

DEFENCE OF DISSERTATION:
"St. Thomas' Thought on Gratia Operans"

[Translator's interpolations are in brackets; L's handwritten marginal notes are in braces, thus { }. The page-numbers of the original will be indicated in brackets]

[Lonergan Research Institute Archives Item A51 (folder 16 of Batch I-A) is Lonergan's defence of his doctoral dissertation, 26 typewritten pages. The defence itself begins on the third page; the first two pages contain an outline of the final part of his four-part article, "St. Thomas' Thought on *Gratia Operans*," in *Theological Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (December 1942) 533-578. The numbers on these two pages refer to the page-numbers in that publication.]

Note by Frederick Crowe on This Archival Item

I today [July 5, 1985] numbered (pencil) the loose pages of this folder 16 of Batch I-A: 1, 2, etc., to 26:--in the order in which I found them today (whether the order has been disturbed might be discoverable from internal evidence, but I cannot undertake that at the moment. Obviously all BL's work. On p. 3, BL speaks of the TS articles as "sub forma contracta et abbreviata." There seems to be no internal evidence that the order of pages has been disturbed, except, I think, that pp. 1 and 2 should be reversed. [In this translation they have been reversed - Tr.] These give an outline of the fourth TS article, and clearly the outline begins with the material on the present page 2. The order of pages 3-14 is surely correct. This judgment is based on internal evidence. 15 and 16 are surely in proper order in relation to one another. 17 could be placed immediately before 19, 18 before 17. 20 and 21 could be located either before or after 18-17-19, and 22-24 may well belong right after 16. 25 and 26 are coincidental, and probably do belong at the end.

[1]

Freedom

— free will 533
 — non-coercion 533-4
 — passive faculty 534
 — four grounds of liberty 534
 — essence of liberty 534
 — Bañezian position 536

Act of Will

— God causes act itself 537
 — Avicenna: basis of intervention 537
 — Augustine: basis & "the heart of the king" [Prov 21:1] 538
 — change of will 538
 — *Liber de Bona Fortuna*
 — intellectualist 539

internal premotion of will 540-41

Contingence

problem 541-42
 time 542
 extrinsic denomination 542-43
 absolute & hypothetical necessity 543
 God is the explanation, not what is to be explained 543
 in *Sentences* 543-44
 in [S.T.] I and III 545
 positive transcendence 545
 variations 546
 exclusively of God 547

Possibility of Sin

3-lane vs. Bañez 2-lane 547
 will, effect willed 548
 intellect 549
 is it [sin] to withdraw oneself from the ordination of the
 divine intellect outside of and contrary to governance? 549
 plan of God = law of God 550
 sin as surd 550-51
 surd as Aristotle's "per accidens" 551
 verification in non-parallelism: predestination and
 reprobation 552

Conclusions 553

a rational creature governs itself
 God governs above this governance
 temporally
 atemporally and with hypothetical necessity
 so that he is not a cause of sin as sin

[2]

Cooperative Grace in *Q. D. de Veritate*

objective obscurity 555
 "man's course is not in his control" [Jer 10:23]
 external providence
 internal motion
 relation to S.T. I-II

Prevenient Grace

motion of the mover, motion of the movable 556
 Rom 9 [esp. vv. 16-18] instrumentality 557

Conversion

prior to I-II 558
 in I-II 559
 Rom 9 from instrumentality to will of end 559-60
 details re conversion 560
 parallel of actual and habitual grace 561

Definition of Operative Grace

prevenient and subsequent--difference of time 561
 operative and cooperative--causal difference 562
 the same grace is operative and cooperative 562-63
 operation of an effect, immanent operation 562
 difference from Augustine 563-64

Interior and Exterior Act

Cajetan I 564
 Bañez 565
 Zigon 565
 Cajetan II 565-66
 John of St. Thomas 566-67
 del Prado 567-68
 usage 568
 interior act 569
 exterior act 570, cf. 555
 relation to Augustine 571: categories of controversy to
 metaphysics 572]

[3] [Here begins the defence]

Reverend Fathers and distinguished gentlemen,

The dissertation to be defended today is "St. Thomas' Doctrine on *Gratia Operans*." It was completed and approved three years ago at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. But after the date and time for its defence had been set, I was forced to leave Rome on account of the war and return to Canada. Hence it is that after the publication of this dissertation in a condensed and abbreviated form in the journal, *Theological Studies*, I am presenting today, through the kindness of Father Rector, the good offices of Father Provincial, and the favor and privilege granted by Very Reverend Father Vicar-General, Vice-Chancellor of the Gregorian University, and in the presence of the learned professors of the same university and of all of you, the defence of this dissertation, before my hair and teeth fall out and I am worn out in the feebleness of old age.

There are two parts to this defence. First, I will, to the best of my ability, outline and comment upon my dissertation; then the examiners, learned professors of the Gregorian University, may out of kindness ask me a few rather easy questions.

[4]

The Object of the Dissertation

Material object: what Aquinas said about operative grace
 whether directly
 or indirectly: that is, whatever Aquinas said that explains
 and clarifies the way grace operates upon man's free
 will.

Formal object: to consider these statements in their historical context, as constituting a stage in the development of theological speculation.

