

BRUNO : IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE
IN *DE LA CAUSA, PRINCIPIO ET UNO*,
DIALOGUE II

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SUMMARY

The second dialogue of *De la causa, principio et uno* focuses on the transcendence and immanence of the intelligible world. Following Egyptian and Pythagorean doctrine, Bruno described the World Soul and Universal Intellect as immanent, blending in compatible features of Neoplatonic ontology. The position that he attributed to these ancient theologians derived in fact from Stoic philosophy – hence his emphasis on immanence and his designation of the World Soul, rather than a hypostasis Soul of the kind that ancient Neoplatonists had proposed, as intermediary between the Universal Intellect and physical reality. Bruno recognized, however, the limitations of spatial analogies when applied to intelligible realities. To clarify his position, he adopted a distinction, originally Neoplatonic and then Arabic, between cause and principle developed by Thomas Aquinas in *De principiis naturae*. The original purpose of this doctrine had been to explain the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of intelligible realities, the problem that Bruno was addressing in the second dialogue of *De la causa*.

BRUNO gave his first detailed account of the intelligible world, as far as his surviving works reveal, in the second dialogue of *De la causa, principio et uno* (1584). Here he explained the relationship of God, the Universal Intellect, the World Soul and matter and, to this end, introduced the distinction between principle and cause which, as its title suggests, informs the

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I have used the following abbreviations in addition to those used in this journal:

CH: *Corpus Hermeticum*, ed. A. D. Nock, French trans. A.-J. Festugière, 4 vols, Paris, 1945-1954.

PL: *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series (latina) prima*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 221 vols, Paris, 1844-1864.

SVF: *Stoicorum veterum fragmenta*, ed. H. F. A. von Arnim, 3 vols, Leipzig, 1903-1905, index M. Adler, Leipzig, 1924.

TOL: THOMAS AQUINAS, *Opera omnia*, vol. 1-, Rome, 1882-.

I have used the 2010 paperback reprint of OIB. In quotations from fifteenth- and sixteenth-century printed editions I have expanded abbreviations, modernized punctuation and capitalization, changed ‘u’ to ‘v’ and vice versa to distinguish vocalic and consonantal ‘u’, and changed ‘j’ uniformly to ‘i’. In quotations from modern Latin editions, I have changed ‘u’ to ‘v’ and vice versa to distinguish vocalic and consonantal ‘u’.

work as a whole. The position that he outlined may be taken as his considered view. Apart from some minor discrepancies, it conforms to what he wrote in works written before and after *De la causa*. In particular, it corresponds with his comments in two later works, the *Lampas triginta statuarum* (1587) and *Summa terminorum metaphysicorum* (1591).¹ What distinguished his comments in *De la causa* was that only here did Bruno explain in detail how the components of his intelligible world cohered.

The significance of *De la causa* has long been recognized. In the ninth volume of his *Geschichte der Philosophie*, published in 1814, Wilhelm Gottlieb Tennemann praised Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi for having provided excerpts from «Bruno's most significant work, *De la causa, principio et uno*» and for «having lucidly conveyed the soul of Bruno's philosophy».² Tennemann was referring here to Jacobi's German paraphrase of the four philosophical dialogues (II-V) of *De la causa*, with a long quotation from the second, published as a supplement to his second edition of Spinoza's works, issued in 1789.³ Jacobi's supplement inspired a revival of Bruno's fortunes as a philosopher, providing as it did the most accessible source for his ideas until Adolf Wagner's edition of Bruno's Italian works, published in 1830, and August Friedrich Gfrörer's edition of the Latin ones of 1836. What disturbed Jacobi and fascinated F. W. J. Schelling, Hegel, Goethe, Schopenhauer, Coleridge, Wilhelm Dilthey and many others was Bruno's purported pantheism, his 'Spinozism'.⁴ Scholarly attention nowadays concentrates on other aspects of Bruno's life and works, yet his ontology, given its radical theological and philosophical implications, remains of abiding interest and the key to understanding his thought as whole.

¹ *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 38-61; BOM 1008-1060; *Summa term. met.*, BOL I, IV 73-126.

² W. G. TENNEMANN, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, 11 vols, Leipzig, 1798-1819, IX, p. 390: «Der geistreiche Jacobi hat aus der Hauptschrift des Bruno: *de la causa, principio et uno* und Buhle aus den übrigen ausführliche Auszüge gegeben und der erste besonders die Seele der Brunoischen Philosophie deutlich entwickelt». Later authors agreed that *De la causa* was Bruno's major work; see E. CANONE, *Introduzione*, in *Brunus redivivus. Momenti della fortuna di Giordano Bruno nel XIX secolo*, ed. E. Canone, Pisa-Rome, 1998, pp. XX-XXI.

³ F.H. JACOBI, *Beilage I. Auszug aus Jordan Bruno von Nola, Von der Ursache, dem Prinzip und dem Einen*, in IDEM, *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn*, revised ed., Breslau, 1789, pp. 260-307. The Italian quotation *ibidem*, pp. 271-276, corresponds to *Causa*, II, OIB I 658-662: «Mi par udir cosa molto nova [...] non dico di vantaggio».

⁴ E. CANONE, *Introduzione*, cit., pp. XIV, XVII-XXX, XLIII; H. GATTI, *Bruno nella cultura inglese dell'Ottocento*, in *Brunus redivivus*, cit., pp. 20-23, 29, 41-42; M. RASCAGLIA, *Bruno nell'epistolario e nei manoscritti di Bertrando Spaventa*, in *Brunus redivivus*, cit., pp. 106-107, 110-117; D. GIOVANNONZI, *Bruno nei manuali italiani di storia della filosofia del XIX secolo*, in *Brunus redivivus*, cit., pp. 295, 300, 304, 307; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo dell'eterno. Percorsi della filosofia di Giordano Bruno*, Pisa, 2003, pp. 29-30; T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, in BW III CXIV-CXVI, CXX, CXXVII-CXLI (but cfr. *ibidem*, p. CLXVI for Cassirer's less appreciative view); S. RICCI, *Dal Brunus redivivus al Bruno degli italiani. Metamorfosi della nolana filosofia tra Sette e Ottocento*, Rome, 2009, pp. 42-53.

The present essay focuses on just the second dialogue of *De la causa*, Bruno's opening philosophical statement following the mise-en-scène in the first dialogue. It shows, it is hoped, how Bruno here set himself the task of explaining in what sense the World Soul and Universal Intellect could be said to be immanent or transcendent; and it identifies the principal sources, some of them unnoticed but revealing, that he adapted to this end. It does not, needless to say, pretend to be a comprehensive account of Bruno's ontology in *De la causa*, let alone his works as a whole. It will have served its purpose if it clarifies Bruno's opening move in his challenge to received wisdom concerning the intelligible realm.

THE WORLD SOUL AND THE UNIVERSAL INTELLECT

The focus of the second dialogue of *De la causa*, as Bruno himself mentioned, was the World Soul – or more accurately, given that it animated a universe rather than a cosmos, the Soul of the Universe or Universal Soul.¹ His comments are in keeping with what he wrote elsewhere.² The universe was an animate whole, an infinite 'organism', informed by the World Soul.³ Its principal bodies – the 'suns', 'earths', comets and other bodies – moving in its infinite expanse were 'great animals' (*grandi animali, principali animali*), each of which, like our earth, nurtured animals,

¹ *Causa*, proemiale epistola, OIB I 600: «nel primo [or rather: 'secondo'] [dialogo] è discorso circa la forma [scil., la anima]».

² For the World, or Universal, Soul in Bruno's works, see, e.g., F. TOCCO, *Le opere inedite di Giordano Bruno*, Naples, 1891, pp. 65-75; E. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu dans la philosophie de Giordano Bruno*, Paris, 1926, pp. 17-62; L. CICUTTINI, *Giordano Bruno*, Milan, [1950], pp. 145-169; P.-H. MICHEL, *Renaissance Cosmologies: I 'Natura artifex': Marsilio Ficino and Giordano Bruno. II The Reign of Unity: Bruno and Campanella*, «Diogenes», XVIII, 1957, pp. 94-95; IDEM, *La Cosmologie de Giordano Bruno*, Paris, 1962, pp. 113-132 (English trans.: *The Cosmology of Giordano Bruno*, trans. R.E.W. Maddison, London, 1973, pp. 108-125); H. VÉDRINE, *La Conception de la nature chez Giordano Bruno*, Paris, 1967, pp. 281-288; G. AQUILECCHIA, *Introduzione*, in G. BRUNO, *De la causa, principio et uno*, ed. G. Aquilecchia, Turin, 1973, pp. xxx, xxxiv-xxxvi; W. BEIERWALTES, *Einleitung*, in G. BRUNO, *Von der Ursache, dem Prinzip und dem Einen*, trans. A. Lasson, notes by P. R. Blum, Hamburg, 1977, pp. xiv-xix; L. SPRUIT, *Il problema della conoscenza in Giordano Bruno*, Naples, 1988, pp. 144, 185-205, 319; IDEM, 'Spiritus mundi'. *Censura ecclesiastica e psicologia rinascimentale a proposito di un documento inedito dall'Archivio del Sant'Uffizio romano*, in F. MERCI (ed.), *La mente di Giordano Bruno*, Florence, 2004, pp. 259-288, especially, pp. 266-269; T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être et dialectique. L'idée de philosophie naturelle chez Giordano Bruno*, Paris, 1999, pp. 244-245; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., pp. 7-8, 14-15, 57-60, 65-66, 85, 100-102, 119 note 227, 129, 136-141, 163-179, 200-201, 209-233, 239-240; IDEM, *Magia dei contrari. Cinque studi su Giordano Bruno*, Rome, 2005, pp. 13-17; T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 340-341.

