The distinction of the powers of the soul from the essence of the soul.

John M. Kiss

University of Windsor

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd

Recommended Citation

Kiss, John M., "The distinction of the powers of the soul from the essence of the soul." (1964). Electronic Theses and Dissertations. 6355.
https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etd/6355
THE DISTINCTION OF THE POWERS OF THE SOUL
FROM THE ESSENCE OF THE SOUL

BY
JOHN M. KISS


A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies through the
Department of Philosophy, in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts at the
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1964
INFORMATION TO USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleed-through, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.
ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the distinction which St. Thomas Aquinas maintains between the powers of the soul and its essence, his criticism of those who identify the powers with the essence, and the metaphysical basis for both his own views and his criticisms.

St. Augustine, Peter the Lombard, and especially William of Auvergne, all hold "whole man" views which identify the powers of the soul with its essence. For William, the principle of every operation must be substantial, and the powers merely name the various operations of the one essence which acts immediately.

Thomas distinguishes every creature's operations from its esse and consequently its powers from its essence. Also the identification of the powers with the essence would mean that every creature would always be exercising each of its operations. The powers of the soul are accidents of the second species of quality; as accidents, the powers have ontological reality. To call the powers natural properties is to speak only logically.

Since action is naturally prior to potentiality, all of the powers are named from and distinguished by their operations. The operations are distinguished in turn by their objects, which therefore ultimately distinguish the powers. The powers, distinct from the essence of the soul, are also really distinct one from the other.
Finally, the distinctions between operations and esse, powers and essence, and esse and essence are seen to be required if man is to be different from God. The "whole man" view is seen to present man as though he were God.
One outstanding feature of modern popular Catholicism is the dichotomy between the soul and the body. We are constantly enjoined from the pulpit and in religious literature to value only spiritual things and to put aside the desires of the body. The spirit alone is worthwhile: the body is evil. The two, as popularly portrayed, are two separate things which are to be kept separate at all costs.

It hardly needs to be said that this radical dichotomy of mind and body is the result of three centuries of Cartesian thinking. Generally speaking, man for Descartes is a machine directed by a spiritual soul. His definitions of thinking and extended substances established the dichotomy, and his influence has been felt ever since. The mechanical and spiritual elements are completely separate but somehow the spiritual element rules the body, directing it to various actions.

A modern reaction to the Cartesian mind-body dichotomy is the viewpoint that maintains that it is the "whole man" that acts. Man is a unity. It is in his unity, in his wholeness, that he performs his every action, whether it be thinking, or sensing, or growing, etc. By the "whole man" is generally meant that man is such a unity that there can be no distinction of parts or powers in him. No action is carried out by a part in him: man in his entirety carries out each and every action.

This notion concerning the "whole man" is by no means novel. An especially outspoken upholder of this same notion in mediaeval times is the early thirteenth century theologian, William of Auvergne. William's
extreme view concerning the simplicity of the soul precluded any dis-
tinction of parts within the soul. There was no allowance for any dis-
tinction of the powers from the essence of the soul. For William no
matter what actions man performed, he performed them in the entirety of
his essence. The whole man acted always. Since it is the whole man
acting, William maintained that the principle of each action had to be
a substance. And since the whole man acting is only one substance there
can be no real distinction of the principles of his diverse actions.

William's identification of the powers with the essence of the
soul aroused the critical ire of St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas' dis-
tinguishing of the essence from esse, and his relating of essence to
esse as potency to act, forced him to distinguish the powers of the
soul from its essence. He could not accept the extreme unity of
William's "whole man" theory of operation. In its place Thomas main-
tained that it was by accidental principles or powers of the soul,
that man acted, with each specifically different operation requiring
a really distinct power.

Thomas would concur that it is the whole man that acts, but his
meaning would be different from William's. For Thomas, man would be a
whole composed of body and soul: the soul being the substantial form
of the body. Man is one in the unity of his being; and he is one in
the remote principle of his actions, namely, his essence, because it
is by the essence that the powers were able to act. But the powers
are many, one for each specific action of man; and they are ordered
one to the other, because the vegetative powers are necessary for sen-
sation to take place, and without sense knowledge, intellect cannot
take place.
It will be the concern of this thesis to present the "whole man" viewpoint upheld by William of Auvergne, and then to present the criticism of it by St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas' own views, point by point in opposition to William's, will be given, along with a discussion of his metaphysical notion of actus essendi, which is the ultimate basis for his theory of the powers of the soul. While none of the basic ideas offered here purports to be original, one point has arisen that has not been explored before. This point is that in view of Thomas' theory of the powers of the soul and their distinction from its essence, any theory which identifies the powers with the essence of the soul makes man operate in the same fashion as God. God alone is absolutely simple. In God alone is there no distinction of essence and esse. In God alone is his power the same as His operations. To say the same of man is to make man into God.

In this thesis, all quotations are given in English translation. The translations from the Latin of St. Augustine, Peter the Lombard, William of Auvergne, and St. Thomas Aquinas are either standard, or done by the author. In any case, the author fully endorses them and accepts all responsibility for them. The Latin for each quotation appears in the appropriate footnote. The Greek for Aristotle's references is not given. All quotations and references to Aristotle are taken from the Oxford translation of The Works of Aristotle, edited by W. D. Ross.

I express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Joseph M. Graham, who directed the initial work of this thesis, and to Dr. John N. Deck, who brought it to completion, and who made it possible in the first
place. Also I wish to thank Mr. Stanley B. Cunningham and Dr. Eugene McNamara who read the thesis and offered many criticisms. Finally I thank Mrs. Norah Badour who adds this to the list of theses she has typed.
Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii - iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>v - viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I  The Relationship of the Powers of the Soul to the Essence in Several Pre-Thomistic Philosophers</td>
<td>1 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II St. Thomas' Criticism of the Previous Thinkers</td>
<td>16 - 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III The Soul as Form and Act of the Body</td>
<td>28 - 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV The Powers as Accidents</td>
<td>49 - 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V  The Distinction of the Powers by Their Acts and Objects</td>
<td>60 - 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI The Distinction of Essence and Esse in Creatures</td>
<td>73 - 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII Conclusion</td>
<td>93 - 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>97 - 101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita Auctoris</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE POWERS OF THE SOUL TO THE ESSENCE IN SEVERAL
PRE-TOMISTIC PHILOSOPHERS

What is the relationship existing between the powers of the soul
and the essence of the soul? This problem has a long history in mediaeval
philosophy. It was mentioned very early by St. Augustine and brought
up again around 1150 A.D. by Peter the Lombard. Then in the thirteenth
century it was thoroughly discussed by all the major philosophers and
theologians, of whom two, William of Auvergne and St. Thomas Aquinas give
two views which are especially relevant to this thesis. St. Augustine and
Peter the Lombard state that the powers of the soul are identical with its
essence. William of Auvergne vehemently upholds this view and develops
its logical conclusions. On the other hand, St. Thomas maintains that the
powers are accidents of the soul distinct from its essence. Two different
viewpoints then are maintained with respect to the relationship of the
powers to the essence of the soul. These two viewpoints, their ramifica-
tions, and their total opposition one to the other, are what will be
developed in this thesis.

Thomas summarizes the position of those who hold the soul to be its
powers by saying that "they think that the essence of the soul is the
immediate principle of all of its operations;"¹ meaning by this that by
the essence of the soul a man would understand, sense things, carry out
actions, etc., and that this same essence of the soul would be called

¹ Quaestio Disputata De Anima, a. 12, c. (See Bibliography, Thomas
Aquinas, Saint, 23): Ponentes igitur quod anima sit suae potentiae, hoc
intelligent quod ipsa essentia animae sit principium immediatum omnium
operationum animae. [Hereafter abbreviated as Q. D. de Anima]
sense inasmuch as it was the principle of sensation, and would be called
intellect inasmuch as it was the principle of intellection, and so on
for all the other powers. Thomas compares this view to saying the heat
of fire is its liquifying power, its heating power, and its drying power,
because the same heat does all three operations.  

Thomas reports that those who upheld the identity of the soul and
its powers were led to this position because they considered that the
simplicity of the soul would not permit such great diversity as appears
in the powers of the soul. They could not reconcile the diversities
which the powers must have to be able to perform so many diverse oper­
ations, with the simplicity which the soul has. The same simple soul
could not have as "parts" of itself contrary and diverse principles of
operation. Rather the whole simple soul itself was the principle of
each and every operation no matter how many or how diverse these oper­
ations were.

It is puzzling that the people who allowed no diversity in the
soul and who greatly emphasized the unity of the soul did not see the
problem involved in having that one simple soul be the immediate prin­
ciple of diverse operations. If the soul is one and simple and at the
same time a principle of operation, it can be the principle of only one
operation. Two diverse operations would need two diverse principles.
in no way could one and the same principle, operating in one and the
same manner, perform two or more different kinds of operation.

To see the relevance of St. Thomas' portrayal of the position

2 Q. D. de Anima. a. 12, c.

3 De Spiritualibus Creaturis, a. 11, c. (See Bibliography, Thomas
Aquinas, Saint 8). [Hereafter abbreviated as De Spir. Creat.]
maintaining the identity of the soul and its powers, the doctrines of St. Augustine, Peter the Lombard, and William of Auvergne will be examined. These men by no means are the only upholders of this position but they are men whose thought would especially have been known to St. Thomas. St. Augustine, being one of the great Latin doctors of the Church, was regarded with deep respect by Christian theologians and philosophers; and his works were known and thoroughly studied by all except some like the Latin Averroists. The large number of references he makes to Augustine shows Thomas' familiarity with Augustine's views. The Sentences of Peter the Lombard which had wide influence, were commented on by all men, including St. Thomas, who were aspiring to teach in the universities of the time. William of Auvergne was an important source to St. Thomas because of his eminent position as Bishop of Paris from 1228 to 1249. Because of the authority of his position, William's views would have been well known to St. Thomas, who, at William's death, would have just really begun his own career. However it should be noted that while St. Thomas directly answers many of the views upheld by William of Auvergne, he never actually names William as the man he is refuting. Rather William's views are included under those of "some philosophers" whom St. Thomas happens to be dealing with at the time.

Concerning this problem the source in St. Augustine which Thomas mentions most often is the De Trinitate. Two statements from this work of St. Augustine are used by Thomas to state the position that the

4 See for example St. Thomas' works: De Spir. Creat., a. 11, obj. 1 and obj. 8; Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, obj. 4; Summa Theologiae I, q. 77, a. 1, obj. 1 and obj. 5 (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 29). [Hereafter abbreviated as Sum. Theol.]
powers and the essence of the soul are identical. The first statement is that mind, knowledge and love exist in the soul substantially, or essentially: they are not in the soul as in a subject, as, for instance, colour, or shape, or any other quality or quantity are in a body. Augustine explains this by saying that accidents are confined to the particular subject in which they exist while the mind can love both itself and things external to it with the same love; and it can also know things external to itself. Love and knowledge then are substantial just as the mind (sic ut ipsa mens). And the relationship existing among these three is not like that of colour in a coloured subject, where the colour has no substance of its own but exists in the substance of the coloured body. Rather the relationship is like that existing between friends who are also men. The men are each substances in themselves. They are not men relatively, but they are friends relatively. Mind, knowledge, and love are found "all in all". Augustine explains this by saying that the mind is in itself, while in relation to its knowledge it is said to be both knowing and known, and in relation to its love it is said to be both loving and loved. Knowledge too, while it is referred to a mind that knows or is known, even in respect to

5 Augustine, De Trinitate, IX, 4, [P.L. 42, 963], pp. 82, 84. (See Bibliography): Simul etiam admonemur, si utcumque videre possumus, haec in anima existere, et tanquam involuta evolvi ut sentiantur et dimumerentur substantialiter, vel, ut ita dicam, essentialiter, non tanquam in subjecto, ut color, aut figura in corpore, aut ulla alia qualitas aut quantitas. St. Thomas gives this passage of Augustine's with minor variations in: Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, obj. 1 and obj. 5; De Spir. Creat., a. 11, obj. 1.

6 Ibid., p. 84.

7 Ibid., IX, 5, [P.L. 42, 965], p. 88.
itself is said to be both known and knowing. And love, though referred
to a mind that loves, is love in itself both as loving and loved. Mind,
knowledge and love, then, exist, each in itself, but still mutually in
each other so that the mind that loves is in the love, and love is in
the knowledge of one that loves, and knowledge is in the mind that knows.
"These three, therefore, are in a marvelous manner inseparable from one
another; and yet each of them is a substance, and all together are one
substance or essence, while the terms themselves express a mutual
relationship."  

The second statement of Augustine that Thomas uses is that memory,
understanding, and will, are one life, one mind, and one essence.  
Indeed Thomas' statement is not so emphatic or explanatory as Augustine's
own words: "Since these three, the memory, the understanding, and the
will, are, therefore, not three lives but one life, not three minds but
one mind, it follows that they are certainly not three substances, but
one substance." Memory, understanding, and will are one substance be­
cause, each of them, when considered in itself, is life, mind, and sub­
stance. But they are three in their mutual reference to one another.
Each is comprehended by each one and all are comprehended by each one.

8 Ibid., p. 90: Miro itaque modo tria ista inseparabilia sunt a
semetipsis, et tamen eorum singulum quodque substantia est, et simul
omnia una substantia vel essentia, cum relative dicantur ad invicem.

9 Augustine, De Trinitate, X, 11 [P.L. 42, 984], p. 156: Et haec
tria [memoria, intelligentia, voluntas] unum, una vita, una mens, una
essentia. St. Thomas slightly modifies this reading to: Memoriam, in­
telligentiam, et voluntatem sunt una vita, una mens, et una essentia.
See: Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, obj. 1; and De Spir. Creat., a. 11
obj. 8; also Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, obj. 4.

10 Ibid., [P.L. 42, 983], p. 154: Haec igitur tria, memoria, in­
telligentia, voluntas, quoniam non sunt tres vitae, sed una vita; nec
tres mentes, sed una mens; consequenter utique nec tres substantiae
sunt, sed una substantia.
That is to say that a man remembers that he has memory, understanding, and will; and he understands that he understands, wills, and remembers; and he wills that he wills, remembers, and understands; and he remembers his whole memory, his whole understanding, his whole will; and he understands and wills his whole memory, his whole understanding and his whole will. Each is a whole equal to all the others together as wholes.

The point which Thomas refers to in Augustine pervades both of these statements of Augustine's position. Augustine is centering his attention on the human mind, searching there for images of the Blessed Trinity. He finds two: the image found in the mind, knowledge, and love of man, and the image in his memory, understanding, and will. In both of these images it has been seen above how Augustine insisted that the parts were related as individual substances, all the while emphasizing that the relationship was such as to form only one substance. All of the parts are substances in themselves and so encompass all the others as to be equal to them in the whole, and yet inseparable from them. The identification of these parts or powers with the one substance of man is what St. Thomas will have to contend with.

But long before St. Thomas was to tackle the question, Peter the Lombard puzzled over these same texts of St. Augustine. In his Sentences Peter states that the mind of man is a rational spirit; and that his essence is spiritual and incorporeal. He goes on then immediately to say that memory, understanding, and will, which are "natural properties or powers" of the soul are different from the soul and from each other: memory is different from understanding, and
both of these differ from will. The occurrence of the expression "natural properties or powers" should be noted here because of the development St. Thomas will give to it, and which will be examined below.

Peter the Lombard, in light of his viewpoint wondered how the three powers could be considered as only one essence. He did not long dwell on it though, working out an answer from Augustine's position that the powers are not in the soul in the same way that the accidents of colour and shape are. Peter says the three powers are said to be one substance with the soul because they exist in the soul substantially and are not able to come and go in the same way as accidents in a subject. St. Thomas came to know the views of Peter the Lombard when he commented on the Sentences. From Peter he took the term "natural property" and gave it precise and lasting meaning in the context of the problem of powers and their relation to the essence of the soul.

After Peter the Lombard's consideration of the relationship between the powers and the essence of the soul, no new developments took place in reference to the problem for over a century. Odon Lottin has searched in vain the works of such men as Gandulph of Bologna,

11 Peter the Lombard, Libri IV Sententiarum, lib. I, d. iii, cap. 2, tom.I, p. 35; (See Bibliography, Peter the Lombard): Mens enim, id est spiritus rationalis, essentia est spiritualis et incorporea. Illa vero tria[memoria, intelligentia, voluntas]naturales proprietates seu vires sunt ipsius mentis et a se invicem differunt, quia memoria non est intelligentia vel voluntas, nec intelligentia voluntas sive amor. [Italics mine]

12 Ibid.: Sed iam videndum est, quo modo haec tria [memoria, intelligentia, voluntas] dicantur una substantia; ideo scilicet, quia in ipsa anima vel mente substantialiter existunt, non sicut accidentia in subiecto, quae possunt adesse et absesse.
Simon of Tournai, Prevostin of Cremona, Master Martin, Stephen Langton, Peter of Capua, and Godefrey of Poitiers, for some trace of the problem.\textsuperscript{13}

In St. Thomas' own time however the problem was being discussed again quite avidly and the man who most immediately stated the position Thomas was to oppose was William of Auvergne. The position which William of Auvergne upholds, identifying the soul and its powers, arises from his notion of the soul as being absolutely without composition. William conceives the soul as a unity, absolutely simple, and this simplicity precludes any partition in it. So strongly does William uphold his thesis for the simplicity of the soul that he considers as childish and imbecile any who would say that the soul is a potential or virtual whole composed of many natural powers.\textsuperscript{14} St. Thomas would agree with William that the simplicity of the soul precludes any division of it into parts. For Thomas the whole soul is totally in each part of the body, but it operates through the various parts of the body by means of the various powers.

