissertation on the TIE is the first historico-critical monograph devoted to the analysis of the composition of the work and to its chronological and philosophical positions on the whole of Spinoza's works. Whenever there is the need to refer to specific passages in the text, the present work will refer to the numeration of Carl Gebhardt's edition from 1920.

[37] One decision that was made is to leave the exegetical intricacies of the political works for another moment. Since politics is the actualization of imagination, the topic is fundamentally important and those books play a special role for our understanding of the praxis of imagination. But, at this point, where the goal is to account for the metaphysics of imagination, it is important to bracket, at least for now, the political dimension. Also, although the dissertation is about imagination, it won't cover more specific epistemic problems related with the problem of the criteria of truth. The problem of imagination in Spinoza has been widely studied in its political and epistemological aspects. The political aspects of imagination are recognized as central in Spinoza since *imaginatio* is moved and moves political forces being at the center of the critique of religion. There is also a lot of research on *imaginatio* as an activity that leads to mistakes, but not enough on the nature of imagination as an activity and the nature of its objects. The metaphysical problem of imagination is different from the problems concerning its political nature and epistemological role. The question that will be asked here and that will guide this work is what is the being of imaginative objects and what kind (*ens*) of activity imagination is that allows it to build some kind of *entia*.

CHAPTER 2

FROM THE THEORY OF NON-BEING TO THE THEORY OF IMAGINATION: AN INTRODUCTORY ANALYSIS OF THE EARLY WORKS

This chapter will condense Spinoza's theory of imagination scattered through the early works.[38] The main arguments on the nature and role of imagination that had been given outside of the *Ethics* will be compiled and reconstructed so the differences can be perceived and their consistency can be addressed. The order of analysis of the early works will not be chronological, but systematic. The analysis will focus only on the metaphysical works: the *Cogitata Metaphysica* (CM), the *Short Treatise* (KV), and on some of the letters. The distinctions between the kinds of non-being in the early works

[38]The early works considered here are the TIE, the KV, and the CM, the appendix of the PPC. Until the 19th century, the TIE was taken to be the methodological introduction to the *Ethics,* but then, in the 19th century, the KV was discovered. When, in 1862, the Van Vloten edition of the *Opera Posthuma* was published, including the first Latin translation of the KV, a new problem in the historiography of Spinozism appeared: how to date the KV in relation to the TIE and the *Ethics*? The problematic chronological relation between KV, TIE and the first draft of the *Ethics* leads to philosophical difficulties regarding the claims concerning Spinoza's theses. In this 1979 article on the chronology of Spinoza's works, Mignini compellingly shows that the TIE was written earlier than the KV, contrary to what 19th century philologists argued. According to the scholarly conclusions of the philologists of the 19th century, however, if the *Ethics* is taken as a criterion of reference, the TIE should be considered as posterior to the KV. This judgement is based on the comparison between KV and the TIE. Since the TIE is closer to the *Ethics*, more mature and complete than the KV, (this hypothesis is sustained by the 19th century German scholars Sigwart and Trendelenburg in 1866), then the TIE should be taken to be the methodological introduction to the *Ethics*. This interpretation was very influential and marked the Van Vloten edition of 1882, an edition in which the TIE is placed right before the *Ethics*. According to Freudenthal (1896), the problems with the incompleteness of the KV can be explained by the fact that Spinoza did not want it to be published. The KV was destined to a restricted circle of friends and not for a larger public, so some scholars argue that it should not to be taken as a good evidence in the analysis of Spinoza's philosophical progress. Gebhardt also considers that the TIE is chronologically prior to the *Ethics* and that the KV should be prior to the TIE. According to Mignini, this chronological interpretation corroborates the tradition of interpretation that was established prior to the discovery of the KV in the 19th century. With the discovery of the KV, a new chronology is hypothesized where the TIE is understood to have been written before the KV. Following this chronology, the TIE is then the first work of Spinoza. (see Mignini 1979, 1983, 2009, and 2015). Most scholars now agree with Mignini and others such as S. Auffret (see Auffret-Ferzli, "L'hypothèse" in Studia Spinozana) further developed Mignini's hypothesis. Auffret tries to demonstrate that the nucleus of the TIE was composed prior to the KV, but since Spinoza never stopped adding theses in the early works, some parts of the TIE were written after the KV. Auffret argues that one example of a doctrine that was added later is the doctrine of imagination, which appears for the first time in paragraph 74 of the TIE (Mignini 2015).

provide the grounds for the metaphysics of imagination that Spinoza will continue to develop in the *Ethics.* With this mapping of the arguments, we will have more elements to address, in the second part of this work, the metaphysical problems that imagination gives rise to in the *Ethics*.

The goal of this chapter is to show that from the early works there is an attempt to categorize ideas into their different kinds so as to distinguish their function in knowledge and their nature. We will see that in the early works there is not a clear characterization of imagination as a kind of mental activity as can be found in the *Ethics,* but, instead, Spinoza is dealing with imaginative objects to show their metaphysical characteristics, that is, to investigate and describe what they are and the function they have. In these works, imaginations appears as a particular kind of event inside his general theory of non-being. Only later will all those objects be considered to be part of an act of imagination; in the early works, this is not very clear. Spinoza deals with the different kinds of imaginative ideas or of non-beings in those early works, this distinction will be useful in the TIE because the difference between true and false ideas is the first step of his philosophical method. Finally, considering that Spinoza had a specific audience in mind when formulating his concept of imagination (Dutch Cartesianism, and Spanish and Dutch Scholastic Aristotelianism), this chapter will also have a second part where I will show which points of Aristotelian and Cartesian doctrine are being considered by Spinoza. By reconstructing Aristotelian and Cartesian theory of faculties, the problems that Spinoza is trying to solve with his theory of imagination (of the early works and of the later works) will become more clear.

Imagination in the Cogitata Metaphysica*: a positive metaphysics?*

Imaginations are not real things. However, we say that we *have* imaginations; w*e do things with* our imaginations, which indicates that we consider our imaginative ideas to have some level of power over us and over others. Imaginations are not real things, but they are not mere nothings either. What, then, is the nature of those things that are at the same time real and not real? Spinoza deals with this question in the first part of the *Cogitata Metaphysica,*[39] which starts with the definition of being (*ente*). Being is "whatever, when it is clearly and distinctly perceived, we find to exist necessarily, or at least to be able to exist" [G I /233/20].[40] After this definition, there is a list of things that are "non-beings" (*non entia*): chimaeras (*chimaera*), fictitious beings (*ens fictum*), and beings of reason (*ens rationis*). Non-beings can be of thwo kind, either they are inconsistent or possible ideas. Inconsistent ideas seem to be a contradiction in terms: if the content of the idea is an inconsistent event, then how can we form this very idea if it

[39] It is argued that the *Treatise of the Emendation of the Intellect* is earlier than the *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy* and its appendix, the *Cogitata Metaphysica.* However, I will start presenting the theses of the CM because it contains Spinoza's richest metaphysical discussions on fiction.

[40] It is interesting to note the introductory words of Spinoza in the CM. On the introductory note to the Part 1, Spinoza characterizes his explanations as belonging to "general metaphysics". This is a reference to the medieval distinction between general and special metaphysics. Spinoza is concerned with being as such (general metaphysics) not its particular categories (special metaphysics). At the same time, Spinoza is not really concerned with defining metaphysics or describing his investigations as metaphysical. Instead he uses the term loosely when saying that he will "explain the more obscure things which are commonly treated by writers on metaphysics" [G I /233/17]. According to Van Inwagen's article at the Stanford Encyclopedia: "many topics and problems that Aristotle and the Medievals would have classified as belonging to physics (the relation of mind and body, for example, or the freedom of the will, or personal identity across time) began to be reassigned to metaphysics. One might almost say that in the seventeenth century metaphysics began to be a catch-all category, a repository of philosophical problems that could not be otherwise classified as epistemology, logic, ethics or other branches of philosophy. (It was at about that time that the word 'ontology' was invented—to be a name for the science of being as such, an office that the word 'metaphysics' could no longer fill." See van Inwagen, Peter and Sullivan, Meghan, "Metaphysics", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/metaphysics/>.

is impossible to ever witness such event? The fact that chimaeras exist as ideas indicates that the conditions for being in thought are distinct from the conditions for existence of beings in extension. It also indicates that the order and connection of ideas in thought is the same as the order and connection of ideas in extension. Consequently, the very existence of chimaeras as objects in thought or as ideas justifies the claim that the conditions of existence in thought are distinct from the conditions of existence in extension. The standard condition of possibility for the existence of beings as such is the condition for being actual in extension, but that does not mean that the conditions for actualization in thought are the same as the one in extension. Again, the very existence of chimaeras is one of those cases where what is actual in thought in not reducible to what is actual in extension. The second kind of non-being are the possible beings. Possible beings are ideas that could be true or false if they were instantiated or were the case in extension. Among them we find the *ens fictum* and the *ens rationis*. Ens rationis are useful operators that are functional for reasoning. They do not exist as such in extension, but they exist as operations of cognition. Possible being is a being whose existence is not justified by any kind of metaphysical necessity. This is the basic categorization provided in the theory of non-beings of the first chapter of the *CM*.

A theory of non-beings, however, is inherently problematic. If non-beings are not beings, then they do not exist, and if they do not exist, they cannot be conceived or described. The concept of non-being is in itself problematic because as soon as it is conceived by the mind, it starts to exist as an affection or as an object of thought. So, if it is the case that Spinoza considers *non entia* to mean non-being in the strong sense - indicating no-beings or beings that are completely non-existent, then a theory of non-

being is impossible, because the very concept of non-being is oxymoronic. There is clear textual evidence supporting this view that non-beings are completely non-existing things. For example, in G/233/24-25, Spinoza claims that "chimaeras, fictitious beings, and beings or reason can not in any way be classed as beings." In this claim, Spinoza seems to be defending the view that chimaeras, fictitious beings, and beings of reason are non-beings in the strong sense because they cannot "in any way" be considered as beings. On the other hand, there is textual evidence showing that the claim Spinoza is actually making is that those *non-beings* can - in some way - be classified as beings. Spinoza is describing the characteristics of those beings, showing how they are caused, and showing how they are useful for knowledge. And that being the case, then these *non-beings* do have some level of causal power over things. If those *non-beings* have some kind of causal power, then we will have to assume that those *non-beings* also have some degree of reality. Non-beings are something.

I will try to show that there is more textual evidence supporting the view that Spinoza is using *non-being* in a weaker sense - that is, in the sense that non-beings are actually some kind of being - than in the strongest sense. If this is the case, then there are good reasons to interpret the CM as a place in which Spinoza is offering a positive metaphysics of imagination. That is, a theory of imagination where the imaginative beings have some degree of reality, some level of causal power, and therefore, some degree of objectivity.[41]

Spinoza is aware of the problem with the concept of non-being. To address this difficulty, he further clarifies the nature of non-being in his ontology: (1) non-beings

[41] Of course, these degrees are of the lowest kinds available in the given ontology. True ideas have more reality, more causal power, and more objectivity. How these degrees are distinguished and what makes true ideas more real are important questions to be answered elsewhere.

cannot be defined but only described [G I233/23], and (2) being is "badly divided" into being and non-being [G I/235/4-9]. Non-beings cannot be defined but only described because non-beings do not have an essence in themselves. Definitions capture the essence of the thing, so if the thing does not have an essence, then it cannot be described. That is, a thing that does not exist also does not have an essence, and, therefore, cannot be defined. However, even if we grant that non-beings cannot be defined, it is still very difficult to understand how non-beings (if they are mere nothings) can be described [G I/233/23]. Non-beings do not have an essence but, if we can describe them, they should have, at least, non-essential properties. Otherwise, what is this that is being described or, to put it in another way, how could we describe something that has no qualities? Non-beings must have some kind of properties or qualities. If those beings have non-essential properties, they have properties, and, for this reason, they are something. However, it seems that the claim that non-beings cannot be defined but only described only give us the information that non-beings have non-essential properties. Although it indicates that non-beings have some kind of existence, it cannot explain what kind of existence they have and what kind of properties they have.

As we have seen, Spinoza lists three kinds of non-beings in the first chapter of the CM;[42] chimaeras (*chimaera*), fictitious beings (*ens fictum*) and beings of reason (*ens rationis*). According to the definition of being given before - that being is whatever we find to exist necessarily or at least to be able to exist once clearly and distinctly perceived -, chimaeras, fictitious beings, and beings of reason can be classified as beings in some sense. Chimaeras are non-beings because they cannot exist in nature, but chimaeras are beings insofar as they are ideas. Fictitious beings are ideas that cannot be clearly and

[42] I think that these definitions are the major contribution of the CM to the metaphysics of imagination.

distinctly perceived because they are the result of an act of the human mind of connecting and disconnecting ideas out of an act of the will[43]. Beings of reason, in their turn, are non-beings because they are not real beings, but mere modes of thinking that "help us to more easily retain, explain, and imagine the things we have understood" [G I/233/ 30-33]. From these definitions or characterizations, the hypothesis that imaginations are beings in some week sense can be confirmed; non-beings are ideas of a special kind. It is reasonable to conclude that there is a positive metaphysics of imagination in the CM; that is, Spinoza's claim is that non-beings are something rather than nothing - and they are and should be classed as beings. The major difficulty, in the CM, with the claim that there is a positive metaphysics of imagination where some of these imaginations are helpful for knowledge rests on the exceptional nature of chimaeras,[44] and on the differences between fictitious beings and beings of reason.

Chimaeras, like the square circle, says Spinoza, can neither be imagined nor be understood. The nature of chimaeras is problematic on the CM, for they "cannot be numbered among the affections of being" - that is, they do not form an idea properly speaking and cannot be considered as an attribute because they lack essence. On the one hand, chimaeras are the paradigm of non-being, because their lack of essence prevents chimaeras from being ideas of imagination or ideas of reason, making them "true non-beings". In this sense, chimaeras, entities of contradictory nature, are only negatively characterized, and have no positive or real being. But just like the other entities of imagination, even chimaeras must have some kind of being because we can talk about

[43] Will and intellect are not the same thing in the CM as it is in the *Ethics*. There is some space for free-will in the early works.
[44] Spinoza, in the CM, claims that the reality of an imaginative idea is limited to being an ideas in one's mind; however, this claim seems to work for fictions and beings of reason, but not for chimaeras.

them describing those beings linguistically. As Spinoza himself exemplifies, the "square circle" is a chimaera because it is an entity that belongs to some kind of ontological limbo:

> First, it should be noted that we may properly call a Chimaera a verbal being because it is neither in the intellect nor in the imagination. For it cannot be expressed except in words. E.g., we can, indeed, express a square circle in words, but we cannot imagine it in any way, much less understand it. So a Chimaera is nothing but a word, and impossibility cannot be numbered among the affections of being, for it is only a negation. [G I 241 /8-16].

Chimaeras are not part of the intellect nor of the imagination, but are verbal entities or beings of language. This limbo or ontological space reserved for chimaeras will disappear in the *Ethics,* and chimaeras will be categorized as ideas of imagination. So, although in the CM chimaeras are not ideas of imagination, in the *Ethics*, verbal beings will be classified as ideas of imagination - including chimaeras.[45] In the CM, then, chimaeras cannot exist fully as ideas because they are "that whose nature involves an explicit contradiction".[46] Nevertheless, there is a place for them in Spinoza's ontology: a chimaera is a verbal being because it is neither in the intellect nor in the imagination, and can only be expressed in words [G I/241/ 9-16]. Chimaeras do not acquire the status of ideas in the CM, they are mere images: words that are uttered or written on a paper.

Chimaeras, insofar as they are verbal beings, are a kind of *non entia* that the mind forms when it is being affected. The same is true for fictitious beings and for beings of

[45] Another problem to address later on is if chimaeras are beings of language and if language is a modification of the attribute of extension, then there has to be a corresponding idea of a chimaera in thought. Therefore, it should be either in imagination or on the intellect. In the CM, Spinoza does not have a clear theory of attributes yet, so parallelism is not an issue here.

[46] See note *a* in GI/233/25

reason, although all three non-entia differ in their origin and role. Fictitious beings are distinguished from chimaeras because their nature does not involve a contradiction; for this reason, they are possible beings. Fictitious beings are constructions that the mind makes when acting over ideas, so fictitious beings are also ideas. These ideas, Spinoza claims, are composed arbitrarily, and, for this reason, these beings do not represent any object that actually exists in nature. In fact, since we cannot know fictitious beings adequately, we cannot even be sure of what kinds of non-essential properties they have. This lack of identity condition can be taken as an indication that none of these beings, chimaeras, fictitious beings, and beings of reason are truly being in a strong sense, that is, they are not beings that can be grasped as beings. But Spinoza, explicitly recognizes that these non-beings are actually beings that are real in and for the human mind, although they do not necessarily have a corresponding object of which they are ideas:

> We are accustomed to depict in our fantasy also images of whatever we understand, it happens that we imagine nonentities positively, as beings. For the mind, considered in itself, since it is a thinking thing, has no greater power of affirming than of denying. But as imagining is nothing but being aware of the traces found in the brain from the motions of the spirits aroused in the senses by objects, such an awareness can only be a confused affirmation. Hence it happens that we imagine as if they were beings all those modes which the mind uses for negating, such as blindness, extremity or limit, term, darkness, etc. [G I/234/18-28]

The claim above encompasses all non-beings that appear in the CM. The non-beings are considered to be depictions of our fantasy, that is, they are actually beings of the

imagination. Therefore, we can conclude that, in the CM, the reality of an imaginative idea is limited to them being ideas in one's mind.[47]

To say that the reality of an idea is limited to it being an idea in the human mind does not indicate that this idea is non-existent and not objective. For example, there is textual evidence showing that beings of reason have some level of objectivity. Consider this claim:

> God must understand those things which he is the cause, particularly since they could not even exist for a moment without his occurrence. (…) We have said that beings of reason are modes of thinking, and in this way must be understood by God, i.e., insofar as we perceive that he preserves and produces the human mind, in whatever way it is constituted.[48]

If God knows these beings that the mind produces, it means that they are real, they exist, and they are, in some sense, objective. That is, the idea of a chimaera, of a fiction, and of a being of reason can be shared by many minds. However, "God does not know them outside the human mind" [G I/262/22-23], indicates that these are not ideas that are formed because they are ideas of things that already exist in nature, but they are ideas formed by the mind because the mind is always being affected by objects in the world. In

[47] Fictitious ideas and false ideas can be, apparently, considered to have a being in one's mind alone. However, this is also not clear. Imaginative ideas like fictions and false ideas can be shared by groups of people. For example, as Spinoza points out in the appendix of the *Ethics*, some people consider that God is anthropomorphic. The idea of anthropomorphism is a shared idea that does not exist only in the mind of a single individual, but it exists in many minds that share that imaginative understanding about God. This idea even has some real objects are can be taken as their referent: images of man-like God can be seen in various places, and are words used to refer to this imaginative idea. For these reasons, the imaginative ideas not only have some level of reality as ideas in the mind, but also some level of objectivity although they do not refer to the essence of a real being on extension. This is a topic for my future studies.

[48] G I 262/16-29. In this second part of the CM, Spinoza is arguing that God knows sins, beings of reason, singular things and universals. But he adds that: " we do not mean that God has such modes of thinking in himself in order to retain more easily the things he understands."

reaching this conclusion that non-beings are actually beings in the mind, Spinoza revises the notion of *non entia*.

The *non entia* that Spinoza is talking about are actually modes of thought, they are "all affections of thought, such as intellect, joy, imagination, etc"[49] [G I/233/ 33-35]. For this reason, later in the CM, Spinoza spends some time arguing that the traditional division between beings of reason and real beings is a bad distinction [G I/235/3-9]. Spinoza claims that this division is made by traditional metaphysicians that "judge the things from the words, not the words from the things". Beings are improperly divided into beings of reason and real beings because whereas real beings are objects that exist necessarily, beings of reason are not ideas of things and have no object that exists necessarily. But because beings of reason arise from the ideas of real beings, people tend to give names to them, "as if to signify beings existing outside our mind, which beings, or rather non-beings, they have called beings of reason." [G I/234/29 - I/235]. Beings of reason are not ideas of objects that are outside the mind, they are modes of thinking. It is important here to note that, although Spinoza names those ideas "beings of reason", they are not exactly objects of the intellect, but part of this category of non-beings or ideas of produced by the human mind. Beings of reason are "affections of thought" that "help us more easily retain, explain, and imagine things we have understood" [G I/233/30-35]. Because beings of reason and the other non-beings are actually something, Spinoza offers an alternative division of being.

The traditional division is rejected as improper because non-beings are in some sense something: "From this it is easy to see how improper is the division of being into

[49] Curley notes that the doctrine that beings of reason are modes of thinking is in Suarez 2:1016 and in Heereboord 2, 222 and 225 (1680) . See Curley (1985) p.301. Here we can see again how difficult it is for Spinoza to characterize chimaeras as mere verbal beings that are neither in thought nor in imagination.

real being and being of reason. For they divide being into being and non-being, or into being and mode of thinking." [G I 235 /4-9] Since non-beings are actually ideas in the mind or modes of thinking, it is improper to call them non-beings.[50] The alternative division of being offered by Spinoza is a modal distinction: "From the definition of being already given (or if you prefer, from the description), it is easy to see that being should be divided into being which exists necessarily by its own nature, or whose essence involves existence, and being whose essence involves only possible existence."[G O 236/22-30][51] According to this new definition, non-beings are, actually, possible beings. With this definition, Spinoza distinguishes himself from tradition, offering, at least on the CM, an ontology of necessary and possible beings. Some of these possible beings are possible only in language (chimaeras) and some of them are ideas (fictitious beings and beings of reason). These possible beings are modes of thought that may or may not help us retain, explain, and imagine things [G I/245/ 10-15].[52]

Hence, not only is there a positive metaphysics of imagination in the CM, but Spinoza is also characterizing those imaginative ideas as playing a role in knowledge. The beings of reason, now possible beings, help the mind to recall things and keep them present to the mind (memory), they also serve to explain a thing through comparison (time, number, and measure), and they allow us to negate things (that is, affirm that

[50] One might claim that this revision seems to be true only for beings of reason, but I do not think that this is the case, specially because Spinoza will offer an alternative division of being after which he will stop calling chimaeras, fictitious beings, and beings of reason non-beings.

[51] It is at this point of the appendix that Spinoza distinguishes between substance and modes. The definition of substance and modes is not as clear as the definition of the *Ethics*.

[52] On a further research, it will be necessary to better investigate the nature of possibility in the CM. According to G I/242 5-25, "a thing is called possible when we understand its efficient cause, but do not know whether the cause is determined. So, we can regard it as possible, but neither as necessary nor as impossible. If, however, we attend to the essence of a thing alone, and not to its cause, we shall call it contingent. That is, we shall consider it as midway between God and a chimaera, so to speak, because we find in it, on the part of its essence, neither any essence of existing (as we do in the divine essence) nor any impossibility or inconsistency (as we do in a chimaera)." Later on Spinoza will claim that "possibility and contingency are only a defect in our understanding". This is a matter for further investigation, but it indicates Spinoza's conflicting endorsement of possible beings or of beings of imagination since the early works.

something is absent).[53] Spinoza wants to distinguish between fictitious being and being of reason,[54] because fictitious beings are possible beings, but they do not contribute, at least given what is argued in the CM, to knowledge. Fictitious beings can contribute to knowledge but only accidentally, since they can be true by chance. But because they do not necessarily contribute, they cannot be classed as modes of thinking that help the mind to think. Beings of reason are a special kind of possible beings because they are originated by the guidance of reason whereas fictitious beings are created by a "sheer act of the will alone" [G I 236/10-20]. In any case, those possible beings are tools that the mind has to better understand itself and nature.

In conclusion, on the CM, Spinoza is providing a positive metaphysical account of imagination where some of these beings help the mind to retain things, explain things, and imagine negations. In the beginning of the CM, Spinoza addresses chimaeras, fictitious ideas, and beings of reason as "non-beings", but later, after showing that non-being is a bad concept, Spinoza will stop using it and will start using the concept of possible beings. The possible beings of the early works will later on be classified as kinds of ideas of imagination. Those beings created by imagination have some degree of reality, some causal power, and some kind of objectivity, even if they are false, inadequate, or happen to be true by accident. Finally, it is important to consider that, on the CM, Spinoza is already reflecting upon the role that imaginative beings have in

[53] A chimaera is also a negation. See G I/241/16: "a chimaera is nothing but a word, and impossibility cannot be numbered among the affections of being, for it is only a negation".

[54] "They think that a fictitious being is also a being of reason because it has no existence outside the mind. But if none attends correctly to the definitions just given of beings of reason and fictitious beings, he will discover a great difference between them, both with respect to the cause, and also with respect to their nature, without regard to the cause. For we said that a fictitious being can be true by chance. But a being of reason does not depend on the will alone, nor does it consist of any terms connected with one another, as is sufficiently obvious from the definition. If anyone asks, therefore, whether a fictitious being is a real being or a being of reason, we need only to go back and repeat what we have already said, that being is badly divided into real being and being of reason, and that therefore the question is ill-founded. For it is supposed that all being is divided into real being and being of reason." [G I 6-21]

knowledge, and defending the notion that some of these beings, such as the beings of reason, are modes of thinking that are fundamental intellectual activities like memory, explanation, and for strengthening imagination itself.[55]

Imagination in the Short Treatise (KV): direct and indirect endorsement of an active imagination

Both the KV and the CM have significant differences when compared to the *Ethics*.[56] The CM is said to be Spinoza's metaphysical laboratory where he is engaging with Scholastic and Cartesian questions while starting to develop his own vocabulary. The KV, on the other hand, is -supposedly - the first version or a summary of the *Ethics*

[55] On this brief summary of the theory of imagination of the CM, I had to leave aside many interesting aspects of the appendix. One of them is how the change in the division of being into beings that are necessary and beings that are possible (instead of beings and non-beings), also implies in a change in the traditional theory of truth. For Spinoza, uncertainty and doubt is only applied to contingent ideas, not to necessary ones. Spinoza's theory of truth on the CM is a matter for other research, but I would like to leave here the description Spinoza gives of the traditional theory of truth because it is suggestive of a positive role of imagination as well as of a positive metaphysics of the imaginative and the false. See in G I/246/15-35]: "But since ordinary people first invent words, which afterwards are used by the Philosophers, it seems desirable for one seeking the original meaning of a term to ask what it first denoted among ordinary people - particularly where we lack other causes that could be used to investigate that [meaning], causes drawn from the nature of language. The first meaning of true and false seems to have had its origin in storied: a story was called true when it was of a deed that had really happened, and false when it was of a deed that had never happened. Afterwards the philosophers used this meaning to denote the agreement of an idea with its object and conversely. So an idea is called true when it shows us the thing as it is in itself, and false when it shows us the thing otherwise than it really is. For ideas are nothing but narratives, or mental histories of nature. But later this usage transferred metaphorically to mute things, as when we call gold true or false, as if the gold which is presented to us were to tell something of itself that either was or was not in it." The understand of ideas as "nothing but narratives, or mental histories of nature" is as poetic as it is problematic, so here is not the place to discuss this, although it is the place to point that out.

[56] In the past scholars did not know if the KV was a collection of notes from Spinoza's students or an authentic text, written by Spinoza, in Dutch, and translated to Latin by an anonymous translator. The current understanding comes from the travel diaries of Stolle (1704) where the first evidences for the existence and discovery of the KV have been found and from the Ep 6 where Spinoza states he is writing "his philosophy". Stolle considers the KV to be "the manuscript of the Dutch *Ethics*", and it is today regarded as an early version of his main work. Filippo Mignini worked the most on the origins of the KV, the establishment of the text, and commentaries. On his introduction to the KV, Mignini (2009) narrates the discovery of the KV. It was in 1852 that Boheme published the *Summary* of the KV after he found it inside an exemplar of a Dutch translation of Colerus' biography of Spinoza, *The Life of Spinoza*, at the F. Muller bookshop in Amsterdam. Boheme describes that inside the book he also found some handwritten notes on the text of Colerus' biography of Spinoza. In one of the notes in Colerus' book, there was a very extensive annotation where one could read: "One can find among certain lovers of philosophy, a manuscript treatise of Spinoza which, although not having been written in geometrical form, like his printed *Ethics*, has nevertheless the same thoughts and the same arguments. It is easy to see, due to the style and the form of construction, that it is one of the first works of the author. (…)" p.159 in *Premiers Écrits. Spinoza Oeuvres Completes*. Puf, 2009. Introduction by Mignini "La Découverte du Court Traité".

where Spinoza is elaborating his own views more explicitly. In the past, scholars have doubted the value of the KV to the understanding of Spinoza's philosophy.[57] But they have slowly been taking the KV into consideration; the difficulties regarding its dates, purpose, and history have been given more attention and scholars are starting to agree with respect to its place and role in the context of Spinoza's works.[58] Just as is true for the other works of Spinoza, the arguments contained in the KV provide more pieces for the puzzle of his metaphysics of imagination. Since the KV has only been given close attention very recently, there is not yet a standard interpretation on which to base a critical reading.[59] This lack of exegetical study is among the reasons that motivates the present effort of mapping Spinoza's arguments on the nature and role of imagination in the early works.[60]

---

[57] As Curley notes, scholars have considered that the study of the KV brings more inconveniences than advantages. (p.51) The *Cogitata Metaphysica* was written after the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* and after the *Short Treatise*. The hypothesis of Gebhardt, which came up in the nineteenth century, is that the *Short Treatise* was written in 1660 and the TIE in 1662. There is, however, a more recent and widely recognized hypothesis, offered in the late twentieth century by Mignini who claims that the TIE is earlier than the KV. In any case, the *Cogitata Metaphysica* is later than both of these books. If we were to analyze the works in chronological order, the order would have been TIE, KV, and CM. Here, however, the order of analysis is CM, KV, and I am leaving the TIE out. The reason for this non-chronological order, besides the one already given on the introduction of this chapter, is to avoid an evolutionary reading of Spinoza's metaphysics of imagination where some kind of progress is implied. For this reason, the current analysis started with the CM, a book that is a mid-point between the first works and the *Ethics*, and, more importantly, a work that offers careful definitions of the different ideas of imagination. Moreover, although there are various evidences supporting Mignini's chronological order, it is is also important to analyze the books regardless of their chronology. Here I am trying to focus on the arguments given on the CM and the KV, and according to the arguments, it is intriguing that the later book (CM) is more experimental than the earlier (KV). The KV, the first work of Spinoza, has a more complete and original metaphysics than the CM - which is said to have been written later, but nevertheless is treated as a space where Spinoza is experimenting with metaphysical questions and the scholastic vocabulary. I think it is a matter for further research to study the CM, KV, and the Ethics together in order to evaluate this idea that in the CM Spinoza's metaphysics was not well developed, but in the KV it was. If Spinoza's metaphysics was ready by the time he wrote the KV, allegedly his first book, then why he had to experiment with metaphysical questions later on? I think there is something more to be studies and said with respect to the KV, and the CM.

[58] Melamed (2015) edition of papers on the early works of Spinoza is a good evidence of the renewed perspective over the role and importance of the early works. But recent scholarship (for example, most of the unpublished work presented in the *Spinoza: France États-Unis* Conference in Paris in June 2016) has been dealing with the arguments presented in the early works and new editions of the PPC/CM and the KV (considering, at least, the French translation of PUF and the Portuguese translation of Autêntica) also indicate this shift on the interest of scholarship towards the early works.

[59] The same is true for the CM.

[60] There is already a lot of work done on the TIE. For readings of the KV, PPC, and CM, see the recent publication on the early works of Spinoza, edited by Melamed (2015). Three articles on that collection are very important to the present discussion. Dan Garber's "Spinoza's Cartesian Dualism in the Korte Verhandeling", Filippo Mignini's "Fictio/Verziering (e) in Spinoza's Early Writings", and Ursula Renz's "From the Passive to the Active Intellect".

The KV, as I see it, contains two theses that are important to our goal of reconstructing Spinoza's metaphysics of imagination: (1) imagination is active - in the sense of being productive - and it is responsible for the multiplication of ideas, and (2) in the KV, there is already an indirect defense of the positive powers of imagination. I will now show how Spinoza arrives at each of these theses.

The definition of truth as a given (G I/79/1-5; KV II; 15, §3) and the passive nature of the intellect (G I/16/10-15; KV I; 1, §5) are the grounds on which Spinoza founds the activity of imagination in the KV. In contrast with the *Ethics*, where intellect is conceived as purely active, the KV is built upon the notion that "the intellect (though the word sounds otherwise) is wholly passive, i.e. that our soul is changed in such a way that it acquires other modes of thinking it did not have before." (G I/79/21-31 ;KV, II, 15, §5) Spinoza conceives knowledge as the capacity to grasp what is. There are two principles at work for the argument in which Spinoza will conclude that truth is a given and intellect is passive. The argument for the passivity of the intellect and the givenness of truth is a step if the *a posteriori* proof of God's existence in the first paragraph of the KV. Spinoza wants to prove that because human beings have an idea of God, God exists. This proof for the existence of God depends upon some principles, or indubitable starting points, which works as premises. For our purposes, there is no need to analyze the full ontological proof, but only the set that will help to lay out the theory of truth and the philosophy of mind of the KV.

Spinoza begins by describing some principles to prove that truth is a given and the intellect is passive. First, he assumes that our intellect is finite and that the things to be known are infinite. By being finite an intellect cannot comprehend the infinite without

some kind of external determination. Finite things alone cannot comprehend the infinite because of the contrast between their nature.[61] While finite things are limited, infinite things are limitless and can only be comprehended at once, otherwise they won't be understood in their infinitude. The finite intellect cannot comprehend an infinitude of things at once. Moreover, a finite intellect does not have in itself the power to bring about the change or the dynamics between itself and other things that will allow knowledge to happen. For knowledge to occur there has to be things to be known and some kind of relationship between the thing to be known and the intellect that will know. Since the things to be known are infinite, those things could not have been created by the finite intellect. A finite intellect cannot produce every thing that there is to be known, so it cannot, in itself, be the cause of knowledge. Since a finite intellect cannot either know everything at once or cause the finite things that exist to be known, then a finite intellect cannot, through its own powers alone, know anything. Therefore, a finite intellect needs to be externally determined to know something. When the finite intellect is determined by something external (G I/16/1-15; KV I, 1, §5), the infinite to be known becomes divided into spatiotemporal parts. It is only when one thing acts upon the finite intellect that the finite intellect is able to know something. The finite intellect then is a passive entity that needs to be moved by an external entity.[62] The external entity then "compels him [the finite intellect] to understand one thing before another" (G I/17; KV I, 1, §8). Knowledge, as it is being defined here in this context, is the effect of this relationship between the

[61] The discussion on the nature of the infinite can be seen in Ep 12. Spinoza advocates for an actual infinite in contrast with the Aristotelian potential infinite. The intricacies of this discussion should be dealt with elsewhere. See Melamed, Y. "Hasdai Crescas and Spinoza on Actual Infinity and the Infinity of God's attributes" in Nadler (ed.) *Spinoza and Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, 2014. pp.204-215. See also Huenemann, Charlie. *Spinoza's Radical Theology: The Metaphysics of the Infinite. Routledge*, 2014. And, finally, see also Klever, Wim. "Actual Infinity: A note on the Crespas-Passus in Spinoza's letter (12) to Lodewijg Meijer." *Studia Spinozana: An International and Interdisciplinary Series* 10:111-120, 1994.

[62] Spinoza does not definite this external entity as a finite entity determined in space and time or as an infinite entity.

finite intellect and the external object. It is the external object that acts over the intellect to make itself known to the intellect. For this reason, truth is something that is given. For the mind to know that some idea is true, it does not need, at least initially, to perform demonstrations or develop discursive reasoning.[63] Truth is a given because it does not depend upon any effort on the part of the finite intellect; instead, truth appears to the intellect directly. Truth is the result of the external determination acting over the finite intellect; it imprints itself in the mind.

