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Interpreting the Critique of Pure Reason in Argentina: The Beginnings of Kantian Philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires

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Abstract. The research explores the origins of Kantian philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires by focusing on the work of Mario Caimi. Although shifts in Caimi's emphases and perspectives can be traced over time, this study argues that a consistent orientation underlies his research: the problem of method as the guiding thread of Kant's philosophy. This interpretative line, inaugurated by Caimi, has decisively shaped the development of Kantian studies at the University of Buenos Aires, establishing a distinctive hermeneutic framework that has since been taken up and further developed by members of the Kant Research Group in Buenos Aires. Through an analysis of key moments in Caimi's reading of Kant – ranging from the Transcendental Aesthetic to the Transcendental Dialectic – this study aims to demonstrate how the focus on philosophical method reveals a coherent interpretative strategy. It also highlights two defining features of Caimi's exegesis: the rejection of psychologistic interpretations of Kant, and the insistence on the centrality of sensibility, particularly with respect to the role of sensation.

Keywords: Kant, method, Transcendental Aesthetic, Transcendental Dialectic, Mario Caimi

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Интерпретация Критики чистого разума в Аргентине: истoki кантианской философии в университете Буэнос-Айреса

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Аннотация. Исследование изучает истоки кантианской философии в университете Буэнос-Айреса, сосредоточившись на работах Марио Кайми. Хотя с течением времени можно проследить изменения в акцентах и перспективах Кайми, в этом исследовании утверждается, что в основе его исследований лежит последовательная ориентация: проблема метода как путеводная нить философии Канта. Эта интерпретационная линия, предложенная Кайми, оказала решающее влияние на развитие кантианских исследований в университете Буэнос-Айреса, создав особую герменевтическую структуру, которая с тех пор была подхвачена и далее развита членами исследовательской группы Канта в Буэнос-Айресе. Посредством анализа ключевых моментов в прочтении Канта Кайми – от Трансцендентальной эстетики до Трансцендентальной диалектики – это исследование призвано продемонстрировать, как акцент на философском методе раскрывает последовательную стратегию интерпретации. Это также подчеркивает две отличительные черты экзегезы Кайми: отказ от психологистских интерпретаций Канта и настойчивое подчеркивание центральной роли чувственности, особенно в отношении роли ощущений.

Ключевые слова: Кант, метод, Трансцендентальная эстетика, Трансцендентальная диалектика, Марио Кайми

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Introduction

The publication, in 1982, of Mario Caimi's study on the *Critique of Pure Reason* – titled *Kants Lehre von der Empfindung in der Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Versuch zur Rekonstruktion einer Hyletik der reinen Erkenntnis* – marks the beginning of interpretative work on Kantian thought at the University of Buenos Aires [1]. The book, the result of his doctoral dissertation supervised by Gerhard Funke, may be considered the starting point of an extensive philosophical trajectory which, over the course of decades, has addressed various central problems in Kant's work.

Although shifts in Caimi's approaches and emphases can be traced, this study will show that a consistent orientation underlies his interpretation: the method as the guiding thread of Kant's philosophy. This interpretative line, inaugurated by Caimi, has decisively shaped the direction of Kantian studies at the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). His reading not only established a distinctive hermeneutic paradigm, but was also continued and enriched by various members of the Kant Research Group based at UBA.

In this context, the aim of this study is to highlight how the problem of the philosophical method serves as the key to interpreting the critical system. We will show how this approach allows us to detect lines of continuity in Caimi's treatment of specific issues. We will also demonstrate how this perspective is articulated with two characteristic features of his exegesis: the rejection of all psychologistic readings of Kant and the insistence on the centrality of sensibility, particularly regarding the role of sensation.

The investigation is organized into four sections. First, we will examine the nature of the philosophical method as conceived by Caimi in his reading of Kant. Second, we will address his analysis of the Transcendental Aesthetic, focusing on the status of sensation. The third part will be devoted to his interpretation of the Transcendental Analytic. Finally, we will examine his treatment of the Transcendental Dialectic, with the aim of reinforcing the general thesis that guides this work.

