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STRAINING THE LIMITS OF PHILOSOPHY: AQUINAS ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE HUMAN SOUL

Linda L. Farmer

It is customary in the literature on Aquinas to hear mention, critiques, and defenses of Aquinas's "proofs of the human soul's immortality." Such do not, at least technically, exist. Aquinas's conclusions of the proofs in question always and only conclude that the human soul is incorruptible. The question this paper is concerned with is whether the distinction between 'incorruptibility' and 'immortality' prohibits us from considering Aquinas's arguments for the soul's incorruptibility to be, as we are already so habituated to claim, arguments for the immortality of the human soul. To answer that question, we attempt to extend Aquinas's two main philosophical demonstrations of the human soul's incorruptibility to immortality without violating any of Aquinas's philosophical principles. What we find is that this cannot be done and that, for Aquinas, the immortality of the human soul can only be theologically demonstrated.

Aquinas never demonstrates the immortality of the human soul. In fact, he never even offers philosophical arguments in support of such a thesis. Each of Aquinas's so-called arguments for the soul's immortality concludes that the soul is incorruptible, not that it is immortal. This fact is commonly unacknowledged in the literature,¹ perhaps because the terms 'incorruptibility' and 'immortality' are considered to be synonymous or, at least, interchangeable. These two notions are, however, formally distinct: 'incorruptibility' refers to being/existence, 'immortality' to life/vital activity. What is the significance of this distinction? Does it prohibit us from considering Aquinas's arguments for the soul's incorruptibility to be, as we are already so habituated to claim, arguments for the immortality of the human soul?

To address these questions, we shall first examine Aquinas's use of the concepts 'immortality' and 'incorruptibility', particularly in his arguments concerned with whether physical death destroys the soul. As those arguments conclude that the soul is incorruptible, we shall then examine whether Aquinas's two main types of arguments for the soul's incorruptibility can be extended in such a way as to demonstrate the soul's immortality. The conclusion we shall reach is that Aquinas's philosophical commitments place him in a very awkward situation with respect to the immortality of the human soul, namely, that he can philosophically maintain that the human soul will continue to exist after physical death but not that it will be actually alive in the separated state.



I. Terminological and Conceptual Considerations

It is not surprising that we are, generally speaking, in the habit of saying that Aquinas argues for the immortality of the human soul. For the question Aquinas poses before an argument concerned with whether physical death destroys the soul may explicitly concern immortality rather than incorruptibility;² and, perhaps more importantly, Aquinas frequently uses the notions 'immortality' and 'incorruptibility' interchangeably.³

Given these facts one would reasonably expect to find the terminology of immortality in at least one of Aquinas's arguments concerning whether the soul is destroyed at physical death. This is, however, glaringly not the case. Aquinas consistently and exclusively uses the terminology of *incorruptibility* in the conclusion of those arguments:

We must assert that the intellectual principle which we call the human soul is incorruptible.⁴

Now, from what has just been said it is clearly shown that every intellectual substance is incorruptible.⁵

It must be stated that it is necessary that a human soul be totally incorruptible.⁶

It is tempting to assume that Aquinas does not consciously avoid using the terminology of immortality and, thereby, does not consciously avoid arguing the claim that the soul is immortal. However, one of Aquinas's own statements undermines the legitimacy of such an assumption: "if the resurrection of the body be denied it is not easy, in fact it is difficult, to maintain the *immortality* of the soul".⁷

If, then, 'incorruptibility' and 'immortality' are interchangeable notions, as the literature on Aquinas apparently assumes,⁸ why does Aquinas say that it is difficult to, not just *demonstrate*, but *maintain* the soul's *immortality* without the support of the truth of faith that the body will be resurrected? Does not Aquinas unflinchingly stand behind his philosophical demonstrations of the *incorruptibility* of the soul? Clearly, the problem rests in the assumption that 'incorruptibility' and 'immortality' are fundamentally interchangeable notions.

The formal distinction between those notions, as we mentioned earlier, is that 'incorruptibility' refers to being/existence, whereas 'immortality' refers to life/vital activity. To claim, then, that the human soul is incorruptible is to claim that its being/existence (*esse*) cannot be destroyed with the corruption of the composite (*viz.*, the human being); and to claim that the human soul is immortal is to claim that the soul's *life* is not destroyed with the corruption of the composite. Aquinas argues for the first, but believes that the latter, as we just saw, requires the support of a truth of faith. To understand why, we need to determine what significant differences exist between the two claims. We can achieve this by attempting to substitute the 'difficult to maintain' claim that the soul is immortal in Aquinas's arguments for the incorruptibility of the human soul and seeing what sorts of

difficulties, if any, that would give rise to in Aquinas's philosophical anthropology.