³ *Causa*, proemiale epistola, II, IV, OIB I 598-599, 656-663, 668-670, 717. Similarly, *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 56-59, BOM 1048-1054; *De immenso*, IV.9, BOL I, II 51: «Spiritus inde simul totum contemprat unus, / Unicus ille animus cunctis, Iovis omnia plena».

plants and other living things.¹ Apparently inanimate objects, even stones, had some vestige of life, a 'vital principle' (*principio vitale*) within them.² Evidence of this was the use to which necromancers put the bones of the dead,³ as were the powers of gemstones that could not be reduced to elemental properties.⁴

The Platonic or Neoplatonic cast of these ideas may seem, as it has to many Bruno scholars, self-evident.⁵ Felice Tocco, for example, referred to, and quoted extensively from, *De la causa*, book II, in support of this interpretation.⁶ Bruno, of course, recognized that the World Soul was an essential feature of Plato's and Platonic cosmology. In the second dialogue of *De la causa*, he cited passages in the *Timaeus*,⁷ the work in which Plato expounded his views on the subject.⁸ Elsewhere, too, Bruno borrowed ideas from Platonic accounts of the World Soul in sources translated by Marsilio Ficino, as well as accounts in Ficino's own works.⁹ For Bruno, however, the doctrine was not Plato's invention, nor was it quintessentially Platonic. Rather, it was Pythagorean,¹⁰ an attribution mentioned by Diogenes Laertius, Lactantius and other sources.¹¹ Indeed the author of the doctrine, in Bruno's mind, was even more venerable than Pythagoras, a point that Bruno scholarship seems to have overlooked. In the *Pimander* and *Asclepius*, the Egyptian sage

¹ *Causa*, II, OIB I 649, 659-662. Similarly, *Cena*, III, OIB I 511-513; *Infinito*, III, OIB II 102; *De immenso*, v.9, v.12, BOL I,II 146-147, 157-159. Plato had described the cosmos as an animal; see PLATO, *Timaeus*, 30B7-31B4, and for Ficino's translation *animal*, see Plato, [*Opera*], in Ficino's Latin translation, with his commentaries, summaries and other matter related to Plato and the Platonic corpus, 2 vols, Florence, 1484-85, II, sig. et4ra-rb.

² *Causa*, II, OIB I 658-662. Similarly, *De immenso*, v.9, v.12, BOL I,II 146-147, 158-160; *Summa term. met.*, BOL I,IV 107; and PLOTINUS, IV.4.36¹⁶⁻²¹.

³ *Causa*, II, OIB I 662. Similarly, see *De vinculis*, BOL III 672; *De minimo*, II.6, BOL I,III 210; *De monade*, VI, BOL I,II 418; *De magia*, BOL III 398-399; F. TOCCO, *Le opere inedite*, cit., p. 209. For the use of bones in necromancy, see LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, VI.533-534, 586; CORNELIUS AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM, *De occulta philosophia libri tres*, ed. V. Perrone Compagni, Leiden, 1992, p. 536 (III.42); R. KIECKHEFER, *Forbidden Rites. A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century*, Stroud (Gloucestershire), 1997, pp. 89-91, 113; G. LUCK, *Arcana Mundi. Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds. A Collection of Ancient Texts*, 2nd ed., Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006, pp. 57, 60, 210.

⁴ *Causa*, II, OIB I 662. Similarly, *Sig. sigill.*, I.31, BOL II,II 174, BOMNE II 214; *De immenso*, VI.12, BOL I,II 159-160; *Summa term. met.*, BOL I,IV 107.

⁵ L. CICUTTINI, *Giordano Bruno*, cit., p. 145; É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 17-62; L. SPRUIT, *Il problema della conoscenza*, cit., pp. 189, 193.

⁶ F. TOCCO, *Le opere latine*, cit., pp. 339-342.

⁷ *Causa*, II, OIB I 649, 658.

⁸ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 30B3-31B5, 34B3-37C10.

⁹ D. KNOX, *Ficino, Copernicus and Bruno on the Motion of the Earth*, «Bruniana & Campanelliana», v, 1999, pp. 333-363, at pp. 334-353.

¹⁰ In addition to the passages cited on p. 468, note 7 below, see *Causa*, proemiale epistola, BOI I, 599; *Camoe. acrot.*, BOL I, I 65, 177; *De magia math.*, XII, BOL III 497, BOM 22.

¹¹ DIOGENES LAERTIUS VIII.28; LACTANTIUS, *Divine Institutes*, I.5 (PL VI 134A); J. MOREAU, *L'Âme du monde de Platon aux Stoïciens*, Paris, 1939, pp. 145-157.

Hermes Trismegistos had described the cosmos as a living thing, animated throughout,¹ and, on three occasions in the *Pimander*, following Ficino's Latin translation, he had called the cosmic principle of animation the *anima mundi* or *mundi totius anima*.² That Bruno was familiar with these works, flawed though Frances Yates's 'Hermetic' interpretation of his thought may be, is undeniable.³

Bruno's source, direct or indirect, for this historical account was chiefly Ficino's interpretation of the *prisca theologia*, the gentile tradition of learning which, originating with sages like Hermes, had inspired Plato's philosophy. However, Bruno, true to character, inverted the moral that Ficino had intended to convey. For Ficino, Platonic philosophy, including the doctrine of the World Soul, explained the full philosophical significance of what Hermes and other earlier thinkers had revealed, just as, following a traditional train of thought, Christianity had brought out the true meaning of Old Testament lore. For Bruno, by contrast, Plato's philosophy and Platonism generally marked a degeneration of the truths known to ancient sages. Human knowledge, like all things in or associated with the physical universe, observed the rule of vicissitude, oscillating from one extreme to the other over the course of time. Platonism did not mark the nadir of philosophy. That accolade belonged to Aristotelianism and its scholastic derivatives. It stood instead, we might say, midway between the extremes. Despite its imperfections, it preserved substantial traces of the truth, ones

¹ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], x.7, x.15, xi.4, xi.8, xi.14, xii.15-21, CH I 116.7-8, 120.17-18, 148.20-149.2, 150.14-17, 152.26-153.4, 180.7-182.16; IDEM, *Asclepius*, §§6, 14, 29-30, CH, II 303, 313, 337-338. For an English translation and commentary, see B. P. COPENHAVER, *Hermetica. The Greek Corpus Hermeticum and the Latin Asclepius in a new English translation*, trans. into English, with an introduction and notes, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 31, 33, 38, 39, 40, 46-47, 70, 75, 85, 158. For the above passages from the *Pimander* in Ficino's Latin translation, see, respectively, HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], trans. M. Ficino, Treviso, 1471, fols [32r, 34r, 38r, 39r, 40v-41r, 47v-48v].

² HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], x.7, x.15, xi.4, CH I 116.7-8, 120.17-18, 148.20, trans. Ficino, fols 32r: «ab una mundi totius anima», 34r: «mundi totius anima», 38r: «anima mundi».

³ E.g.: 1) HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], i.4, CH I. 8.1-3, cited in *De immenso*, III.8, BOL I, I 376; 2) *Pimander*, i.4-6, 20, III.1, CH I 8.1-2, 8.7, 8.16, 13.24, 44.8, cited in *De monade*, 11, BOL I, II 463; 3) *Pimander*, XII.8, CH I 177.4-5, trans. Ficino, fol. [45r]: «pr[i]m[o]genitus deus», cited in (?) *De minimo*, I.9, BOL I, III 171; 4) *Pimander*, XII.1, CH I 174.7, cited (?) in *De immenso*, IV.7, BOL I, II 33, 39; 5) *Pimander*, XII, CH I 177.4, cited in *De minimo*, I.9, BOL I, III 171; 6) *Asclepius*, 24-26, CH II 326.10-331.4, cited, or alluded to, in *De umbris*, BOL II, I 9; *Spaccio*, III.2, OIB II 363-365; *Furori*, II.1, OIB II 645; 7) *Asclepius*, 6, CH II 301.18-302.2, cited in *De immenso*, I.1, BOL I, I 206; *De imag. comp.*, III.10, BOL II, III 306. Some of these passages are discussed in: F.A. YATES, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition*, London, 1964, pp. 194-195, 211-215, 246, 267, 279; A. INGEGNO, *Ermetismo e oroscopo delle religioni nello Spaccio bruniano*, «Rinascimento», 2nd series, VII, 1967, pp. 157-174; M. CILBERTO, *La ruota del tempo. Interpretazione di Giordano Bruno*, Rome, 1986, pp. 157-171; H. GATTI, *Giordano Bruno and Renaissance Science*, Ithaca, 1999, pp. 13-17; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., p. 230.

