

スピノザ『政治論』のために

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スピノザ晩年の著作『政治論（国家論）』には、先立つ『神学政治論』に見られなかったあるフレーズ、「あたかも一つの精神によってであるかのように導かれる群集」という表現がくりかえし出てくる。群集は必ずしも現実に「一つの精神」において一致していなくとも、あたかも一致しているかのような振る舞いを見せる。反事実的表現「あたかも」が示すのは、この群集のパラドックスにほかならない。スピノザは群集のもつそうした逆説的な力能が国家を定義すると言う。そこにはもはや『神学政治論』の社会契約のような相互承認の論理はない。あるのは、各人がそれぞれに、自分以外の「残りの者」総体の力能によって等しく凌駕されるという、非対称的な関係の重ねあわせのみ。つまり、最高権力掌握者の手中にあるかのように見える共同体の力は、実は各人が互いに対してそれと知らずに作り出している「残りの者」の力にほかならず、各人が自分以外の者も服従するであろうと想像し、恐れや期待をいだくまにそのことから、この先取りされた力が彼ら自身の服従の総体として各人に現実のしかかるのである。成員各人によって生きられる主体幻想からの〈ずれ〉、および最高権力の象徴的な至高性からの〈ずれ〉、そうした諸々の〈ずれ〉においてようやく捉らえられるような「群集の力能」によって国家を考えること。ここに『政治論』の賭金がある。『政治論』に特徴的な、ユートピアや理想君主の拒否はここから出てくる。スピノザは、導く者と導かれる者のすべてが「欲しようとして欲しまいと」結局は欲動に駆られて共通の福利の要求するところを為すようになってしまうような、合理的な「術策」を要請する。『政治論』に民主主義的な構想が多々見られるとしても、それは社会契約説ならぬ、群集の自然に基づいたリアリズムからの、論理的一掃結なのである。

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FOR SPINOZA'S *TRACTATUS POLITICUS*

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Spinoza wrote two treaties on politics : the famous *TRACTATUS THEOLOGICO-POLITICUS* (TTP) published in his lifetime, and the *TRACTATUS POLITICUS* (TP) left unfinished because of his death. It is this latter work, the TP, that I want to shed light on in the present paper, for, when we read it, we have quite a different impression from that of the TTP. Whereas the TTP contains the so called social contract theory, one can find no such arguments in the TP, not even one example of the "*pactum*" designating the social contract. [1] Taking account of the somewhat complicated nature of the TTP due to its polemic aim to intervene in the ideological situation in the Netherlands, we may expect that Spinoza's genuine political theory can be pursued in the TP, a more theoretical work, rather than in the TTP. It is quite probable that his political philosophy remains heterogeneous to the line of social contract thinking for which he is most often noted.

Let us take notice of a phrase peculiar to the TP which appears repeatedly (7 times) throughout the whole text, in parts that are relatively important : namely, the multitude is "guided as if by one mind (*una veluti mente ducitur*)" (TP, II, 16, 21 ; III, 2, 5, 7 ; VI, 1 ; VIII, 6). Why "as if" ? Since the term "multitude", as E. Balibar points out, is a key word to which the former TTP did not attach importance, [2] it is no exaggeration to say that the expression "as if" will reveal the singularity of the political thinking contained in the TP.

Does the expression in question simply imply that the "one mind", or the supreme power, is nothing more than a fictitious being such as the "artificial person" of Hobbes ? It does not seem so. Because the TP characterizes the state as a "natural thing" (TP, IV, 4), and its right as the "right of nature itself" determined by the power of the multitude (TP, III, 2). While the social contract

theory presupposes a mutual consent among the multitude to follow the precepts of reason, it is this “precepts of reason” that Spinoza rejects here in seeking “the causes and natural foundations of the state” (TP, I, 7). As a matter of fact, “all men, savage and civilized alike, everywhere enter into social relations and form some sort of civil order” (ibid.). What concerns the TP, then, is not an artificial generation of Leviathan, but a paradox that the multitude, despite the lack of consent to the precepts of reason, never ceases to be guided “as if by one mind”. Multitude as a paradox; such is the theoretical object of the TP, and that is what the expression “as if” refers to.

Thus, the right of the supreme power is to be “determined by the power of the multitude which is guided as if by one mind” (TP, III, 2); what does this formula mean? Spinoza gives us a precise account: “Where men hold rights as a body, and are all guided as if by one mind, then, of course, (by Section 13 of this Chapter) each of them has the less right the more the rest together exceed him in power; that is, he has, in reality, no right against other things in nature except what the corporate right allows him; moreover, he is bound to carry out every command laid upon him by the common decision; or (by Section 4 of this Chapter) be compelled to do so by right” (TP, II, 16).

