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Faith and Reason

The Journal of Religion, 41 (4)

October 1961, 237-247.

RECENTLY there fell into my hands by the kindness of its author - a book which has revealed to me a new, and I think much better, understanding of the situation we are facing today in consequence of the modern scientific revolution. The author's name is Josef Pieper, professor of philosophical anthropology at the University of Münster, and his book which so impressed me is entitled *Scizolastik.* (It will be published in English by the Phaedon Books in New York.)

Owing to this book, I can see now that the conflict between faith and reason evoked by natural science today is but a modern variant of a problem which has filled the thoughts of men in other forms ever since the dawn of philosophic speculation 2,500 years ago.

You will notice that by dating the beginning of philosophy in the sixth century B.C., I am localizing this event in Greece, and more particularly in Ionia and the Greek isles. I know this may be challenged and shall not argue it. Suffice it to say that in my view our anxiety about the relation between faith and reason here in Europe today is the legacy of a particular intellectual family. Modern science has recently been spreading this disturbance all over the planet, but it has formed no part of the heritage of Chinese or Hindu thought. It has originated with us here in Europe, and for two and a half millennia it has remained the preoccupation of that part of humanity that has culturally centered on Europe.

But even within these limits, the perspective I now see appearing before me is widely sweeping. I see extending behind us three consecutive periods of rationalism, the Greek, the medieval, and the modern. Greek rationalism rose from a bed of mythopoetic thought. Myths and ritual couch most thoughts of men in terms of I-Thou and leave little of importance to be said in terms of I-It. Greek rationalism tended to liberate the mind from this pervasively personal network and to

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establish in its place broad areas of objective thought. It extended I-IT relations into a philosophic interpretation of things.

The Christian message exploded into this scene as an outrage to rationalism. It restored the I-Thou relation to the very center of everything. It proclaimed that a man put to death a few years before in a remote provincial capital was the Son of Almighty God ruling the universe, and he, this man, had atoned by his death for the sins of mankind. It taught that it was the Christian's duty to believe in this epochal event and to be totally absorbed by its implications. Faith, faith that mocks reason, faith that scornfully declares itself to be mere foolishness in the face of Greek rationalism - this is what Paul enjoined on his audiences.

The picture is well known. But you may ask where I see any trace here of a new Christian, medieval rationalism striving to reconcile faith with reason. It emerged later as the Christian message spread among an intelligentsia steeped in Greek philosophy. It was formulated by Augustine in terms that became statutory for a thousand years after. Reason was declared by him ancillary to faith, supporting it up to the point where revelation took over, after which in its turn faith opened up new paths to reason. What Professor Pieper has shown me for the first time is that the entire movement of scholastic philosophy from Boethius to William of Ockham was but a variation on this theme.

Ockham brought scholasticism to a close by declaring that faith and reason were incompatible and should be kept strictly separate. Thus he ushered in the period of modern rationalism, which, too, accepts this separation, but with the new proviso that reason alone can establish true knowledge. Henceforth, as John Locke was soon to put it, faith was no longer to be respected as a source of higher light, revealing knowledge that lies beyond the range of observation and reason, but was to be regarded merely as a personal acceptance which falls short of rational demonstrability. The mutual position of the two Augustinian levels of truth was inverted.

In a way, this step would have brought us back to Greek rationalism, and many of its authors did so regard it. They hoped that the new secular world view would appease religious strife and bring back the blessings of an antique dispassionate religious indifference. However, post-Christian rationalism soon entered on paths man had never trodden before, and we stand here today at the dismal end of this journey.

But I have not come here to denounce modern rationalism. The arts, the intellectual splendors, and moral attainments of the last 300 years stand unrivaled in the history of mankind. The very failures and disasters that surround us may themselves bear testimony to this. Only gigantic endeavor could precipitate us into such absurdities as the modern scientific outlook has made current today and could set millions ablaze with the peculiar skeptical fanaticism of our age.

Keeping these awful aspects of our situation tacitly in mind, I shall try to trace a new line of thought along which, I believe, we may recover some of the ground rashly abandoned by the modern scientific outlook. I believe indeed that this kind of effort, if

pursued systematically, may eventually restore the balance between belief and reason on lines essentially similar to those marked out by Augustine at the dawn of Christian rationalism.

