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ON THE PATH TO MODERNITY.
FRANCISCO SUÁREZ'S *DISPUTATIO* XXIX

*by Miquel Seguró**

Abstract: In *On the Path to Modernity: F. Suárez's* Disputatio *XXIX* the Author focuses on the *Disputatio XXIX* because he finds in its development an anticipation of Modern onto(theo)logical thinking, especially in its most characteristic aspect: the explicitness of the subject as a ruler of thinking and feeling. The dividing up of the history of philosophy seen as a progressive and gradual development is a restrictive and inexact a priori and then becomes increasingly obsolete. Thus, Modernity need not be seen as a "superior" stage in relation to its predecessors, but as a product of their different issues and approaches. After looking at the *Disputatio*, the Author concentrates in the second part of the paper on the central role of the *reductio conceptui entis* and its echo of the *quaestio metaphysica* in terms of the problem of analogy (*entis* vs. *fidei*) and the assumption of the heuristic value exemplified by the concept of God.

Keywords: subject, transcendentalism, concept, subject, God, being

Introduction

In the following pages, I intend to examine the *Disputatio XXIX,* in which Suárez addresses the existence of God and reviews the different arguments laid out in support of this claim. It is my understanding that the onto-*logical* nature of his proposal is clearly appreciable in this *Disputatio* and, as a direct extension, so is the nature of modern metaphysics up to Kant. At the crossroads of the Medieval and Modernity, the Jesuit Francisco Suárez (Granada, 1548 - Lisbon, 1617) contributed a metaphysical legacy comprised almost entirely of his monumental *Disputationes Metaphysicae*[1] (*DM* subsequently). Despite the great volume and complexity of this work, it was soon considered an invaluable point of reference for the formal and conceptual transformation of the *quaestio metaphysica*. So much so that E. Gilson has

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    1. Suárez 1960-1966.

repeatedly claimed a direct connection between Suarist metaphysics and the development of Wolffian ontology, which constitutes the framework for the studies and formation of the young Kant[2].

Approaching the *DM* is a demanding task, given that it is a long, dense and prolific work. While it maintains connections with the Middle Ages both in its themes and approach (it is a compendium of many *quaestiones* developed in the classic style of an argument that articulates a critical review of the most relevant opinions on a topic in order to elucidate a pondered, truthful response), it substantially transforms many fundamental medieval concepts. The articulation of the *DM* constitutes one of the broadest systematic attempts at metaphysics, within which we find a (proto)ontology (*Disputationes* 2 through 27), a natural theology (28 to 30) and a metaphysics of finite being (from 31 to 53)[3].

Specifically, my aim is to examine the *Disputatio* at its core in order to demonstrate the means by which this change is effected and to identify which typically modern elements are at work in the process. As in every system, however, the part presupposes the whole; and in his approach to the question of God, Suárez takes for granted a whole series of questions that we must bear in mind. It is opportune, therefore, to highlight a few distinctive elements of his system – above all, the distinction between being and essence or the pre-eminence of the attributive analogy – in order to better understand the scope of the change Suárez achieves.

DISPUTATIO XXIX. *DE DEO PRIMO ENTE ET SUBSTANTIA INCREATA, QUATENUS IPSUM ESSE RATIONE NATURALI COGNOSCI POTEST*

The *Disputatio* is divided into three sections. The first section attempts to refine the means by which the existence of God is asserted. In order to so, the most relevant physical and metaphysical arguments articulated up to that point are examined. The second deals with the a posteriori demonstrations and the third with the a priori demonstrations.

Section I

"*Multipliciter ostendimus necessarium esse in universo aliquod ens quod ex se habeat esse*" (I, 1). The section begins with a convincing statement. In choosing from the means by which to attain this certainty, Suárez opts for the second claim ("*simpliciter veram*") and the fourth claim ("*posse ad sanum sensum revocari*") (I, 6) which argue the four different ways to approach the problem. The second claim affirms that the question of God

2. Gilson 2008, p. 189.
3. For a general introduction to the work, see Pérez San Martín 2000, pp. 35-73.

belongs to the realm of metaphysics and is not an object of study for the philosopher of nature. The fourth claim, however, maintains that the fully metaphysical method depends on the reflective work that a physicist has already put forward. Accordingly, Suárez undertakes a review of the **physical arguments.**

This is one of the most noteworthy parts of the *Disputatio* since the author is critical of the Thomist and Aristotelian tradition of the first cause. The 'Doctor Eximius'[4] points out that Aristotles' proposal in *Physics, VIII* and *Metaphysics, XII* turns out to be ineffective in many ways in its attempt to demonstrate the existence in reality of any immaterial substance (I, 7). In effect, Suárez, who was a contemporary of Luis de Molina, did not accept that the axiom was to be applied to immaterial realities because

In the realm of strictly human or spiritual action, according to Suárez, the simultaneous and non-contradictory presence of the 'virtual act' and the 'formal potential' could emerge, which would render the Aristotelian need to 'be moved by another' unnecessary[5].

Therefore, even if we accepted that the Thomist premise that *all that moves is moved by another* were true at the physical level (an idea which would collide with the idea that the heavens move on their own or that a stone drops due to the force of gravity), that would not oblige us to accept the necessary consequentiality of a first immaterial substance. Let us remember briefly that for Thomas Aquinas:

Respondeo dicendum quod Deum esse quinque viis probari potest. Prima autem et manifestior via est, quae sumitur ex parte motus. Certum est enim, et sensu constat, aliqua moveri in hoc mundo. Omne autem quod movetur, ab alio movetur. Nihil enim movetur, nisi secundum quod est in potentia ad illud ad quod movetur, movet autem aliquid secundum quod est actu. Movere enim nihil aliud est quam educere aliquid de potentia in actum, de potentia autem non potest aliquid reduci in actum, nisi per aliquod ens in actu, sicut calidum in actu, ut ignis, facit lignum, quod est calidum in potentia, esse actu calidum, et per hoc movet et alterat ipsum. Non autem est possibile ut idem sit simul in actu et potentia secundum idem, sed solum secundum diversa, quod enim est calidum in actu, non potest simul esse calidum in potentia, sed est simul frigidum in potentia. Impossibile est ergo quod, secundum idem et eodem modo, aliquid sit movens et motum, vel quod moveat seipsum. Omne ergo quod movetur, oportet ab alio moveri. Si ergo id a quo movetur, moveatur, oportet et ipsum ab alio moveri et illud ab alio. Hic autem non est procedere in infinitum, quia sic non esset aliquod primum movens; et per consequens nec aliquod aliud movens, quia moventia secunda non movent nisi per hoc quod sunt mota a primo movente, sicut baculus non

4. F. Suárez was also known as "doctor Eximius," a title denoting his distinguished status [translator's note].
5. "*En el ámbito de la acción espiritual o humana estrictamente tal podría darse – según indica Suárez – la simultánea y no contradictoria presencia del 'acto virtual' y de la 'potencia formal', que convertiría en superflua la necesidad aristotélica de 'ser movido por otro'.*" Cabada Castro 1999, p. 254.

movet nisi per hoc quod est motus a manu. Ergo necesse est devenire ad aliquod primum movens, quod a nullo movetur, et hoc omnes intelligunt Deum[6].

Certainly, the first two Thomist *viae* harken back to an Aristotelian matrix[7]. This does not preclude, however, that the 'Doctor Angelicus' went beyond these structures and devised a new metaphysics of the *esse* as the act that exceeded the achievements of Aristotles' own naturalist metaphysics[8]. Consequently, if we briefly review what the first *via* says, we realize that the deeper emphasis is really placed on the metaphysical structure of movement, whose formula distinguishes between act and potential. Thus, movement is nothing more than a step from the potential to the action as such: a transition unrealisable from the potentiality of the agent which requires, therefore, the realised actualisation of a prior being that allows such movement to be effected[9]. It follows, then, that the first *via* holds value primarily for its efficiency and therefore in some way co-signifies the original foundation of the being of the effect. However, Suárez replaces the Thomist axiom of movement with the axiom that says *"omne quod fit, ab alio fit"* (I, 20) attempting to preserve, mainly, the (Molinist) autonomy of the finite entity[10]. And yet, this formula does not appear to differ greatly from the one it aims to distance itself from, since the "doing" could just as well be interpreted as an analogy for movement. One difference that would need to be noted, however, is the idea – absent in Thomas Aquinas – of some living beings that move themselves. This idea would most likely have paved the way for the personalisation of the first Aristotelian mover[11].

