SELF-PRESERVATION, AS SPINOZA’S PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW

Ingrid C. Bernard
Department of Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Indonesia
icblight@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

This article explicates Spinoza’s terms of self-preservation\(^1\) as his philosophical view in his book “Ethics”\(^2\) (published in 1677), written in a geometrical method. Generally, self-preservation refers to attention on the needs or desires of an individual self. The term self-preservation is often used simply to denote the attitude of caring about one’s own good. It is a view that human beings are always motivated by self-preservation, which is a necessity view of life. Spinoza has a broader view of the term. He identified self-preservation as the ultimate aim and proper motive of morality. His philosophical view of self-preservation is a more enlightened self-preservation, which shows that acting for one’s own self-preservation can also serve others. Spinoza emphasized that the concepts of good, virtue, into perfection, have a ground in every human being, whilst evil is a condition in which virtue in ordinary people is still in its early unfoldment. Ordinary individuals tend not to undergo rigorous life and therefore they become preys for their passive emotions. According to Spinoza: evil actions are the result of ignorance. Therefore, he emphasized that individuals good potentials must be developed. The higher the individual understanding is, the more the individual has the power to propel himself from within, to enlighten himself, but also to help and bring happiness to others. He argued that an individual’s goodness will inspire others to achieve contenment. The difference of self-preservation term with other philosophical views of it can be observed through his propositions in his “Ethics”. Spinoza’s understanding of the importance of self-preservation, by improving one’s rational ability, is an exclusive view in his era, and can still be an inspiration to individuals today.

Keywords: self-preservation, conatus, ignorance, virtue, perfection.

Introduction

Throughout the humanities and sciences, and even in our personal lives, the idea of self-preservation has played a central role. In the imperative of self-love, philosophers have perceived a tacit threat: “the excessive love of one’s self is in

---

\(^1\) This topic is one of the antologies in Kelly Rogers (ed), Self-Interest, An Anthology of Philosophical Perspectives, NY, Routledge, 1997, p. 93-104.

\(^2\) Ethics, Demonstrated in Geometrical Order (Latin: Ethica, ordine geometrico demonstrata), usually known as the Ethics, is a philosophical treatise written by Benedict de Spinoza. It was first published in 1677.
reality the source to each man’s all offences” (Plato, Laws V, 731b). But Spinoza, a Dutch philosopher who lived in the 17th century had a different philosophical point of view on that matter. As one of a Western philosopher who gave attention to this topic, Spinoza as mentioned above, identified self-preservation as the ultimate aim and proper motive of morality. Certainly it is required to be considered that the views taken on the role of self-preservation in human motivation, is to perceive the foundation of virtue. The central question in this writing concerns to the extent to which human action is driven by the concern for the self-preservation. In general notion human being does not help others for the sake of others, but for the benefit of himself. On the contrary, Spinoza had his argument: “self-preservation is the primary and only foundation of virtue.” In his book ‘Ethics’, he discussed this problem in great detail. His propositions concerning self-preservation is cited as follows:

**PART IV PROPOSITION 20**

*The more every man endeavors and is able to seek his own advantage, that is, to preserve his own being, the more he is endowed with virtue. On the other hand, insofar as he neglects to preserve what is to his advantage, that is, his own being, to that extent he is weak.*

*Proof:* Virtue is human power, which is defined solely by man's essence (Def. 8, IV); that is, it is defined solely by the conatus whereby man endeavors to persist in his own being (Pr. 7, III). Therefore, the more every man endeavors and is able to preserve his own being, the more he is endowed with virtue, and consequently (Prs. 4 and 6, III) insofar as he neglects to preserve his own being, to that extent he is weak.

*Scholium:* Therefore nobody, unless he is overcome by external causes contrary to his own nature, neglects to seek his own advantage, that is, to preserve his own being. Nobody, I repeat, refuses food or kills himself from the necessity of his own nature, but from the constr int of external causes. This can take place in many ways. A man kills himself when he is compelled by another who twists the hand in which he happens to hold a sword and makes him turn the blade against his heart; or when, in obedience to a tyrant’s command, he, like Seneca, is compelled to open his veins, that is, he chooses a lesser evil to avoid a greater. Or it may come about when unobservable external causes condition a man’s imagination and affect his body in such a way that the latter assumes a different

---

nature contrary to the previously existing one, a nature whereof there can be no idea in mind (Pr. 10, III). But that a man from the necessity of is own nature should endeavor to cease to exist or to be changed into another form, is as impossible as that something should come from nothing, as anyone can see with a little thought⁵.