I shall start off in this direction by surveying some essential features of the process of knowing which are disregarded by the modern conception of positive, scientific knowledge.

A few years ago a distinguished psychiatrist demonstrated to his students a patient who was having a mild fit of some kind. Later the class discussed the question whether this had been an epileptic or a hystero-epileptic seizure. The matter was finally decided by the psychiatrist: "Gentlemen," he said, "you have seen a true epileptic seizure. I cannot tell you how to recognize it; you will learn this by more extensive experience."

The psychiatrist knew how to recognize this disease, but he was not at all certain how he did this. In other words, he recognized the disease by attending to its total appearance and did so by relying on a multitude of clues which he could not clearly specify. Thus his knowledge of the disease differed altogether from his knowledge of these clues. He recognized the disease by attending to it, while he was not attending to its symptoms in themselves, but only as clues. We may say that he was knowing the clues only by relying on them for attending to the pathological physiognomy to which they contributed. So if he could not tell what these clues were, while he could tell what the disease was, this was due to the fact that, while we can always identify a thing we are attending to, and indeed our very attending identifies it, we cannot always identify the particulars on which we rely in our attending to the thing.

And this fact can be generalized widely. There are vast domains of knowledge - of which I shall speak in a moment - that exemplify in various ways that we are in general unable to tell what particulars we are aware of when attending to a whole, that is, to a coherent entity which they constitute. Thus we discover that there are two kinds of knowing which invariably enter jointly into any act of knowing a comprehensive entity. There is (1) the knowing of a thing by attending to it, in the way we attend to an entity as a whole and (2) the knowing of a thing by relying on our awareness of it, in the way we rely on our awareness of the particulars forming the entity for attending to it as a whole.

These two kinds of knowing are not only distinct but also, to an important extent, mutually exclusive. We cannot attend to a clue as a thing in itself without depriving it of its meaning as a clue and losing sight thereby of the thing to which it served as a clue. Gestalt psychology has proved quite generally that we cannot focus our attention on the particulars of a whole without impairing our grasp of the whole; and that, conversely, we can focus on a whole only by reducing our awareness of the particulars to the contribution they make to the whole. We may call the latter a subsidiary awareness of the particulars in terms of our knowledge of the whole that is subserved by them.

As a rule the two alternative kinds of knowing do not completely extinguish each other. We may successfully analyze the symptoms of a disease and concentrate our attention on its several

particulars, and then we may return to our conception of its general appearance by becoming once more subsidiarily aware of these particulars as contributing to the total picture of the disease. Indeed, such an oscillation of detailing and integrating is the royal road for deepening our understanding of any comprehensive entity.

In saying this I have pronounced a key word. I have spoken of understanding. Understanding, comprehension - this is the cognitive faculty cast aside by a positivistic theory of knowledge, which refuses to acknowledge the existence of comprehensive entities as distinct from their particulars; and this is the faculty which I recognize as the central act of knowing. For comprehension can never be absent from any process of knowing and is indeed the ultimate sanction of any such act. What is not understood cannot be said to be known.

Let me rapidly run through various forms of knowing to which this analysis can be seen to apply. I have so far used as my leading example the process of medical *diagnostics.* We have a closely similar process in the identification of the species to which an animal or a plant belongs. An expert who can identify 800,000 species of insects must rely on a vast number of clues which he cannot identify in themselves. This is why zoology and botany cannot be learned from printed pages, any more than medicine can. This is why so many hours of practical teaching in the laboratory have to be given in many other branches of the natural sciences also. Wherever this happens, some knowledge of the comprehensive aspect of things is being transmitted: a kind of knowledge which we must acquire by becoming aware of a multitude of clues that cannot be exhaustively identified.

But we hardly ever do such diagnosing without examining the object in question, and this *testing* has itself to be learned along with the art of recognizing the physiognomies of the tested objects. We must jointly learn to be skilful testers as well as expert knowers. Actually, these are only two different and inseparable processes of comprehension. Expert knowing relies on a comprehension of clues, while skilful examination relies on a combination of dexterous motions for tracing these clues.

This reveals the structure of *skills* quite generally. A performance is called skilful precisely because we cannot clearly identify its component muscular acts. The craftsman's cunning consists in controlling these component acts jointly with a view to a comprehensive achievement. Such also is the sportsman's and the musical performer's art. Neither can tell much - and mostly can tell very little - about the several muscular acts he combines in accomplishing his art.

