AN APPRAISAL OF PETER DAVID KLEIN'S EPISTEMOLOGICAL INFINITISM (SCEPTICISM AND INFINITE REGRESS)

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Abstract
This paper offers a thorough appraisal of Peter David Klein's epistemological infinitism, emphasising his treatment of scepticism and the issue of infinite regress in epistemic justification. Klein, a prominent figure in contemporary epistemology, advocates for infinitism; a theory that argues justification is an unending process where each belief requires further reasons indefinitely. The study critically evaluates how Klein's defense of infinitism provides a distinctive response to the infinite regress problem, a core concern in scepticism. By contextualising Klein's theory within the broader framework of epistemology, the research explores its implications for ongoing debates on justification and scepticism. The methodology includes a thematic analysis of Klein's key philosophical contributions, coupled with a critical examination of competing justification theories such as foundationalism, coherentism, and contextualism. Employing a comparative approach, the study assesses Klein's infinitism alongside these rival theories by drawing on primary texts and relevant secondary literature. The paper is divided into five sections: an introduction to scepticism and epistemic justification, an analysis of Klein's infinite regress argument, an exploration of traditional solutions to the regress problem, criticisms of infinitism, and an appraisal of Klein's contributions. The findings reveal that, despite its innovative approach, Klein's infinitism encounters significant theoretical and practical challenges. The conclusion assesses whether infinitism can adequately address the regress problem and considers its relevance to real-world epistemic practices.
Keywords: Epistemology, Scepticism, Epistemological Inifinitism, Infinite Regress

Introduction
This study provides an in-depth appraisal of Peter David Klein's *epistemological infinitism*, with particular emphasis on his treatment of scepticism and the issue of infinite regress in epistemic justification. Klein, a leading figure in contemporary American philosophy within the Analytic Tradition, is widely recognised for his substantial contributions to epistemology. His work, including *Certainty: A Refutation of Skepticism* (1982) and *Ad Infinitum: New Essays on Epistemological Infinitism* (co-edited with John Turri), has played a pivotal role in advancing the discourse on skepticism, epistemic justification, and infinitism. A prominent advocate of epistemic infinitism, Klein has notably influenced ongoing debates about the nature of knowledge and the challenge of justifying our beliefs.

Before delving into Klein's specific account of *epistemological infinitism*, it is essential that we first define epistemology. Epistemology, simply put, is the study of knowledge. It explores key questions such as what knowledge is, what it means to know something, how we come to know, and what we claim to know. The field examines various aspects of knowledge, including its nature, structure, sources, scope, limits, types, creation, and distribution, as well as the certainty and reliability of what we know. Ultimately, the concept of knowledge is at the heart of all discussions in epistemology (Polo, Emmanuel, and Obande, 2024).

Within the broader field of epistemology, Klein's work on epistemic justification presents a unique challenge to traditional responses to scepticism, especially with regard to the problem of infinite regress. This research aims to explore how Klein's defense of epistemic infinitism offers a novel solution to this problem while addressing key themes in epistemology, such as the nature of justification and skepticism. The analysis will be organised into the following thematic sections: (1) The Quest for Epistemic Justification: Epistemology and the Challenge of Scepticism, (2) Peter David Klein's Account of Infinite Regress in Epistemic Justification, (3) Attempts at Resolving the Problem of Infinite Regress in Epistemic Justification: Theories of Justification, with sub-sections on (i) Internalist Theories of Justification: Foundationalism versus Coherentism, and (ii) Externalist Theory of Justification: Contextualism, (4) Criticisms of Infinitism, and (5) Appraisal of Klein's Epistemological Infinitism. Through this structure, the paper will examine Klein's *epistemological infinitism* within the enterprise of philosophy.

