Theological Studies
52 (1991)

INSTRUMENTUM DIVINITATIS IN THOMAS AQUINAS: RECOVERING THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

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HAVING SUCCESSFULLY constructed Christologies "from below," theologians have reached a point in their understanding of Jesus where the humanity of the Lord is no longer in doubt. One could even argue that popular piety has reached such a point, and that the task of the current theological generation is to "recover" the divinity of Jesus Christ in such a way that the rediscovered humanity is not diminished. Indeed, the case for such a recovery of the divinity claim was made recently in the pages of this journal:

> [W]ith considerable enthusiasm in our times for the prophetic figure of Jesus, there is a certain tragedy in the disappearance of the divinity claim into simple irrelevance. It is tragic for all the reasons that the Church Fathers of the fourth century gave: the radical nature of the redemptive claim and the long-sustained hope that it contains is captured precisely by the paradox so awkwardly and doggedly insisted upon at Chalcedon. . . . Now that the search for the historical and human Jesus has had such extraordinary success, it seems that the most urgent attention must be given to the contemporary intelligibility of the divinity claim.[1]

This call for an intelligible retrieval of the divinity claim is made even more challenging by recent theological developments which conclude that some classic theological constructions have been or must be surpassed. Feminist theologies, for example, have submitted to a searching reevaluation the premises, modes of argumentation, and conclusions of many traditional approaches to the subject matter of Christian faith. In Christology in particular, feminist theologians have called for a reconsideration of the presentation of the relationship between the human and divine natures in Christ, where the human nature has often been presented as a passive factor in the work of redemption. Anne Carr writes:

> Images of Jesus as sacrificial victim and of his sacrificial love and self-surrender on the cross . . . are among the most difficult for feminist Christians. At issue is

[1] Monika Hellwig, "Re-Emergence of the Human, Critical, Public Jesus," *TS* 50 (1989) 466–80, at 479–80.

the religious use of this Christological idea to legitimate family, church, and societal structures that support gender roles for women of nonassertiveness, passivity, and sacrifice of self. Male theologians have drawn from the experience of men in patriarchal culture to build models of the "imitation of Christ" that counteract *their* experience of sin as prideful self-assertion; the healing of grace is then understood as sacrificial love. Such models are no help for women, whose fundamental temptation has been described by feminist interpretation as failure to achieve selfhood and responsible agency—requirements for any mature Christian life. Religious self-transcendence first requires an authentic, responsible self. . . . For women, the sacrificial love of Jesus on the cross requires reinterpretation in which Jesus' act is clearly seen as a free and active choice in the face of an evil that has been resisted. It is not passive victimization.[2]

If Prof. Carr and other feminist theologians are correct in their diagnosis of the feminist problematic partly as a Christological issue, then the need exists to investigate to what degree elements of the theological tradition do or do not imply a Christology where the relation of human nature to God is primarily passive. Does a retrieval of the divinity claim force the simultaneous diminishment of the free human agency of Jesus in the work of salvation? On what basis can the divinity claim be recovered without requiring a passive Christology?

Other voices calling for a reevaluation of the theological tradition come from the exponents of the theology of liberation in Latin America. Jon Sobrino frankly acknowledges one of the common criticisms leveled against theologies of liberation in general:

[T]here persists a suspicion with regard to liberation christology that might be charitably expressed in the following way. Liberation christology is silent about themes that bear on the divinity of Christ. Imprecision and ambiguities emerge in its presentation of Christ.[3]

Such criticism is perhaps inevitable of a theological genre which has contributed so greatly to the retrieval and reaffirmation in faith and practice of the true humanity of Christ. Nevertheless, Latin American liberation theologians have been made acutely sensitive by their critics to the risk of diminishing the divinity of Christ as a result of an expanded understanding of Christ's humanity.[4] Theologians such as Sobrino and Segundo have been challenged to avoid a horizontalist reductionism of Christ (where the humanity eclipses the divinity) in their efforts to avoid

[2] *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990) 174.

[3] *Jesus in Latin America* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1987). 17.

[4] Ibid. 7.

a verticalist reductionism (where the divinity eclipses the humanity). Indeed, a major Christological issue for Latin American theologies of liberation has been locating the divinity, what Sobrino terms the "divine transcendence," within a full and true humanity of Jesus—a humanity which, in the person of Jesus, actively works in authentic human freedom to accomplish the saving work of God.

The issue of recovering the divinity claim without diminishing the recently recovered humanity claim is therefore a theological challenge of massive importance, with major implications for the viability of Christian faith. But the problem is not entirely new. This has been the classic Christological issue, on which views of salvation and Christian life have turned: How to talk about "true God" and "true man" in the one person of Jesus Christ.

In a seminal essay which approached the problem from the presupposition that the divinity of Jesus was not in doubt, but rather that the meaning of his real humanity was, Karl Rahner asked how we might understand the full humanity of Christ so that his obedience to the will of the Father was not the act of a purely passive humanity, but rather of an active agent of God in the work of salvation.[5] Rahner asked what it means to say that the human nature is distinct from the divine nature so that its operations are fully human in a regular sense.[6] If the human nature of Christ is not to be a merely passive partner in the saving work of redemption, what is its active role in salvation vis à vis the divine nature? Further, how can the conclusion be averted that Christian faith speaks of two saving works, a supernatural work coming from God alone, and a purely natural effort deriving from a separate human action? The answers to such questions have direct implications for the way Christian faith is lived, if indeed the human nature that participated in the saving

[5] Rahner asks: "How can the whole complex of Christological dogma be formulated so as to allow the Lord to appear as Messianic Mediator and so as true Man . . . with sufficient clarity? As true Man, who, standing before God on our side in free human obedience, is Mediator, not only in virtue of the ontological union of the two natures, but also through his activity, which is directed to God (as obedience to the will of the Father) and cannot be conceived of *simply* as God's activity in and through a human nature thought of as purely instrumental, a nature which in relation to the Logos would be, ontologically and morally, purely passive?" ("Current Problems in Christology," *Theological Investigations* 1 [Baltimore: Helicon, 1963] 161).

[6] He poses the problem of the possible subsumption of the humanity of Christ by the divinity as a problem for practical faith: "Can the 'average Christian' only get on by . . . thinking in a slightly monophysite way, to this extent at least, that the humanity becomes something merely operated and managed by the divinity, the signal put up to show that the divinity is present in the world—a world which is only concerned with this divinity and where the signal is put up pretty well for our sakes alone, because we wouldn't otherwise notice the bare divinity?" (ibid. 179–80).

work of redemption is identical to the human nature that is redeemed by God.[7]

In this famous essay, Rahner focuses the question on the role of the will of Jesus in relation to the divine will, and thus argues his case within the theological problematic of monothelitism. In this regard, he works squarely within the tradition of Thomas Aquinas, who dealt with a similar problem in the *Summa theologiae* 3, q. 19, a. 1: "Whether there is only one saving work (or operation), a work both human and divine, accomplished in Christ."[8] On the answer to this question rests, in large measure, the meaning of the divinity of Christ, understood in relation to the humanity as the instrument of the divinity. The divinity claim, in turn, rests on an understanding of how the humanity of Jesus is not overshadowed or absorbed by the Logos, but rather works freely and harmoniously as an instrument of it, and thereby reveals the nature of God in the work of salvation. As will become clear below, *instrumentum* in Thomas Aquinas does not merely denote an implement or tool, as if Christ's human nature had simply been operated "from above" through an elaborate series of remote causes. Instead, Thomas' understanding of the instrumentality of the human nature of Christ in relation to the divinity implies an integral and free human nature that works in organic harmony with the purposes of the divinity dwelling within and made manifest through it. This relation between the two natures in Christ is paralleled in the patterns of nature and grace that can be predicated of all human beings.

