CHAPTER 1

Introduction

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It has often been observed that Francisco Suárez not only transmitted the achievements of the scholastics to the modern era by influencing Descartes, Leibniz, Wolff, Schopenhauer and Kant, among others, but that he is the very founder of modernity.[1] Scholars disagree on whether this is true,[2] and if it is, whether it should be celebrated or regretted.[3] The purpose of this book is not to adjudicate between these views, but simply to provide a critical exposition of some of Suárez's answers to philosophical questions of the sort that have traditionally exercised philosophers and theologians. The standard used to judge the value of Suárez's works turns not so much on his location within a narrative about the history of philosophy but on the precise presentation of questions, his fair-minded and exhaustive consideration of opposing views, and the cogency and originality of his answers. It is primarily on this score that Suárez deserves our attention.

1.1 LIFE

Francisco Suárez, son of Gaspar Suárez de Toledo and Antonia Vázquez de Utiel, was born in Granada on 5 January 1548. Antonia was the sister of Jesuit theologian and cardinal, Francisco de Toledo (1532–96). According to one Inquisitor their *converso* grandmother and their grandparents were burned at the stake.[4] Suárez had three brothers and four sisters. At the age

[1] For a comprehensive discussion on Suárez and modernity and references to comments by Étienne Gilson, Alasdair MacIntyre, Jorge J. E. Gracia, Alfred Freddoso, John Milibank, Catherine Pickstock, and others see Miner 2001: 17–36; MacIntyre 1990: 73.
[2] Alfred J. Freddoso is in the minority who doubt Suárez's modernity. See Freddoso 2002: xix–xx.
[3] Jorge J. E. Gracia sees Suárez's modernity positively. See Gracia 1991a: 262–64. Heidegger, in his 1927 Marburg lectures, condemns it, and after him so does the Radical Theology movement led by Milibank, Pickstock, and others. See Heidegger 1982: 80.
[4] Maryks 2010: 104.

of sixteen, after studying canon law in Salamanca for three years, he applied to join the Society of Jesus at their school in Salamanca. The application was unsuccessful: his health was weak, his intellect unpromising. Disappointed but resolute, Francisco went to Valladolid to appeal the decision before the Jesuit Provincial of Castile. Against the opinion of his advisors, the Provincial gave Francisco a chance. He was admitted to the novitiate, but only as a lowly ranked *indiferente* – someone whose permanent rank within the Society would be determined at a later date.

Initially Suárez failed to make an impression: despite his dedication he lagged well behind his peers. Francisco's laconic character did not help. An advanced student was asked to tutor him, to no avail. According to the story, worried by the lack of progress, Francisco approached Father Martín Gutierrez: should he simply face the facts, abandon fruitless intellectual efforts and help the Society merely as a 'temporal coadjutor'? Gutierrez urged him to pray to the Virgin Mary, which he did. It did not happen immediately, but something changed: not only did Suárez catch up with the rest of the students, but he outdistanced them.

Suárez's intellectual landscape was marked by the revival of Iberian scholasticism triggered in part by Francisco de Vitoria.[5] Other significant features of this landscape included the impact of the Renaissance and humanist education in Spain, eclectic mystical movements such as the *alumbrados*, Protestantism, the Counter-Reformation, and the Council of Trent, which started in 1545. More directly relevant to Suárez's formation was the founding of the Society of Jesus in 1534. The Society's schools soon became a magnet for spiritually inclined and intellectually curious young men. Ignatius Loyola and some of the first Jesuits, such as Francisco Xavier, were somewhat unsympathetic to scholastic theology, which they regarded as too speculative and detached from the pastoral and more practical orientation that characterized patristic theology.[6] Despite this fact the Society soon produced scholastic theologians of its own. Beyond

[5] Labels and periodization are disputed. Some scholars reject the label 'neo-scholasticism' or 'second scholastic' as being appropriate to Suárez and his milieu and instead locate him within 'baroque scholasticism' as opposed to 'Renaissance scholasticism' which, in this account, designates the first post-medieval phase of scholasticism. The former would differ from the latter by a more marked Scotist influence, a Franciscan presence, and an increasing predominance of Jesuits rather than Dominicans. Some scholars apply the term 'neo-scholasticism' to the Thomist revival of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Other labels one comes across are 'later medieval scholasticism', 'early modern scholasticism', 'late Aristotelianism', and 'Counter-Reformation philosophy'. For a discussion of the appropriateness of these labels, see Novotný 2009: 209–33. See also Pereira 2007: 37–66.

