

Spinoza's Ethics

Philosophy 190: Seminar in Philosophical Classics

Wednesdays: 7:00 – 9:45
Prof. Hadreas
BBC 203
Spring, 2012



Historian of Philosophy Wallace Matson writes:

“Spinozism is the most philosophical of all philosophies. Benedictus de Spinoza considered all the questions philosophers are supposed to ponder, and he gave them definite unequivocal answers. If he is obscure he is never obscurantist. Never before or since was a system of the world presented more systematically and elegantly. Spinoza explicitly claimed to have discovered the true philosophy. Perhaps he alone could make this announcement without irritating his reader .”

Matson might have added that Spinoza's philosophy has remarkable – even for the 21st century -- cutting edge approaches to the mind/body relation, cosmology, and ecology. In this course, we'll spend nearly all of the semester reading and discussing Spinoza's masterpiece, *The Ethics*. There'll be three papers and an occasional quiz or two.

Required book: Spinoza, Baruch, *The Complete Works*, Samuel Shirley, trans., (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 2002)