I propose that we turn to Aquinas to help recover the divinity claim, not because Thomas offers a solution that can be applied without mediation to the current question, but partly because Rahner's own

[7] It is worth noting in passing that such a relation between divine initiative and the instrumental activity of the human person is a major and well-known feature of Ignatian spirituality. Ignatius speaks of God's grace as "the means which unites the human instrument with God and so disposes it that it may be wielded dexterously by His divine hand." Given this foundation of grace, a person pursues those "natural means which equip the human instrument of God our Lord" to be of "divine service.... For He desires to be glorified both through natural means, which He gives as Creator, and through the supernatural means, which He gives as the Author of grace" (Ignatius of Loyola, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*, trans. with commentary by George Ganss, S.J. [St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1970] 322–33). Ganss here observes: "To be a closely united instrument in the hands of God from whom the true efficacy comes is a prominent and characteristic aspect in Ignatius' concept of an apostolic worker.... This concept flows naturally from his desire to be closely associated with Christ in cooperating toward achieving God's redemptive plan as it unfolds in the history of salvation."

[8] 3, q. 19, a. 1, in *Summa theologiae, Pars IIIa et Supplementum*, eds. Rubeis, Billuart, and Faucher (Rome: Marietti, 1948) 140a. All subsequent references to the *Summa theologiae* are to this edition.

theological principles argue for such a turn to Aquinas, particularly his principle of the relationship between a transcendentally graced humanity and the gracious activity of the God-Mystery, wherein anthropology becomes the foundation for Christology, and ultimately, for some understanding of the nature of God.[9] The divinity claim will not be recovered without working through the full meaning of the humanity claim, which is indeed one of the aims of Aquinas' treatment of the humanity of Jesus Christ as the instrument of the divinity. I am of course aware that a comprehensive understanding of Aquinas' theology cannot stand in isolation from later developments in biblical exegesis, systematic theology, philosophical anthropology, and the historical, sociological and psychological fields. The scope of this project is, however, far more modest: simply to reclaim the main lines of Thomas' work on the instrumental relation between the two natures of Jesus in order to contribute to the ongoing project of recovering the divinity claim in terms that are intelligible today. I do not believe that we can do this adequately apart from a critical recovery of major elements of the theological tradition itself; the instrumental problematic is one of these major elements.

My focus on *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, will be limited to the description of the relationship between the divine nature as initiator of the work of salvation and the human nature as the instrument of the divinity. I take for granted Thomas' treatment of the hypostatic union itself as the union of the human nature to the subsisting divine hypostasis or person, which he discusses in *ST* 3, q. 2, aa. 1–8. Thus I shall begin by situating *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1 in relation to the historical problem of monothelitism which it presupposes. Next I shall turn to the notion of conjoined instrumentality of the human and divine natures as presented by Thomas, and then to some of his earlier works which deal with this matter. Finally I shall undertake an analysis of q. 19 itself, and then return to the question with which we started: How to interpret the divinity of Christ in light of his full humanity.[10]

[9] "(A) transcendental Christology takes its starting point in the experiences which a human being always and inescapably has. . . . From this starting point there also follows the relationship of *mutual* conditioning between Christian theology and Christology" (*Foundations of Christian Faith*, trans. William Dych [New York: Seabury, 1978] 208–09.

[10] We might do well to heed Jon Sobrino's warning about the uncritical adoption of Chalcedonian terminology at the outset: "The Chalcedonian formula presupposes certain concepts that in fact cannot be presupposed when it comes to Jesus. [It] assumes we know who and what God is and who and what human beings are . . . We may use "divinity" and "humanity" as nominal definitions to somehow break the hermeneutical circle, but we cannot use them as real definitions, already known, in order to understand Jesus. Our approach should start from the other end" (*Christology at the Crossroads: A Latin American Approach* [Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1978] 82).

THE PROBLEM OF MONOTHELITISM

The body of *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1 indicates that this article is in fact concerned with the consequences of the union of the two natures in light of the issues raised by monothelitism. Monothelitism is popularly understood as the doctrine that in Christ there was but one will, the divine; the human nature was therefore a passive participant in the saving work of the divine nature. In fact, there were many forms of this heresy, which has been called by M. Jugie the "chameleon heresy *par excellence*."[11] Jugie traces the heresy through its major stages. All "monothelites" held one sole hypostatic energy in Christ, or one theandric activity of Christ—one sole hypostatic divine hegemony. The most mitigated form of the heresy, according to Ch.-V. Héris, admitted two wills in Christ, but refused to recognize in him two types of distinct operations corresponding to the two natures. This form of the heresy, known as monoenergism, resulted from fear of the Nestorian implications of positing two centers of action. In the strictest form of the heresy, *energeia* and *thelēma* (will) were therefore predicated of the person of Christ rather than of the natures. Since there was only one person, the divine, in the hypostatic union, there was only one *energeia* and one governing will. While this might be thought the logical consequence of the monophysite positions of Eutyches and Apollinarius, even Nestorius held a version of monothelitism, in an effort to maintain a moral union of love between the two natures.[12]

In general, it can be said that monothelitism consisted in a refusal to speak of two distinctly functioning and complete wills or operations corresponding to the two complete and distinct natures of the hypostatic union. Even if two wills or operations might be admitted, only one operated in the person of Jesus Christ. Héris adds that the problem raised by monothelitism was not so much the existence of two wills in Christ, as it was the matter of their union and relations.[13]

The history of monothelitism colors the background of q. 19, a. 1. Thus Thomas asks whether there was but one operation of the divinity and humanity in Christ. Given that the hypostatic union holds the two natures are united in the divine supposit, it would seem that there is but one operation in Christ, an operation both human and divine, and not two distinct ones. It would seem that the human nature, though it be a complete or integral nature, is nevertheless a passive participant in the

[11] M. Jugie, "Monothélisme," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 10/2 (1928) 2307 and entire article.

[12] Ch.-V. Héris, trans. and ed., *Le verbe incarné, Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, vol. 3, *3a, Questions 16–26* (Paris: Desclée, 1931) 301–35.

[13] Ch.-V. Héris 336.

union, for the saving work of the incarnation is effected by God, hence by the divinity of the Word, through the instrumentality of the human nature. The contemporary problem raised by feminist theologians and others of a passive Christology is not unrelated to this classic issue.

INSTRUMENTAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NATURES

ST 3, q. 19, a. 1 concerns not only the relation between the operations of the two natures, but more specifically, the way in which it can be understood that the human nature is an instrument of the divine, and how this instrumental relation furthers our understanding of the meaning of the divinity of Christ.

