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The Concept of Social Sin in Its Thomistic Roots*

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This article analyzes the key features of social sin in light of both recent pronouncements by the Roman Magisterium and selected passages from the theological work (mainly the *Summa Theologiae*) of Thomas Aquinas. In part 1, the social dimension of sin is highlighted in several documents of the Second Vatican Council, and in many magisterial pronouncements which, after the Second Vatican Council, have contributed to the clarification and development of the concept of social sin, the principal one (which will be used as the main point of reference for the purposes of this writing) is the postsynodal apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance* of December 2, 1984. Part 2 investigates the concept of sin and its affiliates in Thomas's *Summa*. My fundamental argument throughout is that the social dimension of sin does not exclude, but instead is rooted in, the free will of each man who remains responsible for all human action attributable to him.

Introduction

At his general audience of August 25, 1999,[1] while reflecting on the meaning of sin, Pope John Paul II observed that certain fundamental moral values are today often neglected because of a "loss of the sense of sin." In response to this tragic situation, the new evangelization is called to defend personal freedom but resist the tendency to lose it in anonymous "structures of social conditioning." In this respect, the pope acknowledged that personal sin always has a social impact (in the sense that the sinner, in offending God and harming himself, is also "responsible for the bad example and negative influences

linked to his behavior") and that individual sins "strengthen those forms of social sin, which are actually the fruit of an accumulation of many personal sins." The real responsibility lies with the individual. However, it is a fact that the interdependence of social, economic, and political systems ends up creating "multiple structures of sin," whereby evil exerts a "frightening power of attraction," causing many types of behavior to be wrongly judged as normal or inevitable.

The catechetical importance of these reflections is obvious. In the *Catechism*, it is written that an integral component of a catechesis's revealing in all clarity the joy and demands of the way of Christ is a "catechesis of sin," because "unless man acknowledges that he is a sinner he cannot know the truth about himself, which is a condition for acting justly."[2] Hence, the importance of analyzing the concept of sin and, for the limited purposes of this writing, the key features of the concept of social sin, in light of both recent pronouncements by the Magisterium and selected passages from the theological work (mainly the *Summa Theologiae*) of Thomas Aquinas, "light of the Church and the whole world."[3]

As will clearly emerge from part 1 of this work, the social dimension of sin is highlighted in several documents of the Second Vatican Council,[4] and in many magisterial pronouncements which, after the Second Vatican Council, have contributed to the clarification and development of the concept of social sin,[5] the principal one (which will be used as the main point of reference for the purposes of this writing) is the postsynodal apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance* of December 2, 1984.[6]

Correspondingly, with the increasing number of magisterial documents referring to social sin, contributions regarding this topic have also multiplied in the theological literature, from monographs to extended treatments in books on different subjects,[7] to dictionary articles,[8] to commentaries on official documents,[9] to writings in journals.[10]

On the other hand, the analysis of social sin in light of Thomas's teaching on sin is almost nonexistent, at least to the present writer's knowledge.[11] The reason for this paucity of doctrinal contributions is not that Thomas neglected the issue. Quite to the contrary, as will be shown in part 2 of this work, Thomas's writings throw light on all the salient features of the concept. One of the possible reasons for this scarcity has probably to be sought in the fact that, at the time of Thomas, the accent in the theological discussion of sin was on individual sin, its types and elements, rather than its social dimension.

Thus, one does not find, among the many entries on sin and evil in Thomas's work, a separate entry on *peccatum sociale* or *malum sociale* in either Peter of

Bergamo's *Tabula Aurea*,[12] or in Schütz's *Thomas-Lexicon*.[13] Nor has an electronic search for the expression "*peccatum sociale*" in a CD-Rom containing the complete works of Thomas led to any different result.

In consideration of the foregoing, the approach adopted in part 2 will not be systematic but pragmatic, in the sense that a search for parallel passages in Thomas's work (mainly the *Summa Theologiae*) will follow the identification, in part 1, of the key features of the concept of social sin, with special regard to the exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance*.

Before proceeding with the analysis of selected passages from Thomas's works in part 2, though, it is appropriate to prepare the ground for it in part 1, by specifying the meaning of social sin, surveying the magisterial pronouncements, and summarizing some reflections accompanied by selected questions.

The Concept of Social Sin

Multiple Aspects of the Social Repercussion of Sin

Loss of the Sense of Sin

The theological reflection on social sin, like on any other subject, can be better understood in its historical context. In the introduction to this work, it was noted that Pope John Paul II has spoken of the loss of the sense of sin in the present time. His is not an isolated cry: One of his predecessors, Pope Pius XII, already in the 1940s, had warned that "perhaps, today, the gravest sin of the world is losing the sense of sin."[14] Pope Paul VI identified this loss of the sense of sin in the loss of the idea of God and of human freedom.[15] His line of reasoning was captured in the apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance*, where one reads that the sense of sin is "closely connected with the moral conscience, the search for truth and the desire to make a responsible use of freedom," and that, when the moral conscience is weakened, the sense of God is also obscured, with the ensuing result of the loss of the sense of sin.[16]

This loss of the sense of sin is not without consequences in the theological and pastoral context. For example, there is a penitential crisis, not only in the less frequent celebration of the sacrament by a lesser number of penitents but also in the lesser catechetical role that the teaching on sin has assumed, in practice if not in theory.[17]

Communitarian Dimension of Sin

Another consequence, if not of the loss of sin, at least of a different pastoral practice and theological reflection on sin, is the emergence of a sociological notion of sin, which has led to the use of such concepts as "social dimension of sin," "social sin," "collective sin," and "structural sin." More precisely, the starting point remains the classic Augustinian definition of sin as "something said, done or willed against the eternal law";[18] what changes is the theological reflection that captures the multiple dimensions of sin in its religious, personal, communitarian, and cosmic reality. This passage from the pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world (*Gaudium et Spes*), adopted at the Second Vatican Council on December 7, 1965, is exemplary in this respect: "Often refusing to acknowledge God as his source, man has also upset the relationship which should link him to his last end; and at the same time he has broken the right order that should reign within himself as well as between himself and other men and all creatures."[19]

Within this communitarian dimension of sin (the breaking of the right order between man and his fellow men), moral theologians have been addressing the separate questions of sin (1) *within* the Church and *of* the Church and (2) *within* society and *of* society.

Ecclesial Dimension of Sin

The problem of the ecclesial dimension of sin is further subdivided into the problem of the Church as victim of the sins of its members (sin *within* the Church) and that of the Church herself as sinner (sin *of* the Church). That the sins of her members have a negative impact on the Church is an elementary truth that has been taught in conciliar and postconciliar documents. This is how the Second Vatican Council's dogmatic constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) of November 21, 1964, addresses the issue: "Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example and by prayer labors for their conversion."[20]

This offense against the Church (*vulnus Ecclesiae*) amounts to a separation of the sinner from the Church. In fact, the member of the Church is a sinner, not by virtue of his belonging to the Church, but, to the contrary, by virtue of his refusal of being in communion with the Church, a state requiring that he embrace the way of holiness proposed by her. The sinner (albeit imperfect) remains a member of the Church as a result not of his sin but of those very

spiritual values that subsist in him. In this sense, therefore, the antiecclesial character of sin, while affecting the Church as an offense, does not become a sin of the Church.

Can this analysis be pushed one step further and lead to the conclusion that certain forms of sins committed by members of the Church are so widespread and grave that the Church as such becomes responsible for them? In other words, is it ever admissible to speak not only of sin *within* the Church but also of sin *of* the Church—the Church being the sinner? Three different types of answer have been given to this question.

The first one (which, for reasons of brevity, may be attributed to Charles Journet as one of its most eminent proponents)[21] resolutely excludes any possibility of using the term *sinner* as a predicate of the Church, the reason being the essential identity between the Catholic Church and the heavenly church. The second type of answer (which has in Yves Congar one of its renowned supporters)[22] is that the Church is responsible for historical and social faults because she is a concrete, historical reality composed of imperfect members who have the capacity to, and do, sin. Pursuant to the third type of answer (endorsed by Karl Rahner among others),[23] the Church as such can and must be called a sinner, as her reality is that of compenetration between holiness and sin, whereby the Church is at one time saint and sinner.

A detailed discussion of these three different approaches is outside the boundaries of the present work. However, a few summary reflections, along the lines suggested by Cardinal Tettamanzi,[24] are in order. There is undoubtedly sin within the Church because the Church is composed of human beings who are fallible and sinners. It is also licit to speak of historical faults attributable to the Church in the performance of her mission as being the sum total of the individual sins of her members. However, if by sin one means a conscious and deliberate act of moral disorder, then sin cannot be attributable to the Church both because moral responsibility is formally proper of the human person and because the Church cannot be reduced to her individual members.[25] This conclusion seems to be consistent with the requests for forgiveness by Pope John Paul II in preparation for the Jubilee[26] and the reasoning developed in *Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past*, which the International Theological Commission approved in *forma specifica* and the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith subsequently endorsed for publication in 2000.[27]

Survey of Magisterial Pronouncements

In moral theology, the usual discussion of the social dimension of sin does not really concern the question of sin within and of the Church but that of sin within and of secular society. In this latter respect, the relationship between sin and society has been studied from two different perspectives, namely (1) the social dimension of sin in general, and (2) social sin in particular.

Social Dimension of Sin

The Church's teaching on the negative effects of personal sin for society is clear and consistent, as confirmed by several passages from the Second Vatican Council.[28] In the constitution on the sacred liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) of December 4, 1963, one reads: "But catechesis, as well as pointing out the social consequences of sin, must impress on the minds of the faithful the distinctive character of penance as a detestation of sin because it is an offense to God."[29]

In the dogmatic constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) of November 21, 1964, it is written: "Moreover, by uniting their forces, let the laity so remedy the institutions and conditions of the world when the latter are an inducement to sin, that these may be confirmed to the norms of justice, favoring rather than hindering the practice of virtue."[30]

The pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world (*Gaudium et Spes*) probably contains the most articulate exposition of the concept.

> The social nature of man shows that there is an interdependence between personal betterment and the improvement of society.… Among the social ties necessary for man's development some correspond more immediately to his innermost nature—the family, for instance, and the political community; others flow rather from his free choice.… Socialization, as it is called, is not without its dangers.… While on the one hand in fufilling his calling (even his religious calling) man is greatly helped by life in society, on the other hand it cannot be denied that he is often turned away from the good and urged to evil by the social environment in which he lives and in which he is immersed since the day of his birth. Without doubts frequent upheavals in the social order are in part the result of economic, political, and social tensions. But at a deeper level they come from selfishness and pride, two things, which contaminate the atmosphere of society as well. As it is, man is prone to evil, but whenever he meets a situation where the effects of sin are to be found, he is exposed to further inducements to sin, which can only be overcome by unflinching effort under the help of grace.[31]

After the Second Vatican Council, magisterial pronouncements on the social dimension of sin have not been lacking. One in particular is commonly regarded as the most comprehensive treatment of the issue among those contained in papal documents. It is paragraph 16 of the apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance*.[32] For reasons of convenience, one can subdivide this paragraph (headed "Personal Sin and Social Sin") into four parts, an introductory one and three following ones. The introductory part reads as follows:

> Sin, in the proper sense, is always a personal act, since it is an act of freedom on the part of an individual person and not properly of a group or community. This individual may be conditioned, incited and influenced by numerous and powerful external factors. He may also be subjected to tendencies, defects and habits linked with his personal condition. In not a few cases such external and internal factors may attenuate, to a greater or lesser degree, the person's freedom and therefore his responsibility and guilt. But it is a truth of faith, also confirmed by our experience and reason, that the human person is free. This truth cannot be disregarded in order to place the blame for individuals' sins on external factors such as structures, systems or other people. Above all, this would be to deny the person's dignity and freedom, which are manifested—even though in a negative and disastrous way—also in this responsibility for sin committed. Hence there is nothing so personal and untransferable in each individual as merit for virtue or responsibility for sin. As a personal act, sin has its first and most important consequences in the sinner himself: that is, in his relationship with God, who is the very foundation of human life; and also in his spirit, weakening his will and clouding his intellect. At this point we must ask what was being referred to by those who during the preparation of the synod and in the course of its actual work frequently spoke of social sin. The expression and the underlying concept in fact have various meanings.[33]

Of the three parts following this introduction, the first one provides this meaning of the concept of social sin:

> To speak of social sin means in the first place to recognize that, by virtue of human solidarity, which is as mysterious and intangible as it is real and concrete, each individual's sin in some way affects others. This is the other aspect of that solidarity which on the religious level is developed in the profound and magnificent mystery of the communion of saints, thanks to which it has been possible to say that "every soul that rises above itself, raises up the world." To this law of ascent there unfortunately corresponds the law of descent. Consequently one can speak of a communion of sin, whereby a soul that lowers itself through sin drags down with itself the church and, in

> some way, the whole world. In other words, there is no sin, not even the most intimate and secret one, the most strictly individual one, that exclusively concerns the person committing it. With greater or lesser violence, with greater or lesser harm, every sin has repercussions on the entire ecclesial body and the whole human family. According to this first meaning of the term, every sin can undoubtedly be considered as social sin.[34]