After offering this argument, Spinoza thinks that all those steps lead to the proof of God's existence. If the external determination of knowledge explains the givenness of truth, it also explains why God exists. If we have the idea of God, this idea should have come from God himself. Or, another way of putting it, if we have the idea of a one single infinite reality, then this idea should have been imprinted in our intellects by this one single infinite reality itself. As we would expect, this argument is very problematic: what if the idea of God was produced by our intellect and is nothing but a fiction?[64]

As we see, Spinoza has to start the KV arguing against the possibility that the idea of God is fictitious. The metaphysics and the ethics of the KV depend upon the proof that the idea of God is not a fiction; and this indicates that the concept of fiction is instrumental for proving the most fundamental argument of the KV.[65] So, although the

[63] Hervet (2011) shows that the definition of truth in the KV is inspired by the Cartesian rule of evidence. Since the intellect is conceived here as absolutely passive, true ideas install themselves in our knowledge. Truth is a reflexive act that needs no mediation, no criteria, no sign. Truth, just like God, is the cause of itself and it is recognized immediately through its own presence. Hervet shows that this self-manifestation of truth does not imply that language has no role or only a negative role in knowledge. She argues that in the KV language is not a medium through which truth manifests itself, but it is the form of knowledge itself. Reasoning is a non-arbitrary collection of signs ("*ensemble de signes*" p.215-217) because it uses language as an instrument of demonstration and of proof. Language is the form of the second kind of knowledge, a form that compels and fosters the constitution of thought. Hervet points out that language has a double character: it can be said to be arbitrary insofar as language is independent of the nature of things that it signifies, but it is also produced by material conditions such as historical contingencies, social and corporeal.

[64] Spinoza is dealing with the same problem pointed out by Descartes in the third meditation.

[65] The structure of the argument and the problems raised on the first part of the KV (1662) are very similar to those offered by Descartes in his *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641).

topic of the first part of the KV is God and the topic of the second part is human nature, it is wrong to say that fictitious ideas are only going play a role in the second part of the KV.[66] The concept of fiction appears in the first chapter of the first part, in the very first proof of the existence of God, and it is through the proof for the existence of God that fiction and imagination will be defined. Spinoza is acknowledging that the mind has the capacity to form fictions or to imagine. Imagination is in contrast with reason because while reason uses language to reproduce and describe what is, imagination multiplies entities allowing the mind to use language to describe what is not. But what does it mean to say that imagination multiplies entities?

Before I answer this question, let me take a terminological detour. Imagination as a noun rarely appears in this book. There is only one occurrence of *Verbeelding* or imagination in the KV, and it is on the second paragraph of chapter 7 of part 1 where Spinoza is defining attributes and has to account for "the things men commonly imagine about God". The concept that appears the most is *Verziering*, or fiction, and its variations.[67] Fiction, one of the forms of manifestation of imagination,[68] is an act of the mind derived from some given truth or given knowledge. In fact, ideas, in the KV,

[66] Schechter claims in "Temporalities and Kinds of Cognition in the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect, the Short Treatise, and the Ethics." on Melamed (2015) that in the KV " Spinoza abandons the explication of the kinds of cognition as points of departure for the required method". It is true that the KV, instead of starting the investigation pointing out the differences between true ideas and imaginative ideas as it was done on the CM, it starts just like the Ethics with the definition of God and a proof of its existence. The definition of the kinds of knowledge and of the nature of the human mind appear only in the second part of the book where Spinoza characterizes "the perfect man" by defining the soul, distinguishing opinion, belief, and science, explaining the origin and the nature of various passions. The fact that the definition of the false only comes at the end of the second part might mean that Spinoza is changing the role of the modes of cognition for the establishment of the method on the KV as Schechter claims because, instead of making it only part of the method, knowing what the mind is and what it produces now becomes part of a larger project of self-development and pursuit of ethical conduct. This suspicion is false if we understand that method is dissociated from its goals, but it is certainly true - and perhaps trivially true - if we understand that for Spinoza the method is never detached from what it is supposed to accomplish. In this sense, the division of being on the CM and of kinds of knowledge in the KV should both be understood as steps on the development of a larger ethical project where the distinction between the kinds of cognition and the difference between true and false play a major role.

[67] I am not going to dwell on the philological aspects of the problem. For further discussion on the noun *verziering* and its variations, see Mignini (2015) in the article "Fictio/Verziering (e) in Spinoza's Early Writings".

[68] The other forms of manifestation of imagination besides fiction that appears on the KV are beings of reason, chimaeras and false ideas.

proceed from the existence of a given object,[69] no matter whether the idea is true or false. Both true and false ideas result from the interaction between the mind-body complex and an external object. False ideas have their origin in external objects as well, and while having a false idea, the mind, instead of attributing the origin of this false idea to itself, attributes it to the object that its body had experienced.[70] False ideas, however, are not given like true ideas but produced by the mind through an act of association and abstraction. It is because fiction is not given and truth is given, that we are able to distinguish them. False ideas do not have as strong an imprint in our minds as true ideas do, false ideas change and are inconstant.[71]

Now, to the question: what does it mean to say that imagination multiplies entities? According to the note in paragraph 8 of the first chapter of the first part of the KV, for a fictional idea to be formed, we need first to have true ideas. Fictions or false ideas are derived from true ideas. Ideas, Spinoza argues, first come to us from the external things themselves. After having those ideas about particular objects, we turn those particular ideas about particular things into universals through abstraction. Spinoza calls this process "feigning", or imagining, and argues that the mind can construct many other ideas by abstracting from the experience of particular things. To the counter argument that if that's the case then all other abstract ideas are fictions, Spinoza replies

[69] Spinoza also defines the soul as an idea: "the soul is an idea arising from an object which exists in Nature" [G I/120; KV, Appendix II, § 12]

[70] "some could perhaps say that if it is not we, but only the thing, which affirms or denies [something] of itself in us, then nothing can be affirmed or denied except what agrees with the thing. So there is no falsity. For we have said that falsity is affirming (or denying) something of a thing that does not agree with the thing, i.e., that the thing does not affirm or deny that of itself. But I think that if only we attend properly to what we have already said about truth and falsity, we shall immediately see that this objection has been satisfactorily answered. For we have said that the object is the cause of what is affirmed or denied of it, whether it is true or false, i.e. because we perceive something coming from the object, we imagine that the object affirms or denies this of itself as a whole (even though we perceive very little of it). This occurs most in weak souls which very easily receive a mode or idea through a slight action of the object on them. Apart from this there is no other affirming or denying in them." (G I/84/1-10; KV, II, 16, §7)

[71] "the modes of thinking which agree with the thing have had more causes, they have more constancy and essence in them also. Because they agree completely with the thing, it is impossible that at some time they can be differently affected by the thing, or undergo any change." (G I/80; KV II, 15, §6)

that if we analyze carefully those ideas, we will arrive at the conclusion that some of those abstract ideas are necessary, and some others are impossible. The impossible ones are clearly fictional, and the necessary ones are those whose existence we cannot but be forced to accept. If we are forced to accept the existence of necessary ideas, this indicates that they are true ideas. The third kind of ideas, the possible ideas, are considered to be non-necessary and therefore not true. For Spinoza, the true ideas are themselves the criteria, and those true ideas do not need any discursive proof to be accepted as true. All else is false, imaginary or fictional. Those fictional ideas are here also being conceived as part of a positive metaphysics of the false, that is, fictional ideas (ideas of possible or impossible things) are ideas that have some reality in themselves. The origin of these ideas lies both in true ideas we have of things and in the capacity of the mind to act over those true ideas producing other ideas. Hence, it is correct to say that in the KV, while the intellect is passive, the imagination is active. Imagination is active because it produces entities that are not given, multiplying the ideas in the mind.

A fictional or false idea, because its creation is grounded in true ideas, can accidentally be true. For this reason, one thesis that follows is that imagination can be directly or indirectly beneficial. In the *Ethics*, passions and feelings in general are categorized as part of imagination. In the KV, because truth is a given that is perceived and experienced, it is not clear that passions and feelings belong to imagination or our capacity to feign. Spinoza also lists kinds of knowledge in the KV, but instead of calling them modes of thought, they are called "modes of which man consists" (G I/54/3-5; KV, II, 1, §1-2), and are generally addressed as "perceptions". These modes are acquired (1) through belief which comes either from experience or from report, (2) through a true

belief, or (3) through a clear and distinct concept. Just like in the *Ethics*, the argument is that "the first is commonly subject to error. The second and third, though they differ from one another, cannot err." These modes are explained through how they affect the lives of people who act according to them. A person who acts according to the first mode of perception acts "as a parrot [that] repeats what it has been taught" (G I/54/27-28; KV, II, 1, §3). A person who acts according to the third mode of perception "has the clearest knowledge of all" and has no need of report, experience or proofs because he has the ability to immediately see the truth. In this sense, we can see that an opinion or belief acquired through hearsay or report, can accidentally be true, and that can bring us a direct or an indirect good.

However, the defense of imagination or of feigning that Spinoza is offering on the KV does not exactly come from "acting like a parrot" or acting according to the first mode of perception. Instead, it comes from the fact that opinions or beliefs (either true or false) are the cause of passions (KV, II, 3). Passions are movements in the soul that originate in ideas that either true or false. That is, both true and false ideas generate passions and passions are a fundamental ingredient in our development as human beings. There are passions that arise from the error of opinion, and passions that arise from clear understanding (KV, II, 4, §1-4). It is through the passions that man is able to construct the idea of perfection, a being of reason (a fictional idea that is useful) that allows us to distinguish good from evil (KV, II, 4, §4-7). The mind has to feign the notion of a perfect human being to be able to talk about good and evil. This notion of perfection is a false idea that arrives from the various kinds of passions that humans feel, the good and the bad ones. Then, after treating the passions one by one, Spinoza concludes: "Finally,

because we have now explained what feeling is, we can easily see how from this there arises a reflexive idea, or knowledge of oneself, experience, and reasoning." (G I/121/5-11; KV, appendix II, §16-17)

This is the indirect good that imagination can bring: the passions ground our notions of good and evil because from the confusion between true ideas and false ideas, through the forging of a notion of a perfect being, arises a reflexive idea that brings knowledge of ourselves.[72] But there is also a direct benefit of the imagination insofar as it is considered as the cause of passions. Imaginations are essential and in knowing them we come to know ourselves and reality better. Textually, Spinoza claims that only some affects of imagination are essential,[73] but since it is through imagination that we forge the notion of perfection, it follows that it is also through imagination and with imagination that we can know and improve ourselves.[74]

In conclusion, in the KV we can find the theses that imagination is, in some sense, active, and has direct and indirect powers over the affects and the intellect. Those theses, in conjunction with the evidences that, in the CM, there is a defense of a positive metaphysics of imagination, set the stage and complement the theory of imagination in

[72] In the definition of the different passions, Spinoza argues that some passions are useful and good while others cannot have any place in "the man who is led by true reason". (G I/73/7-8; KV, II, 9, §7) Most of them, however, are useful to human's advantage and improvement as we can see in his conclusion about love of esteem and shame: "Now that we know these passions, we also know the vanity and imperfection they have in them. For not only are love of esteem and shame not advantageous, according to what we have noted in their definitions, they are also injurious and objectionable, insofar as they are built on self-love, and on error, that man is a first cause of his own actions, and consequently deserving of praise and blame. But I don't mean that one must live among men as one would live without them, where love of esteem and shame have no place. On the contrary, I grant that we are permitted not only to use [these passions] for men's advantage and improvement, but also to do this even if it involves a restriction of our own freedom, which is otherwise complete and lawful." (G I/75/10-20; KV, II, 12, §2-3)

[73] "we must note here an excellent thing about the 'passions', viz. we see and find all those 'passions' which are good are of such kind and nature that without them we can neither be nor persist, and they belong to us, as it were, essentially. Such as love, desire and everything that is proper to love" (G I /77/ 15-20; KV, II, 14, §3)

[74] Spinoza describes the most perfect kind of knowledge as one that does not need imagination, but by thinking of it as "the most perfect" and by explaining it, an appeal to imagination is being made. Otherwise, there would be no need to define or describe it.

the *Ethics*. The last key points that structure Spinoza's theory of imagination are found in the letters.

Some letters on imagination: Letter to Pieter Balling (Ep 17 / 1664) and Letters to Hugo Boxel (Ep 51-56 / 1674)

The analysis of Spinoza's correspondence allow us to understand his historical context and the intellectual circle in which he was engaged. In the correspondence we can find discussions on chemistry and mechanism with Robert Boyle, discussions on Cartesian themes with Lodewijk Meyer and Henry Oldenburg, further developments on the questions of freedom, truth, and infinite modes with Tschinhaus, information about the state of Spinoza's writings, and his future plans. Among his correspondences, there is a letter from Van Velthusyen that informs us about Spinoza's financial conditions, and a letter from Fabritius with an offer to teach at the University of Heidelberg. Also, letters such as those exchanged with Pieter Balling and Jarig Jelles allow us to know that Spinoza participated in the Collegiant community. The correspondence with Leibniz, for example, gives us the information that Leibniz read the TTP and respected Spinoza's opinion on optical issues, but that they never had long discussions on the nature of substance and other metaphysical issues. Spinoza's correspondence is, then, an important place to visit because it gives a perspective that no other work will offer.[75] When it comes to the topic of imagination, four sets of correspondence are most relevant: the letter on

[75] Deleuze (1970) has an essay on Spinoza's correspondence with Blyenbergh where he points out the importance of reading the letters when one studies the problem of evil: "Now this is precisely where the profound interest of this group of letters resides: they are the only long texts in which Spinoza considers the problem of evil per se, risking analyses and statements that have no equivalent in his other writings." p. 30 in *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*. translation by Robert Hurley. City Lights Books, San Francisco, CA., 1988.

the infinite to Meyer,[76] the letter on omens to Balling, the set of letters exchanged with Blyenbergh on the nature of evil,[77] and the letters on the existence of ghosts exchanged with Hugo Boxel. The letter on the infinite to Meyer and the letters on evil with Blyenbergh already received good attention from the scholarship.[78] For this reason, I will here briefly map and reconstruct the arguments offered in the less studied set of correspondences - letters to Balling (1664) and Boxel (1674) - in order to show the contributions that those letters give to the overall theory of imagination that Spinoza is building across his works.

The Ep 17 to Pieter Balling[79] (1664-1665) is from the period when Spinoza had already written the TIE, the KV, CM, and the PPC (some parts of the *Ethics* were already being crafted by this time). This is a very short letter with personal and emotional content, but it is also one of the most important letters on imagination. Because of the context in which the letter was written, scholars do not take the content as having serious

[76] The letter to Meyer is important because it is where Spinoza establishes the distinction between reason and imagination by arguing that some things can be understood but not imagined, and some other things can be both understood and imagined: "they have not distinguished between that which can only be understood but not imagined, and that which can also be imagined" Ep12

[77] Spinoza discusses the nature of evil in many of his writings including the CM, the KV, the *Ethics*, and in this set of letters. Evil is a fiction and does not exist as an entity independent from the human mind because "evil do not express essence" Ep 23. Evil is defined as privation, and "privation is not an act of depriving; it is nothing more than simply a state of want, which in itself is nothing. It is only a construct of the mind or a mode of thinking which we form from comparing things with one another." Ep21 In Ep 24, from Blyenbergh to Spinoza, Blyenbergh returns to his questions ("is there in reality such a thing as error, and wherein does it consist?" and "in what way do you maintain that the will is not free?") but Spinoza does not reply to this final letter.

[78] In another opportunity, I will develop my views on the set of letters to Lodewijk Meyer (Ep 12 / 1663) and the set of letters to Blyenbergh (Ep 18-27 / 1666). Since these letters have received a lot of attention, I prefer to address the reader to the current scholarship. The letter to Meyer, the famous Ep 12 on the nature of the infinite, has been studied by many. Among them, see the recent works of Mogens Laerke (2013) "Spinoza and the Cosmological Argument According to Letter 12" in *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 21 (1):57-77 and Wim Klever (1994) "Actual Infinity:A Note on Crespas-Passus in Spinoza's Letter (12) to Lodewijg Meijer." *Studia Spinozana: An International and Interdisciplinary Series* 10:111-120. For the letters on evil, see Gilles Deleuze's *Spinoza's Practical Philosophy* originally published in 1970.

[79] As Curley (1985) points out: "Pieter Balling (b.?, d.c. 1664-1669) was a Mennonite and the agent in Amsterdam of various Spanish merchants. As a result the knew Spanish very well. That is one reason for the suspicion that the Ep 17 may have been written originally in Spanish. A work entitled *The Light on the Candlestick* (1662), which "attacked dogmatism and advocated a simple religion based on the inward light of the soul", has been attributed to him, but there is some doubt about the accuracy of this attribution. He was, in any case, the translator into Dutch of Descartes' *Principles* and the *Metaphysical Thoughts*, and perhaps of other works as well." in *Spinoza Complete Works*, Volume 1, p.351

philosophical implications. The argument in the letter is difficult to make sense of, but the principles upon which the argument is built are fundamental for my hypothesis on the structure of Spinoza's theory of imagination.

The Ep 17 is a reply from Spinoza to Balling. He wrote to his friend after having received the news that Balling's son had passed away. In the letter, Spinoza not only offers his condolences, but helps Balling understand the events he experienced prior to the death of his son. According to the letter, Balling experienced omens anticipating the news of his son's death. While the child has healthy and well, Balling heard sighs like those that the child made when he was ill. After his son passed away, Balling reflected upon the sound hallucination he had when the child was alive and well, and he concluded that it was a sign anticipating a future event. Balling asks Spinoza whether he believes in those kinds of signs, and, if he does, how he explains the existence of omens. Spinoza's reply is very difficult to interpret because of how delicate the situation is, but his first answer is "that this was not a true sigh" but only Balling's imagination (G IV/76/17-18). Then, instead of immediately providing an argument that would contradict Balling's omen hypothesis, Spinoza describes a personal story telling about a dream he had with "a certain black, scabby Brazilian" (G IV/76/28-29) whom he had never seen before.

The two stories are supposed to be analogous to one another because both are perceptions without a given object that causes the perception. But whereas Balling had a sound hallucination while awake, Spinoza had a visual hallucination in a dream; so, the stories do not actually bear many similarities. Spinoza saw in his dreams a man he had never seen before. He had the perception of an image without an object that determined this image. Supposedly, Balling had the same kind of experience: he heard a noise when

no object being perceived produced such a noise. Spinoza recognizes the differences between the stories and acknowledges that the content of Balling's hallucination was more significant than the content of his own dream.

Even though Spinoza describes, in the beginning of the letter, that whatever Balling had heard was only "his imagination", he also offers an explanation for the hypothesis that the hallucination might have had some premonitory content. The explanation explores some the workings of imagination and some of its possibly positive traits. First, Balling's hallucination is divided into two moments: in the first moment, when he was imagining things "more effectively and vividly", Balling's imagination was "unfettered and free" (G IV/76/22-24); in the second moment, when the imagination was focused and Balling started paying attention to its origin, his imagination - like in Spinoza's dream - "gradually disappeared" (G IV/77/6). This distinction is tricky and complicated because of the claim that imagination can, at some point in time, be "unfettered and free". It is not clear what Spinoza means by that here, but the point of this distinction is to say that this "freedom" is somehow present in dreams as well. Another advantage of the distinction between the two moments of Balling's imaginative act is that it helps one to understand why his hearing was actually "an omen" (G IV/77/9) while Spinoza's dream was not.

The argument is that because Balling is his child's father, he shares essential characteristics, in thought, with his son, and, for this reason, his "mind can confusedly be aware, beforehand, of something which is future." By having this confused awareness, the mind can imagine these sorts of events "firmly and vividly as if a thing of that kind

were present" (G IV/77/25-28). The full demonstration of this argument does not appear in the letter, but Spinoza refers to another one of his writings:[80]

> According to what I have demonstrated on another occasion, there must be in thought an idea of the son's essence, its affections, and its consequences. Because of this, and because the father, by the union he has with his son, is a part of the said son, the father's soul must necessarily participate in the son's ideal essence, its affections, and its consequences (as I have demonstrated elsewhere at greater length) (G IV/ 77/29-35).

The conclusion Spinoza arrives at is that because father and son share something of their essence, the father can imagine things that follow from the son's essence "as vividly as if he had it in his presence" (G IV/78).[81] This argument needs to be further studied, but, for our purpose here, it is important to at least show the principles on which the argument in grounded. Spinoza distinguishes two kinds of effects of imagination: one arising from the constitution of the mind, and the other from the constitution of the body. Fevers are among the bodily events that cause imaginations, and ideas attached to words are among the mental causes of imagination. This distinction, together with the former on the different modal aspects of imagination, indicates that imagination is a complex event that changes through time and has causes in the different attributes. This letter has more importance for Spinoza's theory of imagination than is usually supposed. The fact that Spinoza is locating imagination in the two different attributes is a key that will allow us

[80] This reference is not supplied by Curley in his *Complete Works*. The work that Spinoza is talking about remains unclear.

[81] It is interesting that Spinoza limits what can be imagined by the father. The imagination occurs only if the following conditions concur: "(i) if the incident which will happen to the son in the course of his life will be remarkable; (ii) if it will be of the kind that we can imagine very easily; (iii) if the time when this incident will happen is not very remote, and finally (iv) if his body is not only well constituted as regards health, but also free and void of all cares and troubles that disturb the senses externally" (G IV/78/5-9). It will take more research to explain those conditions and evaluate their apparent arbitrary character.

to continue making distinctions in the works on imagination so that we will be able to better understand its parts and functions.

In contrast with this letter to Balling (Ep17) where Spinoza acknowledges the existence of omens, we have the set of correspondences with Hugo Boxel where Spinoza strongly denies the existence of ghosts.[82] The exchange of letters begins with Hugo Boxel asking Spinoza for his opinion on apparitions, specters and ghosts. In admitting their existence, Boxel wonders about how many years they live, whether they have gender, if they are spiritual beings, or made of a very delicate and fine matter. Spinoza flippantly replies, questioning the meaningfulness of the theme, characterizing ghosts as entities that are not real things. Spinoza explains that the idea of a ghost is nothing but trifles and fancies that Boxel believes in because he reads many of the stories told by the ancients and their contemporaries. In his reply, Boxel acknowledges his readings and explicitly cites, as the major influence of his beliefs in ghosts and apparitions, the works of Plutarch, Suetonius, Pliny the younger, and other late medieval scientists and Early Modern Protestants. According to Boxel, the stories told by the ancients are an indirect proof that ghosts exist. Spinoza, of course, disagrees.

Spinoza's explanation of the cause of Boxel's belief in ghosts, however, requires the acceptance that ghosts exist as some kind of entity. Spinoza rejects Boxel's explanation that ghosts exist as independently existing entities to which the idea of ghosts corresponds. Instead, Spinoza claims that the cause of Boxel's belief is that ghosts only exist as ideas; ghosts and specters are entities of imagination. In defining ghosts as entities of imagination, Spinoza is not entirely denying the reality of these trifles; as

[82] These letters between Spinoza and Boxel are a set of six letters written in Dutch, most of them lost; but accessible to us through a Latin translation, perhaps done by Spinoza himself.

Gatens (1999) points out "on the contrary, it allows that reality to be properly investigated".[83] It is by understanding the operations of imagination, that the nature of ghosts is properly addressed. Since this is an entity produced by imagination that exists in the mind, its reality does not disappear but becomes an object for rational investigation. Spinoza claims that the creation of an entity of imagination results from the connection that the mind makes between a certain idea of an image and a certain affect. These entities come into being as a result of an operation of the mind upon its affects. Imagination is this operation where the mind turns what is absent, present. It is through imagination that the relation between the idea of an object and the image of the object is sustained. This connection between images and ideas occurs by the same mechanism that makes possible the connection between words and objects. In this sense, imagination is at the same time the condition for the generation of language, and the cause of a failure of language, that is, of the creation of entities that do not have reference. It is due to imagination that the mind is capable of connecting a word (image) with the object that it refers to in extension (object) or in thought (idea). In the case of ghosts, the ideas coming from the reading refer to both the words on the paper and the idea that the mind forms of the object to which those words are supposed to refer. Imagination creates ideas through two mechanisms: (1) it reflects the object that affects it, and (2) it is affected by the emotions of the imagining body itself. So, imagination is affected by another and it affects itself. For this reason, imagination ends up being a mechanism that generates entities where some entities have an external reference, and others do not. These entities are ideas in thought that have some level of reality. Although Spinoza is arguing against the existence of ghosts in his letter to Hugo Boxel, in this set of letters there is also

[83] Gatens & Loyd. *Collective Imaginings Spinoza, Past and Present.* New York: Routledge, 1999. p. 19

evidence for a positive metaphysics of imagination in Spinoza where the ideas of imagination exist as objects in thought that can be investigated with respect to their causes.

These brief considerations on the early developments of Spinoza's theory of imagination and his arguments on the letters can be taken as evidence for three general theses that will be demonstrated in this investigation: (1) that imagination has a complex metaphysics with a variety of kinds of imaginary beings that are considered under the same general heading of "ideas of imagination", (2) that these imaginary beings have different role in knowledge, and have different metaphysical status, but always some degree of reality, and, that, for those reasons, (3) Spinoza is offering a positive metaphysics of imagination. Those exegetical considerations serve as evidence to demonstrate that not all imaginary beings are equal but all of them are, in one way or another, real.

CHAPTER 3

IS SPINOZA'S THEORY OF IMAGINATION A REPLY TO ARISTOTLE AND DESCARTES?

As we have seen, the goal of this part of the dissertation is to consider Spinoza's works in context, examining it as a complex whole that goes beyond the *Ethics.* Spinoza's works took a long time to be constructed, and generations of scholars labored long to organize the manuscripts. In this quest to further develop the interpretation of Spinoza's works, one more layer of complexity should be added: the historical sources. The study of the sources is useful because Spinoza's philosophy is an answer to the philosophical problems of his time and a break from tradition. Understanding the sources is a way to broaden and deepen the understanding of Spinoza's thought. On the one hand, Spinoza's sources are very easy to spot. A reader of Descartes, Spinoza wrote his version of Descartes' *Principles of Philosophy* and most of his own metaphysics is an alternative to the problems that Descartes could not solve. Critiques of Descartes can be found all over Spinoza's writings. But on the other hand, the lively intellectual community of seventeenth century Europe produced various works that influenced Spinoza but are not readily available to the contemporary reader, making it harder to analyze other direct sources more closely.

This is the case when it comes to the influence of Aristotle on Spinoza's thought. Aristotle's influence was mediated by the Aristotelianism of Late Medieval and Early

Modern scholastics. Atilano Domínguez (1997),[84] for example, argues that through an analysis of Spinoza's lexicon, it is possible to track back the influence of the lexicon of, at least, Francesco Suárez and Heereboord. Suárez is not directly quoted in any of Spinoza's works, but Heereboord is. Heereboord wrote the *Meletemata*, a synthesis of Aristotelian logic and physics, a book that Spinoza read very closely. Suarez, for his part, wrote an extensive commentary on *De Anima.* Spinoza was very much influenced by Dutch and Spanish scholastic Aristotelianism and by Descartes and the Dutch Cartesian circle. Because Aristotelianism and Cartesianism are the philosophies with which Spinoza dialogues, a brief analysis of Aristotle's and Descartes' theory of faculties helps illuminate the problems Spinoza is addressing.

Spinoza's theory of imagination is emblematic of the transitions of the epoch, subverting the Aristotelian and the Cartesian models in a way that the tensions between the Aristotelian and the Cartesian model become evident in his theory, as one can see in his constant shift between an endorsement and a rejection of the powers of imagination. Spinoza criticized the Cartesian model of faculties and this suggests a *certain* similarity with Aristotle. Spinoza is not, however, endorsing Aristotelianism either. The consequence of combining tradition and novelty is that Spinoza's theory turned out to be the most controversial in its reception but the one with the largest influence in later modernity. I suspect that it is Spinoza's, not Descartes's, theory of imagination that sets the stage for the modern understanding of this mental activity. Spinoza's critique of the

[84] Domínguez reminds us that the historical studies on Spinoza became stronger after Hegel, especially after J. van Vloten discovered the manuscript of the Short Treatise (KV) in 1862. Domínguez shows us that many scholars (Apphun 1904, Curley 1985, Mignini 1986, Wolfson 1934, Gueroult 1968) accept that Spinoza was influenced by Spanish scholasticism, especially that of Francesco Suárez. Domínguez points to the papers of Ferrater Mora (1953), Lértora (1978), and of Freudenthal (1927) on the scholastic sources of Spinoza. Atilano Dominguez. "Las Fuentes de Los Cogitata Metaphysica. Analogias Lexicas con Suárez y Heereboord" in Spinoziana Ricerche di terinaologia filosofica e critica testuale. a cura di Pina Totaro. Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1997.

Cartesian model anticipates some later developments of a general and philosophical theory of imagination, such as those offered by Hume, Kant, and other philosophers from German Romanticism.[85]

I will begin by providing a historical background, investigating the nature and role of imagination in Aristotle, then I will show how the rationalism of Descartes depends upon a rejection of the Aristotelian paradigm.[86] This background serves the purpose of contextualizing the discussion, and showing how Spinoza is not only a symbol of epistemological tensions of the Enlightenment, but also sets the stage for the modern and contemporary understandings of imagination.

The Aristotelian model:

In the Aristotelian model of mental faculties[87], imagination is a faculty or disposition having two characteristics: (1) it is that in virtue of which we judge truly or falsely and (2) that in virtue of which we construct mental images. The first one

[85] See Israel (2001) and Klever (1993)

[86] Pasnau (2008) in his discussion of the mind-soul problem claims that Descartes's usage of the concept of soul is different from Aristotle's understanding of soul. Referring to the Replies to Gassendi in the *Meditations*, Pasnau indicates that Descartes understands that 'soul' should refer only to the principle by which we think and it should not include other aspects of human nature. In this sense, Descartes, by using '*mentis*' instead of *'animae'* is reducing "the principal form of human being" (*praecipua hominis forma*) to the mind so as to avoid referring to thought and extension through the same concept. For Aristotle, according to Pasnau, "the soul is the first, basic actuality that gives a body life, as distinct from those actualities responsible for the subsequent operations (motion, perception, thought) associated with life" and because of that, "if we are speaking as Aristotelians, then surely we do not want to threat the soul as just the mind."

[87] Aware of the difficulties for establishing an understanding of *phantasia* in Aristotle, I decided to focus on the theory that appears in *De Anima (DA)* where we can find his most developed view on imagination. According to Schofield (1995), the third chapter of the third book of *De Anima* can be considered as the "official and principal discussion" of Aristotle on imagination: "in that chapter lurk most of the pleasures and puzzles which the student of Aristotle's views on imagination will want to savour" because in there lies the set of the fundamental constructions and problems of his theory. However, according to Ross (1923), it is also important to investigate other places such as *De Memoria*, *De Sensu*, *De Somno*, *De Insomniis* and the *Metaphysics* where Aristotle makes use of *phantasia.* Considering the goal of this historical and comparative chapter, I will focus on *De Anima* but without limiting my analysis to the third chapter of the third book. In fact, I think that if one neglects chapter 7, the resulting theory of imagination will turn out to be a mere theory of representation.

constitutes its function and the second is the definition of its nature. This important definition appears in *De Anima* 427b27:

> If, then, imagination [*phantasia*] is that in virtue of which we say that a phantasm presents itself to us, and if we exclude the metaphorical use of the term, it is one of the faculties or dispositions in virtue of which we judge, and judge truly or falsely.

From this general definition of *phantasia*, Aristotle argues that imagination is not perception nor intellect. Imagination is a specific kind of movement of the soul.[88] Imagination fulfills an intermediary function that mediates the unity of sensory experience in common sense and the intellection of the forms of the objects through thought. The objects of imagination, the images or *phantasmatas*, are acted upon by the intellect, bringing it to an active exercise of judgement. Imagination integrates the lower and the higher faculties of the mind and for this reason it is vital to knowledge. According to Aristotle, "that is why the soul never things without an image"[89] (DA 431a17). Aristotle makes a strong claim about the nature of the intellect and its relation to imagination: the intellect never thinks without images and it is only when engaged with images that the intellect is moved to act.

In the second part (2) of Aristotle's definition, imagination is characterized as that in virtue of which we say that a phantasm presents itself to us.[90] A phantasm is an image that appears in the mind either with or without an external object to generate it, and imagination is the faculty that produces these mental images. These images generated by

[88] It is only in chapter 7 of book three that the definition of imagination as the means for judgment will become clear.
[89] DA III.7, 431a17 (*Dió oúdépote noei aneu phantásmatos he psyké*) Translation of Barnes. The Complete Works of Aristotle. Volume 1. p.685.
[90] DA III.3, 428a1. The definition according to Barnes' translation is "imagination is that in virtue of which an image arises for us". The definition appears in a question on the nature of imagination, it is not part of a declarative claim.

imagination (*phantasmata*) are different from the images formed by sight, so this faculty should not be confused with the organ of vision.[91] While seeing implies the appearance of visual images - and therefore physical images- coming from an object which is being seen, the images of imagination are mental. This means that they are not sensorial themselves although they are always associated with the sensory qualities that caused the mental images to be produced. Since the definition of imagination is posterior to the arguments for the existence of the five senses and of the common sense, in the order of deduction of the faculties, imagination is conditioned upon the existence of the senses.[92] Moreover, the image of imagination is not the same as the image from perception - perception includes sight, touch, smell, hearing or taste - because while perception involves the presence of the perceived object, the imaginative mind can have an image without an object being present, such as when one is dreaming. These images of imagination are not themselves sensation and are also not generated by the intellect, although reason can interfere in the judgement of these produced images and these images are caused by the sensory perceptions. Imagination is then an intermediary faculty that lies between perception and reason giving the conditions for genuine intellection. Aristotle's defines imagination as the faculty that is responsible for the emergence of

[91] Sight has a major role to play in the construction of this unity since it allows the mind to discern perceptible objects and retain the object without its matter. Nevertheless, images of objects can remain in the sense organs even when the objects are absent, meaning that we can form images of the sensations coming from the five senses even after having had them. It is from the combination of sight and common sense that the faculty of imagination emerges.Imagination, however, is not the combination of sight and common sense. It is an activity or a movement that is caused by the combination of sight and common sense. Sight is understood by Aristotle as being the one among the five senses that is the paradigm for sense perception. For this reason, it is also the sense most influential in the appearance of phantasms in the mind. Aristotle in DA 429a4 highlights the etymology of *phantasia* (imagination): "And, since sight is the paradigm for sense perception, imagination has derived its name (*phantasia*) from light (*phaos*), because without light one cannot see." This is my translation to English from the Portuguese translation by Lucas Angioni. Barnes translates as "As sight is the most highly developed sense, the name *phantasia* (imagination) has been formed from *phaos* (light) because it is not possible to see without light".

[92] It is in the first three chapters of the third book of DA that this deduction appears. The argument for the existence of the five senses is the initial step in the demonstration that the different sensations coming from each sense organ appear to the percipient subject as a unity. In the argument, Aristotle is appealing to the ordinary experience.

mental images resulting from the unity of sense perception. However, it is the function of imagination in knowledge that characterizes the Aristotelian model because it is also what distinguishes his view from other traditional views.[93]

The function of imagination appears in (1), the first part of Aristotle's definition in DA 3.3 427a15: judgment does not occur without imagination, so imagination is a condition for judgement. But how does judgment happen? Sensations coming from perception are always true because they involve the presence of external objects and they are an effect of the object on the perceiving subject. They are true not in the same sense that we call a statement true, they are true in the sense that they are what they are supposed to be without failure: they are the effect of the interaction between an external body and the perceiving body. Imagination, on the other hand, may be true or false because an image produced by imagination can fail to refer to that of which it is an image, or because the image constructed by imagination can misrepresent what is actually true of the object (or what is true about the object with respect to the always true judgment of the intellect).