The substance of the human soul is one according to William of Auvergne, and the plurality of powers that is attributed to it is reduced to the plurality of operations in which the soul cooperates.

\textsuperscript{13} Odon Lottin, Psychologie et Morale dans le XIIe et XIIIe Siècles, Vol. I, p. 484, note 3, (See Bibliography).

\textsuperscript{14} William of Auvergne, De Anima, c. iii, pars la; p. 87 of Supplementum; (See Bibliography, William of Auvergne): Verum quoniam in hoc adhuc sum, ut removeam ab anima humana compositionem omnem, faciam te scire unitatem ac simplicitatem ejus quae prohibit ab ea partem et partem, et aggredi destruere errorem quorundam qui putaverunt eam compositam esse ex viribus sive potentiiis suis naturalibus, propter quod et dixerunt eam, nominatione puerilitatis suae et imbecillitatis, totum potentiale, totumque virtuale, etc.
Even though he attributes understanding to the intellect, and willing and desiring to the will and to the desiderative power, William still maintains that it is the one soul itself which understands, wills, and desires. Moreover the soul knows all this in itself by a feeling or intuition. William says that the soul with absolute certainty, constantly asserts in itself, concerning itself, that it is it itself that understands, that has knowledge of things, that becomes acquainted, that wills, desires, and lusts after things, that inquires after the things desired, and when able, lays hold of what is desired. The soul asserts that it is it itself that remains one and indivisible throughout all these operations, without which operations it would be impossible even to discern the differing powers which are attributed to it. Whether the powers are substances other than the soul itself, or whether they are accidents of the soul, William says it is impossible to speak of them in any way at all apart from their operations. He insists that it is proper to speak of the powers of the soul only in

15 William of Auvergne, De Anima, c. iii, pars 10a; p. 98 of the Supplementum: Una est substantia animae humanae, et pluralitas virium quae ponitur ei non ponitur nisi secundum pluralitatem operationum illius et cooperationum ejusdem ad illas. Et quamquam intelligere virtuti intellectivae attribuaturn, velque et desiderare virtutis desiderativae atque voluntati, ipsa tamen anima una est quae intelligit, vult atque desiderat, et hoc omnis anima humana sentit in semetipsa, cognoscit certissime, atque testificatur, nec possibile est ei ut mentiatur super hoc. Absque enim ulla dubitatione constantissimeque assertit apud semetipsam et in seipsa: Ego sum quae intelligo, quae scio, quae cognosco, quae volo, quae appeto, quae desidero, quae desideria seu volita inquirio et, cum possibile est et licet, acquirio volita, desiderata et appetita. Ego, inquam, una et indivisa manens per omnia haec, aliquin nec scire, nec intelligere, nec ullo modo cognoscere cujuscumque virtutis quid esset, sicut evidentem declaratum est tibi in proxime praecedentibus. Sive enim virtutes sint aliae substantiae quam sit ipsa anima humana, impossible est veraciter de eis dici quamcumque ex hujusmodi operationibus, sive accidentia sint similiter.
relation to, or comparison with, the plurality or multitude of the acts and operations of the soul. How heartily Thomas Aquinas would agree with William of Auvergne's last point, that the powers are spoken of only in relation to their operations. But how differently they will use this point, how different will be their final solutions to the problem of relating the powers to the essence of the soul.

William continues on from this point to state that the operations of the soul come from the soul itself and cannot be enumerated except as being in the soul itself. He means that instead of there being many different powers there is one soul exercising many operations, and each operation gives its name to a different "power". "Power in the human soul is nothing other than the soul itself in those things which it does by its essence." As an example William says that in saying the human soul is able to understand, or to know, the verb "is able" adds nothing to the essence of the soul. In this respect William compares the soul to God because he says that neither in the Creator nor in the human soul is there any power, except the essence both of God and of the soul, which is the principle and cause of any

16 William of Auvergne, De Anima, c. iii, pars 6a; pp. 92-3 of the Supplementum: Ex iis igitur quae hic audivisti manifestum est quia minoritas et pluralitas potentiarum non dicitur apud animam humanum nisi relatione vel comparatione ad pluralitatem sive multitudinem actuum et operationum quae ab ipsa anima sunt, neque aliter est possibile eas numerari, aut numerum in anima humana invenire.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.: Potentia apud animam humanam nihil est alius quam ipsa anima in iis quae operatur per essentiam suam.
operation.19

He explains this comparison more fully when he says that since it is most true that the Creator is powerful, it is most proper and true to say He has power. But this power is nothing other than Himself, and to predicate power of God adds nothing to His essence. Similarly William says that the human soul, or anything else which exists only by its essence, has nothing added to that essence by predicating power of it. 20

19 Ibid.: Jam igitur feci te scire per hoc quod potentia apud animam humanam nihil est alius quam ipsa anima in suis quae operatur per essentiam suam. Exempli gratia, cum dicitur: anima humana potest intelligere vel potest scire, et ad hunc modum de aliis, dico quod hoc verbum potest nihil addit super essentiam ipsius quemadmodum dicitur de Creatore benedicto. Causa autem in hoc est, quoniam neque apud Creator-em, neque apud animam humanam est potentia, principium et causa hujusmodi operationis nisi utriusque essentiae, sicut verbum illud in hujusmodi sermone praedicat potentiam ex quae sunt hujusmodi operationes, indubitanter non praedicat nisi essentiam utriuslibet earum in hujusmodi operationibus. In eis vero quae anima humana non operatur per essentiam suam nihil prohibit praedicari alius vel alia, si qua tamen hujusmodi sunt.

20 William of Auvergne, De Anima, c. iii, pars. 5; p. 90 of the Supplementum: Dico igitur quia creator sicut verissime potens est, sic verissime ac proprie posse dicitur, quapropter verissima ac proprissima est enuntiatio haec de eo, creator potest, creator est potens. Jam autem declaratum est in prima parte primae sapientialis ac divinallis magisterii, quoniam ipse non potest, nec potens est, propter hoc quod potentia qua potest vel potens est, non est alius ab ipso, alius inquam subjecto, vel essentia, seu veritate: quapropter cum dicitur de eo quia potest vel potens est, non additur aliquid per huiusmodi praedicationem, vel ponitur supra ipsum. Quapropter potentia quae huiusmodi sermonibus praedicatur, vel affirmatur non est alius additus supra ipsum, vel in ipso. Et eadem via declarabit tibi hoc de omnibus quae non possunt nisi per semetipsas vel essentias suas. Et si anima humana secundum hunc modum potest vel potens est quoties dicetur de ea quia potest vel potens est, non sit additio supra ipsam vel ejus essentiam, nec positio in ipsa, cum nihil addit possit sibi ipsi supra se vel ponit in se ipso. And he adds further: Ibid., p. 91: Declaratum igitur est tibi in huiusmodi sermonibus, albedo potest disgregare visum, potest calor calefacere, quod hoc verbum potest nihil addit supra essentiam ejus de quo dicitur, vel omnino nihil ponit aut affirmat de huiusmodi subjecto supra essentiam subjecti de quo dicitur, aut solum actum qui consequenter in eis significatur praedicatur vel affirmatur de illo non dico ponit in illo, sed magis ab illo et hic est modus prae dicandi, et haec intentio in omnibus verbis vere activis.
St. Thomas will pay particular attention to the type of argument just advanced by William. That William could draw so close an analogy between the operations of God and the operations of man shows how radically different his metaphysical basis must be from that of St. Thomas.

Three arguments of William of Auvergne provide support for his identification of the powers with the essence of the soul. In the first, he states a thesis which St. Thomas will spend much effort to explain: William denies that there can be any medium between a substance and an accident. He says, using derisive terminology again for emphasis, that it is impossible for an accident to understand or desire something, or to do anything of the sort; and that only an imbecile would say that it could. Only a substance, and a living substance at that, can understand, and love, and get angry, etc. All the powers then must be substances and therefore they must be the whole soul itself operating. But then William adds the curious phrase: "or part of it" (that is, the soul), which seems to imply that a part of the soul could operate. This interpretation however is contrary to everything William holds with respect to the absolute simplicity and unity of the soul.  

The second argument is this very simplicity of the soul. With no possibility of there being any parts in the soul, William says that it is necessary for the human soul in its totality to be every power that

21 William of Auvergne, De Anima, c. iii, pars 6a; p. 92 of the Supplementum: Et quia igitur non est possibile accidentis aliquid intelligere vel concupiscere, aut aliquid aliorum hujusmodi efficere; nemo enim adhuc imbecillitate tanta desipuit, ut diceret aliquid posse intelligere, vel amare, vel irasci, quod quamque hujusmodi potentiarum seu virtutum substantiam esse, et propter hoc vel ipsam totam animam vel partem ipsius. [Italics mine.]
operates in any way. To further develop this, William says that when a power is considered to be a principle of operation, this does not posit some effective principle in the soul and predicated of it, but rather it is something from the soul. The many powers are not in the soul by number and by power but rather only by relation to and comparison with the many operations of the whole soul. The soul has its powers in the same way that it has its essence or substance. Underlying this position of William of Auvergne is again an analogy between the soul and God. William holds that the many operations flow from the simple soul in the same way that many Divine Ideas flow from God without in any way destroying His simplicity.

In his third argument in support of the identification of the powers with the soul William introduces a principle of distinguishing the powers. He says that the powers are not distinguished according to their essence but according to their office; and by way of illustration compares the powers to a man exercising various official capacities in civil society. In the same way that one and the same man is at the same time a duke, a courtier, a leader of a city, and sometimes a counselor or senator, so one and the same soul, retaining always its unity and indivisibility, at the same time is its power of understanding, its power of reasoning, and its power of willing. The powers of the

22 Ibid.: Jam autem removi tibi partialitatem ab ea et partibilitatem: quare necesse est animam humanam esse unamquamque huiusmodi potentiarum et virtutum totaliter: et quemadmodum audivisti ex sermonibus Aristotelis potentiam et virtutem eam et esse et dici non ex eo quod est, sed inquantum est principium et causa cuiuscumque operationis. Per huiusmodi vero sermones principium effectivum et causa non ponitur aliquid in ea cum de ipsa praedicantur, sed potius ab ea. Est igitur dicere multas potentias non quidem essentia vel subjecto sive numero et virtute, sed relatione sive respectu vel comparatione actuum et operationum multarum; quapropter hoc modo dicitur habere potentiam vel potentias huiusmodi quemadmodum et habere essentiam vel substantiam.
soul are named from the various operations of the whole soul in the same way that a man is named for his various civil positions. 23

The basic theme common to the texts of St. Augustine, Peter the Lombard, and William of Auvergne presented above, is that the essence of the soul is the immediate principle of all of the soul's operations. The essence and the powers of the soul are identified. William, however, goes on much more strongly to emphasize that the powers could not be accidents of the soul; and that the distinction of the powers is merely nominal, identifying the different operations of the one essence of the soul. Now unless St. Thomas is to adopt the same position concerning the soul and its powers as just presented he will have to introduce some radically new element into the discussion. But he will not support these views: point by point he rejects them. In their place he substitutes his own ideas concerning the soul and its powers, based on the metaphysical foundation of actus essendi. From his devastating criticism of the identification of the powers with the soul; through his development of the powers as properties and accidents of the soul; to his distinguishing of the powers by their acts and objects; St. Thomas continually has in mind his notion of actus essendi as the basis for the whole development of the problem. How St. Thomas' notion of actus essendi underlies his criticism of early thinkers on the problem...

23 Ibid.: Quod autem dividitur vel distinguitur in potentias aut virtutes sive per illas, non secundum essentiam est, vel sit hoc, sed secunda officia. Quemadmodum enim apud homines vivos et idem homo, et dux, et comes est, et marchio, et potestas alicujus civitatis, et consul interdum atque senator: sic una et eadem anima, in unitate atque impartibilitate sua persistens ac permanens, simul est vis intellectiva, et vis rationalis, et volens, quod est dicere virtus volendi. Eodem modo concupiscibilis vel irascibilis, sed pro varietate operationum quas efficit, seu perficit, diversae virtutes ac potentiae nominatur, quemadmodum unus et idem homo, pro varietate dignitatum et officiorum, antedictis nominibus nominatur.
of relating the powers to the soul, and how St. Thomas' notion of
actus essendi underlies his own position concerning the powers of the
soul will be the concern of this thesis.
II ST. THOMAS' CRITICISM OF THE PREVIOUS THINKERS

The examination of the texts from St. Augustine, Peter the Lombard, and William of Auvergne in the preceding section, bore out St. Thomas' summary that they held the essence of the soul to be the immediate principle of its operation. This point is more basic than the other two which were also raised there, concerning the distinction of the powers and whether they were substances of accidents, because these ultimately depend on the first point. Since the identification of the powers with the essence of the soul is the more basic point it is important that it be examined before the other two. Therefore this section of the thesis will present St. Thomas' criticism of the theory which maintains the identity of the powers of the soul with its essence. Because this is the first time in this thesis that Thomas has been allowed to speak at length, it will be the first time that the notion of actus essendi will make its weight felt. How much it pervades Thomas' Criticism of his predecessors will be readily seen.

St. Thomas does not agree that the essence of the soul is the immediate principle of its operations and goes to some considerable effort with many different types of arguments to show that it is impossible to uphold. The first of these arguments that Thomas uses is based on the metaphysical notion which is basic to his whole philosophy, namely, the distinction of essence and esse.

The simple statement of the argument is: when the operation itself of a thing is that same thing's esse, then it is that the essence of the thing that operates is alone the immediate principle of operation; for
just as power is related to its operation as to its act, so is essence
related to esse. Now only in God is His act (in this case to understand)
the same as His esse; and so only in God is His power (in this case intel-
lect) the same as His essence. In all intellectual creatures then, the
intellect is a power and not the essence.¹ That is, the power is distinct
from the essence.

Here St. Thomas has used generally a proportion, if it may be so
called, relating power to its operation in the same way that essence is
related to esse. For the essence to be its power then, in this pro-
portion, esse would have to be its operations. But this is so only in
God; and therefore in man and every other creature the principle of
operation is its power, not its essence.

Thomas also relies on the fact that esse and operation are the same
only in God for another argument to show that the powers cannot be id-
entified with the essence of the soul. He starts by saying that diverse
acts belong to diverse things since acts are proportioned to the things
of which they are the acts. And then he goes on to set up another pro-
portion: as ipsum esse is a kind of actuality of an essence, so acting
is the actuality of a power. In this respect then, essence is in act
with regard to esse and power is in act with regard to acting. Thomas
concludes then that since in no creature is its activity the same as its
esse, (this belongs to God alone), the power of no creature is the same
as its essence, (this also belongs to God alone).²

St. Thomas continues his attack on a slightly different line when

¹ Sum. Theol. I, 2. 79, a. 1, c. The relationship between the
operations of a thing and its esse is shown on pp. 31-34 and on pp. 74-
75 below; the relationship between essence and esse on pp. 76-86 below.

² De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Primo quidem, quia impossibile est ...
he says that potency and act divide being (ens) and every genus of being; so that a potency and its act must be referred to the same genus. From this it follows that if an act is not in the genus of substance, then the potency related to that act also is not in the genus us substance. But, Thomas, says, the operations of the soul are not in the genus of substance, and hence the potencies which are the principles of these operations cannot be in the genus of substance, that is, they are not the essence of the soul. Only in God is His power the same as His essence because only in Him is the operation the same as His substance.

Continuing in this vein of thought, Thomas says that since proper and immediate effects are proportioned to their causes, all things having their proximate principle of operation in the genus of substance have substances for operations. But this is true of God alone; and so only He does not act by a mediate power different from His substance. For all creatures, operation is an accident and so the proximate principle of operation also must be an accident.

It should be noted that the lines of reasoning which Thomas is using to show the powers of the soul are not its essence and especially the last two arguments which show that the principles of operation must be in the same genus as their operations, are leading inexorably to the conclusion that the powers of the soul are accidents of the soul. The next argument, which expands greatly on the last one, will bring this home even more sharply.

Thomas starts the argument by stating that whatever acts, acts ac-

---

3 Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, c.: Primo, quia cum potentia et ....