The second meaning of social sin is explained as follows:

> Some sins, however, by their very matter constitute a direct attack on one's neighbor and more exactly, in the language of the Gospel, against one's brother or sister. They are an offense against God because they are offenses against one's neighbor. These sins are usually called social sins, and this is the second meaning of the term. In this sense social sin is sin against love of neighbor, and in the law of Christ it is all the more serious in that it involves the Second Commandment, which is "like unto the first." Likewise, the term *social* applies to every sin against justice in interpersonal relationships, committed either by the individual against the community or by the community against the individual. Also social is every sin against the rights of the human person, beginning with the right to life and including the life of the unborn or against a person's physical integrity. Likewise social is every sin against others' freedom, especially against the supreme freedom to believe in God and adore him; social is every sin against the dignity and honor of one's neighbor. Also social is every sin against the common good and its exigencies in relation to the whole broad spectrum of the rights and duties of citizens. The term *social* can be applied to sins of commission or omission—on the part of political, economic, or trade union leaders, who though in a position to do so, do not work diligently and wisely for the improvement and transformation of society according to the requirements and potential of the given historic moment; as also on the part of workers who through absenteeism or non-cooperation fail to ensure that their industries can continue to advance the well-being of the workers themselves, of their families and of the whole of society.[35]

Finally, this is the third meaning identified in paragraph 16 of *Reconciliation and Penance*:

> The third meaning of social sin refers to the relationships between the various human communities. These relationships are not always in accordance with the plan of God, who intends that there be justice in the world and freedom and peace between individuals, groups and peoples. Thus the class struggle, whoever the person who leads it or on occasion seeks to give it a theoretical justification, is a social evil. Likewise obstinate confrontation

between blocs of nations, between one nation and another, between different groups within the same nation all this too is a social evil. In both cases one may ask whether moral responsibility for these evils, and therefore sin, can be attributed to any person in particular. Now it has to be admitted that realities and situations such as those described, when they become generalized and reach vast proportions as social phenomena, almost always become anonymous, just as their causes are complex and not always identifiable. Hence if one speaks of social sin here, the expression obviously has an analogical meaning. However, to speak even analogically of social sins must not cause us to underestimate the responsibility of the individuals involved. It is meant to be an appeal to the consciences of all, so that each may shoulder his or her responsibility seriously and courageously in order to change those disastrous conditions and intolerable situations. Having said this in the clearest and most unequivocal way, one must add at once that there is one meaning sometimes given to social sin that is not legitimate or acceptable even though it is very common in certain quarters today. This usage contrasts social sin and personal sin, not without ambiguity, in a way that leads more or less unconsciously to the watering down and almost the abolition of personal sin, with the recognition only of social guilt and responsibilities. According to this usage, which can readily be seen to derive from non-Christian ideologies and systems—which have possibly been discarded today by the very people who formerly officially upheld them—practically every sin is a social sin, in the sense that blame for it is to be placed not so much on the moral conscience of an individual, but rather on some vague entity or anonymous collectivity such as the situation, the system, society, structures or institutions. Whenever the church speaks of situations of sin or when [it] condemns as social sins certain situations or the collective behavior of certain social groups, big or small, or even of whole nations and blocs of nations, she knows and she proclaims that such cases of social sin are the result of the accumulation and concentration of many personal sins. It is a case of the very personal sins of those who cause or support evil or who exploit it; of those who are in a position to avoid, eliminate or at least limit certain social evils but who fail to do so out of laziness, fear or the conspiracy of silence, through secret complicity or indifference; of those who take refuge in the supposed impossibility of changing the world and also of those who sidestep the effort and sacrifice required, producing specious reasons of higher order. The real responsibility, then, lies with individuals. A situation—or likewise an institution, a structure, society itself—is not in itself the subject of moral acts. Hence a situation cannot in itself be good or bad. At the heart of every situation of sin are always to be found sinful people. So true is this that even when such a situation can be changed in its structural and institutional aspects by the force of law or—as unfortunately more often

> happens by the law of force, the change in fact proves to be incomplete, of short duration and ultimately vain and ineffective—not to say counterproductive if the people directly or indirectly responsible for that situation are not converted.[36]

On the social dimension of each personal sin, meaning by this a negative influence of sin on society, there is today a wide consensus among moral theologians. The ultimate source of the social dimension of sin has to be found in man himself; more precisely in his intrinsic social nature. In other words, a sin has an intrinsically social dimension by virtue of its being a sin, namely the refusal of communion with God and with the others. In this broad and basic sense, every sin without exception has a social dimension. (Of course, the ways in which this social dimension is realized are many.) This basic sense is the first one listed in paragraph 16 of *Reconciliation and Penance*, reproduced in its entirety above. The vivid image provided in that document is that of communion of sin, whereby a sinner drags down with himself, in some way, the whole world.

The second sense in which the expression social sin is used in *Reconciliation and Penance* is that certain sins, by their very matter, are social because they go against love of neighbor. The list is long and includes both sins of commission and of omission, such as those against justice (of the individual against the community or vice versa), those against basic human rights (first and foremost the right to life and physical integrity), those against the others' freedoms (first and foremost religious freedom) and dignity, and those against the common good.

The third meaning identified in the postapostolic exhortation is that in which the adjective *social* is predicated of sins committed in relationships between communities within a state or between nations or blocs of nations on the international level. In the document, it is stressed that the frequent anonymity of those to whom such sins are attributable, and the complexity of their causes, must not lead us to underestimate the responsibility of the individuals involved. At the same time, it is clear that this third meaning has certain elements of analogy with the last sense of social sin according to *Reconciliation and Penance*, namely that in which the expression social sin acquires its full meaning of a sin committed, not by a single person but by a community.

Social Sin and Structures of Sin

Whether a sin attributable to a community (a social sin in the strict sense of the expression) exists is the most controversial aspect of the debate on the social dimension of sin. The idea of a sin attributable to a community is not

new. After the end of World War II, at the Nuremberg Trials, one of the issues confronting the International Military Tribunal was that of organizational guilt, whereby the subjects of criminal activity would be Nazi organizations, while their members would be found guilty on proof of membership alone.[37] The issue was not a legal one only and was not restricted to the Nazi officers on trial. In those same years, Pope Pius XII forcefully proclaimed that judging and condemning not the single individuals but entire communities and nations would breach the norms that must regulate every human judgment: Nations as such cannot be held accountable.[38]

Consistent with this proclamation, the majority of moral theologians have given a negative answer to the question of whether there can be moral guilt of a community as such without the moral guilt being imputable to its single members. In other words, moral guilt is formally and strictly personal, with the consequence that a community will have acted rightly or wrongly depending on the good or bad action freely decided by its individual members.[39] This conclusion, moreover, is consistent with a psychological analysis of sin. For example, examining group evil in the context of the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, Peck has observed that "[t]riggers are pulled by individuals. Orders are given and executed by individuals. In the last analysis, every single human act is ultimately the result of an individual choice."[40]

The issue has recently been revived, sometimes in response to arguments put forward by certain exponents of the theology of liberation to the effect that social structures of exploitation would force the single individual to accept the values of the system so that guilt would be personified in these social structures.[41] Now, although the expression *structure of sin* is part of the social doctrine of the Church, the pope and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith have warned against watering down and ultimately abolishing personal sin and replacing it by generic references to social guilt and responsibilities. This is indeed the clarification furnished at the end of the paragraph from *Reconcilia-tion and Penance* reproduced above. In it, the pope insisted on the point that, even when social sins are the result of the accumulation and concentration of many personal sins, the real responsibility rests with the individual: At the heart of each and every situation of sin there are always sinful people.

In the same year of the promulgation of *Reconciliation and Penance*, another document (this time an instruction on certain aspects of the theology of liberation—*Libertatis Nuntius*—by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) made the same point in these eloquent terms:

> Nor can one localize evil principally or uniquely in bad social, political, or economic "structures" as though all other evils came from them so that the creation of the "new man" would depend on the establishment of different economic and sociopolitical structures. To be sure, there are structures which are evil and which cause evil and which we must have the courage to change. Structures, whether they are good or bad, are the result of man's actions and so are consequences more than causes. The root of evil, then, lies in free and responsible persons who have to be converted by the grace of Jesus Christ in order to live and act as new creatures in the love of neighbor and in the effective search for justice, self-control, and the exercise of virtue. To demand first of all a radical revolution in social relations and then to criticize the search for personal perfection is to set out on a road which leads to the denial of the meaning of the person and his transcendence, and to destroy ethics and its foundation which is the absolute character of the distinction between good and evil. Moreover, since charity is the principle of authentic perfection, that perfection cannot be conceived without an openness to others and a spirit of service.[42]

Two years later, by an instruction on Christian freedom and liberation (*Libertatis Conscientia*), the same Congregation added:

> Having become his own center, sinful man tends to assert himself and to satisfy his desire for the infinite by the use of things: wealth, power, and pleasure, despising other people and robbing them unjustly and treating them as objects or instruments. Thus he makes his own contribution to the creation of those very structures of exploitation and slavery which he claims to condemn.[43]

In the encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, of 1987, Pope John Paul II applied the category of structures of sin to the analysis of development. He remarked that "it is a question of a moral evil, the fruit of many sins which lead to 'structures of sin.' To diagnose the evil in this way is to identify precisely, on the level of human conduct, the path to be followed in order to overcome it."[44]

The call to follow a path of internal conversion, reverberating in society, takes the form, in the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* of 1991, of an appeal to a true human ecology, whereby man must respect the natural and moral structures with which he has been endowed:

> Man receives from God his essential dignity and with it the capacity to transcend every social order so as to move toward truth and goodness. But he is also conditioned by the social structure in which he lives, by the education he has received and by his environment. These elements can either help or

> hinder his living in accordance with the truth. The decisions which create a human environment can give rise to specific structures of sin which impede the full realization of those who are in any way oppressed by them. To destroy such structures and replace them with more authentic forms of living in community is a task which demands courage and patience.[45]

This call to human ecology encompasses the whole spectrum of human activity, from respect to just economic relationships to respect for the even more fundamental good of innocent human life, disrespect for which is always an intrinsic evil. In the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, of 1995, Pope John Paul II, after denouncing as a structure of sin the emergence of a culture of death, wrote:

> It is at the heart of the moral conscience that the eclipse of the sense of God and of man, with all its various and deadly consequences for life, is taking place. It is a question, above all, of the individual conscience, as it stands before God in its singleness and uniqueness. But it is also a question, in a certain sense, of the "moral conscience" of society: In a way it too is responsible, not only because it tolerates or fosters behavior contrary to life, but also because it encourages the "culture of death," creating and consolidating actual "structures of sin" which go against life. The moral conscience, both individual and social, is today subjected, also as a result of the penetrating influence of the media, to an extremely serious and mortal danger: that of confusion between good and evil, precisely in relation to the fundamental right to life.[46]

Finally, the theological reflection on structures of evil has led, in the Church's teaching, to the identification of the opposite structures of the common good. The Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, in *World Hunger a Challenge for All: Development in Solidarity*, of 1996, wrote:

> Ignorance of the common good goes hand in hand with the exclusive and sometimes excessive pursuit of particular goods such as money, power or reputation, when viewed as absolutes to be sought for their own sakes: namely as idols. This is what created the "structures of sin," all those places and circumstances in which habits are perverse and which demand proof of heroism on the part of all new arrivals if one is to avoid acquiring such habits. The "structures of sin" are numerous and vary in scope. Some are worldwide—for example the mechanisms and the conduct which creates hunger—while others are on a much smaller scale but equally capable of creating imbalances making it more difficult to do good to the people affected by them. These "structures" always generate high costs in human

> terms and are the places in which the common good is destroyed.… Conversely, as soon as groups of men and women begin working together in order to take due account of the need to serve the whole community, and each individual member of it, remarkable developments can be achieved. People previously deemed rather useless become outstanding for the quality of their services, and a positive effect gradually improves the material, psychological and moral conditions of their lives. This is really the "obverse" of the "structures of sin." One might call them the "structures of the common good" which pave the way to the "civilization of man." Our experience in such situations, gives some idea of what a world might be if people were more concerned about the common interests and the fate of each man and woman, in all they do and in the exercise of all their responsibilities.[47]

In conclusion, magisterial pronouncements clearly defend and promote the idea of personal responsibility for social evil, while affirming the reality and gravity of the social dimension of sin in its multiple dimension of intrinsic aspect of each and every sin, specific content of certain sins, and constitutive element of structures of sin. Drawing on this consistent teaching, the *Catechism*, in paragraph 1869, acknowledges that sins give rise to social situations and institutions that are contrary to the divine goodness, but these structures of sin are the expression and effect of personal sins, leading their victims to do evil in their turn.[48]

Summary Reflections and Selected Questions

The previous section has evidenced a clear distinction between the social dimension of sin, on the one hand, and a stricter concept of social sin, on the other. The social dimension of sin has to do with the intrinsic nature of every sin, even though it may be and is more pronounced in some sins (specifically consisting in the refusal of love for neighbor) than in others. Social sin in the strict sense, albeit the accumulation of individual sins, is defined by its imputability to a given community: It is both an act, consisting in the sinful behavior of a community, and a consequence, when it gives rise to structures of sin. In his treatment of sin in general, and of particular sins, does Thomas analyze (or at least allude to) their social dimension? Is there any trace, in Thomas's work, of the concept (if not the expression) of structures of sin?