II. Aquinas's Arguments for Incorruptibility

Aquinas argues for the incorruptibility of the human soul in two main ways: from the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself'; and from the immateriality of the human intellect.⁹ Let us consider each of these in turn to see whether they can be extended to the claim that the human soul's life is not destroyed with the corruption of the composite.

- (i) The argument for incorruptibility from the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself'

The argument from the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself' sets forth that the soul's act of being (*esse*) cannot be corrupted by physical death because it is consequent upon the soul *in virtue of itself*, and what belongs to something in virtue of itself is inseparable from it:

Now it was shown above that the souls of brutes are not self-subsistent, whereas the human soul is, so that the souls of brutes are corrupted, when their bodies are corrupted, while the human soul could not be corrupted unless it were corrupted in itself. [...] For it is clear that what belongs to a thing by virtue of the thing itself is inseparable from it. But being belongs to a form, which is an act, by virtue of itself. And thus, matter acquires actual being according as it acquires form; while it is corrupted so far as the form is separated from it. But it is impossible for a subsistent form to cease to exist.¹⁰

The naturally incorruptibility of the human soul is assured, according to Aquinas, because the act of being (*esse*) by which a human being exists does not properly belong to the composite of soul and matter but, rather, to the soul which animates that matter. This distinguishes human beings from all other animate beings, whose *esse* properly belongs to the composite of their soul and matter, not to their souls alone. It also ensures, through the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself', the continued existence of the human soul after its separation from the matter with which it was united.

Can this argument for the incorruptibility of the human soul be extended, in a manner consistent with Aquinas's philosophical principles, to the immortality of the human soul? The argument would take something like the following form: the soul's *life* cannot be corrupted by physical death because it is consequent upon the soul in virtue of itself; and what belongs to something in virtue of itself is inseparable from it. So, does or can Aquinas maintain that life is consequent upon the soul in virtue of itself?

While it is clear that, according to Aquinas, the soul is in virtue of itself the *cause* of life, this is insufficient to ensure the immortality of the soul from the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself'. As it stands, the argument allows us to conclude only that the soul cannot cease to be the

cause of life, not that soul cannot cease to be *actually living*. To be the cause of some perfection is not necessarily equivalent to possessing that perfection in act. For example, the human soul is the formal, efficient, and final cause of the human body but is not itself a body.¹¹ Moreover, the human soul is the cause of all of the sensitive perfections of human beings but does not, according to Aquinas, possess any sensitive perfection in act in the separated state.¹² Furthermore, the souls of plants and non-human animals are also the cause of their life, but the immortality of those types of souls is denied by Aquinas.¹³

For the desired conclusion that the human soul possesses life *in act* in the separated state, it would need to be the case that the soul possesses life in virtue of itself, not merely that it is the *cause* of life in virtue of itself. For it is not because the human soul is the *cause* of being that it is incorruptible—otherwise, the souls and animals and plants as well as every sort of substantial form would be incorruptible—but, rather, because the human soul is itself the subject of the act of being (*esse*). As the substantial form of the body, the soul, of course, makes the body to be in act but it is only because it is itself the subject of *esse* that, in separation from the body, it is actually in being.

Does, then, the human soul possess life in the way that it possesses *esse*, viz. in virtue of itself? Is the human soul, rather than the human composite of soul and matter, the proper subject of the perfection of life? Unless Aquinas was mistaken in asserting that the immortality of the soul is difficult to maintain without the resurrection of the body, it must be the case that the human soul is not the proper subject of the perfection of life. Otherwise, immortality is demonstrated by Aquinas inasmuch and insofar as incorruptibility is. Consequently, there would be no reason for him to be any less confident in the philosophical demonstrability of immortality than he was of the demonstrability of the soul's incorruptibility.

