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# THE IMMORTALITY OF THE INTELLECTIVE SOUL, THE FUNDAMENTAL OF JESUIT COIMBRA ANTHROPOLOGY (1598)

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**Resumo:** O presente trabalho pretende demonstrar em que medida a defesa da imortalidade da alma intelectual constitui o fundamento daquilo que poderemos apelidar de uma antropologia jesuíta conimbricense. Partindo da filosofia natural (Manuel de Góis) e da metafísica (Baltasar Álvares) como os lugares próprios para o estudo da alma intelectual, alcança-se o objectivo destes filósofos: provar que o homem é um ser natural sujeito à corrupção e à morte mas destinado por Deus à partilha da eternidade.

**Palavras-chave:** alma intelectual, imortalidade, alma separada, psicologia jesuíta conimbricense.

**Abstract:** This paper aims to demonstrate to what extent the defense of the immortality of the intellectual soul is the fundamental of what one might call a Jesuit Coimbra anthropology. Since natural philosophy (Manuel de Góis) and metaphysics (Baltasar Álvares) are the proper places for the study of the intellectual soul, these two disciplines will allow these philosophers to prove that man is a natural being subject to corruption and death but destined by God to take part in eternity.

**Keywords:** Intellectual soul, Immortality, Separated soul, Coimbra Jesuit psychology.

**Summa:** Emmanuel a Goes, uia physica, ac Balthasar Álvares, uia metaphysica (1598), asseuerantes animam intellectiuam esse immortalem ex opinione philosophorum ac fidei christianae, ostendunt hominis naturam creata est ad aeternitatem. Hic tenemus immortalitatem animae rationalis uere scientia de homine Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu.

**Verba praecipua:** anima intellectiua, immortalitas, anima separata, conimbricensis scientia de anima.

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## 1. Introduction: Jesuit Coimbra Course

Jesuit Coimbra Course (JCC) is a Commentary on Aristotle in eight volumes, published in Lisbon and Coimbra, between 1592 and 1606. Originally aimed for the students of the Jesuit College of Coimbra, it was quickly disseminated not only through the other schools of the Society of Jesus in Portugal, but also throughout the world. It has had an unusual diffusion, considering the normal dissemination of any philosophical work made here in Portugal by Portuguese authors. In fact, up to the present day, no other philosophical endeavour has reached not only such a vast audience, but also achieving this in such distant locations as far as the Far East, with such a wide international appreciation. The Commentaries integrating the Jesuit Coimbra Course were textbooks meant for students who could attend the university courses.<sup>1</sup> The textbooks in question served pedagogical functions, according to the specifications of the founder of the Society of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> In reference to the Jesuit Coimbra pedagogy, which is rather well-known, there are some precious extant studies<sup>3</sup>.

Its authors, despite the anonymous publication of the Course, are known to be Manuel de Góis, Baltasar Álvares, Cosme de Magalhães and Sebastião do Couto.

The purpose of these philosophical textbooks was to comment on Aristotle and their bore testimony of the most recent entrance of this philosopher in the West. The Stagirite has several times permeated European philosophical

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<sup>1</sup> On the genesis of the JCC and more specifically about the present volume, see M.S. de Carvalho, «Introdução Geral», in *Comentários do Colégio Conimbricense da Companhia de Jesus Sobre os Três Livros Da Alma de Aristóteles Estagirita*, translation from the Latin original by M<sup>a</sup>. da Conceição Camps (Lisboa: Edições Sílabo, 2010), 9-12 and 26-45. It is, however, indispensable and mandatory, F. Rodrigues, *História da Companhia de Jesus na Assistência de Portugal* (Porto: Livraria Apostolado da Imprensa, 1931), to better understand all the issues concerning the history of the Society of Jesus in Portugal and its religious and pedagogical components; namely, and regarding this issue, see Tomo I, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> See Inácio de Loyola, in *Obras Completas de San Ignacio de Loyola*, transcripción, introducciones y notas de I. Iparraguirre (Madrid: BAC 1963), 482-520.