[6] See O'Malley 1994: 251.

the general exhortation to follow St Thomas[7] that we find in Loyola's *Constitutions*, Jesuit theologians were more or less free to choose their own way. Nevertheless, Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza, Rodrigo de Arriaga, Francisco de Toledo, Benito Pereira, Pedro de Fonseca and his circle at Coimbra, Roberto Bellarmine, Francisco Suárez, Luis de Molina, Gabriel Vázquez, Leonardus Lessius, Gregorio de Valencia, Francisco Torres, and Juan de Lugo, the leading theologians of the first two generations of the Society, converged towards some shared positions. This is partly explained by their solidarity in responding to outside attacks. Consider the imprisonment in 1601 of four Jesuit theologians (including Vázquez) by the Inquisition for allowing a student to defend the thesis that one need not believe as a matter of faith 'that this or that person, for instance Clement VIII, is the Supreme Pontiff'. After interrogation, the Jesuits were given a fortnight to work together, still imprisoned, on a joint theological defence.

After two years studying philosophy with Andrés Martínez, Suárez commenced his four-year theology course, attending the classes of the Dominican Mancio de Corpus Christi, a direct disciple of Vitoria and of the Augustine friar Juan de Guevara, among others. At twenty-three, after the completion of his theological studies and his father's death, and shortly before being ordained, Suárez commenced his teaching career at the Jesuit School in Segovia. This post would be followed by teaching positions in Avila, Valladolid, Alcalá, Salamanca, the Jesuit School at Rome (the Collegio Romano), and, for almost twenty years, at Coimbra. While a poor preacher (his few attempts failed because of a tendency to digress on the finer points), Suárez proved to be a dedicated and original teacher, if not always popular. His method departed from the norm: instead of merely repeating others' opinions Suárez believed in looking a fresh at the problem under consideration, examining the root of the problem (he advocated 'mirar las cosas mas de raíz').[8]

Suárez drew criticism from early on in his academic career. Some of this criticism had to do with opinions on specific doctrinal matters such as the Immaculate Conception of Mary, or the validity of epistolary confession in cases of necessity. Others had to do with more fundamental

[7] Society of Jesus, *Constitutiones Societate Iesu* (Rome: Societatis Iesu, 1558), ch. 14, section 1.

[8] Scorraille 2005: 156, vol. 1. This biographical section is almost entirely based on Scorraille's (1842–1921) still unsurpassed biography. Scorraille makes use of and goes much beyond the earlier biographies, biographical sketches, and panegyrics such as those by Pedro de Ribanadeira, Juan Eusebio Nieremberg, Antonio Ignacio Descamps, Bernardo Sartolo, Antonio García Ribeiro Vasconcellos, and others.

views commonly attributed to the Jesuits, for example on the compatibility between human freedom with divine grace and human freedom with divine foreknowledge. These were the issues under contention in the 'Congregatio de auxiliis', prompted by fellow Jesuit Luis de Molina's *Concordia*, which confronted Jesuits and Dominicans in deliberations held in Rome from 1601 to 1607.

Like many of his fellow Jesuits, Suárez was frequently accused of departing too often from views attributed to Thomas Aquinas. Father Enrique Henríquez (or Enríques), initially a Jesuit and Suárez's teacher, then a Dominican, then a Jesuit again, secretly denounced Suárez to the Inquisition.[9] Another dogged enemy of the Society, and of Suárez in particular, was the Dominican Alonso de Avedaño.[10] He regarded as intolerable Suárez's view that Jesus' way of life was modest rather than austere.

In addition, Suárez wrote a number of polemical tracts motivated by political upheavals. *De immunitate ecclesiastica*, written in 1606, defends ecclesiastical rights against alleged encroachments by the Republic of Venice. *Defensio fidei*, a weightier book, published in 1613 under the auspices of the papal nuncio in Madrid, Decio Caraffa, is a response to James I of England's defence of his requirement of Catholic subjects to make an oath of fidelity. The work went beyond its original purpose to provide something close to a full-fledged theory of political power. Seen as undermining the foundations of regal absolute rule, it was publicly burned not only in London at the end of 1613 but also the following year in the courtyard of the Parlement de Paris. Even before a Dominican friar assassinated Henry III in 1589, and an unsuccessful applicant to the Society of Jesus did the same to his successor twenty-one years later, there was particular sensitivity in France towards anyone defending any form of tyrannicide.[11]

During Suárez's own lifetime and shortly afterwards, allusions to a 'Suarista' party (here in opposition to the Thomist) became popular. A document from the eighteenth century stated that 'not one Doctor in Theology of those present in Buenos Aires was a Thomist, but they were all Suarezians'. The bishop of Asunción lamented in 1757 that '[t]he ecclesiastical prelates are all his [Suárez's] ... and they have followed his school to such an extent that I have no knowledge of any Thomist in this land except for Dr Leiva'.[12] Suárez himself rejected