Obviously, in this passage that serves as a definition of sovereignty, what accounts for the civil order is no longer the obligation of contractors who authorize the sovereign to command themselves, but a mere excess in the power of “the rest” over every member: it is a certain asymmetry that produces “in reality” the obedience of the multitude. If the social contract founds the sovereign power upon a bilateral, symmetrical reciprocity among equal contractors, the reciprocity on which this passage grounds the sovereignty is quite a different one: whereas every one of the members sees himself facing the overwhelming “rest”, he appears himself as a part of the overwhelming power of “the rest” in the face of every other member; so that everyone, without intention, puts equally each other in an asymmetrical power relation with the respective “rest”: *the reciprocity of the asymmetric*, as one might put it. It is this peculiar reciprocity, which I would like to call *the logic of the rest*, that constitutes the power of the multitude by which the sovereignty is defined [3]: “[t]his corporate right”, goes on Spinoza, “which is defined by the power of the multitude, is generally called

sovereignty" (TP, II , 17). What makes the unity of the multitude is not "reason" that might lead individuals to mutual consent, but "some common passion" like hope and fear (TP, VI , 1) : where all fear or hope the same thing, there the civil order is (TP, III , 3), Spinoza says ; and what is the "same thing", if not the power of "the rest" that overwhelms everyone respectively ?

"The rest", however, is not something physical reality per se. As defined in the *ETHICS*, the object of hope or fear is "a future or past thing whose outcome we to some extent doubt" (E, III , AD12, 13). So no one can be absolutely assured whether the overwhelming power of the rest will come into reality or not. Despite that, or rather, because of that uncertainty, every member, fearing or hoping, anticipates in his imagination the rest who might be united in one overwhelming power under the command of common decision. So that, as long as the fear or hope lasts, everyone remains respectively subjected to the uncertain power under the common decision (TP, II , 10). Thus it turns out that the sum of the obeying movements produced by the uncertain hope or fear brings the anticipated power into reality : as this synthesis occurs in the realm of reality, not imagination, everyone materializes to everyone else the uncertain power of the rest even if there is no intended corporation among one another. Thus we can recognize in the given definition of sovereignty a paradoxical auto-reproducing circle where power pictured in mere imagination turns into real power, which, in turn, reinforces the imagination, and so on. No one in the multitude can decide whether the power of the rest is now coming into reality or is merely anticipated in his uncertain imagination ; paradoxically, it is this lack of decidability itself that maintains so constantly the reproduction of the power of the whole multitude, that everything goes as if there were some guarantee.

This logic leads us to a completely different understanding of the sovereign. Whereas in the social contract theory, the sovereign plays the role of the unique guarantor who assures every contractor of the mutual execution of the contract, the TP follows a different path. The role of the sovereign is now to draw from the multitude an illusory credit to himself, by means of the effect of the peculiar reciprocity we saw above. As long as every member cannot wipe away the doubt that the rest might obey the same voice of command as he hears, what is imagined, by the force of the peculiar reciprocity, continues to become real, and

so the circle goes on. If the sovereign is obeyed, it is not because of the guarantee he provides ; on the contrary, his power itself depends entirely on the effect of the circle where his command functions somewhat like a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is why the TP assigns to him who seizes the sovereignty only a communicative role : his voice should materialize the latent voice that everyone either expects or fears to be obeyed by "the rest". Since that voice must be one and the same, its decision "must be taken for the will of all" (TP, III, 5), but, as we will see, it remains effective only as long as a mass of the multitude imagine respectively that the rest might follow it. Even a king who seems to reign over all the members of the state, can do nothing but to grope for that latent voice to be materialized. In that sense, the king himself is subjected to his hope or fear of the power of "the rest" facing him, and that is why Spinoza insists on the necessity of a large assembly which will relieve the king of this dangerous load (TP, VI, 15). Therefore, when Spinoza says that the supreme power manages the affairs of state "by common consent" (TP, II, 17), what this "consent" implies is not a social contract, but the supreme latent voice that everyone, even a king, expects or fears to be followed by the rest.

Thus everything goes as if the multitude were guided by one mind. Why "as if" ? Because the reality of so guiding or of being so guided is not where the rulers and the ruled themselves imagine it to be. Therein lies some discrepancy, and the words "as if" point out this discrepancy, making the TP an incomparable text.

Discrepancy I : in contrast to the social contract theory, the TP holds that the power of the multitude is not a result of an intended concord of the constituent members. As the *ETHICS* points out (E, III, P2, S), the "decision of the mind" determining the actions of the body is an illusion, a daydream. It is not in the daydream in which one believes himself to be the center of his own actions, that these actions actually take place ; they result somewhere else, namely, in the whole movement of the multitude which, as "the rest", respectively overwhelms its own constituent members. Discrepancy occurs between the imaginary and the real, between what one imagines himself doing and what one actually does. Spinoza does not throw away the imaginary as nothing. Since its constituent ideas are the ideas of the human body's affections determining the action

of the body (E, II, P28, D), it is incorporated, without one being aware of it, in the process of the auto-reproducing circle we saw above. Therefore, whenever the power of the multitude materializes itself, it does so in discrepancy with what the constituent members “dream with open eyes”.