The problem of method

The problem of method is the guiding thread in Caimi's interpretation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Caimi takes the problem of method as the key that allows us to grasp both the general architecture of the entire work and its internal logic.

According to Caimi, the *Doctrine of Method* is the central axis of the *Critique*. In this section Kant lays out the general logic of the work. There, Kant introduces the defining features of the philosophical method. This idea is not exclusive to the *Critique*; rather, as Caimi points out, it has clear precedents in Kant's early writings. In particular, in the *Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und der Moral* (1762), Kant already claims that philosophy must proceed in a peculiar way. This same idea, Caimi notes, reappears as the core of the *Doctrine of Method* that concludes the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Caimi argues that the synthetic method is the guiding idea of Kantian inquiry. In this context, the distinction Kant draws in the *Prolegomena* between the method of mathematics – analytic – and that of philosophy – synthetic – becomes central. The analytic method is regressive. It begins from the fact of knowledge and inquiries into its conditions of possibility. The problem with the regressive method is that it rests on the assumption that what is being sought is real and actually existing.

By contrast, the philosophical method is synthetic; it begins with an originally vague concept that must be progressively clarified. This method is progressive and

constructive. Unlike the regressive method, which presupposes what it seeks to explain, the synthetic method requires justification at each step, showing that the elements introduced are not arbitrary but necessary within the development. The process begins with an obscure and confused concept. Through its analysis, clarity and distinction are gradually achieved, and each new element required by the inquiry is introduced. Every component brought in is implied by the preceding ones and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the concept under investigation¹.

The method progresses by isolating, analyzing, and ultimately integrating the elements. For this reason, it is a progressive method. The organic nature of reason makes this operation possible. Caimi maintains: “The development of the faculty of understanding is, therefore, similar to that of an organism that grows only through development, not through external addition. The biological metaphor indicates that the connection among the elements of knowledge is necessary – that is, systematic. Each member is required by the others. The introduction of each new element does not occur by chance, but is justified by an internal necessity (ultimately, by the overall concept)” [3. P. 260].

Based on this conception, Caimi reconstructs the synthetic method in six fundamental stages. The starting point is an obscure and confused concept whose origin is unknown. This representation marks the zero point of the investigation. Caimi argues that the obscure and confused concept from which the *Critique of Pure Reason* begins is that of reason [4. P. 9]. In the *Transcendental Aesthetic*, it is that of representation [5. P. 29]. In the metaphysical deduction, Kant starts from the concept of synthesis [3. P. 262]. In the transcendental deduction, the starting point is apperception [2. P. 11]. Secondly, the elements belonging to this concept must be identified, with the aim of “distinguishing elements within this still undifferentiated concept” [4. P. 10]. Once identified, in the third stage, these elements are isolated and analyzed separately. These new insights may serve as starting points for advancing the investigation. In a fourth step, the new concepts that are required must be introduced. For example, the study of sensibility as a receptive faculty leads to the postulation of an active faculty that makes synthesis possible: the understanding. This progression justifies the transition from the *Transcendental Aesthetic* to the *Transcendental Logic*. In the fifth stage, partial syntheses are formed – a process exemplified by schematism – through which the previously differentiated moments are articulated. Finally, in the sixth stage, these partial syntheses converge in a total synthesis that systematically unifies all the elements involved in the investigation. This mode of procedure not only structures

¹ According to this method: “the philosopher must first isolate the elements of the concept and study them separately. They must isolate and distinguish a single element. This leads to other elements that may have been previously unknown but that henceforth become strictly necessary for the complete analysis of the first element. (It is precisely this necessity that justifies the introduction of new elements.) These newly introduced elements are in turn distinguished and joined to the first element. This procedure is repeated in a synthesis of increasing complexity, until the investigator is in a position to reconstruct the original concept, but now with complete clarity and distinction” [2. P. 12].

