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**Hispanic Philosophy in
the Age of Discovery**

edited by Kevin White

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I. INTRODUCTION: VARIETIES OF SCHOLASTIC REALISM

In trying to understand the Scholasticism of the Spanish and Portuguese “golden age,” a first step is to distinguish the different schools, roughly corresponding to the different religious orders: if we first recognize the basic issues between the schools, we can then try to work out their histories. I will look at these schools to the extent that their differences emerge in metaphysics and in the theory of the categories. My main aim will be to elucidate the metaphysical program of what I will call “liberal Jesuit Scholasticism,” and of its most important works, Fonseca’s *Commentary and Questions on Aristotle’s Metaphysics* (vol. 1, 1577; vol. 2, 1589; vols. 3–4 posthumously, 1604 and 1612) and Suárez’s *Metaphysical Disputations* (1597). I will take my clue from Chauvin’s *Philosophical Lexicon*, which says that “whatever the Peripatetics [i.e., the realists] explain by vulgar modes and vain dodges, the nominalists explain by connotations.”¹ And indeed, while the nominalists reject the theory of modes, Fonseca invokes this theory on some occasions, and Suárez very systematically, to solve problems in their defense of realism against nominalism. The theory of modes is characteristic of Jesuit philosophy, and I will use it as a way to understand the differences between

1. Chauvin says more fully, “Whatever the Peripatetics explain by vulgar modes and vain dodges, the nominalists explain by connotations, so that while the *res* always remains entitatively the same, it really changes only extrinsically and connotatively” (Etienne Chauvin, *Lexicon Philosophicum*, 2d ed. [1713], s.v. “modus”). On Fonseca’s chronology, see Joaquim Ferreira Gomes, “Pedro da Fonseca, sixteenth-century Portuguese philosopher,” in *International Philosophical Quarterly* 6 (1966). The principal sixteenth-century sources I will cite are Soto’s *In Porphyrii Isagogen, Aristotelis Categorias librosque de Demonstratione Commentaria* (1587; reprint, Frankfurt: Minerva, 1967); Fonseca’s *Commentaria in Libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Stagiritae*, 4 vols. (1615; reprinted in 2 vols. (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964); and Suárez’s *Disputationes Metaphysicae* (hereafter DM), in his *Opera Omnia* (Paris, 1866), vols. 25–26 (reprinted in 2 vols., Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1965). I will cite these, not by page numbers, but by books, chapters, disputations, questions, sections, and paragraphs as appropriate.

realism and nominalism, and between “liberal” Jesuit and “conservative” Dominican varieties of realism; this will lead me to a reconstruction of both the philosophical agenda and the formal structure of Suárez’s *Disputations*.

The pioneer of what I am calling liberal Jesuit Scholasticism was a Dominican, Domingo de Soto; but Soto was an atypical Dominican, and his main influence was on the Jesuits, Toletus, then Fonseca and the *Conimbricenses*, then Molina and Suárez.² Among the Dominicans, by contrast, the authority of Cajetan and other standard commentaries on St. Thomas had imposed a conservative Thomist orthodoxy. Soto and Fonseca and Suárez are also Thomists in some sense. Unequivocally, they are realists. Soto says that “no one who is versed in Aristotle can deny universals *in rebus*”; when the nominalists do deny this, and conclude that the object of a science is only its mental propositions, Fonseca says that they are “showing themselves unworthy of the chorus of philosophers.”³ Even when Soto or Fonseca or Suárez agree with the

2. Soto was a pioneer, but no more: his treatments of the questions I will discuss are not nearly as thorough and satisfying as those of his successors, and on the crucial issue of whether there are distinctions intermediate between the real and the rational, he contradicts himself outright, as Suárez correctly protests (see note 10 below). I am not sure how far the ideas I cite from Soto are original to him: Soto studied at Paris and was part of a movement (including also Crockaert and Vitoria) turning away from the nominalism of their teachers (John Mair) toward Thomism (as Soto says, *In Isagogen, De Universalibus*, q. 1, “we were born among nominalists and raised among realists”); study of Crockaert and Vitoria might give a fuller context for Soto. In any case, Soto’s background made him a less sectarian Thomist than he might otherwise have been. What I am calling the “liberalism” of the Jesuits, though characteristic of the Society for its first half-century or so, caused much controversy, and the Jesuits seem to have been told to retreat to a safer Thomism, especially on the burning issues of grace and predestination, but not only there. But the earlier Jesuit approach to philosophy and theology was faithful to the spirit of the Society, using its *libertas philosophandi* to reconstruct traditional teaching, serving the *utilitas* of the Church and preserving the peace of the faith, conforming with traditional authorities and drawing on whatever was serviceable in their teaching, but for the same reason avoiding the encumbrances of old sectarian quarrels.

3. “In reality, no one who is versed in Aristotle can deny universals *in rebus*. Whence Burley, who was a nominalist in his *Summulae*, and Paul of Venice, the eminent disciple of Gregory of Rimini, after they read [= lectured on?] Aristotle, could not *not* assert universals in the fashion of the realists. And Paul calls the contrary opinion, not that of the nominalists, but that of the Ockhamists, who he says are Heracliteans and Epicureans” (Soto, *In Isagogen, De Universalibus*, q. 1). (I know of no other evidence that Burley was ever a nominalist; the reference to Paul of Venice is probably to his *Isagoge* commentary, which I have not seen, and it is hard to assess without context: it might be a denunciation of nominalism, or an attempt to distinguish “true” nominalism from Ockham’s position.) “Heracliteans” and “Epicureans” are old insults for the nominalists, traceable ultimately to Albert the Great (“Heracliteans” because the nominalists, being ignorant of any universals beyond the sensible things, deny that there is anything *in re* meeting the conditions for an object of science); on this see Zenon Kaluza, *Les querelles doctrinales à Paris* (Bergamo, 1988). Fonseca, at *In Met.* V, ch. 28, q. 2, s. 1, gives an account of nominalism as he understands it, connecting the old *nominales* mentioned by Albert

nominalists on some issue, they regard the nominalists as not-quite-respectable; they can say that the *sententia communis* of philosophers and theologians is that P, and yet that the nominalists believe not-P.⁴ Within the *via realium*, although our philosophers are happy to reconcile Thomas and Scotus when they can (Soto says that Thomas and Scotus differ hardly at all on universals), they are far from the Scotism of the Franciscans. They are much readier to disagree with Scotus than with Thomas, and sometimes go to great lengths to save Thomas for their own position.⁵ But our philosophers are separated from traditional Thomism by their acceptance of the authority of the Paris condemnation of 1277; thus they accept the voluntarist axiom that God can produce any creature in separation from any really distinct creature, and they use this axiom freely to derive consequences about existence and identity. Cajetan, by contrast, explicitly rejects this axiom;⁶ and

and Thomas (i.e., Abelard) to the revived nominalism of Ockham, and explaining the connection with Heraclitus and Epicurus. Fonseca takes it as definitive of *Nominales* that “they think all sciences are concerned not with universal things (for they think there are none) but with common names for things” (s. 1); they thus “show themselves unworthy of the chorus of philosophers” (s. 2; cf. Cicero, *De Finibus*, I, 26, ejecting Epicurus from the chorus of philosophers). Soto and Fonseca give the same (false) account of why Ockham is called *venerabilis inceptor*, as the reviver and quasi-founder of the *via nominalium*.

4. Fonseca, at *In Met.* V, ch. 7, q. 5, s. 3, citing Avicenna’s opinion that concrete accidental terms signify substances primarily and accidents only secondarily, says that this is “rightly rejected by almost everyone” (he cites no exceptions); Soto, on the same issue, speaks more frankly of “Avicenna . . . quem Nominales sequuntur” (*In Categorias*, ch. 5, q. 2). Suárez, after noting that the nominalists say quantity “is not a *res* distinct from material substance and qualities” (DM, ch. 40, s. 2, n. 2), says “*contraria sententia est communis Theologorum et philosophorum*” (n. 7).

5. On the question of universals, there are only two *viae*, the realist and the nominalist; “nor do I think it is necessary to distinguish *three* ways here, as a certain nominalist, our fellow-citizen, has recently done, since here and perhaps elsewhere we will see how little difference there is between St. Thomas and Scotus” (Soto, *In Isagogen, De Universalibus*, q. 1; William Wallace has identified this nominalist as Juan de Celaya, who wrote commentaries on Aristotle *secundum triplicem viam*, giving the Thomist, Scotist, and nominalist views). But none of our philosophers follow the distinctively Scotist positions on the transcendentals, on the six minor categories as extrinsically advening relations, and so on; only Fonseca makes a liberal use of the Scotist formal distinction, and even he does not go as far as Scotus. The most flagrant “saving” of Thomas is Luis de Molina’s argument (*Concordia*, d. 49, n. 7) that Thomas cannot have thought the *scientia visionis* worked simply by the presence of things to God, since this has impious consequences, which a saint like Thomas could not have believed. But Fonseca complains (*In Met.* IV, ch. 2, q. 4, s. 3) about Soto and Vitoria dragging an unwilling Thomas into their own opinion positing a modal distinction between essence and existence—the view Fonseca himself supports. Fonseca is the most willing of our philosophers to distance himself from Thomas, and he is happiest aligning himself, as here, with the “*Reales Scholastici*”; Suárez works much harder at aligning himself with Thomas, and has much less sympathy with Scotus.

6. Cajetan, *Commentary on Being and Essence*, trans. Lottie H. Kendzierski and Francis C. Wade (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1964), 190–91. Trombeta had

when his Scotist opponent cites another axiom from the condemnation of 1277, Cajetan replies (i) that since the condemnation was directed against the Averroists, it is unfair to use it against Thomas; (ii) that insofar as the condemnation affects Thomism, it was revoked when Thomas was made a saint; and (iii) that anyhow, the pope has endorsed Thomism, and the Scotists have a lot of nerve to use the authority of the Bishop of Paris against the authority of the Bishop of Rome.⁷ When the Jesuits break with this reactionary brand of Thomism, and accept the voluntarist principles of 1277, they find it harder to refute nominalist arguments that draw on voluntarist principles. As we will see, they accept some particular nominalist theses, while continuing to defend realism against nominalism. In seeing this, we can see better what nominalism was, and how it was connected with voluntarism; and we can see how the Jesuits' attempt to be voluntarists without being nominalists led them to develop the theory of modes.

