FRANCISCO SUÁREZ'S ENCOUNTER WITH CALVIN OVER HUMAN FREEDOM

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ABSTRACT. This essay explores Francisco Suárez's account of the nature of human free will. To that end, Suárez's engagement with John Calvin is considered so as to place the Jesuit's account into greater relief. The conclusion of this study will reveal that, for Suárez, the human will's freedom of self-determination is both caused by God and consists in its own indifference regarding the power to act and the power not to act.

KEYWORDS: Suárez, Calvin, Freedom, Necessity, Indifference

Introduction

Spain's *siglo de oro* included not only unparalleled cultural achievements and flourishing in the Iberian Peninsula but also bitter theological disputes and controversies. The *Congregatio de auxiliis*, established to settle the controversy that raged between the Dominicans (in particular Domingo Bañez) and the Jesuits (especially Luis de Molina) concerning the relationship among human freedom, grace, divine foreknowledge, and providence, is but one example of the contentious atmosphere. Yet, controversies concerning human freedom and divine grace were not merely intramural disputes within Catholicism, for they often spilled over into debates between Catholic and Reformed thinkers as well. While the Council of Trent established the parameters according to which the human will cooperates with and is moved by grace, it remained for Catholic theologians to fill in the particular details of just how the two (grace and freedom) could be fully reconciled. Francisco Suárez was one such theologian; indeed, he was not just a theologian but—as Pope Paul V called him—the *Doctor eximius ac pius*! Suárez's mammoth opera spans both the entire theological and philosophical spectra, and thus it is not surprising that he himself should be drawn into disputes concerning the nature of human freedom.

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In defending his account of human freedom, Suárez's confrontation with Calvin is particularly noteworthy. The reason for this is that the difference between the two thinkers marks opposite ends of the theological spectrum. Recent literature has pointed out that Suárez's view of human freedom can be characterized as a form of libertarianism (see Burlando 1999; Penner 2013), robustly so, in contrast to Calvin, whose account has been described as strongly compatibilist (see Helm 2010: c. 8). While there is more than a little merit to these claims, I believe the terminological baggage these labels import, drawn as it is from contemporary philosophical disputes, risks obfuscating each thinker's position more than clarifying it. Be that as it may, at the root of the controversies—whether among Catholic theologians or between Catholics and Reformers—is the very nature of the human will itself. Just how does it operate and in what does its freedom consist? There can be no doubt that Suárez and Calvin articulate their theories of freedom according to radically incommensurate paradigms—whether those paradigms be labeled as 'libertarian' and 'compatibilist' or not; yet there can also be no doubt that both intend to capture a meaningful and authentic sense of the Christian understanding of human freedom as a prelude to detailing the workings of grace.

In what follows, I explore Suárez's account of human freedom. To do so, I give particular consideration to the Jesuit's engagement with Calvin for the purpose of placing Suárez's own doctrine into greater relief. While discussions of providence and divine *auxilium* are ineluctable in such discussions, as Suárez himself often notes (e.g., 1861: 693), (created) nature, nevertheless, is itself the basis upon which grace operates. Suárez is clear, 'grace perfects nature, especially inasmuch as it is the principle of human and free acts' (1857: 1). For this reason, 'Since free nature is the foundation of grace, and since grace is the perfection and health of nature, therefore the debate about grace supposes some knowledge of such nature' (1857: 1).

Ultimately, my contention is that, while Suárez's confrontation with Calvin regarding human freedom certainly involves serious theological considerations, the controversies that result from those theological considerations can be located within an even broader context: namely, Suárez's effort to secure the real efficacy of secondary (created) causality, especially with respect to (free) human agency. On the one hand, there are those who would deny the efficacy of any secondary causality (let alone any true human agency) for the purpose of securing divine providence and omnipotence (1861: 593). One might say, then, that prior to the coinage of the term, Suárez is anxious to refute the threat of 'occasionalism'. On the other hand, there are those (e.g., Luther and Calvin) who more specifically seek to deny a certain subset of secondary causality (viz., intrinsically efficacious, free human actions) in order to secure the necessity of grace. I argue that, for Suárez, the human will

has its own intrinsic efficacy whereby it exercises true (free) secondary causality. Yet, precisely as instances of secondary causality, those free actions do not metaphysically stand apart from God's exercise of primary causality. In short, as we shall see, the human will and its actions are truly and intrinsically free and efficacious but only because God is the sustaining, primary cause of that freedom.