Some indication of Thomas' approach to the issue is found in *ST* 3, q. 18, a. 1, 2 and ad 2. The question raised in the article is whether there are in Christ two wills, one divine and the other human. The second argument, posed against two wills, is based on the notion of instrumentality. An instrument is not moved by its own will, but rather by the will of the mover. Since, according to John Damascene, the human nature of Christ was the instrument of the divinity, it was not moved by its own will, but rather by the divine.[14]

In reply, Thomas makes some crucial distinctions about instrumental causality. In general an instrument is moved by a principal agent, and this is what makes it an instrument. But the instrument can be further specified according to its nature. An inanimate instrument, such as an ax or saw, is moved by the bodily motion of an artisan. An animate instrument of the sensible order, such as a horse, is moved *through* its own sensible powers, as when the rider handles the horse. But the horse is a passive partner in the action. An animate instrument of the rational order, however, is moved through its own will, as when one responds to the request of a friend for help.[15] This last sense of the term "instrument" is somewhat analogous to the way the human nature in Christ was an instrument of the divinity and thus moved through its own (human) will. The difference in Christ, of course, is that the human will was predicated of only one person, the person of the Word. There were not two persons, but only one, in Christ.

Three points emerge: First, the instrumentality of Christ's human nature to the divine is of the rational order. A distinct self-determining human will is clearly assumed. The human nature in Christ is moved *per propriam voluntatem*. Second, the human nature of Jesus Christ has a regular human will which he exercises as to human things, and although

[14] *ST* 3, q. 18, a. 1, 2m.

[15] *ST* 3, q. 18, a. 1, ad 2. Thomas' somewhat stronger example is that of a master moving a servant to perform a task.

he is moved by God precisely through that will, it does not assume a passive posture with regard to the divine intention. Third, though the divinity accomplish its salvific purposes through the human will of Christ, this does not imply that such ends are accomplished in contradiction to the human will of Christ, or even that this would be possible.[16]

A second key text which touches on this subject is *Summa contra gentiles*, book 4, chapter 41, which was written during the end of Thomas's first stay in Paris and at the beginning of his first stay in Italy, between 1259 and 1264, considerably earlier than *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1.[17] Chapter 41 is a summary of Catholic teaching on the Incarnation. It is of special interest not only because it treats of the relationship between the human and divine operations in Christ, but also because it likens the union of the natures itself to the union of the soul and body, where the human nature is a kind of (*quoddam*) organ of the divinity, just as the body is an organ of the soul.[18]

That part of *Summa contra gentiles* 4 c. 41 which deals with the relations between the two natures contrasts the union of a body as organ of the soul with an extrinsic instrument, such as an ax (*dolabra*) in the hand of its user. The hand, as part of the body, is deputed by the soul toward the soul's proper operation. It is conjoined with the soul as its own (proper) instrument. The ax, however, can possibly be used by many people, and does not enjoy the relationship of a conjoined and proper organ; it is rather exterior and common.[19] The relation between the

[16] See Thomas' earlier treatment of this issue in *ST* 3, q. 18, aa. 4–6.

[17] For more information on the dating of the *Summa contra gentiles*, see James A. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: His Life, Thought, and Work* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1974) 130–34, 144–45, 359–60.

[18] "Relinquitur ergo ut attendatur similitudo secundum quod anima unitur corpori ut instrumento. Ad quod etiam dicta antiquorum Doctorum concordant, qui humanam naturam in Christo organum quoddam divinitatis posuerunt, sicut et ponitur corpus organum animae" (*Summa contra gentiles*, editio Leonina manualis [Rome: Desclée and Herder, 1934] 498a). This notion of "organ" comes from Damascene, as indeed, does much of Thomas' doctrine on instrumentality. For the influence of John Damascene upon Thomas on this doctrine, see Theophil Tschipke, *Die Menschheit Christi als Heilsorgan der Gottheit unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Lehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin* (Freiburg in Breisgau: Herder, 1940) 63–64 and 115–16.

[19] "Aliter enim est animae organum corpus et eius partes, et aliter exteriora instrumenta. Haec enim dolabra non est propium instrumentum, sicut haec manus: per dolabram enim multi possunt operari, sed haec manus ad propriam operationem huius animae deputatur. Propter quod manus est organum unitum et proprium: dolabra autem instrumentum exterius et commune" (*SCG* 4, c. 41). Ignaz Backes argues that while Thomas was influenced by Damascene and other Greeks, his distinction between separate and conjoined instruments (as in *SCG* 4, c. 41), and between inanimate and animate instruments, was his own innovation. See Ignaz Backes, *Die Christologie des hl. Thomas v. Aquin und die griechischen Kirchenväter* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1931) 285.

human and divine natures in Christ is like that of the hand to the soul: it is proper and conjoined. Thus the human nature assumed is worked instrumentally by the divinity (*ut manus ad animam*) to accomplish those things which are proper to God alone, such as forgiving sin, illuminating minds through grace, and, in the ministry of Jesus, leading people to eternal life.[20] It should be noted that Aquinas does not explain *how* the human nature is worked as an instrument; the principles of an instrumental causality are not spelled out here. We are speaking at this stage only of an instrumental *relation* between the humanity and the divinity. But this instrumental relation of the human to the divine nature is not itself the mode of union of the two; the nature of the Word is not the form of the human nature, as the soul is of the body.[21] The instrumentality of the human nature to the divine is predicated of the hypostasis or person which is the active source of union. What we learn from *SCG* 4 c. 41, is that this relation is so intimate as to be called conjoined (*non separatum sed coniunctum*).[22] Neither of the natures, human or divine, eclipses or diminishes the other, and neither can be reduced to the other. The notion of conjoined instrumentality could help address the kind of Christological problem raised by Sobrino and others.

EARLIER TREATMENTS OF THE INSTRUMENTAL RELATION

Before turning to *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, it would be helpful to survey briefly the major treatments of this relation between the human and divine natures in certain of Thomas' earlier works in order to appreciate his handling of the human and divine operations in the *Summa theologiae*. Our selection is limited only to key texts: the *Commentary on the*

[20] *SCG* 4, c. 41; "Sed humana natura in Christo assumpta est ut instrumentaliter operetur ea quae sunt operationes propriae solius Dei, sicut est mundare peccata, illuminare mentes per gratiam, et introducere in perfectionem vitae aeternae. Comparatur igitur humana natura Christi ad Deum sicut instrumentum proprium et coniunctum, ut manus ad animam."

[21] While the union between soul and body is commonly used by Thomas as a model for understanding the instrumental relationship between the human nature of Christ and the Word, this model does not adequately treat of the mode of union itself, for the doctrine of the hypostatic union does not claim that the divine nature is the form of the human in the same way that the soul is the form of the body (which would be the heresy of Apollinarius). For support of this interpretation, see P. Galtier, "L'Union hypostatique et Saint Thomas," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 7 (1930) 448.

[22] "Nihil igitur prohibet hoc modo ponere unionem humanae naturae ad Verbum quod humana natura sit quasi Verbi instrumentum non separatum sed coniunctum, nec tamen humana natura ad naturam Verbi pertinet, nec Verbum est eius forma; pertinet tamen ad eius personam." Thomas adds: "Intelligendum est enim Verbum Dei multo sublimius et intimius humanae naturae potuisse uniri quam anima qualicumque proprio instrumento" (*SCG* 4 c. 41).