recognizable to those versed in ancient Egyptian lore.¹ Bruno's interpretation of the World Soul exemplified this stance. He was presenting, not a Platonic, let alone a Ficinian, interpretation, but the authentic Pythagorean or rather Egyptian version, elaborated, necessarily, given the paucity of ancient Egyptian and Pythagorean records, with the help of vestiges of truth preserved by later philosophers, Platonists included, and indeed in Scripture too. Similar observations could be made about Bruno's treatment of related themes in the *Pimander* and *Asclepius*, for example, the unity of all things, the eternity of the World, as well as ideas mentioned below.²

The feature of the World Soul that Bruno emphasized in the second dialogue of *De la causa*, as elsewhere, was its immanence.³ He quoted Virgil's celebrated lines in the *Aeneid*, book VI, to this effect.⁴ The sublunary and superlunary regions, wrote Virgil, were animated from within: «the *spiritus* within nourishes the heavens, the earth, the flowing plains, the moon's shining globe, and Titan's star [the sun]». ⁵ John Scot Eriugena, Thierry of Chartres, Giovanni Dominici, Cardinal Bessarion and countless other medieval and Renaissance authors had maintained that Virgil's lines drew on Platonic doctrine.⁶ Bruno traced Virgil's source back to the Pythagoreans.⁷ The *Ti-maeus* supported both misattributions. In Plato's dialogue, the doctrine of

¹ E.g., *Summa term. met.*, BOL I,IV 102: «Vulgata est comparatio apud Platonicos ex Aegyptiorum disciplina», referring to the analogy of the sun, sunlight and the warmth used to describe the triadic nature of divine simplicity.

² HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], XII.8, CH I 177.5-7, trans. Ficino, fol. [45r].

³ *Causa*, II, OIB I 651-670; *Spaccio*, epistola esplicatoria, OIB II 182; *De immenso*, VIII.10, BOL I,II 313; P.-H. MICHEL, *La Cosmologie*, cit., pp. 118-121 (*The Cosmology*, cit., pp. 113-115).

⁴ *Causa*, II, OIB I 652-654, 663; *De magia math.*, XII, BOL III, p. 497; *De magia*, BOL III 434, BOM 242; BOEUC, *Documents*, I, *Le Procès*, ed. and intro. L. Firpo, French trans. and notes A.-Ph. Segonds, Paris, 2000, pp. 71, 265. See also *Sig. sigill.*, I.31, BOL II,II 174, BOMNE II 212: «Mens enim, quae universi molem exagitat»; *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 60, BOM 1058 (apparatus).

⁵ VIRGIL, *Aeneid*, VI.724-726: «Principio caelum ac terras camposque liquentis, / lucentemque globum lunae Titaniaque astra / spiritus intus alit, [...]».

⁶ P. COURCELLE, *Interprétations néoplatonisantes du livre VI de l'Énéide*, in *Recherches sur la tradition platonicienne, Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique, Fondation Hardt*, vol. 3, Vandoeuvres, 1955, p. 121; IDEM, *Connais-toi toi-même: de Socrate à saint Bernard*, 3 vols, Paris, 1974-75, II, pp. 469-477; JOHN SCOT ERIUGENA, *De divisione naturae*, I.31, PL CXXII 476C; G. DOMINICI, O.P., *Lucula noctis*, ed. E. Hunt, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1940, pp. 12, 28; B. BESSARION, *In calumniatorem Platonis libri IV*, in L. MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsmann*, 3 vols, Paderborn, 1923-1942, vol. II (1927), p. 299; M. FICINO, *Opera... omnia*, 2 vols continuously paginated, Basel, 1576, pp. 614, 1597.

⁷ *Camoer. acrot.*, art. 65, BOL I, I 177; *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 60, BOM 1058; *De magia*, 'De analogia spirituum', BOL III 434, BOM 240; FIRPO, *Le Procès*, pp. 71, 265; M. A. GRANADA, *Giordano Bruno et la Stoa. Une présence non reconnue de thèmes stoïciens?*, in *Le Stoïcisme au XVI^e et au XVII^e siècle. Le retour des philosophies antiques à l'Âge classique*, ed. P. F. Moreau, vol. I, Paris, 1999, pp. 143-144; IDEM, in BOEUC, VII 509. Elsewhere, without reference to the doctrine of the World Soul, Bruno speaks of Virgil as a Pythagorean poet; see *Furori*, arg. 5, I.2, OIB II 511, 543, *De immenso*, III.8, BOL I,I 376.

the World Soul was expounded by a speaker, Timaeus of Locri, who traditionally, though unwarrantedly, was deemed a Pythagorean. Bruno followed this designation.¹ A comment by Ficino that Virgil's lines had been inspired by «the ancient theologians» may have further encouraged Bruno to describe them as Pythagorean in import.² We can probably assume that he also knew that Hermes had described the World Soul as immanent. The *Asclepius* recorded that «the *spiritus* with which all things are full, mingled with all things, vivifies all things» and that «it is associated with the material world or rather it is within the material world».³ Here, as elsewhere in Hermes's writings and sometimes in Bruno's too, *spiritus* designated the World Soul.⁴

Immanence also characterized Bruno's concept of what he called variously the Universal Intellect, the Universal Intelligence or Mind. The Universal Intellect, he wrote in dialogue II of *De la causa*, was the most intimate and characteristic faculty (*facoltà*) of the World Soul.⁵ The former, that is, was a power of the latter, in the same way as intellect was a power of the human soul. This interpretation excluded the view that it was a transcendent hypostasis, distinct from the World Soul and hence from the sensible world too along the lines that Neoplatonists had typically imagined.⁶ It was an «internal artificer» (*artefice interno*) or «artist intellect» (*artefice intelletto*),

¹ *Causa*, III, OIB I 683: «Timeo pitagorico»; T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 394, note 72.

² M. FICINO, *Opera*, p. 984.

³ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, *Asclepius*, §§6, 14, CH II 303: «spiritus, quo plena sunt omnia, permixtus cunctis cuncta vivificat», 313: «et mundo comitabatur spiritus vel inerat mundo spiritus» (English trans., B.P. COPENHAVER, *Hermetica*, cit., pp. 70, 75). Festugière and Copenhaver translate *mundus* in *Asclepius*, §14, as «matière» and «matter» respectively in keeping with Hermes's preceding statement that *mundus* is his translation for ὄλη. See also A.-J. FESTUGIÈRE and A. D. NOCK in CH II 370, notes 124-125.

⁴ For Bruno's use of *spiritus* to designate the World or Universal Soul, see, e.g., *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 50, BOM 1038: «spiritus universalis seu animae mundi»; *De immenso*, IV.9, BOL I,II 51: «Spiritus inde simul totum contemperat unus, / Unicus ille animus cunctis, Iovis omnia plena»; and D. GIOVANNOZZI, *Spiritus Mundus quidam. Il concetto di spirito nell'opera di Giordano Bruno*, Rome, 2006, pp. 73-80, 184, 224-227.

⁵ *Causa* II, OIB I 651-653. See also: *Cabala*, II.1, OIB II 454-456; F. FIORENTINO, *Il panteismo di Giordano Bruno*, Naples, 1861 (reprint: Naples, 2008), pp. 55-57; H. VÉDRINE, *La Conception de la nature*, cit., p. 140; É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 49, 55, 112; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., pp. 101-102; T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être*, cit., pp. 245, 249-250.

⁶ As noted by É. NAMER, *La Philosophie de Bruno*, in G. BRUNO, *Cause, principe et unité*, French trans. and notes É. Namer, Paris, 1930, p. 17; IDEM, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 49-50; P.-H. MICHEL, *La Cosmologie*, cit., pp. 116-117, 119 (*The Cosmology*, cit., pp. 110-112, 114); M. A. GRANADA, *Giordano Bruno et la Stoa*, cit., p. 149; T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être et dialectique*, cit., p. 245; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., p. 65. Bruno mentioned that Platonists held that the Intellect was a transcendental reality; see *Causa*, II, OIB I 652-653: «Questo fabro [del mondo], dicono [viz. i Platonici], procede dal mondo superiore (il quale è a fatto uno) a questo mondo sensibile che è diviso in molti».

because «it forms matter, shaping it from within».¹ The description of the (Universal) Intellect as a craftsman, as Bruno noted himself, was Platonic.² It derived from Plato's description of the Demiurge in the *Timaeus* (28c), whom Plotinus for one had sometimes identified with his second hypostasis, Intellect or *nous*.³ The qualification 'internal', however, was Bruno's addition, inserted to reinforce the notion that the Intellect was immanent. By contrast, the Platonic Demiurge, as he remarked, proceeded «from the superior realm, which is wholly one».⁴ Many other comments in the second dialogue of *De la causa* served the same purpose. From within seeds and semen, Bruno tells us, the Universal Intellect fashioned the physical attributes of plants and animals, moving out circularly from inside and then, as death approached, circling back in again.⁵ Virgil confirmed that the Universal Intellect was immanent immediately after his account of the *spiritus* quoted above: «the Mind (*mens*), spread through the sinews [of the cosmos], stirs the entire mass, mingling with its whole body».⁶ Again, Hermes, as Bruno no doubt knew, even if he did not trouble to say so, had described the Mind (*Mens* in Ficino's Latin translation) as within the cosmic soul, vivifying the cosmos and the things of which it was constituted.⁷

¹ *Causa*, II, OIB I 653-654. Similarly, *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 49, 52, BOM 1036: «Est enim [intellectus] artifex qui non circa materiam, sed intra omnem materiam et naturam operatur», 1042: «Mundi faber intelligitur, intrinsecus agens, et fabrefaciens, et architectum ordinans et conservans». See also T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être*, cit., pp. 247-248.