Freedom from Necessity

While Suárez takes it as a given that human beings often act freely, the question for him is: what are the necessary conditions for those free actions and, more specifically, what precisely is meant by 'freedom'? When addressing these questions throughout his works, he always notes that, what experience itself seems so evidently to teach, numerous philosophers and theologians—old and new (including Calvin)—have argued against and maintain that no human action is truly free (Suárez 1861: 695–96; 1857: 267–68). The motives behind the rejection of human freedom are varied. Some, such as Simon Magus and Priscillian deny freedom for the sake of preserving divine providence and ensuring that its ordinances are infallibly realized (Suárez 1857: 268).

Such reasoning is not unlike what one finds in other thinkers throughout the history of philosophy, such as Al-Ghazālī, Nicolas of Autrecourt, and Malebranche. For example, in Al-Ghazālī's *Tahāfut al-Falāsifa* (*Incoherence of the Philosophers*) he argues pointedly against the Aristotelian conception of nature for the reason that, upon such a conception, nature operates with strict necessity. It would be utterly contradictory, after all, if it happened that fire failed to produce heat for heat follows necessarily upon fire as a proper effect. But if such necessitation is the case, there would seem to be no opening for God to intervene miraculously within creation, which is a problematic notion for a committed religious thinker such as Al-Ghazālī. Indeed, divine intervention would only interrupt the necessary connections between a natural cause and its effect, which would, again, yield a contradiction. To provide a theoretical space for divine intervention and avoid any contradictory entailments, Al-Ghazālī, not unlike a host of other similarly minded thinkers (especially David Hume), simply denies that there is any intrinsic (causal) connection between what one would ordinarily consider a cause and effect. '[T]he connection between what is habitually believed to be a cause and what is habitually believed to be an effect is not necessary' (Al-Ghazālī 2000: 170). Indeed, there is no connection at all, for concerning any two things 'where "this" is not "that" and "that" is not "this" and where neither the affirmation of the one entails negation of the other, it is not a necessity of the existence of the one that the others should exist, and it is not a necessity of the nonexistence of the one that the other should not exist' (Al-Ghazālī 2000: 166). If there is no entailment of an effect from a (secondary) cause, then the nature

of a cause precisely as a cause is undermined. That is to say, as Malebranche would affirm centuries later, there is simply no secondary causality. The implications such a position has for the free will are obvious. If God is the sole cause, then even acts of the will would have no necessary connection to the will. God's providence and decrees might be preserved, but at the cost of any true, efficacious free human action.

While Al-Ghazālī wished to undermine the necessity of nature to allow divine intervention, Calvin took a different tactic. Divine providence and prescience demand that creation infallibly realizes God's decree, which means that creation must be necessitated. But the necessity with which creation operates does not stem from the intrinsic exigencies of nature; Calvin would be in agreement with Al-Ghazālī on that score. Rather, the necessity stems from God's predetermination, for, as the Reformer holds, 'Nothing is more absurd for anything whatsoever to happen unless ordained by God, since it would happen blindly' (1576: 44). Though approaching secondary causality from different perspectives, Al-Ghazālī and Calvin converge upon the same point: the human will has no intrinsic efficacy unto itself. Does this mean, then, that, in necessitating all actions, God even necessitates sinful actions, for example, the fall of Adam? Calvin's answer is 'yes'. There is, however, a caveat: God ordains that Adam should fall *freely* (ibid: 234). I shall return to this issue below when discussing the difference between God's permissive and ordained will.

Be that as it may, Suárez further notes, there are those who reject human freedom on the basis of more 'theological' reasons, as it were. Some—the 'Innovators' (*novatores*), such as Luther and Calvin—deny freedom in order to defend the necessity of grace (Suárez 1857: 268). If human beings lost freedom on account of original sin, then not only are people necessitated to sin but they can only be liberated from that sin (i.e., justified) through unmerited grace. But it is the claim that the human will can be 'necessitated' that perturbs Suárez. How can a free will that is necessitated to specific actions be free in the execution of those actions? The Jesuit protests: 'That is called free which is free from necessity' (Suárez 1857: 3).