For example, Aristotle considers that the image of the sun produced in the eyes and becoming an image in the mind is an example of a false image. When we see the sun, we perceive it as if it were an object measuring one foot. The immediate perception of the sun produces the imagination (the idea or judgment) that the sun is a yellow object in the sky measuring one foot. However, we continue to observe the distance between the sun and the earth and, with the aid of the intellect, we calculate the size of the sun and arrive at the conclusion that the sun is much larger than a foot. That the sun is larger than a foot

[93] Such as, for example, the Stoic's and Plato's view on imagination.

is a conclusion that does not come from perception or imagination alone, since the sun appears to the eye as a small object and consequently to the mind as a small object. But after reasoning about this event and calculating the distances, the mind then has to account for the coexistence of two judgments: "the object that measures one foot" and "the object that is larger than a foot". Aristotle's quick solution to this impasse is to say that the mind rationally judges the first imagination as false and rejects it. For Aristotle, both cannot be true at the same time and since the intellect always judges truly, the imagination is responsible, by elimination, for the false judgment.

The explanation that the judgment of imagination is false and the judgment of intellect is always true does not address the fundamental problem: how is it possible for imagination to misrepresent an object if it is also, in one sense, representing it? Imagination represents the object in a strong sense because it is carrying the form of the object to the mind. Aristotle even argues that the perception of an object and the object are one and the same. So, if it is carrying the form of an object, how can the phantasm (or the image) be false in first place? Aristotle's account of misrepresentation cannot be explained by appealing to imagination alone. Because imagination is an intermediary activity, in order to answer this question it is necessary to appeal to the activities that come immediately before and after imagination. The answer then has two parts: one involving the relationship between imagination and common sense, and the other involving its relation to the intellect.

The explanation coming from the activity of common sense is effective because imagination derives from the function of sensory organs. The perception of an object appears to the individual as a unity because the faculty of common sense unifies in a

single perception what the senses had perceived separately. Since each sense has a particular function and each sensory organ receives the sensation that it was constituted to receive, the object of experience is perceived separately by each organ. That is, a single and unified object is perceived in its multiplicity of characteristics through different sensations. All the qualities of the tangible are perceived through touch, all the qualities of sight are perceived through seeing, and each sensory organ captures a different kind and quality of the same object. It is when the senses begin to perceive incidentally the proper objects of other senses, that all the different perceptions begin to become unified in common sense. For example, the visual experience of bile indicates that it is yellow and the experience of taste indicates that it is bitter. When perceiving yellow, the sight is capturing the sensorial yellow quality of the object and when it is perceiving bitter, the taste is perceiving the sensorial bitterness of the object. This simultaneous experience of different sensorial properties leads the mind to infer that these properties belong to the same object, and this inference is an activity that is proper to common sense. Imagination, then, forms an image of the perceived object retaining its characteristics without retaining its matter (or sensorial qualities). This image or phantasm allows the mind to discern objects because their properties remain in the mind even after the sensible object has ceased to be experienced. So, when does the misrepresentation occur? The mind can misrepresent the object while reconstructing its unity according to the qualities perceived by the senses. The image can lead the mind to false judgments by making one sensory organ perceive incidentally the qualities of other sensory organs, e.g. the mind can infer that all yellow objects taste bitter, because bile is yellow and bitter. So, in this sense, the image is said to be false, because it does not serve

as a good standard for judging either the actual experience or the future experiences. But it is not the image itself that carries false content; the falsity is a result of inferring from an incidental perception.

Another explanation is the one coming from the relationship between imagination and the intellect. When there is a conflict between an image and a judgment of the intellect, then the image is taken as an object leading to the continuation of a process. In order to further analyze this process we have to appealed to principles coming from Aristotelian metaphysics and remember that for Aristotle the faculties are exercised through a dynamic process of potentiality and actualization. From this theory of potency and act, we can infer that when the mind has an imagination that is contradictory with a thought, imagination actualizes itself. For example, the sun was seen as measuring one foot but after making calculations, the mind realized that it measures more than a foot and rejects the image of the sun as a false one. But then again, it is not the case that mind will reject all imaginations. In fact, imagination is caused by the intellect to actualize itself, so when the sun is seen again, the sun is taken to be "an object that *appears* to measure one foot - but in fact measures more than one foot". In this way, the thought that the sun measures more than a foot can coexist consistently with the imagination that the sun appears to measure one foot. Then, in another moment in the process of actualization of imagination, the reasoning mind takes the false image as an object and investigates why a distant object appears to the mind as smaller than it actually is and concludes that the image is not false, but indicative of the size of the relationship between the sun and the eye. In this sense, the image misrepresents the object, because it is a representation not only of the object, but of the object in relation to the perceiving individual.

In all these cases, the imagination is associating the perceptions from sensory experience that are unified in common sense and generating a mental image that gathers all the different sensations into a single mental object that is susceptible to being judged and is an object to the rational mind. The main point in these examples is to show that imagination is part of the thinking process in Aristotle and is not merely perception, although sensory experience is indirectly responsible for causing these *coup d'œils.* Even more importantly is the fact that, in Aristotle, imagination produces objects that are a necessary part of the thinking process causing reason to act.

So this is the nature of imagination: it is a faculty that produces images that are formed by the perception of the unity of objects and these images remain in the mind in the absence of the external object. These images constructed by imagination carry the form of the object that had been captured by the senses. Hence, there is no imagination without sensory perception (united in and through common sense). The function of imagination is to carry the form of the object to the intellect and to keep the form associated with sensations and the reasoning about the forms. In carrying the form of the sensible objects to the mind, imagination judges and causes the intellect to think. The intellect is a capacity that does not come to actuality if it is not stimulated to act. In this sense, there is no thinking without imagination. Hence, in Aristotle, there is no intellect without imagination and no imagination without sense-perception (common sense).

In conclusion, taking into consideration that what is of interest here is the nature and function of imagination, the Aristotelian model of faculties can be summarized in the following points: imagination is that according to which we judge, it is that according to which a phantasm is present to the mind, and, more importantly, imagination and its

objects (the phantasms) are the conditions for knowledge of external objects and of the thinking mind. This model was generally accepted in the Middle Ages and by most of the Aristotelian philosophers (Aquinas, Avicena, Averroes, Maimonides). During Early Modernity, the period of rejection of the old Aristotelian science, this model was challenged. Although it was first accepted and used by Descartes in his early writings on imagination (*Rules for the Direction of the Mind*), it was rejected in the later writings (*Discourse on Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy*). It was the Descartes of the later writings who entered history and impacted the philosophical debates of the following centuries. The groundbreaking elements of the later writings are anti-Aristotelian and incompatible with the previous scholastic model of faculty psychology. In the following, I will reconstruct Descartes's view of the relationship among sensory perception, imagination, and intellect so as to show the alleged incompatibility. Finally, I will show in the second part of the dissertation that Spinoza's theory of faculties is an original and unprecedented solution to the problem.

The Cartesian model:

There are two places to look for Descartes's theory of imagination: the *Rules for the Direction of the Mind* (1628) and the *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641), the first contains his early theory and the second his late theory of imagination. The main difference between the early and the late theory of imagination lies not with respect to the nature of the faculty, but its role in knowledge. Descartes starts with an optimistic view of imagination, where imagination has a positive and pivotal role in knowledge due to its

instrumental character and the properties of the contents it produces. He then shifts his theory to one that, although it does not disregard imagination completely, is pessimistic with respect to the reliability of the contents of imagination. In the later theory, imagination remains instrumental for the application and construction of the method but its products are considered to be false and deceitful. While the early theory has a lot of similarities with the Aristotelian model, the later theory is incompatible with it because true knowledge can only be acquired to the detriment of imagination.

It is in the RDM that Descartes claims imagination to be important for knowledge both because of the character of the content it produces and because of its instrumental nature. In this work, written twenty years prior to the *Meditations*, the mind is conceived as consisting of a single cognitive power that is separated into different faculties depending on the function that the cognitive power is performing. This cognitive power is called *ingenium*, an innate and individually embodied cognitive capacity that is used as synonymous with *vis cognoscens*.[94] Among the functions performed by the *ingenium*, the most important for knowing is imagination. With imagination, the mind has the capacity to organize and reorder the images that capture the simple nature of objects. Imagination has an instrumental function in knowledge because it is the faculty that orders the images of objects in the mind. The organization is a chief part of the cognitive process because it is due to an ordered sequence that the mind is then able to deduce truths by going through

[94] Schlutz (2009) claims that there is a metaphysical shift from the RDM to the *Meditations* that is exemplified by the shift from the *ingenium* to the *cogito:* "It is in the Meditations, where Descartes turns to those metaphysical problems with which the RDM are not concerned, that imagination becomes problematic in a way unprecedented in the *mathesis universalis* Descartes had begun to develop in 1625. In the metaphysical shift from *ingenium* to *cogito*, imagination loses its place among the fundamental mental operations of the self" In *Mind's World: imagination and subjectivity from Descartes to Romanticism.* University of Washington Press, 2009. (p.47) See also Schlutz characterization of *ingenium* in p.43

them as swiftly as possible.[95] Also, imagination is the faculty that is responsible for true understanding since it is necessary for the ordering of images which in turn allows the mind to make deductions and enumerations (inductions).

In the RDM, the origin of mistakes does not lie in the content of the images or the nature of the images. Mistakes are explained by appealing to the unity of body and mind. Since the cognitive power can work independently from its expression in the bodily function, when this power becomes pure intellect and gains autonomy, it ends up being responsible for errors. This is so because pure intellect can judge material objects as if they were independent from matter and when the intellect does not take into account the corporeal aspect of the object, it makes mistakes. Most of these mistakes are the misjudgment of simple natures as if they were compound natures and vice-versa. Imagination, then, has the auxiliary function of guiding the intellect to the truth of the corporeal natures given that the intellect, when acting alone, can misjudge a particular experience as if it were universal.

Imagination in the RDM also has the role of providing true content because it is the faculty that produces the images of objects in the mind. Descartes explains this content related claim though the discussion of the ability of the mind to grasp simple natures from experience. In this discussion, it is clear that imagination can also be responsible for mistakes; not insofar as it is the faculty that allows us to grasp the external object, but because it offers the object to the mind according to the order of experience

[95] It is important to note that the *ingenium* in the *RDM* is constituted by three operations *intuitus*, *deductio* and *enumeratio* (*inductio*). Sepper (1988) explains that deduction in the *RDM* is similar to having a single intuition. He also claims that imagination has a pivotal role in the acquisition of science in the *Regulae* and that Descartes has a faculty psychology that is much more intimately connected with the body than the one in the later writings. Imagination is then responsible for the construction of method and for problem solving. This is the case because for deduction to take place, imagination has to arrange and order the images in a way that the mind can best "see" the order and connection of things in order to deduce new truths.

and not the order of intellect. For example, when the *ingenium* perceives an object from experience, imagination sees it as a simple unity because it perceives the object in all of the properties that it takes to make the object what it is (shape, color, size, etc). However, according to the intellect, a simple object of imagination is actually a compound intellectual object consisting in a diversity of simple properties such as extension, shape, size, color, etc. Imagination, then, provides the true content of experience to the mind but it is the function of the intellect to order the images and this content in a way that is true according to the criterion of the intellect. If the intellect is able to reorganize the order of experience provided by imagination and turn it into the order of the intellect, then mistakes can be avoided. In any case, imagination does not offer false content to the mind, and the images do refer to the objects of which they are images.

The true representation of the content is possible because imagination is closer to experience than the intellect. Imagination perceives and reconstructs the objects quasi-immediately (because they first appear to the common sense), whereas the intellect is an activity that is further away from experience and is therefore further away from the true nature of corporeal things. This quasi-immediate character of imagination is illustrated through the analogy of the seal and the wax in Rule 12. In the analogy, Descartes gives the impression that there is an immediacy and directness of the information captured by the senses to imagination and finally to the intellect without loss of information in the process. Just like the wax that takes the shape of the seal, the senses are shaped by the external objects:

> we must think of the external shape of the sentient body as being really changed by the object in exactly the same way as the shape of the surface of the wax is

> altered by the seal. This is the case, we must admit, not only when we feel some body as having a shape, as being hard or rough to the touch etc., but also when we have a tactile perception of heat or cold and the like. The same is true of other senses: thus, in the eye, the first opaque membrane receives the shape impressed upon it by the multi-colored light; and in the ears, the nose and the tongue, the first membrane which is impervious to the passage of the object thus takes on a new shape from the sound, the smell and the flavor respectively. (PW, 1, p .40)

Descartes considers that the senses receive the shape of things, by taking the form of these things just as if it were wax receiving an imprint. The figure received by the sense organ is conveyed to common sense immediately, and then from common sense to imagination. The motion from the external object to the sense, then from the sense to common sense and finally from common sense to imagination is a single motion that results in the imprint. If the sensory organs are shaped as if they were wax tablets, then the common sense functions like a seal that will take the shape that the objects left in the sensory organs and carry it to shape the imagination. The imagination then is both like a seal and wax. It is a wax because it takes the imprint of common sense, and it is a seal because the shaped wax will, by its turn, act on the intellect.

Imagination or *phantasia*, according to this analogy, is a "genuine part of the body" which is "large enough to allow different parts of it to take on many different figures" and even retain them for some time. Although Descartes defines sense-perception, common sense and imagination as faculties belonging to the body, he ends the description of the nature of faculties by claiming that the cognitive power (*vis cognoscens*) is one and the same and is purely spiritual. In all the functions (imaginative,

common sense, etc.), the cognitive power is sometimes active, sometimes passive, sometimes it resembles a seal, sometimes wax. Since it is purely spiritual, the claim that it resembles a seal or wax and is caused by these bodily movements is "merely an analogy, for nothing quite like this power is to be found in corporeal things." This conflict between a bodily imagination and a purely intellectual imagination will remain in the later writings. In the RDM, imagination has the ability to grasp an external object, reproduce the information perceived by the senses conveying it to the mind. Imagination is a faculty that bridges the intellect and experience, and, as such, necessary to the intuition of objects of a corporeal nature. Descartes claims that when the mind is perceiving an external object, at this very moment, imagination is directly reproducing the characteristics that compose that object which is present to the mind. This reproduction, he says, exactly corresponds to the way in which the mind is perceiving it (PW, 1, p.47).[96]

Here we already have a difference with respect to Aristotle. For Aristotle, imagination captures the forms and is responsible for providing information to the intellect on what the object is like. But for Descartes, and this is already apparent in the

[96] Sepper (1988) claims that Descartes's idea is that there is an instantaneous rigid transmission between senses, imagination and intellect. And that this idea could only be made in the moments prior to his anatomical studies (which began in 1630s and lead to the *Le Monde* and *Passions of the Soul*). After the studies of the mechanisms of the body, Descartes would have realized that this psychophysiological hypothesis was untenable: "the transmission of images was neither perfect, nor rigid, nor probably even instantaneous; in fact it was not so much transmission of an integral image as the tugging at multiple nerve fibers (or the flow of spirits in the nerves), each of which could transmit information concerning only a tiny part of the image. Moreover, only motion was transmitted; nothing like hue or tone, or even image or impression, would be identifiable in these nerve events. As a result, what arrived at the *phantasia* from the external world would have no great cognitive value, and the ability of the imagination (the *vis cognoscens* applying itself to the *phantasia*) to modify images presented to it, to recall old ones, and to invent new would amount to the unrestricted play of fantasy." p.534 in Sepper 1988. I agree with Sepper to a certain extent. It seems that imagination exactly represents how the object appears to the mind and not how the object is in itself. Descartes in the *RDM* also considers that imagination can be responsible for mistakes, although this claim appears quickly in a small passage: "while he [the wise man] will judge that whatever comes to him form his imagination really is depicted in it, he will never assert that it passes, complete and unaltered, from the external world to his senses, and from his senses to the corporeal imagination unless he already has some other grounds for claiming to know this." (p.47) So, in the *Regulae*, Descartes claims that imagination is a useful and a necessary tool to knowing simple natures that belong to the body and common notion, but when imagination composes entities, then it is a source of deceit.

RDM, imagination - even when it provides true content coming from the direct impression of the objects in the senses - reproduces the object in a way that corresponds to the way in which the individual is perceiving the object. In any case, the point here for Descartes is that imagination is able to provide images that represent its content truthfully in so far as the content is considered to be the relation between the object and the perceiving subject. Another difference is that for Descartes, imagination provides the characteristics of the corporeal nature of the object such as color and shape while the intellect has already and prior to experience the concept of the object perceived. In Aristotle, it is imagination which carries the forms of the object - without its matter - to the intellect causing it to think. This difference in the causal interaction between imagination and intellect will become more prominent in the *Meditations* where imagination is excluded from the essential nature of the *cogito*. The difference is present in the arguments for the deduction of the *cogito* that includes another wax analogy.

It is clear then that the analogy of the wax in the RDM has a very different role than the analogy of the wax in the *Meditations.* Although both are used to tell something about the nature of the mind, in the RDM the wax/seal represents the mechanisms of imagination and in the *Meditations* the wax is an object that is being perceived by the mind and is an example that is used to prove the innate character of ideas. In analyzing the shift in Descartes's theory of imagination in these works, we can perceive that the shift accompanies a difference in the metaphysical status of corporeal things. The main argument in the *Meditations* is that the senses deceive and the human mind is better known than the body, whereas in the RDM, corporeal natures could be known by the mind through imagination due to its ability to grasp the simple natures. In the RDM, the

intellect can be deceived by its autonomous nature. In the *Meditations*, the intellect is never the source of errors and its autonomous character is what grounds all that can be known. The wax argument in the *Meditations* serves to show that there is a priority of the mental over the material and that the mind is only capable of experiencing an object as persisting in time and space because the mind itself has the ability to perceive the object. This is expressed in the conclusion of the analogy: "I must therefore admit that the nature of this piece of wax is in no way revealed by my imagination, but is perceived by the mind alone" (PW, 2, p.21). Since the mind alone (pure intellect) is able to perceive the object, it is able to experience it changing and still understand it as a single unity. The analogy of the wax in the *Meditations* is an argument for the nativism, an argument that implies that although all content coming from imagination and the senses is false and deceitful, the mind is able to have true ideas if it relies on the intellect and its innate objects.

The shift in the role of imagination from the RDM to the *Meditations* can be explained through the foundational role of the *cogito*. The *cogito* as a safe ground for knowledge results in the restriction of the role of imagination and in the exclusion of its objects (and its contents) from the process[97]. The objects of imagination are no longer considered as truthful representations of external objects, instead they are taken to be images that misrepresent objective reality. Imagination has now the potential to jeopardize knowledge and should be controlled and even excluded from reasoning. The images produced by imagination cease to be considered as true representations of objects

[97] According to Schlutz 2009: "René Descartes, for example, forcefully excludes imagination from his conception of the cogito, convinced that the deceptive and misleading products of this image-producing faculty could play no part in the abstract certainty of self-reflexive thought. Hence, the Cartesian cogito is, from its inception into philosophical discourse, defined against imagination." p.4

because there is nothing in the images themselves that guarantees that the content they have actually captures the external reality. Descartes puts into question this representational capacity by doubting the information coming from the senses and associated with the senses, and the result of the questioning was that the only thing that cannot be put into question is the very capacity to think. The *cogito* is then defined with the exclusion of imagination from its essential nature:

> I thus realize that none of the things that the imagination enables me to grasp is at all relevant to this knowledge of myself which I possess, and that the mind must therefore be most carefully diverted from such things if it is to perceive its own nature as distinctly as possible. (PW, 2, p.19)

From this passage, it is clear that imagination should be kept to a minimum and it is not that according to which knowledge of oneself, and consequently the knowledge of anything else which is possible to know, happens. However, imagination is not completely excluded from the *cogito*: "But what then am I? A thing that thinks. What is that? A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, is unwilling, and also imagines and has sensory perceptions." (*ibid*) Imagination is part of the *cogito*, but it is not through imagination that the cogito will know itself because the cogito is "this puzzling "I" which cannot be pictured in the imagination." (AT, 2, p.29).

It is important to note, however, that although the objects of imagination are considered to be doubtful and therefore cannot offer stable foundations for knowledge, imagination does play an instrumental and methodological role. It is due to the false and unreliable nature of its objects that the hyperbolic doubt can be entertained. Also, the dream argument and the evil demon argument are both based on hypotheses that are

engendered by imagination. Imagination in the *Meditations* becomes then purely instrumental because it can, at least, help the intellect to find its firm foundations. As we have seen before, although imagination has a role in the method, its objects are only considered in their falsity of content. Hence, imagination does not have any role in providing true objects to the mind[98]. This pessimism with respect to the content of imaginary representations is a fundamental cause of the puzzle of sensory representation[99] which brings problems to the Cartesian project that will latter be addressed by Spinoza.

After this brief analysis of the RDM and the *Meditations,* it becomes easier to see how the Cartesian model of faculty psychology is not only different but also inconsistent with the Aristotelian. The wax argument in the *Meditations* indicates that Descartes' conception of the intellect is completely opposed to that of Aristotle. In Aristotle, the intellect does not actually exist prior to when the mind starts thinking. Rather, the intellect is caused to exist by the activity of imagination. In contrast, in Descartes the intellect precedes all experience and is the condition for imagination to perceive the objects of the senses as unified objects. In Descartes, the imagination does not cause the intellect to think, but it is the intellect that conditions the expression of imagination. In

[98] Schlutz has a stronger claim: "A close reading of Descartes' philosophical texts (…) reveals that poetic inspiration and divine enthusiasm leave stronger traces in Descartes thought than one might expect, exposing an irrational moment at the foundation of the philosophical system that lies outside the subject's control. At the same time, Descartes cannot hide the representational and hence fictional nature of the cogito, which emerges as a narrative product of the Cartesian text no matter how persistently Descartes attempts to divest it of any representational remnants. Thus, the very centerpiece of Cartesian philosophy depends upon the faculty of imagination that Descartes has so rigorously attempted to exclude from it." So, Schlutz considers that the cogito is a product of Descartes's imagination and that all theses on *Meditations* depend upon imagination. I agree with that only to a certain extent. The theses depend upon imagination insofar as it is an instrument, but not insofar as it provides the structure of ideas or even their content. Descartes is an internalist in the *Meditations* and this should be captured by a theory of imagination.

[99] This puzzle elaborated by DeRosa (2010) is at the very core of the discussion of the dissertation. It says the following: if imagination is capturing somehow the objects of experience, how is it possible to misrepresent them at all? This puzzle is important because it shows that if Descartes is completely ignoring the true content of the objects of imagination, then this indicates that knowledge of experience is impossible.

the *Meditations*, imagination does not lose its cognitive character because it is still characterized due to its proximity to experience, but it loses its former pivotal role in knowledge acquisition. It is undeniable that imagination plays a certain role in knowledge in the *Meditations* for it is that through which radical doubt and suppositions such as the evil genius and the dreaming hypothesis are possible. Nevertheless, this role of imagination does not come from the truth of its objects (the true nature of images), but due to its capacity to create false images or images that do not represent objects as they are. Imagination ceases to be the faculty that provides true objects for the mind, causing or helping the intellect to think, and begins being characterized as a faculty that provides false objects. Most of the time, these objects cause mental confusion, but if properly used, they can aid the intellect. In any case, for Descartes, imagination does not cause the intellect to think; it is the intellect that can use imagination to its advantage. Also, the intellect in Descartes has existential priority over imagination and the mind intuits before it imagines.

In conclusion, I argued that Aristotle holds that imagination causes the intellect to act, being a necessary part of the thinking activity. This is the case because imagination generates images (phantasms) that carry the forms to the intellect and at the same time it is a kind of judgment of sensory experience that can be true or false. I also argued that, on the other hand, Descartes claims that imagination does not cause the intellect to act, because the intellect is separate and is prior to imagination. In this introduction, I tried to show that Aristotle's theory of imagination is in opposition to Descartes' in order to situate Spinoza's theory of imagination in the discussions of the seventeenth century and show how his philosophy is in dialogue with the tradition.

Spinoza between Aristotle and Descartes

Spinoza's theory of imagination results from a reaction towards Descartes's late theory of faculties. In criticizing Descartes, Spinoza ends up with a theory of imagination that - although very different - has a lot in common with the ancient and medieval Aristotelian theory of imagination.[100] However, it is important to note that this hypothesis does not entail any specific claim about a deliberate and voluntary association of Spinoza with Aristotelianism or even a claim focusing merely on his explicit reactions towards and against Cartesianism. When we ask about the influences of other philosophers on Spinoza, it is important to take into account the fact that Spinoza rarely cites the names of the philosophers he is criticizing. But there are a few exceptions to this rule, and two of them are Aristotle and Descartes.

With respect to Aristotle, for example, in the preface of the *TTP*, Spinoza refers to the "delusions of the Aristotelians" and in the Ep56 to Hugo Boxel he states "the opinion of Plato, Aristotle and Socrates carries little weight to me". But still, it is not clear whether the reaction to Aristotle is due merely to the philosophical context of the seventeenth century or whether it comes from the fact that Spinoza read Aristotle. There are some scholars trying to show that Spinoza closely read Aristotle, but even if their

[100] I will develop these ideas further at the end of this dissertation. At this point, it is important to note, as Chauí (1999) argues, that Spinoza and Aristotle had very distinct metaphysical principles guiding their philosophies and that this makes their epistemology incomparable such are the strength of their differences. I do agree that Spinoza and Aristotle work with different metaphysical principles, but I think that they agree with respect to the claim that "imagination causes the intellect to think" at least to a certain extent. This cannot be shown at this point and will be left here hanging as mere speculation.

hypothesis is correct, it does not tell us much about the relationships that we are trying to discover in order to evaluate their similarities and differences.[101]

Although scholars like Manzini claim that Spinoza read Aristotle (and that he read the specific edition from 1548), Melamed (2011), for example, considers that this finding is trivial given that it is certain that Aristotle was a main source of debate in the epoch and Spinoza was, just like his contemporaries, engaged with Aristotelism and anti-Aristotelism.[102] Aristotelian positions dominated the philosophical discussions of the period because Aristotle was part of the curriculum of the major European universities[103], so it is vague and uninformative to say that Spinoza was answering or criticizing Aristotelianism. Although Spinoza cites Aristotle and the Peripatetics in the *TTP* and taking into account the fact that Seventeenth century philosophers were in constant dialogue with scholastic thinkers and Spinoza, in particular, with medieval Hebrew versions of Aristotle's commentaries (Avicena and Averroes), there is still room to doubt whether Spinoza had read Aristotle or whether he only had access to commentators. I think that none of these historical hypothesis is decisive, including the one that says that there is still room for doubt because if we analyze the inventory of Spinoza's personal

[101] Manzini (2009), for example, argues that it was due to a typo in an edition of the *Metaphysics* that scholars were able to find the exact version of Aristotle that Spinoza had access and read. This typo had been reproduced by Spinoza in the text of the *Cogitata Metaphysica*, the appendix to his book on *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy*. Manzini was able to trace the typo (a reference to book XI instead of book XII of *Metaphysics*) back to an edition of Aristotle's work printed in Basel in 1548 by Johannes Oporinus. Manzini claims that his discovery indicates that Spinoza read Aristotle very closely. See Manzini, Frédéric. *Spinoza: Une Lecture d'Aristote*. PUF, 2009.

[102] Melamed, Y. "Spinoza: Une Lecture d'Aristote (review)" in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Vol.49, 1, January 2011.

[103] According to Stone (2002), there are some dangers in talking about the Scholastic Aristotelianism and Aristotelianism in general because the terminology is too vague, sometimes referring to a commonality of principles and some other times to shared problems among certain thinkers and Aristotle. Stone points out that Aristotle's significance is due to his place in the curriculum of major universities, what ended establishing Aristotelian positions that dominated the discussions of the Early Modern period. Stone argues that the Aristotelianism of the Early Modern period is more varied and pluralistic than commonly assumed. He claims that one of the chief products of Aristotelian Scholasticism is the philosophical textbook. These arguments can be found in "Aristotelianism and Scholasticism in Early Modern Philosophy" in Nadler (ed.), *A Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*. Blackwell Publishing, 2002. (p.7-24)

library we will find that there are only commentaries on Aristotle and no books of Aristotle.[104] In my view, these hypotheses are very speculative and may lead us to lose the focus of the philosophical problems at hand. Despite the fact that the real extent of the influence of Aristotelianism on Spinoza can lead to an interesting insight into the history of ideas, it is the comparative analysis of their metaphysical and epistemological views that is central to the philosophical debate. This analysis can be done regardless of whether Spinoza read Aristotle closely, whether he read only the commentaries, or was influenced by the discussion of the time.

Prima facie, the relation between Spinoza and Descartes seems easier to establish because whereas Aristotle is almost never cited in Spinoza's works, Descartes is not only cited but is also the object of one of Spinoza's books. Although it seems easier, the distance between Spinoza and Descartes is even harder to establish than that between Spinoza and Aristotle. Spinoza is said to have begun to philosophize as a Cartesian because in his early work - *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy* - Spinoza himself claims to be reconstructing and adding to the *The Principles of Philosophy* of Descartes. The extent of Spinoza's association with Cartesianism is problematic and becomes a matter of dispute because there are three different moments of Spinoza's works and of scholarship to be analyzed and taken into consideration: the alignment with Descartes in the *PPC* and other early works, the rejection of Cartesianism in the *Ethics* and the late works, and finally, the reception of Spinoza's works and the tradition of interpretation.

[104] One method used by scholars to map the philosophers that Spinoza have in mind while making his criticisms or the philosophers that are underlying influences in his philosophy is to look to the library that Spinoza have left. The inventory of the goods of Spinoza contains a list of 160 books that constituted his personal library. See Van Rooijen, A. J. Servas. *Inventaire des livres formant la bibliothèque de Bénédict Spinoza*. La Haye, Martins Nijhoff. 1889.

Barbone & Rice (1998) in the introduction to the *PPC* explain that this was Spinoza's first published work and the only one that was printed under his own name. Spinoza's friend Lodewijk Meyer was responsible for the publication and he was supposed to write a preface to the work. The correspondence between Spinoza and Meyer (Ep 13 and Ep 15) regarding the preface and publication seem to indicate that Spinoza was willing to be seen as adhering to Descartes's position and not as a critic.[105] This correspondence, however, also leaves in the air whether this intention was because of Spinoza's agreement with Descartes's philosophical theses in his *Principles of Philosophy* or whether the request was coming out of fear of rejection. The case of the *PPC*, *CM* and the *KV* are similar to one another with respect to the difficulty in addressing the extent of Spinoza's critique. All of the early writings seem to be marked by a trace of Cartesianism.

As in the case of Spinoza and Aristotle, the main difficulty lies in trying to evaluate the extent of the distance between Cartesian and Spinozistic theses while appealing to things to which we cannot have access such as Spinoza's personal intentions and what he was thinking. I will avoid taking this stance and speculating on Spinoza's mental states. As much as possible I will attach myself to the analysis of the texts,

[105] Reading the correspondence we can see the history of the production of the *PPC*. Spinoza first dictated it to Caesarius, a pupil living in his house at Rijnsburg. Then he asked his friends to edit the manuscript for style and prepare a preface saying that he, Spinoza, did not accept Descartes's views and that in the PPC readers would find claims contrary to Descartes. Meyer, the friend responsible for the publication and edition for the book wrote the preface including the requested note. Spinoza in Ep 15 then retracts from the former request, and disapproves Meyer's preface. Spinoza asks for the preface to be more mildly written and in a way that his allegiance to Descartes is made explicit: "I should like you to mention that many of my demonstrations are arranged in a way different from that of Descartes, not to correct Descartes, but only the better to preserve my order of exposition and thus to avoid increasing the number of axioms. And it is also for the same reason that I have had to prove many things that Descartes merely asserts without proof, and to add other things that Descartes omitted. Finally, my dear friend, I beg you most earnestly to leave out what you wrote at the end against that petty man, and to delete it entirely. And although I have many reasons for making this request of you, I shall mention only one. I should like everyone to be able readily to accept that this publication is meant for the benefit of all men, and that in publishing this book you are motivated only by a wish to spread the truth (…) This everyone will readily believe when he sees that no one is attached, and that nothing is advanced that might be offensive to some person." Ep 15

although at some times, Spinoza's historical, social or personal context will be cited for the sake of providing illustrations and background. Even if I focus the analysis only on the texts, we would still have problems - and perhaps that is what makes the exegesis such an interesting endeavor - because the writings themselves are not clear. Spinoza and Descartes often use the same terminology but with different meanings (see, for example, substance, *conatus,* clear idea, mind, etc.) and sometimes we need to use later works to be able to interpret early works that are silent on a particular topic. So, the complexity of the texts together with the contextual and historical proximity between Spinoza and Descartes, makes the task of distinguishing these philosophers not trivial. One of the goals of this dissertation is to be able to find what is distinctive about Spinoza's theory of imagination and how his project is different from the project of Descartes - and of Aristotle as well.

Concerning the difficulties in textual interpretation, there are those coming from the fact that in his late works, at the same time that he is building upon Cartesian conceptions, Spinoza is explicitly rejecting and distancing himself from Descartes. Spinoza's critiques are present in the *Ethics* and the *TIE.* Some examples are the preface of part III and of part V of the *Ethics* where he explicitly argues against Cartesian ideas such as the mind-body distinction, Descartes's theory of mental faculties, and the role of emotions in knowledge. We can even read the *TIE* as Spinoza's answer to Descartes's *Discourse on Method,* and as a rejection of Cartesian methodological grounds. For Descartes, the strength and safety of our knowledge building depends on a careful scrutiny of beliefs which happens through the careful application of the method of hyperbolic doubt. Hence, for Descartes, truth is a consequence from doubt, and doubt is

an instrument for knowledge that should be used voluntarily. Spinoza rejects this claim, on two grounds. First, he claims that the search for truth is not best guided by doubt, but by truth itself. Second, he considers that real doubt cannot be voluntary. One does not chose to doubt. For a real doubt indicates that an idea is not yet clear and distinct. It is a sign of not-knowing, a sign of ignorance. In this way, voluntary doubt is then artificial. There is no use in doubting ideas that are already clear in one's understanding because doubt would not add confusion. These different perspectives on the role of doubt will be decisive for the emergence of completely distinct methods. The aim of Spinoza's method is to best direct the intellect for perfecting one's own nature. Hence he is not in search for truth merely. He is instead searching for the true good, a guiding principle. This difference in methodology is just one among various topics from which to evaluate the distance that lies between Spinoza and Descartes.

Finally, the other share of difficulties lies in the fact that the scholarship on Spinoza created a tendency of interpretation that makes it harder to dissociate him from Descartes. Until the early decades of the twentieth century, scholarship could be divided into two categories: "Those that think that Spinozism is a logical prolongation of Cartesianism, the normal product of a meditation on the principles, its inconsistencies and its difficulties"[106] (Lachiéze-Rey 1950) , and others who consider, on the other hand, that "the doctrine of Spinoza was constructed, in its fundamental inspiration and even in general lines, under Cartesian influence, and these influences were a combination of factors that had preceded them and ended up orienting and determining them" (Lachiéze-

[106] This is my translation from the *avant-propos* of Lachiéze-Rey, Pierre. *Les Origines Cartésiennes du Dieu de Spinoza*. Librarie Philosophique J.Vrin, 1960. The commentators that are part of this first group are Fischer, Pillon, Léon et Brunschvicg.

Rey 1950).[107] Later in the twentieth century, however, we have, for example, the commentary of Wolfson (1983), who argues that Spinoza's *Ethics* is a jig-saw puzzle constructed of pieces which are the philosophies of his predecessors. In addition to Wolfson, there is important work being done nowadays trying to evaluate the distance between Spinoza and Descartes (see Yovel 2003, Nyden-Bullock 2007). Comparative strategies are enlightening because since Spinoza's philosophy is not detached from its historical context, the analysis of theoretical models with which Spinoza is in dialogue do bring further instruments to the task of accounting for concepts inside his system. But now, before delving deeper into the differences and similarities between the philosophies of imagination of Aristotle, Descartes, and Spinoza, it is necessary to reconstruct Spinoza's theory of imagination. The intricacies of the philosophical similarities and differences will be a topic for further studies, since this analysis depends on a better understanding of the details of imagination in Spinoza.

