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Praxis Thorough the First Kind of Knowledge-How can we practice the theory demonstrated in geometric order?

HIGUCHI Tomoko

In this presentation, I will argue about the function of the first kind of knowledge in *the Ethics*. Spinoza's *Ethics*, titled as *Ethica ordine geometrico demonstrata* in Latin, is consisted of the chain of the definitions, the axioms, the propositions, and the demonstrations in geometric order, like Euclid's Elements. According to Spinoza's account of human cognition, we have three kinds of knowledge. The first is from symbols and images, and this can be the cause of the falsity in cognition, while the others, the second and the third, are the cause of the true cognitions. Seeing such explanation of the cognitions, the first kind of knowledge seems to be discussed just to explain why we have false cognitions. Against such a view, however, I'll propose that the first kind of knowledge also has an indispensable role when the ethical theory is turned to the praxis.

To propose this, what Spinoza says in the scholium of the proposition 10 of Part 5 will be an important key. There says he, "the best thing we can adopt … is to conceive a right method of living, or fixed role of life, and to commit them to the memory and continuously apply them to particular situations … , so that our casual thinking is thoroughly permeated by them and they are always ready to hand. " We notice here that there is a fundamental connection between the memory and the practice of the ethical theory, which is demonstrated in geometric order through the second kind of knowledge, i.e. "Reason." The memory is explained related to the first kind of knowledge. The proposition of the Second Part of the Ethics on the memory is this; "If the human body has once been affected by two or more bodies at the same time, when the mind afterward imagines one of them, it will straightway remember the others too." In the scholium of this proposition, he explains the nature of memory. According to the explanation, memory is the connections of ideas that occur as the order of affections of the human body.

Thus, there is an overseen relationship of the first and second kinds of knowledge, in our practice of what is demonstrated in our actual lives. In this presentation, I will treat the function of the first kind of knowledge by pointing out the connection between the first kind of knowledge and the memory, and the connection between the memory and the praxis of the ethical theory.