While that claim might seem a little less than illuminating given that it appears to place the *definiendum* in the *definiens*, its vagueness is almost inevitable, and Suárez admits that it is not so much a definition as it is an assertion (Suárez 1857: 11). Indeed the reason for the vagueness stems from the polymorphic character of necessity. If freedom is the opposite of necessity and if necessity is said in many ways, then freedom itself can be said in as many ways as necessity (Suárez 1861: 695). It seems plausible, then, that certain actions operating according to one kind of necessity can nevertheless be free with respect to another kind of necessity. But again our question remains: how can that which is necessitated in any manner be said to be free? Needless to say,

an answer to this question turns upon what is meant by 'necessity', and it will be critical for Suárez to distinguish and examine the different kinds of necessity.

To that end, Suárez identifies two main senses of necessity. There is (N^1) a modal sense of necessity that is simply the opposite of both the impossible and the possible, 'in which way an action is called necessary that is not able [either] not to be or be brought into being, always keeping in mind that supposition, namely, that once all the requisites for action are posited; and we discussed this necessity of action in the previous section' (Suárez 1861: 695). But it would appear that N^1 is not restricted merely to the logical domain, for it also pertains to the intrinsic structure of created nature(s) and the activities that issue therefrom. Suárez alludes to an earlier section (19th) of the *Disputationes metaphysicae* where he had argued that, beyond the first efficient cause (i.e., God), there are created efficient causes that act with necessity. For example, the sun, by its own nature, necessarily illuminates, and the fire, by its own nature, necessarily heats (Suárez 1861: 688). To speak of these causes as functioning with a kind of necessity does not entail that such necessity is absolute but only hypothetical. That is to say, the necessity of created efficient causes is contingent upon the supposition of all prerequisites for action (ibid.). A normally functioning human eye is of such a nature that, once an illuminated object is placed within proximate view, the eye will necessarily see a visible object. Of course, the illuminated object could be obscured by an opaque medium and vision would then be impeded, but in such an event it is not the case that the eye actively withholds its power of sight. Given that all the necessary conditions for vision are in place, an eye does not have the power or ability *not* to see. Similarly, the sun cannot not illuminate and fire cannot not heat, unless God intervenes. But even then it is not the case that a contradiction would ensue, as Al-Ghazālī had feared. Rather, Suárez thinks that in such a situation wherein God intervenes, it is not the case that God alters or transforms the nature of the created agent—as if, for example, to make fire cool. Rather, God withholds His concurrence (i.e., His creative causality that holds secondary causality in being) so that the created agent fails to produce its otherwise necessary effect (Suárez 1861: 692–93). This will be an important point, as we shall see, in our consideration of the efficacy of human free acts.

Regarding the second sense of necessity (N^2), Suárez points out that it not only involves the necessity proper to N^1 , N^2 additionally involves that which is opposed to the voluntary (Suárez 1861: 694). To explain the nature of N^2 Suárez adverts to Aristotle's account of voluntary action found in the third book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle holds, and Suárez agrees, that two conditions render an action non-voluntary. According to the first condition, necessity ($N^{2.1}$) arises when an agent acts without any cognition (e.g., fire

heats without perception); according to the second condition necessity ($N^{2.2}$) arises when an action is coerced by some extrinsic agent. To illustrate this distinction, Suárez explains that a brute animal's pursuit of its appetite's natural object is not necessitated in the sense of N^2 but it is according to N^1 . The gold fish's natural appetite, for example, necessitates (N^1) its action in such a manner that it will necessarily eat, even to the point of death if too much food is present. But, since the goldfish acts both with perception and in accordance with an internal appetite its action is not necessitated according to N^2 . Nevertheless, insofar as that appetite arises from the nature of the animal itself, the fish necessarily pursues nourishment according to N^1 . That said, should it be the case that an animal is forced by some external agent (e.g., a horse is spurred on to pull a carriage by a driver's whip), that action would be necessitated in terms of $N^{2.2}$ as contrary to the animal's internal appetite (Suárez 1861: 694). This kind of necessity ($N^{2.2}$) is simply coercion which is a subset of the necessary (N^1): 'And thus coercion is a kind of necessity and adds something beyond it' (1857: 2).