In this chapter, I tried to reconstruct and summarize Aristotelian and Cartesian models of faculties so as to help the reader comprehend the similarities and differences between their philosophy and that of Spinoza. The arguments of this chapter are a preliminary study that will set the basis for further investigation of imagination. A more detailed analysis of the works that I mapped out here is still needed, and the treatment given in this chapter in no way exhausts the issues. In the second part of the dissertation, we will analyze the theory of imagination in the *Ethics*.

[107] *ibid.* This is the opinion of Avenarius, Busse, Delbos, Dunin Borkowski, Freudenthal-Gebhardt, Robinson and Léon Roth.

PART 2:

THE METAPHYSICS OF IMAGINATION IN THE *ETHICS*

The case for a metaphysics of imagination

An objection that can be raised against the project of analyzing Spinoza's metaphysics of imagination is the following: if imagination produces false ideas and fictions, and if false ideas and fictions do not have any real being, then how is it possible to do a metaphysics of imagination? If metaphysics, in the traditional, Aristotelian and Scholastic sense of the word, is the study of being qua being, then how can we study being qua non-being? The project seems to be grounded in the contradiction of ascribing being to non-being. As it was shown in the first part of the dissertation in the brief analysis of the early works and the correspondence, Spinoza rejects the traditional distinction between being and non-being as meaningless. The traditional distinction is not philosophically fruitful because every time we talk about non-being, we are creating verbal beings. Those linguistic beings exist both conceptually and physically. They are ideas and words. This conception of imagination that was present in the early works is also present in the *Ethics*. Spinoza's theory of imagination is one of the few theories that remains almost unchanged. For this reason, Spinoza's theory of imagination is a key to a unified reading of the complete works. The difference between the theory of imagination in the early works and in the works of Spinoza's philosophical maturity lies less in the

nature of imagination and more in the kinds of ideas it is capable of creating. For example, in the early works beings of reason, chimaeras, and verbal beings are ideas created by imagination. In the *Ethics*, imagination is able to interpret traces in bodies and create ideas in the mind. In the body, imagination transforms traces into images and some aspect of sensation, and, in the mind, it can create ideas of images, general notions, ideas of affects, and fictions. In both cases, imaginations have beings; they are not non-beings. But how so?

In this second part of the dissertation, I will try to show that in the *Ethics*, imagination is conceived as an activity that belongs to both attributes and causally operates in each of them concomitantly. I will try to explain what kinds of beings imagination creates in the body and in the mind, and what purpose, if any, they serve. Answering those questions is not easy because there is not an explicit demonstration in the *Ethics* of what imagination is and what exactly it is doing. It is necessary to map excerpts and group the arguments together so as to be able to talk about an operating theory of imagination. Those arguments can be grouped differently and interpreters can weight in each conflicting claim. The philosophical difficulty, however, is the same as the one in the early works. If imagination constructs ideas that do not correspond to an *ideatum,* that is, if they are ideas of no object or of objects that neither exist in extension nor in thought, then how do those ideas come into being? If they are ideas of no particular thing, how can ideas of imagination be ideas in first place?

One answer to this question, dominant in the materialist tradition of interpretation of Spinoza (such as Gueroult, Matheron, for example), is to say that ideas of imagination are not ideas *strictu sensu.* Instead, they are images formed by the body because the body

is affecting and is being affected by external bodies. This answer is widespread, but not satisfying, because if ideas of imagination are mere images produced by the body, then imagination cannot be a kind of cognition just like reason and *scientia intuitiva*. One may claim, however, that cognition is not intellect, so imagination is an activity of the body. But again, in the E2p40sch, all kinds of knowledge (*modus cogitandi*) are being characterized under the same heading, they are all cognitions. If the images of imagination are not cognitions, then rational ideas are also not cognitions, which is absurd. Moreover, if we insist that ideas of imagination are images of the body (in a sort of Hobbesian way), we will still have to explain why Spinoza is using the expression *idea inadequata* instead of only *imago* to refer to imaginations.

An alternative answer, associated with an idealist tradition of interpretation (Wolfson, Della Rocca, for example), is to say that ideas of imagination and images are strictly mental things. Then, images, feelings, general notions, adequate and inadequate ideas, intuitions, all mental and bodily perceptions, and all conceptions have no reality outside the mind. Images have no being and are merely confusions that the mind makes because, although the mind can know the structure of extension by appealing to the structure of thought, the mind cannot know the content of things in extension. Even if we consider that this account is correct, it does not illuminate the heart of the problem, which is that the being of ideas of imagination are such that they have no object as an *ideatum*. If idealists accept that ideas of imagination have some kind of existence, and if they accept that everything can be known through the structures of thought while thought thinks itself, then it is because what can be known are ideas in the mind and not things outside of the mind. Since ideas in the mind have some form of universality and cannot

be distinguished in and of themselves from the particular things in experience that are associated with them, then it is not possible to distinguish between ideas that are from imagination and ideas that are from reason.

One might argue that the way to distinguish ideas of imagination from the ideas of reason without appealing to extension or to the reality of the body and of perception is to analyze the idea in itself, disregarding any relationship with possible objects that could act as its causal origin or referent. Then, if the existence of the idea has some kind of metaphysical necessity, it is because the idea is rational. If the existence of the idea has no metaphysical necessity, then it is because the idea is imaginary. Possible and impossible ideas are imaginary, whereas necessary ideas - or concepts - are rational. However, this parameter for distinguishing ideas is build upon a certain conception of what is metaphysically necessary and what is metaphysically possible. In a metaphysics like Spinoza's where events in extension can be said to be necessary events, then how can possible ideas be distinguished from necessary ideas? If there is no space left for contingency in Spinoza's metaphysics of extension, if the events in extension are equally necessary as events in thought, then the use of the pair of concepts of possible and necessary is not going to be able to capture the difference between ideas from imagination and ideas that have their origin in reason. Spinoza, however, does not want those ideas to be conflated.[108]

[108] The definition of an entity of imagination first appears in the appendix of the part 1 of the *Ethics* where Spinoza contrasts entities of imagination with entities of reason. This differentiation appears in the context of the discussion of the properties that were mistakenly attributed to nature or God throughout tradition. For example, because the mind does not know the causes of certain events, it attributes this lack of knowledge to the will of God or to pure chance. However, if the mind knew the causes of the events, these properties (of a willing God and of a purely random nature) would be correctly understood as imagined properties. This is so because, if the mind does not find the causes of events, it will try to forge an explanation and entities of imagination will take the place of missing causes. These entities, because they do not refer to an existing thing merely indicate the constitution of imagination. They depend on and are explained by the nature of the faculty alone and the imaginations are not directly involved with knowledge of essences, although it is indicated in Ethics 5 that imagination may be involved with the knowledge of essences. This is

The problems coming from these answers arise because imagination is not being thought of in face of the plurality of attributes, but as an activity that is reduced to either extension or thought. This reductionism, or the claim of priority of one attribute over the other, however, does not work in the case of imagination. Taking into consideration Spinoza's theory of attributes, it is important to rethink the theory of imagination in the *Ethics*. Having causes both in the body and in the mind, imagination is being conceptualized as some kind of inter-attribute activity, pointing more to the unity between the attributes than to their causal autonomy. These problems show that the metaphysics of imagination is of fundamental importance to the understanding of the general metaphysics of Spinoza and vice versa. In the following chapters, I will try to show that distinguishing between the imagination of the body and the imagination of the mind as Spinoza is does in Ep17 brings many advantages to the understanding of Spinoza's metaphysics and theory of knowledge.

---

the reason for why imagination is considered a kind of knowledge, but it is also a source of mistakes. Spinoza is trying to distinguish between entities of imagination and entities of reason.

CHAPTER 4

THE IMAGINATION OF THE BODY: EXTENSION, CORPOREAL CAUSES, AND THE PHYSICS OF BODIES

In this chapter, I will show that Spinoza conceives the existence of an imagination related to the body, that is, an imagination that should be explained only through extension and its laws. One of the excerpts motivating this claim is in the controversial epistle 17 to Pieter Balling:

> The effects of the imagination [*effectus imaginationis*] arise from the constitution either of the body or of mind [*vel corporis, vel mentis*]. (…) We find by experience that fevers and other corporeal changes are the cause of madness, and that those whose blood is thick [*tenacem sanguinem*] imagine nothing but quarrels, troubles, killings, and things like these. We see that the imagination is also determined by the constitution of the soul alone [*ab animae constitutione determinari*], for as we find by experience, it follows in the traces of the intellect in everything and links its images and words together in order, as the intellect does its demonstrations, so that we can hardly understand anything of which the imagination does not form some image from a trace. [G IV/77/10-20]

In this letter, Spinoza is explicitly characterizing imagination as having both corporeal and mental causes. Spinoza claims that it is by experience that we know that corporeal changes cause visual hallucinations, and that there is some kind of connection (though not causal) between the ways our body is constituted and the things our mind imagines.

Traditional interpretation considers imagination to be simply and uniquely a mental event, but as the letter evidences this view leaves aside an important aspect of Spinoza's theory of imagination. Therefore, if we take Spinoza's claim in this letter at face value and if we consider henceforth that imagination has causes in the body (which is a mode of extension) and in the mind (a mode of thought), then imagination should be considered as an activity that pertains to both attributes and not to thought alone.[109] But if we combine this view of imagination as an activity pertaining to two attributes with the well-known and accepted theory of causal independency of attributes defended in the *Ethics*, then because there is no interaction between the attributes, what occurs in one attribute cannot explain what happens in the other. So, how are we to understand this fact that imagination is in some cases a corporeal activity and in other cases a mental activity? How is it possible that imagination belongs or has causes in both attributes in such a way that "changes in the body" and "having thick blood" are related with "imagining quarrels, etc."? The claim for a causal interaction will not explain it and the mere appeal to parallelism will also leave us without answers.

According to parallelism, for every event in thought there should be a corresponding event in extension and vice versa. So, if imagination is merely a mental event, then parallelism postulates that something physical is happening while a mind is imagining. It does not, however, explain the relation between the physical event and the mental event. More specifically, parallelism does not elucidate how the effects of imagination can arise from the constitution of the body or how fever can cause delirium.

[109] One could argue that the arguments in the epistle are problematic due to its context of enunciation (a reply to a friend in the occasion of his son's passing) and cannot therefore be considered as strong evidence. In order to avoid this criticism, in this chapter, I will try to show how the problem also appears in the context of the *Ethics* if we take traditionally accepted interpretations of Spinoza's metaphysics and epistemology into account.

The thesis merely indicates that while someone is having a delirium or imagining a quarrel, a corresponding event is happening in the body such as a fever or the flow of a thick blood. Parallelism does not explain why certain effects of imagination are said to be caused by the body, and this seems rightly so because if imagination is an activity of the mind, there can be no possible explanation of how the body can cause the mind to imagine or even to think. Hence, either there is a causal interaction between the attributes (for the imagination in the mind to be caused by a certain event or condition of the body) or there is something more to imagination than traditional interpreters are willing to see. My contention is that Spinoza conceives of a bodily imagination that is distinct from the mental imagination insofar as their causal regimes depend upon the laws respective to their own attributes, and that these two imaginations are correlated and concomitant to one another. This bodily imagination is not a new entity in Spinoza's metaphysics, it is indeed the extended correlate of the mental imagination that is presupposed by the thesis of parallelism. In this paper, I will try to show that we must take into account the existence of the bodily imagination and name it as such so that we are able to find its nature and mechanisms.

The claim that there is a bodily imagination in Spinoza, that is, a proper activity that can be characterized and investigated as an extended event, is not trivial. Although Spinoza explicitly refers to the corporeal causes of imagination in his letter to Balling (and in other places such as the appendix of the first part of the *Ethics* and in various propositions of the second part), we find no study on the bodily imagination in the literature.[110] In fact, scholars pointed out that imagination has a multifarious meaning,[111]

[110] We can find Klever (1993) interpreting Spinoza as an empiricist, or Levy (2013) claiming that all ideas are originated in affections coming from experience (ideas of affects). There is also Steenbakkers (2004) claiming that

but no one seems to recognize that there is such thing as a bodily imagination in Spinoza's system.[112] Since Spinoza's explanations on the bodily causes of imagination are fragmentary, I propose to reconstruct the fragments so as to evaluate (1) what specifically is a bodily imagination, and (2) what role, if any, it plays in Spinoza's general theory of imagination and knowledge. But first, I will address a fundamental exegetical difficulty that may prevent an extended account of imagination. These difficulties give reason to the traditional interpretation on imagination that limits the activity to its mental expression. So, I will try to illuminate these exegetical dilemmas to begin to pave a way for an account of the extended imagination.

The first difficulty in conceiving an imagination of the body comes from the fragmentary nature of the explanations concerning the bodily causes of imagination. In the same Ep 17 to Pieter Balling, for example, Spinoza claims that "those whose blood is thick imagine nothing but quarrels" but does not elaborate on it further. The readers are left wondering whether this relation is a mere correlation (between having a thick blood and imagining quarrels), if here Spinoza is slipping in non allowed causal claim on the

---

imagination is essential to human freedom because there is something from experience that is constituent of the content of an adequate idea and imagination is firmly rooted in experience (ideas of images and ideas of affects). And finally, Vinciguerra (2005) who considers that all ideas are conceived through a construction coming from elements of experience. Vinciguerra and Steenbakkers describe the mechanisms of the affections of the body and how it can have an impression and retain traces, but they do not address the problem of the corporeal causes of imagination and do not go as far as claiming that there is an argument for a bodily imagination in Spinoza.

[111] Garrett (2008), for example, claims that Spinoza' s "use of the term 'imagination' is broad enough to include sensation as well as mental imagery and to include modalities of bodily representation that do not represent shape. He goes on to identify *imagination* as the first and lowest of the three kinds of knowledge or cognition [*cognitio*], with the intellect (constituted by distinct and adequate ideas) providing the higher (second and third) kinds of knowledge." (Garrett 2008, p. 2) Garrett also does not make the distinction that I am proposing between an imagination of the body and an imagination of the mind.

[112] This lack of recognition is justified by the scarcity of references to the event and the fact that most of the time Spinoza is limiting his discussions to the mental aspect of imagination. None of these reasons, however, entail that there is nothing like a bodily imagination, that is, an imagination that can be explained by its corporeal or physical causes and is the extended correlate of the imaginative mental event. Even though imagination is frequently understood as equivalent or identical with the first kind of knowledge, and as such, it is a mode of thought, when we map the use of the concepts *imago-imaginari-imaginamus* in the *Ethics*, we come to the conclusion that imagination is a complex activity involving various kinds of events. As I mentioned above, in this paper I will try to show that the extended imagination is a proper activity that can and should have its nature and mechanisms investigated independently from its mental correlate.

interaction between the attributes or if something else is going on. In E1app, the same kind of claim appears without much clarification as to how and why the claim is the case (other than appealing to what we commonly experience) and how it should work within his metaphysical system. This kind of argumentative move on the part of Spinoza leads to misinterpretations that should be clarified, and one way to clarify the confusion is by introducing the notion of a corporeal imagination.

Another source of complication is the fact that whenever the corporeal causes of imagination are mentioned (such as, for example, in E1app[113], E2p17, E2p18, and in E5p21), Spinoza defers an extended account and appeals to demonstrations of the event as it occurs in thought. In the above letter, for example, Spinoza goes from claiming that the effects of imagination arise sometimes from its causes in extension and sometimes from its causes in thought to claiming that imagination can be determined simply by the constitution of the soul. This appeal to the causes in thought is, in some cases, done *in lieu of* an explanation of extended causes. For example, the first two propositions of part 2 of the *Ethics* are paradigmatic for how Spinoza deals with explanations concerning extension. In the first proposition, Spinoza offers a demonstration that thought is an attribute of God. In proposition 2, however, the demonstration for extension is left implicit. The reader is supposed to construct the explanation of extension by appealing to the demonstration offered for thought. Spinoza only gives a direction: "the demonstration

[113] "The other notions are also nothing but modes of imagining, by which the imagination is variously affected; and yet the ignorant consider them the chief attributes of things, because, as we have already said, they believe all things have been made for their sake, and call the nature of a thing good or evil, sound or rotten and corrupt, as they are affected by it. For example, if the motion the nerves receive from objects presented through the eyes is conductive to health, the objects by which it is caused are called beautiful; those which cause a contrary motion are called ugly. Those which move the sense through the nose, they call pleasant-smelling or stinking; through the tongue, sweet or bitter, tasty or tasteless; through touch, hard or soft, rough or smooth, and the like; and finally, those which move the ears are said to produce noise, sound, or harmony. Men have been so mad as to believe that God is pleased by harmony. Indeed there are philosophers who have persuaded themselves that the motions of the heavens produce harmony. All of these things show sufficiently that each one has judged things according to the disposition of his brain; or rather, has accepted affections of the imagination as things. (…)" E1 app

of this proceeds in the same way as that of the preceding proposition" (E2p2dem), without ever spelling out the demonstration. This minimal effort of explanation indicates that Spinoza is anticipating a move that will only become clear after the introduction of the theory of causally independent attributes in E2p7. Inferring from this proposition E2p7, namely, if the order and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things, then whether we conceive imagination under the attribute of extension or under the attribute of thought, we shall find the same connection of causes in both realms (E2p7sch). Hence, an account of the corporeal causes of imagination (or of any extended event) is possible because of the identity in the connection and order of causes in thought and extension. So, even though explanations are conceptions elaborated according to the order of the intellect and even though explanations are modes of thought, by the identity of attributes, the conception of an adequate order in thought should be sufficient to account for what happens in extension. But this inference that an explanation in thought also works for extension is not as straight forward as it appears; for, if the corporeal causes are identical to the causes in thought, then there is no point in devoting a separate investigation to finding out the corporeal causes of imagination. Why not just settle for an explanation of the causes of imagination in thought? First, because it is not clear whether every kind of explanation that is given in thought is fit as an explanation for extension. Second, this kind of reasoning where we appeal to one attribute to explain another is a move that Spinoza would not endorse. The problem is that although these two attributes, thought and extension, are two ways according to which we can refer to the same thing (the modes of the substance taken as a unity), each attribute is causally independent from the other. So, if the modes of each attribute involve the concept of their

own attribute and not of another (E2p6dem), then we should be able to explain imagination according to each attribute without involving the concept of the other. Since Spinoza conceives knowledge as knowledge of the cause (E1ax4), if one attribute is causally independent from another and each attribute is self-caused because they are attributes of the single substance (and the substance is *causa-sui)*, then we cannot know the nature or order of causes in one attribute by appealing to another.

The third problem is that Spinoza oscillates between a language that is descriptive of extension and one that describes operations of the mind.[114] The main concern that I have in this chapter is with how the various descriptions of imagination connect and relate to each other, and how they work consistently with Spinoza's general metaphysics. For example, in E1app Spinoza calls modes of imagining ways in which the imagination is affected and provides law-like examples of the functioning of the activity:

> if the motion the nerves receive from objects presented through the eyes is conductive to health, the objects by which it is caused are called beautiful; those which cause a contrary motion are called ugly. Those which move the sense through the nose, they call pleasant-smelling or stinking; through the tongue, sweet or bitter, tasty or tasteless; through touch, hard or soft, rough or smooth, and the like; and finally, those which move the ears are said to produce noise, sound, or harmony.

This excerpt from E1app is evidence that Spinoza considers as modes of imagination activities of extension such as the motion of the optical nerves through the interaction with external objects and the movement of the senses. These dynamics of our sensory

[114] Jaquet (2004) recognizes the oscillation and calls it a "mixed discourse".

experience are characterized as modes of imagination in the same way that inadequate ideas and opinions are considered to be modes of imagination. The fact that Spinoza considers the movement of the nerves and the senses as imagination is not in itself problematic. The problem appears when we take these modes of imagining to be of the same kind as those described in the second part of the *Ethics*, for example, in which inadequate and confused ideas are also considered to be modes of imagining. If we ignore that there is an extended imagination and an imagination of the mind and do not distinguish one from another, we may be led to the wrong interpretation, that the motion of the senses causes ideas in the mind or that sensory experience is not an experience of the body but of thought.[115]

Given the pattern of arguments described above, my claim is that we have to account for an extended imagination to avoid further confusion. In the exegetical tradition, however, we find reasons that could jeopardize the project for the bodily causes of imagination. Most commentators that take Spinoza's fragmentary explanations of extension and his deference to explanations through thought consider either that extension cannot be explained, or claim that accounts of extension can be done if subordinated to the accounts of thought. These common interpretations (Melamed 2013) are built upon the assumption that there is an explanatory barrier between thought and extension due to the causal independency of attributes, and they are not specifically

[115] This distinction is also established by Spinoza in E2p49sch, where he claims that it is important to differentiate between images and ideas. I think that this distinction presupposes the difference between imagination of the body and imagination of the mind. I will discuss this issue later. As we can see in E2p49sch: "I begin, therefore, by warning my readers, first, to distinguish accurately between an idea, or concept, of the mind, and the images of things which we imagine. And then then it is necessary to distinguish between ideas and the words by which we signify things. (…) Indeed, those who think that ideas consist in images which are formed in us from encounters with [NS:external] bodies, are convinced that those ideas of things [NS: which can make no trace in our brains, or] of which we can form no similar image [NS" in our brain] are not ideas, but only fictions which we feign from a free choice of the will. They look on ideas, therefore, as mute pictures on a panel, and preoccupied with this prejudice, do not see that an idea, insofar as it is an idea, involves an affirmation or negation."

against an account of extended imagination but against any account of extension in general. The general argument, applied here to the case of imagination, goes more or less like this: if there is an extended imagination, this extended event cannot be accessed due to the causal independency of attributes and therefore cannot be explained through its causes. So, even if there is something like a corporeal imagination, it cannot be explained through the causes in extension because the mind only has access to the causal sequence in thought. In another version of this argument there is no assumption that there may be an extended imagination. In fact, stronger than the first, this second argument concludes that there is no such thing as an extended imagination. The reconstruction is expressed in the following way: if there is an explanatory barrier preventing an adequate understanding of the extended causes of imagination, it is because the only access to imagination that the mind has is through its causes in thought. If the only access to imagination is through its causes in thought, then imagination is an activity of thought and we cannot say that there is any such thing as the bodily causes of imagination.

The first argument is based on an epistemic difficulty expressed in the thesis of the gulf between thought and extension put forward by Della Rocca (1996). The second is derived from Cartesian and idealist objections to Spinoza's metaphysics as summarized by Gueroult (1974). I will address them here to show that the so called explanatory gap does not characterize a gap and that the idealist view is a misinterpretation. My objections are the grounds from which I will claim that it is not only possible to conceive the causes of events in extension, but that an investigation of the bodily aspects of imagination is necessary. If we do not succeed in overcoming these two problems, then the argument for the existence of a bodily imagination fails. The goal of this chapter is to

make explicit the extended causes of imagination and suggest that this aspect of imagination should be brought to light and further studied.

The thesis of causal independence of attributes and the standard interpretation of imagination

The thesis of causal independence of attributes is the metaphysical ground from which every human activity is explained in Spinoza, and imagination it is not any different. This thesis of the causal independence of attributes is derived from the monism of substance. The general argument showing the relationship between the attributes and their stand with respect to substance is the following: because substance exists by the necessity of its nature and is determined to act by itself alone, it is the only being which acts with absolute freedom (E1d7). This unique substance is a being which is absolutely infinite and consists of an infinity of attributes, each one expressing an eternal and infinite essence (E1d6). But whereas the infinitude of substance is absolute (*ens absolute infinitum*, E1d6), the infinitude of attributes is such that each attribute is limited to being infinite in its own kind (E1d6exp). To say that an attribute is infinite in its kind (*suo genera finita*, E1d2) means that the modes of that attribute cause everything that can be conceived under that kind (*genus*). So, there is no modification in one attribute that is caused through another, all modification of a kind belongs to the infinite attribute in question. Since each attribute is infinite in its own kind and expresses a determined essence of substance, each attribute must be conceived through itself (E1p10), which means that one mode of an attribute cannot be produced by or generate an effect in

another.[116] Now, relating this argument to the specific case of imagination, we have the following problem.

The standard interpretation considers that imagination is only a mental event. However, this event of imagination in the mind always depends upon the constitution of the body (E5p21) and, in some cases, Spinoza is claiming that imagination can be exclusively explained by its corporeal causes (E1app, E2p49sch, E17). If imagination can be explained by its corporeal causes, then the mental account of imagination of the standard interpretation is problematic. This is the case because the constitution of the mind cannot cause or explain an event in the body and vice-versa. If Spinoza is characterizing imagination as a two-sided event that is expressed in both attributes, then my understanding is that we have to separately and independently consider the imagination of the body and the imagination of the mind. This is the case because if each attribute is causally independent from another and each attribute is self-caused (because they are attributes of the single substance and the substance is *causa-sui)*, then we cannot know the nature or order of causes in one attribute by appealing to another. This follows because Spinoza conceives of knowledge as knowledge of the cause (E1ax4). So, if the modes of each attribute involve the concept of their own attribute and not of another (E2p6dem), then we should be able to explain imagination according to each attribute without involving the concept of another. Hence, the standard interpretation of imagination, which reduces the event to the mental causes, fails to capture the full extent of imagination.

[116] Spinoza is rejecting the scholastic conception of God in which God cannot be thought of as corporeal. I take his claim that God is also corporeal as one of the metaphysical foundations that motivates this current investigation and as a strong evidence for the existence of corporeal causes of imagination.

The standard interpretation of imagination does not account for the extended causes of imagination because of the epistemic and metaphysical presuppositions in which it is grounded. The exclusion of an account of the corporeal or extended causes occurs because the standard interpretation is based on the claim for an epistemic impossibility (due to an explanatory gap) and on an idealist interpretation of Spinoza's metaphysics. If these theses follow, my argument for the existence of a bodily imagination would fail. So, I will try to show that the idealist view is a misinterpretation and that the so called explanatory gap does not characterize a gap.

An epistemic impossibility: "the gulf between thought and extension"[117]

The supposed impossibility of an extended account is grounded in an epistemic problem arising from Spinoza's theory of attributes. Della Rocca (1996) argues that the causal independence of attributes gives rise to a radical conceptual or explanatory barrier between thought and extension, a gulf between the attributes (Della Rocca 1996, pp. 9-17). This gulf is such that the mind (a mode of the attribute of thought) can not explain objects in extension, that is, no physical fact can be explained by any mental fact and vice versa. As Spinoza states in E2p7sch,[118] the mode of each attribute has to be explained by the attribute that the mode belongs to and not by any other. This extreme explanatory independence happens because Spinoza treats causal and conceptual relations as coextensive. This is the case because to explain something is to give the cause that

[117] This expression is used by Della Rocca (1996, p.9)

[118] "so long as things are considered as modes of thinking, we must explain the order of the whole of Nature, or the connection of causes, through the attribute of thought alone. And insofar as they are considered as modes of extension, the order of the whole of Nature must be explained through the attribute of extension alone."

produced the thing being explained; that is, giving the cause is the same as providing an explanation, so conceptual claims are equivalent to the explanatory ones and causal claims counts as explanatory claims. Given that the attributes are causally independent from one another, they must be independently explained as well. But if explanations are the result of an activity that the mind does because it is a thinking thing, the only account of extension or physical explanation is through thought. Since Spinoza himself provides explanations of the physics of bodies in terms of matter and motion even while he draws logical inferences from the ideas of bodies, either this problem is not conclusive or it shows an inconsistency in the system.

Della Rocca himself thinks that extension can be accounted for because of the strong requirements that Spinoza has for mental representations. Even claiming for the radical explanatory gap between thought and extension, Della Rocca's argument is that the explanatory isolation of thought and extension is responsible, at least in part, for the requirement that any mental representation should involve the essence of the thing represented as well as for the view that mental particulars, such as the mind, are identical with physical particulars, such as the body. Della Rocca's way of solving the issue is neat and I am not going to argue against it, but I will point out that an important step in Spinoza's argument is being left aside. Although Della Rocca is right in pointing out that the explanatory independence of the attributes, he goes too far with the claim that they have nothing in common. It is because they have something in common, i.e. God as a common cause, that we can understand the same event either through thought or through extension. The problem with the radical independency is that there is nothing justifying the relation between an idea of X and X. If the attributes are radically independent, there

is the possibility of conceiving that X is the case while we are having the idea of Y. This impossibility is ruled out through the thesis of parallelism, which then becomes an artificial solution to this theoretical problem. Della Rocca then explains the identity between the attributes and the fact that we do have the idea of X while being presented with X by considering the identity and the mental representation as requirements posited by Spinoza so that the system can work. I think there is an alternative explanation of the relationships between ideas in the mind and things in extension, which does not need to rely on artificial or formal stipulation.

Although causal action across attributes is strictly not allowed, this causal independence does not imply a metaphysical barrier between the attributes. The explanatory barrier would only be a real problem if there were a dualism of substances, which is not a problem in the context of a theory of infinite attributes like Spinoza's. Della Rocca relies on E1ax4 and 5 to argue that the attributes are causally independent because they have nothing in common with one another. By combining axioms 4 and 5, we have the following proposition: "If things have nothing in common with one another, then they cannot be understood through one another and one cannot be the cause of the other". However, the fact that one attribute cannot cause the other and that we should not explain one attribute through the other, does not imply that they have nothing in common with one another. When Spinoza claims in E2p6dem that each attribute is conceived through itself and that their causal regimes should be kept independent from one another, these claims are being made from within a background in which the substance (or God) is the actor or the actual cause of these causal regimes. Della Rocca's claim for an extreme explanatory independence then faces a challenge. For the thesis to work, there should be

absolutely nothing in common between the attributes. Nevertheless, the attributes are actually identical to one another and they share the same cause: "the modes of each attribute have God for their cause only insofar as he is considered under the attribute of which they are modes, and not insofar as he is considered under any other attribute" (E2p6). Spinoza here is stating that God is the cause of both attributes, but each thing should be considered and explained under the very attribute to which it belongs. Here we should remember the goal of these demonstrations. Spinoza is arguing against the Cartesian conception according to which the body can cause the mind to think. The goal here is to reject the causal interaction between attributes, and not to deny their common causal origin. It is true that there is a radical causal independence of attributes, but there is also a radical underlying identity (and unity) between them that should not be ignored. According to E2p7sch:

> we must recall here what we showed [NS: in the First Part], namely, that whatever can be perceived by an infinite intellect as constituting an essence of substance pertains to one substance only, and consequently that the thinking substance and the extended substance are one and the same substance, which is not comprehended under this attribute, now under that. So also a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, but expressed in two ways.

The attributes are distinct and causally independent from one another but they are fruit of the infinite causal power of the substance, being then ways of regarding the same and unique event that is itself a modification of substance. Since there is no gap between the attributes because they are related through substance, there is no impossibility of accessing extension. In fact, thought and extension are tied by the same order and

connection. So, since they are attributes of the same substance, there is no barrier or gulf between thought and extension for they are intrinsically tied to that of which they are essences. Hence, the requirement for mental representation is not an empty requirement, or a posited rule in the system. It is in fact a consequence of Spinoza's metaphysics of substance and attributes.

The epistemic problem of the barrier between attributes is solved when we consider their identity and the fact that they are ways of considering the same thing. Since extension and thought are fundamentally identical because they are attributes of the same event and follow the same order and connection, we can both access and account for the extended events. This access happens because our mind is the idea of a body that is itself extended. The body experiences itself as extended and it also experiences other extended objects. Since the mind is the idea of the body, it is able to form ideas of the experiences of the body. This happens not because the body causes the ideas in the mind, but because the mind and the body are at the same time being modified by external objects that are themselves constituted by extension and thought. It is the idea of the external object that causes my mind to think, and it is the extended object that causes my body to modify itself. So, the access to extension is given by the body itself and there is no radical explanatory gap between the attributes although there is a causal independence. And since there is a causal independence of attributes conjoined with substance as a common cause, the mind can form concepts of extended objects and elaborate accounts of extended events. But since the mind can also modify itself and conceive ideas about its own nature and the activities in thought, it is necessary to distinguish explanations of events in extension and explanations on events in thought.

This conclusion gives us good reasons to investigate the extended causes of imagination because it poses the necessity of a separate explanation that captures the order of corporeal events. For if Spinoza (in Ep17) conceives of an imagination that can have its causes explained by the body, it means that there is a physical event of imagination that is conceptually independent from the mental event of imagination (and the same applies to the imagination that can be explained by the mind) even though they are metaphysically identical. Now that we showed that an account of a bodily imagination is not only possible but necessary, I should try to point out what kind of explanation works as the most adequate.

A metaphysical problem: "certain objections from a Cartesian and idealist perspective"[119]

We have seen that E2p6dem requires a separate investigation for each attribute when accounting for a complex event, that is, an event that can be explained either by its extended causes or through its causes in thought. This interpretation entails that, given the complexity of imagination, it is necessary to devote a separate investigation to its extended aspects through the ways in which the body is affected. Before I offer my attempt to reconstruct Spinoza's fragmentary explanation on the bodily imagination, there is another possible objection to the project that I would like to rule out. This objection, together with others that I will not address here, was raised by Gueroult in

[119] This expression is used by Gueroult: "Du fait que la démonstration de la Proposition 2, relative à l'Etendue, doit se calquer sur celle de la Proposition 1, relative à la Pensée, peuvent naître, dans une perspective cartésienne, idéaliste, certaines objections." (Gueroult 1974, 41)

what he calls a set of Cartesian and idealist objections (Gueroult 1974, 40-43) to Spinoza that can be raised by the comparison of E2p1 and E2p2.

The objection is the following: a demonstration of the corporeal causes of imagination in extension should begin with any singular body that is experienced, however this or that particular body that I experience is perceived by me as an idea (imaginative idea) in my mind. This claim can find some support in the conjunction of E2p11 and E2p13 which states that the actual being of the human mind is nothing but the idea of a singular thing which actually exists (E2p11), and the object of that singular idea that exists in actuality is the human body (E2p13). So, if the mind is the idea of its body, then every bodily experience is perceived by the mind as an idea in the mind. Hence, since ideas of bodies are modes of thought, we can only perceive things in the mind and consequently, through the attribute of thought. Therefore, it is impossible to offer a demonstration of extended events through extension itself because our access to extended events is through our ideas of them.[120] I think this objection is flawed and I would like to offer two arguments to rule it out. The first one involves an analysis of the bodily dimension, and the second involves the difference between real and nominal definitions that will allow us to reject the idealist claim and show the coherence of Spinoza's realism.

[120] The corollary of this objection is the claim that there is a priority of thought over extension. The most recent defender of this claim is Melamed (2013), who considers that thought is not on par with the other attributes and it actually has priority over them. I will not address Melamed's argument here, but it is interesting to note that he tries to make the rejection of idealism compatible with the priority claim. I do not think that there is a priority of thought over extension in Spinoza's metaphysics, but it is undeniable that the whole project of the Ethics is to demonstrate how through an adequate usage of the intellect, we can construct our freedom. However, it is fundamental to attend to the fact that an adequate usage of the intellect is one in which the power and place of extension is taken into account. Spinoza is not constructing a philosophy of pure reason, but one in which the power of the intellect is directed to knowing the emotions and its own union with the whole of nature.