Theological speculation:

not revelation, which is God's words to man;
 nor dogma, which is the same revelation as taught to the faithful and defined by the Church;
 but the speculative operation performed by man's intelligence, whereby the data of revelation become more and more systematically understood and synthetically expressed.

Historical development:

Although revelation itself develops neither *per se* nor *per accidens*, since it is the deposit of faith which was closed with the death of the last Apostle and preserved infallibly in the Church under the safeguard of the Holy Spirit; and although dogma *per se* does not develop, since it is a clarification of revelation itself; nevertheless theological speculation *per se* does develop, as is clear from the nature of the human mind, being potential, and from the facts of history.

Stage:

And indeed, preëminent among these historical facts are those products of the immense labors of the mind of Aquinas, by which Catholic teaching, hitherto conceived along rather Platonic lines, was set in order, explained and expressed scientifically in Aristotelian form.

The Question: There are, therefore, two questions:

- I- What was the state of the question concerning operative grace when Aquinas began to write about it?
- II- By what steps, whether in the matter of grace itself or in the related matter of divine providence and operation or of human freedom, did Aquinas proceed to arrive at the doctrine as we find it in the *Summa Theologiae*?

[5]

The State of the Question When Aquinas Began to Write

About twenty-five years previously, the theory of supernatural habitual grace was for the first time formally and explicitly proposed.

Subsequently, up to the Commentary of St. Thomas on the Sentences of Peter Lombard inclusively, theologians strove to explain absolutely all the properties of grace strictly so called through this supernatural habit.

Accordingly, only habitual grace was divided into operative and cooperative; the concept of actual grace was still very vague and confused.

1. The first one to affirm the entitative disproportion between nature and grace, between reason and faith, between the natural love of God and charity, and between naturally good deeds and meritorious works, was Philip the Chancellor of the University of Paris.

- a) prior to this there was great confusion; in fact it was impossible to make a clear distinction between theology and philosophy. Thus Anselm reduced natural realities to the mysteries, while Abelard did the opposite.
- b) Hence it was hardly possible to arrive at a philosophical notion of free will; rather, it was more or less essentially mixed up with grace. Lombard defined free will as the faculty by which with the assistance of grace one chooses to do good and with the withdrawal of grace chooses evil. Abelard, on the contrary, was condemned for the proposition, "Free will by itself suffices for any good act" (DB 373).

2. Not only was there no speculative theorem on the supernatural order of reality, but even the very concept of habit had not been widely accepted before the time of Philip the Chancellor.

The difficulty was both an ignorance of the theory of habit and, more important, the fact that justification in Scripture is said to be faith which operates through charity.

Anselm, who was most influential throughout the twelfth century, held the opinion that children who were baptized did not receive grace but only the forgiveness of sins--an opinion that was not officially rejected until the Council of Vienne {at the beginning of the 14th century}, in which it was censured as one that was less probable and ought to be abandoned.

[6]

3. When the notion of habitual grace was first being developed, the need for another grace, actual grace, was not immediately perceived; or, to state it more accurately, a clear and distinct notion of actual grace did not develop right away.

Chief among those who had a part in developing the notion of habitual grace were Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure, and St. Albert the Great.

To cite only Albert, the only type of grace he recognized apart from habitual, or sanctifying, grace, "grace that makes one pleasing to God," is *gratia gratis data*. In Peter Lombard this *gratia gratis data* refers to justification; but according to Albert it refers to virtually everything except justification--for example:

- a rational nature along with its faculties
- natural moral goodness
- the preternatural gifts given to Adam and Eve
- habits uninformed [by charity], servile fear

inspiration, miracles, prophecies
 the assistance of angels
 the sacramental character
 God's activity in conserving all things in being and moving
 them to good

4. St. Thomas, therefore, in treating grace in his [*Commentary on the*] *Sentences* {he says nothing about actual grace}:

- a) distinguishes a twofold aspect in habitual grace
 - a' as a formal cause
 - b' as an efficient cause
- b) he divides habitual grace under each aspect into operative and cooperative
 - a' as formal cause, operative habitual grace makes one pleasing to God, while cooperative habitual grace makes good works meritorious
 - b' as efficient cause, by means of infused virtues it is operative inasmuch as it inclines one to an interior act of the will, and cooperative inasmuch as it inclines one to an exterior act of the will.

[Here L. wrote "omit" for both sections marked a' and b' above, and added the following:]

{But before we can consider the development of operative and cooperative grace, something must be said about the concepts of providence, of operation, and of freedom}

[7]

The Principal Stages in the Development of the Mind of Aquinas on Divine Providence

This development was not dogmatic but speculative. It arose because Aquinas did not simply reject the doctrine of Aristotle which had no notion of divine providence, but rather by modifying it slightly gave it a Christian interpretation.

It consists of three elements:

- a- The indeterminism of future contingent realities
- b- The indeterminism of terrestrial effects
- c- The unintelligibility of sin {we omit this third element because of the complexity of the notion and the shortness of time}

a- Aristotle taught that future contingents are neither determinately true nor determinately false.

Aquinas accepted this principle, while at the same time denying that future contingents are future in relation to God; for God is outside time and thus everything that actually exists [at any time] is present to him.

