

Anna Jani – Balázs M. Mezei (Hg.)  
*FIDES ET RATIO* IM KONTEXT: THEOLOGISCHE UND  
PHILOSOPHISCHE ANNÄHERUNGEN



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## Vorwort

Der vorliegende Band lässt die geistige und spirituelle Atmosphäre der im Jahr 2018 gehaltenen internationalen Konferenz in Budapest weiterleben und sich fortpflanzen. Für die zwischen dem 24. und 26. September 2018 an der Pázmány Péter Katholischen Universität organisierte Konferenz gab die vor zwanzig Jahre herausgegebene Enzyklika *Fides et ratio* von dem heiligen Papst Johannes Paul II. und die Heiligsprechung von Edith Stein, Teresia Benedicta vom Kreuz, Anlass. In der Heiligsprechung am 11. Oktober 1998 beschrieb Papst Johannes Paul II. die Gemeinsamkeit der Liebe Christi und der Freiheit des Menschen als das innere Ineinandergreifen von Liebe und Wahrheit im Leben Edith Steins: „Die neue Heilige sei für uns ein Beispiel für unseren Einsatz im Dienst an der Freiheit und für unsere Suche nach Wahrheit“ – womit er im Leben Edith Steins auf die Autonomie der Wissenschaft und die Einheit der Wahrheit hinweist.

Die im September 1998 veröffentlichte *Fides et ratio* basiert thematisch auf der Enzyklika *Aeterni patris*, herausgegeben von Papst Leo XIII. im Jahr 1879, die sich das Ziel setzte, „die Erneuerung der christlichen Philosophie“ im Geist Thomas von Aquins zu verwirklichen, wodurch sie in einem dem neuscholastischen Denken starke Impulse gegeben hat. Der heilige Papst Johannes Paul II. hebt im §74 der Enzyklika *Fides et ratio* die fruchtbare Beziehung zwischen Philosophie und Theologie in dem modernen philosophischen Denken hervor, die sich beispielweise „in der mutigen Forschung“ von John Henry Newman, Antonio Rosmini, Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson, Edith Stein, und in dieser Reihe muss auch der Name Erich Przywara erwähnt werden, niederschlägt. Unter den Schlagwörtern *fides et ratio*, Glaube und Vernunft, begriff der heilige Papst die Grundaufgabe der Christlichen Philosophie, die Autonomie der Vernunft in den Dienst des Glaubens zu stellen, und den Glauben dazu zu drängen, für die Vernunft „über die Hoffnung, die euch erfüllt“<sup>1</sup> Antwort zu geben.

Die oben benannten Philosophen trugen alle zur Entwicklung der Christlichen Philosophie bei, doch muss man auch neben den neuscholastischen Einflüssen auf eine weitere Strömung aufmerksam machen, die innerhalb der modernen Philosophie des 20. Jahrhunderts aus der Philosophie selbst entquoll,

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<sup>1</sup> Vgl. 1 Pt 3,13

und von dem eigenen System den Anspruch der Phänomenologie der Religion begriffen hat. „Evangelische werden katholisch, Katholische werden evangelisch“ – schreibt Edmund Husserl im Jahr 1919 in einem Brief an Rodolf Otto, dessen Buch *Das Heilige* er selbst hochgeschätzt hat. Edith Stein reflektierte in ihrer Autobiographie auch auf die Impulse, die sie in der phänomenologischen Gesellschaft zu dem Glauben geführt haben: „...sie erschloss mir eine Reihe von ‚Phänomenen‘, an denen ich nun nicht mehr blind vorbeigehen konnte.“<sup>2</sup> Zwischen Edith Steins philosophischen Maßnahmen und dem päpstlichen Rundbrief liegen mehrere gedankliche Zusammenhänge vor, die nicht nur am Rand der neuscholastischen Strömungen beschrieben werden können, sondern vielmehr durch die Philosophie gestellte Fragen im Licht der Glaubenserkenntnisse vernünftig gemacht werden.