The problem of social sin in the strict sense is how sin can be attributed to a community instead (or in addition to) a single person or a plurality of individuals. In other words, the efficient cause of any sin can only be human action (*actus humanus*), resulting from man's reason and free will. Therefore, only the human person, endowed with intellect and will, can produce a moral act

and be accountable for a sinful act. Sin is eminently an *actus personae*. How does Thomas address the passage from personal sin as privation of right reason to social sin as a personal and collective act in breach of the social order?

Man's social nature entails that human freedom is realized in a relational context. What is the type of relationship between the freedoms of the various human persons? Obviously, it cannot be a relationship of cause and effect, in the sense that the freedom of one would cause the freedom of the other and, correspondingly, the sin of one would cause (i.e., automatically determine) the sin of the other. Rather, the relationship is one of occasion,[49] in the sense that the freedom of one can favor or hinder the exercise of the freedom of the other. In this way, the sin of one becomes the occasion of the sin of the other; a bad example contributing to the weakening of the intellect and will in their natural tendency toward attaining the truth and the good. Therefore, there is a correlation (expressly emerging from some magisterial pronouncements mentioned earlier) between social virtue and social sin, between structures of evil and structures of the common good. To what extent is this correlation found in Thomas's work?

A particular aspect of the relationship between human freedoms is that of cooperation and, when the human freedoms are failing, cooperation in evil or sin. In its extreme expressions, this cooperation can give rise to organized sin, whereby individual sin is correlated to the sins of the others (this being the very idea of the structure of sin). How does Thomas address the issue of cooperation in evil? Does he admit of transpersonal occasions of sin, in particular the cooperation of fallen angels in bringing about structures of sin?

Thomistic Roots of the Concept

Thomas's Treatise on Sin

In the general scheme of the *Summa Theologiae*, the treatise on sin belongs to Thomas's analysis of the human act.[50] God is man's final cause, and human acts are the means to achieve this end. Thus, in the *Prima Secundae*, after dedicating the first five questions to beatitude as the final end of human life, Thomas proceeds to consider the human act, with a view to knowing which acts are conducive to beatitude and which ones are an obstacle to its attainment.[51] Human acts are examined in themselves (questions 6 to 48 of the *Prima Secundae*), and with respect to their intrinsic principles (questions 49 to 89) and extrinsic principles (questions 90 to 114). The intrinsic principles are first studied in general (questions 49 to 54) and then according to the criterion of

good and evil (*per bonum et malum*), whereby virtues (questions 55 to 70) are opposed to vices and sins (questions 71 to 89).

Before taking a closer look at the treatise on sin, it is essential to clarify the two meanings of evil accepted by Thomas.[52] On the one hand, there is the evil suffered, or natural evil (*malum poenae*), which is the evil consisting in the withdrawal of the form or part required for the integrity of a thing; on the other hand, there is the evil done, or moral evil (*malum culpae*), which is the evil consisting in the withdrawal of the activity that is due, either because it is totally absent or because it does not have its due mode and order.[53]

Of these two kinds of evil, Thomas adds, it is moral evil that has more of the nature of evil, and this for two reasons. The first one is that, as already indicated by Dionysius,[54] one becomes evil by the evil of fault, not by the evil of pain. In fact, from a good will, which makes a man use well what he has, man is called good, while from a bad will he is called bad. Therefore, as the fault consists in the disordered act of the will, and the pain in the privation of something used by the will, it is the fault rather than the pain that has more of evil. The second reason is that, while by the evil of pain a creature may forfeit an uncreated good, it is only the evil of fault that is directly opposed to the uncreated good because it is opposed to the fulfillment of the divine will and to divine love.

Regarding the cause of evil, only the good can be a cause because only the good has the positive being that is necessary in a cause. From this, it follows that evil is merely accidental, in the sense that moral evil is not the direct effect of the free will, which is good in itself, but an accidental defect whereby the will in bringing about a moral evil is moved toward an apparent good.[55]

These are the premises, in the *Prima Pars*, of Thomas's treatise on sin in questions 71 to 89 of the *Prima Secundae*.[56] While personal sin is the primary analogue or referent of sin, these questions address also original sin and, albeit indirectly (by means of the types, causes, and effects of sin), social sin.

In the prologue to the opening question of his treatise, Thomas lists six aspects of vices and sins that he intends to consider; namely, (1) vices and sins in themselves, (2) their distinction, (3) their comparison with one another, (4) the subject of sin, (5) the cause of sin, and (6) the effect of sin.[57] In this classification, Thomas uses the terms *vice* and *sin*. Are they synonyms? Do they differ, and if so how, from *evil* or *malice*? A terminological clarification is necessary.

In the footsteps of Aristotle,[58] Thomas defines virtue as a good disposition befitting one's nature. There are three things opposed to virtue thus defined: (1) sin, opposing virtue regarding that to which virtue is disposed; (2) evil,

opposing virtue regarding the fact that virtue is a kind of goodness; and (3) vice, opposing virtue regarding the mode of its nature. Hence, sin is conceptually distinguished from moral evil and vice. Thomas then moves on to defining sin. His words are, as usual, an example of brevity and clarity:

> Sin is nothing else than a bad human act. Now, an act is human because of its being voluntary … whether it be voluntary, as being elicited by the will, namely to will or to choose, or as being commanded by the will, namely the exterior acts of speech or operation. On the other hand, a human act is bad because of its lacking conformity with its due measure. Every conformity with measure in a thing depends on its comparison with a rule, departure from which results in that thing being incommensurate. Now, there are two rules of the human will: One is proximate and homogeneous, which is the human reason; while the other is the first rule, which is the eternal law, God's reason, so to speak. Accordingly, Augustine includes two elements in the definition of sin: One is that sin pertains to the substance of the human act, which is the matter of sin, so to speak, when he said "word, deed, or desire"; the other one is that sin pertains to the nature of evil, which is the form of sin, as it were, when he said "contrary to the eternal law."[59]

Sin is therefore a bad human act that, to be human, must be voluntary. In fact, only those acts that proceed from man as man are human. At the beginning of his treatise on the human act, Thomas writes that human acts are those of which man is master through reason and will.[60] Some actions, which are common to men and irrational animals, such as breathing or yawning, do not proceed from a deliberate will. Other actions, while proper to man, such as laughing or crying, do not necessarily proceed from his deliberate will. From this, it follows that, to be human, an action must be so in regard to both its substance and its mode: "[I]t 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."[61]

As a human act, sin must be bad, whereby it violates the rule of right reason and, through this, the law of God. As such, sin is an act against the proper order, which for man is triple: the order of reason, the divine order, and the order of society.[62] If man were a lonely creature, the orders of God and reason would suffice, but man is naturally a social being, with the consequence that he is ordered toward his fellow men, with whom he lives in society. Whatever is contained in the order of reason is contained also in the order of God, which in turn contains things going beyond the order of reason, such as the truths of

faith or the duties that man owes to God alone. Likewise, the order of reason contains and exceeds the order of society because, in all his relationships with neighbors, man must be directed by the rule of right reason. However, sometimes man acts in accordance with right reason in matters relating to him alone, with the result that a defective act in the same matters is a sin against himself, not one against society.

This is the line of reasoning leading Thomas to posit a tripartite distinction of sins according to their objects:

> Now, the things whereby man is directed to God, his neighbor, and himself are diverse. Therefore, this distinction of sins relates to their objects, according to which the species of sins are diversified. Consequently, this distinction of sins is properly one of different species of sins. Virtues also, to which sins are opposed, can be distinguished according to this difference of species: In fact, it is evident from what has been said [*Prima Secundae*, q. 62, a. 1; q. 66, a. 4, 6] that by the theological virtues man is directed to God, by temperance and fortitude to himself, and by justice to his neighbor.[63]

The case for the relevance of the analysis of virtues to the analysis of their opposite sins could not be made more clearly. Moreover, by distinguishing sins according to their objects, Thomas paves the way for basic questions (and their answers) regarding the concept of social sin. Does the identification of a specific category of sins defined by their opposition to the due justice to neighbor imply that only this category of sins has a social dimension, or do instead all sins produce antisocial effects? If the latter answer is correct, can certain sins still be regarded as being social in a stricter sense?

These are the questions to be addressed in the next two sections. The following one, on the other hand, will revert to Thomas's analysis of sin (and more particularly to the causes of sin), with a view to throwing some light on the concept of structure or situation of sin.

Effects of Sin: The Social Dimension of Every Sin

Despite its cause in man's free will, sin may and does produce effects that go beyond the sphere of the sinner. In *Reconciliation and Penance*, one reads that, by virtue of human solidarity, which is as mysterious and intangible as it is real and concrete, each individual's sin in some way affects others.[64] There is a law of descent leading to the communion of sinners, which corresponds to the law of ascent leading to the communion of saints. In this wide sense, every sin is a social sin because it has greater or lesser repercussions on the whole ecclesial body and human family.

The reflection on the repercussions of sin is present in Thomas's teaching. In his analysis of the human act in the *Prima Secundae*, Thomas refers to the good or evil "redounding on the whole community" by virtue of the very social nature of man as part and member of a community. These are his words: "Whoever lives in society is, in some way, a part and a member of the whole society. Therefore, any good or evil done to the member of a society redounds on the whole society: In the same way, whoever hurts a man's hand, by that very fact hurts the man."[65]

As was mentioned above, the treatises on the human act and on sin by Thomas cannot be separated from his treatment of virtue. It is therefore not surprising that, as a footnote to this very passage where Thomas affirms the wider effect of sin for society, the editor has included a cross-reference to Thomas's discussion of the virtue of justice in the *Secunda Secundae*. In it, Thomas notes that justice directs man in his relationships with others, and this may occur in two ways. The first one regards his relationships with another person as a single individual (*ad alium singulariter*). The second one has to do with a man's relationships with another person as a member of a community (*ad alium in communi*) in the sense that someone serving a community serves also each and every member of that community. From this, it follows that

> all those who belong to a community stand in relation to that community as parts to a whole. While a part, as such, belongs to a whole, so whatever is the good of a part can be directed to the good of the whole. It follows therefore that the good of any virtue, whether such virtue directs man in relation to himself, or in relation to certain other individual persons, is referable to the common good, to which justice directs. Accordingly, the acts of all virtues can pertain to justice, in so far as it directs man to the common good.[66]

Now, as the good of every virtue is referable to the common good, so the evil of every sin affects the whole community. Thomas's observation, in the *Prima Secundae*, that the sin of one redounds on the others finds its counterpart, in the *Secunda Secundae*, that the virtuous act of one also benefits the whole community.

This conclusion is confirmed by Thomas's analysis of one of the vices opposed to commutative justice, namely homicide. One of the questions addressed by Thomas is whether it is lawful to kill oneself. In providing an absolutely negative response to this question, Thomas articulates several arguments. The first one is that suicide goes against the natural inclination of

everything that keeps itself in being and to charity whereby every man should love himself. The last argument is that suicide is a sin against God because life is a gift from God and remains subject to his power, with the consequence that taking one's life is usurping a power not belonging to the agent. Between these two arguments, Thomas develops this one: "[It is altogether unlawful to kill oneself] because every part, as such, belongs to the whole. Now, every man is part of the community: and therefore what he is belongs to the community. Hence by killing himself he injures the community."[67]

This idea of suicide injuring the community does not occur only here in Thomas's work. For example, in his *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, commenting on Aristotle's passage that suicide is an injustice to the state, Thomas writes that he who kills himself "does an injustice to the state, which he deprives of a citizen, even if he does no injustice to himself."[68]

For the present purposes, there is no need to discuss these observations on suicide at any length. The point is that both in his treatises on the human act and sin and in his analysis of virtue, Thomas insists on the social dimension of virtuous and vicious acts. It is therefore possible to give a positive answer to the question whether, for Thomas, every sin produces effects going beyond its repercussions on its agent and victim, ending up with injuring the whole community.

Types of Sin: Social Sins in the Strict Sense

Individual Sins Against Neighbor

While all human sins are social sins by virtue of the social nature of man, according to *Reconciliation and Penance* there are some sins that, by their very matter, constitute a direct attack on one's neighbor, and are therefore social sins in the strict sense of the expression.[69] In this sense, a social sin (whether of commission or omission) may be a sin against love of neighbor, against justice in interpersonal relationships (either by the individual against the community or by the community against the individual), against human rights (first and foremost against the right to life from conception to natural death), against freedom (first and foremost against religious freedom), against the dignity and honor of every human being, or against the common good and its manifold requirements.

There is no comprehensive list of which sins are social in this strict sense. Nor is Thomas's analysis of these sins confined to any particular section of the *Summa*. Spiazzi is certainly right in remarking that the social effects of sins are extensively treated in the questions of the *Secunda Secundae* dealing with sins

against justice.[70] However, it is also true that social sins do not invariably fall under the category of sins against justice. Four examples of sin, each one opposing a different theological or cardinal virtue will suffice to prove this point.