The conflict between *reales* and *nominales* had been basic to Scholasticism since the fourteenth century. The two sides knew full well who they were; but it can be difficult, among the many particular polemics, for us to recognize the defining theses of the two *viae*. (Even when a thinker *tells* us which issues were defining, we should be suspicious: he may be stating the issue in a way that favors his own side.) Although the *viae* had implications for metaphysics (and for physics and theology), they are originally schools of logic or (as we would say) semantics: the basic issues concern the signification of terms and the truth-

actually cited a much weaker form of this axiom, namely that "any absolute [i.e., non-relative] thing which is distinct and prior to another absolute thing can exist without that other without contradiction," (185); but even this (along with several other voluntarist axioms, all fairly weak, that Trombeta had invoked) is too strong for Cajetan. We will come back to this particular issue in section III below. By contrast, Soto (*In Isagogen, De Proprio*, q. 2), criticizing "Thomistas . . . inter quos est egregius Cajetanus" who deny that a *proprium* can be separated from its subject, says "God can supernaturally separate the accident, risibility, from its subject, and conserve either without the other; nor have I ever been able to doubt this proposition: for if they are distinct *res*, and neither is of the intrinsic quiddity of the other, then without doubt God can conserve one without the other." Báñez, in his commentary on St. Thomas's *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 4, Báñez's q. 2, considers and rejects the general axiom that of any two really distinct things [i.e., creatures] God can conserve either without the other; Báñez complains that this would imply the absurd conclusion that matter could exist without any form (which is what Trombeta had been trying to prove; Soto of course accepts this conclusion).

7. Cajetan, *Commentary*, 201–202 (replying to an objection at pp. 197–98): the immediate issue here is whether God can produce several intelligences in the same species without matter. St. Thomas maintains the (condemned) thesis that God cannot do this, since signate matter is the only principle of individuation within a species. The articles of the condemnation of 1277 are most readily accessible, in English translation, in *Medieval Political Philosophy*, ed. Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 337–54 (the articles relevant here are on p. 341).

conditions of propositions, not real universals or any other question of “ontological commitment.” Ockham does claim that every being is an individual substance or individual quality; but the realist Suárez agrees that every being is really identical with some individual substance or individual quality or individual continuous quantity. This small difference in ontological commitment cannot be what makes the difference between the two *viae*.

Ontological commitment does come in, but as a consequence of semantics. A famous piece of nominalist propaganda puts the issue in a biased but effective way: “the realists are those who contend that things [*res*] are multiplied according to the multiplicity of the terms,” whereas “those doctors are called nominalists, who do not multiply the things [*res*] principally signified by terms according to the multiplicity of the terms.”⁸ Against what they see as an absurd multiplication of *res*, the nominalists propose the radically simplifying theory that in any true judgment of the form “A is B,” “A” and “B” must signify the same thing: this implies that a universal term (“man”) or a concrete accidental term (“white”) will signify not a universal or accidental being, but just the individual substances of which it is truly predicated. All Scholastic realists reject this nominalist theory of signification and predication: the realists say that in the sentence “A is B,” the term “B” signifies, not the thing which is B, but the B-ness through which it is B: so “man” signifies humanity, and “white” signifies whiteness.⁹ But

8. This is from the manifesto of the Parisian nominalist doctors of 1474, printed in Franz Ehrle, *Der Sentenzenkommentar Peters von Candia* (Münster, 1925), 322 (where I translate “signified,” Ehrle prints “signatas”; perhaps we should read “significatas”—this is probably just a question of an ambiguous abbreviation). The doctors are echoing Ockham’s remark that one source of the realist doctrine of relations is “[the tendency] to multiply beings according to the multiplicity of the terms, and [to assume that] any term has a *quid rei*, which however is erroneous and leads away from the truth most of all” (*Summa Logicae*, I, 51)—to assume that the term “X” has a *quid rei* is to assume that there is an account of X, and not simply an account of what the term “X” means and how sentences including it are to be expounded. It is a polemical exaggeration to say that the realists multiply *res* according to the multiplicity of the terms; the nominalist doctors go on to illustrate by claiming that “the realists say that the divine wisdom is divided [i.e., really distinguished] from divinity” (Ehrle, p. 322): this is false, and amounts to accusing the realists of heresy (the doctors also try to blame the realists for the Bohemian schism; p. 324). The doctors also suggest that the realists, through impatience or logical incompetence, fail to study the *proprietas terminorum*, and that this ignorance accounts for the realists’ distinctive doctrine; this too is a slander. The doctors are being careful in speaking of things *principally* signified by terms, since for Ockham, although in a true sentence “A is B” (if the terms have, as usual, personal supposition), A and B must *principally* signify the same thing, they may have diverse *secondary* significations.

9. The realist view is thus that “white” signifies the same thing as “whiteness,” differing only in *modus significandi*. This traditional doctrine is defended by Fonseca (*In Met.* V, ch. 7, q. 5, s. 3), and taken as obvious by Suárez (DM, d. 39, s. 1, n. 12). (There is an

this semantics need not commit the realists to “multiply *res* according to the multiplicity of the terms,” as the nominalist caricature suggests. Indeed, almost all scholastic realists think that the common nature signified by a universal term (such as humanity) is not another *res* really distinct from its individuals, but is distinguished from them only in some lesser way. The Jesuits, however, make a further and more drastic ontological reduction, when they deny that the ten categories are non-overlapping classes of *res*. While they must admit beings in each accidental category for the terms in the category to signify, they think that all accidents in the last seven categories are really identical with some substance or quantity or quality, and distinguished at most formally or modally.

The Jesuits were forced to this position, against more traditional realist views, by voluntarist arguments. Given the principles of 1277, a real distinction between a substance and an accident, or between two accidents, implies that either can exist without the other at least by God’s power; and Ockham had exploited this principle to produce compelling arguments, in many cases, to show that the realist view of the categories would lead to absurdities. In many cases the Jesuits are forced by Ockham’s arguments to admit that some kind of accident cannot be really distinct from substances or from some other kind of accidents; but they also have traditional arguments, based on realist semantic principles, to show that these different kinds of accidents must be more than rationally distinct. In defending a voluntarist and yet realist account of accidents, they are led to develop a theory of intermediate distinctions (against the Thomist thesis that all distinctions are either real or rational);¹⁰ in particular, they are led to develop the theory of modes.

interesting discussion in Soto, *In Categorias*, ch. 5, q. 2: commenting on a passage [*Categorias* 3b19] that said, in older Latin versions, that “white” signifies *solam qualitatem*, Soto points out that the Greek says rather *solum quale*; the text “is therefore not efficacious at proving that ‘white’ signifies only whiteness, although it is constantly being cited for this purpose, even by philosophers of better repute.” Soto adds that this realist conclusion is true anyway, but is not at issue here. Suárez says the same, in his *Index in Metaphysicam*, VII.1.] Let me add, as a warning against reductionist readings of the realist-nominalist controversy, that the question whether “white” signifies whiteness has nothing to do with universals: if Socrates is white through a whiteness, it is an *individual* whiteness (universal whiteness is just the species whose individuals are individual whitenesses). Nor is it a question about whether there are abstract objects, i.e., objects named by abstract terms like “whiteness”: the nominalists, like the realists, believe that there is a real accident of whiteness which is the formal cause of Socrates’ being white, although the nominalists don’t think this is necessarily entailed by the fact that “white” is a concrete accidental term.

10. Soto comes down on both sides of this issue (as Suárez complains; DM, d. 7, s. 1, n. 9): at *In Isagogen, De Universalibus*, q. 3, he rejects intermediate distinctions, and says

II. SCOTUS, OCKHAM, AND THE JESUITS ON RELATIONS OF UNION

To illustrate the difference between a classical realist position, the radical nominalist position, and the Jesuit restatement of realism, I will focus on one typical and highly controversial issue, the status of relations. The most important examples will not be *predicamental* relations (items in the *category* of relation), but *transcendental* relations of union.¹¹

The *locus classicus* defending the reality of (some) relations, and their real distinction from absolute (non-relative) things, is Scotus's *Opus Oxoniense*, bk. II, d. 1, q. 5 against Henry of Ghent, who had said that no relation is a *res* other than its foundation, Scotus argues "nothing is really identical with anything without which it can really exist without contradiction; but there are many relations without which their foundations can exist without contradiction; therefore there are many relations which are not really identical with their foundation." These relations contrast with "relations of essential dependence," such as the relation of "passive creation" which a creature bears to God as its creator: since it would imply a contradiction for Socrates to exist without his relation of passive creation, Scotus concludes that Socrates' passive creation is not an accident inhering in Socrates and really distinct from Socrates, but is really identical with Socrates himself (it is still *formally* distinct from Socrates, since Socrates is an absolute thing and his passive creation is a relative thing). As relations which must be really distinct from their foundations, Scotus includes many familiar predicamental relations, such as Socrates' color-similarity to Plato; but he draws his most compelling examples from transcendental relations of union, and especially the relation of *inherence*.

Scotus argues, in particular, that "the separation of the accidents from

that as there are "only two kinds of beings, namely *entia rationis* and real beings, therefore neither are there more distinctions than the real and the rational"; but at *In Categorias*, ch. 5, q. 1, he wavers, and apparently admits an intermediate distinction between nature and *suppositum*, and perhaps also between essence and existence, and at ch. 7, q. 2, he gives in and posits a *distinctio formalis ex natura rei* between a relation and its foundation (in both places Soto seems embarrassed, and tries to suggest that the dispute is mostly verbal). (According to Suárez [DM, d. 31, s. 1, n. 11], Soto posits a modal distinction between essence and existence at *In Physicam* II, q. 2, and *In Sententias* IV, d. 10, q. 2; see *Francis Suárez: On the Essence of Finite Being etc.*, ed. and trans. Norman Wells [Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1983], 55nn53–54, confirming these references and correcting a misprint in the standard edition of Suárez.) Fonseca and Suárez have well-developed theories of the kinds of intermediate distinctions, which will be discussed below.