Skills usually require tools - instruments of some kind, and these are things akin to the particulars of a comprehensive entity. For they are tools or instruments by virtue of the very fact that we rely on them for accomplishing something to which we are attending by using the tool or instrument. In this case we can admittedly identify that on which we rely, though mostly we do not quite know how we actually use it. In any case, it still remains strikingly true that we cannot direct our attention to an object as mere object while relying on it as the tool of a skilful performance. You must keep your eye on the ball, and if you look at your bat instead, you inevitably lose the stroke. Any skilful performance is paralyzed by attending focally to its particulars, whether these are the dexterous movements of our body or the tools which we employ.

The same is true of *speech.* Listen intently to the sound of your own words, disregarding their meaningful context which is the comprehensive entity that they should subserve, and you will be instantly struck dumb. The same is true of the whole multitude of signs, symbols, and gestures by which human communications are achieved and by the practical use of which the intelligence of man is developed far beyond that of the animals. Here is another vital area of skilful doing and knowing, all over which we are met with comprehensive entities to which we can attend only by relying subsidiarily on things and acts of our own to which for the time being we do not attend - and must not attend - in themselves.

Last, deep down, in the most primitive forms of knowing, in the act of *sensory perception*, we meet with the very paradigm of the structure which I have postulated for all kinds of knowledge at all levels. It is sensory perception, and particularly the way we see things, that has supplied Gestalt psychologists with material for their fundamental discoveries which I am expanding here into a new theory of knowledge. They have shown that our seeing is an act of comprehension for which we rely, in a most subtle manner, on clues from all over the field of vision as well as on clues inside our body, in the muscles controlling the motion of the eyes and in those controlling the posture of the body. All these clues become effective only if we keep concentrating our attention on the objects we are perceiving. Many of the clues of perception cannot be known in themselves at all; others can be traced only by acute scientific analysis; but all of them can serve the purpose of seeing what is in front of us only if we make no attempt at looking at them or attend to them in themselves. They must be left to abide in the role of unspecifiable particulars of the spectacle perceived by our eyes if we are to see anything at all.

This concludes my list. We have now before us the art of *diagnostics* and of the *testing* of objects to be diagnosed, as taught in universities; we have the practice of *skills* in general and the skilful use of *tools* in particular which leads on to the use of *words* and other *signs* by which human intelligence is developed; and finally we have the act of *perception*, the most fundamental manifestation of intelligence, both in animals and men. In each of these cases we have recognized the typical elements of comprehension. I now want to show how this panorama of knowing suggests a new conception of knowledge, equally comprising both the I-It and the I-Thou and establishing at the same time a new harmony between belief and reason.

Clearly, the new element I have introduced here into the conception of knowing is the knowing of things by relying on our awareness of them for attending to something else that comprises them. And we may remember now that there is one outstanding and obvious experience of certain things which we know almost exclusively by relying on them. Our *body* is a collection of such things; we hardly ever observe our own body

as we observe an external object, but we continuously rely on it as a tool for observing objects outside and for manipulating these for purposes of our own. Hence we may regard the knowing of something by attending to something else, as the kind of knowledge we have of our own body by living in it. This kind of knowing is not an I-It relation but rather a way of existing, a manner of being. We might perhaps call it an I-Myself or I-Me relation.

We are born to live in our body and to feel that we are relying on it for our existence, but the more skilful uses of our body - however elementary - have to be acquired by a process of learning. For example, the faculty of seeing things by using our eyes is not inborn; it has to be acquired by a process of learning.

Hence when we get to know something as a clue, as a particular of a whole, as a tool, as a word, or as an element contributing to perception, by learning to rely on it, we do so in the same way as we learn to rely on our body for exercising intellectual and practical control over objects of our surrounding. So any extension of the area of reliance by which we enrich our subsidiary knowledge of things is an extension of the kind of knowledge we usually have of our body; it is indeed an extension of our bodily existence to include things outside it. To acquire new subsidiary knowledge is to enlarge and modify our intellectual being by assimilating the things we learn to rely on. Alternatively, we may describe the same process as an act of pouring ourselves into these things by relying on them.