From this position Aquinas deduced the theorem of divine transcendence: whatever God knows, wills, and does necessarily exists--not, however, with absolute necessity but with hypothetical necessity; and since what is hypothetically necessary can be absolutely either necessary or contingent, it follows that nothing is either contingent or necessary simply

because it proceeds from God, is willed by God and is known by God.

The essential elements of this doctrine are all present in the *Sentences*, but this theorem is more clearly and fully expounded in his later writings.

b- Aristotle also taught the indeterminism of terrestrial things: all effects, it is true, have a cause, but an accidental effect [*effectus per accidens*] has an accidental cause [*causa per accidens*]. Again, given the cause, the effect follows, so long as some other cause does not intervene and impede it; and again, such interference and prevention is accidental.

But concerning what exists accidentally there is no science; and where there is no science there is no determinism. Hence terrestrial realities happen contingently, for in these realities the "accidental" is present in many ways.

In his work, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Aquinas gave this position a Christian interpretation: there is nothing accidental in God, for he is the universal cause of all things, and so nothing can impede the action of secondary causes as ordered by the divine mind.

Hence in the *Contra Gentiles* Aquinas affirmed the causal certitude of divine providence; this he denied in the *De Veritate*.

[8]

Principal Elements in His Theory of Operation

a- Regarding an agent operating within time, whether it be a natural or a voluntary agent, St. Thomas requires at all times and in every operation a real prior change or "premotion" in order to explain why the agent acted at that particular time and not earlier or later.

This real prior change or premotion is the very same as in Aristotle's system and consists in that either the mover or the movable undergoes a prior change.

This premotion of Aristotle's, therefore, differs from that of Bañez, first, in that it regards an agent as being in time and not an agent as created and limited, secondly, in that a pre-mover can be either a proper cause [*causa per se*] or an improper cause [*causa per accidens*] and not a proper cause only, and thirdly, in that a pre-mover acts indifferently upon the mover or the movable and not upon the mover only.

b- For this reason God is said to move all things because he is the prime mover in a hierarchical cosmic system. According to a general law, God directly acts upon the highest agents and through these highest agents upon lower agents. This general law is so clearly and explicitly asserted that Aquinas said that there would be no divine governance if God did not govern the minds of angels and men, for through them he governs all else.

c- Because Aristotle set up this cosmic hierarchy in order to explain the complex of terrestrial promotions--that is to say, to explain how it can be that terrestrial agents at times act and at other times do not--it necessarily follows that God, because he is the prime mover, is also the first cause of all promotion.

Furthermore, after Aquinas grasped the causal certitude of divine providence, this causal certitude and the causality of the prime mover relative to all promotion were combined; and this synthesis was given a special name, "application."

For this reason, in the *Q. D. de Potentia*, in a famous article [q. 3, a. 7], Aquinas, having affirmed this cosmic hierarchy, immediately added that "from this hierarchy of movers it follows of necessity that God applies every agent to its action."

[9] This doctrine of universal application is not found explicitly and formally either in the *Sentences* or in the *Q. D. de Veritate*. It is found in *C.G.*, *De Pot.*, and *S.T. I.* The reason for this was the development concerning the causal certitude of divine providence.

d- The notion of instrumentality was present from the beginning, but was expressed ever more clearly and fully.

a' Broadly speaking, every moved mover is an instrument.

b' Strictly speaking, an instrument is a moved mover which produces an effect beyond its proper proportion.

c' The proportion of causes is set up hierarchically so that God alone is a proportionate cause for the production of existence, and therefore existence is God's proper effect, whereas a celestial body is a cause proportionate to the production of a natural being by way of generation--hence whatever operates to generate a natural being operates by the power of a celestial body, and whatever operates to produce existence operates by the power of God. {This doctrine is a synthesis of elements from Aristotle's doctrine of motion and from the Platonic doctrine of universal causes.}

d' In order that an instrumental cause may act beyond its proportion it must receive from a principal cause an act of existence that is incomplete, intentional, and spiritual, an influence or power or acting, a similitude flowing downward, so to speak--which are all different ways of expressing the same reality.

e' I believe that from several convergences and the parallelism of texts I have demonstrated that this instrumental power, received in secondary causes to enable them by the power to God to operate in producing existence, is to be identified with fate, which is a participation in divine providence received in secondary causes as these causes are ordered by God to produce their effects.

f' What this fate is, is accurately described in the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*: it is not a substance nor a quality nor a proper cause, but is in the category of relation;

and in fact, if all secondary causes are taken together, it is the complex of all relations by which these causes are interconnected and arranged to either exert or receive promotions.

e- Finally, there is in this dissertation a treatment of the notion of operation, {of instrumental immediacy,} and of the meaning of the dictum, "God operates in every operator." However, because of the constraints of time, we shall have to omit it owing to its difficulty and complexity.

[10]

Principal Stages in the Development of the Notion of Freedom

a- As I have already stated, speculation about human freedom could hardly have occurred before a theorem of the supernaturalality of grace had been developed.

On the other hand, when the theorem of habitual supernatural grace was first proposed, there was a twofold tendency:

a' to do a philosophical analysis of freedom; and

b' to exaggerate man's freedom.

To be able to understand the development [of the notion] of operative grace, something must be said about each of these movements.

b- Aquinas did not work out or set forth a fully developed theory of human freedom before writing the *Q. D. de Malo*, a work that is later than the first part of the *Summa Theologica* but earlier than the second part.

