

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*

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Victor Emma-Adamah

Faculty of Divinity, West Road, Cambridge (vue20@cam.ac.uk)

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

logocentricism of 'propositional revelation'. Revelation, thus, is a 'fact', a fact of divine action. Where propositional revelation has an inalienably epistemological character in that God communicates specific truths to inform minds able to receive and understand such truths, and thus constrains revelation within the ontological grammar of the representational and the verbally intelligible, radical revelation opens the way to a robust understanding of revelation as a metaphysical principle, a reality at once within God as within the natural order of things.

The notion of revelation as the truth of this divine double movement in the proposed concept of radical revelation in turn conditions various ontological commitments by placing these within the *ratio* of a self-revelatory divine activity. Further, it has consequential anthropological implications insofar as the operative notion of revelation holds presuppositions about the nature of the participants within its communicative relations. Radical revelation in this way introduces new perspectives on personhood, and this by an analogical transposition of the community of distinct persons within the unity of the Trinity within which revelation as such manifests.

Important then to Mezei's project is the recognition that the fact of revelation, in its expression in the notion of radical revelation – the thinking on the ultimate source – undergirds various modes of thought and culture. A recovery of this notion of revelation by an ordinary, that is, radical retrieval of its facticity presents a major moment for the renewal of thinking.

Mezei's work joins the growing literature and programs in very recent philosophy of religion to subject the theme of revelation to rigorous philosophical investigation and systematisation. In this regard, in a similar vein to Jean-Luc Marion's *Givenness and Revelation* (2016), there is the attempt to develop revelation beyond (and more fundamentally) the specificity of disclosed *supernaturalia* as positive content for theology, but to sketch the whole of reality as undergirded by a *logos* of manifestation and disclosure. Revelation, then, insofar as it is visible, is thought philosophically as the repeated analogue of the internal trinitarian movements and communication and its kenotic *ekstasis*, and in this sense acquires its speculative identity as a fundamental way of being. Where Marion's entry point is the visibility and experience of his proposed 'saturated phenomena', Mezei's approach lies more within a speculative metaphysics, though invoking the phenomenological at important turns, namely, to elaborate some implications of his notion of revelation.

Mezei's style is systematic and constructive, while being thoroughly analytical at points where this is required. Assuming little, it builds concepts, makes qualifications, flags relevant provisos and has the strength of repeatedly recapitulating the development of the work in helpful summative paragraphs. However, its exactitude is at once its strength and weakness. Mezei's is a 'busy' book with a fair amount of idiosyncratic qualifications, fascinating details and multiple subplots, not all of which equally advance the central line(s) of thought. The writer's style can be tedious and dry. However, with a persevering plod it holds the promise of several stimulating proposals as well as a rich reserve of humanistic erudition. Overall, the work represents a great achievement in the systematic philosophical articulation of revelation.

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