² *Causa*, II, OIB I 652. For Bruno's use of the craftsman analogy, see T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être et dialectique*, cit., pp. 245-265.

³ E.g., PLOTINUS, II.3.18¹⁵; v.1.8⁴⁻⁷; v.9.3.²⁶; J.-M. CHARRUE, *Plotin, Lecteur de Platon*, Paris, 1978, pp. 124-139; M. ANDOLFO, *L'ipostasi della 'Psyche' in Plotino. Struttura e fondamenti*, Milan, 1996, pp. 237-241. HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], x.18, CH, I, p. 122.7-9, spoke of the Intellect as a δῆμιουργός.

⁴ *Causa*, II, OIB I 652-653.

⁵ *Causa*, II, OIB I 653-654. Similarly, *Spaccio*, epistola esplicatoria, OIB II 181-182; *Sig. sigill.*, I.31, II.3, BOL II, II 174, 196, BOMNE II 212-214, 258; *De minimo*, I, BOL I, III 143. This was an application of Bruno's principle that vital forces moved outwards from a centre and then, with the approach of death, returned back again; see W. PAGEL, *Giordano Bruno: the Philosophy of Circles and the Circular Movement of the Blood*, «Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences», VI, 1951, pp. 116-124, at pp. 120-121.

⁶ VIRGIL, *Aeneid*, VI.726-727: «[...] totamque infusa per artus/ mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet». Bruno replaced 'magno' with 'toto' or 'totque' when quoting these lines, an alteration that suited his argument that the World Soul was 'all-in-all' (see p. 472 below); see *Causa*, II, BOL I 663; *De magia*, 'De analogia spirituum', BOL III 434, BOM 240.

⁷ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], XI.4, CH, I 148.21-149.2, B. P. COPENHAVER, *Hermetica*, cit., p. 38, trans. Ficino, fol. [38r]: «Deus in mente, mens in anima, anima autem in materia, omnia vero ista per aevum. Totum hoc corpus, in quo corpora omnia, anima mente, deoque plena, intima mundi replet, complectitur extima. Vitam omnibus haec sugeret [sugerit], extrinsecus quidem ingenti huic perfectoque animali mundi, intrinsecus autem caeteris quae insunt mundo viventibus, supraque in coelo, quod idem est, omnia sistens, infra vero in terra generationem agitans». Similarly HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], XII.13-14, CH I 179.13-21, trans. Ficino, fol. [46v].

An important corollary of Bruno's interpretation was the elimination of the Neoplatonic hypostasis Soul.¹ For Plotinus, Proclus and other ancient Neoplatonists, the World Soul and individual human souls were instantiations of the transcendent reality, Soul, dependent on the Intellect.² On one occasion, Bruno mentioned this Platonic position, seemingly with approval.³ Yet his comments in *De la causa* and other works, suggest that, for Bruno, souls were instead instantiations of the immanent World Soul.⁴ The latter, he wrote in *De l'infinito* and *De immenso*, was the 'soul of souls'.⁵ His World Soul, in short, usurped the role of the Neoplatonic Soul with respect to individual souls. One indication of this is the analogy that Bruno used at the conclusion of the second dialogue of *De la causa* to illustrate the doctrine of «all-in-all». ⁶ The World Soul, he wrote, was «all-in-all», that is,

¹ É. NAMER, *La Philosophie de Giordano Bruno*, cit., pp. 17, 38-40, ignores this point.

² E.g., PLOTINUS, II.3[52].13; IV.3 [27].1-8; V.1[10].2; VI.2 [43].20. For discussion of the Neoplatonic relationship of individual souls to the World Soul, see, e.g., P. MERLAN, *Plotinus Enneads* 2.2, «Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association», LXXIV, 1943, pp. 179-191, at p. 190; H. J. BLUMENTHAL, *Soul, World-Soul, and Individual Soul in Plotinus*, in *Le Néoplatonisme*, Colloques internationaux du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, Paris, 1971, pp. 55-63; J. M. RIST, *Plotinus' Psychology. His Doctrines of the Embodied Soul*, The Hague, 1971, pp. 14-15, 27-30; A. GRAESER, *Plotinus and the Stoics. A Preliminary Study*, Leiden, 1972, pp. 30-31; M. ANDOLFO, *L'ipostasi*, cit., pp. 38-42, and *passim*.

³ *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 58-59, BOM 1054: «Ita universum hoc animal reducitur ad unum principium ideale, sicut et particularia animalia. Ab eadem enim idea intelligunt esse animam mundi et aliorum animam, unde non credunt platonici animam particularium animalium esse partem animae universi, utpote impartibilis. Nobis vero in praesentiarum est dubium, quamvis magis ad hanc quam ad illam partem inclinemus».

⁴ *Causa*, v, OIB I 731-733; *Spaccio*, epistola esplicatoria, OIB II 181-182; *Cabala*, II.1, OIB II 452-457; *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 56-60, 182-183, BOM 1050-1058, 1314-1316; *De minimo*, I.3, II.6, BOL I, III 143, 209-210; *Thes. de magia*, XI, BOL III 463, BOM 340; *De magia*, BOL III 408-409, 435, BOM 186-188, 242; FIRPO, *Le Procès*, cit., p. 383. These passages conflict with the passage in the *Lampas triginta statuarum* quoted in the note above, where Bruno says that he inclined to the Platonic view that individual souls and the World Soul alike depended on (the hypostasis) Soul and that therefore they were not parts of the World Soul. At one moment during his trial (FIRPO, *Le Procès*, cit., p. 387), Bruno claimed that, unlike the souls of brutes, human souls did not return to 'l'università del spirito' after bodily death. Was this, however, a tactical concession? For discussions of this crux in Bruno's philosophy, see e.g., F. TOCCO, *Le opere inedite*, cit., pp. VII, 65-75; IDEM, *Le opere latine*, cit., pp. 387-391; R. MONDOLFO, *La filosofia di Giordano Bruno e la interpretazione di Felice Tocco*, «Cultura filosofica», v, 1912, pp. 25-33 (qualifying Tocco); G. GENTILE, *Giordano Bruno e il pensiero del Rinascimento*, Florence, 1920, pp. 75-83 (disagreeing with Tocco and Mondolfo); É. NAMER, *La Philosophie de Giordano Bruno*, cit., pp. 17-19; IDEM, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 37-47, 146; L. CICUTTINI, *Giordano Bruno*, cit., pp. 153-159; H. VÉDRINE, *La Conception de la nature*, cit., pp. 299-307; P.-H. MICHEL, *La Cosmologie*, cit., pp. 118-123 (*The Cosmology*, cit., pp. 113-118); L. SPRUIT, *Il problema della conoscenza*, cit., pp. 198-201; T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être et dialectique*, cit., pp. 280-290; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., pp. 11, 56-59, 68-71, 100-101, 166-167, 191-192, 223-226.

⁵ *Infinito*, I, OIB II, p. 55; *De immenso*, VII.8, BOL I, II, 259.