11. An excellent reference on the scholastic theory of relations is Mark Henninger, *Relations: Medieval Theories 1250–1325* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

their subject in the Eucharist" shows that the relation of inherence, which the accidents of the bread bear to the bread, must be something really distinct from these accidents. For "if the same quantity of the bread remains which previously existed, and if its inherence in the bread is really nothing other than the quantity itself, then the quantity is united to the bread (or informs it) just as really now as before." Since we can form the judgment "the quantity inheres in the bread," by realist semantics there is *some* relation of inherence, namely, whatever the predicate "inheres" signifies; the question is whether this predicate just signifies the quantity itself, or whether it signifies a further *res* added to the quantity. Scotus's argument is straightforward: if the inherence were just the quantity, then, when the bread becomes the body of Christ and the quantity subsists without the bread, the quantity would continue to exist and so the inherence would also continue to exist; so the quantity would continue to inhere in the bread, contrary to assumption. This argument holds more generally for a wide class of relations of union: if A and B can both exist without being united, or even if A can exist without being united to B, A's relation of union-to-B must be something really distinct from A:

If A and B compose AB, and if the union of these parts to each other is nothing other than these absolute things A and B, then when A and B are really separated, all the reality which belonged to the united A and B will remain; therefore [absurdly] the separated A and B remain really united.

If A and B here are bodies physically united, then it is obvious that they can exist without being united, and the argument works without any theological assumptions. Theology is needed if A and B are united in a less concrete sense, like matter and form or substance and accident: the example of the Eucharist shows that accidents can exist without their substances,¹² and voluntarist principles tell us in general that *whenever* A and B are really distinct, God can preserve them both separately.

12. This is a very common application of the condemnation of 1277: see the text of the condemnation in Lerner and Mahdi, *Medieval Political Philosophy*, 353nn 196–99. Earlier writers (including St. Thomas) did of course accept the principle that, as is shown in the Eucharist, God can make an accident exist without a substance, but they did not use this principle systematically to derive consequences about the nature of accidents. Scotus's example of a subsisting accident is quantity rather than quality, because according to the realists it is the quantity which subsists after consecration, and the other accidents inhere in the quantity (the nominalists deny quantities apart from substances and qualities, and say that the qualities subsist after consecration). Scotus also cites another standard theological example, the union of the human nature in Christ to the person of the Word: here a nature, apt to subsist by itself, supernaturally becomes present in another *suppositum*, just as the Eucharistic accidents, apt to inhere in other things, supernaturally subsist by themselves.

Scotus thinks we could deny that such relations of union are really distinct from the united things only if we “shamelessly” denied the principle that “things one of which can remain without the other are really distinct”;¹³ and if we denied this, Scotus says, we would have no way to prove *any* real distinction, be it between Socrates and his whiteness, or even between Socrates and a stone. But Scotus’s argument leads to serious difficulty. As Scotus recognizes, there is a threat of infinite regress: “it is argued that if a relation were a thing other than the foundation, there would be an infinite regress of relations; for if this relation is a thing other than its foundation, then by parity of reasoning that ‘otherness’ (which is a relation) will be a thing other than its foundation, and *that* otherness from *its* foundation, and so to infinity; but this is absurd.” (Instead of the relation of otherness, the argument could be formulated for a relation’s relation of *inherence* in its foundation.) But Scotus answers that he can avoid this infinite regress, since a relation’s relation to its foundation is a relation of essential dependence, like the creature’s relation to God; and a relation of essential dependence must be really identical to its subject, since the subject cannot consistently exist without it. Since a relation “cannot exist without its foundation (or without itself) without contradiction . . . it cannot (without contradiction) exist without its relation to its foundation . . . and so that relation by which it is related to its foundation will be identical with [the original relation] itself.”

But in stopping the regress by maintaining that a relation cannot exist without its foundation, Scotus contradicts the principle that, for any two really distinct created *res*, God can preserve either without the other. Scotus is trapped: he has used the voluntarist principle that God can preserve an accident without its subject to argue that an accident’s inherence in its subject must be a new *res* added to the original accident; but, by the same principle, since the inherence is really distinct from the original accident, God can preserve it without the original accident, and so, by the same argument, the inherence’s inherence must be really

13. Scotus makes clear that this is a restatement of the major premise of the main argument that some relations are really distinct from their foundations, namely, “nothing is really identical with anything without which it can really exist without contradiction.” Scotus recognizes that we could also avoid concluding that relations of union are really distinct from the united things, by denying that these relations are *res* at all. So first Scotus shows that these relations are not merely *entia rationis*, and then, interestingly, he argues against a solution close to what the Jesuits will say, that “although relations are not formally *entia rationis* but something outside the intellect and not identical with the foundation, still they are not *res* other than the foundation, but only proper modes of the *res*”; for, says Scotus, “although a *modus rei* may not be a *res* other than that *res* of which it is a mode, nonetheless it is not *nulla res*, just as it is not *nullum ens*, since then it would be nothing” (all quotes from *Opus Oxoniense*, II, d. 1, q. 5).

distinct from it. If Scotus's argument succeeds in proving that all relations "without which their foundations can exist without contradiction" are *res* distinct from their foundations, then it will also prove that there are infinitely many really distinct inferences in any given white bread. For any Scholastic, this conclusion is absurd, and gives ground for supposing that there is something wrong in the original argument.

We might try to solve the problem by restricting the scope of the voluntarist principle that God can preserve any one *res* without any other.¹⁴ But for many Scholastics of the fourteenth century and after, this proposition is axiomatic, and any pleading for exceptions would seem to put both the Eucharist and God's omnipotence in question. If Scotus's voluntarism is preserved, perhaps it is his realist semantics that should be abandoned.

This is how Ockham argues when, discussing the category of relation in the *Summa Logicae*, he considers Scotus's arguments for the reality and real distinctness of relations, shows that these arguments lead to absurdity, and offers his nominalist semantics as the only way out. On Ockham's semantics, concrete, accidental terms like "white" or "father" primarily signify the things of which they are truly predicated, namely, those substances which are white or fathers; but in each category Ockham examines what these concrete terms *secondarily* signify or "consignify." Thus "white" secondarily signifies whiteness, since "white" means "something having whiteness," and the sentence "some man is white" is to be expounded as "some man exists and whiteness is in him." So although Ockham's semantics does not *force* him to admit abstract accidental beings, it *allows* him to admit such beings as secondary significata of concrete accidental terms. But he denies that there are real relations: he denies that "father" means "something having paternity," and he thinks that any such analysis leads to absurdity. Ockham gives a series of positive arguments for his view, but he also makes his point by considering realist objections, some drawn from Scotus.

Ockham considers the realist objection from relations of union: "it seems impossible, without the relation [*respectus*] of union, to explain

14. Scotus himself apparently tries to solve the problem by restricting the voluntarist principle to saying that if A and B are really distinct creatures, God can preserve A without B *unless* there is a relation of essential dependence of A on B. But this seems dangerously arbitrary: why should the inference have an essential dependence on the whiteness, if the whiteness does not have an essential dependence on its subject, the bread? This will not satisfy any voluntarist philosopher or theologian in the spirit of 1277. Another possible solution, which Scotus perhaps adopts, is to restrict the principle to asserting the separability of *absolute* (i.e., non-relative) beings; if inference is essentially relative (although it is not a predicamental relation), then this would block the regress. Once again, the restriction seems dangerously arbitrary.

how form is united to matter, or one part to another part in a continuum, or an accident to its subject, or a spirit to a bodily nature" (*Summa Logicae*, I, 51, obj. 9).¹⁵ Even Ockham himself in an earlier work had seemed to be persuaded by this argument, and he had said that "if any relations [*respectus*] are to be posited, they are these: the union of the human to the divine nature [in Christ], the union of matter to form and conversely, the union of accident to subject, the union of one part of a continuum to another."¹⁶ But in *Summa Logicae*, I, 51, Ockham replies that this argument, if it proved anything, would prove an infinite regress:

15. Chapter I, 51, is missing in some manuscripts of the *Summa Logicae*, and its authenticity has been questioned (see Boehner's introduction to his edition of the *Summa Logicae*, [St. Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1951], 1:x-xi; Boehner thinks that it is not by Ockham, but that its content is truly Ockhamist). It is probably a later addition, but the natural assumption is that it is an addition by Ockham himself; it goes beyond other things Ockham says, and there are minor tensions between it and other parts of the *Summa Logicae* (and more serious tensions with other works), but it represents a natural outcome of Ockham's earlier views on relations (which had been developing progressively throughout his career; see the following note), and is plausibly taken as Ockham's last word on the subject, although it is possible that it is by a disciple.

16. *Ordinatio*, I, d. 30, q. 4. Ockham's theory of relations develops from a more to a less realistic position (as he himself tells us in *Summa Logicae*, I, 49). *Reportatio*, II, d. 1, q. 1, is the earliest and most realist text; followed (sequentially?) by *Ordinatio*, I, d. 30; *Quodlibet* VI; the body of the *Summa Logicae*; and *Summa Logicae*, I, 51. (The *Reportatio* text also takes a much more realist position on the theory of predication than Ockham's mature writings: it admits that Socrates himself can be a subject of predication, and is willing to say that under some circumstances the copula, or the quasi-copula *inest*, signifies a *respectus actualis inhaerentiae*.) In the *Ordinatio* text Ockham says that all the arguments for positing real *respectus* in special cases turn on the principle that "it is impossible for contradictories to be verified simultaneously of the same thing except by the local motion of something, or the passage of time, or the production or destruction of something"; this gives far fewer real relations than Scotus wants, and on much narrower grounds (in the *Reportatio* text, Ockham's position may be closer to Scotus's). In the *Summa Logicae*, Ockham apparently denies all real relations, although I am not sure exactly how he would reply to the *Ordinatio* arguments. Henninger (*Relations*, ch. 7) and Marilyn Adams (*William Ockham* [South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987], ch. 7) think that Ockham's (mature) view is that natural reason alone would incline us to deny all real relations, but that faith forces us to admit real relations at least in a few exceptional cases, such as the Trinitarian relations and the union of the divine and human natures in Christ. This is possible (the *Summa Logicae* officially says only what Aristotle's view was, and avoids saying whether it is true or compatible with Christianity), but I doubt it: once we recognize that Ockham's view of relations developed, there seems to be no reason for thinking that he admitted theological exceptions at the time of the *Summa Logicae*, although he certainly admitted these (and others) earlier; the arguments of the *Summa Logicae* are absolutely general, and explicitly address the objection from the union of the natures in Christ. I suspect that Ockham by this time held radical theological views, including the denial that the persons of the Trinity are constituted by relations, but felt that he was involved in enough controversies (notably on the Eucharist) without taking up the defense of these positions too. Certainly later Ockhamists, notably Pierre d'Ailly, do take up these radical theses. All this needs further exploration.

