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ESSAY REVIEW

Fabrizio Baldassarri*

Manipulating Souls. Dominik Perler (ed.), *Transformations of The Soul. Aristotelian Psychology 1250-1650*, «Vivarium», XLVI/3 (2008), and Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2009; Klaus Corcilius, Dominik Perler (eds.), *Partitioning the Soul. Debates from Plato to Leibniz*, Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter, 2014

A spectre haunts the history of philosophy, the soul. Since Antiquity, this topic crucially underlies the philosophical attempts to explain the activities of nonhuman (animals and plants) and human beings. From the digestion of food, growth, sensation, and perception, to the rational faculties, the main capacities of living beings belong to the soul. Additionally, the soul defines the unity and the unicity of living beings, also distinguishing between species. Traditionally considered a crucial topic to ground a system of knowledge that includes all natural bodies, the soul attracted the attention of philosophers, religious people, physicians, and naturalists[1]. Nowadays, while the soul sounds like an old-fashioned concept, a mere remainder of a metaphysical order, it still provokes questions and kindles philosophical, neuro-biological, and neuro-psychological investigations[2]. Yet, these contemporary treatments relevantly benefit from a confrontation with the historical precedents in Antiquity, Mediaeval, and early modern philosophical debates[3].

The two volumes I analyse in this essay are a recent attempt to reconstruct debates on the soul in the history of philosophy with connections to contemporary philosophical debates[4]. Indeed, the authors frequently make comparisons with contemporary philosophers (like Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett or Jerry A. Fodor, for example) in these volumes. In the first, *Transformations of the Soul* [hereafter TS],

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1 Paul J.J.M. Bakker, Sander W. de Boer, Cees Leijenhorst, (eds.) *Psychology and Other Disciplines. A Case of Cross-Disciplinary Interaction (1250-1750)*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2012.

2 See Vaughan Bell, *Neuroscience and the premature death of the soul*, article on «The Guardian», 21 February 2016. The author refers to Tom Wolfe, *Sorry, But Your Soul Just Died*, «Orthodoxy Today» (1996), now on: http://www.orthodoxytoday.org/articles/Wolfe-Sorry-But-Your-Soul-Just-Died.php See also, Ferruccio Andolfi, *Prologo: Avere un'anima*, «Società degli individui», 57/3 (2016), pp. 1-10. Sanjib Kumar Pandya, *Understanding Brain, Mind and Soul: Contributions from Neurology and Neurosurgery*, «Mens Sana Monographs», 9 (2011), pp. 129-149.

3 Robert Pasnau has recently made clear that Aristotelian interpretations of the soul could be acceptable by contemporary philosophers of science in some ways. See, Robert Pasnau, *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature*, Cambridge, CUP, 2002.

4 For another work strictly dealing with Middle Ages, see John Paul Bequette (ed.), *A Companion to Medieval Christina Humanism: Essays on Principal Thinkers*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2016.

the authors interpret the debates on the soul between 1250 and 1650 as a long process of philosophical transformation. The category of transformation is relevant. A transformation means a slight change within a continuity. Neither sharp breaks nor radical changes occur. By contrast, the new framework develops throughout various modifications, intermediate stages, and gradual changes of the traditional interpretation – like a butterfly develops from its cocoon. This is an alternative approach to the scholars' preference for changes rather than to resistance to change. According to the editor, transformations allow to overcome this limitation by including a crucial mix of changes and resistance to them. The chapters show how much the interpretations of the soul developed from 1250 to 1650. Despite early modern thinkers' opposition to Aristotelian psychology, the authors detect the latter's presence in the early modern philosophies. New theoretical frameworks thus grow through the combination of new and old elements, ultimately reshaping the concept of scientific revolution and the birth of modernity (p. 3-4)[5].