⁶ Bruno frequently applies the doctrine of 'all-in-all' to describe the World Soul's presence in things; see, in addition to the sources on p. 472, note 1 below, e.g., *Causa*, proemiale

present wholly and indivisibly in each and every thing, just as the sound of a single voice could be present throughout a room and hence wholly audible to everyone in it, however great the audience.¹ Indeed, if the sound of a single voice could carry throughout the whole universe, it would be «all-in-all».² The analogy derived from Plotinus, who had used it, in a more sophisticated form and without allusion, needless to say, to an infinite universe, to explain how the hypostasis Soul – rather than the World Soul – was wholly present in all things capable of receiving it.³

The World Soul and the Universal Intellect that Bruno described in the second book of *De la causa* were not, then, authentically Platonic, despite the numerous borrowings from Plato, Plotinus, Ficino and other Platonists. The Universal Intellect was not a transcendental reality or hypostasis producing a subordinate but similarly transcendent reality, Soul, of which the World Soul and individual human souls were instantiations. Instead, Bruno's Universal Intellect was a faculty intrinsic to the World Soul immanent within all things, whereas individual souls were 'parts' of the World Soul. In these respects, Bruno's ontology is not so much Platonic as Stoic, as Émile Namer observed.⁴ The resemblance is not fortuitous. For Bruno, the doctrine of the World Soul was, as mentioned above (pp. 466-467), Pythagorean or Egyptian and the two most important testimonies to this effect were

epistola, II, IV, V, OIB I 600, 606, 659, 661-662, 717, 730-732; *Infinito*, I, OIB II 55; *Cabala*, epist., OIB II 413; *Sig. sigill.*, II.3, BOL II,II 196, BOMNE II 258-260; *De immenso*, VII.8, VII.18, BOL I, II 261, 284; *De minimo*, II.6, BOL I,III 209; *De magia*, BOL III 434-435, BOM 240-242; FIRPO, *Le Procès*, cit., pp. 67, 303. Following NICHOLAS OF CUSA, *De docta ignorantia*, II.5, in IDEM, *Opera omnia*, vol. 1-, Leipzig, 1932-, I, p. 76, and M. FICINO, *Opera*, cit., p. 1768, Bruno (*Causa*, II, OIB I 661) attributed the doctrine of «all-in-all» to Anaxagoras. For discussion of Bruno's application of this doctrine, see F. TOCCO, *Le opere inedite*, cit., p. 52; É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 35-37, 98; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., pp. 61, 63, 71, 175, 214. Scholastic authors applied the doctrine to the soul's presence in the body, as Segonds notes in FIRPO, *Le Procès*, cit., p. 552, note 9, citing THOMAS AQUINAS, *Scriptum super Sententiis*, lib. 1, dist. 8, qu. 5, art. 3, co. For its ancient Neoplatonic use, see R. T. WALLIS, *Neoplatonism*, second ed., London, 1995 (first ed., 1972), pp. 54-55.

¹ *Causa*, II, OIB I 669-670. Similarly *De immenso*, IV.15, BOL I,II 85; *De monade*, X, BOL I,II 457; *Thes. de magia*, 9, BOL III 460-461, BOM 334-336; *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 56-57, BOM 1052-1052; FIRPO, *Le Procès*, cit., p. 387.

² *Causa*, II, OIB I 669-670.

³ PLOTINUS, VI.IV.12¹⁻⁵⁰.

⁴ DIOGENES LAERTIUS, VII.138-139 (SVF II.634), VII.142 (SVF II.633); É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 52-55, 88. For Mind, *pneuma* and the World Soul in Stoic philosophy, see A. S. PEASE'S notes in CICERO, *De natura deorum libri III*, ed. and comm. A. S. Pease, 2 vols, Cambridge, Mass, 1955-58, II, pp. 257-258, 267-268; D. E. HAHM, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology*, [Columbus, OH], 1977, pp. 136-184; M. LAPIDGE, *Archai and Stoicheia: a Problem in Stoic Cosmology*, «Phronesis», XVIII, 1973, pp. 273-278; IDEM, *Stoic Cosmology*, in *The Stoics*, ed. J. M. Rist, Berkeley, 1978, pp. 163-185; G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence. Stoic and Platonist Readings of Plato's Timaeus*, Turnhout, 1999, pp. 43, 51-61, 66-73, 97-99, 122, 129 note 38.

Virgil and Hermes Trismegistos. Contrary to what Bruno believed, however, both were in fact Stoic in inspiration.¹ Hermes, again drawing on Stoic philosophy, also corroborated the idea that individual souls were instantiations of the World Soul.² All souls, he declared in *Pimander*, tract x, flowed from the World Soul, whirling around «as if distributed» through the cosmos;³ and, later in the same tract, he noted that, before entering the body and becoming corrupted by passions, they «depended» on the World Soul.⁴ The disguised but formative role that Stoic philosophy played in Bruno's interpretation is exemplified in his comment that the Universal Intellect «impregnated matter with every form».⁵ To bring out this idea, he noted that Plotinus had called the Universal Intellect «a father and generator»⁶ and that the magi had described it as «most fecund with seeds».⁷ The magus that Bruno had in mind was almost certainly Hermes Trismegistos, who had spoken of the cosmos as impregnated with seeds by the Mind or God.⁸

¹ For Hermes, see M. LAPIDGE, *The Stoic Inheritance*, in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy*, ed. P. Dronke, Cambridge, 1988, p. 103. For Virgil, see T. GREGORY, *Anima mundi. La filosofia di Guglielmo di Conches e la scuola di Chartres*, Florence, 1955, p. 124; M. LAPIDGE, *The Stoic Inheritance*, cit., p. 105; M.A. GRANADA, *Giordano Bruno et la Stoa*, cit., pp. 143-144. St Jerome correctly observed that Virgil's lines drew on Stoic philosophy; see ST JEROME, *Commentariorum in Isaiam prophetam libri duodeviginti*, PL XXIV 558A-B: «juxta Stoicos insignis poeta scribens, ait»; P. COURCELLE, *Connais-toi toi-même*, cit., II, pp. 472-473.

² CHRYSIPPUS apud DIOGENES LAERTIUS, VII.87 (SVF III.4), VII.143 (SVF II.633); DIOGENES LAERTIUS, VII.157 (SVF II.774); CLEANTHES, SVF I.495; ZENO apud CICERO, *De natura deorum*, II.8, 22 (SVF I.33, §§112-113); MARCUS AURELIUS, II.1, v.27, XII.26, XII.30; A.-J. FESTUGIÈRE and A. D. NOCK, CH, I, p. 126, note 28; B. P. COPENHAVER, *Hermetica*, cit., p. 158; G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence*, cit., pp. 59, 157.

³ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], x.7, CH I 116.7-9, trans. Ficino, fol. [32r]: «ab una mundi totius anima universae profluunt animae per omnem mundum, tanquam distributae circumcurrentes».

⁴ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], x.15, CH I 120.13-18, trans. Ficino, fol. [34r]: «Hoc inquam assero, animam pueri contemplari seipsam nondum ex natura sua propter corpus egressam, nondum enim corpus omnino compactum est, ac seipsam undique pulchram conspicerem, nam haud corrupta est adhuc a corporis passionibus, mundi totius anima tuncque dependens».

⁵ *Causa*, II, OIB I 653. Similarly, *Sig. sigill.*, II.10, BOL II,II, 202, BOMNE II 274.

⁶ *Causa*, II, OIB I 653. For Bruno's sources, see T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 345-346.

⁷ *Causa*, II, OIB I 653. Similarly, *Sig. sigill.*, II.11, BOL II,II 203, BOMNE II 276.

⁸ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], IX.3, IX.6, XIV.10, CH I 97.7-12, 99.3, II 226.3-8, trans. Ficino, fols [28]r: «Mens omnes notiones concipit, bonas quidem, quotiens a deo semen infunditur, contrarias autem, cum a demonibus quibusdam spermata iaciuntur. Nulla profecto mundi pars est demonum praesentia destituta, horum lumen ab ipso deo totum descendit. Demum denique transfusus in hominem, semina proprie orationis inspergit. Mens autem conspersa seminibus pregnans [...], [29r]: «semina», «instar agricultoris periti», [56v]: «Aspice, precor, agricultorem semina in terrae gremium diffundentem». G. AQUILECCHIA in OIB I 653, note 29, and T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 344-345, cite [*Pimander*], IX.6 (as above) as Bruno's source.

The analogy derived, in both cases, Plotinus's and Hermes's, from the Stoic doctrine of *σπερματικὸς λόγος*.¹

Into this Hermetic and Pythagorean – or, as we would say, Stoic – framework, Bruno introduced a doctrine of great significance for his ontology. There were two inseparable substances in nature, an active power capable of producing all things and a passive one correspondingly receptive of being made into all things. The World Soul, together with its faculty, the Universal Intellect, the source of all forms, was the active power; universal matter was the passive power. Shaped by the World Soul, the latter assumed dimensions, that is, body. Though devoid of all qualities and hence imperceptible, matter was discernible by reason. Since, then, it was an object of thought, it existed. It was not, that is, the *prope nihil* of Aristotelian philosophy but instead, no less than the World Soul, a 'substance'. Both the World Soul and universal matter were eternal. Indeed they were the only eternal things of nature. All else, including individual souls, was accidental.²

These ideas, as Émile Namer pointed out, are Stoic.³ Diogenes Laertius, ps. Plutarch (in the *Placita philosophorum* attributed in Bruno's day to Plutarch), Cicero, Seneca and others reported that Stoics posited two principles, an active ἀρχὴ ποιητική and a passive ἀρχὴ παθητική. Both were eternal, ungenerated and, apart perhaps from the moment of universal conflagration, inseparable. From their union derived the elements and hence all other things.⁴ The active principle – variously identified, according to context, as the Demiurge, World Soul, Mind, God, Zeus, Fate, reason (λόγος, *ratio*) or cause (*causa*) – moved and endowed form to the passive principle, which was interpreted as unqualified substance (οὐσία) or 'first matter' (πρώτη ὕλη).⁵

¹ A.-J. FESTUGIÈRE and A. D. NOCK, in CH I 104, note 25; G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence*, cit., pp. 46, 71-72, 82, 147; DIOGENES LAERTIUS, VII.136 (SVF I.102, II.580); M. J. WHITE, *Stoic Natural Philosophy (Physics and Cosmology)*, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. B. INWOOD, Cambridge, 2003, p. 137.