The argument about matter and form, subject and accident, whole and parts, and spirits united to bodies, does not prove that there is some relative thing intermediate between the things which are united. For the same question will remain with regard to this intermediate thing: how does it compose a unity with the thing in which it is posited? Either by itself, and then by the same reason we should have stopped with the first things-to-be-united; or by some other union, and then there is an infinite regress. For let it be posited that this intermediate thing is separated (by whatever power) from the things-to-be-united, and then let it be united to them, as an accident to its subject: how, from being a non-united thing, does it [the intermediate thing] become a united thing? By another intermediate thing? Then the original difficulty returns.

This crucial point is Ockham's argument against Scotus's proposal that the accident of union is united to its subject by itself. "For let it be posited that this intermediate thing is separated (by whatever power) from the things-to-be-united, and let it be united to them"; this thought-experiment shows that the first relation of union can exist without its union to its subject, and so, by Scotus's principles, that the second union must be really distinct from the first union. Scotus can resist only by denying that God *can* preserve the relation of union separately from the things it unites; and Ockham thinks we cannot deny this once we have said that the union is really distinct from the things it unites.¹⁷

But what is Ockham's alternative? Will he "shamelessly" deny that "things one of which can remain without the other are really distinct," and accept the consequence that there is no way to prove any real distinction, between Socrates and his whiteness or even between Socrates and a stone? No: Ockham accepts the principle, but he says it does not imply that, if A can exist without being B, A must be really distinct from its B-ness; for there may be no B-ness at all. Since some whiteness may be inhering in this bread, even if there is no inherence, it is wrong to start asking what inherence (or any other union) is, and whether it

17. Something like Ockham's argument may have been anticipated by Peter Aureole (cited by Suárez, DM, d. 16, s. 1, n. 2 and n. 7, from Capreolus, *Defensiones*, II, d. 18, q. 1). Aureole certainly did *not* intend the proposition that Suárez initially takes him to intend, that "no accident is a *res* really distinct from the entity of the substance, but only a mode" (as Suárez says, this is blatantly inconsistent with the subsistence of the Eucharistic accidents); he must have meant what Suárez later suspects, that "an accident, whether or not it is a *res* distinct from its subject, is not distinguished *in re* from its actualization or inherence in its subject," because although the accident inheres (and although it is not essential to it that it inhere), the accident does not inhere through any further accident of inherence (as Suárez says at the end of n. 2, Aureole's arguments apply equally to all kinds of union). Suárez briefly reports three arguments of Aureole's in n. 7, of which the first involves God's absolute power to separate, and the third involves an infinite regress of accidents of union, but the information here is too scarce to decide how close Aureole's argument was to Ockham's.

is the same as or distinct from the things it unites. We should first ask how the word “inhering” signifies, and whether its signification involves such a thing as an inherence. The word “inhering” primarily signifies whiteness (and anything else that happens to inhere), just as “white” primarily signifies whatever happens to be white; the question is whether “inhering” also consignifies an inherence, as “white” consignifies whiteness. Ockham denies it: “inhering in the bread” signifies the whiteness, and consignifies *that it inheres in the bread*, but the only *thing* it consignifies is the bread, no “inherence,” just as “father” signifies each thing that is a father, and consignifies *that it has begotten a child*, where the only *thing* consignified is the child, without any relation of paternity or action of begetting.¹⁸

Ockham’s solution to the problem of inherence, and of relations in general, is not open to a Scholastic semantic realist. The realist must agree that, since some things inhere, there must be inherences; but then Ockham’s argument shows that the inherence of an accident cannot be a *res* distinct from the original accident, and Scotus’s argument shows that the inherence cannot be a *res* identical with the original accident. Caught in this dilemma, many Scholastic realists conclude that inherence and other relations of union are not *things [res]* at all, but only *modes [modi]* or ways things are [*modi essendi*]; and they try to satisfy both Scotus’s and Ockham’s arguments with the thesis that the inherence of an accident is a mode of the accident, distinct from the accident *ex natura rei*, but not *really* distinct from it *ut res a re*. These realists, including the Jesuits, are thus led to develop a theory of intermediate distinctions quite different from the Scotist theory of the formal distinction; this modal distinction coexists with the formal distinction in Fonseca, but wholly replaces it in Suárez.

It is impossible to say who invented the Scholastic doctrine of modes. The Scholastics had been talking about modes from the beginning, in broader and narrower senses; but only gradually do they distinguish a class of modes, modes in the strict and proper sense, that are not *res* or *entia*. Thomas had defined quality as *modus substantiae*, but (as Suárez says) this is *modus* in an improper sense, since qualities are typically *res* in their own right. But the scholastics also cite other *modi* or *modi essendi*, such as those by which a being is determined as infinite or finite, as belonging to substance or some other category, or as subsisting by itself

18. In *Reportatio*, II, d. 1, q. 1, Ockham implies that all consignification is consignification of *things*, and uses this against the theory of inherence that I take him to be endorsing later in the *Summa Logicae*; the *Summa Logicae*, by contrast, seems to presuppose irreducible consignification *that*. But these issues are delicate, and need further exploration.

or being *in aliquo* or *ad aliquid*. These ways of being, unlike whiteness, are not plausibly interpreted as beings in some accidental category, attaching to and modifying some other already constituted being; it seems better to say that the being-a-quality of some whiteness is not itself a being, at least not a being *other than* the whiteness and added to the whiteness, but that it originally constitutes the whiteness as the kind of being that it is.

These *modi essendi* first arise in the realist theory of signification. Since “white,” for the realists, signifies the same *res* as “whiteness,” they explain why “white” and “whiteness” are not interchangeable by saying that the concrete and abstract terms have the same primary *significatum* but different *modi significandi*, so that, in particular, “white” signifies whiteness *as being in a subject*. This *modus significandi* of the concrete accidental term corresponds to a *modus essendi* of the *significatum*, namely, its *inesse* in its subject; thus Henry of Ghent distinguishes the *modus praedicamenti*, the way of being consigned by a categorical term, from the *res praedicamenti*, the thing primarily signified by the term. But what ontological status does this mode or way of being have? Scotus insists that it must be a *res*, and Ockham says that it is nothing at all; but for Fonseca and Suárez, it is a clear example of a mode which must exist *in natura rei*, and yet cannot be a *res*, neither the *res* of which it is a mode nor any other *res*.

Suárez argues that there are such modes by taking the example of a quantity inhering in a substance, in which we can distinguish “the entity of this quantity” from “the union or actual inherence of this quantity with the substance”:

The first we call simply the *res* of quantity . . . which remains and is conserved even if the quantity is separated from its subject. . . . The second, that is, inherence, we call the *mode* of quantity . . . [not in the extended sense in which quality is called a mode of substance, or in the sense of the “modes” by which being is contracted to its highest genera] . . . but because it is something which affects [the quantity], and as it were ultimately determines its status and its *ratio* of existing, but which does not add to it any new proper entity, but only modifies a preexisting entity. . . . For if it were an entirely new entity, it could not be the actual union between the quantity and the subject, but rather it would itself require something by which to be united to the subject and the quantity, just as the quantity required this inherence by which to be united to the subject. But if the inherence does not require another union or inherence by which to be united or to inhere, this is because it does not itself add a proper entity which would inhere and be united: it is only a mode, which is *per se* a *ratio* of union and inherence. A sign of this is that this inherence has such a mode of being that it cannot exist, by any power, without being actually conjoined to that form whose inherence it is. Numerically *this* inherence can only affect or be united to numerically *this* form to which it is attached: this mode of affecting is never

found in those forms or *res* which have proper entities of their own. (DM, d. 7, s. 1, nn. 17–18)

Suárez does not explicitly say why, if the inherence were “an entirely new entity,” it would “require something by which to be united to the subject and the quantity”: the reason is that if the inherence were a *res*, it would be something created by God, and God could by his absolute power conserve this *res* in existence by itself; and so again we could distinguish the *res* of the inherence from its mode of inhering in its subject. But since inherence is just a mode, it is not properly created by God; it exists, not because God makes it, but because it is *the way God makes the res to be*, and it cannot exist except as belonging to this *res* (and so it is really identical with its own inherence). Since God does make some *res* united to other *res*, he must also incidentally produce their modes of union; and these modes cannot be *res*, since they can neither be the same *res* as, nor another *res* than, the *res* to which they belong.

Although Suárez uses the language of *res et modus praedicamenti*, his conception of the mode of inherence is importantly different from the semantic conception. For Henry of Ghent, whiteness is an accident because it has the mode of existence of an accident, namely, being-in, the mode of existence consigned by the concrete accidental term “white.” But for Suárez, since an accident can exist (supernaturally) without inhering in anything, *actual* inherence cannot be the mode of being which determines whiteness as an accident; Suárez says instead that the mode of being which constitutes an accident (as necessary-existence constitutes God, and contingent-existence constitutes a creature) is *aptitudinal* inherence, the *tendency* to exist in another thing. The distinction between actual and aptitudinal inherence is not new. But what is new is that Suárez’s argument for modes properly-so-called (that is, modes which are not themselves *res* and are distinct *ex natura rei* from the *res* to which they belong) applies only to actual and not to aptitudinal inherence: the argument works only when the *res* can exist either with or without its mode, and an accident cannot exist without the *aptitudinal* inherence that makes it an accident, just as God cannot exist without necessary-existence, or a creature without contingent-existence.¹⁹ In-

19. The distinction between actual and aptitudinal inherence, and the special modal status of actual inherence, are clearly described in Thomas of Strasbourg (Thomas ab Argentina, fl. 1345), *In Sententias* IV, d. 12, whose voluntarist realism in some ways anticipates the Jesuits. Fonseca agrees with Suárez that actual inherence is distinguished from its *res* by a greater distinction than is aptitudinal inherence, or any of the other modes by which being is contracted to its inferiors (*In Met.* V, ch. 6, q. 6, s. 2). But Fonseca denies that these latter modes are distinct *ex natura rei*, not by applying Suárez’s criterion

deed, Suárez (innovating) makes it the essential sign of a modal distinction that A is distinguished from B as mode from *res* just when A cannot exist without B, and yet B can exist without A.²⁰

So Suárez is the “shameless” person of Scotus’s fears, who denies that “things one of which can remain without the other are really distinct”: Suárez admits that if B can exist without A, then A and B must be distinct *ex natura rei*, but he denies that they must be really distinct *ut res a re* (which is what Scotus means to assert). Scotus says that if this principle is denied, there remains no way to prove any real distinction, be it between Socrates and his whiteness or even between Socrates and a stone; but Suárez answers that the sign of a *real* distinction is *mutual* separability, and that *non-mutual* separability is the sign of a merely *modal* distinction. Indeed, if we admit (on realist semantic grounds) that there are relations of union, then we must distinguish one-way from two-way separability, and we must reject either Scotus’s principle that one-way separability entails real distinction, or the voluntarist principle that real distinction entails mutual separability, to avoid the absurdities that come from supposing that things and their relations of union are *mutually* separable. Ockham does believe both that one-way separability implies real distinction, and that real distinction implies mutual separability, but for him this shows that there are no relations of union; for Suárez, the fact that there are relations of union shows that there is an intermediate distinction, marked by one-way but not two-way separability.

