

Kantian Non-Conceptualism and Varieties of Skepticism

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1. Introduction

Kantian nonconceptualism has become a doctrine that stands on its own two feet, namely the claim that the sensible intuition, apprehension, and association of what appears is sharply independent from understanding and other higher-order intellectual powers. Independently of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the doctrine is also widely supported by empirical findings in contemporary cognitive psychology, psychology of development, neuroscience, and even in cognitive ethology. It is no longer an open question whether infants or animals may represent whatever they are acquainted with quite independently of any kinds of concepts whatsoever.

Yet, the classical debate about the right reading of Kant's philosophy is still open. And recently, more specifically the classical debate about the right reading of *The Transcendental Deduction of the Pure Concepts of the Understanding*, or *Categories* (aka, *The TD*) has come up again in the context of Kantian Non-Conceptualism. Non-conceptualist readings of *The TD* face three charges: the "fitness-for-purpose" objection, the triviality objection, and the "rogue objects" objection.¹

It was Gomes who first identified the "fitness-for-purpose" objection as such.² According to this worry, if Kantian Non-Conceptualism is correct, the *The TD* does not accomplish what it is supposed to do, namely refute the so-called "skeptical" either of Humean or Cartesian provenance. The second objection is closely associated with the first. Because, according to Kantian Non-Conceptualism, *The TD* does not address the so-called "skeptical," then *The TD* does not establish anything of philosophical interest. That is Ginsborg's triviality objection.³ The third charge is independent of the first two: if it is true that objects can appear without categories, Kant cannot soundly conclude *The TD* by claiming that categories apply to all objects of experience. In other words, there is an inferential gap in the *TD*. Kant should have allowed for rogue objects.⁴

This paper addresses those objections, by arguing for the following claims. First, I argue that Kantian Non-Conceptualism provides by far the best and most reasonable account not only (i) of *why* Kant has to undertake *The TD*, but also (ii) of *how* Kant undertakes *The TD*. In a nutshell, according to the Non-Conceptualist reading, categories are not conditions either for

¹ The two most important names in the recent Non-Conceptualist trend in Kant studies are Hanna (2005, 2011, 2013, 2015), and Allais (2009, 2015). Also worth mentioning are recent essays by McLear (2011) and Tolley (2013). The leading names in the Conceptualist response are Wenzel, (2005), Ginsborg (2008), Grüne (2011), and Gomes (2014). But we should also remember that all of the major names in Kant studies since the middle of the 20th century have been Conceptualist readers of Kant: see, e.g., (Strawson, 1966), (Allison, 1984, 2015), (Guyer, 1987), (Longuenesse, 1998), and so on.

² See (Gomes, 2014). I take the label "fitness-for-purpose" from (Watt, 2018). Gomes's objection was raised against Allais's version of Kantian Non-Conceptualism; see Allais (2009, 2015).

³ See (Ginsborg, 2006).

⁴ See (Hanna 2013, 2015).

what appears or even for the apprehension of what appears. Rather, they are conditions for the “possible experience of objects,” namely the *consciousness that (Erkenntnis)* appearances are thought to be connected in a lawlike way.

Second, against the first charge, I argue that the Non-Conceptualist reading of The TD is entirely compatible with Kant’s intention to address a specific form of skepticism. Yet, this is not the skeptical strawman of the Kant-literature, merely conceived to make The TD philosophically interesting, but rather Hume’s skepticism about the uniformity of nature. Regarding this, I argue that the recurrent misconstrual of Hume’s skepticism about the uniformity of nature as Hume’s skepticism about senses traces back to mistaking the empirical sense of appearances (and the transcendental sense of representations) for the empirical sense of representations in The TD. The key claim of this paper is that Kant’s phenomenalism has been deeply misunderstood. To be sure, appearances is representations. Still, appearances are representations only insofar as “appearance” is taken in the empirical sense, namely, what appears in space, and “representation” is taken in the relevant transcendental sense, namely the mind-dependent cognition (of mind-independent existing noumena).

Third, I argue that the only way of addressing Hume’s “challenge to reason” is by providing an account of the uniformity of nature that is superior to Hume’s naturalist account, in the light of the objectivity requirement of Newtonian physics.

Fourth, I argue that The TD makes room for “rogue objects” without leaving a gap open: categories are conditions of all objects of experience *in the formal* rather than *in the material sense*, that is, only insofar as appearances are taken to be lawlike connected.

The paper is structured as follows. After this Introduction, section 2 is devoted to presenting the debate between Kantian Conceptualist and Kantian Non-Conceptualist readers as regards the philosophical motivation of The TD. According to the Conceptualists, Kant is entertaining a mere epistemic possibility (a skeptical hypothesis) to be ruled out later at the end of The TD. By contrast, according to the Non-Conceptualists, Kant is presenting his own metaphysical view in The TD: categories are not conditions for what appears.

Now, since Kant claims that the “possibility of experience” is the principle of The TD (A94/B126-127) and the *Beweisgrund* of transcendental propositions, sections 3, 4, 6, and 7 are devoted to exploring different meanings of “possible experience” in connection with the corresponding forms of skepticism. The exception is section 5, where I expose the so-called “skeptical” as a strawman.

2. The Why of a Transcendental Deduction

In his statements at A90-1/B122-3 Kant explains what makes The TD unavoidable:

Objects can indeed appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding. (A89/B122, underlining added)

Appearances could after all be so constituted that the understanding would not find them in accord with the conditions of its unity.... [and] in the succession of appearances nothing would offer itself that would furnish a rule of synthesis and thus correspond to the concept of cause and effect, so that this concept would be entirely empty, nugatory, and without significance. Appearances would nonetheless offer objects to our intuition, for intuition by no means requires the function of thinking. (A90–91/B122–123, underling added)

What Kant states in these introductory remarks to The TD is crystal clear: categories of the understanding are not conditions of what appears to our senses as sensible intuitions of objects. Objects can appear to us without being subjected to a lawlike connection prescribed by

categories as concepts of the necessary unity of sensible intuitions. This raises the reasonable suspicion that the categories of the understanding might be empty, nugatory concepts. This doctrine is what I want to call Kantian Non-Conceptualism with respect to The TD. This is the claim that Kant's quoted statements constitute a *real metaphysical hypothesis* that he assumes to be his own.⁵

In contrast, Kantian Conceptualists emphatically deny that Kant at A90-1/B122-3 is contemplating a real metaphysical possibility. According to them, what Kant states at A90-1/B122-3 is conceivable, but metaphysically impossible. According to Gomes, for example, Kant is contemplating "a mere epistemic possibility to be eliminated later (in the Deduction) as an unreal metaphysical possibility" (2014:6). In support of his conceptualist reading, Gomes reminds us that Kant uses the indicative "can" (*können*) in the formulation at A89/B122, as opposed to the subjunctive "could" (*könnten*) at A90-1/B122-3.⁶ The indicative tense is supposed to be a hint that Kant is taking the possibility of objects appearing without categories as real, while the second indicates a mere epistemic possibility to be eliminated later.⁷

Are Kant's statements only an epistemic possibility to be ruled out, or are they a real metaphysical claim that Kant endorses as his own? In this section, I limit myself to making the following remarks.

