

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."

At the heart of Evagrius's understanding of evil are these eight thoughts (linked to what Gregory the Great would label the seven deadly sins). These thoughts appear to be coming from the outside, as demons, but they are surely embedded in the human mind as real and individual thoughts. They have become familiar to us: gluttony, fornication, avarice, anger, sadness, *acedia*, vainglory, and pride. Clearly the distinction between forces from the outside (demons) and workings of the human brain as such creates the dilemma as to how to combat these thoughts, because such practices would need to be either ways of controlling the brain (levels of discipline) or means to counteract the external forces of evil. Naturally the study requires not only a way of reconstructing the thought of Evagrius but also some way of translating this into a cohesive understanding of evil.

If this were not enough for us, the project also wishes to connect the worldview of the ancient, which tends toward both a need for the supernatural and a tendency toward a spirit/body split, with contemporary science that is far more naturalistic and in recent years has become more sensitive to holistic views of the human.

Tsakiridis cleverly uses the work of Paul Ricoeur to attempt to do both of these projects by developing a picture of the origins of evil as thought and developing a view of the mythological that can help find a place for the supernatural in the context of contemporary naturalistic explanations. This part of the project is more challenging (requiring the use of a version of Ricoeur's notion of *second naivete*) because it is difficult to actually bridge worlds when the worldviews are so clearly different. All of this has to do with the aim of using Evagrius as a tool to enhance some portion of the science-and-religion dialogue—an honorable aim, but one that tends to move us into a vastly complicated project that differs from the one that seems to be at the heart of the book: giving Christians means for dealing with the personal level of human evil and finding practices of behavior that can help us combat those issues.

Even so, the book is worthy of attention partly because of its nature as a dissertation. It opens the door for the scholar to the various worlds of scholarship dealing with the projects of the book. Thus there is good reason to recommend it as an example of the kind of work that can be done within the expanding world of the science-and-religion dialogue and by students who are aiming to do in-depth study of aspects of this field. All of this happens when scholarly research is challenged not only to study the possible value of ancient thinkers but also to ask how such thought can be made consistent with contemporary science. That is the task we all are busy trying to explore.

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