Suárez continues his dispute by analysing different movements that can take place. He concludes that heaven is an inherently imperfect entity and therefore unnecessary, and that from the movement caused by another in order to create heaven, we cannot arrive at the conclusion that there exists a substance above heaven, let alone an immaterial one. But, as he warns, this speculation is already metaphysical and, as such, it should be accepted that an analysis of the physical means ("movement") cannot exceed its own limits and affirm something that goes beyond the physical (I, 13). Hence Suárez concludes that

omnia media physica per se esse insufficientia ad demonstrandum esse aliquod primum ens increatum; immo obiter est ostensum per se non sufficere ad demonstrandum quid vel quale sit illud ens eo modo quo per effectus demonstrari potest, sed hoc semper ad metaphysicum pertinere (I, 19).

6. *Summa Th.,* I, q. 2, a. 3.
7. Van Steenberghen 1980, p. 330.
8. Gilson 2000, pp. 137-138.
9. *Ibid.,* pp. 93-106.
10. Fernández Burillo 1993, p. 240. Accordingly, the being will expire in the essence since if the act of being were its intimate depth, otherwise, how could such a being be autonomous? (*Ibid.,* p. 241).
11. See Estrada 1994, p. 88.

Here Suárez charts the map leading to the **metaphysical arguments**, the only viable arguments to resolve the question of the existence or inexistence of God. Even so, this exclusively metaphysical part of the analysis begins by taking up again something that was concluded in the previous section: the "subtle" modification of the Thomist axiom of movement in favour of the axiom of action, generation, or any other method of production, grouped under the concept *"fit"* (I, 20). This distinction responds to the fact that production does not presuppose the being of an entity, whereas movement can indeed include it. The step from *nihil* to *aliquid* is captured in the concept of "doing," and given the impossibility that the sum of the beings in the universe could be "produced," there must exist a first being that produces all the rest (I, 21). At the same time, an effect cannot produce its cause since that would require the validation of the impossibility of assuming the latter before the former – which does occur, for example, in a hypothetical circular series of causes (I, 22). Their similarly cannot be a regression of causes *ad infinitum*, since a truly infinite succession could never be completed, nor ever arrive at the effect (I, 25).

What is at stake, then, is the relationship of *dependence*: if in the entire collection of beings that are related through generation and production, there were not one that was independent (not produced), we could not speak of any (produced) finite entity and, therefore, neither could we speak of any totality dependent on the different beings (I, 28). For this very reason, there would be no basis for doubting the existence of infinite intermediary causes either. The impossibility of demonstrating that an infinite process could occur (for the very reason of causation) prevents us from imagining things that are currently produced in an undetermined number; thus there could never be an infinite group of causes under way (I, 32). Furthermore, in any case, the analysis of accidentally subordinated causes leads to the same conclusion elucidated here: we must stop at some cause that has not been produced (I, 38).

This first being must, then, be a substance because the substance is by its own virtue prior to the accident. So, by its own right, the being without cause has to be a substance, which does not mean that it is necessarily immaterial or incorporeal. As J.F. Courtine states, the concept of "being" is omnicomprehensive, such that it includes everything from God and immaterial substances to sentient substances and their accidents[12]. The reason to assume the immateriality of this first substance is therefore derived from the fact that a being-centric structure of composition (form and matter) would require an efficient cause for such a composition. Namely, the immateriality of the first substance is deduced by means of its in-dependence.

Suárez concludes this first section by reviewing the four modes that we have to approach the existence of God; he has already shown himself to be partial to the second and more or less to the fourth, while rejecting the first and third (I, 41). The first, which is laid out in *Metaphysics XII, 5*, affirms that the

12. Courtine 1990, p. 224.

existence of some substance, eternal and separated from matter, can only be inferred by starting from the eternal movement of the heavens. The third, laid out in *Physics VIII*, defends the existence of the principle of the unmoved mover, separated from matter, and the fact that the study of this principle belongs equally to physics and metaphysics as unrelated disciplines.

Section II

It was not sufficiently demonstrated, however, that this being is just one and not many (II, 1). Therefore, the many existing arguments for and against [this concept] requires a reflection on the unity of this first principle. The assumption of its singularity and, consequently, its unity is dependent on it being God (II, 4). In addition, the importance of said unity resides in the fact that it is upon the basis of the singularity of this un-created entity that all other metaphysical attributes are demonstrated (II, 5).

Despite the fact that the primary demonstration of the existence of God be the magnitude of the visible world and its creatures (II, 7), as maintained by renowned authorities in the past – he reminds us of the Scriptures, the Patristics – it does not follow that there is only *one* first un-created being. In other words, it is not in question that there is one absolute principle prior to the finite being; rather, examination is reserved for the question of one versus many. Suárez appeals again to an authority, Lactantius, in order to affirm the necessary unity of this principle, since the connection and mutual operation of all things in the universe reveals the need that there be only one who has designed it to be so (II, 9).

Suárez's certainty about the intuition of the Absolute from the vision of the order and beauty of creation leads him to affirm that

Ipsa universi pulchritudo, ad quam sine dubio tam varia mixtorum procreatio ordinata est et tam ordinate disposita, ut non poterit casu aut fortuito a diversis auctoribus ita fieri, sed ab unico et universali auctore, qui hanc pulcherrimam universi machinam intendebat (II, 14).

And so could be "the Absolute that be seeks" this very "world?" For Suárez, that would be equivalent to affirming the imperfection of said Absolute since in effect the world and, as a reflection of it, the heavens as well – understood in the wider sense of the universe – is not a perfect being. Rather, as it is embodied and endowed with size and quantity, it is manifestly corruptible and therefore imperfect. That being so, it cannot have the property of *aseity*, which necessarily takes us back again to an Other that has produced it (II, 17). Rejecting the world as "all" because it is dependent, the totality of order obliges us to think of one intelligence that has designed every being in its corresponding place. The discovery of ordered and uniform movement in the diversity and subordination of all its constituent parts entitles us to deduce that which sufficient evidence affirms: the singularity of one author of the universe (II, 20).

It is apparent that this conclusion appeals more to a metaphysical-aesthetic intuition, to an anthropological requirement, than to an evident inference. In fact, it is no surprise that the practice of transcendental metaphysics finds one of its major tenets in this. In *Transcendental Metaphysics*[13], José Gómez Caffarena (1925-2013), of Suarist training[14] and a teacher of many Kantians in Spain, tries out a solution to the problematic unity of the Necessary Being that includes a previous assumption of *one* positive sense of existence. Namely, the demand for a horizon of *full* sense implies an unconditional unity of the necessary and the infinite. *If* the world appears to be created by only one being, it is because the subjective perception of said order requires it to be so; and it leads this perspective to *postulate* the necessity of a first unique being that gives answers to such a wonderful experience as cosmic concatenation.

But, Suárez continues, it could also be that the resultant unity of all beings is the product of an 'agreement' between various causes. This hypothesis would say, in effect, that these causes conspired together to coordinate and produce "something" homogenous and unified (world). However, a multiplicity of causes would require that none of them be full and perfect; rather that they would each be lacking – precisely in order to differentiate them from the "others" – and as such would be imperfect. In this case, the need for *fullness* – infinity – of the first cause is what imposes unicity. Thus, Suárez follows Thomas Aquinas in affirming that unity of government is better than multiplicity and he maintains the same opinion with regard to intelligences since if they are all derived from the order of the universe, and the universe does not induce the rejection of a diversity of creating agents, it would seem reasonable to maintain that the entirety of intelligences was also created by one unique agent, by a very *first being* (II, 36).