My contention is that the idealist objection does not follow because it is based on a reduction of the experience of the external object to a single attribute. The external object, according to the deductions of the first part of the *Ethics*, is a singular object that is a modification of substance. This means that every object is both a mode of extension and a mode of thought. The individual that experiences the object is also a complex singular being that is both a mode of thought and a mode of extension. Hence, when the individual experiences a singular object, this experience occurs in extension and in thought simultaneously. Our access to the object then happens through these two modes of the attributes: while the mind forms an idea of the object, the body acts over and is acted upon by the external object. According to E1d4 and E2a4,[121] an individual is able to perceive modifications of substance both through thought and extension and Spinoza is expressly claiming that we feel our own bodies and its modifications by external ones. So, any interpretation that excludes extension from the picture is not true to Spinoza's views. I also think that the idealist objection, just like the "gulf objection", only works if we consider the attributes as if they were separate substances. If thought is independent and dissociated from extension, then there would be a metaphysical gap preventing the mind from grasping external objects. However, thought and extension, as we have seen before, are attributes or ways of considering the same event; so, while the mind is grasping the idea of the object, the body is experiencing the object in extension. Hence, if we accept the metaphysics of attributes as aspects of the same event of a mode of substance, then the idealist objection does not follow.

[121] Definition of attributes and the axiom on the perception of one's own body.

It is important to rule out this objection, because if it is impossible to experience objects in extension and elaborate on these objects through the ideas that we form about them in the mind, then our project of investigating and reconstructing the bodily imagination would be undermined. But since we take into account the fact that Spinoza is rejecting the scholastic conception of God in which God cannot be thought of as corporeal, we take his claim that God is also corporeal as the metaphysical foundation that motivates this current investigation and as strong evidence for the existence of corporeal causes of imagination. That is, if imagination can be conceived through its bodily causes and through its mental causes (Ep 17), then there is no reason why we should not investigate and reconstruct the bodily causes of imagination.

I think we have ruled out the idealist position by showing that it is based on a false reduction of experience to the attribute of thought, however we still have to elaborate on how we can – through thought – account for the extended aspect of a complex event and what kind of account is adequate. These problems appear because although the body that experiences other bodies has direct access to them through extension, when we ask for the causes of a bodily experience, we are also asking for an explanation and not merely for a direct experience. That is, although we have direct access to other bodies through extension (through touch, hearing, smell, vision, etc.) and although this access gives us some kind of knowledge about ourselves and about external bodies, this access is limited to a private experience and does not count as an explanation. When looking for an account or an explanation, we are trying to construct an understanding that will allow us to better grasp any future experience. For this reason, using indexicals or appealing to external reference, that is, pointing to this object or that

object, pointing to this or that experience is not enough to fulfill our purpose. We want an explanation of what is common to all bodily experiences regarding imagination, but at the same time we are looking for an explanation that is not independent and separate from the very experience that this explanation is supposed to be about. So, the direct experience of extension does have a place: it provides a certain kind of evidence, an evidence of what is experienced with the senses.[122] But direct experience does not provide an explanation or a demonstration and for our purposes here we are looking for an explanation of bodily imagination. So, although we experience extension through the body, the way we have to elaborate on it is through the mind. This fact is not at all evidence in favor of idealism. In idealism, truths are merely formal and there is no guarantee that a true idea is the idea of any thing. Spinoza is doing something different. Although we do have to use the mind and our ideas to think the extended realm, this does not imply that the extended real is inaccessible or an improper object for philosophical investigation. The conflict here is between one interpretation that does not ignore extension as a proper object of philosophical research because it poses interesting and important questions, and another that excludes extension because of claims on the lack of guarantee of the existence of extension, or on claims stating that if extension exists, it cannot be known. For this reason, a good strategy is to introduce the distinction between

[122] There is a great discussion on the literature regarding Spinoza's rejection of the experimental sciences of his time. In Ep 6 to Oldenburg on Boyle's experiments on Nitre, Fluidity and Solidity, Spinoza argues against explaining natural events through the senses and through empirical experiments because all that the empirical experiments can provide are evidence for claims that can be proved by the intellect. However, this rejection of experimentalism does not entail a complete rejection of experience. In fact, Spinoza is not excluding the senses (and extension) from his metaphysical and epistemological system and he is also not excluding the role of experience in providing initial truths. Manning interprets this discussion that Spinoza and Oldenburg have on Boyle in the following way: "Spinoza's attitude towards experimental observation seems to be, then, that it can have no weight against a theory based in sound a priori philosophical intuition and geometrical demonstration, and is easy available, though not necessary, to confirm the results of such pure theorizing. Experimentation can help us discover new phenomena, but it cannot help us to prove any scientific propositions we do not already know to be true." in Manning, Richard, "Spinoza's Physical Theory", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.)

a nominal and a real definition, for it will allow us to reject idealism and favor the realist position without giving up the possibility of an explanatory account.

A definition provides the essence of a thing, giving what it is, what its cause is, and the properties that can be derived from it. There are two kinds of definition in Spinoza, the nominal and the real definition. The nominal definition is a kind of description that constructs an object in thought that only exists as a mode of thought and its existence is posited by convention or stipulation. The nominal definition is a bad definition for Spinoza's purposes – the description of reality as it is – because it is empty and does not describe anything that exists beyond that very definition. As Spinoza characterizes it in Ep 9 to de Vries, "a bad definition is one that is not conceived" and a real definition is one that "either explains a thing as it is outside the intellect … or it explains a thing as we conceive it or can conceive it". A real definition is one that provides the order of construction of the thing that is being defined by explaining how to conceive it. In this sense, it is a dynamic description of the genesis of that which is being defined, and for this reason, the real definition allows us to grasp not only the thing being defined but everything else that follows from it. The real definition is not a merely abstract object as is the nominal definition, it presents the thing being defined by recreating it (TIE § 95).

This distinction between nominal and real definitions is further evidence for our rejection of idealism because Spinoza's understanding of a real definition is evidence that he is constructing his philosophy from the point of view of a realist. The intention in providing a real definition indicates the assumption that there are things outside the intellect, that we can grasp them, and we can define them truly. In talking about

extension, Spinoza is trying to explain things are they are outside the intellect. In this sense, when he talks about imagination and corporeal experience of external bodies, he is trying to address the nature, structure and mechanisms of the operation of that which exists beyond the intellect and its ideas.[123]

A definition is real when practical consequences can be derived from it, when the definition itself allows for a better interaction with the thing that it is defining. That is, the definition gives the order of construction of the thing, it presents the external and independent reality of the thing. Then, a good account of extended events is one that makes use of real definitions that are able to capture the nature of the extended event and show its order of production. But as Nadler (2006) points out, how can we be sure that the real definitions are really real definitions, that they describe the things that they are supposed to describe and that the things being described are actually existing things? It is here where Spinoza's claim for the direct experience of extension has its place, for Spinoza grounds his definitions on the certainty that *we have of the fact that we have an extended body that experiences other extended bodies* (E2a4).[124] He introduces some of these definitions by "we know by experience"[125] or, as we can see in Ep17, "we find by

[123] Nadler (2006) claims that Spinoza is not troubled by the epistemological worry of how to justify his definitions. He asks: "Naturally, one will want to know how Spinoza can be so sure – and, more importantly, how he can persuade us – that these definitions are true. Because they are definitions, he does not immediately provide any arguments for them." But although Nadler is not quite sure how this works, he is pointing in the right direction: "it seems that Spinoza thinks that the definitions are self-evidently true". And he explains it very adequately: " definitions are proven by their consequences. Spinoza believes that one acquires greater knowledge of a cause by coming to a greater knowledge of its effects … this, the more one sees how much follows from a given set of definitions, which in Spinoza's argument function as causes, and especially how much of reality they can explain, the greater is one's knowledge of one's starting points." (Nadler, 2006, 44-48)

[124] This claim for the certainty of direct experience is the conclusion for Spinoza's reduction to absurdity of Descartes's method of radical and hyperbolic doubt. Spinoza thinks that Descartes undermines all possible foundations by rejecting what comes from the senses and because of that he is incapable of justifying his first principle. For Spinoza, Descartes's skepticism leads to unnecessary and harmful doubts. So when Spinoza is talking about self-evident truths, he is referring to the perception from the senses that if put into question, nothing else remains and the construction of the system becomes impossible.

[125] Chauí (2001) claims that although most interpreters consider that the expression "*per ... intelligo*" introduces nominal definitions in Spinoza, this is not the case in the first ten propositions of the *Ethics* where he defines substance.

experience". That is, some truths are evident, and for this reason, their definitions should not be contrary to what we commonly experience[126]. So, a real definition is possible because we have access to extended events through direct experience and we can reconstruct the truths that we directly grasp. The construction of real definitions is possible because the object of the idea of the mind is the body. It is because the mind is the idea of the body that the mind is capable of having ideas of other bodies that interact with its own body (E2p13). And for this reason, the perceptual capacities of the mind are intrinsically linked with the dispositions of the body (E2p14).

Defining imagination through its corporeal causes:

So, now that I have made a case for the possibility of an account of extended events, what is the bodily imagination? The demonstration of E5prop21 does not strictly postulate the existence of an imagination that is explained by bodily causes, but it claims something even stronger from which we can deduce the existence of bodily imagination. The demonstration says:

> The mind neither expresses the actual existence of its body, nor conceives the body's affections as actual, except while the body endures; and consequently, it conceives no body as actually existing except while its body endures. Therefore, it can neither imagine anything nor recollect past things except while the body endures.

[126] Although this strategy appears to be problematic in light of contemporary epistemology, my goal here is not to critically assess it. The aim that I have while appealing to the role of real definitions is to show that Spinoza is conceiving his philosophy from within a realist perspective where the role of common experience is not to be ignored. But that is not to say that Spinoza himself does not have an explanation for his own strategy.

That is, the body and its dispositions are the conditions for the expression of every mental event that is somehow connected with the body, its affections and the effects of affections in the mind (such as imagination and recollection). The existence of a body that is the object of a mind is a requirement for the occurrence of imaginations in the mind. Imagination is a kind of event that only occurs because the mind is the idea of a body, which means that the existence of the body is a necessary condition for imagination. Perhaps the existence and the endurance of the body as a condition for the mind to be able to express and conceive the essence of its own body is an obvious claim, but that the mind can only imagine or recollect while the body endures it not as trivial. What this indicates is that, in the case of this proposition, imagination (and recollection) is an activity of the mind that is necessarily connected with the body and its dispositions. This connection indicates that while the mind imagines, certain modifications are also happening in the body that are giving the conditions for the mind to imagine. But what are these modifications and under which bodily condition is the mind able to imagine? How are we to interpret this connection between the imagination of the mind and the given conditions of the body?

As we have seen, according to E2p7, this connection cannot be causal for we know already that the attributes are causally independent so the body cannot cause the mind to imagine. So, how to reconcile E5prop21 with E2p7? My suggestion, as I stated earlier, is to understand imagination as an activity that belongs to both attributes and that is expressed separately but simultaneously in each of them.[127] If the duration of the body

[127] The thesis of simultaneity is also put forward by Chauí (1999). She highlights the fact that Spinoza is claiming a simultaneity of the expressions in both attributes and that it is misleading to over-stress the separation between the attributes because it may misdirect the reader towards an apparent gulf or gap between the attributes. But in my case,

is a condition for the mind to imagine, then there should be a corresponding imagination in the body which is caused by the body. If this corresponding imagination is caused by the body, then this imagination is corporeal. However, Spinoza is also conceiving a mind that imagines, so if imagination is an event in the mind, then it is caused by thought and it is mental. Since the body cannot cause the mind to imagine, then, the body is the cause of bodily imagination and the mind is the cause of the mental imagination. And we should consider then that imagination is an event that is both corporeal and mental. If imagination is both corporeal and mental, then there is an imagination that can be explained through the corporeal causes and an imagination that can be explained through mental causes. One cannot be reduced to the other, otherwise we would be violating the independence of attributes.[128] So, if imagination depends upon the body, it means that some corporeal changes cause the conditions for bodily imagination to take place. However, since both attributes are ways of conceiving the same event, at the same time, some mental changes cause mental imaginations. Hence, I think that imagination is the name that Spinoza gives to this event that happens both in the body and in the mind in which the body-mind complex is affected, suffering and causing modifications.

---

what I defend is actually a *de dicto* distinction between the imagination of the body and of the mind, and not a *de re* or substantial difference.

[128] It is interesting to note that in the opening of *Ethics* part 5, Spinoza reiterates the thesis of causally independent attributes but now instead of using the term "things", he uses the term "affects of the body". Spinoza restates E2p7 but now showing its connection with E2p2 (the claim that extension is an attribute of God) and E2p18 (the claim that the mind imagines a body because the human body is able to be affected and display various dispositions; it is in the demonstration that memory is defined). Remember that the part five is where Spinoza is demonstrating human freedom and how the intellect has power over the affects. He is beginning this part with E5p1dem which is basically a reiteration of the thesis of causally independent attributes: "just as the order and connection of ideas happens in the mind according to the order and connection of affections of the body (by E2p18), so vice versa (by E3p2), the order and connection of affections of the body happens as thoughts and ideas of things are ordered and connected in the mind, q.e.d.". With this demonstration, Spinoza is making explicit that the "things" that have the same order and connection as the ideas in the thesis of the causal independency of attributes are the affections of the body. More precisely, Spinoza is claiming that although the mind cannot cause the body to act and the body cannot cause the mind to think, the intellect has power over the affects. This is so because "there is affection of the body of which we cannot form a clear and distinct concept" (E5p4).

So, although my claim for the existence of bodily imagination is based here in the letter to Balling (where he claims that "the effects of the imagination arise from the constitution either of the body or of mind." Ep17), we can infer the existence of an imagination of the body from the way imagination is characterized in the *Ethics*. An important issue here is to clarify how we can go from claims such as the body is a condition for imagination (as well as the claims that some effects of imagination arise from the constitution of the body, or that corporeal causes and fever cause delirium, or the claim that those with thick blood are more prone to imagine evil things), to the claim that there is a bodily imagination. How can the fact that the duration of the body is the condition for imagination entail that there is an imagination of the body or a bodily imagination? The answer to this question was already sketched in the previous paragraph. When we say that A happens only when B is present, this means that B is the condition for A, that is, B is among the causes of A. In our case, if corporeal changes are the conditions for imagination, this indeed means that corporeal changes cause imagination. But given the thesis of the causal independency of attributes, this imagination that had been caused by corporeal changes cannot be mental. It can only be corporeal or extended. So, if corporeal changes cause imagination, then this means that there is a bodily imagination and that the bodily imagination is caused by corporeal changes.

So, it is not too far from Spinoza's own text to reconstruct his conception of the corporeal causes of imagination in the following way: the imaginations of the body are the effect, in that body, of modifications that can be caused either by itself or by another body. This reconstruction still has to be further explained. What are these modifications and how do they happen? In this part of the chapter, my aim was to show that we could

deduce the existence of a bodily imagination from the way imagination is characterized in the *Ethics*. Now that we have seen that there is a bodily imagination, we shall pass to the explanation of the mechanisms of this corporeal event.

The physics of bodies and the constitutive elements of bodily imagination:

Since the body is the object of the idea that constitutes the human mind (E2p13), the constitution of the body is fundamental to explaining the mechanisms of bodily imagination. Spinoza defines body in the E2d1 as a mode that in a certain and determinate way expresses God's essence insofar as He is considered as an extended thing. According to this definition, a body is any determined extended thing; that is, bodies are particular modifications of the infinite and unique substance understood through the attribute of extension.[129] Since the substance is unique and indivisible, extension inherits these qualities and is not plural or divisible. Spinoza argues that matter is indivisible and there is no space between particular bodies.[130] Insofar as substance is considered to be extended, it modifies itself in a certain and determinate way generating a plurality of bodies that can be considered as individual bodies that are independent from one another. This independence, however, is not absolute because bodies are all modifications of the same substance. So, bodies are particular modifications of extension,

[129] Manning (2012) considers that the denial of substantiality to bodies gives rise to a serious question of interpretation on the relation between bodies and the substance. Manning divides the interpretations into two kinds: the adjectival readings (Bennet 1984) and the non adjectival reading (Curley 1988). "In favor of the adjectival reading is Spinoza's use of the term "modus", or "mode", in connection with bodies' this term regularly signifies a way something is, or a feature it has, functioning to group what are clearly predicates of thing, and in Cartesian usage it means both this and a dependent being. Against the adjectival reading, and in favor of the view that Spinozistic bodies and minds are ultimate subjects of predication, is Spinoza's persistent references to bodies as individuals and as things."

[130] Although this understanding of matter brings the problem of the limits of bodies, this is not relevant to our discussion for now.

an attribute of substance, and for this reason they apparently have contradictory qualities: as being of the same substance, they share common properties, but as particular modifications of the substance, they are different from one another. Bodies are differentiated from one another because each has a particular proportion of motion and rest (E2l1) that defines their specificity. And because bodies are modifications of the unique substance and because they involve the concept of one and the same attribute, they all agree in certain things. Bodies are constantly in relation with one another and the relation that they bear will depend on their own singular constitution. Since bodies agree in certain things, they are able to interact with one another and change their motion according to this interaction. Spinoza considers that motion[131] is a basic property of matter[132] and for this reason, every body has a certain proportion of motion and rest that it tries to preserve. Bodies are actually defined by this proportion of motion and rest, and their power to preserve this proportion. Some interactions are such that facilitate the bodies maintaining their proportion of motion and rest and some other interactions can destroy this proportion. Most of the time, however, a body can change its shape, its size, its speed and retain its nature, both with respect to substance and with respect to mode (E2l4). The lemmas on the physical interlude provide the basis from which we can say

[131] The claim that motion is a basic property of matter can be shown by reconstructing the definition of attributes of substance and the properties of substance. Since substance is free cause (E1p17), it acts (e1def7). Action is motion, so the substance, being self-caused, causes its own motion. Spinoza's physics is characterized by the rejection of the intelligibility of a vacuum (that is, there is no empty space, matter is continuous and cannot be divided metaphysically speaking - see E1p15schol), the rejection of teleology (God does not have a will only an intellect. To say that God has a plan in mind is to constrain his intellect and ability to modify itself infinitely - see E1p17schol and E1app). The assumption that motion is a basic feature of matter (Spinoza argues in the PCP against Descartes's idea that matter is inert) and the attempt to extend Descartes' collision rules can be applied to a variety of cases not only to bodies moving in a single line (see PCP and Klever 1988).

[132] Actually, this is controversial. Since I am not going to involve myself with this problem, I will just assume that motion is a basic property of matter because if it is motion that creates matter, matter is nevertheless still endowed with motion. Klever (1988) deals with this problem and he considers that matter is the consequence of motion (Klever 1988, p.171), for it is because the substance moves itself that matter is generated. Klever (1988) claims that "movement and rest in extension are examples of immediate production by God, whereas the face of the universe with its infinite variations is an example of the mediate effects, which are a product of movement in its turn."

that bodies are animated in different ways and it provides the rules that explain their interaction.

These rules define the physical mechanisms of bodies, but they do not immediately explain the bodily imagination. However, this general introduction to the metaphysics of bodies was necessary so as to show how from the physics we can derive the origins of imagination. As Vinciguerra (2005) hypothesized, the explanation on the origins of imagination lies in postulate 5 of the physical interlude.[133] The postulate says:

> V. When a fluid part of the human body is determined (*determinatur*) by an external body so that it frequently thrusts (*impingat*) against a soft part [of the body], it changes (*mutat*) its surface and, as it were, impresses on [the soft part] certain traces (*vestigia eidem imprimit*) of the external body striking against [the fluid part].

The postulate says that when an external body impels a part of the human body against another but softer part of the same body, the human body itself will impress the traces (*vestigia*) of the external body on its own soft part. That is, the body is impelled, and the external force causes the body to retain the traces of the external body in itself. The impelling and the impressing are actions caused by interaction between bodies that leads to a change of motion from one body to another, generating a change in shape on the body that is impelled due to the retention of traces (vestiges) of the external body. This act of being impelled by a force and impressing a trace coming from that external force causes an affect in the body. From the affection, certain effects are created in the body such as the *vestigia* or traces. So, recapitulating from Ep17: imagination is the activity

[133] See Vinciguerra 2005, p.121. My issue with Vinciguerra's interpretation is that he is reducing all imagination to the bodily dimension and is claiming for a strong empiricism in Spinoza. Also, he does not distinguish bodily imagination from imagination of the mind, which I consider a major step in a reconstruction of Spinoza's theory of imagination.

that happens due to the constitution of the body, generating certain effects. Given that bodies are different among themselves, have a specific constitution and because they are constantly interacting, certain things follow. The interactions generate a change of motion and shape in the bodies which is the bodily imagination. Imagination is not the affects of the body, but the change of motion and shape as well as the effects of the change, that is the traces or the vestiges created by the body.

It seems that trace (*vestigia*) is a good candidate for the "effects of the imagination that arises from the constitution of the body" (Ep17). But what is it that causes imagination? If the trace is the effect of imagination, then what explains the causes of imagination? From what we have seen before in the physical interlude, the causes of imagination lie in the difference between the bodies and the fact that they are constantly interacting. So, among the causes of imagination we can list the condition (or the nature) of a body, the fact that there are a plurality of bodies that are part of the same substance and the fact that they are constantly interacting. This constant interaction and modification of bodies is what Spinoza calls a *corporis affectus,* that generates this complex event called *affectio.*[134] This term is used to refer to the modifications of the mind-body unit, indicating anything that happens with a thing (*quicquid contingit*). An affection is both an act, that is, the affect of affecting, and the state or disposition resulting from affecting. So, bodily imagination is explained by the fact that bodies have

[134] The term *affectio* has been used in the tradition. Vinciguerra (2005, 93) explains that Cicero, for example, used the term to express any sudden change in moral or physical state due to a certain cause. Descartes also used the term to express a quality of a body or a passion. In Spinoza, however, the term has generated a lot of debate. Mignini (1983) considers that the term *sensatio* that Spinoza uses on the TIE to refer to the operations of the senses is abandoned in the *Ethics* to avoid equivocation. According to Mignini, *sensatio* is not an operation of the mind whereas *affectio* is an operation of the mind. Vinciguerra (2005) on the other hand, considers that *affectio* is used to refer to the operations of the body. And Beyssade (1999) considers that *affectio/ affectus* are terms that can refer to the body and to the mind. Levy (2013) in turn, considers that there are only affects in the mind. I think that *affectio* is a term that refers to a complex event, that is, an event that occurs both in the mind and in the body and can be understood either by its extended causes or through its causes in thought. *Affectio* is then the effects of the modifications of a mode of substance, a modification that happens in both attributes at the same time.

affects and are able to impress traces and retain these vestiges.[135] Hence, imagination is not strictly speaking an affect, but the changes that occur in the body due to an affect (or interaction with other bodies) and the very constitution of each body.[136]

This definition is then not limited to the human body, it involves all possible extended things which express God's extended essence in a certain and determinate way. Since the physical interlude is about what is common to all bodies, one consequence of defining bodily imagination from the traceability of bodies is that every body imagines. Clearly, each body imagines to a different degree, depending on their particular constitution and complexity. If to have a bodily imagination means to be susceptible to modification and be modified by bodies, this activity should not be uncommon. Given the human's specific differences, our bodily imagination is intrinsically linked with our mental imagination and is as complex as that one.

After the physical interlude, Spinoza then introduces the definition of images and imagination but now from within the perspective of the mind-body unity.[137] In E2p17sch,

---

[135] There is a long discussion in the literature about the status of the term of *affectus* in Spinoza. Jean-Marie Beyssade (1999) in the paper "*Nostri Corporis Affectus*: Can an affect in Spinoza be 'of the body'?" defends that there as affections of the body in the same way that there are affections of the mind. The discussion is "whether affect, the proper subject matter of the third part of the *Ethics*, is a reality whose definition necessarily implies a reference to the mens (mind, soul [*âme*], or spirit [*esprit*] - according to the French translators) or else whether this reality can also be defined at the level of the body alone just as at the level of the mind or of man as a whole, who consists of both a mind and a body. If the first hypothesis is correct, it will be absurd to speak of an affect of the body (*corporis affectus)*: one will have to speak only of an affect of the mind or of the man. If the second hypothesis is correct, we can speak just as properly of an affect of the body as we can of an affect of the mind and of the man." in *Desire and Affect Spinoza as Psychologist Ethica III*, ed. Yovel, 1999 p.113. I do agree with Beyssade, but I am not going to argue here that *affectus* is a concept that refers to a complex event, that is, one that happens in the body and the mind because I think that it will be repetitive. My argument for *affectus* follows the same structure of demonstration than my argument for imagination, that is, it involves the metaphysics of attributes, the claim for their causal independence, their metaphysical identity and the simultaneity of their expressions in the modes of substance.

[136] The changes that occur in a body depends upon physical constitutions of the body such as its degree of softness, hardship, fluidity, solidity, etc. as well as the proportion of motion and rest that is constitutive of each body. The resulting trace will depend on the constitution of all the bodies involved in the interaction that generates the affect.

[137] The definition in E2p17schol is the following: "Next, to retain the customary words, the affections of the human body whose ideas present external bodies as present to us, we shall call images of things, though they do not reproduce the [NS:external] figure of things. And when the mind regards bodies in this way, we shall say that it imagines" This definition contains the very ambiguity in the use of imagine/imagination that we have been dealing with in this chapter, for it says that imagination is when the mind regards the bodies in a certain way. Imagination is then first being

images are the "affections of the human body whose ideas present external bodies as present to us". Clearly, the definition of image in this case, already involves the attribute of thought and is not strictly grounded in extension. It is fair then to say that while ideas of images are objects in the attribute of thought, traces (or vestiges) are their counterpart in the attribute of extension. So, while E2p17sch gives us the definition of mental images and imagination from the perspective of a complex event, that is, an event that presupposes the understanding of the mind-body union and their causal and explanatory independency, it is in the physical interlude that Spinoza offers the mechanisms that explain the bodily imagination.

But now that I have shown the basic mechanism of bodily imagination, some new questions appear. What are these traces exactly? Spinoza does not offer further explanations and we are left to our own speculation. Traces are all modifications that a body endures including the interactions that form and sustain our sensory organs (E1appx) and the images that we form in the back of the eye (visual images). Traces refer to events that occur both in simple and in complex bodies, which entail that every body that is interacting with other bodies is imagining, that is, bodies are tracing and being traced. Bodies are constructing and maintaining their resulting traces (their image) and

---

defined in terms of body and mind. But this definition follows a specific order of construction of the argument, and it should not be taken out of its context of enunciation. The definition appears in very particular place: after the interlude of part 2 on the physics of bodies, and it is part of a set of 9 propositions (from E2p14 to E2p23) that are about the simultaneity of the imaginative events of the mind and of the body. So, to arrive at this definition, Spinoza had already discussed the metaphysical and epistemological problems concerning the identity, separation, independence of attributes in parts one and two, and had explained, through the interlude, the nature of the union of the body and the mind. Since it is only after the problem of the causal independency of attributes and the nature of the mind-body union had been address that Spinoza defines imagination, we can infer that an understanding of imagination depends upon an understanding of the physics of body, the nature of the mind and the complexity of imagination as a mind-body event. More specifically, the deduction of imagination depends upon the definition of the mind as an idea of the body which in turn depends upon an understanding of the affections of the human bodies. This strategy of deduction is another evidence in favor of our argument that imagination expresses itself both in the body and in the mind. So, to analyze the origin and the implications of the definition of imagination as the certain "way in which the mind regards the body" and its affections (E2p17sch), we need now to understand how can a body act and be acted upon or how it can modify and be modified.

having them destroyed by other bodies all the time. Imagination of the body is then a pervasive activity of corporeal individuals. Certainly, bodily imagination will vary in kind according to the degree of complexity of the individuals in question. In human beings, bodily imagination is the counterpart of imagination of the mind. For this reason, before I conclude this chapter, I would like to address an important question pertinent to the general goal of this dissertation, a question that comes from the analysis of the mechanisms of the corporeal causes of imagination.

Is bodily imagination always passive?

We have seen that every interaction between bodies causes the bodies to imagine, that is, to modify themselves according to their capacity to trace and be traced. If all interaction between particular bodies generates imagination, and if bodily imagination is defined by an interaction between bodies, does this mean that bodily imagination is always passive? For if imagination depends upon an interaction with an external force that impels itself on a body, it seems that imagination is triggered by external causes, hence the imagining body is a partial cause of the imagining process. Moreover, in E3p2, when Spinoza is arguing that the body cannot determine the mind to thinking, and that the mind cannot determine the body to motion or to rest, he justifies this claim by appealing to lemma 3 of the physical interlude: the "motion and rest of the body must arise from another body, which has also been determined to motion or rest by another" (E3p2dem). So, does that mean that the motion of a body as well as its traces are always

caused by another body and never by itself? And if this is the case, should we infer that bodily imagination is always externally caused and therefore passive?

In E3def2 and E3def3, passivity (or passion, *affectum passionem*) is defined as those cases in which we are partial cause of something that happens in or outside us. The contrary of passivity is action (*affectum actionem*), that is, those cases in which we are the adequate cause of something that happens in us or outside us that follows from our nature. An *affectum actionem* can be understood through our nature alone, whereas an *affectum passionem* cannot. So, an event that happens with an individual can be said to be passive (or a passion) if it is caused by something other than itself, and the event is said to be active (action) if it can be understood clearly and distinctly through the nature of the individual alone. As we have seen before, imagination is not strictly speaking an affect, but rather, the changes that occur in the body. It is explained by the affect that triggers it as well as by the very constitution of each body. So, in order to decide whether bodily imagination is an active or a passive event, we should first evaluate whether a body is always and every time moved by external causes or not.

Now, let's come back to E2L3. There Spinoza is claiming that the motion and rest of a body must arise from another body. From this lemma, we have to infer that if imagination depends upon the movements caused by motion and rest and if these movements are always caused by another body, then bodily imagination is, by definition, passive. Moreover, the axiom 1 from the physical interlude also gives us good reasons to infer that bodily imagination is passive. It says " all modes by which a body is affected by another body follow both from the nature of the body affected and at the same time from the nature of the affecting body". This axiom gives us strong reasons for the

passivity claim, because of its inclusive character: all modes by which a body is affected by another body are such that the affected body is only a partial cause of the event.

So, in principle, all bodily imagination is passive because it is caused both by the body and an external cause. However, there are two other factors that we should take into account before a final conclusion is drawn. One of the missing factors in the current explanation is the fact that bodily imagination depends upon the constitution of a given body. What does that mean? Well, according to lemma 1, bodies are distinguished from one another by reason of motion and rest, speed and slowness. If this is the case, there is a certain proportion of motion and rest that defines the body as a particular body that is different from others. This proportion is independent of other bodies and the interaction with them. Moreover, bodies are defined by the power to preserve this proportion in face of the changes that they can suffer from the action of other bodies. This power of preservation is called *conatus,* and, as it is claimed in E3p6, each thing *(unaquaeque res)* strives to persevere in its being *(in suo esse perseverare conatur)*. Since each body is a singular extended thing and expresses the nature of substance in a certain and determinate way, no thing has in itself anything by which it can be destroyed and have its existence taken away (E2p6dem). Hence each body is able to produce nothing but what follows from its nature. This striving to express a body's own nature is its actual essence, and it is related both to the body and the mind. In the case of the body, it is called appetite.[138] But appealing to *conatus* or appetite does not immediately allow us to infer that the imagination of the body can be active. It is not the case that because it follows from a body's nature to imagine, that imagination is active. The fact that it follows from *conatus*

[138] E3p9sch: when this striving is related only to the mind, it is called will; but when it is related to the mind and body together, it is called appetite. This appetite, therefore, is nothing but the very essence of man, from whose nature these necessarily follow those things that promote his preservation

is not enough to entail action, because according to E3p9 the individual strives to preserve its being in both cases, either when it is suffering a passion or when it is acting. However, *conatus* can point to the possibility that in some cases bodily imagination may be said to be active. What are these cases?

The cases in which the bodily imagination can be said to be active are those in which the imagination is not caused by an external body, but by the body itself. If imagination is passive because it is triggered by an external cause, what about when imagination is triggered by the very body that is imagining? In this case, imagination is explained by the imagining body alone. This possibility is open because the traces or vestiges that get imprinted in the human body, may or may not come from a body that is external to the human body. That is, a body can either retain traces of external bodies or it can trace and be traced by itself for the sake of its own preservation. This can be argued if we take into consideration the definition of an individual body as provided in postulates of the physical interlude. According to the first postulate, "the human body is composed of a great many individuals of different natures, each of which is highly composite." That means that a body is a composite of parts that are in relation to one another and affecting one another, that is, changing their own motions, impelling and imprinting traces on each other. Although Spinoza does not develop the biological constitution of the body, from the physical interlude we can infer that the traces may be caused by the body acting upon itself. In this case, there is no external body in the equation (which does not mean that the human body can avoid affection with external bodies or be immune to them) but only movements of a body over itself generating traces on itself for the sake of its own

preservation. I think this is one case in which the bodily imagination should be considered as active.

But then, we can ask, isn't imagination defined (E2p17schol) in terms of an external body of which the mind can form an image? Well, but isn't it also the case that the mind can form an image of its own body? In any case, we should remember that the imagination of the body, as we are reconstructing it here, is not strictly speaking an image, but a trace that the body forms because of its own constitution and because of its constant state of modifications. The central point is that even though the initial motion of a body had been caused by another body that is external to it, a body can still be the cause of its own traits if we consider that it is an individual composed of various simpler bodies. Since the simple bodies all act to preserve the relationship that they have and that maintain the body as a single individual, we can say that in this sense it causes itself (when it acts to persist in its own being). If there is a way in which we can say that a body can be the cause of its own imagination, then this the case where we have an active bodily imagination.

I think that the fact that there may be a space for an active bodily imagination is an advantage because it allows us to have a more consistent explanation for the adequate ideas in the mind.[139] For if the mind can have adequate ideas, there should be a correlated event happening in the body that is equivalent to the action in the mind.[140] Also, the

[139] Gueroult also addresses this question and considers that "this objection can be refuted by considering the nature of the imaginative idea. The imaginative idea does not have in itself any positive thing through which it is said to be false, and its object, the image (*vestigium*, brain trace) involves the true nature of the body, that is extension. Because extension, being indivisible, is parallel in the part and in the whole. Consequently, our imaginative perception of singular things, that is the affections of our bodies, allow us to know them, according to their true nature, as extended things. It is then possible to show from the perceived bodies that the extension is the attribute from which they are modes." (Gueroult 1974, 40-43). But the nature of the imaginative idea is the object of our following chapter.

[140] The actions of the mind depend upon an adequate knowledge of the affections of the body as stated in E2p23 ("The mind does not know itself except insofar as it perceives the ideas of the affections of the body.").

possibility of an active bodily imagination may explain how lower organisms can maintain themselves and in certain cases reproduce in the absence of reason. But I am not going to develop this idea here. In this chapter we have seen that there is a bodily imagination in Spinoza, that it is different from the mental imagination, and, although it is in principle passive, there may be cases in which it is said to be active.

CHAPTER 5

IMAGINATION OF THE MIND: CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS AND THEIR ROLE IN KNOWLEDGE

One of the hallmarks of Spinoza's conception of the human mind is the rejection of the notion that the mind is a passive receptacle of ideas. Ideas are not immediate reproductions of their objects, but conceptions that the mind forms because it is a thinking thing. In E2def3, Spinoza reinforces, in the explanation to the definition, that the mind conceives ideas because it is not passive to its object; instead of having ideas, the mind forms ideas. Reinforcing the active character of ideas, in E2p49sch Spinoza distinguishes between an idea, which is a conception of the mind, and an image of things that we imagine. Even if the mind is not a passive receptacle of ideas, it cannot avoid being passive in some sense (E3p1). Although the mind is active when it conceives ideas, it is passive when it reproduces the images of the external objects or when it has inadequate ideas (E3p3). Since inadequate ideas and imagery belong to the first kind of knowledge (E2p41proof), imagination has to be the cause of passivity and inadequacy.

