Kant and The Experience of Skepticism: Transcendental Arguments, Skepticism, and a Version of The Problem of The Justification of Foundational Assumptions.

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Keywords:

Kant. Transcendental arguments. Deduction. Skepticism. Foundational Assumptions.

Abstract:

Immanuel Kant is a key thinker in the History of Western Philosophy whose ideas continue to fascinate contemporary English-speaking academic philosophers. One such idea is Kant's conception of transcendental arguments. Although these arguments do not originate in Kant's philosophy, Kant's conception of them occupies a special place in the English-speaking literature on the topic. A growing trend in this literature is to claim that Kant's transcendental arguments are unique because they aim to achieve an *anti-skeptical end* through *deductive means*. I call the basic assumption behind readings of transcendental arguments like these the *deductive/anti-skeptical assumption*. This assumption claims that *deduction* is the *best means* to achieve an *anti-skeptical end*. In this thesis, I argue that accepting this assumption is one way to misinterpret transcendental arguments because—even though it *seems* compelling at first blush—it must be false. The resultant twist is that transcendental arguments *cannot be deductive*, which, in turn, means that understanding that Kant's transcendental arguments are *not deductive* in nature is itself no small detail for understanding the version of Kant's *'not-deductive'* solution to skepticism developed here.

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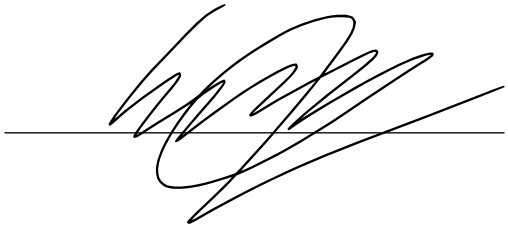

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Acknowledgment:

I dedicate this thesis to my friends and family, without whom I could not engage in the activity of Philosophy.

List of Abbreviations:

Works by Kant:

In line with contemporary conventions, I abbreviate all references to the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the pagination of the original edition indicated by A for the 1781 edition and B for the 1787 edition. Citations from Kant's other texts refer to the translations listed below. I mention sections of the *Critique of Pure Reason* by using capital letters and italics, for example, the *Transcendental Dialectic*, the *Doctrine of Method*, etc. When referring to the argument developed in the section rather than the section itself, I do not use italics, for example, the Transcendental Dialectic, the Transcendental Aesthetic, etc. When mentioning key concepts from Kant's works for the first time, I do so in inverted commas and italics, for example, *'conditions for the possibility of experience'*, *'experience*', etc. Subsequently, I state these key concepts without inverted commas or italics to avoid obscuring the presentation of the work, for example, "Thus, conditions for the possibility of experience are the unique set of premises that are indispensable to entertain an experience in the first place …". Three rare exceptions to this rule are the terms 'Idea', 'Category', and 'Dialectic'. In this thesis, Kant's technical use of these terms always appears in capital letters, inverted commas, and italics while their ordinary use always appears without capital letters, inverted commas, and not in italics.

CPR	*The Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Guyer, P., and Wood, A., 1998, New York: Cambridge University Press
Prolegomena	*Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics That Will Be Able to Come Forward as Science*, trans. Hatfield, G., 2004, New York: Cambridge University Press
COJ	*Critique of The Power of Judgment*, trans. Guyer, P., and Matthews, E., 2001, New York: Cambridge University Press

Groundwork	*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Gregor, M., 1998, New York: Cambridge University Press

Works by Descartes:

Citations from Descartes' texts refer to the translations listed below:

Meditations	*Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Cottingham, J., 1996, New York: Cambridge University Press
Discourse	*A Discourse on the Method*, trans. Maclean, I., 2006, New York: Oxford University Press

Work by Hume:

Citations from Hume's text refer to the translation listed below:

Enquiry	*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, trans. Steinberg, E., 1993, 2nd ed, Indianapolis: Hackett

Work by Husserl:

Citations from Husserl's text refer to the translation listed below:

CM	*Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Cairns, D., 1960, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers

Work by Heidegger:

Citations from Heidegger's text refer to the translation listed below:

K	*Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Churchill, J.S, 1965, USA: Indiana University Press

Works by Aristotle:

In line with contemporary conventions, all references to Aristotle's work are according to the Bekker numbering system. Citations from Aristotle's texts refer to the translations listed below:

Metaphysics	*Metaphysics*, trans. Sachs, J., 1999, Santa Fe: Green Lion Press
NE	*Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Crisp, R., 2016, 3rd ed, New York: Cambridge University Press

Work by Adorno:

Citations from Adorno's texts refer to the translation listed below:

A	*Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Livingstone, R., 2001, California: Stanford University Press

Work by Nietzsche:

Citations from Nietzsche's texts refer to the translation listed below:

Twilight	*Twilight of the Idols or How to Philosophize with a Hammer*, trans. Large, D., 1998, New York: Oxford University Press

Introduction:

Immanuel Kant is a key thinker in the History of Western Philosophy whose ideas continue to influence contemporary English-speaking academic philosophers. One such idea is Kant's conception of '*transcendental arguments'*. Although these arguments do not originate in Kant's philosophy, Kant's conception of them occupies a special place in the English-speaking literature on the topic[1]. A growing trend in this literature is to claim that these arguments are special because they aim to achieve an *anti-skeptical end* through *deductive means*[2]. I call the basic assumption behind these readings of transcendental arguments the *deductive/anti-skeptical assumption.* This assumption claims that *deduction* is the *best means* for transcendental arguments to achieve an *anti-skeptical end*. This claim forms the main focus of this thesis.

Deduction is a means of argumentation that persists in stimulating the philosophical imagination. According to Descartes (Discourse, p.15), deduction is the, "inference of something as following necessarily from some other propositions which are known with certainty". In simple terms, deduction is a form of argumentation that *moves down* from premises (i.e., 'propositions known with certainty') to conclusions (i.e., 'something as following from these 'propositions'). As the allusion to Descartes already makes clear, philosophy's interest in deduction is not new with the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments. This interest, already present in Plato (NE,1095a30 -1095b)[3], continues today. Even though some aspects of the term deduction have changed over time—one distinguishing feature remains the same, as it was for Plato and Descartes: the *directionality* of deduction[4].

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[1] For example, see: (Bübner, 1975, p. 453) and (Stapleford, 2005, p. 333).

[2] I provide examples of this claim in the first chapter of this thesis.

[3], "Let us not forget, however, that there is a difference between arguments *from first principles* [i.e., deductive arguments] and arguments *to* first principles. For Plato rightly used to wonder about this, raising the question whether the way to go is from first principles or to first principles, as in the racecourse whether it is from the judges to the post or back again as well."[Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. All Information in square brackets is mine. I show why arguments *from* first principles (i.e., in my terms, foundational assumptions) are deductive arguments in the first chapter of this thesis. The quote above serves two distinct but related purposes. Firstly, it substantiates the claim that there is a longstanding interest in deductive argumentation throughout the History of Western Philosophy. Secondly, it identifies a longstanding tradition in philosophy that is interested in deduction as a sort of steppingstone to an altogether different form of argumentation, a tradition which, as I attempt to demonstrate in this thesis, Kant, like both Descartes and Plato, locates himself in. My reading of Descartes as part of this tradition is Heterodox; however, it is shared with another author. For example, see: (CM, pp. 10-19).

[4] I provide some examples of this continuity in the definition of the term deduction in the first chapter of this thesis.

This is precisely the aspect of deduction that Kant highlights at (A732/B760) when he distinguishes Mathematics from Philosophy. Kant's awareness of this aspect of deduction is essential to establish early on because there are three concerns about deduction in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments that *appear* distinct but *actually* mutually reinforce one another. The first is a hermeneutical concern. It concerns a *seemingly* compelling but mistaken piece of textual evidence that supports the claim that Kant's transcendental arguments are deductive arguments in our sense of the term[5]. This is the most prominent concern in the English-speaking literature on the topic. The second is historical. It considers the compatibility between Kant's sense of the term deduction and its contemporary sense[6]. The final concern is philosophical. It assesses the relationship between a means of argumentation (i.e., deduction) and a philosophical position (i.e., skepticism). Although these concerns are distinct in theory, it is difficult to distinguish them in practice because it is possible that these concerns reinforce one another in the English-speaking literature on the topic.

On my part, I limit my focus to the third concern because, contrary to the historical concern, there is at least one sense in which Kant's understanding of the term deduction is the same as ours — namely that it moves down from a set of premises to a conclusion — and, contrary to those with hermeneutical concerns, nothing rules out the possibility that Kant is interested in deduction in the sense of the term specified above, at least *initially*, in other parts of the *Critique*. In order to avoid the appearance of a contradiction in my work at later stages in this thesis, it is essential to note that even though I disagree with these authors in some respects, I agree with them in others.

For this reason, unless I specify otherwise, I use the term deduction to refer to a type of justification that *moves down* from premises to conclusions. Examples of deductive argumentation abound in Euclidean Geometry (Discourse, p. 12). However, it is important to remember that this example is not perfect because there is some dispute concerning the deductive nature of Euclidean Geometry

[5] The piece of textual evidence at issue here is Kant's usage of the term *'transcendental deduction'*. The tendency to confuse Kant's legal use of the term deduction with the philosophical usage of the term deduction is well documented in the literature on Kant. For example, see: (K, p. 90), (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 4), (Bell, 1999, p. 193). Perhaps the most detailed discussion of the hermeneutical concern can be found in (Henrich, 1989, pp. 29-47). Even though I think that Kant's technical term transcendental deduction is different from the philosophical usage of the term deduction in our sense—as I intend to demonstrate—the philosophical usage of the term deduction is nevertheless valuable as a foil for understanding Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments.

[6] For example, see: (Hintikka, 1972, pp. 277-278)

in Kant's philosophy[7]. Nevertheless, I think that it can provide a good placeholder for understanding deduction in this thesis because, according to Kant (B14), Geometry *seems* deductive at first glance.

Skepticism is another topic that continues to captivate philosophers. This captivation finds one of its highest expressions in Descartes (*Meditation*s, pp.9-15)[8]. The allusion to Descartes serves two purposes here. Firstly, it points to the possibility of a longstanding tradition that identifies what seems to be a close connection between skepticism and deduction, at least *initially*. The possibility of this longstanding tradition is important to highlight that, even though the inquiry into the relationship between skepticism and deduction *seems* limited since it focuses on a single claim, its consequences are *actually* far-reaching. Secondly, the allusion to Descartes directs the inquiry into the relationship between skepticism and deduction by reminding us that even though there is a recent increase in the literature on skepticism in ethics[9], the primary domain for skepticism in Philosophy, in general, tends to be *epistemology*. Consequently, skepticism refers solely to '*epistemological skepticism'* in this thesis. Epistemology is the science of human knowledge, considering subjects such as the nature of our knowledge, the origin of our knowledge, and the limits of our knowledge (Cassam, 2007, p. 3). In this domain, skepticism refers to the position that *doubts* that knowledge is possible. As we shall see, the scope of skepticism, its content, and its underlying reasons *seem* to vary depending on the definition of skepticism one applies to Kant's transcendental arguments[10].

One potential reason for the variation in the characterisation of skepticism in the literature is that the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments tends to treat skepticism as an ordinary term that refers to a familiar philosophical position instead of a term of art from Kant's philosophy. I examine this tendency to some extent in the first chapter of this thesis. Whatever the cause of the apparent variety of definitions of skepticism in the literature, the result remains the

[7] For an example of the debate concerning the deductive status of Geometry in Kant's philosophy, see: (Crawford, 1962, p. 260).

[8] There is a debate in the literature concerning Kant's interest in skepticism. In more recent literature, this debate tends to turn on whether the skepticism that Kant is interested in is the same as Descartes's or a more ancient form of skepticism. For recent examples of this, see: (Guyer, 2008, pp. 27-28), (Forster, 2008, p. 16). Wherever Kant's fascination with skepticism arose, what remains essential at this stage is that it is at least possible to relate it to the idea of skepticism at issue in this longstanding philosophical enterprise.

[9] For example, see: (Brune, et al., 2017, pp. 1-2).

[10] I provide examples of the apparent variety of skeptical targets for transcendental arguments in the course of this thesis.

same: Any account of Kant's transcendental arguments must speak to both senses. On my part, I treat the term skepticism primarily as a term of art from Kant's account. The motivation behind this is that I think Kant's relationship to skepticism can only be adequately understood, at least *at first*, by taking him seriously on his own terms.

These concepts—skepticism and deduction—form the twin pillars of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. The *apparent* relationship between them— their "connection"— is the specific focus of this thesis. As we shall see in the first chapter of this thesis, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments possesses *at least* a degree of awareness of a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. However, despite the rudimentary awareness of this assumption in the literature, as far as I am aware, there is no attempt to explain the *apparent* connection between these terms. This thesis contends that this lack of explanation is problematic because accepting the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption is one way to misinterpret transcendental arguments since —even though this assumption *seems* compelling at first blush— it is demonstrably false.

The main aim of this thesis is to attempt to answer the question: Can Kant's transcendental arguments provide a *means* to overcome skepticism? To do so, this project will break the main question into the following sub-questions: What is a transcendental argument? What is skepticism? How does a transcendental argument differ from other arguments? If transcendental arguments differ from other arguments, does this difference enable them to overcome skepticism? To answer these questions, I attempt to explain the ongoing tendency in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. I begin by arguing on behalf of the literature that the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *seems* compelling since deduction *appears* to provide us with a means to attain *certainty*, which is precisely what the skeptic doubts is possible. In response to the literature, I argue on behalf of the skeptic by showing that the line of reasoning the literature accepts cannot stand up to scrutiny because the certainty of deduction always depends upon a set of foundational assumptions that it cannot justify since these assumptions are supposed to be the *source* from which all certainty flows. Finally, I argue for what I consider to be Kant's position, that despite the accuracy of this skeptical inference, the attempt to

entertain the *conclusion* that it leads to results in an *aporia*[11]: On the one hand, certainty *seems* impossible because foundational assumptions are unjustifiable when deduction is our *best* means of justification; on the other, certainty —and thus a justification for foundational assumptions—*must be possible because it is so indispensable that even the skeptical attempt to conclude the contrary depends on and presupposes it.*

This is a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions. The unique value of this problem is its ability to force us to investigate assumptions — both our own as well as those of others. On the one hand, it reveals that we cannot completely rid ourselves of *all* assumptions; on the other, it reveals that even though we must '*assume'* some things, these things cannot be assumptions in any ordinary sense of the term that refers to unjustified or arbitrary beliefs. For if foundational assumptions are ordinary assumptions, we could never justify putting forth, entertaining, and evaluating arguments because the source of justification that all of our arguments implicitly use in the justification of their conclusions would itself be *unjustified*. To phrase this more pointedly, if foundational assumptions are ordinary assumptions, then we could never *justify doing what we are doing right now!*

Perhaps, the skeptic may attempt to object that this is precisely their point in so many words: We *cannot* justify arguing! However, if this is their point, and if it is true, it turns out to be *useless* because when push comes to shove, they cannot use it to convince anyone—including themselves—since it turns out to be *at least as unjustified* as its opposite. I suggest that the attempt to entertain this skeptical objection reveals the true urgency of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions as framed above. It shows that the attempt to dispense with this problem depends upon and *presupposes* the possibility of solving it. I call this the *indispensability*[12] of this problem. This feature, its inescapability, results from the problem's *self-reflexivity*[13]. On my reading, the self-reflexive nature of this problem consists of its unique ability to reflect on its own grounds of possibility such that this reflection acts as a sort of *Justification for the possibility of*

[11] Insofar as I understand it, an aporia is a state of internal conflict where something that must be the case seems impossible because of a pre-existing intellectual commitment to something else that also appears as though it must be the case

[12] For another author in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments that identifies indispensability as significant for them see: (Taylor, 1978, p. 163). I speak more about the importance of indispensability in the second chapter of this thesis.

[13] For other authors in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments that identify self-reflexivity as significant for transcendental arguments see: (Hintikka, 1972, p. 278), (Bübner, 1975, p. 460).

justification[14]. What sort of justification this is, how it functions, and how self-referentiality arises are topics of concern for the second chapter of this thesis.

This version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions forms the central focus of this thesis. Although this problem may *appear* one-sided when viewed from the literature's perspective, it *actually* turns out to be in the interest of all when viewed from the proper perspective. We shall see this in the first chapter of this thesis, where I attempt to argue that when pushed to the extreme, the literature's acceptance of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption results in a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions. If I am right, then this problem is, I suggest, itself a powerful reason for letting the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption go. By letting go of this assumption, we also let go of interpretations built upon it. From the literature's perspective, what *initially appears* as a ground-clearing is, from mine, a way of laying the foundation for an accurate interpretation of transcendental arguments. By removing the unsteady support that previous interpretations constructed themselves upon, we arrive at a firm foundation on which to build an interpretation of transcendental arguments. I use Kant's work as the building plan for the interpretation to be developed on this newly laid foundation. Projecting this building plan onto the foundation is the task of the final section of the first chapter. I attempt to complete this task by locating this version of the problem in Kant's work, demonstrating that there is strong evidence to suppose that he attempted to solve it.

Understanding that Kant is aware of this skeptical problem is itself a substantial part of the intellectual work necessary to understand Kant's solution to this problem, namely, transcendental arguments, because it nudges us in the right direction of Kant's solution. It does so by showing us that transcendental arguments, and thus Kant's transcendental arguments, *cannot be deductive* because deduction is itself one of the means Kant understood as prohibited from solving this skeptical problem. This negative evidence requires us to understand that Kant purposefully develops a conception of transcendental arguments that are what I call '*not-deductive'* in nature. It is important to remember this because the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption continues to

[14] I purposefully use capital letters in this phrase to distinguish the Justification that *makes* justification possible (i.e., not-deductive argumentation) from the justification that is *made* possible (i.e., deductive argumentation) to avoid the appearance of a vicious circularity in this phrase. I speak more about the distinction between deductive and not-deductive argumentation and the relationship between these forms of argumentation in the second chapter of this thesis.

exercise a powerful grip on the philosophical imagination of the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments today.

