
Summary of an Article in English

Spinoza and his Social Contract Theory

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In this paper, I discussed Spinoza's political thought, especially focusing on his social contract theory. Is Spinoza a social contract theorist? In conclusion, the answer is "no". In order to describe this, I critically examined the discussion of Takashi Kato, who considers Spinoza a social contract theorist. While relying on Kanichi Fukuda's paradigm, Kato presented Spinoza's political thought as individualistic theory. By the scheme of "nature and artifice (sakui)" Spinoza's political theory is understood as artificial and his "nature" is regarded as secondary. However, such an interpretation of Spinoza's political thought is problematic. There are two reasons for this: First, Spinoza's philosophy is consistently one of nature based on the formula "God or Nature". Second, at the center of Spinoza's political thought is always a multitude, not an individual. This is understood from the fact that social contract is lost between *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (*TTP*) and *Tractatus Politicus* (*TP*). Certainly in *TTP*, Spinoza was discussing social contract theory, but in *TP* he abandoned it. In *TP*, Spinoza began to emphasis on natural relationships and cooperativeness. And there was no longer a need to use social contract theory to describe his thought. It is impossible to interpret Spinoza's political thought in the artificial way.