

Emergent creationism: another option in the origin of the soul debate

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Abstract: In the debate over the theology of the soul's origin, there have traditionally been three broad views on origins. These include creationism, traducianism, and Origen's pre-existence view. In the recent philosophy of religion and mind literature, William Hasker posits an alternative view of origins called emergent substance dualism. As a contribution to this discussion, I put forward one novel option as a *via media* between simple creationism and Hasker's emergent substance dualism, wherein it has relevant overlapping features found in the two contrary positions. I suggest that this view is a variation of creationism like emergentism where the material part (i.e. the brain) has some positive causal role in the soul's coming to be as a discrete effect of one divine cause. I argue that emergent creationism (as I call it) is a viable option deserving the attention of philosophers and theologians.

Theology of the soul's origin

The theology of the soul's origin has received much attention in the history of Christian thought, and rightly so for it touches on many important doctrinal loci. There have been, primarily, three views on the origin of the soul throughout Christian thought, namely, creationism, traducianism, and the Origenistic pre-existence of the soul.¹ Recently, another view, has found its way into the discussion. This view is a kind of emergentism called emergent substance dualism made popular by William Hasker.² As a contribution to the theological and substance dualism literature, I seek to put forward a fifth view on the soul's origin that deserves more attention in the philosophical and theological literature. The view I put forward might be construed as a novel sort of creationism or a more finely grained and careful rendering of a variation of special soul-creation.

Either way, it maintains important creationist intuitions and has some of the benefits of emergent substance dualism of the Haskerian variety. Before I offer my view of the soul's origin, I need to situate the discussion, however briefly.

As stated, there are three traditional views on origins, and one relatively new view. I will spend relatively little time on two of the views – traducianism and Origen's pre-existence theory.³ Traducianism is the notion that souls following the creation of the first pair (i.e. Adam and Eve) successively generate additional souls (i.e. diachronically not synchronically) where souls are parturient or fissile.⁴ By Origen's pre-existence theory, I mean to convey the idea that souls exist prior to the creation of the world in some heavenly state and only enter into the respective body/brains after the fall of man. For purposes here, I am most interested in the special or immediate creation view and emergent substance dualism made popular by William Hasker. Special creationism (hereafter SC) is the view that God creates the soul directly and immediately.⁵ He may do this by creating the soul, then attaching or infusing that soul to a particular material aggregate (body and brain); or, alternatively he may directly create the soul in the body.⁶ Emergent substance dualism, according to Hasker, is the notion that souls exist potentially in physical matter, so that upon suitable material configuration a novel soul as substance emerges. This substance is *sui generis* in nature and is sufficiently distinguishable from the material aggregate. I construe this view as a form of substance dualism with materialist origins because the capacity or disposition for conscious stuff or souls exists in physical matter (hereafter ESDMO). The view I put forward can be construed as a form of emergence yet is also clearly a variation of soul-creationism; thus I call it emergent creationism (hereafter EC).

I proceed as follows. First, I offer an initial description for EC as distinguishable from both SC and ESDMO. Second, I attempt to motivate the discussion by, briefly, situating my view in a Thomist metaphysics of creation. This I do for the purposes of making the claim that metaphysically there is space for divine activity that is more dynamic and continuous with the physical or natural order. Third, I put forward a few iterations on substance dualism that naturally fit EC. Fourth, I consider some of the benefits of EC. Finally, I summarize the findings.

Emergent-creationist soul (a hybrid view)

At first sight, emergentism and creationism seem to be disjunctive terms. If the terms are taken to reflect the language of Hasker concerning emergentism and creationism, then the two terms do in fact seem incompatible. Hasker's ESDMO is the notion that physicality has the capacity or disposition to give rise to a soul without divine aid.⁷ Creationism is incompatible with this kind of emergence. However, if one takes emergence as the manner and mode by which something comes to be, then the two terms are not necessarily incompatible.⁸

On SC, by way of stipulation, I suggest that God creates souls directly and immediately. God is directly the cause in the sense that he utilizes no other cause to bring about the soul. Thus, God is the terminus of the causal chain. By immediate, I mean that divine action is without mediation through other causes or events. For the creationist, the creation of the soul is directly rooted in a divine choice-event, not a process that exists prior to the choice-event or the mere event of soul-emergence.⁹ Some examples of SC or some similar view seem to be found in Peter Lombard and, more explicitly in John Foster. Peter Lombard, it seems, articulates something along these lines: 'The Catholic Church teaches that souls are created at their infusion into the body.'¹⁰ A contemporary example of this kind of creationism that might fit with much of Christian tradition is John Foster. Foster insists on the metaphysical relationship of the body and soul as a brute (irreducible) fact grounded in a personal explanation and argues further for the view that it must be divinely caused not generated. Thus, there is a direct and vertical link/relation between the divine and human on this view of origins. Foster explains it this way:

An apparent difficulty for the Cartesian view is that there seems to be no remotely plausible way of accounting, in natural terms, for the existence and functional role of the postulated nonphysical subjects. Biological life begins at conception, when an ovum and a sperm fuse to produce a new unitary organism. However, it is hard to see how this process, or the subsequent development of the organism, could create an additional nonphysical substance and functionally attach it to the organism in the relevant way. The answer, it seems to me, is that we should explain these things by appeal to the creative role of God. . . . it is God who creates the nonphysical subjects and arranges for their functional attachment to the appropriate organisms; and, at least in the case of human beings, theology can offer some account of God's purpose for doing this, and of why that purpose is rationally appropriate to his nature. . . . Theism enables the Cartesian to explain the existence and role of the nonphysical subjects; and, because this is the only satisfactory explanation, the argument for the Cartesian view becomes itself a powerful argument for the existence of God.¹¹

It is important to note that Foster's argument begins with the relationship between the body and soul, and then moves to the actual existence of the soul as explanatorily grounded in God. On this view, there is not an obviously natural connection between the two concrete parts such that the soul requires an explanation outside physical processes. Arguably, this explanation is rooted directly in a divine choice-event. I would suggest that this option on the origin of the soul gives us no direct reason for thinking that the soul exists in a particular mode or manner. Instead, the soul just does exist at the moment God creates the soul and attaches or infuses it into a body like a person who fashions RAM comprised of small memory chips and places them into a slot of the computer motherboard. SC, then, is a distinctive theoretical option in the origin of souls. The picture SC gives us is different from the variation of soul-creation I put forth, and SC is probably the mental picture that many have of soul-creation.