To conclude the section, Suárez introduces one last hypothesis that illustrates the scientific and cosmological affinity of his times and the modern projection of his purport. It could be that there is a first being for this world, he says, but that does not exclude that there are other worlds and, hence, other first beings for this world. Certainly, this cannot be proven, and is perhaps rash insofar as we have no chance of discovering these parallel global beings. We can only affirm that which we can reach through reasoning performed by our

13. Caffarena 1970, pp. 190-197.

14. In fact, he acknowledges not only his influence but also the meaning of his very philosophy. In large part, says Caffarena, everything could depend *"de mi venerado maestro el P. José Hellín, cuyo impacto en mi forma mentis fue decisivo (...) Por mi parte, estimo que he beneficiado en la presente elaboración la mentalidad 'suareciana' que él me transmitió y quiero manifestar mi incondicional gratitud"*, (Caffarena 1983, p. 381).

"Hay representantes puros de un suarismo cerrado y militante-ejemplos, J. Hellín y S. Cuesta. Más frecuente es la sensibilidad vuelta a los problemas de la filosofía antiguos y modernos, con voluntad de objetIbid.dad, de información y de discusión libre en diálogo constructivo–ejemplos, R. Ceñal y J. Gómez Caffarena. Este último es el eslabón español quizá más caracterizado [sic. ¿identificado?] con la tendencia de Lovaina concretada en Maréchal de juntar Tomás de Aquino y Kant" (Martínez 1978-1979, p. 23).

cognitive structure, and that possibility escapes our mind. Yet, in order to conclude universally that this first being is "one" for all possible worlds, we cannot turn to *a posteriori* reflection because the limits to reasoning lie precisely here (what is *all* of the possible world?). In other words, the transcendental structure of our thinking prevents us from going any further.

Section III

We already know that God is a necessary being, *a se*, an "aseity" that constitutes the intimate nucleus of the essence of the Absolute. This is the fruit of all the a posteriori work carried out so far (III, 2), and the only viable methodology for the purposes of this *Disputatio*. In contrast, it would be impossible to arrive at proof of God through the a priori method, either because there is no cause by which to demonstrate God's being a priori or because, supposing that there were such a cause, our knowledge of the divine is not perfect enough to capture it by means of our own principles of knowledge (III, 1). This is a natural negative theology of the cognisability of God, referred to as the Pseudo Dionisius, as Suárez himself noted.

Being matches God primarily to the extent that "It" is. So, being essentially matched God without any participation, but rather by Its direct invention (III, 6). The participation of the created being, then, is a fundamental characteristic of a finite being. Remember that in *Disputatio* XXVIII, Suárez studies the division of being between finite and infinite. This division explains the finitude of the created being as based on its ontological dependence (*ab alio*), from which follows the non-possession of the totality of the being in its *quiddity*, thus establishing a dynamic relationship of similarity and difference between the Creator (*a se*) and creation. The ontological expression of this relationship is *participation*[15].

"*Ens participatum ducit originem ab ente per essentiam,*" says Suárez (III, 26), such that participation becomes a characteristic property of finite beings,

15. Cf. Ortiz 1991, pp. 10-12. As Fernández Burillo understands it, (Fernández Burillo 1993, p. 242) participation in Suárez does not hold being to be the common element between the First Mover and the effect but, rather, action, which is not strictly common to both since is the "way to the being of the effect." However, we do not see in that how the intrinsic attribution, insofar as an expression of ontological dependence, could be coordinated with the *real* exemplary causality – that between the "ab alio" and the "a se". Unless, on the other hand, that subjective free action were underestimated, which in our view Suárez does not seem to be particularly disposed to do.

It does not hold being to be the common element between the First Mover and the effect but, rather, the act, which is not any less common to them, stictly speaking, since it deals with the "Via "of being of effects." However, we do not see how intrinsic attribution insofar as it is an expression of ontological dependence – 'ab alio' and 'a se' and the *real* exemplary causality – could be coordinated. Unless, on the other hand, subjective free action were underestimated, something which Suárez hardly seems likely to do. (*supra*, note 5).

which *defines* them in opposition to infinite beings. Here emerges the problem of analogous language: how can we refer to both one and the other without erring either on the side of absolute equivocalness or on the side of Monist univocity? Suárez believes this should be achieved by appealing to the concept of a "common being." Since the concept of being includes both "God" and "creature," the ontological difference between them resides in the *mode* of existence, aseity and participation. Existence corresponds to an essence that exists in the act *insofar* as it is indeed in the act, but the fact that a property of the essence exists insofar as it is an essence is not "vital". Thus, a creature is realised through participation or, put another way, God realises essential individualities by means of participation[16]. In Suárez's work, analogy finds support in the concept of being, considering that

si esse abstractissime sumatur ut est analogum quoddam ad esse improductum et productum, non videtur per se primo convenire Deo, aut enti improducto, sed enti ut sic, ut est etiam quoddam analogum ad ens per esentiam et participatum (III, 6).

The analogy of proportionality requires that one of the terms be totally represented by the name used, while the second term gains meaning through a comparison of measured similarity to the first[17]. Consequently, the scope of this analogy is merely metaphorical (extrinsic). In contrast, the analogy of attribution, in which the analogous reason corresponds directly to the first term but also to the second in a derived and hence essentially different form, makes clear that a finite being is essentially different from the *ens a se* and that, therefore, it depends on the latter, such that although the analogous reason is appropriately attributable, it is attributed in an essentially imperfect way. And yet, God and creatures are not specified here as beings only in function of an extrinsic proportional similarity between the being and its Other, but rather because each on their own confirms the reason of a being[18].

Even if Cajetan's Thomism were to consider that the analogy of proportionality was the authentic one, rejecting the attributive analogy because its scope is limited to a metaphoric value, it has been noted that the Thomist evolution points to the opposite[19]. However, if Cajetan's accusations are true, all the problems related to attribution and the accusations of onto(theo)logy should themselves be predicated on Thomas Aquinas' most Platonic

16. Ortiz 1991, pp. 69-73.

17. *DM XXVIII*, III, 11.

18. Cf. Coujou 1999, p. *31.

19. A classic study on this is by B. Montagnes, which highlights how in the works with the strongest Thomist synthesis (*Summa, De Potentia o el Compendium Theologiae*) he opts for an analogy of reference to a first (Montagnes 1963, pp. 80ff). For a study on the evolution of this question and its context in Suárez and Cajetan, see the following articles by E.J. Ashworth: "Suárez on the Analogy of Being: Some Historical Background", *Vivarium*, 33 (1995); "Analogical Concepts: The Fourteenth-Century Background to Cajetan", *Dialogue*, 31 (1992); "Analogy and Equivocation in Thirteenth-Century Logic: Aquinas in Context", *Mediaeval Studies*, 54 (1992).

proposals, such as participation and the intensive *esse*[20]. In this way, and attempting to avoid the apparent dichotomy, other efforts have attempted to reach a balance between the two, despite assigning pre-eminence to the attributive analogy[21].

In any case, the purpose of the analogy of being is for Suárez to establish a meeting point between philosophy and theology. In the *Proemio* of the *DM*, he maintains that theology, insofar as "divine" theology, takes revelation as its starting point, or the very manifestation of God. However, that does not exclude that, as science, the *humano discursu et ratiocinatione*[22] still needs to be completed. As a result, the discovery of God, another being, is subordinated to the discovery of any being as such, which means that God is a particular expression of the universality of beings. Theology then finds support for its development in principles founded in reason, converting philosophy into an invaluable tool for the responsible discursive development of theological science[23]. Likewise confirmed, then, is a formal concept that answers an appropriate objective concept[24] that would require *ontology*, as a theory of the comprehension of objects, in order to explicate its "structure." At the same time, the affirmation of this construct develops the "conditions" that allow us to descend into the concrete and discover the transcendental properties of the particularity of all beings[25].

