the animal the soul is that by which it moves as form, and some part of the body is what moves and is moved as an instrument, as parts next to the principle that formally moves. The whole rest of the body is moved and not moving, as it clear from what we have said. But in the present case the mover and the moved differ only by a distinction of reason and also by an intentional distinction. They do not differ as distinct potencies, but as powers of one potency. Hence, the minor premise that they mentioned is of no help to prove that something that is utterly simple in reality can move itself. In fact, it rather favors the opposite conclusion. After all, if the heavy and the light and animals move themselves because it is possible to find in them a real diversity by which the mover and the moved can be distinguished, then, on the contrary, since such diversity cannot be found in the will, it follows that it can in no way move itself. And that is true of the type of motion by which those things move themselves. Conversely, if the will can move itself because it is a power that can bend back upon itself on account of its simplicity so that the mover and the moved are utterly the same in reality, it follows that the heavy and the light and animals, since they are material, can in no sense move themselves so that the mover and the moved would be utterly the same in reality. Thus, if the will itself or that to which it belonged, for instance, a soul or an angel, contained matter and was composed of matter and form or of any other really distinct components, it could in no way move itself as it now does.

Quodlibet IX, Question 6

Is commanding an act of the will or of the reason or intellect?

On the third point it was argued that to command is an act of the reason, not of the will, because to command is merely to indicate to another that something should be done. But that is the function of reason with regard to the will. Therefore, and so on.

On the contrary. To command always pertains to what is highest and free and possesses the greater dominion. In the whole kingdom of the soul, the will alone is such. Therefore, and so on.

<The Solution>

Our answer will be the following. Since to command is an action directed to someone in order to carry out something, one has to examine to whom the action of commanding belongs through a comparison of three elements to one another, namely, from the relation which the one commanding ought to have to him to whom the command is directed, and from the condition of the act which is commanded, and from the disposition of the one to whom the command is given. When we have examined these, it will be perfectly clear that the act of commanding ought to be attributed to the will and not to the intellect.

First, then, that to command is an act of the will, not of the intellect, is seen from the relation of the one commanding to the one to whom the command is directed. After all, with respect to the one to whom the command is directed, the one commanding ought to have the relation of a superior to an inferior at some level. An equal has no command over an equal; much less does an inferior have such power over a superior. The question concerns commanding without qualification in a human being, both with regard to what is within him, insofar as there should be some power which commands the rest, and with regard to what lies outside of him. For, if there is in a human being some power which commands the other powers which are within him, the command for those things which are outside of him should also be attributed to it. It is necessary to admit in a human being one such power that rules over the rest. The Philosopher teaches this in the first book of the Politics, “In all things which form a composite whole and which are made up of parts, whether continuous or discrete, there comes to light a ruling and a subject element.” This holds only with respect to some activity which the ruler should command the subject to perform. For this reason, Aristotel said just before, “Where the one rules and the other is subject, they have some activity.” In this regard, then, the present question depends very much upon the question about which power or potency is higher in man. After all, rule or command or dominion ought always to be attributed to the higher and more important. As is said in the first book of the Politics, “By nature the ruler is better than the ruled.”

As to which of the potencies in man is higher and more important, the only question concerns the intellect and the will. For this reason, those who say that the intellect is the higher say that to command belongs to the intellect and that it belongs to the will to obey and to receive the command. “For the one who commands,” as they say, “directs him whom he commands to do something,” and he does this “by indicating or declaring” so that to command is nothing other than “to direct.” Or, it is the act “of reason” directing another to do something by some indication, not by means of counseling or persuading one to will the act. He does not do this so that the direction is expressed by a verb in the indicative mood, saying: “This is to be done by you.” He does this, rather, by means of a compelling order to carry out the activity insofar as “the

