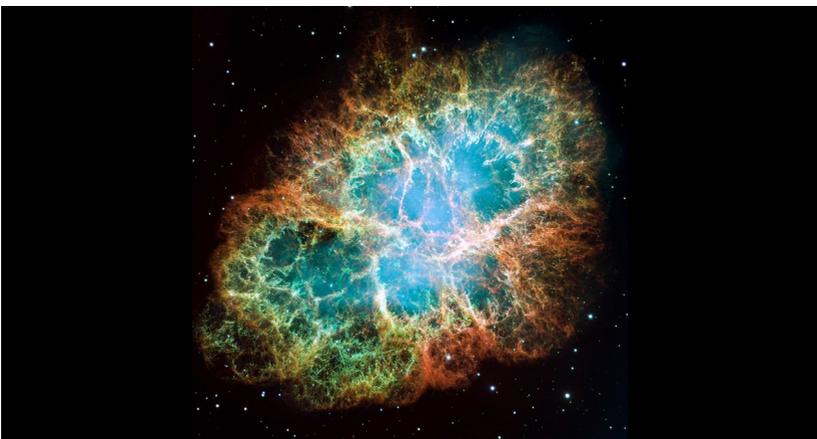




The idea that we as humans are *guilty* of developments that *also* are beyond our control, is currently to be found at many levels. The environmental *footprint* of humanity on planet Earth is but one example. The impact of modern living-standard in only *one part* of the earth is but another.

How can we meaningfully think of *responsibility* for—and the *ability to respond* to—things *beyond* our reach? Things which, at first, appear to be *both fair and feasible*; which in a flash, through the work of some strange counterpoint, appear to us as *beyond* reprieve *and* beyond retrieve?

If this is part of our nature—or, simply, nature itself—what part of it are we missing? Are there points that we are missing precisely *because* they are right *under* our nose? Or, are there metaphysical factors involving *infinity* at play? As we shall see it is *both*. We have a talent which is *also* our quirk.



The invention of *writing* invites the inclusion of language *into* action, in the following way: consider the mark(s) before you—at this moment—as a way of indicating a range. Consider this range in **cm**: it might be (say) *about 54 cm*. If you read them out loud your voice is closer, but its reach wider.

Then consider the reach of what you have before you *if* to any *other* reader, then the range is enormous (with in space and in time). So, writing is like a *pole* in a field, and—beyond that point—*infinity*. Which means that every aspect of writing which is *not* linked to your physical range is *infinite*.

If the cartography of Spinoza's survey in *Ethica*—which cast in *geometrical* terms—is all that, can it be meaningfully linked to the *geometer*? Or, put in different terms, can we think of *action* in terms beyond our physical reach: that is, *beyond* our sensory-motor reach (but still *attributable* to us)?

Consider, for a moment, that this is what we call *design*. Then what is to prevent design from being something completely abstract (something attributable to us, yet something systematically beyond our control)? Well, the *technical reach* of *human made devices* are exactly like this.

And this is why such devices *also* are *contraptions*. We are ever kept hostage by devices we *cannot* control. Which is why what we call the *anthropocene*—which also could be called *capitalism*—is a name of a *syndrome*. Our limited range confronted with our enormous reach.

Now, consider that it is possible to make a *floating statement* of this: a point that has already been evidenced in the preceding paragraphs. Then consider *supportive statements* based on *knowledge*. This is *also* possible. Then, will there be statements *critical* of this knowledge: there will be.

Certainly! Then there will be positions that stick to the *sensory-motor range*, as what we can relate to, so long as the exchanges on the infinite realm of our designs—before which we are powerless yet responsible—are *inconclusive*. Yet, they are *undeniable*. Can we make any progress from here?

We can if we accept that statements based on *common sense*, supportive ones based on knowledge, critical ones referred to *counter-arguments*, and *dismissive* ones pledged to *common practice*—all four—belong together, and constitute a basic set: w/ variations that appear if we move *sideways*.

That is: **1)** common sense; **2)** knowledge; **3)** critique and **4)** common practice. All human *debate* contains these elements. They cannot be homogenous—we tell ourselves—they must vary, with differences that make a difference. Some leading to *disaster*, others to a *better life*.

It would appear that it is currently quite *urgent* to discern between these. And this would well be the defining moment of *ethics* in the years to come. It goes without saying that—if we accept the above set as basic—ethics *cannot* follow from barricaded position. We must move sideways: *crabwise*.