First, even in the course of TD, Kant reiterates the independence of appearances from categories in several passages. Consider these:

That representation that can be given prior to all thinking is called **intuition** (B132, boldfacing in the original)

Appearances are the objects that can be *given* to us immediately, and that in them which is immediately related to the object is called intuition. (A108-109, italics in the original, underlining added)

⁵ See (Gomes, 2014).

⁶ See (Gomes, 2014:3).

⁷ Gomes's suggestion is anything but new. Paton makes the very same remark about the tense of the verb 'can': "Such would, I think, be the obvious explanation, if Kant had said 'objects might appear' instead of 'objects can appear' (*könnten* instead of *können*) as he does in a parallel passage (A90=B123), where he says 'Appearances might be so constituted that the understanding would find them to be not in accordance with the conditions of its unity,' a supposition which it is the business of the Transcendental Deduction to refute. Even as it is, this seems to me a possible explanation, although the sentence is better taken as expressing Kant's own view, if we stress the word 'appear and equate it with 'be given', as I have done, and as Kant himself does expressly in A93=B125. In any case I see no reason to believe that Kant here wishes to assert as his own view the doctrine that objects in the full sense can appear to us apart from thought." (1970:324f, underlining added)

Several scholars have repeated the same mantra. According to Beck, for example: "Kant was aware of this problem. He sets it forth in §13: "Appearances could very well be so constituted, that the understanding could not find them to be in accordance with the conditions of its unity; and everything might lie in such confusion that, for example, in the series of appearances nothing should present itself which might yield a rule of synthesis and thus correspond to the concept of cause and effect, so that this concept would be wholly empty, nugatory and meaningless" (A90 = B123). The Deduction of the Categories and the section on the Principles have as their goal the refutation of this possibility. But it is questionable whether they succeed." (1981:455, underlining added)

According to Allison: "In his initial presentation of the problem of accounting for this necessity in the introductory portion of the Transcendental Deduction Kant *poses it as a worry that*:

Appearances could . . . be so constituted that the understanding would not find them in accord with the conditions of its unity . . ." (2015:8, underlining added)

[I]n experience they (intuition) must stand under conditions of necessary unity of apperception just as in mere intuition they must stand under the formal conditions of space and time. (A110, underlining added)

Now I assert that categories that have just been adduced are nothing other than conditions of thinking in a possible experience, just as space and time contain conditions of the intuition for the very same thing. (A111)

Moreover, Kant reiterates his Non-Conceptualism at the end of TD:

Sensibility gives us forms (of intuition), but the understanding gives us rules. It is always busy poring through the appearances with the aim of finding some sort of rule in them. (A126, underlining added)

Thus the way in which the manifold of sensible representation (intuition) belongs to a consciousness precedes cognition of the object [whose conditions are the categories] (A129, underlining added)

Kant summarizes this by claiming at the end of TD:

The pure understanding is thus in the categories the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances, and thereby first and originally makes experience possible as far as its form is concerned. (A128, underlining added)

In those passages, Kant is clearly assuming what Gomes calls *a metaphysical claim*. Kant's doctrine is that categories of the understanding are not conditions for what appears, but rather conditions for the *synthetic unity of appearance* (A128 above) or for *cognition* (*Erkenntnis*) of objects (A129). For example, categories of the understanding are not conditions for intuiting the cinnabar-appearance or the red-appearance. Those appearances arise from our senses and hence are absolutely independent from categories of the understanding.

3. The Possibility of Intuiting Objects

Let us assume for the sake of argument that categories are conditions for what appears for the time being. Thus, no object could actually ever appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding. Let us focus now on the following §14 where Kant announces the “principle” of his proof:

The transcendental deduction of all a priori concepts therefore has a principle toward which the entire investigation must be directed, namely this: that they must be recognized as a priori conditions of the possibility of experiences (whether of the intuition that is encountered in them, or of the thinking). (A94/B126-127, underlining added)⁸

⁸This passage echoes Kant's Transcendental Doctrine of Method in the chapter about the discipline of pure reason regarding demonstrations: “Through concepts of the understanding, however, it certainly erects secure principles, but not directly from concepts, but rather always indirectly through the relation of these concepts to something contingent, namely **possible experience**; since if this (something as object of possible experience) is presupposed, then they are of course apodictically certain, but in themselves they cannot even be cognized a priori (directly) at all. Thus no one can have fundamental insight into the proposition ‘Everything that happens has its cause’ from these given concepts alone. Hence it is not a dogma, although from another point of view, namely that of the sole field of its possible use, i.e., experience, it can very well be proved apodictically. But although it must be proved, it is called a **principle** and not a **theorem** because it has the special property that it first makes possible its ground of proof (*Beweisgrund*), namely experience, and must always be presupposed in this” (A737/B765, boldfacing in the original).

If the Conceptualist reading is right, and no object whatsoever could ever appear without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding, “possible experience” must mean “the possibility of sensibly representing objects”. As a matter of fact, Kant adds that “the conditions **of the possibility of experience** in general are at the same time conditions of **the possibility of the objects of experience**” (A158/B197, boldfacing in the original. Viewed in this light, The TD aims to prove that categories necessarily apply to the objects of sensible intuitions by arguing that categories make possible the experience of objects in the first place.

But what remains from our experiences without categories? Without categories, Kant says, “everything might lie in such confusion”. The temptation here is to assume that “this mere epistemic possibility” is a skeptical hypothesis that Kant entertains in §13 in order to refute it at the end by showing once and for all that categories apply necessarily to all objects of sensible intuitions. In this regard, Allison suggests that at A90–1/B122–3 Kant is evoking a “specter” to be exorcised:⁹

I refer to this possibility as a specter because its realization would result in a cognitive chaos, and I argue that the Transcendental Deduction can be regarded as Kant’s attempt to exorcise it. Although this specter may call to mind the famous Cartesian specter...it is significantly different from it. While the latter...is at the bottom of the worry about the lack of correspondence between our experience and a mind-independent reality, the Kantian specter concerns the fit between two species of representation...in the Kantian specter the problem is that...nothing would be recognizable and our experience would be nothing but what William James famously referred to as “one great blooming, buzzing confusion” (2015:54).

