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I Am Your Brother Joseph: Ratzinger and the Rehabilitation of Reason

Nalin Ranasinghe

The full significance of Pope Benedict XVI's controversial address at Regensburg in September 2006 has yet to be properly appreciated. The pontiff's main theme, a stirring call for the re-Hellenization of the West, was drowned out by a nearly unanimous chorus of criticism. Ironically, Western academics were so carried away by shallow outrage on behalf of the 'Other' that they inadvertently illustrated the pope's point regarding the breakdown of speech and rationality. Their unwillingness to appreciate the deep connection between Greek Reason and Hebrew Revelation that constitutes the very basis of our intellectual tradition strongly suggests that many academics are at least dangerously unaware of, and perhaps even consciously hostile to, their own origins. This paper will focus on how Joseph Ratzinger's winged words point the way toward the recovery of a richer understanding of both reason and revelation. It is just such an intellectual and spiritual renaissance that is badly needed today.

We should first recall that this address was delivered by a former academic of notable eminence, arguably the most erudite occupant of the papacy, to an audience of former colleagues at the University of Regensburg. However, as the title of this essay suggests, the relationship between the speaker and his fellow intellectuals has not always been marked by serenity or amicability. Indeed, the story of Joseph, sold into Egyptian slavery by his brothers, provides an apt analogy. After rising to distinction in the service of the Pharaoh, Joseph, as the viceroy of Egypt, meted out rough justice to his brothers when later events placed them at his mercy. The words "I am your brother Joseph" convey more than Joseph's easy triumph over his hapless siblings. (That revelation would not take us much

beyond vengeful Odysseus's dramatic appearance before his wife's suitors.) Neither do Joseph's words indicate merely a magnanimous desire to show his undeserving brothers love and mercy. The true beauty of the passage lies in Joseph's sudden, belated recollection that he is their brother-Israelite and not only a prince of Egypt. Just like Joseph and his brothers, the Church and the University must see that they stand and fall together.

The Regensburg Address acknowledged that since Greek philosophy played a necessary and indispensable role in the transmission of the glad tidings of the Christian *Logos* to the Gentile world, reason is an essential aspect of the church. The pope clearly distinguished between the ongoing exegetical activity of reason rightly understood and the stridently anti-intellectual approach of various fundamentalist Islamic and Christian sects. But even more important, he also subtly clarified the proper role of reason in a way that may help Western humanism to recover the moral and intellectual high ground from the unholy trinity of materialism, libertarianism, and positivism animating today's technological juggernaut, the hideous strength of which is threatening the integrity of human society and gravely jeopardizing the frail life-world of our planet. Benedict showed us that far from being the implacable foe of reason, science, and progress, Christianity rightly understood provides the only possible basis for the true flourishing of human civilization.

From the beginning of the address, Pope Benedict emphasizes the connections between speech, reason, and the university, making of Joseph's coat of many colors a seamless garment. He talks of "the genuine experience of *universitas*" and fondly describes a context of "lived experience" in which members of many different faculties would have "lively exchanges" despite their many different specializations because of their "basis of a single rationality with its various aspects and sharing responsibility for the right use of reason" (#4). Benedict takes especial pride in the fact that believers and non-believers alike are able to "raise the question of God through the use of reason, and to do so in the context of the tradition of the Christian faith" (#7). It is clear that he does not regard principled faith per se as an obstacle to rational dialogue between persons of different faith traditions.

Reason somehow serves as the overarching horizon under which widely varying accounts of the mysterious structure of reality can be seriously compared and fruitfully studied. We may note that light plays a similar role in Plato's *Republic*, serving as the gratuitously given permanent condition for many persons gaining and sharing knowledge of a common intelligible object. Indeed, speech itself has to obey certain fundamental preconditions or a priori categories that rule its proper functioning in the common reality.

In other words, the power of articulate human discourse presupposes the abiding existence of readily perceivable ratios of order, harmony, and regularity in the world. Since the ultimate origins of these phenomena are mysterious, there is ample room for thoughtful, reverent speculation about the various sacred accounts given concerning them.

