**ARISTOTLE’S THEORY OF THE GOLDEN MEAN: TOWARDS A HARMONIOUS DIALOGUE BETWEEN FAITH AND REASON IN KAROL WOJTYLA’S *FIDES ET RATIO***

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**Abstract**

Human beings by nature are rational beings. They are endowed with the gift of intellect in order to known, discern, and examine their self, reality, and God. The proper end of man’s intellectual endeavor is the Truth. However, attaining the truth is not an immediate and simple endeavor. The history of man reveals how various thinkers have debated and argued concerning the truth. Especially during the medieval and enlightenment period where the critical clash between faith and reason took place. The medieval period thinkers emphasized the authority of faith in understanding the truth who is God. on the other hand, the enlightenment thinkers abandoned the eligibility of faith and solely relied on the capacity of reason. hence, the problem is: Which among these two modes of learning – faith and reason - will enable man to elevate himself towards the truth? This controversy was being addressed by Pope John Paul II on his encyclical letter Fides et Ratio. In the letter, he emphasized the mutual relationship between faith and reason. These two are distinct yet complementary factors in journeying towards the truth. This relationship is also understood under the context of Aristotle’s theory of the golden mean. This theory suggests that man should strike the mean and avoid the two vices: excess and defect. By moderation, man will become virtuous. Applying to the dialogue between faith and reason, man should avoid exceeding in giving authority to either of the two. Excess in faith would result to fideism and excess in reason would result to rationalism. Hence, man should observe moderation in order to have a harmonious dialogue between faith and reason. In this paper, the researcher will expose the relevance of Aristotle’s theory of moderation towards harmonizing the dialogue between faith and reason as seen in the *Fides et Ratio* of Karol Wojtyla. First, the researcher will discuss Aristotle’s theory of the Golden Mean; second, the researcher will expose the relationship between faith and reason in Pope John Paul II’s fides et ratio; and third will be the application of Aristotelian Moderation in the context of the dialogical encounter between faith and reason.

**Key Words:** *Golden Mean, Dialogue, Fideism, Fides et Ratio, Rationalism, Truth*

**Introduction**

All human beings are in continuous effort to know the truth. As to what the famous philosopher said, in the name of Aristotle, all men by nature desire to know. The proper object of this endeavor is the “Truth”. However, there have been many problems and conflicts emerging in man’s journey towards the truth. The two forms of learning, faith and reason, had a conflict with each other; there is that drama of separation.[[1]](#footnote-1) This conflict is very much evident in the history of philosophy. During the medieval period, faith was primarily emphasized by the thinkers. Their speculation was described as “Theocentric”. The three great religious systems of the Western world – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – have employed philosophy as the handmaid of theology. The degree of servitude has varied with time and differences in these religious traditions, but there is no doubt in the principle that philosophical investigations were confined within the set of more or less theological commitments.[[2]](#footnote-2) However, by the rise of the enlightenment period, there happened a legitimate distinction between faith and reason. As a result of the exaggerated rationalism of certain thinkers, positions grew more radical and there emerged eventually a philosophy which was separate from the absolutely independent contents of faith.[[3]](#footnote-3) Hence, reason was being emphasized during that period. The Enlightenment – the great age of reason – is defined as the period of rigorous scientific, political, and philosophical discourses.[[4]](#footnote-4) With all these controversies and problems, how would man’s journey towards the Truth be successful? Should these two forms of learning be separated or are they complementary to achieve the proper end of man’s speculation? Pope John Paul II addressed this issue with his encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* or Faith and Reason. he emphasized that faith and reason have an intimate relationship in journeying towards the truth. Faith should accept the authority of reason and reason should accept the authority of faith. Accordingly, “Faith asks that its object be understood with the help of reason; and at the summit of its searching reason acknowledges that it cannot do without what faith presents.”[[5]](#footnote-5) This kind of conception may be applied to Aristotle’s theory of the Golden Mean. This theory suggests that man should strike the mean and avoid the two vices: excess and defect. Applying Aristotle’s theory, man should not exceed in giving authority to reason while defect in giving authority to faith. Or man should not exceed in giving authority to faith while defect in giving importance to reason. If man overemphasizes either of the two, there would be a problem. Overemphasis on faith would result to fideism while overemphasis on reason would result to rationalism. There is then a need to observe moderation in the dialogical encounter between faith and reason in order to manifest harmony. In that way, man will eventually lead himself towards the fullness of truth.