Dieser von innerhalb des philosophischen Denkens herausdringende Anspruch für die Antwort auf religiöse Fragen inspirierte das Konzept der Budapester Konferenz, die zum einen auf diejenige religiösen Fragen die Antwort suchte, die philosophisch thematisiert werden, und von der Theologie ihre Antwort erhalten können. Zum anderen hat die Konferenz sich das Ziel gesetzt, das Problemfeld von der Theologie her zu belichten, und dieses mit der Zuhilfenahme der Philosophie nach ihrer Art und Weise zu beantworten. In diesem Sinn hat die Konferenz in Budapest ihren Titel bekommen, *Fides et ratio. Phenomenology and the Philosophy of Religion*, die zum einen durch die unterschiedlichen Annäherungen an die Enzyklika, die Möglichkeiten der religiösen Philosophie erwägt, zum anderen auf den Gegenpol der päpstlichen Enzyklika reflektiert, und dem Problemfeld der religiösen Philosophie in einem weiteren Sinn Raum gibt. Es wurde eine Koinzidenz des Problemfeldes von Glauben und Vernunft in der modernen Theologie und Philosophie entdeckt, die in die Thematik der Enzyklika *Fides et ratio* sowie in das Konzept Edith Steins eingefügt werden kann. Doch hat die Konferenz das Problemfeld Glaube und Vernunft nicht nur in den direkten Reflexionen auf die päpstlichen Enzykliken diskutiert, sondern als das Grundproblem des gemeinsamen Denkens von Theologie und Philosophie. Damit eröffnete sich der Interpretationshorizont für die ethischen, anthropologischen, und politischen Annäherungen, die als Grenzwissenschaften zu dem theologischen und philosophischen Denken ebenso dazugehören.

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<sup>2</sup> Vgl. EDITH STEIN, *Aus dem Leben einer jüdischen Familie*, MARIA AMATA NEYER (Hrsg. v.), ESGA 1, Freiburg i. Br. 2010, 211.

Aufgrund der Konferenzthematik wurde der gegenwärtige Band in vier Kapitel geteilt: „Zur Aktualität der Enzyklika *Fides et ratio*“ haben wir diejenigen Beiträge gesammelt, die mit der Enzyklika entweder philosophisch oder theologisch in eine direkte Diskussion treten. Das zweite Kapitel, „Im Gespräch mit der Moderne: Kirchenrecht und politisches Denken“, sammeln sich die mit der Enzyklika in einem weiteren Sinn in Dialog tretende und die im politischen und kirchlichen Kontext interpretierende Beiträge. Unter „Annäherungen: Theologie und Kontinentalphilosophie“ sind die nach der Kontinentalphilosophie und Phänomenologie, sowie der Theologie gestellten Fragen in der Richtung von Glauben und Vernunft erarbeitet. Das letzte Kapitel des Bandes lässt mit dem Titel „Die Kontribution Edith Steins: Glaube und Vernunft“ Edith Steins spezielle Annäherung zum Thema thematisieren, die organisch sehr eng zu den bisherigen Kapiteln hinzugefügt werden kann, doch mit seinen Vorschlägen den ganzen Band abschließt. In diesem Sinn eröffnet sich der Band mit dem speziellen Fokus auf die päpstliche Enzyklika und deren Einfluss auf das theologische Denken des 20. Jahrhunderts, das in den weiteren Kapiteln in unterschiedlichen geistigen Dimensionen interpretiert wird, bis hin zu dem direkten Vorschlag Edith Steins, der den Sinn und die Möglichkeit der Christlichen Philosophie in ihrer Synthesis findet.

Hiermit möchten wir allen unseren Konferenzteilnehmern und Autoren für ihre Mitwirkung und wichtigen Anweisungen während der Editionsarbeit danken. Darunter möchten wir unseren aufrichtigen Dank dem Pro-Rektor der Pázmány Péter Katholischen Universität, Prof. Dr. Szabolcs Anzelm Szurómi O.Praem., für seine Mitwirkung und großzügige Unterstützung aussprechen. Unser herzlicher Dank gilt Herrn Professor Hans Reiner Sepp für seine freundlichen Unterstützung für die Veröffentlichung des Manuskriptes bei dem Traugott Bautz Verlag in Nordhausen.