On ESDMO, the direct cause of the soul's existence is the physicality that ushers the soul into being. In one sense, God would then become a remote cause of the soul where soul-occurrence is explicated in terms of physical evolution. Thus, we have two very different pictures of origins.

EC offers a different picture of origins. The soul is a divine choice-event that is direct. Thus, the defender of EC can affirm a creationist intuition that souls cannot come into existence solely by physical processes of evolution, but require a higher rational cause – namely God. Instead, God really is the cause of the soul's existence, yet the soul's causal origin comes to exist in a specified manner. This is to say that God designs the world in such and such a fashion that particular souls will exist at particular times via the physical aggregate. In this way, the soul is directly created by God, but the soul comes to be only in the way it functions and exists as a complete human nature. This form of soul-creation, one might argue, includes a form of mediation, yet not the kind of mediation descriptive of traducianism or ESDMO, but a kind of mediation where God's creation of a soul comes into being at a particular time with or dependent upon the physical aggregate. On EC, then, there are necessary conditions for the soul's coming to be, but not necessarily sufficient conditions. Souls coming to exist necessarily depend upon the physical aggregate in which they exist and function, yet this is not a sufficient condition for the soul's existence and nature. In this way, EC is similar to ESDMO in that the physical aggregate has a positive causal role in the souls coming to be. This, then, has implications for the soul's origin and gives a different picture than both SC and ESDMO. In order to motivate the discussion, I situate EC in a broadly Thomist metaphysics of creation.

Thomist metaphysics of creation

As I see it, EC situated in a broader Thomist view of creationism allows for a more dynamic view of creation and a more continuous view of soul-creation with the physical/natural order. What I have in mind is similar to Thomist creationism or resembles it in important respects. This is not to say that the defender of EC must be committed to Thomist variations, but it offers resources for thinking about soul-creation. My purposes here are not historical as they are a way of motivating EC.

Some authors have referred to Thomas's version of soul-creation as a kind of emergent creationism.¹² Having said this, this view has received very little attention and lacks the clarity necessary to distinguish it from SC and ESDMO. Two authors, namely William Hasker and Brian Leftow, have referred to Thomas's view as an instance of divine occasionalism. Leftow states:

By a continuous rearranging of live matter (we'd now say: by the brain's development), the human fetus becomes able to host the human soul, i.e. develops the full material base for the capacity to think in (what Thomas thinks is) the soul-requiring way. At that point, the capacity

becomes present, and with it the individual(s) it requires. So if we leave God out of the picture, the Thomist soul is an 'emergent individual.' . . . The law-like way brain-development leads to souls' appearance may make it look like the brain's development causally accounts for the soul's appearance, but in this one case, Thomas is (as it were) an occasionalist.¹³

The idea is that there is a lawlike nature between the brain and the souls coming to exist – according to physical event causation. Assuming this in conjunction with creationism would entail a denial of physical causal realism and an affirmation of occasionalism, according to Hasker and Leftow, because in this one case the lawlike relation between the material aggregate and the soul's coming to be is really just a manifestation of direct divine causal activity.¹⁴ However, this seems to paint a picture of Thomas's view that is simply inaccurate if we understand his metaphysics of causation and creation.

First, Thomas's metaphysics of creation situates the soul's coming to exist in a dynamic causal structure. What this means is that the physical order of causes and effects are themselves, already, embedded in a causal framework. Assuming Thomist principles for contemporary times, this means that physical evolution itself is embedded in a causal framework and does not stand alone, as with the picture given above in the quotation from Leftow. There is no sense in which you can actually extricate God. Divine causal activity is always present in, through time, and with the physical order.

Second, this causal framework is inclusive of four causes, namely, efficient, formal, material, and final. These causes exist in a dynamic framework and are productive principles by which God causally conserves and concurs with the natural events. Kathryn Tanner helpfully summarizes the Thomistic metaphysics of creation as follows:

The end exists only in virtue of efficient causality and exerts an influence as final cause only because of the act of an efficient cause tending towards it. Similarly, a formal cause achieves actuality, in determining matter to be a particular kind, only through efficient causality. All other order of causality as Thomas understands them are in potency, therefore, vis-à-vis the founding acts of efficient causes.¹⁵

Hence, we have dynamic causal structures on Thomas's view.

Third, God utilizes secondary causes (i.e. created causes that are caused causes) in creation. In this way, God creates and designs these secondary causes to carry out a particular causal order. That means that secondary causes have a principle of operation. In this dynamic, it seems that God works in, with, and through these secondary causes.

Fourth, divine creation is one act with discrete effects. This means that all organisms are created by one divine act in a particular order. So it could be with souls. God could be said to create souls directly, as in SC, yet mediated via the physical aggregate. The mediation is efficiently caused by God, yet the soul comes into existence with and/or dependent upon the physical aggregate. Again, this mediation is not to be confused with traducianism or ESDMO.