Discrepancy II : the foundation of the sovereign power is not in the legitimate supremacy itself, as imagined by the social contract theory. Spinoza agrees that the supreme power, since it is the final authority, can legitimately make whatever law it wants (TP, IV, 5). But to seize the multitude under that law is another thing : it depends, not on the civil law, but completely on the laws of nature which allow the state its reproduction, so that a supreme power which neglects the *logie of the rest* cannot but give cause of conspiracy, and thus perishes in ruining itself (TP, III, 9 ; IV, 4). That is why Spinoza who admits the supremacy of the state in determining justice and injustice, nevertheless sees the cause of the validity of common laws in nothing but the bare fact that “most of the citizens are bound by them” (TP, II, 23 ; III, 8) : Spinoza holds fast to the discrepancy between symbolic supremacy and the cause of its actual efficacy. If the sovereignty can exercise its power upon citizens, it is not because it is symbolically supreme, but because most of the citizens are compelled to obey by the *logic of the rest*.

It follows, therefore, that the “power of the multitude” as shown in the TP is something real, emerging in discrepancy—discrepancy with the imaginary lived by each citizen, and discrepancy with the symbolic supremacy, so that no one, rulers as well as ruled, can ever catch up with it. In that sense, one could say that everyone in the multitude is forestalled by everyone else. What is then the “as if” in the repeated phrase “the multitude which is guided as if by one mind”, if it is not an indicator of this “other scene”, never present to the eyes of the rulers, nor of the ruled ? It is on this invisible scene that one can, always in discrepancy, just barely think the real.

And is not it the last instance of the real that the TP, in its introduction, denotes with the word “*praxis*” ? In making more account of cunning statesmen than of philosophers or theologians, and in declaring that his object “is not to make any new or unheard of suggestions”, but to establish “nothing save the principles and institutions which accord best with practice”, Spinoza makes it

his object to integrate the “artifices” of statesmen into a rational political system. “Now if human nature were such that men desired most what was most to their advantage, there would be no need of *artifice* to promote loyalty and concord. But since, as is well known, human nature is very different, it is necessary to organize the state so that all its members, rulers as well as ruled, do what the common welfare requires whether they wish to or not” (TP, VI, 3). And what is the “artifice (*ars*)”, if it is not what makes the multitude guided “as if by one mind”? If the multitude succeed in preserving peace and freedom, it is due to the concordance of the “form of the state” - or the system of artifices - with the dictate of reason, and not to the concordance of everyone’s mind with one Reason (TP, VIII, 7). It is evident that all this is not derived from a social contract. What we see here is a serious requirement of artifices to keep the state stable, and to guide the multitude in peace and freedom. Otherwise, how can we understand Spinoza’s proposal that “men should really be governed in such a way that they do not regard themselves as governed, but as following their own bent and their own free choice in their manner of life” (TP, X, 8)?

“[N]o matter how we consider men, whether we take them to be guided by passion or by reason, it will make no difference, since the proof, as I have said, is valid in all cases” (TP, III, 18). This somewhat surprising assertion of the TP decisively shows where Spinoza situates the political rationality. Far from seeking it in a legitimating authorization such as developed by the social contract thinking, Spinoza, here in the TP, locates it nowhere else other than in the “*praxis*”, i. e. in the reality of the anonymous multitude of which no one can pretend to be the author. Does Spinoza not warn us, as he once did in speaking of the human body, that those who deny the immanent potency of the body politic do not know what the multitude can do?

NOTES

[1] It is true that, in the TP, the term “*contractus*” appears three times, and that, in only one paragraph (TP, IV, 6). However, as the context obviously shows, the “*contractus*” in question is supposed to be passed between “a people” and a sovereign, and not among one another as is the case of “*pacum*”, a social contract in the TTP (TTP, XVI). That is why the sovereign

is said to be bound not to break the "*contractus*" from fear of the indignation of the majority of citizens. All this makes it difficult to believe that those two terms have the same meaning.

[2] Cf. Étienne BALIBAR : *Spinoza, l'anti-Orwell* . in Les Temps Modernes, sept, 1985.

[3] On this *logic*, see Osamu UENO : *Spinoza et le paradoxe du contrat social de Hobbes : <le reste >* . in *Cahiers Spinoza* . no. 6, Éditions Réplique, Paris, 1991.

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