Kant's exposition, but, according to Caimi, should also serve as the guiding principle for a proper reading of the *Critique*. In the following sections, we will examine how this methodological orientation guides Mario Caimi's interpretations of the different sections of the work.

Transcendental aesthetic

The starting point of the synthetic method is an obscure and confused concept. The initial concept of the *Transcendental Aesthetic* is that of "representation in general." Kant's argument begins from this point zero. According to Caimi, this concept of representation is subjected to the method of isolation, which marks the beginning of the entire argument [6. P. 191]. This first stage arises from sensation, particularly from affection. Affection and sensation are necessarily implicated. Sensation is structurally intentional; by its very nature, it refers to objects [7. P. 112]. Affection, in turn, supplies the material content of knowledge. The existence of sensible representations, generated by affection, marks the beginning of the investigation. For Caimi, the central operation consists in clarifying this initial concept through a progressive process [5. P. 29]. The method makes it possible to decompose the elements that constitute sensible representation: empirical intuition, its material content (sensation), and form [5. P. 33].

In the first paragraph of the *Aesthetic*, Kant introduces sensation as one of the components of representation and posits that space and time are pure forms of sensible intuition. This hypothesis is developed in the second paragraph, where a demonstration is offered that space is suitable to play the role of the form of sensibility [5. P. 36]. According to Caimi, the decisive confirmation that space and time fulfill this function is found in the second conclusion².

Caimi identifies three fundamental consequences of this discovery. First, if space is an a priori intuition, the possibility of synthetic a priori judgments in mathematics is explained. Second, this justifies the applicability of mathematics to empirical phenomena, since space constitutes their form of apprehension. Third – and most importantly – it is established that the objects of experience are not things in themselves, but phenomena. From this, Caimi formulates two theses concerning the scope of the *Transcendental Aesthetic*: negatively, Kant does not develop a doctrine of space and time as such, but rather seeks to ground their status as forms of sensibility; positively, the *Aesthetic* legitimizes the application of mathematics to nature³.

² Caimi maintains that, unlike the metaphysical exposition, in the transcendental exposition Kant applies the analytic method, starting from the fact of geometry. This science shows that we possess synthetic a priori judgments: we know something about spatial relations independently of empirical experience. This demonstrates that both the form and the relations of phenomena are given prior to any concrete perception [5. P. 41]. The *Transcendental Aesthetic* thus succeeds in establishing that space and time are the necessary conditions for sensibility to have form [8. P. 12].

³ Caimi argues: "The *Transcendental Aesthetic* contains some indications concerning the nature of time. The development of this theme extends up to the exposition of time as the form of inner sense and the demonstration of its general consequence, namely, the transcendental ideality and empirical

Transcendental logic: the transcendental analytic

According to Caimi, the idea of method also constitutes the axis that structures both the metaphysical and the transcendental deduction. The *Transcendental Aesthetic* had shown that sensibility is a passive faculty through which we receive representations. However, the analysis of this faculty leads to the necessity of introducing another one that can account for how the multiplicity of representations is unified. Since sensibility cannot perform this operation on its own, a second faculty is required: the understanding. This is introduced, then, by methodological demands derived from the previous analysis of sensibility [3. P. 261].

In order to conceive the unity of the given manifold, an active operation must be presupposed: synthesis. Hence, as Caimi notes, the concept of synthesis determines the systematic position of the metaphysical deduction.

The understanding, as the faculty of thinking, operates through concepts, and these are articulated in judgments, which constitute fundamental forms of knowledge. For this reason, the proper functions of the understanding can be derived from the different types of judgment [3. P. 267]. However, Kant's goal in this section is not so much to classify judgments as to identify the functions of the understanding that are manifested in them. The task of the metaphysical deduction is to demonstrate that there are pure concepts of the understanding [3. P. 267] and to determine which they are – a necessary condition for later addressing the question of their validity, the task of the transcendental deduction [3. P. 270].