The Quest for Epistemic Justification: Epistemology and the Challenge of Scpeticism

It can be validly argued that epistemology is as old as the human person, since questions pertaining to knowledge have always surfaced in human history. However, it is usual to trace the birth of epistemology to the problem of scepticism raised by the sceptics. But what is scepticism? Simply put, scepticism is "the view that nothing can be known with certainty; that at best, there can only be some private probable opinion…" (Jimoh, 2013, p. 75). In other words, scepticism can be broadly represented as the view that: (i) no knowledge is possible (Academic Scepticism), or (ii) there is insufficient and inadequate evidence to determine if any knowledge is possible, hence, one ought to suspend judgment on all questions concerning knowledge (Pyrrhonian Scepticism) (Pokin, 2003). The duo, taking together, constitutes two major traditions of scepticism recognised in epistemology. The first; Academic Scepticism is so called because it was formulated in the Academy established by Plato in the third century. It was inspired by Socrates' submission that: "all I know is that I know nothing" (Pokin, 2003, p. xii). Here, there is a total denial of the possibility of knowledge. The second; Pyrrhonian Scepticism simply cautions that every form of judgment with regards to knowledge be suspended, since we lack adequate evidence or justification for that.

From the above, it is quite obvious that scepticism is simply the entertainment or exercise of doubt in relation to the possibility of reliable, indubitable, distinct, clear and certain knowledge. Although straightforward, this definition is very much inadequate, for it reduces scepticism in all its forms and kinds to doubt. There is more to scepticism than this. In a more comprehensive sense, scepticism is an inquiry that is geared towards validation, verification or confirmation of knowledge claims. Put differently, scepticism

is a systematic methodology through which an epistemic (doxastic) agent or knower can arrive at certainty. On the basis of this, it can be averred that it is a misnomer to reduce scepticism to doubt. For even when the sceptic doubts an epistemic claim, his/her doubt is a means towards attainment of certainty.

There are different kinds or forms of scepticism. We have: (a) Total [absolute, universal, global or complete] scepticism, which denies the existence of any human knowledge, and (b) Partial [limited or mitigated] scepticism, which denies the existence of only some particular knowledge type(s) of knowledge (Jimoh, 2013). Beyond these, we also have: (c) relativism, which denies objective, universal knowledge or truth, and (d) legal or judicial scepticism, which is the idea that a judge in the law court cannot be totally objective in the real sense of the word, as he/she has to manipulate the facts presented to favour or validate his/her final verdict (Traynor, 1958). From this exposition, it is 'crystal clear' that there are at least four variants of scepticism.

Having clarified what is meant by scepticism, let us now consider the sceptics' stance. The sceptics argue that it is impossible for one to know anything for certain. This view was strongly championed by a group of sceptics called the Sophists. The Sophists were "itinerant professional teachers and intellectuals who earned a living by instructing people on the disciplines of rhetoric, philosophy, and the art of successful living" (Jimoh, 2014, p. 52). The Sophists were very frequent in Athens and Greek cities during the second half of the 5th century (Jimoh, 2013).

Collectively, the Sophists refuted the idea of reliable and objective knowledge (that is, knowledge devoid of personal bias and opinions). Prominent Sophists include Gorgias, Protagoras of Abdera and Pyrrho of Elis (360-240 [275] BC). Gorgias wrote a book in which he argued that nothing exists, that even if anything were to exist it would be impossible to know it, and even if such a thing could be known, the knowledge of it cannot be communicated. Protagoras is widely known for his view that the human person is the measure of all things; that is, for Protagoras, the human person is the standard by which truth is determined; the human person decides for him/herself what is true and what is not true, so that in the final analysis, objective truth and knowledge is outrightly denied. Pyrrho, who pioneered what later became known as Pyrrhonian Scepticism in the third century, which we have already summarised above, denied the possibility of certitude in knowledge practice. He opines that the human person cannot know the true nature of things (that is, how things really are in themselves), but can only know things as they appear to him. This view was unswervingly espoused by Timon of Philus, a disciple of Pyrrho (315-225BC) (Omoregbe, 1998).