Anna Jani / Balázs M. Mezei

ZUR AKTUALITÄT DER ENZYKLIKA *FIDES ET RATIO*

# The Encyclical *Fides et ratio* and the Notion of Revelation on the basis of the “sensus populi”

*Balázs M. Mezei (Budapest)*

## *Abstract*

In what follows I survey the main philosophical features of the papal encyclical letter *Fides et ratio* of 1998. I argue that this rich and complex text possesses a number of valuable insight into the problem of the relationship between faith and reason. There are interesting lacunas in the text, such as the unified concept of philosophy, the availability of which the text tacitly presupposes. The perspective of the encyclical is theological; it is the dogmatic theological understanding of philosophy, which is the dominant voice in the text. Yet its encouragement for philosophers to develop a radical kind of thinking is valuable. So is its assessment of various philosophical movements, some of which is clearly criticized in the text. What I especially value in the encyclical is the following: while it does not define the notion of philosophy, it connects philosophy to divine revelation in a number of ways. Through these connections it becomes clear that philosophy has a task far more important than what the text details. It is namely the task of conceiving, understanding and expounding the notion of revelation in a philosophical way. The radicality of philosophy can be expressed in a radical rethinking of the notion of revelation, a rethinking which does not enter the properly theological aspects of revelation but scrutinizes revelation only from the philosophical point of view. The source of this rethinking is a renewed notion of “sensus populi” known from the sources of liberation theology.

## 1. *The Legacy of the Encyclical Fides et ratio*

The encyclical letter *Fides et ratio* belongs to the most important texts offered by Saint John Paul II during his papacy between 1978 and 2005. Beside his other publications, *Fides et ratio* presents a new approach to the relationship between faith and reason, an approach carefully developed and expounded in the details of the encyclical. There is only one more philosophical text issued by the Church which is comparable to *Fides et ratio* in scope and detail, namely *Aeterni Patris* of 1879, which proposes a similarly deep analysis of the form and contents, tasks and responsibilities of philosophy. There are, nevertheless, important differences between the two works. *Aeterni Patris* lays the

foundation of the Thomistic-Scholastic revival; *Fides et ratio* does not offer one definite kind of philosophy as *the* philosophy of the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas is acclaimed thoroughly in *Fides et ratio*, but so are other kinds of thought. *Aeterni Patris* hopes to overcome the “naturalism”, “subjectivism”, “historicism”, and also the generally anti-metaphysical character of the philosophies of the second half of the nineteenth century by advancing the analogical thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. *Fides et ratio*, however, delineates a more diverse form of philosophy and theology, a form containing the results of the philosophical and theological awakening of the twentieth century with their emphases on the Patristic traditions, human personality, and ontological commitments. Moreover, the publication of *Aeterni Patris* was followed by the concerted effort to establish philosophical institutions, schools, and periodicals in every country of the Catholic world. The publication of *Fides et ratio*, however, was not combined with such institutional efforts: it has remained a philosophical-theological tractate discussing many of the central themes of the holy pope and offering solutions of a purely theoretical nature. The lack of a centrally organized institutional framework for *Fides et ratio* may explain why the encyclical has not exerted such an influence in our world as *Aeterni Patris* did in then contemporary intellectual life.