direction is expressed by a verb in the imperative mood, saying: 'Do this.'" In that way, when reason perfectly commands the will to will, the will already wills. The fact that it at times commands and the will does not will is due to the fact that it commands imperfectly as when reason wavers between two choices. "Thus to command is the function of reason," as they say, "because to direct is the" proper "act of reason." As reason is not present in brute animals, so neither is command, although "the first mover toward the exercise of" this "act is the will," just as it is "the first mover in all the powers of the soul for the exercise of" their "acts." Thus command "comes about by the power of the will and with presupposition of its act, because the second mover moves only by the power of the first mover and the power of the prior act remains in the subsequent act. Thus that reason moves lies in the power of the will, and to command is an act of reason that presupposes an act of the will. By the will's power reason moves one by its command to the exercise of the act," though not to the determination of the act that is commanded. 4 In the same way they say that the will moves the intellect "to the exercise of the act" by which the will wills something, although it does not move it "to the determination of that act," but rather just the opposite. 5 In that way, as they say, reason could direct the act of the will, and as it also can judge that it is good to will something, so it could command that the will will it. Thus the act of the will could be commanded by reason. Likewise, its own proper act could be commanded to it. For reason, insofar as it reflects upon itself, is able by commanding to direct its own act, just as it can direct the acts of the other powers.

Supposing, however, from other questions that the will is a higher potency than the intellect, I say that, insofar as it holds the higher position, one should rather claim that it is the function of the will to command and that it is the function of the intellect and the other potencies to obey and receive the command. For the will can will, even contrary to the dictate of reason, and can force reason to depart from its judgment and thus to agree with it, and it can constrain all the other potencies by its power of command. An act of the intellect must precede the will's act of commanding, since we cannot will what is unknown. By inclining the will to command in a way it has determined, the intellect determines for the will what it is that is willed as by an indication which is not a command, but a disposition toward a command. It cannot be called a command or injunction, because the will cannot be constrained to that motion by the intellect, and this being constrained is, as we will soon see, necessarily required in one to whom the command is given. If the will were truly constrained, there would be no other command than the indicating motion of reason, and it would be not only a motion, but compulsion to obey.

Because by its indicating motion reason is in this way a disposition toward the true command of the will, its own motion, whether it compels or not, is still called an injunction, even though it cannot be properly called a command. This injunction has part of the meaning of command, and yet true command is attributed only to the will according to the words of Damascene in The Two Natures in the One Person of Christ, "We call the very rational appetite an activity, because it is free in choice; it has in its power the irrational passions, and judges, governs, and restrains these: anger, desire, sensation and forward motion. For these irrational passions obey and can be persuaded by reason. Their nature is to be persuaded by reason and to be subordinate. Reason moves them as it enjoins those things which are in accord with human nature." 6 Further on he adds, "Therefore, the intellective power and appetite are united in man so that we, as rational beings, are not acted upon against our will as irrational beings are." 7 Note that in human beings he distinguishes appetite and the intellective power and that he attributes to appetite governance and restraint — the sort of thing that is the function only of one who commands in the full sense. But he attributes to the intellective power an enjoining by persuasion in accord with reason, but not by compulsion toward the act as in the case of the will. In accord with this manner of speaking, one can explain what the Philosopher said about the speculative intellect in the third book of The Soul, "It does not enjoin one to fear," implying that this pertains to the practical intellect. But that is not true, because, as Themistius says on that passage, "The practical intellect is not the master of motion." 8 The master of motion is that whose function it is to order and to prescribe in the full sense, and thus the intellect does not properly say, "Do this," except by way of counsel. Nor does it have the function of directing in the full sense, but only by counseling.

In execution and commanding, it is the function of the will alone to direct, while it is the function of the intellect to be subordinate, as Damascene says, and this takes place in the way in which enjoining belongs to it, as we have said. 9 In commanding, the will is not only the first mover with regard to the exercise of the act to be carried out by the intellect so that it goes so far as to determine what should be com-

5. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, The Summa of Theology (Summa theologicae) I-II, q. 9, a. 1, ad 3um.
8. John Damascene, The Two Wills in Christ (De duabus in Christo voluntatibus) c. 18, PG 95, 147A.
9. John Damascene, The Two Wills in Christ (De duabus in Christo voluntatibus) c. 18 bis, PG 95, 147B.
10. Aristotle, The Soul (De anima) III, 9, 432b31.
12. Cf. John Damascene, The Orthodox Faith (De fide orthodoxa) c. 36, PG 94, 946C.
manded; it is also the proximate mover with regard to the imposition of
the act upon those powers by which the command should be carried out,
although this is done in some sense by the power of the intellect, as we
said. In accord with this, the act of the will can in no way be commanded
by reason, just as no other act, whether one’s own or another’s, can be
commanded by reason. Rather, whatever is commanded within the person
or without is commanded by the will, and this belongs to it, in accord with
what we have already said, as the result of its relation to the intellect and
also to all the other powers of the soul, because it is superior to all of
them. This is the first way by which commanding is seen to be an act of
the will, not of the intellect, namely, from the relation of the one who
commands to the one to whom the command is directed.

