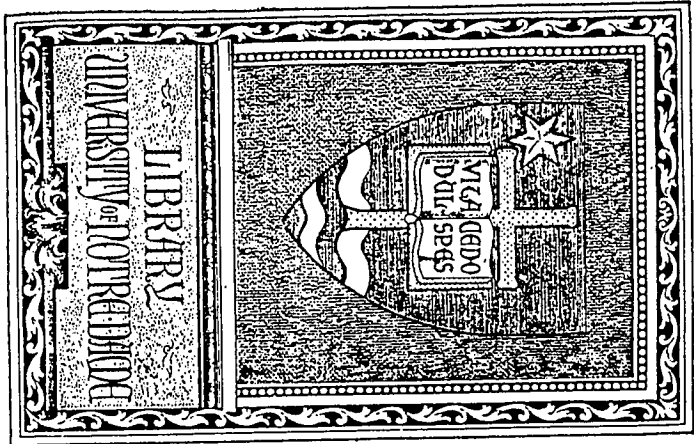


THE FORMAL CONSTITUENT OF A SIN OF COMMISSION

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A Problem: Role of aversion or privation in a sin of commission according to John of St. Thomas, Cajetan, and Salmanticenses.

Since the order of doctrine requires that we begin with the better known and proceed to the less known, we shall open our discussion of the formal constituent of a sin of commission with some of the more proximate general notions which are necessary in order to understand the problem confronting us. First, we shall touch briefly the definition of a human act, for a sin of commission is a human act. Secondly, we shall expose the causes and elements which enter into a sin of commission. Finally, we shall list the opinions of some of the theologians who have treated this problem.

1. DEFINITION OF A HUMAN ACT

Only those actions which proceed from man as man are properly called human. Man in his proper actions differs from irrational creatures because he is the master of his actions. He acts freely, the brutes act necessarily. This power over his actions is manifested in his free choice, for he is the master of his actions through his reason and his will. Since they distinguish man from irrational creatures, the actions proceeding from his deliberate will are, therefore, properly called human.

“ . . . Actionum quae ab homine aguntur, illae solae proprie dicuntur humanae quae sunt propriae hominis in quantum est homo. Differt autem homo ab aliis irrationalibus creaturis in hoc quod est suorum actuum dominus. Unde illae solae actiones vocantur proprie humanae quarum homo est dominus. Est autem homo dominus suorum actuum per rationem et voluntatem; unde et liberum arbitrium esse dicitur facultas voluntatis et rationis. Illae ergo actiones proprie humanae dicuntur quae ex voluntate deliberata procedunt . . . ” (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 1, art. 1).

2. DISTINCTION BETWEEN A HUMAN ACT AND AN ACT OF MAN

This brief explanation of a human act offers a difficulty because it excludes certain actions which are proper to man, although they are not deliberate. Laughing and crying, for example, are actions which are proper to man; yet these actions do not always proceed from his deliberate will. What, then, does St.

Thomas mean when he says an action is human because it is proper to man as man?

To solve this difficulty it is necessary to make a distinction. Man is distinguished from irrational creatures not only essentially or substantially, but also in his manner of operating. Man is distinguished from brutes through his rationality, by which he is constituted man, and through those properties which belong to him alone, such as his intellect and will, which follow his rational nature. He is, moreover, distinguished from other creatures by his manner or mode of operating because he acts with freedom and mastery over his actions.

“... Animadvertendum est primo distinctionem hominis ab aliis posse attendi dupliciter: vel solum in essendo, et quoad entitatem, seu substantiam; vel in operando formaliter, hoc est, in ratione principii operativi respicientis formaliter operationem. Primo modo distinguitur a creaturis irrationalibus primo et per se per rationalitatem, per quam in specie hominis constituitur, et ex consequenti per illa accidentia, quae soli homini conveniunt, ut sunt intellectus, voluntas, risibilitas, etc., quae ad rationem consequuntur. Secundo modo distinguitur per proprium et rationalem modum operandi ipsius hominis. Qui sane modus non consistit in eo solum, quod operetur per intellectum et voluntatem: nam supposito, quod homo sit intellectivus et volitivus, operari utcumque per huiusmodi potentias, non addit speciem modum distinctionis ab irrationalibus supra primum, sed totum hoc pertinet ad distinctionem in essendo, et in ea includitur. Consistit ergo praedictus modus operandi in eo, quod homo agit cum indifferentia ad utrumlibet, movendo se ad operationem, atque adeo cum libertate et dominio sui actus; quae libertas in ceteris animalibus locum non habet, eo quod ex propria natura petunt operari cum determinatione ad unum, et ut nota ab alio.

“Ex quo fit, quod si proprie et formalissime loquamur, tunc solum homo operatur, ut distinctus in operando ab irrationalibus (saltem loquendo de homine prout in via) quando operatur libere et cum praedicto dominio: sive talis actus secundum substantiam immediate pertineat ad partem rationalem, ut sunt operationes intellectus et voluntatis: sive ad sensitivam, secundum quod in homine subordinatur rationali, ut sunt omnes operationes sensus, et appetitus, quae participant libertatem. Quoties vero praedicta libertate et dominio caret, ac proinde operatur cum determinatione ad unum, et ut ab alio actus, etiam si talis operatio ab intellectu et voluntate, aut ab aliis potentis, quae solius hominis sunt propriae, eliciatur; non agit, ut distinctus formalissime in

operando ab irrationalibus, sed ad summum, ut distinctus in essendo, et quasi de materiali. . .” (Salmanticenses, *Cursus Theol.*, Tractatus 8, De Ultimo Fine, Disp. II, Dub. 1, n. 3).

An action is human, therefore, both in regard to its substance and in regard to its mode. It is substantially human because it proceeds from the rational nature of man, which is proper to him; and it is human in its operative principle which follows the perfect rational manner of operating because it is performed freely. This point may be summed up by quoting John of St. Thomas.

“... Est ergo notandum, quod actiones humanae possunt dici propriae hominis, ut homo est, dupliciter. Primo, quantum ad substantiam; secundo, quantum ad modum. Substantia hominis, in quantum homo, id est, quantum ad propriam ejus differentiam, est esse rationalem, id est, intelligentem cum ratione, ex quo consequitur, quod sit volens ex ratione. Et operationes propriae hominis, ut intelligens est, et volens, quoad substantiam, habebunt intelligibilitatem et spiritualitatem, quoad modum vero universalitatem, indifferentiam, reflexionem supra se, potestatem super actus suos, etc. . . . Quare cum D. Thomas ponit illam propositionem, quod proprium est hominis, in quantum homo, quod sit dominus actuum suorum, loquitur de eo quod est proprium hominis, non solum quoad substantiam, sed etiam quoad modum perfectum operandi per rationem. . . . Esse autem actiones humanas, magis, seu perfectius et consummatius, habetur ex modo, quia scilicet, modo humano seu morali procedunt, qui est modus proprius hominis, quam ex substantia tantum, quia spirituales vel intellectuales sint. . . .” (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, De Ultimo Fine Hominis, Disp. I, art. 1, n. 39).

Hence, in answer to the difficulty, we reply that such actions as laughing, crying, and acts of man, when performed without deliberation, are proper to man according to their substance, but not according to their manner of operation. Since they are elicited necessarily, they do not differ from the way brutes act; and hence these actions do not differentiate them from those of irrational creatures. On the other hand, if these actions are performed freely or with deliberation, they are properly called human because they are subordinated to the will. They will be properly human, therefore, not only as to their substance but also as to their manner of operating.

“... Quod ridere, flere, admirari, et similia, si fant sine deliberata voluntate, sunt propria hominis quoad suam en-

tratem et specificationem, non quoad summ exercitium et modum operandi: quia tunc in modo operandi, necessario elicentur, in quo elicendi modo nondum differunt a modo operandi irrationabilium. Si vero aliquis rideat, fleat, vel admiretur ex voluntate libera, aut deliberata, erat illa actio etiam humana, ex proprio modo operandi, sed id non habet tunc ex propriis potentiae risivae, sed ex voluntate deliberata, cui subordinatur. . . . Dicimus enim omnes istas actiones, dici proprias hominis, ut homo est, quoad specificationem et entitatem, non perfecte quoad exercitium et modum operandi proprium hominis, ut homo, et in quo a ceteris differt. . . . Et ideo non dicuntur humanae, quia actiones esse humanas, seu morales, magis dicitur ex isto modo proprio hominis, ut homo est, quam ex entitate materialiter sumpta, quia moralitas ad regulationem rationis, libertatemque pertinet. . . . Et quia D. Thomas in hoc opere de actibus hominis agit, quatenus morales, et ad virtutem et vitium spectant, ideo actiones humanas magis considerat esse proprias hominis ex parte modi humani, qui est proprius hominis, quam ex entitate." (John of St. Thomas, *ibid.*, n. 44).

When man acts deliberately, therefore, he operates in a human manner because he moves himself from one act to another, considering and inquiring about the means to be used, and then selecting one in preference to another in the pursuit of an objective. It is this freedom which makes his actions different from those of inferior creatures who are not free, but rather are determined to one thing. Those actions are properly called human, therefore, which are proper to man not only in that they proceed from the very substance of man, but rather because they proceed from his deliberate will.

" . . . Esse enim liberam, sumitur ex indifferentia iudicii et potestate super suos actus, saltem quoad exercitium, et quantum est ex meritis objecti: esse autem deliberata, sumitur ex eo quod ex uno se moveat ad aliud, quasi seipsam determinando et consiliando, hoc enim est deliberare. . . ." (*Ibid.*, n. 46).

3. GOOD AND EVIL HUMAN ACTIONS

An action is said to be good because it has the fulness of the being and the perfection which are due to it. This goodness may be considered from four points of view.

First, a human action belongs to the genus quality. Since an action enjoys being, and since a thing has as much good as it has being, it follows that there is in every action a certain degree of excellence and goodness.

" Sic igitur dicendum est quod omnis actio, in quantum habet aliquid de esse, intantum habet de bonitate." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 18, art. 1). "Sic igitur in actione humana bonitas quadruplex considerari potest. Una quidem secundum genus, prout scilicet est actio: quia quantum habet de actione et entitate, tantum habet de bonitate. . . ." (*Ibid.*, art. 4).

Secondly, since actions depend for their primary goodness on their species, and since the species of every action is constituted by its form or object, it is evident that a human action derives its essential goodness from its suitable object.

" . . . Primum autem quod ad plenitudinem essendi pertinere videtur, est id quod dat rei speciem. Sicut autem res naturalis habet speciem ex sua forma, ita actio habet speciem ex objecto, sicut et motus ex termino. Et ideo sicut prima bonitas rei naturalis attenditur ex sua forma, quae dat speciem ei: ita et prima bonitas actus moralis attenditur ex objecto convenienti. . . ." (*Ibid.*, art. 2).

Thirdly, since human actions receive the fulness of perfection not from the object alone, but also from the circumstances which are accidents accompanying the species of the act, the circumstances, too, will contribute to the goodness of a human action. Just as a natural being acquires the perfection due to it, not only from its substantial form, but also from its accidents, as man does from his shape, color and the like; so, too, a human action receives the goodness and perfection due to it from its circumstances. A human action is good, therefore, not only by virtue of its species, but also by reason of its circumstances.

" . . . Nam plenitudo bonitatis ejus (actionis) non tota consistit in sua specie, sed aliquid additur ex his quae adveniunt tanquam accidentia, quaedam. Et hujusmodi sunt circumstantiae debitaе. . . ." (*Ibid.*, art. 3).

Finally, the goodness of a human action depends on its end. This end is not the end to which the action is ordained by its nature, since it is extrinsic to the act. It is the end of the agent as agent, i.e., the end which actually moves in virtue of his intention. A human action, therefore, besides the absolute goodness which it receives from its object, has goodness from this end of the agent, to which it is compared as to the cause of its goodness.

" . . . Quaedam vero sunt, quorum esse dependet ab alio; unde oportet quod considerentur per considerationem ad causam a qua dependent. Sicut autem esse rei dependet ab agente et forma; sic bonitas rei dependet a fine. . . . Actiones

humanae, et alia quorum bonitas dependet ab alio, habent rationem bonitatis ex fine a quo dependent, praeter bonitatem absolutam quae in eis existit. . . . Quarta autem secundum finem, quasi secundum habitudinem ad bonitatis causam." (*Ibid.*, art. 4).

A human action is good, therefore, because it has the fulness of the being which it requires. It receives this goodness from its species or object, as from its form, and from the circumstances which accrue to it, as from its accidents, particularly from its extrinsic end which occupies the principal position among the accidents.

Because evil results from any single defect, but good from the complete cause, a human action will be defective as a human action if it lacks one of the perfections which are due to it. Since the primary goodness of a moral action depends on its object, which is in conformity with the rules of morality, the essential deficiency of a human action will be taken from that object which is in disagreement with the norms of morality.

" . . . Et sicut in rebus naturalibus primum malum est, si res generata non consequitur formam specificam, puta si non generetur homo, sed aliquid loco hominis; ita primum malum in actionibus moralibus est quod est ex objecto, sicut accipere aliena. . . ." (*Ibid.*, art. 2). (Italics mine)

Because the goodness or deficiency of a human act is measured by the attending circumstances, a moral action will be defective when a requisite accident is lacking.

" . . . Unde si aliquid desit quod requiratur ad debitas circumstantias, erit actio mala." (*Ibid.*, art. 3).

A human action, therefore, will be deficient as a human action, i.e., to use the proper term, evil, because its object is not in agreement with the rule of reason and the law of God; or because it lacks some circumstance which is necessary for the completion of its moral perfection. Because of this absence of a good that is due to it, because it is deprived of the rectitude that it ought to have, the human action will suffer a privation.

4. DIVISION OF PRIVATION IN GENERAL

When a thing is deprived of the goodness which is proper to it, it is said to be evil, for evil is the absence or privation of good:

"Reinquitur ergo quod nomine mali significetur quaedam absentia boni." (*Ibid.*, I, q. 48, art. 1).

The absence of good may be, improperly speaking, the lack of a form which is not due to a thing. This is not evil, however, because a thing is not evil if it is wanting in something which is not due to it. A stone may be called evil because it does not see, but this is not evil properly understood, since a stone is not apt to have eyes.

" . . . Non autem quaelibet remotio boni malum dicitur. Potest enim accipi remotio boni et privative, et negative. Remotio igitur boni negative accepta, mali rationem non habet: alioquin sequeretur quod ea quae nullo modo sunt, mala essent; et iterum, quod quaelibet res esset mala ex hoc quod non habet bonum alterius rei, utpote quod homo esset malus, quia non habet velocitatem caprae, vel fortitudinem leonis." (*Ibid.*, art. 3).

Evil, properly taken, is the absence of a perfection which is due to a thing. It is a privative negation.

"Sed remotio boni privative accepta malum dicitur, sicut privatio visus caecitas dicitur. . . ." (*Ibid.*).

Evil, in this sense, is neither a being, nor a good; in short, it is nothing.

" . . . Unde non potest esse quod malum significet quoddam esse, aut quandam formam seu naturam. . . ." (*Ibid.*, art. 1).

This privative evil may be the lack of a form due to a nature from its physical principles: or the loss of a form due to a nature from its moral principles, that is, the rules of morality. In the first case, there is physical evil, such as blindness in a man; in the second case, there is moral evil.

Moral evil may be further subdivided into a sin of omission and a sin of commission. A sin of omission is the lack of an act; a sin of commission is the absence of the rectitude that ought to be present in an act which is performed by the agent. The first is evil because there is an absence of an act which ought to be performed, since a sin of omission is a transgression of an affirmative precept. The second is evil because there is an act which ought not to be performed, for it is an act which is opposed to a negative precept.

Because a sin of omission is moral in its exercise, it has an act either antecedently or concomitantly, for it is not a complete lack of an act.

"... Et tamen quia non datur omissio in exercitio per totalem suspensionem actus . . . id circo etiam omissio in quantum voluntaria, et moralis in exercitio non datur sine aliquo ordine ad obiectum saltem Praesuppositive, aut concomitanter, quia non datur sine aliquo actu non constitutivem omissionem in sua specificatione, sed causante, vel concomitante." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, Tractatus de Bonitate et Malitia Actuum Humanorum. Disp. 9, art. 2, n. 4).

"... Quod omissio, licet secundum specificationem, et quasi metaphysice considerata non includat actum, neque positivum ordinem ad obiectum, tamen in exercitio et moraliter considerata non invenitur sine aliqua tendentia positiva quae reddit omissionem voluntariam saltem virtualiter, et eodem modo reddit moralem. Unde omissio virtualiter et interpretative etiam est moralis per tendentiam positivam, quatenus ut omissio consideretur voluntaria, debet considerari ut adjuncta. et participans aliquid ab actu conitante, vel praecedente, et si virtute talis actus, seu ut virtualiter et interpretative includit illum dicitur moralis positive, non ratiome sui." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Disp. 8, art. 1, n. 53).

Whatever shall be said about a sin of commission, therefore, shall be applicable also to a sin of omission, not because of the omission as such, but because of the act which is connected with the omission, for our concern in this paper is the act of sin.

5. THE PRIVATIVE MALICE IN A SIN OF COMMISSION

Every human action ought to be conformed to the principle from which it proceeds. Since reason is the proximate principle of human activity, an action will be good because it has the rectitude of reason. If it lacks this commensuration, it will be deprived of a form which belongs to it, and so will be deprived of goodness. A sin of commission is a human act which proceeds from reason. It is not, however, in conformity with reason; rather it is in disagreement with reason. A sin of commission, therefore, lacks a form, the rectitude which it ought to have, and, consequently, it is deprived of the goodness which a human action ought to have.

"... Nam cuilibet actui humano procedenti ex deliberatione rationis debetur bonitas et rectitudo ipsius rationis, a qua procedit: et ita si illum non habeat, caret forma sibi debita: sed peccatum commissionis est actus humanus ex deliberatione rationis procedens, et non habet huiusmodi rectitudinem: ergo caret forma sibi debita, adeoque importat mali-

tiam privativam. Minor et consequentia constant: major vero suadetur. Tum quia cuilibet actioni debetur commensuratio et conformitas cum principio talis actionis: et ita actui humano procedenti ex principio rationis debita est commensuratio et conformitas cum huiusmodi principis: in hac autem conformitate sita est bonitas et rectitudo rationis. Tum etiam quia cuilibet actioni, in quocumque ordine sit, debita est adaequatio cum propria regula et mensura: et ita actionibus artificialibus debitum est, quidquid exigunt regulae artis: et actionibus naturalibus, quidquid natura exigit, quae est eorum regula: ergo actionibus humanis et moralibus debita erit adaequatio cum mensura et regula morum: nihilque aliud est bonitas nisi rectitudo rationis." (Salmanicensis, *op. cit.*, Tractatus XIII. De Virtutibus et Peccatis, Disp. 6, Dubium 1, n. 1).

6. DIVISION OF PRIVATION IN A SIN OF COMMISSION

The privation may be considered in two ways: as a privation in being corrupted, and as a privation in becoming corrupted; or privation which is the result and effect of sin, and privation in the process of becoming. The pure privation is that which results from the tendency of an act to an inordinate object as from a cause. Blindness for example, takes away sight, death takes away life. This pure privation, or more simply, habitual privation, does not enter our consideration, for this is the result, the effect of sin, namely, the loss of grace.

"... Quod mors animae est privatio gratiae, per quam anima Deo uniebatur; privatio autem gratiae non est essentialiter ipsa culpa, sed effectus culpae et poenae (ut supra dictum est, in quaest. praeced., art. 4 et 5). Unde peccatum dicitur mors animae non essentialiter sed effective. *Essentialiter vero peccatum est actus deformis vel inordinatus.*" (*De Malo*, q. 2, art. 9, ad 2). (Italics mine)

In this paper, our concern is not with the effect of sin, but rather with the very act of sin in the order of its specification and constitution. The actual privation (*privatio in fieri*) is not merely private, but also includes the notion of contrariety, for it retains something of the opposite habit, namely, the tendency of the act to its object. Sickness is the privation of health, not in the sense that it completely destroys health, but in the sense that it is a cause leading to the entire loss of health. In a sin of commission, therefore, there is something positive, the order of the act to its object which is not destroyed by the privation; and there is the negative element, the privation of the rectitude which the human act ought to have.

"... Quod duplex est privatio. Quaedam quae consistit in privatum esse, et haec nihil relinquit, sed totum aufert; ut caecitas totaliter aufert visum, et tenebrae lucem, et mors vitam. . . Est autem alia privatio, quae consistit in privari; sicut aegritudo est privatio sanitatis, non quod tota sanitas sit sublata, sed quod est quasi quaedam via ad totalem ablationem sanitatis quae fit per mortem. Et ideo talis privatio, cum aliquid relinquat, non semper est immediata cum opposito habitu. Et hoc modo malum est privatio boni. . . quia non totum bonum aufert, sed aliquid relinquit. . ." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II q. 18, art. 8, ad 1).

"... Est enim quaedam simplex et pura privatio, quae consistit quasi in corruptum esse. . . Est autem alia privatio non simplex, sed aliquid retinens de habitu opposito; quae quidem privatio magis consistit in corrupti quam in corruptum esse. . ." (*Ibid.*, q. 73, art. 2).

"... Quod est duplex privatio. Quaedam quae est privatio pura. . . Quaedam vero privatio est non pura, sed aliquid relinquens; unde non solum est privatio, sed etiam contrarium. . . primae privationes sunt quasi in corruptum esse; secundae vero significant quasi in via corruptionis. . . In secundis autem privationibus non totum privatur; et quod positive dicitur est de ratione eius, quod dicitur privative; et ideo talia recipiunt magis et minus secundum differentiam eius quod dicitur positive. . ." (*De Malo*, q. 2, art. 9). (Italics mine)

7. THE POSITIVE ELEMENT IN A SIN OF COMMISSION

It must not be thought, then, that a sin of commission is evil merely because it is deprived of the right order of reason. There is more in this kind of sin than this element, for there is a transcendental relation of the act to its object, as we shall see. A sin of commission is not the absence of an act; it is the exercise of an act which ought not to be performed. Just as any act cannot be understood except by virtue of its positive tendency to its object, so, too, this transgression, this sin of commission, is not intelligible unless the order of the act to its object is considered.

"... Quia moralitas in actu est idem quod mensuratio eius in attingendo objectum mensuratum; ex objecto quippe mensuratio accipitur mensuratio actus. . . Quia formalis ratio actus est tendentia ad objectum a quo habet specificationem, et participat omnem rationem mensurationis, et moralitatis ab ipso." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, Disp. 9, art. 1, n. 26).

There are, then, in a sin of commission two elements: there is an order of the act to its object; and there is the privation of the rectitude which the act ought to have.

For a proper understanding of this last point, it should be noted that evil is an equivocal term, since it is used in reference to absolute evil (*malum simpliciter*) and moral evil (*malum respectivum*). Evil, taken absolutely, signifies a privation of good which belongs to an object; whereas in moral acts, evil sometimes means the privation of the good which the actions ought to possess, and it sometimes indicates an act which is contrary to a good act. Between the evil which is privation and the evil which is moral there is this difference: the privation which is absolute is formally nothing; and insofar as this privation is found in sinful actions, it, also, is formally nothing, and is lacking in being and goodness; whereas the action which is contrary to a good human action, is called evil according to its species. A sin of commission, therefore, is evil in two ways: it is evil because its object is contrary to the norms of morality; and it is evil because it is deprived of the rectitude which an action ought to have.

The distinction that has been made between the evil which is absolute and the evil which is relative is difficult to understand. The evil which is absolute is privation as such. The evil which is relative, i.e., evil for man, is, on the one hand, privation, as such, and, on the other hand, it includes the notion of positivity. Insofar as a sin of commission is deprived of a perfection it ought to have, it is evil absolutely; it is evil relatively because the act tends to a defective object. Although the tendency to a deficient object is a defective tendency, nevertheless, because the order of an act to an object is something positive, the tendency in sin is also positive.

Though this is a subtle distinction, there is good authority for maintaining that there is a positive element in a sin of commission. Two of the authorities are St. Thomas himself and his great Commentator Cajetan.

"... Quod aliquid dicitur esse malum dupliciter; uno quidem modo simpliciter, alio vero modo secundum quid. Illud autem dicitur simpliciter malum quod est secundum se malum. Hoc autem est quod privatur aliquo particulari bono quod est ex debito suae perfectionis, sicut aegritudo est malum animalis, quia privat aequalitatem humorum, quae requiritur ad perfectum esse animalis. Sed secundum quid dicitur esse malum quod non est malum secundum se, sed alicuius; quia scilicet non privatur aliquo bono quod sit de debito suae perfectionis, sed quod est de debito perfectionis alterius rei, sicut in igne est privatio formae aquae, quae non est de debito perfectionis ignis, sed de debito perfectionis aquae;

unde ignis non est secundum se malus, sed est malus aquae. . . ." (*De Malo*, q. 1, art. 1, ad 1).

In this passage, St. Thomas first distinguishes evil. He then defines the first member of the distinction, and illustrates his meaning with the example of health in an animal. Next, he defines the second member, and explains it with the example of fire and water.

Something is said to be evil in two ways: absolutely (*simpliciter*), and relatively (*secundum quid*). Evil, absolutely taken, is evil in itself. This absolute evil is that which deprives a subject of a particular good which is required for its perfection. Health is a quality necessary for the perfect being of an animal. When the animal lacks health, it is deprived of a good which is needed for its perfection. Sickness, therefore, is evil because it is the privation of a good which a subject is naturally apt to have. This privation is, in itself, nothing for it is evil absolutely.

The second member of the distinction is not evil absolutely and in itself, but it is evil relatively: that is, evil for something else. It is not deprived of a good which is requisite for its own perfection, but it does deprive something else of a perfection it ought to have. Fire deprives water of its coolness. Coolness, however, is not a perfection of fire, and hence fire is not, in itself, evil. But coolness is a quality of water, and so when water is heated it loses a perfection which is due to it. Because this loss is caused by fire, it is said to be evil relatively that is, evil for the water. The privation of coolness in hot water is evil absolutely because it is the absence of a perfection which water is naturally apt to have. The heat, nevertheless, is not absolutely evil because it is something in itself, and it is good. It is, however, evil for the water, since heat is repugnant to coolness.

In a similar vein, the lack of rectitude in a sin of commission is evil absolutely because it is nothing in itself, since it includes neither being nor good. The tendency to an object repellent to the rules of morality is evil relatively because it is evil for man. It is not evil absolutely because it includes transcendental being and goodness. The order of an act to an object that is good in itself is positive. This tendency to an object measured by the rules of morality is, however, evil because it is evil for man. This point need not delay us now because it must receive greater consideration in the second part of this paper. It suffices to say now that the same order of an act to an object, no longer considered in its physical goodness but in its subjection to reason, is positive. And it is also evil, not absolutely, but relatively because it is evil for man.

CAJETAN

We give four places from Cajetan where he states that there is something positive in a sin of commission.

" . . . Malum enim aequivocum est ad malum vere et proprie; et ad malum genus, differentia et species moralium. Pro quo, nota quod malum absolute loquendo, significat privationem boni debiti, quando, sicut, etc. Malum autem in moralibus quandoque significat privationem boni secundum rationem debiti, quando, sicut, etc., actui humano vel habitui; quandoque autem significat ens contrarium actui vel habitui humano bono. Ita quod inter significationem mali in moralibus et absolute, hoc interest, quod malum absolute formaliter est nihil, denominative autem est ens: in moralibus autem malum, quod est pars subjectiva mali in communi, eodem modo se habet, scilicet quod formaliter est nihil, denominative vere est ens; sed praeter hoc, in moralibus etiam ipsum ens formaliter contrarium actui vel habitui bono moraliter, vocatur malum secundum suam speciem. Ubi manifeste patet aequivocatio. Est igitur in moralibus malum dupliciter, scilicet private, et hoc est simpliciter et formaliter malum, quod est nihil. . . . ; et contrarie et hoc est in se bonum. . . . Ad propositum sufficit haec intellexisse, et cum his eorum radicem: scilicet quod, quia 'nullus operatur aspiciens ad malum' (Dionysius, de Div. Nom., cap. IV), oportet in malo actu voluntatis inventi bonum aliquod verum vel apparens, cum privatione bonitatis alicuius spectantis ad rectam rationem. Et pro quanto actus ille ad bonum fertur, speciem sortitur positam, ex qua dicitur malus contrarie: pro quanto vero privationem bonitatis debita habet commensuram, est malus private." (Cajetan, *Commentarium in I-II*, q. 18, art. 5, n. 2). (Italics mine)

This passage is Cajetan's attempt to reconcile the difficulty which exists between these two statements: The differences, good and evil, constitute distinct and contrary species of moral acts; while, on the other hand, evil is not a nature, since it is nothing. If the moral evil act is a species, it follows that the difference of evil is a nature and not a privation, since it is evident that privation cannot constitute the species of an act or of a habit or of anything else. If, on the other hand, evil is privation and nothing, there will be no positive species in morality, and no contrariety between a good act and a bad act, a virtue and a vice.

Before answering this doubt, Cajetan says that he would not dare maintain that the difference of evil in morals is formally a positive being and good in itself, although it is evil for man, unless St. Thomas himself had not already taught this doctrine.

