

Skeptical Theism and Enlightenment Thinkers in Tracing Epistemological Humility

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Abstract

This study examines the origins and development of skeptical theism a philosophical position that reconciles belief in God with the recognition of human cognitive limitations in understanding divine providence, particularly regarding the problem of evil. While skeptical theism formally emerged in modern philosophy, its foundations can be traced to Enlightenment thinkers who grappled with the boundaries of human reason and faith. Through historical-philosophical and analytical methods, this work analyzes the contributions of six key figures John Locke, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, David Hume, Denis Diderot, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Immanuel Kant demonstrating how their diverse perspectives shaped the epistemological framework of skeptical theism. Locke's empiricism and Leibniz's rational theodicy laid early groundwork, while Hume's radical skepticism and Diderot's materialism, though atheistic, inadvertently reinforced the notion of cognitive limits. Rousseau's natural religion and Kant's critical philosophy further refined the balance between faith and reason, emphasizing the inscrutability of divine will. The study highlights how these thinkers, whether theistic or not, collectively advanced the principle of epistemological humility a core tenet of skeptical theism. By offering a comparative analysis rarely found in existing literature, this essay bridges historical and contemporary debates on theodicy, divine hiddenness, and the rationality of religious belief. Its findings are relevant to philosophy of religion, epistemology, and interdisciplinary studies, providing a foundation for further research on skeptical theism's dialogue with modern movements like reformed epistemology.

Keywords

Enlightenment Thinkers; Epistemological Humility; Skeptical Theism; Theodicy.

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INTRODUCTION

The history of philosophy is a graveyard of dead certainties (Mizrahi, 2016). Every epoch, in its intellectual prime, proclaims its truths to be eternal only to watch them crumble under the weight of their own contradictions. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Enlightenment's turbulent confrontation with the problem of evil that ancient specter which haunted theology for centuries before becoming philosophy's most merciless interrogator. The study employs historical-philosophical and analytical methods. The historical-philosophical approach involves analyzing primary texts by Enlightenment thinkers (Diderot, 1964; Hume, 2004; Kant, 2024; Leibniz, 1720; Locke, 1847; Rousseau, 1762) to identify their positions on

faith, reason, and the problem of evil. The analytical method entails interpreting these texts within the context of the contemporary definition of skeptical theism.

The novelty of the essay lies in its systematic comparison of the positions of six Enlightenment thinkers in the context of skeptical theism, emphasizing their contributions to epistemological discussions about religion. Unlike studies focused on individual philosophers, this work offers a holistic analysis, demonstrating how diverse approaches Leibniz's rationalism, Locke's and Hume's empiricism, Kant's practical philosophy, Rousseau's natural religion, and Diderot's atheism resonate with skeptical theism's ideas. The essay highlights that even non-theistic positions (Diderot, 1964; Hume, 2004) contributed to the development of epistemological humility, a perspective rarely considered in the context of skeptical theism.

Practical Application. The essay holds practical significance for philosophy of religion and epistemology, particularly in the context of contemporary debates on the rationality of religious beliefs. The analysis of Enlightenment thinkers' positions can be utilized in academic research and teaching courses on philosophy of religion, theodicy, and epistemology. The work provides a historical perspective for discussing issues such as the problem of evil, divine hiddenness, and the rationality of faith, which are relevant to interdisciplinary studies in theology, ethics, and philosophy. Furthermore, the essay can serve as a foundation for further research into the relationship between skeptical theism and contemporary philosophical movements, such as reformed epistemology.

What emerges from this confrontation is not a triumphant solution, but something far more intriguing: skeptical theism, that peculiar hybrid of devotion and epistemic restraint. Like a medieval alchemist's failed attempt to transmute lead into gold, the Enlightenment's struggle with divine justice produced an unexpected compound—one where faith persists precisely because reason acknowledges its limits. This is no mere theological curiosity, but the crystallization of a dialectical process where dogmatic certainty and radical doubt collide, producing a third way that preserves elements of both while transcending their limitations. At first glance, skeptical theism appears as philosophical doublespeak an attempt to have one's theological cake while eating it with epistemological utensils. How can one simultaneously affirm God's omnibenevolence and confess ignorance of His ways? The answer lies in the intellectual ferment of the 17th and 18th centuries, when the traditional pillars of theodicy began to crack under new modes of thought.