4 Scriptum super Libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi, lib, I, d. 3, q. 4, a. 2 (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 26): Respondeo dicendum quod ....
cording as it is in act, for example, fire heats because it is actually
hot, not because it is actually bright. Because of this, every agent pro-
duces an effect similar to itself, and from this conformity, by examining
an effect, the principle of the agent's action can be considered. "When,
therefore that which acts does not pertain to the substantial esse of a
thing, it is impossible that the principle by which it acts be anything
of the essence of the thing." Thomas goes on to show how this is very
evident in the case of natural agents which in generation act by
changing matter with respect to some form. Matter is first disposed to
receive the form, and then does receive it, according as generation is
the terminus of alteration. It is necessary on the part of the agent
that that which immediately acts be the accidental form corresponding to
the disposition of the matter. This accidental form acts by the power of
the substantial form, as if it were its instrument; otherwise it would not
induce a substantial form by its acting. For example, artifacts are pro-
duced by the action of an instrument, which action terminates in the form
desired by the artist. Any agent which directly and immediately produces
a substance by its action, is acting by its essence, and no active power
will be present other than that essence.

Thomas continues this long exposition by saying that passive powers
ordered to substantial acts are in the genus of substance, while those
ordered to accidental acts are in the genus of accident by reduction, as
a principle and not as a complete species; because every genus is divided
by potency and act. So a potential man (potentia homo) is in the genus
of substance; and potential white (potentia album) is in the genus of

5 Q.D. de Anima, a. 12, c.: Cum ergo id quod agit non pertinet ad
esse substantiale rei, impossibile est quod principium quo agit sit
aliquid de essentia rei.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
quality. "Now" St. Thomas says, "it is evident that the powers of the soul, whether active or passive, are not spoken of directly with respect to something substantial, but rather with respect to something accidental." He explains this further by using illustrations from the powers of the soul: the operations of understanding and sensing which are carried out by the powers of intellect and sense, are not the substantial esse of the operator, but rather they are only its accidents. In the same way, to be large or small is an accidental mode of existence to which the augmentative power is ordained. The generative and nutritive powers produce and conserve substances, but they do this by changing matter; and so, such an action, like the action of other natural agents, is performed by a substance through the medium of an accidental principle. So it is evident, Thomas concludes, that the essence of the soul is not the immediate principle of its operations, but that it operates through accidental principles. And so the powers of the soul are not its essence.

To briefly sum up this last argument, note that Thomas starts from the assertion that effects are similar to their causes. Because of this, effects in the genus of substance will be produced by an essential principle of the agent. Then he investigates natural agents, active and passive powers, and the powers of the soul, showing how their various actions are all by way of some accidental principle, from which he concludes that the powers of the soul are not its essence.

6 Thomas Aquinas, loc. cit.: Manifestum est autem quod potentiae animae, sive sint activae sive passivae, non dicuntur directe per respectum ad aliquid substantiale, sed ad aliquid accidentale.

7 Ibid.: Et similiter esse intelligens vel sentiens actu non est esse substantiale, sed accidentale, ad quod ordinatur intellectus et sensus.

8 Ibid.
Notice how also once again the argument has led to the conclusion that the powers are accidental principles of operation, not substantial. This idea will be expanded on by St. Thomas and treated at length below. This argument also brings to a close the line of reasoning which Thomas has directly based on the proportions between power and operation and essence and esse, that is, on the distinction between essence and esse in creatures.

The first argument which might be said to depend only indirectly on the distinction of essence and esse in creatures, is an argument which St. Thomas builds on the nature or essence of the soul. It should be noted that although Thomas treats the essence of the soul as an act here, just how and why this is so will not be shown until the next section following, which will treat of the essence of the soul. In considering the soul Thomas says that it is impossible for the essence of the soul to be its powers because the essence of the soul is an act. So if the essence of the soul were also the immediate principle of operation, then whatever has a soul would always be actually exercising the operations of life, in the same way that whatever has a soul is always actually alive. St. Thomas means here that a substance, the essence of whose soul was also the immediate principle of its operations would always be making use of all of its powers, for example, a man would always be understanding, would always be seeing, would always be feeling, would always be moving his limbs, etc., just as the substance is always alive when the soul is present. St. Thomas continues by saying that the soul is an ultimate terminus of generation; it is not an act ordained to some further second act, in so far as it is a form. Its potentiality to another act then belongs to its power not to its essence as form.

9 Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, c.: Secundo hoc etiam impossible ....

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Its potentiality to another act then belongs to its power not to its essence as form. As subject of its power, then, the soul is said to be first act, ordained to second act.\textsuperscript{10} Now nothing having a soul is observed always actually to exercise all the operations of life, and so Thomas gives Aristotle's definition of the soul: "The act of a body having life potentially, which potentiality however does not exclude the soul."\textsuperscript{11} And so Thomas concludes that the essence of the soul is not its power because nothing can be in potency according to an act, insofar as it is an act.

Moving on to another type of argument, which Thomas says is especially applicable to the soul, as against all creatures in general, he says that there are many powers on account of the diversity of acts and objects: these acts and objects diversify the powers which are related to them because a potency is named only in relation to its act.\textsuperscript{12} These many actions of man, some of which are active and some of which are passive, differ generically and must be attributed to different principles, not to just one immediate principle. But the essence of the soul is one principle only. The essence then cannot be the immediate principle of all the diverse actions of the soul, but rather the soul must have many different powers corresponding to all its different actions, because a power is related reciprocally to, and is named from, its act.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{10} See: Aristotle, \textit{De Anima}, II, 1, (412 a27), (See Bibliography).
\textsuperscript{11} Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, c.: Actus corporis potentia vitam habentis, quae tamen potentia non abiicit animam. See also: Aristotle, \textit{De Anima}, II, 1, (412 a25).
\textsuperscript{12} De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Primo quidem quia essentia ....
\textsuperscript{13} Q. D. de Anima, a. 12, c.: Deinde hoc apparat ex ipsa diversitate .... For the relation of a power to its act see the section on the distinction of the powers, pp. 60-66 of this thesis.
Thomas further explains why it is impossible for the essence, since it is only one principle, to be the principle of many diverse and even opposite actions: he says "it is impossible that one and the same thing in one and the same respect could naturally be the principle of many and diverse actions, much less opposite ones."\textsuperscript{14} Rather one principle could be the principle of only one action. Thomas' meaning becomes more clear in the light of Aristotle's discussion on self-movers.\textsuperscript{15} Aristotle says here that "the same thing in respect of the same thing at the same time" could not move itself as a whole. Otherwise the same thing could be both hot and not hot and the same time; or the same person could be teaching and being taught the same thing at the same time; or could be restoring to and being restored to the same health. What Aristotle and Thomas are both getting at is that one principle cannot be the principle of many operations. Many principles are needed: one for each specifically different operation. This argument convincingly corroborates the criticism \textsuperscript{16} leveled above at the thinkers who saw no contradiction in having the essence of the soul be the single principle of the many diverse operations of which man is capable.

Thomas derives another argument from the diverse subjects of the powers of man. Some of the powers are subjected in certain parts of the body, for instance, the sensitive and nutritive parts. Other powers are not acts of the body at all but exist in the soul alone, for instance, the intellect and the will. This double subject for the powers would be

\textsuperscript{14} Quaestiones Quodlibetales, X, q. 3, a. 1 (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 25); Impossibile est ut idem secundum idem sit naturaliter principium plurium et diversorum numero, immo quasi oppositorum. [Hereafter abbreviated as Quodl.]

\textsuperscript{15} Aristotle, Physica, VIII, 5, (257 a33-b13), (See bibliography).

\textsuperscript{16} See p. 2.
impossible if the powers and the essence of the soul were the same, because one and the same thing could not be the act of a body and yet something separate at the same time and in the same respect. 17

Continuing, St. Thomas uses the order of the powers and their relation to one another to show that essence and power are different. One power can move another into operation, for example, the intellect moves the will. But Aristotle has shown that the same thing cannot move itself in the same respect; 18 and so if the powers of the soul were its essence, one power could not move another. But since they do move one another the powers must be different from the essence of the soul. 19

In the final consideration of this problem St. Thomas gives a view which admits of a sense in which the soul is said to be its own powers. Thomas is not really hedging here, but he is leaning over backwards not to impugn the words and authority of St. Augustine who says that memory, understanding and will are one life, one mind, one essence. 20 Thomas relates the argument of "some" philosophers who say that the above statement of St. Augustine's is true in the same sense that the potential whole is predicated of its parts; the potential whole being

17 De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Secundo idem apparat ex potentiorum...

18 Aristotle, Physica, VIII, 5, (257 a 33- bl3).

19 De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Tertio apparat idem ex ordine...

No attempt will be made in this thesis to develop Thomas' doctrine concerning the order and relation of the powers. For this doctrine see: Summa Theologiae I, q. 77, aa. 4;7.

20 Augustine, De Trinitate, X, 11, [P.L. 42, 984], p. 156. See note 9, p. 5 above.
midway between the universal whole and an integral whole. The universal whole is present to each of its parts in its whole essence and power in the way that animal is predicated both of man and of horse. The universal whole is properly predicated of each of its parts. What is meant here (keeping the same example) is that animal considered as a universal whole is in both man and horse essentially. Both man and horse contain within themselves the essence of animality to its utmost. And each and every other man and horse and other animal contains within itself the essence of animality. The essence is in each animal and each animal has the fullness of the essence.

On the other hand, the integral whole is not present in each part, either according to its whole essence or its whole power, and so it cannot be predicated of each of its parts. What is meant by an integral whole is something that is a composition of parts. For example, a house is an integral whole composed of all of its parts, that is, it consists of a foundation, walls, a roof, windows, doors, plumbing, etc. The integral whole cannot be predicated of its parts because this would be to say, for example, that a house is its foundation, or a house is its doors, and so on, which is obviously false. Thomas does say though that in an improper way of speaking the integral whole can be predicated of all of its parts when they are taken collectively. For example, the walls, the roof, foundation, etc., all taken together do constitute a house.

The potential whole is a medium between the first two: it is in each part according to its whole essence but not according to its whole

---

21 *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 1; see also: *De Spír. Creat.*, a. 11, ad 2.
power. It can be predicated of each part but not so properly as is the universal whole. To explain the potential whole by an example, the soul is in each part of the body in its essence because as a substantial form it is the form of the whole body and each part of it. However, the soul is not in each part according to its whole power. Rather it is only in any one part of the body with respect to the power that is exercised through that part. For example, the power of sight is in the eye, it is not in the mouth. It is in the sense of potential whole, according to St. Thomas, that St. Augustine says memory, understanding, and will are the one essence of the soul.\(^{22}\)

To draw an analogy between the three powers Augustine gives and the example just given above, the essence of the soul for Augustine would be the whole body informed by the substantial form, and each of the three powers would be parts of the body by which the soul exercises its individual powers. In the same way that the whole soul is in each part of the body by being the substantial form of the body, so the essence of the soul for St. Augustine would be in each of the memory, understanding, and will in its totality. Hence it would be true to say that the memory, understanding, and will are the one essence of the soul.\(^{23}\)

The powers are distinct from the essence of the soul. No other conclusion is possible following St. Thomas' thorough, varied, and devastating criticism of his predecessors. He showed from his arguments

\(^{22}\) *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 1; see also: *De Spir. Creat.*, a. 11, ad 2.

\(^{23}\) St. Thomas' argument to prove that the soul is totally in each part of the body is analogous to this last problem and would be profitably read. See below pp. 46-48 of this thesis.
based on his notion of *actus essendi* that only in God could the essence be the immediate principle of operations. How noteworthy and radical a difference from the analogy which William of Auvergne drew, making the operations of the human soul similar to God's operations. Thomas' distinction of the powers of the soul from its essence led to the conclusion that the powers of the soul are accidents and not substances in themselves. Just what kind of accidents they are remains to be seen. The position of Thomas' predecessors and especially of William of Auvergne that only substances can act cannot survive the criticism based on Thomas' notion of *actus essendi*. Thomas also showed here that one principle can give rise to only one operation and that therefore to perform many operations the soul necessarily has to have many powers.
III THE SOUL AS FORM AND ACT OF THE BODY

The problem with which this thesis is concerned, one view of which Thomas has already presented and criticized, is the relationship of the powers to the essence of the soul. In the last section Thomas used an argument from the essence of the soul as act, to show that the essence could not be identified with its powers. The general concern of this thesis with the soul, the already presented distinction based on the essence of the soul, the establishing of the powers as accidents of the soul, all point out the necessity of understanding exactly what Thomas means by the soul: what he means by calling the soul the first principle of life, by calling the soul the act of the body, by saying the soul can be the substantial form of the body. To find some of Thomas' meanings and their ramifications is the purpose of this next section.

St. Thomas calls things alive when they exhibit the external appearance of self-movement. However the name is not meant to signify self-movement precisely but rather it is meant to signify the substance which has self-movement naturally, or which can move itself in any way whatsoever to some operation.¹ "For such a nature, to live is the same as the esse of the thing."² Life signifies abstractly this fact of

¹ Sum Theol. I, q. 18, a. 2, c.: Nam vitae nomen sumitur ex quodam exterius apparenti circa rem quod est movere seipsam; non tamen est impositum hoc nomen ad hoc significandum, sed ad significandum substantiam cui convenit secundum suam naturam movere seipsam, vel agere se quocumque modo ad operationem.

² Ibid.: Vivere nihil aliud est quam esse in tali natura.
living in the same way that running signifies abstractly to run. Living \textit{vivum}) is a substantial predicate of a thing then, and not an accidental one, even though it is sometimes improperly used to signify the operations of sensing or understanding.

St. Thomas says that the soul is defined as the first principle of life in those things of this world which live, and that life is shown principally by the two activities of knowledge and movement.\textsuperscript{3} Thomas cautions that every principle of vital action is not a soul because then, for example, the eye which is a principle of vision would be a soul. Rather it is the first principle of life that is called the soul. Nor could a body as body be a principle of life or a living thing, because then every body would be a principle of life or a living thing, which is manifestly not true. It belongs to a certain body to be a principle of life or to be living through that which is such a body \textit{(per hoc quod est tale corpus)}. What is actually such though has this from another principle which is called its act. The soul then which is the first principle of life is not a body but it is the act of a body.

Aristotle defined the soul, according to Thomas, both in view of its essence and its subject.\textsuperscript{4} With respect to defining the essence of the soul Thomas says that Aristotle first placed substance among the ten categories, and then divided it into matter, form and the compound

\textsuperscript{3} Sum. Theol. I, q. 75, a. 1, c.: ... quod anima dicitur esse primum principium vitae in his quae apud nos vivunt.... Vita autem maxime manifestatur duplici opere, scilicet cognitionis et motus.

\textsuperscript{4} In Aristotelis Librum De Anima Commentarium, II, lectio I, n. 214. (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 17). [Hereafter abbreviated as \textit{In De Anima}].
of these two, and that thirdly he distinguished two senses of the
word *act*: one corresponding to habitual knowledge and the other to
actually thinking. With respect to the subject endowed with a soul
Thomas says that Aristotle distinguished between corporeal and incor­
poreal substances, and then divided corporeal substances into natural
and artificial bodies, and then finally distinguished between living
and non-living natural bodies.

Living bodies then are substances compounded of matter and form.
However, to say living body is to imply two things: the body itself and
that by which it is alive; and so, that which is referred to as body,
cannot itself be the principle of life, or soul, of the composite.
Hence, Thomas says that Aristotle understood the soul to be that by
which a living thing is alive, existing in a subject. The subject or
the matter is the body that receives life. "... the soul is a sub­
stance in the manner of a form that determines or characterizes a
particular sort of body, that is, a physical body potentially alive."5
The matter of a living body is related to the life of that body as
potency is to act. "The soul is precisely the actuality whereby the
body has life."6 Thomas emphasizes that Aristotle means the soul is
the substantial and not the accidental form of the body, and that the
compound of soul and body must not be looked upon as though the body
had its own form making it a body, to which a soul is superadded,
making it a living body; but rather that the body gets both its being

5 *In De Anima*, II, lectio I, n. 221: ... quod anima sit substantia,
sicut forma vel species talis corporis, scilicet corporis physici
habentis in potentiam vitam.

6 *Ibid.*, n. 222: ...et hoc est anima, actus, secundum quem corpus
vivit.
and its life from the soul.

To see the relationship between soul as form and soul as act the nature of form as act should be briefly considered. A form through itself makes a thing to be actually because a form is itself essentially an act.\(^7\) The unity of any thing composed of matter and form then is by virtue of the form itself, because it is the nature of a form to be united to matter as its act. Hence everything is what it is by its form; and for anything to be perfect and good it must have a form, together with all that precedes and follows upon that form.\(^8\) A form presupposes a certain determination of its principles whether these be material or efficient and the form itself is signified by the species because everything is placed in its species by its form. And upon a form follows an inclination to the end, or to an action, or something of the sort; for everything, in so far as it is in act, acts and tends towards that which befits it according to its form.