"Ad claritatem huius obscurae difficultatis, scito quod dicere non auderem, nisi expressa divi Thomae sententia in Ia. q. 48, art. 1, ad 3, et III Contra Gentes, cap. 9, explicaret, quod hic tangitur, scilicet quod malum genus et differentia in moralibus, formaliter est ens positivum et bonum in se, quantumvis sit malum homini secundum rationem: sicut forma mortui est quoddam ens et bonum in se, quantumvis sit malum vivo. *Est itaque iniustitiae actus et habitus, secundum suam speciem bonalem, formaliter ens positivum, et contrarium iustitiae.*" (*Ibid.*) (Italics mine)

It does not follow, he adds, that evil is a nature or a being because the equivocation connected with the word evil begets the obscurity:

"Nec ex hoc sequitur quod malum sit natura aliqua aut ens: sed aequivocatio accidens hic obscuritatem parit." (*Ibid.*)

After noting that evil is equivocal, he defines what he means by absolute evil and moral evil. He then explains the difference between evil absolutely understood and moral evil, and shows how moral evil is a contrary and a privation. Since no one can act for evil as such, he introduces a distinction in the evil which is contrary.

There are points here and in the subsequent excerpts which will be explained in the second part of this paper: for the present we are concerned with the fact and not the reason for the fact of this distinction.

Evil, absolutely understood, is the privation of a good due to a subject. The evil in moral acts and habits is sometimes understood to mean the privation of a good which reason demands; and it sometimes signifies a being which is contrary to a good act or to a virtue. The difference between the two is that evil in the absolute sense is formally nothing, denominatively it is being. This evil, too, is found in moral acts, but it is not the only evil, for there is in morals a being which is formally contrary to a good act or to a virtue, and this is called evil according to its species. Since the will tends to an object which is good in itself or apparently good, it is necessary that this tendency be found in a sin of commission. And since this order is something positive,—for there is no other way that the will can attain an object except by tending to it,—it follows that this ordination is good. It is not, however, good for man because it is an order to an object contrary to reason, and therefore evil for man, since man ought to be ruled and directed by his reason. There are, then, two ways in which this tendency is considered: it is a tendency on the part of the will to an object which has some aspect of good; and, secondly, it is a tendency to the same object, this time in its moral nature, which is evil for man. The order in the first case is positive; the order in the second instance is

also positive but deficient because it is evil for man. It is not absolutely evil because it does have some transcendental being and goodness.

In the following selection, Cajetan enlarges on this idea.

"... cave, in tractatu de vitiis et peccatis, ne erres in principio, putans vitium et peccatum habere tantum rationem mali ratione privationis. Oportet namque dicere quod *peccatum est actus malus dupliciter: scilicet contrarie, et privative*: intemperantia enim est actus malus contrarie, pro quantum est actus habens contrarium obiectum formale obiecto temperantiae; est vero actus malus privative, pro quantum est actus privatus rectitudine quam deberet habere.

"... Prima quoque est prior naturaliter secunda, et est fundamentum eius: quod *omne peccatum est actus contrarius alicui virtuti, et ad huiusmodi contrarietatem sequitur privatio debita rectitudinis. Prima rursus spectat ad conversionem: secunda autem ad aversionem inventam in peccato. Utraque etiam vocatur inordinatio, sed prima contrarie, secunda privative*. . . Ergo cum dicitur quod peccatum est actus humanus malus, intellige quod malus et inordinatus utroque modo: utramque enim inordinationem habet actus ex incommensuratione ad suam regulam: nam inordinationem contrarie habet ex obiecto, quod est aliquod appetitum dissonans regulae; et ex hoc comitatur inordinatio privative, quia ex hoc actus privatur rectitudine regulae, qua deberet informari. . ." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, I-II, q. 71, art. 6, n. 3).

(Italics mine)

In the first paragraph of this extract, Cajetan issues a warning: it must not be thought that sin is evil merely because it is privative. Secondly, he tells why this is: because sin is an evil act in a twofold way, since it is contrary as well as privative. Thirdly, he illustrates his reason with the example of intemperance. Intemperance is an evil act contrary to a good act, that is, it is an evil for man, because it has an object which is contrary to the formal object of temperance; and it is evil privatively because it is an act deprived of the rectitude which it ought to have.

Man knows in general (*in universali*) that intemperance is evil. Nevertheless, he desires here and now, in this particular case, the good which is connected with intemperance, since he cannot will evil as such nor act for evil as such. He, therefore, desires the physical good of intemperance, in whatever species of intemperance it may be found. In acting for this good, he tends towards it. And this tendency is a positive ordination of his act to this object.

Man is, however, a moral agent, for his acts are under the di-

rection of his practical reason which is the proximate principle of morality. He knows that he must act for his true ultimate end, that he must do good, that he must avoid evil. It is not sufficient, therefore, to act for the physical good attached to the object, for this object as it affects his moral being is evil. He must act for an object which is good morally and which measures up to the strict requirements of reason. If he performs an operation contrary to the rule of morality, that act is evil for man. And since he attains an object because he tends to it positively, that tendency is said to be deficient and is moral evil, i.e., evil for man.

The contrary element, continues Cajetan, is prior to and is the foundation of the privative because the privation of the proper rectitude follows the contrariety of the act. Where there is an opposition of contrariety, there is also privation, since one extreme is imperfect because it lacks the perfection of the other. Both the contrariety and the privation, resumes Cajetan, are inordinate. A sin of commission, therefore, is contrary because its inordination is taken from the object which is opposed to reason and to the eternal law. And from this contrariety there follows the privation because the act is deprived of the rectitude of the norms of morality, by which it ought to be formed. The third quotation from Cajetan adds another note to what has gone before.

"Est enim in peccato intemperantiae actus voluntarius, qui est materia bonitatis et malitiae moralis: est et malitia moralis contraria temperantiae, puta intemperantiae forma: est et consequens privatio rectitudinis temperantiae debita: illi actu voluntario. . ." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, I-II, q. 72, art. 1, n. 3).

Cajetan here introduces the matter of morality, voluntary acts. Morality is spoken of in somewhat the same manner as works of art. In an artefact both matter and form are found. The matter is that from which the work is made; the form is the disposition or figure which is introduced into the matter, according to the rules of the art. In morality, too, there is matter, voluntary actions; and there is a form, the direction and order of these actions to the rule of reason. Voluntary actions alone are capable of this regulation because they alone are measurable by reason. A moral action, therefore, is a voluntary act which is subject to the rules of morality.

The final extract from Cajetan says much the same thing in different words.

"... Quia peccatum consistit ex conversione ad objectum contrarium objecto virtutis, et ex aversione a lege, sicut in peccato duae malitiae: primo, malitia ex objecto; secundo, malitia in ipsa privatione observationis legis. Prima est posi-

tiva, et in certo entis genere: quia moralia species entium sunt. . . . Secunda est *privativa*: et est ipsa deformitas peccati, in qua consistit ratio mali simpliciter. . ." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, I-II, q. 79, art. 3, n. 4). (Italics mine)

There are, says Cajetan, two malices in a sin of commission: there is the malice which results from the act being converted to an object contrary to the object of virtue or of a good act; and there is the privative malice which accrues to the act because it is averted from the law of reason and the law of God. The first is positive because it is a tendency on the part of the act to the object. And it is in a certain class of being because it is a species of the genus quality. The second is the privation because it is in it that the evil as such, the absolute evil, is found.

According to St. Thomas and Cajetan, therefore, there are two elements in a sin of commission: there is the evil or privation which is evil as such; and there is the evil which is moral, since it is evil for man. And in this moral order there is something positive because there is a tendency of an act to an object.

8. STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION

Since the aim of this paper is to determine that by which a sin of commission is primarily constituted, and since a sin of commission is both contrary to a good act and deprived of the rectitude it ought to have, the question resolves itself to this. Does the conversion of this act to an inordinate object, from which the privation of rectitude follows, suffice to establish the formal constituent of a sin of commission? Or, is the sin of commission constituted by the privation? In a word, is the positive order to an object, which is the foundation of the privation, the formal constituent of a sin of commission; or, is the privation which is founded by this conversion the formal constituent?

9. OPINIONS

Since a sin of commission is in two orders, the formal constituent will consist in privation or contrariety, depending upon the order in which it is considered. The formal constituent, therefore, in the order of absolute evil will be privation because the sin is deprived of the order it ought to have. An act is good because it has the rectitude required of it; an act is evil because it lacks this rectitude.

When sin is considered as a voluntary act in the moral order, the contrariety and the conversion will constitute the essential malice of sin. This is the opinion of Cajetan. Sin, he reasons, is more vol-

untary than evil because it is entirely voluntary, whereas sin is absolute evil only on the part of the privation, which is one element in sin. Secondly, sin receives its species from the conversion to the object, while aversion is the privation of the species. Since the specific difference belongs to sin more than the privation of the species, sin is constituted by the conversion primarily, and from this conversion the aversion follows.

“ . . . Quod peccatum est in duabus generibus: scilicet in genere mali simpliciter; et est in genere voluntarii seu moralis mali. Et in genere quidem mali simpliciter, reponitur formaliter per inordinationem privative, seu aversionem: in genere autem voluntarii seu moralis mali, per suam differentiam, quam ex objecto malo moraliter habet, reponitur. . . . Et si quaeras: Absolute et sine distinctione loquendo, quid sit dicendum?—dico quod, quia peccatum, absolute loquendo, est in genere mali simpliciter, et est voluntarium, ideo utrumque absolute recte dicitur, scilicet et quod aversio est de ratione peccati, et formale in peccato, et quod conversio est de ratione peccati, et formans peccatum.—Ad comparationem autem: Quid magis absolute?—dico quod conversio. Et ratio est duplex. Prima, quia peccatum est magis voluntarium quam malum: quia est voluntarium secundum se totum quamvis diversimode, quia conversio principaliter, aversio secundario; non autem est malum secundum se totum, sed secundum partem tantum, scilicet privationem.—Secunda est, quia conversio dat peccato veram speciem, aversio autem dat privationem speciei: intemperantia enim ex conversione ad objectum, sortitur differentiam verae speciei in genere qualitatis; ex aversione autem privationem habet speciei temperantiae. Magis autem convenit peccato differentia vera specifica, quam privato speciei.” (Cajetan in I-II, q. 71, art. 6, n. 6).

JOHN OF ST. THOMAS

John of St. Thomas teaches that the formal constituent of a sin of commission consists in the positive order to a defective object which is contrary to a good act. This order, he continues, is the foundation of the privation. Since the sin tends to an inordinate object, it follows that the act is deprived of the rectitude it ought to have. The conversion, therefore, formally constitutes a sin of commission, while the privation formally follows this constitution.

“ . . . Species mali moralis conditiva a bono morali in linea et genere moralitatis quantum ad rationem formalem constitutam in peccato commissionis, consistit in ordine positivo ad

objectum pravum, seu indebitum, ut contrario ipsi bonitati, et ut defectibili, et fundante privationem rectitudinis. Ipsa vero privatio fundata non se habet formaliter constitutive in actu malo, sed formaliter consecutive. . . . Ex eo enim quod peccatum tendit ad objectum dissonum rationi, et legi, et naturae rationali quae tendentia est formale constitutivum mali moralis, sequitur quod actus sit privatus rectitudine, hoc est, tendentia ad objectum consonum et ordinatum per rationem, subordinatum legi. . . .” (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, *op. cit.*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 26).

BILLUART

Billuart follows John of St. Thomas closely. The formal constituent of a sin of commission consists in the positive tendency to an evil object, i.e., to an object that is physically good but evil for man. Since this tendency proceeds freely from the will which is subject to the rules of morality, it therefore pertains to the moral order and contracts from the object its moral species. The act of sin, he continues, lacks rectitude because it tends to a deficient object for every motion which tends from one term to another, is specified by the term to which it is ordained, and from this conversion the aversion follows.

“Illud est formale constitutivum peccati, a quo peccatum habet quod sit primo malum morale: atqui peccatum commissionis habet primo quod sit malum morale per positivam et vitalem tendentiam in objectum malum: ergo. Et primo quod inde habeat esse malum morale probatur, quia illa tendentia procedit libere a voluntate ut subiecta regulis morum et respicit objectum morale, scilicet dissonum regulis morum: ergo pertinet ad lineam moralem, contrahitque ab illo objecto speciem moralem, non bonitatem, non indifferentiam: ergo malitiam formalem. Secundo quod ex illa tendentia habeat primo quod sit malum morale probatur: illa tendentia moraliter mala prius convenit actui quam privato rectitudinis, ideo enim actus peccati caret rectitudine, quia tendit in objectum malum, cum omnis motus tendens ab uno termino ad alium, primo per se respiciat terminum ad quem, ex quo sequitur aversio seu recessus a termino a quo: ergo. (Billuart, *Tractatus De Peccatis*, Dissertatio I, De Natura Viti et Peccati, art. 3, section 2).

THE SALMANTICENSES

The Salmanticenses teach that there is a formal positive malice in a sin of commission. Since a sinful action tends positively to an object contrary to reason, this tendency is formally a moral evil, for every action is specified by the term to which it tends.

"Dicendum est dari in peccato commissionis formalem malitiam positivam. . . .
"Actus peccaminosus dicit tendentiam positivam ad objectum lege prohibitum et dissonum rationi: sed hujusmodi tendentia est formaliter malitia moralis: ergo datur in praedicto actu malitia moralis positiva. Major et consequentia constant. Minor vero probatur. Tum quia omnis tendentia specificatur a suo termino, sumitque suam rationem ab eo in quod tendit: atque adeo tendentia ad objectum dissonum rationi et lege prohibitum nequit non accipere ab illo speciem dissonantiae, et dissonantiae eidem rationi et legi: haec est autem formalis malitia: ergo. . . . Tum denique, nam illa tendentia, eo ipso quod respiciat objectum ut prohibitum, respicit illud ut stans sub regulis mortuum, adeoque ut objectum morale: unde ipsa quoque debet esse tendentia moralis: debet ergo formaliter contineri in aliqua moralitatis specie, quae sunt bonitas et malitia: non in prima, ut est per se notum: ergo in secunda. . . ." (Salmanticensis, *Cursus Theol.*, Tractatus XIII, De Vitiis et Peccatis, Disp. 6, Dubium 4, Section 1, nn. 63-64).

GONET

Gonet adheres faithfully to the Salmanticensis. Reasoning from the fact that St. Thomas distinguishes sins by their order to objects specifically distinct, he concludes that the constitutive difference of sin is not privation but the positive order to the object.

"... Idem est constitutum et distinctivum: sed juxta D. Thomam (I-II, q. 72, art. 1) peccata distinguuntur specificce per ordinem ad objecta speciei diversa, non vero ex privatione: ergo differentia constitutiva peccati non est privatio, sed positivus ordo ad objectum." (Gonet, *Clypeus Theologiae*, Vol. 4, De Vitiis et Peccatis, Disp. 3, art. 1, n. 15).

BILLOT

Cardinal Billot teaches that moral evil is something positive. From the fact that good and evil are contraries in morality, and from the fact that the privation in a sin of commission is an actual privation or privation *in fieri*, he reasons that moral evil is something positive because the extremes of contrary opposition are positive, and because the privation *in fieri* includes something of the order of reason.

"... Sciendum est quod duplex privatio distinguitur. Alia enim est privatio pura, sicut tenebra quae nihil lucis relinquít, et mors quae non relinquít aliquid vitae. Alia est privatio non pura, de cuius ratione est ut non tollat totum bonum

cui opponitur, sed aliquid ejus relinquat. . . . Sed quia in privationibus secundi generis, id quod positive dicitur est de ratione ejus quod dicitur privative' (*De Malo*, q. 2, art. 9), sicut . . . defectus claudi positivam curvitatem cruris (importat): oportet profecto ut ibi intercedat oppositio etiam contrarietatis, non quod ipsa ratio mali ut sic (i.e. malum simpliciter) aliquid positivum sit, sed quia est de ratione talis mali ut nequaquam purum existat, seu ut non privet totum particulare bonum cui opponitur.

"... Dicitur enim malum morale esse aliquid positivum, non quidem quantum ad id quod formaliter causat rationem mali; nam istud est privatio. Neque etiam quantum ad subjectum mere materialiter ad privationem se habens, quia, hoc modo omne malum tam in moralibus quam in naturalibus aliquid ponit. Sed quantum ad id cui per se admiscetur privatio, videlicet quantum ad liberam electionem particularis boni quae privationem ordinis justitiae sic conjunctam habet, ut de hujus privationis ratione existat. . . ." (Billot, S.J., *De Personalit et Originali Peccato*, Caput primum, De Actu Peccati, Section 1).

VERMEERSCH

Fr. Vermeersch touches the twofold malice in sin when he says that sin, inasmuch as it is absolute evil, consists in the privation of order or the withdrawal from the order of reason and the law of God; but inasmuch as it is a moral act, sin consists in the positive tendency to an object that is inordinately desired.

"Essentia (peccati). Quatenus est actus malus, peccatum dicit aliquam privationem boni, quae hic erit aliquis recessus ab ordine rationis seu a lege Dei; sed quatenus est actus moralis dicit necessario aliquod bonum quod inordinate appetitur. Malum enim qua tale non est appetibile, sed illud non eligimus nisi sub specie boni vel ut conjunctum cum bono quod amamus. Sed quamvis totus malus sit actus et tota mala sit omissio quibus, propter aliquod bonum, eligimus seu amplectimur malum, minus tamen malum sit velle malum sub specie boni quam sub specie mali. Itaque, in ista tendentia versus bonum, in ista electione mali sub specie boni, remanet vestigium positivi ordinis. . . . Observes tantum, in ordine physico, simpliciter bonum esse quod in caecitate remanet visionis, dum in ordine morali ipsa positiva appetitio est mala, quia fundat electionem mali. Quare etiam magis in moralibus quam in naturalibus malum contrarium bono dicitur. Contraria enim supponunt oppositionem duorum positivorum et non mere privationis et habitus seu actus. Positivum istud malum non reperitur nisi in actu voluntatis qui

'in quantum fertur in malum recipit rationem et nomen mali; et hoc malum contrariatur proprie bono' (*De Malo*, q. 1, art. 1, ad 4).

Specificatio. Si in omni peccato habetur aliqua appetitio boni objecti, quae per se est voluntaria, et appetitio mali, quae est tantum voluntaria per accidens, cum actus voluntarii specificantur qua parte sunt per se voluntarii potius quam alia parte qua sunt tantummodo voluntarii per accidens, inde iterum illud consecretarium seu corollarium a S. Thoma indicatur, quod specificatio moralis peccatorum fiat per objecta ad quae peccans se convertit, potius quam per privationem quae prosecutionem objecti comitatur. . . . (Arthurus Vermeersch, S. J., *Theologiae Moralis*, Tomus I, Theologia Fundamentalis, Tractatus V, De Peccatis, Caput I, nn. 403, 404).

MERKELBACH

There are two constitutive elements in a sin, the positive and material element, or the substance of the act considered in its moral being; and the privative element which necessarily follows from the positivity. This privative element, says Fr. Merkelbach, is called formal because it determines the material element to be a sin.

"Peccatum constat duobus elementis constitutivis quasi partibus metaphysicis, quae sese habent sicut materia (indeterminata) et forma (determinans) in entibus naturae, quaeque proinde materiale et formale vocantur. Ipso enim peccato habetur:

- 1) elementum positivum et materiale: substantia actus considerati, non in esse physico prout tendit ad quodcumque bonum (sic enim non est actus humanus seu moralis, nec ideo moraliter malus ac proinde non est elementum constitutivum peccati sed ipsi praesupponitur), sed in esse morali prout indebitè ad aliquod bonum creatum tendit quod ad finem ultimum referri nequit: est indebita conversio ad creaturam:—et

- 2) elementum privativum quod necessario sequitur ex prima, scilicet ipsa privatio rectitudinis seu debitae ordinationis in finem ultimum: est aversio vel elongatio a Deo. Haec est elementum formale quia determinat materiale ad hoc quod sit peccatum: conversio enim ad creaturam peccatum non esset theologicum nisi per eam homo etiam se haberet inordinatè circa finem ultimum. Aliis verbis: materiale peccati est ipse actus voluntarius quo homo tendit ad aliquod contrarium legi aeternae; formale vero est ipsa difformitas actus seu recessus a lege aeterna."

The essence of a sin of commission, continues Fr. Merkelbach, is not pure privation, but something positive, namely, the material element or the voluntary act. His reason is twofold: first, because the privation of the proper order includes the tendency of the act to a good or an apparent good.

"... Atqui in rebus moralibus non datur privatio pura (seu purum malum), quia nulla voluntas ad malum ut malum tenere potest, sed semper sub ratione boni: voluntas scilicet in agendo non totaliter aufert bonum rationis, sed semper retinet aliquid de rectitudine seu de ordine rationis quae in peccato invenitur, essentialiter includit conservationem aliquis rectitudinis seu tendentiae ad bonum, quae est positivum. . . . Ita peccatum non est pura et totalis privatio ordinis rationis, sed includit positive tendentiam seu ordinem rationis ad bonum apparens, quod revera est malum et prohibitum quia ad ultimum finem referri nequit."

His second reason is that good and evil in morality are contraries, and therefore both are positive.

"Bonum et malum morale non contradictorie opponuntur sicut qualitas et privatio, res et nihil, sed contrarie sicut duae qualitates oppositae: virtus enim et vitium sunt contraria quia tendunt ad objecta contraria bona vel mala: quodsi vitium sit contrarium virtuti, etiam peccatum ex quo generatur vitium, vel quod ab ipso elicitur. Atqui si malum morale vel peccatum esset mera privatio, bono opponeretur contradictorie, et esset simplex absentia boni. Ergo malum morale vel peccatum non est mera privatio sed aliquid positivum, scilicet actus tendens ad objectum malum." (Benedictus Henricus Merkelbach, O.P., *Summa Theologica Moralis*, T. I, Tractatus De Peccatis in Genere, Pars Prima, De Peccato Secundum Se, Q. 1, Art. 4, nn. 425-427).

PRUMMER

Everyone ought to admit, says Fr. Prümmer, that there is, in something positive, the inordinate conversion to a mutable good, and something privative, the aversion from God. There is no harm among scholastics, however, in determining which is the moral essential. Fr. Prümmer inclines to the aversion, for he mentions provingly two texts where St. Thomas seems to decide for the aversion.

"Veteres scholastici penitus investigantes naturam peccati ponebant quaestionem, utrum formale constitutivum peccati sit quid positivum an privativum? Omnes quidem debent

CHAPTER TWO

SPECIFICATION OF A SIN OF COMMISSION

admittere in peccato esse quid positivum (sc. inordinatam conversionem ad bonum temporale) et etiam quid privativum (sc. aversionem a Deo); sed quid ex istis sit essentialis, non concordant. Quae quidem controversia est parvae utilitatis practicae. S. Thomas docet recte: 'Omne peccatum formaliter consistit in aversione a Deo' (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 118, art. 5); et iterum: 'Culpa mortalis utrumque habet: et aversionem a Deo et conversionem ad bonum creatum: sed aversio a Deo est ibi sicut formale, conversio autem est ibi sicut materiale' (III, q. 86, art. 4, ad 1).'' (Dominicus Al. Prümmer, O.P., *Manuale Theologiae Moralis*, T. 1, n. 359).

10. DIVISION OF THIS PAPER

In this paper we shall try to explain the positive element which is found in a sin of commission. For this reason we have divided the paper in three parts. In the first section, we shall expose the teaching of St. Thomas on this problem. The second part shall be a summation in the form of two arguments maintaining the positive aspect in a sin of commission as the formal constituent. In the third part, we shall try to answer some of the objections which may be raised against our contention.

Since the solution to this difficulty rests on a knowledge of the specification of an act by its object, it will be necessary first to have a general understanding of this point. Secondly, since a human act is both voluntary and moral, it will be necessary to explain what we mean by the physical and moral entity of a human act. From the moral genus of a human act we shall descend to the species, goodness and badness. In the latter we shall consider the order of the positivity and privation in sin, which are sometimes called the conversion and aversion, respectively; in this section we shall also give the testimony of St. Thomas.

A sin of commission is, as we have already said, a human act. It is an action which proceeds from the deliberate will of man, for it is performed freely. Since it is a vital and immanent operation which is elicited by the will or commanded by the will, it is a quality, a certain emanation proceeding from the agent. Because it is a quality, it enjoys being, and, consequently, it is good. Nevertheless, in this precise regard, it is not morally good nor morally bad. For, just as animal *qua* animal is neither rational nor irrational, so the act *qua* act is neither morally good nor morally bad. It needs something else, an object, to contract it to its species.

"... Nam si consideremus actum inquantum est actus, bonitas ejus est ut sit quaedam emanata secundum virtutem agentis. . . Sicut enim dicitur, quod animal inquantum animal est neque rationale neque irrationale est: ita potest dici, quod actus humanus inquantum est actus, nondum habet rationem boni vel mali moralis, nisi aliquid addatur ad speciem contrahens: licet etiam ex hoc quod est actus humanus, et ulterius ex hoc quod est ens, habeat aliquam rationem boni, sed non huius boni moralis quod est secundum rationem esse." (*De Malo*, q. 2, art. 4).

1. THE SPECIFICATION OF AN ACT BY ITS OBJECT

Because the act performed is a quality, it enjoys being and goodness. Nevertheless, as such, it does not have the moral goodness or badness we are seeking. This it receives when it is contracted to its species by its formal specifying object. Although the object is extrinsic to the act, nevertheless, the intrinsic concept and species of the act is

taken from and depends on the object. The object itself is reduced to the genus of formal, extrinsic causality, not in the sense of causing the existence of the act, but in the sense of specifying it.

This point may be understood more easily by saying, with Cajetan, that action is midway between pure absolute being and pure relative being.

“ . . . Imaginatur enim, secundum divinum Thomam quod potentiae et habitus, et alia huiusmodi, sunt entitates quaedam mediae inter absolutas omnino, et respectivas totaliter. Ita quod non per aliquid superadditum, sed *per suas essentias essentialiter ordinem habent ad actus*, ita quod absque eis intelligi etiam in prima operatione intellectionis non possint, non quia differentiae earum sint, sed quia *eorum differentiae sumuntur ab ordine ad illos; ordine autem dico, non relationis praedicamentalis, sed transcendente*. . . ” (Cajetan in I, q. 78, art. 3, n. 4). (Italics mine)

It is evident that some things, such as substances, have their species absolutely, without a relationship or order to something extrinsic to themselves. They are specified by the form which constitutes them. Although they are dependent on another as to their existence, they do not depend on another in order to be constituted in their essential nature. Relative things have their whole being related to another and depend on it as on a pure term. On the other hand, such things as potency, habit, act, etc., bespeak an order to an object extrinsic to themselves. In themselves, they have an absolute quiddity or essence, so that they are not classed with pure relatives, for they are essentially ordained to an operation and not to a pure receptivity. Nevertheless, in their constitution and specification, they depend on an extrinsic object because they have, by their very natures, an essential order to their object. The act and the object are thus transcendently related because the relationship is not a form added to the act, but rather it is conceived in the act, connecting, however, something extrinsic, its object, upon which it depends, or to which it is ordained.

“ . . . Ex quo etiam constat quod relatio transcendentalis, quae non est alia a relatione secundum dici, non importat ex principali significato relationem, sed aliquid absolutum ad quod sequitur, vel sequi potest aliqua relatio; nam si absolutum non importat, transcendentalis non erit, i.e., vagans per diversa genera, sed ad unum praedicatum tantum spectabit; unde relatio transcendentalis non est forma adveniens subjecto, seu rei absolute, sed illi imbibita, connotans tamen aliquid extrinsecum, a quo dependet, vel circa quod versatur.”

ut materia ad formam, caput ad capitulum, creatura ad Deum, sique relatio transcendentalis concidit cum relatione secundum dici . . . cum transcendentalis sit in ipsa entitate absoluta, nec ad eum esse differat, et sic non totum sumi esse ad aliud quod requiritur ad relationem secundum esse. . . ” (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Phil., Log. II P., Q. 17, art. 2*).

Since the object, even though it is extrinsic, terminates the order of the act to itself, it is said to specify the act. Or, to word this differently, the act is specified intrinsically, with a dependence, however, upon the extrinsic cause.

This problem may be further clarified by noting that the Latin word *per* denotes a relationship of cause:

“ . . . Quod haec propositio *per* designat habitudinem causae. . . ” (Commentarium S. Thomae in *Primum Librum Posteriorum Analyticorum Aristotelis*, lect. 10, n. 2).

When it is said, therefore, that acts are specified by their object, the object is understood to be exercising some kind of causality. Since *per* may be taken in four ways, it is necessary to know its exact meaning in order to understand the sense in which the causality of specification is taken.

The first meaning of *per* indicates an intrinsic cause in the sense of specific difference. This understanding is alien to ours because the object is extrinsic to the act; hence the object is not the specifying principle in the sense of the intrinsic specific difference of the act. The specific difference of a thing is its intrinsic form, whereas the specifying object is extrinsic to the act.

The second meaning signifies that acts are distinguished by effects rather than by causes. This supposes that acts and objects are distinct, for the act is an effect posterior to the potency, and the object to the act. This is not our meaning because the object, although it is extrinsic, is the principle or end of the action, and is prior in intention. In this way, the object specifies the act, for, although the object is extrinsic, it is not entirely so, since the act is intrinsically ordained to it.