[9] Scorraille 2005: 248, vol. I. [10] Scorraille 2005: 254, vol. I. [11] Scorraille 2005: 193, vol. II.
[12] Furlong 1952: 211, citing Society of Jesus, *Litterae Annuae Provinciae Paraguariae Societates Iesu*, 8 vols. (Buenos Aires: Societatis Iesu, 1710–30), p. 215.

being seen as 'the inventor of a new school or in opposition to or creating a faction against anybody'.[13]

Even within the order not all were happy with Suárez's views. When later in his life Suárez returned to Salamanca, Miguel Marcos, the prefect of studies, worried about the 'novelties' that he introduced,[14] and more generally about the reigning climate of liberty of opinion. Unable to impose order, Marcos refused to be used as a fig leaf (which he might have been given his conventional views); nor was he willing to endanger himself by constantly having to defend his more adventurous brothers to the Inquisition.[15]

Special mention must be made of the personal rivalry and theological quarrel between Suárez and fellow Jesuit Gabriel Vázquez. Suárez was already lecturing at Alcalá when Vázquez returned from Rome in 1591. Vázquez was not only a sharp theologian but was also very popular because of his charisma and casual ways. Having learned and taught in Alcalá for many years before his spell in Rome, Vázquez had the local sympathy. Some of the disagreements between the two theologians are discussed in the chapters by Irwin, Pink and myself. Things soon descended into petty accusations before the General of the Order, Claudio Acquaviva, in response to his letters urging peaceful communion. Vázquez would report on Suárez's lack of ascetism: he had annexed a room to his chamber, kept food stores which he would share only with his disciples, got better meals, and had a butler. In addition he was alleged to shun communal life by avoiding the dining hall, the kitchen and even the communal toilets.

It does not seem that Vázquez's accusations were wholly unfounded, as Miguel Marcos (not a friend of Vázquez) would make similar complaints later at Salamanca. Suárez's delicate health may perhaps have justified some of these special requirements, but not the additional accusation that Suárez kept too many of the School's library books in his study.[16] The clash between Suárez and Vázquez had lasting repercussions: in 1624 the Jesuit Provincial had to write to the Jesuit School of Lima to seek to put an end to the division between followers of Suárez and those of Vázquez.

Suárez would find somewhat more peaceful surroundings in Coimbra. Philip II of Spain (Philip I of Portugal), who imposed his rule on the whole of the Iberian peninsula in 1580, sought to appoint a distinguished theologian to the most eminent university of this new part of the realm.

[13] Scorraille 2005: 310, vol. 1.
[14] Scorraille 2005: 305, vol. 1.
[15] Scorraille 2005: 304, 306, vol. 1.
[16] Scorraille 2005: 307, vol. 1.

After initially accepting Suárez's personally given apologies on health grounds, Philip changed his mind and insisted. Clearly Suárez could not decline. He arrived in Coimbra in 1597 to a lukewarm reception. This was explained not only by patriotic zeal ('why a Castilian and not a Portuguese?'), but also because the appointment was made without open competition and Suárez lacked a doctoral degree. To remedy the latter fact Suárez was eventually forced to procure a doctoral diploma from the smaller University of Evora. Exempted from most of the standard formalities, Suárez was only asked to act as patron (*padrino*) of a certain Gonzalo Luiz in a theological disputation. Interruptions apart, Suárez would remain in Coimbra until shortly before his death.

The overall impression one has after reading Scorraille's detailed and superbly documented biography is that Suárez's dominant desire, and one which explained many of his academic moves, was simply to be left undisturbed so as to be able to devote himself completely to his writing and publishing. University ceremonies, membership in disciplinary academic committees and pronouncements on the affairs of the day at the behest of spiritual or secular authorities were for him burdensome distractions.

Twenty-two of Suárez's works have been published, nine of them posthumously under the care of his friend Baltasar Alvarez. The *Disputationes metaphysicae* (1597), *De legibus* (1612), and *De anima* (1621) deserve special mention. A number of writings have been lost, mostly commentaries on Aristotle which Suárez used for his classes during his first tenure at Salamanca. His oeuvre has been collected, most recently in the twenty-eight volumes (including indexes) published in Paris by Louis Vivès between 1856 and 1878.[17] We also have a collection of *responsae* on a variety of matters, such as whether Mass can be celebrated at sea, whether it is licit to carry out capital punishment on Good Friday, whether a priest who believes that he is the father of a child must recognize him, and whether a wife can abandon her home if she feels threatened by her husband.[18]