<sup>3</sup> See, among others: J.B. e Oliveira, «Filosofia Escolástica e Curso Conimbricense. De uma teoria de Magistério à sua sistematização Metodológica», *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia*, 16 (1960) 124-141; L.C. da Silva, «Os Jesuítas e o Ensino Secundário», *Brotéria*, 31 (1940) 476-86; Id., «Originalidade da Escola Conimbricense de Filosofia», *Itinerarium*, 6 (1960) 11-18; T. de S. Soares, «O Ensino no Colégio das Artes de Coimbra: ‘Os Conimbricenses’», *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia*, 11/2 (1955) 756-68; C. Casalini, *Aristóteles em Coimbra, O Cursus Conimbricensis e a educação no Collegium Artium* (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 2015), 163-213.

thought. The first of such events took place with the translations by Boethius, in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries; the second between the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, by way of the Arabs; the third, in the context of which the present Course is situated, has seen the dawn of the printed word, with the wave of translations of already known texts, but also the reproduction of texts therefore unknown, which compelled reconsideration of thoughts on these matters<sup>4</sup>.

## 2. The Commentary on the three books of Aristotle's *De Anima*

The volume of which the Commentary by Manuel de Góis on the three books of Aristotle's *De Anima* (1598) is a part, includes the *Tractatus de anima separata* [*Treatise on the Separated Soul*], of Baltasar Álvares, and an opuscle about the five external senses, in the guise of Aristotle's *Problems*, attributed to Cosme de Magalhães.<sup>5</sup>

It is remarkable how the mentors of the JCC were concerned not only with maintaining the connection between the study of the soul as it presents in the body and the study of the soul while separated from the body. This decision should not be passed over in silence, since it signals the manifest intention of unveiling the human soul in accordance with its diverse statuses. The status in which it transcends its animal condition to reunite itself with the spiritual substances is discussed and studied in the *Treatise on the Separated Soul* and it is assumed by the intellective soul, once corruption of the body occurs, following human death. The science which concerns itself with this stage is metaphysics, not natural philosophy, as is remarked in the

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<sup>4</sup> For the reception of Aristotle's work in the West, see B.G. Dod, «Aristoteles Latinus», in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 45-79; also L.A. De Boni, *A Entrada de Aristóteles no ocidente medieval* (Porto Alegre: Est, 2010), *passim*; L. Bianchi, «Continuity and Change in the Aristotelian Tradition», in J. Hankins (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Philosophy* (Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 49-71.

<sup>5</sup> This Coimbra short Treatise appears in the tradition of the homonymous work attributed to Aristotle, even though the attribution remains doubtful, at least in its totality. The Aristotelian text we now have is the result of the combination of texts from several periods. It is assumed that some are from Aristotle, others from his School, but not necessarily from the Stagirite. This Treatise was translated several times during the Middle Ages. The most important translation was that of Bartholomew of Messina, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, of which copies were made. Peter of Abano was the author of the Commentary published in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century the translations by Theodorus of Gaza and George of Trebizond appeared, of which the one by Gaza was more well-known. This work became renowned also due to the profusion of medical Commentaries it originated.

*Prooemium* to the Commentary of Manuel de Góis. The science of the soul is the noblest of the sciences, the central, enduring knowledge, since man is unable to understand anything without first knowing himself and his soul. It holds in itself the key that allows the unveiling of both ultimate and transient ends reserved to mankind, establishing itself as the science of sciences:

“From what Aristotle will teach us next it will become evident how the science of the soul stands out among other parts of Philosophy, either for its demonstrative rigour, or for the subject matter which it is about, or for its nobility, and how it is useful to regulate and honestly govern life as to a complete knowledge of the truth. However, the same, specifically in what concerns utility, can be illustrated and more widely recommended, because, according to the admonishment provided in that well-known maxim by Chilon, Femon, or Thales or whoever its author was, inscribed on the doors of the temple of Delphi by Amphictyon, each one of us must, above all, try to know himself. However, no one can know himself unless he has carefully examined the dignity and nature of his soul (...)”.

“In fact, the science of the soul communicates admirably with first philosophy, for in virtue of a certain analogy and resemblance we reach, through our intellect, the substances which are intelligible and free of matter, and the human mind, beyond itself, is called upon the divine nature whence it originated. Whatever in it exists with perfection is found in God, the source of all perfection better known when all imperfection is removed”<sup>6</sup>.

The relation between the two stages, the soul connected to the body and the soul separated from the body, invites understanding of how they relate, with the aim of ascertaining to what extent one is directed and prepared towards the other. This is apparent in the purposes announced in the *Prooemium* to the Commentary by Manuel de Góis’.