Yet, there are passages in Aquinas's works in which he seems to maintain that life and *esse* are possessed by the human soul in the same manner. For example, in the fourteenth question of his *Quaestiones de anima*, the following objection is raised:

[...] Augustine says that just as God is the life of a soul, so a soul is the life of its body.^[14] But death is the privation of life; hence by death a soul is deprived of life and destroyed.¹⁵

To which Aquinas replies:

A soul is said to be the form of its body insofar as it is the cause of life, just as the form is the principle of existing. For in beings which are alive, their 'to live' is their 'to be', as the Philosopher says in Book II of the *De anima*.¹⁶

This text, however, seems to allow for two different interpretations. Aquinas may, on the one hand, be saying that life is possessed by the soul in the same way as the act of being is possessed. Or on the other hand, he may only be saying here that the cause of the body's being and life is one

and the same (i.e. the soul) and, consequently, that just as the soul as cause of being is not corrupted by physical death, so neither is the soul as *cause* of life [or, for that matter, as *cause* of all other perfections (corporeity, sensitivity, etc.)] corrupted by physical death.

Although the text is ambiguous on this point, the second interpretation seems more contextually appropriate. For, in saying that “the soul is the form of the body insofar as it is the cause of life, just as the form is the principle of existence,” the similarity drawn between life and being is in terms of the soul *as cause* (cause of life / cause of existence).

Furthermore, had Aquinas wanted to say that the soul *possesses* life and being in the same way rather than just say that the soul is the *cause* of both the body’s being and life, he could simply have restricted the statement “in beings which are alive, their to live is their to be” to subsistent forms, saying instead “in subsistent beings, their to live is their to be.” For, the cause of the being and life of animals and plants is their soul, but the souls of animals and plants are not subsistent: their act of being (*esse*) is properly possessed by the composite and, consequently, corruptible. Moreover, to be even less ambiguous, Aquinas could have simply said that “the *life* of the human soul *is its being*.”

That Aquinas only believed that the soul is the *cause* of life but not of *itself* actually alive in the same way that it is *of itself* actually in being can be supported by the fact that, in at least one work, his *De immortalitate animae*,¹⁷ Aquinas himself rejects the demonstration of the soul’s immortality from the fact that the soul is the cause of life and “nothing can be separated from itself.”¹⁸ He does so because “the reasons for immortality [must] be taken from what is proper to the human soul amongst other souls, namely, intellection.”¹⁹

Although he does not reject that argument because it is *not* the case that the being and life of the human soul are possessed *in act* in the same way (and not just that they are caused by the same principle), the fact that he requires that “the reasons for immortality be taken from what is *proper* to the human soul amongst other souls” is strongly indicative. For, it is not *proper* to the human soul to be the *cause of life*—the souls of all animate beings are equally the cause of life—and, consequently, the argument that the human soul is immortal because it is the *cause* of life (and ‘nothing can be separated from itself’) *must* be rejected, as, it equally applies to the souls of animals and plants but, the souls of animals and plants are absolutely not, at least in Aquinas’s opinion, *immortal*.²⁰

If, however, Aquinas believes that being and life are not merely *caused* by the same principle but possessed *in act* in the same way, he would not need to reject the argument as such because, with this premise “being and life are possessed *in act* in the same way,” the argument would only conclude to the immortality of the human soul, not to that of every sort of soul. For, if “being and life are possessed *in act* in the same way” and, in plants and animals, being is possessed *in act* by the composite, the life of plants and animals would be corrupted with the corruption of the composite just as their being is corrupted. However, if “being and life are possessed *in act* in the same way” and being is properly possessed *in act* by the human soul rather than the composite (as Aquinas maintains), then the soul could not

cease to be alive *in act* with the corruption of the composite, just as it cannot cease to be *actually in being* when the composite is corrupted.

There are, as we have just seen, good reasons to think that Aquinas does not set forth that life is possessed by the human soul in virtue of itself. Our reasons for thinking that will become even more compelling when we consider his argument for incorruptibility from the immateriality of the intellect, which we will do next. However, that Aquinas's argument for incorruptibility based on the principle "nothing can be separated from itself" cannot be extended to immortality based on the fact that the soul is the cause of life needs no further evidence: it is insufficient just in itself to conclude that the human soul (and only the human soul) is immortal and, further, Aquinas himself rejects this type of argument for immortality.