In the second volume, *Partitioning the Soul* [hereafter PS], the authors delve into the diverse activities of the soul. The soul as a single entity seems to need a philosophical defence, as long as it is responsible for diverse bodily activities ranging from its highest down to its most basic manifestations – a problems that surfaces in TS too. When philosophers tried to handle these diverse manifestations and functions, the notion of *parts of the soul* arose. Debates with a wide range of options focus on this partitioning, which includes the explanation of what the soul is and what the soul does. Indeed, the partitioning of the soul proved extremely successful in the history of philosophy, providing a conceptual framework for heterogeneous philosophical treatments. The volume thus deals with the identification and the localization of the soul, the proliferation of its parts, their dependency and separability, spanning its analysis from Plato to Leibniz.

The two volumes are somehow related. Both highlight the role of the soul in grounding philosophies and reconstruct enduring philosophical threads that connect ancient notions to early modern reflections. TS contains nine chapters on mediaeval (Albert the Great, Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham) Scholasticism (Jandun) Renaissance (Valla, Cardano, Scaliger) and early modern philosophy (Descartes and Cureau de la Chambre.) PS contains an introduction that traces back the origins of the debates on the soul since Plato, plus eleven chapters on Antiquity (Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism, Galen, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Proclus, Philiponus) Middle Age (Ockham) the Renaissance (Suárez) and early modern philosophy (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz.) Another volume, recently edited by Dominik Perler for Oxford University Press, *The Faculties: A History* [hereafter F], provides a different overview of the soul, while dealing with the study of faculties from Antiquity to contemporary philosophy.[6]

Beginning with the first volume, in his highly promising introduction, Dominik Perler discusses the nature of the transformations of the soul, demonstrating how anti-Aristotelianism grew out of a long Aristotelian tradition. Even the sharpest criticism of Aristotelian psychology reveals the presence of Aris-

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[5] Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution*, Chicago & London, University of Chicago Press, 1996. Martin W.F. Stone, *Scholastic Schools and Early Modern Philosophy*, in Daniel Rutherford (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Philosophy*, Cambridge, CUP, 2006, pp. 299-327.

[6] Dominik Perler (ed.), *The Faculties: A History*, Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2015.

totelian arguments, which contributed to building early modern concepts of the soul[7].

Dag Nikolaus Hasse fascinatingly opens the book with a striking example of these transformations within Aristotelian psychology. In his, "The Early Albertus Magnus and his Arabic Sources on the Theory of the Soul," Hasse's focus on Albert the Great's dual interpretation of the soul parallels the Aristotelian definition of the soul[8]. His stance is twofold. Albert rejects the idea of a plurality of perfections in favour of the unity of the soul, but also denies universal hylomorphism and claims that faculties are properties of the soul with respect to their power. Albert's stress on the soul's separability from the body is a clear Neo-Platonic inheritance. Thus, he takes crucial steps away from Aristotle, without departing from Aristotle's yard (p. 28).

Albert the Great's complex position perfectly introduces to the Middle Ages as a period of transformations and hybridization of knowledge. In the second chapter, "The Inner Cathedral: Mental Architecture in High Scholasticism," Peter King analyses opposing positions in the definition of the relation between the soul and its faculties. On the one hand, he discusses the mainstream Aristotelian position endorsed by Aquinas. The latter acknowledges an intensional and an extensional difference between the soul and its faculties – their real difference is underwritten in metaphysics. On the other hand, two alternative positions play a relevant role too, those of Scotus and Ockham. Their radical dissensus became dominant in a later period[9]. Yet, Scotus' differentiation between intensional and extensional identity entails a real difference between the soul and its faculties. According to King, the latter is sufficient to count Scotus among the mediaeval Aristotelian mainstream. By contrast, Ockham opposes the real difference by means of his razor principle. The soul is its faculties, and their difference is merely conceptual. This interpretation inaugurates a radical minority that eventually becomes dominant in the Cartesian account of the mind. Descartes creates a unitary inner space, the mind, and razes the highly structured Scholastic cathedral of psychology to the ground (p. 51).