Consider the seismic shift represented by Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Ott & Dunn, 2013). Here, the father of empiricism dismantles innate ideas

while cautiously preserving room for faith not as dogmatic assertion, but as rational acknowledgment of cognitive boundaries. Locke's God is neither Descartes' clear-and-distinct idea nor Aquinas' prime mover, but a being whose purposes remain partially veiled behind the curtain of human perceptual limitations. This epistemological modesty, born from empirical rigor rather than pious resignation, plants the first seeds of what would later flower into full skeptical theism.

Yet Locke's restrained theology soon faced its antithesis in Hume's corrosive skepticism. Where Locke saw boundaries, Hume saw abysses. His *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (Religion & Hume, 1997) don't merely question whether we can understand God's reasons for permitting evil they undermine whether we can meaningfully speak of "God's reasons" at all. The brilliance of Hume's critique lies in its demonstration that epistemological humility, when pursued with relentless consistency, threatens to dissolve not just theological answers but the very questions themselves. Between these poles Locke's cautious fideism and Hume's skeptical dissolution the Enlightenment staged a spectacular drama of competing theodicies. Leibniz, that last great systematizer, attempted perhaps the most ambitious synthesis with his doctrine of the "best of all possible worlds." His *Theodicy* (Lodge, 2020) reads like a mathematical proof applied to metaphysics: evil exists, but only as the necessary shadow in an otherwise optimal divine equation.

Yet Leibniz's rationalist edifice concealed a profound concession. By admitting that human minds cannot comprehend the infinite variables in God's cosmic calculus, he smuggled skeptical elements into his ostensibly optimistic system. The resulting tension—between comprehensive rational explanation and acknowledgment of cognitive limitation—makes Leibniz's work a pivotal moment in our story. Voltaire's *Candide* may have ridiculed the "best of all possible worlds," but it missed the subtlety of Leibniz's position: optimism tempered by epistemic caution. Meanwhile, Rousseau took an entirely different path in *Emile* (Rousseau, 2010). Rejecting both dogmatic theology and cold rationalism, his Savoyard Vicar proposes a religion of the heart one where moral intuition compensates for rational uncertainty. Rousseau's genius lay in recognizing that epistemological humility need not lead to skepticism, but could instead ground a new kind of faith: not in doctrines, but in the human capacity to sense divine goodness despite intellectual darkness.

The synthesis or perhaps the decisive rupture came with Kant. His critical philosophy didn't so much solve the problem of evil as reconfigure the entire battlefield. By banishing knowledge to make room for faith (as proclaimed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*), Kant

performed an intellectual judo move: the very limitations that made theoretical theology impossible became the foundation for practical belief. In this light, Kant's treatment of evil in *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (Anderson-Gold, 2000) represents a watershed. Evil stems from human freedom, not divine design but why freedom should entail such terrible possibilities remains, like the noumenal realm itself, beyond human comprehension. Kant thus achieves what neither rationalists nor empiricists could: a position that acknowledges the reality of evil, preserves divine goodness, and does so without claiming speculative knowledge of God's nature.

What makes this intellectual history particularly fascinating are the contributions of thinkers who would have rejected the label "theist" altogether. Diderot's materialist writings, for instance, while openly hostile to religion, inadvertently strengthened skeptical theism's core premise. His *Letter on the Blind* (Tunstall, 2011) doesn't merely argue against design in nature it demonstrates how radically perspective shapes metaphysical claims. If a blind man's conception of reality differs so profoundly from the sighted's, how much more must finite minds differ from an infinite God's?