In short, for Suárez, while all coerced act are necessitated ($N^{2.2}$), not all necessitated acts (N^1) are coerced. Does this mean, then, that a free act can be necessitated? Certainly, voluntary acts (i.e., those actions that arise with cognition and are aimed at satisfying and internal appetite) can be necessitated. But there is a difference between voluntary actions and free actions, for as Suárez sees it, 'That action is called free in the most proper sense which is truly free from that necessity which natural and irrational things have when acting' (1861: 695; cf. Penner 2013: 17). It is precisely with respect to such non-necessitated actions that Suárez inquires when asking whether any created agent acts freely. Aristotle has something similar in mind when he tells us that both children and animals exercise voluntary actions, although they lack 'choice' or *ὑποκρίσεως* on account of the fact that they are deprived of or have an underdeveloped rational faculty (Aristotle 1999: 129). But herein resides the problem: if human beings act according to the exigencies of their nature, how can any act be free from the natural necessities (N^1) that are intrinsic to that nature?

Indifference of the Will

Suárez himself is only too keenly aware of the difficulty involved in the relation between a nature that possesses its own intrinsic necessities and truly free action. In one of his efforts to demonstrate that the will exercises truly free activity, Suárez confronts the following objection: '[A] power that deliberates towards one thing is not free; but the will is terminated in one thing, namely, the good' (1978: 382). What the objection points to is the classical scholastic teaching that, while the proper object of the intellect is the true (*verum*), the proper object of the will is the good (*bonum*). The intellect is naturally and

thus necessarily drawn to the true, and in a similar way the will is necessarily drawn to the good. But if it is the case that both faculties are necessitated to their own proper objects, how can the will operate freely? In order to overcome this dilemma and secure the will's freedom, Suárez sketches the relationship between the will and the intellect, the exact nature of which was a matter of considerable dispute among medieval and late scholastic thinkers.

Suárez observes that all are agreed that human freedom emerges from rationality. Confusion has arisen, however, regarding the nature of freedom because of a failure to appreciate the distinction between 'formal freedom' and the 'root of freedom' (Suárez 1861: 707). That is, while the intellect might be the 'root of freedom' as its origin or source, an act of the intellect does not itself formally produce free action. Rather, the will's actions formally constitute freedom, which is to say, those actions are essentially free. In developing his thesis regarding the nature of free action, Suárez confronts the Thomists, who 'commonly explain that liberty of the will arises from the indifference of the intellect' (Suárez 1978: 394). That is to say, if the will is drawn to the good, it is because the intellect cognizes some object as having the character (*ratio*) of a good (Suárez 1861: 719). If the will's choice is to be rational, then it can only operate subsequent to the intellect's presentation of some object as good. Summarizing the Thomist position, Suárez explains, 'the will is not able to [move toward an object] unless that object is known and proposed through reason since [the will] is a rational appetite' (1861: 719). What is more, if the intellect is itself indifferent to the object, as the Thomists hold, then freedom is secured. The reason for this latter claim follows from the fact that if the intellect is indifferent to its object, then it is not necessitated to that particular object. If the intellect is not so necessitated, then the will's election of an object results in a free act. And, in fact, the intellect is indifferent precisely insofar as there is discovered within each object some good element as well as something that has the character of what is bad. For example, in considering an inoculation, the health-preserving properties can be perceived as good while the pain of the needle can be perceived as bad. The upshot of the Thomist view, as Suárez presents it, is that 'if the intellect were to cognize some good thing, in whose love no character of evil should be discovered, the will would not be able not to love that [good]' (1978: 396).

The notion that the will could not, not love some object presented to it as a good strikes Suárez as extraordinarily problematic for the purpose of maintaining the will's freedom. To the Jesuit's mind, freedom consists in the following: that agent is free that—once all the prerequisites for acting are posited—has within itself the power either to act or not to act; that is to say, freedom consists in the will's indifference with respect to its acting. The intellect itself, however, does not enjoy such indifference. 'The will, however, with all the requisites for action posited, just as it is able to act from an internal faculty

by determining itself without the motion of another power, so also by the same internal faculty is able not to act by suspending its influx and internal power and dominion' (Suárez 1857: 12). It is important to note that the will's ability not to act does not stem from an absence of some necessary condition (*ibid.*). For example, a blind person does not exercise an act of vision freely or through choice for the very reason that he is deprived of sight; that is to say, he is lacking one of the prerequisites for acting. The will's freedom, in contrast, consists in the power not to act as well as the power to act.