Sentences, *De veritate*, and *De unione Verbi incarnati*.[23]

Aquinas' earliest treatment of the instrumental relation between the two natures and their operations is found in his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, book 3, distinction 18, quaestio unica, article 1, which was written between 1252 and 1256 in Paris.[24] Dist. 18, q. unica, a. 1 is part of Thomas' commentary on Lombard's discussion of the merits of Christ. This article is of special interest because the difficulties raised parallel so closely those to be raised a few years later in *ST* 3. The question posed by Thomas is whether it would seem that there was in Christ but one action. The specific argument that deals with the instrumental relation between the two natures is the fourth: One action only belongs to the instrument and to the principle of action (the cause of action). Quoting Damascene (as he would throughout his career on this point), he notes that the flesh was the instrument of divinity. Therefore, there was but one action of Christ according to both his divinity and his humanity.[25]

The response gives some indication of a solution to the problem along the lines of causality. A diversity of causes will be followed by a diversity of effects. The cause of an action is the species of that which acts, and whatever acts does so by reason of whatever form it has. Where there are diverse forms, there are therefore diverse actions, just as fire both dries things out and warms things up, and just as a person hears through the sense of hearing and sees through the sense of sight. Similarly, by virtue of his distinct natures, Christ had diverse actions.[26]

The implication is that the human nature is moved by a cause; a possible inference is that while this cause may be exterior, there may also be operations proper to the human nature itself which bring about its own proper actions, and that these two causal orders may work in conjunction with each other. Such an implication is indeed indicated in the reply to the fourth argument, which held that one action belonged to both the instrument and the principal of action. In his reply, Thomas says that this is not true because the same accidents cannot belong to different subjects. On the other hand, there can be said to be one action *secundum quid*, i.e. according to the relation of instrumental causality by

[23] The *Compendium theologiae* (1269–73) is excluded because it overlaps in time the *tertia pars* and does not represent any substantive difference from the doctrine of the *Summa theologiae* on these matters.

[24] See Weisheipl 67–80 and 358–59.

[25] "Instrumenti et principalis agentis est tantum una actio. Sed sicut dicit Damascenus . . . 'Caro est instrumentum Divinitatis.' Ergo una est actio Christi secundum Divinitatem et humanitatem" (*Scriptum super Sententiis Magistri Petri Lombardi*, ed. M. F. Moos, vol. 3 [Paris: Lethielleux, 1933] 554).

[26] *Sent* 3, d. 18, q. unica, a. 1, resp.

which the two natures work together, one moved by the other:

> [T]he instrument does not act except as moved by the principal agent, and acts in virtue of the principal agent. And by this means of action there is some kind of power in the humanity of Christ, inasmuch as the humanity itself is the instrument of divinity.[27]

The operations of the two natures are indeed distinct, although the human nature is moved by the divine, and receives its own internal principles of operation, its *virtus*, from the divine.

The notion of instrumentality is dealt with in several places in the *De veritate* (1256–1259).[28] We focus here on q. 20, a. 1, which asks whether a created knowledge is posited in Christ. If created knowledge is identified with a human operation, that operation could be attributed not to Christ's human nature, but to his person, or hypostasis. But uncreated knowledge is sufficient for the understanding which pertains to the hypostasis or person of Christ. Therefore, it is superfluous to attribute to him a created knowledge.[29] The argument calls on the priority of the hypostasis over the two distinct natures in deciding such questions. Operations are predicated of persons, not of natures. There is only one person; therefore, the one uncreated knowledge of Christ "suffices." Here is a sure recipe for a passive Christology. The response, however, is uncompromising in holding for the full implications of two distinct and full natures:

> From the fact that Christ is true God and true man, it is necessary to attribute to him all that pertains to the divine nature, and further, especially in accord with the rational nature in that same person, all that constitutes a member of the human species.[30]

Furthermore, if Christ is to be truly human, he must be completely human, i.e., possessing all those attributes in their fullness which are necessary for realization of a member of the human species, such as

[27] ". . . inquantum scilicet instrumentum non agit nisi motum a principali agente, et agit in virtute principalis agentis. Et hoc modo in ipsa actione humanitatis Christi est aliqua virtus, inquantum ipsa humanitas est instrumentum Divinitatis" (3 *Sent.*, dist. 18, q. unica, a. 1, ad 4).

[28] Compare q. 24, a. 1, ad 5; q. 27, a. 4, ad 2; q. 29, a. 1, ad 9. For background on the *De veritate* and its dating, see Weisheipl 123–24 and 362–63.

[29] *De veritate*, q. 20, a. 1, 2m, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, vol. 1, 8th ed., ed. R. Spiazzi (Rome: Marietti, 1949) 362a.

[30] "Ad hoc ergo quod Christus verus Deus et verus homo sit, oportet in ipso ponere omnia quae ad naturam divinam pertinent; et iterum seorsum secundum rationem naturae in eadem persona omnia quae speciem hominis constituunt" (*De veritate* q. 20, a. 1, resp. 3).

knowledge and virtue.[31] On these grounds Thomas argues that it is necessary to give Christ a created knowledge.

Finally, we turn to the *De unione Verbi incarnati*, which treats of the instrumental relation between the two natures in articles 1, 4 and 5. We limit our comments to article 5, which discusses whether there was in Christ one operation only.[32] This article consists of fourteen arguments, twelve replies, and a lengthy response. Like Thomas' commentary on the *Sentences*, it is especially useful because it raises many of the arguments treated in *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1. We will consider here only the major conclusions of the article.

First, Thomas states that the operation of the human nature was saving because the human nature acted as an instrument in the power of the (divine) agent (ad 1). This need not imply some sort of composite action where the natures become blurred; the operations are distinct. Rather, following the teaching of Chalcedon, the two operations are conjoined in the unity of the person of Christ, the divine hypostasis. Like the two natures, they remain distinct. But each did what was proper to itself in communion with the other (ad 2). For example, the divinity healed, together with and through the touch of the humanity of Jesus. While the operation of the human nature is in a sense subordinated to the divine here, it is not passive; it receives its efficacity from the divine nature, but as a natural operation possessing its own form it has its own principles of operation. It remains distinct, though in communion with the divine operation. The human nature therefore has dominion over its own actions, and is not a passive instrument in the power of the divinity (ad 4).

The principle of instrumental causality is further specified. Something acts by virtue of another in one of two ways: it is either simply moved by the power of another (as in the case of inanimate instruments), or it is used within the power of some agent as a conjoined instrument, as the soul uses the eye (ad 5). In the hypostatic union, the agent does not have its *esse* and actuality through the human nature alone, for the human nature acts in the power (through the grace) of the divine agent itself, which (as Logos) supplies the *esse* of the person of Christ.[33] The instru-

[31] "Ut non solum verus homo, sed perfectus sit, oportet in eo ponere omnia quae nobis ad perfectionem necessaria sunt, sicut habitus scientiarum et virtutum" (*De veritate*, q. 20, a. 1, resp. 3).