Secondly, the same thing is seen, in part from the relation of the
one whose function it is to command to him to whom the command ought
to be directed, and in part from the condition of that which is com-
manded. For the one commanding ought to be higher than the one to
whom the command is given so that he can somehow compel the inferior
to carry out what is commanded, because obedience in the lower corre-
sponds to command in the higher. If it does not naturally correspond to it,
the higher does not have command over the lower by a natural order.

At times the obedience in the lower does not correspond to com-
mand, because the commanded act is not in its power. For the intellect
cannot obey the will if the will bids it to understand what is beyond its
power, such as supernatural truth, or if it bids it to disagree with the con-
clusion of a clear demonstration, though by its command the will can keep
it from thinking about it. Accordingly, the will can command nothing to
the vegetative powers, because they do not have a nature that can obey.

At times obedience in the lower does not correspond perfectly to
command, because it is partly in its power and partly not. In this way the
sensitive appetite depends in part on the disposition of the organ, and
thus it is not in its power to obey the command of reason – and on this
account, it at times cannot be anticipated by reason – but in part it
depends upon the strength of the soul, and thus when the will insists and
reason persuades, it has to obey. For this reason, the Philosopher says in
the first book of the Politics, “Reason has dominion over the irascible and
concupiscible appetites with political rule, which is characteristic of a
father regarding his sons, though reason has dominion over the members
with despotic rule, which is characteristic of a master regarding his
servants.”13 On this point there is no room for contradiction. This is the
case to the extent that the motion of the members is governed by the

sensitive powers, as it is governed in local motion. This is clear from what
was said in the preceding question.14

In some members motion arises much more from the disposition
of the organ than from the sensitive power of the soul. Hence, those
members in which such motions exist are not, with respect to those
motions, naturally obedient to reason, but they are moved by an invol-
tary or non-voluntary motion. The Philosopher says of them at the end of
The Causes of the Motion of Animals, “We have already said how animals
are moved by voluntary motions and for what reasons. Certain of their
parts are moved by some involuntary motions, as well as by many non-
voluntary motions. By involuntary I mean, for example, that of the heart
and that of the sex organ. For they move when something is seen; still,
they are not moved at the bidding of the intellect. By non-voluntary I
mean, for example, sleeping, waking and breathing and whatever others
are like that. No one is master of these without qualification, nor is
imagination or appetite.”15 Note that he is not speaking of the motion of
the heart in pulling and pushing to cause forward motion – for that is
purely voluntary and falls under the command of the will and appetite.
Rather, he speaks of that which occurs in the pulse, which is purely na-
atural and does not come from the imagination or appetite, or of that which
occurs apart from the command of the will, but naturally precedes it. On
this point he says in the third book of The Soul, “Often the intellect”
thinks “of something frightful or delightful; fear or delight does not come
about for that reason, but the heart is moved.”16 He also speaks of this in
The Causes of Motions, “Imagination and intelligence have the power of
real things,” and so on, as in the preceding question.17 Hence, in the same
passage after what was just cited, he also assigns the cause of such
motions. He says, “The causes of motions are warmth and coldness, both
external and internal. The motions of the mentioned parts are natural,
and they are brought about apart from reason and occur because of a
change that takes place.”18 They are either brought about without imagina-
tion and intellect coming before, or they are aroused by imagination and
intellect, insofar as “these are productive of emotions by introducing
the forms of the things that produce them,” as we mentioned in the
preceding question.19

15. Aristotle, The Motion of Animals (De motu animalium) c. 11, 703b3-11.
16. Aristotle, The Soul (De anima) III, c. 9, 432b30-433a1.  
17. Aristotle, The Motion of Animals (De motu animalium) c. 7, 701b18-19; cf. Henry of
Ghent, Quodlibet IX, q. 5, p. 57.
18. Aristotle, The Motion of Animals (De motu animalium) c. 7, 703b14-19.
19. Cf. above, p. 56.