Apostasy is a sin against faith. One of the questions addressed by Thomas is whether a prince forfeits his dominion over his subjects on account of apostasy. His answer is that the Church may licitly pass a sentence of punishment against the apostate, depriving him of the allegiance of his subjects, lest allegiance might conduce to the corruption of the faith.[71] The relevant point, for the present purposes, is that, when the agent is a public authority, the sin of apostasy is a specific social sin implying social consequences.

Hatred is the first of the sins against charity considered by Thomas in the *Secunda Secundae*. After concluding that hatred against one's neighbor, simply considered, is always sinful, Thomas asks whether hatred of neighbor is the most grievous sin against neighbor. In reaching a negative conclusion in response to this question, Thomas distinguishes two counts on which sins against neighbor are evil: first, by reason of the disorder in the person who sins; and second, by reason of the hurt inflicted on the victim of sin. It is true that, on the first count, hatred is a more grievous sin than external actions that hurt our neighbor because hatred is a disorder of man's will, which is the chief part of man and the seat of the root of sin. However, it is also true that, regarding the hurt inflicted on neighbor, the outward sins are worse than inward hatred.[72] More than this conclusion, what is relevant here is the social dimension of hatred of neighbor as a specific social sin.

In analyzing ambition as an inordinate desire of honor and a sin against fortitude, Thomas identifies three ways in which the desire of honor may be inordinate. The first one is when a man desires recognition of an excellence he does not have, the second one is when a man desires honor for himself without referring it to God, and the third one is when a man's appetite rests in honor itself without referring it to the profit of the others.[73] This third modality raises, one can add, certain sins of ambition to the level of social sins.

At the end of his analysis of lust, a sin against chastity (which in its turn is a subjective part of the virtue of temperance), Thomas asks whether the sin against nature (which includes uncleanness, bestiality, sodomy, and undue means or monstrous manners of copulation) is the greatest among all the species of lust. In the footsteps of Augustine, he answers that it is. In his response, Thomas distinguishes between the transgression of nature and the transgression of right reason and convincingly argues that in matters of action it is most grave and shameful to act against things that are determined by

nature. In the second part of his response, Thomas adds that, regarding those sins of lust implying only a transgression of right reason, it is worse to make use of the venereal act not only with prejudice to the future offspring but also to injure another person beside. This is why simple fornication, which entails no prejudice in the strict sense to another person, is the least grave of the sins of lust. It is also a greater injustice to have intercourse with a woman who is subject to another's authority regarding the act of generation than regarding mere guardianship. This is why adultery is a more serious sin than seduction.[74] Once again, the important point here is that the social dimension of sin is not a mere effect among others but enters into the definition of a particular species of lust and the assessment of its gravity.

Community Against Community

So far, the types of social sins to which reference has been made are those of sins committed by a single individual against neighbor, a group of persons, or the whole community. There is, however, another type of social sin in the strict sense that needs to be mentioned here. This type is that identified in *Reconciliation and Penance* as the third meaning of the expression social sin and has to do with the relationships between human communities, such as class struggle, confrontation between blocs of nations, or between different groups within a nation. In *Reconciliation and Penance*, it is written that, while the causes for these injustices are complex and not easily identifiable, the personal responsibility of those involved must not be underestimated in conformity with the principle (which will be underlined again in the next section) that sin is invariably a personal act.[75]

The classic example of this type of social sin is of course war, which Thomas discusses in the *Secunda Secundae* as a sin against peace, one of the interior effects of charity.[76] Another example is sedition, which opposes different parties within a state and destroys society's greatest benefit, namely the unity and peace of its people.[77]

According to Thomas, sedition has in common with war and strife that it implies a certain antagonism but differs from them in that sedition does not necessarily denote actual aggression but may also denote the preparation for aggression. Moreover, while in the case of war the fight is between external enemies, and in the case of strife it is between one or a few against another one or a few other ones, sedition is between mutually dissentient parties within the same community (*inter partes unius multitudinis inter se dissentientes*). It is therefore a special kind of sin.[78]

Thomas further remarks that the sin of sedition is first and foremost in its authors, who sin most grievously, but secondly in those who are led by them to disturb the common good.[79] In this leader-follower relationship, the social nature of this sin is manifest.

Unless the rule by a tyrant is disturbed so inordinately that his subjects suffer greater harm from the consequent disturbance than from the tyrant's government, there is no sedition in disturbing a tyrannical government. The reason for this conclusion is that a tyrannical government is unjust because it is directed, not to the common good, but to the private good of the ruler. It is therefore the tyrant who is guilty of sedition because he encourages discord and sedition among his subjects with a view to lording over them more securely.[80] This encouragement of discord and sedition among his subjects is seen by Thomas, in another work (*De regno ad regem Cypri*),[81] as the transmittal to others of the audacity in sinning, with the consequence that the tyrant is also accountable to God (albeit indirectly) for their sins.[82] Thus, far from absolving its author by diluting moral responsibility among several persons, such a social sin makes each sinner (and especially the tyrant) responsible also for the sin of the others.

Causes of Sin: Personal Responsibility and Structures of Sin

The above discussion of tyranny, and especially of the tyrant's responsibility for the sins of his subjects, is an appropriate introduction to the consideration, in this last section, of yet another meaning attributed to social sin, namely the idea of social responsibility and structures of sins.

In paragraph 16 of *Reconciliation and Penance*, it is expressly provided that sin is always a personal act, namely a free act of the individual person and not of a group or a community.[83] This means that, while external and internal factors may attenuate the freedom of a person and therefore the responsibility for his acts, the human person remains free, as confirmed by faith, reason, and experience. This fundamental premise is reiterated at the end of the same paragraph 16, where it is denied that blame for sin can ever be placed on some vague entity or anonymous collectivity (situation, system, society, structure, institution), rather than on the moral conscience of the individual.[84] Hence, whenever speaking of situations of sin, the Church knows and proclaims that social sin is the result of the accumulation and concentration of many personal sins. The ultimate responsibility rests not with abstract entities but with sinful persons.

Thomas, too, in the *Prima Secundae*, points out that reason and will are the proximate cause of every human act in respect of which man is free.[85] It remains in man's power to sin or not to sin because the external causes of sin do not lead to sin sufficiently and necessarily.[86] If this is the case, how do the internal and external causes of sin interact with human action? Two of the causes analyzed by Thomas need to be mentioned here.

The first one is ignorance, and the second one is the Devil. The reason for selecting these two, among the other causes, is simple. When referring to structures of sin, there is sometimes a tendency to deny the guilt of the individual person by appealing to the ignorance of the very reality of sin, an impersonal situation of ignorance that would allegedly be created by the structure of sin. Is this really so? In other words, can ignorance ever excuse from the responsibility for sin?

As to the Devil, the reason for summarizing Thomas's reflections on the devil as a possible external cause of sin is likewise straightforward. Even when denying that ignorance may invariably excuse from sin, there is sometimes a tendency to assert that an individual person is led to sin by the irresistible force of an impersonal structure of evil. If the Devil can be an external cause of sin, can it ever be resisted? If the answer to this question is that a personal and supernatural cause of evil such as the Devil can indeed be resisted, one may legitimately infer that, *a fortiori*, an impersonal structure of evil can likewise be resisted.

Ignorance as an Internal Cause of Sin

In the *Prima Secundae*, Thomas writes that ignorance excuses from guilt to the extent that it causes involuntariness by excluding knowledge. This, however, is not always the case. He distinguishes three possible relationships of ignorance to the voluntary act: concomitant, consequent, and antecedent ignorance.[87] Ignorance is concomitant when one is ignorant of what he is doing but would do it anyway. In this sense, ignorance does not induce to willing and therefore to sinning. The fact is simply that ignorance and the commission of an act happen to take place at the same time. This type of ignorance, while not causing involuntariness in the sense that it does not cause anything repugnant to the will, still causes nonvoluntariness, in the sense that whatever is unknown cannot actually be willed.

Ignorance is consequent insofar as ignorance itself is voluntary. There are two types of it. The first (*ignorantia affectata*) implies wishing not to know with a view to having an excuse for sinning. The second type has to do with the ignorance of what one can and must know, either when not considering

what could and should have been considered (*ignorantia malae electionis*), or when not acquiring the necessary information (*ignorantia iuris*). (Cajetan, the famous commentator of the *Summa*, explains that the difference between these two types is that, while the first one consists in the voluntary actual lack of consideration, the second one consists in the voluntary habitual lack of knowledge.)[88] Though acknowledging that consequent ignorance causes a certain measure of involuntariness (in that it precedes the movement of will toward action), Thomas concludes that this type of ignorance, too, is no excuse from the responsibility for sin.

Finally, ignorance is antecedent when it is not voluntary and leads to will what one would not otherwise have wanted. It is this, the only type of ignorance, that excuses from the responsibility for sin, but in which circumstances and to what extent? After this analysis in his examination of the human act, Thomas reverts to the discussion of ignorance within the context of his treatise on sin. It is here that Thomas answers the questions whether ignorance may be a cause of sin; whether it is itself a sin; and whether it can excuse from, or at least diminish, the responsibility for sin.

Ignorance can indeed be the cause of a sinful act because it is a privation of knowledge perfecting the reason that forbids the act of sin insofar as it directs human acts. As the privation of that knowledge that one is bound to have, ignorance is distinguished from nescience, which merely denotes an absence of knowledge. Which are the things that one is bound to know? Thomas replies that they are all those things without the knowledge of which man cannot accomplish a due act correctly. Those pertaining to faith and the universal precepts of law have to be known by everybody. In addition to them, each one is bound to know whatever pertains to his state or duty.[89] Ignorance of what one is bound to know is a sin, unless it is a case of invincible ignorance, namely that kind of ignorance that cannot be overcome by any degree of study (a high standard indeed to satisfy). Such ignorance, not being voluntary, is not a sin. To sum up, invincible ignorance is never a sin, whereas vincible ignorance is a sin if it concerns things one is bound to know.

Finally, for Thomas, only involuntary ignorance excuses from the responsibility for sin; remaining ignorant to avoid responsibility for sin, or neglecting to acquire due knowledge, do not. Likewise, the only ignorance that can diminish sin is that ignorance that is the cause and yet does not excuse from it, provided that it is not directly voluntary ignorance, which ends up increasing, rather than diminishing, sin.

The Devil as an External Cause of Sin

It is now possible to move on to a shorter consideration of the external causes of sin and in particular to the Devil as a cause of human sin. Thomas had written, in the *Prima Pars*, in his treatise on angels, that in one way the devil is the cause of every human sin because he tempted Adam, thus contributing to the Fall that renders men prone to sin. In a strict sense, though, Thomas had acknowledged that diabolical influence does not really enter into every sin because the cause of sin is the weakness of the human nature, or the inordinateness of the appetites, which the sinner freely allows to prevail.[90]

In his treatise on sin, Thomas explores this matter further, investigating in great detail the relationship between the Devil and man's sins. Thomas develops his analysis on the basis of his description of the human soul, the internal part of which is both intellective and sensitive. The intellective part contains the intellect and the will.

The will can be moved either by its object or by an agent directing the will inwardly to will. This agent can only be the will itself or God who, as the universal good, is the only external principle moving the will.[91] Therefore, as the sin cannot proceed from God, the only direct cause of sin is the human will with no possibility for the Devil to play this role.

Regarding the object, a thing may move the will in three ways: the object itself, which is proposed to the will; the agent proposing or offering this thing; or the agent persuading the will that the object proposed is good. According to these second and third ways, the Devil or man can incite to sin either by offering an appetible object to the senses or by persuading the reason. However, in none of these three ways can anything be the direct cause of sin because the will is not moved, of necessity, by any object other than its last end.[92]

Having thus excluded that the devil can ever be the cause of sin in the sense of moving directly and sufficiently the will, Thomas examines the Devil's relationship to the intellect. He writes that the intellect is moved by what enlightens it in the knowledge of the truth, which is obviously not the case of the Devil. Rather, what the devil can do is darken man's reason so that it may consent to sin. The Devil can therefore induce man to sin.[93] The same applies to the sensitive appetite, which may be incited to certain passions by the cooperation of the Devil. A different case, of course, is that of diabolic possession, whereby the Devil may compel acts of sin but with the result that these are not human acts (namely voluntary acts) any more.[94]

The conclusion from Thomas's analysis of ignorance as an internal cause of sin and of the Devil as an external cause is that, to the extent that the act of sin

is voluntary it is attributable to the sinner without any easy way out of personal responsibility. In other words, the human capacity for sin is dramatic precisely because it is the opposite side of the coin of human freedom and capacity for good. The downside of the ability to merit by achieving one's end is the ability to fail by committing sin. No impersonal entity or structure of evil can exempt man from his guilt.

Cooperation in Evil and Scandal

There are two aspects to consider in the concept of the structure or situation of sin. The first one is identifying the extent to which such an impersonal entity or situation can act as a sufficient cause of sin, forcing irresistibly the human will. This aspect has been considered, albeit indirectly, in the foregoing paragraphs on Thomas's analysis of the internal and external causes of sin.