[32] For information on the dating of *De unione*, cf. Weisheipl 262, 307–13, 365–66. Written in April 1272 during his second Parisian residency, the *De unione* at least anticipates the sub-treatise on the unity of Christ of which q. 19, a. 1 is a part. Weisheipl does not think that Thomas could have written very much of the *tertia pars* during this time; we can infer that *ST* 3, q. 19 was probably written a few months later in Italy.

[33] For a brief reference to the possibility of a secondary *esse* in Christ, see note 75 below.

ment, inasmuch as it is used by the agent, follows a certain intentional power of the agent, who moves through the instrument *in effectum*, i.e., through the laws of causality which operate within the nature of the instrument (ad 12).

What can be concluded about the full humanity of Christ, which is the ultimate focus of our investigation of *ST* 3 q. 19, a. 1? First of all, it must be admitted that inasmuch as the human nature is used (or moved) by the divine, the operation that results is not only an action, but also a kind of passivity, inasmuch as it proceeds by a superior power.[34] But this does not mean that there is only one operation in Christ. For the human will is a principle of action, and though it be moved by God, it nevertheless moves according to its own nature, which is self-determining and self-originating, and is not simply driven by a superior power. So the motion of the human will in Christ must be considered an activity, and not solely a passivity.[35] Second, the will is that power by which all human actions have unity, including the human actions of Christ. The unity of these actions cannot be reduced to the first principle of another, divine, nature—if the human nature is to be integral. Therefore, even though the human nature in Christ be moved by the divine, it is necessary that there be two distinct operations because there are two distinct natures.[36]

The principles of relation that we can expect to find in *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1 have therefore been established in the earlier works of Thomas. Each of the two full and distinct, integral and true natures united hypostatically in the person of the Word possesses a principle of operation distinct from the other. Yet each works in communion with the other in the accomplishment of the divine work of salvation. The operation of the human nature is subordinate to that of the divine, which moves it, but the full human nature retains that which is proper to a perfect human nature, especially a self-determining will which unifies all the human actions under a principle intrinsic to human nature. We can already begin to glean the outline of a retrieval of the divinity claim which not only safeguards the integrity of a full and free human nature, but requires it. It is in and through the human that the divinity claim will be made intelligible.

ANALYSIS OF *SUMMA THEOLOGIAE* 3, Q. 19, A. 1

The question in this key article is whether there is one operation in Christ, or two operations corresponding to the two natures that are

[34] *De unione*, a. 5, in *Quaestiones disputatae*, vol. 2, 9th rev. ed., ed. P. Bazzi et al. (Rome: Marietti, 1953) 434.

[35] *De unione*, a. 5, resp. [36] Ibid.

united in the divine hypostasis. The underlying issue is how the operations of the two natures are related to each other so that we can speak of the one saving work of God. Here the notion of instrumental causality will play a key role.

Five arguments are posed against accepting two operations in Christ. Only the second deals specifically with the notion of instrumentality, but all five bear upon the issue of the relation of the operations and whether they should be accounted as one or twofold.

The first argument quotes Pseudo-Dionysius' *De divinis nominibus* on the Incarnation and interprets it as supporting a single operation called both human and divine, or, in the Greek, a *theandric* operation.[37]

The second argument deals specifically with the notion of instrumental causality. Here Thomas turns to the distinction between the first cause, or principal of agency, and the instrument, which we have seen in earlier works. The argument is that only one operation pertains both to the principal agent and to the instrument. The human nature of Christ was an instrument of the divine. Therefore, the same operation pertains to both the divine and human natures of Christ.[38]

The third difficulty is based on the singularity of the hypostasis in which the two natures exist. It is necessary that what pertains to the hypostasis or person be one and the same thing. This includes an operation, for an operation pertains to the hypostasis or person in that nothing happens apart from a subsisting supposit. The authoritative principle invoked is that of Aristotle, *actus sunt singularium*, acts are concerned with singular things.[39] Applied to Christ, there is no operation apart from the subsisting supposit of the Word. And since this Word is one, so, too, is the operation.[40] Thomas' reply will have to show how a multiplicity of acts can be posited without prejudice to the oneness of the supposit.

The fourth argument takes the third one step further. Whereas the third argued a oneness of operation on the grounds of a single hypostasis, this argument is based upon the oneness of *esse* that pertains to the single hypostasis. Since *esse* belongs to a single subsisting hypostasis, so, too, does it belong to a single operation. But since there is only one *esse*

[37] "... ubi unam operationem nominat humanam et divinam, quae in Graeco dicitur *theandrica*, idest *Dei-virilis*" (*ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, 1m). The term *theandric*, or in the Latin, *Dei-virilis*, was used by the monoenergists and monothelites to stress the oneness of operation in Christ, and later on by Pseudo-Dionysius, though not necessarily with the same intention. For use of the term by the monothelites, see Jugie, *DTC* 10/2 (1928) 2309. For Thomas' clarification of the term as it came to him through the literature of Pseudo-Dionysius, see Tschipke 114–15.

[38] ST 3, q. 19, a. 1, 2m.

[39] See Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1.1.981a.16.

[40] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, 3m.

in Christ corresponding to the one hypostasis, there is, in accordance with this same unity, but one operation in Christ.[41]

The final argument against the possibility of two operations in Christ is traditional and inductive. Since the Scriptures suggest that lepers were cured and the dead raised to life through the actions of Jesus, it would seem that these singular results came from single actions. "Wherever there is one thing done, there is but one operation."[42] Therefore, the acts of Christ constitute one operation, both human and divine. Thomas' reply will have to balance an acknowledgement of the sheer common sense of this view with a real foundation for distinguishing the operations.

Aquinas crafts a systematic response to the question. First, he examines the monothelite heresy, which was condemned by the Sixth Ecumenical Council (the Third Council of Constantinople) in 680–681. The first paragraph is in fact a rehearsal of the monothelite position, with a view toward understanding it better.

According to Thomas, the monothelite position is based upon a hierarchy of operations, which implies the passivity of the inferior agent. Wherever there are several ordained agents, the inferior is moved by the superior; the body is moved by the soul, the lower powers by reason. So, actions and motions of the inferior principle are, as it were, more operated upon than they are operations as such.[43] The operation as such belongs to the highest principle or cause of action, as when the soul works through the feet or the hands. Motions of the feet or hands might be considered kinds of human operations because they are distinct effects caused by the human person, but they are produced by the soul. It is the same soul working through each; and from the standpoint of the primary principle of motion in the soul, we have but a single and undifferentiated (*indifferens*) operation. But from the standpoint of the things operated, distinct effects are evident.[44]

Now this reasoning is applied to Christ. Just as the body is moved by the soul, and the sensible appetite by the rational appetite, so in Christ the human nature was moved and governed by the divine nature.[45] Thus there was one undifferentiated operation on the part of the divine nature.

[41] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, 4m.

[42] "[U]bi est unum operatum, ibi est una operatio. Sed idem operatum erat divinitatis et humanitatis: sicut sanatio leprosi, vel suscitatio mortui. Ergo videtur quod in Christo sit una tantum operatio divinitatis et humanitatis" (*ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, 5 m).

[43] *ST* 3, q. 19, a.1, resp.