To put Ockham’s result positively, he has shown that sometimes a thing A can be contingently B (A = whiteness, B = inhering), even though there is no B-ness which can exist apart from A. Since Ockham thinks that any B-ness distinct from A would be able to exist apart from A, he concludes that in these cases “B” does not signify any B-ness (inherence), but primarily signifies A (the whiteness) and consignifies or connotes some proposition (that it inheres in some subject). Suárez, as a realist, accepts that if A is called B, there is some B-ness through which A is B; and he answers the voluntarist objections against realism by allowing that B-ness may be neither an *ens rationis* nor a *res* (either a *res* distinct from A, or A itself), because it is a *mode* of A modally distinct from A *ex natura rei*. This is what Chauvin meant by saying that

of one-way separability (which he rejects), but because “*being* is not some nature which is contracted by these modes to the *summa genera*, which are entirely simple and irresolvable into other entities” (since being is said of its different genera only analogically).

20. Suárez, DM, d. 7, s. 2, n. 6; restated d. 47, s. 2, n. 9, against Fonseca. In Section III, I will contrast Suárez with his predecessors, including Fonseca, on the modal distinction and on its connection with separability.

“whatever the Peripatetics [i.e., the realists] explain by vulgar modes and vain dodges, the nominalists explain by connotations, so that while the *res* always remains entitatively the same, it really changes only extrinsically and connotatively.” While *some* changes (Socrates, who was white, becomes black) are explained by the production or destruction of some *res* in their subject, other changes (this whiteness, which had inhered in Socrates, begins to subsist by itself) are not; and while Suárez explains these changes by the production or destruction of a *mode* of the subject, Ockham will say that a term (“inheres”) which previously signified the thing (the whiteness) ceases to signify that thing, because of an extrinsic change in what the term consignifies.

III. SUÁREZ AGAINST FONSECA: MODES

Suárez shares with Fonseca, and with other voluntarist realists, the modal solution to the problem of relations of union. But Suárez goes beyond Fonseca, and far beyond earlier thinkers, in the way he develops the theory of modes. Suárez is unique, in particular, in taking the modal account of relations of union as a model for solving many of the difficulties of the realist theory of the categories. Suárez maintains that figures (in the category of quality), and all beings in the categories of action, passion, where, when, and position, are modes rather than *res*. He is responding here to voluntarist arguments, brought by the nominalists to show that there are no *res* in these categories, and thereby also to undermine realist semantics; here, as with relations of union, Suárez argues that realism can be saved if the beings signified by terms in these categories are modes rather than *res*. In these cases we can draw an instructive contrast, not simply between conservative realists, the nominalists, and the Jesuits, but also between the earlier Jesuit tradition (culminating in Fonseca) on the one hand, and Suárez on the other; and this contrast will bring out not only Suárez’s development of Fonseca’s ideas, but also his deep divergence from Fonseca’s understanding of modes. We can take the case of figures to illustrate the issues.

Figures are, according to Aristotle, the fourth species of the category of quality; but a figure cannot exist without some extension or continuous quantity which is shaped in that way. Except for the nominalists (who deny that there are quantities distinct from the quantified substances and qualities), the Scholastics all agree that a continuous quantity is the immediate subject of which a figure is predicated; but they disagree about how the figure is distinguished from the quantity. Suárez notes that the figure cannot exist without the quantity, although

the quantity can exist without the figure; so he infers that the figure is a mode of the quantity. (The quantity cannot exist without *some* figure, but this too is characteristic of the modal distinction: God can make a quantity without any other *res*, but he must make it *somehow*, that is, with some mode, for instance, of subsistence or inherence.) Suárez's solution here answers a nominalist challenge. Ockham argues that figure-terms, unlike terms in the other species of quality, do not consignify any qualities other than the qualified substance. Ockham's main argument is that, since a substance can become straight or curved merely by the local motion of its parts, without any *res* being added, no *res* other than the substance is needed to make it straight or curved; but this argument presupposes the voluntarist principle that God *can* move the parts without also producing any new *res*. As Ockham says, "if, by his absolute power, God were to separate every accident, both absolute and relative, from a substance disposed along a straight line, and if the parts of the substance were conserved in the same disposition, then the substance would still be straight, as before." Ockham concludes that "straight" signifies only a substance and its parts disposed along a straight line, since it signifies no other *res*; Suárez concludes that, besides the substance and its parts, it also signifies a *mode* or *way* in which these parts are disposed in relation to one another.²¹

Suárez's understanding of figures as modes of quantity contrasts sharply with Cajetan's conservative realist position. Cajetan's Scotist opponent (in arguing that matter can exist without any form) had cited the principle that any (absolute) *res* can exist apart from any other (absolute) *res* that are posterior to it; but Cajetan rejects this principle, citing the counterexample that quantity is "prior to the category of quality, especially to the fourth species, and nevertheless there can be no continuous quantity without figure."²² Cajetan assumes that figure and quantity must be really distinct, because they belong to different categories or genera of being; and this assumption enables him to refute even very mild voluntarist theses. So the Jesuits, as voluntarists, must reject the thesis that items in different categories are always really distinct. Toletus, in a short and unresolved *quaestio*, says that the different categories of accidents may not all be really distinct, citing as problem-cases the distinction of figure from quantity and the distinction of a relation from its foundation; and in both of these cases, Fonseca answers that the two terms are not really distinct *ut res a re*, but only formally distinct *ex natura rei*.

21. The Ockham quote is from *Quodlibet* VII, q. 2. Ockham gives the same main argument in *Summa Logicae* I, 55, but without explicitly referring to God's absolute power.

22. Cajetan, *Commentary*, 191.

What is surprising, though, is that although Soto and Toletus and Fonseca share Suárez's concern to reconcile realism and voluntarism, and see the difficulty of supposing that (for example) figures are really distinct from quantities, none of them adopt Suárez's solution of saying that figure is only a *mode* of quantity; nor are they willing to say that items in the six minor categories, or in any other category, can be modes (although Fonseca agrees with Suárez about the status of *transcendental* relations of union). All Jesuit thinkers before Suárez seem to assume that figures, and all other predicamental beings, must be *res*: if figure cannot be really distinct from quantity, then perhaps it is only rationally or formally distinct; but they avoid saying that it is *modally* distinct from quantity, because this would imply that it is only a mode, and not properly a *res*.²³

If we can understand this divergence between Suárez and earlier Jesuit scholasticism, we will understand a great deal about the program of the *Disputations*. In what follows, I will contrast Suárez with Fonseca, who sums up the earlier Jesuit tradition. Of the many earlier authors whom Suárez discusses, Fonseca is the closest to Suárez, in his general approach to philosophy and on many particular questions. It is easy to miss this affinity, since Suárez cites Fonseca rather infrequently, and often to disagree; but by pursuing some crucial references, and comparing the projects of Fonseca's *Questions on the Metaphysics* and Suárez's *Disputations*, we can see that Fonseca was in fact a model for the whole *Disputations*. Even so, Suárez's disagreements with Fonseca are important and systematic. In almost every case, Fonseca posits some distinction which Suárez thinks is too great: either Fonseca says that A and B are *formally* (and more than modally) distinct, and Suárez thinks they are only *modally* distinct; or Fonseca says that A and B are either *modally* or *formally* distinct, and Suárez thinks they are only *rationally* distinct. Questions about distinctions are fundamental to Jesuit metaphysics, and Suárez follows Fonseca in placing a systematic discussion of the grades of distinctions early on in his metaphysics, to be used in particular questions later on (Suárez DM, d. 7; Fonseca, *In Met.* V, ch. 6, qq. 6–7). For both Fonseca and Suárez, the crucial question is whether intermediate distinctions are to be admitted (and of what kinds, and on

23. On the six minor categories (action, passion, where, when, position, and habit), Fonseca accepts what seems to have been the usual Thomist solution (rejected by Scotus, and apparently by Cajetan, as insufficiently realist) that they are *res* extrinsically denominating the *res* of which they are predicated. Suárez accepts this for habit, where it is plausible (and he takes action to be a *mode* existing in the patient and extrinsically denominating the agent); but beings in the categories of passion, where, when, and position are modes intrinsic to their *res*.

what grounds and by what signs); both Fonseca and Suárez offer innocent reinterpretations of the old twofold division of distinctions into real and rational (which, as Soto says [*In Isagogen, De Universalibus*, q. 3], was good enough for St. Thomas and for everyone before Scotus), but they both deplore the Dominican attempt to erect this crude division into a dogma. Suárez cites Fonseca as his model for his own solution to the question of intermediate distinctions (DM, d. 7, s. 1, n. 19), but he also makes clear that he has disagreements with Fonseca. Suárez rejects any formal distinction intermediate between the modal and the real (explicitly against Fonseca, DM, d. 47, s. 2, nn. 7–9; cf. DM, d. 7, s. 1, n. 16); he also rejects Fonseca's "potential" distinction (DM, d. 7, s. 1, n. 23; cf. Fonseca, *In Met.* V, ch. 6, q. 6, s. 2); less obviously but more importantly, there is a basic difference in the ways Fonseca and Suárez are conceiving of modes, which will lead them to different answers to particular metaphysical questions.