The second aspect is considering the extent to which the single person can contribute to bringing about a structure or situation of sin. In the context of Thomas's analysis of virtue and sin, this means asking whether man can be a cooperator in somebody else's sin,[95] and whether there is a specific sin consisting in moving the others to sin.

The response to the first question can be found in Thomas's analysis of restitution, which is binding not only on those who have stolen but also on others. With Albert the Great, Thomas identifies nine ways in which one may cooperate in stealing: by command, by counsel, by consent, by flattery, by receiving, by participation, by silence, by not preventing, by not denouncing.[96] The first four are ways of inducing a man to sin; the fifth is a way of providing assistance; the sixth is a way of taking part in the sin; and the last three are ways of not preventing another from evil-doing (provided one is able and bound to prevent such evil-doing).

In addition to these types of contribution to someone else's sin, is there a specific sin consisting in moving another to sin? Thomas gives a positive answer to this question when analyzing the sin of scandal in the *Secunda Secundae*. Scandal is the mutual causing of evil or the social action of attracting to sin. Thomas accepts its traditional definition as something less rightly done or said, which occasions another's downfall;[97] it is a specific sin whereby a man intends a special harm to his neighbor, and it is directly opposed to fraternal correction.

The social dimension of this sin is captured very effectively by Thomas when he distinguishes between direct and accidental cause of another's sin. Directly is when a man either intends to lead another man into sin, or, if he does not so intend, when his deed is such as to lead another into sin; for

instance, when a man publicly commits a sin or does something that has the appearance of sin. This is the case of active scandal. On the other hand, a man's word or deed may be the accidental cause of another's sin when the author neither intends to lead another into sin nor does what is of a nature to lead him into sin, and yet this other one, through being ill-disposed, is led into sin, for instance into envy of another's good. This is the case of passive scandal because he who acts rightly does not, for his own part, afford the occasion of the other's downfall.[98]

Passive scandal is always a sin in the person scandalized because he would not be scandalized if he did not succumb to a spiritual downfall. There can be, however, passive scandal without sin on the part of the person whose action has occasioned the scandal; for example, when someone is scandalized at another's good deed. Likewise, active scandal is always a sin in the person giving scandal because either what he does is a sin or if it only has the appearance of sin, it should always be left undone out of love for neighbor, which binds everybody to be solicitous for his neighbor's spiritual welfare.

To sum up, the interaction between humans (and not only between them)[99] provides constant occasions of sin, which never create an irresistible force to sin and always create the responsibility to be watchful, both in avoiding tempting others to sin and in succumbing to the others' temptations. The same concept (within the context, though, of parental relationship) is vividly expressed in the *Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, where Thomas writes that sons are almost fed at the table of their fathers' sins and throw themselves into more sins with lesser remorse precisely because of the custom and authority of their fathers.[100]

Original Sin

Thomas's treatment of the causality of sin by the Devil, briefly discussed above, is part of a tripartition of the possible external causes of human sin, namely God (who is in no way a cause of sin), the Devil, and man. Man can contribute to another man's sin in the various ways that were mentioned in the last paragraph when examining cooperation in evil and scandal. Another external cause of sin examined by Thomas is the transmission of the first sin of the first man, by way of origin, to all his descendants. This is a matter of Catholic faith,[101] on which the Church articulated its pronouncements in the fifth century under the impulse of Augustine's reflections against Pelagianism,[102] and again in the sixteenth century, in opposition to Protestantism.[103]

This transmission is explained by Thomas in this way. All men may be considered as one man because they all have one common nature received from

their first parents. (Likewise, all the members of a community form one body, which is the whole community as one man.) Therefore, all those born of Adam are many members of one body, which is humanity. The disorder in a man born of Adam is voluntary, not by the will of that man but by the will of his first parent who, by the movement of generation, moves all those who originate from him. Hence the sin so transmitted by the first parent to his descendants is called original because, unlike an actual sin, it is the sin of every man inasmuch as he receives his nature from his first parent.[104]

In this, the order of nature mirrors the order of grace. Original justice was a gift of grace, conferred by God on the human nature in our first parent. This is the gift that Adam lost by his first sin. As that original justice, together with the human nature, was due to be transmitted to Adam's posterity, so was also its disorder.[105] Likewise, in the context of salvation, the grace of Christ, as the head of the Church is bestowed on all her members.[106]

Thomas therefore embraces what may be called an essentialist approach (whereby a sinful nature is inherited by generation from a sinful ancestor), in contrast with either a situationist approach (focusing on historical and environmental evil) or a personalist approach (reducing original sin to the factual universality of actual sins).[107] Its relevance to the present examination of social sin is that, while there is a social dimension of sin brought about by the transmission of sin through generation, this inherited fallen state does not create a social situation irresistibly leading to (and accountable for) the commission of personal sins.

This point clearly emerges from the *Catechism*. On the one hand, it is acknowledged that the consequences of original sin (and of all men's personal sins) "put the world as a whole in the sinful condition aptly described in Saint John's expression, 'the sin of the world.'"[108] On the other hand, however, this dramatic situation is a call to a spiritual battle because the transmission of the sin of Adam to all his descendants is a "deprivation of original holiness and justice, but human nature has not been totally corrupted."[109]

In other words, it is here further confirmed that the social dimension of sin does not exclude, but instead is rooted in, the free will of each man who remains responsible for all human action attributable to him.

Conclusions

The purpose of this brief study was to ascertain whether Thomas's writings (and especially his *Summa Theologiae*) throw any light on the concept of social sin as it has been articulated in the Church's teaching, most notably in the

apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance*. The answer from the foregoing analysis of relevant passages from the *Summa* leads to the conclusion that the concept finds a solid basis indeed in Thomas, with respect to all three tenets of the concept articulated in *Reconciliation and Penance*; namely, that (1) sin has an intrinsically social dimension by virtue of its being a bad act of man as a naturally social being; (2) in addition to this general sense, there are sins that, by their very matter and whether committed individually or jointly (community against community), are social because they go against love of neighbor; and (3) although the accumulation and concentration of sins may lead to the identification of structures of sin, it is undeniable that responsibility rests with the individual because sin, as a human act, finds its ultimate cause in man's free will, with the consequence that at the heart of each and every situation of sin there are always sinful people.

The other conclusion from this study is that contemporary theological concepts, while they may not have found a separate treatment in Thomas (in the sense that, for example, there is no question or article on *peccatum sociale* as such in the *Summa*), are still present and developed in Thomas's theological reflection. In the case of social sin, the key is to search for relevant clues in Thomas's analysis of the human act and sin in the *Prima Secundae* and of virtues and their opposite vices in the *Secunda Secundae* in addition to the internal cross-references to the other parts of the *Summa*.

To sum up, even in his contribution to the elucidation of the concept of social sin, Thomas is really the *Doctor humanitatis*,[110] whose inquisitive mind and love for the truth allows him to capture the basic aspects of reality and thus be a teacher for all times.

Notes

* The author is grateful to Rev. Dr. John Corbett, OP, for insightful comments on an earlier draft, as well as to Rev. Dr. Athanasius Sulavik, OP, and Dr. Kevin E. Schmiesing. This writing is dedicated to the memory of Rev. Dr. Tomas Tyn, OP, a process for whose beatification has been opened. Information about his life, and some of his essays and homilies, are available at http://www.totustuus.biz/users/tyn/. Father Tyn's monograph on participation and *analogia entis* (*Metafisica della sostanza. Partecipazione e analogia entis*) was published by Edizioni Studio Domenicano in 1991.

1. The English version of this speech is available through the Vatican web site, at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_25081999_en.html.

2. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2d ed. revised in accordance with the official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 1997, par. 1697. An electronic version of the *Catechism*, in English, is available at http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/ccc_toc.htm. The original Latin text of the quoted passage reads as follows: "quin se peccatorem agnoscat, de se ipso cognoscere nequit veritatem, quae ad iuste operandum est condicio."

3. Apostolic letter *Lumen Ecclesiae*, December 5, 1974, written by Pope Paul VI on the occasion of the seventh centenary of Thomas's death. (The Latin original is available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-vi_apl_19741205_lumen-ecclesiae_lt.html.) In his letter encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, August 4, 1879, Pope Leo XII had called Thomas "chief and master of all towers." (The electronic version of this encyclical is available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_lxiii_enc_04081879_aeterni-patris_en.html.) A helpful summary of the main magisterial pronouncements on Thomas's holiness and work is available in Fabro, Cornelio, *Introduzione a san Tommaso*, 2d ed. 1997, 123–38.

4. See *Lumen Gentium*, par. 36; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, par. 109; *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 25. The English version of these documents is available in *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Walter M. Abbott and Joseph Gallagher (1965); *Vatican Council II*, vol. 2, *The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, new rev. ed. (1996). The Latin originals are available in *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2:817–1135, ed. Norman P. Tanner (1990); *Les Conciles Œcuméniques*, vol. 2, *Les Décrets. Trente à Vatican II*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo, et al., French edition A. Duval, et al. (1994), 817–1135. The documents of the Second Vatican Council are available at http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm.

5. A comprehensive inventory of such documents is provided in Zunino, Raffaele, *Il concetto di "struttura di peccato" nella Dottrina Sociale della Chiesa: una chiave di lettura per il nostro territorio (Materiali per una riflessione)*, 2002, available at http://digilander.libero.it/percorsidsc/. See also the systematic index of the bilingual edition (Latin-Italian) of Denzinger, Heinrich, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, 37th ed., Peter Hünermann (Italian version Lanzoni, Angelo and Zaccherini, Giovanni) (1996), [94]–[96] (D4).

6. The English text of this document is available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_02121984_reconciliatio-et-paenitentia_en.html. The Latin original is reproduced in 77 *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (1985), 185–275. (Par. 16, on social sin, is on pp. 213–17.) All references to *Reconciliation and Penance* in this writing are to par. 16, unless otherwise indicated.

7. Among the monographs, see Patrick Kerans, *Sinful Social Structures*, 1974; Mark O'Keefe, *What Are They Saying About Social Sin?* 1990. The best treatment of the subject (extensively used in the preparation of part 1 of this work) is probably that by the current Cardinal Archbishop of Milan: Dionigi Tettamanzi, *Verità e Libertà. Temi e prospettive di morale cristiana*, 1993, 545–99. See also Piet Schoonenberg, *Man and Sin: A Theological View* (English trans. Joseph Donceel), 1965, 98–123; Karl Menninger, *Whatever Became of Sin?* 1973, 94–132; Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles*, 1983, 320–22 and 368–69; Thomas Schindler, *Ethics: The Social Dimension: Individualism and the Catholic Tradition*, 1989, 135–42.

8. See, for example, Neil Vaney, "Evil, Social," and Judith A. Merkle, "Sin," in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. Judith A. Dwyer (1994), 366–69 and 883–88.

9. See, for example, Antonio Quarracino, "Il peccato sociale," in *La "Reconciliatio et Paenitentia" commentata*, 1985, 35–39.

10. See, for example, Norbert Rigali, "Sin in a Relational World," *Chicago Studies* 23 (1984): 321–32; James Hug, "Social Sin, Cultural Healing," ibid., 333–51; Kenneth Himes, "Social Sin and the Role of the Individual," *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* (1986): 183–218; David B. Couturier, "Structural Sin, Structural Conversion, and Religious Formation," *Review for Religious* 50 (1991): 406–17; Hormis Mynatty, "The Concept of Social Sin," *Louvain Studies* 16 (1991): 3–26; Joseph H. McKenna, "The Possibility of Social Sin," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 60 (1994): 125–40.

11. An article on the subject containing extensive references to the work of Thomas is Raimondo Spiazzi, "The Social Evil of Sin," in *Sin, Its Reality and Nature: A Historical Survey*, ed. Pietro Palazzini and Salvador Canals (English trans. Devlin, Brendan, 1964), 191–203.

12. See *In opera Sancti Thomæ Aquinatis Index seu Tabula Aurea eximi doctoris F. Petri de Bergomo (editio fototypica)* (1960), 587–90 ("*malum*") and 708–27 ("*peccatum*"). The *Tabula Aurea* is a work of the fifteenth century. On this work and its author, see Tiziano Sterli, "La Tabula Aurea di Pietro da Bergamo," in *Istituto San Tommaso: Studi 1994 (nuova serie – 1)*, ed. Dietrich Lorenz (1994), 163–71; Bertrand-Georges Guyot and Tiziano Sterli, "La *Tabula Aurea* di Fra Pietro Maldura da Bergamo O.P. entro la storia del Tomismo," *Angelicum* 80 (2003), 597–660; D. J. Kenedy, "Peter of Bergamo," in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, available at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11773a.htm.

13. *Thomas-Lexikon: Sammlung, Übersetzung und Erklärung der in sämtlichen Werken des h. Thomas von Aquin vorkommenden Kunstausdrücke und wissenschaftlichen Aussprüche*, 1895 (reprint 1948), 463–66 ("*malus*") and 576–80 ("*peccatum*").

14. Radio-message of October 26, 1946: "forse oggi il più grande peccato del mondo è perdere il senso del peccato" (*Discorsi e radiomessaggi di Sua Santità Pio XII*, vol. 8, 1955–1959).

