Question 75

On Soul Considered in Its Own Right

Having considered spiritual and also corporeal creatures, we should now consider human beings, who are composed of a spiritual and corporeal nature. And first we should consider the nature of human beings [QQ75–89], then second their production [QQ90–102].

Now it is the theologian’s role to consider the nature of human beings with reference to the soul, not with reference to the body—except in light of the relationship that the body has to the soul. And so our first consideration will be turned toward soul. And because, as Dionysius says in Celestial Hierarchy 11.2, three things are found in spiritual substances—essence, power, and operation—we will consider

- first, what pertains to the soul’s essence [QQ75–76];
- second, what pertains to its power or capacities [QQ77–83];
- third, what pertains to its operation [QQ84–89].

Under the first heading, two kinds of considerations arise:

- first, concerning the soul itself in its own right [Q75];
- second, concerning its union with body [Q76].

Regarding the first of these, there are seven questions.

a1. Is the soul a body?
a2. Is the human soul something subsistent?
a3. Are the souls of brute animals subsistent?
a4. Is the soul the human being, or is the human being rather something composed of soul and body?
a5. Is the soul composed of matter and form?
a6. Is the human soul incorruptible?
a7. Does the soul belong to the same species as an angel?

Article 1. Is the soul a body?

It seems that the soul is a body:

1. The soul is what moves the body. But it does not produce motion without itself being in motion: first, because it seems nothing can produce motion unless it is in motion, for the reason that nothing gives to another that which it does not have. (For example: that which is not hot

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1SCG II.65; InDA I.3, I.5; QDSC 2c, 5c; De unitate 3.
does not produce heat.) Also, if something produces motion without being in motion, then that causes a motion that lasts forever and continues in the same way, as is proved in Physics VIII [259b32–260a5]. We don’t see this in the motion of animals, which comes from the soul. Therefore the soul produces motion and is in motion. But every such thing is a body. Therefore the soul is a body.

2. All cognition is brought about through some likeness. But there can be no likeness between a body and a nonbodily thing. Therefore if the soul were not a body, it could have no cognition of bodily things.

3. There must be some contact between mover and moved. But contact occurs only between bodies. Therefore since the soul moves the body, it seems that the soul is a body.

On the contrary. Augustine says in De trinitate VI [vi.8] that the soul is said to be simple relative to the body “because it is not spread out in bulk over the space of some area.”

Reply. In order to investigate the soul’s nature one must start by pointing out that the soul (anima) is said to be the first principle of life in the things that are alive around us. For we say that living things are animate, whereas inanimate things are those without life. Now life is displayed above all by two functions: cognition and movement. But the ancient philosophers, unable to transcend their imaginations, claimed that the principle behind these functions is a body. They said that the only things that exist are bodies, and that what is not a body is nothing. And, in keeping with this doctrine, they said that the soul is a body.

Now although there are many ways in which this view can be shown to be false, we are going to employ one argument by which it is clear in a quite general and certain way that the soul is not a body. It is clear, first, that not just any principle of an operation associated with life is a soul. For if so then the eye would be a soul, since it is a principle of seeing, and the same would have to be said for the soul’s other instruments. But we say that the first principle of life is the soul. Now although a body could be a principle of life, in the way that the heart is a principle of life in an animal, nevertheless no body can be the first principle of life. For it is clear that to be a principle of life, or to be living, does not hold of a body as the result of its being a body: otherwise every body would be living, or a principle of life. Therefore it holds of some body that it is living, or that it is even a principle of life, through its being such a body. But as for the fact that it is actually such, it has

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\(^{2}\) Aristotle, De anima I 2, 403b25–27.
this from a principle that is called its actuality. Therefore the soul, which is the first principle of life, is not a body but the actuality of a body. And this is so in just the way that heat, which is the principle of heating, is not a body, but a certain actuality of a body.

Ad 1. Since everything that is in motion is in motion due to another, and this cannot continue on into infinity, it is necessary to say that not every mover is in motion. For since to be in motion is to pass from potentiality to actuality, that which produces the motion gives what it has to the thing in motion, insofar as it actualizes that thing. But, as Aristotle shows in Physics VIII [ch. 6], there is one mover that is completely immobile—in motion neither per se nor per accidens—and such a mover can produce a motion that is always uniform. There is another mover that is not in motion per se, but is in motion per accidens, and for that reason it does not produce a motion that is always uniform. The soul is such a mover. There is still another mover that is in motion per se—the body. And because the ancient natural philosophers believed that nothing but bodies existed, they claimed that everything producing motion is in motion, that the soul is in motion per se, and that it is a body.