This thesis contends that Kant solves this version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumption by developing an altogether different form of argumentation where the "*conclusion" 'makes possible' its "premises"* (A737/B765). The English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to agree that Kant calls the "conclusion" of such an argument a *'condition for the possibility of experience'* (A94/B126) and the "premises" in a not-deductive transcendental arguments *'possible experiences'* (B5)[15]. I agree with the English-speaking literature about the *terminology* they use. Nevertheless, I disagree with the English-speaking literature about the precise *meaning* of these terms because the tendency to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption causes the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments to conclude that the "conclusions" and "premises" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are conclusions and premises in the deductive sense of the term[16]. To put the point another way, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to accept that the conditions for the possibility of experience derive their certainty *from* the certainty of experience. On the contrary, in my reading, experience derives even its uncertainty from the higher-order certainty of the conditions for the possibility of experience. This means that on the not-deductive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments, the "premises" in this argument are *actually* conclusions, and the "conclusions" are *actually* premises, which, in turn, means that the relationship between the "premises" and the "conclusions" in these arguments is essentially the inverse of the relationship between the premises and the conclusions in deduction.

Explaining the genesis of this inverse relationship is the work of the second chapter. In this chapter, I argue that conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible by providing a means to solve a set of '*aporiai'*. Insofar as I understand it, an aporia is a state of internal conflict where something that *must* be the case *seems* impossible because of a pre-existing intellectual commitment to something else that also *appears* as though it must be the case. This awareness of an *apparent* contradiction combined with the simultaneous recognition that contradictions cannot *actually* exist provides a sort of *"reason to seek"* a happier alternative: one that avoids contradiction. The catch is that a reason to seek is not a reason in the ordinary sense of the term

[15] For example, see chapter 2 of this thesis.

[16] I provide examples of this in the first and second chapters of this thesis.

that signifies a premise from which a conclusion follows. Instead, a reason to seek is what I call a *'surrogate conclusion'*.

A surrogate conclusion is my technical term for a substitute conclusion that momentarily stands for another conclusion that *must* surpass and replace it. A surrogate conclusion is like a deductive conclusion in one sense and unlike a deductive conclusion in another. A surrogate conclusion is like a deductive conclusion because it follows from a set of premises. However, a surrogate conclusion is unlike a deductive conclusion because it is an *apparent* contradiction, and —speaking properly—an apparent contradiction cannot *actually* be a conclusion because if it could, then contradictions could exist, which cannot be the case. An *apparent* contradiction may not seem like much of an argument, but we can think of it like a *reductio ad absurdum*: In a *reductio,* we begin by assuming the opposite of what we intend to prove. We then show that the attempt to entertain this assumption leads to an *apparent* contradiction. By arriving at an *apparent* contradiction, a *reductio ad absurdum* provides the shock to the system that creates the intellectual space to begin letting go of the false assumption from which the argument began.

After letting go of the false assumption, the next step in a not-deductive transcendental argument is to assume the opposite. However, assuming the opposite is not enough because this 'new' assumption is like a '*conclusion yet to be explained'*: We know that it *must* be the case, but we still need to develop the intellectual tools to explain how it is so. The third thing that is necessary to move from a problematic assumption to a properly foundational assumption is an explanation of how assuming the opposite solves the problem that accepting the *initial* assumption created. Thus, in my reading, Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments function by moving from one problem with the possibility of experience to another until it finds the conditions for the possibility that make these misunderstandings possible in the first place. In this way, the conditions for the possibility of experience reflect on the experience from which they begin in such a way that they force us to reinterpret them by recognising that they would not be possible to begin with if the conditions for the possibility of experience were false.

The main contention of this thesis is that *at least* one of the experiences that conditions for the possibility of experience are conditions for what I call *'the experience of skepticism'*. By the experience of skepticism, I mean the activity of *attempting* to *be* skeptical. Let me try to explain the activity in this way: In attempting to be skeptical, I am *doing* something. What, then, is this doing? It *seems* impossible to answer this question because any answer I

present *appears* susceptible to skeptical doubt. But, this is the catch: *At least* one thing that *I cannot doubt, even at my most skeptical, is that doubting is possible*. After all, if the content that this act of doubt attempts to express were true then it would be impossible to express this content in the first place. I call the ability to doubt the *'capacity to doubt'*. By the capacity to doubt, I mean the awareness of the *'potential'* for actively suspecting that something that *seems* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case.

In my reading, the term potentiality refers to the indispensable material for an activity. Take, for instance, the activity of building. In this case, the potential is the material for building —for example, bricks and mortar —while the activity is the building itself —for example, putting these materials together to make something new out of their combination, namely, a building[17]. Thinking about doubting in terms of the potentiality/activity distinction is helpful because it reveals that doubting is a mental activity that is *actually* quite *complex*: I can analyse the process of doubting and break it down into a set of building blocks by searching for those things that are indispensable for the process of doubting to take place. I think that this breaking down of the activity of doubting is the key to understanding Kant's not-deductive solution to skepticism because the general strategy that this thesis attributes to Kant is to show that the skeptic presupposes *more* than they can doubt by the very *act* of doubting. I argue for this in the second chapter of this thesis, where I show that (1) Kant's conception of experience is compatible with skepticism and (2) Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience is a condition for the possibility of the experience of skepticism, amongst other things.

In this way, I attempt to demonstrate that, to paraphrase Kant (B276-277), Kant *'turns the game played by skepticism against itself'* by showing that the skeptical attempt to doubt a not-deductive transcendental argument is *actually* tantamount to the attempt to doubt the conditions for the possibility of skepticism, amongst other things. However, this act must undermine itself at the end of the day since the content that this act of doubt attempts to express contradicts the act of doubting a not-deductive transcendental argument. After all, the content that this act attempts to express is tantamount to the claim that skepticism is impossible, while the act of attempting to doubt a not-

[17] I adopt this example of a potential and an activity and this distinction from (Metaphysics, 1048a30-1048b). For some of the literature that explicitly discusses Kant's relationship to Aristotle, see:(K, pp. 10-12), (Longuenesse, 1998, pp. 329-330), (Conant, 2016, pp. 116-117). For my purposes, I only adopt this distinction insofar as it aids in understanding Kant's own work because —even though I think Kant agrees with Aristotle in some respects—I think Kant disagrees with Aristotle in others.

deductive transcendental argument is tantamount to the claim that skepticism is possible. Thus, the content of this act must be false; otherwise, the skeptic would not even be able to *attempt* to engage in the activity of doubting that enables them to attempt to express their doubt about not-deductive transcendental arguments *in the first place*.

The primary value of this thesis lies in its ability to correct an understandable mistake in the literature on Kant's transcendental arguments by attempting to provide the theoretical tools to liberate the English-speaking literature on the topic from the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. Through this provision, this work attempts to pave the way for an interpretation of Kant's transcendental arguments that avoids the Scylla of a weak reading of the anti-skeptical ability of Kant's transcendental arguments that *appears to* remain faithful to Kant's work and the Charybdis of a strong reading of the anti-skeptical ability of Kant's work that does not. It achieves this by attempting to provide an *even stronger* reading of the anti-skeptical ability of Kant's work that strives to remain faithful to the texts left to us by Kant. As we shall see in the first chapter of this thesis, these are two increasing concerns in the current programme for interpreting Kant's transcendental arguments.

Locating this study:

This study takes place at the intersection of the contemporary English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments and the English-speaking literature on Kant's philosophy: the literature on Kant's transcendental arguments. The literature I discuss in this thesis tends to be from these fields. However, I make exceptions to this rule for a few works from prominent figures in the History of Western Philosophy and some ground-breaking English translations in the literature on Kant where necessary.

Understanding that this project cuts across two fields involved in a complex and evolving relationship with one another is vital for understanding this thesis because it takes an approach to interpreting Kant's texts that differs from the standard approaches to interpretation in these fields. There are roughly three standard approaches to developing a plausible interpretation of Kant's work in the literature on Kant's philosophy. The literature on Kant's philosophy shares the first approach with the literature on transcendental arguments, which continues to lose popularity; while the last approach, which continues to increase in popularity in the literature on Kant, is uncommon in the literature on transcendental arguments[18].

[18] For a discussion of some of the recent trends in interpreting Kant, see: (Ameriks, 2003, pp. 1-2).

The first approach to interpreting Kant's philosophy is to reconstruct Kant's account through contemporary or philosophical concerns. I call this the *'reconstructive approach'*. *The Bounds of Sense* (1966) by Strawson is an excellent example of the former, while *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (1965) by Heidegger is a masterful example of the latter. The second is to develop an interpretation of Kant's philosophy through the historical development of Kant's work. I call this the *'historical approach'*. Guyer's *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (1987) is a brilliant work that follows this style of interpretation. This approach continues to influence the literature on Kant's philosophy today. The third approach is to produce an interpretation of Kant that attempts to take Kant's published texts at their letter. I call this the *'hermeneutical approach'*. A quintessential example of this style of interpretation is Ameriks' *Kant's Transcendental Deduction as a Regressive Argument* (2003). Of course, there are also blended approaches to interpreting Kant. However, these are not typically standard in the literature. An example of the blended approach that, to paraphrase Kant (Groundwork, 4:394), *'shines forth for itself like a jewel'* is Longuenesse's *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Aesthetic* (1998). This work employs the reconstructive and historical approaches to Kant in different aspects insofar as they aid the hermeneutical approach.

My approach to the interpretation of Kant's work is a blended approach. Unlike Longuenesse, I do not employ the historical approach at all. My reason for doing so is that this approach, although interesting, can distort the structure of Kant's published works by using information that Kant did not intend to feature in his final products to evaluate these products. For example, some historical interpretations use a set of lecture notes from one of Kant's students called *The Metaphysics Von Schön* to evaluate parts of his published works like the *Critique of Pure Reason* (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 251). I cannot follow these interpreters here and risk distorting the structure of Kant's work. For, the structure of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is a feature that Kant claims is of the utmost importance for its evaluation (Axix), and part of this thesis's work consists in making such an evaluation. For this reason, I assume that the way that Kant's work appears is how it is *supposed* to appear[19].

[19] One crucial consequence of reading Kant's work as it appears is that I treat the A and B versions of the *Critique* as continuous with one another. This is because Kant states that the main difference between the A and B versions of the *Critique* is its style (Bxxxvii-Bxliii). This differentiates my work from the other work on Kant, which claims that his philosophical position completely changes in the B-edition. For example, see: (K, p. 31). In this respect, I am again closest to Longuenesse, who treats the two versions of the *Critique* as continuous (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 51), albeit

Like Longuenesse, I employ a blend of the reconstructive and hermeneutical approaches that uses the reconstructive approach only insofar as it aids the hermeneutical approach. This means that although I attempt to take Kant seriously in light of a problem that undergirds contemporary philosophy, my primary interest in this project is Kant's work itself. This differentiates my work from works on transcendental arguments that are purely reconstructive insofar as my work strives to remain faithful to Kant's own work and the works that are purely hermeneutical insofar as I include contemporary philosophical concerns as a starting point for entering into Kant's work.

The reasons for these differences are the twin ideas that (1) Kant's philosophy is coherent and (2) that it remains relevant for philosophy today. In a nutshell, that Kant is a *good* writer. Of course, I cannot provide a complete defence of this claim here. Nonetheless, I think I can make some headway toward defending it in this thesis. To do so, I attempt to develop a reading of Kant that shows that parts of his work that others presume as evidence for the claim that Kant is a lousy writer[20] only *appear* as such when presented in isolation from the whole, in which they make sense.

One final note on the location of this thesis in the literature: Despite my best efforts, I could not help but limit the claims in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments, in general, to Kant's work *only* and the claims in the English-speaking literature on Kant's work to transcendental arguments insofar as is possible. Although these limitations are admittedly a significant drawback, I hope that the motivation behind them is enough to make up for it: Kant is aware of —and provides a solution— to one of the problems in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments. Of course, this is a massive promissory note that I can only fulfil at the end of the thesis. I only state it here because it highlights one of the primary reasons for the inquiry into this problem: By furthering our understanding of this problem, this thesis seeks to open a

with the caveat that Longuenesse treats the B-edition as superior to the A-edition (Ibid., p. 9) whereas, I treat them equally.

[20] Perhaps it is Nietzsche who states this criticism of Kant in its most entertaining form in *Twilight of the Idols*. In *What the Germans Lack,* Nietzsche states that, "the fact that the Germans have even just endured their philosophers, above all that most stunted conceptual cripple ever, the *great* Kant, is no mean indication of German grace. —For you cannot subtract every form of *dancing* from *noble education*, the ability to dance with the feet, with concepts, with words; do I still need to say that you must also be able to dance with *the pen*—that you must learn to *write*..." (Twilight, p. 42) [Italics: In the original]. The persistence of the criticism that Kant is a bad writer remains pervasive. For a more recent example of this criticism in different terms, see: (Stern, 2004, p. 7). I discuss a few more examples of this claim throughout this thesis.

space for other works to better understand some of the other transcendental arguments that feature in this rich and diverse literature.

Outline of the Structure of this Thesis:

The first chapter of this thesis acts as a second introduction to this thesis as a whole. This chapter focuses on explaining the relationship between Kant's transcendental arguments and skepticism. This chapter brings a noteworthy trend in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments to the fore to explain the relationship between Kant's transcendental arguments and skepticism. The trend is that scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tend to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. This chapter contends that this trend is noteworthy because the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption must be false since the *attempt* to entertain it ends in a serious problem. The problem is a version of the justification of foundational assumptions. In order to escape this problem, I suggest that Kant identifies what I call an altogether different and *'not-deductive'* means of argumentation in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, where the "conclusion" *makes possible* its "premises"(A737/B765).

The second chapter of this thesis focuses on developing what I call *'the not-deductive/anti-skeptical alternative'*. The not-deductive/anti-skeptical alternative is an alternative to the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, which states that not-deductive arguments where the "conclusions" make possible the "premises" are the *best* means to achieve an anti-skeptical end. This chapter aims to explain how arguments where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises" enable Kant to overcome skepticism. To explain how arguments where the "conclusion" make possible its "premises", this chapter begins by specifying that Kant calls the "conclusion" of a not-deductive transcendental argument a *'condition for the possibility of experience'*(A94/B126) and the "premises" *'possible experiences*' (B5). The chapter acknowledges that the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to be aware of the *terminology* Kant invents to describe the "conclusions" and the "premises" in a not-deductive transcendental argument. However, it also asserts that the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to misunderstand the true *meaning* of these terms because they tend to conclude that the "conclusions" and "premises" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are conclusions and premises in the ordinary deductive sense of the term. In other words, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to conclude that

the conditions for the possibility of experience derive their certainty *from* the certainty of experience or a set of experiences.

On the contrary, in this chapter, I argue that experience derives its certainty from the higher-order certainty of the conditions for the possibility of experience. To explain how experience derives its certainty from the certainty of the conditions for the possibility of experience, I suggest a relatively novel reading of how the conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible. The relatively novel reading is that conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible by providing a means to solve a set of '*aporiai*' that unavoidably accompany the ability to entertain an experience in the first place. A set of aporiai is the plural of the Greek term 'an *aporia*'. In my reading, an aporia is a state of internal conflict where something that *must* be the case *seems* impossible because of an uncompromising intellectual commitment to something else that *also appears* as though it must be the case. The awareness of an *apparent* contradiction combined with the simultaneous recognition that contradictions *cannot* actually exist provides a sort of *"reason to seek"* a happier alternative, namely one that does not end in contradiction. Thus, in my not-deductive reading, Kant's transcendental arguments function by moving from one problem with the possibility of experience to another until they solve these problems by identifying the conditions for the possibility that make these misunderstandings of experience possible to begin with.

The main contention of this chapter is that *at least* one of the experiences that an aporia unavoidably accompanies is what I call *'the experience of skepticism'*. By the experience of skepticism, I mean the awareness of the *'capacity to doubt'*. By the capacity to doubt, I mean the ability to actively engage in the activity of doubting. I define doubting as the mental process of actively suspecting that something that *appears* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case. In this section, I argue that the aporia that unavoidably accompanies the experience of skepticism is that the experience of skepticism *must* be possible but *seems* impossible when experience in Kant's technical sense of the term is impossible. The experience of skepticism *must* be possible because it is impossible to doubt that it is possible to doubt. For, the content that this act of doubt attempts to express, that doubting is impossible, ultimately undermines itself since the act of doubt is tantamount to the assertion that doubting *is* possible. However, the experience of skepticism *seems* impossible when Kant's technical sense of the term is impossible. For, as I argue in this chapter, Kant argues that experience is the stimulation of the senses by an '*appearance* '(B1), in Kant's

technical sense of the term, and it is impossible to suspect that something that *appears* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case if nothing can *appear* to be the case *in the first place.*

The third chapter of this thesis is a review of the argument of the thesis as a whole. It attempts to tie all the loose ends from each chapter into one coherent argument by demonstrating that Kant's transcendental arguments *can* overcome skepticism if they are not-deductive. This chapter argues that conditions for the possibility of experience *are also conditions for the possibility of the experience of skepticism*, amongst other things. The chapter then suggests that there are just some things that cannot be doubted because they make doubting possible. These things are foundational assumptions. I provide a brief recap of all of the foundational assumptions uncovered in the course of this thesis. I then note a significant limitation on the scope of Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments. Finally, I bring the chapter and the thesis to a close by suggesting that what makes Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments so uniquely valuable is not how they prove so much but rather *how they prove so much with so little.*

Chapter 1: The Deductive/Anti-skeptical Assumption:

1. Introduction:

This chapter's focus is to explain the relationship between Kant's transcendental arguments and skepticism. To explain this relationship, this chapter brings a noteworthy trend in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments to the fore. The trend is that scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tend to assume that *deduction* is the best means to achieve an *anti-skeptical end*. I call this assumption the *'deductive/anti-skeptical assumption'*. This chapter contends that this trend is noteworthy because—even though the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *seems* compelling at first blush—this assumption *must* be false because the attempt to take it seriously results in a problem. The problem is a version of the justification of foundational assumptions. In order to address this problem we must attempt to provide an answer to these questions: (1), "What is a transcendental argument?" (2), "What is skepticism?", and (3), "How do transcendental arguments differ from other arguments?". Consequently, I divide this chapter into three sections.