If categories are conditions of the possibility of sensibly intuiting objects, the skeptical assumption is that without categories our experience would be reduced to a chaotic manifold of sensations or, to use James’s words, to “one great blooming, buzzing confusion”. The refutation of this “skeptical” is what the Non-Conceptualist reading overlooks according to the “fitness-for-purpose” charge and what renders TD philosophically uninteresting, according to the triviality charge.

The radical Kantian Conceptualist reading has deep exegetical problems. To start with, “experience” (*Erfahrung*), “cognition” (*Erkenntnis*), and “object” are technical notions. Kant’s “*Erkenntnis*” is something in-between the English word “cognition” (in German “*Kenntnis*” or what Russell has famously called “knowledge by acquaintance”) and propositional knowledge in the proper sense (roughly epistemically justified true propositions), namely a propositional or fact-awareness: *knowing that* something is the case. Consider this:

I would go still further and say: it is one thing to differentiate [*unterscheiden*] things from each other, and quite another thing *to recognize* the difference between them [*den Unterschied der Dinge zu erkennen*]. The latter is only possible by means of judgments and cannot occur in the case of animals, who are not endowed with reason. The following division may be of great use. *Differentiating logically* means recognizing that [*erkennen dass*] a thing A is not B; it is always a negative judgment. *Physically differentiating* [*physisch unterscheiden*] means being driven to different actions by different representations. (Spitzfindigkeit, 2:60, italics in the original)

Likewise, “experience” does not mean either sensible intuition of something or ever apprehending something at all, but also cognition, namely the propositional awareness that something is the case, for example: awareness that the cinnabar is red; that in the longest day

⁹ See (Allison, 1984, 2015).

of the year the land is covered with fruits; that humans have a peculiar animal shape, etc.¹⁰ Finally, “object” does not mean what, since Brentano, has been called an “intentional object”, something that mental states are directed at, that may be a *res* (*de re* attitude such as “conscious of”, “thinking of”), or a *dictum* or clause (*de dicto* attitude such as experience that, judging that, and so on). “Object” in Kant means the *lawlike necessary connection of appearances*. Consider this:

What is an object? That whose representation is a complex of a number of predicates appertaining to it. The plate is round, warm, of pewter, etc. etc.

The object is the subject of a judgment whose representation contains the grounds of synthetic unity of a manifold of predicates. (Refl, 6350, underling added)

An object is that in the concept of which the manifold of a given intuition is united (B137).¹¹

I experience (*erfahre*) an object whenever I am aware of the plate-appearance, the round-appearance, and the warm-appearance as necessarily connected, etc.; according to the examples of The TD, when I am aware of the cinnabar-appearance and red-appearance as necessarily connected, or when I am aware of the longest-day-of-the-year-appearance and the land-covered-with-fruits-appearance as necessarily connected, and so-on. I believe that this is more than enough to exclude for good the reading that the possibility of the experience of objects is the possibility of sensibly representing intentional objects. Nevertheless, in the next section I will add the key additional remark that Conceptualist readers mistake the *empirical sense* of appearances (something in space) for *the empirical sense* of representation (mental states).

But what about Allison’s suggestion that without categories our experience is reduced to what James famously called “one great blooming, buzzing confusion?” I believe that the exegetical mistake here is even more obvious than before. To be sure, Kant mentions the word ‘confusion’ when he states that without categories “everything might lie in such confusion” (A93/B123). Still, what he has in mind is certainly not “one great blooming, buzzing confusion”, but rather that “appearances could very well be so constituted, that the understanding could not find them to be in accordance with the conditions of its unity” (A93/B123). That becomes clear when Kant claims immediately thereafter that

in the succession of appearances nothing would offer itself that would furnish a rule of synthesis and thus correspond to the concept of cause and effect. (A90/B123)

¹⁰ These are Kant’s examples. See (A100-101).

¹¹ I am quoting those passages from Henrich (1976/1994:153). Yet, Henrich never made clear what Kant means by “objects”. He claims misleadingly that: “objects are therefore constant conditions of unity in respect to properties and states. In the sense of formal description, they can be comprehended as ‘things’ or as ‘substances’” (1994:132).

Tugendhat (1979/1982) was the first to call attention to the fact that “object” (*Gegenstand*) is a technical term in Kant: “What Kant means by ‘object’ (*Gegenstand*) is really what one calls ‘objectivity’ (*Objektivität*)” (1982:414f.).

More recently, Burge has called attention to the fact that “experience” (*Erfahrung*) and “cognition” (*Erkenntnis*) are technical terms in Kant: “A cognition is an objective conscious representation whose (actual) objective validity can in principle be established through argument, by the individual with the cognition” (2010:155).

Being even more precise, cognition and experience mean fact-awareness. I experience an object whenever *I am aware that* what appears in space in different times are lawlike connected. Given this, it is a gross exegetical mistake to assume that “experiencing an object” is just sensibly intuiting or ever perceiving an object (either a particular or some abstract entity).

What Kant has in mind is as simple as the idea that without categories we have no reason to assume that the observed regular connection between the cinnabar-appearance and the red-appearance are lawlike connected. But this is far from being one great blooming, buzzing confusion.

With all due respect, I conclude this section by noting that the radical Kantian Conceptualist reading has gotten everything wrong. The possibility of experience (the principle of The TD and the *Beweisgrund* of transcendental propositions) does not and cannot mean “the possibility of sensible intuition of objects”. And that is enough to discredit the assumption that at A90–91/B122–123 Kant is only contemplating “a mere epistemic possibility” to be eliminated later as an “unreal metaphysical possibility” (Gomes, 2014:6). Categories are not conditions for what appears! Objects can appear without having to be related to functions of the understanding.

4. The Possibility of Experiencing Objective Items

In this section I focus on an alternative reading of the Kantian notion of “possible experience of objects” as the principle of TD (or as *Beweisgrund* of transcendental propositions). This alternative reading is as follows. “Object” might be taken as meaning “objectivity” (“object” in Strawson’s “weighty sense”), rather than merely the accusative of our sensible intuitions.¹² Accordingly, “experience” might be taken as meaning experiencing of an order and arrangement of items rather than sensible intuitions. Thus, categories are conditions of the “possible experience of objects” not in the sense that they are conditions for intuiting objects. Instead, they are conditions for experiencing items connected in an objective way (let me call this moderate Kantian conceptualism).