It should be noted that the differentiated and simultaneously intimate relationship between formal concept and objective concept is of fundamental importance in Suárez. In fact, it has been emphasised that the heart of the transition from a scholastic mentality to a modern one depends largely on how an author confronts this distinction[26].

For Suárez (*DM II*, I, 1) the *formal concept* denotes the means by which the intellect constructs its representation of a being or general reason. This

20. In Seguró 2009, I attempt to demonstrate that the course of attribtuion implies, as far as its paradigm structure goes, falling victim to the entification of the Absolute.

21. In our philosophical panorama, we can find examples in the efforts of S. Ramírez [Cf. his synthetical "De analogia secundum doctrinam aristotelico-thomisticam", *Ciencia Tomista*, 24 (1921), pp. 20-40]. More generally, see the study by J.M. Gambra, *La analogía en general: síntesis tomista de Santiago M. Ramírez*, EUNSA, Pamplona (2002) or J. Gómez Caffarena (Caffarena 1970, chapter V).

22. Courtine highlights this extreme, which supposes the installation of 'prima philosophia' as a universally foundational science and support for all other sciences (Courtine 1990, pp. 195-197).

23. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

24. "Dico ergo primo conceptui formali entis respondere unum conceptum obiectivum adaequatum et immediatum, qui expresse non dicit substantiam, neque accidens, neque Deum, nec creaturam, sed haec omnia per modum unius, scilicet quatenus sunt inter se aliquo modo similia et conveniunt in essendo" (*DM II*, II, 8).

25. Coujou 1999, p. *34. The problem of analogy and its implications in all of Suárez´s work cannot be developed here. I recommend the classic study by J. Hellín (Hellín 1947) for those who are interested.

26. Forlivesi 2002, p. 3.

representation is identified with its "act," given that said act indicates first and foremost the production of our intellect when it elaborates a unified representation of a specific being and its properties. On the other hand, the *objective concept* corresponds to the being or reason that is immediately known or represented by means of the formal concept. The formal concept is the real ending of the real operation that is intellection, whereas the objective concept is what knowledge makes present. This means that the objective concept, insofar as it is "objective," makes something visible, although Suárez does not seem to differentiate explicitly between the objective concept of a seen thing and the objective concept of a thing as the concept of some thing as such[27].

The formal concept of being responds to an appropriate and immediate objective concept, Suárez notes (*DM II*, II, 8). Thus, for Suárez, the objective concept responds to a real object insofar as it is known and apprehended as a formal concept – a correlation that comes together magnificently in the case of the concept of being (*DM II*, 2, 14). This allows us to appreciate in his position the assumption of human conception as something both universal and unique at the same time; that is, it is through formality that the *res* as such is known in its abstract condition of sameness although for this very fact, such a conceptualization is at the same time unique. That leads us to stand before a formal concept of *ens*, universal inasmuch as unique, which supposes the complete abstraction, the transcendence of both beings as such; in fact, the formal concept depends more on the formal demands of (human) abstraction than on the being as such[28].

The analogy is solidified, then, in a universal and unique unity, itself so compact that it unifies the analogised entities by virtue of a sort of centripetal and entirely convergent force. However, any thing can serve as the objective concept of *ens*, which leads said concept to be able to respond to "everything." Put another way, the *ens* cannot be an objective concept unless it can become common; that is, an *ens communissimum* as empty and confused as well as useful in order to encompass and subsume everything[29]. Thus, thought is resolved as thinking performed by a being that results in the very object of said thinking, a univocal matrix whose objective is to ensure the unity of metaphysics as a rational science through the concept[30].

Returning to the reflection on the singularity of the *first being* that concerns Suárez here, it must be noted that he does not accept the reasoning of Thomas Aquinas, which posits that if there are two necessary beings, they should be distinguishable; if there were a duality, both beings would be compounds since they must be finite in order to distinguish themselves from one another and, therefore, they would no longer be necessary beings. Again, Suárez does not accept this argument since by a similar argument one could conclude that the

27. Forlivesi 2002, p. 15.
28. Marion 1991, p. 127.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

three divine persons are compounds. The three divine persons are in fact one thing, but they appear to be different from one another only by *reason*, which therefore eliminates any contradiction with maintaining the necessity of their existence (III, 8). From this concrete example, Suárez reaches the conclusion that the demonstrations Thomas Aquinas performs regarding these themes in *Contra Gentes* (Books I and II) are, despite their extreme subtlety, not very convincing to a malevolent and obstinate mind (III, 8). Nevertheless, we do not believe that Suárez considered himself a malevolent mind due to his criticism and intellectual perseverance.

It is true, he continues, that if the first being is not produced and indeed exists by virtue of its essence, then it is *necessary*. But if existence belongs to a singular reality that is indeed *singular,* the singularity of said nature necessarily belongs to its essence as well and, therefore, to the fact that it cannot be multiplied. (III, 11) So it is, then, that these beings are two, three or whatever number that does not aggravate the problem at hand, since any number is in fact possible. (III, 15) It is important to eliminate the plurality of the first principle because if there were two (at the low end) we could not point to any distinction between them, given that in one just as in the other, said necessity would imply in fact a *necessity* as regards the total reality they espouse (III, 17). Given that the difference is manifested by a deficiency in one attribute or another, it is not possible to think even hypothetically of what could be missing in the being that possesses being by essence, meaning Plenitude (III, 24). There must exist only *one* supremely perfect being that serves as the measure of all other beings, *one* reference that serves as the ultimate foundation of the ontological measure.

Lastly, Suárez reviews the argument of final causality. It could be that something has a reason for ending (the end as such), but not a final cause properly speaking, or one that is the cause and reason for the beginning of being (III, 28). Or it could be that the supremely perfect being to which everything leads is not the same one as the first cause. (III, 30) As to the first idea, Suárez explains that the final inclinations of any being, as far as produced beings are concerned, are a product of the superior agent that has placed them there. Regarding the second idea, he responds by affirming a correspondence and proportionality both in the order of the agent as well as in the order of the end, so that the supreme agent also has a supreme end, such that everything that leads to the ultimate end comes from the first being (*reditio*).

Suárez evaluates all the ground covered in this section with a suggestive claim:

Quamquam enim nonnullae fortasse rationes ex his quae tactae sunt per se ac sigillatim sumptae non ita convincant intellectum quin homo protervus aut male affectus possit evasiones invenire, nihilominus et omnes rationes sunt efficacissimae et praecipue simul sumptae sufficientissime praedictam veritatem demonstrant (III, 32).

Such certainty does not seem to be so absolute if, as Suárez admits, the single parts may not be in and of themselves convincing. And even less so, if

we bear in mind that the "proof" is not mutually complementary and does not answer the criticisms of them. As we have seen, Suárez moves from logical, metaphysical rigor in the first section to a *quasi* voluntary sentimental appeal, based on personal subjectivity that recognises a first intelligent cause which explains the *kosmos*. Lastly, from the development of the third *via*, he does not draw a clear conclusion about the question at hand, since by means of aseity – through the attributive analogy, *ergo*, through a postulation of a first beginning that could be resolved as a quasi, transcendental, regulatory exercise – said singularity is proclaimed and, hence, the infinity and plenitude of this first being. From this it follows that the root of Suarist discourse on God, at least in this *Disputatio*, which deals with the possibility of proving God's existence, lies in the *transcendental structure* of knowing, in the idea of being as a formal object[31] and in the regulatory *trust* in the existence of a primordial unity that surpasses multiplicity, which would lend proof of the *order*, level and ultimate diversity of beings.

