

Cambridge Elements

Elements in Epistemology
edited by
Stephen Hetherington
University of New South Wales, Sydney

TRANSCENDENTAL EPISTEMOLOGY

Tony Cheng
National Chengchi University and Waseda University

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-009-47863-2 — Transcendental Epistemology
Tony Cheng
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781009478632

DOI: 10.1017/9781009243834

© Tony Cheng 2024

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

When citing this work, please include a reference to the DOI 10.1017/9781009243834

First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-009-47863-2 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-009-24382-7 Paperback
ISSN 2398-0567 (online)
ISSN 2514-3832 (print)

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
remain, accurate or appropriate.

Transcendental Epistemology

Elements in Epistemology

DOI: 10.1017/9781009243834
First published online: January 2024

Tony Cheng
National Chengchi University and Waseda University
Author for correspondence: Tony Cheng, h.cheng.12@ucl.ac.uk

Abstract: Transcendental arguments were once very prominent in Western philosophy, notably in German idealism, the phenomenological tradition, and P. F. Strawson's thinking. However, they have fallen out of fashion because of their associations with transcendental idealism and verificationism. Somewhat paradoxically, they are still often invoked by important figures in the analytic tradition, even if the very same tradition has cast much doubt on such arguments. Even more problematically, the nature of transcendental arguments remains unclear: are they supposed to be deductive? Are they synthetic or analytic? If they are a priori, how are they supposed to be about the empirical world? What are their relations to necessity, conceivability, and essence? This Element takes up the challenge of elucidating the nature of transcendental arguments, as embedded in the wider context of transcendental epistemology. It will be argued that the key premise – known as 'transcendental conditional' – might be synthetic, necessary, and a posteriori.

This Element also has a video abstract: www.cambridge.org/cheng

Keywords: epistemology, transcendental arguments, how-possible questions, modality, possibilitation

© Tony Cheng 2024

ISBNs: 9781009478632 (HB), 9781009243827 (PB), 9781009243834 (OC)
ISSNs: 2398-0567 (online), 2514-3832 (print)

Contents

1	Transcendental Epistemology Introduced	1
2	What Are Transcendental Arguments? The History Overviewed	16
3	What Should Transcendental Arguments Be? A Hypothesis Proposed	31
4	Transcendental Arguments in Action: The Revisionary Hypothesis Applied	42
5	Roads Ahead	51
	References	62