This implicit recognition that the light of reason serves as a universal revelation is the basis for the pope's indirect condemnation of voluntaristic theology in general and radical Islam in particular. Indeed, we can observe that this very obliqueness presupposes enduring commonalities that make it possible for fruitful analogies to be drawn in many different directions. However, just as many of the great Athenian tragedies, though ostensibly about ancient Thebes or the Trojan War, were really concerned with contemporary Athens and the Peloponnesian War, it could well be the case that Islamic Fundamentalism is only a stalking horse for a far more insidious and potent threat to human rationality and dignity, one emanating from within the West itself.

Quoting the Byzantine emperor Manuel II Paleologus, the pope rejects the use of violence in the name of God in language strongly reminiscent of 1 Chronicles 11, where David refused to drink water that had been obtained for him at the cost of many lives, saying that he would not drink of the blood of brave men who had risked themselves to bring him water. The emperor, after having firmly stated that God "is not pleased by blood," goes on to say that "not acting reasonably is contrary to God's nature." This is because "Faith is born of the soul, not the body. Whoever would lead someone to faith needs the ability to speak well and reason properly, without violence and threats" (#13).

Wedding belief in God to rational speech, Pope Benedict simply but pointedly draws our attention to this essential aspect of Christianity. He does so in a way that both generously discounts the differences separating Greek Orthodoxy from Roman Catholicism and also reiterates the central role of reason and rational discourse in the Christian faith. We may infer that Christianity, a minor sect in 70 A.D., would not have survived the destruction of Jerusalem had it not been for fundamental and timeless insights into the human condition that were both preserved and fostered by its expression in the more philosophical idiom of *koine* Greek, the eponymous common tongue of the Roman Empire and Hellenized world. As a complement, the wisdom provided by Judeo-Christian Scripture gave new moral standing to the oppressed, and the example set by Christ's disciples helped the pagan world to understand the meaning of Jesus' revelations about God's love.

Neither can we forget that the way toward this relatively easy appropriation of the Christian message had been prepared by the noble example of Socrates. The dauntless old philosopher's pious deconstruction of Homeric polytheism and his enacted preference for virtue over life itself, as well as his outrageous claim that it was better to suffer evil than to inflict it, would soon become central aspects of Christian morality. "Biblical faith, in the Hellenistic period, encountered the best of Greek thought at a deep level, resulting in a mutual enrichment evident especially in the later wisdom literature" (#22).

We may now see something more of what Benedict means when he goes on to speak explicitly of "the profound harmony between what is Greek in the best sense of the word and the Biblical understanding of faith in God" (#17). After speaking of the *logos*, "a reason which is creative and capable of self-communication" (#17), he then refers to "the intrinsic necessity of a rapprochement between Biblical faith and Greek inquiry" (#19) and goes on to recognize the importance of "Socrates' attempt to vanquish and transcend myth" (#20). We may infer from this that Christianity is at best ill-served and at worst grievously mutilated, turning into a resentful and fanatically reified shadow of itself, when, under the influence of those who cry "sola scriptura," the Bible is detached from its natural ally, Greek philosophy "in the best sense of the word." While the pope provides us with a provocative schema of the three waves through which this tragedy came about, filling in the details of this account (and paying close attention to what he prudently leaves unstated) will help us to proceed with a fuller understanding of both the full magnitude of the problem and the meaning of the radical course of treatment that he prescribes for overcoming it. He does not refer to the fourth-century events by which Christianity became the official religion of the West and henceforth relied less on Greek persuasion and more on Roman power amid the widespread breakdown of order and classical learning. Nor does he mention the eleventh-century split between the Greek and Roman churches and the sordid issues surrounding the Donation of Constantine.

Benedict's account begins with the Protestant Reformation's earnest desire to hack through the overgrown jungle of scholastic philosophy and recover the pristine purity of biblical faith. "The Reformers thought they were confronted with a faith system totally conditioned by philosophy, that is to say an articulation of the faith based on an alien system of thought... faith no longer appeared as a living historical word but as one element of an overarching philosophical system" (#33). What Luther and Calvin justly denounced (and mistakenly took to be philosophy) was

something very far removed from "what is Greek in the best sense of the word." Indeed, great humanists like Erasmus and More, who were aware of both the letter and spirit of the Greeks, were just as critical of those dry and legalistic clerics who valued precedents, authorities, and forgeries far more than a *logos*-animated examined life. One could imagine how Socrates himself would have dealt with the false wisdom of those descendants of Euthyphro who, while falsely believing that they were the possessors of the truth, were in reality held hostage by their perverse love of technical discourse, their unctuous respect for power, and their rabid hatred of heresy. The reformers in turn assumed that the recovered purity of scriptural literalism would make possible the establishment of God's Kingdom on Earth. They reacted with bewilderment and rage when it became clear that human nature would not conform to a narrow scriptural template. Unfortunately, the zealous and zestful correction of perceived error is not sufficient to prove that the punisher is the guardian of truth; these acts often only harden his heart and make him steadfast in his own false certainty.