“ . . . Actus, licet sit posterior potentia in esse, est tamen prior in intentione et secundum rationem, sicut finis in agente. Objectum autem, licet sit extrinsecum, est tamen principium vel finis actionis. Principio autem et fini proportionatur ea quae sunt intrinseca rei.” (*Summa Theol.*, I, q. 77, art. 3, ad. 1).

The third meaning of *per* indicates the dependency of act on extrinsic causes, the efficient and final. This is a general meaning ap-

pliable to every thing inasmuch as each being has a dependence on the causes which brought it into existence. And again, this is not what we are seeking because specification abstracts from existence, for existence in the creature is accidental to its essence, and does not enter the definition of the essence: whereas specification is something essential and is placed in the definition of the act.

The final signification of *per* indicates a principle which is extrinsic to the thing, but which is intrinsic to the definition of the thing. The cause is extrinsic, but it pertains to the definition, and hence is a formal, extrinsic cause.

"Unde est quarta opinio, quod *ly per* denotet principium definitivum, extrinsecum quidem a re, sed intrinsecum definitioni rei; ita quod potentiae distinguuntur per actus a priori, non tanquam per differentias, nec tanquam per causas omnino extrinsecas, sed tanquam per causas inclusas necessario in definitionibus primis earum; inclusas autem dico per additamentum, eo modo quo alterum correlativum cadit in definitione alterius. . . ." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*)

This is the sense in which specification is understood. The act is specified by the object, and the latter, although extrinsic to the former, is placed in the definition of the act. The object, then, is a cause, formal because it enters the very definition of the act, extrinsic because it is outside the act.

An act, therefore, depends upon the object, for the act is immediately specified by the object. Now this dependence is either a dependence upon the extrinsic causes, efficient and final, which regard the existence of the act, or a dependence upon the formal, extrinsic cause which specifies the act. It cannot be the first because the efficient cause, as such, regards the act which it produces in the order of existence only; and the final cause, since it moves the efficient to act, is related to the act in the same respect, i.e., in the line of existence. In this sense, the order of the act to its efficient principle is considered as an effect of the efficient cause and posterior to it in being. The specific cause, on the other hand, abstracts from existence, for, even if the act never inclined to its object, the essential order of act to object would still constitute the nature of act. Just as act, in the order of specification, is prior in intention to potency, so, too, the object is prior, not only to potency but also to act.

" . . . quia secundum rationem definitivam, actus et operationes sunt priores potentis. Potentia enim secundum hoc quod est, importat habitudinem quamdam ad actum: est enim principium quoddam agendi vel patendi: unde oportet, quod actus ponatur in definitionibus potentiarum. Et si ita

se habet circa ordinem actus et potentiae, et actibus adhuc sunt priora opposita, idest objecta." (Comment. S. Thomae in *II De Anima Aristotelis*, lect. VI, n. 304).

It is with good reason, then, that Cajetan could say that the order of specification is another indication of nature's acting for an end.

" . . . Omnia enim ex hoc uno pendent, quod potentia, actus, passio, et huiusmodi entia, essentialiter specificantur, esse et unitatem et diversitatem habent, ex intrinseca quidem differentia, sed non abstrahent ab extrinseco objecto, agente, fine, vel actu. Et haec si vis in proposito intelligere, imaginere Naturam agere propter finem, et producere potentias proportionatas actibus intentis: ideoque tales facere potentias, quia tales actuum quidditates exigant, et non e converso. Et quia tales actuum quidditates ordinat ad actus, consequens est quod ideo potentiae sint tales essentialiter, quia actus exigit eas tales secundum essentiam. Et sic non abstrahunt essentialiter a transcendentem ordine ad actus." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, n. 5).

The act, then, is related to and is perfected by the object. Since there is a proportion between the act and the object, the act is said to be specified by the object, not in the order of efficient and final causality which regard only the existence of the act, but in the order of formal, extrinsic causality which abstracts from the existence and enters the very definition of the act.

" . . . Constat autem dari aliqua, quae non solum in sui definitione et specie secundum se sumpta dicunt ordinem ad alterum ad quod definiuntur, et sine que non constituitur eorum species, sicut patet in his quorum essentia consistit in portione et coaptatione cum altero, sicut se habet potentia et actus ad objecta, ergo specificantur per illa non secundum ordinem efficientis et finis, quae licet sint causae extrinsecae, tamen non respiciunt rem nisi secundum ordinem existentiae, non sine illa, ergo respiciunt illa secundum rationem causae formalis . . . et non secundum rationem causae formalis intrinsecae, quia objectum est extra potentiam et separatim ab ipsa, ergo secundum rationem causae formalis extrinsecae." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Phil.*, *Phil. Nat.* III P., Q. 2, art. 3).

The species of an act, therefore, is taken from its order to the object.

"Species enim actuum et operationum sumuntur secundum ordinem ad objecta. . ." (Comment. S. Thomae, *op. cit.*, n. 305).

What has been explained in the preceding pages may be summarized by saying that a human act which is elicited by the will is, in itself, something positive because it is a quality. It is, moreover, intrinsically related to its specifying object, for this transcendental relation is inherent in the very act. And this ordination to an object is also positive because the act is elicited in order that it may tend to the object with which it is concerned and from which it receives its perfection. There is no other way that the act pertains to the object and the object to the act than by the positive tendency of the act to the object.

2. THE PHYSICAL ENTITY OF A HUMAN ACT

Since a human action is both voluntary and moral, it may be considered from two points of view. The voluntary or physical nature of the act is the subject and matter upon which morality builds. The moral nature of the act is its subjection to the rules of morality. Since an act is specified by an object, the object of the voluntary aspect of a human action, and the object of the moral act, while entitatively one object, will be viewed under two formalities. The voluntary action is specified by an object considered in its physical goodness and desirability; the moral act is specified by the same object measured and ruled by reason.

“ . . . Hoc quod est objectum . . . subijci legi et regulis morum, in quo consistit moralitas objectiva. posse summi duplīter: vel in esse rei, ut est quaedam ratio per se bona, ac proinde in recto et ut quod appetibilis a voluntate. . . Vel potest summi formalissime in ratione moralitatis objectivae seu in quantum specificatio et terminus moralitatis formalis existens in actu: quo pacto praecise dicit quod sit mensura passiva (quam non incongrue appellabimus mensurationem sive mensuratum esse) bonitatis et appetibilitatis objecti proveniens a lege. . . Diximus solum hoc secundo modo summi praedicam subiectionem formalissime in ratione moralitatis objectivae dantis actui formalem, et specificantis illam: quia primo modo potius sumitur ut objectum physicum . . . nec prout sic dat actu moralitatem, sed entitatem physicam. . . Habemus ergo subiectionem objecti ad regulas morum tunc solum summi formaliter in ratione moralitatis objectivae, terminique et specificativi moralitatis actus, quando praecise consideratur ut determinatio et mensuratio bonitatis et appetibilitatis ipsius objecti, nec curatur an alius etiam sit ut quod appetibilis; sed hoc se habet de materiali. E contra vero cum sumitur ut aliquid in recto et ut quod appetibile, et ut capax recipiendi denominationem volūti, non consideratur ut ad genus moris pertinens adhuc objective, ac proinde neque ut

specificans moralitatem actus, sed ut objectum physicum specificans entitatem volitionis.” (Salmanantenses, *Cursus Theol.*, Tract. XI, *De Bonitate et Malitia Actuum Humanorum*, disp. 1, dub. 3, Section 4, n. 47).

The physical entity of the voluntary action comprising the act and its order to an object as it is in itself, is transcendentially good; for, since an action has being, and since an act has as much goodness as it has being, it is evident that there is transcendental goodness in every human act. This goodness, however, is not moral goodness because the transcendental goodness is distinct from the moral. It pertains to the physical nature of the act, and not to the moral entity of the human action.

“ . . . Non tolli quod in ipso actu detur bonitas naturalis distincta a morali, quantumcumque enim non possit in re separari naturalis entitas actus ab omni moralitate bona, seu conformitate ad rationem, revera tamen actus ille bonitatem habet cum bonitate transcendentali, sicut omnia alia entia, quae bonitas transcendentalis distincta est a bonitate morali saltem in formalitate diversae lineae et ordinis. Et oportet nomine entitatis actus intelligere D. Thomam id quod pertinet ad genus naturae, quando dicit: ‘Sic igitur dicendum est quod omnis actio, in quantum habet aliquid de esse, in tantum habet de bonitate’ (S. *Theol.*, I-II, q. 18, art. 1); eo quod bonitas ad entitatem consequatur, transcendentalis bonitas est et ad lineam physicae bonitatis pertinet, non ad lineam moralitatis quae superaddita est entitati transcendentali. . .’ (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus theol.*, I-II, *Tractatus de Bonitate et Malitia Actuum Humanorum*, Disp. 8, art. 2, n. 4).

By the physical nature of the act, therefore, is meant its ordination to an object which is considered precisely in its physical goodness and desirability. The act tends positively to an object that is desirable, abstracting from its subjection to the dictates of reason. The physical nature of the act, then, is an action which pertains to the genus quality. It is efficiently produced by the will. It is specified by an object that is good in itself or at least apparently good, but not necessarily good morally.

“ . . . Nominē entitatis et generis naturae intelligi in actu morali omnia illa praedicata, quae actus habet ex principio naturali a quo egreditur physice, scilicet a voluntate, sicut ad esse morale pertinet quiddam habet ex principio regulante, et commensurante ipsum cum regulis rationis. . . Igitur ad entitatem actus et ad physicam ejus essentiam secundum genus naturae pertinet in primis, quod sit quantitas

quaedam vitalis et immanens emanans a voluntate . . . quod respiciat bonum et appetibile sub praecisa ratione appetibilis. . . Totum hoc pertinet ad actum in ratione physica, et secundum genus naturae, eo quod omnes istas condiciones participat a suo principio elicitive a quo physice et efficienter procedit. . . Et quia actus non elicitor physice a potentia, nisi in ordine ad objectum circa quod versatur, etiam in istis physicis et entitativis praedicatis secundum quae procedit a potentia libera, respicit similiter in objecto id quod ad talem ordinem naturae et voluntatis spectat, scilicet quod versatur circa bonum appetibile, et indifferens, si sit objectum actus liberi. Hoc enim totum habet actus voluntarius, etiam quacumque regulatione legis, et prudentiae, vel rationis senioa." (John of St. Thomas, *Ibid.*, nn. 8 et 9.)

It must not be thought, however, that the physical entity of the act serves as the genus of morality, as if this genus were contracted and divided by the moral species, goodness and malice. It is true that it is the matter presupposed by the moral principles, i.e., the object, the extrinsic end and the circumstances. It is not, however, a strict genus; rather it is a quasi artificial genus, or matter which is capable of receiving the ordination of reason, just as natural things are capable of receiving the ordination of the rules of arts. The genus of morality which is predicated of moral goodness or malice, is the human act subjected to the rules of morality.

" . . . Quare actio secundum id quod habet de actu, et de entitate, non dicitur genus pro linea morali sumendo genus stricte pro genere logico et praedicabili, sed pro genere quasi artificiali, et physico sicut materia in artificialibus habet rationem generis pro artefactis, nec tamen praedicatur de artefactis ipsa materia, verbi gratia, lignum ut est ens naturale quasi genus logicum ejus, cum sint in diversa linea, sed lignum ut artificiose ordinabile, seu ut subiectum ordinationi et regulationi artis, sic est genus specierum artificialium. Eodem modo actus secundum physicam bonitatem, et entitatem actus non est genus praedicabile de speciebus moralibus, sed actus ut humanus ut sic, et subiectus regulis morum, sic est genus propriae, et praedicabiliter ad species morales." (John of St. Thomas, *Ibid.*, n. 11).

3. THE MORAL GENUS OF A HUMAN ACT

The moral genus of the human act is the ordination of the act to its object which is subjected to and regulated by reason, for reason is the measure and principle of human activity. The moral genus supposes the entire entity of the act in its natural being, and its relation

ship to an object that is desirable. This moral genus, however, does not add a new transcendental relation, for it is only a new formalitatem whereby the act attains an object which is ruled by reason. The things signified by the words, "natural" and "moral," are not different entities or different relations, for they are identical on the part of the subject in which they are, i.e., on the part of the act. They differ in their termination and constitution, since the same tendency is ordered to an object precisely as desirable, which constitutes the natural entity, and is also ordained to an object regulated by reason and by law, which determines its moral nature. The physical entity of the act and its intrinsic order to an object serves as the matter and subject of morality, so that morality, too, consists in an intrinsic order of an act to an object, not as it is in its physical goodness, but as it falls under the sway of reason.

"Respectus autem, et ordo moralitatis, sive bonae, sive male est respectus ipsiusmet actus ad objectum, non praecise sub ratione appetibilis, et ut terminat actum voluntatis sub ratione volubilis, quod pertinet etiam ad entitatem ipsius actus, sed sub ratione regulabilis a ratione. Qui respectus sub hac formalitate supponit totam entitatem actus, et praedicata ejus physica, et respectum ad objectum sub ratione voluti vel appetibilis, et superaddit attingentiam ipsius sub ratione regulabilis, quae tamen attingentia et respectus non est alius entitative ab ipso ordine transcendentali actus ad objectum appetibile, sed solum addit novam formalitatem, ut attingat objectum sub ratione regulabilis, eo quod ille respectus attingens transcendentaliter objectum, potens est attingere totum quod invenit in objecto ad suam sphaeram pertinens; sed ut attingit praecise sub ratione appetibilis, sic pertinet ad actum secundum id quod physicum et entitativum est, puta quod sit actus voluntatis potius quam intellectus. . . Ut autem attingit in ipso objecto ordinem et mensuram rationis sic est moralis, et speciem generisque morale constituit, vel potius autem ipsum in linea morali ponit. Nec tamen ordo iste et linea moralis habet contrahere actum, vel habitum prout est in linea et genere physico seu entitativo, sed solum contrahit actum in quantum humanum ut sic, et differentiae morales boni et mali per se contrahunt actum ut humanum, non ut physicum, stat enim actum in genere physico esse ejusdem rationis, et in genere morali diversum. . . " (John of St. Thomas, *Ibid.*, n. 10).

Morality is accidentally compared to the act entitatively considered. The moral nature of the act is not examined from the viewpoint of the appetibility of the object, or the object as it is in itself, but from the viewpoint of the regulation of the object by reason. Al-

though there is no new transcendental relation, nevertheless, there is a new termination because the act attains the moral object, an aspect which is accidental to the natural entity of the object as it is in itself.

“... Ille ordinet transcendentalis quo actus voluntatis tendit ad obiectum ut appetibile, tendit etiam, et tangit ipsam moralitatem, quae in obiecto reperitur, ... quia totum quod est annexum, vel circumstans ipsum obiectum eodem respectu et habitudine potest actu ille attingere. Dicitur autem esse accidentalis ipsi actui considerato in esse naturae, non quia sit nova denominatio, aut relatio superveniens, sed quia ex parte obiecti accidentaliter se habet ad bonitatem naturalem obiecti, et ad ejus appetibilitatem. Unde non attingitur tanquam id a quo formaliter sumitur physica et entitativa ratio actus; haec enim sumitur solum a bonitate naturali obiecti ut appetibile; sed attingitur tanquam aliquid accidentaliter annexum huic appetibilitati et bonitati obiecti; et tamen eadem reali tendentia et respectu quo attingitur bonitas entitativa, attingitur et moralitas seu regulabilitas, quae isti bonitati accedit, sicut actus videndi eodem respectu, tendentia, qua attingit coloratum attingit accidentia ejus ut figuram, motum, quietem; licet haec attingat tanquam accidentia illius; non tamen indiget ad hoc diversa tendentia, aut relatione superaddita... sed eadem tendentia, qua obiectum specificum coloratum attingitur, etiam sensibilia ejus communia, ut figura et motus attinguntur ipso vero et reali actu et respectu transcendentali, licet unum attingatur ut substantiale et specificum obiectum, alterum ut accidens illius. Sic ergo illo eodem actu et tendentia qua attingitur bonitas naturalis et obiectum in ratione appetibilis, attingitur et ejus regulatio et moralitas secundum quam illud obiectum est subiectum regulis morum; licet haec moralitas accidentaliter se habeat comparatione ad illud bonum et appetibilitatem in esse naturae.” (John of St. Thomas, *Ibid.*, art. 1, n. 50; cf. etiam, art. 2, n. 13).

It should be evident, then, that the genus of morality consists in the order of an act to an object measured by reason. It should be equally clear that this order inheres in the act, since the proportion and relation of act to object is intrinsically in the act.

“... Quamvis finis sit causa extrinseca, tamen debita proportio ad finem, et relatio in ipsum, inhaeret actioni.” (S. *Theol.*, I-II, q. 18, art. 4, ad. 2).

The act, therefore, is specified by the object, not as it is in itself or its natural being, but as it is ruled by reason, for the action inclines by its very nature to the moral object, from which it receives its specification.

“... Quia ratio moralis in actibus sumitur per comparationem ad obiectum consideratum non in esse naturae, sed in comparatione ad regulas moris; sed actus in ordine ad obiectum, et ad omnia, quae in obiecto sunt, comparatur per ordinem intrinsecum et realem; ergo per eundem constituntur in ratione, et in esse morali. Consequentia est certa, quia constituntur in esse morali per ordinem ad obiectum regulatum regulis rationis, seu prout cadit sub ordine rationis... Ergo si ordo ad obiectum, et ad ea quae in obiecto sunt, est intrinsecus et realis, etiam in ordine ad obiectum ut regulatum erit ordo intrinsecus et realis. Minor etiam constat, quia actus non ex aliquo extrinseco et superveniente, sed ex ipsis vicibus, et propria natura actus inclinatur in obiectum, quia respicit illud ut specificativum; ergo ab intrinseco, si quidem ad specificativum non inclinatur nisi ut specificabilis, non est autem specificabilis et accipiens speciem nisi per ipsam intrinsecam naturam, et entitatem suam.” (J. of S. Thomas, *C. Theol.*, *op. cit.*, disp. 8, art. 1, n. 26).

A human act is not ruled by reason except by virtue of the object which it attains. Reason and the law of God do not command or prohibit an action precisely because it is a quality proceeding from the will; but only by reason of the object with which it is concerned and to which it is ordained. The act, moreover, does not touch the object except by virtue of the real order and intrinsic tendency of the act to the object, for the object is attained because the act tends by its very nature to it.

“... Nam actus non regulatur a ratione et a lege, nisi ratione obiecti quod attingit, non ratione sui ut quaedam qualitas est a subiecto egrediens; nec obiectum attingi potest, aut id quod ex parte obiecti se tenet, nisi per hoc quod actus ipsum respiciat, non per aliquam extrinsecam denominationem, aut per aliquem alium modum, quam per respectum, et ordinem ad tale obiectum, quia inter obiectum et actum, non est alia via aut modus quo obiectum pertinet ad actum, et actus ad obiectum, quam per tendentiam et proportionem, seu habitudinem huius ad illud. Quod enim non regulatur actus a ratione et lege, nisi prout attingit obiectum, et medianter obiecto regulato constat, quia nulla lex prohibet aut praecipit actum, ut praecise qualitas est egrediens a potentia, sed solum ratione materiae quam tangit, et super quam cadit, sicut prohibet occisionem, quia occisio hominis est, non quia actus vitalis est a voluntate, vel potentia motiva elicitus. Et idem est in reliquis actibus a quibus, si praescidamus obiectum et materiam super quam cadit, nec praecipii potest, nec prohiberi, atque adeo nec regulari lege, et ratione.” (John of St. Thomas, *Ibid.*, n. 28).

The genus of morality, therefore, is not an absolute form, for it is a mode of the human act, which pertains to the same predicament as does the act, just as the morality of the object is a mode of the natural being of the object. Since morality is the measure of the object, not as it is in its natural being, but as it is ruled by reason, morality is properly called a mode of the object. Since the act is essentially and transcendently related to the object, the morality of the act derived from the object, will also be a mode of the act.

“... Unde cum moralitas objectiva nihil aliud sit quam determinatio et mensura a lege praefixa objecto, ipsa proprie dicitur objecti modus, et quae ex ea in actum derivatur dicitur modus ipsius actus: propriumque munus istius erit modificare et sub mensura reddere actum sicut illa modificat objectum et reddit mensuratum a lege.” (Salmanticenses, *op. cit.*, disp. 1, n. 48).

4. THE SPECIES OF MORALITY

Since the genus of morality consists in the intrinsic order of an act to an object regulated by reason, the species also share this subjection, otherwise they would not be species. The species of morality, goodness and malice, therefore, participate in the common note of subjection to reason. Where it is a question of an act and not the omission of an act, both tend positively to an object measured and directed by reason. They differ, however, by the conformity or deformity of the object to reason, for as the object is, so is the act. Since the act is ordained to an object regulated by reason, it receives its specification from the object.

“... Omnia quae sunt ad aliud specificantur ab illo ad quod sunt, sicut habitus et actus...” (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Phil.*, Log. II, q. 17, art. 6).

In other words, the morality of an act is presupposed by the morality of its object because the act is ruled by reason in so far as it tends to the specifying object which is governed by reason. If the object agrees with the dictates of reason, the act is good; if the object disagrees with the commands of reason, the act is evil.

“... Unde si obiectum actus includat aliquid quod conveniat ordini rationis, erit actus bonus secundum suam speciem; ... si autem includat aliquid quod repugnat ordini rationis, erit malus actus secundum speciem...” (S. Theol., I-II, q. 18, art. 8).

The genus of morality, therefore, is divided into the species,

goodness and malice. It is an essential division, since the genus is essential to the species and is predicated of them as a superior is predicated of its inferiors. Since the formal genus of morality is the intrinsic order and real tendency of an act to an object measured by reason and the eternal law, its species also partake of this intrinsic order and real tendency.

“... Patet ergo quod differentia boni et mali circa obiectum considerata, comparatur per se ad rationem; scilicet secundum quod obiectum est ei convenientis vel non convenientis. Dicuntur autem aliqui actus humani vel morales, secundum quod sunt a ratione. Unde manifestum est quod bonum et malum diversificant speciem in actibus moralibus; differentiae enim per se diversificant speciem.” (*Ibid.*, art. 5).

The differences, then, which diversify the species are essential differences, and hence the division is also essential.

According to St. Thomas, the species, goodness and malice, are taken from the object. Since the order to the object inheres intrinsically in the act, the order of morality in acts is also an intrinsic and real tendency, for this order, too, is inherent in the act.

Since the genus of morality consists in the positive order of an act to an object, the species, too, will be positive, for no object denominates immediately the act which it terminates, but denominates the act good or bad through the relation which the act has towards the object. The object denominates the act in the manner in which it causes it. Since this causality is in the genus of formal, extrinsic causality and terminates the tendency of the act, the object will denominate the act through the medium of the act's intrinsic, positive tendency.

“... Quia nullum obiectum denominat immediate actum quem terminat, sed mediante respectu quem dicit ad illud ipse actus... Et ratio est, quia objecta non aliter denominantur actus, nisi eo modo quo illos causant; cumque haec causalitas solum sit per modum obiecti, terminando eorum habitudinem, hinc est ut nominis media ista habitudine illos denominent. Ergo ut obiectum morale denominet moralium actum, debet esse in hoc aliquis respectus ad illud: a quo respectu immediatus quam ab objecto praedicta denominatio proveniat.” (Salmanticenses, *op. cit.*, disp. 1, dubium 3, n. 40).

“... Nam actus non denominatur moralis immediate ab obiecto, vel alio extrinseco, a quibus sumitur moralitas, sed a respectu ad illa: qui respectus est intrinsecus.” (scilicet in actu) (*Ibid.*, n. 52).

“... Ergo etiam respectu moralitatis actus propriae et per se differentiae erunt habitudo ad obiectum per modum con-

venientis praedictae regulae (rationis), in qua habitudine consistit bonitas; et habitudo per modum disconvenientis, in qua consistit malitia." (*Ibid.*, disp. 2, dubium 2, n. 9).

It may be objected, however, that evil, since it is a privation, is a non-being. A non-being cannot be a difference, and therefore, a sin cannot be constituted in a species because it is evil.

St. Thomas replies to this objection by saying:

"... Dicitur enim actus malus secundum suam speciem, non ex eo quod nullum habeat objectum, sed quia habet objectum non conveniens rationi, sicut tollere aliena. Unde, in quantum objectum est aliquid positive, potest constituere speciem mali actus." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 18, art. 5, ad 2).

The object is not said to be something positive because it is, in itself, something positive, but rather because it is the term of a positive tendency on the part of the act, for the fact is that the act can tend positively to a negation, for example, not to do something that ought to be done, and this, not by the mere omission of an act, but by a positive act on the part of the will which wills not to do something. Even an evil act, therefore, consists in the positive, intrinsic order to an object.

"... Sed non dicitur objectum aliquid esse positivum, quia in se entitative sit aliquid positivum, sed quia ab actu positivo in ordine respiciatur, non enim repugnat actum ferri in aliquam negationem, verbi gratia non dare, non facere; et objectum quod S. Thomas assignat est objectum non conveniens rationi, ubi ly non conveniens aliquid negationis importat. Ergo actus malus constituitur in specie morali per ordinem ad objectum. Si ergo iste ordo est inhaerens actui, utique ordo intrinsecus est, non ordo rationis, non extrinseca denominatio." (*J. of St. T., Cursus Theol., op. cit.*, disp. 8 art. 1, n. 25).

This point may be clarified by a consideration of the sinful act. An act is not good nor bad morally except by reason of the object. The regulation of reason touches the act according as it attains the object. The object is first understood to be regulated and then the act. An act is evil, therefore, because it attains an object not in conformity with the rules of morality. The act, however, does not participate and derive this malice and this defect of regulation from the object except by virtue of its tendency to such an object. In the sin, then, there are found the order or tendency to an object, and the privation of the proper rectitude. Even in sin, therefore, the positive order of the act to an object is first understood, and from that positive tendency there follows the privation.

"... Solum autem ad hoc deservit habitudo, et ordo, quae actus habet ad objectum, quia non est alius modus quo comparatur ad ipsum ut ad objectum, nisi per respectum et tendentiam; ergo in ipso respectu moralitas ab objecto accepta et participata consistet. Et haec ratio militat etiam in actibus malis malitia morali... si quidem malitia morali, cum sit defectus in regulatione rationis, et obliquitas a lege, non potest convenire actui nisi mediante objecto: sicut enim actui convenit regulatio prout attingit objectum, et quatenus prius intelligitur objectum regulatum, et inde actus, sic obliquitas regulationis debet convenire actui, quatenus tangit objectum non regulatum, neque subiectum regulis rationis... At non potest actus ab objecto participare et derivare hanc malitiam et hunc defectum regulationis, nisi mediante respectu et tendentia ad tale objectum: ergo etiam in malis actibus ipsa moralitas malitiae in positivo respectu et tendentia debet consistere. Minor probatur, quia in actu non invenitur nisi ordo, seu tendentia ad objectum, et privatio rectitudinis delinac. At non potest ad objectum comparari, et ab eo deordinacionem et malitiam participare media privatione tanquam ratione formali; ergo medio respectu et tendentia. Minor probatur, quia non participat actus aliquid ab objecto, nisi quatenus tendit ad illud, ut ad terminum, et rem circa quam versatur, non versatur autem circa objectum mediante privatione, sed mediante respectu et tendentia, quia privatio non tendit, neque comparatur nisi ad formam privatum: objectum autem, licet in se sit aliqua privatio, et malum, nunquam comparatur ad actum ut forma privata per illum, si quidem actus versatur circa objectum, non illo privat, nec ei opponitur; ergo licet actus in quantum defectuosus, et tendens ad objectum primum habeat annexam privationem, tamen repugnat, quod privatio sit id, quo actus participat ab objecto rationem objectivam, quaecumque illa sit, sive conveniens rationi, sive disconveniens: ergo neque formalis ratio moralitatis in quantum hausta, et participata est ab objecto, quia illud est formale in moralitate, quod est ratio accipiendi illam ab objecto, si quidem moralitas non consideratur in actu, nisi accepta ab objecto, quia non regulatur nisi ratione objecti attracti." (*John of St. Thomas, Ibid.*, n. 30).

This point may be further elucidated by recalling that an act is good because it is compared to, tends positively towards, and receives its goodness from, an object that is conformable to reason. The act shares the goodness of the object because it regards it as its term. It is related to the object by virtue of its intrinsic order to it. Since the positive order and real tendency inhere in the very act itself, the morality of the act will be constituted by this intrinsic, positive order, for the act attains the object by virtue of its tendency towards it.

In the case of sin, this same tendency is evident, with this important difference that the act is evil because the object is evil. The act regards an object which is desirable in itself, but which is evil for man, since it does not measure up to the requirements of reason. Although the act tends to an object which is apparently good, but which, in reality, is deprived of the moral good it ought to have, there is a certain order present in the act. The act first attains the object which it loves, and, secondly, is deprived of the object which it ought to love. It departs from the good object because it tends to the defective object. By tending to the defective object, it withdraws from the opposite good. The privation, therefore, is secondarily and consequently attained by the act, for the act inclines to the deficient object before it is understood to be deprived of the true object. Just as an act is formally good because it tends positively to an object that is good and that specifies it, so an act is evil because it tends positively to an object that is not conformable to reason, since the tendency of the act is the way in which the object is attained. The morality of a sinful action, therefore, is constituted by the order to the object. This positive order is, further, the reason for and the foundation of the privation which follows the positive tendency of the act. Morality, then, is first constituted by the intrinsic order of the act to the object, and not by the privation which is consequent to the former.