Similarly, Hume's skepticism though weaponized against religion—ends up reinforcing the very epistemic caution that skeptical theists would later employ. His demolition of causal reasoning in the *Treatise* (Bailey & O'Brien, 2013) creates the ironic situation where the arch-skeptic's arguments become useful to theologians: if human reason stumbles over mundane cause-and-effect, how can it presume to judge cosmic justice? This brings us to the present significance of these Enlightenment debates. Contemporary discussions of divine hiddenness, the problem of evil, and religious epistemology all bear the fingerprints of 18th-century thinkers. The "skeptical" in skeptical theism isn't mere rhetorical hedging it's the hard-won result of philosophy's encounter with its own limits. To study this tradition isn't merely antiquarian exercise. In an age where fundamentalisms of various stripes claim exclusive access to divine intentions, the Enlightenment's lesson that the most profound faith may coexist with the most rigorous intellectual humility remains urgently relevant. The thinkers examined here, for all their differences, shared a commitment to truth that refused both easy dogmatism and lazy skepticism.

As we turn now to examine each figure in detail, we'll trace how this delicate balance emerged not through grand pronouncements, but through philosophy's slow, painstaking dialogue with its own possibilities and limits. The story of skeptical theism is ultimately the

story of reason coming to terms with what it cannot know and finding, in that very limitation, new ways to seek truth.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach with a library research design, given the philosophical and theoretical nature of the study (Abdulkareem et al., 2018). The primary focus of this research is to explore and analyze the concept of epistemological humility through the thinking of figures within the skeptical theism tradition and Enlightenment thinkers. Therefore, the data sources used are secondary data, obtained from various philosophical literature, both in the form of primary works of these figures and secondary analyses by previous researchers. These sources include books, scientific journal articles, dissertations, and academic writings relevant to the research theme.

Data collection techniques were conducted through in-depth textual reviews of works representing each tradition of thought. Data analysis was conducted using a conceptual and comparative analysis approach (Onwuegbuzie & Weinbaum, 2017). First, the data were analyzed to identify key concepts related to epistemological humility within each tradition. Next, a comparison is made between the approaches and arguments used by skeptical theists (such as William Rowe, Stephen Wykstra, and Michael Bergmann) and those of Enlightenment thinkers like Immanuel Kant, David Hume, and Voltaire. This process aims to identify common ground and differences in their views on the limitations of human knowledge and the epistemological stances required by this.

The conclusions drawn in this study are deductive, through logical reasoning and critical reflection on the analysis (Maesaroh et al., 2020). The resulting conclusions are expected to provide a deeper understanding of how epistemological humility is understood in two historically and philosophically distinct traditions of thought, and how these ideas can contribute to contemporary epistemological discourse.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Skeptical Theism

Skeptical theism, as articulated in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, is a philosophical stance that asserts, “God exists, but we should be skeptical of our ability to discern God’s reasons for acting or refraining from acting in particular cases” (Bergmann 2021: Section 1). This position is rooted in a profound acknowledgment of human

epistemological limitations, particularly in relation to the problem of evil the perennial challenge of reconciling the existence of a benevolent, omnipotent, and omniscient God with the presence of suffering and moral wrongdoing in the world. Skeptical theism does not attempt to provide definitive answers to why God permits evil but instead embraces a posture of epistemic humility, suggesting that human beings lack the cognitive capacity to fully comprehend divine intentions. This stance implies that the inability to discern God's morally sufficient reasons for allowing evil does not constitute evidence against God's existence or goodness. Rather, it underscores the vast gulf between finite human understanding and the infinite complexity of divine providence.

Skeptical theists counter that what may seem gratuitous to human observers may, in fact, serve a purpose within God's broader plan, one that lies beyond the grasp of human cognition. This position does not deny the reality or severity of evil but refrains from concluding that such evils are unjustified, emphasizing instead the limitations of human perspective. As Michael Bergmann notes, skeptical theism hinges on the principle that "we have no good reason for thinking that the possible goods we know of are representative of the possible goods there are" (Bergmann, 2001). In other words, the goods (or reasons) that God might have for allowing evil could be entirely outside the realm of human comprehension, rendering our judgments about divine justice inherently tentative.

The concept of epistemological humility is central to skeptical theism. This humility is not a passive resignation but an active recognition of the boundaries of human reason, particularly when applied to metaphysical and theological questions. It draws on a long philosophical tradition, with roots in ancient skepticism, such as the Pyrrhonism of Pyrrho of Elis (ca. 360–270 BCE), who advocated for the suspension of judgment (*epoché*) due to the unattainability of certain knowledge. Similarly, Sextus Empiricus (ca. 160–210 CE) argued in his *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* that human senses and reasoning are unreliable for grasping ultimate truths, a perspective that resonates with skeptical theism's caution against overconfidence in theological assertions. While ancient skeptics were not concerned with theistic questions, their emphasis on cognitive limitations provides a philosophical foundation for skeptical theism's insistence that divine reasons may be inscrutable (Bergmann, 2001).