Ad 2. It is not necessary for a likeness of the thing cognized to exist actually in the nature of the thing that cognizes. But if there is something that is at first potentially cognizing and then later actually doing so, the likeness of the thing being cognized must be in the nature of the thing cognizing not actually, but only potentially. (In this way, color is in the pupil not actually, but only potentially.) Hence there is no need for the likeness of bodily things to exist actually in the soul’s nature; instead, that nature must be in potentiality for likenesses of this sort. But because the ancient natural philosophers did not know to distinguish between actuality and potentiality, they claimed that the soul is a body, so that it could cognize bodies. And, so that it could cognize all bodies, they claimed that it was composed out of the basic principles of all bodies.

Ad 3. There are two kinds of contact: that of quantity and that of power. In the first way, only a body touches a body. In the second way, a body can be touched by something nonbodily that moves the body.

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3Aristotle, Physics VII 1, 241b34.
479.2c53–61.
584.2c27–40.
Article 2. Is the human soul something subsistent?⁶

It seems that the human soul is not something subsistent:⁷

1. That which is subsistent is said to be a particular thing (*hoc aliquid*).⁸ It is not the soul that is a particular thing, however, but rather the composite of soul and body. Therefore the soul is not something subsistent.

2. Everything that is subsistent can be said to engage in some operation. But the soul is not said to do so, because (as is said in *De anima* I [408b11–13]) to say that the soul senses or thinks “is like someone’s saying that it weaves or builds.” Therefore the soul is not something subsistent.

3. If the soul were something subsistent, then some operation would belong to it without the body. But no operation does belong to it without the body, not even understanding, because it is not possible to understand without a phantasm, and there are no phantasms without the body.⁹ Therefore the human soul is not something subsistent.

On the contrary. Augustine says in *De trinitate* X [vii.10] that “whoever sees that it is the nature of mind both to be a substance and not to be bodily, sees that those who take it to be bodily go wrong because they associate mind with the things that they depend on for conceiving of any nature”—namely, images of bodies. Therefore the nature of the human mind is not only nonbodily, but also a substance—that is, something subsistent.⁶

Reply. It is necessary to say that the principle of intellectual operation, which we call the soul of a human being, is a nonbodily and subsistent principle.⁶ For it is clear that through the intellect a human being can cognize the natures of all bodies. But that which can cognize certain things must have none of those things in its own nature,⁶ because that which exists in it naturally would impede its cognition of other things.⁶ In this way we see that a sick person’s tongue, infected with a jaundiced and bitter humor, cannot perceive anything sweet; rather, all things seem bitter to that person. Therefore if the intellectual principle were to contain within itself the nature of any body, it could not cognize all bodies. But every body has some determinate nature. Therefore it is impossible for the intellectual principle to be a body.

⁶ QDA 1–2; InDA I.2, III.7; II Sent. 1.2.4, 17.2.1; SSCG II.56–59; De unitate 3; QDSC 2; QDP 3.9; SSCG II.49–51, 69.

⁷ 84.7.
It is likewise impossible for it to operate through a bodily organ, because the determinate nature even of that bodily organ would prevent the cognition of all bodies. Analogously, a determinate color not just in the pupil, but even in a glass vase, makes liquid poured into that vase seem to be of the same color.

Therefore this intellectual principle, which is called mind or intellect, has an operation on its own (per se) that the body does not share in. But nothing can operate on its own unless it subsists on its own, because every operation belongs to something actually existent, and so a thing operates in the same manner that it exists. (For this reason we say not that heat heats, but that the thing that is hot does so.) We can conclude, therefore, that the human soul, which is called intellect or mind, is something nonbodily and subsistent.

Ad 1. The phrase 'particular thing' can be taken in two ways: first, for anything subsistent; second, for something subsistent and complete within the nature of some species. The first rules out something inhering as an accident or a material form; the second additionally rules out the imperfection associated with a part. A hand, then, could be called a particular thing in the first way, but not in the second. So therefore, since the human soul is part of the human species, it can be called a particular thing in the first way—in the sense of being subsistent—but not in the second. For in this latter way it is the composite of soul and body that is called a particular thing.