- (ii) The argument for incorruptibility from the immateriality of the human intellect

The second main type of argument Aquinas offers for the incorruptibility of the human soul is from the immateriality of the human intellect. According to this argument, the human soul must be incorruptible because it has an essential operation, viz. intellection, in which the body does not share. Intelligence of universals by the human intellect requires, according to Aquinas, that the human intellect be neither itself a body nor utilize a corporeal organ in its operation. This operative independence of the human soul, however, can only be explained by a corresponding independence in the order of being. For this reason, the soul must be a subsistent substantial form (i.e., itself the subject of the act of being) and, consequently, cannot lose *its* being through the corruption of the composite.²¹

If the operative independence of the soul in intellection can serve to demonstrate the incorruptibility of the human soul, could it not also serve to demonstrate the immortality of the human soul? If our intellectual power is not, as Aquinas argues, the act of any corporeal organ and our soul is subsistent (itself the subject of the act of being), would it not be the case that our soul could and would exercise a vital activity in separation from the body (namely, intellection) and, therefore, be alive *in act*?

Unfortunately, there is a serious difficulty involved in attempting to extend Aquinas's philosophical demonstration of incorruptibility from the immateriality of the intellect to the immortality of the human soul. Although it is true that our intellectual power is not the act of any corporeal organ, phantasms are required for any human thinking. If the intellectual power of the soul, while being immaterial, yet *objectively* depends on phantasms in order to think/know, would it not then be impossible for the human soul to exercise its power of intellection in separation from the corporeal organs in which phantasms reside?

To solve this difficulty Aquinas argues that the soul will have a different mode of understanding when separated from its body. He posits that a separated soul has a different mode of being than a soul united to its body and, consequently, as the mode of action in every agent follows from the mode of its being, the mode of understanding of a separated soul will differ from that of a soul in a state of union with the body. Rather than turn to

phantasms (which is the mode of understanding proper to the human soul), the separated soul will, according to Aquinas, turn to pure intelligibles (which is the mode of understanding proper to separate substances):

[...] we must consider that nothing acts except so far as it is actual, and therefore the mode of action in every agent follows from the mode of its being. Now the soul has one mode of being when in the body, and another when apart from it, though its nature remains the same. [...] The soul, therefore, when united to the body, consistently with that mode of being, has a mode of understanding by turning to corporeal phantasms, which are in corporeal organs; but when it is separated from the body, it has a mode of understanding by turning to the pure intelligibles, as is proper to other separate substances.²²

Nevertheless, as it is *natural* for the soul to understand by abstracting from phantasms²³ and death does not change the nature of the soul, the separated soul's mode of understanding (namely, turning pure intelligibles rather than to phantasms) is, according to Aquinas, unnatural (*praeter naturam*):

[...] it is as natural for the soul to understand by turning to the phantasms, as it is for it to be joined to the body. But to be separated from the body is not in accordance with its nature, and likewise to understand without turning to the phantasms is not natural to it.²⁴

Accordingly, then, the soul is unable to think/know *in any natural way* apart from its body and, consequently, the argument from the immateriality of the soul's power of intellection fails to *philosophically* demonstrate the immortality of the soul.²⁵ In order to live while disembodied, the soul must be capable of exercising at least one of its acts/powers in separation from the body and, although *preternaturally* the soul will be supplied an alternative to phantasms for its intellectual activity, it cannot be *philosophically* demonstrated that this will be the case.²⁶

We are now in a position to understand why Aquinas sets forth that "if the resurrection of the body be denied it is not easy, in fact it is difficult, to maintain the immortality of the soul" and, also, why he could not have maintained that the human soul is the proper subject of the perfection of life. While he could argue on philosophical grounds that the human soul does not lose its being at physical death, and perhaps even that in such a state the soul would have a different mode of being, he could not guarantee on philosophical grounds that the separated soul would exercise a vital activity like intellection. That guarantee is provided by the final purpose of the separated state, viz. the resurrection of the body.

III. Conclusion

Aquinas's philosophical principles place him in a very awkward situation with respect to the immortality of the human soul: he can philosophically maintain that the soul will be continue to exist in a different mode after

physical death but not that it will be supplied an alternative to the phantasms it requires in order to exercise its vital activity of intellection. The tenet that the soul will be supplied with an alternative to phantasms and, consequently, that it will actually exercise a vital activity in the separated state is theological, not philosophical. Aquinas's position on the immortality of the soul truly strains the limits of philosophy: as much as immortality is strongly suggested, even implied, by Aquinas's philosophical principles, it is only assured by a truth of faith. As Aquinas respects the boundary between faith and reason in his arguments concerned with whether the human soul is corrupted at physical death, we should follow suit and cease claiming that he offers philosophical demonstrations of the immortality of the human soul.

