

The Discovery of Infinity

by strannikov

The discovery of infinity must always occur on the day following, the next day, that is, or even the one after: it is never an option on the very day its apprehension is entertained.

The discovery of infinity follows some sudden intrusion, like a stumble or a lurch across an untidy threshold: never is it the result of an intentional or systematic search, infinity is far too clever for that to occur. “The discovery of infinity” thus is nothing at all like “the discovery of America”: any “discovery of infinity” is a discovery made by infinity, it is an action performed by infinity (America, by contrast, performs no actions and discovers nothing—America itself was discovered). By convention, Columbus discovered America: but infinity still has not discovered America. Had infinity discovered America by now, its borders would be limitless, but alas . . .

Having not discovered America to date, infinity will never discover America today, though perhaps possibly maybe some day later, or the next day following, or some day subsequent to that. This cannot be helped, sequence being the orderly phenomenon it is praised for being: if consolation is to be found, then we might comfort ourselves with the reminder that even Columbus had his day, without ever being discovered by America. We can deem this an unambiguous sign of progress, as now we see plainly that America's discovery by infinity is postponed indefinitely, or at least until some other day: until that day, or the day after, or the next available day succeeding, America's bounds will stretch only from shining sea to shining sea, as convention, cartography, and oceanography allow.

Some wonder whether infinity takes its measurements of a subject like America before the fact: but this is an interrogative error of the first magnitude, because infinity sizes up the subjects it accosts all at once, all at the same time, but—not until at least a day

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or two afterwards. (Must we remind ourselves that America's day has not yet passed?)

Infinity thus eternally entails procrastination, since its actions transpire only afterwards, well after it's too late to avoid the discovery or collision. No one rushes infinity: you disbelieve? You'll have nothing to show for your efforts ahead of time!

Infinity occurs as an afterthought, for discoverers like Columbus as for countries like America. Now, Columbus has since been discovered by infinity—well after the fact of his discovery of America, if we may belabor the point. Whenever infinity gets around to discovering America, it will no longer be the land found by Columbus. (Here, some would interject that infinity is not obliged to discover America, an interjection that merits reflection today and perhaps for the next few days.) Thus, well-toured travelers can confess that boundless discoveries of infinity may well yet occur—but not, of course, until later, the next day or the day following, or even some day afterwards. (Whether this serves as proof that infinity is the perfection of a Procrastination long since hallowed by practice remains to be seen. [Perhaps possibly maybe it can be said properly that infinity will at least one day hence constitute just such a proof, but of course, later, the next day following, or some day after that.]

All such urgent matters warrant postponement of consideration until further notice! (Nota bene: someone remind the author to put off taking up this matter again until . . . well, at least until soon, that is.)

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