Such ways of acquiring knowledge may sound strange, but then we are dealing with a kind of knowledge which, though familiar enough to us all, seems never to have been clearly identified by students of the theory of knowledge. Hitherto recognized processes for acquiring knowledge, whether by experience or deduction, apply only to the knowledge of things we are attending to and not to what we know of things by relying on our awareness of them in the process of attending to something else. I shall continue, therefore, my account of the way such knowledge is acquired and held, however curious, this account may sound at first hearing.

I have said that when we rely on our awareness of some things for attending to something else, we assimilate these things to our body. In this sense, then, subsidiary knowledge is held by indwelling. We comprehend the particulars of a whole in terms of the whole by dwelling in the particulars; or, in other words, we grasp the joint meaning of the particulars by dwelling in them.

All my earlier examples of comprehension can be seen to illustrate this conclusion. To diagnose a disease is to grasp the joint meaning of its symptoms, many of which we could not specify; so we know these particulars only by relying on them as clues. Indwelling comes out more evidently when applied to the skilful testing of an object, or to any other feat of dexterous handling. Here we literally dwell in the innumerable muscular acts which contribute to our purpose, and this purpose is their joint meaning. But indwelling is perhaps most vivid in man's use of language. Human intelligence, which surpasses that of animals, comes into existence only by grasping the meaning and mastering the use of language. Little of our mind lives in our natural body; a truly human intellect dwells in us only when our lips shape words and our eyes read print. The

intellectual difference between a naked pigmy of central Africa and a member of the French Academy is grounded in the cultural equipment by which Paris surpasses the African jungle. The French academician's superior mind is formed and dwells in his intelligent use of this superior equipment.

At this point we see before us a way of knowing a human being in the fulness of his dignity through recognizing in him the same powers of understanding by which we are understanding him. But let us look first at the way comprehension is achieved - comprehension as understood by my examples. More often than not we comprehend things in a flash. But it is more illuminating to think of the way we struggle from a puzzled incomprehension of a state of affairs toward its real meaning. The success of such efforts demonstrate man's capacity for knowing the presence of a hidden reality accessible to his understanding. This capacity is at work in all our knowing, from the dawn of discovery to the holding of established truth. Our active foreknowledge of an unknown reality is the right motive and guide of knowing in all our mental endeavors. Formal processes of inference cannot thrust toward the truth, for they have neither passion nor purpose. All explicit forms of reasoning, whether deductive or inductive, are impotent in themselves; they can operate only as the intellectual tools of man's tacit powers reaching toward the hidden meaning of things.

Plato has argued that the task of solving a problem is logically absurd and therefore impossible. For if we already know the solution, there is no occasion to search for it; while if we do not know it, we cannot search for it either, since we do not know then what we are looking for. The task of solving a problem must indeed appear self-contradictory unless we admit that we can possess true intimations of the unknown. This is what Plato's argument proves, namely, that every advance in understanding is moved and guided by our power for seeing the presence of some hidden comprehensive entity behind yet incomprehensible clues pointing increasingly toward this yet unknown entity.

When a student is taught how to identify a disease or a biological specimen, his confidence in the hidden coherence of a puzzling state of affairs is guided by an external aid. For example, when the psychiatrist I mentioned said to his students that they will learn to recognize in practice the characteristic appearance of an epileptic seizure, he meant that they would learn to do so by accepting *his own diagnosis* of such cases and trying to understand what he based it on. All practical teaching, the teaching of comprehension in all the senses of the term, is based on authority. The student must be confident that his master understands what he is trying to teach him and that he, the student, will eventually succeed in his turn to understand the meaning of the things which are being explained to him.

But whether our confidence in the powers of our comprehension arises spontaneously from the depth of our inquiring mind or leans on our trust in the judgment of our teachers, it is always an act of hope akin to the dynamism of all human faith. Tillich says that "that which is meant by an act of faith cannot be approached in any other way than through an act of faith." And this holds here too. There is no other way of approaching a hidden meaning than by intrusting ourselves to our intimations of its yet unseen presence. And such intimations are the only path toward enlarging and upholding our intellectual mastery over our surroundings.

Tillich says that his dynamic conception of faith "is the result of conceptual analysis, both of the objective and subjective side of faith." This is precisely what I claim for my derivation of the dynamic conception of knowing. It is derived in the last resort from our realization of the two kinds of knowledge which combine to the understanding of a comprehensive entity. Our reliance on our awareness of the particulars is the personal; our knowledge of the entity, the objective element of knowing.