In the following chapter, Richard Cross focuses on "Some Varieties of Semantic Externalism in Duns Scotus's Cognitive Psychology." Scotus' defence of the causal activity of the soul matches his claims that the intelligible species is a partial cause in the formation of a cognition. An investigation about the relation between the mind and the body that deals with specific issues of cognitive psychology results. According to Cross, in Scotus, the intelligible content 'shines out' from the inherent accident (p. 72). In this way, epistemic aspects of external objects are themselves conjoined to the mind. Indeed, the Universe is just information. Scotus' reasoning leads to including non-inherent objects of thought in the mind, leading to a break in the boundary between the mind and external reality. As a result, inherence appears less relevant, and Scotus' account of intuitive cognition involves a weakening of the self as an integrated whole.

Martin Lenz brilliantly challenges Ockham's famous (Aristotelian) tenet that thought is prior to

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[7] See Denis Des Chene, *Life's Form. Late Aristotelian Theories of the soul*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2000. Id., *Spirits and Clocks. Organism and Machines in Descartes*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2001.

[8] On a similar line, see Sander W. De Boer, *The Science of the Soul: The Commentary Tradition on Aristotle's* De anima, *c. 1260-c. 1360*, Leuven, Leuven U.P., 2013, pp. 15-25.

[9] Similarly, such an enterprise is in [F], and especially in D. Perler, *Faculties in Medieval Philosophy*, in [F], pp. 97-139; and in Verena Olejniczak Lobsien, *Faculties and Imagination*, in [F], pp. 140-149.

conventional language by means of Ockham's early writings, in his chapter, "Why is Thought Linguistic? Ockham's Two Conceptions of the Intellect." In his early work, Ockham shows that the sistematicity of our thought derives from our acquaintance with conventional language (p. 87). Syncategorematic terms are thus abstracted from conventional sentences (p. 88). Two things result. First, conventional language is semantically prior to mental language. Second, concepts are significatively instituted – *significare* is not always the same as *intelligere*. Yet, the language enables us to turn objects we have cognized into syntactic constituents, which grounds Ockham's novel explanation of the systematicity of thought. This position makes clear Ockham's later proximity with Aristotelianism.

In his, *Ame intellective, âme cogitative: Jean de Jandun et la* duplex forma *propria de l'homme*, Jean-Baptiste Brenet deals with the 'double form' of the soul (the separate intellect and the cogitative soul) which developed in the Fourteenth-century Averroism of Jean de Jandun. The latter's interpretation develops from an ambiguity concerning the unicity of the human form and the ontological separation of the soul. Jandun endorses the plurality of forms and adds cogitation to the intellect. Both qualify humanity. As long as this interpretation opens the flank to criticism, Jandun solves the contradictions of this duality, stressing the difference between these forms: the one is the last of the material forms; the other is the first of the separated forms. The intellect is just a pilot in his ship (p. 104). Consequently, the human being's ambiguity between a quotidian life and a thinking life is internal to the structure of his soul. Part of a never-ending debate about human nature, Jean de Jandun's interpretation of the soul develops an alternative, but fascinating and important perspective.

Joël Biard continues to investigate mediaeval and Scholastic philosophy in his *Diversité des fonctions et unité de l'amé dans la psychologie péripatéticienne (XIV^e^-XVI^e^ siècle)*. He analyses various positions about the unicity of the soul, starting from John Buridan, who grounds the plurality of the soul's powers in the rational distinction. The separability of the soul parallels its unity and concerns all its powers. A lively debate follows. Nicolas Oresme and Peter of Ailly discuss the unity and plurality of the soul from alternative points of view. These commentators favor the unity of the soul, heavily contrasting the separability of the human intellect, and propose an alternative path that follows neither Aristotelian nor Aquinas' positions. Biard then detects several aspects of this debate in Rubio and Descartes, and tracks down the presence of Buridan's argument in the latter's philosophy[10]. Debates internal to the Scholastic culture thus pave the way to early modern philosophical attempts to deal with the soul.