In the first section, I situate the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in the existing English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments and provide a reason that *seems* compelling to all outward appearances to explain it. In the second section, I explain why accepting the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *seems* compelling to all outward appearances. I then argue that the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *must* be false because the *attempt* to entertain it leads to a serious problem. The problem is a version of the justification of foundational assumptions. In the final section, I provide textual evidence that demonstrates Kant possessed a keen awareness of this problem and its solution by discussing what I call Kant's altogether different and uniquely *'not-deductive'* solution to the problem of foundational assumptions through Kant's much-misunderstood definition of foundational assumptions as "*conclusions*" that *'make possible'* their "*premises*" (A737/B765).

2. The English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to accept a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption:

In this section, I suggest that scholars in the English-speaking literature on the topic of Kant's transcendental arguments tend to tacitly accept a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in two forms that *seem* opposed at first sight but *actually* mutually reinforce one another. On the one hand are those scholars who attempt to criticise Kant's transcendental arguments by claiming that these arguments *fail to achieve an anti-skeptical end* because they *fail to be deductive*. I call scholars like these *'Kant's skeptical critics'*. On the other, are those scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments who *attempt* to save Kant's transcendental arguments by arguing that these arguments can be something *other* than deductive arguments if Kant does *not* intend them to achieve an anti-skeptical end. I call scholars like these *'Kant's non-skeptical saviours'*. By demonstrating that scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tend to commit themselves to a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in one way or another, I provide some of the tools for identifying the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments. In doing so, I provide the reader with the means to go beyond my limited engagement with the secondary literature to verify this tendency in the secondary literature for themselves.

Barry Stroud is an author whose criticism of Kant's transcendental arguments continues to exert a profound influence on the English-speaking literature on the topic[21]. In *Transcendental arguments* (1968), Stroud (Ibid., pp.242-247) claims that Kant's transcendental arguments fail to achieve an anti-skeptical end because they are either deductively invalid when they omit a '*verification principle*'[22] or superfluous when they do not (i.e., when they are deductively valid). By criticising Kant's transcendental arguments in this way Stroud commits himself to a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption because Stroud's criticism loses its sting if deduction is *not* the best means to achieve an anti-skeptical end. For, if Kant's transcendental arguments are *supposed* to be something *other* than deductive arguments in order to be *better* at achieving an *anti-skeptical end*, then Kant's transcendental arguments do not fail to be compelling because they are not deductive. On the contrary, any criticism of Kant's transcendental arguments that hinges

[21] For example, see: (Rorty, 1971, p. 5), (Stern, 2004, p. 69), (Giladi, 2016, p. 1).

[22] A verification principle is an assumption that states that the meaning of a sentence is determined by what we can know (Ibid., p. 255).

on the claim that Kant's transcendental arguments are supposed to be deductive fails to be compelling since it misunderstands the nature of Kant's anti-skeptical intentions.

Karl Ameriks is an author whose *'modest-regressive'* attempt to save Kant's transcendental arguments is currently enjoying the limelight in the English-speaking literature on the topic[23]. On Ameriks' modest-regressive reading Kant's transcendental arguments are arguments that function by moving back from *'experience*' to the *'necessary conditions'* for experience (Ameriks, 2003, p. 11). Experience[24] is a technical term from Kant's philosophy that Ameriks interprets as a claim that presumes to be an item of knowledge, for example, *'the sun warms the stone'* (Ibid.). A necessary condition is a requirement for something else, for example, food is a necessary condition of eating. This means that on Ameriks' modest-regressive reading Kant's transcendental arguments *move up* from a claim to knowledge to the requirements for this claim. The directionality of Ameriks' modest-regressive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments distinguishes Ameriks' modest-regressive arguments from deductive arguments because deduction *moves down* from a premise to a conclusion while Ameriks' modest-regressive transcendental arguments *move up* from a premise to a higher-order premise or set of premises.

Despite Ameriks' *attempt* to distinguish his modest-regressive reading from other readings in the English-speaking literature, Ameriks (Ibid., p. 11) also states, "On this reading [i.e., Ameriks' modest-regressive reading], since a *modern skeptic* typically accepts arguments that start only from 'mere representations' (rather than experience in any objective sense), it is admittedly not clear that any such skeptic need be moved by Kant's main arguments or any simple extension of his approach.". According to Ameriks (Ibid.), a modern skeptic is a skeptic that tends to accept arguments that do not start from an *objective sense* of experience. Ameriks (Ibid., pp. 8-9) characterises an objective sense of experience as one that is *not private*. A private experience is one that other people cannot access, for example, the way a particular pain feels to me. Yet, earlier on in this same text Ameriks (Ibid.) also states, "All that is presupposed with my view of the regressive form and commonsense starting point of Kant's is *that there is some objectivity* to our experience, that some of our states (of a basic kind, i.e., perceptual, moral, aesthetic) are *not* mere private events but can be justified and are true or false" [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. Consequently,

[23] For example, see: (Cassam, 2007, p. 57), (Longuenesse, 2008, p. 512), (Allais, 2015, p. 262).

[24] I speak more about Kant's conception of experience in the following chapter where I offer my own interpretation of Kant's use of this term.

either Ameriks commits a slip of the pen, and the modest-regressive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments are admittedly not anti-skeptical, or Ameriks does not and the modest-regressive reading is *not so modest after all*.

I think that Ameriks' modest-regressive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments cannot achieve an anti-skeptical end. My reason for this is that in response to the charge that the inclusion of objectivity in Ameriks' sense renders Ameriks' reading of Kant's transcendental arguments trivial, Ameriks (Ibid., p. 61) states, "not every *interesting* argument has to be a refutation of extreme skepticism."[Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. Ameriks' rhetorical flourish in this passage shows that Ameriks attempts to save the modest-regressive reading from triviality by embracing one part of the objection and rejecting another part of it. In my reading, Ameriks' embraces the inclusion of objectivity and rejects the charge of triviality because Ameriks essentially states that the modest-regressive reading *can* remain interesting even if it does not possess an anti-skeptical end[25]. Yet, whatever this other end for Ameriks' modest-regressive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments might be, the point remains the same: Ameriks ends up arguing for a position that asserts that Kant's transcendental arguments can be something *other* than deductive arguments if Kant *does not* intend them to achieve an anti-skeptical end. However, this is a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption since deduction remains the *best* means to achieve an anti-skeptical end on this reading.

Finally, in *Transcendental arguments: Problems and Prospects* (2004), Stern (Ibid., p. 67) states that on the most 'natural' reading of transcendental arguments in the literature, these arguments are supposed to function through deductive means to achieve an anti-skeptical end (Ibid.). According to Stern's reading of the literature (Ibid.), the anti-skeptical end of transcendental arguments is to refute the '*epistemic skeptic'*. Epistemic skepticism is Stern's technical term for the position that doubts that certainty is possible (Ibid., p. 15). Thus, on Stern's own account of the most natural

[25] For a possible objection to my account of Ameriks, see (Ibid., p. 11), where Ameriks states, "(Nonetheless, my approach is compatible with allowing that Kant was concerned with skeptical problems about the claims of the *higher* faculty of reason, and that relevant skeptical difficulties can arise *after* one accepts the principles of the Critical philosophy and tries to apply them in a concrete way)"[Italics: In the Original]. I admit that Ameriks' account may be able to overcome another form of skepticism. However, Ameriks thinks that the other form of skepticism that he identifies is *weaker* than the skepticism at issue in the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption (Ibid., p. 61). In this way, deduction remains the best means to overcome skepticism proper on Ameriks' own account, which is what the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption contends.

reading in the literature, transcendental arguments are supposed to achieve an anti-skeptical end through deduction, which is a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption.

After explaining this assumption, Stern (Ibid., pp. 69-72) attempts to criticise it by arguing that transcendental arguments are *only* convincing if they are not *'truth-directed'*. A *'truth-directed'* transcendental argument is Stern's technical term for a deductive argument that *moves down* from a premise—For example, the claim that 'I am thinking' (Ibid., p. 69)— to a conclusion—for example, the claim 'that there is a mind-independent world' (Ibid.). According to Stern (Ibid., pp. 69-72), the problem with truth-directed transcendental arguments is finding an appropriate middle term for them. The line of reasoning behind Stern's claim here is that the middle term of such an argument either *already* includes a reference to the way things are independent of the mind and then it will be too strong for the epistemic skeptic to accept, or it does not and then the move from the way things *appear* to the mind to their true[26] nature is unwarranted.

Consequently, Stern presents what I call a *'not-deductive'* alternative to truth-directed transcendental arguments. Stern's not-deductive alternative to truth-directed transcendental arguments is what Stern (Ibid., p. 10) calls an *'experience-directed'* transcendental argument. An experience-directed transcendental argument is Stern's technical term for an argument that demonstrates that something must *appear* to be a certain way for another kind of experience to occur (Ibid., p. 11). Stern's example of such an argument is that 'for individuals to have subjective sensations or feelings, they must have experience *as* of an external world' (Ibid.) [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. Insofar as I understand it, this argument is only supposed to establish that experience must *appear* to be of a world of mind-independent things, not that experience *actually* is of such a world. In other words, an argument like this proves that the appearance of something (X) is a necessary condition for the experience of something else (Y). The directionality of Stern's experience-directed argument differentiates it from a deductive one since deduction *moves down* from a premise to a conclusion while Stern's experience-directed transcendental arguments *move up* from a lower-order premise to a higher-order premise.

Stern also *appears* to uphold that Kant's transcendental arguments can achieve an anti-skeptical end because Stern intends experience-directed arguments to overcome a form of skepticism (Ibid.).

[26] I speak more about the distinction between mind-independent things and things that are mind-dependent in the next chapter.

To paraphrase Kant (B276-277), Stern's experience-directed arguments are supposed to '*turn the game played*' by skepticism against itself by showing that the skeptic unintentionally commits themself to a position they *attempt* to argue against through another one of their commitments. Sticking with Stern's example above, if the skeptic is committed to the existence of sensations or feelings, then they must also have experience as being of an external world (Ibid.). Insofar as I am aware Stern does not provide a middle term for this argument. However, it is easy to imagine that the middle term of this argument is something like it is impossible to make sense of the experience of sensation as self-caused. Thus, Stern *seems* to be an exception to the rule that the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in one form or another since it *appears* as though Stern supports a reading of Kant's transcendental arguments, which submits that Kant's transcendental arguments *can* overcome skepticism if they are something other than deductive arguments.

However, Stern goes on to argue that an experience-directed transcendental argument can only overcome skepticism if skepticism means *'justificatory skepticism'* instead of epistemic skepticism (Ibid, pp. 90-102). Justificatory skepticism is Stern's technical term for the position that doubts that rational belief is possible (Ibid., p. 15). According to Stern (Ibid.), one of the distinguishing features that separates rational belief from knowledge is the degree of certainty required for a belief to be rational. For, Stern (Ibid.) asserts that a belief does not have to be completely certain to qualify as a rational belief, while knowledge must be completely certain to qualify as knowledge. This is important for my reading of Stern's account of transcendental arguments because it means that experience-directed transcendental arguments are only convincing if they are directed towards overcoming a *weaker*[27] form of skepticism (Ibid., p. 144-154). Thus, Stern is a sort of exception that proves the rule because —even though Stern asserts that experience-directed transcendental arguments can overcome a form of skepticism— deduction continues to function as the *only* means of response that can overcome a *strong* form of skepticism on Stern's own account.

[27] The term '*weaker*' in this sentence refers to the level of certainty required to overcome skepticism. This is important to note because—even though justificatory skepticism is a weaker form of skepticism insofar as it requires less certainty— Stern thinks that justificatory skepticism is a stronger form of skepticism than epistemic skepticism because of its far-reaching consequences (Ibid., p. 17). I do not agree with Stern because I think that skepticism about certainty also extends to skepticism about our beliefs.

By now, it should be clear that scholars in the literature tend to assume that deduction is the best form of argumentation to achieve an anti-skeptical end. What remains unclear, at this point, is their reason for doing so. Insofar as I am aware, there is no explicit justification for this assumption in the English-speaking literature on the topic of Kant's transcendental arguments. Nevertheless, I believe there is a reason that *seems* compelling to all outward appearances for accepting this assumption. I also believe that scholars in the literature tend to omit this reason from their accounts because it *seems* so conspicuous. I suggest that scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tend to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption because deduction *appears* to provide us with a means to attain *certainty*, which is precisely what the skeptic doubts[28].

3. The deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *must* be false:

In this section, I argue against the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. I begin by cementing the identity of the skeptic by discussing Kant's own characterisation of skepticism. I then attempt to explain the *apparent* connection between skepticism and certainty that the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption identifies. Finally, I argue that the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *must* be false by demonstrating that it leads to a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions when thoroughly thought through. After I explain the problem, I propose a solution to it.

Kant provides a clear outline of skepticism in the *Transcendental Dialectic* in the section titled *The Antithetic of Pure Reason* when Kant (A424-425/B451-452) states, "It [i.e., the skeptical method] is entirely different from skepticism, a principle of artful and scientific ignorance that undermines the foundations of all cognition, in order, if possible, to leave *no reliability or certainty anywhere*. For the skeptical method aims at certainty, seeking to discover the point of misunderstanding in disputes that are honestly intended and conducted with intelligence by both sides," [Italics: H, Grecia, 2023]. Even though it is possible to provide an in-depth account of this incredibly rich passage, at this moment, it is only necessary to take note of the distinction that Kant makes between the skeptical method and the philosophical position at issue here. The difference

[28] For other examples of authors in the English-speaking literature on transcendental arguments that are aware of a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, see: (Gram, 1971, pp. 16-17), (Genova, 1980, pp. 26-27), and (Giladi, 2016, p. 2). Rare exceptions to the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in the literature include: (Taylor, 1978, p. 152), (Baum, 1979, pp. 7-8), and (Hintikka, 1972, p. 277).

that Kant identifies between the skeptical method and skepticism is that the method aims toward certainty, while skepticism aims to establish that *certainty is impossible*[29]. Thus, the next step toward understanding skepticism is to answer the question, "Why does certainty *seem* impossible to the skeptic?" However, the answer to this question depends upon and presupposes an answer to an even more fundamental question: "What is certainty?"

In everyday life, certainty signifies a kind of immunity to error. That is, we think, act, and speak as though we are certain in those cases where we know—or *at least* believe that we know—something that is beyond doubt. The highest degree of immunity to error is *indubitability*: the quality of being absolutely immune to doubt. The pre-eminent means of justification that all the ordinary sciences, like mathematics, use to justify conclusions with indubitability is *deduction*. Deduction is a form of argumentation that *moves down* from a premise or set of premises, the truth of which we *presuppose*, to a conclusion. The conclusion as the consequence of the premises is *as certain as* the premises it derives from. This means that deduction *seems* to provide us with a powerful means to attain certainty because it *appears* to provide us with a means to establish conclusions with certainty by moving from premises that are certain to conclusions that are certain. So, deduction *appears* immune to skepticism since it *seems* impossible to doubt any deductive conclusion because —speaking precisely— deductive arguments either prove their conclusions with certainty or not at all. Thus, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments *appears* to possess a compelling reason to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption.

However, deduction faces a serious problem when confronted by a radical form of skepticism that I call *'skepticism about foundational assumptions'*. This skeptic begins their attack on the certainty of deduction by shifting our focus from the certainty (C1)[30] of the conclusions in deduction to the

[29] As far as I am aware, this is Kant's most ubiquitous characterisation of skepticism. It appears most clearly in the *Preface to the Second Edition* (Bviii-Bix) and *The Doctrine of Method* (A761-762/B789). It also underlies the characterisation of the skeptic in the *Preface to the First Edition* (Aix-Ax), where the skeptic is contrasted with the dogmatist. Furthermore, Kant has this characterisation in mind throughout the first *Critique* because the skeptic is associated with the analogy of the 'foundations' of knowledge which Kant takes up episodically, revises, and clarifies right from the beginning of the *Critique* until its end. It is surprising that Kant's own characterisation of skepticism has yet to attract more attention in the literature on Kant's transcendental arguments especially since it is so rich and precise.

[30] I use a capital letter to distinguish between the certainty of the conclusions in deduction and the Certainty of the premises or foundational assumption that the certainty of the conclusions derives its certainty from.

Certainty (C2) of the premises. Through this shift in focus, the skeptic forces us to recognise that the certainty of the conclusions in deduction (C1) *always* derives its certainty from the Certainty (C2) of a higher-order premise or set of premises that are unjustifiable according to the very criterion of certainty (C1) that they make possible. I call these premises *'foundational assumptions'*. The foundational assumptions of deduction are unjustifiable because any attempt to justify these assumptions by an appeal to a higher-order premise or a set of higher-order premises would undermine itself since these premises would be *less* certain than the foundational assumptions that it attempts to justify. After all, foundational assumptions are supposed to be the *source* from which deduction derives its certainty (C1). So, since the certainty (C1) of deduction depends on and presupposes the Certainty (C2) of a set of foundational assumptions, and foundational assumptions *seem* unjustifiable when deduction is the best means of justification, any deductive argument that I can entertain with the pretense of certainty *actually* turns out to be *as unCertain as it is certain.* Thus, contrary to those scholars that accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, deduction cannot provide a means to attain Certainty proper. This is so much so that deduction is itself one of the means of justification that this skeptical problem explicitly prohibits.

Despite the accuracy of this skeptical inference, the attempt to entertain the conclusion that it leads to results in an *aporia*: Either Certainty (C2) is impossible because foundational assumptions are unjustifiable, or skepticism about foundational assumptions is impossible because the skeptical conclusion that Certainty (C2) is impossible turns out to be, *at least*, as unjustifiable, if not more so, than any conclusion to the contrary. This is the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions. To reiterate, the problem is that the skeptic about foundational assumptions *needs* a foundational assumption or set of foundational assumptions to *be* skeptical in the first place, but it *appears* as though the skeptic about foundational assumptions cannot possess a foundational assumption insofar as foundational assumptions remain unjustifiable.