"Suárez": issue in discussion

Proof of God appears to be relegated to partial approximations that can offer a certain constancy only in their entirety. It is as though there were a certain Nominalism in each of the reasonings of the different arguments that prevents a supportive, *global* grasp of their semantic intentions. Bearing in mind that Suárez's philosophy finds support in some fundamental concepts of Ockham and Duns Scotus[32], the critical distance between the "part" and the "whole" could easily be related to the Ockhamian criticism of the universal concept. We must remember that for Ockham, that which exists does so individually, such that a *Being* expires in the totality of *every* being[33]. So it is then that Suárez must face the real difference between essence and existence since at the heart of the matter, what is affirmed is the totality of the existence of an essence that expires in this realised essence. Consequently, for Suárez, the act of the essence defines the state of identification of the existence of a being with the essence of that being "in" reality[34].

Now let us limit the debate on the distinction between essence and existence to the context of the present *Disputatio*. Suárez's reflection on the plausibility of demonstrating the existence of God hinges fundamentally on the notion of being and on its *a se* condition, thus sustaining that participation denotes a relationship to a first being (dependence). However, we should also conclude that the dependent relationship also implies the notion of "creation,"

31. Metaphysics for Suárez cannot, according to J-F. Courtine (Courtine 1990, p. 216), comprehend God by means of a supremely first common reason. Cf. *DM I*, 1, 11.
32. Pérez de San Martín 2000, pp. 52-53.
33. Ockham 1985, p. 49.
34. Coujou 2001, p. 31.

or a rooted, existential foundation: Suárez says that although there *must* exist a supremely perfect being that serves as the measure of all other beings, from this we cannot conclude that *only* that being is an unproduced being and the efficient cause of all others (*DM XXIX*, III, 21)[35]. What we can speak of is the possibility of considering a First Cause from the horizontal plane, that is, from efficient causality: "*quocirca Aristoteles, citato loco, potius sumit dari aliquod ens quod sit causa caeterorum, ut inde concludat illud esse verissimum ac perfectissimum*" (*DM XXIX*, III, 22).

So, does that mean that Suárez realises that proportionality proves the existence of God "better" than attribution? From an Aristotelian viewpoint, we must speak of participation of the other towards another, of participation of the absolute created to the Absolute creator and not of the same to the same within the same[36], a conception of participation that manifests and guarantees the ultimate autonomy of the created[37]. That would imply a concession to a radical difference in the same formal concept, or at least a more symbolic than objective scope of its semantic content, something unlikely[38] because for the 'Doctor Eximius', proportionality only means metaphor and, hence, unsuitability (*DM XXVIII*, III, 11). The formal concept of being "responds" above all to *one* appropriate and *immediate* objective concept[39].

Conversely, if proportionality could also be considered suitability[40], a finite being would be nothing other than a *contingent being*, whereas an infinite being would be nothing other than *Being*. This leads to a reinterpretation of the value of essence as determination – not merely negative, but particularly "heterogeneous" to being (Avicenna) – and the *esse*, not here as *perfection* but as something that is beyond all determination and hence the true founder of perfection: that is, *actus*[41]. In this way, the first being would no longer be in

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35. F. Van Steenberghen speaks in the same terms when referring to the diffrent problems that the fourth Thomis *via* presents. (Cf. Van Steenberghen 1966, pp. 80ff).

36. "...participation de l'autre à l'autre, participation de l'absolu créé à l'absolu créateur, et non pas du même au même dans le même Un absolu." Muralt 1995, p. 150.

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 149.

38. Hellín: "*admite sí la proporcionalidad, pero no la analogía de proporcionalidad*" (Hellín 1947, p. 164, n. 141).

39. Here are again Suárez's own words: "*dico ergo primo conceptui formali entis respondere unum conceptum obiectivum adaequatum et immediatum*" (*DM II*, 2, 8).

40. Thomas De Vio Cardinalis Caietanus, *De nominum analogia*, III, n. 25-28.

41. Johannes B. Lotz (1903-1992), Jesuit of Suarist training, who was a renowned representative of the transcendental Thomist circle when teaching at the Gregorian University (1952-1985), reminds us that a being can be expressed, firstly, through a verb or the realisation of being or, secondly, through a noun that no longer denotes the realisation of being but rather the possibility of said realisation. Those ontologies that elect the second model of denominating a being give the being maximum and transcendental size, but they forget about its *actual* being and end up referring to it as merely a possible being. They must be disputed for their essentialism. By contrast, the Being that is approached from the *verbaliter* concept is called forth by the beings, returning the latter to their central place in ontology. (Cf. Lotz 1978, pp. 136ff).

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fact a being; rather it would be the very Being in a pure state or, in other words, it would be indeed Pure Act without essence.

If that were so, all this would include the impossibility of obtaining any positive determination from the Being, or any intensive definition, without risk of falling once again into the dynamic of essentialisation. However, for Suárez, the current being of essence is nothing other than the actual essence, and the actual essence is existential essence (*DM XXXI*, IV, 3). If existence is that by which formally and intrinsically a thing is actually existent, an intrinsic constituent element of what it constitutes (*DM XXXI*, V, 1), then we can deduce that the *existence* is the very existence of finite beings[42]. If the being is its own existence, in other words, essence and existence are one and the same, the distinction between them is nothing more than a *distinctio rationis* (*DM XXXI*, VI, 23), the result of placing a being under the reasoning of the species (essence) by defining it, and under the reasoning of the actual state (existence) because it is given to us outside the bounds of its causes. In contrast, if we conceive of a real distinction between essence and existence, it will turn out that before the entitative composition, essence must already be something in order to be endowed with existence, since nothingness cannot receive anything. In short, it would be a "something" added to a *something*, which in some way would already *be* (*DM XXXI*, VI, 11).

Now, if we invert the first argument mentioned above, we can say: if essence is in fact a mere possibility and therefore nothing in act, its own actualisation, without anything else, would result a "nothingness" in act[43]. Essence, then, must be "something," but not yet "being." The only possibility left is that of potential, in the sense of "determination" and a possibility rooted in the act that precedes it, hence its logical (never ontological) status.

Moreover, if we accept as identical the fact that a human is human and that a human exists, then we would also claim that "humans exist" is equivalent to "a human is human," such that the conclusion would be that "if a human is human, then he exists." The relationship based on need, which cannot simply appear in other ontological or merely formal proposals, limits Suárez to referring always to essences (understood always as possible beings, as *truly* possible)[44] and never to the Being as such[45]. On the other hand, if the definition of *aseity* of the first being is understood as a complete identification between essential content and existence (which cannot be so in the finite being), then the essential content is de-finite in the sense of marking a limit; so, where does the *existential* modal difference lie? If the existence of a finite entity is identified with essence, in some way the finite being would be its own existence, an identification that would not explain the *finitude* of one being or of its concrete existential constitution, but rather the opposite.

And so we can understand why this Suarist thesis has generated (and still generates) such debate. In effect, depending on which aspect of his thinking is

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42. Alcorta 1954, p. 86.

43. Gilson 1985, p. 163.

44. Courtine 1990, pp. 296ff.

examined, a different global hermeneutics of his thought will determine subsequent historical interpretations of his influence. Thus, *grosso modo* we can detect three tendencies[46].

The first is an essentialist tendency (E. Gilson), the label assigned to the 'Doctor Eximius' by those that defend the most Cayetanist Thomism. According to this point of view, Suárez affirms that essence is prior to existence. The first absorbs the second, and everything is subordinate to the conception of "object" and from there to "formal being." Those who understand that being is an act that realises a potential dispute this interpretation and, for this reason, claim that Suárez forms part of the lineage of conceptual imperialism (along with Avicenna and Scotus) that falls victim to refusing to accept that reality cannot be penetrated by human concepts, thereby reducing the act of being by which things actually come about to nothingness[47].

A second tendency is the existentialist interpretation (J. Hellín)[48]. This maintains that although for Suárez essence encompasses the entirety of reality, if we truly assume the Thomist distinction, existence is even more important in his work since it encompasses the entirety of the reality of a being. If this claim is true, however, it would presume that which Suárez seems to reject: that is, the real distinction between being and essence[49], at the risk of affirming the true infinity of all beings.