In his “austere” reconstruction of The TD, Strawson eliminates all reference to the Kantian threefold synthesis of imagination, which according to him belongs to what he pejoratively calls “Kant’s psychology”. However, he recognizes that what he is claiming is that categories are conditions for objective apprehension of what appears:

There are passages in the first edition of the Deduction which might almost be read as comments on such a suggestion... in awkwardly expressed language, Kant says that if it were accidental that appearances should fit into a connected whole of human knowledge, then it might be that they do not so fit together, were not associable in the required way. (1966:99, underling added)

According to Kantian radical Conceptualism, no objects could appear without *having to be related to functions of the understanding*. In contrast, in moderate Kantian Conceptualism, objects could appear without *having to be related to functions of the understanding*. Without categories though, one cannot know whether those appearing objects (in the accusative sense) are objects in the “weighty sense”, that is, objects connected in a way that allows the crucial distinction between the order and arrangement of items and the order and arrangement of our experience of them in the first place. Given this, even if Kant’s statements at A90–91/B122–123 are not alluding to a mere epistemic possibility to be ruled out, the destiny of TD is inexorably connected to the refutation of another “skeptic”:

No doubt, it might be said, the contents of possible experiences might be unified in some way and must be brought under concepts. But why should not the objects (accusatives) of awareness of such a consciousness be a succession of items such that there was no distinction to be drawn between the order and arrangement of the objects (and of their particular features and characteristics) and the order and arrangement of the subject’s experiences of awareness of them – items, therefore, which would not be the topics of objective judgments in Kant’s sense?

¹² As regards the “weighty” sense of objects in Kant, see (Strawson, 1966:88).

Such objects might be of the sort which the earlier sense-data theorists spoken of – red, round patches, brown oblongs, flashes, whistles, tickling, sensations, smells. (Strawson, 1966:98-99)

Some passages of Kant's *Prolegomena* seem (*prima facie*) to support Strawson's moderate Kantian Conceptualism. Consider this:

I say: Experience teaches me something, I always mean only the perception that is in it – e.g., that upon illumination of the stone by the sun, warmth always follows – and hence the proposition from experience is, so far, always contingent. That this warming follows necessarily from illumination by the sun is indeed contained in the judgment of experience (in virtue of the concept of cause), but I do not learn it from experience; rather, conversely, experience is first generated through this addition of a concept of the understanding (of cause) to the perception. Concerning how the perception may come by this addition, the *Critique* must be consulted, in the section on transcendental judgment, pp. 137ff. (Prol, 4:305ff)

In this passage, Kant says that we can take the notion of experience in at least two different senses. In the first sense, “experience” without categories of the understanding means *perception*, more specifically, *the consciousness that appearances are connected in the subject but not in the object*. For example, without the category of causality something appears warm to me following something that appears illuminated by the sun to me in a contingent connection. That is what Kant, in-between the A (1781) and B (1787) editions of the *Critique*, called “judgments of perception”. In the second sense, “experience” means the consciousness that what appears warm is necessarily connected with what appears illuminated by the sun. In this case the relevant category of causality is presupposed. That is what Kant, in-between the two editions of the *Critique*, called “judgment of experience”.

“Judgment of perceptions” and “judgments of experience” do not refer to two propositional contents, one (the “judgment of perception”) *presupposing* the other (the “judgment of experience”). Rather, Kant's idea is that the same propositional content (*Satz*), namely *that the sun warmed the stone*, is accepted in different, but complementary ways.¹³ First, the proposition (*Satz*) is accepted as a mere judgment of perception, that is, the simple finding that the warm-appearance and the illumination-appearance are somehow connected. And second, the same proposition is accepted under the assumption that the warm-appearance and the illumination-appearance are connected in accordance to the category of causality.

Now, assuming that so-called Strawsonian “skepticism” takes the form of an objection against Kant's view, the potential of experiences as belonging to a same subject entails the Kantian distinctions, namely:

[i]ndividually, the distinction between the subjective component *within* a judgment of experience; collectively the distinction between the subjective order and arrangement of a series of such experiences on the one hand and the objective order and arrangement of the items of which they are experiences on the other” (1966:101, original emphasis).

This Strawsonian reading of The TD is known in the literature as the *contrastive argument*. The idea is quite clear: “the potential self-attribution of experiences” entails the contrast between subjective order and arrangement of experiences and objective order and arrangement of what those experiences are of. Now, whether Strawson's contrastive argument is sound and

¹³Consider this: “E.g., if I say: the air is elastic, then this judgment is to begin with only a judgment of perception; I relate two sensations in my senses only to one another. If I want it to be called a judgment of experience, I then require that this connection be subject to a condition that makes it universally valid. I want therefore that I, at every time, and also everyone else, would necessarily have to connect the same perceptions under the same circumstances” (Prol, 4:299).

successful against his own skeptical hypothesis of a purely sense-datum experience is not my concern here. My only concern is whether Strawson's reading of The TD has actual Kantian provenance.

Let us take stock. According to Allison's Cartesian specter our experience might be reduced to "one great blooming, buzzing confusion". By contrast, according to Strawson, our experience might be reduced to "disconnected impressions ... which neither require, nor permit of, being 'united in the concept of an object'" (1966:99). The reader might wonder: what is the big difference? Well, for my purposes, there is no relevant difference. Is that what Kant had in mind?

That is certainly not the case. My diagnosis is as follows. Kant scholars fall prey to the same fallacy of ambiguity of the notions of appearances and representations that Kant denounces in his Fourth Paralogism of the first edition: they are tacitly taking "representations" in the empirical rather than in the transcendental sense. Likewise, they are tacitly taking "appearances" in the transcendental rather than in the empirical sense. Let me explain in detail what is at stake.

Both notions—appearances and representations—have an empirical and transcendental sense. "Representation" *in the transcendental sense* is nothing but what lies within our cognitive powers. It is in this transcendental sense of representation that Kant is a phenomenalist:

We have said above that appearances themselves are nothing but sensible representations, which must not be regarded in themselves, in the same way, as objects (outside the power of representation). (A104)

Kant's phenomenism is the doctrine that "appearances in the empirical sense" are nothing but "representations in the transcendental sense". By contrast, representations *in the empirical sense* are nothing but states of mind of directing at something. Now, appearances in the empirical sense are nothing but things that the mind represents as existing in space. In contrast, *in the transcendental sense* appearances are *manifestations of something* (inside or outside the mind).