The first stages in its development were roughly as follows:

In the *Sentences* he rejected two opinions: the opinion of those who maintained that free will was not a faculty but a habit, and the opinion of his teacher, Albert the Great, who held that free will was indeed a faculty but one that is really distinct from both intellect and will.

In the *Q. D. de Veritate* Aquinas began working on the notions of appetite, will, and freedom; but his position up to and including the *Prima Pars* was as follows.

According to Aristotle's dictum, "The desirable when apprehended moves the appetite," the will was a passive faculty; it is never said to **move** itself, although it is said to **be moved** of itself [ex se]; hence the first mover of the will is said to be the intellect, and the freedom in question does not belong to the will considered by itself but to the person. Thus the basis of freedom is placed objectively in the possibility of reaching an end in a variety of ways, and subjectively in the fact that man is rational, because he thinks about courses of action not only in explanatory syllogisms but also in argumentative and rhetorical syllogisms.

But in the *Q. D. de Malo* and in *S.T.* I-II all this is changed.

A distinction is made between the specification of the act of the will, a specification that is from the intellect, and the exercise of its act. This exercise of the act proceeds from the fact that the will moves itself, and if the will did not move itself it would not be master of its act and free. And yet the will is not its own prime mover; it moves itself to the means, but is moved by a divine influence to the end.

[11]

c- The second tendency I mentioned that arose after the introduction of the theory of supernaturalism was the tendency to exaggerate human liberty.

That is why St. Albert in his *Commentary on the Sentences* and, following his teacher, St. Thomas in his own commentary, explicitly and formally deny the doctrine of moral impotence, namely, that a sinner cannot for long avoid all mortal [sins].

Their argument is that if a sinner cannot refrain from sinning, he is not free and therefore his sin would be no sin at all.

They argue further that the statements of Augustine that were being adduced to prove the moral impotence of a sinner do not refer to the avoidance of future sins but to the remission of past sins; without grace a sinner cannot obtain the remission of his sins, but without grace he can avoid even for a long time all mortal sins.

But see the lengthy article in the *Q. D. de Veritate* [q. 24, a. 12] in which about fifty objections are stated and in which the body of the article extends over several pages. This article deals with the question of moral impotence and corrects the opinion previously held.

d- This article is of the utmost importance for understanding Aquinas' doctrine on operative grace, for it describes that upon which operative grace operates.

The basic notion is the fixity of the will through the habits or the dispositions of the will itself in accordance with the principle, "A person's end or aim will correspond to his or her character."

{This doctrine about the fixity of the will was already present in the *Sentences*, is more fully developed in the *Q. D. de Veritate*, but not perfectly set forth until the *Q. D. de Malo*--but I omit this.}

This fixity, then, is twofold, absolute and relative.

Absolute fixity in good is found in God and, in a lesser way, in the Blessed; absolute fixity of the will in evil is found in demons.

Relative fixity is found in human beings in this life. This fixity is not contrary to the essence of freedom, for freedom in itself directly concerns the choice of means through deliberation, and only indirectly concerns the habits and dispositions of the will. Besides, this indirect power does not belong to man as free but as existing in a changeable nature.

The effect of this relative fixity is that man chooses in accordance with his volitional disposition or habit unless some contrary disposition intervenes, some contrary habit is infused, or some new intellectual apprehension draws the will in a new direction.

Therefore, because man cannot maintain constant vigilance but naturally follows his habits, he cannot for long {avoid all mortal sins.}

[12]

Principal Stages in this Development With Respect to Habitual Grace as Operative and Cooperative

In the *Sentences* there is a distinction between two aspects of habitual grace, and each aspect is divided into operative and cooperative.

Habitual grace is above all the **formal cause** which, as informing a person and rendering him or her pleasing to God is called operative grace, and as informing the person's actions and rendering them meritorious is called cooperative grace.

But habitual grace, through the mediation of the infused virtues, is also an efficient cause, modifying the relative fixity of the free will.

Therefore inasmuch as it inclines a person to a good interior volitional act, it is termed operative grace; and inasmuch as it inclines a person to a good exterior act, it is termed cooperative grace.

Beginning with the *Contra Gentiles* but clearly and explicitly in *S.T.* I-II, this doctrine developed further specifically with regard to the moment in which a person is justified. For according to the constant teaching of Aquinas, at the very moment of justification in the case of an adult three elements are to be distinguished: the infusion of grace, free acts of faith and contrition, and the remission of sins.

In the *C.G.* these three are conceived by an analogy with substantial change in Aristotelian physics: thus, for example, when a heavy body becomes light, first there comes to it the form of lightness, then a movement upwards in accordance with that form, and thirdly the arrival at the end, i.e., some high place.

In a similar manner, at the moment of justification, in which all happen at the same time, first there is the motion of the mover, the infusion of grace, secondly the motion of the moved, the acts of the free will in accordance with this new form, that is, the fixation of the will, and thirdly the attainment of the end, the remission of sins.

Consequent upon this, in *S.T.* I-II this same habitual grace is divided into operative and cooperative in this way, so that inasmuch as infused grace is a formal cause rendering one pleasing to God, it is termed operative, while inasmuch as it is

an efficient cause or principle of operation of a free will, it is termed cooperative.