Along these same lines, Alcorta states that for Suárez there is no reality beyond existence and, hence, existence is the only and ultimate consistency of beings. In that case, what Suárez offers us is a moderate and concrete realism which highlights the difference between real and ideal order that results from the *study* of the real. In this way, his philosophy leads to an existentialism, which beyond the identifications between the ideal and the real, purifies his thought from ontological inclinations[50].

Lastly, there is a third tendency which talks of the passage from a metaphysics of act, of a Thomist sort, to a metaphysics of concept, of the intentionality of reflexive knowledge. This is what Courtine's work represents. The starting point for this hermeneutics situates Suárez in consonance with the Scotist and Ockhamian tradition of "placing" the metaphysical object in a noetic environment, although the content of this abstraction does not lose its objective correlative; it is rather quite the opposite, such that the noetic essence is the real essence[51]. The objective concept is not what is *in place of*

45. Peña 1985, pp. 196-197. Gustav Siewerth accuses Suárez of being one of the principle episodes in the history of the oblivion of Being (*Die Seinsvergessenheit*). Cf. Siewerth 1987, pp. 183ff.
46. Barroso 2006.
47. Gilson 1985, pp. 166-167.
48. Hellín 1956.
49. Barroso 2006, p. 130.
50. Alcorta 1954, pp. 83, 86 and 101.
51. Courtine 1990, pp. 157-194.

real things, rather it constitutes the *very being of the thing*[52]. Thus, the first study reference should be the *being* as a concrete thing and the first (real) distinction should be between "something" and "nothingness," taking the distinction to exist (*DM III*, II, 5). Everything else, including natural theology, hinges on this point. Consequently, metaphysics is transformed into a discourse on the (ontological) real-noetic, basing its possibility on the Nominalist discovery of the singularity of everything real[53].

On the path to Modernity

Following Courtine's interpretation and bearing in mind Gilson's essentialist criticisms, in this last section I will attempt to identify how far Suárez's influence on the constitution of continental metaphysics lasts into Modernity in two of its principle themes: the notion of being and its subsequent application in the question of the *quaestio Dei* (analogy of being).

As Gilson claims, Suarist metaphysics and its model decisively inspired René Descartes' thinking (when Suárez died in 1617, Descartes was 21 years old) and also that of Christian Wolff, who in turn then influenced Kant[54]. In fact, the French Thomist catalogued the *DM* as "*un traité philosophique moderne*"[55], since in his own work a change of metaphysical orientation was already in progress given that he did not confine himself to Aristotles' work as the canonical metaphysical text. In any event, for Gilson the metaphysical turn that accompanies his proposals is decisive. *Ens* means for this type of ontology (in this case Gilson refers to Kleutigen, a Jesuit theologian and philosopher of the beginning of the 19th century who restored Scholasticism in Germany) "some thing" that has an essence and, hence, a being. Essence becomes then the root and intimate nucleus of all activity and characteristics of beings, which means that what Thomas Aquinas called the act of existing becomes here the Suarist exaltation of essence[56].

It cannot be expected that a metaphysics of this sort would continue to exist as the central point of a science of Being, Gilson concludes; thus Descartes, "*élève des élèves de Suarez*", inherited an initial philosophy without existential roots[57]. If the object of Suárez's metaphysics is rooted in finding a universally foundational *prima philosophia* that supports all doctrines, including the *sacra doctrina*, the necessary step in this process of general abstraction implies the absolute intelligibility and cogitability of an initial, univocal formal concept. Therefore, it is no surprise that in Descartes

52. *Ibid.*, p. 193.
53. Barroso 2006, p. 138.
54. Gilson 1985, pp. 170-171 and 184-185.
55. Gilson, 2008, p. 145.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

existence in general, just like thought in general, is merely an abstracted notion[58].

Marion had already worked on Descartes' reception of Suárez, albeit from a different point of view since he highlights above all the discontinuity. In the aforementioned *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes* (1981), Marion delves deeper in the scope and nexus that exists in Descartes' work between the doctrine of creation of eternal truths, analogy and the search for foundation. One doctrine leads to another in a journey from the most familiar to the grand mystery of the "Unknown"[59]. In this way, the Cartesian analogy makes use of the tension that Marion finds in Suárez: it is impossible for a univocal concept not to imply an impropriety and imperfection in its application[60] (thus confirming the Cayatenist incurring in an extrinsic relationship), which implies assuming the *difference* in the discourse on the divine.

For Marion this is clearly exemplified, curiously, in the problem of substance, which interferes radically in the same way as the question of analogy. Transposing the implication of non-univocity to which the analogical journey leads, Descartes deduces the impossibility of applying the concept of substance to the theological issue. The concept of substance functions in the realm of the created[61] so that the break is inevitable: Descartes does not follow Suárez in attributing substance to the divine. By considering that the sphere of thinking about God is the "infinite," he understood it to be evident that the "comprehension" of God must lie beyond the formal and objective cognitive horizon[62].

The transcendence of God as regards complete intelligibility and the truths that God establishes implies, then, that no human metaphysics could ascertain God; hence, there is no possibility of reducing God to any univocal concept. According to Marion, the Cartesian rejection of the *analogia entis* correlates with the spiritual exhaustion that the theological caricature of such a reduction to a conceptual "one" caused Descartes. From there, the only path left to take was one of doubt and inscrutable and subjective experience of the problem of the infinite and the un-created[63]. It was no longer viable to use analogy, understood as univocity, as a basis; it was, at best, a false friend.

Accepting the hypothesis of such an analysis and considering that the discourse on God does not fit into the Cartesian epistemological structure, how can we interpret this fact in the context of the analysis here? Does this mean that Descartes signifies a break from Suarism along the conceptual line? In my opinion the contrary is the case: Descartes exemplifies the internal and already inchoate contradictions regarding the Suarist proposals on the transcendental

58. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
59. Marion 1991, pp. 20ff.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.
61. "Le concept de substantia fonctionne, en fait, dans le champ du créé" (*Ibid.*, p. 112).
62. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

possibilities of thinking *meta*-physically, especially in theology[64], as I will attempt to demonstrate. As a sort of premonition of where the Suarist followers seems to point, the philosophically provisional and intermediate condition in which Descartes found himself led him, despite his calling God *causa sui*, to the pre-eminence of the infinite, *ergo* its incomprehensibility. What remains from Descartes then – Marion concludes – is a starting point for the "distance," the disguise of the infinite based on its incredible emergence without "demands"[65]. This means that the sphere of the divine is reserved *de facto* for the extra-ordinary, whereas the metaphysical and conceptual order is resolved, insofar as it is the product of the formal intellective process, as an appropriate object of the process of human intellect for immanence.

In effect, this is the process that reverses speculative movement. Although philosophy should be at the service of theology, the development of its discourse requires a solid conceptual arsenal that only metaphysics can supply. And so, at the heart of the matter operates a fundamental twist: first, we must search for the conditions that make a discourse on the divine possible – a discourse that ultimately leads back to the intelligibility of the point of support (*ens*) for its proper development, and one that concludes, as we will see shortly, with the assumption of the distance between the human and the divine.

In fact, Suárez's formulation of the metaphysical subject-object thesis responds in its development to an eclectic process by which the 'Doctor Eximius' integrates the sense of all the opinions[66] until he reaches a necessary unity, abstraction and formality of *one* univocal concept. This supposes a vital moment, together with the determination of the type of abstraction typical of this science, which means that the process already aims at an ultimate transcendentalisation of the question of being as such and at the prior nature of the pole of cognisability as the ultimate (and typically modern) criteria of metaphysics. If the project of metaphysics in Suárez focuses on the *ens* as a synonym of *res*, his followers will ensure that this *res* is transformed more and more into "something"[67].