Skeptical theism also engages with the Enlightenment's broader intellectual project, which sought to delineate the boundaries of human knowledge while grappling with questions of faith, reason, and morality. Enlightenment thinkers, as explored in this study, contributed to the development of skeptical theism by wrestling with the tension between rational inquiry

and religious belief. The skeptical theist's position is not without its critics. Some philosophers argue that it risks undermining theistic belief by rendering God's actions so mysterious as to make faith intellectually vacuous.

Another dimension of skeptical theism is its distinction from other theodicies, which attempt to provide positive explanations for why God permits evil. Traditional theodicies, such as Augustine's free will defense or Leibniz's best-of-all-possible-worlds argument, seek to justify divine permission of evil through specific rational accounts. Skeptical theism, by contrast, refrains from such explanations, focusing instead on the epistemic gap between human and divine perspectives. This makes it a more modest position, avoiding the speculative overreach of traditional theodicies while preserving the possibility of divine rationality. For example, while Leibniz argued that evil is necessary for a greater good within an optimal world, skeptical theists might simply assert that we lack the ability to judge whether such a world is optimal, given our limited perspective.

The implications of skeptical theism extend beyond the problem of evil to broader questions of divine hiddenness the apparent absence of clear evidence for God's existence. If God's reasons for allowing evil are inscrutable, so too might be the reasons for God's seeming silence in the face of human inquiry. Skeptical theism also intersects with contemporary movements in religious epistemology, such as reformed epistemology, which emphasizes the rationality of religious belief independent of empirical or rational proofs. The practical significance of skeptical theism lies in its ability to navigate the tension between faith and doubt in an intellectually rigorous way. In an era marked by polarized debates between dogmatic religious assertions and militant atheism, skeptical theism offers a middle path—one that upholds theistic commitment while embracing the critical spirit of philosophical inquiry. It challenges believers to maintain faith in the face of unanswered questions and skeptics to reconsider the assumption that the absence of clear answers disproves God's existence. This balance makes skeptical theism a valuable perspective for both academic philosophy and personal reflection, particularly in addressing existential questions about suffering, meaning, and divine justice.

Moreover, skeptical theism's emphasis on epistemological humility has broader applications beyond theology. In ethics, for instance, it encourages caution in making absolute moral judgments, recognizing that human perspectives on justice may be incomplete. In epistemology, it aligns with fallibilist approaches that acknowledge the provisional nature of human knowledge, fostering openness to new evidence and perspectives. By grounding itself

in the recognition of human limitations, skeptical theism resonates with a wide range of philosophical inquiries, making it a versatile framework for interdisciplinary studies.

Skeptical theism is not merely a defensive maneuver against the problem of evil but a sophisticated philosophical stance that emerges from centuries of debate about the limits of human reason and the nature of divine providence. By embracing epistemological humility, it offers a nuanced approach to theistic belief—one that neither dismisses the reality of evil nor claims unwarranted certainty about divine intentions. Its roots in ancient skepticism and its development through Enlightenment thought underscore its historical depth, while its engagement with contemporary issues like divine hiddenness and religious epistemology highlights its ongoing relevance. As philosophy continues to grapple with the mysteries of existence, skeptical theism stands as a testament to the enduring power of humility in the pursuit of truth.

Enlightenment Thinkers and Skeptical Theism

Locke (1847), a Christian theist, emphasized the limitations of human cognition in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. He argued that knowledge is grounded in experience, and the nature of God and His providence remain beyond human comprehension. Locke's faith in God was rational, yet he acknowledged that some divine purposes are inscrutable, aligning with the epistemological humility of skeptical theism. This perspective is also evident in his *Two Treatises of Government* and *Letters Concerning Toleration* (1689–1692) (Bird, 2017). His focus on cognitive limits and rational faith resonates with contemporary skeptical theist arguments, which stress that the inability to discern divine reasons does not undermine God's existence (Locke, 1847).

