

Spinozas Philosophie: Über den Zusammenhang von Metaphysik und Ethik.
Wolfgang Bartuschat.

Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2017. 436 pp. €26.99.

This book contains eighteen papers on Spinoza, dating from 1974 to 2012, seventeen of which were published before in a wide variety of journals and edited volumes. Together they present us with a sustained analysis of Spinoza's metaphysics, his ethics and politics, and the way in which German philosophers from Leibniz to Hegel and Schelling responded to the seventeenth-century Dutch philosopher they admired and occasionally feared as well. Although *Spinozas Philosophie* is well written, it clearly is no introduction to Spinoza. Instead it addresses the initiated, among whom its author, Wolfgang Bartuschat, is mainly known for his 1992 *Spinozas Theorie des Menschen* and his translations of Spinoza's works into German, the last installment of which, containing the *Briefwechsel*, was published in 2017. Materially, Bartuschat is known for his insistence that the naturalism propounded in Spinoza's *Ethics* did not prevent its author from developing a proper anthropology. Thus, for quite some time now, his interpretation of Spinoza has served as a source of inspiration to students of the *Ethics* who remained unconvinced by the extremely influential French, essentially Althusserian and Deleuzian emphasis on Spinoza's purported anti-humanism. Jointly, the papers collected in *Spinozas Philosophie* elucidate the background as well as the general structure of Bartuschat's particular perspective.

Throughout his career Bartuschat has argued in favor of a moral interpretation of Spinoza's thought, as it is only the human mode of substance, the human mind is able to grasp itself as a mode of substance, and by doing so to achieve freedom within a universe otherwise ruled by the same necessity with which it exists in the first place. Bartuschat demonstrates convincingly how Spinoza's metaphysics not only determines man's dependence on "the Absolute"—as he typically prefers to identify Spinoza's concept of substance—but also allows for the very possibility of formulating a metaphysics by man. Since everything which exists strives for its perseverance, man's finitude does not preclude the possibility of achieving some degree of autonomy: being part of God's infinite intellect the human mind is able to reflect about itself, recognize its own essence, and thus conquer its finitude by affirming it. Having determined Spinoza's metaphysics in the first part of this collection, Bartuschat subsequently sets out to demonstrate its moral ramifications. Man's most perfect actions consist in understanding the world we live in and, ultimately, in knowing God. In one of the finer essays of this collection on Spinoza's understanding of *pietas*, Bartuschat deftly compares the ways in which the concept occurs both in the *Tractatus theologico-politicus* and in the *Ethics*, alternatively as the outcome of divine command and a command of reason itself.

In the third and final part of this book Spinoza is situated against the background of the German tradition. It starts off with two chapters in which Spinoza's concept of

conatus is compared to Leibniz's monads and Kant's views on teleology. After two further chapters on Spinoza's notion of freedom in relation to Schelling and Fichte, it seems fitting in more than one way that this impressive collection of papers is completed by a meditation on Hegel's assessment of Spinoza: according to Bartuschat, Hegel's rendering of Spinoza's metaphysics of substance failed to appreciate the real differences separating his own conception of the absolute from Spinoza's, as he failed to recognize the reflective nature of Spinoza's theory of the subject.

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Musical Exchanges, 1100–1650: Iberian Connections. Manuel Pedro Ferreira, ed. Iberian Early Music Studies 2. Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2016. xii + 392 pp. €76.

Although this should be an almost unquestionable fact, scholars working on Spanish or Portuguese music have very seldom studied connections between both entities, in spite of their common culture and history. This book—a collection of essays presented as a result of the research project whose title is given for the book—provides a comprehensive approach to the study of interactions between both countries and the rest of Europe, a notable initiative that must be warmly welcomed. Moreover, it discusses the conflict between center and periphery by replacing a peripheral Iberian Peninsula not only at a central point on a wider map of Europe, but also as an important actor within a complex network of influences and reception.

To deal with these multiple matters, the editor has divided the book in two main sections: “Monody” and “Polyphony,” the former discussing medieval musical repertory while the latter explores the Renaissance, plus three contributions (“Other Sources, Other Connections”) considering both historical periods. We can however question this division, since one of the contributions in the “Polyphony” section deals mostly with monodic music, and the very last study examines a Portuguese polyphonic manuscript containing Spanish music, surprisingly not included in the second section. Unfortunately, the introduction does not provide an explanation nor a general presentation of its content to the readers.

That said, the introduction by M. Pedro Ferreira, a synthesis of the state of music in medieval Iberia, sets luminously the substance of the whole volume. As Ferreira points out, musicological paradigms rarely cross the Pyrenees, neglecting the fact that in medieval Europe Hispanic rites were not more peripheral than others from the symbolic center of them all, Jerusalem. Ironically, Iberia held a prominent musical centrality within the Islamic medieval world, whose influence in music is yet to be (re)examined, as in the case of rhythmic patterns from the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*.