The major problem of this paper is: How is Aristotle’s theory of the golden mean relevant to the harmonious dialogue between faith and reason in Karol Wojtyla’s Fides et Ratio? To answer the major problem, this paper proposes minor problems. First, what is the golden mean? second, what is the relationship between faith and reason in Karol Wojtyla’s Fides et Ratio? and third, how is the theory of moderation conducive to a harmonious dialogue between faith and reason? This paper is basically a textual analysis. It is recommended that further study should be conducted for this does not fully exhaust the entire philosophy of Aristotle and Fides et Ratio of Pope John Paul II.

**Aristotle’s Theory of the Golden Mean: Towards A Harmonious Dialogue Between Faith And Reason in Karol Wojtyla’s *Fides Et Ratio***

The first part of this paper will expose the theory of the golden mean proposed by Aristotle. Afterwards, the researcher will discuss the relationship of faith and reason in the lens of Karol Wojtyla’s *Fides et Ratio.* Then, the last part will be the application of Aristotle’s theory of moderation in the context of Karol Wojtyla’s *Fides et Ratio*.

1. **Aristotle’s Theory of the Golden Mean**

Aristotle first made a remark that virtue or excellence brings into good condition of the thing and makes the work of that thing to be done well.[[6]](#footnote-6) Hence, the virtue of man also will be “the state of character which makes a man good, and which makes him do his own work well.”[[7]](#footnote-7) But how would this happen? Aristotle simply made an analogy of an art. Accordingly, if the way in which every art or science performs its function well by looking at the mean and apply that as a standard to its production,[[8]](#footnote-8) then virtue, which is much more accurate and better than any form of art, has the quality of hitting the mean.[[9]](#footnote-9) Virtue, then, is all about hitting the mean or the intermediate. Accordingly, “it is nature of things to be destroyed by defect and excess while the intermediate produces and preserves the good.”[[10]](#footnote-10) Hence, anything that is excess or defect gives badness to a thing. This is also the case of vices and virtues: the excess and defect are vices and the mean is virtue.[[11]](#footnote-11) That is why, Aristotle asserted that an agent should strike the mean for it is the “mark of virtue.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Since excess and defect is a form of failure while the intermediate is praised and is a form of success, hence, this is the virtuous state for being successful and praised are both characteristics of virtue.[[13]](#footnote-13) Virtue, then, is a kind of mean since it aims at what is intermediate. It is through virtue that man will be able to achieve his ultimate end which is Eudaimonia or Happiness.[[14]](#footnote-14) However, it should be noted that this mean is not an objective mean but a relative one. Aristotle said that “the intermediate is not in the object but relatively to us.”[[15]](#footnote-15) The mean of one person is not the same with the mean of the other person. By saying that the mean is relative to man, Aristotle wanted to emphasize that the mean depends upon the situation, context, and circumstances of an agent.[[16]](#footnote-16) Hence, Aristotle defines virtue as “a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, that is, the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it.[[17]](#footnote-17) It is then a relative mean between two vices: excess and defect. It is a mean state in which the vices either fall short of or exceed what is right in terms of feelings and actions (for virtue is concerned with feelings and actions) and virtue ascertains and adopts the mean.[[18]](#footnote-18) However, Aristotle stressed that in everything, it is not easy task to find the middle just like finding the middle of a circle.[[19]](#footnote-19) It is easy to be angry or to give and spend money, but to do this in a right way, to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, with right motive, and the right way, is not easy.[[20]](#footnote-20) That is why, man should be careful and prudent in order to observe virtue in facing various circumstances and situations. Man should be aided by practical wisdom. Aristotle defines practical wisdom as “a reasoned and true state of capacity to act with regard to human goods.[[21]](#footnote-21) Furthermore, he asserted that practical wisdom is not only concerned with universals, but also with particulars for practical and practice is concerned with particulars.[[22]](#footnote-22) A man of practical wisdom is able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself conducive to a good life.[[23]](#footnote-23) Hence, practical wisdom aids the agent to deliberate well in doing an act considering the differing circumstances in order to achieve the good. A man with practical wisdom has the capacity to assess a given situation and to find what is best and most effective way of acting.[[24]](#footnote-24) After discussing Aristotle’s theory of the Golden Mean, the researcher proceeds to the discussion of Karol Wojtyla’s *Fides et Ratio.*