Thus is explained Augustine's dictum, "He who created you without you will not justify you without you;" for in the moment of justification there is a free act, which, nevertheless, is an effect of the grace infused.

[13]

Principal Stages in the Development of the Notion of Actual Grace as Operative and Cooperative

1- On account of the rather hazy notion of actual grace at that time, it was only habitual grace in the *Commentary on the Sentences* that was divided into operative and cooperative.

2- But in the *Q. D. de Veritate* another forward step was taken besides the one mentioned in regard to moral impotence.

First, the term *gratia gratis data*, which previously used to refer to just about anything, is now restricted to designating graces given to serve certain needs in the ecclesial community, such as inspiration, prophecy, and miracles.

Secondly, the attempt to explain everything that is truly and properly gratuitous as the effect of habitual grace alone was rejected. This rejection was made with the authority of Augustine who taught that after receiving prevenient grace one ought to pray to receive further grace; but no-one prays for what one already possesses, and therefore there is a real distinction between prevenient grace and subsequent grace.

Further, habitual grace remains prevenient grace, but in addition to it other effects of God's gratuitous will are added termed "divine aids," exemplified by the infusion of good thoughts and affects, and also called cooperative grace.

In the *De Veritate*, therefore, we find actual cooperative grace.

But it is hard to say what precisely it is. It seems to be a transient change in a will that is relatively fixed, for "the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and He directs it whithersoever He will." However, with the theory of the will not yet fully worked out, further clarification is virtually impossible: we must not look for more clarity than is objectively available.

3- In the *Contra Gentiles*, first grace is always habitual grace. The Pelagians are refuted in the matter of the beginning of faith, since the beginning of faith is the infusion of a supernatural habit.

In this work, however, as in the roughly contemporaneous *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, we find a greater emphasis on the instrumentality of the will with respect to grace.

The argument was: we cannot invert "It depends not on human will or effort, but on a merciful God" [Rom 9:16] to say, "It depends not on a merciful God but on human will and effort."

Grace, therefore, is not just a condition but rather the principal cause of good action. From this results the now explicit doctrine of the motion of the mover and the movement of the movable.

[14]

4- In the first part of the *Summa Theologiae* there is further progress: there is the interior preparation for grace prior to the reception of habitual grace; in this initial conversion the will is as an instrument. Then in *Quodlibetum* I, a work later than the *Prima Pars*, an interior grace is explicitly required before justification. The contrary position, accepted in the *Sentences* and the *Q. D. de Veritate*, is now condemned as heretical.

The explanation of this grace is based on the fact that "the heart of the king is in the hand of God, and He directs it whithersoever He will."

5- Still further progress is virtually present in the *Q. D. de Malo*, where for the first time a definitive and complete theory of freedom is expounded.

For now it is sufficiently clear how God is able to govern rational creatures. Rational creatures govern themselves in so far as through a process of deliberation they move themselves to choose means. But God governs this self-governance inasmuch as he holds the willing of the end in his hands, and inasmuch as by his infallible providence he directs all the external circumstances that enter into the deliberation as well as the deliberative process itself.

6- In the *S.T.* I-II, these various elements are brought into synthesis. God moves every will to universal good, but moves some wills in a special way through grace to a specific end. Conversion consists in the fact that God converts persons to himself as the good {and end} with which they desire to be united.

Thus in q. 111, a. 2, actual grace is not only called cooperative but also operative.

Operative grace is that movement of the will that is only moved and does not move anything; this kind of grace is especially found in the process of conversion. Cooperative grace is this same grace, when, however, the will is not only being moved but also moves.

{To conclude this matter in a brief summary:

- 1- A rational creature governs itself in deliberating and moving itself to choose.
- 2- Above this self-governance, God governs it, for its will is relatively fixed and in the hand of God.
- 3- Further, in those who are destined to a supernatural end, God changes this fixity by infusing habits and by

transient motions. These prior movements make the will an instrument.

But it is by reason of divine transcendence and not because of such movements that one who is moved by God to will a thing will infallibly, by hypothetical necessity, will it.}

[15]

The Purpose of this Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is historical, namely, to find out what exactly Aquinas taught about operative grace.

To explain this purpose more clearly, it will be good to relate the origins of this dissertation. Having been sent to Rome after my tertianship in order to do a *biennium*, I chose Father Charles Boyer as my thesis director and consulted him frequently. After we had considered and rejected other subjects for a dissertation, he reached over and opened the Prima Secundae of the Summa Theologica saying, "Here is this article on *gratia operans*; I don't know how it ought to be interpreted. I have consulted in vain various authors and commentators on it, and I believe it leans to neither the Molinist nor the Bañezian camp. Take it, if you wish, investigate the parallel passages and the historical sources, and throw whatever light you can on it."

Here, then, is not only the starting-point but also the end of this dissertation: to write an historical commentary on Aquinas' teaching on operative grace.

[16]

What the Purpose of this Dissertation is Not

From this statement of purpose, you can readily deduce what pertains and what does not pertain to this dissertation and its defence.

First, it is not "*de omni re scibili, et quibusdam aliis*"! [about all that can be known, and a few other things as well.]

Nor is it about the whole of the field of grace, but about operative grace, about grace as operating upon man's free will.

