sciences and to secure the moral order. The edifice finally gave way with Darwin's breakthrough and the impact of historical-critical approaches to the Bible in the nineteenth century. At this point, Fraser's narrative takes another bold turn. Having largely exhausted itself in Britain, the Protestant emphasis on the literal, univocal and perspicuous reading of the Bible migrates to colonial North America. There it combines with Scottish common sense philosophy and becomes the bedrock of a virulent strain of modernist Christian fundamentalism. As it evolves, this movement exploits a carefully calibrated distinction between 'theory' and 'fact', building a parallel quasi-scientific discourse in which divine activity is held to disrupt and substitute for 'natural' causal relations. The last plot twist brings the reader into the very recent past as 'new atheism' is found to share the hermeneutical assumptions of modern fundamentalism. While not putting it in these terms, Fraser describes what René Girard would label 'mimetic contagion', where opponents are steeped in a bitter rivalry over the same 'object' and scapegoats are sought to bring temporary relief. That many fundamentalists and new atheists converge on attacking Islam is not a coincidence from such a perspective.

To be convinced by Fraser's story, one has to be sympathetic to the methodology from the outset and there is a breathlessness to the book as rapid steps are taken across four centuries and two continents. Historians of a reductionist and empiricist bent are always ready to apply the scalpel of suspicion to such projects, tending to see sweeping genealogies as 'ideological'. Perhaps some would suspect a 'secret sympathy' with Hegel here as Fraser goes so far as to categorise new atheism as a 'negative Protestantism (p. 238), even though he insists that there is nothing necessary about this dialectic (p. 6). Charles Taylor's *Secular Age* and Brad Gregory's *Unintended Reformation* have faced similar attacks and endured. Collingwood is invoked in the opening chapter to assure readers that the gains of the genealogical methodology outweigh the losses, and Fraser seeks to head off at least some potential critics by being upfront in acknowledging the limitations of the methodology and by continuously clarifying the way he limits his genealogy to particular questions of Protestant hermeneutics and notions of divine action. At no point does Fraser deny that these concepts operate within textured forms of life. What results is a lively, readable and compelling narrative that achieves what it sets out to do. The book is well-grounded in historical fact yet, with Collingwood, breaks free of what he labelled the 'scissors and paste' approach to historical method.

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Brian J. Arnold, *Justification in the Second Century*

(Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017; Waco, TX: Baylor, 2018), pp. 236. $39.95.

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The Christian doctrine of 'justification', and especially 'justification by faith', is most closely associated with Paul in the first century and Luther in the sixteenth. Its

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Pauline formulation and Lutheran interpretation have been extensively studied, but if there was anything significant in between them, it has passed largely unnoticed. This is partly due to the influence of T. F. Torrance's little book on the *Doctrine of Grace in the Apostolic Fathers* (1959), in which he asserted that the doctrine of grace that Paul proclaimed did not survive into the apostolic era. Torrance owed the idea to Karl Barth, his *Doktorvater*, and Brian Arnold observes his significance in shaping subsequent discussion. While Arnold does not claim to be the first to critique this approach, he seeks to give the most sustained account yet of the 'presence' of the Pauline doctrine of justification in the apostolic fathers. His own study is organised by author, with a chapter each on 1 Clement, Ignatius, the Epistle to Diognetus, the Odes of Solomon and Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*. Each chapter presents a brief introduction to the text and significant issues of studying it, such as date, provenance and transmission history. The main part of the chapter is then devoted to a close reading of the passages that Arnold finds most significant for his theme. A concluding chapter draws together the findings. In this way, Arnold charts the scope and shape of the doctrine of justification in this period.

Justification in the Second Century participates in a wider trend of growing interest in the second century. It succeeds in drawing attention to the challenge of studying pre-Lutheran concepts of justification, and in highlighting salient texts across a range of different types of second-century Christian literature. Arnold brings out the diversity of genres, doctrines and emphases in the different texts that he studies. 1 Clement says *both* that one is justified not by words but by works (1 Clem. 30.3) *and* that all alike are justified through faith (1 Clem. 32.4). Ignatius' contribution is for the most part found to be only indirect, through his interpretation of love and perfection, as he mentions justification in a relevant way only once (Phld. 8.2). The Epistle to Diognetus, meanwhile, is explicit (Diog. 9.2–4). The Odes of Solomon stand out as a hymnic source for liturgical use, and include the line that 'he justified me by his grace' (Od. 29.5). Justin never names Paul, but he does cite Abraham as the type of justification by faith apart from works of the law (*Dial.* 23, 92). For a book that originated as a PhD thesis, Arnold's study is notably wide-ranging, thorough and well-written. However, it is the dreary duty of a reviewer also to note weaknesses.

