**Sanem Soyarslan**

NC State University, Department of Philosophy& Religious Studies

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**Academic Employment**

**NC State University,** Associate Professor of Philosophy (August 2020, present)

**NC State University**, Assistant Professor of Philosophy (August 2013-August 2020)

**Boston University**, Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy (July 2011-July 2013)

**Education**

**Ph.D.** Philosophy Duke University **(**defended August 2011)

**M.A.** Philosophy Boğaziçi University, Turkey (2005)

**M.A.** Political Science Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris II)(2000)

**B.A.** Political Science, *with honors* Boğaziçi University, Turkey (1999)

**Areas of Specialization**

Spinoza, Early Modern Philosophy, History of Ethics

**Areas of Competence**

Ethics, Ancient Philosophy, Social and Political Philosophy

**Publications**

Soyarslan, S. (forthcoming), “Spinoza’s Changing Views on Humility Explored Through a Cartesian Lens” in Justin Steinberg (ed.) O*xford Philosophical Concepts: Humility, A Histor*y, Oxford University Press

Soyarslan, S. (2021), “Spinoza’s Account of Blessedness Explored Through an Aristotelian Lens,” *Dialogue: Canadian Philosophical Review / Revue canadienne de philosophie*, https://doi.org/10.1017/S001221732100010X

Soyarslan, S. (2020) “From Humility to Envy: Questioning the Usefulness of Sad Passions as a Means towards Virtue in Spinoza’s *Ethics*,” *European Journal of Philosophy*, 28:1, pp. 33-47.

Soyarslan, S. (2019), “Two Ethical Ideals in Spinoza’s *Ethics*: The Free Man and The Wise Man,” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, 5:3, pp. 357-370.

Soyarslan, S. (2018) “Spinoza’s Critique of Humility in the *Ethics*,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*,56:3, pp. 342-364.

Soyarslan, S. (2016) “The Distinction between Reason and Intuitive Knowledge in Spinoza’s *Ethics*,” *European Journal of Philosophy*, 24:1, pp. 27-54.

Soyarslan, S. (2014) “The Susceptibility of Intuitive Knowledge to *Akrasia* in Spinoza’s Ethical Thought,” *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 22:4, pp. 725-747.

Soyarslan, S. (2014) “From Ordinary Life to Blessedness: The Power of Intuitive Knowledge in Spinoza’s *Ethics*,” in Matthew Kisner and Andrew Youpa (eds.) *Essays on Spinoza’s Ethical Theory*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, pp. 236-257.

Translation from French to Turkish: Balibar, Etienne. (2004) *Spinoza ve Siyaset* (*Spinoza et la Politique*), Otonom Publishing, Istanbul.

**Awards and Honors**

* NC State University College Outstanding Junior Faculty Award in the Humanities (2020)
* Duke University Summer Research Fellowship (June-August 2011)
* The Woodrow Wilson Foundation Charlotte W. Newcombe Fellowship (Finalist)
* Duke University Summer Research Fellowship (June-August 2009)
* Duke University Kenan Institute for Ethics Graduate Colloquium Award (2008-2009)
* Boğaziçi University Merit-Based Fellowship(for entire undergraduate education)

**Dissertation**:

*Reason and Intuitive Knowledge in Spinoza’s Ethics: Two Ways of Knowing, Two Ways of Living* {Supervisors: Tad Schmaltz, David Wong}

**Abstract.** In my dissertation, I explore the distinction between reason (*ratio*) and intuitive knowledge (*scientia intuitiva*) in Spinoza’s *Ethics* in order to explain the superior affective power of the latter over the former. In addressing this fundamental but relatively unexplored issue in Spinoza scholarship, I suggest that these two kinds of adequate knowledge differ not only in terms of their method, but also with respect to their content. I hold that unlike reason, which is a universal knowledge, intuitive knowledge descends to a level of particularity, including the adequate knowledge of one’s *own* essence as it follows directly from God, which is a superior form of self-knowledge. Since, for Spinoza, there is an intrinsic relationship between the pursuit of knowledge and how we live our lives, my interpretation of these *two ways of knowing* is that they are at the same time *two ways of living*.

**Philosophy Master’s Thesis**:

*Combining Theoria and Virtuous Activity in the Best Possible Life for Aristotle*

**Political Science Master’s Thesis:**

*La politique- est elle l’affaire de tous?* (*Is politics everyone’s affair?*)

**Presentations, Workshops & Invited Comments (\* indicates refereed)**

“Spinoza’s Changing Views on Humility Explored Through a Cartesian Lens,” *OPC Humility Workshop*, Virtual Meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic), May 18, 2021.

“Are There Two Ethical Projects in Spinoza’s *Ethics*?” *Spinoza Workshop@ UCSD*, Virtual Meeting due to COVID-19 pandemic, May 23, 2021.

Comment on Joel Van Fossen’s “On Egoism and Honor in Spinoza,” APA Eastern Division Meeting, Virtual Meeting due to Covid-19 pandemic, January 16, 2021.