Thus, by assimilating Kant's "confusion" to James's "confusion", Kant scholars are mistaking "appearances in the relevant empirical sense" (in TD) for "representations in the empirical sense". The cinnabar-appearance connected with the red-appearance, the longest-day-appearance connected with the land-covered-with-fruits-appearance, the warm-appearance connected with the illumination-appearance, etc. etc., are not connected representations in the empirical sense. Without categories they are just concrete particulars (objects, events, and particular instances of properties) regularly connected in space and time. With categories they remain the same particulars, but now lawlike connected in what Kant calls nature.

5. The Skeptic as a Strawman

Does this mean that The TD does not address any sort of skepticism? That is certainly not the case. I believe that it is beyond any reasonable doubt that by proving that categories of the understanding necessarily apply to all objects of sensible intuitions Kant is addressing some skepticism of a Humean provenance.¹⁴ Now, the question is: which Humean skepticism does

¹⁴Consider this: "But since he (David Hume) could not explain at all how it is possible for the understanding to think of concepts that in themselves are not combined in the understanding as still necessarily combined in the object, and it never occurred to him that perhaps the understanding itself, by means of these concepts, could be the originator of the experience in which its objects are encountered, he thus, driven by necessity, derived them from experience (namely from a subjective necessity arisen from frequent association in experience, is

Kant address in The TD? When we remember that in The TD what it is at stake are “appearances” in the empirical sense, a closer look at some key passages of The TD reveals that Kant is concerned with the uniformity (*Gleichförmigkeit*) of nature and that is what he calls the lawlike *necessary connection between appearances*. Consider those passages:

Thus we ourselves bring into the appearances that order and regularity in them that we call **nature**, and moreover we would not be able to find it there if we, or the nature of our mind, had not originally put it there. For this unity of nature should be a necessary, i.e., certain unity of the connection of appearances. (A125, boldfacing in the original, underlining added)

Thus as exaggerated and contradictory as it may sound to say that the understanding is itself the source of the laws of nature, and thus of the formal unity of nature, such an assertion is nevertheless correct and appropriate to the object, namely experience. (A127, underlining added)¹⁵

Kant’s idea of a “formal unity of nature” (a necessary connection between appearances) is nothing but what Hume called the assumption that “the course of nature continues always uniformly the same.” In his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, he claims that inductive inferences rely on transitions taking the following form:

I have found that such an object has always been attended with such an effect, and I foresee, that other objects, which are, in appearance, similar, will be attended with similar effects. (E., 4.2.16, underling added)

In the *Treatise*, Hume says that

if Reason determin’d us, it would proceed upon that principle that instances, of which we have had no experience, must *resemble those*, of which we have had experience, and that *the course of nature continues always uniformly the same.* (T., 1.3.6.4)

Following the philosophical secondary literature, I will refer to this claim of similarity or resemblance between observed and unobserved regularities as the “The Principle of Uniformity of Nature”. Sometimes it is also called the “The Resemblance Principle”, or the “The Principle of Uniformity”.

Now, before proceeding, I can imagine that the reader might be wondering: what is the relationship between Hume’s skepticism about induction and Allison’s specter, Strawson’s *sensa-datum* skeptic, and Gomes’s skeptic of Humean provenance? On closer inspection, the “skeptic” that The TD is supposed to address and to refute emerges from a mix of quite different skeptical issues in Hume’s theoretical philosophy. The first is Hume’s skepticism about senses. The second is his skeptical solution to this skepticism about senses. The third is his skepticism about induction, namely the problem of uniformity of nature. The fourth is his skeptical solution for this problem of uniformity. Let me explain each of them one by one.

subsequently falsely held to be objective, i.e., custom), however he subsequently proceeded quite consistently in declaring it to be impossible to go beyond the of experience with these concepts and the principles that they occasion. The first of these two famous men [Locke] opened the gates wide to enthusiasm, since reason, once it has authority on its side, will not be accepted within limits by indeterminate recommendations of moderation; the second (Hume) gave way entirely to skepticism, since he believed himself to have discovered in what is generally held to be reason a deception of our faculty of cognition.” (A97/B128, original emphasis in bold)

¹⁵As a matter of fact, the idea is everywhere in the A-Deduction, e.g., at (A108, A110, A112-113, A113-114, A122, A123, etc.).

“Hume’s skepticism about the senses” is the Humean version of Cartesian external-world skepticism.¹⁶ The reasoning is as simple as it is compelling. First, we assume that our senses provide us with cognitive access only to what appear inside our own minds: sense impressions are not appearances of outside things. Second, any attempt to attribute causal inferences from what we experience to their probable outside causes is doomed to fail. Therefore, there is no way of justifying our beliefs about outside things by appealing to our senses.

As a matter of fact, Kant takes issue with external-world skepticism both in his Fourth Paralogism of the A edition as well in the “Refutation of Idealism” in the B edition. In his Refutation he famously claims that inner experience is only possible under the presupposition of outer experience. However, there is no such argument in The TD. Moreover, there is no hint whatsoever in The TD that the problem of cognitive access to outer things, that is, to things outside us, is what motivates The TD. Likewise, there is no hint whatsoever in The TD that Kant is targeting Hume’s skeptical solution/accounts for the beliefs in bodily changes and his skepticism about the senses (external-world skepticism). In The TD the contrast between consciousness in me and consciousness of something outside me plays no role whatsoever. Rather, the key role is played by the contrast between the contingent/regular and necessary/lawlike connection of what appears in the empirical sense in space and time. Finally, if The TD has proven that the empirical consciousness in me entails the objective consciousness of things outside me, why would Kant take issue with the same problem all over again in his Fourth Paralogism as well as in his Refutation?

We are now back at what I said at the end of the last section. It is quite clear why Kant scholars mistakenly assume that by addressing Hume’s skepticism about induction Kant is thereby also addressing Hume’s external-world skepticism. They mistake “representations” in the transcendental sense for “representations” in the empirical sense as mental states and “appearances” in the empirical sense with “appearances” in the transcendental sense (just as Hume does in his naturalist skeptical account for the belief of bodies). In The TD “appearances” should be taken empirically as what appears outside us in space and time, while “representations” should be taken transcendently as what lies within our cognitive powers and abilities. For example, when Kant claims that the cinnabar-appearance/representation is necessarily or lawlike connected with the red-appearance/representation, he is taking “appearances” in the empirical sense and representations in the transcendental sense and not the other way around, namely representations in the empirical sense.

