

Anna M. Rowan

01/06/2022

Faculty of Philosophy

Pontifical University of John Paul II in Kraków, Poland

### **Summary of doctoral dissertation**

#### **A critique of physicalist interpretation of human intellect.**

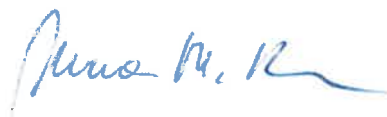
#### **Aristotelian and Thomistic approach**

The dissertation focuses on the arguments for the non-physical nature of the intellect in selected writings of Aristotle and Aquinas. The goal of this work is to show that the methods, concepts, and distinctions used in Aristotle's and Aquinas' arguments continue to be a solid foundation for the understanding of the intellect and its acts. Selected arguments for the immateriality of the intellect by contemporary philosophers demonstrate how Aristotle's and Aquinas' ideas continue to be used in present-day arguments for the non-physical nature of the human intellect and thus confirm the enduring value of their insights. I suggest that, in contrast to physicalist interpretations of the human mind, Aristotle's method of inquiry, augmented by Aquinas, is more suitable to study a human being in his entirety and especially the human intellect.

The study involves a detailed discussion within the system of Aristotle's and Aquinas' primary works in translation, as well as selected works of contemporary scholars. In Chapter 1, I present a brief overview of the main reductive approaches to reality that influence the interpretation of human being, such as naturalism, materialism, scientific materialism, scientism, and physicalism, and discuss the justifications behind these views of reality. Chapters 2 and 3 contain a detailed explication of Aristotle's notion of the soul in *De Anima*. My goal is to highlight Aristotle's method of inquiry and his use of the concepts of potentiality and actuality in his analysis of the soul. In Chapter 4, I explain Aquinas' arguments

for the immateriality of the intellectual substance and discuss his solution to the question of how immaterial substance can be connected to a physical body. In Chapter 5, I discuss several contemporary arguments in support of the immaterial nature of the intellect. I begin with Stephen M. Barr's argument about the role of the observer in quantum phenomena. I suggest that Aristotle's concept of actuality and potentiality is compatible with an epistemological reading of the traditional interpretation of quantum theory. I end with arguments for the immateriality of the intellect by Hans Halvorson, Edward Feser, Jürgen Vijgen, and Stanisław Judycki. In Chapter 6, I discuss Feser's argument against scientism and Michal Heller's proposal for a totally different form of naturalism [Christian Naturalism] and his explanation of the proper domain of the scientific method. I emphasize several distinctions made by Aristotle and Aquinas that I consider crucial to their arguments for the immaterial nature of the intellect, specifically, the distinctions between: 1] potentiality and actuality; 2] intellect and physical body; 3] Aristotle's method of inquiry and the scientific method; 4] the sensitive and intellectual faculties of the soul; and 5] the soul's essence and its powers. I suggest that Aristotle's method of inquiry is more suitable to study the being of the human being, and that Aquinas' distinction between the soul's essence and its powers is the key to explaining how the intellectual soul can be both united with the body and have an operation that is not bodily. I emphasize Aristotle's insight about the intellect as no-thing, which explains its being open and capable of knowing all things.

I end with some reflections about the importance of proper inquiry into the question of being of human being. Nonetheless, I do not advocate turning back to 'old times', but allowing ourselves to benefit by merging insights from both paths to knowledge – philosophy and science. They do not have to stand in opposition, but can instead help and support each other by offering complementary insights.

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