After giving his reasons for introducing "modes only modally distinct from *res*," Suárez tries to find authorities who have recognized such modes. He can find some passages from earlier writers recognizing that the modes of inherence and subsistence have a special ontological status, but only Fonseca gives a systematic discussion of modes as such: "finally Fonseca, *In Met.* V, ch. 6, q. 6, s. 2, expressly posits these modes" (DM, d. 7, s. 1, n. 19). As Suárez reports, Fonseca distinguishes three kinds of modes: those "which are entities *ex se* distinct from others, like whiteness and sweetness"; those "which are not only not distinct entities, but are not distinguished in any way *in re*, but only by reason, from the things whose modes they are said to be, like the modes by which being is contracted to its inferiors"; and finally "those modes which *we* properly and by a special title call *real modes*, about which he thinks the same as what *we* have explained"—and indeed, Fonseca is clearly Suárez's source both for this tripartition of modes, and for the crowning of the third kind, the "modes only modally distinct from *res*," as modes "properly and by a special title."²⁴ But Suárez immediately adds that, although Fonseca has described the three kinds of modes correctly, Fonseca's examples are wrong. In the first class (of modes which

24. Suárez is closely paraphrasing Fonseca's descriptions of the first two classes of modes, in the paragraph from *In Met.* V, ch. 6, q. 6, s. 2, marked in the margin "tria genera modorum essendi." Fonseca notes that modes of the first and second kinds are *formaliter entia*, in the first case distinct "*ex natura rei*, and frequently even *realiter*, from the things of which they are *modi essendi*," and in the second case really identical with, and only rationally distinct from, their *res*. About the third kind of modes, Fonseca says that "even though they are distinguished *ex natura rei*, apart from any operation of the intellect, from the things of which they are *modi essendi*, they are not themselves *formaliter entia*, unless *ens* is taken in the broadest sense for whatever is not nothing."

are themselves distinct *res*), Fonseca cites not only whiteness and sweetness but also figure; “but wrongly, since [figure] affects [quantity] as a mode, and not as a *res* entirely distinct from it.” Even in the third class of modes proper, “about which he thinks the same as what *we* have explained,” Fonseca still “posits some examples that we find dubious, such as the existence of created *res*, and the mode by which a *res* is called necessary or contingent, and complete or incomplete.” Although Suárez dismisses these modes as only rationally distinct from their *res*, they are in fact the *only* examples, besides actual subsistence and actual inherence, that Fonseca had cited for the third class of modes. If so many of Fonseca’s examples are wrong, it seems likely that he and Suárez have different conceptions of the modal distinction, and are using different principles to classify modes into their three classes.

One clue is Fonseca’s preferred description of modes as “*modi essendi*,” ways of being: “*modus*” is just an abbreviation for this phrase. (In Suárez, “*modus essendi*” is rare and vestigial: the important description is “*modus rei*” = *quod distinguitur modaliter a re*.) For Fonseca, the modes properly so-called are *modi essendi*, which are not *formaliter entia*, ways things exist, which do not themselves exist: the paradigmatic *modus essendi* is the actual existence of a created *res*, and existence does not exist, any more than whiteness is white (*In Met.* IV, ch. 2, q. 4, s. 4). Suárez tries to agree that “however his examples may fare, Fonseca says most truly that this mode is not properly a *res* or *entitas*, unless we use ‘*ens*’ broadly and most generally for whatever is not nothing,” but Suárez is at a loss to find a sense of “*ens*” in which a mode is *not* an *ens*. The best Suárez can do is to say that an *ens* is “what is something *ex se* and *in se*, so that it does not require entirely intrinsically and essentially to be always attached to something else,” or, even more lamely, “what cannot be united to something else except by means of some mode distinct from it *ex natura rei*”; Suárez says that the imperfection of a mode is best shown by its failure to meet these two conditions (DM, d. 7, s. 1, n. 19). For Suárez, *separability* is the key to *res* and modes, and must be used to interpret any ontological concepts; for Fonseca, modes and the modal distinction cannot be defined in terms of separability (some modes-proper belong to their *res* contingently, others necessarily; *In Met.* V, ch. 6, q. 6, s. 2), but must be explained through primitive ontological terms. Any proper *ens* is an existing essence: following (ultimately) Henry of Ghent, Fonseca supposes that any real being has both an *esse essentiae*, by which it is eternally endowed with its essential attributes, and an *esse existentiae*, by which it exists in actuality outside its causes. When X actually exists, it exists in some way, so it has some mode or modes of being (including existence itself as the *ultimus modus*

intrinsicus which actualizes the others; *In Met.* IV, ch. 2, q. 4, s. 2); these modes are not themselves *formaliter entia*, because they add no further *esse essentiae* to the *esse essentiae* of X.²⁵ If the modes themselves had *esse essentiae*, they would require some further *modus essendi* to be constituted as actually existing (the essence must either inhere or subsist, and so on), and there would be an infinite regress. As a mode does not have its own *esse essentiae*, neither does it have its own *esse existentiae*, since existence is the act of an essence; if a mode “exists,” it does so only through the *existentia* of its *res*.

For Fonseca, we need these ontological concepts to interpret the theory of distinctions: in particular, they show how to distinguish an at-least-formal (formal or real) from an at-most-modal (modal or rational) distinction. As a real distinction is between two *res*, a formal distinction is between two *entitates* in the same *res*, where an *entitas* is whatever has its own *esse essentiae* and *esse existentiae*. Thus Fonseca says that predicamental relations “are distinguished from their foundation by a formal distinction, so that they all have their own peculiar *esse*, both *essentiae* and *existentiae*, distinct from the *esse* of the foundation”; whereas, if they were only modally distinct from the foundation, they would not add “any entity, to which a peculiar existence would belong, but only a pure *modus essendi* of this foundation” (*In Met.* V, ch. 15, q. 2, s. 5). Suárez, citing this passage, can make no sense of the ontological criterion that Fonseca appeals to. “In the first place,” he says, “I do not perceive this distinction intermediate between the real and the modal” (DM, d. 47, s. 2, n. 8). If X exists *in natura rei*, either it can exist by itself, and then it is a *res*, or it logically requires to be attached to some Y, and then it is a mode of Y. Likewise, if X and Y are distinct *in natura rei*, either each can exist without the other, and there is “a wholly proper and rigorous real distinction,” or one can exist without the other, but not conversely, and the distinction is modal; “there is no other way beside these two, since if each extreme is inseparable *in re* from the other, it will be a distinction of reason, and not *ex natura rei*” (n. 9). If X can exist when Y does not exist (or vice versa), then obviously the *esse* of X is not the same as the *esse* of Y; but if X and Y are inseparable, then Suárez sees no ground for supposing that they have different *esse*’s, or

25. Fonseca gets into odd binds denying that these modes are *entia*: at *In Met.* V, ch. 8, q. 6, on what a *suppositum* adds to a nature, he admits that what is added is a mode, but refuses to say that it is a *purus essendi modus*, “which has the *ratio* not of an entity, but only of a *modus essendi*,” since to complete a substance it must itself be something substantial; he allows it to be called a *modus essendi*, because it is so called “by good authors”—only “not *pure*, but entitative and even substantial” (s. 4). This seems to be just an *ad hoc* evasion.

are in any way distinct beyond the way we conceive and signify them. Nor does Suárez see why Fonseca says that modes are not entities with their own existence: “as a mode is distinguished *in re* from the *res* whose mode it is, so it has some *esse* of its own, equally and proportionally distinct from the *esse* of that *res*”; and “as it is something existing *in rebus*, so it can be said to have some entity,” less perfect than that of a *res* only because it is not self-sufficient (n. 8).

By Suárez’s criterion of separability, a being and its existence are only rationally distinct: so for him it makes no sense for X and Y to be united by having the same *esse*: if the *esse* of X is the *esse* of Y, then $X = \textit{esse-of-X} = \textit{esse-of-Y} = Y$. For Fonseca, since the *esse* of X is the mode completing X’s nature, it makes sense for X and Y to be modally distinct and to be completed by the same *esse*, so that the mode has no *esse* of its own. (For Cajetan, who thinks *esse* is *really* distinct from the *ens*, even two *really* distinct *res* can be united by having the same *esse*. This is how Cajetan explains the union of form and matter, and it allows him to say that matter cannot exist without form, since it has no *esse* of its own and exists only through the form’s *esse*.) Conversely, because Fonseca conceives of modes as *ways things are*, and finds it intuitively obvious that these are ontologically different from existing entities, he accepts *esse* as a mode, even though it fails Suárez’s test of separability (although Fonseca too uses the test of separability to refute the Thomist claim that a thing’s *esse* is *really* distinct from the thing; *In Met.* IV, ch. 2, q. 4, s. 2).