Ad 2. Aristotle says those words not with respect to his own position, but with respect to the view of those that were claiming that to think is to be in motion. (So much is clear from the preceding remarks he makes there [408a34–b11].)

Alternatively, one can reply that a thing's acting on its own holds of that which exists on its own. But a thing can sometimes be said to exist on its own if it does not inhere as an accident or a material form, even if it is a part. Still, a thing is said to be strictly subsistent on its own when it neither inheres in the way just stated nor is a part. In this way one's eye or hand could not be said to subsist on its own, nor consequently to operate on its own. Thus even the operations of the parts are attributed to the whole, through the parts. For we say that human beings see through their eyes and touch through their hands. And this is different from how what is hot heats through heat: for there is no way in which

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8De anima I 1, 403a10–11.
9Ad I49–51.
heat makes things hot, strictly speaking. Therefore one can say that the soul thinks, just as the eye sees. But one speaks more strictly in saying that the human being thinks, through the soul.

Ad 3. The body is required for the intellect’s action not as the organ through which such an action is carried out, but on account of its object. For a phantasm is related to intellect just as color is to sight. But needing a body in this way does not preclude intellect’s being subsistent. Otherwise an animal would not be something subsistent, since it needs external sense objects in order to sense.

Article 3. Are the souls of brute animals subsistent?

It seems that the souls of brute animals are subsistent:

1. A human being shares its genus with other animals. But the human soul is something subsistent, as was just shown [75.2]. Therefore the souls of other animals are also subsistent.

2. The sensory capacity stands to sensible things just as the intellective capacity stands to intelligible things. But the intellect apprehends intelligible things without the body. Therefore the senses also apprehend sensible things without the body. But the souls of brute animals are sensory. Therefore they are subsistent, for the same reason that the intellective human soul is.

3. The soul of a brute animal moves the body. The body, however, does not produce motion, but is instead put into motion. Therefore the soul of a brute animal has an operation without the body.

On the contrary is what is said in On Church Dogma [16–17]: “we believe that only a human being has a substantive soul. . . . The souls of animals, in contrast, are not substantive.”

Reply. The ancient philosophers drew no distinction between sense and intellect, and attributed each to a bodily principle, as we have said. Plato, on the other hand, distinguished between intellect and sense, but he nevertheless attributed each to a nonbodily principle, claiming that sensing, just like thinking, holds of the soul in its own

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10Aristotle, De an. III 7, 431a14–17; see 85.1 later.
11SCG II.82; QQ 9.5.1, 10.4.2; QDA 19; QDP 3.11; ST 1a 70.3c, IV Sent. 44.3.3.1 (= ST 3a supp. 70.1).
121a 50.1c, drawing on Aristotle, De an. III 3, 427a21.
right. And from this it followed that even the souls of brute animals are subsistent.

But Aristotle held that, among the soul’s functions, only thinking is carried out without a bodily organ. Sensation, on the other hand, and the resulting operations of the sensory soul, clearly do occur with some transformation to the body: in seeing, for instance, the pupil is transformed by the species of a color, and the same is evident in other cases. And so it is clear that the sensory soul does not have some special operation, on its own; rather, every operation of the sensory soul belongs to the compound. From this it follows that since the souls of brute animals do not operate on their own, they are not subsistent. For as a thing exists, so it operates.

Ad 1. A human being, though sharing a genus with other animals, still differs in species. A difference in species, however, is marked by a difference in form. And not every difference in form must yield a distinction in genus.

Ad 2. In a way it is true that the sensory capacity stands to sensible things just as the intellective capacity stands to intelligible things—inasmuch as each is in potentiality towards its objects. But in another way they stand differently—inasmuch as the sensory capacity is affected by something sensible with some transformation to the body. That is why excessive sensible objects harm a sense. This does not occur in the case of intellect, because after it thinks about the most intelligible of things, it becomes more able to think about what is less intelligible. And if thinking tires the body, this occurs accidentally, inasmuch as the intellect needs the operation of the sensory powers, through which phantasms are provided to it.