Baruch Spinoza, one of the first Enlightenment philosophers, was born in Amsterdam, the Netherlands (1632-1677). He was born from Sephardic⁶ Portuguese Jewish parents, living in the Netherlands due to the Inquisition⁷. At the age of twenty-four he was excommunicated from Jewish community of the Netherlands because of his unorthodox views, and he took on the name Benedictus, the Latin translation of Baruch, that means the 'blessed.' He lived all his life as a lens grinder, and in his spare time he developed one of the most profound philosophical systems in Western philosophy. His views, particularly his biblical criticism, were different from other philosophers, that some of his works, particularly the "Ethics", were only published posthumously.

Spinoza’s Method

In his “Ethics” Spinoza employed the “geometrical” method, a style of a geometrical treatise, with each book comprising a set of definitions, axioms, propositions, scholia, and other features that make up the formal apparatus of geometry⁸. In this style, he frequently made references to other parts of his argument that plays a supporting role. He then summarized those parts and made it the point of his discussion. His aim was to explain that human mind must be explicable in terms of the laws of nature. He insisted that ethical properties, which he sometimes characterized as human “modes of thinking”, are explicable in terms of natural laws⁹. Through his geometrical method, he attempted to show that the constitution of human being follows the order of nature. In his opinion, the laws and rules of nature, according to which all things take place, and change from one form to another, are always and everywhere the same. He also believed that human

---

⁶ Sephardic is Jews of Spain and Portugal or their descendants, distinguished from the Ashkenazim and other Jewish communities chiefly by their liturgy, religious customs, and pronunciation of Hebrew: after expulsion from Spain and Portugal in 1492, established communities in North Africa, the Balkans, Western Europe, and elsewhere.
⁷ An official investigation, esp. one of a political or religious nature, characterized by lack of regard for individual rights, prejudice on the part of the examiners, and recklessly cruel punishments.
beings are not “outside nature” 10. He argued that any features or deeds of human beings, must have some explanation in terms of the natural laws.

In short, Spinoza stated his view that all things must be understood to follow the laws of nature. Human beings are under the principles of causal laws. Similar in kind to other ordinary objects, in his term “finite modes”11, they ought to be analyzed and understood in the same way as the rest of nature. According to Spinoza, there is a right, rational ends to pursue, or a continuance to the end, or perseverance in being. Everything in nature leads to perfection. But there is also wrong, irrational ends. In this way, he saw moral concepts are not different from the laws of nature. His book “Ethics” was his attempt to show that moral concepts, such as the concepts of good and evil, virtue, and perfection, have a ground in human nature.

**God**

Spinoza’s intention in his “Ethics” was to provide a unified explanation of all things within a naturalistic framework. One point that was discussed in his philosophical system, was the concept of God. In his thought, God is not identified as a ‘supreme being’ that constitutes the world, but God is nature itself12. Spinoza argued that natural world is a single substance, where anything can be observed, including human beings, as aspects of nature. According to one of his proposition, "each thing, as far as it lies in itself, strives to persevere in its being" (Ethics, part 3, prop. 6)13. Each particular thing is an expression of God’s substance. This means that each thing expresses the power of God in a particular way. Human beings and nature must be unified under a consistent set of laws. God and nature are the same, God is nature, and human beings are an integral part of it14. He believed that all aspects of natural world, including human beings were expressions of the eternal substance of God, and can therefore only be known through pure thought or reason. In his “Ethics”, God is illustrated in a geometrical style:

---

12 "From God's supreme power, or infinite nature, infinitely many things in infinitely many modes, that is, all things, have necessarily flowed, or always follow, by the same necessity and in the same way as from the nature of a triangle it follows, from eternity and to eternity, that its three angles are equal to two right angles" (IP17S1). The entire modal system, Natura naturata, follows immanently from the divine nature, Natura naturans, in http://www.iep.utm.edu/spinoza/#SSH3b.i, accessed 20 November 2015.
13 III Prop. 6, in Spinoza, de Baruch, 2002, p. 283
14 I Proposition 34: God's power is his very essence. Proof: From the sole necessity of God’s essence it follows that God is self-caused (Pr. I I ) and the cause of all things (Pr. 16 and Cor.). Therefore, God's power, whereby he and all things are and act, is his very essence. in Spinoza, de Baruch, 2002, p.238
PART I PROPOSITION 5

The existence of God is known solely from the consideration of his nature.