There are two effects of form. The first effect is \textit{esse} because everything has \textit{esse} by means of its form; and the second effect is operation, because every agent acts by means of its form.\(^9\) Thomas explains the act of a form further when he says that by its "first act" a form informs matter to make any thing be what it is, for example, it is the act of the form of the body, that is, the soul, to make the

\(^7\) Sum. Theol. I., 2. 76, a. 7, c. : Forma autem per seipsam facit rem esse in actu, cum per essentiam suam sit actus.

\(^8\) Ibid., q. 5, a. 5, c. : cum autem unumquodque sit id quod est, per suam formam; forma autem praesupponit quaedam, et quaedam ad ipsam ex necessitate consequuntur; ad hoc quod aliquid sit perfectum et bonum necessae est quod formam habeat, et ea quae consequuntur ad ipsam.

\(^9\) Ibid., q. 42, a. 1, ad 1: Primus autem effectus formae est esse nam omnis res habet esse secundum suam formam. Secundus autem effectus est operatio nam omne agens agit per suam formam.
body a living thing. This first act is not attributed to the suppo-
osition, but solely to the form. The "second act" of a form is some
operation, for example to heat, and this second act is attributed to
the suppositum. To attribute second act to the suppositum means
simply that it is a thing that acts, a composite of matter and form,
and not just a form alone.

Thomas uses the distinction: first act is form and second act is
operation. He says however that the original meaning of act was oper­
ation, and that only secondly did it come to denote the form insofar
as the form is the principle and end of operation.

Thomas finds the basis for the distinction of first act and
second act in Aristotle's De Anima. There, Aristotle gives two senses
of the word actuality. The first sense corresponds to the possession
of knowledge; and the second to the actual exercise of knowledge.
Aristotle says the soul is actuality in the first sense, that is, of
knowledge as possessed, because both sleeping and waking presuppose the
existence of the soul. Waking corresponds to actual knowing while
sleeping corresponds to knowledge possessed but not employed. And in
any individual Aristotle says that knowledge comes before its emplo­
ment or exercise.

Taking up this last statement, Thomas says that every substance

10 De Veritate, q. 27, a. 3, ad 25. (See Bibliography, Thomas
Aquinas, Saint, 14). [Hereafter abbreviated De Verit.]

11 De Potentia Dei, q. 1, a. 1, c. (See Bibliography, Thomas
Aquinas, Saint 6). [Hereafter abbreviated De Pot.]


13 Aristotle, De Anima, II, 1 (412 a23- a27).
exists for the sake of its operations,\textsuperscript{14} which operations are the ultimate perfection of a thing.\textsuperscript{15} "The activity of anything is its end, in a sense, it is what is best in it."\textsuperscript{16} Thomas explains this when he says that the less perfect exists for the sake of the more perfect and hence just as matter is for the sake of form, so form which is first act exists for the sake of operation which is second act. Therefore operation is the end of the creature.\textsuperscript{17} "Second act is more perfect than first act in the same way that actual consideration of knowledge is more perfect than habitual knowledge."\textsuperscript{18}

The distinction of first act and second act led to Aristotle's definition of the soul as "the first grade of actuality of a natural body having life potentially in it."\textsuperscript{19} The importance of this definition can be seen from Thomas' distinction of first and second act with reference to the two effects of form. As first act of the body, the soul, is the form of the body. It is the very source of the esse of the body, and it makes the body to be what it is. The soul as the first

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Summa Contra Gentiles I, c. 45. (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 27): Omnis substantia est propter suam operationem. [Hereafter abbreviated as Cont. Gent.]
\item \textsuperscript{15} Cont. Gent. III, c. 113: Operatio enim est ultima perfectio rei.
\item \textsuperscript{16} De Verit., q. 19, a. 1, c.: Operatio enim cuiuslibet rei est quasi finis eius, cum sit optimum in ipsa.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Sum. Theol. I, q. 105, a. 5, c.: Semper enim imperfectum.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Cont. Gent. I, c. 45: Actus secundus est perfectior quam actus primus; sicut consideratio quam scientia.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Aristotle, De Anima, II, 1, (412 a 27).
\end{itemize}
act of the body, as the source of esse for the body, gives meaning to St. Thomas' expression: "To live is the esse of the living thing."\textsuperscript{20} The soul as the source of esse for the body underlies all of the body's actions. A thing cannot perform its actions unless it first exists; and so the first act of the body exists for its second acts. The operations of a thing always follow on its esse.

Thomas calls attention to the expression in Aristotle's definition of the soul: "having life potentially in it."\textsuperscript{21} He says that a body actually alive would be a living compound and adds that no compound as such can enter into the definition of a form. Thomas also comments on Aristotle's additional remark that the potentiality of the body did not exclude the soul from the body. Thomas says this means that the soul itself is included in the thing of which the soul is called the act. By way of illustration Thomas says that heat is the act of what is hot, and light is the act of what is lucid. This does not mean that the hot body is hot in separation from the heat but that it is hot through the heat, and that what is lucid is lucid through light, not in separation from it. In like fashion the soul is said to be the act of a body potentially alive because it is by the soul that the body is a body, and is organic, and has life potentially. The soul, which is first act, when it is said to be in potentiality, is in potentiality to second act which is operation. That is to say that the body complete with its soul is potentially animate in the sense that while it possesses its first act it does not necessarily have to be acting in some fashion, that is, it does not have to actually possess its second act. Such a

\textsuperscript{20} Cont. Gent. II, c. 57: Vivere enim est esse viventibus.

\textsuperscript{21} In De Anima, II, lectio 1, n. 222.
potentiality to operate in no way removes the soul from the body. The soul itself however is a potency only insofar as it receives esse from God. 22

The subject of the soul is an organic body. An organic body, Thomas explains, is any body which has the various organs which a living body needs as a consequence of the vital activities of the soul; and the human soul especially gives rise to many different activities that need a wide array of organs for their execution. 23

Thomas relates that Aristotle demonstrates that the soul is substantially united to the body, as form to matter; and that this demonstration followed from his consideration of the vegetative, sensitive, motive, and intellectual operations of the soul. The demonstration follows this line: that by which a thing is first able to operate is the form of the thing that is operating. For example, the act of knowing in a man proceeds either from knowledge itself or from the soul. But since it could proceed from the soul only in so far as the soul actually possessed knowledge, man must know first by knowledge itself, which then is a form of the soul. Or again, a man becomes healthy either with respect to health itself, or with respect to the body or some part of it. But since it is by health itself that the body is healthy, health is a form of the body. 24

Aristotle, according to St. Thomas, applied the same reasoning to the operations of the soul. It is by the soul that man lives because

22 Sum. Theol. I, q. 76, a. 4, ad 1. For a more detailed discussion of the potency of intellectual substances see pp. 87-8 below.

23 In De Anima, II, lectio 1, n. 230.

24 De Unitate Intellectus, p. 209, column b. (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 12): Hoc ergo habito quod anima determinatur ...
the soul is vegetative; it is by the soul that man senses because the soul is sensitive; it is by the soul that man moves because the soul is capable of motion; it is by the soul that man knows because the soul is intellective. From this Thomas says that it is evident that the soul is the act of the physical body; not only is it the act of the vegetative, sensitive and motive powers, but also of the intellect. And so Thomas says that it was the opinion of Aristotle that that by which man understands is the form of the physical body.\(^{25}\)

The human soul is unique among the forms which inform matter, in that it is able to subsist in its own esse\(^{26}\) while the other forms are able to subsist only in the esse of their composites. This is so, Thomas says, because only existing things act and their action is proportioned to their esse. Since understanding and willing, which are the proper actions of the human soul, take place without the organs of the body, then esse must be ascribed to the human soul as subsisting apart from matter. Even though the soul subsists in its own esse it also communicates this esse to corporeal matter to form one thing, a man.\(^{27}\) The esse of the soul is also the esse of the composite, and after the dissolution of the body, the soul retains its own esse.

Because it is the nature of a spiritual substance to subsist in its own esse, and because it is the nature of a form to have its esse in some subject which is the matter of which it is the act and perfection, it would seem to be against the nature of a spiritual substance to

\(\text{25 De Unitate Intellectus, p. 209, column b: Anima est primum ...}\)

\(\text{26 De Pot., q. 3, a. 9, c.: Prima est, quia rationalis....}\)

\(\text{27 Sum. Theol. I, q. 76, a. 1, ad 5; see also: De Spir. Creat., a. 2, ad 3.}\)
be the form of a body. But in the case of human knowledge Thomas says it is obvious that understanding belongs to some particular man. Every activity though belongs to a particular thing through either a substantial or an accidental form existing in the thing itself. So the principle of the operation of understanding must be formally present in a particular man. The activity of understanding goes beyond matter entirely because it does not take place through a corporeal organ. The esse of the human soul then, being proportioned to its activity, surpasses corporeal matter and is not totally included in it. In so far as the human soul surpasses the esse of corporeal matter and subsists and operates in itself, it is a spiritual substance. But in so far as it is touched upon by matter in communicating its own esse to the body, the human soul is the form of the body.

St. Thomas pursues this point in much greater detail and at great length in the Summa Contra Gentiles, Book II. Here, Thomas first says that the union of an intellectual substance with a body cannot be by way of mixture or by way of bodily contact because these ways of union are proper only to substances having corporeal matter. However, he goes on to say that an intellectual substance can be united to a body by way of a contact of power which differs from bodily contact in three ways. First, by a contact of power, something indivisible can touch something divisible insofar as it is able to act upon it, as, for example, when an intellectual substance acts on a body. But by bodily

28 De Spir. Creat., a. 2, c.: Dicendum quod difficultas huius....

29 De Spir. Creat., a. 2, c.: Sed tamen si quis diligenter consideret .... In quantum vero attingitur a materia et esse suum communicat illi est corporis forma. See also: De Unitate Intellectus, pp. 211-12: Quomodo autem hoc esse possit quod anima sit forma corporis.
contact, an indivisible point is able to touch only something else which is indivisible. Second, bodily contact is at the extremities only, while in a contact of power one thing touches the whole of the other according as that thing is in potentiality to be acted upon. Potentiality regards the whole of a thing, not just the extremities. Third, in a contact of power, that which touches another penetrates to the innermost depths of the thing. The touching substance is within the thing touched; while in bodily contact at the extremities, there is no interpenetration.  

A union through a contact of power does not make a thing to be unqualifiedly one, as Thomas points out; but rather the two things so united are one only in respect to acting and being acted upon. Since to be acting (esse agens) is not the same as to be, simply (esse simpliciter), then a thing one in acting is not one unqualifiedly. A thing qualifiedly one can be spoken of in three different ways: as indivisible, as continuous, and as one in reason. The first two kinds of unity are incompatible with the union of an intellectual substance and a body because no composite can be one indivisibly; and because the parts of something continuous are parts of quantity. Finally Thomas says that from two permanent things (ex duobus permanentibus) a thing one in reason can result only if one is to the other as substantial form is to matter. This poses the crucial question: is it possible for an intellectual substance to be the substantial form of a body?  

Now for one thing to be the substantial form of another, two

30 Cont. Gent. II, c. 56: Est autem primo manifestum....

31 Ibid.: Quae autem uniuntur secundum talem contactum....

32 Ibid.: Hoc igitur inquirendum relinquitur, utrum substantia intellectualis corporis alicuius forma substantialis esse possit.
conditions must be fulfilled. First, the form must be the principle of the substantial being (*essendi substantialiter*) of the thing whose form it is. That is, it must be the formal principle by which a thing exists and is called a being. Second, the form and matter must be united in one act of being (*in uno esse*). The composite of matter and form, the composite substance must subsist in this one single act of being.33

Before giving his own solution, Thomas relates five objections to this way of uniting the soul and the body. The first objection holds that both the intellectual substance and the body are actually existing substances and since the act of one thing distinguishes it from another, from two actually existing substances one thing cannot be made. Next, the form and matter of a substance must be of the same genus, which is not the case with an intellectual substance and a body. Third, a form whose *esse* is in matter is a material form, and so an intellectual substance as a form with *esse* in a body would not be immaterial. The fourth objection maintains that it is impossible for something whose *esse* is in a body to be separate from the body. But since the intellect is separate from the body, it can in no way be the form of the body. The fifth and final objection related here is that a thing whose *esse* is in common with a body must also have its operation in common with a body. An intellectual substance then which is also the form of a body must have its *esse* common to both it and the body, since a composite exists in one act of being. The operation of such an intellectual substance then will be in common with the operation of the body, and

33 *Cont. Gent.* II, c. 68: Ad hoc enim quod aliquid sit forma...
its power will be a power of the body.\textsuperscript{34}

Thomas gives three arguments to show that the soul is united to the body as its substantial form. The form and act of anything is that by which it becomes a being in act from a being in potency. The body becomes a being in act from a being in potency by means of the soul because, as Thomas says: to live is the \textit{esse} of a living thing. The soul then, since it makes the body to be living in act, is the form of the ensouled body.

In his second argument, Thomas says that \textit{esse} and operation belong to the composite of matter and form and to neither the form nor the matter alone. Thomas hence attributes to be (\textit{esse}) and to act (\textit{agere}) to two things which are related one to the other as form is to matter. For example, a man is said to be healthy in body and in health, and he is said to know in knowledge and in his soul. But knowledge is a form of the knower's soul while health is a form of the healthy body. Similarly Thomas attributes life and sensation to both the soul and the body. But, he says, the soul is the principle of life and the senses, and so therefore it is the form of the body.

Finally Thomas says that the whole sensitive soul is related to the whole body as a part is related to a part. And he says a part is related to a part in such manner as to be its form and act, as, for example, sight is the form and act of the eye. Thus the soul is the form and act of the body.\textsuperscript{35}

Thomas notes the objection that since diverse genera have

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid.}, c. 56: \textit{Videtur autem rationabiliter considerantibus}....

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Cont. Gent.} II, c. 57: \textit{Quod autem ut forma propria}....
diverse modes of being, an intellectual substance cannot be united to
corporeal matter in the same act of being, but rather should have a
more noble mode of being. Thomas rejects this by saying that corporeal
matter and intellectual substance do not possess the single act of
being in the same way. For esse is received into corporeal matter as
into a subject which is raised to a higher level than just elemental
matter; while esse is the principle of the intellectual substance, in
keeping with its own nature. And so from this difference in the
relationship between esse and corporeal matter, and esse and intellectual
substance, Thomas concludes that nothing prevents an intellectual sub-
stance from being the form of the human body: and this form is the
human soul.

The composite of human soul and body is a unity because, as
Thomas says: "The greater the mastery of form over matter, the greater
is the unity of that which is composed of that form and matter." And from the examination of the operations of forms it can be seen that
the higher a form is, the more it exceeds the limitations of matter,
and the higher is its rank of esse. The lowest forms, those wholly
embedded in matter are the forms of the four elements: earth, air, fire,
and water. The operations of these forms are limited to what is proper
to those qualities which are the dispositions of matter, for example,
heat, cold, moisture, dryness, etc. Slightly higher are the forms of
mixed bodies whose operations, while mostly dependent on the qualities
of matter, yet produce some effects by a higher power, which Thomas

36 Cont. Gent. II, c. 68: Potest autem obiici quod substantia...

37 Ibid.: ... quia quanto forma magis vincit materiam, ex ea et
materia efficitur magis unum.
says is received from a heavenly body, for example, the attraction of a magnet for iron. Higher yet than these are the forms which are the life principles of plants. The operations of plant forms exceed the qualities of elemental matter in that they are principles of movement in living things that move themselves: although the qualities of the elemental matter do assist organically in the operation of the forms. Above the plant soul there next comes the sensitive soul of the brute animal. This sensitive soul, Thomas says, not only is a principle of motion but also of a form of knowing. Hence the souls of brute animals are capable of operations to which the qualities of elemental matter are no assistance even organically, although the operations are performed only by means of the bodily organs. Thomas briefly explains this by saying that sensation and imagination are not brought about by heating or cooling, or any other quality, but that these qualities are necessary dispositions of the organs involved in sensing. 38

Finally Thomas says there is a form which is like the higher substances not only by being a principle of motion but also as to the type of its knowledge, namely understanding. This form, the intellective soul, is capable of an operation which totally surpasses the bodily organs. Hence the intellective soul of man, by which he understands and which transcends all the conditions of corporeal matter, is not wholly embedded in matter as material forms are. 39

38 Cont. Gent. II, c. 68.
39 Ibid.: Super omnes autem has formas invenitur.
ion of understanding requires no bodily organs it still depends on
the powers of sense and imagination for knowledge of individual things.
The soul is not endowed by nature with the knowledge of truth, as is
an angel, but must acquire it through the senses, which operate through
bodily organs. This shows that it is natural for the soul to be united
to the body.

