

Science and Spirituality: Making Room for Faith in the Age of Science. By Michael Ruse. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 264 pages. \$30.00.

Those who follow the developments over the last thirty years of the conversation between religion and science know that Michael Ruse has been involved as a pioneer in this work. He has done this despite the fact that he personally holds a view that would exclude from the conversation much of what the public thinks of as religious thinking. However, he has been in regular dialogue with religious thinkers who hold quite different views and has done so with a high level of respect for them as scholars and conversation partners. This has happened partly because those religious thinkers are both knowledgeable about and respectful of scientific developments and perspectives but also because he has held a view throughout that there is room for faith in an age of science. This book is an interesting and direct effort to explore how it is possible for a philosopher of science such as he is can hold to such a view.

The book is clear about how the discussion will unfold. Certain religious views, however popular they may be, will not be considered thoroughly because they will not or cannot respect the developments and overall positions dominant in science today. Still, this leaves a wide range of possible religious positions that can be partners at the table he has set, a table that begins with an assumption of a thoroughly naturalistic perspective regarding those questions about the physical world that science considers. Even with that assumption, Ruse accepts that there will likely be areas of ongoing contention, such as the area of miracles that he identifies in his concluding remarks. Thus, the conversation does not require complete agreement or resolution of all problems even if that were possible. Instead there is a need for open-endedness to consider a range of possible changes in thinking realizing that religious faith begins with certain beliefs that are not subject to change.

Much of this history reiterates the many attempts by scientists and theologians over the years to construct ways of thinking about science and religion in a constructive and interactive way. Ruse's most important contribution in this book may be his persistent effort to write a history, brief as it is, of all of the fundamental questions that emerge in the conversation, including a summary of some of the current views. The history, though clearly abbreviated, is thorough, seeking to trace ideas back into the ancient world and take up transformations of thinking that have occurred in different eras. To be sure, Ruse considers basically the history of thought in the Western world and even more specifically for the most part within Christianity. He is not ignorant of the wider world of thought in the East or among other religious traditions, but Ruse's book serves as a guide for doing a history of the relation between science and religion with care (from the viewpoint of a historian of science and from a philosopher of science).

So what does this effort accomplish? Apart from considering specific issues (homosexuality, for example), the book allows the reader to sort through possible religious ways of thinking that can respect the scientific world and how such thinking can be ready to accept criticism of views that are no longer viable given scientific advancements. The approach also indicates views that are not viable in

such a dialogue, such as the order of grace option he discusses in the book. Versions of this option cannot finally be acceptable given the state of contemporary science.

However, the most significant contribution of Ruse's history is that it shows that options exist within every religious tradition that are discovered throughout their histories that allow for alternative approaches. The historical approach can reveal those options as real paths for new possibilities, showing that there is no need to be left with a stalemate in the conversation. Although Ruse seems to be prepared to accept a modified version of Stephen J. Gould's notion of magisteria (that certain areas are the domain of science while other areas are the domain of religious thought), he is flexible enough in the end to suggest that conversation should continue even about those most challenging areas of potential disagreement. This leaves us with a book that allows for ambiguities and some openness to variety that may be unsettling for some but is enormously fruitful for most of us in the dialogue. Thus, we all should be happy for this new contribution from one of the true pioneers of the dialogue.

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Evagrius Ponticus and Cognitive Science: A Look at Moral Evil and the Thoughts. By George Tsakiridis. Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2010. 124 pages. \$17.00.

This book is a revision of the dissertation written by George Tsakiridis for the purpose of completing his degree in religion and science. I offer this review as a way of both examining it as a new work in the field of religion and science and considering the text as one of many to be produced by graduate students in religion and science. In this review I consider the merits of the argument of the book and its usefulness as a contribution to the science-and-religion conversation, but I also have in mind that it represents an important example of the growth of this field of study.

Tsakiridis takes up a challenge on several levels, each of which is difficult to sustain. His book thus suggests a division of objectives that may not neatly fit together, especially in such a short text. However, I take as its main point what is emphasized in the conclusion, that the book aims to show that the work of an ancient philosopher theologian often ignored in theological discussions, not to mention discussions of science and religion, offers important and valuable ways for the believing Christian to reconsider what to say about why or how people choose to do things that are evil even if their intentions are good. Even more, Tsakiridis says that the work of Evagrius Ponticus can help Christians to consider pathways to overcome tendencies toward evil and do the right thing. It is on this level that the author suggests a link with contemporary cognitive science and various contemporary treatments (practice) as they connect with the practices suggested by Evagrius as ways of overcoming the "eight thoughts."