Lodi Nauta discusses an alternative point of view, in his chapter *From an Outsider's Point of View: Lorenzo Valla on the Soul*. Accordingly, Valla rejects much of standard Aristotelian teaching about the soul, which he labels as unstable, abstract, theoretical, untrue to what we observe, and unscientific. He substitutes it by means of common sense, observation, and good Latin. Accordingly, Valla applies to the soul his model of substance-plus-qualities, and compares both the soul and God to the Sun (p. 154). The soul's

[10] See also, Dominik Perler, *What are Faculties of the Soul? Descartes and his Scholastic Background*, in *Continuity and Innovation in Medieval and Modern Philosophy. Knowledge, Mind, and Language*, John Marenbon (ed.), Oxford, Oxford U.P., 2013, pp. 9-38. Andrew Pyle, *Faculties of the Soul: Response to Dominik Perler*, in *Continuity and Innovation in Medieval and Modern Philosophy*, cit., pp. 39-50.

qualities are not identical to the substance, according to Valla, but it is one and the same soul that carries all its functions, namely memory, reason, and will. Valla bridges the mind-body dualism stressing that the soul permeates the body and both exert influence on each other. At the same time, he claims that animals have a rational, though mortal soul (plants are downgraded). In sum, Valla's critique touches a number of features of Scholastic psychology, crucially undermines Aristotle's authority of the soul, and foreshadows the late developments in natural philosophy of the Seventeenth Century.

Another step along this path is the better-known debate on the soul's separability and powers in Cardano and Scaliger[11], analyzed by Ian Maclean in his *Cardano's Eclectic Psychology and Its Critique by Julius Caesar Scaliger*. Despite Cardano's and Scaliger's pretention to novelty and humanist credentials, Maclean shows that their discussions move in an inherited scholastic matrix of thought. Scaliger actually chooses a peripatetic line of interpretation. By contrast, Cardano uses Greek medical canon to supplement texts on the mind and the soul (a hermeneutic choice) and produces an innovative philosophical interpretation. The discussion centers on the soul's connection with the body — the infinity of the intellect, the mortality of the soul, and its individuation. Yet, both their latent connection with the Aristotelian matrix and their attempts to look for new interpretations open room for a broad intellectual debate. Cardano was considered a free-thinker, either praised by Vanini or vilified by Mersenne. Scaliger, by contrast, entered German universities, where philosophical debates about psychology play a significant role[12].

In the following chapter, *Cartesian* Scientia *and the Human Soul*, Lilli Alanen finally approaches the early modern period. Yet, her detailed analysis of Descartes' work detects an internal contradiction. Accordingly, Descartes' interpretation of the soul struggles to fit his physics of nature, which is only inert matter. Not only does the composite, but also human psychology represents something inexplicable in such terms. Spinoza later condemned Descartes as one who treated human affects as something outside nature (p. 198). Yet, Alanen locates an Aristotelian theme when Descartes started dealing with consciousness[13]. A revealing (though nominal) convergence to the Stagirite appears in Descartes' modern system[14], when the appeal to the institution of nature forces him to reintroduce theodicy and teleology – previously excluded from his physics[15]. Yet, defining the role of psychology within Descartes' tree of philosophy leaves room for further investigation[16].

Markus Wild's fascinating investigation on *Marin Cureau de la Chambre on Natural Cognition of the*

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[11] Guido Giglioni, *Girolamo Cardano e Giulio Cesare Scaligero. Il dibattito sul ruolo dell'anima vegetativa*, in *Girolamo Cardano. Le opere, le fonti, la vita*, a c. di Marialuisa Baldi, Guido Canziani, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1999, pp. 313-340.

[12] Sacha Salatowsky, *De Anima: Die Rezeption der aristotelischen Psychologie im 16. und 17 Jahrhundert*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, B.R. Grüner, 2006. Pekka Kärkkäinen, Henrik Lagerlung, *Philosophical Psychology in 1500: Erfurt, Padua and Bologna*, in Sara Heinämaa, Martina Reuter (eds.), *Psychology and Philosophy. Inquiries into the Soul from Late Scholasticism to Contemporary Thought*, Boston, Springer, 2009, pp. 27-46.