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<sup>6</sup> *Commentarii Collegii Conimbricensis Societatis Iesu, In tres libros de Anima Aristotelis Stagiritae* (Conimbricæ: A. Mariz, 1598), Prooemium, 1 (henceforth quoted: *De anima*): “Quantum scientia de anima, ob certitudinem demonstrandi, et rerum, in quibus versatur, nobilitatem, inter alias Philosophiæ partes emineat: quam sit tum ad uitam probe instituendam, et moderandam; tum ad omnem veritatis cognitionem utilis; ex iis, quæ Aristoteles mox docebit, conspicuum fiet. Sed idem, præsertim quod ad utilitatem spectat, suaderi amplius, illustrarique ex eo potest, quia ut celebris illa siue Chilonis, siue Pemonoæ, aut Thaletis, uel quicumque eius author fuerit, sententia foribus templi Delphici ab Amphictionibus inscripta commonebat, maxime eniti quisque debet, ut se ipsum norit: nosse autem se nemo potest, nisi animi sui naturam, et dignitatem perspectam habeat. (...) Ad primam vero Philosophiam mirifice confert, quatenus ab intellectu nostro ad substantias intelligibiles, et a materia absolutas per analogiam quamdam, similitudinemque prouehimur, et humana mens se supra se conuertens, a se ipsa ad diuinam naturam, a qua profecta est, reuocatur, et quicquid ipsa perfectionis habet, in Deo omnium perfectionum fonte inuenit, meliori tamen nota, omnique imperfectione sublata.”

The study of the intellectual soul's nature is a matter for physiology when it involves the human dimension in its entirety, that is, the organic body of which the soul is the prime entelechy. When the intellectual soul performs its functions, it is in the body that such performance takes place and that is the subject matter of natural philosophy. It is in that sense that man is said to be a rational animal. As for the essence of the soul, it belongs to physics, because it is the prime act of an organic body whose life has potential existence<sup>7</sup>. However, when the functioning of the intellectual soul is seen as in itself a product, when the philosopher considers thought itself, viz. human understanding taken in abstraction from the physiological aspects of its production, or when his reflection focuses on the soul as separated from the body, then we are before the subject matter of metaphysics<sup>8</sup>.

The path taken at the beginning of Manuel de Góis' Commentary is concluded at the end of his work, when he announces the end of a stage which will be followed by another one, this time a more elevated one:

“It has been argued about the soul only to the point where, connected by the bodily nexus and condemned to cohabitation in order to perform its functions, it beseeches for its work. Next, we shall write about it as already freed from that bond, and we will undertake the treatment of the separated

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<sup>7</sup> Aristotle, *De Anima*, II 412b5 presents a general definition applicable to all species of soul. He claims there are three types of soul, the vegetative, common to all living beings; the sensitive, common to all animals; the intellectual, pertaining only to man. The human soul comprises, thus, all three types of soul; that of the other animals only the two first types. Plants only have vegetative soul. The possibility of separation of the intellect is sometimes suggested by the Stagirite (III 429 a20 e III 430 a15). This possibility, conjectured in some passages of the Aristotelian work, will be used by Christian philosophers, especially by Saint Thomas, to build a Christian concept of soul involving separability and immortality.

<sup>8</sup> On the problem of the place of *scientia de anima* and its relations with the other sciences, as well as the debates and polemics it originated, namely from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, see J.F. Meirinhos, *Metafísica do Homem. Conhecimento e Vontade nas obras de Psicologia atribuídas a Pedro Hispano (século XIII)* (Porto: Ed. Afrontamento, 2011), 38-46. On *scientia de anima* in the Coimbra Jesuit Course see, among others, the following works of M.S. de Carvalho, *Psicologia e Ética no Curso Jesuíta Conimbricense* (Lisboa: Edições Colibri, 2010); «Introdução Geral», 92-108; «Introdução», in *Comentários a Aristóteles do Curso Jesuíta Conimbricense (1592-1606). Antologia de Textos*, introdução de M.S. de Carvalho; traduções de A.B. de Andrade, M. da C. Camps, A.A. Coxito, P.B. Dias, F. Medeiros e A.A. Pacoal (Editio Altera, Coimbra: LIF – Linguagem, Interpretação e Filosofia, Faculdade de Letras, 2011), in: [http://www.uc.pt/fluc/lif/comentarios\\_a\\_aristoteles1](http://www.uc.pt/fluc/lif/comentarios_a_aristoteles1); “Beyond Psychology- The Philosophical Horizon of the Coimbra Commentary on Aristotle’s ‘De Anima’ (1598)”, in Daniel Heider (ed.), *Cognitive Psychology in Early Jesuit Scholasticism* (Neunkirchen-Seelscheid: editiones scholasticae, 2016), 67-95.