“ . . . Quia actus malus habet se ad ista objecta, scilicet ad objectum deordinatum, quod respicit, et ad objectum bonum, quo privat ordine quodam, et prius attingit objectum quod diligit, quam objectum quo privat: ideo enim recedit ab isto objecto bono, et privatur illo, quia accedit et tendit ad illud pravum; et prius est actu tendere, quam recedere, constituitur enim per tendentiam, non per recessum, et semper id quod constitutum est praecedit, et quia ex parte ipsorum objectorum datur ista oppositio, ideo accedendo ad unum, recedit et privat altero. Ergo privatio illa est secundaria, et consecuta, nec ratione illius potest habere actus moralitatem primo, et per se, quia cum primo tendit ad objectum primum per respectum, et habitudinem antequam intelligatur privare bono opposito, illa tendentia est in genere moris, quia est ad objectum non habens praecise bonitatem in genere naturae, sed in ratione inconvenientis ad rationem, si quidem est tale quod ex illo sequitur privatio objecti boni oppositi; ergo iam habet in se aliquid pertinentis ad regulam et ordinem rationis, alias non posset in quantum tale opponi, et fundare privationem boni finis. Ergo ante privationem inventur moralitas in actu respectu objecti proprii quod diligit, et ad quod habet tendentiam, illud enim in se pravum est. . . id autem quod diligitur ab aliquo actu positive respicitur, et

tenditur ad illud, non privat eo quia non opponitur illi: ergo illud diligere, et illud positive respicere objectum primum etiam moralis ratio et formalitas est; sed non est in linea et genere boni, cum sit ratio et fundamentum privandi bono opposito et rectitudine; ergo est in linea mali. . . Et sic genus moris, etiam in malis actibus, positivum respectum dicit, et in illo genere morali non potest ille respectus pertinere ad lineam et speciem boni, sed mali. . . Quare quamcumque privationem, quam habet actus malus habet haustam ab objecto, et quasi secundario consecutam, quatenus objectum, quod respicit, et ad quod tendit privationem habet objecti boni. Ab objecto autem, quod est proprium et specificativum actus non participatur, et accipitur aliquid per privationem erga illud, sed per tendentiam et respectum, qui est modus attingendi objectum; ergo moralitas etiam in actibus malis per respectum et tendentiam positivam convenit actibus, non per privationem.” (*Ibid.*, n. 32).

More light can be thrown on this point by noting that acts are good or bad because their objects are good or bad; in other words, the goodness or malice of an act is presupposed in the object from which it is taken. The same thing may be said about the circumstances because they affect the object immediately and the act through the medium of the object. The act, therefore, is compared to the object from which it receives its goodness or malice. A sinful act is not compared to the object by reason of the privation, for the latter is related or compared to the deprived form only; but by virtue of the tendency to the object, for there is no other way by which any act, good or bad, can be compared and related to the object, except by its intrinsic order to it. The morality of an act, therefore, is taken from the object because the act is not regulated except by reason of the object to which it tends positively.

5. CONVERSION AND AVERSION IN SIN

This point may be summarized by referring to the positive aspect in a sin of commission as a conversion to a mutable good, while the privation, which follows from this conversion, is called an aversion, a turning away from the true good.

“ . . . Quod ex ipsa indebita conversione ad aliquod bonum commutabile sequitur aversio ab incommutabili bono, in qua perficitur ratio mali.” (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 73, art. 3, ad 2).

The inordinate turning to a variable good is the cause of the aversion, and is the foundation of the privation because the act is not propor-

tionate to the real good by reason of the disorderly conversion to a mutable good.

“ . . . Quod inordinata conversio ad commutabile bonum, est causa aversionis. . . ” (*De Malo*, q. 2, art. 7, ad 1).

“ . . . Quod ex inordinata conversione ad commutabile bonum redditur actus improporcionatus ad conversionem ad finem debitum; et ideo fundamentum aversionis est conversio in peccato.” (*4 Sent.*, dist. 16, q. 3, art. 3, quaestione. 1, ad 2).

The aversion, which is the privative malice, supposes as its cause and its foundation the prior conversion. The latter is not inordinate by the subsequent privation; rather it precedes the latter, for it is sinful by reason of its positive tendency to a defective object.

“ . . . Quod bonum et malum non sunt differentiae nisi in moralibus, in quibus malum positive dicitur, secundum quod ipse actus voluntatis denominatur malus a volito; licet et ipsum malum non possit esse volitum nisi sub ratione boni.” (*De Malo*, q. 1, art. 1, ad 12). (Italics mine).

According to St. Thomas, therefore, there is a positive malice in a sin of commission, for in moral acts there is a positive evil which is denominated as such by the object willed. And the denomination taken from the object is positive because it is made by virtue of the positive tendency of the act to the object.

“ . . . Quod peccatum non est privatio pura, sicut tenbrac, sed est aliquid positivum.” (*Ibid.*, q. 2, art. 11, ad 13). (Italics mine).

The theologians of Salamanca commenting on these two passages have this to say:

“ . . . Uterque iste locus, et primus praesertim valde expressus est pro hac sententia (i.e., positive malice in a sin of commission): non enim potest exponi de malo praecise pro materiali: nam verba illa ‘malum positive dicitur’ exprimunt ipsam mali denominationem: debentque proinde referri ad illud, unde malum dicitur, et a quo sumitur haec denominatio: quod est ipsa formalis malitia. Et hoc magis ostendunt sequentia verba D. Th. ‘secundum quod ipse actus voluntatis denominatur malus a volito’: ac si diceret, ideo in moralibus dicitur aliquid malum positive, quia eam denominationem sumit ab objecto volito, et denominatio sumpta ab objecto est denominatio positiva: fit enim media tendentia actus ad ipsum objectum, quae est positiva. Hoc etiam docetur in solut. ad 4 ejusdem art. (*De Malo*, q. 1, art. 1), ubi haec habet: ‘Omnis autem actus denominatur et speciem recipit ab objecto. Sic ergo actus voluntatis, in quantum fertur

in malum, recipit rationem et nomen mali; et hoc malum contrariatur proprie bono; et haec contrarietas ex actibus in habitus transit in quantum actus et habitus simulantur.’ Plane ergo concedit D. Thomas in moralibus aliquam rationem positivam, quae tribuat denominationem mali, siquae proinde formalis malitia.” (Salmant., *Cursus Theol.*, De Virtus et Peccatis, disp. 6, dub. 3, n. 30).

6. FURTHER TESTIMONY OF ST. THOMAS

When St. Thomas treats of the specification and distinction of sins, he distinguishes in them two formalities, one positive which is the conversion and tendency to an object opposed to reason and the eternal law, the other privative which is the aversion and withdrawal from the law and the immutable good. Sin receives its species and distinction from the first formality whereas the second does not specify sin, but rather follows the sin already specified by its order to a deficient object.

“ . . . Quod formalis ratio alicujus peccati potest accipi dupliciter. Uno modo secundum intentionem peccantis, et secundum hoc id ad quod convertitur peccans est formale objectum peccati, et ex hoc diversificantur ejus species. Alio modo secundum rationem mali, et sic illud bonum a quo receditur, est formale objectum peccati; sed ex hac parte peccatum non habet speciem, immo est privatio. . . ” (II-II, q. 10, art. 5, ad 1).

For St. Thomas, then, sin is specified and distinguished by the conversion. And this particular passage is in absolute accord with other places in his doctrine where he treats *ex professo* of the distinction of sin.

“ . . . Ad rationem peccati duo concurrunt, scilicet actus voluntarius; et inordinatio ejus quae est per recessum a lege Dei. Horum autem duorum unum per se comparatur ad peccantem, qui intendit talem actum voluntarium exercere in tali materia; aliud autem, scilicet inordinatio actus, per accidens se habet ad intentionem peccantis. ‘Nullus enim intendens ad malum operatur’ ut Dionysius dicit (*De Div. Nom.* cap. 4, part. IV). Manifestum est autem quod unumquodque consequitur speciem secundum illud quod est per se, non autem secundum id quod est per accidens; quia ea quae sunt per accidens, sunt extra rationem speciei. Et ideo peccata specie distinguuntur ex parte actuum voluntariorum, magis quam ex parte inordinationis in peccato existentis. Actus autem voluntarii distinguuntur specie secundum objecta. . . Unde sequitur quod peccata proprie distinguantur specie secundum objecta.” (I-II, q. 72, art. 1).

Again, we find the same doctrine in the following selections :

“ . . . Peccatum etiam non habet speciem ex parte aversionis, quia secundum hoc est negatio vel privatio; sed ex parte conversionis, secundum quod est actus quidam. . . .” (*Ibid.* . . . art. 6, ad 2).

“ . . . Peccata speciem sortiuntur ex parte conversionis: quia ex parte aversionis non differunt.” (*4 Sent.*, dist. 16, q. 3, art. 2, quaestunc, 4, ad. 5).

In the I-II, q. 72, art. 8, he teaches the same doctrine :

“ . . . Quod cum in peccato sint duo, scilicet ipse actus et inordinatio ejus, prout receditur ab ordine rationis et legis divinae; species peccati attenditur non ex parte inordinationis, quae est praeter intentionem peccantis, sed magis ex parte ipsius actus, secundum quod terminatur ad objectum in quod fertur intentio peccantis. . . .”

And in art. 9, ad, 1, we read :

“ . . . Quod malum, inquantum hujusmodi, privatio est; et ideo diversificatur specie secundum ea quae privantur, sicut et ceterae privationes. Sed peccatum non sortitur speciem ex parte privationis vel aversionis, sed ex conversione ad objectum actus.”

This conversion, moreover, is not specified by the object as it is in itself; rather it is constituted by the order to the object measured by the rules of morality :

“ . . . Quod in peccatis invenitur duplex differentia: una materialis, et alia formalis. Materialis quidem attenditur secundum naturalem speciem actuum peccati (i.e., the ordination of the act to an object considered in its physical entity); formalis autem secundum ordinem ad unum finem proprium, quod etiam est objectum proprium (i.e., the object regulated by reason and the eternal law). Unde invenitur aliqui actus materialiter specie differentes, qui tamen formaliter sunt in eadem specie peccati, quia ad idem ordinantur; sicut ad eandem speciem homicidii pertinet jugulatio, lapidatio et perforatio, quamvis actus sint specie differentes secundum speciem naturae. . . .” (*Ibid.*, art. 6).

St. Thomas, furthermore, does not understand the privative inordination alone as being in sin, but rather recognizes the conversion as being the foundation of sin.

“ . . . Quod peccatum non solum significat ipsam privationem boni, quae est inordinatio, sed significat actum sub tali privatione, quae habet rationem mali. . . .” (*Ibid.*, I-II, q. 75, art. 1, ad 1).

Sin is not only the privation of rectitude; it is also an act. And since an act is specified by its object to which it tends and which it attains as its term, it will be formally constituted by the positive order and tendency to the object, and not by the privation.

“Sic igitur voluntas carens directione regulae rationis et legis divinae, intendens aliquod bonum commutabile, causat actum quidem peccati per se, sed inordinationem (which is the privation) actus per accidens, et praeter intentionem: provenit enim defectus ordinis in actu ex defectu directionis in voluntate.” (*Ibid.*, corpus.).

According to St. Thomas, therefore, a sin of commission is specified by the conversion and the tendency of the act to an inordinate object. Although the privation or aversion, which is absolute evil, is found in a sin of commission because it completes the sin, it does not specify it, since it follows the species of the sin.

This point may be summed up by saying with the Salnantienses that

“ . . . constitutio, specificatio et distinctio peccati in ratione talis fieri debet per illud quod est formale in ipso, adeoque formaliter malitia et deformitas moralis: fit autem secundum D. Thomam per conversionem et tendentia ad objectum dissonum, quae est ratio positiva; non vero per aversionem, sive privationem: ergo praedicta conversio ut positiva, et ut distincta a privatione, habet formaliter rationem malitiae. . . . ac proinde sentit dari aliam rationem diversam a privatione, adeoque positivam quae constituit peccatum in ratione talis, sitque proinde formaliter malitia. Haec autem ratio positiva est tendentia ad objectum dissonum. . . . ‘Mala actio, (says St. Thomas), ‘specificatur ex ordine ad finem indebitum i.e., finis operis seu objectum) cui admisceatur privatio finis debiti, ex quo ratio mali incidit: unde patet, quod non sola privatio specificat malum habitum et actionem; sed *positio quaedam ad finem quendam cum privatione debiti finis.*’ (2 Sent., dist., 34, q. 1, art. 2, ad 3). Salnantienses, *op. cit.*, n. 31). (Italics mine).

7. SINS AGAINST THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

The sins which are opposed to the moral virtues consist principally in the conversion to a mutable good, and, consequently, in aversion or withdrawal from the immutable good. The sinner, for example the fornicator, intends, not to depart from God, but to enjoy carnal pleasures, the result of which is that he recedes from God and His law. These sins receive their species from the conversion, the

positive order to the object. On the other hand, the theological vices consist principally in aversion from the immutable good. Consequently, they are turned to a mutable good, for the sinner who withdraws from God must necessarily turn to other things.

“... Quod in quolibet peccato mortali est quadammodo aversio a bono incommutabili et conversio ad bonum commutabile; sed aliter et aliter. Nam principaliter consistunt in aversione a bono incommutabili peccata quae opponuntur virtutibus theologiacis, ut odium Dei, et desperatio, et infidelitas, quia virtutes theologicae habent Deum pro objecto; ex consequenti autem important conversionem ad bonum commutabile, inquantum anima deserens Deum, consequenter necesse est quod ad alia convertantur. Peccata vero alia principaliter consistunt in conversione ad commutabile bonum; ex consequenti vero in aversione ab incommutabili bono; non enim qui fornicatur, intendat a Deo recedere, sed carnali delectatione frui, ex quo consequitur quod a Deo recedat.” (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 20, art. 1, ad 1).

It seems, therefore, that the sins against the moral virtues are constituted by the conversion which is the positive malice, whereas the sins against the theological virtues seem to be constituted and specified by the aversion which is privation. It seems probable, too, that pride, because of its close affinity with the sins opposed to the theological virtues, is directly contrary to God, for the proud man by an inordinate desire for his own good, opposes himself to God, since he wills not to be subject to God and His law.

“... Sed ex parte aversionis, superbia habet maximam gravitatem: quia in aliis peccatis homo a Deo avertitur, vel propter ignorantiam, vel propter infirmitatem, sive propter desiderium cujuscumque alterius boni; sed superbia habet aversionem a Deo ex hoc ipso quod non vult Deo et eius regulae subjici. . . . Et ideo averti a Deo et ejus praeceptis, quod est quasi consequens in aliis peccatis, per se ad superbiam pertinet, cuius actus est Dei contemptus. . . .” (*Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 162, art. 6).

Before considering the conversion and aversion in the sins which are opposed to the theological virtues, it is important to note that St. Thomas teaches that the privation or aversion in sinful acts or vices opposed to the moral virtues follows from the conversion to a mutable good. The act tends to a variable good as to its proper object because the object of these sins is not God directly. In this kind of sin, the sinner turns to a mutable good, and as a consequence departs from the immutable good.

In sins opposed to the theological virtues, on the other hand, three things are found. In hatred of God, for example, there is first the conversion to its proper object, i.e., God Who is hated; secondly, there is a formal aversion of the act of hate from the divine law, just as there is in every other mortal sin; thirdly, there is the concomitant conversion to a variable good, the sinner himself who sins by loving himself inordinately. In this sinful action, then, there is both conversion towards the immutable good and aversion from the immutable good. The act of hate, therefore, receives its species from the evil conversion towards the immutable good, just as every other act is specified by its object; for he who hates God ordains his act directly against God as its proper object. By the same act the sinner withdraws himself from the immutable good, for in hating God he denies God entrance to his will, since hatred is nothing else than to refuse God by withdrawing his affection from Him. This is not only departing from God, but it is also an offensive conversion against loving God.

“... In peccatis oppositis theologiacis virtutibus, verbi gratia in odio Dei, tria inveniuntur: primo, conversio ad proprium objectum, Deum scilicet, qui odio habetur; secundo, aversio formalis istius actus odii a divina lege, etc., sicut inveniuntur in quolibet alio peccato mortali aversio; tertio, conversio concomitans ad commutabile bonum, puta seipsum qui peccat, nimis amando. In aliis autem peccatis conversio ad proprium objectum, quae est essentialis peccato, est ad commutabile bonum; quia objectum aliorum peccatorum non est Deus. Et ideo in aliis aversio est ab incommutabili bono, conversio vero ad commutabile bonum: in istis vero, ut dictum est, et aversio est ab incommutabili bono, et conversio essentialis peccati est ad incommutabile bonum. Sed quia hujusmodi mala conversio ad incommutabile bonum, secundum ordinationem quidem actus appetitivi ad objectum, conversio est ad incommutabile bonum (nam qui odit Deum actum odii ordinat directe in Deum ut illius proprium objectum), et propterea hinc sumit speciem hujusmodi peccatum, sicut cetera ab objectis suis; secundum vero efficaciam actus ejusdem ad objectum, aversio est ab incommutabili bono:—nam qui odit Deum abnegat Deum a sua voluntate; odio enim habere nihil aliud est quam abnegare illud a suo appetitu. Hoc autem non solum est avertere amorem ab illo, sed contra illum etiam appetere. Unde, sicut convertens gladium ad aliquem occidentium convertit quidem se ad illum, sed conversione occisiva, ita in hujusmodi peccatis est conversio ad incommutabile bonum offensiva: et ideo Auctor in littera dicit hujusmodi peccata principaliter consistere in aversione a bono incommutabili.” (Cajetan in II-II, q. 20, art. 1, ad 1, n. 1).

Cajetan has distinguished the aversion from the immutable good into formal and objective. The formal is common to every mortal sin, but it is not this aspect which St. Thomas says consists principally in aversion from the invariable good. It is the privation which, was mentioned above as being in sin but not in the sense of constituting the species. The objective notion consists in an offensive conversion to God as to the proper matter and proper object of that conversion; and it is this which St. Thomas is considering, since the theological virtues have God for their object. And this, says Cajetan, shows that St. Thomas is talking about the aversion on the part of the object.

"Ut ergo cuncta juxta vocabula Auctoris clare videas, distinguere aversionem ab incommutabili bono in formalem et obiectivam. Et perspice primo, quod aversio formalis est quae communis est omni peccato mortali et dicitur formale in peccato mortali; et non esse illam de qua hic dicitur quod est principaliter intenta; et esse illam de qua superius dictum est, quod non specificat peccata.

Perspice secundo, quod aversio obiectiva Dei, quae consistit in conversione offensiva Dei ut propriae materiae et obiecti illius conversionis, est de qua hic dicitur quod est principaliter intenta. Et probatur hanc esse mentem Auctoris clare ex causa subijuncta, scilicet, quia virtutes theologicae habent Deum pro objecto: hoc enim manifestat quod de aversione ex parte obiecti loquitur. Et sic omnia consonant." (*Ibid.*, n. 2).

The formal aversion departs from God not directly as an object that is despised but consequently because the sinner loves something else more than God and His law. He recedes from God, therefore, as from his rule, not from God as He is in Himself, or as an object that is contemned. The objective or positive aversion tends against God by rejecting Him and willing Him not to be, as an object intended and willed. Whereas the formal aversion is found consequently and indirectly in sins against the moral virtues and the theological virtues, the objective aversion is found directly in the latter, for these sins touch God directly as their matter and object. They withdraw not only from God consequently, as from man's Ruler, but also recede from Him as an object which is despised.

"... Dicitur aversio obiectiva quando ipsum averti et relinquere Deum, quatenus erat obiectum aliquarum virtutum est res intenta et volita, quod accidit in habentibus tiam corruptam aestimationem de Deo, quod ipsum contemnit, et quasi sibi taediosum et onerosum reputans a se abigit, et repellent; ... aversio formalis est, quae relinquit Deum non directe et per se ut obiectum quod contemnit, sed con-

secutive quia scilicet amat aliud plusquam Deum, seu plusquam legem Dei, et sic recedit a Deo ut regulante, et recedit a Deo non in seipso, sed in sua lege, quatenus illam transgreditur, non vero recedit a Deo ut contempto in se, aut odio habito. Qui ergo peccat contra virtutes theologicas, cum ipsae tangunt Deum non solum in sua lege, et regula, sed ut materiam et obiectum repulsam, etiam talis peccans recedit a Deo, et fugit ipsum ut materiam et obiectum sibi aversum et taediosum, et nihilominus etiam recedit ab ipsa lege Dei prohibente talem contemptum. Illa ergo aversio dicitur obiectiva, quia pro objecto habetur Deus ut repulsus et contemptus, ideoque non mirum, quod in istis peccatis principaliter consideretur, cum ex parte obiecti se teneat, aversio autem formalis semper ex consequenti se habet, quia non respicitur ut obiectum, sed ut terminus a quo." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, *op. cit.*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 65).

8. PRIDE

Pride, which is not a sin directly opposed to the theological virtues, yet bears a close resemblance to them, needs special consideration. It is a sin because it is specified by an object, one's own excellence, which is opposed to right reason. Reason requires that every man tend to that which is proportionate to him; to go beyond that he is, to appear greater than he really is, is contrary to reason, since the desire for excellence is in excess of right reason. To desire one's perfection is not sinful, but to go beyond the limits sets by reason is evil.

"... Quod superbia nominatur ex hoc quod aliquis per voluntatem tendit supra id quod est... qui enim vult supergradi quod est, superbus est. Habet autem hoc ratio recta ut voluntas uniuscujusque feratur in id quod est proportionatum sibi. Et ideo manifestum est quod superbia importat aliquid quod adversatur rationi rectae. Hoc autem facti rationem peccati, quia, secundum Dionysium (De Div. Nom. cap. 4), malum animae est praeter rationem esse. Unde manifestum est quod superbia est peccatum." (S. Theol., II-II, q. 162, art. 1).

"... Quod superbia dupliciter accipi potest. Uno modo ex eo quod supergreditur regulam rationis, et sic dicimus eam esse peccatum..." (*Ibid.*, ad. 1).

Pride is, moreover, a special sin because it has a special object, an inordinate appetite of one's own excellence. And it has a generic character because other sins are directed to it, though this does not necessarily mean that all sins originate from or are subordinated to inor-

dinate exaltation, for some sins may be the result of ignorance or passion.

“ . . . Quod peccatum superbiae dupliciter potest considerari. Uno modo secundum propriam speciem, quam habet ex ratione proprii objecti. Et hoc modo superbia est speciale peccatum, quia habet speciale objectum; est enim inordinatus appetitus propriae excellentiae. . . . Alio modo potest considerari secundum redundantiam quamdam in alia peccata, et secundum hoc habet quamdam generalitatem, inquantum scilicet ex superbia oriri possunt omnia peccata, duplici ratione. Uno modo, per se, inquantum scilicet alia peccata ordinantur ad finem superbiae, qui est propria excellentia, ad quam potest ordinari omne id quod quis inordinate appetit. Alio modo, indirecte, et quasi per accidens, scilicet removendo prohibens, inquantum scilicet homo per superbiam contemnit legem divinam, per quam prohibetur a peccando. . . . Sciendum tamen quod ad hanc generalitatem superbiae pertinet quod omnia vitia interdum ex superbia oriri possent; non autem ad eam pertinet quod omnia vitia semper ex superbia oriuntur. . . . Non tamen semper ex contemptu aliquis praecepta divina transgreditur, sed quandoque ex ignorantia, quandoque ex infirmitate. . . .” (*Ibid.*, art. 2).

Pride is a mortal sin, for man refuses to be subject to God, since he elevates himself above that which has been appointed to him according to the divine rule or measure. In averting himself from God, man commits a serious sin, since he rejects his subjection to God and to His rule.

“ . . . Quod superbia humilitati opponitur. Humilitas autem proprie respicit subjectionem hominis ad Deum. . . . Unde e contrario superbia proprie respicit defectum huius subjectionis, secundum scilicet quod aliquis se extollit supra id quod est sibi praefixum secundum divinam regulam vel mensuram. . . . Et ideo dicitur Eccli. X, 14 quod initium superbiae hominis est apostatare a Deo, quia scilicet in hoc radix superbiae consideratur, quod homo aliquoties non subijcitur Deo et regulae ejus. Manifestum est autem quod hoc ipsum quod non est subijci Deo, habet rationem peccati mortalis; hoc enim est averti a Deo. Unde consequens est quod superbia secundum genus suum sit peccatum mortale. . . .” (*Ibid.*, art. 5).

Finally, pride is the greatest of sins, not on the part of the conversion, but on the part of the aversion.

“ . . . Quod in peccato duo attenduntur: scilicet conversio ad commutabile bonum, quae materialiter se habet in pec-

cato; et avertia a bono incommutabili, quae est formalis et completiva ratio peccati. Ex parte autem conversionis non habet superbia quod sit maximum peccatorum, quia celsitudo, quam superbus inordinate appetit, secundum suam rationem non habet maximam repugnantiam ad bonum virtutis. Sed ex parte aversionis superbia habet maximam gravitatem. . . .” (*Ibid.*, art. 6 et cf. pages 51-52).

In other words, pride, since it is specified by its object which is the self and not directly God, is not the most grievous of sins. Pride has extreme gravity, however, on the part of the aversion, because in other sins man turns away from God, either through ignorance or through weakness, or through desire for any other good whatever; whereas pride denotes aversion from God simply through being unwilling to be subject to God and His rule. Aversion from God and His commandments, which is a consequence in other sins, belongs to pride by its very nature, for its act is the contempt of God. Since that which belongs to a thing by its very nature is always of greater weight than that which belongs to it through something else, it follows that pride, by its genus, is the most grievous of sins, because it exceeds in aversion which is the formal complement of sin.

Before explaining two points which seem to undo what we have been attempting to establish, it is well to notice again that aversion in sins opposed to the moral virtues flows from the conversion to a mutable good.

There are, however, two difficulties to be solved. First, St. Thomas says that pride is the most grievous of sins because it exceeds in aversion which is the formal complement of sin. It would seem, therefore, that pride is constituted by the aversion and not by the conversion. And this seems to be true because St. Thomas says—and this is the second difficulty—that pride is not the greatest of sins on the part of the conversion, since the conversion is the material element in sin. It would seem, then, that St. Thomas understands the aversion to be the formal constituent of sin.

This becomes more apparent because St. Thomas considers the gravity and primacy of pride from the viewpoint of the aversion.

“ . . . Quod illud quod est per se, est primum in quolibet genere. Dicitur est autem supra, quod aversio a Deo quae formaliter complet rationem peccati, pertinet ad superbiam per se, ad alia autem peccata ex consequenti: et inde est quod superbia habet rationem prini peccati, et est etiam principium omnium peccatorum, ut supra dictum est (I-II, q. 84, art. 2), cum de causis peccati ageretur ex parte aversionis, quae est principalior in peccato.” (*Ibid.*, art. 7).

St. Thomas teaches, therefore, that the aversion from God formally completes the nature of sin; secondly, this aversion is essential to pride; thirdly, the aversion is a consequent in other sins. Pride, so it would seem, is an exception to what we have been attempting to show, since the aversion, the formal completion of sin, belongs essentially to pride. Nevertheless, even this passage can be conformed to the positivity which, as we have already seen, St. Thomas says constitutes and specifies sin.

Contempt which is the act of pride is due more to the turning away from God than to the conversion to the object, for the proud tend towards the non-subjection to God, since they desire their own exaltation without the proper ordination to God, which, as a matter of fact, they reject. This lack of submission is willed in itself, for to say that man does not will to be subject to God is the same as saying that it is positively desired.

“ . . . Et propterea in littera dicitur quod superbia in hoc differt a ceteris (scilicet a passione, inhumanitate, desiderio cuiuscunque alterius boni), ex parte aversionis, quia aversionem ipsam superbia habet, quia vult averti a Deo, quod est contemnere subjectionem Deo: sed in aliis est aversio propter ignorantiam, vel passionem, vel malitiam. . . . Cum expresse dicitur quod superbia ex parte conversionis non est maximum, quia suum obiectum, etc.; sed ex parte aversionis est maximum, quia sua aversio est ex seipsa volita. Dicere enim quod est volita ex hoc ipso quod non vult Deo subijci, et dicere quod est ex seipsa volita, idem est. . . .” (Cajetan in II-II, q. 162, art. 6, n. 2).

By the same act by which one's own perfection is inordinately desired, the proud man tends directly and positively against God because he wills not to submit to Him, as to his legitimate superior, since he expressly opposes himself to God.