However, even in a less perspicuous manner, *Fides et ratio* also influenced philosophers and theologians after its publication. First, I mention the impact of the ethical, philosophical and theological work of John Paul II himself. His books, encyclicals and various other writings contain a good number of ideas presented also in *Fides et ratio*. These writings have been well received among philosophers and theologians working in many institutions all over the world. Second, the number of conferences organized on *Fides et ratio* are above one hundred to my present knowledge; this number also shows the stimulating power of the text. Third, there are institutions – centers, book-series, research projects – focused on the insights and teachings of John Paul II; one of the is the Fides et Ration Research Group at my home university. Finally, let me refer to my piece *Faith and Reason* published in the *Oxford Handbook of Catholic Theology*.<sup>1</sup> This piece discusses the theoretical developments of the encyclical letter, developments arranged as the well-formed theoretical

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<sup>1</sup> BALÁZS M. MEZEI, *Faith and Reason*, LEWIS AYRES, MEDI ANN VOLPE (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Catholic Theology*. Online Publication Apr 2016 DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199566273.013.59; print publication 2018.

framework of the notion of “radical revelation.”<sup>2</sup> The legacy of *Fides et ratio*, thus, is variously considered but not yet fully utilized in the scholarly community today. By having developed a philosophy of revelation I have tried to contribute to a theoretically deeper reception of the text’s most important insights.

The central notion of my contribution is the elaboration of the notion of divine revelation from the philosophical point of view. I have developed the philosophy of divine revelation first in the framework of overall reflections on the theoretical situation “after Auschwitz”, a situation significantly open to an overall reinterpretation of our heritage in philosophy and theology.<sup>3</sup> I have further developed this paradigm into the notion of “radical revelation” as the result of the reinterpretation required in our time and realized in the form of a “nonstandard radical philosophical theology.”<sup>4</sup> In the present text, nevertheless, I further elaborate this approach in such a way that it leads to a better understanding of radical revelation, namely an understanding acquired especially from the “sensus populi” of human beings interested in an overall perception of the ultimate meaning of revelation.

This approach is connected to what is called “implicit philosophy” in the encyclical *Fides et ratio*. The “sensus populi” of philosophers embodies the implicit philosophy referred to in the encyclical letter, a philosophy forming the massive consensus throughout the ages of Western and non-Western thought, namely, the consensus of the primacy of reality and truth and our capacity of conceiving reality and truth in such a way that our understanding itself contributes to reality and truth in an important way. It is a central dimension of this consensus that reality and truth is ultimately non-material but rather spiritual, or even personal in some sense. In this way, this consensus points out that there is the very possibility of thinking through the ultimate presuppositions of our existence in the world, the spiritual reality of these presuppositions, and our contribution to this reality by conceiving and understanding the reality and truth in our theoretical and personal, scholarly and practical life.

In my work on the notion of radical revelation I focus on the typological-phenomenological structures of reality and truth in their ultimate disclosure. In this paper, with respect to the notion of implicit philosophy, further

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<sup>2</sup> BALÁZS MEZEL, *Radical Revelation: A Philosophical Approach*. London 2017.

<sup>3</sup> BALÁZS MEZEL, *Religion and Revelation after Auschwitz*. New York, London 2013.

<sup>4</sup> MEZEL, *Radical Revelation*, 51-58.

developed by the notion of “sensus populi” of liberation theology, I want to emphasize the life-world aspect of such a phenomenological typology. In my earlier work I talk of the “nonstandard radical philosophical theology”; here I emphasize the “courage to think”, the “audacity to forge new paths” and the explanation of the implicit philosophy mentioned in the encyclical letter *Fides et ratio*. Thus I offer a connection between the notion of radical revelation as the object of philosophical exploration on the one hand, and also the philosophical-theological background of Pope Francis on the other hand.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. *Philosophical Implications*

In what follows I want to focus on the specifically philosophical points of the encyclical *Fides et ratio* and clarify what the author means by “philosophy” in this text.

The encyclical offers an emphatically *theological* interpretation of philosophy. Yet it makes clear that philosophy’s autonomy is in no way endangered by such a theological approach. The autonomy of philosophy is safeguarded by the dualistic methodology the encyclical applies, that is, by emphasizing the autonomy of philosophy from a higher point of view by means of a subsidiary structure. This point is embodied in faith both as *fides qua* and *fides quae*. *Fides quae* or *auditus fidei* is related to revelation; *fides qua* or *intellectus fidei* is the rational exposition of the contents of faith. *Fides quae* is the presupposition of *fides qua* and the latter is subsumed under the former in the ontological as well as epistemological senses. It is precisely this subsuming that warrants autonomy in the proper sense of the word; an autonomy beyond any context loses the necessary presupposition on the basis of which meaningful autonomy is possible.