Fonseca’s ontological conception of modes explains why he does not use them, as Suárez does, to solve the problems of the realist theory of the categories. Since, for Fonseca, modes have no *esse essentiae*, they have no genera and species of their own, but belong reductively to the genus of their *res*, in the same way that an incomplete being like a human hand or a human soul has no species of its own, but belongs reductively to the species “man.” Since the categories are genera of being, it follows that modes do not belong to categories *per se*, but belong reductively to the category of their *res* (*In Met.* V, ch. 7, q. 4, s. 1–2; q. 9, s. 2).²⁶ This, finally, is why figure cannot be a mode of quantity: because a figure is a quality, it has an *esse essentiae* of its own, different from that of its quantity, which belongs to a different genus. Figure is thus at least *formally* distinct from quantity (and the usual voluntarist arguments show

26. In these texts Fonseca primarily discusses the status of *existentiae*, then adds other *modi essendi* as an afterthought. At *In Met.* V, ch. 7, q. 4, s. 1, he claims to have the agreement of “all scholastics of any repute who have treated these things in detail” that *existentiae* are not *per se* in categories, but reductively in the category of their *res*; he apparently just assumes that this agreement will generalize to other *modi essendi*.

that it cannot be *really* distinct); for the same reason, a relation must be formally distinct from its absolute foundation (just as, for Scotus, Socrates must be formally distinct from his passive creation, because, although they are inseparable and really identical, one is absolute and the other is relative).²⁷

One of Suárez's deepest departures from Fonseca, and from the entire older realist tradition, comes in a passage whose serene exposition gives no hint that Suárez is promoting a controversial teaching. Suárez is considering the difficulty that the division of created being into substances and accidents seems not to be exhaustive, since modes are not included in either division (difficulty raised at DM, d. 32, s. 1, n. 3; answered at nn. 13–19). Suárez first rejects two easy answers, first, that modes should not be included in a division of created *beings*, since "as these modes do not have an entity and reality of their own, they cannot be called beings, but modes of beings"; or, second (amplifying rather than contradicting the first answer), that although modes are not *per se* in any substantial or accidental category, they may be placed reductively in the category of their *res*. Although Suárez does not hint that anyone has actually said this, this was the view of Fonseca, and (as Fonseca assumes, probably rightly) of the entire realist tradition before him. But Suárez says that this is clearly wrong, since figure and *ubi* are accidents: these are only modes (figure of quantity, *ubi* of quantity or substance or whatever is primarily located), but they are in their own categories *per se*, and are not reductively or in any other way in the same category as their *res*. So Suárez gives a new answer: a mode of X may be placed reductively in the same category as X if it pertains to the "constitution and completion" of X (as do the union of form and matter, the mode of subsistence, and the mode of existence if there were one), or if it contributes to X's exercising its formal effect on its subject (as does the mode of inherence). But if the mode (like figure or *ubi*) comes to modify an X already "constituted and complete," then the mode is an accident of X (or a new accident inhering ultimately in X's subject), and it belongs *per se* in some accidental category of its own. For Fonseca, of

27. Action and passion do not have different *esse essentiae*, but this is because they are the same thing considered first as belonging to the agent and then as belonging to the patient. Fonseca's liberality on the formal distinction is quasi-Scotistic: X and Y are formally distinct whenever either contains a *ratio formalis* that the other does not, so that (for instance) the generic nature of animal (in Socrates) is formally distinct from the specific nature of man (in Socrates). (But Fonseca often says that X and Y are formally distinct even when X can exist without Y, although not vice versa, as in the case of quantity and figure; for Scotus this would be grounds for a *real* distinction.) Suárez sees no ground for different *esse essentiae* here: the generic nature in X is nothing *in re* distinct from X, just X compared to one or another class of things.

course, there are no modes of this kind: a mode is a *modus essendi* constituting some *res* as an actually existing thing; once the thing exists in some determinate way, anything further that attaches to it must bear some new *esse essentiae*, whether inhering in the *res* (like figure) or attaching from without (like *ubi*). But for Suárez, as the inherence of a quantity is just how it exists in its subject, so its figure is how it exists in its spatial limits; if we like, we can say that these hownesses add new *esse essentiae* to quantity, but they do not add anything that could be conceived (or could actually exist) without the quantity, and so they are merely modes.²⁸

IV. SUÁREZ AND FONSECA: METAPHYSICAL PROJECTS

Although Suárez maintains against Fonseca that modes can be in the categories *per se*, and so that they can be beings *per se*, Suárez does not advertise this as a major criticism of Fonseca; he seems to think of it as a necessary technical correction within the overall program of Jesuit metaphysics. Suárez's official statement on the object of metaphysics (in DM, d. 1, s. 1) closely follows Fonseca (*In Met.* IV, ch. 1, q. 1): not only does he accept the same right answer as Fonseca (*ens reale per se*), he also rejects the same six wrong answers (God; God and the separate substances; all substances [said to be Buridan's view]; all predicamental being [excluding God, who is substance only transcendentially]; all real being, whether *per se* or *per accidens*; and all being, whether *reale* or *rationalis*). Both for Fonseca and for Suárez, this *ens reale per se* includes, precisely, all predicamental being plus God; but the shared formula covers an important correction, since *ens reale per se*, for Fonseca, meant *res* (or at least "entities"), while for Suárez it means both *res* and modes.

It seems reasonable to see Suárez's *Disputations* as a more efficient and systematic execution of the project of Fonseca's *Questions on the Metaphysics*, while recognizing that this efficiency has a doctrinal component in pruning away Fonseca's multiplications of realities and of ways of being. As is often said, the *Disputations* is the first Scholastic *Summa* of metaphysics, not as part of theology (as in Thomas's *Summae* and innumerable commentaries on the *Sentences*), not just studying a particular problem (like Thomas's *De Ente et Essentia*), and not following

28. Figure is, as Fonseca says, "a quality resulting from the termination of a magnitude" (*In Met.* V, ch. 14, q. 2, s. 3), and a magnitude cannot be terminated without being terminated in some particular way, or be terminated in some particular way without having a figure; so nothing beyond the mode of termination is needed. Modes of termination (like figure and subsistence), along with modes of union, are the most frequently cited, because least disputable, kinds of modes properly-so-called.

the order of a standard text (like the expositions or questions on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* by Scotus, Fonseca, the Thomists Soncinas, Javellus and Dominic of Flanders, and the Averroist Nifo).²⁹ Instead, Suárez lays out in d. 1 his conception of what metaphysics is supposed to be, and then pursues it systematically, treating first being-in-general (d. 2), then its attributes (dd. 3–11), its causes (dd. 12–27) and its kinds (dd. 28–53: first, infinite and finite being, then, the categories as kinds of finite being; d. 54 is an appendix on *entia rationis*, not because they are properly treated in metaphysics but for lack of anywhere better to treat them), and covering all traditional metaphysical questions in their place. But Fonseca's *Questions on the Metaphysics* (disregarding his Greek text, Latin translation, and expositions of Aristotle) are a close precursor to Suárez.

The first thing that strikes us about Fonseca's book is the staggeringly disproportionate bulk of his commentary on *Metaphysics* V, five hundred and seventy-one double-columned pages in the Cologne edition, occupying a whole volume by itself. The disproportion may be in part because Fonseca never finished his questions: the questions stop at the end of *Metaphysics* IX.5, although text and translation and exposition continue through the end of XII, and text and translation alone all the way to the end of XIV.³⁰ Still, Fonseca deliberately decides to leave some chapters of Aristotle's text (including the whole of III) entirely unquestioned, and to treat others very densely, as they give him occasion

29. But note that the *Summa philosophiae naturalis* of Paul of Venice (d. 1429) contains a section on metaphysics, which might be called a *Summa metaphysicae*, although it is nowhere near as comprehensive and detailed as Suárez's or as any of the great *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*. This work would repay further study; a Renaissance edition (Venice, 1503) has been reprinted (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1974).

30. Books XIII and XIV were traditionally not commented upon, and are excluded from Suárez's index to the *Metaphysics*. The circumstances surrounding the posthumous parts of Fonseca's work are to me obscure. It seems (if we trust Fonseca's dedicatory letter, dated Coimbra, 4 days before the Ides of July 1597) that vol. 3 (*Metaphysics* VI–IX) was ready in Fonseca's lifetime; why was it not published until 1604, five years after his death? The editors explain neither this nor why the questions do not continue to the end; indeed, though Christopher à Govea, the Provincial of the Jesuit province of Portugal, includes a note ordering publication (and giving the Society's endorsement), he never explicitly says that the author has died. Now Suárez, according to his biographers, moved to Coimbra in May 1597, two months before Fonseca wrote this dedicatory letter; it was also in 1597 (but I don't know in what month) that the *Disputations* were published. What did Suárez and Fonseca know of the state of each other's work in 1597? Was there a competitive rush to publication (fostered by rivalries either personal or national)? Could this be why Fonseca was ready to let the commentary on books VI–IX go to press with the second half of book IX unquestioned? Contrariwise, could the publication of Suárez's *Disputations* have made publication less urgent? Or was Fonseca just too busy? He certainly had a great deal of Jesuit business in his hands—which he complains about in the dedicatory letter—and he was an old man with only two more years to live.

for asking the questions he wants to ask. The commentary on book V is three times as long as the commentary on book I and more than twice as long as the commentary on book VII, although the texts are all roughly the same length, and although Fonseca's questions on book V are confined to chapters 1–8, 10, 13–15, and 28, leaving chapters 9, 11–12, 16–27, and 29–30 unquestioned (and the question on chapter 10 is unconnected with the subject of that chapter). What is so wonderful about these chapters of *Metaphysics V*?

Part of the attraction of *Metaphysics V* is that it has no argument at all: it simply raises a series of metaphysical topics, and allows the commentator to investigate them as he likes. Fonseca takes *Metaphysics V*, along with the first two chapters of *Metaphysics IV*, as his occasion to write what is in effect a systematic *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, following his own conception of the subject to be treated, and having almost no connection with Aristotle's text.³¹ *Metaphysics IV*, says Fonseca, is prefatory, asking about the subject of metaphysics (being; IV.1), then about the parts and affections of this subject (the inferiors of which being is predicated, and its transcendental attributes; IV.2), and then about the principles of the science (noncontradiction; IV.3); but *Metaphysics V* begins the "treatment of the *res*" themselves, dealing in three parts first with the causes of being (V.1–5), then with being itself and its parts (V.6–15), and finally with its affections (V.16–30).³² Against Averroes and Thomas, Fonseca insists that the book is not concerned with the meanings of names, but with the *res* themselves which are analogous, picking out their primary instances and showing how the other instances are subordinated to them; so Fonseca feels free to develop a systematic metaphysics. In his questions on the first of the three parts of the book, and especially on chapter 2 ("cause"), Fonseca gives a systematic treatise on the causes. In the chapters on being, substance,

31. By contrast, Fonseca's treatment of *Metaphysics VII* is much more reactive to particular issues raised by the text (e.g., problems of the generation of animals). The commentary on book VII is disappointing, in part, because Fonseca had already treated the big issues in IV and V.

