

Between Hegel and Spinoza

A Volume of Critical Essays

Edited by
Hasana Sharp and Jason E. Smith

B L O O M S B U R Y

Between Hegel and Spinoza

A Volume of Critical Essays

Edited by
Hasana Sharp and Jason E. Smith

B L O O M S B U R Y
LONDON • NEW DELHI • NEW YORK • SYDNEY

Bloomsbury Academic

An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

50 Bedford Square
London
WC1B 3DP
UK

175 Fifth Avenue
New York
NY 10010
USA

www.bloomsbury.com

First published 2012

© Hasana Sharp, Jason E. Smith and Contributors, 2012

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

The authors have asserted their right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, to be identified as Authors of this work.

No responsibility for loss caused to any individual or organization acting on or refraining from action as a result of the material in this publication can be accepted by Bloomsbury Academic or the author.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN: HB: 978-1-4411-8404-7

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Between Hegel and Spinoza: a volume of critical essays/edited by
Hasana Sharp and Jason E. Smith.

p. cm. – (Continuum studies in philosophy)

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 978-1-4411-8404-7 (hardcover: alk. paper) – ISBN 978-1-4411-5052-3
(ebook pdf: alk. paper) – ISBN 978-1-4411-6690-6 (ebook epub: alk. paper)

1. Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, 1770-1831. 2. Spinoza, Benedictus de,
1632-1677. I. Sharp, Hasana. II. Smith, Jason E.

B2948.B463 2012

193–dc23

2012016909

Typeset by Deanta Global Publishing Services, Chennai, India
Printed and bound in Great Britain

Notes on Contributors

Jeffrey A. Bernstein is an Associate Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, USA. He works in the areas of Spinoza, German philosophy, and Jewish thought. He is currently at work on a book-length study entitled *Leo Strauss on the Borders of Judaism, Philosophy, and History*.

André Santos Campos is a Lecturer in Philosophy and Legal Theory at the Lusíad University of Lisbon, Portugal, and Research Fellow in the New University of Lisbon, specializing in legal philosophy, political theory, and early modern philosophy. He is the author of *Jus sive Potentia* (Lisbon: CFUL, 2010) and of *Spinoza's Revolutions in Natural Law* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

Idit Dobbs-Weinstein is an Associate Professor of Philosophy with secondary appointments in Jewish Studies and the Graduate Department of Religion at Vanderbilt University. Her research and writing seeks to retrieve an other, occluded materialist Aristotelian tradition from Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic medieval philosophy to the Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno. Her publications include *Maimonides and St. Thomas on the Limits of Reason*, *Maimonides and Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, and *Maimonides and His Heritage*. She is currently finishing a manuscript whose provisional title is *Whose History, Which Politics? Spinoza's Critique of Religion and Its Heirs*.

Gordon Hull is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, USA. He works on the history of modern philosophy, as well as issues in moral and political philosophy surrounding new technologies, where his focus is on intellectual property and privacy. In the history of philosophy, he has written primarily on Spinoza and Hobbes, including the book *Hobbes and the Making of Modern Political Thought* (Continuum, 2009).

Christopher Lauer is an Assistant Professor in Philosophy at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, USA. He works primarily in German Idealism and the ethics of

recognition and is the author of *The Suspension of Reason in Hegel and Schelling* (Continuum, 2010). He is currently at work on a book on intimacy.

Vance Maxwell has retired as a Professor of Philosophy from the Department at Memorial University of Newfoundland-Labrador, Canada, after a long teaching career. In various journals, he has published reviews, critical notices, and articles on Spinoza, Spinoza-Hume, and Spinoza-Hegel. He is currently writing a book which will offer a Spinozan philosophy of mathematics. He also intends to write a work proposing a Spinozan aesthetic.

John McCumber received his PhD in philosophy and Greek from the University of Toronto and has taught at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, USA, the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research, and Northwestern University, Illinois, USA. He is currently Professor of Germanic Languages at UCLA. He has written many books and article on the history of philosophy and its implications, most recently *Time and Philosophy: A History of Continental Thought* (Acumen 2011) and *On Philosophy: Notes from a Crisis* (Stanford, 2012).

Warren Montag is a Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Occidental College, California, USA. His most recent book, *Philosophy's Perpetual War: Althusser and his Contemporaries*, will appear in 2013.