Finally, a different picture of soul-creation is available on a broadly Thomist view. On a broadly Thomist creationism, accidental changes and substantial changes can exist in the natural order according to productive principles (i.e. efficient/ultimate, formal, material, and final causality). I argue, on this basis, that we have a picture where God is dynamically and intimately involved in the affairs of the world in conjunction with soul-creation. Souls, on this picture, exist continuously with the natural order of causes. Distinctively, EC has an advantage over SC and the apparent picture on substance dualism (generically construed) where these give us a picture that does not necessitate soul-creation's continuity with physical causes and effects.

Whilst I think Thomist metaphysics of creation help motivate an alternative picture of God's dealings with the world and with soul-creation, I do not think a defender of EC must commit him/herself to everything Thomas affirms. Neither, does this require a Thomist variation of substance dualism.¹⁶ I move on to explore variations of substance dualism that fit naturally within EC, whereby God directly creates souls that only come into existence with or upon the particular physical aggregate.

Various substance dualism iterations of EC

Having established a Thomist creational metaphysic, I have argued that EC as a view of origins is situated in a metaphysical framework that is dynamic. With Thomas, creationists assume that souls are wholly non-material and not able to come from physicality or physical processes, yet must be directly created by God. Additionally, this metaphysical perspective has openness with respect to when and, precisely, in what manner the soul comes to exist. This is possible in a Thomist metaphysical framework or something resembling it. Now, I wish to consider some reasons for thinking that the soul only comes into being as part of a composite or compound structure.

I suggest there are two positive causal roles the physical aggregate might play in the soul's coming to be. First, the physical aggregate may be a kind of passive receptor for the soul. This means that the physical aggregate still has a positive causal role to play, according to EC. Analogously, we have examples of something like this receptacle view. The interaction between ink and paper suggest that the paper has some positive role in the ink's coming to be. Additionally, one example given by Stump is of the enzyme catalysing protein. The enzyme exists independently and in a configuring manner to make it active in a dynamic structure (i.e. as a part of a larger whole).¹⁷ Second, it may be that the order of operation is embedded by God in the broader causal framework of the natural order. This is not to say that physicality is simply endowed with the disposition for soul-emergence, taking God out of the picture, but to say that there is a broader

causal framework where divine activity is present with physicality in the natural order. From here, I move on to various iterations of EC.

I put forward two differing EC iterations and two distinct variations of each view. First, I put forward a dynamic-structures soul view. A dynamic-structures soul view is a kind of compound substance dualism in contrast to pure or composite substance dualism. On this view, the soul comes to exist in an appropriate dynamic structure where the soul functions according to the physical arrangement (i.e. bodily/neural part). A distinct variation of this view is a dependent-Cartesian soul view, the notion that souls intimately depend upon the neural arrangement that mediates the soul's existence. Second, I put forward a complex-configuration soul view. On this view, we have a form of composite substance dualism distinct from compound and Cartesian dualism. Naturally, the soul exists as a structured entity that unites with the physical part – hence a complete human nature. Similar yet distinct, I suggest that we can conceive of a soul that comes to exist in virtue of two parts composing an individualized human nature (construed in terms of powers not property-universals). Call this the Thomist-powers soul view.

One view affirms that the soul is created directly by God, but only obtains when the brain reaches a specified level of complexity for hosting a soul (call this the dynamic-structures soul view).¹⁸ A soul on this view is dependent upon a material whole for which the soul-part and physical part become one dynamic structural unity. This would seem to require some variety of compound dualism or, possibly, composite substance dualism whereby the soul depends in an intimate manner upon a sufficiently complex brain and may not interact with the physical world until the physical/neural part begins to exist. It may be, then, that the functionality of the soul occurs when the body becomes the host for the soul. The soul would not be a complete substance (in a broad sense of substance) in the sense that it does not form a complete human nature. On this view, it seems that a sufficiently complex human brain/body implies a soul, because there is no reason to think that a human body would not have a soul. In a Thomistic metaphysic of creation there is a continuity that would not seem to allow for the discontinuity that souls would come to exist without their bodies or that human bodies would not have souls. The two concrete parts exist as a full and complete human nature.

One construal of a modified Cartesianism yields a form of emergent creationism. A modified Cartesianism says that persons are souls and the neural part that is the secondary agent for those souls gives rise to a human person in the process of the gametes coming together at syngamy (call this the dependent-Cartesian soul view). If we take the soul to have a dependent relation on the brain, then this is not necessarily a version of hylomorphism wherein the soul and body are constituents of one existing entity, namely a human person. One could situate this view in a broad Thomistic metaphysics of creation (or some similar metaphysic) whereby God works through, with, or over secondary causation, but divine causality is ultimately responsible for actualizing human nature.

Having said this, the Cartesian is not required to affirm a full-blown Thomistic metaphysics of causation concerning form and matter. This requires further development.

If God created the soul logically prior (not metaphysically, actually, or naturally prior) to the soul's supervening on or arising from the brain yet its proper order or manner of being is with the bodily aggregate (i.e. as a concrete part of the whole compound structure), then this cannot be SC.¹⁹ The physical or neural correlate is necessary for the soul's emergence in the physical world. Therefore, the soul emerges from the brain in virtue of a sufficiently complex brain or merely an existent brain, but the brain is not a sufficient causal explanation for what the soul is by nature – instead there could be a lawlike dependence relation of soul on the neural-body arrangement. God is the cause of the soul, having created it directly, but it only obtains in time or as a temporal effect in relation to the physical (i.e. somatic or neural) part.