I suggest that the trick to escaping this problem for this skeptic is to realise that they must *already* possess a foundational assumption to doubt that a justification for foundational assumptions is possible. The foundational assumption I suggest that this skeptic must possess is the ability to doubt. After all, *it is impossible to doubt that doubting is possible* because the content that this act attempts to express ultimately undermines itself. For, the content that this act attempts to express

is that doubting is impossible, and if it were impossible to doubt then it would *also* be impossible to *attempt* to express this content in the first place. However, it *must* be possible to express the content that doubting is impossible because it is something that this skeptic is attempting to do at this very moment. Thus, it *must* be possible to doubt. Through the process of *attempting* to actively entertain skeptical doubts the skeptic can come to realise and reinterpret the significance of their ability to doubt by understanding it anew as a means to justify foundational assumptions.

Re-reading Kant's distinction between skepticism and the skeptical method at (A424-425/B451-452) through the problem of foundational assumptions sheds light on Kant's assertion that the skeptical method aims at certainty by demonstrating that the activity of engaging in skeptical doubts possesses a productive side which tends to be obscured when the skeptic's focus on the *end* of their activity distracts them from the Certainty of the *means* that they *must* be using to engage in this activity *all along*. In my reading, Kant conceives of the skeptical method as a means of testing foundational assumptions by attempting to see whether they can withstand skeptical doubt. The test that foundational assumptions must pass to qualify as foundational assumptions is to reveal that they cannot be doubted because the *act* of *attempting* to doubt them depends on and presupposes them. Kant does not explicitly state this idea in these set terms in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. However, I think that Kant keeps a version of this solution in the back of his mind throughout the *Critique* because, as I intend to demonstrate in what follows, Kant is aware of a version of this problem and develops an *even more* sophisticated version of the solution I developed above to solve it.

4. Textual Evidence:

In this section, I suggest that there is an even better way to demonstrate that Kant is aware of this version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions that aligns better with Kant's own text than the version I developed in the previous section. However, I must warn my reader that developing this version of Kant's solution is incredibly difficult; it requires a high degree of patience and dedication. Nevertheless, I think that it is important to develop a version of this problem and its solution that remains faithful to Kant's own text to correct the tendency to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments. Doing so will enable us to articulate and evaluate Kant's solution to skepticism on its own terms. As such, in this section, my aim is to situate a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions in Kant's own text and gesture toward what I call

Kant's *'not-deductive'* solution to it. This sets the stage for the rest of this thesis where I attempt to develop what I call *'Kant's not-deductive solution to skepticism'*.

Compare the version of the problem of foundational assumptions I developed above to the problem that Kant addresses at (A148-150/B188-189) in the *Analytic of Principles*. In this passage, Kant (Ibid.) says

> ... principles bear this name not merely because they contain in themselves the grounds of other judgments, but also because *they are not themselves grounded* in higher and more general cognitions. [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]

Although Kant's language may sound antiquated to modern ears, the problem Kant is dealing with in this passage is essentially the same as the first part of the problem I outlined in the previous section. The crux of this passage is that principles, which I call foundational assumptions, are unjustifiable because they are what Kant terms the *grounds* of justification for *all* our other knowledge[31]. Thus, Kant is aware of the skeptical problem raised above. In fact, this is so much so that Kant even agrees with the skeptic about foundational assumptions insofar as they both claim that foundational assumptions are beyond justification. What can we conclude from Kant's agreement with this skeptic? Can we conclude that Kant is a skeptic? If so, must we conclude that Kant's transcendental arguments cannot be anti-skeptical?

It is impossible to provide any *simple* answer to these questions. On the one hand, if I conclude that Kant's transcendental arguments cannot be anti-skeptical, and I conclude that Kant's transcendental arguments cannot be deductive, then I end up in the same position as Kant's non-skeptical saviours; I end up accepting that Kant's transcendental arguments are both not-deductive and not-anti-skeptical. However, I have already argued that this is a position that tacitly accepts the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, an assumption that I already argued must be false. On the other hand, if I conclude that Kant is not a skeptic and that Kant's transcendental arguments are anti-skeptical, then I must provide evidence from Kant's own work that demonstrates that Kant attempts to provide a means of justification for foundational assumptions. However, if such evidence is available, it is difficult to see why no one else in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments notices it.

[31] Cognition is Kant's technical term for knowledge (A320/B377).

In my account, the difficulties only *appear* to multiply after attempting to reject the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. Is this an admission that there is still some hope for the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption? I do not think so. I only raised this problem to demonstrate how difficult it is to escape from the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. In fact, I think there is a much simpler explanation that aligns better with Kant's own texts for the inability to provide a simple answer about Kant's relation to skepticism. The explanation is that Kant's relationship with skepticism is *complex*. That is to say that Kant is a *skeptic in one respect and anti-skeptical in another*. I submit that Kant is even *more* skeptical than any skeptic that features in the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *insofar as Kant argues that deduction cannot provide a means to attain Certainty* (C2). However, I also submit that Kant is even *more* anti-skeptical than those philosophers that accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption *insofar as Kant argues that there must be some way to attain Certainty* (C2). Kant argues for this in the following passage which proceeds directly from the passage previously quoted at (A148-150/B188-189) when Kant says

> Yet this property [i.e., the source-like nature of foundational assumptions] does not elevate them [i.e., foundational assumptions] beyond *all* proof. For although this could not be carried further objectively, but rather grounds all cognition of its object, yet this does not prevent a proof from the subjective sources of the possibility of a cognition of an object in general from being possible, indeed even *necessary*, since otherwise the proposition would raise the greatest suspicion of being a merely surreptitious assertion. (A149-150/B188-189) [Italics: H. Grecia,2023][32]

Insofar as I understand it, Kant's point in this passage is that it *must* be possible to provide *some* justification for foundational assumptions to avoid diminishing the certainty of the criterion and the conclusions that it makes possible by causing foundational assumptions to appear as mere dogma. What speaks even more to Kant's keen awareness of this issue is the striking clarity in which Kant outlines the terms of solution to this version of the problem of foundational assumptions in a passage from the *Doctrine of Method* where Kant (A737-A738/B765-766) defines foundational assumptions by stating, "... it is called a principle [I.e., a foundational-assumption]... because it has the special property that it first *makes possible* its ground of proof"[Italics, H. Grecia, 2023]. Insofar as I understand it, in this passage, Kant recognises that an altogether different and *'not-deductive'* form of argumentation where the "*conclusion*" makes possible its "*premises*" is required to solve this problem. The caveat is that the terms "conclusion"

[32] Another key area in the first *Critique* where this problem comes to the fore is in Kant's discussion of the '*Inferred Concepts of Reason*' in the *Transcendental Dialectic* at (A321-323/B377-B380) and (A330-A333/B386-390). For a discussion of this problem in Kant's other works, see the problem of the *'Principle of Taste'* in (COJ,5:285-5:287).

and "premise" cannot mean the same thing that they mean in a deductive argument in this not-deductive form of argumentation. The "conclusion" in a not-deductive argument cannot be a conclusion in the traditional sense of a claim that *follows from* a premise or set of premises since the "conclusion" in these arguments are foundational assumptions which make possible their "premises". And the "premises" in Kant's not-deductive arguments cannot be premises in the traditional sense of presuppositions since Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments must be *presuppositionless* to overcome skepticism about foundational assumptions.

Despite the clarity of Kant's outline of a not-deductive solution to a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions, Kant's solution has either garnered inadequate attention from the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments or the wrong type of attention altogether. For, in those rare cases where the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments notices this definition, they tend to evaluate it in terms that are either alien to Kant's own philosophy[33] or in extreme cases in the terms of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption. For example, Gram's (1971, pp. 16-17) dismissive condemnation that Kant's transcendental arguments *'remain as obscure as ever'* follows from the claim that the conclusion of a transcendental argument must make its assumptions possible in the *same* way that the conclusion of a deductively valid argument makes its assumptions possible. Consequently, Gram misses Kant's not-deductive solution to the problem of foundational assumptions altogether since, by accepting of a version of the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, Gram concludes that the "conclusions" and "premises" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments must be conclusions and premises in the ordinary deductive sense of these terms, thereby missing Kant's not-deductive solution to the problem of foundational assumptions altogether.

Thus, even when scholars are keen enough to catch a glimpse of Kant's not-deductive solution to skepticism they cannot see the value of this solution because the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption and other foreign assumptions tend to blind them. I think that the tendency to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental

[33]The terms alien to Kant's philosophy at issue here are Russellian propositional logic, Speech-act theory, Presupposition theory, and Carnap's internal/external distinction. Even though it may be exciting or illuminating to evaluate Kant's definitions in such contemporary terms, this evaluation can only come as a second step. For some examples of authors that evaluate Kant's account in these terms, see: (Crawford, 1962, pp. 263-268), (Genova, 1980, pp. 27-29), and (Stroud, 1968, pp. 251-256).

arguments is a major part of the explanation of the scarcity of a not-deductive reading of Kant's anti-skeptical intentions in this literature. In what follows, I intend to rectify this omission in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments by attempting to present an account of Kant's definition that strives to take Kant seriously by remaining as faithful to the word of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as possible.

Let Kant speak

> To approach a new science – one that is entirely isolated and is the only one of its kind – with the prejudice that it can be judged by means of one's putative cognitions already otherwise obtained, even though it is precisely the reality of those that must first be completely called into question, results only in believing that one sees everywhere something that was already otherwise known, because the expressions perhaps sound similar; except that everything must seem to be extremely deformed, contradictory, and nonsensical, because one does not thereby make the author's thoughts fundamental, but always simply one's own, made natural through long habit. (Prolegomena, 4:262-263)

5. Conclusion:

I identified a noteworthy trend in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments in this chapter. The trend is that scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tend to assume that *deduction* is the *best* means of argumentation to achieve an *anti-skeptical end*. I suggested that the reason for accepting this assumption is that deduction *appears* to provide us with a means of attaining certainty, which is precisely what the skeptic claims is impossible. I then argued that this trend is noteworthy because it must be false since the attempt to entertain it results in a serious problem. The problem is a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions. The problem is that a justification for foundational assumptions *seems* impossible when deduction is our best means of justification, but a justification for foundational assumptions *must* be possible; otherwise, even the skeptical attempt to conclude to the contrary would be impossible. To overcome the problem, I proposed that Kant's transcendental arguments must provide an altogether different not-deductive means of argumentation where the "conclusion" makes possible its "premises" to justify the foundational assumptions of deduction.

I then demonstrated that the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to misinterpret Kant's not-deductive solution to the problem of foundational assumption because the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption forces them to conclude that the "conclusions" and "premises" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are conclusions and premises in the

deductive sense of the terms. To rectify this, I suggest that we, as readers of Kant, need to take a step back before we can understand how Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments enable Kant to overcome skepticism. This step is to open ourselves up to the possibility of an alternative form of argumentation where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises". Without this step, we cannot even begin to understand Kant's not-deductive solution to skepticism, let alone evaluate it.

Chapter 2: The Not-Deductive/Anti-Skeptical Alternative:

1. Introduction:

This chapter focuses on developing what I call the *'not-deductive/anti-skeptical alternative'*. The not-deductive/anti-skeptical alternative is an alternative to the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption that states that not-deductive arguments are the *best* means to achieve an anti-skeptical end. A not-deductive argument is an argument where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises" (A727-728/B765-766). This chapter aims to answer the following question: How do arguments where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises" enable Kant to overcome skepticism? This chapter divides the main question into the following sub-questions: (1) What are the "conclusions" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments? (2) What are the "premises" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments? (3) How do the "conclusions" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments *'make possible'* their "premises"? Consequently, I divide this chapter into three sections.

In the first section, I specify that Kant calls the "conclusions" of transcendental arguments *'conditions for the possibility of experience*' (A94/B126). Next, I put a not-deductive spin on Kant's famous concept of conditions for the possibility of experience by suggesting that conditions for the possibility of experience are *actually* the unique set of *premises* indispensable for a set of *'possible experiences*' (B5). After this, I explain how conditions for the possibility make experience possible through a relatively novel means. I discuss Kant's conception of the "premises" in a not-deductive transcendental argument in the second section, beginning by examining Kant's characterisation of experience in the *Introduction to the B-edition* as the *'stimulation of the senses by objects'* (B1). I then argue that Kant's conception of experience is compatible with skepticism because, as I intend to demonstrate, Kant is *even more skeptical than the skeptic*. In the final section, I argue that what I call *'the experience of skepticism*' is impossible without Kant's conception of experience. This sets the stage for the final chapter of this thesis, where I attempt to evaluate Kant's not-deductive solution to skepticism.

2."Conclusions" that make possible their "Premises", Conditions for the Possibility of Experience, and the role of the *Aporetic* method in the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

The English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to be aware that Kant calls the "conclusions" of transcendental arguments '*conditions for the possibility of*

experience' (A94/B126) and the "premises" *'possible experiences*' (B5)[34]. However, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments *also* tends to conclude that the "conclusions" and "premises" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are conclusions and premises in the ordinary deductive sense of the term[35]. To put the point another way, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to accept that the conditions for the possibility of experience derive their certainty *from* the certainty of experience or a particular set of experiences. On the contrary, I assert that experience must derive its certainty from the higher-order Certainty of the conditions for the possibility of experience[36]. This means that in the not-deductive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments, the "conclusions" in Kant's transcendental arguments are *actually* premises, and the "premises" are *actually* conclusions, which, in turn, means that the relationship between the "conclusions" and "premises" in a not-deductive transcendental argument is the exact inverse of the relationship between the conclusions and premises in deduction.

This section aims to explain the genesis of this inverse relationship. This section suggests a *relatively*[37] novel means to explain the relationship between the "conclusions" and "premises" in

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[34] For Kant's use of this term, see: (A24-25/B38-39), (A28-29/B44-45), (A39/B56), (A90/B122), (A95-A97), (A111), (A158-B197). For some examples that the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments are aware that the "conclusions" in Kant's transcendental arguments are conditions for the possibility of experience and the "premises" are possible experiences, see: (Crawford, 1962, p. 252), (Stroud, 1968, p. 242), (Ameriks, 2003, p. 11), (Stern, 2004, p. 8), and (Cassam, 2007, p. 52).

[35] For example, see the section titled 'textual evidence' in the previous chapter of this thesis. Another noteworthy example of this tendency is (Stroud, 1968, p. 253). In this passage Stroud (Ibid.) states, "But for any proposition S that is a member of the privileged class, the truth of S *follows from* the fact that somebody asserted it, or denied it, or said anything at all "[Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. According to Stroud (Ibid.), the privileged class is a set of propositions that no one can genuinely doubt. In this passage, Stroud asserts that the truth of a member of the privileged class *follows from* the act of assertion or denial. This shows that Stroud conceives of the privileged class deductively as a set of conclusions that follow from a set of premises. However, if the truth of the privileged class were not-deductive, then any member's truth would not follow from its assertion or denial. On the contrary, its assertion or denial would only be possible if the relevant member of the privileged class were true. In other words, the ability to assert or deny anything would *follow from* the truth of the member of the privileged class and not vice versa. I think this is closer to what Kant has in mind with not-deductive transcendental arguments. However, Stroud's privileged class differs from the conditions for the possibility of experience because Stroud only focuses on the self-contradictory nature of these statements as opposed to their role in making experience possible. See also: (Stern, 2004, p. 11).

[36] For passages in Kant's own work that support a reading where the certainty of experience comes from the higher-order Certainty of the conditions for the possibility of experience, see: (B5-B6), (Prolegomena, 4:313-314).

[37] The only other author I am aware of in the English-speaking literature on Kant that explicitly attributes an aporetic structure to the *Critique of Pure Reason* is (Conant, 2016, p. 97). I am heavily indebted to Conant's account of Kant. However, Conant does not explicitly discuss the role of a set of aporiai regarding Kant's transcendental arguments in this paper.

Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments. I argue that conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible by providing a means to solve a set of existing '*aporiai*' that unavoidably accompany the ability to entertain an experience in the first place. A set of aporiai is the plural of the Greek term *'an aporia'*. Insofar as I understand it, an aporia is a state of internal conflict where something that *must* be the case *seems* impossible because of a pre-existing intellectual commitment to something else that *also appears* as though it *must* be the case. The existence of an *apparent* contradiction combined with the simultaneous recognition that nothing contradictory can *actually* exist provides a "reason to seek" a happier alternative, namely, one that does not end in contradiction. The twist is that a reason to seek is not a reason in the ordinary sense of the term, which signifies a premise from which a conclusion follows; instead, a reason to seek is what I call a *'surrogate conclusion'*.

A surrogate conclusion is a technical term I use to describe a conclusion that momentarily stands in for another conclusion that *must* eventually replace it. A surrogate conclusion is like a deductive conclusion in one sense and unlike a deductive conclusion in another: On the one hand, a surrogate conclusion is like a deductive conclusion because it follows from a set of premises; on the other, a surrogate conclusion is unlike a deductive conclusion because it is an *apparent* contradiction, and —strictly speaking— it is impossible for an apparent contradiction to *actually* be a conclusion. For, if it were possible for an apparent contradiction to be an actual conclusion, then contradictions could *actually* exist, which is impossible.

An apparent contradiction like the one above may not *seem* like much of an argument, but we can think of it like a *reductio ad absurdum*. In a *reductio*, we begin by assuming the opposite of the proposition we want to prove and then aim to show that it leads to an apparent contradiction[38]. By arriving at an apparent contradiction, a *reductio* provides a shock to the system that enables us to recognize that we must have been proceeding along a false assumption somewhere along the line to arrive at a *seemingly* contradictory conclusion in the first place. This recognition provides the necessary intellectual space to begin letting go of the false assumption from which the argument began.