1. **The Relationship of Faith and Reason in Karol Wojtyla’s *Fides Et Ratio***

Pope John Paul II begins his encyclical letter by recognizing man’s unending pursuit towards the truth. He acknowledges that it is the very nature of the human being to question because the human heart desires knowledge and yearns for an answer to these questions.[[25]](#footnote-25) Accordingly, “in both East and West, we may trace a journey which has led humanity down the centuries to meet and engage truth more and more deeply. It is a journey which has unfolded—as it must—within the horizon of personal self-consciousness: the more human beings know reality and the world, the more they know themselves in their uniqueness, with the question of the meaning of things and of their very existence becoming ever more pressing.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Hence, the pursuit of knowing the world and reality will also enable man to know themselves better. Furthermore, the encyclical indicated the fundamental questions which continuously pervade human life: Who am I? Where have I come from and where I am going? Why there is evil? What is there after this life?[[27]](#footnote-27) These questions can be traced in the different streams of cultures, religions, and philosophies. These can be found in the writings of Confucius and Lao-Tze, and in the preaching of Tirthankara and Buddha; they appear in the poetry of Homer and in the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles, as they do in the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle.[[28]](#footnote-28) With all of these, the encyclical’s introduction basically emphasizes the human being’s desire to know the truth.

The church is also on Her perpetual journey towards knowing the truth. She is not exempted to this kind of endeavor. Accordingly, it is her duty to serve the humanity in different ways and one of her peculiar ways of serving them is to be the *diakonia of truth.[[29]](#footnote-29)* This mission makes the faithful a partner in humanity’s struggle to arrive at the truth.[[30]](#footnote-30) Being a faithful does not mean that you will simply believe to the Divine, but also it is your task to know Him. Faithful are also in pursuit in knowing the truth of their faith, that is, knowing God. As the source of love, God desires himself to be known and the knowledge which the human beings have of God perfects all that the human mind can know of the meaning of life.[[31]](#footnote-31) In journeying towards the truth, the Church fundamentally relies on two sources: Faith and Reason. Faith is manifested in Revelation and reason is manifested in philosophy. Accordingly, the gift of faith, as an obedient response to God, aids in the comprehension and credibility of Revelation.[[32]](#footnote-32) In faith, the intellect and the will transcend toward God, in the fulfillment of personal freedom, to live in the truth.[[33]](#footnote-33) However, the Church does not solely rely on the authority of faith. She also acknowledges the importance of philosophy in journeying towards the truth. Through Philosophy, man is able to ask questions regarding the meaning and purpose of human existence. Philosophy shows in different modes and forms that the desire for truth is part of human nature itself.[[34]](#footnote-34) It is through philosophy that man will be able to dive the deep waters of knowledge concerning the meaning and purpose of human existence. With that, the Church acknowledges its importance in moving towards the fullness of truth. Accordingly, “the Church cannot but set great value upon reason's drive to attain goals which render people's lives ever more worthy. She sees in philosophy the way to come to know fundamental truths about human life. At the same time, the Church considers philosophy an indispensable help for a deeper understanding of faith and for communicating the truth of the Gospel to those who do not yet know it.”[[35]](#footnote-35) it is then clear that Pope John Paul II wanted to emphasize the unity between faith and reason in attaining the truth. The truth of faith and the truth of reason are both coming from God. Fides et ratio basically presupposes the unity of all truths, whether those of reason or of faith.[[36]](#footnote-36) Hence, they should work together in journeying towards the truth. The *parrhesia* of faith should be matched by the boldness of reason.[[37]](#footnote-37) Faith asks that its object be understood with the help of reason; and at the summit of its searching, reason acknowledges that it cannot do without what faith presents.[[38]](#footnote-38) Moreover, the truth which God reveals to us in Jesus Christ is not opposed to the truths that philosophy perceives; the two modes of knowledge lead to truth in all its fullness.[[39]](#footnote-39) As to the opening statement of Pope John Paul II’s encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio*:

Faith and Reason are like two wings on which human spirit rises to the contemplation of Truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth – in a word, to know himself – so that by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.[[40]](#footnote-40)

1. **Aristotelian Golden Mean in the Dialogue Between Faith and Reason**

In the preceding sections, the researcher discussed the theory of the mean proposed by Aristotle and the encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* promulgated by Pope John Paul II. In this section, the researcher will try to apply the theory of moderation in the context of the dialogue between faith and reason. How is the theory of moderation relevant to the dialogue between faith and reason? The fundamental principle of the golden mean is to avoid excess and defect and observe what is moderate. The excess and defect are vices for they give badness to a thing. Aristotle asserted that it is nature for things to be destroyed by defect and excess while the intermediate preserves the good.[[41]](#footnote-41) Hence, one should observe the mean for it is the “mark of virtue”.[[42]](#footnote-42) Mean then is the balance between the two vices. So, how is this concept related to the dialogue between faith and reason? The dialogue between faith and reason should be grounded on the observance of the golden mean. That is, one should necessarily avoid the excess and defect in their dialogical encounter. One needs to avoid giving too much emphasis on the authority of reason while devaluing the authority of faith. Or in the other way around, one should avoid giving too much emphasis on the authority of faith while devaluing the necessity of reason. Failing to observe moderation in the dialogue between faith and reason would result to various problems, or in Aristotelian term, would result to vices. Excess in utilizing reason and defect in utilizing faith would result to Rationalism. On the other hand, excess in utilizing faith and defect in utilizing reason would result to Fideism. Hence, these are the two fundamental vices if one fails to observe moderation and balance in the dialogical encounter between faith and reason. This problem would then engender disharmony between them.

The fist extreme to be discussed by the researcher is Fideism. Fideism is a theological view insisting that faith needs no justification from reason.[[43]](#footnote-43) Theological faith is considered to be the fundamental criterion for truth while minimizing and devaluing the power of reason.[[44]](#footnote-44) Hence, fideists overemphasize and exceed in giving authority to faith and defect in giving authority to reason. For them, blind faith is supreme as the way to certitude and salvation. They defend such faith on various grounds like mystical experience, revelation, subjective human need, and common sense.[[45]](#footnote-45) One of the famous figures that can be inferred when talking about fideism is Tertullian. Developing a theme articulated by Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians, Tertullian insisted that the truth of Christianity could only be unveiled by revelation, and that it must necessarily remain opaque to unregenerate philosophical reason.[[46]](#footnote-46) Hence, Tertullian strictly emphasizes faith while criticizing the power of philosophical reason. He is invariably depicted as the personification of religious anti-rationalism.[[47]](#footnote-47) On the other side of extreme is Rationalism. Rationalism is a philosophical movement which gives primacy to reason in journeying towards the truth. This attitude was being amplified during the enlightenment period in the names of Rene Descartes, Leibniz, and Spinoza. The rise of the enlightenment period manifested the legitimate distinction between faith and reason which led to their separation. As a result of the exaggerated rationalism of certain thinkers, positions grew more radical and there emerged eventually a philosophy which was separate from the absolutely independent contents of faith.[[48]](#footnote-48) The Enlightenment – the great age of reason – is defined as the period of rigorous scientific, political, and philosophical discourses.[[49]](#footnote-49) These two extremes – fideism and rationalism – are the vices in faith and reason encounter. Fideism is the vice of overemphasizing faith and rationalism is the vice of overemphasizing reason. Since they are vices, they can then affect and obstruct man’s journey towards the fullness truth. Just like in Aristotelian terms, vices can hinder mans journey towards His ultimate end which is Happiness. Fideism and rationalism are not only problematic per se, but that their attitude could engender various problems. Exceeding on giving authority to faith would reduce faith as merely a superstitious belief. It is superstitious in the sense that faith has no rational foundation. It is even stated in the Fides et Ratio that, “Deprived of reason, faith has stressed feeling and experience, and so runs the risk of no longer being a universal proposition. It is an illusion to think that faith, tied to weak reasoning, might be more penetrating; on the contrary, faith then runs the grave risk of withering into myth or superstition.”[[50]](#footnote-50) Hence, the object of faith becomes not a set of universal truths to which all people can potentially attain when assisted by grace, but rather the subjectivity of one’s inner experience and affectivity. [[51]](#footnote-51) The act of experiencing, even when valid, is particular, and the particularity of religious experience requires the universality of truths discernible by the use of reason.[[52]](#footnote-52) Furthermore, exceeding in faith or fideism would makes us to fail in fulfilling the task given to us by God – the task of Knowing Him. To nourish one’s faith means not only to believe deeply on Him, but also to know Him deeply. Even Hegel affirmed that it is the task of the faithful to know the fullness of Truth even if it is unfathomable. Accordingly, in direct contravention of what is commanded in Holy Scripture as the highest duty – that we should not merely love but know God; that it is the Spirit or Geist that leads into Truth, knows all things, penetrates even into the deep things of the Godhead.[[53]](#footnote-53) Hence, to show one’s deep faith and love for God, he should also exert an effort in knowing Him. That is why fideism is indeed a problematic theological view. This is the extreme or vice of giving too much emphasis on faith.