It is not about operative grace in Scripture, in the Fathers, among theologians or in the whole of Tradition, but about operative grace in the genuine works of St. Thomas.

Nor is it about St. Thomas' position from a dogmatic standpoint, that is to say, it is not about what a dogmatic theologian may or may not conclude from Thomas' position, but is about the prior historical question, namely, what in fact St. Thomas said and what was in his mind when speaking of operative grace.

Finally, we are dealing with this historical topic not as would be determined by a devotional interest [*pio credulitatis affectu*] or by authority or out of adherence to some tradition

or through a supernatural illumination or gift, but as determined by a scientifically historical method.

Thus whatever a scientifically historical method rightly claims for itself pertains to the dissertation and its defense; whatever is alien to a scientifically historical method also is to be thought of as alien to the dissertation and its defense.

If this is objected to:

Appeal to: The Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, AAS 23 (1931) 208

Normae generales, article 18, §2.

Insist: As much sad experience has shown, from a mixture of *genres* and methods nothing results except the bitterness of fruitless disputes.

[17]

Note of the Thesis

The "note" or qualification of this thesis, as in every historical thesis, is "probable until the contrary is established historically."

However, as to its substantial elements, when a number of convergences of disparate factors can produce certitude, we defend a thesis as virtually certain.

If this is objected to:

History is not a deductive but an inductive science: it proceeds not from the general to the particular, but from particular indications and external monuments to the connections among them and their intelligibility.

Hence without a manifold convergence that would exclude the very possibility of the contradictory, history cannot attain more than a degree of probability.

[18]

The Import of the Thesis

I intend to deal with only one difficulty, namely, about what opinions are implicitly stated or are virtually present in a work or passage where they are not found explicitly and formally.

There is here a great danger of anachronistic subjectivism: just as the Protestants ascribe their novelties to the primitive Church and the Jansenists their own opinions to Augustine, and for three centuries now the Molinists and Bañezians have both been proving that their contradictory systems are readily and almost everywhere to be seen in the works of Aquinas, so in every historical investigation there is always the danger of this fallacy which I have termed "anachronistic subjectivism."

A scientifically historical method is most careful to guard against this fallacy. Therefore,

a) it attends first and foremost to what has been said explicitly and formally;

b) in general, unless the contrary is indicated, what has been explicitly and formally said at one time can and ought to be extended to later times--hence the importance of attending to the chronology of events;

c) general principles can be extended to particulars by way of deduction, unless the contrary is indicated, so long as these general principles have truly been explicitly and formally enunciated by the author being studied;

d) on the other hand, and this is a very common fallacy, one cannot prove that something is present implicitly and virtually just because it is present elsewhere implicitly and virtually--the Molinists, for example, find their *scientia media* present implicitly and virtually in this or that passage and want to extend it to be present implicitly and virtually in all passages; and likewise the Bañezians find their physical predetermination implicitly and virtually present in this or that passage, and want to declare it to be implicitly and virtually present everywhere;

e) one cannot say that what was present explicitly and formally at a later time was also present implicitly and virtually at an earlier time--for the human intellect is potential, and through incomplete acts it proceeds step by step to a perfect act.

On the other hand, what has been said pertains to the laws of interpretation of any mind: what is implicit dogmatically is broader than what is implicit speculatively. For example, the distinction between the validity and the liceity of a sacrament conferred by a heretic was dogmatically but not speculatively implicit in the early Church.

[19]

Various Methods

My response is that one should note first that there are many different methods of interpreting St. Thomas, of which some have a greater appeal at one time and others at another time.

a) First of all there is the supernatural method, of which there are two variants:

a' there are those who are themselves so inspired as to be able gaze clearly and immediately and, as it were, face to face, upon the abstruse and quite profound mind of Aquinas;

b' there are others who know for certain that someone, such as Capreolus or Cajetan or Ferrarensis or Suarez or John of St. Thomas had such a privileged intuition.

In this method it is surely unnecessary to consult the text of Aquinas: one need only consult one's own or someone else's divinely inspired intuition. But the trouble with this method

is that not everyone is so sure about this sort of inspiration; hence at least those others, unless moved by some devout inclination to believe [*pio quodam credulitatis affectu*], will have to look for some other method.

b) Next there is the method of traditionalism according to which, as by way of a self-evident first principle, the whole of tradition or any part of it necessarily coincides with the mind of St. Thomas.

Once again, according to this method it is superfluous to consult St. Thomas; it's much easier to read some textbook where everything is clearly and succinctly spelled out.

The trouble with this method is that the more carefully one examines the so-called tradition, the less constant and unchangeable it is found to be; besides, that first principle itself seems to many to be pretty dubious.

c) Thirdly, there is the scientifically historical method which finds more and more favor in our day, and which has been developed and perfected by many important studies. This method has received great praise and commendation in the Apostolic Constitution *Deus Scientiarum Dominus* [1931].

I have adopted this method, therefore, in this dissertation, not as a principle to be defended but as an instrument to be used. But if a discrepancy is found between the conclusions from this method and those of another, that will be another problem, which no doubt someone else will have to deal with and solve in his dissertation; it does not pertain to mine.