² *Causa*, II, III, OIB I 655-656, 663-665, 678-688; *De monade*, II, BOL I, II 344-345. Bruno alludes to this doctrine elsewhere; e.g. *Cena*, I, V, OIB I 443, 555-557; *Spaccio*, epist., OIB II 181-182. For discussion of it, see F. TOCCO, *Le opere latine*, cit., p. 346; É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 28, 31-32, 40, 52, 61-64, 70, 75, 80-81, 87-91, 99-100, 112.

³ É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 52, 63-64, 70, 87-91. See also G. AQUILECCHIA in BOEUC III, 325 note 35; T. DAGRON, *Unité de l'être et dialectique*, cit., p. 242 note 5.

⁴ E.g. DIOGENES LAERTIUS, VII.134 (SVF I.85, 493; II.300; III Archidemus 12), VII.150 (SVF I.87, II.316); PS. PLUTARCH, *Placita philosophorum*, I.3, 878B-C, ed. Mau, p. 59.17-20 (SVF I.85); SEXTUS EMPIRICUS, *Adversus mathematicos*, IX.11, ed. Mutschmann, p. 215.15-17 (SVF II.301); CICERO, *Academica posteriora*, VI.24, VII.27-29, ed. Plasberg, pp. 10-13 (reporting Antiochus of Ascalon's views); SENECA, *Epistulae morales*, LXV.2 (SVF II.303).

⁵ For the two principles in Stoic philosophy, see É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 88-91; M. POHLENZ, *Die Stoa. Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung*, 2 vols, 4th ed., Göttingen, 1970-72, I, pp. 67-69, II, p. 38; D. E. HAHM, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology*, cit., pp. 29-56; R. B. TODD, *Monism and Immanence: Foundations of Stoic Physics*, in J. M. RIST, *The Stoics*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978, pp. 137-160; G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence*, cit., pp. 42-60,

Aristotelian doctrines of principles, change and matter, particularly Aristotelian accounts of biological genesis, are evident influences, as is Aristotle's identification of God with $\nu\omicron\upsilon\zeta$. The Stoics, however, reinterpreted these ideas. Two of their innovations are significant for Bruno cosmology. First, the Stoic active principle – the World Soul, with Mind as one of its aspects – was self-moving and immanent throughout the cosmos, whereas Aristotle's $\nu\omicron\upsilon\zeta$, as pure Intellect without psychic functions, imparted movement from outside the cosmos and solely to the *primum mobile*. Second, whereas for Aristotle, matter was the substrate of individual instances of sublunary change, for Stoics, it was the substrate of the cosmos as a whole, an interpretation inspired perhaps by the «receptacle of all becoming» described in Plato's *Timaeus*.¹ Bruno mentioned Plato's receptacle in his account of the two principles.² In several other respects, most noticeably in his ideas concerning aether, *spiritus* (understood as a subtle body rather than as soul) and comets, Bruno showed an interest in, or affinity with, Stoic cosmology.³ Perhaps, like his near contemporary Francesco Patrizi, he recognized that Stoicism had adhered closely to Hermes Trismegistos's physics.⁴

Bruno, however, shied away from an important feature of Stoic ontology. For Stoics, both principles, even the active when conceived as the World Soul or God, were corporeal.⁵ Cleanthes, for example, had called the World Soul fiery and intelligent; Chrysippus defined *pneuma* as a mixture of air and fire.⁶ In the third dialogue of *De la causa*, Bruno explicitly rejected Stoic cor-

89-100, 115, and *passim*; M. J. WHITE, *Stoic Natural Philosophy*, cit., pp. 125-126, 129, 132-133, 136; B. INWOOD in L. A. SENECA, *Seneca. Selected Philosophical Letters*, trans and comm. B. Inwood, Oxford, 2007, pp. 138-139, 155.

¹ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 48E-52D; D. E. HAHM, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology*, cit., pp. 39-40, 46-48; G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence*, cit., pp. 28-32, 43-45.

² *Causa*, III, OIB I 686.

³ M.A. GRANADA, *Giordano Bruno et la Stoa*, cit., pp. 143-144, 147-160.

⁴ F. PATRIZI, *Nova de universis philosophia*, with other works and translations by Patrizi, 6 pts, Ferrara, 1591, pt 4, fol. 3rb: «Apparebit, quoque, Graecas philosophias omnes, Pythagoream, Platoniam in divinis, ac morum dogmatibus Aristotelicam autem, et Stoicam in physicis, et medicinae etiam prima principia, et ex his, et ex aliis, qui perierunt eius [i.e. of Hermes] libris fuisse desumptas».

⁵ M. POHLENZ, *Die Stoa*, cit., I, pp. 67-69; D.E. HAHM, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology*, cit., pp. 4, 9, 14, 32, 37, 49 note 12; G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence*, cit., pp. 56-60, 68, 89-101, 108, 115, 224; M.J. WHITE, *Stoic Natural Philosophy*, cit., pp. 128-133, 136. A minority of modern scholars reject this otherwise universally accepted interpretation, arguing that the Stoic active principle was, in fact, incorporeal; see e.g. R.B. TODD, *Monism and Immanence*, cit. G. REYDAMS-SCHILS, *Demiurge and Providence*, cit., pp. 56-60, discusses the conflicting modern scholarly views.

⁶ T. GREGORY, *Anima mundi*, cit., p. 124; M. POHLENZ, *Die Stoa*, cit., I, pp. 67-68; M. LAPIDGE, *Archai and Stoiceia*, cit., pp. 240-278, especially pp. 247, 253-258, 263-275; IDEM, *Stoic Cosmology*, cit., pp. 164, 168-176; A. A. LONG, *Soul and Body in Stoicism*, «Phronesis», xxvii, 1982, pp.

porealism. For many years, reacting against Aristotle's hylomorphism, he tells us, he had held that «forms were nothing other than accidental dispositions of matter», as Democritus, the Epicureans, Avicbron (Ibn Gabirol), Cyreniacs, Cynics and Stoics had proposed.¹ With time, however, he had come to recognize, that there were (as we have seen above) necessarily two substances, active form (the World Soul) and passive matter.² How this conclusion squared with Bruno's proposition, articulated in the remainder of *De la causa*, that these two substances were ultimately two aspects of the one supra-substantial God is beyond the scope of this essay.³ For his immediate purpose in the second dialogue, namely, explaining in what sense the World Soul was or was not immanent, what mattered was that he retained the notion of intelligible realities of the kind proposed in Platonic philosophy. Adjustments, of course, needed to be made. To say, as Plato did of the Ideas, that intelligible realities were completely disengaged from matter was fantastic.⁴ But this did not mean that they were fictions. They existed, distinct from matter, but necessarily engaged with it. Hence Bruno could call the Ideas 'separate, absolute, substances'.⁵ Again, the Intellect was «separate» from us but not completely so, as Platonists claimed when they observed that it did not «stoop to us», leaving us to gaze upon it on high. The Intellect manifestly did engage with us, illuminating us perpetually.⁶ Intelligible realities, in other words, retained their own identity as separate substances in combination with matter but did not exist separately from it. The World Soul, Bruno wrote in the *Lampas triginta statuarum*, spread through all things without mixing with it, just as light was diffused in air without becoming consubstantial with it.⁷ Similar sentiments occur throughout his surviving works.

Observations of this kind showed that the World Soul was, as Bruno wrote in the prefatory letter of *De la causa*, «esteriore» as well as «intima» in natural things.⁸ Together with its faculty the Universal Intellect, it was internal to the universe inasmuch as it worked from within rather than from outside of it. It was external to the universe in that it was a distinct substance which did not perish with the individual things it produced in combination

34-57; D. E. HAHM, *The Origins of Stoic Cosmology*, cit., pp. 139-153, 158-162; M. J. WHITE, *Stoic Natural Philosophy*, cit., p. 129, 133-136; T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 387.

¹ *Causa*, III, OIB I 678: «le forme non essere altro che certe accidentali disposizioni de la materia». See further É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 31, 99-100, 111.

² *Causa*, III, BOI I 678-679. For the World Soul as 'form', see *Causa*, II-III, OIB I 651, 658, 662-669, 684-686.

³ See, e.g. *Causa*, III, OIB I, 696-698; É. NAMER, *Les Aspects de Dieu*, cit., pp. 32, 43, 76, 93, 100-101, 112, 122-123, 144-147.

⁴ *Causa*, IV, OIB I 721; *De immenso*, VIII.10, BOL I,II 313.

⁵ *Orat. valed.*, BOL I,I 16.

⁶ *Sig. sigill.*, I.31, BOL II, II 173, BOMNE II 210; P.-H. MICHEL, *La Cosmologie*, cit., p. 115 (*The Cosmology*, cit., p. 110).

⁷ *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 6, 183, BOM 1052, 1316.