soul. May the divine power be favourable, in such a way that, as with the conjoined soul on which we were able to write and have produced work, so too in what shall be said on the separated soul may we add a further degree. Thus, once freed from the body to which is then bound the soul flees into a freer state, where, already bound only to God, indissoluble and separate from human beings for a very long period, it undertakes a delightful life and enjoys it in its most blessed”<sup>9</sup>.

In fact, that ending points to the continued study of the soul in its journey towards God, this time with a different status, since it has attained its liberation from the body. The strong Platonic connotations of the final passage, resorting to phrases such as “condemned to cohabitation”, “freed from that bond”, “freed from the body”, upholding an environment underlain by the Platonic imaginary, at least in the diacritics structures patent in the work, bears testimony of such, by referring the destiny of the intellective soul at the moment in which the body decays, pointing towards a stage of freedom and beatitude, since the bond with the body is replaced with a bond with God.

The text is clear in stating that as long as man persists in his worldly condition, all knowledge of which he is capable, even intellective knowledge, cannot be attained without the cooperation of the senses. Only in perfect ecstasy, which takes place by divine intervention, it is possible for human beings to renounce the senses. However, in the imperfect, towards which man is led by his own efforts, even though favoured by God, that is not entirely possible. The senses are the fundamental tool of knowledge in that stage in which the soul is bound to the body. Hence the needs to appropriately study and know the external and internal senses, in order to better unveil the soul and its movement. Without them, it will not be able to access, contemplate and understand Creation, to reach God. Also, without them, it could not have recognized His Son, who in His human condition, when among men, also made use of them to spread His message.

The intellective soul lives between two worlds, bound to the senses (when in the body) or bound to God (separated soul). This twofold status gives it an enigmatic character, since on the one hand it receives from the weight of

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<sup>9</sup> *De Anima* III c.13, q. 5, a 4, 439-40: “Hactenus disceptatum de anima, quatenus corporis constricta nexu, et contubernio addicta, ad functiones exercendas suas, illius operam emendicat; deinceps de eadem scribemus eo iam uinculo exoluta, et de separata separatam instituemus tractationem. Praestet utinam propitium Numen, ut quemadmodum de coniuncta anima, quali quali potuimus industria, opus confecimus, et de separata dicturi gradum addimus ulteriorem: sic solutus aliquando e corpore, cui coniunctus nunc animus est, in statum euadat liberiorem, ubi soli Deo insolubili iam nexu adstrictus, et ab humanis longissimo abiunctus interuallo, uitam auspicetur iucundissimam, et possideat beatissimam.”

matter all sorts of information in order to the fulfilment of its faculties but, on the other hand, assuming a bond with God, it will be able to access a higher knowledge. Whereas it is bound to the body, except by miracle, all knowledge, including knowledge of God, will be triggered in it by the senses, making it indebted to the image. The image, on the one hand, brings man closer to Creation, and on the other hand it makes him more distant, since the knowledge of Creation imparts is imperfect, mediated by the sensible species.

“The human soul is at the same time not only a substance independent from the body, but the form of the body; by the first condition it claims the operation for itself, that is, the act of intellection, which is not inherent to the corporeal organ; in virtue of the second, it claims for the said function the ministry of the body and the support of fantasy (...) We shrug off however from the dependency of phantasms the state of the soul united to the glorious body, for in it there will not be the necessary concurrence of fantasy for intellection.”<sup>10</sup>

The problem subsists relative to the moments in which the soul reaches ecstasy. Manuel de Góis appeals to the opinion of two authors, the Abulensis and Saint Thomas<sup>11</sup>. The question is that of whether in a situation of ecstasy, the senses, external and internal, continue to operate. According to the Abulensis, in ecstasy, all powers, beyond the intellect, are in repose, contrary to what happens during sleep, in which the intellect and the internal senses function in a disorderly way, ceasing all natural functions. In its turn, Saint Thomas considers that the natural functions do not cease during ecstasy even though they act according to the way of nature and not by an intention of the soul<sup>12</sup>.