Proof: To say that something is contained in the nature or concept of a thing is the same as to say that it is true of that thing (Def. 9). But necessary existence is contained in the concept of God (Ax. 6). Therefore it is true to say of God that there is necessary existence in him, or that he exists.

Scholium: From this proposition there follow many important consequences. Indeed, on this fact alone - that existence pertains to the nature of God, or that the concept of God involves necessary existence just as the concept of a triangle involves its three angles being equal to two right angles, or that his existence, just like his essence, is an eternal truth - depends almost all knowledge of the attributes of God through which we are brought to love of him and to the highest blessedness. Therefore it is much to be desired that mankind should come round to our opinion on this subject.

PART III PROPOSITION 6

The existence of God is proved a posteriori from the mere fact that the idea of him is in us.

Proof: The objective reality of any of our ideas requires a cause in which that same reality is contained not just objectively but formally or eminently (Ax. 9). Now we do have the idea of God (Defs. 2 and 8), and the objective reality of this idea is not contained in us either formally or eminently (Ax. 4), nor can it be contained in anything other than God himself (Def. 8). Therefore this is idea of God, which is in us, requires God for its cause, and therefore God exists (Ax. 7).

Scholium: There are some who deny that they have any idea of God, and yet, as they declare, they worship and love him. And though you were to set before them the definition of God and the attributes of God, you will meet with no more success than if you were to labor to teach a man blind from birth the differences of colors as we see them. However, except to consider them as a strange type of creature halfway between man and beast, we should pay small heed to their words. How else, I ask, can we show the idea of some thing than by giving its definition and explaining its attributes? Because this is what we are doing in the case of the idea of God, there is no reason for us to be concerned over the words of men who deny the idea of God simply on the grounds that they cannot form an image of

15 Part 1, Proposition 5, in Spinoza, de Baruch, 2002, p. 133, 134
him in their brain.\textsuperscript{16}.

Conatus

The term 'conatus' plays an important role in the philosophy of Spinoza. It expresses his point of view that everything has an inherent tendency toward self-preservation and activities. According to Spinoza, all living creatures are controlled by an 'inner force', called conatus, which maintains the existence and behaviour of all beings. In his thought, conatus means the force in every animate creature toward the preservation of its existence. Spinoza argues that all finite modes strive to persevere in being (IIIp6). He used an analysis of human’s striving to explain desire, human freedom, good and evil in terms that might apply to any finite modes. A proposition of conatus will be given below in III Proposition 6:

\textit{PART III PROPOSITION 6}

Each thing, insofar as it is in itself, endeavors to persist in its own being.

Proof: Particular things are modes whereby the attributes of God are expressed in a definite and determinate way (Cor. Pr. 2 5., I), that is (Pr. 34, I), they are things which express in a definite and determinate way the power of God whereby he is and acts, and no thing can have in itself anything by which it can be destroyed, that is, which can annul its existence (Pr. 4, III). On the contrary, it opposes everything that can annul its existence (preceeding Pr.); and thus, as far as it can and as far as it is in itself, it endeavors to persist in its own being\textsuperscript{17}.

In Spinoza’s opinion, conatus is the essence, the highest principle. It is the drive for self-preservation in all living things impulses. It is a principle that can be applied to nature’s objects. Conatus has psychological connotations as well. In human beings, the drive to pursuit happiness is also included in the self-preservation. It is stated in his “Ethics” that happiness contains in human capacity to preserve itself. This endeavor, according to Spinoza can also be seen as the foundation of virtue: Happiness means alignment with conatus, and consequently an individual faces sadness when he opposes his conatus.

On the concept of conatus, a central theme in his philosophy, Spinoza based his system of moral principles. Striving is "nothing but the actual essence of the


\textsuperscript{17} Part III, Proposition 6, in Baruch de Spinoza, 2002, p. 283.
thing” (Ethics, part 3, prop.7)\textsuperscript{18}. Feelings and emotions are qualities of the living things. Human passions, desires and their varieties are forms of striving itself. Changes in these qualities mean the increase or decrease in the power of striving. Active affections are the increase in the power with which living things strive. On the contrary passiveness are the decrease in the power, which is against the conatus.