15. Message of March 8, 1972: "La nozione di peccato coinvolge due realtà, di cui l'uomo moderno non intende occuparsi: una realtà trascendente assoluta, vivente, onnipresente, misteriosa, ma innegabile, ch'è Dio.… E una seconda realtà soggettiva e relativa alla nostra persona, una realtà metafisico-morale; e cioè la relazione insopprimibile delle nostre azioni al Dio presente, onnisciente, interrogante la nostra libera scelta" (*Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, vol. 10, 1965–1979).

16. Paragraph 18 of *Reconciliation and Penance*.

17. In theory, the appeal not to neglect the teaching on the nature and effects of personal sin continues to be a catechetical tenet. See paragraph 62 of the *General Catechetical Directory* of 1971, available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_cclergy_do. The accent of the new *General Directory for Catechesis* of 1997, though, is different. Its text is available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cclergy/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_17041998_directory-for-catechesis_en.html.

18. "Peccatum est dictum, vel factum vel concupitum contra aeternam legem" ("Contra Faustum Manichæum libri XXXIII," *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 42, 207–518).

19. Paragraph 13, in the English translation provided in Austin Flannery (ed.), *Vatican Council II*, 1:914. The Latin original reads as follows: "Deum tamquam principium suum saepe agnoscere renuens, etiam debitum ordinem ad finem suum ultimum, simul ac totam suam sive erga seipsum sive erga alios homines et omnes res creatas ordinationem disrupit."

20. Paragraph 11, in the English translation provided in *Vatican Council II*, 1:362, ed. Austin Flannery. The Latin original reads as follows: "Qui vero ad sacramentum poenitentiae accedunt, veniam offensionis Deo illatae ab Eius misericordia obtinent et simul reconciliantur cum ecclesia, quam peccando vulneraverunt, et quae eorum conversioni caritate, exemplo, precibus adlaborat."

21. *L'Église du Verbe incarné: essai de théologie speculative*, 2d ed., vol. 2 (1962). For a brief introduction to the theological work of Cardinal Journet, see Battista Mondin, *Dizionario dei teologi* (1992): 327–29. (On page 328, one reads Congar's assessment of Cardinal Journet's *L'Église du Verbe incarné* as the most profound work of dogmatic theology ever written on the church in the twentieth century.)

22. "L'Église est sainte," *Angelicum* 42 (1965): 273–98. For a brief introduction to the theological work of Congar, see Battista Mondin, *Dizionario*, 188–92.

23. "Il peccato nella Chiesa," in *La Chiesa del Vaticano II* (1965), 419–35. For a brief introduction to the theological work of Rahner, see Battista Mondin, *Dizionario*, 475–89.

24. *Verità e Libertà*, 560–61.

25. Faynel has observed: "contrairement à la sainteté '*dans*' l'Église mais qui vient '*de*' l'Église de Dieu, le péché lui n'est pas une realité d'Église mais s'il est 'dans' l'Église il ne vient pas d'elle puisqu'il est précisément l'acte par lequel quelqu'un refuse l'influence de l'Église. En ce sens il ne peut donc pas non plus compromettere sa sainteté." (*L'Église*, 1970, 1:239.)

26. See Luigi Accattoli, *Quando il Papa chiede perdono. Tutti i mea culpa di Giovanni Paolo II*, 1997.

27. The text of this document is available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000307_memory-reconc-itc_en.html.

28. The references provided in this section are not meant to be exhaustive. For reasons of brevity, some are omitted, such as the passage from the decree on the apostolate on lay people (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*), of November 18, 1965, referring to institutions having become corrupted as a result of original sin (par. 7).

29. Paragraph 109(b), in the English translation provided in *Vatican Council II*, 1:30, ed. Austin Flannery. The Latin original reads as follows: "Quoad catechesim autem animis fidelium inculcetur, una cum consectariis socialibus peccati, illa propria paenitentiae natura quae peccatum, prout est offensa Dei, detestatur."

30. Paragraph 36, in the English translation provided in *Vatican Council II*, 1:393–94, ed. Flannery. The Latin original reads as follows: "Laici praeterea, collatis quoque viribus, instituta et condiciones mundi, si qua mores ad peccatum incitant, ita sanent, ut haec omnia ad iustitiae normas conformentur et virtutum exercitio potius faveant quam obsint."

31. Paragraph 25, in the English translation provided in *Vatican Council II*, 1:926, ed. Austin Flannery. The Latin original reads as follows: "Ex sociali hominis indole apparet humanae personae profectum et ipsius societatis incrementum ab invicem pendere.… Ex socialibus vinculis, quae homini excolendo necessaria sunt, alia, uti familia et communitas politica, intimae eius naturae immediatius congruunt; alia potius ex eius libera voluntate procedunt.… Hoc autem factum, quod socializatio nuncupatur, licet periculis sane non careat.… Sed si personae humanae ad suam vocationem adimplendam, etiam religiosam, ex hac vita sociali multum accipiunt, negari tamen nequit homines ex adiunctis socialibus in quibus vivunt et, inde ab infantia, immerguntur, saepe a bono faciendo averti et ad malum impelli. Certum est perturbationes, tam frequenter in ordine sociali occurrentes, ex ipsa formarum oeconomicarum, politicarum et socialium tensione pro parte provenire. Sed peni-

tius ex hominum superbia et egoismo oriuntur, quae etiam ambitum socialem pervertunt. Ubi autem ordo rerum sequelis peccati afficitur, homo, proclivis ad malum natus, nova deinde ad peccatum incitamenta invenit, quae, sine strenuis gratia adiuvante conatibus, superari nequeunt."

32. The work of the Synod of Bishops leading to the apostolic exhortation is reflected in *Il Sinodo dei Vescovi. Sesta Assemblea Generale (29 Settembre—29 Ottobre 1983)*, ed. Giovanni Caprile, 1985 (with special regard to the passages listed in the index, on page 863, under *Aspetti e ripercussioni sociali del peccato: peccato strutturale*).

33. The Latin original reads as follows: "Peccatum, vere proprieque acceptum, est semper *actus personae*, quoniam actus est liber unius cuiusvis hominis neque proprie alicuius coetus vel communitatis. Qui quidem homo condicionibus potest astringi, premi, impelli causis externis, nec levibus nec paucis, vel etiam propensionibus, vitiis, consuetudinibus moveri, cum condicione sua sociali coniunctis. In casibus non paucis eiusmodi causae, internae et externae, eius libertatem ideoque conscientiae onus et culpam plus vel minus possunt minuere. Sed est veritas fides, etiam experientia nostra et ratione confirmata, qua asseritur humanam personam liberam esse. Non igitur licet hanc veritatem ignorari ea mente ut peccatum singulorum in causas externas—humanae consortionis 'structuras,' systemata et alios—transferatur. Ceteroquin, hoc modo dignitas et libertas personae auferrentur, quae—etsi male et calamitose—etiam in hac peccati commissi responsali ratione manifestantur. Quapropter in unoquoque homine nihil est tam personale eiusque tam proprium ut alio nequeat transferri, quam meritum virtutis aut responsalis ratio circa culpam. Ut actus *personae*, peccatum habet effectus primos et gravissimos *in ipso peccatore*: id est in ratione, quae huic cum Deo intercedit quaeque vitae humanae ipsum est fundamentum, in eius spiritu voluntatem infirmando et intellectum obcaecando. Quaerendum est nunc quaenam respexerint qui, in synodo praeparanda et per eius operis cursum, frequentius de *peccato sociali* mentionem fecerunt. Haec vox et notio, quae ei subiacet, sane varias habent significationes."

34. The Latin original reads as follows: "Loqui de *peccato sociali* idem est ante omnia ac fateri peccatum cuiusque, ob solidam necessitudinem hominum inter se, tam arcanam et obscuram quam veram et certam, ad ceteros quodammodo redundare. Haec altera facies illius necessitudinis in campo religionis, efficitur in alto et miro mysterio *communionis sanctorum*, propter quam affirmatum est 'omnem animam, quae assurgat, mundum extollere'. Huic *legi ascensus* opponitur, pro dolor, *lex descensus*, adeo ut loqui fas sit de *communione peccati*, ob quam anima, quae peccando se submittit. Ecclesiam secum et quodammodo totum mundum demittit. Aliis verbis, nullum est peccatum, ne intimum quidem et occultissimum et unius cuiusvis maxime proprium, quod ad eum solummodo pertineat, qui illud commisit. Quodlibet peccatum maiore vel minore cum vehementia, maiore vel minore

cum detrimento, ad totam compagem ecclesialem et ad totam humanam familiam redit. Iuxta hanc primam significationem cuilibet peccato, sine controversia, potest attribui nota *peccati socialis*."

35. The Latin original reads as follows: "Quaedam tamen peccata propter ipsum obiectum suum directo proximum—vel, quo rectius dicatur secundum evangelicum loquendi genus—fratrem veluti adoriuntur. Ea sunt offensio Deo illata, quia proximum offendunt. Haec peccata solent vocari *socialia*, quae est secunda vocis significatio. Sic acceptum, *sociale* est quodlibet peccatum contra amorem proximi, eo magis in lege Christi, quod obest alteri mandato, simili primi. Item *sociale* est quodvis peccatum patratum contra iustitiam in rationibus intercedentibus tum inter personas, tum inter personam et societatem, tum inter societatem et personam. *Sociale* est quodlibet peccatum adversus iura humanae personae, imprimis contra ius vitae, non excepta vita nascituri, aut adversus integritatem corporis cuiusque; quodlibet peccatum contra aliorum libertatem, ante omnia contra summam libertatem credendi in Deum eumque adorandi; quodvis peccatum in dignitatem et honorem proximi. *Sociale* pariter est omne peccatum contra bonum commune eiusque postulata in tota ampla provincia iurium et officiorum civium. *Sociale* potest esse peccatum commissionis aut omissionis, quod moderatores politici, oeconomici, opificum collegia faciunt, cum, quamvis possint, non curant prudenter ut societatem meliorem efficiant vel in melius mutent secundum necessitates et opportunitates temporum; illud quoque, quod patrant operarii, qui officiis praesentiae operisque sociandi desunt, quibus officinae possint iis ipsis, eorum familiis et universae societati prosperitatem pergere comparare."

36. The Latin original reads as follows: "Tertia significatio *peccati socialis* ad necessitudines attinet inter varias communitates humanas. Haec commercia non semper cum Dei consilio congruunt, qui vult in mundo esse iustitiam, libertatem, pacem inter homines singulos, coetus, populos. Hinc 'classium contentio,' quicumque auctor eius est et quicumque eius, interdum, statuit normas, est *malum sociale*. Similiter obstinata adversitas nationum consociatarum et alterius nationis contra alteram, coetuum contra coetus in eadem natione item est *malum sociale*. In utroque casu quaeri potest num alicui morale conscientiae onus ideoque peccatum sit attribuendum. Sane profitendum est facta et condiciones, qualia memoravimus, cum latius manant, quin immo vehementer ingravescunt ut facta socialia, fere semper sine nomine fieri auctorum, sicut perplexae earum causae sunt nec semper possunt cognosci. Itaque, si sermo de *peccato sociali* instituitur, haec verba significationem hic habent aperte analogicarn. Si utcumque de *peccatis* loquimur *socialibus*, licet sensu analogico acceptis, nemo inducatur ut singulorum responsale officium et onus aestimet minoris, sed omnium conscientiae incitentur ut serio et animose nefastas illas res rerumque mutent condiciones, quae tolerari minime possunt. His modo apertissimo minimeque ambiguo positis, ilico addendum est

non legitimam esse nec probari posse peccati socialis significationern, saepe temporibus nostris in quibusdam ambitibus assertam, quae opponens non sine ambiguitate *peccaturn sociale peccato personali*, scienter aut inscienter efficiat ut illud *personale* attenuetur et paene auferatur, ita ut solae culpae et rationes responsales *sociales* agnoscantur. Secundum hanc significationem, quae facile videtur orta esse ex ideologiis et systematibus non christianis—fortasse hodie ab us ipsis, qui publice ea propugnaverant, reiectis—reapse quodlibet peccatum esset sociale, quatenus tribuendum esset non tam conscientiae morali hominis, quam potius incerto cuidam enti et sine nomine consortioni, cuius generis condicio, systema, hominum societas, compages, instituta esse possunt. Atqui Ecclesia, cum de *condicionibus* peccati loquitur aut ut *peccata socialia* quasdam condiciones indicat aut mores communes coetuum socialiurn, ampliorum vel minorum, aut etiarn totas nationes et nationes consociatas, novit et edicit eiusmodi *peccata socialia* esse simul effectum, acervationem et coniunctionem multorum *peccatorum personalium*. Agitur de peccatis maxime personalibus tum eius qui iniquitatem gignit et fovet vel ea abutitur; tum eius qui, cum aliquo modo agere possit ad vitanda vel removenda aut saltem finibus circumscribenda quaedam mala socialia, id facere omittit desidia, metu et probroso consciorum silentio, dissimulata facinoris societate aut indifferentis animi neglegentia; tum eius, qui se excusat causam interponens mundum mutari non posse; tum eius etiam, qui laborem et incommoda intendit effugere, praetexens fucosas rationes superioris momenti. In personarum ergo capita verae recidunt culpae. Nulla condicio—sicut nullum institutum, nulla compages, nulla societas—ipsa per se est actuum moralium subiectum; quam ob rem ea potest per se nec bona esse nec mala. In omni ergo *condicione peccati* semper homines insunt peccatores. Hoc quidem tarn verum est ut, si talis condicio mutari potest quoad 'structurarum' et institutorum formas vi legis aut—uti saepius, pro dolor, evenit—lege potentiae, immutatio reapse imperfecta esse appareat, brevis et ad summam vana atque inanis—ne dicamus eam in contrarium agere—nisi homines convertuntur, qui directo aut oblique condicionis eiusmodi rationem reddere debent."