After presenting his position on the union of the soul and body,
Thomas specifically answers the five objections raised above to the
soul being the form of the body. The first he dismisses as a false
supposition. The soul and body are not two actually existing sub-
stances, but rather together they form one actually existing substance.
The presence or absence of the soul makes a difference to the body
because the soul makes it to be actually a human body. The second
objection Thomas says would be valid if the intellectual substance and
the body did exist apart because then they would indeed be species of
diverse genera. However by being united, the soul and the body are of
the same genus in the sense that they are the principles of that genus.
The third objection has been answered above when Thomas showed how the
intellectual soul, though being a form of matter was not wholly immersed
in matter and so was not a material form. To the fourth objection
Thomas answers that for the intellect to be separate means that if the
soul's operation is not carried out by means of a bodily organ then
its power will not be the act of a body. Any operation that is carried
out by means of a bodily organ, for example, seeing, is the act of a
power of that organ. But through the essence of the soul, the soul
gives esse to a body. So even though the soul is separate from matter
in its power of intellecction, still it is united to the body in its
essence as the form of the body. To the fifth objection Thomas answers that for the substance of the soul to be the form of a body does not mean every power of the soul will be the act of a bodily thing. And this he showed when he proved that the human soul was not a form embedded in matter.40

The soul is united to the body for two main reasons. The first is to make a complete human being; and the second is to perfect the soul in intellectual knowledge.41 No part has the perfection of a nature when it is separated from the whole. And so the soul which is part of human nature, does not have the perfection even of its own nature except in union with the body. This can be seen because the soul does not have the perfection of its nature until it is able to actualize all of its virtually contained powers. And since many of the powers of the soul are acts of the organs of the body it can actualize them only in union with the body.42 "The soul so much occupies the lowest level among the intellectual substances that it does not naturally possess the truth and must strive for and gather knowledge from individual things by way of the senses."43 The intellectual soul then had to be endowed not only with the power of understanding but also with the power of sensing. Since the power of sensing needs corporeal

40 Cont. Gent. II, c. 69: His autem consideratis non est difficile....

41 Q. D. de Anima, a. 1, ad 7.

42 De Spir. Creat., a. 2, ad 5.

43 Sum. Theol. I, q. 76, a. 5, c.: Anima autem intellectiva ... secundum naturae ordinem, infimum gradum in substantiis intellectualibus tenet; intantum quod non habet naturaliter sibi inditam notitiam veritatis ... sed oportet quod eam colligat ex rebus divisibilibus per viam sensus ....
organs for its operations, the soul then had to be united to a body which could be the fitting organ of sense.

Because the soul is the substantial form of the body Thomas says that of necessity it is in the whole body and in each part of the body. This is so because the substantial form perfects both the whole and each part of the whole of which it is the form. A whole is made up of parts and if the form of the whole did not give esse to each of the parts of the body, it would be a form like the form of a house, consisting in composition and order: it would be an accidental form. But since the soul is a substantial form of the body it is the form and act of the whole body and of each of its parts. If the soul is the act of each part of the body and an act is in the thing of which it is the act, then the soul by its essence is in each part of the body. An illustration is that upon the separation of the soul from the body, no part of the body retains its proper work; and the body itself is only so-called equivocally, as is, for instance, the body of a painted animal. 44

Thomas says that the soul is related in one way to the whole body and in another way to its parts. The soul is primarily and essentially the act of the whole body, but it is also the act of the parts in their relation to the whole. Thomas clarifies this by saying that since matter is for the sake of form, the matter has to be such as suits the form. The lower types of forms of things are of weaker power and have few activities and few different parts, as in inanimate bodies. The soul, however, is a higher form with greater powers. It can be the

44 Sum. Theol. I, q. 76, a. 8, c.: Sed quia anima unitur corpori...
principle of many different activities, each of which requires a different organ of the body. The more perfect the soul, the greater is the diversity in organs required. The lowest forms perfect their matter in a uniform way, while the soul perfects its matter in a non-uniform way, so that the whole of the body of which the soul is primarily and essentially the act, is made up of dissimilar parts.  

To show that the soul is entire in each part of the body, Thomas examines the three types of parts into which a whole can be divided and the three types of totality corresponding to these parts. There is a whole which can be divided into parts of quantity, like a whole line or a whole body. Another type of whole can be divided into logical and essential parts, as, for instance, a thing which has been defined is divided into the parts of a definition; and a composite is divided into matter and form. Thirdly a thing can be a totality in relation to its active and passive powers, inasmuch as these are considered to be parts of it which are distinguished from one another because their operations differ.

As an illustration, Thomas considers all three types of whole with respect to whiteness in a surface. The quantitative whole which whiteness has accidentally is not in each part of a surface which is white. Nor is the potential whole of whiteness in each part of a surface since whiteness in the whole surface affects the eye more than the whiteness in a small part of it. However the wholeness of the species and essence of whiteness is in each part of the surface.

45 De Spir. Creat., a. 4, c.: Sed tamen aliter se habet totum...
46 Sum. Theol. I, q. 76, a. 8, c.: Et quod tota sit in qualibet...
The quantitative whole applies to forms only accidentally because, for example, whiteness, which in its essence is equally disposed to be in a whole surface and in each part of it, is divided accidentally when the surface is divided. But the soul of a perfect animal which requires variety in the parts of the animal is not equally disposed to be in the whole and in the parts, and so it is not divided accidentally through the division of quantity. The soul is not a quantitative whole either accidentally or essentially.

Nor is the soul in every part of the body from the viewpoint of a wholeness of power because the parts are perfected in different ways by the soul itself for different activities. And one activity of the soul, understanding, is performed without any part of the body. Hence by power, the soul is not wholly in every part nor even wholly in the body. With respect to any one power the soul exists only in that part of the body which takes care of the operations exercised by that particular part.

Whole and part, taken quantitatively, pertain to forms only accidentally insofar as the forms are divided when the quantitative subject in which they reside is divided. But whole and part as applied to the perfection of the essence are found in forms essentially. With respect to this type of totality, which belongs to forms essentially, the whole of every form is in the whole subject and the whole of it in each part, just as whiteness by its total essence is in a whole body.

48 De Spir. Creat., a. 4, c.: Relinquitur ergo quod secundum.
49 Q. D. de Anima, a. 10, c.: Unde secundum illam potentiam tantum est in aliqua parte quae respicit operationem quae per illam partem corporis exercetur.
50 Cont. Cent. II, c. 72: Totum autem et pars secundum quantitatem...
and its every part. The soul by its essence is the form of the body and it exists as such in each part of the body because the perfection of the species comes from the soul in virtue of its very essence.\textsuperscript{51}

So the whole soul exists in each part of the body according to the whole of its specific perfection.

To sum up then, by soul Thomas means the first principle of life in bodies which are potentially alive. The soul is that by which the body lives, and as such is the act of the body. It is the first act, by which the body has esse, and which underlies all its operations. But anything is in act only by means of its form. The soul then is the substantial form of the body, making it to be what it is, existing in all of the body's parts. Much effort was spent by Thomas to show how the soul was essentially a form and act. The concern of this thesis though is the powers of the soul, and so the manner in which the soul can be in potency is extremely relevant. However it will remain to a later section to treat of this.

\textsuperscript{51} Q. D. de Anima, a. 10, c.: Dicimus ergo quod, cum perfectio speciei pertineat ad animam secundum suam essentiam, anima autem secundum suam essentiam est forma corporis et prout est forma corporis est in qualibet parte corporis, ...relinquitur quod anima tota sit in qualibet parte corporis secundum totalitatem perfectionis speciei.
St. Thomas started his discussion of the relationship between the powers and the essence of the soul by saying two viewpoints were held concerning it. In the course of presenting the viewpoint which identified the powers with the soul, it was noticed that Peter the Lombard held that the memory, understanding, and will were different from the soul, and that he gave the name "natural properties" to these powers. But William of Auvergne vehemently objected to any notion of accidents being in the soul. The simplicity of the soul, he said, demanded that the whole soul in its essence be the principle of each and every human action. However, St. Thomas, in the course of demolishing the theory that made the essence of the soul the immediate principle of its operations showed that the principles of the soul's operations had to be accidental principles. It now remains to say in what way Thomas means the powers to be accidents of the soul, and in what way they are properties of it.

It is true or false to say the powers are essential or natural properties of the soul according to which one of two senses of the term accident is used.\(^1\) In one sense accident is used in opposition to substance and includes the nine categories of Aristotle: quantity, quality, relation, place, time, position, state, activity, passivity.\(^2\)

---

1 *De Spiri*. Great., a. 11, c.: Quod quidem concedentes dicunt...

2 Aristotle, *Topica*, I, 9, (103 b21-24), (See Bibliography).
In this sense, Thomas says that a power cannot be a natural or essential property because there can be nothing intermediate between substance and accident. Substance and accident, he goes on, are divided by affirmation and negation, that is, according as they are in a subject or not in a subject (secundum esse in subiecto et non esse in subiecto). It is proper for a substance not to be in a subject, since it is a subject; while an accident must exist in some subject. The powers were shown above not to be the essence of the soul and that they must be accidents. But because property is not included in the nine categories of accidents, the powers cannot be considered as natural properties of the soul. What Thomas means by property will be fully explained below, but briefly he means it is something that does not belong to the essence of a thing, and yet is caused by the essential principle of the species and cannot be considered in separation from it. Because a property is not the same as the essence of a thing, and because it is not included among the nine categories of accidents, a power cannot be considered as a natural property of the soul when it is considered to be an accident in this first sense of the term.

Thomas goes on to conclude then that the powers are accidents included under one of the nine categories. Moreover he says they are accidents of the second species of quality which is called natural power or natural impotence.

---

3 De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Sic autem accipiendo accidentem...

4 Ibid.: ...sequitur quod [potentiae animae] sint accidentia in novem generum contenta.

5 Ibid.: Sunt enim in secunda specie qualitatis, quae dicitur potentia vel impotentia naturalis. [Italics mine].
Thomas refers here to Aristotle's definition of the species of quality. For Aristotle a quality is that in virtue of which people are said to be such and such; and under the second of the four classes of quality he considers, he "includes all those terms which refer to inborn capacity or incapacity." Aristotle illustrates his words by saying good boxers and good runners are so because of some inborn capacity to accomplish their tasks with ease, and not because they have such and such a disposition.

St. Thomas goes on to his own consideration of quality, saying that it implies a certain mode of substance, which mode implies a certain determination according to some measures. And so he says that in the same way that a quality, which is a difference of a substance, is said to determine the potency of matter according to its substantial esse, so an accidental quality, which is also a certain kind of difference, determines the potency of a subject to its accidental esse. Thomas explains the use of the term quality as substantial difference to mean "the difference by which one thing is distinguished substantially from another and which is included in the definition of the sub-

6 Sum. Theol. I-II, q. 49, a. 2, c.: see Aristotle, Categories, 8, (8 b25-10 a25), (See Bibliography).

7 Aristotle, Categories, 8, (9 a14). [Italics mine].

8 Sum. Theol. I-II, q. 49, a. 2, c.: Proprie enim qualitas importat....

9 Ibid.: Et ideo sicut id secundum quod determinatur potentia materiae secundum esse substantiale, dicitur qualitas quae est differentia substantiae; ita id secundum quod determinatur potentia subjecti secundum esse accidents dicitur qualitas accidentalis quae est etiam quaedam differentia.
stance. For example, man is said to be a two-footed kind of animal; while a horse is a four-footed kind.

Thomas continues by saying that the determination of a subject to be accidentally can be taken in one sense according to the action and passion which follow on the principles of its nature, namely, matter and form. This determination of a subject according to action and passion happens respectively in the second and third species of quality. Thomas has said in effect, that the second species of quality determines an existing subject to act in some way, accidentally.

Thomas clarifies his notion of second species of quality when he says that this quality is proper to creatures alone. Creatures do not act immediately by their essence as does God; rather they act by the medium of accidental forms which are powers of the second species of quality.

When power is considered to be an accident in the first sense of the term, that is, when it is considered to be in the second species of quality, it is impossible for it to be called a natural property of the soul. In what sense then is it possible to say the powers are properties of the soul? To find out, Thomas examines the second sense of the term accident, that sense which he says is one of the four predicables which Aristotle mentions, namely, definition, property, genus as follows:

10 In Metaphysicam Aristotelis Commentaria, V, lect. 16, n. 987, (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 18): ... differentia substantiae, idest differentia per quam aliquid ab altero substantialiter differt, quae intrat in definitionem substantiae. [Hereafter abbreviated In Metaph.]

11 Sum. Theol. I-II, q. 49, a. 2, c.

12 De Pot., q. 1, a. 1, ad 11.
and accident;\textsuperscript{13} and which is also one of the five universals Porphyry
gives in \textit{IV Isagoge}, namely, property, difference, genus, species, and
accident.\textsuperscript{14} Aristotle says that a definition is a phrase which sig-
nifies the essence of a thing;\textsuperscript{15} and that "a property is a predicate
which does not indicate the essence of a thing, but yet belongs to
that thing alone, and is predicated convertible of it."\textsuperscript{16} Aristotle
has here set up three conditions which must be satisfied if one
thing is to be a property of another. He illustrates these three con-
ditions by the example of a man's ability to learn grammar. This
ability certainly does not indicate the essence of man, but it does
belong to man alone; and it is convertible because as Aristotle says,
if \textit{A} is a man he can learn grammar, and conversely if \textit{A} can learn
grammar he is a man. He emphasizes that nothing which could belong
to something outside of \textit{A} is convertible with \textit{A}, for example, a man can
sleep, but what can sleep does not have to be a man. Sleep then strictly
speaking is not a property of man. If man is the only thing sleeping
at a particular time then sleep is what Aristotle calls a temporary
property of man; or if man is not alone when sleeping Aristotle calls
his sleep a relative property, that is, relative to those creatures
not sleeping.

\textit{St. Thomas} offers two examples to clarify the notions of absolute
and relative properties. \textit{Risibibility} is an absolute property of man
because it belongs to him alone; while \textit{rationality} is a property for

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} Aristotle, \textit{Topica}, I, 4, (101 b17).
\item \textsuperscript{14} \textit{De Spir. Creat.}, a. 11, c.: \textit{Alio modo accipitur accidens}...
\item \textsuperscript{15} Aristotle, \textit{Topica}, I, 5, (101 b36).
\item \textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}, (102 a18).
\end{itemize}
man only relative to, say, a horse, because angels also are rational.  

Aristotle goes on to define genus as that which is predicated in the category of essence of several things exhibiting differences in kind. Then he gives two definitions of accident: one, a process of elimination has accident belonging to a thing and yet not being definition, property, or genus; the second says accident may belong or not belong to any one and the self-same thing. As an illustration of an accident he says whiteness may belong or not belong to the self-same thing. Nothing prevents the thing from at one time being white and at another time not being white.

For Aristotle an accident could be a relative or temporary property but never an absolute property. For example, sitting posture is an accident in man but also is a temporary property if he alone is sitting; or if he is not alone it is a property relative to those men not sitting. However no accident will fulfill the three conditions necessary to be an absolute property. After this presentation of the meanings of the four predicables Aristotle says that they are nevertheless reducible to the ten categories:

Next then we must distinguish between the classes of predicables in which the four orders in question are found. These are ten in number: Essence, Quantity, Quality, Relation, Place, Time, Position, State, Activity, Passivity. For the accident and genus and property and definition of any thing will always be in one of these categories: for all the propositions found through these signify either something's essence or its quality or quantity or some one of the other types of predicate.

17 De Pot., q. 10, a. 4, ad 7: Sed proprium dupliciter...
18 Aristotle, Topica, I, 5, (102 a32).
19 Aristotle, Topica, I, 5, (102 b4-7).
20 Ibid., 9, (103 b20-28).
This lengthy digression into Aristotle's meaning concerning accident and property was necessary to see just how Thomas was using the terms. Thomas continues his discussion by saying that the second sense of the term accident signifies the accidental relationship of a predicate to a subject. Using this second sense of accident, St. Thomas places property as a medium between the substantial and the accidental predicates. By a medium Thomas means that in the order of hierarchy, property is above the accidental predicate and below the substantial predicate, and also that in some ways property is similar to both predicates and in some ways different. Thomas explains that a property is similar to a substantial predicate because both are caused by the essential principles of the species: from this, by a definition signifying the essence, a property can be demonstrated as belonging to a subject. Also Thomas says a property, since it is something outside of the essence of a thing, is like an accidental predicate. But he says a property differs from an accidental predicate because the accidental predicate is not caused by the essential principles of a species, but rather happens to an individual thing the same way a property happens to a species: however sometimes it happens separably and sometimes inseparably.\textsuperscript{21} An inseparable accident has a permanent cause in the individual subject, as Thomas explains, for example, a human being is permanently male or female, while a separable accident has a cause which is not permanently in the individual subject, for example, to sit and to walk are not permanent.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{21} De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Sic enim accidens non significat ....

\textsuperscript{22} Q. D. de Anima, a. 12, ad 7.
Thomas concludes then that "the powers of the soul as essential properties naturally consequent to the essence of the soul are intermediate between the essence of the soul and an accident."\(^{23}\)

From his twofold consideration of accident Thomas concludes that the powers can be considered as being in the nine categories, and that they can be considered as natural properties of the soul intermediate between the essence and an accident. However an interesting problem arose when it was pointed out by Aristotle that the four predicables are always included under one of the nine categories. Since accident and property, considered as two of the four predicables, can always be reduced to some of the nine categories, it seems legitimate to wonder if power is considered to be a natural property only in a logical sense. In other words, is a power considered in a real sense when it is considered as an accident in one of the nine categories? and is it considered only in a logical sense when considered as a property in the four predicables?