[44] "[E]t quia est eadem anima operans per utrumque, ex parte ipsius operantis, quod est primum principium movens, est una et indifferens operatio; ex parte autem ipsorum operatorum differentia invenitur" (ibid.).

[45] Ibid.

But on the part of the human nature, there were effects distinct from the divine action.

The divinity of Christ did one thing through itself, for "he upheld everything by the word of his power" (Hebrews 1:3) and another through the human nature, e.g., the bodily action of walking.[46]

Even the monothelites (and monoenergists) recognized that on the level of physical natures, some distinction of effects was to be granted. Thomas quotes Severus' letter to Pope Sergius, both to underscore this point, and to show the extremes to which the monothelites carried this insight.[47]

Thomas then offers his own opinion. The problem with the monothelites is that they operate from but one view of causality, whereby an effect, even a diversity of effects, can be traced only to one cause, or mover. They forget that one thing can be moved by another in at least two ways: first through the principles of its own form, and second by virtue of the movement originating in a mover or principal agent.[48] For example, the operation proper to the nature or form of an ax is to cut; in the hands of a craftsman its operation may be to fashion a bench: two distinct effects resulting from different operations which result from different principles of causality. The operation that belongs to a thing by virtue of its form is proper to it and does not belong to the (outside) mover except insofar as he uses it to accomplish his own operation.[49] Thus, while heating is the proper operation of fire, it is not the proper operation of the smith except insofar as he uses fire to heat iron. So a distinction of operations can be made.

On the other hand, an operation which belongs to a thing solely because it is moved by another is nothing other than the operation of the mover

[46] "Et ideo dicebant quod eadem est operatio et indifferens ex parte ipsius divinitatis operantis, sunt tamen diversa operata, inquantum scilicet divinitas Christi aliud agebat per seipsam, sicut quod 'portabat omnia verbo virtutis suae' (Heb. 1.3); aliud autem per naturam humanam, sicut quod corporaliter ambulabat" (ibid.).

[47] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, resp. Severus acknowledges that some actions of Christ were clearly human in their effects, e.g., walking, and others clearly divine, e.g., healing, but avers that the one incarnate Word did both, and that no action by one nature derived from the other nature. Aquinas would not find it impossible to agree with this much. The conclusion, however, is problematic: "From the fact that there are distinct effects (*operamenta*), we cannot rightly conclude that there are therefore two operative natures or forms." This letter is quoted in the *acta* of the Sixth Ecumenical Council, which Thomas consulted. For Thomas' familiarity with the teachings of this Council, cf. Tschipke 118. It is perhaps not accidental that Thomas quotes Severus, who was condemned by this Council, in order to underscore how very difficult the issues in fact are.

[48] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, resp. [49] Ibid.

itself; it is not distinct from the action of the mover.[50] To make a bench is not the operation of an ax apart from the operation of the artisan who uses the ax. But again, a distinction remains on the basis of different proper operations:

> Therefore, wherever the mover and the moved have different forms or powers of operation, it is necessary that one be proper to the operation of the mover, and the other proper to the operation of the moved.[51]

But this principle of distinction between operations does not mean that they do not work together. Thomas explains that they do so in communion with one another:

> At the same time, the thing moved will participate in the operation of the mover, and the mover will use the operation of the moved, and each acts in communion with the other.[52]

There can therefore be a distinction of operations, even when there is one principal agent, and these operations can work in communion with each other.

Now Aquinas applies these principles to the person and operations of Christ. Here the language of instrumental causality enters the discussion explicitly. First, he notes that in Christ both the human nature and the divine nature have a proper form and power according to which each operates. Therefore, the human nature has a proper function distinct from the divine function, and vice versa.[53] Second, the divine nature uses the operation of the human nature as its instrument, and the human nature participates in the operation of the divine nature as an instrument participates in the operation of a principal agent or user.[54] Based upon the distinctions made in *ST* 3, q. 18, a. 1, we know that the type of instrumentality he has in mind is a conjoined and animate instrumentality, i.e., the sort that would comport with a regular human being in possession of self-determining will. As if to underscore this point, Thomas turns to Leo's *Tome*, which says that the form of both the human and divine natures in Christ acts in its proper fashion in communion with the other: "the Word doing what belongs to the Word, the flesh what

[50] Ibid.

[51] "Et ideo, ubicumque movens et motum habent diversas formas seu virtutes operativas, ibi oportet quod sit alia propria operatio moventis, et alia propria operatio moti . . ." (ibid.).

[52] " . . . licet motum participet operationem moventis, et movens utatur operatione moti, et sic utrumque agat cum communione alterius" (ibid.).

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

belongs to the flesh."[55]

Next Thomas considers the implications of rejecting this position. If there were only one human and divine operation in Christ, it would be necessary to say either that the human nature did not have its own form and power (which could not be said of the divine), or that from the divine and human powers of Christ one power was formed (*esset conflata*).[56] Neither conclusion can be upheld. The first implies that the human nature of Christ is imperfect, and by implication, a passive instrument of the divinity, thus courting the heresies of Arius and Apollinarius; the second implies a mixture of natures, which of course is monophysitism.[57] Thomas' solution stands then as an alternative to the heresies which gave rise to monothelitism.

Finally, Aquinas invokes the authority of Chalcedon, echoed by the Sixth Ecumenical Council and its decree condemning monothelitism: "We glorify in the same Lord Jesus Christ, truly our God, two operations, divine and human: undivided, not interchangeable, unmixed, and inseparable."[58] The final word comes from the teaching traditions of the Church.

With this settlement based upon instrumental causality in mind, Aquinas now turns to the arguments originally posed against the doctrine of two operations in Christ.

The opening argument was that the Word operated and suffered congruently in the humanity and divinity of Christ, in one *theandric*

[55] "Verbo scilicet operante quod Verbi est, et carne exequente quod carnis est" (*ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, resp.). For more on Thomas' use of Leo, see Tschipke 82–85. For more on Thomas' view of the humanity of Christ as conjoined and animate instrument of the Word, see F. Malmberg, *Über den Gottmenschen* (Basel: Herder, 1960) 51. Malmberg quotes Congar, *Le Christ, Marie et l'Église* (Bruges, 1952) 64, who says that God did not use the body of Christ the way a violinist uses a bow. Rather, the humanity of Christ is animated itself, and admits of the spiritual faculties of intelligence and free will; it is truly free. These faculties are at work as God pardons, communicates grace, etc., through the humanity of Jesus Christ.

[56] "Si vero esset una tantum operatio divinitatis et humanitatis in Christo, oportet dicere vel quod humana natura non haberet propriam formam et virtutem (de divina enim hoc dici est impossible), ex quo sequeretur quod in Christo esset tantum divina operatio: vel oporteret dicere quod ex virtute divina et humana esset conflata in Christo una virtus" (*ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, resp.).

[57] Ibid.