Confronted with the challenge of scepticism, philosophers across different epochs have preoccupied themselves with investigating issues pertaining to knowledge, such as justification, truth, belief, certainty, reliability, and so on. Here, particular mention can be made of René Descartes, David Hume, George Berkeley, Immanuel Kant, Edmund Gettier, Bertrand Russell, George Edward Moore, Ernest Sosa, Irvin Goldman, Duncan Pritchard, David Chalmers, Hilary Putnam, Timothy Williamson, and of course Peter David Klein. On the basis of this, it can be said that the enterprise of epistemology, as we have it today, is nothing but a response to the challenge of scepticism.

Finally, it should be noted here that, regardless of its varied forms or kinds, in contemporary epistemological discourse, scepticism is simply understood as evoking a fundamental question; namely, the question of epistemic justification. By epistemic justification, we refer to the reasons, evidences or proofs which we (doxastic agents) are expected to present in support of our knowledge claims. In other words, when we talk of epistemic justification, we are simply talking of what constitutes the basis, ground or warrant for our claim to knowledge; that is, the reasons we have to support or account for the truthfulness of our beliefs (Jimoh, 2013), so that in the absence of these, our knowledge claim, for epistemologists, is simply to be regarded as baseless, unwarranted, unjustified, unfounded, unsupported, and so on. Thus, the challenge of scepticism can be succinctly construed as the question of what reasons, evidences, or justification we have for our day-to-day claims to knowledge.

Peter David Klein's Account of Infinite Regress in Epistemic Justification

The question of epistemic justification, which has been a focal point in epistemology, especially within the domain of skepticism, has elicited diverse responses from scholars. These responses often center on explaining or clarifying the ultimate nature of epistemic justification. However, there is a fundamental issue which has been identified with regards to the nature of epistemic justification; namely: 'infinite regress.'

What is Infinite Regress?

Infinite regress, also referred to as epistemic infinitism, describes the idea that every belief or claim requiring justification must be supported by another belief or reason, which in turn must also be justified by yet another reason, and so on without end. The infinite regress problem asks whether such a sequence can truly provide epistemic justification if it is never-ending. This leads to the central philosophical dilemma: Can a belief ever be fully justified if the chain of reasons extends infinitely? Alternatively, must justification have a foundational starting point, or can it form a coherent whole without needing an ultimate base?

Historical Background and Rejection of Infinitism

Historically, infinitism has faced substantial criticism and rejection from notable philosophers. The term itself, epistemic infinitism, was popularised by Paul Moser in 1984, who, along with John Post (1987), rejected the concept. Even Aristotle, who engaged with the notion of regress in his works, dismissed infinitism, favoring foundational approaches instead. Aristotle believed that an infinite chain of reasoning could not provide sufficient grounding for knowledge, as no ultimate starting point would exist to secure the entire chain (Klein, 1998). Similarly, empiricist and rationalist philosophers of the 17th and 18th centuries rejected infinitism, favoring either foundationalist or coherentist models.

Advocates of Foundationalism and Coherentism, two prominent theories of epistemic justification, also dismissed infinitism. Foundationalism posits that certain self-evident or basic beliefs serve as the ultimate justification for all other beliefs. These basic beliefs require no further justification. Coherentism, on the other hand, argues that justification arises from the coherence or mutual support of a network of beliefs, rather than from an infinite chain or a foundational belief. Both these views, despite their differences, reject the infinite regress of reasons as untenable for providing epistemic certainty or

justification (Klein, 1999). Thus, it can be said that infinitism as a word, has suffered so much rejection from scholars down the ages, except for Charles Pierce and Peter David Klein.

Peter David Klein's Advocacy for Infinitism

While infinitism has historically faced rejection, Peter David Klein is one scholar who has vigorously defended and clarified the concept, reviving interest in infinitism as a plausible theory of epistemic justification. Precisely, Klein fostered a recent interest in infinitism by publishing the first in a series of articles defending infinitism (Klein, and Turri, 2024). Klein has published extensively on the topic, including seminal works such as his co-edited volume with John Turri, *Ad Infinitum: New Essays on Epistemological Infinitism* (Oxford University Press, 2014), which presents a collection of essays exploring various facets of infinitism (Klein and Turri, 2014).