“ . . . Nam superbus eodem motu, quo appetit inordinatam excellentiam, tendit etiam directe contra Deum, expresseque illi adversatur, et se illi opponit, nolens habere illum superiorem, cui se submitat, quique sit regula et mensura propriae excellentiae. . . . Haec tamen aversio seu tendentia contra Deum, ut diximus, non differt a conversione ad creaturam, scilicet ad propriam excellentiam; quia ipsum non habere Deum supra se, reputat superbus ut partem suae excellentiae; et ita eodem omnino motu, quo Deum abijcit, in excellentiam tendit; et quo tendit in excellentiam, Deum a se repellit.” (Salmanticensis, *op. cit.*, n. 55).

While the aversion is a consequent in sins opposed to the moral virtues, and while the objective, contrary aversion is proper to sins

in opposition to the theological virtues, the aversion in pride is essential to it, since pride wills to turn from God, for it is an act despising one's orderly subjection to God. Thus this aversion, while it has an absolute evil about it, is willed by a positive act, since the contempt present in pride arises from the positive tendency of the act, whereby a man refuses to submit to God and to His rule. The act of pride, therefore, is specified and constituted by the positive order of the act willing not to be subject to God.

“ . . . Secundum est, quod aversio a Deo potest inveniri in peccato dupliciter: scilicet ex parte obiecti, et ex parte aversionis; et hoc dupliciter, scilicet ex consequenti, vel per se. Communiter namque peccata habent aversionem ex parte aversionis ex consequenti ad obiectum: ut furtum, adultarium et huiusmodi, in quibus ex conversione ad aliquod temporale commodum vel delectans concommittitur aversio a Deo. Peccata autem opposita theologice virtutibus scilicet infidelitas, desperatio et odium Dei, habent aversionem a Deo ex parte obiecti: avertitur enim directe a Deo, quod est obiectum virtutum et virtutum illorum, non credens, desperans et odians Deum. Superbia autem habet aversionem a Deo ex parte aversionis. Et propterea superbia, ex parte aversionis primum tenet locum in gravitate; et aggravat peccata graviora se simpliciter et absolute, scilicet infidelitatem, etc., quae aversionem ipsam habent ex parte obiecti, unde substantialis gravitas in peccatis pensatur. Ex eo namque quod aversio a Deo, quae primum est gravitatis principium, in istis peccatis, substantialem locum, unde specificantur peccata, obinet; consequens est quod tanto plus gravitatis det, quanto locus alicuius ut obiecti praeceminet loco sui ipsius ut consequenter se habentis, seu ut minus principaliter se habentis, ut in superbia invenitur.

Et si haec non perspicis, abstrahere aversionem a Deo, et seorsum secundum se illam considera, sicut si albedinem secundum se considerares: et vide illam secundum se esse radicum et primum principium malitiae et gravitatis in peccatis. Et deinde applica illam, diversis locis peccati. Scilicet principali, qui vocatur ex parte obiecti: et constituet peccata opposita virtutibus theologice. Vel secundario, qui vocatur ex parte aversionis. Et hoc in loco dupliciter loca illa. Aut ut consequenter se habentem in hoc quod est esse volitum: et sic communis est peccatis mortalibus, inquantum voluntas aversionis ex voluntate conversionis est communiter. Aut ut per seipsum volitum, in illo tamen loco: et sic propterea ex parte aversionis gravissimum; et primum peccatum; et principium ceterorum gravium ex parte aversionis.” (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, art. 7, n. 4).

Private final

In every sin of commission, therefore, the positive malice constitutes the sin; in sins opposed to the moral virtues by the conversion to a mutable good; in sins contrary to the theological virtues by the objective aversion which tends against God directly; in pride by the aversion which consists in the act of contempt positively turning away from God.

9. THE ELEMENTS FOUND IN A SIN OF COMMISSION

This point may be clarified and summarized by reconstructing, as it were, the ingredients that enter into the composition of mortal sins of commission, both moral and theological.

The private aversion, as has been previously mentioned (cf. pages 15-16), is either habitual which consists in the loss of grace and charity whereby man is united to God; or actual, which is the privation of the actual rectitude that is due to the sinful action.

"... Aversio privativa alia est habitualis, consistens in averso esse, quae est carentia illius formae, per quam habitualiter et in facto esse Deo conjungitur; et quia homo sic conjungitur Deo per gratiam et caritatem, praedicta aversio in eorum privatione consistit. Alia est aversio actualis, quae consistit quasi in averiti seu in fieri: et haec est privatio illius rectitudinis actualis, quae ipsi actui peccaminoso debetur, . . . nam sicut omnis actus humanus rectus per suam rectitudinem tendit mediate vel immediate positive in Deum; ita per carentiam praedictae rectitudinis recedit et fugit ab eo, et ab eius lege privative." (Salmanticensis, *op. cit.*, n. 53).

A further distinction may be made in the private aversion, the formal and objective. The formal is the separation and loss of union with God. The objective is the contrary aversion which is the positive tendency aimed against God.

"... Duplicem esse aversionem a Deo: aliam privativam, quae consistit in recessu, et separatione, seu in carentia conjunctionis cum illo, soletque dici aversio formalis: aliam vero contrariam, quae importat tendentiam positivam, offensivam, et nocivam secundum affectum Deo, a quo averiti: seu adversus quem convertit: ob idque dici potest aversio conversiva. Etenim hoc nomen aversio aliquando deducitur ex verbo *avertio*, quod proprie est separare aliquid ab aliquo: aliquando ex praepositione *adversus*, vel ex verbo *aversor*, prout est idem, quod tendere adversus aliquem affectu nocivo, abominari illum, et odio prosequi. . . . Unde aversio a Deo juxta primam ex istis acceptionibus formaliter significat carentiam conjunctionis cum illo et recessum ac separa-

tionem privativam ab eo. Juxta secundam vero significantiorem positivam adversus illum, et quendam motum, seu affectum nocivum et destructivum ipsis esse Dei. . . . quia per illam intenditur directe non esse, seu aversio et destructio esse objecti, a quo est talis aversio." (*Ibid.*).

The contrary aversion, or the conversive aversion, is also twofold: explicit, by which the act tends formally and expressly against God; by willing Him not to be; the other implicit or virtual, such as is found in every mortal sin, for the sinner virtually and implicitly wills God not to be. It is the implicit ordination of an act contrary, not to God as He is in Himself, as is the case in the sins opposed to the theological virtues, but to the eternal law, or God as He is man's Ruler, for the sinner, desiring a mutable good, indirectly withdraws from God.

"... Objective autem malum culpae opponitur bono divino in seipso. . . . Vult enim explicitae vel interpretative quilibet peccans, quantum in se est, Deum non esse ultimum finem; quod est opponi ei objective secundum id quod in se est: sicut e contra amans ex caritate vult Deo quicquid est et ei debetur." (Cajetan in I, q. 49, art. 3, n. 4).

"Similiter aversio conversiva seu contraria, alia est talis formaliter et expresse, qualis reperitur in odio Dei, quo quis expresse et formaliter tendit contra Deum, volendo illum non esse: et alia interpretativa sive virtualis, quae in omni peccato reperitur. Quicumque enim mortaliter peccet, diligit plus appetitative creaturam, quam creatorem: potiusque eliget ex vi talis peccati Deum non esse Deum, quam peccatum relinquere: in quo virtualiter et interpretative vult Deum non esse." (Salmanticensis, *op. cit.*).

Since the act of sin turns to a mutable good which is opposed to reason and prohibited by the law of God, there also will be found in a sin of commission, a conversion to a variable good which is the foundation of the aversion in evil actions.

"... Tam aversio privativa, quam contraria affectu secum, vel supponit conversionem ad creaturam: supra quam conversionem fundatur, et in cuius virtute fit: eo quod omnis negativus fundatur in aliqua affirmatione: et omnis fuga, odium, recessus fit in virtute alicujus prosecutionis et amoris: nisi enim voluntas diligeret bonum aliquod commutabile a Deo prohibendum, non separaretur et averteretur a Deo, neque adversus illum odio converteretur." (Salmant, *ibid.*, n. 54).

This conversion is also twofold: the turning to a good as it is in itself, or the physical conversion; and the conversion to the same object as opposed to God or to His law, or the moral conversion.

"Haec autem conversio ad creaturam summi etiam potest vel omnino materialiter, ut praecise est amor huius vel illius particularis boni secundum se sumpti, terminaturque ad illud solum in esse physico: quae proinde dici potest conversio physica. Vel potest summi formaliter, ut fundat aversionem a Deo, estque tendentia in tale vel tale bonum ut lege Dei prohibutum: et sic est conversio moralis contraria rationi, quia terminatur ad objectum morale rationi dissonum: imo prout sic fundat, et causat aversionem, potest dici aversio causalis et fundamentalis." (*Ibid.*)

In a sin, then, these elements are found: there is the conversion to a mutable good as it is in itself; the conversion to the same object as opposed to reason; the contrary aversion which is either explicit or implicit; and, finally, the privative aversion which is either actual or habitual.

In a sin opposed to the moral virtues, there is first the physical conversion to an object desirable in itself; secondly, there is the moral conversion which constitutes the primary malice and primary constitutive form of sin; thirdly, the implicit, contrary aversion from God; fourthly, the privative, actual aversion; and, finally, the privative, habitual aversion.

"... Conversio physica ad creaturam est prima et veluti subiectum ceterarum: nam primum quod in predictis peccatis reperitur, est prosequutio et amor alicujus boni creati sumpti secundum se: et ex hoc amore reliquae conversiones et aversiones veluti originantur: non tamen ista conversio secundum se sumpta spectat formaliter ad rationem peccati, sed habet se materialiter per modum fundamenti vel subiecti malitiae, sicut ordo entitativus et physicus est fundamentum ordinis moralis. Deinde primum, quod supra hanc conversionem physicam fundatur, est conversio moralis, quae est prima malitia, et prima forma peccati constitutiva. Ad hanc quasi consequitur aversio a Deo contraria, quae in peccatis, de quibus nunc loquimur, non est formalis, sed interpretativa: nec differt re ipsa a conversione morali ad creaturam, sed eam transcendit: nam secundum rem idem formaliter est averti hoc modo a Deo, et converti ad objectum creatum ut dissonum et prohibitum lege Dei, ac per hoc ipsi Deo contrarium, ut docet D. Thomam (2 Sent., dist. 42, q. 2, art. 1, ad 7), tibi ait, quod conversio et aversio sunt idem secundum rem, sed differunt secundum diversos terminos. Succedit quarto aversio privative actualis, quae recipitur in ipso actu peccaminoso, et fundatur supra conversionem, nam haec causalis est vera, quia actus peccati importat tendentiam ad objectum dissonum, caret rectitudine sibi debita, scilicet ten-

dentia ad objectum consonum, et conformitate ad legem; in qua carentia haec aversio consistit. Ultima est aversio privativa habitualis, quae est terminus et complementum peccati." (*Ibid.*)

In sins contrary to the theological virtues which are immediately opposed to God, another order is observed. There is first the objective conversion whereby the sinner opposes himself directly and explicitly against God as tending towards an object to be despised. Accompanying this conversion, there is the conversion to a mutable good. Then follows the actual privation, since the act in its opposition to God, lacks the rectitude due to it. This causal privation begets, in turn, the habitual aversion which follows every sin and is the term and completion of every formality found in sin. It is really not subjoined in the act, but rather in the soul and the will, since it deprives the soul of grace and the will of charity.

"In peccatis vero quae opponuntur virtutibus theologicis. . . . quia sunt immediate contra Deum . . . alius ordo servatur. Nam primum, quod in eis reperitur, est aversio a Deo contraria seu contraria, quae in huiusmodi peccatis est formalis, et non solum interpretative: habetque duplicem considerationem, moralem et physicam: sicut de conversione ad creaturam in aliis peccatis diximus: ut physica est, habet rationem subiecti et materiae peccati; et ut moralis, rationem formae, et est prima malitia peccati constitutiva. Deinde sequitur aversio privativa actualis: nam acutus odii Dei viget hoc quod tendit contra Deum, habet quod caret rectitudine sibi debita. Ultima est aversio privativa habitualis, quae consequitur ad omne peccatum mortale, estque veluti complementum et terminus omnium aliarum formalitatum, quae in tali peccato reperiantur: subiectatur vero non in actu peccaminoso, sed in anima, vel in voluntate. Et quia huiusmodi aversio consistit in privatione gratiae, quae est vita animae, ipsa dicitur ejus mors, et ab ea praedictum peccatum denominatur mortale. . . ." (*Ibid.*, n. 55).

10. THE 2ND DIFFICULTY: THE CONVERSION AS MATERIAL IN SIN

The conversion, which St. Thomas sometimes calls the material part of sin, needs a brief explanation. It must be noted that what is essential in a human act is not always called formal; nor is that which is said to be material, outside the essence. The essential form is sometimes called material with respect to a higher accidental form, and the latter is said to be formal in regard to the former. A man,

for example, may perform an act of fortitude for the love of God. This act is materially an act of fortitude, but formally an act of charity.

"... Si enim aliquis actum fortitudinis exerceat propter Dei amorem, actus eodem ille materialiter est fortitudinis, formaliter vero caritatis..." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 13, art. 1).

Nevertheless, the specific, essential goodness of this act is the goodness of fortitude; the goodness of charity is accidental. The species which is taken from the object is as matter and subject that is actual and formalized by that which comes from the end of the agent. The essential goodness, therefore, is called material in relation to the accidental which is called formal.

Similarly, in a sin of commission, there are the positive and private aspects. The private, which is the consequent and completion of the sin, is sometimes referred to as the formal in relation to the positive which is the essential notion. For the latter is considered in this case as subject and matter, although it is the essential and constitutive note. Because the privation completes the notion of sin, St. Thomas sometimes calls it formal; the aversion is then the form, the conversion is the matter.

"... In actibus humanis non semper dici formale illud, quod est essentialis; nec semper id, quod materiale dicitur, esse extra essentialiam: imo ipsa forma essentialis et constitutiva dicitur aliquando materialis respectu alterius formae accidentalis supervenientis: et haec respectu illius dicitur formalis. Hac ratione S. Thomas (q. 18, art. 6: 'Et ideo actus humani species formaliter consideratur secundum finem [operantis]; materialiter autem secundum objectum exterioris actus'), speciem bonitatis vel malitiae, quam actus habet ex objecto, quae est ei essentialis, appellat materialem: eam vero, quam habet ex fine operantis, quae absolute accidentalis est, dicit esse formalem. . . . Quia minimum species, quae ex objecto desumitur, habet se sicut subiectum et materia, quae actuatur et formalizatur per eam, quae ex fine supervenit: et ideo illa, licet essentialis, dicitur materialis respectu istius, quae absolute est accidentalis. Cum igitur in peccata commissionis tam malitia positiva quam privativa concurrant; et positiva sit veluti subiectum et materia, cui advenit privativa, poterit haec dici formalis respectu illius: quamvis absolute loquendo, sola positiva sit essentialis et constitutiva peccati: privativa vero absolute sit extra essentialiam. Imo quia in quolibet peccato mortali aversio a Deo privativa supervenit conversioni, eamque veluti formalizat et complet: aversio est sicut forma, et conversio sicut materia: ob idque D. Thomas

sape ait, aversionem in peccato habere se formaliter: conversionem vero materialiter." (*Salmanicensis, op. cit.*, n. 56).

The two principal elements in a sinful act, then, are the positive tendency of the operation, which is contrary to reason and to the law of God, and the privation which is the absence of the rectitude due to every human act, i.e., its conformity with an object in accord with the demands of right reason. According to St. Thomas, both are formal in sin, the one as the constituent of sin, the other as its complement. Since the act is positively ordained to a defective object, the sin is understood to be converted formally to, formally specified by, and constituted by that object. Sin, therefore, is formally constituted by reason of the conversion to a defective object by which it is specified; and it is completed by virtue of the privation. The first is presupposed to the second, and is its root and foundation, for an act is not deprived of its goodness except it supposes the conversion to a deficient object.

CHAPTER III

EXAMINATION OF OPINIONS OF CAJETAN AND JOHN OF ST. THOMAS

It should be quite evident from the first two chapters of this paper that sin is absolute evil and it is moral evil. St. Thomas said (cf. p. 49) that the conversion and aversion are both formally in sin, for the formal aspect of sin may be considered in two ways: from the viewpoint of the sinner's intention which is directed to an object from which the sin receives its species; and, secondly, from the viewpoint of absolute evil which is not intended by the sinner, and which does not specify the sin. The first is the conversion or the moral evil, i.e., it is evil for man, since he tends positively to an object opposed to reason and to the law of God; the second is the aversion, the privation, or absolute evil which is nothing, considered in itself.

1. CAJETAN

From this passage, Cajetan concludes that sin is absolute evil because it is deprived of the rectitude it ought to have: and it is found in the moral order because it is evil for man. In the moral order, sin is formally constituted by the conversion, which is followed by the aversion. Since sin is voluntary, it is specified by the object to which the agent tends. It is in this positive tendency that the contrary inordination consists. The privation or aversion which is accidental to the intention of the agent follows from the conversion to a defective object.

"Distinguo igitur in primis, ex ipso in II-II, q. 10, art. 5, ad 1, quod *peccatum est in duobus generibus: scilicet in genere mali simpliciter: et est in genere voluntarii seu moralis mali.* Et in genere quidem mali simpliciter, reponitur formaliter per inordinationem privative, seu aversionem: in genere autem voluntarii seu moralis mali per suam differentiam, quam ex objecto malo moraliter habet, reponitur. Et quoniam objectum tale et differentiam talem, in qua inordinatio contrarie consistit, sortitur peccatum ex intentione peccantis, unde habet peccatum quod sit voluntarium; aversionem autem seu inordinationem non sortitur ex intentione, sed consequitur: ideo peccato, inquantum voluntarium, intimus

inest inordinatio contrarie quam privative, et conversio quam aversio; inquantum vero malum simpliciter, intimus inest inordinatio privative, et aversio quam conversio." (Cajetan, in I-II, q. 71, art. 6, n. 6). (Italics mine)

The aversion is formal in sin, and the conversion is formal in sin, since it is absolute evil and since it is a voluntary act.

"Et si quaeras: Absolute et sine distinctione loquendo, quid sit dicendum?—dico quod, quia peccatum absolute loquendo, est in genere mali simpliciter, et est voluntarium, ideo utrumque absolute recte dicitur, scilicet et quod aversio est de ratione peccati, et formale in peccato et quod conversio est de ratione peccati, et formans peccatum." (*Ibid.*)

Which, continues Cajetan, is the more absolute? The conversion is for two reasons. Sin is more voluntary than evil, that is, absolute evil, because it is entirely voluntary, although in different ways. The conversion is primary because the sin is specified by the order to an object, and is directly willed; whereas the aversion is secondary because it is the result of the inordinate conversion and is willed only in the conversion. On the other hand, sin is absolute evil only on the part of the aversion or privation.

"Ad comparationem autem: Quid magis absolute?—dico quod conversio. Et ratio est duplex. Prima, quia peccatum est magis voluntarium quam malum: quia est voluntarium secundum se totum quamvis diversimode, quia conversio principaliter, aversio secundario: non autem est malum secundum se totum, sed secundum partem tantum, scilicet privationem." (*Ibid.*)

The second reason is because the sin receives its species from the conversion, while the aversion gives only the privation of the species. Intemperance receives its species from the conversion to the object, while there is only the privation of the species on the part of the aversion. Since the difference belongs more to sin than the privation of the species, sin will be constituted by the conversion rather than by the aversion.

"Secunda est, quia conversio dat peccato veram speciem. Aversio autem dat privationem speciei: intemperantia enim ex conversione ad objectum, sortitur differentiam verae speciei in genere qualitatis: ex aversione autem privationem habet speciei temperantiae. Magis autem convenit peccato differentia vera specifica, quam privato speciei." (*Ibid.*) (Italics mine)

2. JOHN OF ST. THOMAS

John of St. Thomas, considering sin in its moral nature rather than in both orders, as Cajetan has done, teaches that the formal constituent of a sin of commission consists in the positive order to an object contrary to reason and to the law of God. The privation which is the result of the conversion is a formal element, not constitutively but consequentially or consecutively attained by the sin. From the fact that the sin tends to an object repugnant to the rules of morality, the privation of the rectitude, i.e., the lack of the order to an object in conformity with the eternal law and reason, follows as a formal consequent. He reaches this conclusion by reducing the problem to three propositions gathered from St. Thomas, and strengthening each with appropriate selections gleaned from the Angelic Doctor, many of which we have already seen.

The first proposition is that the constitutive difference of a sinful action is not the privation but the positive order, for the constitutive difference of a species is formal.

"Prima est: In moralibus, seu in linea morali, *differentia constitutiva actus mali quantum condiditur a bono, non est privatio, sed aliquid positum*. Constat autem quod differentia constitutiva speciei formaliter se habet in tali constituto, non praesuppositive, aut connotative." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 16). (Italics mine.)

The proof of this proposition is taken from the following passages of St. Thomas.

"... Quod bonum et malum non sunt differentiae constitutivae, nisi in moralibus, quae recipiunt species ex fine, qui est objectum voluntatis, a quo moralia dependent. Et quia bonum habet rationem finis, ideo *bonum et malum sunt differentiae specifice in moralibus*: bonum, per se, sed malum, inquantum est remotio debiti finis. *Nec tamen remotio debiti finis constituit speciem in moralibus, nisi secundum quod adiungitur fini indebito*; sicut neque in naturalibus invenitur privatio formae substantialis, nisi adiuncta alteri formae. Sic agitur malum quod est differentia constitutiva in moralibus, est quoddam bonum adiunctum privationi aetheris boni (i.e., it is good in itself or physically desirable, but evil for man, i.e., moral evil): sicut finis intemperati est non quidem carere bono rationis, sed delectabile sensus absque ordine rationis. Unde malum, inquantum malum, non est differentia constitutiva, sed ratione boni adiuncti." (*Summa Theol.*, I, q. 48, art. 1, ad 2). (Italics mine.)

The second selection, which we have already seen is taken from I-II, q. 18, art. 5, ad 2.

"... Quod malum important privationem non absolutam, sed consequentem talem potentiam. Dicitur enim malus actus secundum speciem, non ex eo quod nullum habeat objectum, sed quia habet objectum non conveniens rationi, sicut tollere aliena. Unde inquantum objectum est aliquid positive, potest constituere speciem mali actus."

It is evident that an act does not have an object, nor receive its species from it, because it is compared to the object by way of privation, but rather because it is related to it by the positive, intrinsic order of the act to the object.

"... Constat enim, quod actus non habet objectum, nec ab illo speciem sumit, quia per privationem comparatur ad illud, sed per habitudinem, et ordinem positivum. Ergo idem est dicere, quod habet actus malus speciem suam per hoc quod habet objectum, ac dicere, quod per ordinem positivum ad objectum illam habet, quia actus non habet objectum nisi mediante habitudine ad illud, non privatione erga illud, ac per hoc dicere: Quod inquantum objectum est aliquid positive potest constituere speciem, est idem ac dicere, quod inquantum objectum positive attingitur et habetur potest constituere speciem." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 20).

Thirdly, St. Thomas says,

"... Et ideo nec malum, secundum quod est differentia specifica in genere moralium, importat aliquid quod sit secundum suam essentiam malum, sed aliquid quod secundum se est bonum, malum autem homini, inquantum privat ordine rationis, quod est hominis bonum." (*Contra Gentiles*, III, cap. 9, n. 2). And continuing, St. Thomas adds, "Ex quo etiam patet quod malum et bonum sunt contraria, secundum quod in genere moralium accipiuntur, non autem simpliciter accepta... sed malum privatio est boni, inquantum est malum." (*Ibid.*, n. 3).

Commenting on this, the Salmonaticenses point to this as a confirmation of the distinction between absolute evil and moral evil.

"... Sed confirmat distinctionem duplicis mali, qua hucusque usi fuimus: distinguitur siquidem in eo quoddam malum, quod non est nisi malum, seu quod nihil habet boni: *et hoc vocatur malum secundum suam essentiam*; nos autem vocamus illud malum absolute: quoddam vero, quod etiam si sit malum, dicitur secundum se bonum, quia attentio eo, quod in se claudit, bonum transcendente est: *dicitur autem mal-*

num homini, quia ut exprimit tendentiam ad obiectum dissonum, rectae rationi et naturae rationali repugnat: et hoc est malum positivum, quod adstruimus. Cum vero additur, 'In quantum privat ordine rationis, quod est hominis bonum, loquutio est transitiva, et reddit sensum non formalem; sed causalem: ac si diceret, ideo illud, quod transcendentaliter est bonum, esse malum homini, seu malum morale, quia habet causare et inducere privationem boni oppositi; ita quod non privatio ipsa causata et inducta, sed vis positiva causandi, et inducendi, seu fundandi illam sit formalis et immediata ratio constituta praedicti mali.' (Salmanicensis, *op. cit.*, n. 61). (Italics mine)

Finally, John of St. Thomas appeals to two places in the Sentences to bolster his first proposition:

"... Omnia enim moralia ex fine speciem consequuntur. Ex ordine autem ad finem debitum specificatur bona actio et bonus habitus, ratione cuius bonum differentia specificatur habitus et actionis moralis: mala vero actio specificatur ex ordine ad finem indebitum, cui admiscetur privatio finis debiti, ex quo ratio mali incidit. Unde patet quod non sola privatio specificat malum habitum et actionem; sed positio ordinis ad finem quemdam cum privatione finis debiti." (2 *Sent.*, dist. 34, q. 1, art. 2. ad 3).

In this selection, St. Thomas says that moral acts are specified by the end, i.e., the end of the action, or the object, because the act is intrinsically ordained to the object. And it is by reason of this order, which is something positive, that an act receives its specific difference. It is good because it conformed to reason: it is evil because it is a defective order, to which there is joined the additional note of absolute evil. Nothing can be more evident than this.

The second reference from the Sentences is a confirmation of the preceding:

"... Ipsa privatio qua aliquid malum dicitur non potest esse differentia neque genus; sed unusquisque actus specificatur et in genere ponitur per aliquid positive dictum. Sed positionem utramque per quam scilicet ponitur in genere vel specie, potest consequi privatio aliqua: et ideo quidam actus dicuntur mali ex genere vel ex eo quod in speciem trahit." (*Ibid.*, dist. 37, q. 2, art. 2. ad 4). (Italics mine)

St. Thomas denies, therefore, that sin is a pure privation, for it is an act deprived of its due order:

"... Quod peccatum non est pura privatio, sed est actus debito ordine privatus... (S. *Theol.*, I-II, q. 72, art. 1, ad 2).

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The specification is not taken from the deprived form, but from the object of the act.

"... Negatque summi specificationem peccatorum ex formis oppositis, sed ex objectis actuum, et tamen si privatio esset constitutum peccati, necessario deberet sumi ex oppositis formis, quia privatio non tangit nisi rem privatam, a qua specificatur in ratione privationis; ordo autem et habitudo actus tangit obiectum. Quare differentia constitutiva actus mali moralis non est privatio fundata, sed ratio fundans privationem. Et cum fundamentum privationis non sit alia privatio, sed aliquid positivum, sic in illo consistet differentia actus mali." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 21).

There is, then, in the moral order, according to St. Thomas, a species which is evil. This species is not constituted by privation but by the positive order to an unbecoming object; and this conversion is the foundation of the privation.

"... In linea ergo morali datur aliqua species de qua loquitur S. Thomas non solum per modum destructionis, sed per modum constitutionis, non constituta aliqua privatione, sed per aliquo ordine positivo ad obiectum. Talis ergo species, aut est bona, aut mala, aut indifferens... Illa species de qua loquitur D. Thomas non est bona, neque indifferens, quia ordinatur ad finem indebitum, et habet adiunctam privationem, illamque fundat, quod rei bonae competere non potest, neque indifferenti ut talis; *ergo est mala*. Quidquid ergo sit de destructivo speciei bonae (quod non negamus, quia una species opponitur alteri, et destruit illam), tamen datur vera et formalis species mali moralis apud D. Thomam constituta aliquo positivo ordine ad obiectum indebitum, licet fundet privationem... (*Ibid.*, n. 22). (Italics mine)

THE SECOND PROPOSITION

The second proposition of John of St. Thomas is that the defect in sin, of which God is not the cause, pertains to the species of the sinful action consequent, and not as a specific difference.

"Secunda propositio: Defectus ille in peccato, qui non est a Deo, pertinet ad speciem actus mali consequentem, et non ut differentia specifica: privatio autem, si constituit speciem mali moralis, non potest consequenter se habere ad ipsam differentiam constituentem: si autem non constituit ipsam speciem mali moralis contrariam et oppositam bono; ergo aliquid quod non est privatio constituit illam, et hoc non potest esse, nisi positivum." (*Ibid.*, n. 17).

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This proposition rests on the teaching of St. Thomas, where he says:

"... Actus et habitus non recipiunt speciem ex ipsa privatione in qua consistit ratio mali (i.e., ratio mali simpliciter seu mali absolute), sed ex aliquo objecto, cui coniungitur talis privatio. Et sic ipse defectus, qui dicitur non esse a Deo, pertinet ad speciem actus consequentur, et non quasi differentia specifica." (*S.Thom.*, I-II, q. 79, art. 2, ad 3).

According to St. Thomas, then, the sinful action receives its species from an object to which it is positively ordained; secondly, the privation which is joined to the object is not a specific difference but a consequent; thirdly, it is not from God; fourthly, he insinuates that the formal constituent which is the foundation of the privation is also not from God, for, since the latter is not caused by God, its root also cannot be from God.