Suárez was both prolific (according to one account he wrote about twenty-one million words, more than twice the output of Aquinas)[19] and industrious, attending not just to writing but also involving himself in all

[17] Francisco Suárez, *Opera Omnia*, ed. M. André and C. Berton, 28 vols. (Paris: Vivès, 1856–78).
[18] Francisco Suárez, *Conselhos e Pareceres*, 3 vols. (Coimbra: Biblioteca Geral da Universidade de Coimbra, 1948–1952). These cases are discussed respectively in vol. 1, pp. 141–66, 179–83, 353.
[19] Fichter 1940: 340. In Pereira 2007: 10.

editorial matters. Suárez's books were quite profitable. Initially the Jesuit Schools would pay the printers and retain most of the gains. Suárez obtained a special authorization to divert part of the revenues to his family.[20] At one point the Jesuit General had to intervene to prevent the Schools from continuing to invest in Suárez's books, as, he argued, it violated poverty vows. Instead he thought the capital should come only from booksellers or publishers. More than once Suárez had to borrow money to pay the printers.[21] As soon as a Suárez book was published, unauthorized copies were printed in places such as Paris, Vienna, Cologne, Geneva, Lyons or Mainz, some of which were smuggled into Spain.[22] This gives us some measure of his popularity at the time.

Suárez died on 25 September 1617 at almost seventy after convalescing for two weeks in Lisbon from what may have been dysentery. In his last days a colleague brought a painter to have Suárez, unbeknownst to him, portrayed for posterity. Suárez spotted the hidden artist and had him seen out.

1.2 PHILOSOPHY

Was Suárez primarily a philosopher or a theologian? What motivates this question seems to be not so much a matter of zeal for disciplinary boundaries, but the suspicion that Suárez's fundamental views may not be based on reason but ultimately on faith and revelation. Whether these two need be set in opposition is not to be discussed here, but what we can say without hesitation is that neither Suárez nor his scholastic predecessors ever thought that citing the Bible in philosophical argument was sufficient to command the assent of the reader. Someone equipped with philosophical tools can go a long way in acquiring knowledge of God and his creation. Hence references to Suárez's 'philosophy' are not to be read as 'opposed to Suárez's theology', but as his philosophical engagement with questions which belong to an overarching theological research programme. Not just knowledge of the divine but also revealed doctrine (such as angels, miracles, transubstantiation, and the Immaculate Conception of Mary) require an intelligible and coherent account of the sort good philosophers may be able to provide.[23]

Suárez covered a considerable number of canonical philosophical problems. His exposition is always thoughtful and compendious. Without

[20] Scorraille 2005: 351, 245, vol. II. [21] See Brandão 1974: 295, vol. II.
[22] Scorraille 2005: 26, vol. II. [23] See Freddoso 2000: xvi.

claiming to be exhaustive, I simply select a number of central themes within Suárez's work, and relate them to the chapters that compose this book.

1.2.1 *Metaphysics*

Suárez was convinced that a solid metaphysical background was required for good theology. He regarded as deficient standard metaphysical treatments consisting of commentaries on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* which followed Aristotle's own somewhat arbitrary order. To remedy this Súarez set out to provide a reasoned and well-structured exposition of metaphysics as it had developed from Aristotle to his own time. The result is his monumental *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, first published in 1597. In it he collected and thoughtfully assessed the views of about two hundred and fifty authors, in fifty-four disputations, each divided into various subsections, before offering his own solutions. Not only was this work enormously useful as a didactic tool, it also challenged readers to think afresh about old problems. The somewhat standardized scholastic Latin and the apparent deference to authors of the past are deceptive: behind this veil we find a creative thinker.

Suárez's most notorious metaphysical innovations comprise the definition of the subject matter of metaphysics, as 'being insofar as it is real being',[24] his revision of Aquinas's position on the difference between essence and existence, and his rejection of Aquinas's account of individuation. In the *Disputationes* Suárez also discussed, in typically thorough manner, transcendentals, causation, finite and infinite being, substance and accident, categories, God's existence and his nature, modality, quantity, relations and beings of reason.