After letting go of the false assumption, the next step in a not-deductive transcendental argument is to assume its opposite. However, this is still not enough because this assumption is like

[38] My interpretation of the role of an *apparent* contradiction in an argument draws inspiration from (Halper, 1993, p. 22).

a *conclusion yet to be explained*: We know that it *must* be the case, but we still need to develop the intellectual tools to explain how it can be so. The third thing that is necessary to move from a problematic assumption to a properly foundational assumption is an explanation of how assuming the opposite solves the problem that the *attempt* to assume the *initial* assumption created. That is, the final step in a not-deductive transcendental argument is to show that the conditions for the possibility of experience solve a problem with the possibility of experience that otherwise would have been insoluble.

It is important to be specific about the justification for the conditions for the possibility of experience because it is easy to mistake a not-deductive transcendental argument with a deductive argument by assuming that the *justification* for the conditions for the possibility of experience is that they solve a problem. However, if the conditions for the possibility of experience were justified because they solve a problem, then it would be possible to make arguments for conditions for the possibility of experience conform to a deductive structure. For example, one could create a template that runs as such: (1) Anything that solves a problem with the possibility of experience is a condition for the possibility of experience (2) x solves a problem with the possibility of experience, therefore (C) x is a condition for the possibility of experience. Nevertheless, this template cannot be correct because, according to the previous chapter, Kant's transcendental arguments cannot be deductive, which in turn means that in the not-deductive reading, the problem-solving status of the conditions for the possibility of experience is not their *justification* but only a means to *confirm* their truth. That is, if the condition for the possibility of experience solves a problem with the possibility of experience, then it does not depend on the problem for its justification. Instead, '*the problem can only arise because the solution exists in the first place*'[39].

An example can aid in explaining how a problem can only arise because its solution exists. Take, for instance, Kant's example of *'the Copernican Revolution'* (Bxvi-Bxvii)[40]. The Copernican revolution is Kant's technical term for the shift in the way of thinking that occurred after the

[39] I adopt this phrase from: (Bübner, 1975, p. 459). Bübner heavily inspires my reading of Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments. However, my account differs from Bübner's insofar as it (1) focuses on the anti-skeptical nature of Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments and (2) thinks that Kant possesses a solution to a form of skepticism.

[40] I only use Kant's Copernican revolution to explain how a problem depends on and presupposes its solution for its existence in the first place. I refrain from entering into any discussion of the extensive secondary literature on this controversial topic. My limited aim in this section is to say enough about how Kant *must* have understood the Copernican revolution to make sense of the claim that the problem that the conditions for the possibility of experience solve cannot exist without the solution being true in the first place.

'Copernican model' of the planetary motions replaced the *'Ptolemaic model'* (Ibid.). The Ptolemaic model assumes that the entire host of stars and planets rotates around the Earth, which remains at rest (Ibid.). On the contrary, the Copernican model assumes that the Earth and the other planets rotate around the sun while the sun remains at rest (Ibid.). Kant thinks that the Copernican model must be correct (Bxxii). What justifies Kant's assumption of the Copernican model over the Ptolemaic model?

Insofar as I understand it, Kant thinks that the Copernican model solves a serious problem that the *attempt* to entertain the Ptolemaic model leads to (Bxvi-Bxvii). The problem that Kant thinks the Ptolemaic model inevitably leads to is that the experience of the motions of the planets conflicts with one of the central assumptions of the Ptolemaic model (Prolegomena, 4:291). The central assumption of the Ptolemaic model at issue is the claim that the motion of the planets is consistent—they move in one direction (Ibid.). The experience at issue is what Kant calls a *'retrogressive motion'*, Kant's technical term for a moment where the planets *appear* to move backward before returning to their original progressive paths (Ibid.). However, on the Ptolemaic account—even though the planets *appear* to move backward sometimes and forward at others—the planets cannot *actually* move backward because the motion of the planets is supposed to be consistent (Ibid). Thus, the problem that Kant thinks Copernicus stumbles upon is that, according to Ptolemy's model, it *must* be the case that the planets move consistently, but it *appears* impossible to account for the consistent motion of the planets on this assumption (Ibid.)[41].

Kant thinks that Copernicus's keen knowledge of the Ptolemaic model enables him to spot this problem (Bxxii). By thinking through the problem, Copernicus comes to recognise that the problem disappears if he assumes the opposite: The *appearance* of a retrogressive motion in the planets is *actually* the result of a flaw in the Ptolemaic model, which leads Ptolemy to conflate the motion of the observed with the motion of the observer (Prolegomena, 4:291). To put the point another way, if we assume that the Earth remains at rest and the planets move, then there *seems* to be no consistent way to account for the apparent experience of the backward motion of the planets. However, if we suppose that the Earth rotates, then the *appearance* of a backward motion of the planets can be explained by the Earth's rotation making the other planets *appear* to move backward when they are *actually* moving forward. In this way, *Copernicus's model of the motion of the*

[41] For a similar account, see: (Kemp-Smith, 1912, pp. 550-551).

planets makes the Ptolemaic problem possible. For, if the Copernican model were not true, it would be impossible to entertain the appearance of a retrogressive motion *in the first place*. After all, it would be impossible to confuse the motion of the observer with the motion of the observed *if there were no motion of the observer to begin with*[42].

Translating this example back to Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments reveals that the final step in these arguments is to *confirm* the status of a condition for the possibility of experience by showing that it possesses the explanatory power to solve a problem that made an indispensable experience or set of indispensable experiences *appear* impossible. Consequently, as Kant states (A94/B127), "the unfolding of the experience in which they [i.e., the conditions for the possibility of experience] are encountered, however, is not their deduction (*but their illustration*), since they would thereby be only contingent" [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. The point of this quote is that the possible experiences that Kant includes in a not-deductive transcendental argument are not the *reason for concluding* that the condition for the possibility of experience must be true. On the contrary, the possible experience only acts as a means to *confirm* the truth of the condition for the possibility of experience. It achieves this by providing a means to illustrate how the condition for the possibility of experience makes experience possible by showing that it makes experience possible *in some way*.

Notice the phrase, '*in some way*,' in the previous sentence. Saying that the conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible in some way may sound vague to untrained ears because it does not explain the particular way in which the conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible. However, this is the catch: Each problem that the conditions for the possibility of experience provide a means to solve is *unique* (A789/B817). By the uniqueness of the problem, I mean that each experience that the conditions for the possibility of experience makes possible requires a single explanation of the problem it faces and the means through which the conditions for the possibility make this experience possible. This means that there is no specific formula or precise number of steps for generating a problem or evaluating it. Instead, we must inspect each problem on its own terms and evaluate each solution to a specific

[42] Insofar as I understand it, Kant reads the scientific discoveries that *follow* the Copernican revolution, such as Newton's law of gravity and Kepler's laws of motion (Bxii), as *consequences* of the truth of Copernicus's assumptions. This means that Kant does not think that the assumption that the earth rotates around the sun must be true *because* Newton's laws are true (Ibid.). On the contrary, Kant thinks that Newton's laws must be true because the earth rotates around the sun (Ibid.). In other words, the truth of Newton's laws *confirms* the Copernican Model, but they do not *prove* it.

problem in terms of its ability to solve the problem it attempts to solve. In this sense, the secret to understanding Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments is *that there is no secret*. *This* is perhaps their greatest distinguishing feature from deductive arguments.

By attempting to understand the root of each problem that Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments solve, we arrive at a better position to reflect on and reinterpret the significance of the problem. Doing so enables us to better understand the experience by which we arrived at the conditions for the possibility of experience. Through this process of reinterpretation, we arrive at a new understanding of the "premises" and "conclusions" of such arguments. I call this feature of not-deductive transcendental arguments their '*self-reflexivity*' [43]. The self-reflexivity of an argument is its ability to prompt reflection on its own terms and conditions and thereby lead us to revise and reinterpret them through the conclusion.

Kant presents a lucid description of the self-reflexive nature of the *Critique of Pure Reason* at (Axi-Axii) when Kant states

> This is evidently the effect not of the thoughtlessness of our age, but of its ripened **power of judgment**, which will no longer be put off with illusory knowledge, and which demands that reason should take on *anew the most difficult of all its tasks, namely, that of self-knowledge, and to institute a court of justice by which reason may secure its rightful claims while dismissing all its groundless pretensions*, and this not by mere decrees but according to *its own* eternal and unchangeable laws; and this court is none other than the **critique of pure reason** itself. [Bold: In the original, Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]

In this incredibly rich passage, Kant calls the *Critique of Pure Reason* a court (Ibid.). A court is a room where legal proceedings take place. In an ordinary court, a judge presides over legal proceedings in which a defendant defends a claim and a jury decides upon the claim's legitimacy. '*Reason*', which is Kant's technical term for the ability to argue (A303/B360), finds itself in a peculiar scenario when it comes to court. The peculiar scenario is that in the court that is the *Critique of Pure Reason*, reason must play *all* three roles: reason must act as judge, jury, and defendant. In other words, reason must attempt to undertake a sort of *self-evaluation* (Ibid.)[44].

Self-evaluation is a challenging task; it requires a certain openness and intellectual honesty to accept its results, regardless of the way the evaluation turns out. The self-evaluatory nature of Kant's project in the *Critique* is relevant for the anti-skeptical project of Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments because it means that it is impossible to determine the outcome of Kant's

[43] For other authors in the English-speaking literature that accept a self-reflexive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments, see: (Bübner, 1975, p. 460), (Hintikka, 1972, p. 275).

[44] For another example of a self-reflexive reading of this passage in Kant, see: (A, p. 7).

anti-skeptical endeavour in advance. To put this another way, for Kant it is only by *attempting* to take skepticism *seriously* that it is possible to test the extent of the legitimacy of its claims. Reinterpreting the *Critique of Pure Reason* in this light reveals that it is a book where *Reason reasons about Reasoning*: The ability to reason is the subject matter or '*object*' of this book (*Reasoning*), the subject that interprets the book must possess the ability to reason to interpret it (*Reason*), and the *activity (Reasoning about Reason)* of interpreting this book that the reasoning subject undertakes is the middle term that unifies the reasoning subject with the part of itself that contains the ability to reason in general by ridding itself of apparent inconsistencies.

Through this self-reflexive mechanism, the *Critique of Pure Reason* attempts to perform an act of self-revelation where reason reveals itself to itself by clarifying its own intrinsic content. Although this may sound complicated, it is not. What Kant is attempting to do in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is provide us with a means *to reinterpret* the significance of the activity that we, as skeptical self-evaluators of reason, *must* be engaged in at this very moment to evaluate reason. Kant (Axiii) even goes so far as to say that the function of philosophy is to, *"abolish the semblance arising from misinterpretation"*. Insofar as I understand it, this means that it is the job of philosophy to provide a means of reinterpreting our circumstances that removes the illusions that arise when we bring our own peculiar biases to bear on them.

An analogy can explain the process of reinterpretation. Compare the process of reinterpretation in the *Critique of Pure Reason* to the process of reinterpretation in a dialogue. In a dialogue, I begin by speaking to—or in the voice of— another person. The other carries on the line of thought. In some conversations, the thread of discussion comes undone. However, this undoing does not always make the conversation standstill. In fact, in some cases, a momentary pause is helpful because it reveals the very point of miscommunication where the thread of conversation came undone. On some occasions, the point of miscommunication shifts the focus of the conversation by forcing the participants to reinterpret the entire conversation they engaged in through the lens of the misunderstanding. By reinterpreting the conversation through this lens, the participants can arrive at a better understanding of themselves, their relation to one another, and the subject matter they attempt to discuss. This happens all the time in ordinary life. However, conversations occur so often that reinterpretation is almost *second nature*—it happens so quickly that we barely notice it.

Take, for instance, the classic joke, "A man walks into a bar ... **OUCH!**". The beginning of the joke is a typical comedic setup. This setup creates an expectation that causes the reader to assume the joke will continue in a specific way, for example, "The man sits down on a barstool and says to the bartender..." The joke then breaks this expectation: The bar that the man walks into turns out to be a steel pole (B2) instead of an institution where alcohol is served (B1). The equivocation between the term bar (B1) at the beginning of the joke and the term bar at the end of the joke (B2) forces the reader to reflect on the meaning of the term 'bar' in such a way that the misunderstanding between their initial assumption (B1) could only turn out to be problematic because the term bar *actually* meant something else (B2) *all along*. After one identifies the proper meaning of the term (B2), it is impossible to unsee. The comedic term for this is '*getting the joke*'.

I suggest that there is a philosophical equivalent to getting the joke. *Perhaps*, one could call this '*getting the argument*'. In the same way that it is impossible to unsee a joke once one gets it, it is impossible to unsee a not-deductive transcendental argument once one sees it. We reinterpret the world of our everyday experience through the lens of the conditions for the possibility of experience and, in doing so, come to a better understanding of where experience *actually* begins. Of course, philosophy, in the sense I think Kant is interested, is not comedy—it is quite serious. Nevertheless, I think philosophy shares some significant affinities with comedy.

For one thing, in the same way some people fail to get a joke because of the assumptions they bring to bear on the comedic situation, not everyone gets an argument because of the assumptions they bring to bear when interpreting it. For another, much like comedy, philosophy is an *activity*: Philosophising[45] requires active participation on the philosopher's part to work their way into the problem that a not-deductive transcendental argument solves. Finally, both philosophy and comedy provide a means to escape assumptions. The critical difference is that, unlike philosophy, comedy *does not* attempt to sort out our ordinary assumptions from those truly foundational assumptions.

Reading the *Critique of Pure Reason* in this light requires the reader to approach it as a thoroughly dynamic text that only comes to life by identifying the animating principle of the text in its

[45] I adopt this phrase from (A838/B866), where Kant states, "Among all rational sciences (a priori), therefore, only mathematics can be learned, never philosophy (except historically); rather as far as reason is concerned, we can at best only learn **to philosophize**"[Bold: In the Original.]. Insofar as I understand it, Kant's point here is that wrote-learning philosophy from books (i.e., historically) (A836/B864) is not *really* learning philosophy *at all* since philosophy is an activity that requires us to actively interrogate foundational assumptions rather than pick them up from somewhere else.

problems. To engage in this activity, we, as readers of Kant, need to take a step back. This step is to drop all our feelings, practices, and intellectual baggage, insofar as possible, to get to grips with the text on its own terms. What I am suggesting, then, is that only *after* we have come out the other side will we be able to guide ourselves and others through this text by concretely applying its teachings to contemporary problems.

What I want to suggest specifically is that instead of assuming that we know what the term experience—or better yet, the possibility of experience (B5)— means at the beginning of the inquiry into Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments, we need to ask the question, *'What is Kant's conception of the possibility of experience?*' anew. In the following section, I want to show that Kant's conception of the possibility of experience is open to a more skeptical interpretation than the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to attribute to Kant. To achieve this, I attempt to demonstrate that there is an unavoidable ambiguity attached to the term '*object*' (A373-374) that Kant attempts to clarify in such a way that he ends up being even more skeptical than the skeptic. However, by exposing this ambiguity Kant is not just being skeptical for skepticism's sake; he is attempting to develop a sort of self-consistent skepticism to save the skeptic from self-contradiction (A761/B789)[46].

3. Kant's conception of Experience is compatible with Skepticism:

In the *Introduction to the B-edition*, Kant (B1) defines experience as '*the stimulation of the senses by objects*'. The term object is a notoriously difficult term to define in Kant's philosophy. In this section, I do not address any of the extensive and highly controversial secondary literature on this topic. Instead, my limited aim is to say enough about the object of experience in Kant's account to enable me to explain how Kant's attempt to identify conditions for the possibility of experience enables him to overcome skepticism. To achieve this, I frame this section around solving a problem I call '*the problem of objectivity*'.

The problem of objectivity results from the *attempt* to explain Kant's distinction between two different senses of the term object (Bxx-Bxxi). In the *Preface to the B-edition*, Kant (Ibid.)

[46] My account of Kant's relationship to the skeptic draws inspiration from: (Stapleford, 2005, p. 355). I agree with Stapleford in many respects, for example, (1) that Kant is attempting to develop a form of *'scientific skepticism'* (Ibid.), (2) that Kant's philosophy shares a common ground with the skeptic (Ibid.), and as we shall see in the following section that the literature tends to underappreciate Kant's own conception of 'objectivity' (Ibid., p. 352). I differ from Stapleford insofar as (1) I identify a different skeptical target for Kant who — even though sharing *some* common ground with Kant — Kant attempts to overcome and (2) I attribute an aporetic reading of the *Critique of Pure Reason* to Kant.

distinguishes between an object in the sense of a '*thing-in-itself*' and an '*appearance*'. The thing-in-itself is a tricky term to define. A significant part of the problem with defining this term is that Kant (Bxxvi-Bxxvii) states that it is impossible to say anything about the thing-in-itself except that it *must* exist. The term appearance is no less complicated to define. At (A20/B34), Kant defines an appearance as '*the undetermined object of an empirical intuition*'. Insofar as I understand it, '*determination*' is Kant's technical term for the act of specification (COJ:20:215). For example, I determine *this* is an apple by picking out the specific features that distinguish it from other things such as pears (Ibid.). Empirical intuition is Kant's technical term for a type of mental representation that relates directly to an object through '*sensation*' (Ibid.). Sensation is a term of art in Kant's philosophy for a modification of the mind insofar as an object affects it (A20/B34)[47]. Reinterpreting Kant's definition of appearance in this light renders appearance as the '*unspecified*' object of sensation (Ibid.). However, at this point in the text, the term unspecified remains open to interpretation: It can either mean that Kant *intentionally* avoids specifying whether the object of experience is a thing-in-itself (u1), or it can mean that an appearance is not any particular object of experience, such as an apple or chair, but only a *'something that appears, in general'* (u2) (A289/B346).