\textbf{PART III PROPOSITION 7}

\textit{The conatus' with which each thing endeavors to persist in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself}

\textbf{Proof: From the given essence of a thing certain things necessarily follow (Pr. 36, I), nor do things effect anything other than that which necessarily follows from their determinate nature (Pr. 29, I). Therefore, the power of any thing, or the conatus with which it acts or endeavors to act, alone or in conjunction with other things, that is (Pr. 6, III), the power or conatus by which it endeavors to persist in its own being, is nothing but the given, or actual, essence of the thing}\textsuperscript{19}.

This inward disposition was introduced in his primary affects, desire, at IIIp9s, after introducing the doctrine of human striving or in his term, the appetite. In the context of striving, Spinoza showed how the universal striving doctrine can be the basis for an account of human desire. His thesis designated that the essence of any finite mode, including any human mind, is striving. To persevere is an attempt to give an account of nature, as described his “Ethics” . Spinoza's psychology is grounded in his physics and in the conception of conatus, the striving of each being to persevere and to manifest its essence. It is the dynamic element in Spinoza's vitalistic conception of nature. In human beings, the conatus takes on certain predictable psychological features. Ultimately, people seek to satisfy desires, feel joy and pleasure, and enhance their well-being, and these goals require increasing harmonious activity within nature and the diminishing of the posions, which mark a person's subordination to beings external to it and failure to satisfy its own preservation. This goal requires as complete and perfect a knowledge of nature as one can attain, a knowledge that corresponds in the mind to the maximizing of life enhancing physical states on the body's part\textsuperscript{20}.

\textsuperscript{18} Part III, Proposition 7, in Baruch de Spinoza, 2002, p. 283.
\textsuperscript{19} Part III, Proposition 7, in Baruch de Spinoza, 2002, p. 283.
\textsuperscript{20} Introduction in Ethics, in Baruch de Spinoza, 2002, p. 214
Determination

According to Spinoza, all living things, human actions and thought, are under a lawful necessary mode. All is acting or living according to the law of nature that Spinoza called God. Thus the whole is determined. The principle of determination can be applied on the whole substance of nature. The result of the law of determination is that the whole substance of nature, including ordinary human beings in general, as an aspect of it, do not have 'free will'. There is no freedom in the physical objects. All things including human actions, are determined according nature’s laws. He demonstrated that ‘only one substance, with infinite attributes, exists’; it does so necessarily, and every mode that follows from it occurs with precise and necessary determination. This one eternal, necessary, determinate substance is God, and hence nature is either identical to it or to a certain ways an understanding of it”21, as demonstrated below:

PART II PROPOSITION 16

Every body that moves in a circle (e.g., a stone in a sling) is continuously determined to continue in motion at a tangent to that circle.

Proof: A body that moves in a circle is continuously prevented by an external force from continuing to move in a straight line (Cor. previous Prop.). If this force ceases, the body will of itself proceed to move in a straight line (Prop. 15). Furthermore, I say that a body that moves in a circle is determined by an external cause to proceed to move at a tangent to the circle. If you deny this, suppose that a stone at B is determined (e.g., by a sling) to move not along the tangent BD but along another line conceived as drawn without or within the circle from the same point. When the sling is supposed to be coming from L toward B, let this line be BF. If on the other hand the sling is supposed to be coming from C toward B, let this line be BG. If BH is the line drawn from the center through the circumference, which it cuts at B, I understand the angle GBH to be equal to the angle FBH. But if the stone at B is determined to proceed to move toward F by the sling moving in a circle from L toward B, then it necessarily follows (Ax. 18) that when the sling 0 moves with a contrary determination from C toward B, the stone will be determined to proceed to move in line with BF with a contrary determination and will therefore tend not toward G but

toward K. This is contrary to our hypothesis. And because no line except a tangent can be drawn through point B making equal adjacent angles, DBH, ABH, with the line BH, there can be no line but a tangent that can preserve the same hypothesis, whether the sling moves from L to B or from C to B. And so the stone can tend to move along no line but the tangent. Q.E.D^{22}.