In this interpretation of the metaphysical deduction, previously noted themes are reiterated. Caimi emphasizes that the synthetic method guides the entire argumentation. He also stresses the rejection of any psychologistic reading: the deduction is not based on empirical observations of mental functioning, nor does it require psychological or anthropological references. Each of the concepts is introduced out of a necessity imposed by the method itself. In Caimi's words: "Nowhere have we sought the concept of synthesis through psychology. We arrived at it through the demands of the method, which required a separate consideration of sensibility and understanding, but later demanded their combination. Not insofar as we have observed them, but only insofar as they are methodologically indispensable, have we considered the concepts as syntheses, as actions of the understanding or of the imagination" [3. P. 275].

The metaphysical deduction, through the synthetic method, concludes that we possess pure concepts of the understanding. These concepts, although empty in themselves, must be able to refer to sensibility in order to acquire content. However,

reality of time. In vain shall we look in the *Aesthetic* for a more detailed description of time, an exhaustive account of its properties, or an explanation of its structure. (Similarly, in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* there is no explanation of space in the way geometry offers one). The reason for this is that, in order to provide such an explanation of the nature and properties of time, it would be necessary to consider time as an object; but there is no way to consider something as an object if one entirely abstracts from the work of spontaneity." [9. P. 416].

this reference is not given in advance: the possibility remains open that such concepts “are nothing more than fictions of the understanding, without any object to which they could be applied” [8. P. 26]. Unlike formal logic, transcendental logic cannot dispense with content. Overcoming the separation between sensibility and understanding – in order to confer content to concepts and meaning to intuitions – is what will drive the transcendental deduction.

The problem of method continues to guide the transcendental deduction as well. Once it has been demonstrated that there are pure concepts of the understanding, it remains to be proven that these concepts can effectively refer to objects. From Caimi’s perspective, the guiding question of this deduction is how thought can be connected to objects [2. P. 1]. While empiricism does not confront this problem – since it holds that the content of concepts derives from experience – and it does not arise in frameworks where form and content are given together [2], in Kantian thought the issue becomes central due to the way Kant conceives of the concept as essentially empty. Caimi argues that one of the novel contributions of the critical system is the notion of “empty concept” [2. P. 54]. Kant shows that the validity of a concept does not depend solely on its formal logical correctness, but on its reference to an intuition: “Therefore, a concept may be empty and still flawless according to formal logical criteria. This is because it may be empty in this new way, since it may lack a corresponding intuition. Kant’s achievement, his innovation with respect to the Leibniz-Wolffian philosophy, emerges here. It consists in recognizing intuition as a necessary condition of knowledge. This entails the recognition of the insufficiency of the understanding as the sole source of knowledge” [10. P. 145].

The goal of the transcendental deduction is to show that the pure concepts of the understanding are not doomed to vacuity, but can in fact have objective reference [11. P. 59]. To this end, Kant once again applies the synthetic method. The obscure concept from which this deduction begins is that of apperception, which will be clarified through its synthetic development [2. P. 14].

The synthesis carried out by the understanding must not be conceived as a psychological process, but as a methodological requirement. Based on the passivity of sensibility, already established in the *Aesthetic*, an active faculty is required: the understanding. The metaphysical deduction had shown that we possess pure concepts of the understanding; but, given their emptiness, it is necessary to demonstrate that they can refer to objects. This is the task of the transcendental deduction, which begins from the still undetermined notion of apperception. Caimi summarizes his thesis as follows: “The entire Transcendental Deduction B is constructed with extreme coherence, as the exposition of a single principle and as its synthetic enrichment. The argument can be followed as the progressively richer and more differentiated formulation of the Principle of Apperception, which Kant introduces at the beginning of §16” [6. P. 193].

Ultimately, Caimi’s reading of the Transcendental Deduction highlights three main features. First, the centrality of the synthetic method as the guiding thread. Second, the rejection of any psychologistic or anthropological approach: Kant is

not concerned here with describing how representations empirically arise, but rather with the conditions of possibility of knowledge. Finally, Caimi emphasizes that one of the fundamental problems of the critical project is how to ensure that the empty concepts of the understanding acquire content, thereby resolving the relation between being and thinking.