There is certainly a sense in which St. Thomas considers the accident which signifies a power, to be real, because he says that "every power of the soul is a certain form or nature."\(^{24}\) Even more explicitly he says that creatures act "by the medium of accidental forms" which are powers in the second species of quality.\(^{25}\)

\(\text{23 De Spir. Creat., a. 11, c.: Sic igitur potentiae animae sunt medium inter essentiam animae et accidentes, quasi proprietates naturalles vel essentiales, id est essentiam animae naturaliter consequentes.}\

\(\text{24 Sum. Theol. I, q. 80, a. 1, ad 3: Dicendum quod unaquaeque potentia animae est quaedam forma seu natura.}\

\(\text{25 De Pot., q. 1, a. 1, ad 11: Dicendum quod potentia quae est in secunda specie qualitatis, non attribuitur Deo: haec enim est creaturarum quae non immediate per formas suas essentiales agunt, sed mediantibus formis accidentalibus.}\

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Thomas to call a power an accidental form shows that in this sense he is certainly not considering the power to have only a logical reality. Accidental forms have their own definite mode of being in making substances to be in such and such a way, and as such, the powers have their own definite mode of being. That St. Thomas indeed means that the powers are accidental forms he affirms again when he says: "That the accidental form is a principle of action is due to the substantial form." How pregnant is this short statement! It describes the powers as accidental forms, it gives their function as principles of action, and it indicates that the substantial form is the first or remote principle of any operation and that the powers as accidental forms act only by it. And in a final statement to show that by the first sense of accident he understands a power to have ontological reality, Thomas sets up a proportion: an active accidental form is related to the substantial form of the agent (for example, heat compared to the form of fire) in the same way that the powers of the soul are related to the soul. Thomas is able to set up the proportion because a thing has its substantial esse only as a result of its substantial form, and because it operates by the power which results from its substantial form. The proportion directly expresses Thomas' notion that the soul is the substantial form of the composite, and it ties in the powers with the active accidental forms. The powers as accidental forms,

26 Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 4: Dicendum quod hoc ipsum quod forma accidentalis est actionis principium, habet a forma substantiali.

27 Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 1, ad 3: Compositum autem per formam substantiali habet esse substantialiter; per virtutem autem quae consequitur formam substantialiter, operatur. Unde sic se habet forma accidentalis activa ad formam substantiali agentis, ut calor ad formam ignis, sicut se habet potentia animae ad animam.
have ontological reality.

It now remains to see whether there is any evidence to support the second half of the problem: the notion that accident in the second sense is only a logical entity. Support for the contention that it is only a logical entity could arise from the very nature of the predicables, genus, species, and difference. These are undoubtedly logical terms and are spoken of only in relation to some existing subject. In this context it would seem that property and the predicable accident here are also only logical terms.

In his discussion of the second sense of the term accident it was seen above that Thomas considered it only to signify the relationship of a predicate to a subject. The relationship between a subject and its predicates is a question of logic and does not necessarily correspond to the relationship between a substance and its accidents. For example, man and horse are both in the genus of animal. Each man and each horse contains the full essence of animality within itself. But there is no animal essence outside of the specific animals themselves. Man and horse are animals. Animal is something said about the man and the horse, and without these individuals is nothing.

The very fact that Aristotle said the predicables could be reduced to the categories indicates that he was considering the predicables in a special light. It is reasonable to conclude that this special light was a logical one to help speak of things in a more precise manner. The two examples that Thomas used to clarify the notions of absolute and relative properties strongly support the notion that the second sense of the term accident is logical. He says risibility is an absolute property of man, while rationality is only
a relative property, relative to angels. If property is something real in man, then man no longer is a rational animal primarily: he is a laughing animal. What a reversal of order! But if the notion of property is only logical, and meant to aid in subtle distinctions, the result here is not too important.

There indeed seems to be solid ground then for the contention that Thomas' notion of power as an accident in the first sense has ontological reality, while in the second sense it has only logical reality.
The problem of distinguishing the powers is the third and last of the major problems concerning the powers of the soul that were raised by those who maintained the identity of the soul and its powers. William of Auvergne especially spoke of distinguishing the powers by their operations, but his distinction was only nominal, and for him in no way led to a real plurality of powers. Thomas agrees entirely with William's principle that the powers are distinguished by their operations and objects. How Thomas uses this principle; the metaphysical basis for it; its complex results; and how Thomas' distinction of the powers differs from William's are the concern of this section.

St. Thomas says that a power in so far as it is a power is spoken of only in relation to an act.1 The powers then are defined by their acts and are distinguished one from another according as their acts are distinguished. But their acts are distinguished according to their objects, and so ultimately, the distinction of the powers of the soul is based on a difference of objects.

To explain this, Thomas starts by saying that "every operation of the soul is the act of either a passive or of an active power."2 The objects of the passive powers are related to these powers as the

1 Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.; Dicendum quod potentia secundum id quod est, dicitur ad actum.

2 In De Anima, II, lect. 6, n. 305; Omnis enim animae operatio, vel est actus potentiae, vel passive.
active agents which reduce the powers to actuality. For example, visible objects activate the power of sight, and, in general, sense objects activate the sense powers. On the other hand, the objects of the active powers are related to these powers as the ends of their operations, because the object is what is realized or achieved by the operation. For example, the object of the power of growth is perfect quantity and this is the end of growth.

By an active principle or power Thomas means some source of change in some other thing inasmuch as it is other; and by a passive power he means a principle by which something is moved by something else inasmuch as it is other. Since some active agent is required to bring about the change anything undergoes, Thomas says that a passive power can always be reduced to some first active power.

Thomas says this again when he comments on Aristotle's method of defining the parts of the soul. Aristotle, he says, starts his consideration of the parts of the soul, namely, intellectual, sensitive, and vegetative, from the act of the part in question. This is because in idea, acts and operations are prior to powers. "A potentiality is nothing but a capacity to act or be acted upon; it essentially involves a relation to actuality and can only be defined in such terms."

---

3 In Metaph., IX, lect. 1, n. 1776: ...principium quod dicitur potentia activa, est principium transmutationis in alio inquantum est alid.

4 Ibid., n. 1777: ...dicitur potentia passiva, quae est principium quod aliquid moveatur ab alio, inquantum est alid.

5 In De Anima, II, lect. 6, n. 304.

6 In De Anima, II, lect. 6, n. 304: Potentia enim, secundum hoc ipsum quod est, importat habitudinem quamdam ad actum: est enim principium quoddam agendi vel patiendi: unde oportet quod actus ponantur in definitionibus potentiarum.
In order to prove that actuality is prior to potentiality, Thomas uses three of Aristotle's proofs. He proves that act is prior to potentiality in intelligibility, in time, and in substance. Act is prior in intelligibility because that which is used to define something else is prior in intelligibility to the thing defined. For example, the notion of animal must be understood before that of man; and again, the subject is prior in understanding to its accidents. Thomas explains that a potentiality is definable only in terms of an actuality because the first characteristic of a potentiality is the very possibility of it actually acting or existing. For example he says that a builder is defined as a man who is able to build; and a theorist is a man who is able to theorize; and the visible is what is able to be seen; etc. The definitions make sense only if building, theorizing, and seeing are first understood. And so the knowledge of actuality must be prior to the knowledge of potentiality.\textsuperscript{7}

But if potentiality is defined only in reference to actuality, how is actuality defined? Thomas answers that it is not defined, but rather is known only from induction. It is not defined because it is a simple notion (\textit{prima simplicia}) which is the starting point of knowledge. An act has to be seen in a proportion between two existing things. Some examples of Aristotle's which Thomas uses are: act is related to potentiality as a man who is building is related to a man who is capable of building; or as one who is awake is related to one who is asleep; or as one who is seeing is related to another with his eyes closed. An act and its corresponding potentiality are known then by induction from particular cases.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{7} In \textit{Metaph.}, IX, lect. 7, n. 1846.

\textsuperscript{8} In \textit{Metaph.}, IX, lect. 5, nn. 1826-7.
In time, potentiality can be prior to actuality in one sense, but actuality is prior to potentiality in a more ultimate sense. Potentiality is prior to actuality in the sense that before there actually is a man, or actually is grain, there must exist matter that is potentially man, or seed that is potentially grain. But on the other hand, prior in time to the matter that is potentially a man, there must exist other men who are the active agents who through the act of generation will bring the potential man into actuality. In this way, act must be prior to potentiality.  

Act is also prior to potentiality in substance, and this Thomas interprets as meaning "in perfection." He takes this interpretation because it is by its form that a thing is perfected, and form is also signified by the term substance. Perfection though has a double reference: to form, and to the end of a thing. With respect to form, act is prior to potentiality, but is subsequent in the order of generation. For example, in generation a man comes from a boy, and a human being comes from seed; but man and human being have the perfection of form which is lacking to the boy and to seed. And secondly everything that comes to be moves towards some end which is a principle for the attainment of which, generation took place. Since actuality is the goal of potentiality it is prior to and a principle of the potentiality. It is the goal of potentiality because for example, an animal does not see in order to have the power of sight, but rather it has the power of sight in order to see. Potentiality is for act and not vice versa.  

9 *In Metaph.*, IX, lect. 7, nn. 1847-8.  
10 *In Metaph.*, IX, lect. 8, nn. 1856-7.
Though potentiality is for actuality and can be reduced to actuality, nevertheless when they are found in the same subject potentiality differs from actuality. Passive potentiality is the principle existing in a subject, by which the subject is acted upon by another thing. For example, when a thing is burned it undergoes a change and the passive potentiality is the principle present in the burned thing by which it is capable of being burned. But in contrast, the active potentiality is in the subject or agent in the same way that heat is in the thing which heats and the art of building is in the builder; it wants to go out to something else and change it.\textsuperscript{11}

"An act receives its species then from its principle or from its end."\textsuperscript{12} Thomas uses the difference between heating and cooling to illustrate this. The act of heating starts from the principle of heat to warm something, while the action of cooling starts from the principle of cold to cool something. Since heat and coolness are specifically different principles they distinguish their respective acts. Also the ends of the actions of heating and cooling are different, namely, to produce something warm or cold. These ends are specifically different and so then are the actions which result in them.

Both the active and the passive powers then are diversified by their acts and objects. This, Thomas says, is because whatever has esse for some end, has its mode of esse determined from that end to which it is ordained. For example, in order to be suitable for its

\textsuperscript{11} In Metaph., IX, lect. 1, n. 1782.

\textsuperscript{12} Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 3, c.: Ex his autem duobus actio speciem recipit, scilicet ex principio, vel ex fine seu termino.
end as a cutting instrument, a saw has to have a certain form and
certain matter. As Thomas explained above, every potentiality whether
active or passive, is ordained to some act as to its end. And every
potentiality has to be a potentiality to something in some definite
way and condition. For instance there must be a potentiality to walk-
ing or sitting before a person can walk or sit, and the time of season
must be right before a tree will bear fruit. Every power then has a
definite mode and species according to which it is suitable to such and
such an act. The powers therefore are diversified because the diversity
of acts requires different principles from which to elicit the acts. 13

Thomas also regards the diversity of objects in a twofold manner.
Objects can differ according to their natures as, for instance, taste
differs from colour; or they can differ according to their diverse in-
telligible character, as, for instance, the good differs from the
true. 14

A note of caution is added when Thomas points out that a species
is not divided by things accidental to it but rather by what pertains
to its very nature. The species of an animal for instance, is not
changed by a change in its colour, which is accidental to it. But a
difference which affected the very nature of an animal, for example,
the difference in the sensitive soul between rational and irrational,
would change the species of the genus of animal. Similarly, Thomas
says, not just any variety of objects will diversify the powers of the

13 De Verit., q. 15, a. 2, c.; In utrisque potentiss activa and
passiva inveniuntur actus et objecta non solum esse signa diversitatis
sed causae aliquo modo.

14 Ibid.; Sed obiectorum diversitas dupliciter attendi postest:
uno modo secundum naturam rerum; alio modo secundum rationem.
soul, but only a difference in that to which the power of its very nature is directed. The objects in so far as they are objects, are divided into colour, sound, etc., and so the powers of sense are divided accordingly into sight for colour, hearing for sound, and so on. However if the objects differ only accidentally, that is, if they do not differ in so far as they are objects then they will not cause any diversity in the sense powers of the soul. For example it is an accidental difference to an object as object, say, something coloured, for it to be a grammarian or a musician, great or small, a man or a stone. 15

Having established that the powers are distinguished by their operations, and the operations in turn by their objects, Thomas then sets about to see how the principle applies to man, that is, he distinguishes the many powers in man. Thomas starts by examining the various grades in the actions of the soul according as the action of the soul transcends the actions of a nature operating in an inanimate thing. This transcendance, he says, occurs both with respect to the manner of acting and with respect to what is produced by the action. In its manner of acting, the soul which is the principle of life and the source of self-movement in a thing, is the intrinsic agent of operation and as such transcends the operation of the inanimate nature. But with respect to the effect produced, the action of the soul may or may not transcend the action of the inanimate soul, because the effect produced and the things necessary for the effect, require the same

15 Sum. Theol. I, q. 77, a. 3, c.: Sed tamen considerandum est quod ea quae sunt per accidens, non diversificant speciem.
action from either an animate or inanimate body. The difference is 
that the effect of an inanimate body is brought about by an extrinsic 
agent while the animate body has an intrinsic principle of action. 16

Thomas says that it is to this sort of action that the powers 
of the vegetative soul are directed. The generative power is ordained 
to giving esse to an individual living thing, while the augmentative 
power enables a living body to acquire its proper size, and the nut-
ritive power preserves the living body in esse. An inanimate nature 
could produce such effects only by the aid of some extrinsic agent. 17

Because the soul is naturally disposed to receive all things in 
itsmately through sense and intellect, Thomas continues on 
to say that it has other actions which transcend both the actions of 
natural vegetative forms and their effects. Through the senses, by 
means of bodily organs, the individual species of corporeal things are 
received into the soul without their proper matter. And through the 
intellect the soul, without the aid of bodily organs, receives species 
which are completely abstracted from matter and the individuating 
material conditions. So the intellect is a higher, more perfect grade 
of immateriality than is the sense. Following the apprehension of 
either a sensible or intelligible form, is a natural inclination to- 
wards the apprehended thing, arising from the appetitive power of the 
soul. By its motive power the soul is referred to something extrinsic 
as to the end of its operation and movement: it enables the soul to

16 Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Oportet autem in actionibus animae 
tres gradus considerare: See also Sum. Theol. I, q. 78, a. 1, c.

17 Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Et huiusmodi sunt actiones .... 
See also Sum. Theol. I, q. 78, a. 2, c.
realize its desires and intentions. ¹⁸

For the sense knowledge of a perfect animal, Thomas says that five things are necessary. First is the proper sense by which the animal receives species from sensible things, and by which the animal discerns the proper sensible from other things coming in under the same sense, for example, it discerns white from black, or any other colour. And to make a discerning judgment about the sensible species received that is not possible to the proper sense, there is required the common sense. For instance it distinguishes white from sweet. To do this, the common sense must know both white and sweet; more broadly, it must receive and know the species of all the senses, as being their root and principle. And after a species has been received, a perfect animal must retain and preserve it, otherwise it would never be moved to seek something absent. This retention belongs to the imagination.

The fourth requirement for the life of a perfect animal is the estimative power by which the animal grasps intentions not received through the proper senses, for example, that something is harmful or useful. Animals perceive these intentions by natural instinct: the sheep naturally flees the wolf, not because the wolf is of such a shape or colour. And birds naturally build nests for use, not for the pleasure of building. But man is able to grasp these intentions by inquiry and inference, and so this power in him is called the cogitative power or particular reason. The fifth requirement is memory. By the memory animals recall to actual consideration things apprehended by the sense and conserved interiorly, and also the intentions known by the

¹⁸ Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Sunt autem aliae altiores actiones.... See also Sum. Theol. I, q. 78, a. 1, c.
estimative power. Animals have sudden recollection of the past only, but men are able to seek past intentions by logical reasoning. Thomas says that a separate power is needed for memory because its activity moves from the soul to things, while it is the reverse with the other sentient powers which move from things to the soul; and diverse movements require diverse motive principles or powers.\textsuperscript{19}

The proper sense, which is changed immediately by sensible objects is necessarily divided according to what belongs to the senses properly and \textit{per se}. Since they are passive powers, the senses are naturally changed by the exterior sensible which \textit{per se} is perceived. It is according to the diversity of exterior causes then that the proper sense is diversified. Because in sensing the sensible species is received without matter, Thomas sets up an order among the modifications which alter the senses according as they are more or less spiritual. Some sensible objects, though their species are received immaterially by the sense, cause a material change in the sensing animal, either by heating or cooling, or wetting or drying, etc. These qualities which change the animal are known only by contact and so the sense power which experiences them is called touch. Other sensible qualities, those known by taste, both bring about a change in the sense organ and in themselves also, especially by moisture. Where the sense immutation involves change only on the part of the sensed object, contact is not necessary but rather a medium is used for sensing. This occurs in smelling, which is caused by dissipation and alteration of the sensible object; and in hearing, which is caused by percussion and commotion of

\textsuperscript{19} Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Ad perfectam autem sensus cognitionem .... See also Sum. Theol. I, q. 78, a. 4, c.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
the air. The qualities of colour and light apprehended by sight, modify the sense with no material change on the part of either the sense or the sense object. Sight therefore is the most spiritual and noble of all the five external senses, and extends to more objects than the others.  