One of the timeless virtues of Greek philosophy rightly understood is its power to make humans aware that certain knowledge of matters above the heavens and below the earth is beyond the powers of discursive speech. Both Plato and Jesus seemed to know that these lofty matters could be discussed only through inspired parables and analogical myths; by rudely eliminating all poetry from religion, or by regarding mythic revelations as the literal god-given truth, we gainsay our only means of access to transcendent truth.

While the reformers of the first wave of de-Hellenization earnestly believed that only the truth would set mankind free, they failed to see that parables and myths are an indispensable means both of revealing divine matters and of keeping human beings appropriately nimble-footed and humble in their disposition toward such matters. Sadly, the chronic insecurity of men like Luther with regard to the baffling question of whether they were divinely predestined for heaven or for hell coincided with a new emphasis on certain knowledge and technical mastery. Those men of science who believed that man could have certain knowledge only of what he had made himself seemed to have been dazzlingly successful in wresting Nature's secrets from her. By ensnaring Nature in their procrustean webs and grids they unfortunately found themselves able to "know" the subjects of their inquiry only as dead or mechanical objects, wholly governed by grim necessity and rigid determinism. This meant that the proofs of God's existence provided by Descartes and Spinoza were precise and ironically what the reformers thought they had rebelled against.

Their theology, not scholasticism, was the product of “a faith system totally conditioned by philosophy, that is to say an articulation of the faith based on an alien system of thought . . . faith no longer appeared as a living historical Word” (#33).

Rejecting deterministic science on the one hand and held hostage by a stale precedent-bound scholasticism on the other, the church itself was entirely unprepared to deal with the new picture of the universe so dramatically conveyed to mankind by the genius of Galileo and Newton. While the deterministic power of the new science seemed to be uncannily consistent with the deepest fears of Luther and the reformers, it also made God dwindle into relative insignificance through its capacity to perform miracles and/or stupendous feats of revelation that he either could not or would not do.

Under these dire circumstances in which reason and revelation no longer seemed to have very much in common with each other, it was no wonder that religion and piety became increasingly understood in terms of otherworldliness and blind faith. Benedict brings up Kant’s famous claim that “he needed to set thinking aside in order to make room for faith.” With this defensive intent, Kant “anchored faith exclusively in practical reason, denying it access to reality as a whole” (#35). The German philosopher’s heroic but ultimately unsuccessful efforts to reconcile Newtonian necessity and moral freedom are also reflected in his somewhat schizophrenic claim that it is more important for man to *deserve* happiness than to *be* happy. This stark and striking distinction between virtue and happiness—a disjunction that reduces once-virile Machiavellian *virtù* to mean something like chastity or self-denial before the infinite temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil—is all but inevitable once science seems to be the proud possessor of the art of happiness. Furthermore, under the continued tutelage of Machiavelli, it seemed that men had to learn “how to be bad” in order better to enjoy this promised happiness.

At this point the second wave of de-Hellenization took place. Faced with the increased impotence of the church in society and its strong tendency to ally itself with forces of reaction and misanthropy, enlightened men of reason drew a sharp distinction between Jesus and the church and proclaimed that the moral teachings of the former had nothing in common with the stultified doctrines and meaningless rituals of established religion. Having triumphantly slipped the repressive bonds of otherworldly religion, these men of goodwill now tried to do what the institutional church both could not do and would not allow: they set out to realize the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Marked by all the attributes of apocalyptic Gnosticism, this

enterprise was obviously heartened by the massive triumphs, both rhetorical and intellectual, that the scientific Enlightenment had gained over what Hobbes famously called the Kingdom of Darkness. It was only a matter of time before science and technology would be able radically to transform the hitherto miserable lives of those Jesus had blessed but had been unable to liberate: the poor, the oppressed, and the handicapped.