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NOTES

1. Restricting ourselves to just a few examples, see: Donald Abel's "Intellectual Substance as Form of the Body in Aquinas," in *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association: The Recovery of Form*, ed. By Thérèse-Anne Druart, Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1996; Joseph Bobik's "Immortality," *Philosophical Studies* (Ireland) 25 (1977): 69-85; Montague Brown's "Aquinas on the Resurrection of the Body," *Thomist* 56 (1992): 165-207; Anton C. Pegis's "The Separated Soul and Its Nature in St. Thomas," in *St. Thomas Aquinas 1274-1974, Commemorative Studies*, ed. By Armand Maurer, Toronto: PIMS, 1974; Stephen Priest's "Aquinas's Claim 'Anima Mea Non Est Ego,'" *Heythrop Journal* 40 (1999): 209-211; Mary F. Rousseau's "Elements of a Thomistic Philosophy of Death," *Thomist* 43 (1979): 581-602; Kenneth L. Schmitz's "Purity of Soul and Immortality," *Monist* 69 (1986): 396-415; and John L. Treloar's "Pomponazzi's Critique of Aquinas' Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul," *Thomist* 54 (1990): 453-470. Joseph Owens discusses the distinction between 'in corruptibility' and 'immortality' but remains convinced that the distinction does not prohibit Aquinas from philosophically demonstrating the immortality of the human soul: see his "Aquinas on the Inseparability of Soul from Existence," *New Scholasticism* 61 (1987): 249-270.

2. *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 14 (Leonine edition, p. 123): "Quartodecimo queritur de immortalitate anime humane." However, this is not always the case. See, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, I, q.75, art.6 (Ottawa edition, p.444b): "Utrum anima humana sit corruptibilis."

3. See the instances of *immortalis* and *immortalitas* in Busa's *Index Thomisticus*, sec. II, Concord. I, vol. 11, pp. 57-62.

4. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 75, art. 6 (Ottawa edition, p. 445a, l.30-33): "Dicendum quod necesse est dicere animam humanam, quam dicimus intellectivum principium, esse incorruptibilem."

5. *Summa contra gentiles*, II, cap.55, §.1.

6. *Quaestiones de anima*, q.14, resp. (Leonine edition, p.125, l.163-164): "Dicendum quod necesse est omnino animam humanam incorruptibilem esse."

7. *In I Cor.*, 15, lect. 2 (Vivès edition, p. 33b): "Si negetur resurrectio corporis, non de facili, imo (sic) difficile est sustinere *immortalitatem* animae". (Emphasis mine.)

8. See references in note 1.

9. Aquinas does offer other types of arguments for the incorruptibility of the soul: e.g. from the way in which forms progressively dominate the limitations of matter (see, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 76, art. 1, in corp. and *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 1, in corp.); and from the fact that the act of being (*esse*) of humans cannot be deduced from the potencies of matter (see, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 90, art. 2, ad 2; q. 118, art. 2, in corp.; and q. 75, art. 6, ad 1). We shall, however, be restricting our attention to his two main types of arguments for incorruptibility.

10. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 75, art. 6, in corp. (Ottawa edition, p. 445a-445b): "Ostensum est autem supra quod animae brutorum non sunt per se subsistentes, sed sola anima humana. Unde animae brutorum corrumpuntur, corruptis corporibus; anima autem humana non posset corrumpi, nisi per se corrumpere. Quod quidem omnino est impossibile non solum de ipsa, sed de quolibet subsistente quod est forma tantum. Manifestum est enim quod id quod secundum se convenit alicui, est inseparabile ab ipso. Esse autem per se convenit formae, quae est actus. Unde materia secundum hoc acquirit esse in actu, quod acquirit formam; secundum hoc autem accidit in ea corruptio, quod separatur forma ab ea. Impossibile est autem quod forma separetur a seipsa. Unde impossibile est quod forma subsistens desinat esse."

11. This fundamental tenet is set forth in many of Aquinas's texts. See, for example, *Summa theologiae*, I, q.75, art.1.

