

well-defined body of beliefs, of a religious faith expressed in a small number of well-defined Articles. The second assumption is: that the human mind is in possession—or at least in confident search—of a method by which these definite and generally accepted Articles of Faith can be rationalised and brought into reasoned connection with the large body of existing natural, scientific, and historical knowledge. These two assumptions, which formed as it were the background of all philosophical speculation in Germany for at least two-thirds of a century, beginning with the year 1770, cannot nowadays be safely taken for granted by any philosophical writer. Both require, to say the least, a preliminary justification based upon a searching analysis.

The task of mediating between two forms of knowledge, or between Knowledge and Faith, was first assigned to philosophy by Leibniz, whose whole literary career was characterised by the endeavour to do justice to different and frequently opposed schools of thought, of science, and of belief; throwing out manifold suggestions whereby a reconciliation might be brought about. In this respect the system of Leibniz, which was only adumbrated by its author but never carried out with any approach to consistency and completeness, stands in direct contrast to that of Spinoza, who put forward a compact body of doctrine which was at once his science, his philosophy, and his religion. For various reasons, which for our present purpose it is not necessary to enumerate, this compact and comprehensive philosophical creation of Spinoza was not at the time either appreciated or even understood. The many existing controversies,