Moderately and not without reservations, Manuel de Góis adopts Saint Thomas' opinion, since he allows for the existence of situations in which the senses might cease to function by divine intervention. However, he thinks it's very hard to determine precisely whether or not those functions cease. In his opinion, it is more likely that the natural powers operate to a certain extent, even though not in a manifest way<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> *De Anima* III, c.8, q. 8, a. 2, 401: “Vbi aduertes cum operatio formam, eiusque modum existendi sequatur, anima uero humana simul sit et substantia independens a corpore, et forma corporis, merito primae conditionis uendicare sibi operationem, scilicet, intelligendi actum, non inhaerentem organo corporeo; ratione secundae, exposcere ad eam functionem ministerium corporis; et phantasiae satellitium» (...) Exclusimus autem a dependentia phantasmatum statum animae unitae corpori glorioso; quia in ea non erit necessarius phantasiae concursus ad intelligendum.”

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *De Anima* III, c.8, q. 8, a. 3, 403.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *De Anima* III, c.8, q. 8, a. 3, 403-404.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *De Anima* III, c.8, q. 8, a. 3, 404.



After this problem, he moves immediately to question whether ecstasy can only occur by divine intervention or whether it can also occur by the power of nature.

There is a kind of ecstasy, a perfect one, in which all senses are dormant and that can only occur through divine intervention. There is yet another kind, an imperfect one, which may occur in a natural context. In this latter case, the workings of the senses, external and internal, do not cease entirely, remaining partially numbed or scarcely functioning. It is not misplaced to mention that the intellect depends on fantasy and this, in its turn, on the external senses, in what the acquisition of the species is concerned, but not as to their use, as pointed out by Saint Thomas<sup>14</sup>.

Through the senses man experiences God and His works. The distance between the image and the world bears testimony of the *condemnation* to blindness, since images, on one hand, unveils but, on the other hand, are shadows of a world where all mediation is unnecessary. Although for Christianity the work of the Creator is not falsehood, as Plato's sensible world was, but rather proof of His love for the creature, a Platonic atmosphere still seeps through these lines, through the abyss separating man from the Creator. However God is good and, for that, He has revealed His image in the person of His Son and left inscribed in nature and in the human soul the signs pointing towards the journey back to Himself, in a demonstration of kindness and love for the Creation and the creature.

### 3. Baltasar Álvares' *Treatise on the Separated Soul*

Considering the crucial role performed by the Society of Jesus in the Counter-Reformation, the discussion about immortality, the separability of the rational soul and resurrection itself, acquire a decisive importance *vis-à-vis* the reformist opinions of Luther on this subject, namely, when he and, more markedly, his followers, seemed to neglect the existence of an intermediate stage of the soul, between death and resurrection, thus suggesting the improbability of the separation and immortality of the rational soul. There were also those who, drawing on Aristotle, simply denied the possibility of a demonstration of the immortality of the individual rational soul, like Pomponazzi<sup>15</sup>. In 1513, the 5<sup>th</sup> Council of Lateran, facing the assaults on catholic faith, which were beginning to take shape in the philosophical and religious field, condemned all those who asserted the mortality of the intellective soul,

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Su. Theol.* I<sup>a</sup>, q.84, a. 7<sup>o</sup> ad 2um.

<sup>15</sup> Pietro Pomponazzi, *Trattato sull' immortalità dell' anima*, a cura di V.P. Compagni (Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 1999).

clearly resorting to an Aristotelian classification specific to the definition of the soul<sup>16</sup>.

In continuance of the Thomist tradition, Baltasar Álvares' *Treatise* falls within the purposes of this confrontation<sup>17</sup>. Summing up, the *Treatise on the Separated Soul* is intended to rationally demonstrate the immortality of the intellective soul, to define its status as separated from the body and to explain how it acquires knowledge, among other aspects.<sup>18</sup> The first dispute about the immortality of the rational soul shows that the rational soul is immortal, in light of natural reason and according to the catholic faith. As regards to the state of the separated soul and the mode of being outside the body, it questions what the state of separation amounts to, concluding that it is a pre-natural state, since it is found in a situation where the body is absent. The soul is deprived of the second act, the information of the body, which indeed is natural<sup>19</sup>. The naturalness of the union between body and soul is part of the strategy of Creation, since the soul yearns to be united with the body. Hence, the naturalness of the resurrection of the flesh<sup>20</sup>.