[13] For a more recent work on Descartes and his scholastic sources, see Igor Agostini (ed.), *Nouvel Index Scolastico-Cartésien*, forthcoming.

[14] As Stephan Schmid claims at the beginning of his *Faculties in Early Modern Philosophy*, in [F], pp. 151: «surprisingly […] faculties kept on playing a significant role in both early modern psychology and logic. Early modern authors were often fairly traditional […] and even strengthened the role of faculties».

[15] Cf. Emanuela Scribano, *Macchine con la mente. Fisiologia e metafisica tra Cartesio e Spinoza*, Roma, Carocci, 2015.

[16] Cf. Simone D'Agostino, *Esercizi spirituali e filosofia moderna. Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza*, Roma, EDS, 2017.

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Vegetative soul: An Early Modern Theory of Instinct, concludes the volume with a less-studied part of the soul, the vegetative one. Cureau de la Chambre's middle way between Aristotelian tradition and Descartes' innovation reveals a crucial early modern philosophical interrogation concerning the presence of cognition in every living form. Indeed, Cureau de la Chambre claims that the lower souls foreshadow a cognitive activity of the higher one – everything that lives cognizes and everything that cognizes is alive (p. 223). In the lower souls, cognition means a regulation of the internal equilibrium and bodily navigation in the natural environment. This is a highly specialized instinct that acquires and processes information from the environment or from inside. In the case of vegetation, this cognition is placed all over the body and serves to recognize differences in humors, poisons, food or sickens. Wild places Cureau de la Chambre within Scholastic tradition, though crucial differences arise.

In the second volume [PS], the authors enlarge their interest in the soul from Antiquity to the early modern period, and restrict their focus on a very specific part of the soul, the mind and its unitary activities. However, focusing on the unicity of the soul and the unicity and identity of the living body raises relevant questions in the history of philosophy. The editors reduce these questions to six main categories, concerning (1) parthood, (2) unity, (3) identification – be it anatomically or logically grounded, (4) localization, (5) dependency or separability – the question of parts' relationship, (6) the proliferation problem – i.e., are there limits to the number of parts of the soul?

This thread originated in a crucial passage of book IV of Plato's *Republic* (434d-441c), where Socrates introduces three different kinds of soul. Questions about what part individuates the living being arise, highlighting psychological, methodological, and ontological issues (p. 4). Accordingly, the soul is the subject of desires. These latter are individuated and correlated in one-to-one correspondence, revealing the soul as a multiple subject. This interpretation is problematic and substantiates the debates in the history of thought. Christopher Shields provides a detailed analysis of Plato's treatment of the soul in his first contribution, entitled, *Plato's Divided Soul*. He shows Plato's largest context in order to reveal how much his partitioning of the soul does not result in a fragmentation of the living beings – '*the parts of the soul are not homunculi*' (p. 27-8). On the contrary, Plato claims the unity of the soul, despite its internal discords and psychic disarray. The soul may be a uniform simple, which is consistent with its parts.

Aristotle inherits this interpretation of the soul and submits it to his scientific investigation. He makes the soul the first principle of the science of living beings, thus distinguishing his approach from Plato's account. Yet, Aristotle is critical of the idea of parts of the soul – see *De anima* 432a22-b7, where he faces all the questions that structure the debate on parts of the soul. Thomas K. Johansen deals with some of these features in his *Parts in Aristotle's Definition of Soul:* De Anima *Book I and II*. For Aristotle, partitioning the soul establishes a set of capacities (nutritive, perceptual, etc.) that compose an integrated hierarchy of functionalities following a unitary principle. The parts of «the soul are unified only relative to kinds of living being» (p. 60).