More so, Klein's significant contributions to the defense of infinitism can also be found in several important papers, such as *Foundationalism and the Infinite Regress of Reasons* (1998), *Human Knowledge and the Infinite Regress of Reasons* (1999), *Infinitism is the Solution to the Regress Problem* (2005), and *Infinitism and the Epistemic Regress Problem* (2012). These works collectively offer a robust defense of infinitism as a solution to the regress problem in epistemology (Klein, 1998, 1999, 2005, 2012).

Klein's Account of Infinite Regress

In Klein's account of epistemological infinitism (infinitism about epistemic justification); that is, infinite regress, to be justified in believing a proposition **P**, one must have a reason **R1** for believing **P**, but for that reason to be valid, there must be another reason **R2** supporting **R1**, and another reason **R3** supporting **R2**, and so on, *ad infinitum* (Klein, 1998). Klein famously describes this process as akin to "turtles all the way down," indicating that no belief is ever ultimately self-justifying; every reason can, and indeed must, be subject to further questioning or challenge.

Klein further asserts that no reason is immune to further legitimate questioning. This is a crucial tenet of infinitism: there is always a further reason required to back any given reason. Once a reason is challenged, a further reason must be provided to maintain the justification for the belief in question. The process is perpetual, never reaching a final, unquestionable foundation (Klein and Turri, 2024).

Implications of Klein's Infinitism

Klein's conception of infinite regress in epistemic justification implies that justification is an **ongoing, never-ending process**. According to this view, there can never be a point at which all beliefs are fully justified without the need for further support. This raises important implications for how we understand the structure of knowledge and justification: instead of aiming for an ultimate foundation or a closed system of mutually supporting beliefs (as in coherentism), infinitism embraces the **openness** of justification. Each reason requires further justification, and this infinite chain is what constitutes proper epistemic justification (Klein, 2005).

For Klein, the never-ending chain of reasons does not imply a failure of justification but rather an acceptance that **epistemic inquiry is unbounded**. This perspective challenges

more traditional epistemological views by suggesting that the demand for reasons need not terminate at any foundational or coherent point; rather, justification is a dynamic and evolving process (Klein, 2012).

Attempts at Resolving the Problem of Infinite Regress in Epistemic Justification: Theories of Justification

In an attempt to resolve the problem of infinite regress in epistemic justification, different theories of justification have been postulated, each of which has been categorised as either (i) Internalist, or (ii) Externalist theory of justification. While both Foundationalism and Coherentism are classified as internalist theories of justification, Contextualism is usually classified as an externalist theory of justification.

(i) Internalist Theories of Justification: Foundationalism versus Coherentism

Internalist theories of justification claim that "the conditions that determine whether or not a belief is justified are primarily psychological conditions (for example, what beliefs and experiences one has)" (Richard, 1998). By implication, for advocates of internalism, we do not need to look outside the belief, the environment of the known in order to determine the reasonableness of the belief.

The view above is expressed by Laurence Bonjour when he asserts: "Epistemic justification depends only on the matters which are within the cognitive grasp of the believer in question, that is, of which he or she or at least can be in some way justifiably aware; matters that are, as it might be put, accessible from within his or her first person cognitive perspective" (Bonjour, 2010, 203). What this implies is that, for the internalists, what justifies one's beliefs must be something that is directly accessible or available to one; something one has access to; for what one does not have access to cannot constitute the justification of one's beliefs. What this means is that "justification depends on elements that are internal to the believer's conscious states of mind in a way that makes them accessible to his conscious reflection" (Lemos, 2007, 109).