However, insofar as the term appearance remains open to interpretation, Kant's distinction between appearances and things-in-themselves is not *really* a distinction *at all* since an appearance *might* be a thing-in-itself. Consequently, it *seems* impossible to define the object of experience in Kant's own account because it *appears* as though it is impossible to distinguish between things-in-themselves and appearances. Yet, it *must* be possible to define the object of experience; otherwise, it is impossible to explain how Kant's attempt to identify conditions for the possibility of experience enables him to overcome skepticism. This is the problem of objectivity. To reiterate, the problem is that we *need* to define the object of experience to explain how Kant's attempt to identify conditions for the possibility of experience enables him to respond to skepticism, but, at this point in the text, it *seems* impossible to define Kant's conception of the object of experience.

To solve this problem, I suggest that, at this point in the text, Kant is *intentionally* equivocating between two different senses of the term unspecified [i.e., (u1) and (u2)] to provide a means of

[47] Affection is a difficult term to define in Kant's philosophy. I do not go into any investigation of this term here. For an example of a philosopher who does, see: (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 22).

reinterpreting the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction to save the skeptic from self-contradiction. To put the point another way, I am suggesting that what Kant is doing through these terms is developing a not-deductive transcendental argument, which shows that the first sense of this term (u1) *depends on and presupposes* the second sense (u2). Developing this problem and this version of the solution takes a lot of work and patience. Nevertheless, it is essential to undertake this task because, as I intend to show, the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to accept a version of the inconsistency I think Kant is attempting to address through the problem of objectivity.

To demonstrate this, I suggest we go through what I think Kant considers one—*perhaps*, even the *most*—common way to misunderstand the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction in the History of Western Philosophy. By misunderstanding the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction, I suggest we will arrive at a better understanding of why Kant thinks it must be impossible to say anything about the thing-in-itself, which will, in turn, enable us to say enough about appearances to explain how Kant's attempt to identify conditions for the possibility of experience enables him to overcome skepticism. Consequently, I divide this section into two sub-sections.

In the first sub-section, I explain what I take to be the most common way to misunderstand the thing-in-itself. To explain this, I employ Descartes' version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction (V1)[48]. I then use Descartes' version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction to explain what I call '*the skeptical conception of experience*'. After this, I provide textual evidence that demonstrates Kant is aware of this conception of experience. Finally, I bring this sub-section to a close by gesturing toward textual evidence that shows that Kant possesses an *even* more skeptical conception of experience than Descartes (A378-379/B275). The second section aims to develop what I call '*Kant's hyper-skeptical interpretation of experience*'. To achieve this, I discuss some of the arguments from the *Transcendental Aesthetic* that demonstrate that Kant thinks the object of experience *cannot* be a thing-in-itself (A35/B52). I bring this section to a close by arguing that Kant's hyper-skeptical interpretation of experience provides Kant with a potent

[48] According to Kant (Bxvi) *any* author in the History of Philosophy prior to the *Critique* is suitable for illustrating the inconsistency in the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction because the *Critique* attempts to revolutionise our thinking about the nature of objects. I choose to use Descartes because the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to accept a version of Descartes' version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction (V1). For example, see: (Stroud, 1968, pp. 255-256), (Rorty, 1971, pp. 5-6), (Stern, 2004, pp. 64-65), (Ameriks, 2003, p. 11). A rare exception is (Allais, 2015, pp. 158-159). However, Hume also accepts a similar version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction as Descartes (V1). For example, see: (Enquiry, pp. 243-246).

anti-skeptical tool since it enables him skeptical camp from which to further his anti-skeptical intentions.

3.1. The Skeptical Conception of Experience:

In this sub-section, I aim to develop what I call '*the skeptical conception of experience*'. The skeptical conception of experience is a misinterpretation of Kant's conception of experience at (B1) that results from reading Kant's definition of experience through the lens of '*external-world skepticism*'. External world skepticism is a technical term that contemporary philosophers tend to use to describe a type of skepticism resulting from the skeptical considerations raised by Descartes in the *Meditations on First Philosophy*[49]. I begin this section by developing what I consider the main argument for external world skepticism from Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*. I then explain the version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction that external world skepticism inevitably leads to. Finally, I explain the skeptical conception of experience that results from reinterpreting Kant's conception of experience through this skeptical lens.

Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* is one of the most influential texts about skepticism in the History of Western Philosophy. The story of the *Meditations* is well known: After becoming dissatisfied with many of the beliefs Descartes formed in his youth, Descartes sets out to find out once and for all whether there is anything that it is possible to attain Certainty about (Meditations, p. 12). To decide once and for all whether there is anything Certain, Descartes employs a version of the skeptical method by subjecting all his former beliefs to skeptical doubts (Ibid.). Noticing the immensity of the task ahead of him, Descartes (Meditations, p. 12) realises that it is not necessary to doubt all his beliefs individually because if he undermines the grounds that all his former beliefs rest on, then they will collapse on their own accord.

Descartes spares no time by going to work on the ground of all his previous beliefs, which he identifies as the senses (Ibid.). To properly evaluate the senses' ability to attain Certainty, Descartes articulates *'the Dream argument'* (Ibid, pp. 12-13). The dream argument is an argument that shows that the senses cannot provide a means to attain Certainty. Insofar as I understand it, this argument functions through two steps. The first step of the argument is to show that perception is indistinguishable from dreams (Ibid, p. 13). To achieve this, Descartes shows that—even in the best-case scenario—there are at least some times when our dreams approach the same degree of

[49] For example, see: (Stroud, 1968, p. 242), (Stern, 2004, p. 4).

vivacity as our experiences and other times when they even surpass this degree, for example, in bouts of fever (Ibid.). The next step in the argument is to notice that dreams tend to misrepresent the objects that they are supposed to represent. To give a Cartesian example, it is possible for a person to dream that they are fully clothed and awake when they are *actually* asleep and naked in bed (Ibid.). This example illustrates the deceptive nature of dreams by showing that dreams tend to present a distorted picture of reality which often fails to correspond to it. Consequently, since perception is indistinguishable from dreams and dreams are deceptive, perception *might* also be deceptive (Ibid.).

Descartes spells out the skeptical implication that follows from the dream argument when he (Ibid., p. 13) states, "Suppose then that I am dreaming, and that these particulars—that my eyes are open, that I am moving my head and stretching out my hands —are not true. *Perhaps, indeed, I do not even have such hands or such a body at all*." [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. The point that Descartes makes in this passage is that *after* the dream argument, it is impossible to prove that the '*external world*' exists. On this reading, the external world is the ordinary world of things we interact with, such as hands, bodies, and other beings (Meditations, p. 13). According to this reading, in ordinary life we tend to assume that the world exists independently of our minds (Ibid.). However, this claim becomes dubious after skeptical reflection because it is always possible that the things perception presents to us are not things-in-themselves, but products of the mind.

The line of reasoning behind this skeptical assertion is that, as dreams are a product of the mind and perception is indistinguishable from dreams, so perception might also be a product of the mind. But, products of the mind do not *actually* exist, so things that appear in perception might not actually exist either. This skeptic assumes that things that are mind-dependent, like dreams, do not *actually* exist. Insofar as I understand it, this assumption is something that the external world skeptic shares with the ordinary person. For, according to the external world skeptic the ordinary person distinguishes between the type of existence that the things in dreams possess and the type of existence that the things that the senses tend to present to us possess. On the ordinary person's account, the former represents an illusion, while the latter represents reality: Things in dreams do not exist because they are *only* a pale imitation of the things that exist in themselves that perception provides access to.

Insofar as I understand it, the external world skeptic accepts the ordinary person's distinction and attempts to alter its meaning from the inside. While accepting that mind-independent things represent reality and mind-dependent things represent an illusion, this skeptic shows that the ordinary person's confidence in the senses is unfounded by demonstrating that the senses *might* not provide them with access to things-in-themselves (Ibid.). In this way, the external world skeptic turns the ordinary person's distinction on its head by showing them that they can only continue to uphold this distinction at the cost of giving up their ability to access the very reality that makes this distinction possible to begin with[50]. This means that the difference between the ordinary person and this skeptic is not one of kind, but one of *tone*. By this I mean that the external world skeptic is more pessimistic than the ordinary person about perception. However, this pessimism is not unfounded. On the contrary, the skeptic thinks that their pessimism represents a concession to the harsh reality that they only possess a very limited set of cognitive capacities.

This pessimism leads to what I call the *'skeptical conception of experience'*. The skeptical conception of experience is the conception of experience we entertain *after* skeptical reflection on the senses. In this conception of experience, it is impossible to decide whether the objects of experience are appearances or things-in-themselves. That is, while the things that stimulate the senses *might* be things-in-themselves, it is equally possible that the things that stimulate the senses *might* not be things-in-themselves. Take, for example, the experience of an apple. I experience an apple as existing at a particular moment, as possessing a particular shape, size, and colour. At this moment the apple is round, large, and green. Now, do these properties belong to the apple-in-itself, or are they merely properties that belong to my mind?

According to the ordinary person, these qualities are qualities of the apples themselves. That is, the apple would possess the same properties even if the ordinary person did not perceive it. I call this reading of the properties of the apple an '*object-dependent interpretation*'. An object-dependent interpretation of the properties of a thing is one where the properties of the thing depend on the way that the thing is in-itself. I call the opposite interpretation a '*subject-dependent*

[50] It is important to note that this explanation of Descartes is only partially faithful to Descartes's own philosophy because Descartes does *actually* attempt to provide a way back to his conception of reality in the third meditation (Ibid, pp. 28-29). Nevertheless, insofar as I understand it, this way back to reality is unusable by Kant because it turns on a conception of the relationship of cause and effect, which insofar as I understand it, Kant rejects after he reads Hume. After all, for Kant (A9-10/B13-14), as for Hume (Enquiry, pp. 72-73), a cause is not contained in its effect.

interpretation'. On the subject-dependent interpretation, the properties of a thing are due to a set of features of the mind. In this reading, the apple that we experience in ordinary life is not a thing-in-itself; instead, the apple only exists as an apple in the mind. Nevertheless, the apple is not an illusion of a thing-in-itself, but a completely different kind of entity. Insofar as I understand it, the external world skeptic *attempts* to occupy a sort of halfway point between these positions by arguing that it is just as likely that the shape and colour of the apple are mind-independent properties of the object as it is that they are mind-dependent features of the subject (Meditations, p. 13). In this way, the external world skeptic *appears* to develop a third option to account for the properties of an object, which is neither completely object-dependent nor completely subject-dependent.

Kant is aware of a version of these competing interpretations of experience (B275). In the *Refutation of Idealism*, Kant (Ibid.) calls Descartes a *problematic idealist*. According to Kant (Ibid.) a problematic idealist does not assert whether the objects that appear to us in experience are imaginary or not. Instead, they only assert that it is impossible to *prove* that these objects are *not* imaginary (Ibid.). This is the position occupied the external world skeptic described above[51]. What then is Kant's relationship to the external world skeptic? The English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to assume that Kant *attempts* to *completely* reject external world skepticism. However, they also tend to notice that the attempt to develop an account where Kant rejects external world skepticism *must* fail for one reason or another, which, in turn, leads them to criticise Kant for attempting to refute the external world skeptic in the first place. To give just one example Stroud states (1968, p. 242) that transcendental arguments are supposed to overcome '*the skeptic*'. Stroud's skeptic supports a version of external world skepticism (Ibid.). Yet, as we saw in the previous chapter, Stroud also criticised Kant's position by claiming that Kant's transcendental arguments are either superfluous or fail to overcome this skeptic altogether (Ibid, p. 242-247)[52].

However, I think there is an alternative option to account for Kant's *apparent* inability to refute external world skepticism through transcendental arguments which aligns better with Kant's own texts. The alternative option is that Kant's response to external world skepticism is *complex* because Kant supports one aspect of external world skepticism and rejects another. That this must

[51] For other examples of Kant's awareness of this position see: (A369-A377) and (Prolegomena, 4:293-294).
[52] For other examples of this tendency, see: (Rorty, 1971, p. 5), (Stern, 2004, p. 4).

be Kant's own position is readily apparent when one consults Kant's own texts. For example, In the *Prolegomena*, Kant (4:290) states, "The difference between truth and dream, however, is *not decided through the quality of the representations that are referred to objects, for they are the same in both*…" [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. In this passage, Kant agrees with the external world skeptic insofar as Kant accepts that the quality of the representations in experience are indistinguishable from dreams. However, in the *Refutation of Idealism*, Kant (B275) states that, "Problematic Idealism…is rational and appropriate for a thorough philosophical manner of thought, allowing, namely, no decisive judgment, *until* a sufficient proof has been found."[53][Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. This passage shows that Kant thinks that, even though the external world skeptic's position is *good as far as it goes* because it curbs our unfounded pretensions, external world skepticism *does not go far enough* insofar as the external world skeptic *attempts* to remain agnostic about the kind of existence that the objects of experience possess. Keeping this wrinkle of complexity in mind is important because it enables us to relate and differentiate Kant's conception of experience from the external world skeptic's conception, which I intend to do in the following section.

3.2. Kant's Hyper-Skeptical Conception of Experience:

In this section, I demonstrate that Kant develops an *even more* skeptical interpretation of experience than the skeptic. In the section above, I stated that the skeptic supports a version of external world skepticism. External world skepticism is the position that argues it is impossible to prove that the objects of experience are things-in-themselves. In this section, I show that Kant takes external world skepticism a *step further* by arguing that the objects of experience *cannot* be things-in-themselves (A34/B51). This is a subtle distinction. In the previous section, I argued that the external world skeptic's interpretation of experience differs from the ordinary person's interpretation of experience in tone. In this section, I want to show that Kant attempts to develop an interpretation of experience that differs from both the ordinary interpretation and the skeptical interpretation *in kind*. That is, this section demonstrates that Kant supports a version of a subject-dependent interpretation of experience, where the objects that appear to us in experience only exist in and for the sake of experience (B132). It is vital to notice that this is a claim about the nature of

[53] See, also: (A378-379).

appearances rather than the thing-in-itself because this enables Kant to distinguish appearances from things-in-themselves without *actually* saying anything about the latter.

This section aims to develop *some* of Kant's arguments for the claim that the objects of experience *cannot* be things-in-themselves (A45/B62). Kant provides many arguments for this claim throughout the *Critique* (A129-130/B166-167)[54]. I limit my focus to what I take to be the two most important arguments for understanding Kant's conception of the objects of experience in relation to the external world skeptic. These are the first two arguments for the claim that objects in space *cannot* be things-in-themselves in the *Transcendental Aesthetic* (A23-24/B38-39)[55]. I think Kant's reconfiguration of the skeptical term '*appearance*' shines brightest in these arguments. Within the constraints of this thesis, is difficult to give a complete account of these incredibly rich arguments which captures all their complexity. However, I attempt to clarify the role of these arguments to the extent that is sufficient to clarify Kant's reinterpretation of the object of experience in what follows.

At the outset of the *Transcendental Aesthetic,* Kant (A23/B37) states

> Now what are space and time? Are they actual entities? Are they only determinations or relations of things, yet ones that would pertain to them even if they were not intuited, or are they relations that only attach to the form of intuition alone, and thus to the subjective constitution of the mind?

In this passage, Kant outlines three possibilities to describe space. In the first case (S1)[56], space is an *'actual entity'*. An actual entity is one of Kant's technical terms for a thing-in-itself (Ibid.). In the second case (S2), Kant describes space as a '*relation of things'* (Ibid.). Kant uses the term relation of things to describe a relationship between things-in-themselves (Ibid.). We can see this because Kant states that these relations would pertain to these things even if they were not *intuited*. Intuition is a technical term in Kant's philosophy used to describe a type of *mental representation* that is '*immediate'* (A19-20/B33-34) and '*unique'* (A25/B39). Immediacy is Kant's technical term for that representation that relates to an object without any other mental processes determining it (A19/20/B33-34). Uniqueness is Kant's technical term for that which can only be given by a single object (A32/B48). For example, the representation of *this* is an intuition. In this way, Kant specifies that the relations he addresses in (S2) do not depend upon the mind for their existence.

[54] For example, see: (A30-34/B46-B50), (A129-130/B166-168), (A510-A515/B538-543), (A677/B705).

[55] I am aware that Kant's proofs for (S3) time at (A30-34/B46-B50) are equally important for overcoming skepticism in general. I speak to Kant's conception of time to some extent in the following section.

[56] I use (S1), (S2), and (S3) to represent the different possibilities for Space that Kant outlines in this passage.

Finally, in (S3) Kant describes space as a relation that *'only attaches to the form of intuition'* (Ibid.). The form of intuition is Kant's technical term for the means that the mind uses to organise the *'matter of intuition'* into relations (A20/B34). The matter of intuition is the representational content of an intuition (Ibid.). In this reading of (S3), space is *not* a thing-in-itself. Instead, it is a part of the mental toolkit for forming a particular kind of representation.

In (S1), space is something like the cosmos, which continues to exist without depending on the thought or perception of any being. The representation of space in (S2) is more complicated than (S1). An analogy can help explain this example. Take, for instance, the force of attraction between the opposite ends of a set of magnets. In this case, the force is not a thing-in-itself. Nevertheless, it is not *entirely* nothing, either. The force is still something insofar as it affects the things-in-themselves and is affected by a set of such things. We call the 'something' that the force of attraction represents a *relationship*. Compare space (S2) to the force of attraction between magnets. In this analogy, space is a relationship like the distance between things-in-themselves—For example, the measure between a horse and a carriage. In this reading of (S2), the relationship that space represents would exist whether or not it was represented. Kant's final scenario of space and time (S3) is the most important scenario to explain for my reading of Kant. In order to do justice to this characterisation of space (S3), I dwell on it for longer than the previous two.

One way to think of space (S3) is to think about the space in dreams. Take, for instance, the dream of a three-headed dragon. While this dream is quite far-fetched, there is nevertheless still some semblance of space in it. For example, the three-headed dragon exists *somewhere*: I can imagine it in front of me or behind me and in relation to other things. Insofar as the dragon can occupy different positions and come into relation with other things in dreams, it *appears* as though it is in space, at least in some sense of the term. I think that Kant is invoking this conception of space at this point in the text. Insofar as I understand it, on this interpretation of (S3), space is a mental place a means of representing things as being in certain places.