One might construe this relationship between souls and their bodies/brains along teleological lines. Teleo-functional properties are those properties, I suggest, that are internal to the soul and are dispositional in nature.²⁰ Without the body/brain in place, the soul would not function properly and specific functions naturally attributable to the human soul would lie dormant. It is important to emphasize, at this point, that this is not a form of hylomorphism. Yet it does share some important elements with it because the soul requires the body to function with respect to its sensual powers and, possibly, other powers. The functionality of the soul requires the neural and somatic arrangement, hence we have a variation of a compound substance dualism that is also emergentist in nature. Arguably, the soul only comes to exist in the manner in which it is actualized in a full human nature. Thus, on this modification of Cartesianism there are necessary conditions for the emergence of souls/persons and a sufficient condition whereby God somehow creates the soul directly with the physical part or through the physical part.²¹

One can articulate the second iteration in different ways depending on how one construes the relationship between the soul and body and the nature of a human soul. To begin, let us consider one variety that is, arguably, a position that finds some support in Christian tradition and is a version of composite substance dualism.

Some have argued that Thomas's view or a broadly Thomistic view is a kind of composite substance dualism, and this would fit an emergent-creationist view of the soul. On Thomas's account, to all appearances the soul/mind seems to emerge from a sufficiently developed brain.²² Thomas's view could be a version of emergent creationism in that the human soul is not generated from pre-existing stuff or from a previous soul, but God creates something with or through the physical organism and has some causal influence over it. As a result, there is a dynamic interaction between God's instantiating a 'rational soul' in the body and

the material stuff that contributes to the emergence of a human nature (call this the complex-configuration soul view). For the human person, the emergent process is a dynamic between the animal body and God's causal activity with it.²³ The previous souls/forms of bodies that come about in evolution, on Thomas's view, are reorganized and transformed by the soul.²⁴ There would, then, seem to be some kind of emergence taking place whereby some new thing comes to exist or emerges from the composite of the 'rational soul' and the body. It may be that a new human soul emerges or a complete human substance emerges. This human substance is a result of the soul causally transforming or replacing the previous form of the body, thereby bringing about a new soul. This is sufficiently distinct from a Cartesian-esque version cited above whereby the soul emerges or suitably depends upon a sufficiently complex neural structure as its base whereby new properties emerge. In a sense, this view requires the soul/form for a person to be present. Hence, the kind of emergence is reversed.

On this variation of Thomism, it does not seem that the physical aggregate from physical evolution is sufficient for causing a 'rational soul'. In fact, the 'rational soul' is the kind of thing that requires a different causal explanation of origins. This is so because rational activity is higher than and distinct from bodily or neural acts. Patrick Lee and Robert George in discussing Hasker's emergent substance dualism argue that the soul requires a different kind of causal emergence from Hasker's version of emergence. They state:

As Aquinas points out, an entity can come to be only in the manner in which it exists; if it exists through itself (not dependent on the whole of which it is a part), then it can only come to be through itself (though caused by another), that is, directly, not through the coming to be of another. Hence, the human soul must be directly caused to be, not produced through the coming to be of the whole (the human being) of which it is a part.²⁵

On the Lee and George view the human person is one unified animal, hence on their articulation of Thomas's view we do not have substance dualism but a form of 'animalism' that is also a form of creationism.²⁶ Additionally, the soul comes to exist in the way that it comes to function or is actualized as a being.²⁷ What is interesting about the Lee and George view is the fact that the brain cannot create the soul. God must causally intervene to bring about a human person. Without discussing what Thomas affirmed, I believe that a broadly Thomistic view that has some emergent elements and is a form of creationism does not entail animalism. I believe Thomas's view is a form of composite substance dualism. If in fact the two concrete parts, body and soul, are distinct, and the soul can persist without the body, then we can have a form of composite substance dualism. It seems that Thomas affirms a distinction in virtue of the soul existing independently as a modal possibility, hence substance dualism.²⁸ Furthermore, if a broadly Thomist view holds to a Platonic or Augustinian view of the immaterial part or an Aristotelian soul as form, then one would have substance dualism.²⁹ It may be that

the new substance is new in a *sui generis* sense or that the substance reorganizes with the immaterial part. The former would hold to the strongest form of emergence that intimately depends upon divine soul-creation of a rational nature situated in a dynamic causal context and complex configuration.³⁰ The latter would hold to a weaker form of emergence, namely the emergence of new properties and powers – hence a complete human nature, arguably. Both would fit into a metaphysics of creation whereby God created the soul that emerges from a suitable bodily/brain aggregate as a discrete temporal effect. Having said this, I am not suggesting that this is in fact Thomas's view, but it is broadly construed as a modified form of Thomism or in agreement with aspects of Thomism. It is also a form of creationism and emergentism.³¹ Both could be instances whereby the soul comes from the bodily aggregate and God creates the soul as its primary cause.

Another variation in terms of powers is broadly Thomistic. One could interpret Thomas's view or a view that is broadly Thomist as a form of composite substance dualism in terms of natures as 'powers' not necessarily properties construed as universals (call this the Thomist-powers soul view).³² On this view, human nature is composed of two concrete parts that are not complete as a substance until they unite as one nature. Moreover, natures are powers that are dispositional and obtain when the appropriate parts are united. When the parts unite the two become a unity, or in this case, an individualized human nature. On this variation, a human nature is a composite of body and soul, such that, when the two parts unite, through an enforming relation a new *sui generis* nature or substance emerges, with powers. For example, these powers include freedom of the will, consciousness, and moral awareness. These are distinctive powers of a human nature. The body exists through physical generation, but physicality alone does not generate an immaterial part. The immaterial part could be the concrete part God creates that is situated in a dynamic causal process and a complex configurative state. When the two unite, a human nature emerges as an individualized substance that is complete in nature. This is one manner in which to interpret Thomas's composite dualism that is arguably a kind of substance dualism, emergentism, and creationism. This version of creationism has many of the benefits found in ESDMO and may have some benefits of its own. There are other views that could be a form of emergent creationism. Emergent creationism, then, is sufficiently different from the version of emergence from a material thing alone.