#### 4. On the immortality of the soul

To think of immortality is to think of death. Death is a natural fact common to all living beings, even though it is the least naturalized by human

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<sup>16</sup> *Tractatus de Anima Separata* d. 1, a. 5, 458: "Eandem assertionem comprobatur decretum Lateranensis Concilii sub Leone X, sess.8 in hunc modum. Damnamus, sacro approbante concilio, omnes asserentes animam intellectivam esse mortalem."

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Aquinas had already philosophically demonstrated the separability and immortality of the intellective soul, and written his own "treatise on the separated soul", cf. *Su. Theol.* I, q. 89.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Leen Spruit, "The Discussion on the Separated Soul in Early Modern Jesuit Psychology", in Heider (ed.), *Cognitive Psychology*, 96-122.

<sup>19</sup> *Tractatus de Anima Separata* d. 2, a. 1, 470: "Nimirum animae rationalis status extra corpus, separationemve, si formaliter spectetur, privationem esse actus secundi eiusdem animae, id est informationis, seu unionis erga corpus (...)."

<sup>20</sup> *Tractatus de Anima Separata* d. 2, a. 3, 481: "Nam cum anima proprio appetitu donata sit, id est, voluntate, cur ea, quibus perficitur et in quae, sive proprie, sive improprie propensa est, elicito actu non desideret? Praesertim quia voluntas totius subiecti appetitus dicitur, quo, videlicet, desiderare possit quicquid ei naturae iure semel obvenit; qualis est societas corporis. Deinde, anima etiam qua rationalis, atque adeo qua volitiva, forma est corporis, ut alibi demonstrandum est, non enim quia per hanc praerogativam caeteras formas excedit, ideo per illam a conditione formae recedit; poterit ergo per voluntatem appetere quicquid ei, qua natura est, competit, cum eiusmodi appetitio ab ea, ut natura est, proveniat."

beings from the point of view of its interpretation and acceptance. The conception of death is first of all communal and religious. Death in antiquity, or in any other place and time, differs substantially from Christianity's conception of death and, either in antiquity or in Christianity itself, its conception is not at all one. Man reaches the end of life fulfilling his vital cycle but the interpretation of this fact is eminently cultural and, in a sense, it is already to be found complete at the time of its inception. It is, thus, an inherited conception, which transcends the individual considered in himself.

The Greek Platonic tradition is one of the main responsible in the Christian West for the dissemination of a predominantly dualist view of man, which has irreversibly conditioned a certain kind of thought about death, despite the widespread circulation of other ideas and beliefs in the ancient world. In fact, the Platonic conception will attain an unquestionable productivity in western philosophy, namely during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and it will exhibit a particular strength clearly visible in the Coimbra Course, specifically in the philosophical treatment of the soul<sup>21</sup>.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the discussion about the immortality of the soul is rekindled and, beyond the relevance imparted to it by the reasons invoked in the 5<sup>th</sup> Lateran Council and the opinions of Pomponazzi, it is also important in virtue of the fact that it allows thinking on the separateness of the rational soul under a new perspective, that of the man who thinks. This is grounded on the awareness that in thinking one experiences a kind of separation, while yet in life, consequent on the very act of thinking. It refers more properly to the phenomenon of abstraction<sup>22</sup>. Relevantly, Baltasar Álvares emphasizes, in this respect, the importance of the experience felt by him who thinks as he thinks. His purpose is to draw on the testimony of such personal experience in order to provide a rational ground to the separability of the soul, its spirituality. The ultimate purpose is to prove its individual persistence. If we remind ourselves that at this point we are a few years away from Descartes, maybe this position of Baltasar Álvares is not of minor philosophical importance, bearing in mind the due differences, the distinct aims pursued by each of these two philosophers included.

The importance of experience in the Coimbra Course is rather well-known, but up to now the experience has been revealed in strictly sensory terms and not exactly that which results from the intellectual act<sup>23</sup> The

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<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that while referring to Plato's *Phaedo*, the JCC named it "Dialogue on the immortality of the soul", e.g. in *Tractatus de Anima Separata* d.1, a. 3, 449, and *ibid.* d. 1, a. 3, 451.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Tractatus de Anima Separata* d.1, a.3, 448.

