

Call for papers

YEAR II 2019 (2), 4

Giordano Bruno: Politics and infinity

Don't be afraid of Giordano Bruno anymore

Giordano Bruno's philosophy is a consideration of infinity. He overturns the hierarchical monolithic order of the universe, and thanks to his study of Copernicus' work succeeds in affirming the *infinitization* of the universe. In Bruno's interpretation, heliocentrism breaks through the walls of the universe, and the "new philosophy" abolishes not only the central position of the Earth, but also that of any other body in space.

The idea of infinity determines an open universe in continual evolution: "There are no ends, boundaries, limits or walls which can defraud or deprive us of the infinite multitude of things. Therefore the earth and the ocean thereof are fecund; therefore the sun's blaze is everlasting, so that eternally fuel is provided for the voracious fires, and moisture replenisheth the attenuated seas. For from infinity is born an everfresh abundance of matter. Thus Democritus and Epicurus who maintained that everything throughout infinity suffereth renewal and restoration, understood these matters more truly than those who would at all costs maintain belief in the immutability of the universe, alleging a constant and unchanging number of particles of identical material that perpetually undergo transformation, one into another". (From *Infinity, the Universe and the World*, p. 42)

It is by reworking the concept of potency that Bruno arrives at this theory of infinity, in which potency is not the "prope nihil", but is what already contains everything. In fact, Bruno no longer conceives the possibility as a "privation", waiting for its "realization" (in the act). By identifying with the act, potency has "all dimensional acts".

However, Giordano Bruno's infinity cannot be configured as a "whole". Potency is never fully realized: "For from infinity is born an everfresh abundance of matter". The potency overflows, upsets and produces incessantly so that natural infinity is not totally infinite, but rather a perpetual construction, an eternally unfinished becoming.

Can a philosophy of the infinite be a philosophy of the Same, of eternal repetition? Would it not be more appropriate to think of the philosophy of the infinite as a philosophy of becoming and a philosophy of difference? Bruno reminds us that there is always a becoming of infinite matter.

From this perspective, we can also read Bruno's philosophy according to the categories formed by Alfred North Whitehead, and begin by saying that infinite power constitutes a becoming of continuity and not a continuity of becoming. The worlds of Bruno and Whitehead are more than a becoming, they are a process: the "dynamis" is still too marked by the characterization that Aristotle formulated with his model of the passage from potency to act.

Thus, becoming is blocked in a higher purpose. It becomes teleological, which means that everything has its place in the universe and respects its destiny. Becoming always reaches an ideal, both in its totality and in its parts. On the other hand, the paradigm of Bruno and Whitehead is that of perpetual flow, of inexhaustible movement that does not exclude continuity, unity, but at the same time is not conceived in terms of permanence, always equal to itself, but more precisely, in terms of becoming.

In other words, the movement of the world does not move towards perfection, but expresses perfection in its movement. This teaches us that being is always new, that it is always renewed, that natural movement cannot be reduced to a circle, instead, it is articulated in a structure that closes and then

reopens, in a constantly evolving movement. It is not the becoming that is continuous, but the continuous (the Whole, the infinite nature) that is in progress.

By rejecting the "realization", or better, by continually realizing and surpassing it, Bruno's potency shatters Western metaphysics. The philosophy of the infinite is not a new ontology, and it is not compatible with other ontologies as it rejects any form of measure. It causes the liquidation of metaphysics as a science of being, as being and as the logic of unalterable measures. On the basis of this intuition, in our opinion, Bruno embodies the emergence in the modern world of a conception of politics that has nothing to do with politics, the State, constituent power. In fact, in the dimensionless dimension of infinity, Bruno's potency assumes a destituent role, definitively breaking away from its pairing with the act (which Agamben was still talking about only recently), this role points out the annihilation of every identity, substance and violence: it is capable of unleashing a liberating force starting from the idea that every finite and singular being is an infinite error. In this journey, singularity is a power in the face of any form of established power.

We can therefore understand why Bruno is feared.

Who is not afraid of Giordano Bruno?

In the next number of K, we aim to show the destituent purpose of Bruno's potency. It is destituent not because it remains unrealized, nor because it is inoperative, but simply because it never stops being realized. In this inexhaustible and constantly repeated work the *novum* is created by removing what is there, and at the same time, the creation of the *novum* removes what is already there.

By looking at Bruno and beyond, we would like to investigate the destituent role of infinity.

This number is focused on philosophies and mathematics that raise the same problems (Whitehead, Vuillemin, Lucrece, Thom, Weyl, etc.), but it is also an investigation:

- Into works that try to account for the explosion and fragmentation of discourse and its codes (Joyce, Gadda, Michaux, Blanchot, etc.).
- Into aesthetic forms that aim to explore infinite spaces (Kubrick, Monet, Malevich, Matisse, etc.).
- Into (cosmo) - politics that strive to create human institutions appropriate for the infinite universe (Sade, Saint-Just, Starhawk, Deleuze, etc.).

Deadline for submission of abstract: 15th December 2019 (max 2500 words)

Please specify if the abstract is for the “essays” or “readings” section.

Please send abstract to: krevuecontact@gmail.com

Deadline for submission of papers: 30th March 2020.

Proposals may be submitted in English, Italian and French.