

La geografia come “filosofia prisca”?

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Kant taught physical geography from the summer semester of 1756 until his retirement in 1797 when his course was cancelled. And his Critique of Pure Reason can be defined as nothing but the protocolar, systematic, radical and conscious realization of Ptolemy's Geography assumptions. According to Kantian analytics of pure intellect, metaphysical being is not an original data but a problem or a postulate. It poses questions on the nature of the projection point and, in particular, on the transition from its “objectivity” to the subjective form of representation, a movement that in the context of Kantian thought seems to represent exactly the metamorphic character of the projection mechanism. This is called “the design” according to which “reason has insight only into what it itself produces”, as it is explained in the preface of the second edition of the Critique, a critique which is, in short, the illustration of a sort of mental map of the projective drawing and its analysis, that begins not from the objects that are produced, but from the recognition of its function as producer of a particular mode of knowledge. In other words the Ptolemaic projection point is Pure Reason, and its Critique is the cartographic description of projection. The famous motto on silence that Kant borrows from Bacon and includes in his foreword to his Critique marks his intention to say no more concerning himself as geographer and the cartographic nature of his thought.

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Kant insegnò senza interruzione la geografia fisica per tutta la sua quarantennale vita di docente, dal semestre estivo del 1756 fino al suo collocamento a riposo nel 1797, quando l'insegnamento tacque¹. Nello stesso an-

¹ Cfr. P. Gedan, *Immanuel Kants physische Geographie*, in *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, 29 vol., Berlin, Reimer/de Gruyter, 1923-1983, vol. IX, pp. 509-10.