In arguing that metaphysics concerns being insofar as it is *real* being, Suárez excludes beings of reason and being *per accidens* from its scope, but includes immaterial and material being, substances and accidents, creatures and God. This is a considerable expansion of the territory of metaphysics explored by some of his predecessors. The being of a chair and that of God are not the same, and are only in some respects similar. Nonetheless there is in reality a common aspect shared by all these beings.[25] Because of this, although the beings of these things differ in reality, when we think in terms of 'being' we are employing just one concept. In Suárez's terminology the formal concept of being (what is

[24] *DM* I.Intro. [25] *DM* II.2.14.

represented by the term 'being') exhibits unity.[26] The same is true of the confusingly named 'objective concept of being', which is not a concept but rather what we think about when we think in terms of 'being'.[27] Nonetheless Suárez denies that the unity of the formal concept of being and the unity of actual being in the world is enough to make the term 'being' univocal; as argued by his predecessors the term remains analogical.[28]

For Suárez actually existing essence and actual existence are only mentally distinct. The essence of an actually existing horse and its existence do not differ outside the mind. This view has been read by some interpreters – influentially by Gilson – as reducing existence to essence and thereby diminishing the metaphysical importance of creation, the divine conferral of existence.[29] Nonetheless the opposite reading is possible, and indeed seems more natural: Suárez is actually demoting the metaphysical status of essences by saying that their existence depends on the existence of things they are essences of. As Norman Wells has asserted: a 'metaphysics . . . which is knowledge of essences or *aeternae et necessariae veritates* ha[s] been dealt a mortal blow'.[30]

Suárez's comprehensive discussion of individuation is a salient feature of his metaphysics. He rejects 'designated matter', substantial form, and mere existence as good principles of individuation. Aquinas's 'designated matter' may help to *discern* between individuals, but it is no help as a principle of individuation as such (partly because it does not allow us to distinguish between non-material individuals).[31] Form taken on its own cannot individuate features such as accidents and matter (form is nevertheless declared the 'primary' principle of individuation so, for instance, human individuals differ more on account of their souls [form] than of their bodies [matter]).[32] Actual existence cannot be the sole principle of individuation because it would not allow us to distinguish between two different possible beings which do not yet exist. Suárez posits that it is 'entity' (*entitas*) that provides the genuine principle of individuation.[33] '[T]he whole singular substance does not need any other principle of individuation in addition to its own *entitas* or in addition to the intrinsic

[26] *DM* II.2.9. [27] See Gracia 2003: 297.
[28] *DM* II.2.36: 'quia ad univocationem non sufficit quod conceptus in se sit aliquo modo unus, sed necesse est ut aequali habitudine et ordine respiciat multa, quod non habet conceptus entis'. See Ashworth 1995: 50–75.
[29] This influential interpretation can be easily traced to Gilson 1948: 148–53. See also Miner 2001: 19–21.
[30] Wells 1967: 58, cited in Miner 2001: 28; García de la Mora 1996: 35. [31] See Gracia 1994: 497.
[32] Gracia 1994: 497. [33] See Thiel 1998: 217, vol. I.

principles from which its *entitas* is constituted'.[34] In the case of composite beings, a particular matter and a particular form are united. The same criterion furnishes the principle of individuation of accidents (for Aquinas these were individuated by the subject in which they inhere).

An exposition of some of the central tenets of Suárez's metaphysics is contained in the first three chapters of this volume. Gracia and Novotný discuss Suárez's treatment of transcendentals and categories. The mark of a transcendental is that it is included in the notion of every being and therefore is not exclusively included in the notion of any being or any kind of being. The transcendentals comprise being and its properties, such as unity, truth, and goodness. As Gracia and Novotný show, Suárez, perhaps in the footsteps of Scotus, comes close to proposing an intensional view of transcendentals and transcendence. In the intensional view, 'animal' transcends 'horse' not because the extension of 'animal' includes the extension of 'horse' but, roughly, because what we pick when we use the term 'horse' includes animality. This means that, although these properties are coextensional (all that is, is also, insofar as it is a being, one, true, and good), they are intensionally different because they pick different aspects of being. This view raises a problem that Suárez tackles: under the accepted account of 'property' can we really say that being qua being has properties? As Gracia and Novotný show, Suárez proposes a solution that consists of a middle way between two unattractive options: (1) that the properties of being are something over and above being as such, and (2) that these properties are identical to being.

Being and its properties transcend categories insofar as the latter are the most general kinds of being, but what are categories ontologically speaking, and how many of them are there? Suárez's response to the first question is that a category is 'nothing other than the appropriate disposition and coordination of essential predicates'. Gracia and Novotný unpack the meaning of this assertion. In addition, in response to the second question Suárez mounts and responds to a number of challenges to Aristotle's division of accidents into nine genera, asking whether his division is the most reasonable one, whether it is exhaustive, and how one ought to account for the diversity between categories. The article closes with an overview of Suárez's discussion on 'quasi-transcendental' properties of beings of reason and their categories.

In his chapter, Christopher Shields discusses substantial forms. Substantial forms have been traditionally proposed as conferring unity

[34] *DM* v.6.