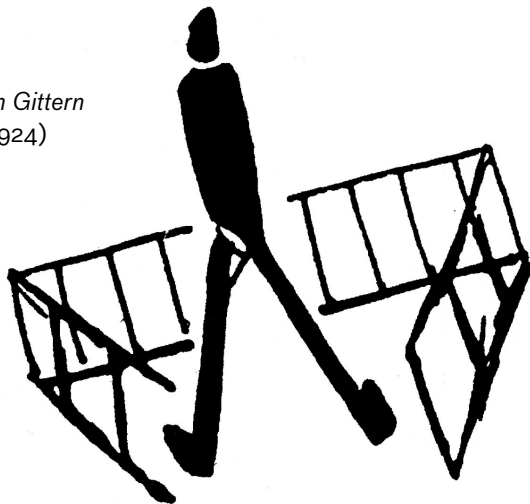


Descartes “[...] maintained, that the soul or mind is specially united to a particular part of the brain, namely, to that part called the pineal gland, by the aid of which the mind is enabled to feel all the movements which are set going in the body, and also external objects, and which the mind by a simple act of volition can put in motion in various ways.” Q.E.D. Spinoza, *Ethica*, Kindle.

“So, also, a mode of extension and the idea of that mode are one and the same thing, though expressed in different ways. This truth seems to have been dimly recognised by those Jews who maintained that God, God’s intellect, and the things understood by God are identical.” Q.E.D. Spinoza, *Ethica*, Kindle.

Mann zwischen Gittern
Franz Kafka (1924)



I'd like to **continue** on the track of **sensoriality**. To avoid all misunderstanding: 'sensoriality' is **not** a **bias** for **perception** before **reason** and **intuition**, but the **wiring** of the **three**—reason, perception and intuition—into a **reflective practice**, which one can easily **trace** from the **renaissance** to the **baroque**.

Sensoriality more broadly connects to the **techniques** of **conjuring memories** joined to **places** we have **not physically** been. Ranging from **methods** of **memorising** texts to the **method** of **loci**: perambulating a **palace** conjured to **retrieve** text-passages from memory: **metaphor** is a means of **communication**.

This is **relevant** to Spinoza using the **metaphor** of an Euclides style **treatise** of **geometry**, **retaining** and **developing** the **metaphysics** exposed in **Ethica**: articulating his **own** contribution at the **edgeland** between **philosophy** and **kabbalah**. That is, the precincts of **natural philosophy** since the **renaissance**.

Spinoza's use of **references** is **sparing**: his references to **Descartes** and the **Jews** are reductive; his knowledge of **geometry**—owing to his practice as a **lens-grinder** in the high-tech of his time (**telescopes**)—**exceeds** the examples he sets in **Ethica**, which are **limited** to **squares**, **triangles** and **circles**.

Spinoza's **correspondence**, with **scientists** and **philosophers** in his time, was **extant**. But the **presuppositions** of his metaphysical **venture** are **neither historicist** nor **cultural**. Its current interest lies **here**. For all of those **memories** we **claim** but strictly **cannot have**: historical and cultural memories.

The metaphysical **project** of **Ethica** brings us to the **outer precincts** of **time**: which is where we **get** to **read** about **substance**, **thinking things** and **G-d**. Spinoza's **pantheism**—everything is in G-d—is **interesting**, from a **design** point of view, since it **invites** us to think in **depth** of what we call **containers**.

What is the **affordance** of a container to hold **thought** and **extension**, acting as a kind of **vessel** for them, that **calls** on them **conjointly**. The **container**, in this sense, **contrary** to **content**, articulates at the limit of what **memory** can hold. Yet, Spinoza states that **thought** and **extension** are **together** in **substance**.

I think of the **piece** we listened to—**Nulla res singularis**—as a **container**, in the same sense as **my reading** of a book (certainly Spinoza's **Ethica**) is **held** by the **book** as a **container**. This **holding entity** is **ineffable** in the hands of the **reader** who is **working** through it, yet it is also **irreplaceable** in that capacity.

It is also **irreplaceable** in the sense of that **specific copy** of the book, even **though** it has been **mass-produced**. Re-reading **Ethica** for this lecture, however, I have been **managing** the text on my **Kindle-device**; and find myself **challenged** to **conjure up the book** in the aspects discussed here.

Which is why I **do not** relate **philosophically**—in contemporary terms—to **Ethica**, but as a **visual anthropologist** with a take on **books** as a **reflective practitioner**. With the **hit-and-impact** of **digital media** I am querying how Spinoza can be **relevant** to the **sensorial education** of **new generations**.