In the first argument of the *Transcendental Aesthetic,* Kant asserts that 'space is *not* an *empirical concept* that has been drawn from outer experiences' (A23-24/B38-39) [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]. An empirical concept is a technical term in Kant's philosophy for a *concept* that I can abstract from experience (Prolegomena, 4:267). Kant defines the term concept in contrast to intuition (A68/B93). For Kant, concepts are the representations of the mind that are *general* (A25/B39) and *mediate* (A68-69/B93-94). Generality is Kant's technical term for something that is not unique (A32/B48)

while mediation is Kant's technical term for that which relates to an object through another mental process (A68/B93). For example, the mental representation of 'doghood' or whatever we call the awareness of the features that *all* dogs possess is a concept.

Reading the assertion above in this light reveals that the space Kant talks about in this passage does not refer to any particular space (A23-24/B38-39). Instead, it refers to the space in general—or better yet, absolute space. Thus, in this passage, Kant asserts that it is impossible to acquire the concept of absolute space by abstracting it from an experience or a set of experiences of things '*outside me*' (A23/B38). At this point in the text, Kant's use of the term 'outside me' is open to interpretation. It can either refer to something external (E1) in the sense of something that occupies a place different from the one that I occupy or something that is extra-mental (E2) (Ibid.). Insofar as I understand it, the function of this argument is to close off the room for interpretation by specifying which conception of the term Kant thinks *must* be the case.

Kant attempts to justify the assertion that it is impossible to acquire the concept of space from experience by showing that the *attempt* to assume the opposite *must* fail (Ibid.). Kant (Ibid.) states that if I *attempt* to assume that it is possible to acquire the concept of space from experience, then it must be possible to abstract it. However, to abstract the concept of space, I must be able to identify a sample group of experiences to abstract this concept from (Ibid.). According to Kant (A23/B38), the minimal sample group from which I could abstract the concept of space is the experience of a sensation outside me (Ibid.) But, to have the minimal experience of a sensation that exists outside me, I must be able to represent a sensation in a different location than the one I find myself in (Ibid.). Nevertheless, in order to represent a sensation in a different location from the location I occupy, I must be able to distinguish between and relate the place that I occupy to the place that this sensation occupies, which is impossible to do without the general representation of space (Ibid.).

In simple terms, the problem Kant's argument points to is that it would be impossible to identify a sample group from which to abstract the concept of space if I did not *already* possess the concept of space in general (Ibid.), but it *must* be possible to identify a sample group since I can entertain the experience of sensations as outside me. To escape this problem, Kant assumes that the concept

of space must be a condition for the possibility of the experience of outer appearances since the experience of things outside me would be impossible without it (Ibid.)[57].

There is a lot to say about this incredibly rich argument. The most important for my account is that it is an argument from the *'first-person perspective'*. By the first-person perspective, I mean this argument invites the skeptic to *try* the argument out for themselves. We can see this from Kant's minimal sample group for the experience of a particular space, which is the experience of something outside *me* (Ibid.). By trying the argument out for themselves, the skeptic can come to reinterpret their own experience of a thing outside them by learning more about what the nature of the thing that is outside them *must* be like to be experienced as being outside them. That is, insofar as I understand it, in this argument Kant is attempting to help the skeptic answer the question, 'What makes it possible to experience something *as being* outside me?'

This is a fascinating question whether we are external world skeptics or not, and *perhaps* even more interesting if we are. For, whether the 'something' at issue in this question is a thing-in-itself or not, the question remains, 'How can I represent this thing as being in a particular relation to myself?' For example, leaving undetermined for now whether these things are things-in-themselves or not, how do I identify the table as being *over there* and the chair as *over here*? That I *must* be able to do this is readily apparent, for I could not doubt that I cannot identify things as being outside me without actively entertaining the possibility of the experience (B5) of something outside me to begin with. If this experience were impossible, it would be inconceivable. I *must* be able to conceive of this experience, however, otherwise I could never even *attempt* to engage with this argument in the first place because I could not doubt that the things outside me cannot be abstracted if I could not entertain the experience of things outside me to begin with. Kant answers this question by arguing that the concept of space enables me to distinguish between and relate different sensations to one another as in a location outside me (Ibid.).

This answer, however, requires me—as well as all other external world skeptics engaging in this argument at the moment— to reinterpret their *initial* understanding of the term outside me (E2) by noticing that it *must* be a misinterpretation of this term. For, the things in a different location from me could not be things-in-themselves (E2); otherwise, I would have to derive the concept of space from the experience of these extra-mental beings, which this argument demonstrates is impossible.

[57] For a fascinating account of the relationship between Kant and Plato concerning the claim that experience presupposes prior knowledge, see: (Allen, 1959, p. 169).

This means that the object of sensation must be an appearance that is unspecified in the sense of not representing any specific object (u2). That is, it is not the appearance of a table or chair *in particular* but the concept of a something that appears, in general (A248/B307).

Insofar as I understand it, the philosophical significance of this argument separates Kant from Descartes by demonstrating that Kant *cannot* be a *substance dualist* (D1). A substance dualist thinks that minds are different kinds of entities than bodies (Meditations, p. 55). Now Kant cannot occupy this position because, as stated above, Kant proves that the concept of space is a condition for the possibility of outer appearances (A24/B39). This means that for Kant, the external world is *actually* intra-mental (A375-376). However, the catch is that the external world (E1) cannot be external in the sense of (E2). That is, the external world *cannot* be a world of things-in-themselves but rather is the ordinary world of spatial objects that we interact with like bodies. Understandably, this point tends to be overlooked in the literature because Kant (A371-372) calls himself a dualist in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. However, as Kant (Ibid.) later clarifies, dualism in his sense of the term (D2) is the position that accepts that external things in space are only a different species of representation to internal things.

This means that the external world must *actually* be a world of appearances in Kant's technical sense of the term, which does not refer to any specific thing that appears (u2) but only the concept of a something in general (A248/B307). Consequently, the ordinary world that appears to me as being outside me only exists in the mind. In this way, Kant's first argument in the *Aesthetic* is a not-deductive transcendental argument that identifies a condition for the possibility of external world skepticism. For, it would be impossible for the external world skeptic to mistake the externality in the subject (E1) with the externality of the object-in-itself (E2) if there was no externality in the subject (E1) to begin with (Prolegomena:4,294). After all, if there were no externality in the subject (E1), it would be impossible for anything to appear to me *as* external (E2) to begin with (Ibid.). This argument confirms the not-deductive structure I attributed to Kant above *at least* in part.

The second argument of the *Aesthetic* is a thought experiment. In this argument, Kant (A24/B39) asserts, "One can never represent that there is no space, although one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it [i.e., in space]". Insofar as I understand it, the thought experiment Kant is instructing us to undertake for ourselves in this passage is to notice that there is a difference between the *attempt* to represent that there is no space and the attempt to represent

that there are no things in space (Ibid.). In this passage, Kant is focusing on the representation of space, which is its mental conception (Ibid.). The difference that Kant is showing us in this passage is that the representation of space is conceivable without objects, but objects are inconceivable without the representation of space (Ibid.). This difference is important because it reveals that the representation of space must be a condition for the possibility of the experience of objects in space (Ibid.). The principle behind this argument is that if one thing (x) is conceivable without another (y) but not vice versa, then this thing (x) *must* be a condition for the possibility of that thing (y). It is important to remember that, at this point in the text, Kant has already internalised[58] the object in space by clarifying that the term object is to refer to the object as appearance in Kant's technical sense (A20/B34).

Although the principle behind this argument is clear, there is still a lot to explain about the thought experiment itself. For a start, it is necessary to explain how the representation of space is conceivable without appearances. It is possible to explain Kant's thought experiment like this:

1. Imagine a room with a table, a shelf, and a set of books on the shelf.
2. Gradually remove from the image of the room the books, then the bookshelf, and then the table.
3. Remove the walls of the room from this image.
4. Attempt to remove everything from this image until *almost* nothing is left.

Through this process of abstracting away from the image one arrives at a blank. However, this *'blankness'* is not nothing. For, it is possible to entertain the experience of this blankness, and it is impossible to doubt that this blankness is a possible experience because this thought experiment shows that it is possible to entertain it.

Thus, this blankness *must* be something. Insofar as I understand it, this blankness is Kant's conception of space. Although a blank may *seem* like nothing, it is still something insofar as it is imaginable. Furthermore, I can fill this blank with appearances and remove them at will. It is difficult to describe this 'blankness' because any other description I provide shifts the focus from this blankness to the type of thing the blankness is. Nevertheless, it *must* be possible to describe

[58] The term *'internalization*' is a technical term from (Longuenesse, 1998, pp. 20-22). At this point in the text, Longuenesse (Ibid.) uses this term to describe that Kant shifts the sense of the term 'object' from the object-in-itself in *the Aesthetic* to the object as appearance in the rest of the text by making the object *'internal to (mental) representation itself'.* Insofar as I understand it, this means that Kant's radical shift in thinking transforms the thing that thinking corresponds to into something intra-mental that is non-conceptual (A25/B39).

this blankness since it is something, and a thing can only be something by virtue of being different from other things. I think that what Kant is trying to point to through this blankness is a *potential* for representation.

By a potential, I mean an ability, for example, the ability to draw. The ability to draw is not the activity of drawing itself. However, it is not completely nothing either. Instead, the ability to draw is the indispensable pre-requisite or set of indispensable prerequisites for drawing, for example, a medium like paper, a substrate like a pen, and a thing that brings the substrate in contact with the medium. Translating this analogy back to the blankness reveals that it is an indispensable tool for the mind to represent things. This tool functions by making the imagination of outer objects possible (A374-375)[59]. The blank that abstracting from all mental-images results in is a place where we can locate mental images. This means that the space Kant is talking about in this argument must be (S3) space.

Even though it may seem odd to think about space as an ability, the ability to mentally represent things as being in space is something we use all the time in everyday life. For example, according to Kant (B154-155), when we imagine a line, triangle, or another shape, we generate it in this mental space. In ordinary terms, we might say that we draw these images in the '*mind's eye*'. The mind's eye is the ordinary term for the visual sphere in the mind. However, in ordinary life, we tend to think of the mind as a brain or something that exists *in* a body. Yet, Kant's conception of space causes us to reconfigure our conception of the mind because Kant proves that space is in the mind and not vice versa. To put the point another way, In Kant's account, the question, 'Where is the mind?' turns out to be pointless because it is only *in* the mind that *everywhere* is: Space is an imaginary realm that we locate objects in by determining appearances through the mental act of spatialising them.

At this point in the *Critique*, Kant already demonstrates that the mind makes a genuine contribution to the constitution of an object by providing a means to determine the appearance of something, for example, when I recognise that *this* brown hard thing is a door in front of me, I '*phenomenalise*' it. By phenomenalisation I mean the process of the mind that makes an appearance in general into

[59] At the end of the *Transcendental Analytic* in a much-neglected passage of the *Critique of Pure Reason,* Kant (A292/B349) calls space and time (S3) *'ens imaginarium'*. An ens imaginarium is Kant's technical term for an imaginary being (Ibid.). Kant (A120) also states that he is the first psychologist to claim that the imagination makes perception possible by organizing the impressions of the senses into images. The tendency to overlook Kant's claims that space and time are means of imagining is common in the English-speaking literature on Kant. For an insightful discussion of this tendency and the *'entia imaginaria'* thesis, see: (Waxman, 1991, pp. 33-37).

a particular object of experience, or better yet, in Kant's terms, a *'phaenomena*' (A249). In this way, the object as phaenomenon (Ibid.) is a mental-product about which Certainty must be possible insofar as we can access our own mental abilities. This means that I can attain Certainty about the external world (E1) as long as I remember that the external world is nothing more than the ordinary world of hands, bodies and other beings in space. However, it is important to remember that according to Kant (A26/B42) (S3) space is only the form of intuition. This means that (S3) space cannot *completely* generate the things that appear to us in outer perception because it does not generate the content of the things that appear (A374-375). Nevertheless, I can *anticipate* (A166/B208)—or better yet, pre-determine—that the things that appear to me in experience will appear as in space (S3) since space (S3) is one of the potentialities that enables me to turn the appearances into mental phaenomena.

Insofar as I understand it, with this argument, Kant takes the first step toward developing a unique philosophy where it is possible to draw ontological results from epistemological considerations. By ontology, I mean the study of the nature of being or a particular set of beings. By the term epistemology, I mean the study of knowledge. Insofar as I understand it, in this argument, Kant begins developing what I call '*an epistemic-ontological*' conception of philosophy. An epistemic-ontological conception of philosophy is one where *the conditions for knowing something are the same as the conditions for being the kind of thing that is knowable*[60]. Kant's technical term for this is an '*analytic of pure understanding*' (A247/B304). Kant uses this term to designate the study he proposes to replace ontology (Ibid.). Insofar as I understand it, Kant is developing a new sort of ontology in the *Critique* where there is a primordial unity between thinking and being. The caveat is that this unity only exists between thinking and being- thinkable. I suspect I anticipate too much at this point. However, it is difficult not to overemphasise the importance of the paradigm shift in the term appearances Kant is attempting to develop: On Kant's account appearances are no longer illusions of a thing-in-itself, but a completely distinct kind of entity whose entire being consists in existing for the sake of thinking, rendering them genuine objects of knowledge (A129-130/B166-167).

[60] Kant expresses this idea in the section titled *On the Pure Concepts of the Understanding or Categories* when Kant (A79/B105) states that "The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition..." In this section of the *Critique*, Kant establishes the unity of thinking and being thinkable through the act of thinking. For an in-depth analysis of this passage, see: (Longuenesse, 1998, pp. 199-207).

This difficult task finds its first formulation in the second argument of the *Aesthetic*. The second argument of the *Aesthetic* establishes that appearances depend on the mind to be what they are, whereas a thing-in-itself does not, by showing that the things that appear to us as in space (S3) could not appear to us as spatial without the mental representation of (S3) space. In this way, the mental representation of space (S3) determines the constitution of the things that appear in space. By this, I mean (S3) space enables us to specify things as being in particular locations and relations.

This means that Kant supports a version of a subject-dependent interpretation of experience about spatial objects because — *at least*, at this point, in the text — one of the properties of the objects that appear to us in perception depends on the mind: the *spatiality* of the object. Returning to the example of the apple, for Kant the shape and size of the apple in perception is not a property of the apple itself but a property of the apple that appears in perception. The catch with Kant's view is that, strictly speaking, there is no apple itself. For, an apple that cannot, in principle, be a particular shape or occupy a particular space is not *really* an apple at all, at least if we intend to use the term apple in the *same sense*. Consequently, for Kant, the apple is a thing that can *only* exist in the mind (A46/B63). I call this Kant's *'hyper-skeptical conception of experience'*. In this reading, *at least all* the outer objects of experience are in the mind.

In this way, Kant fights external world skepticism with external world skepticism. Kant achieves this by showing that the ordinary external world skeptic does not go far enough because they do not accept *'Kantian skepticism'* about the external world. Kantian skepticism about the external world is my term for the position that brings the ordinary world into the mind and makes the ordinary world depend on it. In this way, Kant uses the mental tool of space (S3) to show the external world skeptic that when their position is properly thought through there *must* be some things possible to attain Certainty about. For, (S3) space is a condition for the possibility of experience, and nothing can appear as *in* space without the representation of space. However, at least *some* of the things that appear in dreams are in (S3) space, so one of the conditions for the possibility of experience is *also* a condition for the possibility of dreams. Yet, dreams are a condition for the possibility of external world skepticism because the external world skeptic uses dreams to frame their skeptical doubts (Meditations, p.13). Thus, *at least* one of the conditions for the possibility of experience is also a condition for the possibility of skepticism, amongst other things, which, in turn, means that there are just something that the skeptic cannot doubt because

the ability to formulate their doubts depends on and presupposes these things. We have seen some of these things in this section. For example, (1) that (S3) space is possible, (2) that everything that appears in (S3) space is not a thing in itself, (3) that outer appearances are products of the mind which are not illusory but genuine objects of knowledge, (4) that dreams are possible, and that (5) the externality in dreams is a product of the mind (E1). In the final section of this chapter, I attempt to provide a few more.

4. The experience of skepticism is impossible without Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience:

In the previous section, I argued that Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience is a condition for the possibility of skepticism. In this section, I expand the scope of Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments by linking Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience to a particular experience, which I call '*the experience of skepticism*'. In doing so, I aim to show that there are more conditions for the possibility of experience that are *also* conditions for the possibility of the experience of skepticism, amongst other things. I begin by explaining the experience of skepticism. I then relate Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience to the experience of skepticism. Finally, I bring the section to a close by showing that not-deductive arguments where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises" enable Kant to overcome skepticism because, as I intend to demonstrate, *at least* one of the "premises" that the "conclusions" of Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments make possible is the experience of skepticism.

The experience of skepticism is a technical term I use to describe the awareness of the *activity* of *being* skeptical. It is not easy to describe this activity because any attempt to explain it shifts the focus from the activity itself to the adequacy of the explanation of the activity. Nevertheless, the next step in the account is to attempt to explain this experience because it is indispensable for understanding how not-deductive transcendental arguments enable Kant to overcome skepticism. Let me explain it like this: By the *activity* of *being* skeptical, I mean the awareness that I appear to be doing something. Now, it is this '*doing*' the experience of skepticism attempts to describe. What then is this doing? The ordinary term for this 'doing' is doubting. I define doubting as the mental process of actively attempting to suspect that something that *appears* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case. This means that, for example, when I

attempt to doubt that Certainty is possible, I am entertaining the possibility that—even though Certainty *appears* possible—Certainty cannot *actually* be possible. It is this activity that I think Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments take an interest in.

A significant part of this interest comes from the fact that it is impossible to *doubt that doubting is possible* because the content that this act *attempts* to express undermines itself when thoroughly thought through. The basic idea here is that it is impossible to doubt that doubting is possible because the *attempt* to doubt that doubting is possible is itself an instance of doubt, which, as such, undermines its own ability to raise doubts about the possibility of doubting in general. This reveals that the ability to doubt something, in general, must be possible because it is indispensable for formulating a particular doubt in the first place. Thinking of doubting this way is interesting because it shows that doubting is a sort of *activity* I possess the power to do. I call the power to doubt the '*capacity to doubt*'.