Ad 3. There are two motive powers. One, the appetitive power, commands the motion, and the operation of this power within the sensory soul does not occur without the body. Instead, anger, joy, and all such passions occur with some transformation to the body. The other motive power is what carries out the motion; through it the body’s parts are

13Nemesius, De natura hominis ch. 6 (pp. 322–23); see Plato, Theaetetus 184c.
14Nemesius, De natura hominis ch. 2 (p. 288); see Plato, Phaedrus 245c–246a.
15For the case of intellect, see, e.g., De an. I 10, 408b5–18; III 4, 429a24–27, 429b5. For the senses, see De an. I 1, 403a16–17.
1778.1 ad 4.
made ready to obey appetite. Its act is not to produce motion but to be put into motion. So it is clear that producing motion is not an act of the sensory soul without the body.

Article 4. Is the soul the human being, or is the human being rather something composed of soul and body?\(^{18}\)

It seems that the soul is the human being:

1. It is said in II Corinthians 4.16 that *though he who is our outward human being is corrupted, still he who is inside is renewed day by day.* But that which is inside a human being is the soul. Therefore the soul is the inner human being.

2. The human soul is a kind of substance.\(^{19}\) But it is not a universal substance. Therefore it is a particular substance. Therefore it is a hypostasis, a person.\(^{6}\) But if so, then it is none other than a human person. Therefore the soul is the human being, since a human person is a human being.

On the contrary. In *City of God* XIX [3], Augustine praises Varro, who "held that a human being is neither the soul alone, nor the body alone, but the soul and the body together."

Reply. There are two ways of understanding the claim that the soul is the human being. First, that *human being* is the soul,\(^{6}\) but that a particular human being—Socrates, say—is not the soul, but a composite of soul and body. I say this because some have claimed that only form belongs to the defining account (*ratione*) of the species, whereas matter is part of the individual rather than the species.\(^{20}\) But this cannot be true. For the nature of a species consists in what its definition signifies. But in the case of natural things the definition signifies not the form alone, but the form and the matter. For this reason the matter is part of the species in natural things—not signate matter,\(^{\dagger}\) of course, which is the principle of individuation, but common matter.\(^{\dagger}\) For just as it belongs to the account of this human being to be composed of *this* soul, *this* flesh, and *these* bones, so it belongs to the account of *human being* to be composed of soul, flesh, and bones. For whatever belongs in common to the substance of all the individuals contained within a species must belong to the substance of the species.\(^{6}\)

\(^{18}\)SCG II.57, II.83; *De unitate* 3; *De ente* 2; In*Met* VII.9; QDP 3.10; In*Job* 4; III Sent. 5.3.2, 22.1.1.

\(^{19}\)75.2sc, with note.

\(^{20}\)Averroës, *Metaphysics* VII.21, VII.34.
The claim that the soul is the human being can be understood in another way, so that even a particular soul is a particular human being. And this could be maintained, if it were held that the sensory soul’s operation belongs to it alone, without the body. For in that case all the operations assigned to a human being would hold of soul alone.\(^2\) But any given thing is identified with what carries out the operations of that thing,\(^2\) and so a human being is identified with what carries out the operations of a human being. We have shown, however, that sensing is not the operation of the soul alone [75.3]. Therefore, since sensing is one of the operations of a human being (even if not one unique to humans), it is clear that a human being is not a soul alone, but something composed of a soul and a body. Plato, however, since he claimed that sensing belongs to the soul alone,\(^2\) could claim that a human being is a soul using its body.\(^2\)

Ad 1. According to the Philosopher in Ethics IX [1168b32], what any thing appears to be, most of all, is that which is foremost in it: a city, for instance, is said to do what the leader of the city does. It is in this way that what is foremost in a human being is sometimes called the human being. Sometimes the intellective part is so called (and truly so); this is spoken of as the inner human being. Sometimes, on the other hand, the sensory part is so called, along with the body (on the view of those who concern themselves solely with sensory things); this is spoken of as the outer human being.

Ad 2. Not every particular substance is a hypostasis or person, but only one that has the complete nature of the species.\(^2\) For this reason a hand or a foot cannot be called a hypostasis or person, and likewise neither can a soul, since the soul is part of the human species.

**Article 5. Is the soul composed of matter and form?\(^2\)**

It seems that the soul is composed of matter\(^1\) and form\(^1\):

\(^2\)Aristotle, Meteorology IV 12, 390a10–11.