⁸ *Causa*, II, OIB I 598.

with matter.¹ This was, Bruno explained in the *Lampas triginta statuarum*, how philosophers should be understood when they called the Intellect 'separate'.² Numerous authorities corroborated this position. Orpheus had called the Universal Intellect «the World's eye», a phrase indicating that the Universal Intellect saw both within and outside all natural things, that it worked both intrinsically and extrinsically to maintain the overall harmony of the universe.³ Plato – that is, the Pythagorean Timaeus of Plato's dialogue (see pp. 467-468 above) – had spoken of the World Soul as not only spreading from the centre throughout the cosmos, but also enveloping it from without.⁴ With this passage in mind, Plotinus, as Bruno observed in *De la causa*, dialogue II, had commented that it was more appropriate to speak of the body being in the soul rather than vice versa.⁵ Once again, Bruno's position conformed with that of Hermes Trismegistos. The Soul, with Mind and God within, Hermes declared, was both intrinsic and extrinsic – *intrinsicus* and *extrinsicus* in Ficino's translation – to the physical cosmos.⁶

PRINCIPLES AND CAUSES

To speak, as Stoic philosophy did, of one subtle bodily thing (the active principle) as diffused within another, denser, body (the passive principle) made some sense. Applied to intelligible realities, however, the language of immanence can only be metaphorical. Bruno recognized this. As he pointed out in *De la causa*, dialogue II and elsewhere, by definition souls and intelligible realities in general had no dimensions and therefore could not be inside or outside anything.⁷ The analogy drawn between the distribution of sound

¹ *Causa*, II, BOI I 664-665; *Spaccio*, epist., OIB II 181-182; F. TOCCO, *Le opere inedite*, cit., pp. 57-61.

² *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 48; BOM 1034.

³ *Causa*, II, OIB I 653: «occhio del mondo». For sources, see T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 345. See also *Causa*, III, OIB I 690-691.

⁴ PLATO, *Timaeus*, 34B1-5, 36E2-3, trans. Ficino, cit., sigs et4vb-5ra: «Animam autem in eius medio collocavit, perque totum tendit, atque ea corpus ipsum etiam extrinsecus circumtegit», sig. et5va: «At illa a medio per omne usque ad celi extrema se porrigens, eique extrinsecus circumfusa seque in seipsa convertens». See also, e.g., TIMAEUS OF LOCRI, *De natura mundi et animae*, ed. and German trans. W. Marg, Leiden, 1972, p. 124 (95E). Bruno associated this idea with Pythagoras in *Causa*, proemiale epistola, OIB I 599: «E si conchiude con Pitagora et altri che non in vano hanno aperti gli occhi, come un spirito immenso secondo diverse ragioni et ordini, colma e contiene il tutto».

⁵ *Causa*, II, OIB I 662-663; *Furori*, I.3, OIB II 566; PLOTINUS, IV.3.20¹⁻⁵¹, IV.3.22⁷⁻¹², citing PLATO, *Timaeus*, 36D9-37C2; E. CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, cit., p. 176.

⁶ HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], XI.4, CH I 148.23-149.2, trans. Ficino, fol. [38r], quoted above at p. 470, note 7. See also HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], XII.23, CH I 183.14-15, trans. Ficino, fol. [49r].

⁷ *Causa*, II, III, OIB I 669, 681: «la natura opra dal centro (per dir cossi) del suo soggetto o materia». Similarly, *Furori*, I.3, OIB II 566; *Thes. de magia*, IX, XI, BOL III 460-461, 463-464, BOM 334-336, 340-342.

and that of the soul, he wrote, mindful of Plotinus's own qualifications about its appropriateness, was «rozzo». ¹ Hermes Trismegistos, we may add, had declared that there was nothing dimensional about intelligible beings. ²

To forestall this objection, Bruno redefined spatial expressions such as 'within' and 'without', 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic', 'interior' and 'exterior' in terms of causality. To this end, he adapted a Neoplatonic distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic causes developed by Arabic and subsequently Latin authors, including Marsilio Ficino in some early writings unavailable in print in Bruno's day. ³ Interestingly, the Neoplatonic and Arabic thinkers in question had developed this distinction with the issue of immanence and transcendence in mind. Bruno probably knew the brief remarks in Averroes's *Metaphysics* commentary. ⁴ His immediate source was, however, a passage in Thomas Aquinas's *De principiis naturae* ('On the Principles of Nature'), composed c. 1255, or perhaps an intermediary. ⁵ The generation of natural things, Thomas explained, following standard Aristotelian and scholastic doctrine, required a final and an efficient cause as well as a material and a formal

¹ *Causa*, II, BOI I 669; PLOTINUS, VI.4.12²⁸⁻²⁹.

² HERMES TRISMEGISTOS, [*Pimander*], IV.1, XII.8, XII.23, XIII.3, CH, I 49.6-7, 177.9-10, 183.12-14, II, 201.19, trans. Ficino, fols [16v], [45r]: «nihil est intelligibilium ab intelligibili distans», [49v], [50r].

³ R. WISNOVSKY, *Final and Efficient Causality in Avicenna's Cosmology and Theology*, «Quaestio: Yearbook of the History of Metaphysics», II, 2002, pp. 97-123; IDEM, *Towards a History of Avicenna's Distinction Between Immanent and Transcendent Causes*, in D. C. REISMAN and A.H. AL-RAHIM (eds), *Before and After Avicenna*, Leiden, 2003, pp. 49-68, esp. pp. 49-50, 60-67 (with English translations of Avicenna's distinctions between the two sets of causes on pp. 62-66); AVICENNA, *Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina V-X*, ed. S. van Riet, Louvain, 1980, p. 292.27-36; AVICENNA, *Sufficientia*, cap. XI, A-C, 'De comparationibus causarum inter se', in IDEM, *Opera*, trans. Gundissalinus, Venice, 1508, fol. 19va-vb; P.O. KRISTELLER, *The Scholastic Background of Marsilio Ficino, with an Edition of Unpublished Texts*, «Traditio», II, 1944, p. 293 (cited by T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW, III, p. 339).

⁴ AVERROES, *In libros Metaphysicorum*, v.1, in ARISTOTLE and AVERROES, *Opera ... omnia*, 11 vols, Venice, 1562, VIII, fol. 101F: «omnes enim causae non sunt principia, nisi propter istud primum [principium]. Deinde dicit: *Et quaedam principia sunt in rebus*, etc. [Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Δ.1, 1013^a19-20]: id est principiorum quaedam sunt in re, verbi gratia, ut forma et materia, et quaedam extra rem, ut agens et finis»; AVERROES, *In libros Metaphysicorum*, v.4, fol. 105F-G: «Vult [Aristoteles, *Metaphysics*, Δ.3, 1014^a26-^b15] distinguere secundum quot modos dicitur elementum, quum ista nomina sunt propinqua synonymis et communibus appropriatis. Elementum enim non dicitur de causis extrinsecis, et dicitur de intrinsecis et dignius de materia. Principium autem dignius est dici de causis extrinsecis et causa est minor principio in hoc. Principium autem est quasi universalis causa, cum dicatur principium de principiis transmutationis et de quatuor causis». Wisnovksy does not mention Averroes's distinction in his two studies.

⁵ For Thomas's *De principiis naturae*, see J. BOBIK, *Aquinas on Matter and Form and the Elements. A Translation and Interpretation of the De principiis naturae and the De mixtione elementorum of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Notre Dame, 1998. Thomas's probable source, as yet unidentified is, I believe, AVICENNA, *Liber de philosophia*, p. 292.27-36, cited in note 3 above.

one.¹ These four causes could be divided into two principles and two causes. A knife was constituted of matter and form. Hence, material and formal causes were intrinsic. Final and efficient causes, on the other hand, were extrinsic. The final cause of the knife, to cut things, and its efficient cause, the knife maker, were not constituents of the knife. All four causes were commonly called causes, noted Thomas, but properly speaking the two intrinsic causes, the material and formal, were principles, whereas the two external causes, the final and efficient causes, were authentic causes. Bruno made the same point. Given that this terminology does not occur in the Greek or Arabic sources, we can be reasonably sure that Thomas's discussion or a derivative was Bruno's source for the doctrine as a whole.² The distinction between the two types of cause corresponded to the scholastic distinction, mentioned by Bruno in other contexts, between the cause whereby something comes into being (*causa fiendi*) and the cause of its actual existence (*causa essendi*).³

Bruno applied Thomas's distinction to matter, the World Soul and the latter's faculty, the Universal Intellect.⁴ Matter and the World Soul were, respectively, the intrinsic material and formal causes or rather principles constituting the physical universe.⁵ The Universal Intellect was the efficient cause of the universe.⁶ As an efficient cause, it was external to its effects and so, properly speaking, a cause rather than a principle.⁷ It was, however, the most intimate faculty of the World Soul, shaping things from within and therefore could be said to be «intimate» as well as «exterior» to «natural things».⁸ The World Soul – the formal principle – and Universal Intellect – the efficient cause – were, that is, 'joined' and 'in a certain way' one and the same.⁹ Lastly, the World Soul conjoined with the Universal Intellect governed the universe in accordance with a final cause, «the perfection of the universe». By doing so, it ensured that, at any given moment, the matter of which the universe was constituted fulfilled all its potentialities.¹⁰ It ensured, that is, that the universe was «in act».¹¹

¹ THOMAS AQUINAS, *De principiis naturae*, cap. 3, TOL XLIII 41-43. Thomas mentions the same distinction briefly in *De veritate*, qu. 14, art. 5, arg. 2.