Faith stands above reason, theology stands above philosophy; philosophy’s proper nature can be grasped precisely by the presupposition of the existence and validity of this higher realm. If there is no higher realm, the unity of philosophy falls apart and what we then have is only a plurality of various philosophical standpoints, but not an understanding of philosophy as such. The higher realm and philosophy itself, nevertheless, form an amorphous unity: they belong together in a disproportionate unity. Philosophy is grasped in its belonging to this higher unity, the higher unity (traditionally theology) is conceived in its relationship to philosophy, yet their unity is never fully

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<sup>5</sup> RAFAEL LUCIANI, *Pope Francis and the Theology of the People*. Maryknoll 2017, 1-36.



conceived; it remains open and its structures are disproportionate. As Pascal wrote, “There is not so great a disproportion between our justice and God’s justice as there is between unity and infinity.” Unity and infinity are proportionally related to one another; they form an amorphous unity the conceiving of which is real but, at the same time, never fully realized.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, it is one of the recurring themes of the encyclical that faith and reason belong organically together. This unity can be grasped as a “circle” (§ 73) in which theology begins with the *auditus fidei*, then it goes over to the *intellectus fidei*, in which philosophy is already presupposed. The circle thus arrives at reason’s explicit philosophy, which is grounded in the “implicit philosophy”, the natural yearning of every human being after truth. Finally, the explicit philosophy becomes “Christian philosophy”, the philosophy focusing on the contents and the whole of divine revelation. Implicit philosophy is real but never fully realized; it is real as “Christian philosophy” but never fully actualized, because Christian philosophy is open to divine infinity.

The circular character of the relation between faith and reason is an expression of the unity of truth. Whether natural, logical, mathematical or scientific, philosophical or theological, truth is truth precisely by its uniquely general status: what is true is true for everybody, everywhere and at any time. The unity of truth is the warrant of the unity of the circle of faith and reason, a circle always in movement never to be halted. It belongs to the spontaneous development of faith to spill over into reason, of theology to go over to philosophy, and *vice versa*: Philosophy necessarily leads to the higher realm in which it is embedded. This organic unity between faith and reason will help us understand better the tacit role of philosophy as proposed by the encyclical letter.

One of the most beautiful parts of the encyclical is the one on the interpretation of the Biblical notion of wisdom. By this reference the holy author points out that there is a strictly Biblical philosophy present in the Bible, a philosophy which appears to be natural in many ways yet its ultimate source is divine wisdom. Similarly, an appropriate analysis of the New Testament shows that its authors knew about Greek philosophy. They even name two schools, Epicureanism and Stoicism as opposite kinds of understanding dialectically connected to one another and showing thereby the higher unity of the doctrine of “the unknown God” as pointed out by St. Paul in his speech on the Rock

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. BLAISE PASCAL, *Pensées and Other Writings*. HONOR LEVI (transl.), ANTHONY LEVI (ed.) with an introduction and notes by, Oxford 2008; MEZEI, *Radical Revelation*, 270.

of Ares.<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, Plato is not mentioned by name in this brief but skillfully composed text, while the buildup of the New Testament is in many ways Platonic.<sup>8</sup>

Without going into more detail of the historical overview of philosophy in the encyclical, let me point out that this analysis of philosophy's history is both accurate and enlightening: accurate because of its details, and enlightening because of its recurring critical notes concerning the role, form and content of philosophy. The tenor of this criticism is that "no historical form of philosophy can legitimately claim to embrace the totality of truth, nor to be the complete explanation of the human being, of the world and of the human being's relationship with God."<sup>9</sup>