"... Insinuat tamen hoc ipso sanctus Doctor, quod etiam illa specifica differentia, prout fundans talem privationem a Deo non est, quia quoties aliqua forma non est ab aliquo agente, etiam radix et fundamentum illius non est ab illo, sicut patet in ipsa potentia peccandi, quae antecederet se habet ad ipsum peccatum, et tamen prout talis potentia non est a Deo, quia est defectuosa, est enim radix et fundamentum deficiendi et peccandi, et sic potentia ut deficiens, seu defectuosa, non est a Deo, sicut nec ipsum peccatum quatenus defectus est." (*John of St. Thomas, op. cit.*, n. 23).

THE THIRD PROPOSITION

The third proposition reads that the deformity of the act not only implies a privation of a due form, but also a contrary disposition; nor is this defect from God.

"Tertia propositio: Deformitas actus non solum importat privationem debitaе formae; sed etiam contrariam dispositionem, et actus deformis non est a Deo..." (*Ibid.*, n.18).

For this proposition, John of St. Thomas invokes St. Thomas in the II-II, q. 6, art. 2, ad 2:

"... Quod deformitas actus est de ratione speciei ipsius actus, secundum quod est actus moralis, ut supra dictum est; dicitur enim actus deformis per privationem formae intrinsecae, quae est debita commensuratio circumstantiarum actus... Vel dicendum quod deformitas non solum importat privationem debitaе formae, sed etiam contrariam dispositionem. Unde deformitas se habet ad actum, sicut falsitas ad fidem. Et ideo, sicut actus deformis non est a Deo, ita nec aliqua fides falsa..."

This passage poses a doubt for Cajetan:

"... Dubium occurrit, quomodo deformitas actus sit de ratione speciei ipsius actus secundum quod est actus moralis. Videtur enim hoc contrarium doctrinae datae in Prima Secundae (q. 79, art. 2, ad 3), ubi dictum est quod deformitas privativa actus peccati non est de integritate speciei ipsius peccati, sed consequens ad speciem mali moralis. Quomodo stant haec duo simul? Ad hoc dicitur quod littera non dicit quod privatio significata per deformitatem sit de ratione speciei simpliciter et absolute, sed cum modificatione, scilicet ut supra dictum est. Ubi propter subiunctam rationem, scilicet 'Dicitur enim actus deformis per privationem formae intrinsecae' etc., scito quod commensuratio intrinsecae debita actui morali dupliciter, quantum ad propositum spectat, potest inveniri deesse in actu morali. Uno modo, per modum purae privationis, sicut tenebra invenitur in diaphano per solam absentiam luminis. Et si hoc modo inveniri concederetur actus moralis deformis, tunc procul dubio deformitas privative esset intrinsecae de ratione speciei actus moraliter mali. Et quoniam ex dictis in Primo Libro (q. 48, art. 1, ad 2) et Secundo (q. 18, art. 5; q. 71, art. 6; q. 72, art. 1) patet mali moralis speciem positivam esse, et non in privatione, sed in contrarietate consistere; ideo hic sensus non est huic litterae tribuendus.

"Alio ergo modo contingit per modum privationis consequentis contrariam formam: sicut caecitas sequitur ad formam contrariam visui vel oculo. Et hoc modo dictum fuit quod deformitas privative invenitur in actu malo moraliter. Et dicitur esse de ratione speciei actus moralis non ut differentia intrinsecae, sed ut passio consequens ad differentiam intrinsecam. Et dicitur etiam privatio formae intrinsecae: quia est privatio formae intrinsecae actui morali. Et quantum ad praesentem quaestionem spectat, idem est iudicium sive illa privatio sit de ratione speciei ut differentia sive ut passio: ab eodem enim agente sunt." (*Cajetan in II-II*, q. 6, art. 2, n. 1).

Cajetan introduces a second sense in which this response may be understood:

"Potest autem et debet, secundum intentionem litterae et planum illius sensum, aliter exponi littera ista: ut sit sermo non de specie mali moralis quod est genus positivum in genere qualitatibus; sed sit sermo de actu quidem morali, et eius specie moraliter, sub malo simpliciter transcendenter sumpto. Et tunc esset sensus quod deformitas est intrinsecae de ratione speciei actus moralis inquantum malus.

"Et quoniam haec responsio non attingit ad deformitatem speciem actus moralis in proprio genere usque ad ultimas species simpliciter . . . sicut juxta primum sensum ad deformitatem consequentem speciem deventum est et deformitas dupliciter sumi potest, private et contrarie; ideo secundam addidit responsionem de deformitate contrarie sumpta. . ." (*Ibid.*).

It is to be noted, therefore, that St. Thomas does not say that the privation pertains to the species constitutively, for he refers to two places of the *prima secundae* to show that the contrary deformity is the formal constituent, while the privation follows consecutively. We repeat one of the two already mentioned:

"Quod peccatum non est pura privatio, sed est actus debito ordine privatus. Et ideo peccata magis distinguuntur specie secundum opposita. . . Virtutes enim distinguuntur specie secundum objecta," (I-II, q. 72, art. 1, ad 2).

The privation, then, does not constitute the species, nor does it distinguish the species of sin, but rather follows the positive order of the act to the object. The deformity, therefore, must be understood according to the previous references, where it is stated that the order to an object constitutes the species. St. Thomas, moreover, adds his second solution in order to explain more exactly and in order to clarify his first reply. This contrary deformity, he continues, is not from God, just as false faith, which is contrary to the true faith, is not from God.

" . . . Deformitas ergo cum dicitur hoc a D. Thoma esse de ratione speciei, sicut supra dictum est, regulandum est hoc dictum juxta haec supra dicta, ubi cum inveniamus privationem juxta a D. Thoma, quod non constituit speciem, intelligimus etiam quod deformitas non est de ratione speciei per modum formae constituentis, si sumatur pro privatione, bene tamen si sumatur pro ordine positivo contrario. Unde ut melius explicaret suam mentem adhibuit S. Thomas secundam solutionem quae potius est explicatio primae, videlicet quod deformitas in actu non est solum privatio, sed etiam contraria dispositio. Ubi contraponens contrarietatem privationi manifeste loquitur de contrarietate propria et positiva. Et hanc deformitatem contrariam, dicit non esse a Deo, sicut nec fides falsa, quae opponitur contrarie et positive fidei verae. . ." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 25).

With these propositions as a basis, John of St. Thomas uses two arguments to prove that the formal constituent of a sin of commission consists in the positive order of the act to an object. The first is that

there is a true species of sin in the moral order, for the act receives its morality from the object inasmuch as it is transcendently related to it. The second reason is founded on the fact that there is a true, proper contrariety not only between virtue and vice, but also between a good act and a bad act, because contrary opposition demands positive extremes, whereas private opposition is not real but only rational. These are the arguments which we shall use to sum up our solution to the problem of the formal constituent of a sin of commission.

" . . . Primum, quia in linea morali, datur vera, et propria species malitiae, seu actus vel habitus pravi, quae species constitui non potest formaliter, nisi per positivum ordinem ad objectum a quo haurit actus suam moralitatem sive bonam sive pravam; in attingendo enim objecto est tota perfectio, seu bonitas, aut imperfectio, seu malitia generis moralis. Secundum fundamentum est, quia in linea et ordine morali invenitur vera, propria, et rigorosa contrarietas inter virtutem et vitium, actum bonum et malum, et non solum privativa oppositio, quae est oppositio non realis, sed rationis. Unde manifeste sequitur, quod utrumque scilicet tam bonum quam malum debet consistere in aliquo positivo, quia oppositio contraria est inter extrema positiva." (*Ibid.*, n. 28).

FIRST ARGUMENT

Theologians are agreed that the species of a sinful action is composed of a genus and a difference, since the species is made up of a genus and a difference. The specific difference of a sinful action is something positive and real, and not private, since the act is specified by its positive order to an object, to which there is joined the privation of the proper order. Therefore, concludes John of St. Thomas, the formal constituent of sin is something positive, i.e., the order of the act to the object not in conformity with the eternal law.

"Species mali moralis, quae dividitur contra bonum, etiam in linea et genere morali debet constitui aliquo genere et differentia: sed differentia specifica actus moralis mali est aliquid positivum reale, seu a parte rei, non privatio, vel extrinseca denominatio; ergo formale constitutum speciei mali moralis est aliquid positivum. Major negari non potest, nam etiam in linea morali datur aliquid constitutum ex universalis et particulari, ex genere et differentia, nec est ratio cur excludamus ab ista linea et ordine morali hanc constitutionem omni generi communem . . . et ita dantur diversae species virtutum et vitiorum, et actuum moralium, species autem essentialiter constat genere et differentia. Et ita gener-

alter S. Thomas et theologi omnes morale genus agnoscunt, et diversas divisiones virtutum et vitiorum tanquam diversas species concorder sentiant. Quod si hoc debet negari ut sustentetur, privationem esse constitutum formale actus mali, certe cum magna difficultate id defendetur, negando principium adeo receptum inter theologos. Minor vero constat in primis ex locis supra citatis ex D. Thoma, ubi apertissime docet in moralibus differentiam constitutam non esse privationem, sed ordinem ad finem, seu obiectum indebitum cui annexa est privatio. Et loquitur de specifica differentia in genere morali; tum, quia expressis verbis de moralibus loquitur, ut patet in istis locis pro prima propositione allatis; tum, quia non erat ad propositum loqui de differentia specifica in genere naturae, cum nec etiam loquatur de bono, neque de malo in genere naturae, quod est malum simpliciter, sed de malo et bono morali." (*Ibid.*, n. 29). (Italics mine)

Breaking this reason into parts, three points are to be noticed: the genus, the species which is the non-conformity of the object, and the privation.

The moral genus of a human act, or morality which is the predicate superior to the goodness or malice of an operation, consists in the ordination of the act to an object subject to the norms of reason and the eternal law, abstracting from the goodness or malice of the act. This moral genus is a positive form because the order to an object is positive, since it is nothing more than the intrinsic relation of the act tending to its object. Its species, therefore, must also be positive because a positive predicate cannot be contracted and divided except by a positive form.

"... Quod divisio alicujus potest esse multipliciter: vel sicut generis in species. . . Divisio ergo generis in species vel differentias primas non est nisi una. . . Dicendum ergo quod divisio peccati in species suas essentielles est per oppositum virtutis: quia oportet quod sit secundum obiectum, ex quo specificatur peccatum et virtus. . ." (2 *Sent.*, dist. 42, q. 2, art. 2, quaestione 1, ad 1).

"Moralitas, quae est praedicatum superius ad bonitatem et malitiam, et in eas dividitur, est forma positiva: ergo differentiae bonitatis et malitiae, per quas contrahitur, adeoque ipsae bonitas et malitia morales, in quas dividitur, debent esse positivae. Consequentia est perspicua: quia praedicatum positivum non potest contrahi nisi per positivum, et ad positivum, sicut nec potest de alio quam de positivo praedicari. Antecedens vero probatur: nam praedicata moralitas in communi praecise est quidam ordo, quem actus liber dicit ad ob-

jectum ut morale, seu ut subiectum regulis morum, praecedendo a conformitate vel difformitate cum praedictis regulis: et ita eo ipso quod talen ordinem concipiamus, nullo alio intellecto, intelligimus actum ut moralem; et eo ipso quod actus concipiendus sit solum ut moralis in communi, abstractendo a differentis boni et mali, non possumus amplius aliquid quam praedicatum ordinem concipere: sed ordo ad obiectum dicit formam positivam, et non privationem: ergo etiam moralitas in communi." (Salmanicensis, *op. cit.*, n. 71).

When a human act is examined, abstracting from its species, the first note that is conceived is something positive, the tendency of the act to the object. The note common to the species is positive, and not privative because privation, as such, contains more than the generic notion, since it has the note of evil.

"Nam cum concipimus actum humanum praecise ut moralem, abstractendo a differentis bonitatis et malitiae, in quo concipimus gradum communem moralitatis: vel concipimus aliquid positivum; vel aliquid privativum; determinate enim debemus concipere unum ex his, sicut determinate concipere debemus ens, vel non ens; sed non concipimus privativum; ergo positivum: est igitur praedictus gradus forma positiva. Minor . . . quia si tunc conciperemus privationem, talis actus conciperetur determinate ut malus privative, et non secundum rationem communem actus moralis: siquidem conciperetur ut privatus et carens forma debita; in quo consistit formalissime ratio huius mali. Unde aperte contradictionem involvit, quod concipiamus actum moralem in communi, abstractentem a bono et malo, proindeque indifferentem ad utrumque; et quod in hoc concipiamus aliquam privationem." (*Ibid.*).

The common note of a good act and a bad act is the tendency on the part of each to an object: in this positive ordination both agree, since it is nothing more than the subjection of the act to the rules of morality. It is, in other words, something positive and not privative, since privation, as such, cannot attribute to a human act the generic note of a moral act, for it is, as such, a lack of a proper perfection, a note which is particular rather than generic or common. The genus of morality, then, is positive. Its inferiors, therefore, partake of this positive aspect, for both share a common note because both are moral acts.

"Nam illud quod re ipsa est privatio, secundum quemcumque gradum consideretur, non potest tribuere actui humano gradum communem actus moralis: ergo talis gradus, ubi-

cumque sit, sive in actu bono, sive in malo, debet provenire a forma positiva: atque adeo moralitas, quae est praedictum superius ad bonitatem et malitiam, tribuitque talem gradum, determinate erit forma positiva . . . quod sicut in actu malo, quatenus est in genere moris, distinguimus duplicem gradum: alium actus moralis, ut sic, in quo convenit cum actu bono; et alium actus moralis ut malus ut peccaminosus, per quem ab actu bono distinguitur: per prius concipimus talem actum ut moralem, quam concipiamus illum ut malum: ita in moralitate seu malitia, constituentem ipsum debet duplex similis gradus distingui: alius formae moralis ut sic, in quo convenit cum bonitate; et alius formae moralis ut male, per quem a bonitate differt: ex quibus ille utpote communis debet esse prior: hic vero tanquam particularis debet esse posterior. . . . Quae re ipsa est privatio, non datur duplex iste gradus; nec prius est in illa quod sit moralis, quam quod sit mala: sed sicut primum quod in ea concipitur, est quod sit privatio et carentia formae debita; sic primum eius conceptus est conceptus malitiae; quod autem talis privatio est moralis, sicut et quod forma, qua privat, sit debita moraliter, omnino est quid posterius . . . ergo nequit per eam actus humanus constitui in ratione moralis." (*Ibid.*, n. 72).

The species of morality add a particular note to the generic notion. A good act has its generic concept, its subjection to the rules of morality, and its specific concept, its conformity to its norms, through its object. In short, the act is both moral and good. Similarly, a bad act has two notes: it agrees with a good act in the moral or human sphere, since it is measured by reason; but differs from a good act specifically, since it is, through its object, in disagreement with the demands of reason and the eternal law. In both acts, the first concept is generic, both are moral acts in virtue of their dependence on their measure. Both have something in common, and this common note is prior to the specific, where each goes its separate way. They tend to opposite extremes, yet, each retains its positive nature. Even in sin, there is a positive motion of a voluntary act to a moral object, and there is also the note of privation. The object is deprived of the moral goodness it ought to have. Since the act is infected by the object because it is essentially ordained to it, the act, too, is deprived of the rectitude it ought to have.

In a sin of commission, therefore, there is first the moral genus, secondly the specific nature, the non-conformity with its rule, both of which are positive; and thirdly, there is the privation of the right order to the end or object, which the act ought to have. Sin cannot be specified by the privation because the latter is related only to the form which is absent. It cannot be the formal constituent because in

itself it is nothing. The most that can be said about it is that it is a being of reason and this because the mind grasps it through the mode of being:

" . . . privatio autem res naturae non est, sed rationis tantum." (2 *Sent.*, dist. 37, q. 1, art. 1).
 " . . . Ad obiectum autem non comparatur actus per privationem, sed per tendentiam positivam, quia privatio solum comparatur ad formam oppositam, et privatum, non ad obiectum amatum: ergo per tendentiam positivam, et non solum per privationem constituitur abominatio et malitia moralis. Quare cum inveniamus in peccato positivam tendentiam praeter privationem, seu aversionem, et quod illa tendentia sit moralis et mala; ergo illa erit formale constitutum peccati in actu morali malo. Patet consequentia, quia ipsa natura actuum petit speciem suam habere ex objecto suo per tendentiam et respectum positivum ad illud. Si ergo in actu peccati invenitur tendentia positiva ad obiectum, eaque moralis seu in linea morali et mala, cur non constituit formaliter talem speciem mali actus, sicut alii actus constituentur in suis speciebus per tendentiam positivam ad obiecta?" (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 34).

THE SECOND ARGUMENT

The second argument maintains that the opposition between a good act and a bad act is that of contrariety, since good and evil, as St. Thomas says, are contraries in the moral order:

" . . . Ex quo etiam patet quod malum et bonum sunt contraria secundum quod in genere moralium accipiuntur." (*Contra Gentes*, III, 9, n. 2).

Just as virtue is contrary to vice:

" . . . vita, inquantum sunt contra bonum rationis, contrariantur virtutibus. . ." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 68, art. 1, ad 2),

So, too, a bad act is contrary to a good act.

" . . . Quod autem dicimus de habitibus, eadem ratio currit de actibus, quia actus et habitus eandem reminent similitudinem, ex actibus enim generantur habitus similes, et habitus ad similes actus inclinant: ergo eadem ratio contrarietatis, quae currit in habitibus, currit et in actibus." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 36).

The extremes of this opposition must be something positive and real,

for contrariety exists between positive terms, while the privative opposition is between a positive term and a negative extreme.

“ . . . Quia inter actum bonum et malum, vitium et virtutem invenitur non solum oppositio privativa, sed etiam contraria in linea et genere morali, et non solum in esse naturae et entitatis physicae: ergo oportet quod utrumque extremum huius contrarietatis sit positivum et reale . . . quia in hoc distinguitur oppositio contraria a privativa, quod illa versatur inter extrema positiva, haec vero inter positivum et negativum, ut patet in tenebris et luce, caecitate et visu, quae privative opponuntur; contrarie opponuntur calor et frigus, album et nigrum.” (*Ibid.*, n. 35).

St. Thomas shows in the I-II, q. 54, art. 3, *Sed Contra* that habits are distinguished specifically by good and evil:

“ . . . Quod habitus bonus contrariatur habitui malo, sicut virtus vitio. Sed contraria sunt diversa secundum speciem. Ergo habitus differunt specie secundum differentiam boni et mali.”

St. Thomas shows that the specific difference of habits is received from the positive contrariety existing between good and bad habits, virtues and vices, good and bad acts. The opposition which exists between good and bad acts must be contrary, for St. Thomas has denied that privation is the specific difference in moral acts.

“ . . . Si ergo ex contrarietate probat differentiam specificam habitus, et ista differentia specifica in moralibus non est privatio, ut toties affirmat S. Thomas ubi supra: ergo admittit contrarietatem positivam, ut distinguitur a privativa, quia illa, quae constituit speciem non est privatio. Idem etiam constat a simili, quia inter acritudinem et sanitatem corporalem datur contrarietas positiva. Ergo etiam inter acritudinem et sanitatem spirituales, quae est virtus et vitium; tum etiam, quia a virtute ad vitium, et e contra datur latitudo vincenda, quia per assuefactionem paulatim itur de uno ad aliud, et acceditur vel receditur secundum magis et minus, quod est signum distantiae positivae et contrarietatis, quia ubi datur magis et minus secundum utrumque extremum, datur maxima distantia, et illa constituit contrarietatem.” (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 36).

Contrariety is, further, the maximum difference between two species of the same genus, since contraries are opposites which are contained in the same genus and in the same subject. Specifically, however, they are at opposite extremes and are unable to exist in the same subject at the same time. A good act and a bad act are in the

same genus, not only the remote genus quality, but also the proximate genus, human act. Both have the same subject, the will, or some other faculty, though both cannot exist at the same time in the will, or in any other subject, for the entrance of one excludes the other, just as a vice is expelled by a virtue, and vice versa. A good act is specifically distinct from a bad act, for one is conformed to the norm of morality, the other is diametrically opposed to it. Just as the constitutive difference of a good act is something positive, so its opposite, a bad act, is also constituted by something positive:

“ . . . Quod bonum commune omni enti non est differentia constituens speciem alicujus habitus, sed quoddam bonum determinatum, quod est secundum convenientiam ad determinatum naturam, scilicet humanam. Similiter etiam malum, quod est differentia constitutiva habitus, non est privatio pura, sed est aliquid determinatum repugnans determinatae naturae.” (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 54, art. 3, ad 2).

According to St. Thomas, therefore, the specific difference of a good act, as well as that of an evil act, is something determined, something real. This reality is the order of the act to its object. The act tends positively to an object, for the proportion between the act and the object towards which it inclines is an intrinsic, positive relation; or, to express this in another way, the act is intrinsically related to the object from which it receives its specification. This object, however, is repugnant to the due end of reason, and for this reason it is said to be deprived of the order it ought to have; and since whatever is said of the object is referred to the act, the latter, too, is deprived of the rectitude it ought to have. The privation, therefore, follows upon the contrariety, for just as a good act, one term, is said to be perfect, so, a bad act, the other term, is imperfect or evil. And this not only because of the privation but also because of the positive inordination.

ANSWER TO OBJECTIONS

This last section shall be devoted to a few objections whose solutions may help to clarify the doctrine of St. Thomas. These objections may be reduced to two headings: those drawn from passages in St. Thomas where he speaks about absolute evil which is a pure privation; and those drawn from places in which he expressly refers to moral evil or sin, where he seems to teach that privation is the formal constituent of an evil action.

In the first instance, St. Thomas says that evil is an absence of good, a non-being:

"... Relinquitur ergo quod nomine mali significetur quaedam absentia boni." (*S. Theol.*, I, q. 48, art. 1);

evil is a privation of that which a thing ought naturally to have:

"Malum, enim ut dictum est, nihil est aliud quam privatio ejus quod quis natus est, et debet habere." (*Contra Gentiles*, III, 1);

evil is a privation of a particular good:

"... Alio modo potest intelligi ipsum malum: et hoc non est aliquid, sed est ipsa privatio alicujus particularis boni." (*De Malo*, q. 1, art. 1).

To this objection we reply that evil may be taken in two senses: absolute evil which is a pure privation and which contains no entity or goodness; and relative evil which is evil for some nature, but which has some transcendental being and goodness. This evil, when used in reference to sin, is moral evil. As often as St. Thomas speaks about evil as being a privation or a non-entity, even when he is treating sin, he means the absolute evil which is in sin, but which does not include the entire notion of sin. In other words, this is a part of sin, if it may be so termed, not the full nature of sin. When St. Thomas says that absolute evil is found in sin, he does not intend to exclude the positive order that specifies sin. In other places where he treats more explicitly of sin he more than includes the latter, for he says that it is the conversion, the moral evil, which specifies, determines, distinguishes sin:

"... Cum igitur vitia et peccata speciem habeant secundum

illud ad quod convertuntur, manifestum est quod, secundum illud quod perficit speciem peccatorum, nullam connexionem habent peccata ad invicem..." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 73, art. 1);

"... Sed intentio peccantis non est ad hoc quod recedat ab eo quod est secundum rationem, sed potius quod tendat in aliquod bonum appetibile, a quo speciem sortitur..." (*Ibid.*); and in the answer to the first objection of this article, he says:

"... Quod Jacobus loquitur de peccato, non ex parte conversionis, secundum quod peccata distinguuntur..."

This point may be summarized by saying with Cajetan that the privative inordination pertains to sin because the act is deprived of a form it ought to have. Since this privation is absolute evil, sin will also be absolute evil, for the aversion pertains to sin inasmuch as it is absolute evil. The converse and contrary inordination belongs to sin inasmuch as the conversion is a voluntary act specified by the object to which it tends, not as the object is in its physical entity, but as it is in its moral being.

"Dixi autem pluries malum simpliciter ad differentiam mali moralis, quod non est malum simpliciter, sed huc... Sicut enim frigus est in se bonum quoddam, et est malum caldo; ita intemperantia est in se bonum quoddam, est tamen malum rationali vite. Et sicut ad frigidum, quod est contrarium caldo, sequitur privatio calidi non quia frigus non est calor, sed quia frigidum non est calidum; et haec privatio habet rationem mali in subjecto cui debetur bonum calidi, quando, sicut, etc., ut patet in corporibus infirmis ex frigore; ita ad intemperantiam sequitur privatio non quia non est temperantia (haec enim est negatio imperitens), sed quia actus voluntarius subiectus formae intemperantiae, non est temperantiae; et quoniam debetur tali actui subjecto bonum temperantiae, ideo huiusmodi privatio habet rationem mali simpliciter. Et sic inordinatio haec, et aversio, pertinet ad peccatum inquantum malum simpliciter: inordinatio autem contrarie, et conversio, pertinet ad peccatum inquantum habet rationem mali moralis et voluntarii..." (Cajetan in I-II, q. 71, art. 6, n. 7).

Secondly, it may be argued that absolute evil is common and superior to every determined evil; therefore, it is common and superior to moral and physical evil. Since absolute evil is privation, its inferiors, by which it is contracted and divided, must partake of this common note. Because sin is evil, it must share the privation; and hence sin cannot be something positive.

It was pointed out earlier in this paper that evil is an equivocal term. It is not, therefore, a superior, a common note which is predicated of moral evil, for it regards only those evils which are absolute and privative. It does not comprehend moral evil, or physical evil, for the name is applied equivocally to both. In a sinful human action there are two malices, the privative, the lack of rectitude, which is absolute evil, and the contrary or positive, which is the order to an object opposed to reason and to the law of God.

“ . . . Observa, malum absolute, et malum, quod appellamus respectu alicujus, non conferrī inter se ut superius et inferius, neque unum de alio praedicari; sed potius quasi disparate se habent: et aequivoce applicatur utrique nomen mali. . . . Neque etiam malum absolute convertitur cum malo physico et malum alicujus cum malo morali: sed tam in physicis quam in moralibus utrumque malum reperitur. Nam in aqua calida, v.g. privatio frigiditatis habet rationem mali absolute, quia nihil est, et nulli bona ista privatio: calor autem non est malus absolute, quia in se est ens et bonus; sed est *malum alicujus*, quia est malus et disconveniens ipsi aquae. Similiter in actu humano carentia rectitudinis debita est malum absolute, utpote quae neque in se est ens, neque bona alicui: tendentia vero positiva ad objectum lege prohibitum, est malum alicujus, scilicet hominis, quia naturae rationali et rectae rationi repugnat; non tamen est malum absolute quia includit ens et bonum transcendentalē. . . . Quod appellamus malum absolute non est superius ad omnia mala, sed ad ea dumtaxat quae etiam sunt mala absolute, adeoque privative: unde non debet comprehendere illud, quod solum vocamus malum alicujus, sive sit physicum, sive morale. . . . ” (Salmanticenses, *Cursus Theol., De Virtutibus et Peccatis*, disp. 6, dubium 3, n. 49).

“ . . . Dicimus malum simpliciter non esse commune ad malum morale et malum physicum per modum generis et gradus superioris. . . . Aliquid tamen est in malo morali, seu in peccato quod participat rationem mali simpliciter, scilicet ipsa privatio consecuta in actu ex illa conversione morali, non ipsum constitutum formale peccati, seu species mali moralis.” (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol., Tractatus de Bonitate et Malitia Actuum Humanorum*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 59).

It is to be noted also that the division of evil into the evil of fault and the evil of pain, is not a division of absolute evil but rather a division of evil as it is found in voluntary things:

“ . . . Quod poena et culpa non dividunt malum simpliciter,

sed malum in rebus voluntariis.” (*Summa Theol.*, I, q. 48, art. 5, ad 2).

The evil of pain injures the agent in himself and is contrary to his will, whereas the fault is voluntarily elicited by the agent and is injurious to him in his actions.

“ . . . Malum . . . est privatio boni, quod in perfectione et actu, consistit principaliter et per se. Actus autem est duplex, primus et secundus. Actus primus est forma et integritas rei; actus autem secundus est operatio. Contingit ergo malum esse dupliciter. Uno modo per subtractionem formae, aut alicujus partis quae requiritur ad integritatem rei. . . . Alio modo per subtractionem debitae operationis: vel quia omnino non est, vel quia debitum modum et ordinem non habet. . . . Malum igitur quod est per subtractionem formae et integritas rei habet rationem poenae. . . . De ratione enim poenae est quod sit contraria voluntati. Malum autem quod consistit in subtractione debitae operationis in rebus voluntariis, habet rationem culpae. Hoc enim imputatur alicui in culpam, cum deficit a perfecta actione, cujus dominus est secundum voluntatem. . . . ” (*Ibid.*, art. 5).

Moral evil, therefore, is more frequently understood by Thomists to signify the positive order of the conversion in sin, while the privative, even when found in the moral order, retains its name, absolute evil. If one aspect of sin is emphasized to the apparent neglect of the other, this does not mean that that element is the formal constituent, for the whole nature of sin must be considered, not one phase of it.