Longuenesse's seminal work *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Aesthetic* (1998) inspires my understanding of the ability to doubt as a capacity. In this work, Longuenesse (Ibid, pp.7-8) introduces Kant's distinction between a '*Vermögen*' and a '*Kraft*'. According to Longuenesse (Ibid.), a *vermögen* is a *potential* for an activity, and a *kraft* is the activity itself. An example can aid in explaining the distinction between the potential for an activity and the activity itself. Take, for instance, the activity of building. In this case, the potential is the raw matter that is indispensable for the activity of building to take place —for example, bricks and mortar— while the activity is the building itself —the act of combining the raw materials for building together in such a way that they result in a new product: 'a building'[61]. Relating this to what Longuenesse (Ibid, p.7) calls '*the capacity to judge*' reveals that Kant interprets '*judgment*' as a sort of mental activity. Judgment is Kant's technical term for thinking (A69/B94). Thinking about thinking as a sort of activity shifts the focus from the *content* of thinking to the *ability* to think. This shift forces the skeptic to shift their focus from the Certainty

[61] I adopt this example of a potential and an activity and this distinction from (Metaphysics, 1048a30-1048b). For some of the literature that explicitly discusses Kant's relationship to Aristotle, see: (K, pp. 10-12), (Longuenesse, 1998, pp. 329-330), (Conant, 2016, pp. 116-117). For my purposes, I only adopt this distinction insofar as it aids in understanding Kant's own work because —even though I think Kant agrees with Aristotle in some respects—I think Kant disagrees with Aristotle in others.

of the propositional content that a thought asserts to the Certainty of the *ability* to formulate propositions in the first place.

Thinking is something that the skeptic must possess the ability to do because the *activity* of doubting is a species of thought. What I mean by this is that doubting is one form of thinking amongst others, such as *affirmation* (A70-71/B95-96). Affirmation is Kant's technical term for one of the primary forms of thinking where I assert that a particular predicate belongs to a particular subject, for example, 'apples are green' (Ibid.). Similarly, when I doubt something, what I am doing is attempting to entertain the idea that a specific predicate *appears* to belong to a particular subject and simultaneously attempting to withhold this predicate by showing that this predicate cannot *actually* belong to a particular subject. For example, if I doubt that 'Certainty is possible' I am entertaining the idea that there is a thing called Certainty and entertaining the idea that the conditions for this thing to exist cannot obtain.

Thinking about doubting in this way shows that doubting presupposes quite a lot. Perhaps, most importantly, that it *must* be possible for a specific predicate to belong to a particular subject in the first place. After all, the awareness of the ability to suspect that something that appears to be the case cannot *actually* be the case depends upon and presupposes that something can *appear to be the case in the first place*. For, if nothing could appear to be the case, then it would be impossible to raise suspicions to begin with. Put simply, the ability to doubt depends upon and presupposes a '*something*' to doubt. I call this something an '*object of doubt*'. The object of doubt is the horizon that forms the focal point of a particular doubt. Now, what kind of thing is the object of doubt? Is the object of doubt a thing-in-itself or an appearance?

The external world skeptic attempts to accept that the object of doubt *might* be either a thing-in-itself or an appearance. However, as we saw in the previous section, this agnosticism gets this skeptic into trouble when they attempt to follow it through because it leads them to commit a category error by confusing a feature of the subject for a feature of an object in itself (A297/B345). We saw one example of this in the previous section, where I explained that the skeptic confuses the externality of the subject (E1) with the externality of the object in itself (E2) (A373-374). However, there are others in Kant's work, such as the '*representation of time*' (A34/B51) and '*the categories*' (A94-95/B127-128). Like with (S3) space, providing a full definition of these terms and explaining how they make the experience of skepticism possible takes a lot of work to do well.

I do not go into any in-depth explanation of how the representation of time and the categories make experience possible. I only briefly explain these mental tools to show that the skeptic presupposes more than they can doubt by the very act of doubt.

In Kant's philosophy, Time (S3) is like a mental calendar: It is the mind's means of representing and organising *all* mental events (B69). In the same way that (S3) space enables us to phenomenalise appearances by locating them in particular spatial relations, (S3) time enables us to phenomenalise appearances by placing them in temporal relations such as before and after (A144/B183). Kant's technical term for the mental act of placing appearances in relations of time is a '*transcendental time-determination*' (A139/B178). A transcendental time determination is a specification of time under one of the '*the categories*' (Ibid.) *The Categories* are a set of fundamental concepts that enable us to organise particular appearances according to some of the fundamental ways of thinking, such as affirmation (A94-95/B128-129). For example, Kant (Ibid.) thinks that without the concept of '*substance*' it would be impossible to think of an object of experience as a subject (Ibid.). These are just some ways that the conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible by generating the form of the things that appear to us. Nevertheless, the content of the objects of experience must be given from elsewhere (A20-21/B34-35). But, as Kant (B145-146) reminds us, we cannot explain *how* this content is given but only that it *must* be.

This means that Kant's anti-skeptical interest in the conditions for the possibility of experience is that, even though the skeptic about foundational assumptions may be able to doubt *some* things, *at least* one thing they cannot doubt is that experience in Kant's sense of the term is possible. The reason behind this is that experience is the stimulation of the senses by an appearance (B1) in Kant's technical sense of the term, and it must be possible for something to appear to be the case for the skeptic to get their doubt off the ground in the first place. Thinking about the possibility of experience in this way reveals that the possibility of experience is the possibility of being *appeared* to, which, as Kant can argue, must be possible because one of the conditions for the possibility of doubt is that it must be possible for something to appear. In this way, through identifying conditions for the possibility of experience, Kant also identifies conditions for the possibility of skepticism, amongst other things. This means that conditions for the possibility of skepticism are things about which Certainty must be possible because no skeptic can *actually*

doubt their own conditions for possibility. After all, if they could, then there would be no skeptics to begin with.

5. Conclusion:

In this chapter, I developed the not-deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, which claims that not-deductive arguments where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises" are the *best* means to overcome skepticism. I began by specifying that Kant calls the "conclusions" of not-deductive transcendental arguments 'conditions for the possibility of experience' (A94/B126) and the "premises" 'possible experiences' (B5). I then put a uniquely not-deductive spin on these concepts by asserting that conditions for the possibility of experience are *actually* the unique set of premises indispensable for experience. This means that the "conclusions" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are *actually* premises, and the "premises" are *actually* conclusions, which, in turn, means that the relationship between the "premises" and "conclusions" in Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments is the inverse of the premises and conclusions in a deductive argument. To explain the genesis of this inverse relationship, I suggested that the conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible by providing a means to solve a set of aporiai that unavoidably accompany the ability to entertain an experience in the first place. I dedicated the rest of the chapter to demonstrating that *at least* one of the aporiai that conditions for the possibility of experience must solve is the experience of skepticism.

The experience of skepticism is the mental awareness of the capacity to doubt. The capacity to doubt is the ability to actively suspect that something that *appears* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case. The capacity to doubt leads to an aporia when Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience is impossible because, as I argued in the final section of this chapter, it is impossible to suspect that something that *appears* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case if nothing can appear to be the case *in the first place*. As I argued, in the second section of this chapter, Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience makes this possible through identifying conditions for the possibility of being appeared to. In this way, I proved that Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments could provide a means to overcome skepticism because one of the experiences they make possible is the experience of skepticism.

Conclusion: Kant's Skeptical Solution to Skepticism: Kant's Not-Deductive Transcendental arguments justify Conditions for the Possibility of the Experience of Skepticism, amongst other things:

1. Introduction:

In reviewing the thesis as a whole, this concluding chapter aims to demonstrate that Kant's transcendental arguments *can* provide a means to overcome skepticism if they are not-deductive. To achieve this, I recap the argument from the first chapter of this thesis which demonstrated that Kant's transcendental arguments cannot overcome skepticism if they are deductive. I then rehearse the argument of the second chapter where I argued that Kant's transcendental arguments could provide a means to overcome skepticism if they are not-deductive arguments where the "conclusions" make possible their "premises" (A737/B765). Finally, I attempt to show that no skeptic can doubt a not-deductive transcendental argument because what they *actually* attempt to doubt by the act of doubting a not-deductive transcendental argument is *the conditions for their own possibility.*

2: Conditions for the Possibility of Experience *are also Conditions for the Possibility of the Experience of Skepticism*:

In the first chapter, I identified a noteworthy trend in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments, namely that scholars in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tend to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption, which asserts that deduction is the *best* means of argumentation to achieve an anti-skeptical end. I then suggested that the reason for accepting this assumption is that deduction appears to provide us with a means of attaining Certainty, which is precisely what the skeptic claims is impossible. After this, I argued that the tendency to accept the deductive/anti-skeptical assumption is noteworthy because it *must* be false since the attempt to entertain it results in a serious problem. The problem, a version of the problem of the justification of foundational assumptions, was that a justification for foundational assumptions *seems* impossible when deduction is our *best* means of justification, but a justification for foundational assumptions *must* be possible; otherwise, even the skeptical attempt to conclude to the contrary would be impossible. To overcome the problem, I proposed that Kant's transcendental arguments must provide an altogether different not-deductive means of

argumentation where the "conclusion" makes possible its "premises" (A737/B765) to justify the foundational assumptions of deduction.

In the second chapter, I asserted that Kant calls the "conclusion" of a not-deductive transcendental argument a 'condition for the possibility of experience' (A94/B127) and the "premises" 'possible experiences' (B5). I then argued that conditions for the possibility of experience make experience possible by providing a means to solve a set of *aporiai* that unavoidably accompany the ability to entertain an experience in the first place. After this, I demonstrated that Kant's *initial* conception of experience as the *'stimulation of the senses by objects'* (B1) is compatible with skepticism as Kant argues that the object of experience *cannot* be a thing-in-itself (A129/130). Consequently, on Kant's own account, the object of experience *must* be an appearance (A20/B34). This conception of experience is compatible with skepticism, which doubts the existence of mind-independent things (Meditations, p. 14). However, unlike this skeptic, Kant *does not* think it is impossible to tell whether an appearance is an illusion of a mind-independent thing-in-itself (B69-70). On the contrary, Kant argues that appearances *cannot be illusions of a thing-in-itself* because appearances are a completely separate class of entities that *cannot* exist in themselves (A129-130). After all, an appearance is only a *potential* object of experience (A20/B34), and for a fully-fledged object of experience or phaenomenon to *actually* appear to a perceiver, the phenomenalising functions of the mind—like space, time, and the categories (Ibid.)— are required (Ibid.). In this way, Kant shows that appearances are the proper object of knowledge since they are products of the mind.

Finally, I argued that Kant's conception of experience is a condition for the possibility of the experience of skepticism, amongst other things. To achieve this, I argued that the experience of skepticism is the awareness of the capacity to doubt. I claimed that the capacity to doubt is the ability to actively suspect that something that *appears* to be the case cannot *actually* be the case. I then argued that it is impossible to actively suspect something that appears to be the case cannot actually be the case if nothing can appear to be the case *at all*, which is what Kant's conception of experience enables. This means that Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments can provide a means to overcome skepticism. For, no skeptic can *actually* doubt a not-deductive transcendental argument because what a not-deductive transcendental argument *actually* justifies *are conditions for the possibility of the experience of skepticism*, which are impossible to doubt. After all, if conditions for the possibility of the experience of skepticism were false, then it would be

impossible to entertain skeptical doubts about a not-deductive transcendental argument altogether because what the skeptic would actually doubt is *the conditions for their own possibility*. Consequently, there must be some things that cannot be doubted because these things make the skeptical activity of doubting possible in the first place.

One significant limitation to the not-deductive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments which I could not pass over in silence is that these arguments *cannot* prove anything about the way things are in themselves. Consequently, Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments cannot be used to overcome external world skepticism by demonstrating that the external world is a thing-in-itself. However, this is not because—as the English-speaking literature on Kant's Transcendental arguments tends to assume—Kant's transcendental arguments are *not skeptical enough*. On the contrary, Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments cannot prove anything about the way things are in themselves since, as I proved in the previous chapter, Kant is an *even more radical* external world skeptic than the ordinary external world skeptic in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments. This means that Kant's inability to prove anything about things-in-themselves is not to Kant's detriment but to Kant's credit because, possessing a keen awareness of the scope of not-deductive transcendental arguments, Kant never *attempts* to prove anything about things-in-themselves. However, as I demonstrated in the previous chapter, Kant *can* overcome external world skepticism by demonstrating that the external world skeptic commits a category error by confusing the externality of the subject (E1) with the externality of the object in itself (E2).

In this respect, I think it is worthwhile to compare Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments to the classic tale of *Goldilocks and The Three Bears* (Swan, 2004). In this story, the young girl, Goldilocks, barges into the house of a family of bears while they are away (Ibid., p.13). After barging in, Goldilocks tries three bowls of porridge (Ibid.). The first is *too* hot, the second is *too* cold, but the third is *just* right (Ibid., p. 15). I think that Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are like *'Goldilocks arguments'* since they are *neither too ambitious nor too modest but possess just the right amount of ambition*[62]. For, Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments

[62] The terms 'ambitious' and 'modest' are standard in the English-speaking literature that authors use to describe Kant's transcendental arguments. For example, see: (Ameriks, 2003, p. 8), (Stern, 2004, p. 102). An ambitious transcendental argument attempts to overcome a radical skeptic (Stern, 2004, p. 65). A modest transcendental argument attempts to overcome a less-radical skeptic (Stern, 2004, p. 102). There is a third kind of argument that

strive only to justify what *must* be justifiable while simultaneously being aware of the limits of what can be justified. In other words, Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments do not attempt to prove too much, nor too little, but just the right amount necessary to overcome skepticism. In my opinion, what makes Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments so impressive is not how much they prove but *how they manage to prove so much with so little.*

3. Conclusion: There are just some things that *cannot* be doubted:

By attempting to entertain skeptical doubts throughout this thesis, we have come to learn that there are just some things that cannot be doubted. For example: (1) That Certainty is possible, (2) that foundational assumptions are justifiable, (3) that skepticism is possible, (4) that doubting is possible, (5) that dreams are possible, (6) that (S3) space is a condition for the possibility of experience, (7) that (S3) space is a condition for the possibility of dreams, (8) that experience in Kant's technical sense of the term must be possible, (9) that there must be an object of experience, (10) that the object of experience *cannot* be a thing-in-itself, (11) that the experience of skepticism is possible, (12) that the experience of skepticism depends on Kant's hyper-skeptical conception of experience, (13) that conditions for the possibility of experience, in general, are conditions for the possibility of the experience of skepticism in particular, amongst other things ,(14) that Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments justify conditions for the possibility of skepticism, and, *perhaps*, most importantly (15) that Kant's not-deductive transcendental arguments are immune to skeptical doubt.

I explained these things in many ways: As foundational assumptions, as "conclusions" that make possible their "premises", as conditions for the possibility of experience, as conditions for the possibility of dreaming, and conditions for the experience of skepticism. Now I can characterise these things as *conditions for the possibility of doubting*. This description is more accurate because it is only through these things that the skeptical activity of doubting is possible in the first place. Even though I provided a means to overcome skepticism by identifying conditions for the possibility of doubting, there is still plenty of work to be done. After all, I could only cover a few of the particular conditions for the possibility of doubting that Kant covers in the course of the

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the literature on Kant's transcendental arguments tends to overlook. This form of transcendental argument is realistic: It aims to overcome an even more radical form of skepticism than the ordinary form of skepticism in the English-speaking literature on Kant's transcendental arguments without attempting to justify more than is required to overcome this form of skepticism. This third form of argumentation is the not-deductive reading of Kant's transcendental arguments.

Critique of Pure Reason. For some of the other conditions for the possibility of doubting that I could not cover in this limited space, I refer the reader to the *Analytic of Principles*, where Kant attempts to justify *all* of the *'ancestral concepts'* (A82/B108) in the table of categories.

> The objections that are to be feared lie in ourselves. We must search them out like old but unexpired claims in order to ground perpetual peace on their annihilation. External quiet is only illusory. The seeds of the attacks, which lies in the nature of human reason, must be extirpated; but how can we extirpate it if we do not give it freedom, indeed even nourishment to send out shoots, so that we can discover it and afterwards eradicate it with its root? *Thus, think up for yourself the objections which have not yet occurred to any opponent, and even lend him the weapons or concede him the most favourable position that he could desire. There is nothing in this to fear, though much to hope, namely that you will come into a possession that can never be attacked in the future* (A778/B806) [Italics: H. Grecia, 2023]

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Glossary:

1. Transcendental arguments (Transcendental arguments): A unique form of argument intended to overcome skepticism.
2. certainty (C1): The certainty of the conclusions in a deductive argument.
3. Certainty(C2): The certainty of the premises, or foundational assumptions, in a deductive argument.
4. bar (B1): An institution that serves alcohol.
5. bar (B2): A steel pole.
6. Unspecified (u1): A lack of an *actual* distinction between things-in-themselves and appearances.
7. Unspecified (u2): An appearance that is not specified as being any particular thing that appears.
8. Descartes' version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction (V1): A distinction where the thing-in-itself represents mind-independent reality and appearances represent a mind-dependent illusion.
9. Kant's version of the thing-in-itself/appearance distinction (V2): A distinction where both the thing-in-itself and appearances represent something real in distinct ways.
10. Space and time (S1): A conception of space and time where they are mind-independent entitles.
11. Space and time (S2): A conception of space and time where they are relations between mind-independent entities
12. Space and time (S3): A conception of space and time where they are a subjective means of representing.
13. outside me(E1): The *actual* externality of the mind
14. Outside me(E2): The *apparent* externality of the thing-in-itself
15. dualism(D1): A substance dualist that thinks that minds are a distinct kind of entity from bodies
16. Dualism(D2): A Kantian dualist that thinks that minds and bodies are *only* distinct kinds of representation.