All things considered, the so-called “skeptical” opponent of The TD comes closest to Hume’s skeptical solution to his skepticism about the senses, namely Hume’s naturalist account for beliefs in bodies and bodily chances. Hume writes:

What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body? But 'tis in vain to ask, Whether there be body or not? That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasoning. (T., 1.2.4.1/187-188, italics in the original).

¹⁶According to Hume: “Thus to resume what I have said concerning the senses; they give us no notion of continu'd existence, because they cannot operate beyond the extent, in which they really operate. They as little produce the opinion of a distinct existence, because they neither can offer it to the mind as represented, nor as original. To offer it as represented, they must present both an object and an image. To make it appear as original, they must convey a falshood; and this falshood must lie in the relations and situation: In order to which they must be able to compare the object with ourselves; and even in that case they do not; nor it is possible they shou'd, deceive us. We may, therefore, conclude with certainty, that the opinion of a continu'd and of a distinct existence never arises from the senses” (T., 1.2.4.11/191-192).

We naturally believe in the existence of bodies because we inwardly experience “a peculiar constancy” between qualitatively identical impressions as if they were appearances of numerically identical bodies outside us. Along similar lines, we believe in the existence of bodily changes because we inwardly observe coherent qualitatively different sense-impressions as if they were appearances of bodily changes.¹⁷

Now, if the Kantian manages to prove that this Humean account for our beliefs in bodies and bodily changes is somehow conceptually incoherent, has Kant thereby successfully rebutted Hume’s external-world skepticism? Obviously not! Again, Hume’s external-world skepticism is based on the assumption that our senses provide us with no information whatsoever of what lies outside us. Sense-impressions are not appearances of something outside. Thus, even if Hume’s naturalist account for beliefs in bodies and bodily changes is unsound, Hume’s external-world skepticism still stands: our beliefs in outside things remain epistemically unjustified as long as impressions are not appearances of outside things. To address Hume’s external-world skepticism Kant has to show that inner experience is only possible under the presupposition of outer experience (i.e., the target conclusion of the Refutation of Idealism).

The moral to be drawn is that both the “fitness-for-purpose” and triviality charges are by-products of a fallacy of equivocation (*sophisma figurae dictionis*) that mistakes “appearances” in the empirical sense in The TD for “representations” in the empirical sense. Moreover, the so-called “skeptical” opponent to The TD (of either Cartesian or Humean provenance) is nothing but a strawman, conceived merely in order to make The TD philosophically “interesting”. Therefore, Kant’s putative refutation of this “skeptical” is nothing but a case of the straw man fallacy. To put it in Quine’s famous words, the “skeptical” “engenders the air of Strawson v. Strawman” (1953:499).

6. Observed Regular Connection of Appearances

Now when we purge The TD of the ambiguity I have pointed up, and assume that what is at stake are appearances in the empirical sense (or representations in the transcendental sense), then the “skeptical” as a strawman becomes a real skeptic, namely, in the sense of Hume’s skepticism about induction. Regarding this, the destiny of TD is inextricably bounded to providing an answer to what Kant called Hume’s “challenge to reason” (Prol, 4:275). In other words, by proving that categories necessarily apply to all objects of our sensible intuition, Kant is also thereby showing that we have the epistemic right to assume the uniformity (*Gleichförmigkeit*) of nature (under the transcendental idealist assumption that knowable nature is not the totality of things in themselves, but rather the totality of what appears to us in the empirical sense). This is the principle of induction of the nature of science (physics).

Now let me examine Hume’s challenge in detail. He starts with a distinction between “relations of ideas” and “matters of fact” and claims that “all reasonings may be divided into

¹⁷In Hume’s own words: “After a little examination, we shall find, that all those objects, to which we attribute a continu’d existence, have a peculiar constancy, which distinguishes them from the impressions, whose existence depends upon our perception. Those mountains, and houses, and trees, which lie at present under my eye, have always appear’d to me in the same order; and when I lose sight of them by shutting my eyes or turning my head, I soon after find them return upon me without the least alteration” (T., 1.2.3.19/195).

“This constancy, however, is not so perfect as not to admit of very considerable exceptions. Bodies often change their position and qualities, and after a little absence or interruption maybe come hardly knowable. But here ’tis observable, that even in these changes they preserve a coherence, and have a regular dependence on each other; which is the foundation of a kind of reasoning from causation, and produces the opinion of their continu’d existence. When I return to my chamber after an hour’s absence, I find not my fire in the same situation, in which I left it: But then I am accustom’d in other instances to see a like alteration produc’d in a like time, whether I am present or absent, near or remote. This coherence, therefore, in their changes is one of the characteristics of external objects, as well as their constancy” (T., 1.2.4.19/195).

two kinds, namely, demonstrative reasoning, or that concerning relations of ideas, and moral reasoning, or that concerning matter of fact and existence” (E., 4.2.18). Using this distinction, he considers the possibility of each of those types of reasoning in providing a justification for the assumption that nature is uniform. His challenge to reason takes the form of a dilemma.

According to the first horn, he argues that such reasoning cannot possibly be demonstrative, because demonstrative reasoning only establishes conclusions which cannot be conceived to be false. Yet, there is no contradiction whatsoever in the thought that the course of nature may change.¹⁸ So, according to the first horn of the dilemma, it is possible to clearly and distinctly conceive of a situation where the unobserved case does not follow the regularity so far observed.¹⁹

According to the other horn, Hume argues that the reasoning also cannot be “such as regard matter of fact and real existence” (he calls this “probable” reasoning). All such forms of reasoning “proceed upon the supposition, that the future will be conformable to the past” (E., 4.2.19).²⁰ Now, in the chain of this second type of reasoning, it will again be taken “for granted, which is the very point in question” (E., 4.2.19).²¹ So, according to the second horn, the second type of reasoning is viciously circular.²² The moral to be drawn is that our natural tendency to project past regularities into the future (the principle of uniformity of nature) is not grounded on reason.²³

¹⁸ See (E., 4.2.18).

¹⁹ See (E., 4.2.18; T., 1.3.6.5).

²⁰ This is what, following the literature, I have called The Principle of the Uniformity of Nature.

²¹ See also (T., 1.3.6.7).