[58] "Duas naturales operationes indivise, inconvertibiliter, inconfuse, inseparabiliter, in eodem Domino Iesu Christo, vero Deo nostro, glorificamus, hoc est, divinam operationem et humanam" (*ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1). It is significant that Thomas does not appeal in the first instance to the authority of this Council, but rather to the various arguments which gave rise to the monothelite position. Just as his earlier and deft quoting of Severus (a condemned heretic) may indicate, he is keenly aware that the invocation of authority alone, apart from the intrinsic reason of the argument, will not settle the issues.

operation. Thomas had treated this argument briefly in his commentary on the *Sentences*, and later in *De unione*.[59] His reply here is much more detailed than in his earlier treatments. First, he explains Dionysius' term in light of the principles of instrumental causality already discussed. Dionysius attributes to Christ a *theandric* operation not through some confusion or intermingling of operations or powers of the natures, but because the divine operation uses the human, and the human participates in the power of the divine operation.[60] He quotes Dionysius for two examples of such a *theandric* operation, whereby "he did in a superhuman way those things which pertain to a man": being conceived by the Virgin supernaturally, and walking on water.[61] Human conception and walking are both natural human operations, but in these instances, they occurred supernaturally because the humanity was empowered by the divinity conjoined to it in the hypostatic union. And divine works were clearly performed by human means, as when Christ healed a leper by touching him.[62] Today we might find other examples, e.g., the liberation of the poor, sinners, and marginalized people through the incomparable "authority" of Jesus' compassionate words and deeds. Such are instances of human works performed through empowerment by the divine. We would also wish to underscore, as Jesus himself did, that such saving works also were accomplished as a result of the faith of those who were liberated by these words and deeds, and that the substance and origin of this faith is God, whose divinity is made manifest in this faith.

The second reply directly addresses the matter of instrumental causality. The argument had held that the operation of a principal agent and of an instrument was one only; therefore, we cannot speak of two operations in Christ. Thomas goes back to the principles laid out in the body of the article to say that while an instrument can be described as something that is moved by a principal agent, it will also have its own proper form.[63] This means that an instrument may have an operation

[59] *Sent* 3, d. 18, q. unica, a. 1 ad 1; *De unione*, a. 5 ad 1. In *Sent* 3, he argues that the human operation of Christ participated in the divine perfection, for example, when his intelligence understood something more deeply by the power of the divine intellect personally conjoined to him. In *De unione* he says that the term *theandric* means that the humanity of Christ participated in the divine power, and that the humanity was saving to the degree that it worked as an instrument in the power of the divine agent. The term *theandric* could imply some new or unique action insofar as the humanity of Christ is the instrument of the divinity by a new means of conjunction of natures, the incarnation; but this does not mean that from two actions there was one composite action.

[60] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 1.

[61] " . . . super hominem operabatur ea quae sunt hominis . . ." (ibid.).

[62] Ibid.

[63] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 2.

proper to its capacity as an instrument, which is not wholly distinct from the action of a principal agent, but that it may have another activity proper to its specific form, in which case its activity is distinct from the action of the principal agent.[64]

Thomas applies these principles of instrumental causality to Christ. The operation of his human nature, insofar as that nature is an instrument of divinity, is not other than the operation of the divinity. For there is not one salvation by which the humanity of Christ saves, and another by which the divinity saves. There is only one salvation.[65] But Christ's human nature, as a particular nature, has its own proper activity beyond that of the divine nature which moves it.[66] In the *De unione* he expressed it even more forthrightly: the human nature has dominion over its own actions.[67]

Imbedded in this discussion is the question of the subordination of the human to the divine nature. The two natures are not simply parallel; one is indeed moved by the other. If the human nature is moved by the divine nature, yet possesses its own principles of operation, how is the integrity of the human nature preserved?[68] First, if the agent and the instrument both participate in the same action, then *together* they constitute a causal order within one movement or action. The divine requires the human in order to be made manifest. Second, although the agents can be distinguished from the instrument by virtue of their respective proper operations, the unity of their action within the causal order is established by the motion of the first cause, which rests in the agent. But the instrument becomes an instrument, properly speaking, only when its *own proper* operations freely act in accord with the motion imprinted upon it by the agent.

Applying this kind of analysis to Christ, Héris adds that this principle of the subordination of actions does not imply that the agent and instrument do not mutually communicate their power; the principal agent moves the instrument to perform those actions proper to the instrument,

[64] Ibid. Cf. Héris, p. 301, who explains that according to Thomas, the action of one being or nature is distinct from the action of another, and that each acts by its proper power. When one thing is moved by another, it must be stressed that, in addition to the motion with which it is imprinted by a mover, the moved being has an action which belongs to itself. For an excursus on the concept of instrument in Aquinas, see Tschipke 139–43.

[65] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 2.

[66] Ibid.

[67] *De unione* a. 5, ad 4.

[68] We take the principles of our analysis from H.-F. Dondaine, "A propos d'Avicenne et de Saint Thomas: De la causalité dispositive à la causalité instrumentale," *Revue Thomiste* 51 (1951) 448.

in order to attain the ends of the agent. The instrument receives from the principal agent the movement which it needs to accomplish its own ends as an instrument, and to produce an effect superior to what it could accomplish of its own accord. The instrument nevertheless retains its full integrity and principles of operation.[69] So, the human nature of Christ received (through the Logos) the graces to fulfill the divine ends of salvation, all the while maintaining intact the fullness of human nature, including the self-determining will which bestows unity to human acts. Indeed, the freedom of Christ, like human freedom in general, is understood without compromise within this agent-instrument framework.[70] But since the instrumental relation of the human operations of Christ to the divine are *conjoined* and not simply extrinsic and separate, this is a freedom exercised by the person of the Word in and through the human nature in which it has become incarnate. The operations of the human will of Christ are therefore conjoined with the saving intentions of God.[71]

The following three replies can be handled more economically, because they presuppose the settlement already reached in the first two replies. The third and fourth replies each operate on a similar principle: operations are specified by natures, not by subsistence (i.e., not by hypostasis or *esse*).

The third argument held that in Christ there is but one hypostasis, that the operations of Christ pertain only to that hypostasis, and that because the hypostasis is one, the operations must also be numerically one. Thomas' reply recalls his earlier discussion in *De veritate*. He grants that the principle of activity belongs to the subsisting subject, but according to the form or nature by which the action receives its specific character.[72] So there can be a diversity of operations which find their relation to each other, and a functional unity, in the subsisting subject.[73]

The fourth argument held that the one *esse* of Christ belongs to the subsisting hypostasis, and thus to the saving work of Christ. Since there is only one *esse*, there is only one operation. Thomas agrees that both *esse* and operation belong to the notion of person by nature, but in different ways. *Esse* belongs to the very constitution of the person as the perfection of the person. The unity of personhood requires the unity

[69] Héris 301. [70] See Héris 337.

[71] Malmberg 60 suggests that Christ's human "I" is totally embraced by the divine "I" but that the human "I" remains nevertheless utterly free and answerable for its actions. An adequate treatment of the self-determined human will of Christ would require a critical reading of this passage in light of *ST* 3, q. 18, aa. 4–6.

[72] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 3. [73] ibid.

itself of a complete and personal *esse*.[74] Thus, the *esse* of Christ is the *esse* of the Word of God.[75] On the other hand, a distinction of operations can be made if we understand the operations of a person to be the effects (as it were) of the person corresponding to some form or nature. In this case, a plurality of operations is not prejudicial to the unity of the person.[76] The point is clear from the principles which have preceded it. Distinction of operations are predicated of distinct natures or forms, not of hypostases or persons—the very point lost on the monoenergists of the seventh century.