(Summa theologicae) I-II, q. 17, a. 7.
He correctly says at the end of The Causes of Motion, “At times the same motion is produced in those parts in beings with intellect as is produced apart from reason, and at times not; the reason is that at times passive matter is present, at other times there is not enough matter or matter of the right quality.” What commands, then, should be of the proper type for the one to whom the command is given, because the latter has to obey him to carry out what was commanded. Since that which has freedom of choice is of itself bound to obey no one, but rather all the other things are bound to obey it, freedom of choice belongs to itself to the will. Hence, it belongs to other things only by participation in it, just as the power of the first mover remains in the second mover, as we have elsewhere sufficiently explained. From a consideration, then, of the relation of the one commanding to him to whom the command is given, it is clear in the second place that to command is an act of the will.

Hence, away with the claim of some persons that “the root of liberty, as a cause, is reason, or intellect,” though “its subject is the will,” so that “the will can freely be carried to different things only because reason can have different conceptions of the good.” We have elsewhere shown that this is impossible. Indeed the will is both the subject and the first root of liberty; from this root it is found in the acts of reason and of the other powers, such as the virtues, through their participation in its command and through its imprint upon them, as we have elsewhere explained.

Hence, when the intellect precedes the will by its action, the action of the will derives its rationality from the intellect, but not its freedom of choice. When, on the contrary, the action of the will precedes the intellect, the action of the intellect has from the will freedom of choice, but not rationality. The intellect is naturally prior, and it also acts with natural priority, because we cannot will what is not known. Hence, rationality, which is a property of the intellect, is naturally prior to freedom of choice, which is a property of the will, and the will naturally has rationality from the intellect before the intellect has freedom of choice. Hence, whatever is rational has freedom of choice, and vice versa, and everything with intellect has will, and vice versa. This agrees, nonetheless, with Damascene; he says in chapter twenty-one of the first book, at the beginning, “In those beings in which there is rationality, freedom of choice immediately follows.” Thus rationality comes first, and freedom of choice follows, and not the reverse.

20. Aristotle, The Motion of Animal (De motu animalium) c. 7, 703b36-704a2.
22. Thomas Aquinas, The Summa of Theology (Summa theologicae) 1-11, q. 17, a. 1, ad 2um.
24. John Damascene, The Orthodox Faith (De fide orthodoxa) c. 41, PG 94, 959B.

In accord with this position whereby freedom of choice is attributed to actions of the will and of reason, it ought to be understood to be essentially in the actions of the will, but by participation in the actions of the intellect. Likewise, where rationality is attributed to the actions of the will and of the intellect, it ought to be understood to be essentially in the actions of the intellect, but by participation in the actions of the will. Hence, when Damascene says in chapter twenty-four of the second book of the Sentences, “The will is rational, and the natural appetite is free in choice. For it is freely moved in choice and reason,” I understand by “in choice” “in the will” and by “in reason,” “in the intellect,” so that we could likewise say it the other way around, “For it is rationally moved in reason and choice, that is, in the intellect and will.” Likewise, he goes on to say, “It freely desires by choice, freely wills by choice, freely seeks by choice, freely examines by choice, freely judges by choice, freely disposes by choice, freely chooses by choice, freely makes a move by choice, freely acts and always operates by choice in those things which are in accord with its nature.” In these cases some actions proper to the will are attributed to reason because of the freedom of choice that is united with it. Thus, if we understand that some of them belong to the will and others to the intellect, we will understand that freedom of choice is attributed essentially to those that belong to the will and only by participation to those that belong to reason. The same thing holds the other way around, if we say conversely, “The intellect is free in choice, and the natural mind acts rationally. For it is moved rationally in reason and in free choice; hence, it desires rationally, wills rationally, seeks rationally, examines rationally, judges rationally, disposes rationally, chooses rationally, moves a move rationally, and acts and operates rationally in things in accord with its nature.”