Summarizing the highlights of EC

First, I argue that EC has an advantage with respect to the mystery surrounding personal existence. Given the above, EC could account, it seems, for evolutionary development, the neural similarities between higher-level animals,

and the tight connection between mind and brain because of the dynamic structure in which souls and/or a complete human nature comes to exist, which gives a picture of continuity between souls and the natural order.³³ It is also a version of creationism because it requires some kind of direct involvement on the part of God. In light of this, EC seems to have an immediate advantage over ESDMO with respect to the mysterious nature of individual human emergence, because with ESDMO there is no explanation of how physicality gives rise to consciousness or a conscious subject.³⁴ There is something deeply mysterious about emergentism where the self emerges from physical stuff alone and exists potentially in matter.³⁵ A defender of EC can, arguably, better handle this mystery. This leads to the notion of miracles concerning souls.

Second, I argue that EC does not involve a miraculous event. On the EC view, it could be that the emerging self is an instance of what some would consider a miracle similar to the resurrection within divine providence.³⁶ However, it seems that on a Thomistic metaphysics of causation/creation this is not a miracle on a par with SC where God intervenes in the causal nexus of physical laws (assuming one of the modern views whereby physical laws are regularities of succession). The soul/mind emergence requires a cause beyond naturalistic explanation and human agency in a different way than the view of SC offered above. Instead, this view does not violate laws of nature (again assuming a modern view of laws) nor does it require a random divine act like that of other miracles (e.g. turning water to wine, the physical resurrection, or physical healing). The occurrence of the soul in time is a discrete effect of God's creative act. In the end, it is not necessary to assume there is a violation of physical law. Instead, soul-occurrence is common (not random), yet physical generation of souls seem to provide an inadequate grounding for soul-occurrence. The creative act of the soul occurs in natural order, yet physical processes alone do not causally ground or fully explain this event. Hence, we could say that this event of souls coming to be is unique in contrast to other natural events, but not necessarily a miracle comparable to the physical resurrection. This leads to the natural relationship between body and soul.

Third, I argue that EC has the advantage of providing a more natural and non-*ad hoc* unity relation between soul and body in contrast to pure varieties of dualism and SC. One might argue that this provides an adequate story for compound/composite dualism and the unity of the body and soul. This would apply to either hylomorphic variations of the soul or non-hylomorphic variations without sliding into a pure variety of substance dualism. On hylomorphic variations, the soul has intrinsic potency and exists in the physical body. On non-hylomorphic variations, this is not the case. Arguably, according to Cartesian compound dualists, the two concrete parts are substances in their own rights yet in relation to the other find completion for human nature. This moves beyond some sort of causal interaction to positing a union in terms of the telos of the

natures intrinsic to both body and soul, respectively. Thus, similar to hylomorphism there is a teleological explanation that brings about a union between the two concrete parts. The difference is that the soul is not intrinsically material nor has material, but has an overlap of properties or being that allow this union to occur. The causal history of both body and soul is such that they come to exist together as one unit (i.e. mereological aggregate), and the natural habitat of both is union with the other. This is not the same as saying both parts are essential for the surviving soul/person, even if there is reason to affirm the fact of the original existence including both body and soul.

While both parts have some relation to generation, they do not exist in the same way, as argued above concerning ESDMO. It seems that on both views a human body is generated physically and the individualized soul comes into existence immediately upon the human body (and brain) reaching some level of physical and neural complexity or when the appropriate genetic materials unite. On SC, the soul just is created directly and immediately by God and attached to the body or created in the body. Divine arbitration or mental-physical laws that God establishes in the design and structure of the world establish the soul – body relation. On EC, it is true to say that God creates the soul directly, but it seems that there is some causal relation the soul has to the body that is part of the warp and woof of the created world. This causal relation is not one of physicality causing the soul to exist, but it seems to have the secondary causal role of functionality or existence of the soul. The soul then comes to be via the body. What this means in terms of origin and the nature of the soul is significant.

EC, then, provides a natural and/or more intuitive basis for the soul – body union in contrast to an *ad hoc* basis. The body then serves as a kind of base for soul functioning. The two parts have the same origin or a very intimate relationship to that origin. The body also provides the functional apparatus for the soul. This story provides a fuller picture of the compound or composite nature of the soul and the body by fleshing out the relationship of the soul to the body.³⁷

Two unwelcome conclusions follow from the SC variation of soul-creation, because of the problem of ‘gappyness’. First, it seems conceivable that God could create a human soul that does not become embodied at any time. Second, it seems conceivable that a human body could come into existence yet not a human soul. This seems very odd, contrary to appearances, and seems to have problematic implications.³⁸

All of the variations on the mind–body relation and human nature listed above fit naturally within a metaphysics of creation where God is dynamically involved in the physical creation (not merely a causal part) through secondary causation. As I have said, in EC, the soul requires a unique and higher cause beyond the physical order, but comes to exist by, with and/or through the physical aggregate (i.e. human body/brain).

Theological benefits from emergent creationism

First, EC offers one theological benefit when ascribing a positive causal role to the parents in the procreative act. A common and intuitive objection to SC is that no positive causal role can be ascribed to the parents of a child. The objection is that God is the direct and immediate creator of the soul, such that there appears to be no other explanatory role available.³⁹ At most, on SC, parents have a positive causal role in producing the physical aggregate to which God happens to attach a particular soul. However, there is a theological problem for SC. SC seems to undermine the intuition that parents have some positive causal role in the production of children. EC is different. As I explained above, the production of the soul on EC occurs in the natural order of causes and effects, such that the physical aggregate has a mediating role for the soul's coming to be. Thus, while soul-existence is highly specified and uniquely points beyond itself, it still takes place within the natural process. Consequently, human beings are justified in holding the belief that they have some positive causal role in the production of children.