Vittorio Morfino is a Senior Researcher in the History of Philosophy at the Università di Milano-Bicocca, Italy. He is the author of *Substantia sive Organismus* (1997), *Sulla violenza. Una lettura di Hegel* (2000), *Il tempo e l'occasione. L'incontro Spinoza Machiavelli* (2002), *Incursioni spinoziste* (2002), and *Il tempo della moltitudine* (2005). He has edited *Spinoza contra Leibniz* (1994), *La Spinoza Renaissance nella Germania di fine Settecento* (2000), *Labisso dell'unica sostanza* (2009), as well as the Italian edition of the late writings of Louis Althusser (2000). He is an editor of *Quaderni materialisti* and of *Décálogos*.

Jason Read is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern Maine, USA. He is the author of *The Micro-Politics of Capital: Marx and the Prehistory of the Present* (2003) as well as numerous articles on Althusser, Negri, Spinoza, Foucault, Deleuze, and Guattari. He is currently completing a manuscript titled *Relations of Production: Transindividuality between Economics and Politics* for the Historical Materialism book series.

Hasana Sharp is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at McGill University, Quebec, Canada. She is author of *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalization* (University of Chicago, 2011).

Jason E. Smith is an Assistant Professor in the Graduate Art Program at Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, California, USA. He writes primarily about contemporary art, political thought, and philosophy. He recently published, with Philip Armstrong and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Politique et au-delà* (Galilée, 2011).

Caroline Williams is a Lecturer in Politics at Queen Mary, University of London. She is author of *Contemporary French Philosophy: Modernity and the Persistence of the Subject* (2001) as well as articles on Spinoza, Althusser, Lacan, Castoriadis, poststructuralism, and subjectivity. She is currently completing a monograph entitled *Spinoza and Political Critique: Thinking the Political in the Wake of Althusser*.

List of Abbreviations

Spinoza's works

<i>E</i>	<i>Ethics Demonstrated in Geometric Order (...) (Ethica...)</i>
App	Appendix
Ax	Axiom
C	Corollary
D	Definition
Def. Affs.	Definition of the Affects
Dem	Demonstration
Lem	Lemma
P	Proposition
Pos	Postulate
Pref	Preface
S	Scholium
<i>Ep</i>	<i>Correspondence (Epistola)</i>
<i>KV</i>	<i>Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well-Being (Korte Verhandeling...)</i>
<i>TIE</i>	<i>Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect (Tractatus de Intellectus Emendatione)</i>
<i>TP</i>	<i>Political Treatise (Tractatus Politicus)</i>
<i>TTP</i>	<i>Theological-Political Treatise (Tractatus Theologico-Politicus)</i>

Hegel's works

<i>EL</i>	<i>The "Encyclopedia Logic" (Part I of the Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences)</i>
<i>EPS</i>	<i>Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences</i>
<i>EPR</i>	<i>Elements of the Philosophy of Right (also referred to as: The Philosophy of Right)</i>
<i>ETW</i>	<i>Early Theological Writings</i>

<i>IPH</i>	<i>"Introduction," Lectures on the Philosophy of History</i>
<i>LHP</i>	<i>Lectures on the History of Philosophy</i>
<i>LPH</i>	<i>Lectures on the Philosophy of History (Volume III, unless otherwise noted)</i>
<i>LPR</i>	<i>Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion</i>
<i>LPS</i>	<i>Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit</i>
<i>PhS</i>	<i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i>
<i>SL</i>	<i>Science of Logic</i>

Contents

Notes on Contributors	vii
List of Abbreviations	xi
Introduction <i>Hasana Sharp and Jason E. Smith</i>	1
Part 1 The Individual and Transindividuality between Ontology and Politics	
1 The Misunderstanding of the Mode. Spinoza in Hegel's <i>Science of Logic</i> (1812–16) <i>Vittorio Morfino</i>	23
2 “Desire is Man’s Very Essence”: Spinoza and Hegel as Philosophers of Transindividuality <i>Jason Read</i>	42
3 The Problem of the Beginning in Political Philosophy: Spinoza after Hegel <i>Andre Santos Campos</i>	61
Part 2 Hegel’s Spinoza	
4 Hegel, <i>sive</i> Spinoza: Hegel as His Own True Other <i>Warren Montag</i>	83
5 Hegel’s Treatment of Spinoza: Its Scope and its Limits <i>Vance Maxwell</i>	98
6 Hegel’s Reconciliation with Spinoza <i>John McCumber</i>	118
Part 3 The Psychic Life of Negation	
7 Affirmative Pathology: Spinoza and Hegel on Illness and Self-Repair <i>Christopher Lauer</i>	133
8 Of Suicide and Falling Stones: Finitude, Contingency, and Corporeal Vulnerability in (Judith Butler’s) Spinoza <i>Gordon Hull</i>	151
9 Thinking the Space of the Subject <i>between</i> Hegel and Spinoza <i>Caroline Williams</i>	170