In this way both theologians and philosophers frequently interchange the intellect and the will and their activities and manners of acting, but the careful reader should distinguish each of them. Hence, when Damascene says in The Two Natures and One Person of Christ, “Irrational things are not freely moved to desire by choice; for when desire is naturally aroused in them, they are guided by nature, overcome by such desire, since they do not have reason which commands. Hence, they are immediately stirred to action unless they are prevented by something else, since they are not free by reason of choice, but under the power of desire.” Certainly, when he says, “since they do not have reason which commands,” he is thinking of intellect and will together as rea-
son. He immediately goes on clearly to distinguish them, saying: “The rational nature has the ability to yield to natural desire and the ability not to yield to it, but to conquer it.” He points out that the natural desire for life both exists and yields to reason. “For many using reason as their guide have willingly gone to their death and restrained their desire for food and sleep and the rest, guiding nature by free choice.” Notice how he distinguishes them, first saying “reason as their guide,” for example, in counseling, and then saying, “guiding nature,” for example, in natural appetites, “by free choice,” for instance, in commanding the lower powers and restraining them from what they seek. And so, as Damascene adds after some intervening material, “As rational, man was created the king of every irrational creature; since he is both rational and intellectual, he understands and reasons in appetition; as both rational and intellective, he desires by free choice.”

Thirdly, it is clear that to command is an act of the will, especially from the condition of what is commanded the one to whom the command is directed by the one commanding. For what is commanded is an act to be carried out by the one who is given a command. Accordingly, no one has a command given him concerning a disposition which he himself does not have to bring about, but which he only has to have produced in him by another. Now the will can only will those things which pertain to the exercise of the other potencies, for example, what it wills the intellect to consider, to advise, and so on, or those things which the intellect determines for it in accord with what certain people say. But reason in no sense commands the first sort of willing; rather, by that willing the will commands reason, as they admit. The second sort of willing is also, according to them, not caused by the will moving itself, but rather by the intellect and by the good as known, as they say. Thus the will cannot be commanded unless one takes “command” in the common sense in which members of the body are commanded with despotic command. Therefore, in no sense should we state that the intellect can command the will. But one of them necessarily is able to command the other, and it is the function of that one to command without qualification. Hence, to command without qualification is the function of the will, and not of the intellect.

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28. Cf. John Damascene, The Two Wills in Christ (De duabus in Christo voluntatibus) c. 19, PG 95, 150C-D.
29. Cf. John Damascene, The Two Wills in Christ (De duabus in Christo voluntatibus) c. 7, 16, 18; PG 95, 135B, 143D-146A, 171B-174B.
30. John Damascene, The Two Wills in Christ (De duabus in Christo voluntatibus, c. 18 bis; PG 95, 147C.

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Henry of Ghent

<With Regard to the Arguments>

From what has been said the objections of both sides are resolved.

Quodlibet XIV, Question 5

Are the intellect and the will equally free potencies?

With regard to the second point it was argued that the intellect and the will are equally free potencies, because the freedom of a potency lies in the fact that it can elicit its act first and by itself. But this ability belongs equally to the intellect and to the will, because it belongs to them by reason of the fact that they are spiritual powers. This is clear from what the Commentator says regarding the passage in the eighth book of the Physics, “It is impossible that what moves itself move itself in terms of its whole self.” The Commentator speaks as follows: “This is only impossible in movers that are bodies or powers in bodies.” Because the intellect and the will are spiritual potencies, they are not bodies or powers in bodies. For this reason, then, it is characteristic of them that it is not impossible, but rather possible for them to move themselves in terms of their whole selves. And freedom consists in this. Hence, since they are equally spiritual potencies, it follows that they are equally free.

Likewise, in the ninth book of the Metaphysics and in the second book of Interpretation, the Philosopher says that rational potencies can produce contrary effects. They have this ability only because they are rational. On this basis they are distinguished from irrational and natural potencies which cannot produce contrary effects. Hence, since the intellect and the will are equally rational — or, if one is more rational, it is the intellect, because it reasons both for itself and for the will — either they are equally free, or the intellect is freer than the will.

So too, that potency is freer which in terms of its act depends less upon another and upon the act of another, because dependence upon another impedes its freedom in carrying out its act. But in its act the intellect does not depend at all on the act of the will. Rather, just the opposite is the case; in its act the will depends upon the act of the intellect. After all, the intellect is able to know without any prior act of the will, but the will is not able to will anything at all without a prior act of the intellect. Therefore, and so on.

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