²² In the *Treatise*, he adds the following conclusion: “Thus, not only our reason fails us in the discovery of the ultimate connection of causes and effects, but even after experience has inform’d us of their constant conjunction, ’tis impossible for us to satisfy ourselves by our reason, why we shou’d extend that experience beyond those particular instances, which have fallen under our observation” (T., 1.3.6.11/91–2).

²³ The dilemma can be reconstructed as follows:

- 1-There are only two kinds of arguments: demonstrative and probable.
- 2-Inductive inference presupposes the principle of uniformity of nature.

1st horn:

- 3-A demonstrative argument establishes a conclusion whose negation is a contradiction.
- 4-The negation of the principle of uniformity of nature is not a contradiction.
- 5-Conclusion 1: there is no demonstrative argument for the principle of uniformity of nature (by P3 and P4).

2nd horn:

- 6-Any probable argument for the principle of uniformity of nature presupposes the very principle of uniformity of nature in return.
- 7-An argument for a principle may not presuppose the same principle (non-circularity).
- 8-Conclusion 2: there is no probable argument for the principle of uniformity of nature (by P5 and P6).
- 9-Conclusion 3: there is no argument for the principle of uniformity of nature (by P1, C1, and C2).

Corollary: If there is no argument for the principle of uniformity of nature, there is no chain of reasoning from the premises to the conclusion of any inductive inferences that presuppose the principle of uniformity of nature.

Hume's skeptical solution to this skepticism about induction is similar but also different to his skeptical solution of beliefs in bodily changes. This consists of an explanation of why the inductive inferences are not driven by reason. According to him,

when the mind, therefore, passes from the idea or impression of one object to the idea or belief of another, it is not determin'd by reason, but by certain principles, which associate together the ideas of these objects, and unite them in the imagination. (T., 1.3.6.12)

The imagination is responsible for grounding the inductive inference, rather than reason. The idea is that if one has seen similar objects or events constantly conjoined, then the mind is naturally inclined to expect a similar regularity to hold in the future. That is what Hume calls habit or custom.

Hume's problem about the uniformity of nature raises a great controversy in Hume's scholarship. The controversy here turns on the two Humean projects: his epistemological skepticism versus his naturalized theory of cognition. "Old school" interpreters take Hume's stance as a form of classical skepticism about induction: there is no justification at all for the assumption that nature is uniform.²⁴ By contrast, other interpreters claim that Hume's stance is a cognitive rather than an epistemological problem. Rather than raising a skeptical doubt about the legitimacy of the assumption that nature is uniform, Hume is providing a superior account for that assumption that nature is uniform based on imagination.²⁵

However, I believe that the controversy hinges less on the tension between Hume's two philosophical projections and more on two different meanings of "skepticism". Those who deny Hume's stance towards the problem of uniformity of nature take "skepticism" in the Cartesian sense of raising doubts or suggesting sceptical hypotheses. Yet, both Hume and Kant understand Hume's stance towards the problem of uniformity of nature as a form of "skepticism" in the sense of the old Pyrrhonists, namely as a challenge to reason. While skepticism of Cartesian provenance can only be addressed by a refutation, as a challenge to reason, Pyrrhonian skepticism cannot be addressed by some refutation. That is why I believe that Kant's way of addressing Hume's challenge is to provide an account for the assumption of the uniformity of nature that is superior to Hume's account based on imagination, in view of the requirements of Newtonian physics.

7-Possible Experience as Cognition of Necessary Connections

Now, we are back to our original problem: what does Kant mean by the possibility of experience? Here we must remind the reader that "experience" (*Erfahrung*) and "cognition" (*Erkenntnis*) are technical terms for Kant. In A104 Kant tells us that cognition carries *something of necessity*. Then he adds that this necessity is what provides the *unity* to appearances. Finally, he adds that this unity is what establishes *the relation* to objects. In this light, experience is cognition but not of what empirically appears (as per Kantian Non-

²⁴ Dicker claims, for instance: "Other, more 'traditional' interpreters of Hume see him as essentially a skeptic. We shall not try to do justice to this controversy about Hume's overall intentions; for this would require an extended discussion of the secondary literature. We shall not try to do justice to this controversy about Hume's overall intentions. Rather, we shall simply maintain that at least part of Hume's purpose in Section IV is to establish that inference from past experience cannot be rationally justified. For his overall argument, as we shall see, is that there is a principle on which all such inferences depend, but that this principle cannot be established or supported by any reasoning or argument" (2001:76).

²⁵ This is the view that Allison supports: "[T]he central question that Hume poses in T 1.3.6, namely, whether inductive inference is to be understood as a product of reason or of the associative procedures of the imagination, is to be viewed as a question in cognitive psychology rather than normative epistemology" (2008:112). This view can be traced back to Garrett (1977:77). Regarding this see also Wright (2009:99).

Conceptualism), but rather of what appears necessarily connected: “Experience is possible only by means of the representation of a necessary connection of perceptions” (B128).

Now according to Beck,

the Deduction of the Categories and the section on the Principles have as their goal the refutation of this possibility. But it is questionable whether they succeed. (1981:11)

In the putative refutation of Hume’s skepticism, the crucial conceptual step is between empirical affinity and transcendental affinity. What Kant calls “empirical affinity” is nothing but what Hume calls the observed contingent regular connection between appearances. In contrast, what Kant calls “transcendental affinity” is what Hume calls the (putative) lawlike necessary connection of appearances. Regarding this, Kant states:

Now, however, representation of a universal condition in accordance with which a certain manifold (of whatever kind) can be posited is called a **rule**, and, if it **must** be so posited, a **law**. All appearances therefore stand in a thoroughgoing connection according to necessary laws, and hence in a transcendental affinity, empirical affinity is mere consequence. (A113-114, boldfacing in the original)

The problem is that there is no conceptual entailment between the notion of the observed regular connection of appearances and the notion of a lawlike necessary connection of appearances. In Kant’s words:

Without consciousness that that which we think is the very same as what we thought a moment before, all reproductions in the series of representations would be in vain. For it would be a new representation in our current state, would not belong at all to the act through which it had been gradually generated, and its manifold would never constitute a whole, since it lacks unity only consciousness can obtain for it. (A103, underlining added)

Kant’s claim is that without such transcendental affinity, the lawlike necessary connection of appearances, the observed regular connection of the same appearances “would be in vain.” The question is: would be in vain for what? The answer is obvious: *it would be in vain* for cognizing what appears in space and time as necessarily lawlike connected. Here the Kantian faces Hume’s charge of circularity: rather than proving that nature is uniform, Kant is assuming it. The moral is that as a refutation of Hume’s skepticism, The TD is doomed to fail.