Now, what would be the danger of the other extreme which is Rationalism? Exceeding in giving authority to reason would blind the human beings toward the ultimate end of their intellectual endeavor – God who is the Fullness of Truth. Pope John II acknowledges the danger of overemphasizing rationalism. He said that if reason is “deprived of what Revelation offers, reason has taken sidetracks which expose it to the danger of losing sight of its final goal. Reason which is unrelated to an adult faith is not prompted to turn its gaze to the newness and radicality of being.”[[54]](#footnote-54) Being blinded by its final goal, Rationalism would result to intellectual arrogance, atheism, and nihilism. These three intellectual attitudes were being indicated in the encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II. Concerning intellectual arrogance, He said that idealism sought in various ways to transform faith and its contents into dialectical structures which could be grasped by reason.[[55]](#footnote-55) Hence, human beings would have the tendency to regard reason as having the capacity to grasp the fullness of truth. Concerning atheism, rationalism engenders atheistic humanism. This kind of atheism regards faith as alienating and damaging to the development of a full rationality.[[56]](#footnote-56) This then considers faith as an obstruction to the rational nature of man. And lastly, rationalism engenders nihilism. Nihilism claims that the search is an end in itself, without any hope or possibility of ever attaining the goal of truth.[[57]](#footnote-57) In the nihilist interpretation, life is no more than an occasion for sensations and experiences in which the ephemeral has been emphasized.[[58]](#footnote-58) With that, reason is no longer concerned with the truth and hence, loses its true dignity.[[59]](#footnote-59)

We have seen that the vices of rationalism and fideism would hinder man towards achieving the ultimate end of man – God – the Fullness of truth. Just like in Aristotelian terms: vices of extreme and defect would hinder man from achieving his ultimate end which is happiness. In order to avoid these two vices or extremes, there should be an equal treatment between faith and reason. That is then the moderation of their dialogical encounter. Man should not exceed in giving authority to faith while devaluing reason and should not exceed in giving authority to reason while defect in faith. Man should observe the mean in faith and reason dialogue in order to avoid the vices of rationalism and fideism. Faith should accept the authority of reason and reason, in return, should accept the authority of faith. This virtue of moderation is evidently manifested in Pope John Paul II’s Fides et Ratio. The encyclical letter emphasizes the indispensability of faith and reason towards the fullness of truth. Faith and reason should essentially go together for they have the same and single object – the Truth, that is, God Himself. Accordingly, when one speaks of the object of reason, what is meant is not only the particularity of publicly verifiable phenomena but also the lawlike structures of the universe, the objectivity of truth, goodness, and beauty, and the existence of God as origin and ultimate end of all that is.[[60]](#footnote-60) As for the object of faith, what is meant is God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as well as Jesus as fully God and fully human.[[61]](#footnote-61) Hence in journeying towards the truth, faith should consider reason and reason should consider faith. Reason makes faith rational and not merely a superstitious belief. As written in the *Fides et Ratio*, the church sees in philosophy the way to come to know the fundamental truths about human life. At the same time, the church considers philosophy an indispensable help for a deeper understanding of faith and for communicating the truth of the Gospel to those who do not know yet.[[62]](#footnote-62) That is why many of the Church Fathers have utilized philosophy in deepening their understanding with God.[[63]](#footnote-63) On the other hand, faith guides reason in order for it not to be blinded towards the truth. The encyclical letter reads:

The truth made known to us by Revelation is neither the product nor the consummation of an argument devised by human reason. It appears instead as something gratuitous, which itself stirs thought and seeks acceptance as an expression of love. This revealed truth is set within our history as an anticipation of that ultimate and definitive vision of God which is reserved for those who believe in him and seek him with a sincere heart. The ultimate purpose of personal existence, then, is the theme of philosophy and theology alike. For all their difference of method and content, both disciplines point to that “path of life” (Ps 16:11) which, as faith tells us, leads in the end to the full and lasting joy of the contemplation of the Triune God.[[64]](#footnote-64)

Hence, in the dialogue between faith and reason, the golden mean of moderation plays a vital role. It enables faith and reason to dialogue harmoniously. It reminds not to exceed in giving authority to faith while devaluing the power of reason for it would result to the vice of fideism. On the other way around, one should not exceed in giving authority to reason while defect in utilizing faith for it would result to the vice of rationalism. However, harmonizing these two is not that easy just as how difficult it is to strike the golden mean. It needs to be done with careful and conscientious considerations. In Aristotelian ethics, man should consider the situations and circumstances in observing the golden mean with the aid of practical wisdom. In the encounter of faith and reason, man should also be careful and critical in harmonizing faith and reason. That is why Christianity’s adaptation to philosophy is neither straight forward nor immediate.[[65]](#footnote-65) Christian thinkers were very much critical and cautious in adopting philosophical thought so as to avoid various problems.[[66]](#footnote-66)

Moderation should be observed in their dialogical encounter. Without moderation, faith and reason would not be able to work harmoniously. Even in looking at the famous introductory statement of Pope John II’s Fides et Ratio, the theory of moderation is already manifested. In his introductory statement, he emphasized that faith and reason are like two wings which transcends humanity towards the fullness of truth. If one of the wings exceeds in weight or size, then it would not be able to fly well. That is why these wings should essentially be balanced together in order to effectively fly towards the fullness of truth. Hence, the manifestation of the theory of the golden mean. Actually, the dialogue of faith and reason and Aristotle’s theory of the mean fundamentally have one and the same ultimate end – God. Faith and reason is directed towards the truth and the theory of the mean is directed towards Happiness. Truth and Happiness rightly belong to no other than - God.

**Conclusion**

Man has always been under the pursuit towards the truth. As to Aristotle’s words, men by nature desire to know. Even the encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II fides et ratio defines human being as one who seeks the truth. However, this journey is not that easy. There are many ways to achieve the truth which sometimes confuses man which should be properly and preferably utilized. The two forms of learning – faith and reason – had a history of conflicts and discords. This problem has been amplified during the enlightenment period where philosophers radically gave reason the absolute authority in knowing the truth. Prior to such period, the medieval times considered faith in undergoing intellectual endeavor. But on the outset of the enlightenment period, faith was no longer part of the equation. Faith was being disregarded and reason was being radically stressed. Such overemphasis gave rise to various problems which blinded man towards his proper ultimate end who is God – the fullness of truth. that is why, Pope John Paul II promulgated the encyclical letter Fides et Ratio in order to reconcile the problem between faith and reason. accordingly, faith and reason are indispensable in journeying towards the fullness of truth. Faith enables reason to be properly guided and reason makes faith rational. That is why Pope John Paul II stated that faith and reason are like two wings which transcend human beings towards the fullness of truth. Such relationship can also be understood under the concept of the Golden Mean proposed by Aristotle. The golden mean states that man should strike the mean and avoid the two vices: extreme and defect. It is by virtue of moderation that man will be able to achieve the ultimate end which is happiness. Applying to the relationship between faith and reason, the Aristotelian moderation suggests that man should not overemphasize in giving authority to faith while defect in giving importance to reason for it would engender fideism. Strict fideism would somehow reduce faith into superstitious belief and would lack a rational foundation. On the other hand, man should not also exceed in giving authority to reason while defect in giving authority to faith for it would result to rationalism. This would make man to be blinded towards his ultimate end which is the truth. hence, in the dialogical encounter between faith and reason, moderation should be observed. Both should be given authority equally. Faith should be supplemented by reason and reason should be guided by faith. In that way, there will be a harmonious dialogue between faith and reason towards the fulfillment of the truth. The Aristotelian theory of moderation indeed is related to Karol Wojtyla’s Fides et Ratio. It plays a vital role in harmonizing the dialogue between faith and reason.