In other words, what serves as justifiers, for the internalists, is not something outside the epistemic agent, so that, the agent does not need to look outside himself for the justification of his/her beliefs. Thus, "the fundamental claim of internalism is that it restricts justifiers to items that are within something, more specifically, within the subject" (Alston, 1998, pp. 45-78). However, it should be noted that not everything that is within the subject or epistemic agent is to be seen as a possible justifier of the epistemic claim of the knower. As a matter of fact, "the internal of internalism refers to what is internal to the person's first cognitive perspective in the sense of being accessible from that perspective, not necessarily to what is internal in the sense of being metaphysically a state or feature of the person" (Bonjour, 2010, p. 205). In this sense, every psychological process within the epistemic agent, which he/she does not know about, will not count as a justifier. In the final analysis therefore, for the internalists, "what justifies our beliefs are good reasons and only mental items such as sense experiences, intuitions, introspective states, or memories qualify as good reasons" (Greco, and Feldman, 2014, pp. 324-337).

Having established an understanding of internalism, let us now briefly consider two internalist theories of justification; namely: Foundationalism and Coherentism. Foundationalism, or Foundationalist theory of justification, as it is also called, is usually

traced to René Descartes, who tried to rest human knowledge on an indubitable foundation. The basic tenet of Foundationalism is that knowledge is architectonic in nature, so that justification is like a structure, for instance, a pyramid, which has a sub-structure and a super-structure, with the former (the sub-structure) serving as the foundation, and the latter (the super-structure) resting on the sub-structure. Hence, for the Foundationalist, the foundation of every knowledge is constituted by basic beliefs which are self-evident; that is, beliefs which are self-justifying; beliefs which are not in need of further justification by other beliefs. These basic beliefs constituting the sub-structure of knowledge provide justification for other beliefs which are not basic, self-evident, or self-justifying. The non-basic beliefs which depend on the basic beliefs (sub-structure) for their justification constitute the super-structure of knowledge.

In the view of the Foundationalists, our beliefs are to be justified by basic beliefs, and when such basic beliefs have been presented as justification or foundation for our beliefs, we do no need to keep searching for any other reason(s) to justify our beliefs. In other words, we are to stop the process of justification with presentation of the basic beliefs which constitute the foundation or justification of our beliefs. In this way, Foundationalism tries to halt the infinite regress scenario (Jimoh, 2013).

Despite its remarkable attempt at resolving the problem of infinite regress in epistemic justification, Foundationalism has been found to be flawed by two central concerns; namely: (a) how do we determine foundational beliefs? And (b) in what sense can we say they are foundational beliefs? Owing to this, another theory called Coherentism has been proposed as an alternative to Foundationalism.

Coherentism claims that the justification of beliefs is not based on basic beliefs, but on the degree of interconnectedness of beliefs. In other words, Coherentists hold that there is a logical affinity between each belief and other beliefs, and that beliefs are justified to the extent that they are interconnected with other beliefs. The Coherentists therefore claim that knowledge cannot be architectonic in nature; rather, their central claim is that "the justification (justifiedness) of a belief depends on its coherence with other beliefs one holds" (Audu, 1998, p. 195). Coherentism, as a theory of justification, therefore claims that knowledge is constituted by a web-like structure; where individual beliefs are tied together in order to form a coherent epistemic system. Thus, "the unit of coherence roughly, the range of the beliefs that must cohere in order for a belief among them to derive justification from their coherence maybe as large as one's entire set of beliefs" (Audu, 1998, p. 195).

Even though its claims seem sound, Coherentism has also been accused of being flawed by the fact that Coherentists themselves are yet to state what coherence is, though they have stated that coherence entails consistency, and that "it is a necessary condition for a coherent system of beliefs, but not sufficient condition" (Fogelin, 1994, p. 148). Consequently, "a system is sometimes said to be coherent just to the extent that the belief[s] in the system support (or probabilise) one another" (Fogelin, 1994, p. 148).

(ii) Externalist Theory of Justification: Contextualism
Unlike internalism, externalism claims that "one cannot determine whether a belief is justified without looking at the believer's external environment" (Richard, 1998). Thus, in

the externalist view, what guarantees the justification of our knowledge claims are not internal but external environmental factors around the epistemic agent. Externalists therefore argue that one can depend in great part upon matters that are external to the epistemic agent's cognitive viewpoint. For the externalists, what is central for knowledge is that: "The beliefs constituting it register truth; and this objective connection between the grounds of a belief and its truth is understood in a way implying that the belief-grounding factors are not internal in the crucial way; they are not necessarily accessible to consciousness" (Audu, 1998, p. 241).