32. Fonseca, in his Prooemia to *Metaphysics IV* and V, distinguishes the preliminary *constitutio* of the science of metaphysics (establishing its subject, etc.) from its *tractatio*, its actual scientific work. Actually, Fonseca thinks the *tractatio* begins in *Metaphysics IV.4–8* with the *tractatio* of the first *propositional* principle of metaphysics (the principle of non-contradiction, as opposed to *entitative* principles or causes), but he shows little interest in these chapters and writes no questions on them. Fonseca explicitly follows St. Thomas in his threefold division of *Metaphysics V*, which is accurate enough, except that the part on the "affections" is too loosely connected to be brought effectively under a single scheme (Fonseca in fact ignores this part of the book). But when, in his Prooemium to *Metaphysics V*, Fonseca criticizes Averroes for saying that this book is about names, he is also implicitly criticizing Thomas.

quantity, quality, and relation (7–8, 13–15), he develops everything that would normally be done in a commentary on the *Categories* (Fonseca devotes chapter 7, “being,” to the division of being into the categories; since Aristotle says nothing about the six minor categories, Fonseca crams them into chapter 15, “relation”). In chapter 28, “genus,” he does everything that would be done in a commentary on the *Isagoge* (192 columns on less than a column of text!), and he skips all the rest of the third part of the book. In chapter 6, “unity,” he discusses the principle of individuation, and then the grades of distinction. Fonseca does not deal with the concept of being under “being,” or with transcendental unity under “unity,” because he has already turned *Metaphysics* IV.2 into a treatise on being and the transcendentals (truth and goodness are not mentioned in the text, but Fonseca crams them in along with unity), as he has turned *Metaphysics* IV.1 into a disputation on the object of metaphysics, omitting all the rest of *Metaphysics* IV (but for a solitary question on IV.3). Fonseca interprets *Metaphysics* V as applying these general principles to the particular kinds of being, to individuality and universality as kinds of unity, and to distinction as the opposite of unity.

Fonseca’s questions on *Metaphysics* IV–V are thus very unlike Aristotle, and very much like Suárez’s *Disputations*. Fonseca’s *Metaphysics* IV.1 on the object of metaphysics corresponds to Suárez’s d. 1; Fonseca’s treatise on being in *Metaphysics* IV.2 corresponds to Suárez’s d. 2, and Fonseca’s treatise on the transcendentals corresponds to Suárez’s dd. 3–11, except that Suárez inserts after transcendental unity the treatises on individuation, universals, and distinctions from *Metaphysics* V. Suárez then gives a treatise on the causes (dd. 12–27), corresponding roughly to Fonseca on the first part of *Metaphysics* V (though much more elaborate, and containing some material that would have been treated elsewhere, notably a treatise on God as first efficient cause); then a treatise on the kinds of being (dd. 28–53), corresponding to Fonseca on the second part of *Metaphysics* V (Suárez has a discussion of God at the beginning, dd. 28–30, but after that he, like Fonseca, follows the order of categories, raising similar questions although in greater detail); Suárez has nothing corresponding to the third part of *Metaphysics* V, but Fonseca says nothing about it either.

The point is not that Suárez was just copying Fonseca. Suárez’s treatment is much more thorough than Fonseca’s, and Suárez was his own man. But I think it is undeniable that Suárez framed his *Disputations* on the model of the order of questions to be treated in a commentary on *Metaphysics* IV–V, and that Fonseca was Suárez’s most important model for what such a commentary would be; although questions from

elsewhere are treated, they are all inserted into the framework, not of *Metaphysics* IV–V, but of what a *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* IV–V had become.³³ Suárez himself thinks that these texts of Aristotle cannot bear the weight that has been put on them, and he proposes to break up Fonseca's weird marriage of systematic disputations with a scholarly presentation of an irrelevant text. Suárez prefaces to his *Disputations* an *Index Locupletissimus in Metaphysicam Aristotelis*, listing questions on each chapter of Aristotle's text, and saying where in Suárez's *Disputations* each question will be treated: this index is a key converting Suárez's work into a *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam*, for the "many" who will want such a thing. Suárez himself thinks this is a bad idea.³⁴ Suárez's comments in this index are occasionally caustic, and frequently designed to show the irrelevance of Aristotle's text. In particular, Suárez cites Averroes' remark (which Fonseca had disparaged) that *Metaphysics* V is about words, and has not yet started treating *res*. "So it happens that this book too, if we looked to Aristotle's intention, would be counted among the preliminaries to presenting the real science of metaphysics; but if we consider the custom of the commentators, they are accustomed to treat in it the *res* themselves which pertain to the object of metaphysics, especially all the categories, and the causes of being *qua*

33. Charles Lohr, in his chapter ("Metaphysics") in the *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. Charles B. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), cites some other interesting Jesuit precedents for Suárez's work, but (if we see past the artificial commentary form) Suárez is much closer to Fonseca than to any of these other models. Lohr notes the concentration on *Metaphysics* V, but fails to see its importance: he thinks that this book is about "philosophical terminology," and that discussions of substances and accidents must come from *Metaphysics* VII or XII. The Jesuit concentration on *Metaphysics* IV–V, and neglect of the bulk of the *Metaphysics*, indicate not that the Jesuits lacked interest in metaphysics, but that Aristotle's *Metaphysics* was not an effective vehicle for the kind of metaphysical issues that the Jesuits (for the purposes of Scholastic realist philosophy and theology) found it important to address. (Note, for example, that the division of being into actuality and potentiality plays no structural role for Suárez [as it does for Aristotle], and that Fonseca omits it from his questions on *Metaphysics* V.7, discussing only the division of being into the categories).

34. Suárez stresses the importance of an appropriate method or order of inquiry, "which I could scarcely (or not even scarcely) have observed, if, after the custom of the commentators, I treated all questions as they arise, incidentally and almost randomly, in the text of the Philosopher" (prefatory *Ratio et Discursus Totius Operis, Ad Lectorem*, first page); "but since there will be very many who will desire to have this whole doctrine applied to the books of Aristotle, both so that they can perceive which principles of so great a philosopher it relies on, and so that its use for understanding Aristotle himself may be easier and more useful, I have tried to serve the reader in this matter too, by means of an index that we have worked out, by which (unless I am mistaken), if it is read carefully, everything which Aristotle treated in the books of the *Metaphysics* can be both comprehended and kept in the memory; and also all the questions which are customarily raised in the course of expounding those books may be present to hand" (*ibid.*, second page).

being, in the knowledge of which a great part of this doctrine consists."³⁵ This is as much as to say that Fonseca's *Quaestiones* on this book are already a *Disputationes Metaphysicae secundum ordinem rerum*: Suárez can simply liberate these questions from their artificial commentary-form.

On each of the topics raised in this way, Fonseca and Suárez pursue the realist agenda, which is not at all the agenda of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Typically, the questions arise from predication. Being is predicated of its inferiors, existence and subsistence or inherence of essences, the transcendentals of all beings, universals of individuals, form of matter, accidents of substances, relations of their foundations, figure and *ubi* of quantity: in each case, the realist must ask whether the predicate is something real or an *ens rationis*; if real, whether it is intrinsic or extrinsic to the subject; if intrinsic, whether it is really, or formally, or modally, or only rationally distinct from the subject. Again, if one *res* is predicated of many inferiors, by what kind of sameness is it the *same res* for all? Unless the realist can answer all these questions, there seems no escape from the nominalist conclusion that *res* are not predicated of *res*, that subjects and predicates are words, that in every true predication the subject and the predicate signify the same *res*, and that the project of realist metaphysics is founded on a mistake.

The dilemmas that plague realism are in many cases founded on voluntarist principles. It is characteristic of Jesuit Scholasticism to confront this challenge head on, and to accept the voluntarist refutations of many real distinctions that had been proposed. What is distinctive of Fonseca is that he recognizes the systematic importance of the theory of distinctions, and the need for intermediate distinctions to solve these problems. The Dominican Soto, who shares Fonseca's principles, denies intermediate distinctions, because two were enough for Thomas; then, under pressure of argument, Soto admits a formal distinction in one place, a modal distinction in another, without ever saying how such distinctions differ or what are the principles for reasoning about them

35. Suárez's introductory comments on book V. Cf. on IV.2: "Although Aristotle in this chapter does not so much dispute about unity, as say that it ought to be disputed, it is customary to treat here all questions that pertain to unity, and indeed also to the other attributes of being . . . some people also dispute here about *esse existentiae*, how it is related to *ens* or essence" (Fonseca does all these things). Similarly on V.28 (the chapter on genus), Suárez says that it is about not the reality, but the significations of the word "genus"; "but since one signification of 'genus' is that it signifies the first [Porphyrian] predicable, some writers contrive here a very broad disputation on the predicables [Fonseca's 192 columns!]; Suárez refers to his discussion of universal unity, then says, "but the rest, which are proper to the dialecticians, we leave to them." Suárez says that *Metaphysics* IV.4–8 are "of no particular use, and give no occasion for asking any questions," and he suggests that Aristotle has invented his opponents *disputandi gratia*.

(Soto seems to think this is all needless subtlety). Fonseca, with Jesuit *libertas philosophandi*, and with a care for thoroughness and consistency, forges ahead and tries to elaborate and apply a theory of distinctions. The resulting theory is, like Fonseca's book itself, vast and disorderly, with five kinds of distinctions, no single scheme that generates them all, and no way to recognize them without appeal to vague ontological intuitions. What distinguishes Suárez is his clear vision of the whole metaphysical project, his thoroughness in seeing principles through to their conclusions, and his lack of mercy for vague ontological intuitions. Suárez sets out to clean up both the structure of Fonseca's book and the content of the theory of distinctions. As Soto had complained, "since metaphysical distinctions of this kind are both obscure and difficult to believe, we should not admit more of them into the schools than reason proves."³⁶ Reflecting on the dilemmas of realism, Suárez sees that the problem is separability, and that realism is doomed if it continues to assume that one-way separability implies real distinction, and that real distinction implies two-way separability. Suárez uses this reflection to present a single scheme of three kinds of distinctions, with a clear test for recognizing them, sufficient for answering all the challenges if applied without ontological scruples, and minimizing the multiplication of entities. The great *Metaphysical Disputations*, however much they may disguise themselves as a Scholastic encyclopedia, are a systematic and ruthless execution of this program.³⁷

36. *In Isagogen, De Universalibus*, q. 3. Soto had said before (*De Universalibus*, q. 1) that the realists were obscure and the nominalists difficult to believe (on the same question of universal natures that he is here considering); he now combines both these compliments for the Scotists.

37. I would like to thank Fred Freddoso and Alison Laywine for comments on a draft of this paper, and an audience at The Catholic University of America for comments in oral discussion. My views on Scholastic realism and nominalism continue to be shaped by conversations with Calvin Normore, and will be developed further in our collaborative book, *Nominalism and Realism*.