Part 4 Judaism beyond Hegel and Spinoza

10	The Paradox of a Perfect Democracy: From Spinoza's <i>Theologico-Political Treatise</i> to Marx's Critique of Ideology <i>Idit Dobbs-Weinstein</i>	189
11	Spinoza, Hegel, and Adorno on Judaism and History <i>Jeffrey A. Bernstein</i>	209
	Bibliography	228
	Index	237

Introduction

Hasana Sharp and Jason E. Smith

If Kant is the widely acknowledged intellectual father of the Enlightenment, Hegel has always had an important place by his side as a sympathetic but exacting critic. Hegel, as is well known, objected to Kant's "formalism," to which he opposed a more demanding view of freedom as an historically achieved reconciliation of one's will with the moral law, civil society, and the State.¹ Hegel thereby requires the political theorist, for example, to consider not only the requirements for a legitimate form of rule but also the process by which subjects come to desire, animate, and identify with laws and social codes. A recent, influential reassessment of the Enlightenment champions Spinoza as the progenitor of the "radical" Enlightenment, which differs from the received tradition by virtue of a more profound commitment to its hallmark ideals: reason, equality, and democracy.² According to this interpretation, and as his contemporaries feared, Spinoza inaugurates an atheist tradition of radical materialism that dissolves God into nature, and, with the fall of metaphysical hierarchy, the first truly democratic vision becomes possible. Spinoza and Hegel thus point the way toward alternatives to the dominant wisdom that continues to govern our age.

Just a word on the relationship of each philosopher to what we will loosely call "the received tradition of the Enlightenment": Hegel sees in Kant's philosophy the distillation of the conflict animating Enlightenment "man": the irreconcilable tension between autonomy and heteronomy.³ The ideal of perfect autonomy by which each individual subordinates himself or herself only to a self-authorized law (self-authorized because given by reason) appears in the Kantian picture to be at odds with our dependency upon the forces of nature, including bodily needs and the labor and care of other people. Yet, Hegel sees in modern society the possibility of reconciling this tension and thereby revisiting the Enlightenment ideal of freedom. Modern society has structured human life such that we can finally experience the profound co-implications of dependency and freedom, social obligations, and self-assertion. It is our bodily need, for example, that

generates the division of labor necessary to meet those needs, which engenders a society in which we can come to exercise our reason reflectively.⁴ The form that this Hegelian reconciliation of dependency and freedom might take has historically been divided into “right” and “left” camps. Hegel is seen to satisfy the individual yearning for freedom by way of total identification with the State and God (for the “right” Hegelian) or by way of a community of free producers (to allude only to the most famous “left Hegelian,” Karl Marx). We see in this very brief account why Hegel is an immanent critic of Enlightenment ideals. While freedom and rationality remain paramount, the self-determination of individuals can only be realized by virtue of a system of relationships, a complex network of dependencies, and a mutually supportive system for developing our capacities and satisfying our aims. Freedom and reason, then, ought not be seen in strict opposition to dependency and nature.

We might find in Spinoza’s philosophy a similarly valiant effort to resolve the conflict between self-determination and natural-determination that came to characterize Enlightenment thought. Spinoza’s solution may rightfully be considered “radical” in that he utterly rejects the terms of the opposition by denying that there is anything other than natural determination. From the point of view of the received tradition, Spinoza’s “solution” is nothing but the total victory of heteronomy or determination by external forces. Yet, Spinoza labors to show that freedom as human reason is the effect of natural powers coming together in a felicitous way so as to amplify one another.⁵ There are parallels, albeit imperfect ones, between Hegel’s critique of Kant’s ideal of freedom and Spinoza’s critique of Descartes’ freedom of the will. Just as Hegel resists the idea of freedom as the form of human rationality itself, Spinoza denies Descartes’ view that the faculty of the will is fundamentally unconstrained. Thus, they each endeavor to paint a picture of freedom that is integrated with bodily life, natural determination, and social dependency. Such revisions of ideals of freedom, in our current age of free-market rational choice, are sorely needed.