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2. Julius R. Weinberg, “Introduction,” *A Short History of Medieval Philosophy* (Princeton University Press, 1964), 3–29, accessed October 15, 2022, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv39x53j>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Matthew White, “The Enlightenment,” *Discovering Literature: Restoration & 18th century* (British Library, June 2018), accessed October 15, 2022, [https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/the-enlightenment#](https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/the-enlightenment). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by W.D. Ross (New York: Pocket Books Publishing, 1958), Book II, Chap. V. The example that was given by Aristotle was that of an eye. If an eye is excellent, then the eye is good and performs its work or function well. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Aristotle asserted that in a perfect artwork, you cannot take away nor add something to its perfection while adherence to the mean preserves it. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Aristotle, *Nicomachea Ethics,* Book II, Chap. II. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. An example given by Aristotle was that of temperance and courage. Accordingly, the man who flies from and fears everything and does not stand his ground against anything becomes coward, and the man who fears nothing at all but goes to face every danger becomes rash; and similarly, the man who indulges in every pleasure and abstains from none becomes self-indulgent, while the man who shuns every pleasure as boors do, becomes in a way insensible. Temperance and courage, then, are destroyed by excess and defect, and preserved by the mean. See Aristotle, *Nicomachea Ethics,* Book II, Chap. II. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ibid. By living virtuously, one is living one’s life well or excellently, hence, success. See Gavin Laurence, *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics*, (United States: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 35. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. In Greek, happiness is translated as “Eudaimonia”, which means the condition of human flourishing or of living well. The term happiness, however, is somehow unfortunate for Eudaimonia does not solely consist of a state of mind or a feeling of contentment or pleasure; it is beyond those things. See Brian Dauignan, *Eudaimonia* (Encyclopedia Britannica, July 2020), accessed April 4, 2022, https://www.britannica.com/topic/eudaimonia. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Accordingly, in everything that is continuous and divisible, it is possible to take more, less, or an equal amount, and that either in terms of the thing itself or relatively to us; and the equal is an intermediate between excess and defect. By intermediate in the object, Aristotle means that which is equidistant from each of the extremes which is one and the same for all men; by the intermediate relatively to us is that which is too much nor too little – and this is not one nor the same for all. For instance, if ten is many and two is few, six is the intermediate, taken in terms of the objects; for it exceeds and is exceeded by an equal amount. This is intermediate according to arithmetical proportion. But the intermediate relatively to man is not to be taken so: if ten pounds are too much for a particular person to eat and two pounds too little, it does not follow that the trainer will order six pounds for this is also perhaps too much or too little for the person who is to take; too much or too little for the beginner in athletic exercise. Thus, the master of any art avoids excess and defect, but seeks the intermediate and chooses it – the intermediate not in the object but relatively to man. Again, since Aristotle asserted that virtue is much more accurate and better than any form of art, hence, this principle would also apply to virtues. See Aristotle, *Nicomachea Ethics,* Book II, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. For example, in the case of eating: the mean will obviously be different for an athlete and for a little girl. Or when one gives money, liberality as the mean between prodigality and stinginess, is not an absolute figure but is relative to one’s assets. See Samuel Stumpf, *Philosophy: History and Problems*, Fifth edition. (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1994), 101. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Chap. VI. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IV, Chap. IX. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IV, Chap. IX. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, Chap. V. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, Chap. VII. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI, Chap. IV. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Daniel C. Russell, *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics*, edited by Ronald Polansky (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 199. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Elora J. Weringer, "Fides et Ratio: The Perpetual Journey of Faith and Reason," *The Linacre Quarterly*, Vol. 67: No. 4, Article 5, 59. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 2. The term "diakonia" (from the Greek verb diakonein, to serve; cf. diakonos, male or female servant) refers to service as a permanent activity of the church throughout its history. It is the "esponsible service of the gospel by deeds and by words performed by Christians in response to the needs of people", is rooted in and modelled on Christ’s service and teachings. The intimate link between the service of God and the service of humankind is said by Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry to be exemplified for the whole church by the ministry of deacons. See Teresa Joan White, “*Diakonia*,” (World Council of Churches, January 1, 2002), accessed October 18, 2022, [Diakonia | World Council of Churches (oikoumene.org)](https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/diakonia). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Weringer, “Perpetual Journey,” 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Weringer, “Perpetual Journey,” 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Michael Smith, “Beyond Fideism and Anti-Rationalism: Some Reflections on Fides et Ratio,” *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, Vol. 4, No. 4, (Fall 2001): 112, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/20400. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; Introduction. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book II, Chap. II. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book II, Chap. IV. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Terence Penelhum, *God and Skepticism: A Study in Skepticism and Fideism*, (D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1983), 1. The term itself derives from *fides*, the Latin word for faith, and can be rendered literally as faith-ism. “Fideism” is thus to be understood not as a synonym for “religious belief,” but as denoting a particular philosophical account of faith’s appropriate jurisdiction vis-a-vis that of reason. See Amesbury, Richard, "*Fideism*,” The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), accessed October 18, 2022, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/fideism/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. The Editors of Encyclopaedia, "*fideism,”*  Encyclopedia Britannica, 20 Jul. 1998, accessed 18 October 2022.https://www.britannica.com/topic/fideism. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “*fideism.”* [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Richard Amesbury, "Fideism", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), accessed October 18, 2022, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/fideism/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Peter Harrison, *I Believe Because it is Absurd: The Enlightenment Invention of Tertullian’s Credo*, (American Society of Church History, 2017), 339. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Matthew White, “*The Enlightenment*,” British Library, June 2018, accessed October 19, 2022, [https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/the-enlightenment#](https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/the-enlightenment). [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Smith, “Beyond Fideism and Anti-Rationalism,” 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Smith, “Beyond Fideism and Anti-Rationalism,” 118. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (Toronto: Our Open Media, 2017), 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 48. Nihilism has been defined by the fount of philosophical Nihilism, Nietzsche: "That there is no truth; that there is no absolute state of affairs-no 'thing-in-itself.' See Seraphim Rose, “*Nihilism: the Root of the Revolution of the Modern Age*,” (United States: St. Herman Press, 1994), Preface. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 47. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Michael Smith, “Beyond Fideism and Anti-Rationalism*,”* 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Michael Smith, “Beyond Fideism and Anti-Rationalism*,”* 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. St. Thomas Aquinas, who used Aristotle as his basis in doing theology. He developed his own conclusions from Aristotelian premises, notably in the metaphysics of personality, creation, and Providence. St. Thomas Aquinas is famous for his “Five Ways in Proving God’s Existence.” He had a great merit of giving pride of place to the harmony which exists between faith and reason. Both the light of reason and the light from faith come from God. See Marie Dominique Chenu, “St. Thomas Aquinas: Italian Christian Theologian and Philosophe*r*,” Britannica, March 2021, accessed October 19, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Thomas-Aquinas>. Another notable theologian was St. Augustine, who was influenced by Plato. Plato's metaphysics and epistemology shaped Augustine's understanding of God as a source of absolute goodness and truth. This idea mirrored Plato's thinking idea of "forms." For Plato, every entity in the world is a representation of a perfect idea of that entity. For Augustine, God is the source of the forms. See Nick Robinson, “Platonic Influence on St. Augustine’s Philosophy,” Seatlepi, accessed October 19, 2022, https://education.seattlepi.com/platonic-influence-st-augustines-philosophy-5566.html. Another theologian who was influenced by both Plato and Aristotle was St. Anselm of Canterbury. He was famous for his saying “Credo ut Intellegam” or translated as, I believe so that I may understand. He was also famous for the celebrated “ontological argument” for the existence of God in the Proslogion, but his contributions to philosophical theology (and indeed to philosophy more generally) go well beyond the ontological argument. See Thomas Williams, “Saint Anselm,” Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, May 2000, accessed October 19, 2022, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/anselm/. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 15. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 38. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*; par. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)