Yet, if what the Thomists hold regarding the relationship between the intellect and the will is truly the case, the will's freedom would be undermined. Suárez thinks that since the intellect is not really indifferent, as the Thomists propose, it is not a formally free faculty. Suárez argues that the intellect, by its own nature, is determined either to assent to what is true or dissent from what is false (Suárez 1861: 715). For instance, confronted with the self-evident truth of the principle of non-contradiction, the intellect cannot not assent to its truth, which means that its assent to that truth is necessitated by that very truth itself. One might object, however, that if it happens that the intellect is uncertain about the truth value of its object, then there remains a certain degree of indifference that is necessary for freedom. For example, one might not be certain whether a particular kind of wild berry is nutritious or harmful. As such, the intellect would seem to be free or undetermined with respect to the object (Suárez 1861: 715). Suárez rejects that line of reasoning since it is not the case that the intellect, of itself, has any control over its action in assenting or dissenting to the propositions 'This kind of berry is healthy' or 'This kind of berry is not healthy', but rather that an object might not be sufficiently presented to the intellect (*ibid.*). To return to our example, if upon a chemical analysis of the berry some poisonous chemical should be discovered, the intellect would not be able to assent or dissent with indifference from the proposition 'This kind of berry is good for me'. If the intellect is not a formally free faculty, then neither would the will be free on the Thomist assumption, 'for [the will] always follows a judgment of the intellect, and should choose what the intellect judges to be better; but the intellect is not free; therefore neither is the will' (Suárez 1978: 396). That is to say, given the intellect's presentation of a good to the will, the will would be unable not to elect that good (Suárez 1861: 719). But, again, the ability *not* to act once all the requisites for action are in place is the very essence of freedom.

While not denying that the intellect plays a crucial role in free action—for, indeed, Suárez thinks the will is 'blind' without the intellect (1861: 719)—the Jesuit nevertheless sketches a different account of the will's freedom relative to the intellect. As we have seen, Suárez holds that the intellect is necessarily determined to its proper object (the true), but he thinks that the will is not determined to the good in the same manner. The intellect cannot determine

itself to assent or dissent when some sufficiently clear truth is present, but the will can either act or not act for the sake of some object even once it has been presented as a good. To return to the inoculation example, the intellect, upon the sufficient cognition of relevant data, cannot fail to assent to the claims that 'The inoculation will preserve health' and that 'Health is a good'. And though for most people the intellect cannot fail to assent to the claim that 'The prick of the needle is uncomfortable', the intellect cannot also fail to assent to the claim that 'It is better to suffer the needle than suffer a horrible disease'. Nevertheless, because one and the same object presents an aspect of the good (health) as well as an aspect of some evil (pain), the will remains indifferent to that object (the inoculation). For Suárez, the will:

[I]s not determined by all things, since some necessary character of the good does not appear in all things, or [it could be the case that] such goodness does not appear that would not have evil, some inconvenience, or defect mixed with it' (1861: 722).

Because the will is indifferent it can, after a judgment of reason and together with all the other prerequisites for acting, either elect to take the inoculation or elect not to take it. Indeed, Suárez is convinced that, in this life, all good things (*bona*) are presented in such a manner that they possess a mixture of both good and evil (1978: 398). Accordingly, unlike the intellect, the will is never determined with respect to its object and remains free in its actions, for the will brings its very self into act.