Freedom

Although human actions are determined according to the laws of nature, Spinoza argued that in the essence, each individual is not a restricted entity. Therefore, every advanced individual can achieve 'freedom' from the determination. Freedom means free from the confinement of the determination. Advanced human beings actions are free in the sense that they can overcome the constrain or the working of external forces or impulses. Whilst in everyday life, ordinary individuals are ignorant of the determination of nature. The freedom of attitude closes to the ability to understand, to have the true understanding of nature. In the free minds of advanced individuals, each of their respective consciousness can take their respective liberty to arise, and an individual is then able to understand adequately the causes behind his own ideas and behavior. The individual knows how to distinguish an adequate idea, a true idea (ideatum), from untruthfulness, that consists of inadequate ideas. Inadequate ideas are fragmented and confused ideas^{23}. Spinoza wrote that conscious mind tends to seek clear and distinct ideas. This effort frees an advanced individual from the 'bondage' of life. In Spinoza’s opinion, the higher the individual understanding is, the more the individual has power to propel himself from within. The proposition in the appendix containing metaphysical thoughts, part I, chapter 4, shows how to achieve freedom:

[To reconcile the freedom of our will with God’s predestination surpasses human understanding. ] As to the freedom of the human will, which we asserted to be free in Schol. Prop. I 5 Part I., this too is preserved by the concurrence of God, nor does any man will or perform anything except what God has decreed from eternity that he should will or perform. How this can be while saving human freedom is beyond our capacity to understand. Yet we must not reject what we clearly perceive because of what we do not know, for if we attend to our nature, we clearly and distinctly understand that we are free in our actions, and that we reach decisions on many things simply on account of our will to do so. Again, if we attend to the nature of God, as we have just shown, we clearly and distinctly perceive that

---


all things depend on him, and that nothing exists except that whose existence God has decreed from eternity. But how the human will continues to be created by God at every moment in such a way as to remain free, we do not know. For there are many things that exceed our grasp and that nevertheless we know to have been brought about by God - for example, the real division of matter into indefinite particles, clearly demonstrated by us in Prop. 11 Part 2, although we do not know how that division comes about.\textsuperscript{24}

Self-Preservation is a Moral Virtue

What human beings desire to do is, according to Spinoza, to obtain perseverance, to secure their existence to the end.\textsuperscript{25} It is said in the description above that the quality of an individual mind, such as desire or appetite, can be seen as human striving to live. There is no difference between appetite and desire, except that desire is generally related to men insofar as they are conscious of their appetite. So desire can be defined as appetite as well as consciousness of the appetite. Self-preservation in the form of human desire is a part of the striving for perseverance. As previously described, self-preservation is the primary and only foundation of virtue. The view of most people, most of their time, consciously desire for their own benefit. But part IV proposition 36, 37 suggests that Spinoza hold a different kind of view:

\textit{PROPOSITION 36}

\textit{The highest good of those who pursue virtue is common to all, and all can equally enjoy it.}

\textit{Proof: To act from virtue is to act by the guidance of reason (Pr. 24, IV), and whatever we endeavor to do in accordance with reason is to understand (Pr. 26, IV). So (Pr. 28, IV) the highest good of those who pursue virtue is to know God; that is (Pr. 47, II and Sch.) a good that is common to all men and can be possessed equally by all men insofar as they are of the same nature.}

\textit{Scholium: Somebody may ask: "What if the highest good of those who pursue virtue were not common to all? Would it not then follow, as above (Pr. 34, IV), that men who live by the guidance of reason, that is (Pr. 35, IV), men insofar as they agree in nature, would be contrary to one another?" Let him take this reply, that it arises not by accident but from the very nature of reason that men's highest}

\textsuperscript{24} Appendix Containing Metaphysical Thoughts, Part I, Chapter 4, in Baruch de Spinoza, 2002, p. 185.

good is common to all, because this is is deduced from the very essence of man insofar as that is defined by reason, and because man could neither be nor be conceived if he did not have the ability to enjoy this highest good. For it belongs to the essence of the human mind (Pr. 47, II) to have an adequate knowledge of the eternal and infinite essence of God.

**PROPOSITION 37**
The good which every man who pursues virtue aims at for himself he will also desire for the rest of mankind, and all the more as he acquires a greater knowledge of God.