However, it would be incorrect to say that the only cause of passivity is epistemological or owing to imagination. In E3p3sch, Spinoza claims that the cause of passive states of the mind lies in our own nature. The metaphysical explanation of passivity is the following: because the mind "has something involving negation" [*sive*

quatenus aliquid habet quod negationem involvit],[141] then the mind (as well as other particular things) will have a certain degree of passivity. Passive states are a characteristic of all particular things[142] [*res singulares*] just as they are of the mind because a particular thing, when considered in itself as a part [s*ive quatenus consideratur naturae pars*], cannot be clearly and distinctly perceived through itself independently from other parts. We have passive states because the mind is a finite mode of the substance, and, for this reason, in so far as it is a part, it has a degree of passivity (which is a kind of partiality). If, on the one hand, the metaphysical cause of passivity cannot be remedied, the epistemological cause can. In fact, one of the primary goals of the *Ethics* as a philosophical project is to show that a life of freedom [*mentis libertas*] and well-being [*mentis beatitudo*] depends upon an adequate understanding and application of the powers of the intellect [*potentia intellectus, potentia rationis*]. Accordingly, the problem that I would like to deal with here is not whether the epistemological causes of passivity can be remedied, but why and how the passive effects of imagination can be transformed.

The standard explanation for why and how the passive states of the mind can be transformed appears to be compelling: the mind acts when it conceives an idea, and it increases its activity when it is able to construct more adequate ideas. If adequate ideas are produced by reason, then the mind can overcome its passive states through the exercise of reason and its ability to form adequate ideas. In the standard explanation, it is a matter of quantity: the more the mind exercises its own reasoning, the more it knows

---

[141] In the E3p3sch, Spinoza claims: "*Videmus itaque passiones ad mentem non referri nisi quatenus aliquid habet quod negationem involvit sive quatenus consideratur ut naturae pars quae per se absque aliis non potest clare et distincte percipi et hac ratione ostendere possem passiones eodem modo ad res singulares ac ad mentem referri nec alia ratione posse percipi sed meum institutum est de sola mente humana agere."*

[142] Elwes (1883) and Shirley (1982) translates *res singulares* by particular things, whereas Curley (1994), more faithful to the original, translates it as 'singular things' (see E2def7). With respect to 'passive states', this is also Shirley and Elwes translation. Curley chooses 'passions', since the original is '*passiones*'.

itself as well as the union it has with nature, the more it is able to overcome passivity (E3p1cor). The passive effects of imagination can be reversed because the mind can exercise its rational capacity and know things through the second (and third) kinds of knowledge. According to this interpretation, the transition from passivity to activity depends upon a limitation of the activity of imagination and an increase in the activity of reason. When the transition occurs, the mind would have experienced active states more often than passive states. This change in the mental activity does not, however, indicate that the mind can transform a given passive state (an inadequate idea) into an active state (an adequate idea)[143]. This standard interpretation presupposes at least two theses concerning imagination: that (1) all kinds of ideas of imagination are ideas of images, that (2) ideas of imagination are inadequate and passive. In this chapter, I would like to dispute these theses in order to show that the causes of passivity can be remedied not only through the exercise of the rational capacities [*potentia rationis*], but also through an adequate and active exercise of imagination.[144] My contention is that imagination does not necessarily form inadequate and passive ideas, and that it is an activity that can create conditions for the mind to construct adequate ideas. Moreover, I will evaluate whether E5p3 and E5p4 indicate that a passive state can be transformed into an adequate idea. If the answer is positive, then I think that the standard interpretation of imagination should be reconsidered in face of the distinctions and challenges here proposed. My suggestion

[143] This distinction between having more active states than passive states, and transforming an inadequate idea into an adequate idea is important because for some interpreters it does not seem plausible to argue that an inadequate idea can be transformed into an adequate one. I will try to show one way in which this transformation is possible and that Spinoza makes an argument in favor of this kind of transformation in the fifth part of the *Ethics*.

[144] It is Charles Appuhn (1926) that offers the claim that there is an active imagination in Spinoza. In his short paper, he appeals to E5p10-15, Ep 7 to Pieter Balling and E2p17 as evidence of his claim. The goal of the note is "d'appeler l'attention des lecteurs sur d'autres textes qui, sans contredire les précédents, montrent que Spinoza conçoit et connaît une autre forme d'imagination, non plus passive mais active, non plus asservie au corps mais capable au contraire de lui imposer sa maîtrise." in "Note sur la théorie de l'imagination dans Spinoza", *Chronicon Spinozanum IV*. (1924-1926), pp. 257-260.

for a renewed understanding is to think of imagination as one way through which the mind can continue to form adequate ideas. In this way, imagination should not be counteracted or limited by reason but be stimulated in its virtuous nature.[145]

On the origin of the ideas of imagination: not all ideas of imagination are ideas of images

The first thesis to be disputed is the claim that all ideas of imagination are ideas of images. I am first going to show how this claim appears to be right, but, in the face of the need to establish more fine-grained distinctions, this claim is so general that it will lead us to error: to say that ideas of imagination and ideas of images are synonymous is a mistake. Although all ideas of images are ideas of imagination, the converse does not follow because not all ideas of imagination are ideas of images. In the following section, I will show that imagination is constituted by different elements that are defined by their causal origin. The constitutive elements of imagination include ideas of images, but also general notions, ideas of affects (emotions), and fictions; all of these are ideas of imagination. These ideas are all different among themselves but, most importantly, they are not to be identified with ideas of images.

There is a reason why the standard interpretation considers that ideas of imagination are ideas of images. The origin of it lies in E2p17sch where Spinoza defines

[145] The discussion on whether imagination is virtuous or not lies in the divergence in interpretations of E2p17sch. Spinoza claims that "*Nam si mens dum res non existentes ut sibi praesentes imaginatur, simul sciret res illas revera non existere, hanc sane imaginandi potentiam virtuti suae naturae, non vitio tribueret praesertim si haec imaginandi facultas a sola sua natura penderet hoc est (per definitionem 7 partis I) si haec mentis imaginandi facultas libera esset.*" According to Elwes translation: "If the mind, while imagining non-existent things as present to it, is at the same time conscious that they do not really exist, this power of imagination must be set down to the efficacy of its nature, and not to a fault, especially if this faculty of imagination depend solely on its own nature--that is (I. Def. vii.), if this faculty of imagination be free."

images of things: "to retain the usual phraseology, the modifications of the human body, of which the ideas represent external bodies as present to us, we will call the images of things, though they do not recall the figure of things". In this scholium, Spinoza defines the images of things as the ideas through which the mind represents the modifications of its own body when in contact with an external body.[146] From the perspective of the mind, images, then, are ideas of things; that is, ideas of images or ideas of external bodies. The mind forms ideas (of images) of external bodies because it is, itself, the idea of its body (E2p13), and, consequently, it can form ideas of the modification of its own body.[147] Imagination, then, turns the idea of the external body [*ideae corpora externa*] into an idea of an image of the external body as an object present to the mind [*praesentia repraesentant*]. If we take this scholium to be offering the general definition of all ideas of imagination, then it seems that – just as the standard interpretation supposes – that all ideas of imagination are ideas of images directly produced from the interaction with the non-extended aspect of the external objects. If this is the case, then, if all ideas of imagination are ideas of images, every idea of imagination should have as its *ideatum* an external extended object.[148]

---

[146] The definition is ambiguous between image being an effect of the modifications of the body and being an effect of the modifications of the mind. As we have seen in the previous chapter, I think that imagination is an activity that occurs in both attributes simultaneously. The choice of word here does not help much in deciding whether an image is a visual image or a mental image, so I interpret this scholium as indicating that an image is caused both by the modification of the body (bodily imagination) and by modifications of the mind (mental imagination). Since the concept of *imagines* appears to be ambiguous, interpreters assume that images mean the same as ideas of images, although this is not obvious in the text. A further complication with this scholium is the one noted by Steenbakers (2004). Spinoza is introducing the definition with the expression "*verba usitata retineamus*", which indicates that this may not be his own definition, but a reference to the manner in which images are traditionally defined. I am referencing this scholium in this chapter to analyze the images insofar as they are also ideas of images in the mind and consequently, objects constituent of the mental imagination.

[147] As we have seen in the previous chapter, the mind is able to have an idea of its body and of the modification it suffers from the interaction with external bodies even though the body is an extended object and the mind is a particular modification of thought.

[148] In this case, we should understand as the *ideatum,* the idea of the extended object. Since there is no cross-causality between attributes, the object of the idea of image is the non-extended aspect or character of the extended object. That is, the process occurs in a thought-thought causality.

Ideas of imagination, however, do not necessarily have an external object as their *ideatum* (E2p49sch). Ideas of imagination can be ideas that do not represent any particular external object, such as, for example, fictional ideas, general notions and ideas of affects. Fictional ideas and general notions make the mind regard as present things that do not exist (E2p17sch). Examples of fictional ideas [*figmenta*] in the *Ethics* are the idea of a winged horse [*equum alatus*], and all of the images that appear in dreams and during hallucinatory states (E249sch). Examples of general notions are the notions of "being", "thing", "something", "man", "horse", "dog and the like", which are also called transcendental notions or universals.[149] Finally, ideas of imagination can also have as their object the relationship between an external object and the human body, as it is in the ideas of affects. Ideas of affects are ideas of the modifications of one's own body when in relation with other bodies. Examples of these ideas or imaginations are offered in the definition of the affects on part 3 of the *Ethics,* where the three primitive affects are also defined: desire [*cupiditatem*], joy [*laetitiam*] and sadness [*tristitiam*].[150] The origin of fictions and general notions is distinct from the origin of the ideas of affects, but all these cases illustrate how ideas of imagination are not reducible to ideas of images. We will see the implication of not reducing ideas of imagination to ideas of images later on.

Although fictional ideas and general notions do not represent any particular external object, they must nevertheless have an origin and another kind of object of

[149] In the Ep 52 to Boxel, ghosts and specters are also considered fictional ideas.

[150] Deleuze, in his unpublished lectures (available only online), claims that there is a distinction between affect [*affectus*] and ideas. The affect is determined but is not reduced to the ideas that one has, it is a variation in one's perfection and it does not represent anything. An idea represents its object through its objective reality, and it has a degree of reality or perfection in itself given its intrinsic character. Finally, an idea of an affect, according to Deleuze's interpretation, is the representation of an effect without its cause, that is, the perception of the variation of one's perfection and power to act. It is the lower cause of knowledge because this perception does not involve the knowledge of its causes. I am aware of this distinction, but I do not think that it is relevant here because the problem we are dealing with derives from the definition of an idea and of idea of affect and how the ideas we have can determine passive and/or active affects.

which they are ideas. The origin of general notions appears in E2p40sch1, after the justification for the causes of the common notions. General notions are defined in contrast with common notions. Common notions are ideas common to all men, and which are equally in the part and in the whole (E2p38). General notions, on the other hand, depend upon individual experience and are not formed by all men in the same way. They originate in the mind due to its nature as a part, that is, due to its particular character. Since the human body is limited, it is capable of forming distinctly only a certain number of images at the same time. When the images in the body start to become so great in number, the mind starts to imagine them confusedly, without any distinction. When the set of images trespasses the number of images that can be distinctly perceived by the mind, these images start loosing their distinctive traces. The particular characteristics of these images disappear due to the excess of images, and the mind considers them as a single general notion. The general notion is a combination and conflation of particular images into a general, and confused, image. Confusion in this case means without distinction, and in this state or through these notions, the mind cannot imagine with distinction the color, size, number, and other differences that appear in a particular image. Instead, the mind imagines distinctly only what they all agree in, and according to what is more often perceived of these things in experience. These general notions are predicated by the mind of infinitely many singular things. Since the formation of notions are relative to the experience of each person, they are the reason why philosophers disagree.

General notions, at least indirectly, do have an origin in the images of things, but because they are the result of the conflation of various images, general notions do not represent any particular object. The cause of the general notions can be only partially

explained by the external objects. Since they are the result of the combination of various images in the mind, the nature of the mind as a particular imaginative being is what explains the construction of general notions and not the external objects themselves. So, while ideas of images are representations of the ideas of external objects, general notions are not. In this sense, they are like fictions which do not represent any particular external object. Both general notions and fictions result from a combination of ideas of images.

The difference between general notions and fictions is that general notions are ideas where the particular characteristics of objects are absent, while fictions are ideas that may or may not include particular characteristics. The origin of fictions is varied. A fiction can be a combination of ideas of images of different objects previously experienced, such as the idea of a winged horse, or it can be the combination of ideas of images generated by one's own body in a hallucinatory experience. Spinoza claims, in the set of letters to Hugo Boxel, that fear and ignorance can explain the origin of fictions such as ghosts and specters. Fictions, for Spinoza are not empty names, they are entities of imagination that do not represent any particular external object, but they are entities to which one can refer. That is, ideas of ghosts and specters are objective insofar as they can be the cause of, and be caused by, other ideas. Fictions, however, are not ideas of external objects like ideas of images.

Another kind of entity of imagination that is clearly not an immediate representation of external objects is the idea of an affection. Ideas of affections are ideas which involve the nature of things outside the human mind together with the mind's own nature (E2p18sch). Ideas of affections do not represent objects outside the mind, but the relationship between the mind and those objects. The idea of affection is not an idea of an

image, because an idea of affection can be formed through the interaction with objects that are not present and with objects that are not particular external objects.[151]

The mind forms ideas of affections because the mind itself is an idea, the idea of the body. For this reason, it is through the perception of the affections of the body that the mind knows about its own existence and about the existence of its body (E2p19). The ideas of the affections are formed due to the movement of the parts that compose the body and the ability of the mind to perceive the ideas of these affections (E2p22 & E2p23). The movements of the bodies and its affections may or may not generate an idea of an image, but it necessarily generates ideas of the affections in the mind.[152] Due to their different origins and objects, we cannot take ideas of images and ideas of affections as synonymous.

Hence, by analyzing the nature and origin of the components of the imagination of the mind, and showing that they have fundamental differences, we can conclude that it is not the case that all ideas of imagination are ideas of images. Up to this point, the distinction I tried to establish is between ideas that reproduce or represent external objects, and ideas that result from a composition of images or from the non-representational relations between objects and the mind.[153]

---

[151] One example is when we have an idea of affection of ideas of reason such as the idea of God or substance.

[152] For example, when I feel an earache I am having an idea of the affections of my body, but I am not forming an idea of the image of the earache. One the other hand, when I can have an idea of the affection of the sea while bringing to my mind the idea of the image of the sea, which I formed when I was at the beach.

[153] This distinction is similar to the one seen by Wolfson (1934). He claims that this distinction appears in Arabic and Hebrew philosophical texts, and especially in Maimonides: "from the various restatements of Aristotle's discussion of imagination in mediaeval Arabic and Hebrew philosophic texts it appears that a distinction is to be drawn between two kinds of imagination which may be designated respectively by the terms "retentive imagination" and "compositive imagination", corresponding to what is called today reproductive and productive imagination. (…) Suggestions of this distinction between retentive and compositive imagination may be discovered in the various scattered passages which occur in the writings of Spinoza, though no formal distinction is drawn by him between them." (Wolfson 1934, pp.82-83) Like Wolfson, I think that this distinction is present in Spinoza but we can only perceive the difference if we analyze the ideas of imagination in their different kinds: the ideas of images, ideas of affects, fictions and general notions.

On the nature of the ideas of imagination: it is not the case that ideas of imagination are always (or only) inadequate and passive

I have shown that ideas of imagination are not reducible to ideas of images. A question remains though: are these ideas always inadequate and passive? The positive answer to this question results from the presupposition that all ideas of imagination can still be considered images, even if they are not all ideas of images. That is, an idea can be considered to be an image if the mind is passive with respect to the object that it represents as an idea. So, one could claim that imagination is a passive activity, and, consequently, that all ideas that it forms are passive states. This interpretation can be justified by appeal to the series of propositions E2p24-E2p31 in which Spinoza characterizes inadequate knowledge.[154] Especially from E2p26cor, E2p27, and E2p29 one can infer that insofar as the mind imagines an external body, the mind has inadequate knowledge of the imagined object.[155] So, in accordance with this standard interpretation, this set of propositions can be considered as a general claim about imagination: insofar as the mind imagines, the mind has an inadequate knowledge. The inference is based on a dilemma: either the mind has adequate ideas or inadequate ideas of objects. If through

[154] According to Macherey (1997), on his introduction to the second part of the Ethics, this cluster of propositions is about "*la connaissance inadequate*", which is part of the section on "*connaissance immédiate*" (E2-14-31). The section in question comes after the argument for how we know the human mind (E2p20-23) and from it follows the sessions containing arguments on the difference between truth and error(E2p32-26), the nature of the common notions (E2p37-39), the three kinds of knowledge (E2p41-43), and adequate knowledge (E2p44-47). Macherey distinguishes two forms of the thinking activity: the immediate knowing and rational knowing. His distinctions are helpful to map the structure of the second part, but it is import to pay attention to the transitions between the clusters of propositions because in the argument for the knowledge of human mind there are keys to interpret both arguments, for adequate and inadequate knowledge.

[155] The corollary of proposition 26, "insofar as the human mind imagines an external body, to that extent it does not have an adequate knowledge of them". In E2p27 and E2p29 Spinoza's claim is that the ideas of affections of the body do not involve adequate knowledge of the human body nor of the mind.

imagination the mind does not have an adequate idea, it follows that when the mind is imagining it should be necessarily having inadequate ideas.

The mind has an inadequate idea, according to E2p29sch, when it has "confused and fragmentary knowledge of itself, its own body, and external bodies whenever it perceives things from the common order of nature, that is, whenever it is determined externally". In contrast, the mind has adequate knowledge when it is "determined internally, through its regarding several things at the same time, to understand their agreement, their differences, and their opposition." Inadequate knowledge, then, happens when the mind is determined externally, and adequate knowledge when the mind is conditioned internally. This distinction explains why the standard interpretation considers that all ideas of imagination are inadequate and passive. Since imagination produces ideas of images that are representations of external objects, then knowledge from imagination is passive and inadequate because ideas of imagination are always externally determined. Given that the traditional interpretation holds that all ideas of imagination are caused by an interaction with an external object, then the origin of these ideas is only partially explained by mind. According to definition 2 of part 3, "we are passive when something takes place in us, or follows from our nature, of which we are only the partial cause". Imagination is passive if we consider that it has its origin in external causes, that is, if we consider that we cannot be the adequate cause of these states. Since ideas of imagination are caused either directly or indirectly by its interaction with external objects, then imagination is a passive activity. Passivity of imagination can also be explained by appealing to the metaphysical definition of modes. According to E4p2, we are passive because we are part of nature and we cannot be conceived independently of

other parts. For this reason, it is impossible for us to undergo changes that can be only understood through our nature alone (E4p4). That is, the mind-body complex is always subject to passive states, and this condition cannot be changed because it is a consequence of finitude, that is, of us being part of nature. Consequently, imagination is the origin of mistakes and it is a mental activity that should be overcome if we want to have real knowledge.

These arguments support the standard interpretation which I think is neither charitable nor faithful to the text. I will try to show that the claim that ideas of imagination are always inadequate and passive does not capture the whole of Spinoza's theory. My contention is that although in some cases they are, it is not the case that ideas of imagination are always inadequate and passive. First, I will address the metaphysical claim that grounds passivity, and secondly, the problem of the origin of the ideas of imagination. Finally, I will propose a positive interpretation of imagination that justifies it being defined as a kind of knowledge. According to this alternative interpretation, imagination, even being the origin of mistakes, it is also the beginning of knowledge and should be stimulated in its virtuous nature.

The claim that imagination is an activity that the mind has because it is part of nature cannot in itself be disputed. We are indeed parts of nature being able to form ideas that are themselves partial because our nature "has something involving negation" (E3p3sch). There is nothing in nature that can be adequately understood through itself alone, so it would be trivial to say that imagination is passive because it cannot be understood through the nature of the mind alone. Moreover, it would be wrong to say that only imagination is passive in this sense. If passivity is defined as a consequence of

something being a part of nature, all modes and their activities are necessarily passive. The kind of passivity that is being attributed to imagination is illustrated by the worm in the blood example in Spinoza's letter to Oldenburg.[156] The mistake of the worm is to take a part as if it were a whole, interpreting what is part as a self-contained and independent whole. This letter on the part-whole distinction exemplifies two approaches to the nature of a thing: we can consider it as part and as whole, but we can only understand the thing if we analyze how it is connected with its surroundings. It is through the understanding of external causes that we can know the causes of motions and transferring of motion from one thing to another. A part or a finite thing can only be known through the relations that it bears with other parts or finite things. It is the reciprocal relations and the mutual modifications that occur between parts that explain the function and nature of the thing in the larger whole. It is through the apprehension of the ways in which the part agrees or disagrees with other things, the ways in which the part is similar or different from them, that the part can be known in its "intimate union with the whole" (Ep 32). So, the

[156] The thought experiment contained in the epistle 32 is the following: "Let us imagine, with your permission, a little worm, living in the blood, able to distinguish by sight the particles of blood, lymph, &c., and to reflect on the manner in which each particle, on meeting with another particle, either is repulsed, or communicates a portion of its own motion. This little worm would live in the blood, in the same way as we live in a part of the universe, and would consider each particle of blood, not as a part, but as a whole. He would be unable to determine, how all the parts are modified by the general nature of blood, and are compelled by it to adapt themselves, so as to stand in a fixed relation to one another. For, if we imagine that there are no causes external to the blood, which could communicate fresh movements to it, nor any space beyond the blood, nor any bodies whereto the particles of blood could communicate their motion, it is certain that the blood would always remain in the same state, and its particles would undergo no modifications, save those which may be conceived as arising from the relations of motion existing between the lymph, the chyle, &c. The blood would then always have to be considered as a whole, not as a part. But, as there exist, as a matter of fact, very many causes which modify, in a given manner, the nature of the blood, and are, in turn, modified thereby, it follows that other motions and other relations arise in the blood, springing not from the mutual relations of its parts only, but from the mutual relations between the blood as a whole and external causes. Thus the blood comes to be regarded as a part, not as a whole. So much for the whole and the part. All natural bodies can and ought to be considered in the same way as we have here considered the blood, for all bodies are surrounded by others, and are mutually determined to exist and operate in a fixed and definite proportion, while the relations between motion and rest in the sum total of them, that is, in the whole universe, remain unchanged. Hence it follows that each body, in so far as it exists as modified in a particular manner, must be considered as a part of the whole universe, as agreeing with the whole, and associated with the remaining parts. As the nature of the universe is not limited, like the nature of blood, but is absolutely infinite, its parts are by this nature of infinite power infinitely modified, and compelled to undergo infinite variations. But, in respect to substance, I conceive that each part has a more close union with its whole. For, as I said in my first letter (addressed to you while I was still at Rhijnsburg), substance being infinite in its nature, it follows, as I endeavored to show, that each part belongs to the nature of substance, and, without it, can neither be nor be conceived."

character of imagination as a part that is in contact with other parts is not itself enough to determinate its nature as passive or inadequate.

When investigating the nature of imagination, we are trying to find out how this activity is related to other activities in the mind and how it can be explained by the nature of the human being as a whole. In fact, when explaining the nature of any activity or event, the right way to do it is not to focus on its aspect as part, but how this part has coherence with other parts that form a whole. So, it is wrong to interpret imagination as being in itself a passive or inadequate activity just because it is a part in contact with other parts. Spinoza's criticism of the mind as a passive receptacle of ideas is, in fact, also extended to his theory of imagination.

When imagination is characterized in E2p17sch as the way in which the mind regards external bodies as present to the mind, this definition is accompanied by additional qualification. Spinoza claims that these representations do not reproduce the figure or shape of things [*tametsi rerum figuras non referunt*]. Through this claim two thesis are being defended: first, that ideas of objects are not "mute pictures"[157], that is, they are not images of objects or reproductions.[158] Second, ideas of objects are constructions resulting from the interaction between mind and objects, and these ideas, in some cases, inform the mind more about its own nature than the nature of the external object (E2p16). That is, ideas of imagination are not pictures or images that the mind contemplates or passively receives due to interaction with external objects, they are ideas

[157] Elwes translates *picturas mutas* as "mute pictures" and Shirley translates it as "dumb pictures". I am using Elwes translation because it is closer to the original meaning.

[158] Gleizer (1996) in his book *Truth and Certainty in Spinoza*, claims that Spinoza's theory of ideas is in direct contrast with Descartes'. Gleizer argues that Spinoza in E2p17sch is referring to Descartes' claim in the *Meditations* that the ideas are like pictures, and is constructing an alternative theory of ideas guided by the principle that the mind is never passive towards its object. I think that Gleizer is right in this point, but in my view, Spinoza's theory of ideas is also heavily influenced by his critique of Descartes' separation of the mind and body as well as of his claim that the mind is independent from the body. I take the claim that the mind is embodied to be a fundamental notion for Spinoza.

that the mind forms because of its nature as a thinking thing. If that is the case, if ideas of imagination tell more about the nature of the mind than about the nature of the external object, then these ideas cannot be said to be only or fully determined by external causes. There has to be a degree of internal determination for the ideas to carry the qualities of the thinking mind together with the qualities of the external object.

Ideas are not mute or dumb pictures, ideas speak to the mind and they speak the mind. Ideas are not mute because they are never meaningless, ideas do not depend upon a voluntary act of the will to be judged and affirmed as true or false. Instead, ideas are themselves acts of assertion, for every idea is a judgment. So, because an idea does not depend on a voluntary act to acquire meaning or to affirm itself as an idea of something, it cannot be interpreted as a mere representation. Ideas of things carry an affirmation about that of which they are an idea, they carry value and judgment. The mind, for example, is the idea of the body, and, as an idea, it affirms the existence of an actually existing body. Generalizing, any idea affirms the existence of the object that it is the idea of, as well as some properties of the object that it is an idea of: an idea of the sun as small object, for example, is a cluster of affirmations that include the existence of the sun and the existence of the sun as a small object. The fact that we perceive the sun as a small object is not an idea that will later be judged by the will that will decide whether the idea is true or false. Perceiving the sun as a small object is already to affirm that the sun is a small object. Spinoza considers that affirming that the sun is a small object when we perceive the sun as such is not in itself wrong or inadequate. This perception informs us about the relationship between size and distance: we will perceive objects that are far as smaller than they are when we are close to them. In itself, this perception is an instance of

a law of nature and there is nothing inadequate about it. The inadequacy comes when we affirm that the sun is, under any condition or observed from any given distance, small just like when we see it from the earth. This perception itself is not wrong, but it lacks the idea of its cause, and, for this reason, if the affirmation of the sun as a small object is not understood in relation to its cause (the relativity of size in relation to distance), it will be an inadequate idea.

There is, then, one sense in which we have to say that the ideas of imagination are inadequate. Because ideas of imagination do not carry in themselves the idea of their cause, they are partial and not necessarily adequate. Nevertheless, the idea of imagination, as a part in the whole that is the mind, is always in relation to other ideas, and in some cases ideas of imagination are indeed followed by their causes. An astronomer who knows the real size of planets and their distances will continue to see the sun as a small object when observing it from the earth, but this imagination will be followed by an adequate explanation of its cause and will, therefore, not be an inadequate idea. Hence, ideas of imagination are not in themselves inadequate, they only are inadequate when these ideas are not followed by the ideas of their cause. When there is a privation of the idea of the cause, the ideas of imagination are a source of passivity and of mistakes, but they are not in themselves inadequate or passive. In fact, they are informative, but I will further address this point in the following session.

Finally, ideas of imagination cannot be passive in the same sense that images are said to be passive. Ideas do not reproduce the figure or shape of things [*tametsi rerum figuras non referunt*], so they should not be confused with pictures: “For ideas I do not mean images such as those that are formed at the back of the eyes - or if you like, in the

middle of the brain - but conception of thought." (E2p48sch). Spinoza is very clear in the scholium of E2p49:

> it is essential to distinguish between ideas and the words [*inter ideas et verba*] we use to signify things. (…) For those who think that ideas consist in images formed in us from the contact of external bodies are convinced that those ideas of things whereof we can form no like image are not ideas, but mere fictions fashioned arbitrarily at will. So they look on ideas as mute pictures on a tablet [*ideas igitur veluti picturas in tabula mutas aspiciunt*], and misled by this preconception, they fail to see that an idea, insofar as it is an idea, involves affirmation or negation.

The context of the critique of ideas as "mute pictures" [*picturas in tabula mutas*] is this distinction between images and ideas, or the distinction between words and ideas. As one can see in the quote above, Spinoza understands images as words used to signify things, and not ideas of objects. So, ideas of imagination are not pictures in the sense that they are not mere words,[159] but concepts that involve judgment. Ideas of imagination are not images but affirmations, or an act of assertion or judgment about that which the idea is an idea of. This act of assertion indicates more the state of one's body in relation to the object perceived than the object itself, and this explains why imagination is only the first kind of knowledge. But this same reason also explains why ideas are not pictures: they do not reproduce the external object as it is, but as it is in relation to one's own body. In this sense, even ideas of imagination are conceptions of the mind, and, for this reason, are not passive representations (or picturing) of external objects. Finally, ideas of affects, general

[159] Spinoza is here showing that he is from a pre-linguistic turn era, defending that one philosophizes with ideas and not merely with words. Words are images, but ideas are not images because ideas are not reducible to the words we use to "picture" the ideas.

notions, fictions, and ideas of images are ways in which the mind can know about itself and its relation with other things, and whether these ideas are partial or not connected with their cause does not prevent them from being conceptions of the mind.[160]

In conclusion, we cannot say that imagination is only defined by inadequacy and passivity. I think that if there is nothing positive in ideas whereby they can be said to be false (E2p33), similarly, there is nothing positive in the idea whereby we can say that it is inadequate. The imaginations of the mind, looked at in themselves, contain no error (E2p17sch) and no inadequacy. This is the case because there is nothing preventing this imagination from becoming an adequate idea when its causes are known. In fact, the idea of imagination only becomes inadequate when the mind takes the partial idea as an adequate idea. If the mind knows that it is imagining, then there is no inadequacy in the imagined idea itself.

On the power of imagination

Imagination cannot be defined simply as a passive activity that only forms ideas of images and inadequate ideas. We have to take into consideration that imagination also actively conceives ideas insofar as it is an activity through which the mind affirms or denies the existence of external bodies and of its own body. The ideas it forms are not inadequate in themselves, but they are inadequate only when these ideas lack the idea of

[160] Jaquet (2004) has a similar argument when it comes to the characterization of emotions or affects. She does not, however, extend this characterization to all ideas of imagination as I am proposing here. One problem with this characterization is that conceptions refer to ideas that do not have any contradiction. One could argue that a fictional idea such as the idea of a round square is not a conception because it is an idea that involves a contradiction, and should then be considered as an image. This argument can be extended to all ideas of non-existent objects. I do not think that this objection holds because the idea of a round square, even not having much objective reality, it is a conception of the mind that depends upon the concepts of being round and being square. Some formal characteristics of the idea include being contradictory and being impossible.

their cause. Previously, I gave reasons to reject the main theses that serve as ground to the traditional interpretation. Now I will offer a positive interpretation of imagination as an alternative. In the following session, I will argue that imagination is an activity that creates conditions for the mind to form adequate ideas and to persist in the act of forming more adequate ideas. The result of my interpretation is that imagination should not be counteracted or limited by reason, but be stimulated in its virtuous nature.

For this interpretation to become clear, I have to say a few words about how the mind forms adequate ideas. Adequate ideas, as we already know, are ideas that are internally determined. They are ideas which find in the mind their adequate cause, that is, "an idea which, insofar as it is considered in itself, without relation to an object, has all the properties, or intrinsic denominations of a true idea" (E2d4). Adequate ideas are ideas that accompany their cause, that is, ideas that are not partial, but complete because they are associated with the idea of their cause. Adequate ideas are complete because they are properly constructed by the mind according to an order of deduction. The process of construction of an adequate idea begins with ideas that are already in the mind, innately[161]. These ideas are the pre-conditions for any possible knowledge because they are foundational and come first in the order of deduction. The initial idea in the order of deduction is the idea of the substance. This first idea, the idea of substance (or God), is an idea that cannot be given by imagination or by the experience of external objects and it functions as the ground for the deduction of other ideas. The second idea which is a pre-condition for any adequate knowledge is the idea of the mind as embodied and united

[161] I am not going to discuss what ideas are innate for Spinoza. I only want to show that for him, at least one idea is already in present, adequately, in every mind: the idea of God. God is also the only idea that cannot be imagined. Other than the idea of God, there is no other that is already adequate in the mind or that cannot be imagined. Spinoza's argument on this matter is explored by Eugene Garver, in the not yet published paper "Scandalous Knowledge about God". In the future, I would like to further explore the different origins of ideas.

with nature. Adequate knowledge cannot be inferred if the mind is not aware or if it did not conceive the idea of substance, the idea of the mind itself, and the idea of the relationship that the mind has with substance. Those ideas are the grounds upon which adequate ideas are inferred; that is, adequate ideas follow from these foundational ideas. The question of where these ideas come from and how we can come to conceive them is at the heart of the matter here. Whereas the idea of the existence of a single nature (God or substance) cannot be acquired through the interaction with external objects, the idea of the mind as embodied and united with nature both can and should be conceived through experience. Experience is a condition for the mind to know itself as embodied, and it is also the condition for the mind to conceive its own unity with the substance. Although the idea of God is innate (E2p47) and given prior to any experience, the other two ideas that are necessary for the deduction of adequate knowledge are not given *a priori*.

Being a good opponent of Descartes, Spinoza does not define the mind as a separate and independent substance that can have ideas regardless of its body. The mind in Spinoza is embodied and the mind is defined as the idea of the body. Because the mind is the idea of the body, when the mind has an idea of itself as a mind, this idea is actually the idea of the mind as the idea of the body. That is, for the mind to know itself and its essence, it has to know itself as the mind of a body. This second idea that is needed for the establishment of an order of deduction in thought is not innate, but acquired in experience. According to E2p23, "the mind does not know itself, except insofar as it perceives the ideas of the affections of the body". The mind can only know itself once it perceives the ideas of the affections of its own body, so, differently from the idea of

substance, it is through the experience of its body and of other bodies that the idea of the mind is acquired.

Once the mind forms an idea about itself as body and about its unity with nature, other ideas can be adequately inferred. Since an idea is adequate when it is accompanied by its cause and is intrinsically determined, then every adequate idea depends upon the idea of substance and the idea of the mind. So, substance and the mind are in the causal origin of every adequate idea because every idea is a conception of the mind which is, in its turn, also a mode of the substance (an idea in the mind of God).[162] Now, we saw that every adequate idea (except the idea of God or substance) depends upon the knowledge of the nature of the mind because the mind is the immediate cause of every idea.[163] Also, we know that the adequate idea about the nature of the mind is the idea of the mind as the idea of the body. Since perceiving the body and its modifications is an activity proper to imagination, then it is through imagination that the mind can know itself as the idea of the body. If imagination is what allows the mind to know itself as the idea of the body, then imagination is the condition for the mind to know itself and its own nature[164]. The mind can only perceive its own body while the body is affected by other bodies. So, imagination, the activity according to which the mind perceive its body and its modifications, is the condition for the mind to know itself.

---

[162] Chauí (2016) claims that in explaining the origin of an adequate idea, "Spinoza presents, for the first time, the mind as a cause, and as cause, it takes part in the activity of the infinite intellect, in so far as the cause of the adequate idea is God (not insofar as he is infinite - attribute of thought - nor insofar as he is affected by the ideas of singular things - when the mind is inadequately perceiving it) but only insofar as God constituted the essence of the human mind". Chauí explains: "The cause of the adequate idea and of the connection among adequate ideas is the mind itself which, expressing the substance's power of thinking in its particular essence, is internally disposed and apt to form ideas in an absolute, perfect and necessary manner."

[163] The mind is the cause of every idea insofar as it is part of the infinite intellect or insofar as it is a mind present in God's infinite power of thought.

[164] The only adequate idea that does not depend upon imagination is the idea of God. Following Spinoza's postulates on the nature of bodies in the scholium of proposition 13 in Part 2 according to which there are parts of the body with are liquid, soft and hard, I think that ideas can be characterized analogously. Some ideas in the mind are received, some are constructed, and others are innate.