Second, defenders of EC have the resources to avert another potential objection against SC from the arbitrary relation of soul and body. On SC there is no reason to suppose this soul should be related to the body with which it interacts. The relationship of the soul to the body is completely arbitrated by divine choice on SC, yet this is not so on EC. Defenders of EC can respond by claiming that souls exist in the natural order of causes and effects, such that we have a metaphysical accounting for the soul – body relationship, which satisfies our basic experiences of being embodied. And this is so because of the teleological relationship souls have to bodies where souls exist in a dynamic structure.

Another related problem occurs for the defender of SC. On SC, it is conceivable that some soul could come to exist without a body or some body without a soul. Apart from divine ethical problems, there is no metaphysical reason to deny this possibility. Once again, EC has an advantage in that souls come to exist and function in a structure as a part of a compound structure or as a part of a composite entity such that it is natural to assume that where there is a human body there is a soul.

EC has advantages over ESDMO. First, while it is unlikely that the physical could produce souls, there is the advantage of grounding souls in a higher cause. Whilst the notion of affirming human uniqueness from other organisms in terms of souls is becoming an unpopular belief, it is a doctrinal belief that finds much traction in the Christian tradition.⁴⁰

Second, there is an obvious objection to ESDMO from the Christian tradition. ESDMO does not fall under any traditional categories on the debate of the origin of the soul. Philosophers and theologians with ecclesiastical ties should be reticent to affirm such a position at variance with traditional teachings. By contrast, EC can

naturally be categorized as soul-creation in the spirit of Christian thought. ESDMO does not resemble Origen's pre-existence soul view nor does it resemble creationism. ESDMO has some similarities to traducianism, but is far removed from what traditional theologians would consider traducianism. According to traducianism, God creates at least one soul directly and immediately. Whereas, ESDMO maintains that all souls are produced through biological evolutionary processes.

Summing up the factors of an emergent creationism

First, as put forward by both Hasker and Leftow one variation of emergent creationism is a form of occasionalism. As stated above, Hasker and Leftow see a Thomist version as an instant divine occasionalism. This is so on the basis that the body appears to cause the existent soul to emerge, yet if God is actually the primary cause then we have a form of occasionalism. This is only so if we grant that emergentism mutually excludes an outside cause and we assume that the physical part provides a sufficient causal explanation for the soul.⁴¹ However, this may be granting too much. For example, if we take it that the hylomorphist soul is distinct, from the body, and that the body does not have the sufficient potency to bring about a human soul then we have reason to look elsewhere for a cause. The metaphysical story may look rather different, whereby both the body and the soul are constituent parts of a human being such that God utilizes the animal body and creates a soul through it or with it. This would issue in a distinct human nature (the dynamic structure in which the soul comes to exist). Otherwise, the soul and body as parts would be incomplete in terms of a human nature. The animal body would not be sufficient for a human being and the soul would only come to exist in the manner of its nature. Would this hylomorphic variation of dualism entail occasionalism? Occasionalism does not necessarily follow. It would entail a version of property/nature emergence or substance emergence. It is easy to see why Hasker and Leftow would so quickly dismiss occasionalism because of its undermining of our common sense and the ensuing dilemma of agnosticism regarding cause and effect. The following features of an emergentist creationism are not, necessarily, mutually exclusive. Instead I see them as part of the novel position I put forward.

Second, one might think that the functional dependence of soul on body requires a kind of emergence whereby the directly created soul and/or human substance (construed broadly) is actually mediated (i.e. in terms of the physical aggregate) or secondarily caused by a sufficiently complex brain – body arrangement.⁴² Above, I called this sort of view a dynamic-structures soul view. On this view, the soul comes to exist and functions in the context of a dynamic structure. This might be a variation of supervenient dualism in a loose sense of the term supervenience. Cartesian dualism whereby persons are strictly identified

with their immaterial parts could be construed as having a tight fine-grained dependence of the soul on brain. This construal may yield a loose supervenient dependence relation (i.e. functional supervenience). The process seems to be inverted whereby the soul comes to function and its existence is mediated by a sufficiently complex neural structure. Namely, the physical part of the Cartesian human is a part in the sense that it completes the powers of the soul through a teleological relationship. The soul is functionally dependent upon the physical part, yet the physical part is a contingent part of the soul's nature (construed broadly in terms of teleological properties in a compound structure). This view is distinct from hylomorphic varieties with interesting and significant parallels to it.

Third, another variation of emergent creationism is a complex-configuration soul view. The kind of emergence is either a property or nature (i.e. as properties or powers) emergence. This version of EC is distinct from the previous one in that it is a variation of composite substance dualism. On variations of Thomist dualism, it would seem that the emergent nature or substance occurs via the newly created soul. An Augustinian construal of the immaterial part would be the concrete part that actually transforms the body into a human body. An Aristotelian construal of the immaterial part might see the new nature as emergent from and dependent upon the two concrete parts uniting. This new nature could be construed as a new substance – a hylomorphic substance. Variations of Thomistic substance dualism fall under this kind of property/nature emergence. As stated above, both Platonic/Augustinian and Aristotelian construals of the immaterial part seem to be variations of composite emergent creationism whereby the soul exists at the moment the bodily aggregate does as the soul's secondary cause. The immaterial part on this view either brings about the emergence of the new body (e.g. Platonic/Augustinian construal) or brings about a new nature in virtue of the two concrete parts (Aristotelian construal). Both variations lend themselves to a kind of dependence view where secondary causation is at work.