Transcendental schematism

According to Caimi, Kantian schematism fulfills a specific function, distinct from that of the Transcendental Deduction. Contrary to what many interpreters claim, its role is not superfluous [12. P. 147]. While the Deduction is concerned with establishing the conditions of possibility for objectivity, the Schematism addresses the problem of how a singular empirical object can be subjected to the a priori conditions imposed by subjectivity [2. P. 75]. It is no longer a question of the object in general, but of the one given in sensible intuition. The role of schematism is precisely to enable the subsumption of two heterogeneous elements: empirical objects under the categories [12. P. 155]. The given object is external to thought and possesses properties that the intellect does not provide; therefore, the challenge is how to incorporate it under the conditions imposed by the subject. Caimi thus underscores a distinctive aspect of the Kantian interpretation: the singular object is not a product of thought but something heterogeneous to it, and for that reason, its subsumption is necessary⁴.

From this perspective, neither the categories nor the forms of sensibility can, by themselves, generate the given object. The object remains heterogeneous with respect to the a priori conditions. Therefore, the function of schematism is to mediate between these two domains: between the object given to sensation and the understanding. This bridge is constructed through temporal determination, which generates schemata by means of the action of the imagination guided by the understanding [13. P. 202]. The schema, in this context, is a transcendental determination of time. It is a procedure [14. P. 84]: the imagination produces a temporal synthesis according to the rules of the understanding, such that each category is related to a specific form of temporality [13. P. 417]. The task of schematism consists precisely in giving time a structure in accordance with each category [13. P. 418]. Each schema represents a specific modality of this temporal determination. In this way, imagination resolves the heterogeneity between the sensible and the intellectual by providing unity to what is temporally diverse. The schemata are homogeneous with the concepts because they arise from the synthesis of the understanding, and they are also homogeneous with sensibility because they are based on time. Thus, as Caimi argues, the schemata, being both temporal and

⁴ Schematism must show how particular objects given to the senses can be integrated within the a priori conditions of thought. This entails a shift in perspective: whereas the *Analytic of Concepts* deals with the object in a general sense, the *Analytic of Principles* refers to the singular and intuitively given object [10. P. 205].

categorial, succeed in mediating between the concept and the sensible object [13. P. 203]⁵. For this reason, the problem of subsumption must not be confused with the logical subordination of concepts. Transcendental logic is not concerned with subsuming concepts under other concepts, but rather with how the given object can be comprehended by a concept. Since they belong to distinct domains (intuition and concept), only a third element can connect them [15]. This element is the schema: a product of the imagination that enables the necessary homogeneity for subsumption. In this way, the heterogeneity between the sensible and the categories is overcome [16. P. 225], and it becomes possible to explain how the empirical object can be subsumed under a category [14. P. 91]. Once this possibility has been clarified, nothing prevents us from affirming that the categories have universal validity for all sensible objects [8. P. 31]. Therefore, synthetic a priori judgments valid for all phenomena can be formulated – these constitute the fundamental principles upon which all other judgments are based [8. P. 33]. Kant develops this task in the *System of Principles*.

Caimi's reading of schematism aligns with the interpretative guidelines outlined in the introduction. First, it rejects any psychologistic interpretation. Imagination is not understood as a faculty of the empirical subject, as it would be in the *Anthropology*, but rather as a transcendental condition of knowledge. For this reason, Caimi proposes replacing the term "faculty" with "necessary condition" [16. P. 217]. Likewise, schemata are not individual mental images, but universal procedures that make the application of concepts to given objects possible. Second, the chapter on schematism introduces the problem of the given object and, with it, the role of sensation. This should not be interpreted in a psychological sense: such an approach would obscure the epistemological aim of the text [14. P. 104]. Once again, the methodological question serves as the guiding thread of the argument: schematism is introduced as a methodological requirement, as a solution to the problem left open in the *Analytic of Concepts*, and it also prepares the ground for the *System of Principles*.