“ . . . Dum ergo Cajetanus et alii Thomistae agentes de peccato, distinguunt malum morale et malum simpliciter seu absolute: per malum absolute non intelligunt malum in communi sumptum, quod sit superius ad omne malum: neque etiam malum physicum, quod est praecise in rebus naturalibus: sicut nec per malum morale intelligunt totum id quod in actu humano habet rationem mali, et ad genus moris pertinet. . . . sed in ipso actu humano distinguunt duas malitias: aliam privatam quae est carentia formae debitae et nullo modo etiam transcendentaliter est bona: aliam vero positivam, quae dicit tendentiam ad objectum dissonum et prohibitum per legem, adeoque includit ens et bonitatem transcendentalē. Et licet utraque haec malitia ad ordinem naturalem spectet, ob idque malitia moralis dici possit; quia tamen positiva est prima et essentialis in actu humano, constituitque illud primario in ordine morali: privata vero ad eam consequitur: idcirco inter Thomistas nomen malitiae moralis frequentius sumitur pro malitia positiva; privata

vero, etiam dum in moralibus reperitur, retinet nomen mali absolute." (Salmant., *op. cit.*.)

OBJECTIONS AGAINST CONVERSION AS THE FORMAL CONSTITUENT OF SIN

If the positive malice which consists in the conversion to an object opposed to reason and the eternal law constituted the formal reason of a sinful action, then it ought to be the essential constituent of a sin of commission. But this is not true in the moral order, for St. Thomas says that there is a good consisting in the ordinate act itself, which also has its mode, species and order, the privation of which is essentially sin:

"... Est etiam quoddam bonum quod est ipse actus ordinatus, quod etiam habet suum modum, speciem et ordinem; et huius privatio est essentialiter peccatum. . ." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 85, art. 4).

St. Thomas apparently denies that the conversion is essential in sin, for, omitting it entirely, he attributes this essential reason to the privation and the aversion. According to St. Thomas, therefore, privation is the formal constituent of sin.

John of St. Thomas gives two solutions to this objection. In the first, he distinguishes the word "privation," pointing out that it may be physical or moral. The first is the negation of a proper form; the second is the privation of a form which, however, includes the positive contrary to virtue or to a good act. In other words, privation is distinguished by John of St. Thomas into actual and habitual. The latter is a complete lack of good, for it is the loss of grace and charity; it is the punishment due to sin, and not the sin itself. The actual privation, the privation *in fieri*, does not destroy the form entirely, but leaves something of that form in the subject, since it does not take away the ordination of the act to its object. It is in this sense that the Angelic Doctor, according to John of St. Thomas, must be understood.

"... Non intelligit per privatio, ipsam physicam privationem, quae est negatio debita formae, sed moralem, quae est contrarietas ad virtutem, et talis essentialiter est peccatum." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 64).

Secondly, John of St. Thomas distinguishes the word "essential." This word may signify that which is intrinsic to and is found in the substance of the act, although it is a mode following as a consequent the formal constituent, which is the positive conversion, just as

the denial of stone in man is essential to man, although it is not the formal constituent of man. He is led to this interpretation because St. Thomas is treating of the effects of sin: "Whether privation of mode, species and order is the effect of sin?" After making various distinctions and applying them to different things, St. Thomas says that there is another privation which is not outside the entity and essence of the act, but is in the very entity of the sinful action, not as the formal constituent, but as a consequent, or effect.

"Vel secundo potest by essentialiter intelligi pro eo quod intrinsecum est, et invenitur in ipsa entitate et substantia actus, licet inveniat ut modus aut quid consecutum, non ut formale constitutum; sicut in homine negatio lapidis est essentialis, id est, in essentia imbibita, licet non formale constitutum hominis. Et persuademur ad hanc intelligentiam, quia D. Thomas, ut patet ex titulo articuli solum agit de privatione, quae est effectus peccati, inquirens: 'An privatio speciei, modi, et ordinis sit effectus peccati?' Et dicit, quod sic: sed cum hac distinctione, quod invenitur aliqua privatio talis, quae solum ponitur in natura, aut in subiecto peccante, et talis privatio est extra essentiam, seu entitatem actus, ut est privatio gratiae, et diminutio inclinationis naturalis. Alia est privatio quae non est extra ipsam entitatem et essentiam actus, sicut privatio actus ordinati. Et haec dicitur esse ipsum peccatum essentialiter, quia non in subiecto seu natura, sed in ipsa entitate actus peccaminosi, non tamen ut formale constitutum, sed ut consecutum, vel effectus. Nam de privatione, quae est effectus peccati loquitur titulus articuli." (*Ibid.*).

Cajetan offers two solutions to this difficulty. He points out that St. Thomas does not intend to say that sin is essentially privation. St. Thomas means that sin, since it is deprived of many species, modes and orders, is deprived of them in different ways. Since sin is lacking in those which pertain to the good of the act, it is formally deprived of them. And because of this formal privation, St. Thomas says that sin is essentially privation.

"... Quod cum in littera dicitur, 'Et huius privatio est essentialiter ipsum peccatum,' non intendit peccatum essentialiter, ut sit privatio. . . Sed intendit quod, cum peccatum privet multos speciebus, modis et ordinibus, privat eis diversimode: nam pertinentibus ad bonum gratiae, privat demeritorie; pertinentibus ad bonum habitatis, privat effective; pertinentibus ad bonum ipsius actus, privat formaliter. Ita quod, quia privat formaliter, ideo dictum est quod est essentialiter privatio." (Cajetan in I-II, q. 85, art. 4).

Cajetan goes on to say, however, that it is better to distinguish the privation as absolute evil, since it is the privation of the mode, species and order pertaining to the good of the ordinate act.

"Vel, et melius, intendit quod peccatum, ut est in genere mali simpliciter, est essentialiter privatio modi, speciei et ordinis pertinentibus ad bonum ordinati actus." (*Ibid.*).

To these three distinctions, actual and habitual privation, the essential constituent and the essential completion of sin, moral and absolute evil, a fourth solution may be added. St. Thomas is here talking about a sin of omission which consists in privation, and not about a sin of commission. St. Thomas understands privation, as taken in this article, not only as the privation of the rectitude and order which every human act ought to have, and which is found in a sin of commission, but more particularly he means the lack of the very act itself.

"Est etiam quoddam bonum quod est ipse actus ordinatus, quod etiam habet suum modum, speciem et ordinem; et huius privatio est essentialiter ipsum peccatum."

The word *huius* refers, so it seems to us, not to the subordinate clause, but to the ordinate act itself. The privation of this act is essentially sin, i.e., it is a sin of omission. A sin of commission is not the privation of an act, for it is a positive act deprived of its due order; omission is the absence of an act which ought to be performed; commission is the placing of an act which ought not to be performed.

"... Fit enim eo loco sermo de peccato omissionis, de quo non dubitamus consistere in privatio; non autem de peccato commissionis... Desumiturque locutio ex ipso contextu, nam privatio, de qua ibi loquitur S. Thomas, non est solum privatio rectitudinis, vel ordinationis debita actui humano, qualis est omnis privatio, quae spectat ad peccatum commissionis; sed est privatio ipsius actus ordinati et recti: ut constat ex verbis antecedentibus, quae sic se habent: 'Est etiam quoddam bonum, quod est ipse actus ordinatus, quod etiam habet suum modum, speciem et ordinem: et huius privatio (id est praedicti actus) est essentialiter ipsum peccatum.' Huiusmodi vero privationem, apud omnes fore perspicuum est, esse peccatum omissionis, non commissionis. Nam peccatum commissionis... non esse privatio alicuius actus debiti, sed est actus positivus debito ordine privatus." (Salmant, *op. cit.*, n. 52).

It may be further objected that evil, which is the specific difference in the moral order, does not imply anything which is evil ac-

ording to its essence, but something which is good, though evil for man, inasmuch as it deprives him of the order of reason, which is man's good.

"... Et ideo nec malum secundum quod est differentia specifica in genere moralium, importat aliquid quod sit secundum essentiam suam malum, sed aliquid quod secundum se est bonum, malum autem homini, inquantum privat ordinem rationis, quod est hominis bonum." (*Contra Gentiles*, III, 9a).

From this passage, we may gather that St. Thomas seems to reduce the whole reason of evil to privation, for he apparently excludes the positive contrarily from the reason of evil.

In this particular section of the *Contra Gentiles*, St. Thomas shows that good and evil are specific differences in the genus of morality. That act which is conformed to the end of reason, from which it receives its specification, is good according to its essence; while that act, which is specified by an end contrary to reason, is said to be evil according to its essence or species. This end, although it really withdraws from reason, is something good in itself, but bad for man. St. Thomas has here distinguished evil in two ways: there is a certain evil which has no goodness whatsoever, which he calls evil according to its essence, and which we have called absolute evil; secondly, there is another evil which is, in a certain sense, good because it includes transcendental goodness. It is the ordination of the act to an object desirable in itself; or, it is the physical entry of the act not the moral. It is evil for man, however, because it is a tendency to a defective, moral object. This is the moral evil, or the positive contrariety and conversion which is present in sin. The physical conversion is transcendentially good, but the moral conversion is evil for man. The positive contrariety, therefore, causing and founding the privation caused and induced by the former, is the immediate constituent of a sin of commission, not the privation itself.

It must not be thought, however, that moral evil is good and evil at the same time, because in the moral order good is not a *privatio* or property which follows the moral being. Rather it is the specific difference which contracts the moral being, just as evil is also a specific difference dividing the moral genus. It does not follow, then, that whatever is positive in the moral order is good, for there is a positivity which is defective and contrary to good. This positive order is not morally good because it is the specific difference, not a property following the moral being of an act.

"... At vero malum morale est quoddam speciale et determinatum ens alteri determinato enti contrarium, scilicet virtuti, et sic potest inducere oppositionem contrariam, atque

adeo et positivam, et cum defectivitate ab eo cui contrariatur. Nec ex hoc sequitur, quod simul sit aliquid malum et bonum morale, quia in moralibus bonum non est passio consecuta ad ens morale, sed potius differentia contractiva illius, sicut et malitia. Unde non sequitur, quod quidquid in genere morali est positivum sit bonum morale (quidquid sit an bonitatem habeat in genere entis saltem identice et materialiter ex parte entitatis actus), sed datur positivum defectibile et contrarium bono, et fundans privationem rectitudinis, et tale positivum non est bonum morale, nec enim in genere morali bonum illius generis est passio consecuta, sed differentia constitutiva; ubi autem non est haec differentia, sed opposita, nempe malitia, non consequitur ad illam bonum morale, et sic malum positivum non est bonum." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 89).

The final objection which we list is the most difficult that is raised against our contention. If the formal constituent of a sin of commission is something positive, God ought to be its cause; since it is something real, it is a reality which is caused and which participates being. Therefore, it ought to be caused by God Who is the first being and universal cause of all being and of every reality possessing being. But this is absurd since God cannot be the cause of sin directly or indirectly.

"Deus autem non potest esse directe causa peccati vel sui vel alterius; quia omne peccatum est per recessum ab ordine qui est in Deum sicut in finem. Deus autem omnia inclinat et convertit in seipsum sicut in ultimum finem, sicut Dionysius dicit: unde impossibile est quod sit sibi vel aliis causa descendendi ab ordine, qui est in ipsum. Unde non potest esse directe causa peccati. Similiter etiam neque indirecte. Contingit enim quod Deus aliquibus non praebet auxilium ad evitandum peccata; quod si praebere, non peccarent. Sed hoc totum facit secundum ordinem suae sapientiae et iustitiae; unde non imputatur ei quod alius peccet, sicut causae peccati. Et sic patet quod Deus nullo modo est causa peccati." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 79, art. 1).

The formal constituent of sin, therefore, is not positive; otherwise, it would be caused by God, which cannot be admitted. It is therefore constituted by the privation, the lack of order to the proper object.

In answer to this objection, it must be readily admitted that God is not the cause of sin. Nevertheless, this does not mean that privation constitutes sin, for there are three things in sin: there is the act, the moral species, and the privation. Considering the act as both a being and an action, it can be maintained that the act of sin

is from God. Every being must be derived from the First Being, and every action, since it is caused by something existing in act, must be reduced to God, as to its first cause and first act.

"Actus peccati est ens, et est actus; et ex utroquo habet quod sit a Deo. Omne enim ens, quocumque modo sit, operet quod derivetur a primo ente. . . . Omnis autem actio causatur ab aliquo existente in actu, quia nihil agit nisi secundum quod est actu; omne autem ens actu reducitur in primum actum, scilicet Deum, sicut in causam, qui est per se essentiam actus. Unde relinquatur quod Deus sit causa omnis actionis, inquantum est actio. . . ." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 79, art. 2).

Sin, however, is more than an act, for it is a voluntary act specified by a moral object which admits it to the realm of morality. This moral act tends positively to its object, as to its term; and in this tendency a distinction must be made: the positive tendency which comes from an agent; and, secondly, the positive tendency which is from a defective agent.

"Quia de ratione peccati mortalis est voluntarium voluntate mala—oppositum enim non est intelligibile: nec morale enim absque voluntario intelligi, nec peccatum mortale absque moraliter peccante potest, cum peccare nihil aliud sit quam aliquem voluntarie declinare:—quia, inquam, de ratione peccati mortalis est voluntarium voluntate mala, mortaliter, oportet ut de ratione peccati mortalis sit esse a voluntate deficiente, ac per hoc, impossibile sit ipsum esse a Deo immediate. Et si huic adiunxeris quod dictum est, scilicet quod conversio actus mali parit necessario aversionem, videbis quod de ratione talis conversionis est etiam voluntarium voluntate deficiente: ac per hoc, impossibile sit ipsam esse a Deo immediate. Et vere sic est, Nam actus malus, puta odium Dei vel negatia Dei, secundum suam naturam, spectantem, et includit ly voluntarium directe, et ly voluntate deficiente ex consequenti: sicut ipse actus est secundum se essentialiter voluntarius, deficiens autem ex consequenti."

"Ex hoc autem quod de ratione talis actus est esse ab agente deficiente, sequitur quod, pro quanto est ab agente, sit a Deo, primo agente; pro quanto a deficiente, non sit a Deo. . . ." (Cajetan in I-II, q. 79, art. 1 et 2, nn. 5 et 6). (Italics mine).

In the first case, then, the positive aspect is from God, for everything that is, must be reduced to God, the First Cause and the First Act. As it proceeds from a defective agent, however, sin is not from God, but from the free will of man who departs from the order imposed by God.

“... Sed peccatum nominat ens et actionem cum quodam defectu. Defectus autem ille est ex causa creata, scilicet libero arbitrio, inquantum deficit ab ordine primi agentis, scilicet Dei. Unde defectus iste non reducitur in Deum sicut in causam, sed in liberum arbitrium: sicut defectus claudicationis reducitur in tibiam curvam sicut in causam, non autem in virtutem motivam, a qua tamen causatur quiddam est motus in claudicatione. Et secundum hoc Deus est causa actus peccati; non tamen est causa peccati, quia non est causa hujus quod actus sit cum defectu.” (*Summa Theol., op. cit.*)

It may be objected, however, that this defect is privation which is not from God, for God is not the cause of the defect accompanying the act:

“... Quod in hominem sicut in causam reducitur non solum actus, sed etiam ipse defectus; quia scilicet non subditur ei cui debet subdi, licet hoc ipse non intendat principaliter, et ideo homo est causa peccati; sed Deus sic est causa actus, quod nullo modo est causa defectus concomitantis actum; et ideo non est causa peccati.” (*Ibid.*, art. 2, ad 2).

The defect, says St. Thomas, is the privation because man lacks subjection to God, although this is only accidental to his intention. God, he continues, is not the cause of this defect because He cannot be the cause of man's defection from the order which is to Himself. It is the privation, therefore, which is not from God; and hence it is the privation which constitutes sin.

In answer to this it must be said that the privation is not the only defect in sin, for its root and foundation is also deficient. This foundation, as we have already mentioned, is the conversion of the act to the object, the positive aspect of sin, viewed not merely as being from an agent but as proceeding from a deficient agent.

“... Et dicimus debere hanc doctrinam adniti, quod licet omne positivum sub ratione effectus et existentiae sit a Deo, non tamen ipsummet positivum sub ratione deficientis est a Deo. Nemo enim Deo auctore fit deterior, ut Augustinus inquit. In ratione autem, et linea deficientis non solum intrat ipsa privatio, quae formaliter est defectus, sed etiam ipsam fundamentum et radix talis privationis, quod non potest esse ipsamet privatio, sic enim fundaretur in seipsa, nec alia privatio, quia de illa esset eadem difficultas, sed est positivum aliquid cum limitatione et absentia alicujus cum quo illa privatio non compareretur. Et tale positivum licet in se et in suo esse sit a Deo, tamen ut subest illi connotationi, et est radix talis privationis a Deo non est, sed talem defectum habet prout est ex nihilo.” (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 75).

St. Thomas himself says,

“quod deformitas peccati non consequitur speciem actus secundum quod est in genere naturae; sic autem a Deo causatur; sed consequitur speciem actus secundum quod est naturalis, prout causatur ex libero arbitrio.” (*De Malo*, q. 3, art. 2, ad 2).

In this statement, St. Thomas has distinguished in a sinful action, its physical entity, its moral species, and the privative malice. The first is from God; the second and third, however, are not caused by God but by man's free will. The moral species is necessarily positive, for the act is intrinsically related to its object. Privation, while it is not a species, nor does it give a species, is rooted in a species; and in something positive, which is its proximate foundation. To say, therefore, that the deformity which is the privative malice is not caused by God, does not exclude the positive malice, for, since the privation is not caused by God, its root also is not caused by God because He is not the cause of the act which is defective. The cause of the deficiency is man; and he is also the cause of the privation which follows this deficiency:

“... Quod effectus causae mediae precedens ab ea, secundum quod subditur ordini causae primae, reducitur etiam in causam primam; sed si procedat a causa media, secundum quod exit ordinem causae primae, non reducitur in causam primam; sicut si minister faciat aliquid contra mandatum domini, hoc non reducitur in dominum sicut in causam. Et similiter peccatum quod liberum arbitrium committit contra praeceptum Dei, non reducitur in Deum sicut in causam.” (*Summa Theol.*, q. 79, art. 1, ad 3).

It may be argued, however, that this positive deficiency ought to be reduced to God as to its cause, since God is the cause of the will. To this, St. Thomas replies that sin is referred to the will as to its cause. Although the will is created by God inasmuch as it is being, the possibility of the will falling into sin is not referred to God, but is reduced to the fact that the will is created from nothing. Although God, creating it from nothing, is the cause of the will, nevertheless, the nothingness is not from God, but from the will itself. The defect, therefore, which follows from the will according as it is from nothing, is not reduced to a further cause.

“... Quod peccatum refertur in voluntatem sicut in causam; et quantum voluntas sit creata a Deo inquantum est quoddam ens, non tamen quantum ad hoc defectus ex ipsa incidere potest: est enim possibile ad defectum ex hoc quod ex nihilo

est. Quamvis autem Deus sit causa voluntatis faciens eam ex nihilo, hoc tamen quod est ex nihilo non habet ab alio, sed a se: unde secundum hoc non habet aliam causam; et ideo defectus qui sequitur hoc ex secundum quod est ex nihilo est, non oportet quod in ulteriorem causam reducatur." (2 Sent., dist. 37, q. 2, art. 1, ad 2).

This last point may be made more manifest by considering the will as a power. The power is the principle of the act, both good and bad. It is a being, and as such God is the cause of the power which sins. The power, however, is not the sin, for no one is punished because he can sin, but only because he does sin.

"... Cujus exemplum habemus in ipsa potentia peccandi. Nam illa non est ipsum peccatum, sed antecedens ad peccatum (nemo enim punitur quia potest peccare, sed si peccat), et consequenter neque est ipsa privatio peccati, sed est aliquid positivum ut defectibile, et sic talis potentia peccandi non est a Deo prout talis, nempe ut est ad peccandum et defendendum, sic enim non est a Deo, quia nemo Deo auctore fit peior, nec tendit ad recedendum a Deo. Bene ergo stat, quod aliquid positivum sub aliqua consideratione, seu connotatione, et respectu a Deo non sit, sed illud positivum prout est ex nihilo est defectibile, et prout est a Deo est effectibile." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 75).

Furthermore, the will as a power is naturally ordained to the good. When the power is impeded or withdrawn from that to which it is naturally inclined the reason for that defect must be sought for in the power itself. When the will is applied to act the defect which is in sin must be traced to a deficiency in the power itself. And this deficiency is the result of the will's creation from nothing. God is not the cause of this defect because that which belongs to a thing essentially and in the order of specification is not caused in that thing by another, for a created thing, if left to itself, is nothing.

"... Hic autem defectus est secundum quod ex nihilo est. Hujusmodi autem defectus, scilicet quod creatura ex nihilo est, Deus directe causa non est, ut Avicenna probat: quia quod convent rei secundum se, non causatur in eo ex alio..." (2 Sent., dist., 44, q. 1, art. 1).

This does not mean that the power is bad because sin is committed, for the application of the power to act is principally ordained to good, not to evil.

"... Quod usus (i.e., its application) rei dicitur ad quem res principaliter ordinatur. Potentia autem qua in peccatum pos-

sumus, non ordinatur ad malum, sed ad bonum: et ita peccare non est ejus usus: unde non sequitur quod si peccatum est malum, potentia sit mala, sed magis quod sit bona: quia defecere ab eo quod bonum est, malum est." (*Ibid.*, ad 5).

The power which is being and good is caused by God; the defect which is in the sin is not from God. In like manner, the positive ordination of the act to its physical object is caused by God, but the moral deficiency which is attached to that positive order is not caused by God, since this defect is ultimately the result of the nothingness of man.

Another example may serve to make this more intelligible. Man's immanent operations are vital entities and as such are caused by God. Who is the universal cause of every being. Nevertheless, these activities are not from God under every formality because they do not proceed from God as from an intrinsic principle since God is not the intrinsic principle of these actions. Similarly, the formal constituent of sin is caused by God according as it is a real, positive entity endowed with being; but as it touches a defective object and is deprived of the regulation of the rules of morality it is not caused by God but by the deficient agent, man.

"... Quod etiam aliis exemplis manifestatur. Nam actus vitalis est entitas quae a Deo ut a causa universalis totius entis, et tamen non sub omni formalitate est a Deo, quia non est ab ipso ut a principio intrinseco, sic enim est a principio creato, quia Deus non est principium intrinsecum in creatura. Et actio limitata est a Deo ut entitas est, et non sub modo et formalitate limitationis et imperfectionis, sed sub modo perfecto. Et motus tibiae claudicantis est a Deo, et ab anima sub ratione motus, non sub ratione obligitatis et claudicationis. Hac ergo ratione illa entitas, seu ordo positivus moralis ad objectum pravum prout in se entitas realis est, et habet esse, est a Deo, est enim quid effectibile: ut autem tangit objectum deordinatum et privatum regulis rationis, ex quo oritur in actu privato rectitudinis, sub hac ratione est fundamentum defectibile, et non est a Deo, licet alias in se ut entitas est, sit a Deo, quia licet tangat positive objectum, non tamen positive absolute, et simpliciter, sed non in ea plenitudine essendi, quam postulat illa regulatio moralis: sicut artefactum deficiens a regulis artis respicit quidem aliquam ideam secundum quam fit, sed non in ea plenitudine et adaequatione, quam postulat idea et ars propria talis artefacti." (John of St. Thomas, *op. cit.*, n. 76).

This difficulty may be concluded and perhaps simplified by saying that the act in its physical entity and nature is from God. The

moral genus is also caused by God because this expresses the subjection of the act to the rules of morality, abstracting from the goodness or malice of the act. The species of the sin may be distinguished into the species absolutely understood and, secondly, according to its perfection. In the first sense, sin is evil because it is converted to an object contrary to the law of God, and from this conversion the aversion results. Neither of these formalities is caused by God but by the deficient agent, the sinner. In the second case, the perfection or positive entity which is intrinsic to the sinful action is from God, for inasmuch as it is being it comes under the causality of God.

" . . . Vel . . . distinguatur sic actus moralis malus secundum suam speciem, duplīcter : primo, absolute, seu simplīcter ; secundo, secundum id quod habet perfectionis. Et primo modo, sequitur ad eam deformitas : secundo, non. Primo modo, est ab agente deficiente : secundo, ab agente tantum, ac per hoc a Deo . . ." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, n. 7).

APPENDIX

There is another problem connected with sin. St. Thomas has said that privation is formal in sin because it completes sin. How is this to be understood? What place does the privation or aversion occupy? What is its rôle in sin? According to the commentators of St. Thomas privation or aversion is a consecutive element in sin. But, then, the question is asked: how does this occur? How can an *inimī per se* result from a positive element and a privative element? As far as we have been able to ascertain. St. Thomas did not consider this question, but his commentators have attempted an answer. Their solutions, however, are not unanimous. Nevertheless, we shall expose what some of these commentators have said about this problem. First, then, let us read what John of St. Thomas has to say.

In considering the denomination of sin he asks whether the sin may be denominated evil formally in virtue of the conversion, or in virtue of the privation. In the latter case, the conversion will denominate sin fundamentally, for that which is formal to one thing is fundamental and material to another. The conversion, therefore, is a formal conversion, but the act is said to be deprived or averted from its rule fundamentally. When the act is understood to be formally deprived or turned from its proper subjection, it is said to be completely evil. A sin is evil, then, because it is formally evil by reason of the privation by which the act is ultimately and completely sin. The first formality, continues John of St. Thomas, is presupposed to the second, since it is the foundation of the privation, for an act is not said to be deprived of its goodness unless it presupposes the conversion to a deficient object.

"Quaestio de nomine est circa denominationem peccati, utrum actus sit dicendus peccatum, possitque denominari malum formaliter in vi privationis positivae ad obiectum malum; an in vi privationis consecutae, conversio autem illa positivā ad obiectum pravum solum fundamentaliter sit, et denominet peccatum. Nam ly formaliter est acquivozum ad constituere, seu esse constitutum formale, vel esse complementum rei constitutae, et quasi modus ejus, nam etiam esse *in malum* et complementum formalitas quaedam est; sicut obscuritas in fide formaliter se habet, cum formaliter excludat evidentiam, non tamen formaliter constitutive, sed complete. Stat autem bene, quod id quod est formale respectu unius sit solum fundamentale et materiale respectu

alterius, et sic quando actus intelligitur converti ad obiectum pravum positivo ordine, et tendentia, formaliter intelligitur converti, sed fundamentaliter deviare et averti et privari. Quando autem formaliter privatur et averitur, intelligitur complete denominari malum et peccatum. Et ideo potest appellari formaliter peccatum ratione ordinis et conversionis ad obiectum pravum, a quo accipit specificationem actus in bono, vel in malo; et potest etiam appellari peccatum formaliter ratione privationis tanquam ratione complementi, quo ultimate redditur actus defectuosus. Et prima formalitas praesupponitur ad secundam, et est radix et fundamentum illius, quia non privatur actus bonitate, nisi quatenus praesupponit conversionem et respectum ad obiectum pravum. Unde ab aliquibus vocatur peccatum fundamentaliter, ab aliis formaliter, quia primi attendunt ad rationem privationis cuius est fundamentum et principium; alii vero attendunt ad specificationem ab objecto, respectu cuius se habet formaliter, et constitutive ipse ordo et tendentia ad obiectum." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theol.*, *op. cit.*, Disp. 9, art. 2, n. 9).

According to John of St. Thomas, then, a sin of commission is formally constituted by the positive order, and is formally completed by the privation. How, it may be asked, does it complete the nature of sin? He supplies the answer to this question in a reply to an objection.

The objection maintains that the aversion or privation cannot follow the essence and constituent of sin because the essence of sin is taken away if the aversion is removed. Privation, therefore, does not follow the conversion as a consecutive element, rather it enters the very constituent of sin. Moreover, if the privation follows, then the essence of sin is understood to be constituted even before the privation is considered, because as long as the privation in the act is not understood, the rectitude which is absent is also not intelligible. The rectitude, therefore, is still in an act which is essentially sin. It is, in other words, a contradiction.

"... Quia aversio seu privatio non potest esse consecuta ad essentiam et constitutum peccati; ergo si intrinsece et essentialiter requiritur ad illud, et non ut consecutum, necessario est ut constitutum. Antecedens autem probatur; tum, quia ablata aversione tollitur tota essentia peccati, et posita ponitur; ergo non potest esse consecuta ad ipsam essentiam peccati, sed ingreditur in ejus constitutum; tum, quia si consequitur; ergo ante ipsam privationem tota essentia peccati intelligitur constituta, ergo potest intelligi tota essentia peccati nondum sublata rectitudine, et expulsa ab actu. Patet

consequentia, quia rectitudo solum tollitur per privationem ejus; ergo quando non intelligitur privatio in ipso actu, nondum intelligitur remota rectitudo. Intelligitur ergo rectitudo adhuc in actu, qui essentialiter est peccatum, et constitutum in essentia peccati, quod est impletorium." (*Ibid.*, n. 73).

John of St. Thomas replies to this by pointing out that privation is a condition or a mode which is essentially required in order that sin may be constituted.