² *Causa*, II, BOI I 650-651.

³ *Summa term. met.*, VI, BOL I, IV 19; THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa theologiae*, I, qu. 104, art. 1, con., TOL V 464.

⁴ *Causa*, II, OIB I 650-651, 654-656; F. FIORENTINO, *Il panteismo*, cit. pp. 55-57. Bruno defined causes and principles differently elsewhere, distinguishing both from elements; see *Libri phys. expl.*, BOL III 266-267, 316.

⁵ *Causa*, II, OIB I 651, 663-664. For the World Soul as the 'principio formale' of the universe, see also *Causa*, proemiale epistola, II-III, OIB I 599, 663, 664, 679, 685.

⁶ *Causa*, epist., II, OIB I 599, 651-656.

⁷ *Causa*, II OIB I 654-655.

⁸ *Causa*, epist., BOI I 598. Cfr. *De rerum princ.*, BOL III 509, BOM 586: «Rerum causae efficientes et moventes sunt intellectus et anima».

⁹ *Causa*, epist., II, BOI I 651, 655-656.

¹⁰ *Causa*, II, OIB I 655. Similarly *Cena*, v, OIB I, 555-557.

¹¹ For the universe as 'in act' when fulfilling all its potentialities, see, e.g., *Causa*, proemiale epistola, I-III, OIB I 603, 655, 698.

The Intellect achieved this end by means of the Ideas of which it was constituted. Like a sculptor, it modelled its effects on the Ideas, understood as archetypes, and expressed them as principles intrinsic to things.¹ It performed, therefore, two roles, extrinsic cause and intrinsic principle. To illustrate this point, Bruno borrowed, no doubt with a certain impish glee, Aristotle's notoriously controversial comments on the separability of the intellectual soul in *De anima*, II.2. Aristotle had described the soul at one moment as the form of the body and therefore inseparable from it but, at another, had commented (following Bruno's interpretation) that, as a knowing subject, it was separate from matter and therefore a subsistent substance.² What was true of the human soul was *a fortiori* true of the Universal Intellect conjoined with the World Soul, given that, as Plotinus had pointed out, the World Soul ruled its body, the cosmos, more simply than human souls governed theirs.³ The World Soul conjoined with the Universal Intellect was, to adapt an analogy used by Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus and countless other thinkers over the centuries, like a helmsman on board a ship.⁴ Inasmuch as he moved with his ship, a helmsman was part of it. Inasmuch as he governed its direction autonomously, he was separate from it.⁵ Similarly, the Universal Intellect conjoined with the World Soul was both a principle, inasmuch as it was the form and therefore 'part' of natural things, and a cause, inasmuch as it was the extrinsic cause of their activity.

The distinction between principle and cause applied also to God, with an important qualification. The terms 'cause' and 'principle' when used of the Universal Intellect and the World Soul denoted the distinct ways – extrinsic and intrinsic – in which they related to their effects. By definition, however, God was absolutely simple, singular and suprasubstantial.⁶ No distinctions or enumerations were admissible in him. Hence God, uniquely, was both cause and principle of each and every thing and the two terms denoted no more than the two ways in which they related to him.⁷ He was their

¹ *Causa*, II, OIB I 655.

² *Causa*, II, OIB I 656.

³ *Causa*, II, OIB I 656-657; PLOTINUS II.9.7; T. LEINKAUF, *Kommentar*, cit., in BW III 356.

⁴ For the analogy, see CANONE, *Il dorso e il grembo*, pp. 7, 54, 65, 242-243.

⁵ *Causa* II, OIB I 656.

⁶ *Causa* II, OIB I 648. Similarly *De rerum princ.*, BOL III 509, BOM 586; *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 40, BOM 1014; *Summa term. met.*, BOL I, IV, pp. 73-74.

⁷ *Causa* II, OIB I 650. As noted by E. CANONE, *Magia dei contrari*, cit., p. 16, note 1, Bruno (*Summa term. met.*, 'Intellectus seu idea', BOL I, IV 102-104), using the traditional analogy of the sun and sunlight, which he attributed to the Egyptians and Platonists, commented that God could be spoken of in two ways, in His absolute simplicity and vestigially as the «pater generationis». The sun's intrinsic substance, while remaining unchanged in itself, produced light and warmth, thereby generating and sustaining life. Its substance was therefore triadic, in that the light and warmth that it produced were rooted (*radicatus*) in it. Similarly, God was triadic: His absolute simplicity was threefold in that His substance entailed the generative

efficient cause and hence external to them; but he was also their intrinsic principle inasmuch as each thing occupied a place within the hierarchically ordered whole deriving from him.¹ (An analogy, which Bruno did not provide, might be the way in which an axiom is implicit in a hierarchy of axioms deriving from it.) Bruno's comment that priority and posteriority in this hierarchy was based on 'duration', 'nature', or 'dignity' – that is, temporal priority, ontological priority and priority of one thing over another of the same kind based on merit or rank – derived from scholastic discussions of priority, or rather the lack of it, in relation to the three persons of the Trinity,² a subject that had preoccupied Bruno during his early career as a theologian. Ultimately, the distinctions between these types of priority derived from Aristotle's *Categories*.³ Bruno did not re-employ this argument, not an entirely satisfactory one, on the other occasions on which he explained that God was both above and within things.⁴

CONCLUSION

In the second dialogue of *De la causa*, Bruno set himself the task of explaining that the World Soul was both immanent and extrinsic to the universe. Following Stoic sources, ones that he mistakenly believed to be Egyptian or Pythagorean, he described the World Soul as lying 'within' the material world. The Universal Intellect was an aspect or, in his words, 'faculty' of the World Soul rather than a distinct hypostasis of the kind that Neoplatonists had posited. The Universal Intellect and the Ideas of which it was comprised were, therefore, also immanent within the universe. Further,

power which produced the rational order of all things (*intelligentia*) and the love (*amor seu pulchritudo*) binding all things to Him.

¹ *Causa*, II, OIB I 650. Bruno mentioned or discussed order (*ordo*) in relation to *Deus seu mens* in *Immenso*, v. 10, BOL I, II 314, and *Summa term. met.*, XXIX, BOL I, IV 86-87. In the next two sections of the latter work (*ibidem*, XXX-XXXI, BOL I, IV, 87), he discussed priority and posteriority.

² THOMAS AQUINAS, *Contra errores graecorum*, pars 1, cap. 2 (TOL XL, A, 73); IDEM, *In sententiis*, lib. 1, dist. 9, qu. 2, art. 1, co.; *ibidem*, lib. 1, dist. 12, qu. 1, pr.; IDEM, *De potentia*, qu. 3, art. 18 ad 17; ps. THOMAS AQUINAS (NICOLAUS DE GORRAN), *In VII epistolas canonicas*, pars 4, cap. 1, in THOMAS AQUINAS, *Opera omnia*, 25 vols, Parma, 1852-72, XXXI, p. 422. (All available online through the *Corpus thomisticum*).

³ ARISTOTLE, *Categories*, XII, 14a26-b8; BOETHIUS, *In Categorias Aristotelis libri quatuor*, lib. 4, PL LXIV 283D-286C.

⁴ E.g., *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 40, BOM 1014: «Est supra omnia, infra omnia, in omnibus»; *De minimo*, I.4, BOL I, III 147; *Summa term. met.*, BOL I, IV, 102; FIRPO, *Le Procès*, cit., pp. 67, 303. Elsewhere, as F. Tocco (*Le opere inedite*, cit., p. 47) noted, Bruno described God as intrinsic in things, more so than things were in themselves, a formula that he used elsewhere of the World Soul; cf. *Lampas trig. stat.*, BOL III 41, BOM 1016; and *Causa*, proemiale epistola, OIB I 606. In *Sig. sigill.*, I.32, BOL II, II 175, BOMNE II 214, Bruno used the formula of the (Universal) Intellect.

from Stoic philosophy, though on this occasion knowingly, Bruno borrowed the idea that the World Soul was the active principle informing the passive principle of matter to produce the corporeal universe. Unlike the Stoics, however, Bruno defined the World Soul, the Universal Intellect and its constituent Ideas as intelligible realities. This permitted him to argue that they were 'separate' and therefore 'exterior' or 'extrinsic' to, as well as immanent within, the corporeal world.

Bruno was, however, aware that words and expressions denoting spatial relationships were inadequate for the task to hand. Intelligible realities, being by definition dimensionless, could not be located in or outside corporeal things. To solve the problem, he redefined interiority and exteriority in terms of causality. Drawing on a passage in Thomas Aquinas's *De principiis naturae* or a derivative, he defined principles as internal causes and distinguished them from causes proper, which were external. He applied this distinction to the World Soul and the Universal Intellect with its constituent Ideas, and indeed, albeit briefly, to God. With these concepts and definitions in place, Bruno proceeded to his extraordinary account of matter, God and the universe in the following dialogues of *De la causa, principio et uno*.