The appetitive power is divided into the concupiscible and the irascible. The concupiscible power is that by which the soul seeks what is suitable to it according to the senses and flees what is harmful to it; while the irascible power resists whatever is contrary to the inclinations of the concupiscible power and makes possible the enjoyment of the thing desired by it.

The motive power which makes possible the local motions of the animal is diversified with respect to these local motions. For instance in different animals there are different powers enabling some to walk, some to crawl, some to fly, etc. Also there would be different motive powers in different parts of the body according to the local movement of the various parts and limbs.

The powers of the soul which use no physical organ extend in their action to all beings. Hence the diverse natures of their objects cannot distinguish them, since they extend to them all. The powers of the intellect then can be distinguished only in so far as the act of the soul is directed to one and the same thing according to different relations at different times. That is, the intellect is divided into

---

20 Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Quia vero sensus proprius.... See also Sum. Theol. I, q. 78, a. 3, c.

21 Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Similiter autem vis appetitiva....

22 Q. D. de Anima, a. 13, c.: Vis autem motiva....
the understanding, according as the soul is directed to intelligible truth as to a form; and the will, according as the soul is directed to the good as to its end. 23

Thomas also divides the power of understanding into the agent and possible intellect, for the reason that an object is not an object for the same reason when it is in act and when it is in potency. A thing actually intelligible is the object of the possible intellect and it reduces the possible intellect from potentiality to act; while a thing potentially intelligible is the object of the agent intellect, which makes the object to be actually intelligible. 24

So from the three grades of action of the soul, namely the vegetative, the sensitive, and the intellectual, Thomas shows that there are five genera of powers of the soul distinguished by their acts and objects, namely, the vegetative, the sensitive, the intellectual, the appetitive, and the locomotive, each of which contains many powers under itself.

The presentation of Thomas' doctrine concerning the distinction of the powers does not indicate how radically it differs from William of Auvergne's position. Rather it merely shows Thomas carrying out the same principle as William, namely, that the operations distinguish the powers. The difference can be seen only in the light of what has already been developed in this thesis. Thomas crushed William's notion that the essence of the soul is the immediate principle of its operations. Hence William's view that the different "powers" only indicate different operations of the whole soul is meaningless: the

23 De Verit., q. 15, a. 2, c.: Illa vero pars animae quae non....
24 De Verit., q. 15, a. 2, c.: Sic etiam circa intellectum....
whole soul does not act immediately. The powers then are something

distinct from the essence of the soul. Thomas showed that the powers

of the soul were accidents of the soul having ontological reality.

What a difference these two points make. When Thomas uses operation

as a principle of distinction he is applying it to powers that have

real existence distinct from the essence of the soul. To distinguish

things that have real existence results in a real plurality: each power

is a different accidental form of the soul. And this is the radical
dergence between Thomas’ view of distinguishing the powers, and Will­

iam’s: Thomas has a real plurality of powers, while William has only

a nominal distinction of the operations of the essence of the soul.
There remains now the necessity for a section explaining at
greater length the metaphysical foundations of Thomas' notions of the
powers of the soul. Many of Thomas' arguments in his criticism of
the position upholding the identity of the soul and its powers were
directly based on the distinction of essence and esse in man. The
basis for this distinction will be the main aim of this section.
Also to be established is how spiritual substances with limited esse
are in potency to ipsum esse. Finally how esse is the act of every
substance; and the relationship between form and esse will be explored.

In many of his major works like the Summa Theologiae and the Sum-
ma Contra Gentiles, St. Thomas' order of presentation is theological,
starting from considerations about god, then working down through the
angels to man. The distinction of essence and esse in man has already
been applied to show that in him power is different from essence. By
examining this same distinction which Thomas maintains in the angels,
and by examining his identification of essence and esse in God, the
basis for the use of the distinction in man will be found. Finally
Thomas' arguments distinguishing essence and esse in man, based
specifically on the nature of created intellectual substances will be
presented and examined.

Thomas shows how the powers and essence are distinguished in an
angel by the fact that in no creature is the essence the same as its
esse, but rather is compared to it as potency is to act. The act
of an operative power is its operation. But since in an angel neither the act of understanding nor any other operation is the same as its esse, neither than is an angel's power of understanding, or any other power, the same as its essence.\(^1\)

The argument just given depends on the distinction of esse and operations, or first act and second act in all creatures. This distinction was also the crucial point in many of Thomas' arguments proving the distinction of the powers of the soul from its essence. To prove that esse and operation are distinct in angels and in every other creature, Thomas investigated the twofold class of action, transient and immanent, for the basis of his argument. In transient action, action goes out from some agent to something beyond, causing passion in that thing, as, for example, burning and cutting. This kind of action cannot be the esse of the agent because the esse of a thing is within that thing itself, while transient action denotes an outflowing from the agent. But the second class of action, immanent action, takes place wholly within the agent, as, for example, to sense, to understand, to will. By its very nature immanent action is ordained to infinity either absolutely or relatively. Thomas explains this statement with several examples. The acts of understanding and willing, whose objects are respectively the true and the good, are ordered to infinity absolutely. This is because the good and the true are convertible with being (cum ente);\(^2\) and so to understand and to will are related in themselves to

---

1 Sum. Theol. I, q. 54, a. 3, c.

2 Concerning the good see: Sum. Theol. I, q. 5, a. 1, c.: Dicendum quod bonum et ens sunt idem secundum rem. Concerning the true see: Ibid., q. 16, a. 3, c.: ...sicut bonum convertitur cum ente, ita et verum.
all things, and are specified by their objects. Thomas' example of relative infinity is the act of sensation which is related to all sensible things. While the esse of every creature is restricted to one in genus and species, the esse of God is absolutely infinite, comprehending all things within itself, and so the esse of God alone is its own act of understanding and its own act of will. Thomas concludes his argument here but it may be seen that the act of sensation and all other acts pertaining to relative infinity are distinct from their esse by the same argument. That is, esse is restricted to one in genus and species, while sense acts pertain to more than one genus and species.

Neither is the action of an angel identical with its substance, because an action is the actuality of a power in the same way that esse is the actuality of a substance or essence. But since actuality is opposed to potentiality, nothing which has some mixture of potentiality can be its own act. Because God alone is pure act, Thomas concludes that only in God is His substance the same as His esse and His action.

Thomas continues on to say also that if an angel's act of understanding were his substance, it would have to be subsisting. Since a subsistent act of understanding could be one only, just as subsistent whiteness could only be one, it would be impossible to distinguish the substance of the angel from the substance of God, or from any other angel, which idea Thomas rejects.

3 Sum. Theol. I, q. 54, a. 2, c.
4 Ibid., a. 1, c.: Dicendum quod impossibile....
5 Ibid., Praeterea si intelligere angeli....
Both in his treatment of man and of the angels Thomas has insisted on the distinction of their essence from their esse; and he has compared the essence to the esse as potency to actuality. To see then what the basis is for the distinction as Thomas has presented it, the essence and esse of God will be considered next.

God is infinite act, possessing the entire fullness of being (essendi), not contracted to any nature of genus or species. God's ipsum esse then is not an esse put into some nature which is not its own esse, because then it would be limited to that nature. So God is said to be ipsum suum esse. But, Thomas adds, this cannot be said of any of God's creatures, because in the same way that whiteness apart from every subject and recipient, if this were possible, would be one only, so ipsum esse subsistens could be one only. And so Thomas goes on to say that every thing which comes after the first being (ens), because it is not its own esse, has esse received in something through which ipsum esse is contracted: in every created thing, the nature of the thing which participates esse is one thing, and the participated ipsum esse is another. Everything participates the first act by being made similar to it in so far as the thing has esse. The participated esse is related then to the participating nature as act is related to potency. 6

This argument is very important in its scope. It starts off by saying the infiniteness of God's actuality precludes its being limited to any genus or species, meaning that in Him His essence is

6 De Spir. Creat., a. 1, c.: Manifestum est enim quod primum ens, quod Deus est, est actus infinitus....
His esse. Then it continues on to show that subsistent esse can be one only and that in every creature esse, which is one thing, is received into some limited nature, which is another; and the relation of this nature to the received esse is a relation of potency to act. The rest of this section will only go to further explain and reinforce the ideas brought out here: that in God, His essence is His esse; that in creatures essence is distinct from esse; and that essence is related to esse as potency to act.

Thomas offers an argument for the identity of esse and essence in God which starts from things wherein they are distinct. In creatures whose essence differs from their esse, what it is (quod sit) is distinct from that whereby it is (quo sit), because we say that something is by its esse and say what it is by its essence. In this way a definition signifying an essence tells what a thing is. But, Thomas concludes, God is a simple thing, having no composition and so there is no distinction between what He is and that whereby He is and so His essence is not distinct from His esse.7

Thomas argues in the same place that because God is pure act with no mixture of potency His essence must be the ultimate act within Him. Any act related to the ultimate act is in potency to that ultimate act, which is ipsum esse, according to Thomas. In creatures, since all motion is a passing from potency to actuality, ultimate actuality is what all motion tends to, and since tendency is for what is naturally desired, this ultimate act must be desired by all. And

7 Compendium Theologiae, I, c. 11. (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 2.) [Hereafter abbreviated Compend. Theol.]
this Thomas says is esse. The divine essence then, which is pure and ultimate act, is ipsum esse. 8

"The first effect God works in things is ipsum esse on which all other effects are based." 9 God is existence itself: existence belongs to Him in virtue of His essence, but belongs to all other things by participation because the essence of no creature is its existence. This is because esse which is per se subsistent can be one only, and this is God, Who therefore is the cause of existence in all things that exist.

Thomas also argues that whatever is outside of the essence of a thing is caused either by the constituent principles of that essence or by some exterior agent. So if ipsum esse of a thing differs from its essence, it must come to the essence in either of these two ways. But if the esse of a thing is caused, it cannot be caused by the constituent principles of the essence because then it would be the cause of itself. So the esse must be caused by some other being if it differs from its essence. Since God is the first cause though, His esse cannot differ from His essence. 10

Thomas says that esse denominates an act, because a thing is said to have esse insofar as it is in act, not because it is in potency. Everything which has an act belonging to it that is different from the thing itself, is related to that act as potency is related

8 Comp. Theol. I, c. 11, Ostensum est quod Deus est actus purus....

9 Comp. Theol. c. 68: Primus autem effectus Dei in rebus est ipsum esse, quod omnes alii effectus praesupponunt, et supra quod fundantur .... Ostensum est autem supra quod Deus est ipsum suum esse.

10 Sum. Theol. I, q. 3, a. 4, c.: Primo quidem quia quidquid est.
to act. If in God the divine essence differs from its esse, then essence and esse must be related as potency to act. God however is pure act, with no admixture of potency, and hence, the divine essence is not different from the divine esse.\(^{11}\)

Another argument that Thomas uses builds on the fact that some esse is esse necessarily and per se, and that this is God. If this esse which is necessary belongs to an essence which is not what it is, either it is incompatible with, or repugnant to that essence: as, for example, it is repugnant to the essence of whiteness to exist per se; or, it is compatible with or appropriate to it, as, for example, for whiteness to be in some subject. In the first alternative, the esse which is per se necessary will not befit that essence, just as it does not befit whiteness to exist per se. But if the esse, per se necessary, is compatible with the essence, then three more alternatives present themselves: the esse could depend on the essence, or both the esse and the essence could depend on another cause, or finally the essence could depend on the esse. Thomas rejects the first two as being contrary to the nature of what is esse per se necessary, because nothing which depends on something else can be a necessary esse. In the third alternative the essence that depends on the esse is added to that esse accidentally, because whatever follows on a thing's esse is accidental to that thing, and so is not its essence. But God is His essence, and so therefore does not have an essence that is not His esse.\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\) Cont. Gent. I, c. 22: Esse actum quendam nominat: non enim dicitur esse aliquid ex hoc quod est in potentia, sed ex eo quod est in actu....

\(^{12}\) Cont. Gent. I, c. 22: Ostensum est enim supra....
These arguments of Thomas' suffice to show that in God His essence is His esse, and they also suffice to show that this identity is possible only in God, and that in all creatures the essence and esse are distinct. Now the argument will shift from God down to created intelligences. The composition of form and esse in these will be examined, leading to arguments specifically dealing with the distinction of essence from esse in created intellectual substances.

In the human soul, or other created intelligence, there is no composition of matter and form, but there is in it a composition of form and esse. The difference between the essence of a composite substance and that of a simple substance, according to Thomas, is that the essence of the composite substance encompasses both form and matter, while the essence of the simple substance is its form alone. From this it follows that the essence of a composite substance can be signified as a whole or as a part according to the designation of matter. Therefore the essence of a composite thing is not predicated of the composite thing itself, because, for example, man is not said to be his essence. But the essence of a simple substance which is the form of the substance is signified only as the whole, because there is nothing outside of the form as receptive of the form. In whatever way then that the essence of a simple substance be taken, it is predicated of the substance.13

But Thomas does not say that a simple substance is simple absolutely, insofar as this would make it pure act. There remains some

13 De Ente et Essentia, c. 4, [p. 33, line 33 - p. 36, line 3] (See Bibliography, Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 4): In hoc ergo differentia substantie composite ....
potency in it, which is clear from what follows: those things which do not belong to the idea of essence are added to it from outside and make a composite with the essence, because the essence cannot be understood without those things which are the parts of essence. But an essence can be understood without anything being known of its esse, for example, the essence of a man or a phoenix can be understood without anything being known of its esse. Esse is different from the essence then unless they belong to a thing in which the essence is its very esse. In this case the thing is one and it is first. Since it is esse subsistens, this esse could not take on any difference because then it would become esse plus some form, and no longer be esse only; and it could not take on matter because then it would no longer be subsisting, but material. So that which is its own esse can be one only. In anything outside of this then, esse is one thing and essence is another. In an intelligence then, above the form is the esse, and so there is the composition of form and esse.  

The reasoning behind Thomas' statement that the essence of a man or phoenix could be known without anything being known of its esse is rather questionable. The statement is open to the charge of thinking with the imagination. However logically sound the statement is, a phoenix just could not be known and fully understood unless it existed to be examined. Statement after statement could be said about phoenixes, but unless phoenixes existed, to talk about their essence would be to talk about nothing, or at most, about a figment of the imagination.

14 De Ente et Essentia, c. 4.
An intelligence then is form and esse, and it receives its esse from the first ente which is esse only. However, anything which receives something from another is in potency to that thing, in respect of that which it receives, and what is received is its act. So the essence of an intelligence must be in potency in respect to the esse it receives from God, and that esse is received after the manner of an act. Potency and act are therefore found in intelligences, and their composition is spoken of as being of that by which it is and that which it is, or, of that which it is and esse.\(^\text{15}\)

Here Thomas has shown how an intellectual substance is in potency. The potency is with respect to the ipsum esse. Everything which acts has its esse from God Who is first act, and so it is in potency to this first act. This potency will be explained still further below.

It now remains to show the specific arguments by which Thomas shows that in created intellectual substances esse differs from quod est. Here, as has been seen above, Thomas argues by opposing esse subsistens to creatures to show that esse subsistens can be one only. In the first argument Thomas states that nothing besides ipsum esse can be added to esse subsistens. He explains this with the parallel situation in non-subsistent esse. Everything in an existing thing besides its esse is united to the thing, but is one with the esse only accidentally, that is, insofar as the thing is one subject having esse and that which is other than esse. For example, in Socrates there is white, which is other than his esse substantiale, the white

\(^{15}\) De Ente et Essentia, c. 4.
is united to the esse substantiale only accidentally. So if esse is not in some subject there is no way in which what is other than esse can be united to that esse. Which proves the first statement of the argument. Thomas goes on then to say that esse cannot be diverse insofar as it is esse, but that esse can be diversified by something other than itself, in the way that the esse of a stone is different from the esse of a man. Esse subsistens therefore can be one only, and this is God. Nothing besides God can be his own esse, and so then in every substance outside of God the substance itself differs from its esse.  