"Ad confirmationem respondetur negando antecedens. Ad primam probationem dicitur, quod posita aversione ponitur peccatum, et ablata tollitur, distinguo: posita et ablata aversione ut consecuta ad conversionem, et supponendo illam, transeat. Unde non sequitur, quod aversio sit constitutiva peccati, sed quod sit aliquid necessario consecutum, aut essentialiter requisitum ut conditio, aut modus ut res constituantur, non autem ipsa forma constituens, sicut requiritur obscuritas in fide, vel recessus a termino a quo in motu, sine quibus non constituantur ista: non tamen illis constituantur formaliter. Ad secundam probationem dicitur, quod ante privationem tota essentia peccati constituitur, distinguo: quantum est ex parte constitutivi formalis, transeat; quantum est ex parte conditionis requisitae aut modi ad constituendum, nego. Et ideo absolute, et simpliciter non est sine tali conditione peccatum constitutum, quia ut in re sit, non solum attendi debet formale constitutum, sed etiam conditiones et modi requisiti, sicut sine unione corpus non constituitur a forma, et materia, nec sine obscuritate fides, nec sine recessu motus, nec sine negatione lapidis homo, nihil tamen horum supponit essentiam constitutam absolute, et in re cum adveniunt." (*Ibid.*, n. 84).

When it is said, then, that privation follows the conversion, this is understood in two ways. A thing is said to follow something which is already constituted in order that the thing may operate or be perfected accidentally. Thus the properties and accidents of a substance, for example, are said to follow the essence which is already constituted. The second manner in which one thing is said to follow another is not like an accident which is subsequent to the actual constitution of the essence; rather it is one of the ingredients which is required to establish the thing. Privation does not follow as an accident or a property, according to John of St. Thomas, but as an intrinsic mode which is necessary in order that sin be constituted, just as the obscurity in the virtue of faith is requisite in order that this virtue be formed. Privation, therefore, is required in order to form sin, but it

is not the formal constituent, nor does it follow the essence of sin as being already constituted. It is the formal completion which is necessary to constitute the essence of sin.

"Et cum instatur, quod privatio supponit essentiam constitutam in peccato si quidem est aliquid consecretum, non consecretur autem nisi ad essentiam jam constitutam, ante enim consecreti non potest, respondentis negando consequentiam. Et dicitur, quod aliquid consecreti ad alterum, stat dupliciter. Uno modo ad rem jam constitutam ut operetur, vel perficiatur accidentaliter; alio modo non ad rem jam constitutam, sed ad ipsam ejus constitutionem, seu ad ejus constitutivam, ut constituant. Primo modo consequuntur rem propriae passiones, vel aliae conditiones extrinsecae, et accidentia, et in his verum est, quod dicit argumentum, quod si consecretur, supponit essentiam constitutam. Secundo modo se habent conditiones, seu modi intrinseci, qui ad hoc requiruntur ut res ipsa constituantur, non postquam res est constituta, sicut requiruntur obscuritas in fide, recessus in motu, unio materiae et formae in corpore. Et quod requiruntur hoc secundo modo non consequuntur ad essentiam constitutam, sed ad ipsam constituentia ut talia, seu ad officium constitutendi, et ideo neque talia se habent ut formale constitutivum, neque tamen supponunt rem constitutam, sed ad constituentiam concurrunt tanquam conditiones, aut modi requisiti, neque consequuntur constitutam essentiam, sed ejus constitutiva. Et hoc secundo modo se habet privatio rectitudinis in peccato, requiruntur enim ut constitutum, consequiturque formalem ejus rationem, et constitutivam, non enim potest intelligi ordo ipse positivus et contrarius virtuti, quin ex eo sequatur privatio rectitudinis quae omnino requiritur ut constituitur peccatum quod intrinsece est exclusivum regulationis rationis et virtutis, et constituit actum regulationi oppositum, et ab ea obliquatum. Quod sine privatione illa non potest intelligi, quod constituitur, sicut nec homo sine negatione leonis, licet in homine sit negatio, in actu morali privatio, eo quod inquantum liber est capax rectitudinis, illique debita, sicut artefacto deformi ut picturae, vel cathedrae, debita est commensuratio regulata, et ejus negatio, in tali artefacto privatio est." (*Ibid.*, n. 85).

We mention one other place where John of St. Thomas uses this distinction. His third proposition stated that the deformity of the evil action not only implied a privation of rectitude, but also a contrary disposition (cf. page 72). And his authority for this statement was taken from the II-II, q. 6, art. 2, ad 2. After quoting this reference, he commends Cajetan highly for his excellent interpretation of

this passage, and says that Cajetan has rightly distinguished the deformity.

"... Quo loco Cajetanus optime S. Doctoris mentem interpretatur, qui in prima solutione in qua dicit deformitatem esse de ratione speciei actus, addidit S. Doctor, sicut supra dictum est, ad denotandum quod deformitas contraria, et positive sumpta est de ratione speciei actus mali constitutive, sumpta autem privative non est de ratione ejus constitutive, sed consecutive." (*Ibid.*, n. 24).

Cajetan, however, does not say that the aversion or privation is a consequent which is essentially required in order that sin be constituted, as we have already seen (cf. page 73); rather he states that it is a property which follows the intrinsic difference.

"Scito quod commensuratio intrinsece debita actui morali dupliciter, quantum ad propositum spectat, potest inveniri deesse in actu morali. Uno modo, per modum purae privationis. Et si hoc modo inveniri concederetur actus moralis deformis, tunc procul dubio deformitas privative esse intrinsece de ratione speciei actus moraliter mali. Et quoniam ex dictis in Primo Libro et Secundo patet mali moralis speciem positivam esse, et non in privatione, sed in contrarietate consistere; ideo hic sensus non est huc litterae tribuendus. "Alio ergo modo contingit per modum privationis consequentis contrariam formam. Et hoc modo dictum fuit quod deformitas privative invenitur in actu malo moraliter. Et dicitur esse de ratione speciei actus moralis non ut differentia intrinseca, sed ut *passio consequens ad differentiam intrinsecam*. Et dicitur etiam privatio formae intrinsecae: quia est privatio formae intrinsecae actui morali. Et quantum ad praesentem quaestionem spectat, idem est iudicium sive illa privatio sit de ratione speciei ut differentia sive ut passio: ab eodem enim agente sunt." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*, n. 1). (Italics mine)

The appeal of John of St. Thomas to Cajetan weakens his argument, for the latter does not say that privation is essentially necessary for the specific difference; rather he states that it is a property which is subsequent to the specific difference.

THE OPINION OF CAJETAN

The reliance of John of St. Thomas on Cajetan seems ill advised, for Cajetan seems to admit that privation does not unite with the positivity to form an *unum per se*. He says that sin is an *unum per se*, and it is a being contrary to virtue. The privative inordina-

tion, he continues, is a necessary concomitant of sin, since it follows sin.

"... De peccato, cum plura in se claudat ex quibus non fit unum per se, uno existente privato, altero positivo, nunquam poterit iudicium simpliciter dari, nisi supponatur ipsum simpliciter et absolute esse aliquid per se unum. Sic enim de ipso nunc loquimur. Et si quidem peccatum est privatio... constat quod species ejus sumuntur ex parte aversionis, seu inordinationis. Si autem est actus contrarius virtuti, constat quod species ejus sumuntur ex parte conversionis seu objecti. Et ex hoc sequitur quod, si in hac quaestione veritur in dubium res ipsa, patet responsio: scilicet quod res quae vocatur inordinatio privative, specificatur ex habitu opposito... et res quae vocatur contrarium virtuti, specificatur ex objecto seu fine, sicut virtutes ipsae.

"Dicemus tamen veritatem ratione firmatam. Et est quod peccatum est unum per se, et est eius contrarium virtuti: et inordinatio privativa est necessario concomitans ipsum, ut informans illud." (Cajetan in I-II, q. 72. art. 1. n. 2).

Cajetan's reason is twofold: sin is an *unum per se* because it is defined and distinguished specifically, whereas an *unum per accidens* cannot sufficiently distinguish the species of sin. And, since privation is accidental to the intention of the sinner, it cannot specify or distinguish sins.

"... Quod peccatum sit unum per se, ex hoc patet quod absolute definiti distinguuntur specificae consuevit: haec autem de uno per accidens non quaeruntur." (*Ibid.*).

His second reason is that sin is contrary to virtue because there are many sins specifically distinct, in which there is only one privation of rectitude according to species. When, for example, many sins specifically distinct are opposed to the same virtue, there is found only the one privation of rectitude. Prodigality and avarice are specifically distinct sins which are opposed to the same virtue, liberality. The privation which is in these sins is the privation of the rectitude due to the virtue of liberality. Since privations are specified by their opposite acts, it will follow that prodigality and avarice are specifically the same sin, for both are deprived of the rectitude of liberality. This, however, is not true because liberality occupies a middle place between prodigality and avarice. The former sins against liberality by excess, the latter by defect.

"... Dicit ergo primo quod liberalitas est medietas circa dationem et acceptionem pecuniarum. Sed prodigalitas et illiberalitas se habent secundum superabundantiam et de-

fectum, contrario modo. Nam prodigus superabundat in datione et deficit in acceptione. Illiberalis autem e contrario superabundat in acceptione et deficit in datione." (Comment., *S. Thomae in II Ethicorum*, lect. 8, n. 343).

Therefore, concludes Cajetan, sins are not privations essentially but positives and contraries. Their specific differences are taken from objects which are contraries in the moral order and not from the privation and aversion.

"... Quod vero sit contrarium virtuti, ex hoc patet quod aliter non salvatur distinctio specifica peccatorum. Declaratur sequela in peccatis extremis contrariis inter se et mediae virtuti. Si enim peccatum intemperantiae et peccatum insensibilitatis sunt formaliter inordinationes privativae: cum privationes... distinguantur specie secundum oppositos actus; oportet quod peccata ista sint ejusdem speciei specialissimae: quia opposita rectitudo, qua privant, est unitus speciei specialissimae, scilicet rectitudo temperantiae vel temperantiae talis. Et simile est iudicium de vitii et peccatis oppositis aliis virtutibus moralibus mediis inter duas malitias. Consequens hoc est contra veritatem et Aristotelem in *Ethicis*, etc. Ergo peccatum non est privatio essentialiter sed contrarium: et specifica distinctio eorum est ex contrariis objectis in esse morali, et non ex privationibus inordinationis et aversionis. Et quoniam haec ratio, sumpta ex parte distinctivi speciei peccatorum, convincit utrumque, scilicet distinctionem peccatorum ex parte conversionis, et significationem formalem peccati, quoniam distinctiva specificae per se sunt diversificativa rationis formalis ejus quod distinguitur: ideo sola pro nunc sufficit." (Cajetan, *op. cit.*)

THE OPINION OF THE SALMANTICENSES

The theologians of Salamanca also disagree with the solution of John of St. Thomas. For them the formal constituent of a sin of commission is not a combination of the positive and privative malices, for otherwise sin would not be an *unum per se*, but only an *unum per accidens*.

"... Rationem formalem constitutivam peccati commissionis non esse aliquid coalescens ex positivo et privatione." (Salmanticensis, *Cursus Theol.*, *op. cit.*, n. 113).

These theologians reason that a sin of commission ought to be an *unum per se*: otherwise it would be an *unum per accidens* and could not be defined. Since an *unum per se* cannot result from the

union of a positive and a privative, the constituent of a sin of commission also cannot be a union of a positive and a privative.

“... Peccatum commissionis debet esse aliquid per se unum: sed ex positivo et privativo non potest fieri unum per se: ergo nec ratio constitutiva talis peccati potest ex utroque coalescere. Major fere ab omnibus recipitur, et est per se satis nota: quia si praedictum peccatum non esset unum per se, esset unum per accidens, proindeque non posset unica definitione defini. Consequentia vero est perspicua, quia nequit esse major unitas in re constituta, quam habeat ratio constitutiva.” (*Ibid.*, n. 113).

They prove their minor proposition by pointing out that an *unum per se* may be the result of a union of metaphysical parts, i.e., genus and difference; or of quasi physical parts, i.e., potency and act.

“Alinor autem suadet animadvertendo, duobus modis tantum, quoad praesens attinet, posse resultare ex duobus unum per se: vel tanquam ex partibus metaphysicis, quae sunt genus et differentia: vel tanquam ex partibus physicis, aut quasi physicis, quae sunt potentia et actus.” (*Ibid.*).

In neither of these ways, they continue, can an *unum per se* be made from a positive and a privative. We have already seen that privation can be neither a genus nor a difference:

“... Ipsa privatio qua aliquid malum dicitur non potest esse differentia neque genus: sed unusquisque actus specificatur et in genere ponitur per aliquid positive dictum. Sed positionem utramque per quam scilicet ponitur in genere vel specie, potest consequi privatio aliqua. . . .” (*2 Sent.*, dist. 37, q. 2, art. 2, ad 4; cf. page 70).

The genus and difference, moreover, are not really distinct but only rationally. A privative and a positive, on the other hand, are entirely different, for one is as non-being, the other as being. The positive and privative aspects in a sin of commission, therefore, cannot be united as a genus and a difference; and hence the formal constituent of a sin of commission is not the result of a positive and a privative.

“... Probatur ergo, neutro ex his modis posse fieri per se unum ex privatione et positivo: etenim quoad primum res est perspicua, quia genus et differentia in quacunque re non differunt realiter: sed sunt omnino idem secundum rem cum sola distinctione rationis: et ideo potest unum de alio quidditative praedicari tam in abstracto quam in concreto, praedicatione saltem identica. Unde hae sunt verae praedicationes, rationale est animal, animal est rationale: rationalitas est

animalitas, haec animalitas est rationalitas, etc. Atqui privatio et positivum non sunt realiter idem: sed differunt omnino sicut esse et non esse: nec potest unum de alio quidditative praedicari, ut est per se notum: ergo non se habent per modum generis et differentiae, neque hoc modo potest unum per se ex illis componi.” (*Salmanticensis, op. cit.*).

The same thing may be said about the physical parts because potency and act, which constitute an *unum per se*, ought to be in the same predicament. A positive and a privative, however, do not pertain to the same predicament, for the privative is outside every predicament.

“Quoad secundum vero modum etiam constat. Tum quia actus et potentia, quae constituunt unum per se, debent esse in eodem praedicamento: et ideo ex substantia et accidente non fit unum per se, licet illa se habeat per modum potentiae et hoc per modum actus, quia pertinent ad distincta praedicamenta: constat autem positivum et privationem non pertinere ad idem praedicamentum; imo privatio est extra omnia praedicamenta: ergo.” (*Ibid.*).

Act and potency are parts which constitute an *unum per se*, whereas privation and the positive malice are not parts since each is completely a whole in its own order. Furthermore, since privation is nothing and has no perfection, it cannot have any actuality or notion of act which would be capable of perfecting a potency. Similarly, it cannot be considered as a potency which has a relation to act, since privation is the lack of this relationship. The positive malice and the privative evil, therefore, do not unite to form an *unum per se*.

“Tum etiam quia quae per modum actus et potentiae constituunt unum per se, utrunque in suo genere est aliquid incompletum, habens simpliciter rationem partis: nam ex entibus totalibus et in suo genere completis non fit unum per se: sed malitia positiva et privativa non habent simpliciter rationem partium: imo unaquaeque in suo ordine est forma totalis, et completa in suo genere: ergo, etc. Tum denique quia privatio cum sit nihil, nullamque habeat perfectionem, neque actualitatem, nequit habere rationem actus: de cuius ratione est actiare et perficere potentiam. Nec similiter potest habere rationem potentiae: nam potentia dicit realem habitudinem ad unum actum, estque per illum actualis et perfectibilis: privatio vero neque fundat praedictam habitudinem, imo ipsa est carentia habitudinis, neque est ulla ratio in seipsa perfectibilis, aut capax recipiendi aliquam actualitatem: non ergo se habent per modum actus et potentiae. . . .” (*Ibid.*).

The Salmanticensis argue against privation being a mode because union by way of a term and a terminable thing is reduced to the union of act and potency and requires nearly the same conditions. The privation and positive malices must be incomplete, must be in the same predicament; one must be perfectible, the other perfecting. The privation, therefore, is not a term or an intrinsic mode completing the formal constituent of a sin of commission.

"... Quia unio per modum termini et rei terminabilis (saltem in creatis) reducitur ad unionem actus et potentiae, et tere easdem conditiones requirit: ut quod utrunque sit incompletum, quod sint in eodem predicamento, quod unum sit perfectivum, et aliud perfectibile... ergo propter eandem rationem non potest habere locum inter positivum et privativum." (*Ibid.*, n. 114).

The example of faith's obscurity is also rejected because the lack of evidence does not pertain to the essential concept of faith, for this privation supposes the essence adequately constituted and follows it as something entirely outside it. The essential concept of faith, according to the Salmanticensis, is the assent of such a kind that it necessarily founds and carries with it the notion of obscurity.

"Respondetur, neque carentiam evidentiae esse de conceptu quidditative fidei, neque carentiam certitudinis aut veritatis de conceptu opinionis vel erroris: sed omnes huiusmodi negationes vel privationes supponunt essentiam adequate constitutam, et consequuntur ut aliquid omnino extra illam. Unde de conceptu quidditivo fidei tantum est, quod sit assensus talis conditionis, ut necessario fundet, et secum ferat obscuritatem. Idemque est de opinione respectu carentiae certitudinis, et de errore respectu carentiae veritatis. Similiter licet omnis perfectio limitata et creata trahat secum carentiam increatae perfectionis Dei, et omne contrarium carentiam sui contrarii, non tamen huiusmodi carentia, aut aliqua alia est de eorum conceptu quidditivo: sed fundatur in illo, et ad eum consequuntur. Praedictus vero conceptus quidditativus adequate sistit in eo quod sit res tantae vel tantae perfectionis per suum genus et differentiam positive limitatam; ex quo sequitur quod non sit alienus, nec majoris, ac prout quod habeat praedictam carentiam..." (*Ibid.*).

The theologians of Salamanca thus reject the teaching of John of St. Thomas. And it seems to be an adequate reply, at least in regard to the example which he had used to explain his point, for in a later disputation he says that the lack of evidence or obscurity in faith is a property or an inseparable accident.

"... Sufficit quod sit proprietatis, aut accidens inseparabile, sicut obscuritas a fide." (John of St. Thomas, *Cursum Theologicus, op. cit.*, Disp. XI, art. 1, n. 34).

Having argued negatively for their assertion, the Salmanticensis next proceed positively, maintaining that sin is adequately constituted in its formal nature by the positive malice alone, whereas the privative malice is outside the essential concept of a sin of commission.

"Dicendum est secundo peccatum commissionis adequate constitui in sua ratione formali per solam malitiam positivam; malitiam vero privativam esse extra conceptum essentialem." (Salmanticensis, *op. cit.*, n. 116).

When St. Thomas says that a sin of commission is not specified by the aversion but by the conversion, and when he teaches that the privation follows the positive malice, he means, according to the Salmanticensis, that the former is outside the essence of the latter. The reason for this teaching is that the formal constituent of a thing is that which is first in that object; what supposes this object or nature is outside the formal constituent, for properties and effects presuppose the essence. The essence, on the other hand, does not suppose anything previous, since the constituent of the essence ought to be the first thing that is found in the object. The first thing that is found in a sin of commission, as such, is the positive malice, for the tendency to the object repugnant to reason and to the eternal law is prior to the privation which is based on the positive order and follows it, just as every privation and negation is founded on and follows an affirmation. The positive malice, therefore, and not the privative, is the formal constituent of a sin of commission.

"... Illud est constitutum alicujus rei, quod est primum in tali re: quod vero hoc praesupponit, jam est extra praedictum constitutum: sed primum quod invenitur in peccato commissionis ut tali, est ejus malitia positiva: estque omnino prior quam malitia privativa: ergo non haec, sed illa constituit praedictum peccatum. Consequentia est perspicua, et etiam major: nam sicut essentia rei nihil in ea supponit, omnia vero alia, ut proprietates, effectus, etc., supponunt essentiam: ita ejusdem essentiae constitutum debet esse primum quod in tali re invenitur, et quod non praesupponit aliquid aliud. Minor autem... tum quia in quolibet peccato commissionis, ut tale est, primum quod excogitari potest, est tendentia ad objectum dissonum, quae est malitia positiva: privatio privativa vero oppositae rectitudinis, in qua privativa consistit, consequitur ad praedictam tendentiam,

et in ea fundatur : sicut omnis privatio vel negatio fundatur in affirmatione, et ad illam consequitur. . . . Tum etiam quia malitia positiva et privativa, quoties in eodem junguntur, habent inter se ordinem prioris et posterioris, estque una fundamentum et causa alterius : constat autem quod privativa non potest esse prior, quam positiva, sicut neque esse potest fundamentum et causa illius : ergo, etc." (*Ibid.*).

The Salmanticenses confirm this teaching with other arguments. They maintain that, before privation is understood to be in a sin of commission, the sin is already constituted in its species, for the act is understood to be contrary to reason. In this concept, the sin is most formally conceived and fits the definition of sin, which is a voluntary act contrary to the eternal law.

" . . . Quia priusquam intelligamus in peccato commissionis aliquam privationem, intelligimus illud adaequate constitutum in specie peccati et mali moralis : ergo non constituitur per malitiam privativam. . . . Antecedens vero probatur : quia antequam intelligamus in praedicto peccato aliquam privationem, intelligimus quod sit actus moralis contrarius rationi, et tendens ad objectum prohibitum per legem : hoc enim totum est positivum ; sed in hoc concipitur iam formalissime ut peccatum ; convenientique illi sic concepto peccati definitio, scilicet 'dictum, factum, vel concupitum contra legem aeternam' (Cf. *Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 71, art. 6) : ergo, etc." (*Ibid.*, n. 118).

This is further confirmed from the fact that a thing is constituted in its species by its genus and its difference which is divisive of the genus. Before the privation is conceived, the act is composed of its genus, the moral act, and its species, its conformity or deformity with its rule. In the latter case, sin, the privation in consequent to the deformity ; it follows the essence which is already constituted.

"Confirmatur : tunc intelligitur aliqua res constituta in sua specie, quando intelligitur ut constans ex proprio genere et ex propria differentia divisiva talis generis : sed ante omnem privationem intelligimus in peccato commissionis genus et differentiam : ergo intelligimus illud constitutum in specie peccati. . . . Minor vero quoad primam partem, nempe quoad genus, etiam est perspicua, nam proprium genus peccati commissionis est, quod sit ens morale, seu actus moralis, in quo cum actu bono convenit. . . . constat autem quod ut intelligamus in peccato commissionis rationem actus moralis, prout communis est ad bonum et ad malum, non requiritur aliqua privatio ; imo si in hoc includeretur privatio, non conciperemus gradum illum actus moralis ut communem ; sed ut

determinate malum per talem privationem. . . . Quoad secundam partem, scilicet quoad differentiam, suadet eadem minor : quia gradus communis actus moralis prius intelligitur determinari per suam propriam differentiam, quae est talis vel talis modus tendendi ad objectum, quam intelligitur fundare aliquam privationem : ideo namque fundat privationem, quia tendit ad tale vel tale objectum, ad quod debet tendere : ergo prius est huiusmodi tendentia et differentia quam praedicta privatio." (*Ibid.*).

The Salmanticenses strengthen their teaching with another confirmation. A sin of commission is adequately constituted in its species when it is sufficiently distinct from other things which are not of the same species, i.e., from a good act and a sin of omission, for the constituent and the distinguishing mark are really the same thing. The positive malice alone, or the positive tendency of the act to the object that is contrary to the eternal law, is sufficient to distinguish a sin of commission from both a good act, which is entirely opposed to it, and from a sin of omission which is an absence of an act and of this tendency. The formal constituent of a sin commission, therefore, is the positive malice alone, and not the privative.

"Confirmatur secundo : tunc intelligimus peccatum commissionis adaequate constitutum in sua specie, aut saltem formam illam per quam constituitur, quando intelligimus illud sufficienter distinctum ab aliis, quae non sunt ejusdem speciei, scilicet ab actu bono, et a peccato omissionis, nam constitutum et distinctivum secundum rem idem sunt : sed per se ipsam tendentiam positivam actus ad objectum prohibitum, sine aliqua privatione, intelligimus praedictum peccatum sufficienter ab aliis distinctum : ergo, etc. Minor ex eo probatur, quia nec actus bonus nec peccatum omissionis importat praedictam tendentiam ; imo actus bonus dicit tendentiam omnino oppositam ; peccatum vero omissionis carentiam totius actus et tendentiae : ergo, etc." (*Ibid.*).

If the formal constituent of a sin of commission is not the privation, and if the positive and privative do not form an *unum per se*, what, then, is the privation? If the sin is considered from the viewpoint of absolute evil, it will be constituted by the privation. The privation of the order to a fitting object will be formal in the sin, though this formality does not specify the sin. If the sin is considered from the viewpoint of moral evil, as sin ought to be since it is a voluntary act, the privation will follow as a quasi inseparable property. For, from the fact that the act tends to a defective object, by which it is specified and constituted in the moral order, it follows that the sin is deprived of the rectitude it ought to have. The privation of

this rectitude, therefore, is a quasi property which follows the prior tendency of the act. Because it is posterior to the latter, the theologians of Salamanca conclude that it is outside the essence of a sin of commission.

"Ex dictis inferre licet primo, qualiter privatio rectitudinis in peccato commissionis reperta, ad illud se habeat. Nam si praedictum peccatum consideretur in ratione mali absolute dicitur constat quod constituitur per ipsam privationem: et ita respectu peccati sic accepti privatio potest dici ratio constituta. . . Si vero consideretur in ratione peccati absolute, seu in ratione mali moralis per se prima dicti, ut denotat iam ipsum nomen peccati. . . *privatio habet se ex consequenti per modum proprietatis, vel quasi proprietatis*. Ex eo namque quod actus peccaminosus dicitur tendentiam ad obiectum dissonum, per quam constituitur in ratione peccati, sequitur quod careat rectitudine sibi debita, scilicet tendentia ad obiectum consonum: et ita privatio huius posterioris tendentiae est *quasi proprietatis consequens ad illam priorem, et ab ea inseparabilis*: omnino tamen posterior illa, adeoque extra peccati essentiam." (*Ibid.*, n. 124). (Italics mine)

According to the Salmanticensens, therefore, privation is consequent to the positive order in a sin of commission. It is not an intrinsic mode, but an inseparable property which follows the essence of the sin. This interpretation seems to be in conformity with what St. Thomas himself says:

" . . . Quod sicut dictum est supra (q. 72, art. 1), actus et habitus non recipiunt speciem ex ipsa privatione in qua consistit ratio mali (i.e., *malum simpliciter* which is the privation), sed ex aliquo objecto, cui coniungitur talis privatio. Et sic ipse defectus, qui dicitur non esse a Deo, pertinet ad speciem actus consequenter, et non quasi differentia specifica." (*Summa Theol.*, I-II, q. 79, art. 2, ad 3).

St. Thomas has not qualified the *consequenter* but has said simply that privation is not a specific difference since it pertains to the species of the act consequently. The Salmanticensens would distinguish this word: the privation follows the essence of sin as a property, not as an intrinsic condition or mode.

John of St. Thomas, on the other hand, readily admits that a sin of commission is formally constituted by the positivity, even before the privation is considered, as we have already seen.

" . . . Ergo ante privationem invenitur moralitas in actu respectu objecti proprii quod diligit, et ad quod habet tendentiam, illud enim in se primum est. . . Nec solum est funda-

mentaliter morale, sed formaliter, quo ille actus formaliter et secundum formalem et positivum respectum, quem habet non est solum in genere naturae, respicit enim obiectum secundum quod cadit sub ordine rationis: ergo formaliter, et non solum fundamentaliter, est in genere moris. . . Quare quancumque privationem quam habet actus malus habet haustam ab objecto, et quasi secundario consecutam, quatenus obiectum, quod respicit, et ad quod tendit privationem habet obiecti boni. Ab objecto autem, quod est proprium et specificativum actus non participatur et accipitur aliquid per privationem erga illud, sed per tendentiam et respectum, qui est modus attingendi obiectum: ergo moralitas etiam in actibus malis per respectum et tendentiam positivam convenit actibus, non per privationem." (*Cursus theol.*, *op. cit.*, disp. 8, art. 1, n. 32).

He is, moreover, in perfect accord with the passage just cited from St. Thomas.

" . . . Ubi ponderandum est D. Thomam, hoc dicere respondentem ad argumentum quod est fundamentum oppositae sententiae, quod videlicet formale constitutum peccati non debet esse a Deo, et tamen illi respondendo dicit, quod: 'Iste defectus, qui dicitur non esse a Deo, pertinet ad speciem actus consequenter, et non quasi differentia specifica; ergo tale argumentum et fundamentum oppositum non movet S. Doctorem ut diceret formale constitutum malitiae moralis esse privationem, sed hanc solum consequenter se habere ad speciem actus.' (*Ibid.*, disp. 9, art. 2, n. 23).

John of St. Thomas is in perfect agreement with the Salmanticensens in saying that privation is neither a genus nor a difference (cf. page 71). Since privation is a non-being, an absence of being, it cannot be a genus contracted by positive differences; and it cannot be a difference contracting a positive genus, for the genus and difference ought to belong to the same genus. He disagrees with the Salmanticensens when he says that privation is an intrinsic mode or condition which is required in order that the sin of commission be essentially constituted. For the Salmanticensens and Cajetan, this privation is a property of the moral act.