Within the ambit of externalism falls Contextualism, which is completely anti-Foundationalism and Coherentism. Contextualism contends that justification should not be reduced to something like a structure or web-like system, as claimed by the Foundationalists and Coherentists, respectively. Rather, the Contextualists are of the view that knowledge and justification are indexical; meaning that they are context-dependent, so that claims about knowledge and justification are made by rational epistemic agents within a given social context, environment or situation.

Hence, what is essential in justifying our beliefs or claims, for the Contextualists, is the social context within which those beliefs or claims are held or made. The point expressed here is that, every knowledge claim has its own context, which we must take into consideration when judging whether or not an epistemic agent knows. In other words, for the Contextualists, the context within which an epistemic agent makes a claim is what will tell whether or not he/she has made the right claim to knowledge. This being the case, according to Contextualism, someone "may know that P relative to context C, while not knowing that P relative to a different context C2" (Barke, 2005, p. 211). Thus, in the final analysis, there are varying contexts within which epistemic claims are made, and the justification of an epistemic claim stems from the particular context within which it was made, and not any other context.

It should be noted however, that, Contextualism is also flawed on the ground that it does not give a plausible explanation of what constitutes a context and an account of the dynamics of how context changes; that is, when contexts change and what induces the change in contexts. Thus, just like Foundationalism and Coherentism, Contextualism also fails to exhaustively tackle the problem of epistemic justification stimulated by scepticism and further compounded by the infinite regress problem.

Criticisms of Infinitism
Despite Klein's defense, critics of infinitism argue that an infinite regress does not adequately solve the problem of justification. Foundationalists argue that without basic beliefs that are self-justified, the entire structure of justification would collapse under its own weight, as no belief could ever be fully justified. Coherentists, while rejecting foundationalism, argue that justification must arise from the coherence of beliefs within a system, and an infinite regress undermines the possibility of any stable epistemic structure.

Infinitism also faces practical objections, as it seems to demand an impossible level of cognitive commitment: no one could ever possess an infinite number of reasons for their beliefs. However, Klein and other infinitists argue that this objection misunderstands the

nature of justification, which does not require us to actually hold an infinite chain of reasons at once but rather to be open to the potential extension of reasons when challenged (Klein and Turri, 2014).

Appraisal of Klein's Epistemological Infinitism
In brief, the term infinite regress, in accordance with Peter David Klein's thoughts expressed above, implies that we are expected to keep providing reasons in support of every belief we hold, or claim we make, without stopping at any point. Klein asserts that this ongoing process of reasoning is essential for true epistemic justification. The illustration below shows how this principle operates in practice:

- **Epistemic Claim:** "Christiano Ronaldo is the best footballer of the 21st century English Premier League."
- **R1 (Reason for the epistemic claim):** "Ronaldo is the best footballer because he has the highest goal record in the history of the English Premier League."
- **R2 (Reason for R1):** "Ronaldo has the highest goal record because he has scored more goals than any other player of the 21st century in the Premier League."
- **R3 (Reason for R2):** "Ronaldo has scored more goals than any other player because he has featured in more matches than any other footballer in the same period."
- And so on, where R stands for the reason supporting each previous statement in the chain.

This example captures the essence of Klein's infinitism. The justification for the original claim continues indefinitely, as each reason requires further support. According to Klein's theory, this process never stops; there is always another reason to be given, another layer to add, ensuring that no belief or claim is ever beyond question.