<sup>23</sup> *De Generatione et Corruptione* I, c. 2, *explanatio* G (Conimbricæ: A. Mariz, 1597), 10: "... quia experientiam, quae philosophiae mater est..." Concerning "experience" and

ascertainment of the phenomenon of abstraction or separability resulting from the act of thinking, carried out by Baltasar Álvares, appealing to experience, further involves, as it could not otherwise be, the cooperation of the senses. However, the unfolding which abstraction in this particular case compels already results in thinking, especially when abstraction itself is conceived as a phenomenon observable by the very intellect experiencing it, as is manifest in the *Treatise*, despite Baltasar Álvares' unawareness of the autonomy of that fact, in a cartesian sense.

## 5. Arguments for the immortality of the individual rational soul

Baltasar Álvares organizes the discussion about the immortality of the soul around eight arguments, appraised from the point of view of philosophers, theologians and the catholic faith. In general, these are received in their plenitude, even though the debate is heated and controversial, in virtue of the diverse reasons prompting acceptance of those arguments by the different authors called upon to cooperate in this dispute. There remains a concern of the author in being thorough in this matter, since all reasons and considerations are important for enriching the debate, but also because the more controversial and heated it appears, the more convincing it will prove to be, thus fulfilling the aims fixed by the Lateran Council. We now list the eight arguments mentioned above.

- First, the rational soul is a spiritual and self-subsisting substance, because it is independent and separate from matter, and thus incorruptible. It is a substantial subsistent form.
- Second, nothing that is self-subsisting can become corrupted when it is, as is the case of the rational soul, a simple entity, and receiving existence by a single creation.
- Third, there is in man a desire and appetite for eternal life that the soul reflects and channels.
- Fourth, the experience of ecstasy shows that the possibility exists, while yet in life, of experiencing a stage of separation and abstraction from

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its meaning, see also: L.F. Barreto, «Do Experiencialismo no Renascimento Português», in P. Calafate (dir.), *História do Pensamento Português. Volume II: Renascimento e Contra-Reforma* (Lisboa: Ed. Caminho, 2001), 24; O.T. Almeida, «Experiência a madre das cousas» – On the 'Revolution of Experience' in Sixteenth-Century Portuguese Maritime Discoveries and their Foundational Role in the Emergence of the Scientific Worldview», in M. Berbara & K.A.E. Enenkel (eds.), *Portuguese Maritime and the Republic of Letters* (Leiden-Boston: E.J. Brill, 2012), 377-394.

the senses and matter, which confirms the separateness of the rational soul from the body and, thus, its incorruptibility.

- Fifth, the mind always yearns for the highest, and tends to draw away from obsolete things, seeking to know and understand the divine and immortal things. Such relentless unsatisfaction, striving for more and better, bears testimony to the soul's vocation for its natural place, that of the spiritual world.
- Sixth, there is an innate appetite in man towards happiness, that cannot exist in vain and that only the contemplation of God can satisfy.
- Seventh, the human soul is created for virtue and man possesses a moral consciousness. Such is proof that man cannot die like an animal but that he will rather crave for the highest, the full realization of virtue.
- Eighth, the Divine Providence practices distributive justice. This life not always bears witness to justice, such as we deserve and imagine it. We see the just being punished and victims of suffering, and we see the dissolute and sinners surrounded by prizes, without criticism or remorse, often reaping benefits from the practice of iniquity. There must then be a divine justice capable of amending the situation, of remedying the injustices that afflict us in this life, punishing those who have eschewed the practice of good and caused harm to others, and rewarding the just.

As we remarked above, these arguments are discussed in Dispute I of the *Treatise on the Separated Soul* in light of natural reason. Although, it is not enough to explain the immortality of the soul with the arguments of the pagan philosophers, namely those of Plato and Aristotle, and those of the Christian philosophers, such as Saint Thomas and others. It is necessary to do it also in accordance with the catholic faith, namely with the Holy Scripture, the opinion of the Church Fathers, and the decisions of the Councils. In that sense, several testimonies in favour of the immortality of the soul are listed, as they appear in the books of *Genesis*, *Job*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Maccabees*, and in other places. Also, Augustine, Chrysostomus, Ambrosius, Isidorus, Gregory of Nanzianzus, and others are called upon to corroborate and prove the immortality of the soul. Finally, there is also a quotation from the Lateran Council under Leo X, sent. 8, which condemns all those who assert that the intellectual soul is mortal.