The first generation of Hellenistic philosophers demonstrate its concern about the parts of the soul, though differently from Plato and Aristotle. Brad Inwood analyses Epicurean and Stoic philosophies in his *Walking and Talking: Reflections on Divisions of the Soul in Stoicism*. The Old Stoa's position is a fusion of a

faculty psychology, whose hierarchy is dominated by rational faculty. Yet, psychical conflict reveals a kind of irrationality. A keystone in their knowledge is the materiality of the soul. The latter in fact facilitates kinds of divisibility and the coherence of the partitioning, making the location understandable.

An alternative to this interpretation, but somehow related to this effort to locate the soul, is presented in *Partitioning the Soul: Galen on the Anatomy of the Psychic Functions and Mental Illness*. Indeed, James Hankinson shows Galen's eccentric Platonism in the context of his medical work. Galen endorses a different, empirical view in this discussion. Notoriously, he located Aristotelian humors within the organs of the body. Similarly, he based the localization of parts of the soul and his encephalocentrism on anatomical and empirical knowledge (p. 87). He grounded his knowledge of the soul on his therapeutic concerns. Yet, the treatment of malfunctioning in the parts of the soul (appetitive, spirited, but also rational parts) is a medical treatment of bodily parts. These features offered a great deal of discussion in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries[17].

In opposition to Galen's pairing of the parts of the soul with the organs of the body stands Plotinus, according to Filip Karfík's interpretation presented in the following chapter, *Parts of the Soul in Plotinus*. Accordingly, Plotinus builds a complex metaphysical system in which he integrates diverse philosophical positions. Indeed, he accepts both Plato's immortality of the soul, Aristotle's claim that the soul is the principle of life, and the Stoics' claim that all souls derive from one soul. A complex account of the functioning of the role of the parts of the soul fascinatingly results. Parthood parallels corporeal individuality, but also finds a unifying factor in the undescended intellect of each individual. At the same time, Plotinus distinguishes between a divisible (the vegetative and sensitive parts) and an indivisible part of the soul. Yet, the communication of the two remains problematic (p. 142).

Christoph Helmig discusses Neoplatonic doctrine on parts and faculties of the soul in the next chapter, *Iamblichus, Proclus and Philoponus on Parts, Capacities and* ousiai *of the Soul and the Notion of Life*. While dealing with the unity and partitioning of the soul, Neoplatonic psychology establishes the separation of the soul from the body and relevantly differs from Aristotle's and the Stoics' interpretations (p. 153). In their views, Neoplatonists reverse Aristotle's order, which takes the vegetative soul as a point of departure. According to them, the rational soul is the basic form that produces or projects the lower forms. A fascinating relationship between the parts of the soul and its connection with the body results. When the soul is embodied, these parts become disjoined one from another (p. 155). What becomes relevant is the relation between these parts, or faculties, and the essence (*ousia*). The difference between Neoplatonic positions and Aristotelian tradition clearly develops. At the same time, Helmig stresses that the former's position develops on the difference between *dunameis* or *energeiai* and can be considered a compatible development of Aristotle's *De anima* (p. 162). When facing the discussion of the unity of the soul and the difference of its faculties (the Platonic tripartite soul), Neoplatonists claim that the essences pertaining to the different parts are not at the same ontological level, and the lower parts are derived from the rational part.

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[17] Fabrizio Bigotti, *Physiology of the Soul. Mind, Body and Matter in the Galenic Tradition of the Late Renaissance (1550-1630)*, Turnhout, Brepols, *forthcoming*. Cf. Hiro Hirai, *Medical Humanism and Natural Philosophy: Renaissance Debates on Matter, Life and the Soul*, Leiden, Brill, 2011.