\(^2\)75.3c21–22.

\(^2\)Nemesius, De natura hominis ch. 1 (p. 225); ch. 3 (p. 295). See Plato, Alcibiades 129e (authenticity doubtful).

\(^2\)75.2 ad 1.

\(^2\)SCG II.50–51; QQ 3.8; QDSC 1, 9 ad 9; QDA 6; CT I.74–75; De substantiis 5–8, 18; De ente 4. For the similar case of angels: II Sent. 3.1.1; QQ 9.4.1; IndDN IV.1.276–78; ST 1a 50.2; IndDT 5.4 ad 4; I Sent. 8.5.2; II Sent. 17.1.2.
1. Potentiality is divided against actuality. But each and every thing that is in actuality participates in the first actuality, which is God. It is through participation in him (as Dionysius’ teaching in Divine Names [5.5] makes clear) that all things are good, are beings, and are living. Therefore everything that is in potentiality participates in the first potentiality. But the first potentiality is prime matter. Therefore since the human soul is in potentiality in a certain way, as is evident from the fact that a human being is sometimes [only] potentially thinking, it seems that the human soul participates in prime matter as a part of itself.

2. Wherever one finds features distinctive of matter, there one finds matter. But in the soul one does find features distinctive of matter: being a subject, and being changed. For the soul is the subject of knowledge and virtue, and undergoes change from ignorance to knowledge, and from vice to virtue. Therefore there is matter in the soul.

3. Things that do not have matter do not have a cause for their existence, as is said in Metaphysics VIII [1045a36–b7]. But the soul has a cause for its existence, since it is created by God. Therefore the soul has matter.

4. That which does not have matter, but is solely form, is pure and infinite actuality. But this holds only of God. Therefore the soul has matter.

On the contrary. Augustine proves in De Genesi ad litteram VII [vii–ix] that the soul is made neither from corporeal nor from spiritual matter.

Reply. The soul does not have matter, as can be observed in two ways. First, from the defining character (ratione) of soul in general. For it is part of the soul’s defining character that it is the form of some body. Therefore it is a form either in respect of its whole or in respect of some part of itself.

- If in respect of its whole, then it is impossible for a part of it to be matter, assuming that matter is said to be solely a potential being. For form, considered as form, is actuality, and that which is solely in potentiality cannot be part of an actuality, since potentiality is incompatible with actuality, being divided against it.

- If it is form in respect of some part of itself, then we will say that that part is the soul. As for the matter that it is the actuality of first, we will say that that is what is first ensouled.

2676.1c170–72.
Second, our conclusion can be observed in one specific case, from the defining character of the human soul, inasmuch as it is intellective. For it is clear that everything received in something is received in it according to the mode of the recipient. But any given thing is cognized in keeping with how its form exists in the one cognizing. Now the intellective soul cognizes a thing in that thing’s unconditioned nature—if, for instance, it cognizes a stone as it is a stone, without [material] conditions. Therefore the form of the stone exists in the intellective soul without conditions, in terms of the stone’s own formal character. Therefore the intellective soul is an unconditioned form, not something composed of form and matter. For if the intellective soul were composed of matter and form, then the forms of things would be received in it as individuals; then it would cognize only singular things, as happens in the sensory capacities, which receive the forms of things in a corporeal organ. For matter is the principle of individuation for forms. We can conclude, therefore, that the intellective soul—and every intellectual substance that cognizes forms unconditionally lacks composition of form and matter.

**Ad 1.** The first actuality is the universal principle of all actualities, since it is infinite and virtually “prepossesses all things within itself,” as Dionysius says. Thus things participate in it, not as if it is a part [of them], but in virtue of the diffusion of its procession. Now potentiality, since it is receptive of actuality, must be proportioned to actuality. But received actualities, which proceed from the first infinite actuality and are various participations in it, come in different kinds. So there cannot be one potentiality that receives all actualities, in the way that there is one actuality infusing all the participated actualities. (If there were, then that receptive potentiality would be equal to the active potentiality of the first actuality.) The receptive potentiality in the intellective soul, however, is different from the receptive potentiality of prime matter. This is clear from the difference in things being received. For prime matter receives individual forms, whereas the intellect receives unconditioned forms. Hence the existence of such a potentiality in the intellective soul does not show that the soul is composed of matter and form.