While Klein's defense of infinitism offers an alternative to foundationalism and coherentism, this approach raises significant practical and philosophical concerns. The first and most evident issue is that infinite regress becomes a never-ending task, potentially leading to epistemic paralysis. It is neither practical nor feasible to demand an infinite sequence of reasons in everyday knowledge practices. As the example shows, if we continue the regress indefinitely, the process becomes tedious and unmanageable, turning epistemic inquiry into a boring venture or an endless chain of reasoning with no final point of resolution.

A critical challenge arises when we consider the possibility of running out of reasons. At some point, we may find ourselves unable to provide further reasons, either due to a lack of available evidence or the inherent complexity of the subject matter. In such situations, Klein's model of infinite regress confronts a serious limitation: What happens when we have no more reasons to offer? Should we then resort to basic or self-evident reasons to support our beliefs? These are the kinds of fundamental reasons that Foundationalism emphasises. Foundationalism posits that not all beliefs require justification from further reasons because certain beliefs are self-justified or basic, serving as the foundation upon which other beliefs rest.

Additionally, the issue of running out of reasons points to a broader critique of infinitism: the concern that the process may collapse if no satisfactory further reason can be found. In

such cases, epistemic justification would be incomplete or halted. This inability to provide endless reasons undermines the practical applicability of infinitism in real-world epistemology, where finite cognitive resources and limitations of time and knowledge constrain the pursuit of an infinite chain of reasons.

From this perspective, Klein's infinitism confronts the same core problem that foundationalism, coherentism, and even contextualism have grappled with: the challenge of ensuring epistemic closure; the point at which justification for a belief is satisfactorily complete. Foundationalism resolves this by stopping the regress at basic beliefs, while Coherentism avoids the infinite regress by positing a web of mutually supportive beliefs. Coherentists argue that a belief is justified not because it is foundational, but because it coheres with other beliefs in a system, forming a self-supporting network. Contextualism, on the other hand, posits that the context in which justification is sought determines the adequacy of reasons. For example, within certain conversational or practical contexts, we may not need an infinite regress of reasons to justify a belief; instead, the reasons acceptable within that context suffice.

By comparison, Klein's infinitism insists that no reason is ever immune from further questioning, and justification remains an open-ended process. This insistence on unceasing justification, while philosophically intriguing, becomes impractical when applied to ordinary knowledge claims. People rarely, if ever, engage in infinite chains of justification for everyday beliefs. In fact, epistemic practices in science, law, and daily life typically involve stopping at reasons deemed sufficient within a particular context.

Moreover, the concern that infinitism is self-undermining emerges when we reflect on Klein's own defense of the theory. If each reason demands further justification, then Klein's own argument for infinitism must also be subject to infinite questioning. This raises a paradox: can Klein ever fully justify infinitism under his own model, or does his theory become trapped in the same epistemic loop it proposes?

Conclusion

In conclusion, Peter David Klein's account of infinite regress offers a compelling defense of epistemic infinitism, challenging traditional views of justification. Klein argues that justification is an unending process, with each reason requiring further support *ad infinitum*. This approach has revived interest in the infinite regress problem, offering an alternative to foundationalism and coherentism. However, while Klein's theory provides a thought-provoking alternative, it faces substantial challenges. The requirement for endless reasons becomes cognitively overwhelming and practically untenable, leading to epistemic paralysis, a problem Klein himself seeks to overcome.

Additionally, Klein's model encounters significant critique from proponents of more traditional epistemic frameworks, who question whether an infinite chain of reasons can truly ground epistemic justification. The inability to arrive at a final, self-sufficient reason raises doubts about whether infinitism can ultimately resolve the regress problem. In contrast, foundationalism, coherentism, and contextualism, despite their own shortcomings, offer more manageable solutions by providing a stopping point or a coherent structure to avoid the endless loop inherent in infinite regress.

In practical terms, while infinitism is conceptually rigorous, it may falter in real-world knowledge practices, where finite cognitive resources and limitations of time demand a more practical approach to justification. Klein's theory, although intellectually stimulating, remains a challenge to apply effectively in contexts where endless reasoning is not feasible. Thus, although infinitism represents an important philosophical contribution, it may struggle to find application in everyday epistemic practices.

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