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In his paper, *Ockham on Emotions in the Divided Soul*, Dominik Perler makes a long jump throughout the centuries, focusing on a very specific case of Mediaeval interpretation of the soul partitioning. Differently from Aquinas, the mainstream Aristotelian tradition, Ockham defines two classes of emotion, 'sensory emotion' and 'volitional emotion', which belong to different parts of the soul. These parts are really distinct souls inside a single soul. While reflecting the Platonic positions for partitioning the soul, Ockham goes a step further. The sensitive and intellective souls bring about emotions of their own and develop a strong conflict (p. 190). The consequences are huge: sensory emotions require cognition that exists without any cooperation or influence by the intellective soul. The emotional conflicts internal to the soul thus lead to acknowledge a divided soul. At the same time, refusing to reduce all emotions to a single class is appealing for grounding (1) a medicine of the mind (p. 195-6), and (2) a clear partitioning of the soul that importantly prospers in the following centuries.

By contrast, Francisco Suárez subscribed to the unity thesis. Yet, he conceded that there is one soul with many distinguishable faculties or capacities that are really distinct from the soul. Christopher Shields examines the combination between a singular soul with a plurality of entities, analyzing unexplored texts of Suárez, in his chapter, *Virtual Presence: Psychic Mereology in Francisco Suárez*. Suárez endorses the idea that capacities have a virtual presence in the soul (which he addresses in connection with his analysis of elemental mixture.) Already present in Platonic thought, this topic shows how much the presence of lower faculties is detectable in the higher ones. The latter contains the former as a cause contains its effects (p. 208). Yet, the virtual presence of the lower capacities of the soul dissipates the problems of psychic mereology. The soul is not an aggregate, but a unity in the highest degree. A fascinating position on the interrelation of the soul's parts arises[18].

In her chapter, *The Faces of Simplicity in Descartes's Soul*, Marleen Rozemond amazingly deals with René Descartes' original holenmerism (the soul is present in the entire body[19]) and his refusal of hylomorphism. In contrast with Suárez, Descartes endorses a strand (Rozemond claims to originate in Plato's *Phaedo*) for which the soul has no parts, cannot decompose, and is immortal. Descartes' ontological parsimony develops within his definition of the soul as a substance or independent entity. Accordingly, Descartes' dualism eliminates any partitioning of the soul – psychical conflict concerns the body and soul relationship (a very nice section is the one devoted to the 'I' in the *Meditations*, p. 233-234). As a result, Descartes reconfigured the soul – Rozemond achieves this task by showing Descartes' dis-connection with Scholastic philosophy, as the former rejects an amount of theories of composition and separability between faculties and soul. Descartes' position denies the pluralist theories and highlights the unicity of the soul. There is only one soul, the rational one.

Stephan Schmid shows that even Descartes, a *monist* concerning the types of souls, was no monist concerning the kinds of acts the mind performs. To Descartes' separation of the intellect and the will,

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[18] Cf. Christoph Sander, *Medical Topics in the De anima Commentary of Coimbra (1598) and the Jesuits' Attitude towards Medicine in Education and Natural Philosophy*, «Early Science and Medicine», 19 (2014), pp. 76-101.

[19] Jean-Pascal Anfray, *L'étendue spatiale et temporelle des esprits : Descartes et le holenmérisms*, «Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger», 139/1 (2014), pp. 23-46.

***Manipulating Souls*.**
DOMINIK PERLER (ed.), *Transformations of The Soul. Aristotelian Psychology* 1250-1650, «Vivarium», XLVI/3 (2008), and Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2009; KLAUS CORCILIUS, DOMINIK PERLER (eds.), *Partitioning the Soul. Debates from Plato to Leibniz*, Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter, 2014

Schmid opposes Spinoza's interpretation in his *Spinoza on the Unity of Will and Intellect*. Spinoza's monism radicalizes Descartes' anti-Aristotelianism: the mind is not a distinct substance – in this interpretation it is possible to detect the material position endorsed by Henricus Regius[20]. According to Spinoza, there is only one kind of act, ideas or acts of thinking. Schmid shows Spinoza's denial of differentiating between the cognitive and conative features that crucially underpins his theory of the unity of the soul (p. 256). Spinoza's doctrine figures in his account of representationality and helps early modern thinkers to overcome the Aristotelian theory of intentionality.