Conclusion

In this article, I have put forward an alternative to the various options in the debate over the origin of the soul. I have argued that this alternative is either a novel position or a more finely grained variation of soul-creationism. Either way, it seems to me that EC, as I construe it above, is sufficiently distinct from SC and gives a picture beginning to resemble ESDMO. In the end, objectors may find problems with this view, but it still deserves a place in the discussion. Some may object that EC should not be called 'emergentism', and maybe this is true, but I wonder what term might be more appropriate. Setting aside these matters for the present discussion, one thing is clear: that EC deserves further reflection and consideration in the debate over the soul's origin.⁴³

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Notes

1. By referring to the Christian tradition, I am referring to the tradition that occurs continuously all the way back to the source. Particularly, I see the Christian tradition as reflected in Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestant Christianity. Naturally, this discussion may have close relations with and application to Jewish and Muslim theological anthropology. My interest here is primarily in discussing creationism and traducianism as they bear on the present contemporary theological and substance dualist literature and the novel position I put forward. By speaking of the pre-existence theory, I am referring to the Origenistic or pseudo-Origenistic view whereby souls exist prior to the creation of the world in a heavenly state. Pre-existence may not be a very helpful term, because on a variety of views the soul does pre-exist in some sense (e.g. traducianism; souls exist, potentially, in their progenitors).
2. See Hasker (1999).
3. I refer to traducianism when distinguishing different kinds of mediation.
4. Parturient means that souls have parts and the progenitors of succeeding souls give off parts, which comprise new souls. Fissile variations are different in that souls split off.
5. One might also call this view simple creationism.
6. By 'in', I mean to convey that the soul is causally interactive with the physical aggregate or united to it.
7. I am not suggesting that this precludes God creating material objects with those intrinsic powers at the beginning of time.
8. See Moreland (2008, 21) for differing levels of emergence.

9. I was particularly helped by Daniel von Wachter (2003). Von Wachter also calls this an initiating event, which contributes more precision to the libertarian sense of causation than others that root it in some sort of determinism, indeterminism, or no cause. A choice-event is not the notion that the agent intends, which causes my arm to rise. The arm rising is an event that is not caused by anything else that can be called a choice-event. The two are co-joined and we have a distinct category for this sort of event, which one normally thinks of as an event-cause. Thus, this sort of event is not caused by another event nor is it random, but it is the choice of the agent. Somehow, the agent has the instantaneous power of bringing about an immediate event. This notion of a choice-event splits the dilemma of the two horns between determinism and indeterminism and roots the control of the event directly in the agent. It does so in that an agent with free will has no preceding cause, either deterministic or indeterministic, but the agent begins the causal chain. This is different from the issue of agent-causation where an event could be rooted, metaphysically, in a deterministic process or an indeterministic process (which both are not directly in the control of the agent). This does not bring precision to the agent him/herself, but gives more precision to the notion of a free action in terms of events. This also does not mean that the initiating event or choice-event cannot be the cause of other events in a causal chain, it can, but it is distinct from the notion of an event-process whether determined or undetermined.
10. Peter Lombard, *Sent.* II, d. xviii. Quote taken from Siegfried (1908).
11. See Foster (2001), 29.
12. See Stump (2003), 207. Stump, after quoting Thomas, defines his view as a kind of human nature emergence or soul-emergence and creationism. She says: 'That is why, he says, the soul is created in the body, and souls are produced simultaneously with human bodies, at the culmination of human generation.' Later on, she states:

On the one hand, unlike the forms of other material objects, every soul is directly created by God, as an individual thing in its own right, with its own configuration. On the other hand, like the form of any material object, it exists in the composite it configures, and it comes into existence only with that composite, not before it.

13. See Hasker (1999), 195–196. Also see Leftow (2001), 128. The argument proffered is a difficult one to accept. First, the appropriate base for hosting the soul that thinks ought to be distinguished from the capacity to think. For the emergentist to make the claim that the capacity to think occurs simultaneously with the brains becoming an appropriate host is different from saying that the brain directly causally produces the soul. Second, to leave God out of the picture is to assume something other than a Thomist view of creation and providence. For the sake of the argument, we can grant this much.
14. Hasker (1999), 196.
15. Tanner (2005), 63.
16. I am certainly not definitively stating that Thomas was a substance dualist. I realize there is much disagreement in the literature. While I take him to articulate a variation of substance dualism, I realize that some would categorize him in the monist camp. For my purposes, ultimately it does not matter where Thomas stands.
17. See Stump (2003), 205. She proceeds to argue that Thomas's view is that God directly creates the soul, yet the soul is not created before the body and is not somehow infused in the body (*ibid.*, 207). Thus, this 'configured configurer', as Stump calls it, is directly created by God only coming into existence as a part of the composite whole. What is not clear, yet intimated in Stump's writing, is the positive role the matter plays just so that the soul only comes to exist with the physical aggregate. Maybe this is enough to get at EC by distinguishing it from SC, but I think we can say more – as I am doing so here.
18. I am assuming that the view of God's timelessness is coherent, but do not wish to enter into this debate here. This would not rule out the view that God is timeless before the creation of the world and in time at the moment of creation. These seem to be compatible.
19. See Hoffman (2009), 37. Here Hoffman describes the soul and body, according to Descartes, as substances considered alone yet in relation to the other as one complete human being. While Hoffman ultimately takes this in a hylo-morphist direction, stating that Descartes's teleological view of the soul