Yet, for many philosophers, political and ethical theorists today, one must choose between Hegel and Spinoza. Each is acknowledged as a valuable critic of the received Enlightenment tradition and its corresponding politics; nevertheless, it is hardly possible to adopt their alternatives together and neither can one discover a position between them. Both Hegel and Spinoza might be seen, for example, to challenge the abstract individualism of the Kantian moral subject,⁶ yet the insistence of each thinker on the relational dimensions of existence is understood to be so different as to be incompatible. Hegel’s vision of human life is stamped by the image of the master and slave, engaged in a violent struggle to

the death.⁷ Even if this is but a moment of Hegel's picture of human existence, it so often remains the defining moment. Humans are death-bent and destructive by nature, even as Spirit, expressed in human history, strives to resolve our natural bellicosity. In contrast, rather than underscoring the fundamentally antagonistic character of social relations, Spinoza's interpreters often celebrate his emphasis upon the human bond ("man is a God to man") and the absolutely affirmative character of human desire.⁸ If Hegel represents the thinker of violent antagonism and its resolution, Spinoza is often seen as the herald of love and unequivocal self-affirmation.

On a certain understanding, between Hegel and Spinoza, we find only an abyss. As Deleuze's influential interpretation maintains, Hegel exemplifies and promotes the "cults of death," while Spinoza embodies an irrepressible "appetite for living."⁹ Hegel is the figure of negation, while Spinoza is the thinker of "pure affirmation."¹⁰ Perhaps paradoxically, Deleuze reflects Hegel's own judgment of the relationship between these two thinkers, even as he inverts his evaluation. Whereas, for Deleuze, Spinoza has "enough confidence in life to denounce all the phantoms of the negative,"¹¹ for Hegel, Spinoza's philosophy remains "rigid" and "motionless" by virtue of its inability to incorporate the majestic labor of the negative.¹² For Hegel, the absence of negativity in Spinoza leads to the inability of individuals to act as the motors of their own transformation. Without an internal principle of opposition, change must arrive from the outside. If development is external, humans do not enjoy any genuine autonomy or power of self-determination. For Deleuze, the lack of internal opposition reflects Spinoza's courageous refusal of the constitutive necessity of death and self-destruction. With war surrounding him, Spinoza produced a heroic alternative to "all the ways of humiliating and breaking life."¹³

Deleuze's portrait of Spinoza as the doctor of life, who refuses *avant la lettre* the lure of any capitulation to despair, has been highly influential in Continental ethics and politics, such that it appears nearly impossible to harness the resources of these two major alternatives to our inherited tradition. As provocative and brilliant as Deleuze's interpretation of Spinoza often is, we might be wary of how Deleuze's view of the chasm between Hegel and Spinoza mirrors Hegel's. Although, for Deleuze, the opposition between Hegel and Spinoza clearly yields a favorable assessment of Spinoza, he adopts Hegel's terms. On one side of the chasm, we find affirmation, positivity, and life. On the other, there is negation, negativity, and death.¹⁴ Yet, between Hegel and Spinoza, there is not only opposition. This collection of essays seeks to find the suppressed kinship between Hegel and Spinoza. If Spinoza was an important ally for Deleuze

and others against the Hegelianism of France in the 1960s and 1970s, it is not clear that philosophy, ethics, or political theory continue to be served by their opposition today. Moreover, while it is important not to suppress any important differences between them, what they bequeathed to us is much more similar than we tend to recognize. They both offer rigorous and profound alternatives to the methodological individualism of classical liberalism. In addition, they sketch portraits of reason that are much more context-responsive and emotionally charged than typical Enlightenment portraits and which make better sense of our embodied and historical existence. In a word, they are the most powerful living alternatives to mainstream Enlightenment thought. The common ground that lies between them should not remain obscured by the differences that hold them apart.