Unlike its predecessor, which was profoundly antiphilosophic and was mostly waged by disillusioned clerics, this second wave of de-Hellenization was undertaken in the name of philosophy, albeit of a novel, non-Hellenic variety. When the pope refers to this phenomenon as "Platonism," he means by this "a synthesis between Platonism (Cartesianism) and empiricism, a synthesis confirmed by the success of technology" (#40). What is Platonic about this Cartesian project is its presupposition of the "mathematical structure of matter" and its "intrinsic rationality" (#41). The deeper significance of this project, which clearly justifies Benedict calling it Platonism rather than Cartesianism, is its utopian quality—a quality that finds its origin in Plato's most famous, or notorious, work: the *Republic* has been the unacknowledged template of the failed modern enterprise.

The twentieth century saw the culmination of half a millennium of modernism, marked by various well-intentioned and/or bloody-minded attempts to emulate the *Republic* literally and impose a post-theological Heaven on Earth by combining materialistic metaphysics, draconian technology, and social engineering. All of these Promethean endeavors ended in abject failure. They killed over a hundred million human beings, ruined the lives of several billions more, and left most of us feeling deeply suspicious of all attempts to bring about revolutionary transformations of the human condition. Today the era of the *Republic* is over, and the overdetermined space of totalitarianism seems to have been abolished. Entertainment has replaced both edification and education as the primary sense of the meaning of life. No longer believing that the human being's psychic and intellectual powers could be directed toward the attainment of heaven or the recovery of paradise on earth, many postmodern intellectuals are content to cannibalize their higher faculties and place them at the disposal of base or banal passions.

While the *Republic*, if read properly, teaches that a virtuous political regime may be established only in the soul and not in the city, it does not take us much beyond this point. The literal enactment of the *Republic* failed because science and technology could not reform human nature; post-Enlightenment human beings could not reenter the Garden of Eden as happy contented animals because the human soul perversely refused to wither

away. Today, in the West, while the state may well be said to have been superseded by market forces, the infinite desires of the soul aroused by the seductions of modernity rage on unabated amid the ashes of the modern project itself. It is here that we feel the third wave of de-Hellenization, and it is at this point that the re-Hellenization of civilization must begin.

Although Benedict is very terse here, for reasons that may have to do with the failed ecumenism of his predecessors, we may decipher the main threads of his argument. The third wavers, says the pope, claim that "the synthesis with Hellenism achieved in the early Church was an initial inculturation which ought not to be binding on other cultures. The latter are said to have the right to return to the simple message of the New Testament prior to that inculturation...to inculturate it anew in their own particular milieu" (#51). The implication is that at this final stage of de-Hellenization, the church, after previously having become separated from both philosophy and science, now must complete this sorry saga by tossing out its own historical origins. Since Platonism is assumed by postmodernism to be identical with the Cartesianism of the modern project, Plato is ritually condemned for the sins of his illicitly cloned progeny. We must burn our conceptual rainbow-bridges, the third wavers insist, and plunge into the pure flux of becoming. However, as the sea of faith recedes, only the sweet sentiment of solidarity with the oppressed gives spiritual meaning to the life of the *bien pensant*. Gushingly impotent expressions of the infinite guilt of the West towards the 'Other' replace honest acknowledgment of cultural differences; the integrity of Christianity itself is undermined by a guilt-sodden sentimentality that all too often surpasses understanding, evades responsibility, and oozes *ressentiment*. Even today, personal charisma and nihilistic humanitarianism are often used to generate moral responses to calamities that dogma and piety cannot cope with.

While it is indeed true that the grand experiment of modernity had disastrous results, the pope is asking us whether Reason, Christianity, and the West are all radically discredited by this debacle. By insisting that God is not pleased by coercive conversion and claiming that faith is born of the soul through reason and persuasion, Benedict is reiterating the rational integrity and freedom of that very indigestible spiritual substance that caused the downfall of the various modernist utopias: the human soul, the discovery of which was the very origin of Hellenism. He also sharply distinguishes between the coercive methods of instrumental reason and the *logos* that rightly persuades the human soul. Quoting Plato's *Phaedo*, the pope warns us against misology, a frustration with the abuse of reason that leads to an aversion of reason itself (#61). As this misology leads the

stubborn to turn to biblical literalism, Marian devotion, and Ultramontane doctrine, the tender-hearted are consumed by nihilistic humanitarianism.