Christian Barth closes the volume with a chapter on Leibniz, *The Great Chain of Souls: Leibniz on Soul Unitarism and Soul Kinds*. Following Aquinas' unitarist position, Leibniz claims the soul is a true unity. As he acknowledges differences in the activity of living bodies, he commits to the theory that all living beings are ordered in a perfectly continuous series. On the one hand, a kinds-of-souls monism seems to surface, according to which all souls belong to the same type, or that their inner activities are of one general kind. This entails that all souls are gradual variants of one and the same absolute kind of soul, a position with Cartesian nuances. However, Leibniz preferred a kinds-of-souls pluralism. As Barth shows, Leibniz's explanation of the different faculties accounts for the difference in psychical activities in terms of representational contents (p. 294-296). This respresentationalist epistemology is central in Leibniz's attempt to defend the old position and offer it a new version. According to Barth, Leibniz thus is not forced to assume different sources of activity in the soul, and his position provides him a better chance to preserve the unity of the soul.

The efforts of the editors and authors brilliantly result in two outstanding and compelling pieces of knowledge, useful for both historians of philosophy and contemporary philosophers. What remains outside is a connection between these philosophical interpretations of the soul and the humanist medical culture, whose impact continues to be understudied[21]. While dealing with the transformations of Aristotelian tradition, a look to the latter is useful for both historians of science and historians of philosophy.

Yet, these volumes present important material accessible to a wide audience of scholars. As the chapters make clear, the metaphysical and philosophical manipulation of the soul importantly reconstructs a crucial topic of human nature: the soul's entirety, unity, internal conflicts, and partitioning, and its unification or separability, architecture, causal activity, and powers. This knowledge in fact facilitates the definition of the unity and of the wide range of operations and activities of human beings. Although further works may be added, for example on a topic barely touched, the vegetative soul[22], the editors and authors

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[20] Sergio Landucci, *La mente in Cartesio*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2002.

[21] Stefanie Buchenau, Roberto Lo Presti (eds.), *Human and Animal Cognition in Early Modern Philosophy and Medicine*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017.

[22] Fabrizio Baldassarri, Andreas Blank (eds.), *Vegetative Powers: Endowing Bodily Life from Antiquity to the Early Modern Period, Cham, Springer, 2019 forthcoming*. Paola Bernardini, Corpus humanum est vegetabile, sensibile et racionale. *L'âme végétative dans les commentaires au* De anima *au XIIIe siècle*, in *Le monde végétal. Médecine, botanique, symbolique*, A. Paravicini Bagliani (éd.), Florence, Sismel-Ed. del Galluzzo, 2009, pp. 137-156. Amber D. Carpenter, *Embodied Intelligent Souls: Plants in Plato's Timaeus*, «Phronesis», 55/4 (2011), pp. 281-303. Cf. Elaine P. Miller, *The Vegetative Soul. From Philosophy of Nature to Subjectivity in the Feminine*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2002. Christiane Bailey, *La vie végétative des animaux : la destruction heideggérienne de l'animalité*, «PhaenEx», 2 (2007), pp. 81-123.

have fulfilled the goal to show how much the soul puzzles the history of philosophy, from late Antiquity, to Mediaeval and early modern periods – and even conditions contemporary philosophical debates. Investigating the soul is a paramount, though never ending philosophical and metaphysical task. As a result, the authors shape a more precise knowledge of the history of philosophy while detecting transformations, changes, blurring positions, and interconnections in the philosophical manipulations of the soul. These interpretations construct the understanding of human nature throughout the history of philosophy. Yet, issues about the nature of human beings and their souls are still relevant and continue to populate human investigations, eventually stemming in the utopic 2049 of *Blade Runner*[23].

[23] https://www.forbes.com/sites/scottmendelson/2017/09/29/review-blade-runner-2049-is-an-overlong-and-underwhelming-sequel/#56f10fb82fce