In my view, the most significant issue lies in identifying the object of study, and its significance. Arnold poses the open-ended question, 'how did the second century fathers understand the doctrine of justification?' (p. 4), but in practice, he declines to be controlled by their use of terminology (*dik-* words), and instead seeks 'conceptual links' that suggest the 'concept of justification' (p. 5). However, the closest he comes to defining this 'concept' is a sentence on his first page, which describes the 'traditional Lutheran reading of Paul … that justification is forensic, which means that the sinner is declared righteous in God's sight by faith and found not guilty of sin' (p. 1). He does not allow himself to get drawn into the 'quagmire of Pauline studies' in order to explore Paul's own concept of justification, nor does he engage closely with Luther at first hand. To my mind, this leaves his study strangely etiolated. We repeatedly encounter a penumbra of terms that are widely associated with a Lutheran reading of Paul, such as 'justification', 'justification by faith', 'grace', 'forensic justification', 'Pauline', but there is no real grappling with Paul himself. Barclay's *Paul and the Gift* (2015), the most significant recent contribution to this debate, is not cited (cf. pp. 1–2, n. 4). Conversely, second-century authors are mined for passages that might show that the doctrine (whatever exactly it was) was 'present' in the second century. To my mind, this underplays questions of proportion: how much did this doctrine actually matter to these second-century

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authors, if they write of it so rarely and often ambiguously? In writing a history of doctrine, should we be focusing on what was 'present', or what was 'significant', and what is the relation between these?

The book is generally well-presented, but lengthier quotations from primary sources are given without the original language, and much significant information is relegated to lengthy footnotes.

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Balazs Mezi, *Radical Revelation: A Philosophical Approach*

(London: Bloomsbury, 2018), pp. xxvi + 362. £118.80.

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If the condition of possibility and ground for theology as *scientia* is divine revelation – the unveiling of something supernatural and inaccessible through natural cognitive means – then the attempt to think the nature of this revelation *as such* is plagued irredeemably by an impossible circularity: for any thinking on revelation would already have to presuppose (and have access to) the very revelatory content that is revelation. In the face of this challenge Mezei takes up the task of developing 'a comprehensive philosophical understanding of the notion of revelation' conceived as 'radical revelation'. In this regard, he distinguishes between an object-ive paradigm of revelation, that is, one whose *object* is the disclosure of a positive content in the modality of the historical and the epiphanic and conveyed by the authority of witnesses, religious text and tradition, on one hand; and a subject-ive paradigm of revelation, that is, a self-revelation without object, revelation as such as the subject of revelation. For Mezei, the impasse pertains properly to revelation as object only, while revelation as its own subject alone holds the potential for a way of access to any philosophical thinking about the notion of revelation as such.

How can revelation as such be thought, beyond its supernatural content? Without a banal distinction between natural and supernatural revelation, Mezei's proposal is for a 'radical' (derived from *radix*, i.e. root, or origin) consideration of revelation in its most fundamental moment as 'fact of revelation', the very condition for the possibility of revealed objects (revelation in the second sense). If God is the source of revelation, then the possibility of that manifestation is guaranteed by the truth of an *ad intra* or immanent revelation within the trinitarian economy: a revelation of God to God within godness, where there is not only the coincidence of subject and object as subject and the revelation of revelation in its full and rich communicative transparency, but there is also the discovery of revelation as an *essential* 'fact' of the divine nature. It is by virtue of this fact of the divine nature that there is an outwardly directed (*ad extra* or 'transcendent') revelatory movement in a mode of disclosure that is ontologically 'multilingual' by virtue of an all-encompassing kenotic understanding of revelation that is beyond the

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