Philosophy is also limited by some particular orientation. There are forms of erroneous philosophy. The list is long; it contains "rationalism", "nihilism", "fideism", radical "traditionalism", "ontologism", "evolutionism", "existentialism" and "historicism", "eclecticism", "scientism", "pragmatism", and finally relativistic "postmodernity". "Marxism" is explicitly rejected. As opposed to these false conceptions, philosophy's fundamental vocation is "to recognize the human being's ceaselessly self-transcendent orientation towards the truth."<sup>10</sup> This "implicit philosophy" belongs to all human beings by nature. And the main objective of the encyclical is precisely to enhance the exposition of this implicit philosophy. The author of the text "cannot but encourage philosophers – be they Christian or not – to trust in the power of human reason and not to set themselves goals that are *too modest* in their philosophizing. [...] it is necessary not to abandon the passion for ultimate truth, the eagerness to search for it or the audacity to forge new paths in the search."<sup>11</sup>

This kind of audacious philosophy receives the title of "Christian Philosophy" in the text. It is telling that the holy author applies this expression after the decade-long debate in French philosophy on the appropriateness of the

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<sup>7</sup> Cf. Acts, 17:23; JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, § 36.

<sup>8</sup> MICHAEL J VLACH, *Platonism's Influence On Christian Eschatology*, n.d., see at [http://theologicalstudies.org/files/resources/Platonism\\_and\\_Eschatology\\_article\\_\(PDF\).pdf](http://theologicalstudies.org/files/resources/Platonism_and_Eschatology_article_(PDF).pdf) (accessed February 22, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, § 51.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, § 23.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, §56.

adjective “Christian” in this expression.<sup>12</sup> John Paul II explains that it is appropriate using the expression, because “it in no way intends to suggest that there is an official philosophy of the Church, since the faith as such is not a philosophy. The term seeks rather to indicate a Christian way of philosophizing, a philosophical speculation conceived in dynamic union with faith. It does not therefore refer simply to a philosophy developed by Christian philosophers who have striven in their research not to contradict the faith. The term Christian philosophy includes those important developments of philosophical thinking which would not have happened without the direct or indirect contribution of Christian faith.”<sup>13</sup>

The text emphasizes a number of crucial field for philosophy: culture, political thought, ethics, philosophy of language, logic, or philosophy of history. Yet it does not offer a systematic exposition of “implicit philosophy” beyond a list of its important subject matters: the notion of a free and personal God who is the Creator of the world; being as such; the problem of evil; the notion of the human person as a spiritual being; history as event.<sup>14</sup> As we shall see below, this lacuna in the development of the notion of “implicit philosophy” gives us the chance to enlarge our notion of philosophy and connect it to the nonstandard philosophical theology of *Radical Revelation*.

Before I begin an assessment of the reasons why this important encyclical has not been more influential during the past decades, let me offer a brief overview of the contemporary landscape of philosophy.

### 3. *After Fides et ratio*

The philosophical scene has greatly changed since the publication of *Fides et ratio*. Above all, the scientific criticism of philosophy has become more articulate as can be seen in such authors as the late Stephen Hawking. As he wrote some years ago, “[...] philosophy is dead. Philosophy has not kept up with

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. GREGORY B. SADLER, *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation: The 1930s Christian Philosophy Debates In France*, Washington, D.C., 2011. See also: Balázs M. Mezei and Matthew Z. Vale (eds), *Philosophies of Christianity: At the Crossroads of Contemporary Problems*, Berlin 2019.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, § 76.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

modern developments in science, particularly physics. Scientists have become the bearers of the torch of discovery in our quest for knowledge.”<sup>15</sup>

This proposition is clearly self-contradictory. If “philosophy is dead” as a proposition is pronounced, it expresses at least the following: a) there is truth concerning philosophy; b) this truth is properly called a philosophical truth; c) thus to deny that philosophy is “dead” is a philosophical proposition, which expresses some kind of philosophical vividness (i.e. philosophy is “alive”). And finally d) a philosophy that is based on a proposition denied by itself is simply bad philosophy. In other words, the proposition by Hawking is philosophical, it confirms what it denies, and thus it is bad philosophy. We may continue to flesh out further implications contained in that proposition, such as the fact that this proposition is not a scientific one and so it cannot be considered as a scientific criticism of philosophy.