When the mind knows itself as the idea of the body, two other ideas follow: that the body exists and that it is constantly affected by other bodies that also exist. It is through the acknowledgment of its embodied nature that the mind is able to perceive itself and perceive other bodies, forming ideas about these relationships. Those ideas are ideas of imagination because the ideas formed are not necessarily followed by the idea of their cause. This means that those ideas are not conceived by deduction, implication or any process of rational inference. Ideas of imagination in this case are the opinions we have from common experience, random experience, hearsay, and the perception of our emotional states. Imaginations are formed through habit, memory, and association of impressions and emotions. These immediate ideas of imagination are not formed by deduction and inference, so they cannot be considered as adequate ideas. Imaginations, however, because they are ideas about the relationship between one's own body and an external body, carry true content to the mind. The true content being carried is the existence of a bodily change the cause of which can be tracked back to interactions with other bodies. Imagination provides the mind with the ability to form ideas of its experience of the objective essences of things, that is, its experience of objects as actually existing.[165] The idea of the mind, of its body, and of its relationship with other bodies (ideas of the modifications or ideas of affections) are ideas that depend upon experience and therefore are caused, at least initially, by imagination. Imagination is the activity that mediates the mind and its bodily experience, because it is an activity that belongs to both attributes, expressing itself simultaneously in the mind and in the body, mediating their non-causal interaction. Consequently, because adequate knowledge depends, necessarily,

[165] Formal essences of particular things are only known through the third kind of knowledge.

upon the idea of God, the idea of the mind as embodied, and the idea of the connection between the mind and nature, then all adequate ideas, besides the adequate idea of God, have to involve imagination.[166]

The knowledge coming from imagination, however, does not exhaust every possible knowledge. In fact, it is the most basic kind of knowledge giving only simple self-evident truths such as the existence of the objects that affect the human body and the existence of the body of which the the mind is an idea. Imagination, as we have seen, is not reducible to ideas of images. Ideas of imagination involve ideas of images, ideas of affects (including emotions), general notions and fictions. Insofar as it conceives ideas of affects, imagination indicates how one's body reacts to its interaction with other bodies, providing us with knowledge of what is good and what is not good for oneself at a given point in time (E4p19proof). Imagination, when conceiving general notions[167], allows us to gather the perceptions of a diversity of objects in a single notion. It is through general notions that the mind is able to associate various ideas of images in to a single notion.

[166] This is a fundamental point of divergence between Spinoza and Descartes. Spinoza's approach to the senses and emotions is very different from his predecessor: instead of doubting the reality of the senses, we should investigate the causes of these experiences if we want to have adequate knowledge, acknowledging the true content that experience provides. Obviously, Spinoza is not an ordinary empiricist. Knowledge through the senses is only the first kind; second kind of knowledge is the investigation of properties that are common among things. It is when the mind forms common notions. Common notions are ideas about how things agree and disagree in their nature, how they are similar and how they are different. These properties, since they are common, do not belong exclusively to any particular thing. These ideas are adequately conceived by reason, not by imagination. But imagination provides partial ideas that may or may not be understood through their cause by reason. This thesis has also been defended by interpreters such as Klever (1996), and Levy (2013).

[167] General notions are ideas of imagination allowing the mind to perceive various things at the same time. This ability of forming a general idea from particular ones is recognized by Spinoza as a trait that is present across all kinds of knowledge. The demonstration on the formative process of general notions is in E2p40sch1, and immediately after this demonstration, Spinoza introduces the description of the three kinds of knowledge in the following way: "from what has been said above, it is clear that we perceive many things and form universal notions". I tend to interpret this heading that comes before the description of the three kinds of knowledge as an indication that they are all resulting from the same basic activity of the mind of forming and creating notions. The act of imagination described in the first scholium is the act of forming or conceiving an idea that does not contain particularities, only general properties which all bodies agree in. Hence, the problem with general notions is not that it is formed by an act of imagination, but that the order of construction of the notions follows the order of experience and not the order of the intellect. This character is enough to strongly differentiate general notions from common notions. While the first one is a notion that serves as proxy for other ideas because it does not have any particularity, the second one is an idea of a characteristic that is common to all particulars. Instead of not carrying any particularity, common notions are about what is common in a given set of particulars.

General notions do not carry the particularity of ideas of images, so they function as a proxy for other ideas. It is through general notions that the mind is able to develop linguistic abilities. This is the case because a word (a bodily image) has a general notion as its mental counterpart. It is through the generality of language that the mind is able to communicate as well as learn from signs and hearsay (E2p40sch). Finally, imagination conceives fictions, ideas of non-existing things that although they do not indicate any object in extension, they exist in the attribute of thought. Fictions can serve all sorts of purpose, but the key element here is that they can increase or decrease our power to act, contributing or preventing the expression of one's *conatus*[168]. According to E3p12 , the mind, as far as it can, endeavors to imagine those things that increase or assist the body's power of activity.[169] Then, it is *also* through imagination (through fictions, general notions or other ideas of imagination) that the mind expresses its power to persevere in its own being.

In conclusion, propositions E5p1-p5 show us that imagination provides conditions for the construction of adequate ideas. Imagination provides objects to the mind because imagination is among the creative activities of the mind. But more than that, in the set of propositions from E5p11-p16, Spinoza is proposing imagination as a vehicle for the mind to be able to persist continuously in the construction of adequate ideas. The proposal of a method appears in E5p10schol:

> The best course we can adopt, as long as we do not have perfect knowledge of our emotions, is to conceive a right method of living, or fixed rules of life, and to commit them to memory and continually apply them to particular situations that

[168] E3p6: "Each thing, insofar as it is in itself, endeavors to persist in its own being."

[169] Shirley translates this passage as "the mind … endeavors to think of those things" where the original is "*mens quantum potest ea imaginari conatur*".

are frequently encountered in life, so that our causal thinking is thoroughly permeated by them and they are always ready to hand.

The method involves arranging ideas and images in a way we will most likely act according to an internal determination. The efficacy of the method depends upon a commitment from memory, which is another way of saying that it depends upon a constant commitment from imagination. Memory (a resulting process of imagination) allows the mind to continuously persist in the association between the idea and its cause.

An idea of imagination has then to be stimulated in the direction of perseverance in one's being (the direction that strengthens the *conatus*) for it to be virtuous and active. The way to do so is to relate an idea of imagination to as many ideas as possible in the mind, grouping them together and making them relate to more things so it can more frequently engage the mind to act in the direction of *conatus* (E5p11-p13). In this way the mind can determine itself to act more frequently. Spinoza ends the *Ethics* proposing that we connect the ideas of imagination (ideas of images of things, ideas of affections of the body) to the idea of the single nature (substance or God). When all the ideas of imagination are related somehow to the idea of substance - a foundational and adequate first idea (E5p16proof), then there is no other idea that will not be clearly and distinctly conceived (E5p14proof). This ordered net of ideas is used for understanding oneself as part of the single whole. When ideas are connected with their cause, they cannot be considered to be partial, becoming, instead adequate and complete ideas. This means that ideas of imagination that are inadequate can become adequate. The importance of this conclusion is that it allow us to further infer that the mind conceives ideas of imagination, and imagination later becomes part of an adequate idea. The process of transforming an

inadequate idea into an adequate idea is characterized in E5p2: if we remove an idea of imagination from the thought of its external cause and joint it with other thoughts that are adequate, then the idea of imagination ceases to be inadequate.[170] If we can join the idea of imagination with the idea of the mind as its adequate cause, then this imagination is active, otherwise it is passive. As shown in E5p4: there is no idea of imagination of which we cannot form a clear and distinct idea. An idea of imagination ceases to be inadequate when the causes that are internally determining these ideas are associated with other adequate ideas.

The project of the *Ethics* finds its goal in the fifth part where Spinoza provides the account or the method for the remedies against passivity. In this chapter, I tried to show that the remedies against passivities of imagination are found in a redirection of imagination, and not in a suppression or overcoming of its activities. This positive interpretation of imagination that I am proposing challenges the standard interpretation of Spinoza's epistemology, offering an alternative that is consistent with his immanent monism. Knowledge begins in experience and serves experience. Knowledge for Spinoza does not begin only in reason and does not end in reason, and it should give the mind more power to move itself and its surroundings. If blessedness, the goal of the *Ethics*, is the enjoyment coming from the knowledge of the union that the mind has with the whole of nature, imagination is also a condition for blessedness. The mind can only know that it is united with nature if it is able to perceive other objects as parts of or modifications of nature.

---

[170] Even though the description present there limits the process to ideas of affects or emotions, I interpret this process as a general procedure that can occur with ideas of images, general notions and fictions, that is, with all the ideas of imagination. E5p2: "If we remove an agitation of the mind, or emotion, from the thought of its external cause, and joint it to other thoughts, then will the love or hatred towards the external cause, and also the vacillations that arise from these emotions will be destroyed."

CHAPTER 6

THE UNITY OF IMAGINATION: SOME DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING ITS NATURE AND THE TRANSITION FROM IMAGINATION TO REASON

In the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*, Spinoza conceives a method to guide the mind in the pursuit of knowledge [*veram rerum cognitionem dirigitur*] that will lead to a fulfilling and happy life. Knowledge, for Spinoza, among other things, serves a therapeutic purpose: the more we know nature, the more we can enjoy its perfections - or enjoy it as it is without suffering from what could have been or what is not. That Spinoza finds knowledge to be beneficial for the individual and society is evidenced in his definition of the highest good [*verum bonum, summum bonum*] as the enjoyment of one's true nature as part of a single and common whole. As argued in the TIE and the *Ethics*, the condition for a life well lived lies in our ability to conceive adequate ideas. The method offered in the TIE follows what Spinoza calls a "natural order of exposition" [TIE 18] where from a single adequate idea, other adequate ideas follow without error [TIE 104].

According to this natural order, one of the first objects of investigation should be the human mind. If all adequate ideas are adequate ideas that are conceived by the mind in so far as the mind is a finite mode of God, knowledge of other things depends on the knowledge that the mind has of itself and its

activities. Hence, the adequate idea of the nature of the human mind itself either as a finite mode of God or the knowledge of the union that the mind has with the whole nature [TIE 13] precedes the derivation of other adequate ideas. If the adequate idea of the human mind as part of the infinite thinking power of nature is the knowledge that grounds all other adequate ideas, then according to the order of derivations, the adequate ideas that should immediately follow are the adequate ideas about the mind's knowledge or cognitive activities. Since the mind is the idea of the body, these adequate ideas of the mind's activities should be or, at least, include, cognitions of the body. This, as we have seen in the case of the imagination, is what Spinoza does. Spinoza argues that for interpreting the workings of imagination, it is also important to understand the nature of the human mind, its activities, and relations with the body.

Imagination is an activity that has both a mental and a bodily expression. In solving the paradox of the usage of a mixed-discourse in the description of imagination in the context of the causal independence of attributes, Spinoza is arguing for the existence of a bodily imagination in addition to the imagination of the mind. But if imagination expresses itself in the attribute of thought independently from its expression in extension and, at the same time, mind and body are identical to one another given that they are modes of attributes of the same mode of substance (the individual taken as a unity of mind and body), then either the imagination of the body is independent from the imagination or the mind or these two expressions are identical to one another. That is, either imagination is something that can be experienced separately in the body or in the

mind, or imagination is the unified experience of the body and mind unity. Although it seems that the mind-body problem reappears in the distinction between imagination of the mind and imagination of the body, this is not the case. I will argue that there is a unity between imagination of the mind and imagination of the body, where, although, these imaginations occur concomitantly, they keep their difference because they follow different causal regimes. The first difficulty that we will be dealing with in this chapter is how to understand the unity of imaginative experience.

The second problem that will be investigated in this chapter concerns the relationship between imagination and reason. The argumentative sequence of the *Ethics* starts with the establishment of the human mind and emotions as the foundational step to the understanding of human servitude and freedom. The path towards freedom is the development of the intellect for the achievement of the emotional strength that comes with knowledge. Through the *Ethics*, Spinoza explains the process according to which the mind leaves the state of ignorance and servitude to start the ongoing and continuous process of gaining freedom and knowledge. This process starts when the individual experiences the second kind of knowledge, and as much as the mind knows, the more it will desire to know. However, it is not clear how the individual stops imagining and starts reasoning, or even whether imagination and reason together contribute to the construction of adequate ideas. These two kinds of knowledge are both parts or steps in the knowledge process, but it is not the case that both reason and imagination are equally effective and contribute in the same way to the knowledge process.

The traditional interpretation holds that imagination should be overcome by reason, but there is no clear explanation for how the mind can entertain the transition from the first to the second kind of knowledge. It seems that Spinoza ascribes the ability to conceive adequate ideas to reason, whereas imagination is the activity that passively perceives inadequate ideas. The traditional interpretation holds that imagination and reason are independent activities. But, as we have seen in previous chapters, it is not clear how adequate ideas can be formed apart from the workings of imagination. If the mind is the idea of the body and imagination is the capacity that the body has to perceive its particular affections, reason should be another kind of embodied mental activity. Spinoza defines reason as the capacity the mind has to conceive common notions and adequate ideas, that is, reason conceives notions that explain things which are common to all things, but these notions do not explain the essence of any singular thing (E2p44dem). So, if reason conceives notions that are common to all things that are experienced by the mind and body, then reason cannot be fully independent from imagination. But if reason is not fully independent from imagination, then how can it possibly distinguish true from false ideas? Once we start investigating the nature of the human mind in detail, we learn that the activities of the mind should be adequately understood as a first step in the investigation. I will now investigate the consequences of the thesis of the identity between mind and body on the nature of imagination and its relation to reason.

The unity of imagination

As we have seen in the previous chapters, imagination is an activity that allows the mind to perceive the affections of its body. So at the same time that imagination is an activity of thought, it is also an activity of extension. According to E2p7, this concomitance of the mental and extended activities of imagination seem to be trivial. If the order and connection of things in thought are the same as the order and connection of things in extension, then for every object or activity in thought there has to be a corresponding object or activity in extension and vice versa. However, parallelism does not explain why some kinds of imaginative activity such as visual images are caused by the body while some other kinds such as erroneous judgments are caused by the mind. Parallelism does not provide the conditions for the proper study of these activities because if they are parallel, we can study the mental expression of imagination and suppose, without further exploration of its causes and its nature, that there is at the same time some corresponding event occurring in extension. The supposition is not sufficient to account for why, when we are asleep, our body produces images that are perceived as dreams, or why, some things, when interacting with the body, produces hallucinations. Both dreams and hallucinations are occurrences that find their cause in the body, and although the mind perceives these occurrences as mental events, these bodily events can only be comprehended through the study of the causal order that triggered them in extension.

Hence, the argument for two different kinds of activity of imagination, one of the body and another of the mind, is not a mere corollary of parallelism. This argument is intended to solve the difficulty that lies in ascribing to imagination, as a mental activity responsible for the first kind of knowledge, the capacity to perceive external bodies and the effect of their interaction with one's own body. With the distinction, the causal independence of attributes is preserved and certain events such as dreams, hallucinations, visual images, and sensations can be explained through the physics of bodies. This argument allows us to take a bodily occurrence independently from a mental occurrence with an interpretation that is consistent with Spinoza's claim in the Ep 17 to Pieter Balling. With this distinction, we can better understand why certain imaginations are bodily and others are mental, but at the same time, it may cause confusion. If we need to distinguish imagination of the body from the imagination of the mind, does that indicate that they are two different kinds of activities that are separate and independent? How do these two imaginations interact if they belong to different attributes, and can they be related at all?

It seems that the dualist interpretation of imagination poses some kind of mind-body problem for Spinoza. The paradox of the mind-body identity is analogous to the problem of two kinds of imagination. On the one hand, imagination is a single activity that occurs due to the constitution of the individual expressing itself through the body and through the mind. On the other hand, these regimes are so distinct from one another that the occurrences of mental imagination cannot explain the events of bodily imagination and vice versa. Each

expression of imagination seems to be self-contained and, although they share a common reality, they cannot be understood through one another: the bodily events cannot cause the mental events, so the bodily events cannot explain the mental events and vice versa. However, the fact that imagination of the mind and of the body share a common reality is the key to understanding them as having concomitant and synchronic causal regimes.

Although, I claim, Spinoza is arguing for a theory of imagination that follows the dualism of attributes, this theory is also offered in the context of the monism of substance. The imagination of the mind and of the body, as modifications of the attributes of thought and extension, are one and the same thing (E2p7sch). The imagination of the mind and the imagination of the body are one and the same insofar as they are activities of the same individual. The individual as a mode is a unity of modifications of thought and extension. In the same way, the individual that imagines, imagines at the same time through the body and through the mind. So, imagination is unified in the individual as a single activity that expresses itself in the body and the mind. The unity of imagination is explained by the underlying unity that exists between the modes of the attributes. The difficulty of dualism appears because imagination is an activity of both modified attributes, but the attributes are always of the same unified whole that is itself a modification of the substance. Attributes are that which the intellect perceives of the substance as constituting its essence, they are not independent from one another with respect to their nature. They are attributes of a single substance. Distinguishing substance into its various expressions in attributes is an

intellectual distinction. In itself, the substance is a single unified whole. Consequently, imagination is an activity that can be related to the body or to the mind but in itself it is a single activity providing the unified experience of the mind-body union to the individual.

Imagination provides the concomitant and synchronic experience of the causal regimes of the mind and of the body to the individual. As a single activity occurring in the mind and in the body, it is imagination that allows the individual to experience his own psychophysical unity. Moreover, it is through imagination that the mind can access ideas about bodily things, and the body can be better prepared to deal with its current and future interaction with other bodies. Imagination allows the individual to perceive himself, his surroundings and form ideas about his own experiences, share these through language and also learn from the experiences of others.

Imagination, by being both bodily and mental, expresses the underlying unity and wholeness of the individual. The problem of interaction between mind and body, however, is not solved yet. It can appear again in the second kind of knowledge since reason is supposed to be a mental activity that conceives only adequate ideas and is immune to the partiality of imagination, the finite and limited experiences of the body. If the unity of mind and body in experience is a fundamental trait of the nature of the individual, then reason, by being embodied, has to have some kind of relationship with imagination.

The relationships between imagination and reason

The process of transition from one kind of knowledge into another is not very much explored by the secondary literature. That there is a transition from one kind of knowledge to another is a problematic idea because it is not clear whether there is a transition at all. Spinoza labels the ways in which we perceive and conceive things (E2p41sch) without showing how we can move from one mental activity to another. For this reason, it seems that the three kinds of knowledge are independent from one another as activities that do not depend on one another to act. Reason conceives adequate ideas while imagination is perceiving various kinds of inadequate ideas; reason operates with common notions and imagination with general notions. Although there is no clear argument that indicates the existence of a transition from one kind of knowledge to another, there is an explanation for the continuous action of the activities. At most, Spinoza claims that there is a certain emotional regularity or affective mechanism that keeps the mind reasoning and intuiting continuously. In knowing through reason and through the third kind of knowledge, the individual experiences a satisfaction that contributes to the continuous persistence in knowing through these kinds (E5p25dem). The more we know through the second and third kind, the more we would like to continue to know through the application of reason and intuition. The satisfaction of knowing that comes from the use of reason and intuition is among what is needed for the individual to continuously persist in those kinds of cognitive activity. However, this

satisfaction does not explain whether and how we can come to know through the second and third kinds. Instead of explaining how the beginning of the knowledge process happens, Spinoza offers a description of a mechanism that occurs once we start to realize what we know. For this reason, one could assume that, in Spinoza, the activities of the mind are not only independent from one another but they are also ongoing and innate. This assumption holds because Spinoza does not give an account of how we start to reason, but assumes that we do reason. Analogously, Spinoza assumes that there are these kinds of activities such as imagination, reason and intuition without explaining how they come to be.

Although there is no account of how we start to reason, there has to be an explanation of how we can make the transition from imagining to reasoning. The project of the *Ethics* is to demonstrate how we can use the power of the intellect to gain freedom and become autonomous. It intends to show that knowledge leads to a better and more fulfilling life. Spinoza demonstrates that we live in a state of ignorance, imagining partial and inadequate ideas about things, and that this condition of ignorance can be somehow remedied through the use of reason in the pursuit of knowledge. This indicates that the project is grounded in our ability to form adequate ideas and to turn inadequate into adequate ideas or in our ability to figure out which of our ideas are false and which of them are not. But we do know that it is imagination that forms inadequate ideas and we know that it is reason which is the activity that conceives adequate ideas and is able to distinguish truth from falsity. So, if it is possible to turn inadequate ideas into adequate ideas, and if it is possible to distinguish true ideas from false ideas, then reason and

imagination have to be somehow in relation. More than that, there has to be some sort of transition from imagination to reason when an inadequate idea is turned into an adequate idea, and the objects of imagination have to be objects that can be turned into objects of reason.

Even if there is no clear explanation in the *Ethics* of how the transition happens, it is possible to find in the *Ethics* enough information to allow us to deduce the relationship, or possible relationships, between imagination and reason. In addition, no investigation of the nature of the mind is complete without an understanding of the relationship between these mental activities. In figuring out the relationship between the kinds of knowledge, we will be able to answer questions such as whether imagination is the condition for reason, whether they are independent from one another, whether there is a hierarchical relationship between them, and, finally, whether there is a progression from one to another such that one springs from the other either through overcoming or relinquishing.

In this way, my suggestion is that the kinds of knowledge have to be studied from the perspective of their being parts of a larger well-functioning whole or unity. Each kind of knowledge or mental activity is a constitutive part of the mind that determine each other reciprocally so they can function as a single and unified whole. So, in order to begin to answer the question of the transition between them, I will briefly map and point out some of the possible relationships that there are between imagination and reason. My claim is that there are at least four relations characterizing the interaction between imagination and reason:

difference, simultaneity, proportion, and continuity. All these relations are present in some way or another when the knowledge process is discussed by Spinoza.

a) Difference: imagination and reason are not the same mental activity

The first relation that we can find between reason and imagination is that they are not identical, but different from one another. One could argue that reason and imagination is a single mental power that, depending on the function it is performing, is named imagination or reason. This argument may sound reasonable in the face of Spinoza's claim that inadequate and confused ideas follow with the same necessity as adequate or clear and distinct ideas (E2p36). If inadequate ideas follow from the same necessity as adequate ideas, that is, if inadequate ideas are as necessary as adequate ideas then there seems to be no difference in the manner in which these ideas are constructed.

However, if we analyze the descriptions of reason and imagination, Spinoza is always contrasting these kinds of cognition. That they are different is indicated by the usage of verbs that express different activities. For imagination, Spinoza uses, among others, *imaginatio, percipere*, *repraesentare* and *contemplatio.* Among the verbs used to express the actions of reason we can find *concebere, inferire, cognoscere, intellegere*. The second set contains stronger, more active verbs than the first set, and through a simple mapping of concept usage we can find evidence enough for the distinction.

Moreover, in the appendix of part 1, Spinoza distinguishes imagination and reason not only with respect to the kinds of activities they are, but also with respect to the nature of the objects with which they operate. Confusing imagination and reason, taking one as the same as the other, is the main reason why we make mistakes according to the appendix of 1: "those who do not understand the nature of things, but only imagine them, affirm nothing concerning things, and take the imagination for the intellect". At the end of the appendix, Spinoza distinguishes "beings of imagination" from "beings of reason" where the first only exist in the mind and the second exist outside the mind and is common to all things.

Also, if imagination and reason were the same activity, it would be impossible for reason to distinguish truth from falsity. Imagination is responsible for mistakes, because it affirms an idea as true while the idea is still partial, that is, not connected with its cause and therefore not adequately conceived. If reason is the same activity as imagination, then its actions would result in the same effects of imagination. However, reason has other foundations, and by operating with common notions and adequate ideas, it should be able to conceive knowledge that is necessarily true. Although Spinoza may not provide enough grounds to explain how we actually distinguish truth- from falsity through a norm of truth, whenever we distinguish truth from falsity we are operating with reason and not with imagination.

Hence, we can infer that the kinds of knowledge, especially imagination and reason, are different modes of thought that cannot be considered to be identical.

Each activity of the mind is the cause of different effects, different kinds of knowledge. But although the existence of different kinds of knowledge indicates the multiplicity of operations of the mind, this does not explain how these operations are further related. Hence, that imagination and reason are different is a relation that should be understood in conjunction with other kinds of relation.

b) Proportion: different mental activities occur in different ratios

Proportionality is a mereological relation, that is, a relation that is about measuring the nature of the parts with respect to one another. The proportion among the parts is a fundamental relation that characterizes the nature of the individual being in Spinoza. Individuals are defined by the proportion or a pattern of communication of motion among its parts- (E2p13schol1). The self-preservation of the individual is conditioned upon the maintenance of the proportion among the variations of motion and rest among the parts of his body and of his mind (E4p39sch). So, if the proportion of motion and rest is an essential characteristic of the nature of the individual, then it is correct to infer that the knowledge activities are also related according to a pattern of motion and rest or a communication of motion among parts.

Imagination and reason, as activities of the mind, are related to each other as parts are related to the whole. The whole of which they are parts is the human mind. The mind is, in turn, a part of the individual. Hence, given that the individual is characterized by its proportion of motion and rest, or the pattern that

describes the relationship between its parts, the activities of imagination and reason together form a pattern that itself characterizes an individual human mind. If proportion among parts defines individuality, then it should also define the particular characteristics of an individual's mental activity.

Imagination and reason as activities of the mind are among the mind's constitutive parts and therefore can be understood as related according to a certain proportion. In this way, the difference between the wise and the ignorant, between humans and animals, is not the absence or presence of rationality, but the difference in proportion of inadequate and adequate ideas in the mind of a given individual. The wise human being exercises the second and third kind of knowledge more frequently than the ignorant. But proportionality can also explain the differences in the mental process of a single individual analyzed through time. According to Spinoza, the individual is born perfect- (E2d6) with a mind that is able to imagine and reason-, but the individual can become increasingly more knowledgeable about reality and his own nature. The improvement in the individual's well-being and autonomy depends on his exercise of the capacities that he is born with, strengthening his mind through the development of the ratio of the exercise of imagination and reason.

So, the proportion of the exercise of imagination in relation to the exercise of reason defines the degree of autonomy and freedom that one individual has at some point in time. This proportion is a function of the frequency of the exercise of imagination and of reason. In some cases, reason can be exercised more often than imagination and in other cases it is the opposite. The ratio of activities is

different among individuals and it is a ratio that varies through time in a single individual. Some individuals have more inadequate ideas than others, and we can increase our inadequate ideas as well as our adequate ideas through time. It is through the change in the proportion of adequate and inadequate ideas that one's knowledge can be developed. The variation in the exercise of the activities is another relation that explains the transition of one kind of knowledge to another. The transition in this case is quantitative and related to the frequency with which the mind reasons and imagines. Proportionality is not enough to explain how an inadequate idea can be turned into an adequate idea, but it explains how I can go from a state of ignorance to the state of blessedness.

c) Simultaneity: imagination and reason can occur at the same time

The simultaneity relation is not as present in the literature as proportion and difference, but it is equally important. Simultaneity is a relation that is consistent with difference and proportionality. If imagination is a different activity that produced objects other than those produced by reason, and if the proportion among these objects can change through time, then these activities are at work simultaneously. Although the description of kinds may make it seem that we are either imagining or reasoning about a given idea, these two activities are not mutually exclusive. Take the sun example: when I look at the sun, I see it as if it were a small object in the sky. My mind then imagines that the sun is a small object because of the relationship that I have with the real sun when I see it. Since

objects that are very distant from each other appear small to the eye, then the sun appears small to my mind. This image of the sun is an inadequate idea or an imaginative idea about the sun: it is false to say that the sun is a small object in relation to the usual things that strike us as small. So, when I imagine the sun as small, this is merely the result of an interaction between my visual apparatus and the sun. To misrepresent the sun in imagination is to assume that the result of the interaction between the sun and I is true of the thing and not true of that particular interaction (which is what is the case). The idea of the relationship between the sun and me is inadequate at this point because the mind does not know the causes of this idea, the mind does not know the limitations of this idea and it does not know that it is an idea about a relation and not about the object itself that the idea is about. They are "like conclusions without premises". Had the mind known that it sees the sun as small because of its distance from the sun, it would not have misapprehended reality but it would have learned something from it. This learning can happen when reason starts acting: first, seeing the sun as small object in the sky, then, by looking around, and not finding the shadow of the sun anywhere, inferring that the absence of the shadow on the ground indicates that the sun as an object lies far away. This inference is concomitant with the generation of a concrete idea in the mind: the idea of a far away object. This idea works as an adequate cause when associated with the idea of sun as a small object. When the mind is actively thinking, the impression of the sun constructed by imagination becomes part of the adequate idea of the sun. The idea of the sun as a small object will continue to be present in the mind, but now it will be associated with its

cause. When we perceive the sun as small, and connect this perception with other ideas that we have about the sun, then the inadequate idea can be turned into an adequate one and we will have a true, rational understanding of the properties of the sun. This association between the idea of imagination and the idea of its cause can only happen if reason and imagination are activities that occur simultaneously to one another.

The relation of simultaneity between reason and imagination holds because although I can have an adequate idea about the sun, the adequate idea is not going to prevent me from seeing the sun as small. When I have an adequate idea of the sun, I do not stop imagining it as small. Instead, I simultaneously see it as small (the content of the inadequate idea) and as an enormous star in the solar system that appears small to me because of its distance from where I stand (an adequate idea). In the first case, the inadequate idea is not connected with its cause, so it is an inadequate and partial idea. In the second case, I continue to see the sun as small, but the content of this inadequate idea (I see the sun as small) is connected with the idea of its cause (large objects such as stars are seen as small from a distance). So although the content of the inadequate idea is still present, when this content is connected with the idea of its cause it has the characteristics of an adequate idea and is no longer partial.

Hence, we can conclude that the mind can only form adequate ideas from inadequate ideas insofar as imagination and reason are simultaneous to one another. There are other cases of simultaneity such as, for example, when I have an inadequate idea about X while at the same time having an adequate idea about

Y. This case, however, is not as interesting as the one I just discussed where I can have an inadequate idea of X at the same time that I have an adequate idea of the same X. This simultaneity is possible because the initial content of the inadequate idea is present while the structure of that idea has changed (now the idea is connected with its cause) and more content has been added to the idea of X (content coming from the adequate idea of X).

Chauí (2016) seems to be the only interpreter who claims that simultaneity is an essential trait of the activities of the mind. She argues that Spinoza is constantly using the expression *plura simul* ("several things at once"-) to refer to the cognitive structure of the mind. She claims that "each kind of knowledge is a cognitive structure that distinguishes itself from others through the way in which the mind operates with the simultaneity of the multiplicity (*plura simul*) of its operations and of reality." The capacity of the mind to understand and perceive many things simultaneously reflects the nature of substance as a unified whole that contains simultaneously a multiplicity of changing parts. Not only the mind but nature itself is constituted by the simultaneous presence of multiple objects and ideas. So when the individual experiences reality, the individual experiences at the same time its own affections, the ideas of these affections is a way in which these experiences are perceived. The perception of imagination and the perception from reason are not perceived as separate from one another, but as a complex unity that has multiple parts. In this way, the activities of the mind do not occur one after another where for one to occur the other has to stop acting; the activities occur simultaneously, all at the same time. Hence, simultaneity is another kind of

relation that there is between imagination and reason. I will try to defend here the claim that Spinoza considers the kinds of knowledge as continuous and simultaneous in opposition to them being discontinuous and successive.

d) Continuity: reason is continuous with imagination

In the context of monism where every mode is a mode of the same substance, there is nothing which is not a mode of the substance. With regard to the extended realm, this indicates that there is no vacuum in nature, no thing which is not a given modification of extended space. With respect to the realm of thought, one of the consequences of monism is the absence of discontinuity in the activities of the mind. Even though imagination and reason are different mental activities, each working according to its own functions and operating with different objects, they are not discontinuous because if they were the mind would not be fully permeated with thought. Spinoza reasons about the mind in the same geometrical fashion as the body. This is a reasoning by analogy. On the *Treatise of the Emendation of the Intellect*, Spinoza claims that because the kinds follow the same necessary laws, they have an unbreakable connection. This unbreakable connection is such that the mind operates "like a spiritual automata" [*quasi aliquod automata spirituale*, TIE 85]. One problem in this characterization of the activities of the mind is that it seems Spinoza is treating the modes of thought as if they were modes of extension, being able to be continuous and act mechanically like bodies acting upon one another. But this is exactly his intention, as we can

see in E3pref: “I shall treat the nature and powers of the affects, and the power of the mind over them, by the same method which, in the preceding parts, I treated God and the mind, and shall consider human actions and appetites just as if it were a question of lines, places, and bodies.” Spinoza argues through analogy, by showing that the mind works like a whole that contains parts. But this analogy breaks when we consider that the mind is a mode of thought and is therefore a unified whole. Whether Spinoza is successful in treating the mind as if it were spatial and extended is not my concern here. The way to make his treatment of the mind as a whole consistent with its division into kinds of knowledge is to consider the mind to be constituted by different activities that are continuous with each other. My claim is that Spinoza sees imagination connected with reason in unbreakable unity and such that it is only their continuity that explains how one can cause or modify the other.

Again, the problem with the idea of continuity is that it is usually a relation between entities in space or entities that have a certain magnitude. Thought does not have any magnitude, so it cannot possibly be characterized as continuous or even discontinuous. However, when we distinguish the activities of the mind, this distinction does not imply a spatial division. The kinds of knowledge are types of activities that the mind as a single and indivisible unity performs. Since the mind is a single unified whole, we have to think of the kinds of knowledge as continuous, otherwise the distinction in kinds would imply that the mind has parts. That reason and imagination are continuous follows from the characterization of the modes of attributes as modes of a single substance where

there is always a common trait connecting the modes. This connection is an unbreakable connection such that there is no gap between imagination and reason. Nevertheless, this continuous whole is differentiated into its parts where imagination performs one kind of activity and reason performs another.

The result of this continuity is the ordered characterization of kinds according to their levels of complexity and adequacy. The ordered hierarchy is not a matter of precedence in time. To say that imagination is the first kind, reason the second, is not the same as saying that one succeeds the other. Imagination is the first kind of knowledge not because it comes before reason in time, but because it is the least reliable kind of knowledge, the least structured. The first kind of knowledge implies partiality, inadequacy, and confusion whereas the second is complete, adequate, and clear. The second kind of knowledge does not come after the first. It is only more reliable than the first. There is no indication in the *Ethics* or in Spinoza's other books that one activity only starts to act after another. There are cases in which imagination causes reason to act, but this does not imply that reason only acts after imagination stimulates it. In fact, if simultaneity is a relation that holds between imagination and reason, the mind is constantly both imagining and reasoning. Therefore, reason cannot succeed imagination. Continuity, however, is consistent with simultaneity as well as with difference and proportionality.

The investigations of the relationships between the kinds of knowledge is a condition for understanding the mind as a whole as well as a condition for understanding the working of its activities. In this part of the chapter, I tried to

map the relationships between imagination and reason. This mapping has not yet been done in the scholarship, but it is important that these relations be thought through so that Spinoza's theory of knowledge can be better understood. The relations that I mapped, difference, proportionality, simultaneity, and continuity, may not be the only relations that imagination and reason have. It is also still to be investigated whether all these relations are consistent with one another and what kind of difficulties Spinoza's theory of knowledge will face given the existence of these relations. Although I will not pursue the further questions that those relations bring to Spinoza's theory of knowledge, the mapping of these relations serves a specific purpose in the context of the analysis of Spinoza's theory of imagination. The purpose is to provide the metaphysical foundations for the knowledge process in the *Ethics*, analyzing how imagination and reason are connected so as to discover the details of how an inadequate idea is transformed into an adequate one as well as discover the virtuous aspects of an inadequate idea. By the virtuous nature of the inadequate idea I mean the elements that are present in the inadequate idea of X that are also present in the adequate of X.