It is still surprising, then, that a metaphysics that takes Ockhamian and Scotist influences as a point of reference[68] should look to the universality of the ultimate (or initial) concept as a first resort for the foundation of metaphysics. However, far from constituting a contradiction, this fact seems to be rather its "logical" consequence. The priority is the intellect, a decidedly

64. As stated above, in the *Proemio* of the *DM* he sustains that theology, insofar as "theology", takes revelation as its starting point, or the very manifestation of God. This is the starting point for theological wisdom and the principal tension that the history of Suarist influence will demonstrate: the dilemma between the human intellect and the un-knowable mystery of God.
65. Marion 1991, p. 456.
66. Courtine 1990, pp. 205ff.
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 535-537.
68. Courtine 2001, p. 335.

conceptual question, which means that for Suárez what is essential is the determination of the unity of the concept "*sub denominatione intellectus*"[69].

It is certainly true, however, that the objective unity taken to be the foundation of formal unity could signify a sort of *real* universalism of the concept of being, something that would be compatible with the centrality of the notion of substance in modern philosophers (especially Spinoza). In any case, what is true is that Suárez's thesis on being and essence is in some way a precursor to Wolff's work[70] and as such constitutes an ontology that no longer includes theology. This ontology makes *ens* and *aliquid* synonymous and assumes existence to be a mode of essence, by which the central Suarist thesis is ratified: the essence is what operates as motor and unity of all operations. The natural theology of Wolff is seen to be ruled, consequently, by the principle of sufficient reason, by the necessity of "being for itself" (or it could also be said *a se* – Suárez – or *causa sui* – Spinoza) which establishes that a being exists for itself because it is indeed effectively *possible*.

Kant's subsequent criticism of the "ontological" approach (as he himself called it) to proving the existence of God is the inscrutable critical correction of the same "essentialist" thesis. If beings are not a real predicate because they add nothing to the essence[71], then the possible being remains just that, "possible." For whom? Well, for the human intellect, whose ultimate reach is none other than the phenomenical, the only realm to which it can appeal thanks to its cognitive constitution. If it can be said that due to its formality Suárez's notion of "being" falls into the category of intellectual, such that it is understood in relationship to the unity of the act of the intellect[72], it is because there is a certain *transcendentality*, that is, a withdrawal of speculative thinking to the conditions of possibility where it unfolded, and thus (in a later interpretation, though also possible in Suárez) to the subject. The 'Doctor Eximius' states: "*qui dicitur conceptus, quia est veluti proles mentis*"(*DM II*, 1, 1). In this sense, the last step in this process would take place in Kant: the phenomenical withdraws to the subject while the *noumenic* dimension (being for itself, on its own) *really* transcends it. The being of things would no longer be the perceived being[73].

In this context, Caffarena's position on this topic is exemplary. The refusal to admit a real (effective) difference – and only a reasoned one (for me) – between *being* and *essence* leads one to read it as a human structure and then to put the question: "*would reality be structured according to those structures?*," understanding that, based on its very transcendentality, "*rather we must say that we do not know*" although, "*according to God, there is no being and essence, as such*".

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69. As Courtine confirms about the Suarist adagio "*multum pendet ex conceptione nostra*" (Courtine 2001, p. 335).
70. Gilson 2008, pp. 172-186.
71. Kant 1998, A 599 / B 627.
72. Courtine 2001, p. 324.
73. Gilson 2008, p. 205.

We would then be faced with a process of intellectual reduction by which the subject would become conscious of the problematic remission of its thesis and of the difference between thinking and being. This problematic situation of correspondence is for Caffarena "*the deep meaning of the Suarist thesis.*" Why? Because "*it is interpretationist*"[74].

The transcendental remission of metaphysics finds its corollary in the Kantian critique of all rational theology and in the regulatory role that Kant grants to the idea of God in *Critique of Pure Reason*. It is important to remember that it was already possible for Ockham that a proposal is *true* and not necessarily *real*. So, if truth is resolved as a logical eventuality, a "fiction," there is no other option than a profoundly dualist systematic metaphysics[75]. It should not be forgotten, however, that for the Nominalists, God was willingness before understanding, something that for Suárez was not necessarily so; the withdrawal of God to the formal notion of being would allow him to avow a certain discourse with an objective reach over its *realitas* (that is, its essence). However, the intellectual and proto-transcendental connotation of his metaphysics was so influential as to transform ontology into such an autonomous "science" that it no longer needed theology. Hence it is no accident that Suárez opted entirely for attribution, for *ad unum*, in his proposals on analogy, thus giving rise, paradoxically, to the crisis of analogical discourse. I will attempt to make this causality clear.

The constitution of ontology as a fundamental science of being, as a result of the transcendental issue of being, brought about a new thematic delimitation of what was understood by metaphysics. The idea of *ontology* slowly impressed itself upon the German Scholastic tradition[76] as an expression of a *prima philosophia* that no longer had as object the first being, understood as *principium entium* cause. The primacy of the *prima philosophia* should be understood then as the establishment of the study of the ens *generalissimum* and not of the ens *primum*[77], making absolute the study of the generic *forma mentis* that necessarily accompanied the study of the theological disciplines.

Courtine understands that the final supposition of the disassociation between theology and *prima philosophia*, that is, of the independence of the general science of beings and the tying of theology to its form, is none other than the disguise of the *analogia entis*[78]. The self-referential nature of this new science, ontology, allows it, thanks to the ultimate unity of the formal being, to encompass the question of God, the truly meta-physical issue, within its

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74. Caffarena: "*la realidad, ¿estará estructurada conforme a esas estructuras?*" "*Más bien tenemos que decir que no sabemos*". "*Para Dios no hay ser y esencia, como tales*". "*El sentido profundo de la tesis suareciana*" "*es interpretacionista.*" Caffarena 1983, pp. 433-434.
75. Polo 2001, pp. 28-30.
76. Courtine 1990, p. 405.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 455-456.
78. Idem.

contextual parameters[79]. Consequently, the ontological elucidation of the divine is effected from the modal specificity of its entity. As Hellín rightly points out, taking Suárez himself as a starting point (*DM XXX*, V, 2,7), "attributes are not accidents truly distinct from the divine essence; because the divine essence is pure actuality, and pure actuality includes the actuality of all perfection in the best *mode* possible"[80].

In such a notion of conceptual unity, Courtine continues, it is no longer possible to use experience as the starting point for the analogical discourse. In contrast to Thomas Aquinas, who started from the equivocity of experience in order to later correct it through a reflection on judgment, Suárez starts from the univocity of the formal concept of *ens*, neutral and indifferent, in order to apply it to all aspects of thinking, including metaphysics. Rejecting proportionality and choosing attribution, Suárez insists on the absoluteness of the *ens*, which in the name of the objective concept of beings responds to the apprehension or experience of the spirit. Hence analogy, understood as difference (which is probably what lies at the heart of Courtine's position), does not serve any real function in his metaphysical structuring[81].

Certainly, the great importance that Suárez attaches to attribution does not exclude an infinite distance between the first item analogised, *ens a se,* and the second, *ens ab alio.* Yet since *"non significatur quod creaturae non sint vere ac proprie entia, sed quod infinite distent a Deo"* (*DM XXVIII*, III, 15), the *ratio entis* ensures the possibility of a real attribution of "the" dimension of entities to the divine. Both are "entia".

The borderline for the ontic group certainly lies beyond the modal difference; so Hellín himself concludes that Suárez "does admit proportionality, but not the analogy of proportionality"[82]. In any case, "the problem of analogy only has a bearing when the existence of God and His infinite excellences have been demonstrated"[83]; thus the attributive approach is converted into a process by which, ultimately, the need to postulate a threshold is established in order to comprehend a being in its constitutive finitude. It should be no surprise, then, that suspicions of ontologism have been raised against authors who, like Coreth (1919-2006), also a Jesuit of transcendental metaphysical training[84], have defended intrinsic attribution as an "authentic"

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79. *Ibid.*, p. 208.

80. Hellín: *"los atributos no son accidentes realmente distintos de la divina esencia; porque la esencia divina es actualidad pura, y la actualidad pura incluye la actualidad de toda perfección del mejor modo possible"* Hellín 1947, p. 129 – author's emphasis.

