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Thomas M. Crisp, Steven L. Porter, and Gregg A. Ten Elshof (eds.), *Neuroscience and the Soul: The Human Person in Philosophy, Science, and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), vii + 286 pp., \$38.00, paperback (ISBN 978-0-8028-7450-4).

This bundle of essays presents conversations between Anglo-Saxon philosophers with Christian commitments, a few theologians, and a neuropsychologist on the nature of the human person. Taking their starting point in the widespread conviction that a human being consists of body and soul, the editors have given defenders of monist and dualist positions equal space. The intended academic service is to sample, contribute to, and advance the debate about the existence of the soul. The first purpose expresses the editors' hope to reach nonspecialists, the last two demonstrate the ambition to challenge specialists.

The book comprises alternating academic conversations: an opening essay by scholar x, a critical response by scholar y, and a rejoinder by scholar x. An extensive index covers the authors included and cited in the book, as well as the range of topics touched upon. The twenty-one contributions are spread out over three parts capturing recent discussions on the mind-body problem in analytic philosophy, philosophical approaches to contemporary brain sciences, and theology.

In the first part, William Hasker presents his objections to materialist ontologies based on his 'unity-of-consciousness' argument: My conscious experience is unified. Therefore there is an 'I' who has these experiences. Respondent Timothy O'Connor does not share Hasker's concern to account ontologically for the experiencing subject. J.P. Moreland proceeds with a philosophical argument against the possibility of top-down causation: the idea that emergent properties of a complex object causally influence the behavior of the microparticles that compose the object. Neuropsychologist Jason Runyan responds, but Moreland explains himself again thereafter. Surely the reader has been thoroughly presented conflicting positions, but the promise of a dialogical experience is unfulfilled in this first part.

Richard Swinburne commences the second part with a criticism of the purported import of philosophical conclusions drawn by neuroscientists on the formation of our intentions. This is followed by Daniel Speak's modest response, which invites Swinburne to unfold his thesis further. The genuinely dialogical part of the book, in which one can imagine the differing parties conversing in the same room, follows this exchange. Here, Kevin Corcoran and Kevin Sharpe contend that the mystery of consciousness does not demand the

positing of a soul but can be trusted to have a natural explanation. At this point, Corcoran and Sharp distinguish methodological from metaphysical naturalism. Eric LaRock and Collins reply that Corcoran and Sharpe “plunk down a *physicalist promissory note*” (137) and, furthermore, that they have only dealt with easy problems of consciousness, instead of the hard problem of phenomenal consciousness. Corcoran’s and Sharpe’s response questions the predictive resources of dualism. In the second round of debate, LaRock unpacks the hard problem in relation to neuroscience and Corcoran and Sharpe tackle the meaning of ‘explaining.’ They proceed to argue that the answer to the question of how physical processes give rise to first-person subjective experience is forever beyond our reach; but they expect that a physical binding mechanism that physically grounds the first-person perspective will be found. LaRock finally maintains that phenomenal consciousness and the accompanying first-person view cannot be explained on empirical grounds.

A systematic theologian, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, is given the floor in the third part, on theology. He makes an effort to honor the analytic philosophical decorum, but then shifts to new terminology, introducing ‘multidimensional monism’ as a means to escape the philosophical dichotomies. Philosopher Stewart Goetz is quick to respond that Kärkkäinen does not present arguments against a contemporary dualist concept of the soul. Notwithstanding the fact that Goetz’s concerns are appropriate in this philosophical theater, the fact that Kärkkäinen is judged on his philosophical merits is illustrative of the focus of the volume. Both the order (philosophy—philosophy in relation to neuroscience—theology) and the match of Kärkkäinen to a philosopher in an arena already dominated by philosophers leave little space for hermeneutic theological approaches to the soul. Can theologians only offer afterthoughts on an absolutely prior philosophical core? Ironically, John Cooper’s philosophical approach to hermeneutics thwarts a dialogue with Brian Lugioyo in the final essays. Although the philosophical concentration is representative of discussions on the soul in its American (Christian) academic context, it does not help to uncover the theological potential of the debate, which demands more hermeneutical sensitivity. This third part of the volume consequently illustrates the difficulty of discussing the soul both philosophically and theologically.

The predominance of analytical philosophical methods thus hinders an interdisciplinary dialogue. Also, those not already familiar with the theme and its terminology will only manage to read the lucid introduction. Nevertheless, the philosophical focus pays off in Part Two, where the dialogical format truly serves the purpose of advancing the discussion. In brief, rigor and diversity of philosophical stances characterize this fine collection of essays. By all means,

this book demonstrates that the soul remains a topic that merits philosophical and theological reflection.

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