37. See the various references to "organizational guilt," listed on page 696 of Telford Taylor, *The Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials*, 1992.

38. See the transcript of the radio-message published in 37 *Acta Appostolicae Sedis* (1945), 21.

39. See, for example, Charles Germain, "Le Problème de la responsabilité criminelle de tout un peuple," *Revue Dominicaine* 51 (1945): 338–53;Yves Congar, "Culpabilité, responsabilité et sanctions collectives," *Vie Intellectuelle* 18 (1950):257–84 and 387–407.

40. M. Scott Peck, *People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil*, 1983, 215.

41. Although this is not the place for exploring this matter, it might be suggested that this idea of irresistible structures of sin is not far from Weber's notion of bureaucratic structures in which human resources are directed toward the efficient attainment of ends that escape their control and rational moral judgment. (See Alasdair Macintyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2d ed., 1984, 25–26.)

42. Paragraph IV.15. The text of the instruction (dated August 6, 1984) is available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html.

43. Paragraph 42. The text of the instruction (dated March 22, 1986) is available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19860322_freedom-liberation_en.html.

44. Paragraph. 37. The text of the encyclical (dated December 30, 1987) is available at http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0223/__P6.HTM. The Latin original of this encyclical was published in 80 *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (1988), 513–86. The passage quoted in the text reads as follows: "agitur de malo *morali, multorum peccatorum* exitu, quae ad 'peccati structuras' adducunt. Hoc modo considerationem intendere in malum significat, secundum humanam disciplinam, apte *viam sequendam* cognoscere, ut illud superetur."

45. Paragraph 38. The text of the encyclical (dated May 1, 1991) is available at http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0214/_INDEX.HTM. The Latin original of this encyclical was published in 83 *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (1991): 793–867. The passage quoted in the text reads as follows: "Homo suam essentialem a Deo accipit dignitatem simulque potestatem transcendendi omne societatis institutum usque ad veritatem et ad bonum. Is tamen condicionibus adstringitur structurae socialis in qua vivit, tum accepta educatione et locis exterioribusque rebus. Haec possunt efficere ut secundum veritatem aut facilius aut difficilius vivat. Consilia, quibus ambitus humanus constituitur, possunt ergo structuras proprias peccati parere, quae impediunt ne, qui iisdem varie premuntur, plene se qua homines perficiant. Tales structuras demoliri et pro illis veriores convictionis formas substituere, negotium est quod firmum postulat animum et patientiam."

46. Paragraph 24. The text of the encyclical (dated March 25, 1995) is available at http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/_INDEX.HTM. The Latin original of this encyclical was published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995): 401–522. The passage quoted in the text reads as follows: "*Ipsa in intima morali conscientia* perficitur Dei hominisque sensus obscuratio, multiplicibus suis perniciosisque de vita consecutionibus. Ante omnia *cuiusque conscientia* in medio ponitur, quae una et non iterabilis sola Dei in conspectu stat. At agitur quoque ratione quadam de *societatis* 'conscientia morali'; ipsa quodammodo est responsabilis non modo quia tolerat vel consuetudinibus vitae adversantibus favet, verum quia et 'mortis culturam' alit, quippe quae ipsas 'structuras peccati' adversum vitam efficiat et confirmet.

Conscientia moralis, tum personalis tum socialis, etiam ob instrumentorum socialis communicationis praepotentes virtutes, *pergravi mortiferoque* periculo hodie subditur: *permixtionis* scilicet *boni malique*, quod attinet ad idem fundamentale vitae ius."

47. Paragraph 25. The text of the document (dated October 4, 1996) is available at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/corunum/documents/rc_pc_corunum_doc_04101996_world-hunger_en.html.

48. The Latin original reads as follows: "Sic peccatum homines invicem complices reddit, inter eos concupiscentiam, violentiam et iniustitiam facit regnare. Peccata condiciones sociales et institutiones provocant bonitati divinae contrarias. 'Structurae peccati' expressio sunt et effectus peccatorum personalium. Ipsae ad malum vicissim committendum suas inducunt victimas. Sensu analogico, 'peccatum sociale' constituunt."

49. On the general notion of occasion of sin, see E. Thamiry, "Occasion, Occasionnaires," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. 11(I), 1931, cols. 905–15.

50. The importance of Thomas's treatise on the human act in the development of moral theology cannot be overestimated: "Le traité thomiste des actes humains se recommande à plusieurs titres à l'attention du théologien. S. Thomas a incontestablement fourni à la théologie morale ses principales catégories et l'on peut dire que c'est à l'intérieur de cadres thomistes, plus ou moins fidèlement conservés, qu'elle se meut encore aujourd'hui. On pourrait même affirmer que beaucoup de notions morales, dont use couramment la pensée occidentale, ne s'expliquent bien, au-delà des apports multiples de l'histoire postérieure, que mises en référence avec les conceptions de la scolastique médiévale." [*Saint Thomas D'Aquin. Somme Théologique. Les Actes humains (1a–2ae, Questions 6–17)*], new French editor H.-D. Gardeil, vol. 1, 1962 (reprint 1997), 5–6 (preface by S. Pinckaers). In the second volume of the same work (on questions 18 to 21), Pinckaers considers on page 212 the wider meaning that the term *peccatum* has in Thomas when compared to the meaning that the corresponding term has today.

51. "Oportet consequenter de humanis actibus considerare, ut sciamus quibus actibus perveniatur ad beatitudinem, vel impediatur beatitudinis via." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 6, prologue). The Latin text is taken from *S. Thomae Aquinatis Doctoris Angelici Summae Theologiae cura et studio Sac. Petri Caramello cum textu ex recensione leonina*, 1952.

52. This distinction is briefly but efficaciously treated in Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 1992, 92–97.

53. "Contingit ergo malum esse dupliciter. Uno modo, per subtractionem formae, aut alicuius partis, quae requiritur ad integritatem rei; sicut caecitas malum est, et

carere membro. Alio modo, per subtractionem debitae operationis; vel quia omnino non est; vel quia debitum modum et ordinem non habet." (*Prima Pars*, q. 48, a.5.)

54. In question 48, article 6, Thomas reports this passage from Dionysius's *De divinis nominibus*: "puniri non est malum, sed fieri poena dignum." The text of this work by Dionysius Aeropagita can be found in *Patrologia Graeca*, 3:586–996. See also *Il testo tachigrafico del "De divinis nominibus" (Vat. Gr. 1809)*, ed. Salvatore Lilla, 1970.

55. See *Prima Pars*, q. 49, a. 1 ("Utrum bonum possit esse causa mali").

56. For reasons of convenience, all the references here will be to the *Summa*. However, Thomas's reflection on evil, sin, and vice has been developed also in other works, especially his *questio disputata de malo*. On this last work, see Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin. Sa personne et son œvre*, 1993, 293–99. A monograph on Thomas's treatment of evil is Laurent Sentis, *Saint Thomas d'Aquin et le mal. Foi chrétienne et théodicée*, 1992.

57. "Consequenter considerandum est de vitiis et peccatis. Circa quae sex consideranda occurrunt: primo quidem, de ipsis vitiis et peccatis secundum se; secundo, de distinctione eorum; tertio, de comparatione eorum ad invicem; quarto, de subiecto peccati; quinto, de causa eius; sexto, de effectu ipsius." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 71, prologue.)

58. In question 71, article 1, of the *Prima Secundae*, Thomas reports this passage from Aristotle's *Physics*: "virtus est dispositio perfecti ad optimum; dico autem perfecti, quod est dispositum secundum naturam." An English translation of this work by Aristotle is available in *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (The Revised Oxford Translation), ed. Jonathan Barnes (1984), 1:315–446.

59. "Peccatum nihil aliud est quam actus humanus malus. Quod autem aliquis actus sit humanus, habet ex hoc quod est voluntarius … sive sit voluntarius quasi a voluntate elicitus, ut ipsum velle et eligere; sive quasi a voluntate imperatus, ut exteriores actus vel locutionis vel operationis. Habit autem actus humanus quod sit malus, ex eo quod caret debita commensuratione. Omnis autem commensuratio cuiuscumque rei attenditur per comparationem ad aliquam regulam, a qua si divertat, incommensurata erit. Regula autem voluntatis humanae est duplex: una propinqua et homogenea, scilicet ipsa humana ratio; alia vero est prima regula, scilicet lex aeterna, quae est quasi ratio Dei. Et ideo Augustinus in definitione peccati posuit duo: unum quod pertinet ad substantiam actus humani, quod est quasi materiale in peccato, cum dixit, dictum vel factum vel concupitum; aliud autem quod pertinet ad rationem mali, quod est quasi formale in peccato, cum dixit, contra legem aeternam." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 71, a. 6.)

60. "Illae solae actiones vocantur proprie humanae, quarum homo est dominus. Est autem homo dominus suorum actuum per rationem et voluntatem.… Illae ergo

actiones proprie humanae dicuntur, quae ex voluntate deliberata procedunt." (*Prima Pars*, q. 1, a. 1.)

61. James R. Maloney, "The Formal Constituent of a Sin of Commission (Ph.D. diss., Laval University), 1947, 9.

62. See Étienne Gilson, *Saint Thomas Moraliste*, 1974, 210–12.

63. "Sunt autem diversa quibus homo ordinatur ad Deum, et ad proximum, et ad seipsum. Unde haec distinctio peccatorum est secundum obiecta, secundum quae diversificantur species peccatorum. Unde haec distinctio peccatorum proprie est secundum diversas peccatorum species. Nam et virtutes, quibus peccata opponuntur, secundum hanc differentiam specie distinguuntur: manifestum est enim ex dictis quod virtutibus theologicis homo ordinatur ad Deum, temperantia vero et fortitudine ad seipsum, iustitia autem ad proximum." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 72, a. 4.)

64. "Loqui de *peccato sociali* idem est ante omnia ac fateri peccatum cuiusque, ob solidam necessitudinem hominum inter se, tam arcanam et obscuram quam veram et certam, ad ceteros quodammodo redundare."

65. "Unusquisque in aliqua societate vivens, est aliquo modo pars et membrum totius societatis. Quicumque ergo agit aliquid in bonum vel malum alicuius in societate existentis, hoc redundat in totam societatem sicut qui laedit manum, per consequens laedit hominem." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 21, a. 3.) Later, in the same article, Thomas writes: "Ad tertium dicendum quod hoc ipsum bonum vel malum quod aliquis sibi facit per suum actum, redundat in communitatem, ut dictum est." (Q. 21, a. 3, ad 3.)

66. "Omnes qui sub communitate aliqua continentur comparantur ad communitatem sicut partes ad totum. Pars autem id quod est totius est. Secundum hoc igitur bonum cuiuslibet virtutis, sive ordinantis aliquem hominem ad seipsum sive ordinantis ipsum ad aliquas alias personas singulares, est riferibile ad bonum commune, ad quod ordinat iustitia. Et secundum hoc actus omnium virtutum possunt ad iustitiam pertinere, secundum quod ordinat hominem ad bonum commune." (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 58, a. 5.)

67. "[Seipsum occidere est omnino illicitum] quia quaelibet pars id quod est, est totius. Quilibet autem homo est pars communitatis: et ita id quod est, est communitatis. Unde in hoc quod seipsum interficit, iniuriam communitati facit." (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 64, a. 5.)

68. *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics—St. Thomas Aquinas*, English trans. C. I. Litzinger, 1993, 349, par. 1094, commenting on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, book V, 1138a11. An English translation of this work by Aristotle is available in *The Complete Works of Aristotle* (The Revised Oxford Translation), ed. Jonathan Barnes, 1984, 2:1729–1867.

69. "Quaedam tamen peccata propter ipsum obiectum suum directo proximum—vel, quo rectius dicatur secundum evangelicum loquendi genus—fratrem veluti adoriuntur. Ea sunt offensio Deo illata, quia proximum offendunt. Haec peccata solent vocari *socialia*, quae est secunda vocis significatio."

70. Spiazzi, "The Social Evil of Sin," in *Sin: Its Reality and Nature: A Historical Survey*, ed. Pietro Palazzini and Salvador Canals (English trans. Brendan Devlin, 1964, 235, note 1 to text on pages 202–3).

71. *Secunda Secundae*, q. 12, a. 2.