Adequate ideas and the unity of experience

Now that we have mapped some of the relations that exist between imagination and reason, it is important to say something about the relationship between the ideas of imagination and common notions (ideas from reason). More specifically, how an imaginative idea can be turned into an adequate idea and

what of imagination remains, if anything, when the inadequate idea is transformed into an adequate idea. The purpose of this final part of the chapter is not to analyze reason and its proper objects *per se*, but to analyze the objects of the second kind of knowledge insofar as they are related to first kind. Hence, I will only deal with the case in which imagination is taken as an object of knowledge in itself and as an object that is the subject of rational scrutiny.

In the first sixteen propositions of the fifth part of the *Ethics,* Spinoza describes the mechanism according to which inadequate ideas can become adequate ideas. This process can be done in two ways: ordering and connecting [*ordinandi et concatenandi*] the ideas of imagination (affects of the body and partial ideas) according to the order of the intellect (E5p10), and joining [*junguntur*] an idea of imagination with ideas that we understand clearly and distinctly (E5p12). An inadequate idea is formed because the individual, as a finite mode of the substance that expresses itself through body and mind as the modes of its attributes, is a part of nature. By being part of nature, the individual cannot be conceived through itself, without other individuals (E4p2). The human being is then only partial cause of itself and of its own ideas. Because of the nature of the individual as part, the individual is always undergoing change and is subject to affects that are not under his control. These affects have influence on both the body and the mind of the individual. With respect to the mind, the affects are confused ideas that the mind has because it has been acted upon (expE3def). These confused ideas or ideas of imagination (ideas of affects or ideas of images) are one way in which the mind affirms its force of existing. Whether the mind will

affirm a greater or lesser force of existing after having suffered an affect will depend on the excellence of the object that interacted with the individual. Because the force of an idea of imagination depends on the nature of external objects, this variation in the individual's force of existing resulting from the affects depends on fortune (E4pref). Inadequate or partial ideas, therefore, are formed according to the order of experience. The mind perceives the affects according to the effects that the events have produced in the individual. For this reason, the order of experience seems, at first, confused, partial, and fortuitous [*mutilate, confuse et sine ordine*] to the mind. Since the mind ignores the causes of things which the individual experiences, the mind perceives these things as if they were contingent and random [*experientia vaga*] (E2p40sch2).

This apparent randomness in the experience of things [*experientia vaga*] is the first stage in the knowledge process. The ideas that are formed according to fortune are always inadequate at first because these ideas are not joined to the ideas of the causes. For this reason, these inadequate ideas are imaginary and partial. However, these ideas, although inadequate, are, in some sense, true. They are true ideas because they bring information to the mind about the external object and about the relationship the external object has with the individual that is experiencing it. Since everything that there is exists by necessity, because the substance acts solely from necessity, there is no randomness in the coming to being of the perceived events. When the mind perceives experience as random, it is because it does not know the causes that generated the given events.

Hence, the mind can improve its force of existing by ordering the ideas of affects in a way that follows the order of the intellect. The order of the intellect is the same as the order in which things are caused in nature (E2p7), and instead of appearing as a random combination of ideas, the order of the intellect connects ideas of things with the ideas of the causes of things. The ordering of inadequate ideas is the act of connecting these ideas with the ideas of their causes. When an inadequate idea is connected with the ideas of its causes, its nature changes from a partial idea to a more complete idea. The joining together of ideas turns a confused idea into a clear and distinct idea. Every affect, then, which is a passion, ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it (E5p3). Hence, when this transformation happens, the force of existing of the individual becomes less dependent on fortune. This is the case because the effects of fortune are taken away by the new affective organization resulting from the ordering of ideas according to the intellect (E5p7). This transformation is a remedy for effects of affects because it turns what is not in the individual's own power into something that depends solely on the power of the mind to think and form adequate ideas.

Spinoza claims that all affections of the body can be turned into clear and distinct ideas (E5p4). Since the affections of the body are, with respect to the mind, ideas of the individual embodied mind, and since every individual has an adequate idea of its own mind as the idea of his body, then - at least in theory - it is possible for the mind to form adequate ideas about all of its affections. One problem with this claim is the difficulty of connecting all ideas of causes together

given that the causal chain that resulted in a certain effect is infinite in number. But at the same time that Spinoza claims that all ideas of imagination can be turned into adequate ideas (E5p4), there is also a restriction as to what can be turned into an adequate idea. According to E5p4dem and E2p38, only those things that are common to all things can be understood adequately. So it seems that there is a restriction on which ideas of imagination can be turned into adequate ideas. But the restriction is not a restriction of the kind of idea of imagination which can be turned into an adequate idea, but on what in the idea of imagination can be adequately understood. The idea of imagination, when it is joined with the idea of its cause, is not joined with all ideas of all causes that made it come into being. The idea of imagination is understood in what has in common to all other things, that is, the idea of imagination is joined to the adequate idea that explains it as an instance of a given common notion or concept.

Although it is impossible to have all the ideas of all the causes of a given event, three things are possible: to understand that the ideas that we have of the object or the event are partial and inadequate, and to use this understanding as a tool in structuring our emotional habits. Also, it is possible to associate a given inadequate idea with an adequate idea that is already given as a concept in the mind. In this way, to order inadequate ideas according to the order of the intellect is not to connect partial ideas together until they form a complete whole, but to take the partial idea as belonging to a given concept or adequate idea in the mind. Partial ideas are then instances of common notions or adequate ideas. Inadequacy is related to the way in which the idea is constructed; inadequate ideas are like

conclusions without premises. Inadequate ideas are formed inadequately, but their content is not necessarily inadequate. If inadequate ideas are like conclusions without premises, to turn them into adequate ideas is to associate them with their cause by finding the right justifying premises. Finally, what the relationship between reason and imagination shows is that although we can remove error, imagination itself can never be removed. By knowing that imagination is a constitutive activity that has its virtues, we can more confidently invest in its development.

CONCLUSION:

THE POSITIVE INTERPRETATION OF IMAGINATION

In this dissertation, I tried to show that there is continuity in Spinoza's theory of imagination from the early works to the *Ethics*. In the early works, we can find the metaphysical basis in which the entities of imagination are grounded. These works set the stage for the later theory that appears in the *Ethics* after Spinoza has developed his monism and theory of attributes. With this investigation, we learned that ideas of imagination have positive existence, that is, they exist independently of the experience of a given human being and are collectively shared, and that those beings of imagination can play a virtuous role in knowledge and human experience. In the second moment of the dissertation, I showed that the monism and the theory of attributes in the *Ethics* together with the standard interpretation of imagination leads to paradoxes. Then, I tried to demonstrate that the best way to solve the apparent paradoxes was to distinguish between imagination of the body and imagination of the mind, investigating their proper objects and role separately. Finally, I tried to show that although Spinoza is critical of imagination, he is also making an argument about its role and virtuous nature. The virtue of imagination is that it allows us to experience both the unity of body and mind, creating the conditions for the mind to be able to

conceive and further live according to the union that the mind has with the whole of nature.

The dissertation left some problems unanswered, but these problems will be investigated in future research. Here we did not investigate what reason is and what its objects are, and there are further difficulties to be addressed coming from the separation of imagination into its two causal regimes. With respect to the complete works, there is still research to be done on the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* and on the *Theological Political Treatise*. Finally, it is important to continue the chain of deductions and discover how Spinoza's positive theory of fictions is expressed in his philosophical psychology, epistemology, and political philosophy.

REFERENCES

Ablondi, Frederick & Steve Barbone. “Individual Identity in Descartes and Spinoza.” *Studia Spinozana* 10 (1994). 69-92.

Akkerman, Fokke & Pieter Steenbakkers. *Spinoza to the Letter: Studies in Words, Texts and Books*. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Akkerman, Fokke. “Towards a Better Edition of Spinoza Correspondence.” *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 31 (119). 4-26.

Apphun, C. “Note sur la théorie de l’imagination dans Spinoza.” *Chronicon Spinozanum* IV (1924-1926). 257-260.

Atherton, Margaret. *Women Philosophers of the Early Modern Period.* Indianopolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1994.

Attie Filho, Miguel. *O Intelecto em Ibn Sina.* São Paulo: Ateliê Editorial, 2007.

Arianrhod, Robyn. *Seduced by Logic. Émilie du Châtelet, Mary Somerville and the Newtonian Revolution.* Oxford University Press, 2012.

Audié, Fabrice. *Spinoza et les mathématiques.* Presses de l’Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2005.

Ayers, Michael. “Spinoza, Platonism and Naturalism.” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 149 (2007). 53-78.

Barbone, Steven. “What counts as an Individual for Spinoza?” *Spinoza: Metaphysical Themes*. Edited by Olli I. Koistinen and John I. Biro. Oxford University Press, 2002.

Barbaras, Françoise. *Spinoza La Science Mathématique du Salut*. Paris: CNRS Éditions. 2007.

Bassler, Otto Bradley. "Leibniz on the Indefinite as Infinite." *The Review of Metaphysics* 51:4 (1998). 849-874.

_____. "Motion and Mind in the Balance: The Transformations of Leibniz's Early Philosophy." *Studia Leibniziana* 34:2 (2002). 221-231.

Bennett, Jonathan. “Spinoza’s Mind-Body Identity Thesis.” *The Journal of Philosophy* 78:10 (1981). 573-584.

Beyssade, Jean-Marie. “*Nostri Corporis Affectus*: Can an affect in Spinoza be ‘of the body’?” *Ethica III: Desire and Affect: Spinoza as Psychologist.* Edited by Yirmiyahu Yovel. Little Room Press, 1999. 113-128.

Boss, Gilbert. *L’Enseignement de Spinoza. Commentaire du “Curt Traité.* Zurich: Éditions du Grand Midi, 1982.

Bostrenghi, Daniela. *Forme e Virtù della Immaginazione in Spinoza.* Napoli: Bibliopolis, 1996.

Bottici, Chiara. “Another Enlightenment: Spinoza on Myth and Imagination.” *Constellations* 19:4 (2013).

Bove, Laurent. “La théorie du langage chez Spinoza.” *L’Enseignement philosophique* 4, (1991).

_____. *Espinosa e a Psicologia Social. Ensaios de Ontologia e Antropogênese.* São Paulo: Editora Autêntica, 2010.

_____. *La Stratégie du Conatus: Affirmation et Résistance Chez Spinoza.* Vrin, 1996.

Brann, Eva. *The World of Imagination: Sum and Substance.* Rowman & Littlefield, 1990.

Brient, Elizabeth. "From Vita Contemplativa to Vita Activa: Modern Instrumentalization of Theory and the Problem of Measure." *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 9:1 (2010). 19-40.

_____. "Transitions to a Modern Cosmology: Meister Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa on the Intensive Infinite." *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 37:4 (1999). 575-600.

Brochard, Victor. "Le Traité des passions de Descartes et L’Éthique de Spinoza." *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale.* 4:4 (1896). 512-516.

Broughton, Janet. *Descartes’s Method of Doubt.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

Brunschvicg, Leon. *Les Étapes de la Philosophie Mathématique.* University of Michigan. The Michigan Historical Reprint Series, 2006.

Butler, Judith. *Giving an Account of Oneself.* Fordham University Press, 2005.

_____. *The Psychic Life of Power*. Stanford University Press, 1997.

Byrne, Alex. “Truth in Fiction: The Story Continued” *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 71:1 (1993). 24-35.

Chauí, Marilena. *A Nervura do Real. Imanência e Liberdade em Espinosa.* São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003.

_____. *A Nervura do Real. Imanência e liberdade em Espinosa.* Volume II. Liberdade: Companhia das Letras, 2016.

_____. “A Posição do Agente da Liberdade na Ética V.” *Cadernos Espinosano*s 22 (2010). 11-25.

_____. *Contra a Servidão Voluntária.* Escritos de Marilena Chauí. Organizador Homero Santiago. Volume 1. São Paulo: Editora Autêntica, 2013.

_____. “Definição Real na Abertura da Ética I de Espinosa.” *Cadernos de História da Filosofia da Ciência*. Série 3: 11 (1) (2001). 7-28.

_____. “Imperium ou Moderatio?” *Cadernos de História da Filosofia da Ciência.* Série 3: 12 (1-2) (2002). 9-43.

_____. *Política em Espinosa.* São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003.

Colerus. *The Life of Spinoza.* Amsterdam, 1705.

Cottingham, John. “The Intellect, the Will, and the Passions: Spinoza’s Critique of Descartes.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy*. 26:2 (1988). 239-257.

Curley, Edwin. *Behind the Geometrical Method. A Reading of Spinoza’s Ethics.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Damasio, Antonio. *Descartes' Error. Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*. Penguin Books, 1994.

Darbon, A. *Études Spinozistes.* Paris: PUF, 1946.

De Deug, C. *The Significance of Spinoza’s First Kind of Knowledge.* Van Gorcum, 1966.

De Dijn, Herman. *Spinoza. The Way to Wisdom.* Purdue University Press, 1996.

Deleuze, Gilles. *Différence et Répétition.* Paris: PUF, 2011.

_____. *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*. Translated by Martin Joughin. Zone Books, 1992.

_____. *The Fold. Leibniz and the Baroque.* Translated by Tom Conley. University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

_____. *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy.* Translated by Robert Hurley. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books, 1988.

Della Rocca, Michael. "Rationalism run amok: representation and the reality of emotions in Spinoza." *Interpreting Spinoza: Critical Essays*. Edited by Charles Huenemann. Cambridge University Press, 2008. 4-25.

_____. *Representation and the Mind-Body Problem in Spinoza.* Oxford University Press, 1996.

De Rosa, Raffaella. *Descartes & The Puzzle of Sensory Representation.* Oxford University Press, 2010.

Desan, Philippe. "La Philosophie de Montaigne." *Montaigne Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum.* 7 (1-2). 3-5.

Descartes. *Discours de la Méthode.* Texte et Commentaire par Étienne Gilson. Vrin, 1987.

_____. *Discourse on Method.* Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998.

_____. *The Passions of the Soul*. Translated by Stephen H. Voss. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989.

_____. *Philosophical Writings.* Volumes 1-2. Translated by John Cottingham, *et al.* Cambridge University Press, 1985.

De Souza, Ronald. *The Rationality of Emotion.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990.

Di Poppa, Francesca. "Spinoza's Concept of Substance and Attribute: a Reading of the Short Treatise." *British Journal of the History of Philosophy*. 15:5 (2009). 921-938.

Di Vona, Piero. "La Parte V Dell'Ethica." *Spinoza nel 350 anniversario della Nascita. atti del Congresso.* Edited by Emilia Giancotti. Bibliopolis, 1982.

Dominguez, Atilano. "Las Fuentes de los Cogitata Metaphysica. Analogias Lexicas con Suárez y Heereboord." *Spinoziana: Richerche di Terminologia Filosofica e Critica Testuale. Seminario Internazionale Roma, 29-30 settembre 1995*. A cure di Pina Totaro. Olschki, 1997. 63-91.

Feibleman, James K. "Was Spinoza a Nominalist?" *The Philosophical Review*. 60:3

(1951). 386-389.

Ferré, Frederick, ed. *Concepts of Nature and God.* Philosophy Curriculum Workshop Papers developed at the 1987 NEH Summer Institute on Concepts of Nature and God. Resources for College and University Teaching. University of Georgia, 1989.

Fisher, Kuno, *et al. Estudos sobre Espinosa.* Organizador César Benjamin. Rio de Janeiro: Contraponto, 2014.

Freudenthal, J. "On the History of Spinozism." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 8 (1896). 7-76.

Fritzman, J.M. and Brianne Riley. "Not Only Sub Species Aeternitatis, but Equally Sub Specie Durationis: A Defense of Hegel's Criticism of Spinoza's Philosophy." *The Pluralist* 4:3 (2009). 76-97.

Garrett, Aaron V. *Meaning in Spinoza's Method.* Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Garrett, Don. "Representation and consciousness in Spinoza's naturalistic theory of imagination." *Interpreting Spinoza. Critical Essays.* Edited by Charlie Huenemann. Cambridge University Press, 2008. 4-25.

Garber, Daniel. "Should Spinoza have published his philosophy?" *Interpreting Spinoza: Critical Essays.* Edited by Charlie Huenemann. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Garver, Eugene. "Spinoza's Democratic Imagination." *The European Legacy* 19:7 (2014). 833-853.

Gatens, Moira. "Compelling Fictions: Spinoza and George Eliot on Imagination and Belief." *European Journal of Philosophy* 20:1 (2012). 74-90.

_____. *Collective Imaginings: Spinoza, Past, and Present*. Routledge, 1999.

Gebhardt, Carl. *Spinoza Judaisme et Baroque.* Textes réunis part Saverio Ansaldi. Traduit par Sylvie Riboud-Sainclair. Presses de L'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 2000.

Gilead, A. "The indispensability of the First Kind of Knowledge." *Spinoza on Knowledge and the Human Mind*. Papers presented at the Second Jerusalem Conference. Edited by Yirmiyahu Yovel. Leiden: Brill, 1994. 209-221.

Gleizer, Marcos André. "Espinosa e a Idéia-Quadro Cartesiana." *Analytica* 3:1 (1998). 75-89.

_____. *Verdade e Certeza em Espinosa.* L&PM, 1999.

Goff, Philip, ed. *Spinoza on Monism*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Gore, William Clark. *The Imagination in Spinoza and Hume: A comparative study in the light of some recent contributions to psychology*. University of Chicago Press, 1902.

Grasset, Batiste, *et al. Spinoza e as Américas. X Colóquio Internacional Spinoza*. Volumes 1-2. Coleção Argumentum Nostrum. Ed. UECE, 2014.

Greco, John. *Putting Skeptics in Their Place: The Nature of Skeptical Arguments and their Role in Philosophical Inquiry.* Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Gueroult, Martial. *Leibniz Dynamique et Métaphysique suivi d'une note sur le principe de la moindre action chez Maupertuis.* Paris: Aubier. 1967.

Gueroult, Martial. *Spinoza I - Dieu.* Aubier Philosophie, 1997.

_____. *Spinoza II - L'Âme.* Aubier Philosophie, 1997.

Hartle, Ann. "Montaigne's Skepticism." *Montaigne Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum.* 12:1-2 (2000). 75-91.

Hatzimoysis, Anthony. *Philosophy and the Emotions.* Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Halper, Edward. "Aristotle on Knowledge of Nature." *The Review of Metaphysics* 37:4 (1984). 811-835.

_____. *Form and Reason: Essays in Metaphysics.* SUNY, 1993.

_____. "Maimonides on the Scope of Divine and Human Self-Knowledge" *Quaestio* 15 (2016). 299-308.

_____. "The Rationality of Being" *Review of Metaphysics* 68:3 (2015). 487-520.

_____. "Spinoza on the Political Value of Freedom of Religion." *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 21:2 (2004). 167-182.

Hampshire, S. *Spinoza: An Introduction to his Philosophical Thought.* New York: Penguin Books, 1987

Heereboord, A. *Disputationes ex philosophia selectae.* Leiden, 1650.

_____. *Meletemata.* Amsterdam, 1680.

Hegel, G.W. *Lectures on the History of Philosophy.* Volume 3. Translated by E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson. New Jersey: Humanities Press. 1983.

_____. *The Science of Logic.* Translated by A.V. Miller. London: Allen and Unwin, 1969.

Hervet, Céline. *De L'imagination à L'entendement - La Puissance du langage chez Spinoza.* Classiques Garnier, 2012.

_____. "Langage et pouvoir dans le *Traité politique* de Spinoza." *Philonsorbonne* 1 (2006-2007). 49-63.

Holmberg, Eva Johanna. *Jews in the Early Modern English Imagination: A Scattered Nation.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011.

Huenemann, Charlie. "Epistemic Autonomy in Spinoza." *Interpreting Spinoza: Critical Essays.* Edited by Charlie Huenemann. Cambridge University Press, 2008. 94-110

_____. *Spinoza's Radical Theology: The Metaphysics of the Infinite.* Routledge, 2014.

Israel, Jonathan. *Radical Enlightenment:. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750.* Oxford University Press, 2001.

Jaquet, Chantal. *A Unidade do Corpo e da Mente. Afetos, Ações e Paixões em Espinosa.* Tradução de Marcos Ferreira de Paula e Luís César Guimarães Oliva. Editora Autêntica, 2011.

_____. *L'unité du corps et de l'esprit. Affects, Actions et passions chez Spinoza.* Paris: PUF, 2004.

_____. *Sub Species Aeternitatis Études des concepts de temps, durée et éternité chez Spinoza*. Préface d'Alexandre Matheron. Éditions Kimé. Paris, 1997.

James, Susan and Eric Schliesser. "Spinoza on the Politics of Philosophical Understanding." Papers from the 2011 Joint session. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 121:3 (2011).

Joachim, H. *Spinoza's Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione: A Commentary.* Oxford University Press, 1940.

Kennington, Richard, ed. *The Philosophy of Baruch Spinoza.* The Catholic University of America Press, 1980.

Kisner, Matthew J. "Spinoza's Virtuous Passions." *The Review of Metaphysics* 61:4 (2008). 759-783.

Klever, Wim. "Actual Infinity:A note on the Crespas-Passus in Spinoza's Letter (12) to

Lodewijg Meijer." *Studia Spinozana: An International and Interdisciplinary Series* 10:111-120 (1994).

_____. *Franciscus Van den Enden Free Political Propositions and Considerations of State* 1665. Vrijstad, 2007.

_____. "Hume Contra Spinoza?" *Hume Studies* 16:2 (1990). 89-105.

_____. "More About Hume's Debt to Spinoza." *Hume Studies* 19:1 (1993). 55-74.

_____. "Quasi Aliquod Automa Spirituale." *Spinoza nel 350 anniversario della Nascita: atti del Congresso*. Edited by Emilia Giancotti. Bibliopolis, 1982. 249-257.

Lachiéze-Rey, Pierre. *Les Origines Cartésiennes du Dieu de Spinoza*. Librairie Philosophique J.Vrin, 1960.

Landim Filho, Raul. *Evidência e Verdade no Sistema Cartesiano*. Edições Loyola, 1992.

Lennon, Thomas M. *The Battle of the Gods and Giants: The Legacies of Descartes and Gassendi, 1655-1715.* Princeton Legacy Library, 1993.

Lepore, Ernie and Matthew Stone. *Imagination and Convention: Distinguishing Grammar and Inference in Language*. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Levy, Lia. "Conhecimento Humano e a idéia de afecção na Ética de Espinosa." *Analytica* 17 (2013). 221-247

_____. "Representação e Sujeito: o conceito cartesiano de idéia" em *Verdade, Conhecimento e Ação. Ensaios em Homenagem a Guido Antônio de Almeida e Raul Landim Filho.* Edições Loyola, 1999.

Lewis, David. "Truth in Fiction." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 15:1 (1978). 37-46.

Lewis, Douglas. "Spinoza on having a False Idea." *Metaphysica* 8 (2007). 17-27.

Lord, Beth. *Spinoza's Ethics: A Concise Introduction to Spinoza's Ethics.* Indiana University Press, 2010.

Loyd. Genevieve. *Spinoza: Context, sources, and the early writings.* Routledge Press, 2001.

Lucash, Frank. "Ideas, Images, and Truth." in *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 6:2 (1989). 161-170.

Macherey, Pierre. *Avec Spinoza Études sur la Doctrine et l'histoire du spinozisme.* Paris: PUF, 1992.

_____. *Introduction à l'Éthique de Spinoza. La deuxième partie. La réalité mentale.* Paris: PUF, 1997.

_____. "Présentation" in Vinciguerra, *Spinoza et le Signes, La Genèse de L'imagination*. Vrin, 2005.

Manning, Richard, "Spinoza's Physical Theory." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spinoza-physics.

Manzini, Frédéric. *Spinoza et ses scolastiques. Retour aux sources et nouveaux enjeux.* Centre d'études Cartésiennes et Group de Recherches Spinozistes. Presses de l'université de Paris-Sorbonne. Paris, 2011.

_____. *Spinoza: Une Lecture d'Aristote*. Paris: PUF, 2009.

Marshall, Colin R. "The Mind and the Body as 'One and the Same thing' in Spinoza." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 17:5 (2009). 897-919.

Marshall, Eugene. *The Spiritual Automaton. Spinoza's Science of the Mind.* Oxford University Press, 2013.

Martens, Stanley C. "Spinoza on Attributes." *Synthese* 37:1 (1978). 107-111.

Matheron, Alexandre. *Individu et Communauté Chez Spinoza*. Les Editions de Minuit, 1969.

Martineau, James. *A Study of Spinoza.* London: Macmillan, 1882.

Merçon, Juliana. "Relationality and Individuality in Spinoza." *Revista Conatus. Filosofia de Spinoza* 1:2 (2007).

Melamed, Yitzhak Y. "Acosmism or Weak Individuals? Hegel, Spinoza, and the Reality of the Finite." *Journal of the History of Philosophy.* 48:1 (2010). 77-92.

_____. *Spinoza's Metaphysics. Substance and Thought.* Oxford University Press. 2013.

_____. "Spinoza's Metaphysics of Thought: Parallelisms and the Multifaceted Structure of Ideas." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 86:3 (2013). 636-683.

_____. "Spinoza: Une Lecture d'Aristote (review)." Review of *Spinoza: Une Lecture d'Aristote*, by Frédéric Manzin. *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 49:1 (2011). 334.

_____. *The Young Spinoza: A Metaphysician in the Making.* Oxford University Press, 2015.

Mignini, Filippo. *Ars Imaginandi Apparenza e rappresentazione in Spinoza.* Napoli: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1981.

_____. *Introduzione a Spinoza.* Roma: Editori Laterza, 2006.

_____. "Introduction to the TIE and the KV." *Spinoza Oeuvres: Premiers Écrits.* Edited by Pierre-François Moreau. Paris: PUF, 2009.

_____. "Nuovi Contribute Per la Datazione e l'interpretazione del *Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione*." *Spinoza nel 350 anniversario della Nascita. atti del Congresso.* Edited by Emilia Giancotti. Bibliopolis, 1982. 515-525.

Milinowski Charles, Syliane, ed. *Affects et Conscience Chez Spinoza*. Olms, 2004.

Millican, Petter. "Hume's Old and New: Cartesian Fellow - Traveller or Revolutionary?" *The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplementary*. 81 (2007). 163-199

Mogens, Laerke, Justin E.H. Smith, and Eric Schliesser. *Philosophy and its History: Aims and Methods in the Study of Early Modern Philosophy.* Oxford University Press, 2013.

Montaigne, Michel de. *The Complete Essays of Montaigne.* Translated by Donald M. Frame. Stanford University Press, 1948.

Moreau, Pierre-François. "Introduction Générale aux oeuvres de Spinoza." *Spinoza Oeuvres I - Premiers Écrits.* Édition publiée sous la direction de P-F Moreau. Paris: PUF, 2009.

_____. *Problèmes du Spinozisme.* Paris: Vrin, 2006.

_____. *Spinoza L'expérience et l'éternité.* Paris: PUF, 2009.

Morton, Adam. *Emotion and Imagination.* Polity Publishing, 2013.

Myers, Henry. *The Spinoza - Hegel Paradox: A study of the choice between traditional idealism and systematic pluralism.* New York: B. Franklin. 1944.

Nadler, Steven, ed. *A Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*. Blackwell Publishing, 2002.

_____. *Causation in Early Modern Philosophy: Cartesianism, Occasionalism, and Pre-established Harmony.* Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993.

_____. *Spinoza: A Life.* Cambridge University Press, 1999.

_____. "Spinoza and Consciousness." *Mind* 117 (2008). 575-601.

_____. *Spinoza and Medieval Jewish Philosophy.* Cambridge University Press, 2014.

_____. *Spinoza's Ethics: An Introduction.* Cambridge University Press. 2006.

Nussbaum, M. C. and Amélie Rorty, eds. *Essays on Aristotle's De Anima.* Oxford University Press, 1995.

Nyden-Bullock, Tammy. *Spinoza's Radical Cartesian Mind.* Continuum, 2007.

Parkinson, G.H. R. "Hegel, Pantheism, and Spinoza." *The Journal of the History of Ideas* 38:3 (1977). 449-459.

Peden, Knox. *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavaillès to Deleuze*. Stanford University Press, 2014.

Ramond, Charles. *Dictionnaire Spinoza*. Ellipses, 2007.

Ravven, Heidi Miriam. "Spinoza's Intermediate Ethics on Society and the Family." *Animus* 6 (2001). 80-95.

_____. *The Self Beyond Itself: An Alternative History of Ethics, the New Brain Sciences, and the Myth of Free Will.* The New Press, 2013.

Ravven, Heidi Miriam and Lenn E. Goodman, eds. *Jewish Themes in Spinoza's Philosophy.* SUNY Press, 2002.

Rodis-Lewis, Geneviève. "Doute Pratique et Spéculatif chez Montaigne et Descartes." *Revue de la France et l'Étranger*. 182:4 (1992). 439-449.

Rosenthal, Michael A. "Spinoza and the Philosophy of History." *Interpreting Spinoza. Critical Essays.* Edited by Charlie Huenemann. Cambridge University Press, 2008. 111-127

Ross, David. *Aristotle.* Routledge, 2005.

____. *Aristotle: De Anima.* Oxford University Press, 1961.

Rovère, Maxime, ed. *Correspondance*. Paris: Flammarion, 2010.

Renz, Ursula. "From the Passive to the Active Intellect." *The Young Spinoza.* Edited by Yitzhak Y. Melamed. Oxford University Press, 2015.

Sainsbury, Richard Mark. *Fiction and Fictionalism.* Routledge, 2010.

Salem, Jean, André Tosel, and Pierre-François Moreau, eds. *Spinoza au XIXe Siècle*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2008

Santiago, Homero. *Espinosa e o Cartesianismo: O Estabelecimento da Ordem nos Princípios de Filosofia Cartesiana.* Editorial Humanitas, 2004.

Sepper, Daniel. "Imagination, Phantasms, and the Making of Hobbesian and Cartesian Science." *Monist* 71:4 (1988). 526-542.

Schffman, Zachary S. "Montaigne and the Rise of Skepticism in Early Modern Europe: a Reappraisal." *Journal of the History of Ideas.* 45:4 (1984). 499-516.

Schieckel, Joel A. "Descartes on the Identity of Passion and Actions." *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*. 19:6 (2011). 1067-1084.

Schmitter, Amy M. "17th and 18th Century Theories of Emotions" *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014 /entries/emotions-17th18th

Schultz, Alexander M. *Mind's World. Imagination and Subjectivity from Descartes to Romanticism.* University of Washington Press, 2009.

Spinoza. *Breve Tratado de Deus, do Homem e do seu Bem-estar.* Tradução e notas por Emanuel da Rocha Fragoso e Luís César Guimarães Oliva. Editora Autêntica, 2012.

_____. *The Collected Works of Spinoza.* Volumes 1. Edited and translated by Edwin Curley. Princeton University Press, 1985.

_____. *The Collected Works of Spinoza.* Volume 2. Edited and translated by Edwin Curley. Princeton University Press, 2016.

_____. *Compendio de Gramática de la Lengua Hebrea.* Traducción y notas de Guadalupe González Diéguez. Editorial Trotta, 2005.

_____. *Éthique.* Texte original et traduction nouvelle par Bernard Pautrat. Éditions du Seuil, 1988.

_____. *The Ethics and Other Works.* Edited and translated by Edwin Curley. Princeton University Press, 1994.

_____. *Ética*. Tradução Tomaz Tadeu. Editora Autêntica, 2007.

_____. *Pensamentos Metafísicos, Tratado da Correção do Intelecto, Ética, Tratado Político, Correspondência. Coleção os Pensadores*. Tradução Marilena Chauí, Carlos Lopes de Mattos, Joaquim de Carvalho e Manuel de Castro. Editora Abril

Cultural, 1973.

_____. *The Principles of Cartesian Philosophy and Metaphysical Thoughts*. Translated by S. Shirley. Hackett Publishing, 1998.

_____. *Princípios da Filosofia Cartesiana e Pensamentos Metafísicos.* Tradução de Homero Santiago e Luis César Guimarães Oliva. Editora Autêntica, 2015.

_____. *Tratado Teológico-Político.* Tradução, introdução e notas de Diogo Pires Aurélio. Editora Martins Fontes, 2003.

Steenbakkers, Piet. "Spinoza on Imagination." *Imagination in the Later Middle Ages and Early Modern times.* Edited by Lodi Nauta and Detlev Patzold. Leuven: Peeters, 2004.

Strauss, Leo. *Spinoza's Critique of Religion.* University of Chicago Press, 1997.

Suárez, Francisco. *On the Formal Cause of Substance Metaphysical Disputation XV*. Translated by John Kronen & Jeremy Reedy. Marquette University Press, 2000.

_____. *On the Various Kinds of Distinctions.* Translated by Cyril Vollert. Marquette University Press, 2007.

Tatián, Diego. *Spinoza Noveno Coloquio.* Editorial Brujas, 2013.

Teixeira, Lívio. *A Doutrina dos Modos de Percepção e Conceito de Abstração na Filosofia de Espinosa*. Editora Unesp, 2001.

Thiel, Udo. *The Early Modern Subject. Self-Consciousness and Personal Identity from Descartes to Hume.* Oxford University Press, 2011.

Thomasson, Amie L. *Fiction and Metaphysics.* Cambridge Studies in Philosophy, 1999.

Van Bunge, Wiep. *Spinoza Past and Present. Essays on Spinoza, Spinozism, and Spinoza Scholarship.* Brill, 2012.

Van Inwagen, Peter and Meghan Sullivan. "Metaphysics." The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2016/entries/metaphysics.

Van Rooijen, A. J. Servas. *Inventaire des livres formant la bibliotèque de Bénédict Spinoza*. Martins Nijhoff, 1889.

Vinci, Thomas. "Reason, Imagination, and Mechanism in Descartes's Theory of Perception." *Oxford Studies in Early Modern Philosophy* 2 (2005). 35-73.

Viljanen, Valtteri. *Spinoza's Geometry of Power.* Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Villey, Pierre. *Les Essays de Michel de Montaigne.* Paris: Société Française d'Études Littéraires et Techniques, 1932.

Vinciguerra, Lorenzo. *Spinoza et le Signe: La Genèse de l'Imagination.* Vrin, 2005.

_____. "Mark, Image, Sign: A Semiotic Approach to Spinoza." *European Journal of Philosophy* 20:1 (2012). 130-144.

Weigel, Peter. "Memory and the Unity of Imagination in Spinoza's Ethics." *International Philosophical Quarterly*. 49:2 (2009). 229- 246.

Williams, Bernard. "Life as Narrative." *European Journal of Philosophy*. 17:2 (2007). 305-314.

Winfield, Richard. *Hegel and Mind: Rethinking Philosophical Psychology.* Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

_____. *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit: A Critical Rethinking in Seventeen Lectures.* Rowman & Littlefield, 2013.

Wolfson, Harry Austryn. *The Philosophy of Spinoza: Unfolding the Latent Processes of His Reasoning.* Harvard University Press, 1948.

Yovel, Yirmiyahu, ed. *Ethica 3: Desire and Affect. Spinoza as Psychologist*. The Jerusalem Conferences. Little Room Press, 1999.

_____. *Spinoza and Other Heretics. Volume 1: The Marrano of Reason.* Princeton University Press, 1992.

_____. *Spinoza and Other Heretics. Volume 2: The Adventures of Immanence.* Princeton University Press, 1992.

_____. "Spinoza, the First Anti-Cartesian" *Idealistic Studies* 33:2-3 (2003). 121-140.

Yovel, Yirmiyahu. & Gideon Segal, eds. *Ethica 2: Spinoza on Mind and Human Knowledge.* The Jerusalem Conferences. Little Room Press, 1994.

_____. *Ethica 4: Spinoza on Reason and the "Free Man".* The Jerusalem Conferences. Little Room Press, 2004.

Zourabichvili, François. "La langue de l'entendement infini." *Spinoza Aujourd'hui*. 1-10.

_____. *Spinoza: Une physique de la pensée.* Paris: PUF, 2010.