81. Courtine 1990, pp. 521-534.

82. Hellín: *"admite sí la proporcionalidad, pero no la analogía de proporcionalidad"* Hellín 1947, p. 164, n. 141.

83. *"El problema de la analogía sólo se suscita cuando ya se ha demostrado la existencia de Dios y de sus excelencias infinitas" Ibid.*, p. 12.

84. E. Coreth, the most important Austrian metaphysicist of the last century, is a clear example of the rapid influence that J. Maréchal came to have on Jesuit philosophical circles. In Coreth's case, in addition, his interest was not only due to a mere formative formalism since, by dedicating his undergraduate work to the study of the foundations laid by

analogy[85]. These suspicions, as I have attempted to demonstrate, are not exaggerated[86]. Since from an attributive assumption of analogy, metaphysics is transformed into an explanation of created beings by another un-created being within the scheme of *being as such*[87].

It was no more than an exercise in transcendental coherence when Kant reduced the scope of the idea of God to a regulative idea, being especially critical of the "ontological" approach of dogmatic (Wolffian)[88] metaphysics. Since theology is tied to the science of being and this science of being is tied to the human spirit, there then follows the idea of God as an axis, a heuristic vector, necessary only as a unitary explanation of the human experience. It is the transcendental structure and its *will*, the structure of the subject, which validates the idea of God and its projection. Kant would vindicate the value in and of God "Himself" in the practical use of reason, considering that only a consequential supreme reason could ensure happiness in the world, which "I call the ideal of supreme"[89], coming "inevitably to the concept of one primary being, supremely perfect and rational, a being to which speculative theology could not lead us, not even starting from objective foundations, let alone convince us of its existence"[90]. From then on, the restitution of the *analogia entis* seems to be oriented towards the elucidation of analogy as difference, therefore dethroning the transcendental illusion of an immediate and objective unity of the discourse on the divine as a apex of the same. A good example of that is the dispute on the value of the *analogia entis* articulated by Karl Barth, probably the most renowned reformed theologian of the past century, for

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Maréchal, he could not only understand them deeply but also arm himself with important elements for the subsequent exposition of his own intuitions (Cf. Park 1999, p. 9).

85. As he argues in his last great work, the anaolgy of the ontological dependence of attribution, in the Suarist manner, is more original than the analogy of proportionality because it depends on human reason for its original *existential reason*. (Cf. Coreth 2001, p. 277). For the accusation of ontologism, see Salvatierra 1968, p. 282. However, the author considers that Coreth's thinking is 'aposterioristic,' and would thus escape from ontological ties. Nevertheless, his closeness to idealism is acnowledged (Salvatierra 1968, p. 283). In my view, Coreth's thinking establishes a complete being as the horizon of his thinking, clearly in keeping with attribution. In this way, he contemplates the need for the complete being as an explanation of the finite being, deducing its reality from the intrinsic necessity of *plenitudo essendi*.

86. Cf. Seguró, 2013.

87. *"Ainsi en va-t-il, à notre avis, chez Suarez, qui parle tranquillement de la 'division de l'être en infini et fini', et ne goûte guère la thèse classique d'après laquelle Dieu est au-dessus de l'étant,"* states H. Bouillard (Bouillard 1967, p. 152). Cf. Forment 1990, p. 290.

88. Gilson 2008, p. 188.

89. Kant 1998, A 811/B 839: *"...so fern sie mit der Sittlichkeit (als der Würdigkeit glücklich zu sein) in genauem Verhältnisse steht, das Ideal des höchsten Guts."*

90. Kant 1998, A 815/B 843: *"...den eigentümlichen Vorzug vor der spekulativen, dass sie unausbleiblich auf den Begriff eines einigen, allervollkommensten und vernünftigen Urwesens führet, worauf uns spekulative Theologie nicht einmal aus objektiven Gründen hinweiset, geschweige uns davon überzeugen konnte"* (Kant 2000, p. 636).

whom the *analogia entis* was an invention of the Anti-Christ and therefore a sufficient motive for never becoming a Catholic[91].

If it were plausible, this hermeneutic hypothesis would also imply that we could already find in Suárez the germen, the starting point, of the crisis of analogy that leads to the dispute on the *analogia entis/analogia fidei*. As Courtine thoroughly documents, in the process of the transmission to and taking up of Suarist metaphysics in Germanic lands, the theologians R. Goclenius (1572-1621) – the first to use, it seems, the word *ontology* – and Clemens Timpler (1563-1624), both reformed, were of vital importance[92]. And perhaps this is no mere coincidence, because it is ontology (the beings) and not metaphysics (the divine) which is within the grasp of the human mind since this is its transcendental constitution. Just as the analogical proposal of Caffarena can be condensed in the formula "God as limit concept"[93], a transcendental attributive projection that conceives of the divine as an asymptote expression that gathers strength and transcendental scope thanks to the volitive structure of the subject, of humanity (Kant): the irreducible attempt at "meaning"[94].

If this hermeneutical thesis were plausible, then, two of the inchoate theses in the Suarist proposals would be confirmed: *1)* That theology, as such, is revealed theology; therefore analogy is resolved as a conceptual artifice that at its heart refers to the divine for and as regards the human; *2)* That it could be that the "unwilling" human (*DM XXIX*, III, 32) finds ways to avoid the adduced arguments because, ultimately, he does not share the willingness, paired with the irreducible liberty of the created spiritual substance, to believe.

And thus was paved one of the paths to Modernity and its present-day projection.

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91. *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*, I, "Vorwort."

92. Courtine 1990, pp. 405-435.

93. Caffarena´s position on the issue is the following: *"afirmación humana de lo Absoluto sobre la base de la postulación de último fundamento y finalidad y mediante un 'paso al límite' de la tensión ser-ente (sintetizando así aspectos de 'atribución' y 'analogía'). Es un proceder típicamente dialéctico, en el que la afirmación, negada la estructura connatural, se sostiene en 'eminencia', de modo suficientemente significativo pero más allá de toda representación objetiva"* (Caffarena 1970, p. 284).

94. See Seguró 2011, pp. 125-148.

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CAUSALITÀ E REALTÀ
NEL DIBATTITO SULLA MECCANICA QUANTISTICA DEGLI ANNI '30 DEL NOVECENTO. UNA POSSIBILE RICOSTRUZIONE

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Abstract: Causality and Reality in the debate on quantum mechanics in the 1930s. A possible reconstruction. As with any scientific revolution, quantum mechanics entailed a profound revision of our fundamental epistemological concepts and also of our worldview as a whole. This was the case for the concepts of causality and reality. Around these concepts, there arose in the third decade of the last century a heated debate in which almost all the scientists and philosophers of the time took part and which in a certain sense is still going on today. The Author provides a reconstruction of the various different positions, from the "conservative" attempt to defend determinism to the most radical stochastic positions, and singles out in Ernst Cassirer's solution the most convincing approach.

Keywords: causality, reality, determinism, indeterminism, probability, quantum mechanics, hidden variables or parameters, epistemology

> Das Kausalprinzip ist *wandelbar* und wird sich *dem unterordnen*, was *die Physik* verlangt.
> Richard von Mises (1930)

Primo antefatto

Nel 1927 Werner Heisenberg pubblicò sulla «Zeitschrift für Physik» la memoria *Über den anschaulichen Inhalt der quantenmechanischen Kinematik und Mechanik*, nella quale venivano formulate le relazioni d'indeterminazione, oggi meglio note come principi d'indeterminazione. La conseguenza evidente di tali relazioni era che dei fenomeni microfisici si può dare soltanto una descrizione statistica. Infatti esse stabiliscono che per ogni quantità fisica *u* esistono molte altre quantità *v* che non possono essere misurate simultaneamente a *u*. Queste quantità inoltre non sono commutative. Va detto che l'esistenza di relazioni di indeterminazione, di per sé, non comportava necessariamente un

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