Proof Insofar as men live by the guidance of reason, they are most useful to man (Cor. 1, Pro 35, IV), and so (Pr. 19, IV) by the guidance of reason we shall necessarily endeavor to bring it about that men should live by the guidance of reason. But the good that every man who lives according to the dictates of reason, that is (Pr. 24, IV), who pursues virtue, seeks for himself is to understand (Pr. 26, IV). Therefore the good which every man who pursues virtue seeks for himself he will also desire for the rest of mankind. Again, desire, insofar as it is related to mind, is the very essence of mind (Def. of Emotions 1). Now the essence of mind consists in knowledge (Pr. 11, II) which involves the knowledge of God (Pr. 47, II), without which (Pr. 15, I) it can neither be nor be conceived. So the more the essence of the mind involves knowledge of God, the greater the desire with which he who pursues virtue desires for another the good which he seeks for himself.

According to his thought, particular things are expressions of power, they derive from God’s attributes and God’s attributes constitute God’s essence and God’s essence is His power, the eternal power of God. Because all particular things in Spinoza’s philosophy are about expressions of God, the expressions of power, potentially they must have derivations of God’s quality. The power that a genuine particular thing expresses, and directed towards its own perseverance, has potentially divine quality. To actualize this potentiality and to turn it into action or fact, Spinoza suggested that an individual can do it through his knowledge of true and adequate ideas. The conatus would lead an individual to a rational direction, and would inspire him to cultivate wisdom. Spinoza stated that each one, from his own affection, and proper judgement can perceive clearly what is good and what is evil.

According to Spinoza, nothing is more useful than that which brings man to higher understanding. In his thinking, the higher the knowledge is achieved by an individual, the greater the wisdom he gains.

---

26 Part IV, Proposition 36 & 37, in Baruch de Spinoza, 2002, p. 338-339

Spinoza emphasized in his “Ethics”, that the idea of goodness has a metaphysical connotation. The highest good in human being means his ability to know a substance of God. In IV Proposition 20 he wrote: “The more each one strives, and is able, to seek his own advantage, i.e., to preserve his being, the more he is endowed with virtue; conversely, insofar as each one neglects his own advantage, i.e., neglects to preserve his own being, he lacks power”. Spinoza specified that striving for perseverance is identical with conatus, the essential drive of all beings. Trying to preserve oneself is right, and neglecting to preserve oneself is wrong. It is an effort to achieve higher goals, in his terms it is a greater perfection. An increased power to persevere is, according to Spinoza, a transition to a greater perfection, and it is a goodness. On the contrary, the decreased power is a transition to lesser perfection and it is an evil.

As stated before, Spinoza believed that all essential aspects of nature, including human beings are expressions of the eternal substance of God, and can therefore be known only through pure thought or reason. The description above shows that in Spinoza’s philosophy, an individual reaches the faculty of wisdom when he is in harmony with the laws of nature, with his conatus, because the nature of human being is to strive for the preservation of the individual self. To behave in accordance with the principle is preserving the existence of the self. Therefore, in Spinoza’s opinion, the definition of 'self-preservation' is not in contrast with nature’s principle. Spinoza’s philosophy of 'self-preservation' is in fact the basis of goodness. It is an individual effort to achieve a higher purpose that is obtained through understanding. When an individual can free himself from the determination of his lower innate impulses, he will reach contentment.

The actualization of one’s potentials in this regard is achieved through reasoning of adequate ideas, the ideatum of the essence of nature, that liberates the individual from his inadequate ideas. The understanding of the essence of nature is reached through rationalization. An individual has to strive to achieve fulfilment. Spinoza defined self-preservation in his philosophy as how an individual achieves self-actualization. He explained that individuals who live their lives in accordance with nature and rationality, will find fulfilment. Because the whole is an expression of God, then to improve one’s awareness of individual self, is to be in alignment with nature and it means awareness of others. The individual who is guided by reason will reach human perfection.

Spinoza’s thought of self-preservation is not a common thought and can easily be distinguished from other philosophers point of views. His view of self-preservation should be more understood as self-introspection. His thought that all human existence is guided by the conatus, is also a driving force to move individuals towards certain goals of self-realization. Despite of the complexity of Spinoza’s philosophy, his notion of self-preservation as mentioned above can be considered as a guide in individual life.

---

References

Bennet, Jonathan, .1984, A Study of Spinoza’s Ethics, Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Co

Websites