[20]

[An objection:]

Against the whole tradition:

[Reply:] Tradition in the proper sense: in the meaning given to "tradition" in the Council of Trent which teaches that the deposit of faith is found not only in written works but also in oral traditions - NO;
Tradition improperly so called, THE CONSENSUS OF THEOLOGIANs:

as to what is materially a matter of faith: I pass
as to what is formally a matter of faith: NO

[An objection:] But all theologians taken together over a long period of time cannot be in error.

[Reply:] regarding a matter of faith, I admit;

but regarding an historical fact,

- if that fact is a dogmatic fact, I admit or pass
- if it is not a dogmatic fact, I subdistinguish:
 - that they cannot be in error in the proper sense, I deny
 - that they cannot be in error improperly speaking, that is, be ignorant, I admit.

As to what "to err" means:

Error is a lack of **due** knowledge;
but before the introduction of the scientifically
historical method, one can hardly say that the
conclusions from such a method are part of due
knowledge.

[21]

The whole tradition

on the act of the will:

Agostino Trape, *Il concorso divino nel pensiero di Egidio Romano* [Giles of Rome]

Santo Santoro, *Valenzianismo o Delfinismo*

Hentrich, *Gregor von Valencia und der Molinismus*

de San, *De Deo Uno*

as being present ontologically

Stegmüller, ?, *Zum Schicksal des Augustinismus in der Salmantizenschule*

Shannon, *Thomas of Strasbourg*

on [divine] concurrence

Landgraf

Stufler, John of Naples, John Peter Olivi, Durandus

Pelster, Thomas of Sutton

[22]

Usefulness of This Dissertation

Intrinsic

General: the value of the science of history which we ought to acknowledge lest we seem to ignore the precepts and counsels of the Holy See.

Special: the value of the science of history in the most noble of disciplines. For if historians laboriously strive to determine historical truth in profane matters, how much more ought we with equal diligence devote ourselves to the task of exploring the mind of the Common Doctor not by our subjective fictions or in a partizan spirit, but by a scientific method. {It would be most advantageous if all factions were done away with.}

Extrinsic

Special: one who has devoted himself to such a task for two whole years will have acquired a rich store of knowledge for a career in teaching: in every theological question the opinion of Aquinas is sought; but one who has approached historically the mind and writings of Aquinas will have learned how he ought to be read, will have a good knowledge of the chronology of his works, and an exact definition of his ideas, and know as well the connection between all these

matters, not according to some subjective synthesis but as understood in the historical context.

General: from this investigation it seems possible to draw conclusions about the doctrine of grace or providence or operation or freedom, and I believe that there can be many such conclusions from this dissertation.

Nevertheless, in this matter one must proceed with great caution. For its whole history manifests a very great interdependence: hence before one rejects an opinion that was once accepted, one must, in my opinion, investigate why and how such an opinion arose. [E.g.,] {Neither positive nor negative reprobation, but a third alternative}

If its origin is only in a muddled and erroneous interpretation of Aquinas, such an error can and ought to be summarily rejected--{Molinists quoting the *Sentences* in their favor} as in the matter of freedom; likewise concerning God's transcendence, and also concerning the notion of action introduced by John of St. Thomas.

If, however, the origin of a divergent opinion lies in dogmatic or scientific facts, it must be cautiously investigated. With regard to the notion of habit: the Second Council of Orange, the psychological knowledge of habits.

Again, anachronism must be avoided: Protestants, Jansenists, Lavaud (doctrine vitally adapting itself) [see next section]

[23]

Special Usefulness by Reason of the Authority of St. Thomas

Lavaud: exegetical historical Thomism

Thomism vitally adapting itself to new questions

BL[onergan]: We must not blindly go back to the ancients, lest the acquisitions of more recent times be lost: Protestants, Jansenists were not only heretical but also anachronistic.

Grace is not only a metaphysical supernatural category but a psychological category as well: the effectiveness of the will, whence the unity of physical and moral impotence, and the unity of virtues, of the gifts, and of exterior and interior aids.

The simultaneous development of the mind of St. Thomas concerning grace, the will, freedom, providence, operation, where all the parts are vitally related and fit in with one another.

The error of the Molinists who in defending their opinion quote [Aquinas'] *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, where because of a very imperfect theory moral impotence and exterior graces preparatory to justification are

denied, actual grace is virtually non-existent, and freedom is exaggerated.

In particular questions -

Action: disputed since the time of Cajetan.

Physical premotion: in dispute for three centuries without any clear and explicit passage ever being referred to, so far as I know.

Application: the merging of Aristotle's cosmic system with the Christian notion of providence and a metaphysic of operation: IMPORTANCE for a theory of history.

Instrumental power: proceeding not from subjective principles to what Thomas must have intended to say, but proceeding by way of parallel passages and a manifold convergence to what he did say.

Cooperation: St. Thomas quotes the *Liber de Causis*; I show how it influenced him.

Immediacy of power: from Albert, Alfarabi, Aristotle.

FREEDOM: Bañezian theory, [TS 3 (1942)] 536; ignorance of history.

MOVEMENT OF THE WILL: where objective clarity can be expected and where not.

Contingence of future events: I have given a logical exposition of the notions involved, and not simply affirmed them. [I have shown] why St. Thomas seems not to have solved these problems which in fact he did solve.