The example of whiteness in Socrates above seems to be an unfortunate one for this argument, and makes it difficult to fathom St. Thomas' meaning. Obviously whiteness is accidental to Socrates; but in what way can it be taken, to say that Socrates' essence is only accidentally united to his esse? Surely the union is not like that of colour in a body. Thomas' obscurity here is unfortunate and disappointing because this argument is one of the few where he expressly determines to show that esse and essence are different in creatures. Other times he shows the identity in God and the subsequent impossibility of an identity in creatures.

Thomas continues this same line of reasoning in his second argument when he considers a natura communis as separated. This separated nature can be one only, even though many things possess the nature, for example, the nature of animal considered as separated would not include those things which are proper to man or ox, because if it

16 Cont. Gent. II, c. 52: Si enim esse est subsistens....
did have them it would not be animal alone, but man or ox. In the same way, Thomas argues, if the differences which constitute the species, and which divide the genus, be removed, only the undivided nature of the genus would remain. If then, this thing itself which is esse is common as a genus, esse separatum, per se subsistens, can be one only. However Thomas goes on to say that esse is not divided by differences, as is a genus, but rather by the fact that it is the esse of this or that thing, and he adds that this makes it even more manifest that esse per se existens can be one only. And since this esse subsistens is God, nothing else besides Him can be its own esse. 17

This argument is liable to the charge of thinking with the imagination. It has no meaning to speak of a common nature as separated. Only individual things exist ontologically. Similarly, it is only imaginatively true to speak of a genus with the differences constituting the species removed. And to compare esse to such a genus to arrive at esse subsistens being only one, is again only imagination. In all, the effect is to destroy confidence in the argument, and it is once again disappointing.

In a third argument Thomas says that absolutely infinite esse cannot be twofold since absolutely infinite esse would include in itself every perfection, and so nothing would differentiate two such things. Esse subsistens must be infinite though because it is not limited by, or received into any recipient. Therefore there is only

---

17 Cont. Gent. II, c. 52: Natura communis, si separata....
one esse subsistens. 18

Thomas builds another argument on a theme broached just above, that is, that nothing belongs to esse per se subsistens except what is proper to ens insofar as it is ens. Anything else belongs to the thing only accidentally by reason of the subject. If then this last thing were separated from the subject it would in no way belong to it. Now Thomas introduces the new argument that it does not belong to ens insofar as it is ens to be caused by another. Because if it did every ens would be caused by another and an infinite regression of causes would result, which Thomas shows is impossible. 19 Esse subsistens then is uncaused, and no caused ens can be its own esse. 20

In a new line of reasoning Thomas says that the substance of any thing belongs to it per se, and not through another, and by way of illustration says that the luminosity of air does not pertain to its substance, but rather comes from something else. Every creature though has esse from something else, otherwise it would not be caused. In no created substance then is the esse the same as that substance. 21

And in another mode of argumentation Thomas says that because an agent acts insofar as it is in act, the first agent must be most perfectly in act. An agent is more perfectly in act the more its act is posterior in the way of generation because in anything passing

18 Cont. Gent. II, c. 52: Impossibile est quod sit duplex....


20 Cont. Gent. II, c. 52: Si sit aliquod esse per se subsistens....

21 Cont. Gent. II, c. 52: Substantia uniuscuiusque est ei per se....
from potency to actuality, act is posterior in time to the potency. What has act, is in act because of act itself, and so act itself is most perfectly in act. Since as Thomas has shown that God alone is the first agent, He alone is in act in the most perfect way, that is, He himself is the most perfect act. But it is esse which terminates all generation and motion, since every form and act is in potency until it acquires esse. God alone then is His own esse just as He alone is the first agent.

From this Thomas goes on to say that it is in accordance with the nature of God that ipsum esse belong to the first agent since God's esse is his substance. But, he adds, that which belongs to something according to its nature can belong other things only by way of participation, as, for example, heat is in many bodies by means of fire. So therefore, ipsum esse belongs to all things by a certain participation in the first agent. The substance of no thing belongs to it by way of participation, though, and hence only in God is ipsum esse the same as the substance.

Having shown that the substance of a created intellect is distinct from its esse, St. Thomas goes on to show that the composition of substance and esse is a composition of potency and act. This is a very important consideration because it shows at some length how intellectual creatures are in potency to actus essendi. This question

23 Cont. Gent. II, c. 52: Cum omne agens agat inquantum est actu....
24 Ibid.: Ipsum esse competit primo agenti....
has already been briefly touched on above, but the arguments here will take on new relevance in the light of the distinctions of **esse** and essence just explored.

Because everything is in act through having **esse**, **ipsum esse** is the complement of the existing substance. But Thomas says whenever one thing is the complement of the other, there exists a proportion of potency to act between them. Therefore in every created intellectual substance the composition of substance and **esse** is a composition of potency and act.  

And since an agent makes something to be in act, whatever a thing has from an agent must be act. All substances however have **esse** from the first agent, and they are caused by the fact that they have **esse** from another. Every caused substance then has **esse** in it as a certain act of its own. But since act is referred to potency, that in which act is present is a potency, and so every created substance has a composition of act and potency.

Thomas also shows the act and potency composition in created substances, when he says that God alone is one and that all other things participate in **esse**. Anything which participates in another is actualized in such and such a way by what is participated, and the participator is compared to what is participated as potency to act. Hence created substance is compared to its own **esse** as potency to act.

25 Cont. Gent. II, c. 53: *In quocumque enim inveniuntur aliqua duo quorum unum est complementum alterius, proportio unius eorum ad alterum est sicut proportio potentiae ad actum.*

26 *Ibid.*: *Quod inest alicui ab agente, oportet esse actum*....

27 *Ibid.*: *Omne participans alicui comparatur*....
A thing is made similar to its efficient cause by act because agents produce their like insofar as they are in act. But it is through ipsum esse, Thomas says, that every created substance is made similar to God. Hence ipsum esse is compared to all creatures as their act. And so in every created substance there is a composition of potency and act. 28

Intellectual substances then, including the soul, are in potency with respect to actus essendi. Their esse is limited, and entirely received from ipsum esse subsistens. Thus they are in potency to what they participate in.

Thomas develops some very basic notions concerning esse when he shows that the composition of substance and esse is not the same as that of matter and form. Both of these compositions are compositions of potency and act. They are not the same because matter is not the substance of a thing, but only a part of the substance. Otherwise form would only be an accident of a thing. It follows also because ipsum esse is the proper act of the whole substance, since esse is the act of that which is. So esse is predicated of the whole substance, not just the matter. Matter then cannot be called that which is but rather substance is that which is (id quod est). Thomas also denies that form is ipsum esse, but says instead that there is a relation of order between them: form is compared to ipsum esse as light is to illuminating, or as whiteness is to being white. Also ipsum esse is compared even to form itself as act. For in things

---

28 Cont. Gent. II, c. 53: Assimilatio alicuius ad causam agentem fit per actum....
which are compositions of matter and form the form is said to be the principle of being (principium essendi), because it is the complement of the substance whose act is ipsum esse. Thomas explains this with an example saying that transparency is the principle of illumination with respect to air because it makes the air the proper subject of light. 29

Thomas briefly summarizes this all by saying that in things composed of matter and form, neither the matter or the form, nor even ipsum esse can be termed that which is (ipsum quod est). Then he explains that the form is that by which it is (quo est), because it is the principle of being; and the whole substance itself is that which is (quo est); and ipsum esse is that by which the substance is called a being (ens). In an intellectual substance however where there is no composition of matter and form, the form itself is that which is (quo est) and ipsum esse is the act and that by which (quo est) the substance is. And so Thomas says that in intellectual substances there is only one composition, that of substance and esse, whereas substances composed of matter and form have the twofold composition: first the substance itself is composed of matter and form; and second, the substance so composed and esse. 30

Composites of matter and form are not at once ens and one. 31 Matter is ens in potency only and is made ens actually by the advent of the form which is its causa essendi. Matter of itself does not

29 Cont. Gent. II, c. 54.
30 Ibid.
31 De Spir. Great., a. 1, ad 5.
participate ipsum esse, but by its form. The form coming to the matter makes it ipsum esse actu, as for instance, the soul does to the body. The form however does not have esse by any other form. A subsistent form then would be at once ens and one, having no formal cause of its esse. It would have some cause of its esse though because all finite subsistences are in potency to ipsum esse subsistens which is the cause of all other esse.

Thomas explains the role of the form when he says that "as long as the form is present a thing must exist because it is by the form that the substance is made the proper recipient of that which is esse." This is also asserted when he says that the action of anything belongs to the whole composite, because to act belongs to what has esse, and the composite has esse by the form, and so the composite acts by the form. Forms which depend on matter according to esse are not said to have esse properly, but rather, esse belongs to the composite by the form. Thomas speaks again of the act-potency relationship of esse and form when he says that the subsistent

32 Ibid., a. 1, c.: In natura igitur rerum corporarum materia non per se participat ipsum esse, sed per formam; forma enim adveniens materiae facit ipsum esse actu, sicut anima corpori.

33 De Spir. Cread., a. 1, ad 5.

34 Cont. Gent. II, c. 55: Forma enim manente, oportet rem esse: per formam enim substantia fit proprium susceptivum eius quod est esse.

35 Cont. Gent. II, c. 50: Actio cuiuslibet ex materia et forma compositi non est tantum formae, nec tantum materiae, sed compositi: eius enim est agere culus est esse; esse autem est compositi per formam; unde et compositum per formam agit.

36 Cont. Gent. II, 51: Formae enim secundum esse a materia dependentes non ipsae proprie habent esse sed composita per ipsas.
forms of incorporeal substances cannot be deprived of the act of
the form because esse is consequent to the form and nothing is corrup-
ted except it lose its form. 37 Esse is the actuality of every form
or nature, because only insofar as goodness and humanity, for example,
have esse, are they said to be in act. 38 Ipsum esse is the most
perfect of all things, Thomas says, and is compared to these things
as their act. 39 This is so because nothing has actuality except in-
ssofar as it is: ipsum esse then is the actuality of all things in-
cluding the forms themselves. Thomas says immediately then that ipsum
esse is not to be compared to other things as the receiver is to what
is received (recipient ad receptum), but rather the reverse, as what
is received is to the receiver. For example, to speak of the esse
of a man or horse, or any other thing is to speak of ipsum esse as
what is received; it is not to speak of that to which esse belongs.

This last section on the metaphysical foundations of Thomas'
consideration of the powers cleared up several problems which were
carried over from earlier parts of the thesis. The distinction of
the powers from the essence of the soul depended on the distinction
of a thing's operations from its esse. This last distinction was es-
blished here. The distinction of the powers from the essence also

37 Sum. Theol. I, q. 9, a. 2, c.: Substantiae vero incorporeae,
quia sunt ipsae formae subsistentes, quae tamen se habent ad esse
ipsarum sicut potentia ad actum, non compatuntur seu privationem
huius actus; quia esse consequitur formam; et nihil corrumpitur
nisi per hoc quod amittit formam.

38 Ibid., q. 3, a. 4, c.: esse est actualitas omnis formae vel
naturae; non enim bonitas vel humanitas significatur in actu, nisi
prout significamus eam esse.

39 Ibid., q. 4, a. 1, ad 3: Dicendum quod ipsum esse est
perfectissimum omnium; comparatur enimad omnia ut actus.
hinged on the distinction of esse and essence in creatures: this too was established here, and in fact was the main concern of the whole section. Several disappointments were noted concerning Thomas' proofs that esse and essence were distinct in intellectual creatures. Though relevant, the criticisms did not destroy the main concept. A third major problem cleared up here was how intellects were in potency to actus essendi. Other points which were established were that form was that by which a thing has esse, and that esse is the act of every substance, by which the substance becomes a being.
There are two positions which can be maintained concerning the powers of the human soul, two positions which are diametrically opposed. One maintains that the powers are the essence of the soul, while the other maintains that the powers are accidents of the soul.

The premise of the first position is that the essence of the soul is the immediate principle of all of its operations. A necessary consequence of this is that the powers are all substantial principles of operation. Only substances are able to operate in such fashion as to understand, to will, or to sense. A second consequence is that any distinction of powers is only nominal. If the powers are identified with the soul, and if the powers are substantial principles of operation, then, since the soul is only one substance, there can be only one principle of operation: and to name many powers is only to name the different operations of that one principle, the essence of the soul.

In effect, by saying that the powers are the essence of the soul, this position makes the operations of man similar to the operations of God. God is His essence, and His power, and His operations. He is one principle, and from Him flow many creatures. Man, if he acts immediately by his essence, also will have only one principle for his many operations. However there is one difference between the operations of God and the operations of man, and this one difference will be the difference which establishes the second position concerning
the powers of the soul as accidents. The difference is that in God His operations are the same as His esse, while in man they are distinct from his esse.

How will this difference establish the powers as accidents? Only indirectly: by furnishing arguments to show that the powers cannot be the essence of the soul. And if the powers are not the essence, then the two consequences of this position, which made the powers substances, and which made the distinction of powers nominal, will also go by the board. Really then the problem boils down to whether or not the powers are the same as the essence of the soul: everything else follows from the answer to this question.

In no creature is the operation identical with its esse. Its second act, operation, always follows on its first act, which is esse. Only in God are the two identified. The essence of every creature is related to its esse in the same manner that its power is related to its operations. But because the operations are distinct from the esse, in all creatures, the powers must be distinct from the essence. Again, only in God would power be identified with the essence.

The absolutely fundamental tenet of the argument which makes it impossible for the powers of the soul to be its essence, is the distinction of essence and esse, and relationship of essence to esse as potency to act, or power to operation. Without this distinction and relationship it has no meaning to speak of powers. The powers would become one with operations and indistinguishable from them. They would become one with their essence and esse. If essence was not distinct from esse, then the powers would be the essence, the operations would be the esse, the powers would be the operations, and
the creature would be God. But man is not God, and so his essence
is not his esse, and, more relevantly here, his power is not his
essence.

What are the consequences of saying the powers are not to be
identified with the essence of the soul? Two - just as for the opp­
osite viewpoint. First, because the powers are not essential prin­
ciples of operation, they have to be accidental principles of opera­
tion. As accidental principles of operation they may be taken in two
senses. In one sense the powers are accidental forms in the second
species of quality. These powers, as accidental forms, have ontolo­
gical reality, and operate by the power of the substantial form
to bring a thing to act in such and such a way. In the second sense,
the powers can be taken as natural properties of the soul. But as
properties they are always reducible to the first sense of the term
accident, and so as properties they are best regarded as logical
entities. The important thing is that the powers are accidents of
the soul with ontological reality.

The second consequence of distinguishing the powers from the
essence of the soul, like the first, is at complete variance with the
opposing view. Using the same general principle, that operations
distinguish the powers, the viewpoint that distinguishes the powers
from the essence, and makes these powers accidental ontological en­
tities, ends up with many really distinct powers. The powers are not
merely nominal appendages to the one principle, the essence. They
are ontological entities distinct from the essence, and distinct from
one another. Each is the principle of its own specifically different
operation.
And so the two viewpoints concerning the powers of the soul have been presented and contrasted. On three major points: whether the essence is its powers? whether the powers are accidents? and whether the powers are really distinguished? the opposing views have been examined. With the distinction of essence and esse in man, the powers of the soul must be distinct from the essence and they must be accidental principles of operation, really distinct one from the other. Without the distinction of essence and esse this position must reduce itself to the essentialist view, which makes the essence of the soul the immediate principle of its operations, which makes the powers essential or substantial principles of operation, which makes the distinction of the powers nominal, which makes man into God.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aristotle. The Works of Aristotle, translated into English under the editorship of W. D. Ross. [12 vols. at various dates.]
Partial contents:


Lottin, Odon. *Psychologie et Morale aux XIIe et XIIIe Siècles.*
Partial Contents:
  Tome 1. Problèmes de Psychologie.

Partial Contents:


2 Compendium Theologiae. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 21).


Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
6 De Potentia. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 22).


8 De Spiritualibus Creaturis. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 22).


12 De Unitate Intellectus. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 21).


14 De Veritate. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 22).


20 In Physicam. S. Thomae Aquinatis... In Octo Libros De Physico Auditu Sive Physicorum Aristotelis Commentaria, cura ac studio P. F. Angeli M. Pirotta, O.P. Neapoli: M. D'Auria Pontificius Editor, 1953.

Partial Contents:

Partial Contents:
Vol. II. De Spiritualibus Creaturis, M. Calcaterra and T. S. Centi, eds. De Potentia, P. M. Pession, ed.
Quaestio Disputata De Anima, M. Calcaterra and T. S. Centi, eds.

23 Quaestio Disputata De Anima. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 22).


26 Scriptum Super Libros Sententiarrum Magistri Petri Lombardi. (See Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 21).


VITA AUCTORIS

1938 Born in Calgary, Alberta, the son of Steve Kiss and Helen Benko.

1956 Graduated with senior matriculation from St. Mary's Boys' High School, Calgary, Alberta.

1958 Graduated with Diploma in Engineering from Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta.

1959 Continued engineering studies at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

1962 Graduated with Bachelor of Science degree from Assumption University of Windsor, Ontario.

1964 Fulfilled the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of Windsor, Ontario.