12. See, for instance, *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 19, in corp.

13. See, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, I, q.75, art.3 and *Summa contra gentiles*, II, cap.82.

14. See, for instance, Augustine's *City of God*, XIX, 26 (PL 41: 656).

15. *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 14, obj. 8 (Leonine edition, pp. 123-124): "Augustinus dicit quod sicut Deus est uita anime, ita anima est uita corporis. Set mors est priuatio uite. Ergo per mortem anima priuatur et tollitur."

16. *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 14, ad 8 (Leonine edition, p. 128): "Ad octauum dicendum quod anima dicitur forma corporis in quantum est causa uite, sicut forma est principium essendi: uiuere enim uiuentibus est esse, ut dicit Philosophus in II De anima." The reference to Aristotle is from *De anima*, II, 415b13.

17. *De immortalitate animae* [ed. by L. A. Kennedy, in *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 45 (1978)], solutio [pp. 213-214]. As far as we are aware, this short treatise, dated not too long after 1261, is considered authentic (at least by Fries, Dondaine and Eschmann).

18. The argument rejected by Aquinas is a reformulation (using the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself' of the Platonic theme (*Phaedo*, 105c-106e) that the soul as cause of life cannot admit of the opposite (namely, death).

19. *Ibid.*

20. Joseph Owens presents the argument for immortality from the principle 'nothing can be separated from itself' as though it is one made by Aquinas himself and, this, even after acknowledging that Aquinas rejects it. See his "Aquinas on the Inseparability...", pp. 254-256. This may be due to the fact that Owens interprets the reason Aquinas gives for rejecting the argument differently. According to him, Aquinas simply wants a proof not just from "the fact" of immortality but, rather, from the "reason why" (p. 255). However, even if his interpretation is preferable to our own, the argument should not and cannot be presented as a demonstration of the soul's immortality, for, it is rejected as such by Aquinas.

21. See, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 75, art. 2, in corp. and *Quaestiones de anima*, q. 1, in corp.

22. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 89, art. 1, in corp. (Ottawa edition, pp. 550a-550b):

"Si autem ponamus quod anima ex sua natura habeat ut intelligat convertendo se ad phantasmata, cum natura animae post mortem corporis non mutetur, videtur quod anima naturaliter nihil possit intelligere, cum non sint ei praesto phantasmata ad quae convertatur. Et ideo hanc difficultatem tollendam considerandum est quod cum nihil operetur nisi in quantum est actu, modus operandi uniuscuiusque rei sequitur modum essendi ipsius. Habet autem anima alium modum essendi cum unitur corpori, et cum fuerit a corpore separata, manente tamen eadem animae natura; [...] Animae igitur secundum illum modum essendi quo corpori est unita, competit modus intelligendi per conversionem ad phantasmata corporum, quae in corporeis organis sunt; cum autem fuerit a corpore separata, competit ei modus intelligendi per conversionem ad ea quae sunt intelligibilia simpliciter, sicut et aliis substantiis separatis."

23. See, for instance, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 89, art. 1, in corp. (Ottawa edition, p. 550b): "Unde modus intelligendi per conversionem ad phantasmata est animae naturalis, sicut et corpori uniri; sed esse separatam a corpore est praeter rationem suae naturae, et similiter intelligere sine conversione ad phantasmata est ei praeter naturam."

24. *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 89, art. 1, in corp. (Ottawa edition, p. 550b): "Unde modus intelligendi per conversionem ad phantasmata est animae naturalis, sicut et corpori uniri; sed esse separatam a corpore est praeter rationem suae naturae, et similiter intelligere sine conversione ad phantasmata est ei praeter naturam."

25. It is interesting to note that the difficulty caused by Aristotle's requirement of phantasms for human thinking gave rise to a controversy at the beginning of the 16th century and that Cajetan, while granting that the *incorruptibility* of the human soul is philosophically demonstrable, came to deny that the soul's *immortality* is philosophically demonstrable. These two points are mentioned by Joseph Owens in his "Aquinas on the Inseparability..." pp. 268-269 and it is to him that we owe the following references: regarding the controversy over the Aristotelian requirement of phantasms for human thinking, see Étienne Gilson's "Autour de Pomponazzi. Problématique de l'immortalité de l'âme en Italie au début du XVIe siècle," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 28 (1961): 163-279; and for references to passages in Cajetan's works, see John P. Reilly's *Cajetan's Notion of Existence*, (Paris/The Hague: Vrin/Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), pp. 95-102, esp. 99-100.

26. This is acknowledged by Joseph Owens in his "Aquinas on the Inseparability..." p. 268.