The dynamic impulse by which we acquire understanding is only reduced and never lost when we hold knowledge acquired and established by this impulse. The same impulse sustains our conviction for dwelling in this knowledge and for developing our thoughts within its framework. Live knowledge is a perpetual source of new surmises, an inexhaustible mine of still hidden implications. The death of Max von Laue last year should remind us that his discovery of the diffraction of X-rays by crystals was universally acclaimed as an amazing confirmation of the existing theory of crystals and X-rays. In a like manner, Dalton's atomic theory was an amazing confirmation of Boyle's speculation on the structure of crystals, which itself was a development of ideas originating with Lucretius and Epicurus. And Dalton's theory was amazingly confirmed in its turn by the experiments of J. J. Thompson ninety years later. To hold knowledge is indeed always a commitment to indeterminate implications, for human knowledge is but an intimation of reality, and we can never quite tell in what new way reality may yet manifest itself. It is external to us; it is objective; and so its future manifestations can never be completely under our intellectual control.

So all true knowledge is inherently hazardous, just as all true faith is a leap into the unknown. Knowing includes its own uncertainty as an integral part of it, just as, according to Tillich, all faith necessarily includes its own dubiety.

The traditional division between faith and reason, or faith and science (which Tillich, too, erroneously reaffirms), reflects the assumption that reason and science proceed by explicit rules of logical deduction or inductive generalization. But I have shown that these operations are impotent by themselves, and I could add that they cannot even be strictly defined by themselves. To know is to understand, and explicit logical processes are effective only as tools in search of the solution of a problem, commitment by which we expand our understanding and continue to hold the result. They have no meaning except within this informal dynamic context. Once this is recognized, the contrast between faith and reason dissolves, and the close similarity of this structure emerges in its place.

Admittedly, religious conversion commits our whole person and changes our whole being in a way that an expansion of natural knowledge does not do. But once the dynamics of knowing are recognized as the dominant principle of knowledge, the difference appears

only as one of degree. For - as we have seen - all extension of comprehension involves an expansion of ourselves into a new dwelling place, of which we assimilate the framework by relying on it as we do on our own body. Indeed, the whole intellectual being of man comes into existence in this very manner by absorbing the language and the cultural heritage in which he is brought up. The amazing deployment of the infant mind is stirred on by a veritable blaze of its confidence, in surmising the hidden meanings of speech and other adult behavior, and so eventually grasping their meanings. Moreover, the child's dynamic intellectual progress has its closely similar counterpart on the highest levels of man's creative achievement- and the structure of both these processes resembles in its turn that of the self-transformation entailed in a religious conversion.

But perhaps the deepest division between reason and faith arises from the urge toward objectivity which tends to destroy the I-Thou commitment of the religious world view and establish a panorama of I-It relations in its place. Has not the modern positivist outlook exercised its pressure even on the purely secular studies of the human mind, as well as of human affairs whether past or present, in favor of a mechanical conception of man which represents him as a bundle of appetites, or as a mechanical toy, or as a passive product of social circumstances?

But this too is the outcome of the obsessive limitation of knowledge to the results of explicit inferences. Persons can be identified as comprehensive entities only by relying on our awareness of numberless particulars, most of which we could never specify in themselves. This is the same process by which we diagnose an elusive illness or read a printed page. Just as we assimilate the symptoms of a disease by attending to their meaning, so we assimilate the workings of another man's mind by attending to his mind. In this sense we may be said to know his mind by dwelling in its manifestations. Such is the structure of empathy (which I prefer to call conviviality), which alone can establish a knowledge of other minds - and even of the simplest living beings.

Behaviorism tries to replace convivial knowledge by I-It observations of the particulars by which the mind of an individual manifests itself and tries to relate these particulars to each other by a process of explicit inference. But since most of the particulars in question cannot be observed in themselves at all and, in any case, their relation cannot be explicitly stated, the enterprise ends up by replacing its original subject matter by a grotesque simulacrum of it in which the mind itself is missing. The kind of knowledge which I am vindicating here, and which I call *personal knowledge,* casts aside these absurdities of the current scientific approach and reconciles the process of knowing with the acts of addressing another person. In doing so, it establishes, a continuous ascent from our less personal knowing of inanimate matter to our convivial knowing

of living beings and beyond this to the knowing of our responsible fellow men. Such I believe is the true transition from the science to the humanities and also from our knowing the laws of nature to our knowing the person of God.