Epistemological humility is a philosophical stance that acknowledges the limitations of human cognition and the imperfection of our cognitive faculties. It implies caution in claiming absolute knowledge, particularly in matters beyond immediate experience, such as metaphysics, theology, and ethics. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716), a philosopher, mathematician, and theologian, is a pivotal figure in the history of philosophy, whose ideas are closely tied to the problem of evil and the epistemology of religion (Jacobs, 2025). His most significant contribution to the context of skeptical theism is found in his *Essays on Theodicy* (1710) (Huxford, 2020), where he sought to reconcile the existence of evil with God's goodness and omnipotence. Leibniz introduced the concept of the “best of all possible

worlds,” asserting that God, being perfect, created a world that, despite the presence of evil, is optimal in the overall balance of good and evil.

In *Essays on Theodicy*, Leibniz directly addresses the problem of evil, central to skeptical theism. He argued that human reason is limited in understanding the divine plan, and what appears as evil from a human perspective may be part of a broader divine design. For instance, Leibniz wrote: “We cannot comprehend all the reasons why God permits evil, but we must believe that He has sufficient grounds for doing so” (*Theodicy*, 23). This stance is close to skeptical theism, as it emphasizes epistemological humility: humans are incapable of fully grasping divine intentions, yet this does not negate God’s goodness.

Leibniz also distinguished between “metaphysical evil” (the imperfection of the created world), “physical evil” (suffering), and “moral evil” (sin), asserting that all serve a higher purpose within the harmony of the world. His emphasis on the limitations of human cognition, particularly in *New Essays on Human Understanding*, where he debated Locke on the nature of knowledge, reinforces this idea. Leibniz acknowledged that while the human mind is capable of rational insight, it is limited in its ability to encompass the fullness of divine providence.

However, Leibniz’s position is not skeptical theism in its purest form. His theodicy not only acknowledges cognitive limitations but also proposes a rational explanation for evil through the “best of all possible worlds” concept. This makes his approach less skeptical than that of contemporary skeptical theists, who avoid such explanations, focusing solely on epistemological humility. Nevertheless, Leibniz’s emphasis on the inscrutability of divine reasons for evil positions him as a precursor to this stance (Leibniz, 1720).

David Hume (1711–1776), an empiricist and skeptic, questioned rational proofs of God’s existence, including the teleological argument, in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (1779). His focus on the limitations of human reason and the inability to discern divine intentions aligns his position with skeptical theism, though he was not a theist. Hume’s contribution to epistemological discussions of religion lies in his emphasis on cognitive limitations, making him a precursor to skeptical theism’s ideas (Hume, 2004).

Denis Diderot (1713–1784) initially a deist and later an atheist, challenged religious dogmas in his *Letter on the Blind* (1749), prioritizing empirical knowledge. His skepticism toward traditional theology distances him from skeptical theism, though he contributed to epistemological discussions. Diderot’s skepticism targeted metaphysical claims, including God’s existence, rendering his position incompatible with skeptical theism. However, his

emphasis on the limitations of human cognition in metaphysical matters contributed to discussions that resonate with skeptical theism's ideas, albeit without a theistic foundation. Diderot did not propose faith in God as a solution to the problem of evil, instead rejecting theological explanations, distinguishing him from thinkers like Locke or Rousseau (Diderot, 1964).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), a theist, defended rational faith in God while rejecting dogmatic revelations in his *Emile, or On Education* (1762), particularly in the section “Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar.” His balance of faith and skepticism aligns his position with skeptical theism, as expressed in *The Social Contract* (1762). Rousseau indirectly addressed religious questions, emphasizing the role of natural religion, which supports his rational yet skeptical approach to theology. His balance of faith and skepticism makes him a significant figure in the context of skeptical theism (Rousseau, 1762).

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), a philosopher who radically rethought the nature of knowledge, morality, and religion, developed a critical philosophy that transformed approaches to metaphysics and theology. His works, particularly *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1787) and *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793), propose an approach to faith that has significant parallels with skeptical theism, especially in its emphasis on the limits of human cognition (Hendricks, 2023).