A lingering question is whether in The TD Kant is thereby rebutting Hume’s skepticism about the uniformity of nature. The answer is: obviously not! As I said in the last section, Hume’s challenge to reason does not invite a refutation in the same sense that a Cartesian scenario or a Strawsonian hypothesis invites. Kant’s way of addressing Hume’s challenge is by overcoming Hume’s naturalist account. Kant’s official answer to Hume’s challenge to reason is this:

If a body is illuminated by the sun for long enough, then it becomes warm. Here there is of course not yet a necessity of connection, hence not yet the concept of cause. But I continue on, and say: if the above proposition, which is merely a subjective connection of perceptions, is to be a proposition of experience, then it must be regarded as necessarily and universally valid. But a proposition of this sort would be: The sun through its light is the cause of the warmth. The foregoing empirical rule is now regarded as a law, and indeed as valid not merely of appearances, but of them on behalf of a possible experience, which requires universally and therefore necessarily valid rules. (Prol, 4:312, underlining added)

Kant is not attempting to rebut Hume's skeptical solution to the problem of induction. If that were Kant's intention, he would have claimed that the observed regular connection between appearances *presupposes* the lawlike connection between them. But how could Kant overcome Hume's naturalist account? The common ground of the controversy between Kant and Hume is the Newtonian physics considered by both as a mature science of nature. Given this, The TD overcomes Hume's naturalist account of the uniformity of nature under the presupposition that it can better account for the objectivity of Newtonian physics as a mature science.²⁶

Correspondingly, the actual argument of The TD can be outlined as follows:

0-Objects can appear without necessarily being brought under categories (categories are not conditions for what appear empirically in space and time).

1-*Beweisgrund*: to prove that categories necessarily apply to all objects of experience is to prove that I could not be aware of appearances as lawlike connected without categories. This awareness of appearances as lawlike connected is what Newtonian objective science of nature requires. Moreover, awareness of appearances as lawlike connected is the *tertium* that connects the understanding to the sensibility and justifies the so-called transcendental propositions.

Those are synthetic a priori propositions because (i) they are true of nature and because (ii) their truths cannot be recognized only by means of the concepts/meanings involved.

Yet, they are not "dogmata" because (iii) they are not direct synthetic propositions from concepts: they are proven as conditions of the *tertium*. But they are not "mathemata" either because (iv) they are not propositions through construction of concepts. This is Kant's way of circumventing Hume's dilemma of the last section.

2-The *tertium* requires that the "I think" must be able to accompany all my appearances, that is, I must be able to be aware of what appears, since something can always appear independently of any concepts whatsoever.

Kant's transcendental apperception has nothing to do with the usual contemporary sense of self-consciousness as self-attribution of mental representations. As a matter of fact, several of Kant's scholars have adopted Tugendhat's semantic analyses of psychological I- ϕ sentences as the best model for Kant's transcendental self-consciousness.²⁷ Accordingly, the Kantian "I think" is couched in terms of: "I know that I ϕ " (where " ϕ " stands for a predicate describing a generic conscious state, a representation). However, since appearances should be taken in the empirical sense (rather than representations in the empirical sense), this is a complete mistake. Kantian identity of self-consciousness is the identity of the thinking agency in apprehending what appears as lawlike connected in space and time. That is why Kant (obscurely) claims that the "thoroughgoing identity of the apperception of a manifold given in intuition contains a synthesis of the representations, and is possible only through consciousness of this synthesis" (B133).

²⁶Regarding this, see (De Pierris and Friedman, 2018). Interestingly, as they indicate, Newton seems to be philosophically closer to Hume's empiricism rather than to Kant's transcendentalism.

²⁷See (Cramer, 1990; Schulting 2017:148).

3-Nonetheless, reflection on what appears is not enough. It also requires the apprehension of what appears as connected regularly in time.

4-Again, this apprehension of what appears as regularly connected is still not enough for the awareness of what appears as lawlike connected.

5-Only the categories of the understanding (as concepts of a priori unities) can account for the awareness of what appears as lawlike connected.

6-Since Newtonian science is as successful as it is objective, we are aware of what appears as lawlike connected (a fact), therefore,

7-Categories necessarily apply to all objects of experience insofar as we are aware of those appearances as lawlike connected.

8-The Formal Sense of the Totality of Appearances

Now, by all accounts, in his statements at A89/B122 and A90–91/B122–123, Kant is contemplating a real metaphysical possibility: objects can appear to us without being necessarily related to the functions of understanding. For example, something appears to be warm and as illuminated by the sun without the relevant category of causality. The question is how Kantian Non-Conceptualists can reconcile this with the conclusion of the Deduction, where Kant claims to have proven that categories necessarily apply to *all objects of experience*. In the A Deduction Kant states:

The pure understanding is thus in the categories the law of the synthetic unity of all appearances, and thereby first and originally makes experience possible as far as its form is concerned. But we did not have to accomplish more in the transcendental deduction of the categories than to make comprehensible this relation of the understanding to sensibility and by means of the latter to all objects of experience, hence to make comprehensible the objective validity of its pure a priori concepts and thereby determine their origin and truth. (A128, underlining added)

Thus, assuming that Kant's statements at A89/B122 and A90–91/B122–123 express a real metaphysical possibility, and that Kant's concluding remarks are Conceptualist, Hanna concludes that there must be a gap in the A-Deduction.²⁸ If it is metaphysically possible that objects can appear to our senses without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding, then Kant should also assume the possibility of the existence of “essentially rogue” objects, that is “objects that cannot even in principle be conceptualized” (2013:13).

Another lingering question is whether Kant attempted to rule out the possibility of the existence of essentially rogue objects when he claimed that categories apply to all objects of experience. On a closer inspection, Kant attaches different meanings to the phrase “all objects of experience” in the *Prolegomena*. Nature in *the material sense* is nothing but “the totality of all appearances” given in space and time (Prol, 4:318). By contrast, nature in *the formal sense* is “the totality of rules under which all appearances must stand if they are to be thought as connected in an experience” (Prol, 4:318, underling added). In a nutshell, categories are not conditions of *all objects of experiences* when those are considered in the material sense, that is, as the totality of particulars in space and time. Instead, they are conditions of all objects of experience in the formal sense *only insofar as they are to be thought of as connected in an*

²⁸See (Hanna, 2011, 2013, 2015).

experience. Therefore, The TD leaves plenty of room for rogue appearances. Both claims are in perfect accordance with Kantian Non-Conceptualism.

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