Finally, Caimi's interpretation takes up a concern already present in his 1982 research: how the conditions of experience relate to that which is not produced by the mind. Integrating the given object into the structure of experience is a demand the system must fulfill. In this sense, Caimi highlights the central role of sensation and of the matter of affection in the chapter on schematism. Sensation allows for the recognition of empirical properties and testifies to the existence of the object [14. P. 100]. Therefore, schematism addresses the problem of how thought relates to reality.

⁵ Kant illustrates this mediation by comparing the empirical concept of "plate" with the geometrical concept of "circle": both share roundness, which enables the conceptual transition between them (*KrV*, A 137/B 176). Caimi explains that roundness functions as a mediator: even if the matter is abstracted, the relation that defines both concepts (the round shape) remains [15. P. 218]. Thus, in schematism, the schema plays the role of this mediator, allowing the heterogeneity between concept and object to be overcome without one being reduced to the other [15. P. 219]. Intuition and concept remain distinct and irreducible to one another [15. P. 85].

Transcendental logic: the transcendental dialectic

According to Caimi's interpretation, the Dialectic has both a positive and a negative role. On the one hand, the dialectic plays a negative role. It shows how reason, by its very nature, necessarily leads to illusions. Caimi emphasizes that Kant sees the dialectic as a source of metaphysical errors when reason mistakes its own ideas for real objects (e.g., treating the idea of "God" as an actually existing entity). The dialectic exposes the excesses of reason when it transcends the limits of experience. Kant demonstrates "that those ideas we believed to have a divine origin – and therefore to be true and to refer to their corresponding objects – are merely the almost mechanical result of the repetition of certain logical forms. That is why I said that the metaphysical deduction of the ideas entails an extraordinary novelty in philosophy. It is almost a revolution within it" [17. P. 256].

However, on the other hand, it is also the task of the Dialectic to highlight the positive – and indeed necessary – role of reason's ideas. Kant acknowledges that the dialectic, although deceptive, drives reason to seek the unconditioned, which grants it heuristic value.

In this way, the Dialectic has two tasks with respect to metaphysics. On the one hand, it must structure and guide rational thought toward the unconditioned (the ideas of soul, world, and God), showing their systematic and heuristic function. On the other hand, the Dialectic must critique and expose the transcendental illusions that arise when reason mistakes its own ideas for real objects, thereby delimiting the scope of metaphysical knowledge.

Following the transcendental method, the starting point of the Dialectic is the isolation of reason. Reason, by its very nature, produces peculiar representations⁶. As in previous cases, the approach is not psychological, but rather lies in the methodological necessity of introducing a specific kind of activity. The metaphysical deduction of concepts presupposes spontaneity as their origin: the understanding. Ideas also originate in an activity – namely, reason.

The metaphysical deduction of the ideas is analogous to the metaphysical exposition of space and time: its aim is to show the *a priori* origin of certain concepts. In the metaphysical exposition of the *Aesthetic*, it is shown that space and time are *a priori* forms of sensibility. The metaphysical deduction of the ideas will show the *a priori* origin of each of them. Likewise, in the metaphysical deduction of the categories, the table of concepts is derived from the table of judgments; that is, from the table of judgments one can determine which are the concepts of the understanding. Ideas arise from the form of the syllogism. Kant shows that ideas do

⁶ Caimi exposes the internal tension within the *Critique of Pure Reason* regarding the origin of ideas. On the one hand, Kant claims that reason produces peculiar concepts – the ideas; on the other hand, he maintains that these are nothing more than concepts of the understanding freed from the conditions of their empirical application. Caimi shows that both theses coexist in the Kantian text, and that it is precisely the logical structure of the syllogism that allows for the resolution of this apparent hesitation [17. P. 458].

not emerge arbitrarily nor are they innate, but have a systematic origin in the forms of syllogisms, just as the categories of the understanding derive from the table of judgments.