- and body is a form of hylomorphism with substance dualist tendencies, it seems to me that this is not necessary.
20. See Koons (2000), esp. ch. 16.
 21. It could be that the soul/person is created directly, but the functionality of the soul or coming to exist as causally interactive with the physical world is mediate via the body. This could be an example of Richard Swinburne's view that seems to be creationist with some emergent elements. See his Swinburne (1997). It is not clear that it is emergent creationism, because Swinburne does not spell out in detail how the soul and body are related, if the soul is independent from the body and to what extent it might be. This could be a form of person – body dualism whereby the soul is a simple that only emerges from the brain and requires the brain to function.
 22. Leftow (2001). See also Stump (1995), 520. When the rational soul enters the human organism there is a unity that takes place and a human person emerges, which then is the hypostasis for the emergent powers.
 23. Something like Stump's configured configurator, which is distinct from a dynamic-structures view whereby the soul comes into being dependent upon the brain in a compound structure.
 24. See the discussion by Pasnau (2004), 126–130. As Pasnau discusses, there is some disagreement about the nature and origin of the previous forms/souls and what happens when the body reaches a higher level of complexity and there is a new form/soul added. It seems most natural to take Thomas as saying that the sensory soul/form is not destroyed, but reorganized with the 'rational soul', so that substantial reorganization occurs. So, depending on one's interpretation on the nature of the soul, the soul must somehow interact with the body as the bodies form to become a human form. Thus, the gestation process is necessary and God's causal work of instantiation of the 'rational soul' is necessary, so providing the sufficient conditions for emergence. It does not make a difference with respect to EC if Thomas was a Platonist or Aristotelian on the soul; it still entails a view that is different from SC and ESDMO. This does not entail occasionalism, as Leftow and Hasker have suggested.
 25. Lee & George (2008), 71.
 26. *Ibid.*, 66–70. This is the notion that human persons are animal organisms that have a distinct organic nature in virtue of the 'rational soul'. George and Lee define an animal as a bodily entity (*ibid.*, 4). However, implicit in the notion of the created soul is an ontological distinction. If one were to interpret the created soul as the part that brings about the emergence of a new entity – namely, a human person – then this is a form of emergentism. On the other hand, if one interprets the created soul/form of the body as the person that only comes to exist as a form/matter unity, then you might have a different kind of emergence.
 27. See Burrell (1993), 61. This is because of Thomas's metaphysics of act.
 28. Thomas assumes this in several places. One place in particular is in his *Summa Theologica* on 'Powers of the Soul', Q. 77 Article 7. Richard Swinburne has recently affirmed that Thomas was a substance dualist. See Swinburne (2013), 171–173. In fact, Swinburne, surprisingly, goes so far as to claim that Thomas's view of the soul – body relationship is the Plato – Descartes view.
 29. Thus, this would rule out Aristotelian or hylomorphic monism, which is a recognized position in the literature. See Leftow (2001).
 30. This may entail a *tertium quid* or third kind of thing. If it does, then it still seems to me that the two parts are modally distinct, hence a form of substance dualism.
 31. This or something like it seems to be Eleonore Stump's interpretation of Thomas's view of the soul's origin. See Stump (2003), 206–218. This also may be the view of Moreland (2008). Although Moreland refers to his view as traducian in nature it could very easily be a form of emergent creationism.
 32. See Rea (2011a & 2011b). Rea develops a hylomorphic model that avoids certain difficulties with traditional hylomorphic distinctions of the universal/particular, act/potency, and the nature of inherence.
 33. It is easy to see how this might satisfy the assumptions of persons who are more scientifically and evolutionary minded better than the 'special creation' view.
 34. EC does not leave the emergence of conscious persons to something contrary to consciousness, but articulates a theoretical explanation by bringing God into the process.
 35. Hasker's view and those of others who assume something similar must also affirm mysterian assumptions about the physical.

36. I only intend the meaning of 'miracle' to convey the idea that this is unique within God's creative work, not that it is a violation of the 'regulative succession' of events. It seems to me that there is a gap in the natural world of cause and effect and the human persons appearing in that natural world that is unaccounted for solely in terms of physical cause and effect. If by miracle one means something that cannot occur in the physical causal nexus without outside influence, then it may be a miracle distinct from accidental change that occurs by normal natural events. Some may think that souls coming into existence is irregular. However, souls come into existence with great regularity in the world. There is an established continuity between souls and their existing at the moment of bodily conception or some time shortly thereafter. This sort of occurrence cannot be caused by natural events in the same way that other physical events occur nor is it miraculous in the same way as the physical resurrection, which is unique, highly specified, and cannot be caused or explained by nature. For a discussion in Thomas on the matter of miracles see *Summa Theologiae*, I, Q. 105 Art. 7, 520.
37. It seems rather odd to think of conscious-making properties in themselves without a proper concrete particular.
38. See William Hasker's development of problems for traditional substance dualism, which he identifies with creationist-dualism in Hasker (2011). He raises other similar 'unappealing' consequences of traditional dualism (i.e. creationist dualism), but gives no recognition to the kind of view I am putting forward here.
39. David Albert Jones (2004, 106) made me aware of this.
40. This becomes an important theological datum in accounting for deep and meaningful relationships with others and with God. Additionally, the soul is an important datum accounting for the beatific vision and *theosis* where we have the basis or ground in terms of the soul. Souls are then the foundation for these higher-order processes.
41. This seems like a big assumption to make, however.
42. Secondary causes are causes that have themselves been caused. This is common to Thomism, where second causes receive their power and directedness from a prior first and efficient cause.
43. Thanks goes to the Tyndale Philosophy of Religion study group and British Society of Philosophy of Religion Conference where I presented earlier and distinct drafts of this article. Thanks for advice from Simon Burton, Jonathan Chan, Oliver Crisp, R. J. Matava, Carolyn Muessig, and Daniel von Wachter. Additionally, I would like to thank the Read-Tuckwell Foundation for providing funds that made possible the research found here.