**Ad 2.** Being a subject and being changed hold of matter inasmuch as it is in potentiality. Therefore just as intellect’s potentiality is different

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27*Liber de causis*, proposition 24; Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy* 5 prose 4.
28*Divine Names* 5.9.
from prime matter's, so too there is a different account of how it is a subject and how it is changed. For intellect is the subject of knowledge and undergoes change from ignorance to knowledge inasmuch as it is in potentiality for intelligible species.

**Ad 3.** Form serves as a cause of existence for matter, but so too does an agent. Thus an agent, insofar as it brings matter to the actuality of form by changing it, is a cause of existence for it. But if something is a subsistent form, it does not have existence through any formal principle, nor does it have a cause changing it from potentiality to actuality. That is why, after the words cited above, the Philosopher concludes [1045b16–23] that in things that are composed of matter and form, "there is no other cause except that which produces the movement from potentiality to actuality. But those that do not have matter, they are all, without qualification, truly particular beings."

**Ad 4.** Everything participated in stands as actuality relative to that which participates in it. But any created form that is held to be subsistent *per se* must participate in existence, since even "life itself," or anything spoken of in this way, "participates in existence itself," as Dionysius says in *Divine Names* 5.5. But participated existence is limited to the capacity of what participates in it. Hence only God, who is his own existence, is pure and infinite actuality. In the case of intellectual substances, in contrast, there is a composition of actuality and potentiality: not that of matter and form, to be sure, but of form and participated existence. For this reason, some say that these substances are composed of that by which and that which, because existence itself is that by which a thing exists.

**Article 6. Is the human soul incorruptible?**

It seems that the human soul is corruptible:

**1.** Things that have a similar starting point and course seem to have a similar end. But human beings and beasts have a similar starting point

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29Ad 1.

3079.2.

31Boethius, *De hebdomadibus* axiom 8: "For every composite, existence and it itself are different."

32In 1C 15.2 [Appendix 6]; CT 1.74, 1.84; QDA 14; ST 2a2ae 164.1 ad 1; II Sent. 19.1.1; SCC II.55, II.79–84; ST 1a 9.2c, 50.5; QDIA; QQ 10.3.2; InDA III.10.202–49; InMet XII.3 §§2450–2453.
for their generation, since they are made from earth.\textsuperscript{33} There is also a
similar course of life in each, since \textit{all things breathe alike, and a human
being has nothing more than a beast}, as is said in Ecclesiastes 3.19.
Therefore, as the text there concludes, \textit{there is a single death for humans
and beasts, and an equal condition for both}. But the soul of brute animals
is corruptible. Therefore the human soul is also corruptible.

2. Everything that comes from nothing can be turned back into noth-
ing, since the end ought to match the start. But, as is said in Wisdom
2.2, \textit{We are born from nothing}, which is true not only as regards the
body, but also as regards the soul. Therefore, as that passage concludes,
\textit{After this we will be as if we had not been}—even with regard to soul.

3. Nothing exists without its proper operation. But the soul’s proper
operation, to understand with phantasms, cannot take place without
the body. For, as is said in the \textit{De anima}, “the soul understands nothing
without a phantasm” \textit{[431a16–17]}, and there is no phantasm without
the body \textit{[403a8–10]}. Therefore the soul cannot remain once the body
is destroyed.

\textbf{On the contrary.} Dionysius says in \textit{Divine Names} 4.2 that because of
divine goodness, human souls are “intellectual” and “have inexhaust-
ible substantial life.”

\textbf{Reply.} It is necessary to say that the human soul, which we call the
intellective principle, is incorruptible. For there are two ways in which
something is corrupted: either per se\textsuperscript{†} or per accidents.\textsuperscript{†} But it is impos-
sible for something subsistent to be generated or corrupted per
accidents—i.e., by something [else’s] being generated or corrupted. For
a thing is generated or corrupted in the same way that it exists—exist-
ence being what a thing acquires through generation and loses through
corruption.\textsuperscript{○} Hence that which has existence per se can be generated or
corrupted only per se. Things that do not subsist, on the other hand,
such as accidents and material forms, are said to be made and cor-
ruped through the generation and corruption of their composites. But
it was shown above that the souls of brute animals are not subsistent\textsuperscript{″}
\textit{[75.3]} and that only human souls are \textit{[75.2]}. So the souls of brute ani-
mals are corrupted when their bodies are corrupted, whereas the
human soul cannot be corrupted, unless it is corrupted per se. But this,
to be sure, is entirely impossible—not only for it, but for any subsistent
thing that is wholly form.\textsuperscript{○} For it is clear that what holds of something
in its own right is inseparable from it. Existence, however, holds per se