The fifth reply is a summary statement of how the two natures work together in their operations. The argument had held that the saving deeds of Christ, such as healing the sick, constituted a single operation. Thomas has already granted the validity of the underlying premise: the saving work of Christ is indeed one. But this does not mean that the operations by which that work were accomplished are also one. One thing (*aliud*) is the proper operation of the divine nature, another of the human. Healing the leper is the proper work of the divine operation, but touching him in order to heal him is the proper work of the human operation. These two concur in one work, inasmuch as one nature works in communion with the other.[77] This, by the way, is a good illustration of the principle of the subordination of the human to the divine operations in the one saving work of Christ. In this case, the healing is the instantiation of Christ's saving work in general, and the Word is the agent acting by the divine nature; the Word is thus the governing cause of the human work of touching. In itself, the touching is simply a human operation conforming with the natural principles of human actions. As an act of the human instrument of the Word, it helps accomplish the saving ends of God, and points to the divinity revealed in the humanity of Jesus of Nazareth.[78]

[74] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 4.

[75] Thomas seems to be coming down here squarely on the side of but one *esse* in Christ, making no allowance in this reply for the possibility of a secondary *esse* (inasmuch as the divine supposit becomes human in time). This, of course, must be read against his treatment of this issue in q. 18, and in *De unione*, a topic that falls beyond the scope of this paper. For the view that the position in q. 18 represents a shift from the position taken in *De unione*, see A. Patfoort, *L'Unité d'être dans le Christ d'après S. Thomas* (Paris: Desclée, 1964) 150–89. For a different view, see Héris 329–35. For a discussion of the distinction between secondary and accidental being as applied to the hypostatic union, see Barry F. Brown, *Accidental Being: A Study in the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985) 216–17.

[76] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 4. For a discussion of operations as accidents of *esse*, cf. Brown 205–12.

[77] *ST* 3, q. 19, a. 1, ad 5.

[78] Malmberg 52 suggests that the term "minister divinitatis" might more aptly describe

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The relation of the two operations of Christ through the means of instrumental causality is established by Thomas in the key article of the *Summa theologiae* which we have been considering. The divinity claim is underscored, precisely by presenting an uncompromising picture of the full and integral humanity of Jesus.

The underlying problem for Thomas was set forth by the monothelites and their respondents: how to account for one saving work of the incarnate Word through the two natures of Christ. The solution is found by predicating the specifically distinct operations of the human and divine natures, not of the human personality of Jesus, but of the subsisting hypostasis of the Word. The unifying, subsisting, and animating person of both operations is the Word, sent by the Godhead to assume human nature "propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem." The operations remain specifically distinct, but united; working in relation with each other, they find their unity in the subsisting hypostasis of the Word. The Word acts as principal agent, or first moving cause, of the human nature of Christ. The human nature, while utterly integral and possessing a self-determining will, receives the grace of the Word and freely exercises operations proper to a human nature, in communion with the saving end of the Word of God. In this order of causality, therefore, the human nature is subordinate to the Word, but not passive to the Word. Precisely as a conjoined, animate and rational instrument of the Word, the human nature possesses dominion over the full range of operations proper to it as a human nature.

We opened this investigation by asking how this presentation of the instrumental relation between the two operations would help recover an understanding of the divinity of Christ without eclipsing his full humanity. As Rahner observed, monothelitism is never far removed from monophysitism, and monophysitism is never far removed from a Christology where the humanity assumes a merely passive role in the work of salvation. Such a passive Christology would undercut faith in Christ as the fully incarnate Word, and thus as the instrument of salvation and mediator of grace, especially in and through the Church. But it would also undermine the point of the Incarnation, wherein, as Rahner put it so well, the Word "who is not subject to change in himself can *himself* be subject to change *in something else.*"[79] Faith in the full divinity of

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the role of the human nature with respect to the divine. The alternative is suggested in order to circumvent some of the possible diversions that might present themselves in posing the relation between the operations of the two natures in terms of instrumental causality. But one could argue that this is a bit too Nestorian in tone.

[79] *Foundations of the Christian Faith* (New York: Seabury, 1978) 220.

Christ requires faith in the full humanity of Christ, which works in an active relation with the divine nature.

It is plain that there is to be found in this key article of the *Summa theologiae* no hint of a passive Christology. The instrumental relation between the two operations is not merely a moral one; the principles of causality which bind the two operations are rather "physical," or real; they show how the two natures are realized, fulfilled, and perfected precisely in their operations in the person of Christ, each working in relation with the other. And because personhood is that principle by which a nature is realized *in ratione termini*, we have the foundation here for a substantial theological inference: To the degree that the human nature of Christ is realized, precisely according to its nature as a conjoined, animate and rational instrument of the divinity, that nature will be fully human. The converse is also true: To the degree that the human nature of Christ is perceived differently—separate or simply passive—that nature will be less than fully human. But the divinity of Christ can only be shown through a full humanity. Thomas' doctrine of instrumental causality retrieves the uncompromising significance, not only of the full humanity of Christ, but also of the divinity of Christ, by focusing on what together they accomplish in relation with each other: the saving work of God. There is neither a horizontalist nor a verticalist reductionism to be found here.

This theological conclusion bears a message for the practice of faith as well: To the degree that human beings, *instrumenta separata*, are united to God in dependence upon God's grace, and through the instrumentality of Jesus Christ, they will realize their own natures as persons who are loved, free, responsible, and saved.[80] At the same time, through their own instrumental relation to God's grace, they will be poised to further the work of the redemption, that God may be shown forth by a model of "divine-human relationship" that stresses "interdependence, mutuality, reciprocity, cooperation."[81] In Schubert Ogden's language, the Christian can take on the work of "emancipation," the human response to the redemption which is, in the first instance, an act of God's love.[82]

Finally, an emphasis upon the instrumentality of the humanity in relation to the divinity can help build a model of discipleship that finds

[80] On the notion that all humans are, as it were, instruments of the divinity, see *SCG* 4. 41: "Omnes enim homines comparantur ad Deum ut quaedam instrumenta quibus operatur." Aquinas goes on to say that the difference between the instrumentality of Christ and that of other humans is that Christ's was conjoined, while that of other humans is extrinsic and separate.

[81] Anne Carr, *Transforming Grace* 159.

[82] See Ogden, *Faith and Freedom: Toward a Theology of Liberation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979) 89–91.

the divine transcendence precisely in a "praxic" focus upon the humanity of Jesus. Jesus is more than the unique human revelation of divinity as the Logos incarnate; in the pattern of his human life, dying, and witness to new life, "divinity" is to be found as an integral part of a Christian's own human life. In Sobrino's words:

> [T]he profession of Christ's divinity will only be "Christianly real" and will transcend a mere knowledge *about* Christ—although this knowledge about his divinity is important and indispensable—will only become genuinely "comprehensible"—while ever remaining mystery—will only show itself to be efficacious for salvation—in the humble, unconditional discipleship of Jesus, where one learns "from within" *that* God has come unconditionally near in Jesus and *that* God has promised the divine self to us unconditionally in Jesus: that Jesus is true God and that the true God has been made manifest in Jesus.[83]

[83] *Jesus in Latin America* 29.