The possibility of sin: outlines of a system midway between Bañezianism and Molinism; hence perhaps the very best thing would be to do away with this controversy altogether, (a) in order to remove the scandal about the value of the intellect, and (b) to free Catholics to spend more time on contemporary problems.

[24]

Its Usefulness in Historical Matters

Systematic applications of a scientific method:

- a) de Guibert: *Les doublets de S. Thomas d'Aquin*.
- b) Lottin: examines the whole historical process throughout the middle ages; the place of St. Thomas in this process.
- c) As is evident, the procedure is not from some unhistorical synthesis, but from an objective synthesis of the historical process. Proceeding otherwise, the Molinists and the Bañezians are doomed to find their respective positions in the one and the same St. Thomas.
- d) Therefore attention is paid
 - a' to what has been explicitly and formally said about questions that have been explicitly and formally asked {and therefore we must not overlook what is not said in our time; for example, although we do not admit the influence of celestial bodies, nevertheless Aquinas did, and in order to penetrate his mind it is necessary to consider this as well}; otherwise, questions are put to S. Thomas that he

never considered at all or considered in a different way, and answers are extracted from his answers to questions that **we** have not considered.

b' Such a doctrine explicitly and formally taught can be extended to what was taught subsequently but not to what had been said at an earlier time. [This holds] in both cases, unless there are clear and solid reasons to the contrary.

c' But if fundamental principles that are nowhere explicitly and formally set forth are erected into rules for all interpretation, the results will be merely illusory.

Concerning the preparatory stage I have brought together into a unity

a) Lottin on liberty,
 b) Landgraf, Schupp, Doms on grace,
 and this unity I have ordered into one historical process from Augustine to the third part of the *Summa Theologiae*.

With this I have suggested one small example of the systematic response of Catholics to the so called histories of dogmas of non-Catholics: for what really develops historically is not dogma but [theological] speculation. We must write textbooks on the history of speculative theology and not imitate non-Catholics who write about the history of dogmas--for dogmas develop *per accidens*, speculation *per se*.

Thus does one grasp the innermost workings of the mind of St. Thomas concerning cosmic theories: the Platonic-Arabic influence through the *Liber de Causis*; the influence of Aristotelianism; the Christian transformation of this syncretism.

[25]

Why [There is] Nothing About Motion

a- Stuffer, *Gott der Beweger aller Dinge* (Innsbruck, 1936).

b- This question is partly philosophical and partly pertains to the history of science: just as the object of Aristotelian metaphysics is being, so the object of physics is being in motion.

c- {An erroneous cosmic system which leads to false but different conclusions}

d- Because of their ignorance of history, authors have wanted to find a fully developed doctrine on actual grace everywhere in St. Thomas. Since such a doctrine is not present everywhere but developed gradually and was not given complete expression until

S.T. I-II, fictitious notions were the result. Hence commentators, especially the more recent ones, place the foundation of the theory of actual grace in *De Potentia* 3, 7, ad 7m. But there is nothing there from which Aquinas developed his teaching on actual grace--there is a doctrine of external providence there, but not a doctrine on grace, which came from a different source:

- a' from an adaptation of Avicenna
- b' from Augustine: God can change the will in any way he pleases. God, without us, works that we may will; and when we do so, he cooperates that we may act.
- c' from a correction of Aristotle: the desirable when apprehended moves the appetite, and from an adaptation of Eudemus: concerning the beginning of deliberation.

[26]

Is Sensation (and Understanding also) a Passion [pati]?

[Aquinas] *In II De Anima*, lect. 10:

"To sense is a certain action, or being according to an act."

"Thus we speak of sensing in act, as if to say that to be acted upon [pati] and to be moved are a kind of acting, that is, a certain being in act. For motion is an act, though imperfect, as is said in *Phys.*, Book III."

In II De Anima, lect. 11:

"Thus, to be acted upon (is spoken of) not in only one sense but in several. In one sense it refers to a certain corruption which is brought about by its contrary. For being acted upon, or **passion, in the proper sense of the term** seems to involve a diminution of the one who experiences or suffers it [patientis], inasmuch as it is worsted by the agent: a detriment happens to the sufferer inasmuch as something is lost by it, and this loss is a kind of corruption.... **In the first way, therefore, passion in the proper sense refers to the suffering of a certain corruption brought about by a contrary agent.**

"Passion" is commonly and less properly used in another sense, as involving a certain reception... and in this sense the word is used not as referring to some corruption of that which suffers it, but rather to a certain healing or perfecting of that which is in potency by that which is in act."

In III De Anima, lect. 7:

"To sense, as was said in the second [book], is not a passion in the proper sense. For a passion or suffering, strictly speaking, is something produced by its contrary ... The intellective part must be impassible, in the strict sense of the word 'passion.'"

Quodl. VIII, a. 3:

"A sense is to the act of sensing as a heavy object is to an upward movement: it in no way cooperates or acts."

S.T. I, 85, 2, {ad 3m}:

"The operation of a sense is **perfected** through its being modified by a sensible object."

In I Sent., d. 40, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1m or ad 2m: In the Parma edition there is a long passage that is not found in all the old codices, according to Mandonnet, *I Sent.*, ed. Paris, 1929, on this passage.

[Translated by Michael G. Shields, SJ, at the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, May 1993]