72. Ibid., q. 34, a. 4.

73. Ibid., q. 131, a. 1.

74. Ibid., q. 154, a. 12.

75. "Tertia significatio *peccati socialis* ad necessitudines attinent inter varias communitates humanas.… Itaque, si sermo de *peccato sociali* instituitur, haec verba significationem hic habent aperte analogicam. Si utcumque de *peccatis* loquimur *socialibus*, licet sensu analogico acceptis, nemo inducatur ut singulorum responsale officium et onus aestimet minoris, sed omnium conscientiae incitentur ut serio et animose nefastas illas res rerumque mutent condiciones, quae tolerari minime possunt."

76. *Secunda Secundae*, q. 40.

77. Ibid., q. 42.

78. Ibid., q. 42, a. 1.

79. "Peccatum autem seditionis primo quidem et principaliter pertinet ad eos qui seditionem procurant, qui gravissime peccant. Secundo autem, ad eos qui eos sequuntur, perturbantes bonum commune." (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 42, a. 2.)

80. "Ad tertium dicendum quod regimen tyrannicum non est iustum, quia non ordinatur ad bonum commune, sed ad bonum privatum regentis, ut patet per philosophum, in III Polit. et in VIII Ethic. Et ideo perturbatio huius regiminis non habet rationem seditionis, nisi forte quando sic inordinate perturbatur tyranni regimen quod multitudo subiecta maius detrimentum patitur ex perturbatione consequenti quam ex tyranni regimine. Magis autem tyrannus seditiosus est, qui in populo sibi subiecto discordias et seditiones nutrit, ut tutius dominari possit. Hoc enim tyrannicum est, cum sit ordinatum ad bonum proprium praesidentis cum multitudinis nocumento." (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 42, a. 2, ad 3.)

81. On this work, see Dondaine's introduction to the critical edition of the Latin text in *Sancti Thomae de Aquino Opera Omnia iussu Leonis XIII P.M. edita. Tomus XLII cura et studio fratrum praedicatorum*, 1979, 421–44. See also the introduction in *S. Tommaso d'Aquino. Opuscoli politici*, ed. Lorenzo Perotto, 1997, 9–24;

Marie-Dominique Chenu, *Toward Understanding Saint Thomas*, English trans. M. Albert Landry and Dominic Hughes, 1964, 336–37; Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas d'Aquin. Sa personne et son oeuvre*, 1993, 247–49; James A. Weisheipl, *Frère Thomas d'Aquin. Sa vie, sa pensée, ses oeuvres*, French trans. Christian Lotte and Joseph Hoffmann, 1993, 211–19. (Although Weisheipl's original work is in English, the French translation is referred to here so as to facilitate a comparison between Weisheipl's and Torrell's remarks on *De regno*.) On Tolomeo of Lucca, who brought to completion this opuscule, see J. Rivière, "Lucques (Barthélemy de)," in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. 9(I), 1926, columns 1062–67; Thos M. Schwertner, "Bartholomew of Lucca," in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, available at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02316a.htm.

82. "Adicitur autem ad eorum impenitentiam quod omnia sibi licita estimant que impune sine resistentia facere potuerunt; unde non solum emendare non satagunt que mala fecerunt, sed sua consuetudine pro auctoritate utentes, peccandi audaciam transmittunt ad posteros, et sic non solum suorum facinorum apud Deum rei tenentur, sed etiam eorum quibus apud Deum peccandi occasionem reliquerunt." (Lib. 1, cap. 11, on p. 463 in Dondaine's critical edition.)

83. "Peccatum, vere proprieque acceptum, est semper *actus personae*, quoniam actus est liber unius cuiusvis hominis neque proprie alicuius coetus vel communitatis."

84. "In personarum ergo capita verae recidunt culpae. Nulla condicio—sicut nullum institutum, nulla compages, nulla societas—ipsa per se est actuum moralium subiectum; quam ob rem ea potest per se nec bona esse nec mala. In omni ergo *condicione peccati* semper homines insunt peccatores."

85. "Immediata quidem causa humani actus est ratio et voluntas, secundum quam homo est liber arbitrio" (*Prima Secundae*, q. 75, a. 1).

86. "Ex hoc ipso quod exteriora moventia ad peccandum non sufficienter et ex necessitate inducunt, sequitur quod remaneat in nobis peccare et non peccare" (*Prima Secundae*, q. 75, a. 3, ad 1).

87. "Ignorantia habet causare involontarium ea ratione qua privat cognitionem, quae praeexigitur ad voluntarium.… Non tamen quaelibet ignorantia huiusmodi cognitionem privat. Et ideo sciendum quod ignorantia tripliciter se habet ad actum voluntatis: uno modo, concomitanter; alio modo, consequenter; tertio modo, antecedenter." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 6, a. 8.)

88. "Inter ignorantiam malae electionis et ignorantia iuris differentia est, ut notat Caietanus, quod 'ignorantia electionis consistit in ipsa voluntaria actuali inconsideratione, ignorantia vero iuris in voluntaria habituali privatione scientiae.'" (*S. Thomae Aquinatis Summa Theologiae*, ed. Caramello, *Prima Secundae*, p. 44, n. 15.)

89. "Horum autem quaedam aliquis scire tenetur: illa scilicet sine quorum scientia non potest debitum actum recte exercere. Unde omnes tenentur scire communiter ea quae sunt fidei, et universalia iuris praecepta: singuli autem ea quae ad eorum statum vel officium spectant." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 76, a. 2.)

90. "Diabolus non est causa omnis peccati: non enim omnia peccata committuntur diabolo instigante, sed quaedam ex libertate arbitrii et carnis corruptione." (*Prima Pars*, q. 114, a. 3.)

91. See *Prima Pars*, q. 9, a. 6.

92. "Nullo istorum trium modorum potest aliquid esse directa causa peccati: quia voluntas non ex necessitate movetur ab aliquo obiecto nisi ab ultimo fine" (*Prima Secundae*, q. 80, a. 1).

93. "Tota interior operatio diaboli esse videtur circa phantasiam et appetitum sensitivum. Quorum utrumque commovendo, potest inducere ad peccatum" (*Prima Secundae*, q. 80, a. 2).

94. See *Prima Secundae*, q. 80, a. 3.

95. The question of cooperation in evil is treated fairly often in the contemporary reflection on moral theology. See Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, 1997, 3:871–97. See also Ermenegildus Lio, "Cooperatio ad malum," in *Dictionarium morale et canonicum*, ed. Petrus Palazzini, 1962, 1:964–67. Austin Fagothey, *Right and Reason: Ethics in Theory and Practice*, 2d ed., 1959 (reprint 2000), 338–39; Bernard Häring, *The Law of Christ*, vol. 2, *Special Moral Theology*, 1967, 494–517; Carlo Caffarra, *Living in Christ: Fundamental Principles of Catholic Moral Teaching* (English trans. Christopher Ruff), 1987, 154–55; Benedict M. Ashley, *Living the Truth in Love: A Biblical Introduction to Moral Theology*, 1996, 141–44; Peter B. Bristow, *The Moral Dignity of Man: An Exposition of Catholic Moral Doctrine with Particular Reference to Family and Medical Ethics in the Light of Contemporary Developments*, 2d ed., 1997, 179–90. Livio Melina, "La cooperazione con azioni moralmente cattive contro la vita umana," in *Commento interdisciplinare alla "Evangelium Vitae,"* ed. Ramón L. Lucas, 1997, 467–90; Edward J. Hayes, Paul J. Hayes, Dorothy E. Kelly, and James J. Drummey, *Catholicism and Ethics*, 1997, 71–76; Louis A. Eltz, *Cooperation in Crime: An Historical Conspectus and Commentary*, Catholic University of America, Canon Law Studies, 1942.

96. "Iussio, consilium, consensus, palpo, recursus: Participans, mutus, non obstans, non manifestans." (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 62, a. 7.)

97. "Dictum vel factum minus rectum praebens ruinae" (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 43, a. 1).

98. "Dictum vel factum alterius potest esse alteri causa peccandi dupliciter, uno modo, per se; alio modo, per accidens. Per se quidem, quando aliquis suo malo verbo vel

facto intendit alium ad peccandum inducere; vel, etiam si ipse hoc non intendat, ipsum factum est tale quod de sui ratione habet ut sit inductivum ad peccandum, puta quod aliquis publice facit peccatum vel quod habet similitudinem peccati. Et tunc ille qui huiusmodi actum facit proprie dat occasionem ruinae, unde vocatur scandalum activum. Per accidens autem aliquod verbum vel factum unius est alteri causa peccandi, quando etiam praeter intentionem operantis, et praeter conditionem operis, aliquis male dispositus ex huiusmodi opere inducitur ad peccandum, puta cum aliquis invidet bonis aliorum. Et tunc ille qui facit huiusmodi actum rectum non dat occasionem, quantum in se est, sed alius sumit occasionem, secundum illud ad Rom. VII, *occasione autem accepta*, et cetera. Et ideo hoc est scandalum passivum sine activo, quia ille qui recte agit, quantum est de se, non dat occasionem ruinae quam alter patitur. Quandoque ergo contingit quod et sit simul scandalum activum in uno et passivum in altero, puta cum ad inductionem unius alius peccat. Quandoque vero est scandalum activum sine passivo, puta cum aliquis inducit verbo vel facto alium ad peccandum, et ille non consentit. Quandoque vero est scandalum passivum sine activo, sicut iam dictum est." (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 43, a. 1. ad 4.)

99. In his treatise on angels, Thomas notes that the sin of the highest angel was a bad example that attracted the other rebel angels and, to this extent, was the cause of their sin: "Peccatum primi angeli fuit aliis causa peccandi, non quidem cogens, sed quadam quasi exhortatione inducens." (*Prima Pars*, q. 63, a. 8.)

100. "In filio imitante peccatum patris est duplex ratio quare temporaliter puniatur: tum quia ipsemet peccat imitando patrem; tum quia res patris est, et decet ut pro peccato patris puniatur, inquantum est res ejus. In patre autem erat una ratio tantum; et ideo magis punitur filius quam pater; et praecipue quia contingit ut filii qui peccata patrum imitantur, liberius peccent, quasi in his nutriti, et in plura peccata se praecipitant cum minori conscientiae remorsu propter consuetudinem et auctoritatem majorum suorum." ("Scriptum super Sententiis," lib. 2 d. 33 q. 1 a. 2, ad 3, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia ut sunt in indice thomistico additis 61 scriptis ex aliis medii aevi auctoribus curante Roberto Busa S.I.*, 1980, 1:223.)

101. See Ott, Ludwig, *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, 2d English ed., Bastible, 1957, 106–14.

102. The Pelagian error was condemned at the Synods of Mileve (416), Carthage (418), and Orange (529). On Pelagianism and Augustine's response to it, see John N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, rev. ed., 1978, 357–66. There were three leaders of Pelagianism: Pelagius, Julian of Eclanum, and Celestius. (Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, vol. 1, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, 1971, 313.) On the Pelagian controvery, see also the article on original sin by A. Gaudel in *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, vol. 12(I), 1933, cols. 382–406.

103. The text of the decree on original sin (Session V—June 17, 1546), is reproduced in Heinrich Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, 37th ed., ed. Peter Hünermann, Italian ed., Angelo Lanzoni and Giovanni Zaccherini, 1996, 642–45; Norman P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 1990, 2:665–66; Giuseppe Alberigo, et al. *Les Conciles Œcuméniques*, vol. II(2) *Les Décrets. Trente à Vatican II*, French ed. A. Duval, et al., 1994, 665–67.

104. "Omnes homines qui nascuntur ex Adam, possunt considerari ut unus homo, inquantum conveniunt in natura, quam a primo parente accipiunt … inordinatio quae est in isto homine, ex Adam generato, non est voluntaria voluntate ipsius sed voluntate primi parentis, qui movet motione generationis omnes qui ex eius origine derivantur… peccatum quod sic a primo parente in posteros derivatur, dicitur *originale*." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 81, a. 1.)

105. "Iustitia originalis … erat quoddam donum gratiae toti humanae naturae divinitus collatum in primo parente. Quod quidem primus homo amisit per primum peccatum. Unde sicut illa originalis iustitia traducta fuisset in posteros simul cum natura, ita etiam inordinatio opposita." (*Prima Secundae*, q. 81, a. 2, cross-referring to *Prima Pars*, q. 100, a. 1.)

106. See *Tertia Pars*, q. 8, a. 1.

107. This is the terminology used in Gabriel Daly, "Original Sin," in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary and Lane Collins, and A. Dermot, 1987, 727–31 (especially at p. 730).

108. The expression is used in the Gospel according to John 1:29.

109. See the *Catechism*, par. 405 ("Originalium sanctitatis et iustitiae est privatio, sed natura humana totaliter corrupta non est") and par. 408 ("Consequentiae peccati originalis et omnium personalium peccatorum hominum conferunt mundo, in eius complexu, peccatricem condicionem, quae sancti Ioannis potest expressione denotari: 'peccatum mundi'").

110. In his apostolic letter *Inter Munera Academiarum*, of January 28, 1999, Pope John Paul II, recalling his address to the participants in the VIII International Thomistic Congress of 1980, called Thomas the *Doctor humanitatis*. (The text of this apostolic letter is available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19990128_inter-munera-academiarum_en.html.)