However, let me use the expression “philosophy is dead” as indicative of a basic pattern shared by a number of philosophers today. We can find other patterns as well: beyond the “philosophy is dead” group (1), there are those who want to show that philosophy is alive as an interpretation of science; philosophy is a handmaid of science (2). There are also those who attribute to philosophy a theoretical role with respect to the sciences; this is not the handmaid role but rather a theoretical role beyond science (3). There are others who believe that philosophy is simply the so-called history of philosophy; here we are given well-written monographs on “famous philosophers” (4). Also, there are philosophers who claim that philosophy has its own field and method but they differ as to what this field and method are (5). Finally, some claim that philosophy is strong and alive and is very different from the

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<sup>15</sup> STEPHEN HAWKING, *The Grand Design*. Co-authored by LEONARD MLODINOV, New York 2010.

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previous notions, because it is a kind of ultimate metaphysics or even more than metaphysics, a sort of ultimate theological philosophy (6).

It must be noted that the last group – philosophers of an ultimately autonomous philosophy – is a minority even among those who believe that philosophy is still alive and has its own terrain. The emphasis of *Fides et ratio*, nevertheless, is on the sixth understanding: Philosophy in its essence is a kind of “metaphysics” or at least an autonomous and ultimate intellectual endeavor. It is understandable, therefore, that *Fides et ratio* could not reach a wide-



spread repercussion among the representatives of the other groups who form the majority in contemporary academia. Yet *Fides et ratio* confesses philosophy to be very much alive; it offers a strong criticism of various positions, most importantly scientism; and it also emphasizes the metaphysical-theological significance of philosophy.

I have no space here to offer a thoroughgoing analysis of these notions of philosophy. My understanding is that philosophy must be conceived in terms

of the sixth dimension, while the other possibilities are also open to it as sub-fields of autonomous thinking. At the same time, I wish to emphasize that philosophy in its entire scope can be properly assessed only by the sixth type. This is the type which is addressed as “implicit philosophy” in the encyclical and this is the type I relate to the philosophical “*sensus populi*” of past, present, and future philosophers. Without the reality of this type we do not have an access to philosophy in its various meanings. If we deny this philosophy, philosophy as an ultimately autonomous terrain, we a) commit a contradiction, because we cannot deny that which is presupposed by the denial itself; and b) we enter another contradiction, because we want to offer a judgment of philosophy in its entirety yet without the point of view from which philosophy in its entirety can be pictured. My conclusion is that we willy-nilly acknowledge the reality of autonomous philosophical thinking beyond the other types and thus we also acknowledge tacitly the requirement to develop the concrete form of this autonomous thinking. If one fails to answer to this requirement, one fails to do philosophy in its proper sense.

#### 4. *Some Problems in the Encyclical*

I begin with the problem of the lack of the understanding of the historical dimension in the text. By historicity I do not mean the “precious and seminal insights” concerning “time and history” which the encyclical points out.<sup>16</sup> Rather, I mean the fact that the meaning of fundamental notions changes throughout history. “Person”, “faith”, “reason”, or even the word “history” itself have gone through important semantic changes the modelling of which would be important in the text. As I have shown elsewhere, there are historical models of “faith”, “reason”, and even “revelation”, which make clear the trajectory through which the meaning of these and similar expressions have developed.<sup>17</sup> To begin with, in Greek and Latin, later also in German, there are two different expressions for “reason”, i.e. *nous-dianoia*, *intellectus-ratio*, and *Vernunft-Verstand*. In the framework of “faith and reason” it appears to be mistaken not to see their different meanings and also the meanings which have determined modern and contemporary epistemology.

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, § 48.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. BALÁZS M. MEZEI, FRANCESCA MURPHY, KENNETH OAKES: *Illuminating Faith. An Invitation to Theology*. New York 2015; MEZEI, *Religion and Revelation after Auschwitz*; MEZEI, *Radical Revelation*.