Ironically, even as postmodern academics and theologians reject and revile reason, their ritual denunciations are almost irrelevant; instrumental reason is more powerful than ever in postmodernity. Technology is so ubiquitous and invisible today that its processes are no longer intelligible to even the most educated and well-informed individuals. It is this dehumanizing species of reason that seems to be the true target of the pope's address. Otherwise, we cannot reconcile his critical account of de-Hellenization and his defense of reason with the crass realities of the technological world in which we live. Differently put, while the excesses of high modernity caused much academic and clerical revulsion against reason, these protests don't matter much in our postmodern cave where the lives and interactions of even its harshest critics are silently held together by technology.

The question then is whether the West can possibly regain its spiritual and intellectual integrity by recovering its Hellenic roots. While clearly this can occur only through reason and *logos* being rightly understood, it remains to be seen whether this synthesis can persuade our jaded desires and lazy bodies. In other words, because reason rightly understood can act only by the genuine persuasion of the soul, it could be the case that our disordered psychic regimes are unmoved by reason's authority. But since Pope Benedict has affirmed that God acts on the human soul through the *logos*, "a reason which is creative and capable of self-communication" (#17), such a state of affairs would effectively mean that God is dead to technological man. Indeed, the reflexive vilification and simple incomprehension that greeted the Regensburg address may provide chilling confirmation of this dire condition. Or we could return to our Hellenic roots and argue, using the Myth of the Cave as our proof-text, that it is always possible to use philosophical dialectic to persuade a soul mired in artificial reality to get rightly acquainted with reality and rule its desires through self-knowledge and rational persuasion.

Everything hinges on whether technology has truly "invented the art of happiness," as Nietzsche put it. If so, and the fallen soul is ruled by violations of its own order, then Benedict is wrong. We are indeed in the age of the Last Man, and God is dead. Conversely, if the happiness that is offered in the postmodern cave turns out to be false, we may be more hopeful about the fate of mankind. The soul's stubborn refusal to wither away before totalitarianism was the death-knell of modernity. Could this restlessness of the human heart also defeat the more insidious hedonistic

self-violence of postmodernity and lead the West to be reborn with renewed self-knowledge?

Today's technology of happiness promises mankind thoughtlessness, silence, separation, and distraction. It flies in the face of all that is represented by the *logos*: reason, speech, community, and presence-in-the-world. The pope warns that if we allow technology to define what is meaningful and rational, then moral judgments will be seen as subjective epiphenomena. Furthermore "ethics and religion lose their power to create a community" (#49). Their spokespersons then become shrill, impotent, irresponsible protesters against the crass *ananke*-like tyranny of supply and demand. If, on the other contrary, we refuse to banish the School of Hellas from Christendom, there are far more virile voices on our side to defend the integrity of the human soul. The quarrel between Athens and Jerusalem, both victims of an earlier globalization, is proved false and should not be allowed to exclude those pagan voices and minds that played an essential role in the building of civilization. Greek *eros* and poetry must not be exiled by censorious Roman legalism, a force with rather too close an affinity to power dynamics, property rights, and today's materialism. We should rather follow the example of the exiled Dante (who was after all following the example of the church fathers) and smuggle these pagan muses back into our tradition.

These three forces of fundamentalism, technology, and nihilistic humanitarianism all continue to exist as ravaging monsters spawned by the Roman Church's inability to come to terms with the Greek aspects of its origins. Each force began as a response to a genuine crisis within the church before then becoming a massive problem in its own right. But these issues can be corrected only when Christianity's Greek roots are recovered and not jettisoned, as the nihilistic humanitarians would have us do today. Benedict reminds us that "The New Testament was written in Greek and bears the imprint of the Greek Spirit" (#52). This retrieval of Hellenism can take place only through *logos*-bearing speech; it cannot occur through divine dispensation, magisterial diktat, or curial jargon. The ugly silence of the cave of technology must be broken by rational dialogic speech. This word is best heard in the sanctuary of an academic setting, at universities dedicated to recovering the unity of truth and knowledge. There, true happiness must be seen to issue from intellectual generosity and spiritual communion. The role of the university is thus to display this great truth to humanity.