The obfuscation of their kinship is surely owed in part to Hegel's urgent, yet conflicted disavowal of his own Spinozism.¹⁵ There is no better analysis of Hegel's systematic blindness with respect to this silently productive kinship than Pierre Macherey's *Hegel or Spinoza*, a book whose translation has finally appeared.¹⁶ Some context for this under appreciated work is in order. A decade and a half after the publication of two important texts in postwar French Marxism, *Reading Capital* and *For a Theory of Literary Production*, Macherey published *Hegel or Spinoza* in 1979. During those long 15 years, much had happened in the fields of politics and philosophy. During this same period, Macherey had published little, almost nothing. We can imagine, nonetheless, that *Hegel or Spinoza* represents the result of a silent, patient, and meticulous philosophical labor. It is a book that, in many ways, *had* to be written: a book that stages a veritable *Auseinandersetzung* between the actual, literal, or material practice of Spinoza's text and Hegel's magisterial exposition of Spinoza's philosophical system. A book that had to be written, then, because much of the most important work accomplished by Althusser and what came to be called his "circle" *presupposes* this philosophical labor. Indeed, the circle opposed the Hegelianism and humanist Marxism promoted by the most public intellectuals at the time, Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Yet, nowhere in the work of Althusser, Macherey, or Balibar, among others, do we find an explicit articulation of what Macherey will call the "essential divergence" between these two images of thought and these two competing figures of rationality. And yet it seems that the silent presence of Spinoza's antiteleological, "antihumanist" materialism was what supported their efforts to purge Marx's materialist dialectic of its Hegelian residues. Why, in the course of this operation, Spinoza could only be invoked obliquely is no

doubt a matter of strategy, on the philosophical and political fronts, in a very determinate situation.¹⁷ Suffice it to say that the conjuncture in 1979, on the philosophical and political fronts, was much different. An operation that, in the mid-1960s, assumed the form of a semiclandestine strategic hypothesis could now take place, in its smallest details, out in the open.

Hegel or Spinoza appears to propose a bifurcation in the history of thought: either/or, either Hegel or Spinoza. But this provocative title does little justice, in fact, to the complex and overdetermined relations between these two philosophical systems, relations that Macherey draws out. Indeed, at moments, as the title to Montag's contribution to this volume suggests, the "or" may just as well be an inclusive "or": Hegel or Spinoza; Hegel, which is to say, Spinoza. Macherey is concerned primarily with how Hegel "misses" Spinoza, how Hegel's seemingly attentive examination of Spinoza's thought is in fact a missed encounter, a nonevent that nevertheless leaves symptomatic, legible traces in Hegel's own thought.¹⁸ Whether it is a question of Hegel's critique of Spinoza's peculiar deployment of the geometric method, the misreading of the famous formula, *omnis determinatio est negatio*, or the relation between substance and attributes in the first two books of the *Ethics*, Hegel is shown to *consistently* "say exactly the opposite of [what Spinoza's thought] establishes."¹⁹ This, we can assume, reveals less about Spinoza's own philosophical system than it does the conditions of Hegel's own discourse. It is as if these inversions are scars internal to Hegel's thought, a blindness to what is right before his eyes, a blind spot that is the historical and material condition for the emergence of Hegel's thought. More enigmatically, Macherey underlines on several occasions that this blindness is all the more blind in those moments when Spinoza's thought seems to *anticipate* Hegel's *avant la lettre*. Speaking of Hegel's false characterization of Spinoza's substance as "dead" and the relation between substance and attributes as at once mechanical and external to one another, Macherey demonstrates that, to the contrary, substance is "in its immanent life . . . a movement toward self, affirmation of self"—that is, a notion of substance as an absolute process in which the attribute of thought is a point of immanent reflection or inflexion that is perilously close to Hegel's own.²⁰ It is at these moments, Macherey emphasizes, when an "essential convergence" between these two thoughts occurs, that Hegel's interpretation "diverges" most dramatically from the actual formulations of Spinoza's text. It is this play of proximity and distance, of divergence and convergence, that constitutes the space of the missed encounter between Hegel and Spinoza.