Following Rudolf Mather, Caimi distinguishes two steps in this deduction: first, recognizing that the premises and conclusion of the syllogism are judgments, that is, representations connected according to logical relations; second, applying the principle of reason, which requires the discovery of an unconditioned synthetic unity. In this way, the prosyllogistic procedure – the ascending chain of conditions in search of the unconditioned – becomes the formal mechanism by which reason generates ideas. Three types of ideas are generated, according to the three kinds of relation among representations – that is, in accordance with the categories of relation. The idea of God is deduced from the disjunctive syllogism, insofar as it introduces a collective unity encompassing the totality of possible predicates. The sum of all realities, conceived as an individual, gives rise to the ideal of pure reason. The hypostasis of this idea – that is, treating it as existing – leads to the dialectical use of the concept of God. The idea of World is deduced from the hypothetical syllogism, as it reflects a conditional connection among phenomena. Reason tends to complete the series of causes and effects in pursuit of a totality. The hypostasis of this totality gives rise to the antinomies of reason. Finally, the idea of Soul is deduced from the categorical syllogism, whose form affirms a subject of which all concepts are predicated. If this synthetic unity is hypostatized as an existing substance, it leads to the illegitimate use of the idea of the soul. In conclusion, Caimi emphasizes that the deduction has a dual task: to show the origin of the ideas in reason, and to establish their complete table based on the forms of the syllogism. Since there are only three syllogistic forms, there will be only three transcendental ideas. The connection of these ideas with the categories gives rise to a multiplicity of pure rational concepts – the “predicables of the ideas” – which constitute the foundation of the antinomies. In this way, the metaphysical deduction of the ideas is achieved by taking the three types of syllogisms as its guiding thread. Now, just as for the concepts, a transcendental deduction is also necessary to show that these ideas have content⁷. This is also a positive task of the Transcendental Dialectic.

The positive role of metaphysics has two aspects. On the one hand, ideas have a regulative function: they serve to extend our knowledge as far as possible. On the other hand, they demonstrate the existence of a critical metaphysics. Caimi’s study addresses both of these aspects. As we have noted, the positive role of ideas is not limited to their regulative function. Caimi shows that in the *Progress of Metaphysics*, there is a special metaphysics compatible with critical philosophy. A critical metaphysics is neither a natural disposition, nor a practical nor an immanent one. Caimi argues that special metaphysics not only continues to exist within the

⁷ “If, on the other hand, they are generated by reason, they might perhaps be empty concepts to which no object corresponds. To resolve this latter issue concerning the possible emptiness of the ideas, a transcendental deduction of them becomes necessary.” [17. P. 472].

critical system, but that Kant develops “a complete metaphysics following the model of Baumgarten” [18. P. 262].

Caimi shows how Kant develops a special or theoretical metaphysics that replaces the traditional *metaphysica specialis*, displaced by the critique of reason. Within this framework, his intention is to highlight the existence, in the Kantian system, of a *theologia rationalis*, a *cosmologia rationalis*, and a *psychologia rationalis* as components of the theoretical part of transcendental idealism. The objective reality of concepts of the supersensible is attained through *symbolization*, as the proof of the regulative use of ideas is insufficient to demonstrate their validity [18. P. 275]⁸.

Conclusion

An examination of Mario Caimi’s work reveals the coherence of an interpretation that, beyond occasional thematic shifts or specific emphases, consistently places the problem of method at the center of Kantian philosophy. This hermeneutic key not only guides his reading of the different sections of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, but also allows for their articulation within a systematic perspective. His approach not only inaugurates an interpretative line within the Argentine academic context but also establishes a hermeneutic paradigm that has had a lasting impact on Kantian studies at the University of Buenos Aires.

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⁸ Caimi states: “Now it is not a matter of considering this logical use of the ideas, but of finding their reference to objects: it must be shown that they are not merely empty concepts, but that they possess objective validity. This demonstration amounts to a transcendental deduction of the pure concepts of reason” [18. P. 275].

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