“The Unity of Spinoza’s Ethics Explored Through an Aristotelian Lens,” Departmental Colloquium, The Pennsylvania State University Philosophy Department, March 6, 2020.

“Is Spinoza’s Blessedness a Contemplative Ideal?" Departmental Work-in-Progress Session, NC State University, November 8, 2019.

\* “Spinoza’s Account of Blessedness Explored Through an Aristotelian Lens,” *North American Spinoza Society Session*, APA Central Division Meeting, Denver, February 23, 2019.

“The Attainability of Spinoza’s Free Person Reconsidered,” *North American Spinoza Society Session*, APA Eastern Division Meeting, New York City, January 8, 2019.

“The Empowered Life,” *Spinoza’s Ethics of Joy: A Manuscript Workshop*, University of Toronto, March 24, 2018.

\* “Rethinking the Usefulness of Sad Passions as a Means towards Virtue in Spinoza’s *Ethics*,” *North American Spinoza Society Session*, APA Central Division Meeting, Chicago, February 22, 2018.

“From Humility to Envy: Rethinking the Instrumental Value of Humility in Spinoza's *Ethics*,” *Spinoza Workshop*, Alpen-Adria Universität Klagenfurt, June 28, 2017.

\* “Spinoza’s Critique of Humility in the *Ethics*,” *New England Colloquium in Early Modern Philosophy*, Yale University, May 18, 2016.

“Spinoza’s Critique of Humility in the *Ethics*,” *Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy*, UNC-Chapel Hill, April 26, 2016.

“From Humility to Envy: Rethinking the Instrumental Value of Humility in Spinoza's *Ethics*,” Departmental Work-in-Progress Session, NC State University, April 22, 2016.

Comment on Anne-Lise Rey’s “L’Épistémologie d’Emilie du Châtelet: Quelques Éléments,”

*New Narratives in Philosophy Conference*, Duke University, April 16, 2016.

Comment on Matthew Homan’s “Towards a More Concrete Interpretation of Spinoza's *Scientia Intuitiva*,” APA Central Division Meeting, Chicago, March 2, 2016.

“Spinoza’s Critique of Humility in the *Ethics*,” Departmental Colloquium, Boğaziçi University, May 12, 2015.

*Descartes-Spinoza Workshop*, Johns Hopkins University, September 14, 2014.

“The Transformative Ascent in Spinoza’s *Ethics*,” *Triangle Area Philosophy Symposium*, Duke University, August 23, 2014.

“The Transformative Ascent from Ordinary Life to Blessedness in Spinoza’s *Ethics,*” Departmental Colloquium, Istanbul Technical University, May 27, 2014.

\* “The Power of Intuitive Knowledge in Spinoza’s *Ethics*: The Case of *Akrasia*,” *South Central Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy*, Texas A&M University, September 27-28, 2013.

“The Distinction between Reason and Intuitive Knowledge in Spinoza’s *Ethics*,” Departmental Colloquia, NC State University, January 2013; Loyola University Chicago, January 2013; George Washington University, February 2013.

\* “The Susceptibility of Intuitive Knowledge to *Akrasia* in Spinoza’s Ethical Thought,” *Southwest Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy*, California State Polytechnic University, February 16-17, 2013.

“The View *Sub Specie Aeternitatis* in Spinoza’s Moral Philosophy,” Departmental Colloquium, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, February 2012.

\* “The View *Sub Specie Aeternitatis*: Understanding Nature and Oneself in Spinoza’s Ethical Thought,” *Spinoza Workshop*, Department of Philosophy and Moral Sciences, Ghent University, December 2-3, 2010.

\* “The Distinction between Reason and Intuitive Knowledge in Spinoza’s Ethics,” *Southwest Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of New Mexico, February 27-28, 2010.

**Journal Referee**

*British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, *Philosophers’ Imprint*, *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger, Journal of Modern Philosophy*, *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*

**Professional Organizations**

*North American Spinoza Society*

*Spinoza Society of Canada*

**Languages**

English (fluent), French (speaking and reading), Latin (reading), Turkish (native).

**Teaching Experience**

* Phi 300 Ancient Philosophy (NC State University, Fall 2017&2019, Spring 2020)
* Phi 301 Early Modern Philosophy (NC State University, Spring 2015, 2016&2019, Fall 2016&2018)
* Hon 296 Emotion and Reason (NC State University, Fall 2014, 2018&2019, Spring 2016)
* Phi 205 Introduction to Philosophy (NC State University, Fall 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, Spring 2015, 2019&2020)
* Phil 310 History of Modern Philosophy (Boston University, Spring 2012)
* Phil 150 Introduction to Ethics (Boston University, Fall 2011&2012, Spring 2013)
* Phil 350 History of Ethics (Boston University, Fall 2011&2012, Spring 2012&2013)
* Phil 313 Emotion and Reason (Sabancı University, Summer 2010, 2011& 2012)
* Phil 117 Ancient & Modern Ethical Theory (Duke University, Summer 2008)

**Non-Academic Employment**

Research Analyst, Social Research Center, Istanbul, Turkey, 2000-2002.