Macherey's localization of these points of convergence should, however, give us some pause. Much of the work done on Spinoza in Europe since the late 1960s, whether that of the Althusserian circle, Deleuze, Matheron, or Negri, as we have already observed, was undertaken in view of affirming the divergence between Hegel's and Spinoza's thought: what interest is there, after all, in affirming that Spinoza's doctrine of substance is identical with Hegel's, that he anticipates it by a century and a half? What interest is there in affirming that Hegel's thought, the Hegel of absolute idealism, the Hegel for whom the absolute is both substance and subject, is already found in what is supposed to be a thought committed to a critique of finalism? What is at stake for Macherey is not only the actuality of Spinoza's text but the symptomatic nature of Hegel's inability to characterize that text accurately. What is implicit in this enterprise is another scansion of the history of philosophy and the historicity of thought: a history in which Hegel does not *succeed* Spinoza so much as merely repeat him in their points of convergence, and even regress to a pre-Spinozan position at certain moments where they diverge? Nonetheless, Macherey's philosophical strategy leaves open, and perhaps calls for, still *another* approach to Hegel, an approach that would seek out those configurations in Hegel's thought that diverge from Hegel's *own* understanding of his philosophical system. For three decades of Continental thought, to invoke Spinoza was to take one's distance from Hegel, and this distance was itself often a way of drawing a line of demarcation internal to Marx's thought, cleaving it from its lingering Hegelianism, and from every religious, that is teleological, conception of history. Much rarer are those occasions when we witness the inverse operation: the operation that folds the materialism of Spinoza back onto Hegel's own text, using Spinoza as a weapon to draw a line of demarcation internal to Hegel's system, between Hegel the philosopher of absolute idealism and Hegel the thinker of history as a process without subject or end.²¹ Spinoza, would be, in this scenario, the necessary detour required to accomplish the task that Lenin, in his notebooks on the *Logic*, set out for himself: to read Hegel as a materialist. That is, as Spinozist.

The ambition of this collection of critical essays is to begin to explore this possibility of reading Hegel and Spinoza again, after and in light of the extraordinary philosophical labor performed on Spinoza's thought in, among other places, France and Italy over the past 30 years. This work has needed a fictional Hegel in order to assume the distance taken from him, a fictional Hegel whose textual and philosophical practice is assumed to coincide with its own declared "consciousness" of that practice. Such an undertaking, however, will

have to reflect on its own conditions of possibility. Why is it possible to begin the process of locating these moments of divergence or deviation *internal* to Hegel's thought *today*, at a certain moment in the history of thought? Why has it been necessary, over the past three decades, to treat Hegel's philosophy as a homogenous bloc of thought, unmarked by internal distances and immanent *décalages*, unscathed by the war at the heart of every thought? And why, in turn, does it fall to Spinoza, and Spinoza alone—this singular thought—to make this new Hegel come to light? If these questions are not answered in this collection, they are clearly the inspiration for the essays.

Part I concerns Spinoza's account of the individual. This account is a difficult one, a difficulty often avoided in the history of philosophy by reducing the individual to a mere dissipation of substance, its degradation or diminution, or by assimilating Spinoza's thought—in particular his political thought—to the methodological individualism of Hobbes. In this part, Vittorio Morfino, Jason Read, and André Santos Campos address, in various ways, the problem of the individual in Hegel and Spinoza, and all do so through the concept of "transindividuality." This concept was first developed by Gilbert Simondon in his posthumously published book *L'individuation psychique et collective*,²² and expanded by Etienne Balibar, first in relation to Spinoza's ontology and later in a wider ranging reflection that includes Hegel himself within the philosophical tradition of thinking transindividuality.²³ Spinoza's thought of the individual, according to Balibar, escapes the dilemma of individualism or holism, which is also understood in another register as the dilemma of the exteriority of relations characteristic of civil society (e.g. as described by Hegel) or the interiority of an essential community. Balibar therefore speaks of a "transindividuality," which is meant to describe a process of individuation in greater specificity, including the process of the production of the individual outlined by Spinoza as well as the relations (of exchange, modification, destruction, or combination) between individuals without which the individual could not exist. Beginning with the schema of causality proposed in Book 1 of the *Ethics*, it is possible to understand nature not as an undivided substance that subsequently breaks apart into an infinity of attributes and modes but as "nothing *other*," insists Balibar, than its distribution into the infinite multiplicity of modes, the infinite process of their production, and the infinity of causal relations among them. The immanent causality of substance is, therefore, not to be conceived or represented as a linear series of causes but to be conceived as an "infinite network of singular modulations,"²⁴ in which the individual is constantly transformed in its