\textsuperscript{33}Genesis 1.24; see ad 1.
of form, which is actuality. As a result, matter acquires actual existence in virtue of its acquiring form, whereas corruption results in virtue of the form's being separated from it. But it is impossible for a form to be separated from itself. As a result, it is impossible for a subsistent form to cease existing.

Further, even if we were to suppose that the soul is composed of matter and form, as some maintain, 34 we would still have to hold that it is incorruptible. For corruption is found only where contrariety is found, since generation and corruption occur from one contrary to another. For that reason celestial bodies, which do not have matter subject to contrariety, are incorruptible. 6 But there cannot be any contrariety in the intellective soul. For it receives in keeping with the mode of its existence, and those things that are received in it are without contrariety. This is because even the concepts of contrary things are not contraries within intellect; instead, the same knowledge embraces contraries. 6 Therefore it is impossible for the intellective soul to be corruptible.

One can also see an indication of this from the fact that each thing naturally desires existence in its own way. Now in the case of things that are cognitive, desire depends on cognition. 6 But the senses cognize only in terms of what is here and now, whereas the intellect apprehends existence unconditionally, according to all times. For this reason everything that has an intellect naturally desires to exist forever. But a natural desire cannot be pointless. 6 Therefore every intellectual substance is incorruptible.

Ad 1. Solomon introduces this argument in the voice of the foolish, as is made clear in Wisdom 2. 6 So the claim that human beings and other animals have a similar starting point for their generation is true as regards the body, since all animals have been made alike from the earth. But the claim is not true as regards the soul. For the soul of brute animals is produced by a bodily power, whereas the human soul is produced by God. 35 And to signify this it is said in Genesis 1:24, as regards the other animals, Let the earth produce the living soul, while as regards human beings it is said 2:7 that He breathed into his face the breath of life. And so the last chapter of Ecclesiastes concludes that Dust reverts to the earth from where it came, and spirit returns to the God who gave it.

Likewise, the course of life is similar as regards the body, and this is what Ecclesiastes 3.19 refers to: All things breathe alike, and also Wis-

3475.5.

351a 118.1—2.
dom 2.2: *Smoke and breath are in our nostrils*, etc. But as regards the soul the course is not similar, since human beings think and brute animals do not. So it is false to say that *a human being has nothing more than a beast*. And so there is a similar death as regards the body, but not as regards the soul.

**Ad 2.** A thing is said to be able to be created not through a passive capacity, but only through the active capacity of a Creator who can produce something from nothing. In just the same way, when it is said that something can be turned back into nothing, the creature is not being credited with the capacity for nonexistence; rather, the Creator is being credited with the capacity for not instilling existence. But something is said to be corruptible when the capacity for not existing is present in it.

**Ad 3.** Understanding with phantasms is the soul’s proper operation insofar as it is united to its body. Once separated from its body, however, it will have a different mode of understanding, like that of other substances that are separate from body. This will become clearer below [Q89].

**Article 7. Does the soul belong to the same species as an angel?**

It seems that the soul and an angel belong to a single species:

1. Any given thing is directed to its own distinctive end through the nature of its species, through which it has an inclination toward its end. But the soul and an angel have the same end—namely, eternal blessedness. Therefore they belong to a single species.

2. The ultimate specific *differentia*† is the one that is loftiest, since it fills in the defining character (*rationem*) of the species. But nothing is loftier in an angel and the soul than intellectual being. Therefore the soul and an angel agree in their ultimate specific *differentia*. Therefore they belong to a single species.

3. The soul seems to differ from an angel only through its being united to the body. But the body, since it is outside of the soul’s essence, does not seem relevant to its species.° Therefore the soul and an angel belong to a single species.

**On the contrary,** things that have distinct natural operations differ in species. But souls and angels have distinct natural operations, because (as Dionysius says in *Divine Names* 7.2) angelic minds have simple and

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36SCG II.94; QDA 7; II Sent. 3.1.6.