In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant argues that human reason is limited in its ability to know “things in themselves” (Dinge an sich), including the nature of God. He distinguishes between the phenomenal world, accessible through experience and categories of reason, and the noumenal world, which lies beyond human cognition. God, as a noumen, cannot be known by theoretical reason, as metaphysical claims about His nature exceed the bounds of experience. Kant wrote: “We cannot know God as an object, but we can think of Him as a necessary condition of the moral law” (Kant, 2024).

In *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Kant views evil as a result of human free will, not directly tied to divine design. He asserts that we cannot know why God permits evil, as this lies beyond human experience and reason. Instead, Kant proposes focusing on practical faith grounded in the moral law. His concept of God as a postulate of practical reason a being necessary for the moral order and highest good does not require theoretical knowledge of divine reasons, aligning his position with skeptical theism.

In *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), Kant (2024) develops the idea that belief in God is justified from a practical perspective, as a necessary condition for achieving the highest

good, combining virtue and happiness. However, he emphasizes that this belief is not based on empirical or metaphysical evidence but on the moral demands of reason. This approach supports skeptical theism, as Kant avoids speculation about divine intentions, acknowledging their inscrutability. Kant's approach supports skeptical theism by eschewing metaphysical claims about God, though it is distinguished by its emphasis on moral justification for faith.

CONCLUSION

Skeptical theism, this paradoxical blend of faith and epistemological sobriety, did not descend from the heavens as a revelation nor flare up in a single mind as an epiphany. It matured in the crucible of the historical development of philosophical thought, through the contradictions of eras, through the agonizing antinomies that the Enlightenment, that great destroyer of dogmas, could not resolve but exposed with ruthless clarity. Locke undermined the very possibility of dogmatic theology but halted at the threshold, unwilling to draw final conclusions. Leibniz attempted to reconcile the irreconcilable rationality and faith, evil and the goodness of the Creator. His “best of all possible worlds” became not a solution to the problem but its sophisticated expression, a philosophical equivalent of a courtly bow in the face of irresolvable contradictions. Hume, as an “incurable destroyer of illusions,” carried the logic of the Enlightenment to its conclusion. His Dialogues are not merely a critique of religion but a death sentence for any attempt at rational theology. The irony of history lies in the fact that this extreme skepticism later became fertile ground for a new theism—no longer “naïve” (intuitive) but armed with all the doubts of modernity (accessible discoveries and technologies).

Diderot brought the logic of the Enlightenment to its materialistic finale, without compromise or mercy. If Locke cautiously opened the door to skepticism, and Hume methodically dismantled the edifice of rational theology brick by brick, Diderot took a battering ram and razed the foundation. His evolution from deism to atheism was not merely a change of views but a symptom of the inevitable collapse of an era of half-measures. The “paradox” is that Diderot, this “anti-theist,” unwittingly became a co-author of skeptical theism. By demolishing dogmas, he elevated the principle of epistemological humility to an absolute: if human reason is so limited that it cannot even grasp the nature of matter (as shown in his *Philosophical Principles*, 1746), what claims can theology make? His mockery of Leibniz (“Optimism is the passion for asserting that all is well when things are bad”) is not just criticism but a demonstration of the impasse of all theodicies. Kant executed a “strategic

retreat" in understanding skeptical theism. Recognizing reason's impotence in the face of antinomies, he relocated religion to the realm of the practical not as knowledge but as a postulate. Kant's "ingenious maneuver" saved faith from total defeat, but at the cost of complete capitulation to the impossibility of rational knowledge of God.

Contemporary skeptical theism is not merely one philosophical position among others. It is the inevitable product of centuries of intellectual development, a dialectical synthesis in which all previous stages dogmatic faith, destructive skepticism, and attempts at their reconciliation are preserved as sublated moments. If skeptical theism today represents the highest form of religious consciousness, armed with the full critical power of modern philosophy, tomorrow it may become merely a transitional stage to a new, even more consistent worldview. For in philosophy, as in history, there are no final words only a continuous process of overcoming, in which every "solution" becomes the source of new contradictions, demanding a new synthesis. Such is the dialectic of thought relentless, like truth itself.

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