The concern with demonstrating that Aristotle defended the immortality of the soul is a recurrent one, seeking to bring together the Stagirite and catholic faith, namely in contesting the passages in which the Philosopher might have suggested that the rational soul cannot ever operate independen-

tly from the body<sup>24</sup>. Probably this zeal is not alien to what was referred above as the position of Pomponazzi, who asserted that, according to Aristotle, it would not be possible to prove the immortality of the individual soul. Let us not forget that Aristotle was, at the time, par excellence, the holder of the final word in the philosophical field. As such, beyond the concerns with the reformists who were beginning to avoid the very term “soul”, there was also the reason for fighting off against those who irreversibly separated faith from reason and deprived faith of the possibility of being philosophically thought.

## 6. Conclusion

First of all it is reasonable to sustain that there is an unquestionable doctrinal unity in these two Coimbra titles as regards the study of the intellectual soul. In spite of Manuel de Góis’ and Baltasar Álvares’ different perspectives, natural philosophy and metaphysics respectively, they both coincide on what is specific to man and distinguishes him from the rest of the Creation. Man has thus the unique status of being a creature in itself submitted to generation and corruption but participant in Eternity. Both Coimbra titles must be read as integrating the discussion about man, a natural and spiritual being, as God’s project.

Whereas, Manuel de Góis conceives the human project as related to all levels of the senses and to the sublunary world, Baltasar Álvares connects man and transcendence; his humanity is only due to the spirituality of his soul, to the fact that soul will never cease to be. As if man in his entirety, body and soul, could be suspended. As if his spiritual side could be the only witness to the transcendence of his humanity. Intellectual soul is both the instrument with which reason operates and the place for man’s individuality after the death of the body. Intellectual soul is the guarantor of the non-interruption of the individual, the unique identity of each man until his reunion with the body in the resurrection of the flesh.

Both physics and metaphysics cooperate contributing in a clear way to the interpretation and the formation of Jesuit anthropology. In spite of the importance of the senses within the frame of physics, the study of man in his entirety points towards the final cause, God. This establishes the need for a metaphysical approach that will replace man in his due place in accordance to the project of the Creator and the possibility of understanding man, ontologically speaking.

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<sup>24</sup> *Tractatus de Anima Separata* d.1, a. 6, 463: “Quarto, Anima rationalis habere nequit operationem a corpore omnino independentem, igitur neque, existentiam habere poterit extra corpus atque adeo mortalis erit. Assumptum probatur illo celebri Aristotelis pronuntiato lib.3 de anima cap.8 text. 39.”

One even may observe a kind of a crypto-metaphysics underlying the study of man, qua nature. The five senses, the tool for the knowledge of the nature allow discovering in it the signs of Creation, recognizing in God's work the visible witness of an invisible God. According to Góis, God has an intention when endowing man of a sensitive cognition, namely that by this particular kind of cognition he may reach Him. This is patent in various moments, for instance in Góis' theory of vision. This theory shows that behind the physical description of the human eye one guesses a meta-natural project that aims to achieve the perfect vision, the vision of God.<sup>25</sup> This is why we cannot agree with those who underestimate the role and the importance of metaphysics in the Coimbra Course.<sup>26</sup> At first glance its unequivocal modernity may lead us to ignore its fundamental aim, viz. to approach man to God, recognizing God as the unique end of human life since humanity in its completeness can only be lived in His bosom. The modernity of the JCC can be seen by the way physics and metaphysics are juxtaposed as autonomous disciplines. This is clear enough in the way the intellective soul is treated. Nevertheless, it is imperative to read the JCC as a whole in order to understand how far physics in its own way precludes the reader of getting the key for its ultimate goal. Let us repeat it: to replace man within the project of God's Creation both as nature and spiritual being born to Eternity. Furthermore, this will only be possible with an absolute epistemological rigor, as detected in Góis' Prooemium to *De Anima* in where he discusses the science of the soul by pointing to its precise direction, physics and metaphysics.

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<sup>25</sup> M<sup>a</sup> da C. Camps, *Do visível ao Invisível- A teoria da visão no Comentário aos três livros 'Da Alma' do 'Curso Jesuíta Conimbricense (1598)* (PhD Dissertation presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 2012), 156-193 [also: ]; Camps, "The Pleasures of Seeing according to Manuel de Góis' 'Coimbra Commentary on De Anima (1598)", *Quaestio* 15 (2015), 817-826.

<sup>26</sup> Casallini, *Aristóteles*, 215-250.