When the pope celebrated the vitality of academic life at Regensburg, he was doing far more than indulging in septuagenarian nostalgia; he was

describing a place where all parties could enter into honest respectful dialogue with the intent of finding the truth, living the good life, and recovering a common love of the world. Such an academic ethos is the only possible setting in which the church can become honestly reacquainted with her Hellenic roots; legalistic curial bureaucrats and self-appointed guardians of fideism are usually too authoritarian, inflexible, or adversarial for the delicate process of negotiating with free-spirited humanists and recovering a *logos* of the original elements of the Christian tradition. This urgently needed conversation should not be hamstrung by a desire for short-term polemical advantage or silenced by the dead weight of past precedent. By setting a place at the high table for his brother academicians, Joseph Ratzinger suggests that intellectual probity and thoughtful religiosity belong together at all institutions of higher learning dedicated to recovering the splendor and unity of truth.

In today's universities crass bureaucratic necessity and irresponsible academic anarchism are typically in constant conflict. Consequently there is minimal concern shown toward either the discovery of truth or its cultivation. Because of an emphasis on jargon, technique, and specialization, knowledge is no longer synthesized in the human mind; there are very few academics with a broadly informed understanding of how the various areas of human knowledge hang together. Many postmodern humanists seem to be trying to pass a sort of inverted Turing test, one that requires their work to be as pseudo-scientific as possible, even though their paradigms conform only to the obsolete categories of nineteenth-century positivism. Believing that "only the kind of certainty resulting from the interplay of mathematical and empirical elements can be considered scientific," they are certain that the human sciences must "attempt to conform themselves to this canon of scientificity" (#45).

Conversely, and even more strikingly, many believing intellectuals practice a flat-footed fideism and maintain the strictest separation between their "double truths" of unreflective faith and instrumental thought. But though such a stoic stance is quite consistent with Roman legalism, making it quite easy for the same person to praise God and service Mammon, still "God does not become more divine when we push him away from us in a sheer, impenetrable voluntarism" (#27). It does not suffice to aver resolutely that Jonah was swallowed by a whale; this only makes us more prone to obey power mindlessly and less likely to live by the teachings of "the truly divine God...who has revealed himself as *logos* and, as *logos*, has acted and continues to act lovingly on our behalf" (#27). Blindly praising God's irrational will and unlimited power confirms every charge of

irresponsibility leveled against religion by fundamentalism's deadly adversary, the technological juggernaut that corrupts the university and causes the state to wither away. By discrediting reason and giving rise to antirational humanitarian nihilism, this deadly struggle between angry fundamentalism and violent technology suggests that happiness is incompatible with the burden of the *logos* and justifies the spawning of the Last Man.

The pope challenges the university to reverse this dismal trend and set both church and society on a nobler path. He looks forward to a scientific spirit that by "broadening our concept of reason and its application" (#56) may embody "the will to be obedient to the truth," an attitude essential to the Christian spirit (#55). This reversal can happen only if "reason and faith come together in a new way," one that will "overcome the self-imposed limitation of reason to the empirically falsifiable" and "once more disclose its vast horizons" (#56). This coming together must also combine both senses of the word *logos*, as reason and speech respectively, in contrast to fundamentalism, which employs speech against reason; technology, which is reified reason without speech; and nihilistic humanitarianism, which uses speech and finds reasons to follow the bleak advice of Job's wife: it would "curse God and die."

In Benedict's vision, conversely, the re-Hellenized university must be a place where cultivated human beings discover and celebrate the beauty and bounty of the created universe, where they can reconnect with the great cosmic mysteries that are being discovered every day by pure scientists. In keeping with the spirit of Attic tragedy, re-Hellenized scholars will confront the darkest texts and issues of bygone times with honesty and responsibility; legalistic literalism and blind loyalty to the past must not be allowed to poison the future. As with Joseph and his brothers, old mistakes must be admitted to, atoned for, and forgiven. The truth must out.

By his stirring account of the divine *Logos* and his lively vindication of the power of human rationality as its bearer and interlocutor, Joseph Ratzinger, Pope Benedict XVI, has reaffirmed the dignity of the human person. Rejecting both the "Death of Man" proclaimed by postmodernism and the misanthropic piety of fideism, he challenges the university to be true to its *logos*-bearing essence and come to the defense of the church and the world. We cannot let this rare opportunity slip. A new Pharaoh "who has not heard not of Joseph" could well be the precursor of a terrible new dark age made more sinister by the lights of perverted science.