But is the person we may know in this manner not floating vaguely above his own bodily substance, outside of which he actually cannot exist at all? The answer to this question will reveal a surprising affinity between my conception of personhood and a central doctrine of Christianity.

I have said that the mind of a person is a comprehensive entity which is not specifiable in terms of its constituent particulars; but this is not to say that it can exist apart or outside of these particulars. The meaning of a printed page cannot be specified in terms of a chemical analysis of its ink and paper, but neither can its meaning be conveyed without the use of a physical medium, such as ink and paper. Though the laws of physics and chemistry apply to the particles of the body, they do not determine the manifestations of the mind; their function is to offer an opportunity - an admittedly limited and precarious pportunity - for the mind to live and manifest itself. Our sense organs, our brain, the whole infinitely complex interplay of our organism offer to the mind the instruments for exercising its intelligence and judgment, and, at the same time, they restrict the scope of this enterprise, deflecting it by delusions, obstructing it by sickness, and terminating it by death.

The knowing of comprehensive entities thus establishes a series of ascending levels of existence. The relationship I have just outlined obtains throughout between succeeding levels of this hierarchy. The existence of a higher principle is always rooted in the inferior levels governed by less comprehensive principles. Within this lower medium and by virtue of it, the higher principle can operate widely but not unconditionally, its range being restricted and its every action tainted by the very medium on which it has to rely for exercising its powers.

We see, then, that as the rising levels of existence were created by successive stages of evolution, each new level achieved higher powers entramelled by new possibilities of corruption. The primeval matrix of life was inanimate and deathless - subject neither to failure nor suffering. From it have emerged levels of biotic existence liable to malformation and disease and, at higher stages, prone also to illusion, to error, to neurotic affliction - finally producing in man, in addition to all these liabilities, an ingrained propensity to do evil. Such is the necessary condition of a morally responsible being, grafted on a bestiality through which alone it can exercise its own powers.

Such is the inescapable predicament of man which theology has called his fallen nature. Our vision of redemption is the converse of this predicament. It is the vision of a man set free from this bondage. Such a man would be God incarnate; he would suffer and die as a man, and yet by this very suffering and death he would prove himself divinely free from evil. This is the event, whether historic or mythical, which shattered the framework of

Greek rationalism and has set for all time the hopes and obligations of man far beyond the horizons of Greek philosophy.

I have mentioned divinity and the possibility of knowing God. These subjects lie outside my argument. But my conception of knowing opens the way to them. Knowing, as a dynamic force of comprehension, uncovers at each step a new hidden meaning. It reveals a universe of comprehensive entities which represent the meaning of their largely unspecifiable particulars. A universe constructed as an ascending hierarchy of meaning and excellence is very different from the picture of a chance collocation of atoms to which the examination of the universe by explicit modes of inference leads us. The vision of such a hierarchy inevitably sweeps on to envisage the meaning of the universe as a whole. Thus natural knowing expands continuously into knowledge of the supernatural.

The very act of scientific discovery offers a paradigm of this transition. I have described it as a passionate pursuit of a hidden meaning, guided by intensely personal intimations of this yet unexposed reality. The intrinsic hazards of such efforts are of its essence; discovery is defined as an advancement of knowledge that cannot be achieved by any, however diligent, application of explicit modes of inference. Yet the discoverer must labor night and day. For though no labor can make a discovery, no discovery can be made without intense, absorbing, devoted labor. Here we have a paradigm of the Pauline scheme of faith, works and grace. The discoverer works in the belief that his labors will prepare his mind for receiving a truth from sources over which he has no control. I regard the Pauline scheme therefore as the only adequate conception of scientific discovery.

Such is, in bold outline, my program for reconsidering the conception of knowledge and restoring thereby the harmony between faith and reason. Few of the clues which are guiding me today were available to the Scholastics. The modes of reasoning which they relied on were inadequate; their knowledge of nature was tenuous and often spurious. Moreover, the faith they wanted to prove rational was cast into excessively rigid and detailed formulas, presenting intractable and sometimes even absurd problems to the reasoning mind.

Even so, though their enterprise collapsed, it left great monuments behind it, and I believe that we are today in an infinitely better position to renew their basic endeavor. The present need for it could not be more pressing