God as Cause of Human Freedom

Thus far, our presentation of Suárez's account of human freedom reveals that one's free actions emerge entirely from the will's own active power and indifference with respect to its self-determination. But how does God stand in relation to the will's own self-determination? Suárez points out that all agree—both Catholics and 'heretics'—that for 'supernatural' acts God's aid of grace (*auxilium gratiae*) is absolutely required for the efficacy of the will (1858: 379, 387). Our question, however, pertains to the will's *natural* (volitional) acts. Indeed, given Suárez's claim, noted above, that an account of the nature of grace cannot be forthcoming without a proper understanding of the will, the question of the will's freedom relative to God is not without crucial importance. To be sure, the relationship among sufficient grace, efficacious grace, and the will's freedom only emphasizes the urgency of arriving at some proper understanding of human freedom. Does the difference between efficacious and sufficient grace emerge as a consequence of God's initiative, as the Dominicans had taught, or does sufficient grace become efficacious upon the assent of the will, as the Jesuits held? Further still, is there really any room for sufficient grace since, as Suárez points out, the 'heretics

of this time’—by which he means Luther, Calvin, and their followers—not only admit efficacious grace, but they ‘exaggerate’ it to such an extent so as to deny any sufficient grace. For the Reformers ‘efficacious grace is a certain kind of divine motion which imports necessity upon the will so as to will whatever [God] wants’ (1858: 181). But, at least on Suárez’s view, the will’s cooperation with or rejection of sufficient grace (i.e., its indifference) determines whether that grace becomes efficacious or remains merely sufficient. ‘Therefore efficacious aid is that principle of grace that has a particular strength and efficacy to induce the human will [to action] as [the will] consents to it’ (ibid.). But if the determining factor between sufficient and efficacious grace is the will and the innovators have denied sufficient grace, Suárez thinks they have also simply denied free will (ibid.).

Again, if grace perfects nature, then understanding how, at the natural level, God interacts with the human will in such a way that the latter remains free will be of paramount concern for the theologian. In describing the relationship between God and human freedom Suárez defends the following four propositions. (1) The will (*voluntas*) determines itself to free action; (2) the will is not physically predetermined to its free actions by God alone or by any other extrinsic agent; (3) God determines the will, not however without the will; (4) the will (*voluntas*) freely determines itself (Suárez 1858: 86–90). Importantly, Calvin, as we shall soon see, advances a doctrine that is incompatible with these four propositions.

Propositions (1), (2), and (4), seem consistent enough with what we have seen regarding Suárez’s treatment of human freedom. Concerning (1), Suárez simply claims that the will determines itself in its free actions, but then adds that the will determines itself ‘with proportionate divine concurrence’ (1858: 87). The obvious question that arises from this proposition is: to what extent does ‘divine concurrence’ move or effect the will? In defending (2) Suárez makes it clear that the will is not determined by any external agent—even God—alone, for if that were the case, the will would not be truly free (1858: 89). Rather, operating with a sense of what has come to be known as ‘congruism’, Suárez thinks that both the will *and* God work simultaneously to bring about some effect, namely, a particular act of the will. Suárez explains this further in defending the third proposition.

Suárez holds that God does in fact determine the will, but, lest this claim seem to strip away the will’s freedom, he immediately adds ‘but not without the will’. In our preceding discussion of human freedom, we saw that the human will has a true efficacy to it. It is the will itself that, once all the conditions for acting are present, moves itself either to an action or to refrain from action. If the will acts, that action is an effect of a secondary cause, namely, the created will. As such, the secondary cause’s dependence upon a primary cause (God) cannot be left out of ultimate consideration. ‘Anything

whatsoever that a secondary cause accomplishes, so does the first; for if fire heats, so also does God heat' (Suárez 1858: 89; cf. Esposito 2014: 122). Indeed, as Suarez sees it, the efficacy whereby the first agent acts is greater (*magis*) than that of the secondary. The reason for this is that the secondary cause depends upon the primary cause precisely for the exercise of its own causality. In other words, though he does not use the terminology in the present passage, the relationship between the divine cause and the human cause (i.e., the will) relative to the effect (i.e., the will's action) is an 'essentially ordered causal series'.

Well before Suárez, John Duns Scotus had offered an extensive discussion of the nature of an essentially ordered causal series, which boils down to these three main conditions. First (i), a secondary cause depends upon the primary cause precisely insofar as it (the secondary cause) exercises its own causality. Second (ii), in an essentially ordered series the causality of the primary cause is of a higher character (*ratio*) and is thus superior and more perfect than its effect. Third (iii), in an essentially ordered causal series the causal efficacy of all the causes is simultaneously required to produce the effect (Scotus 1950: 154–55). Holding Scotus's account of essentially ordered causes in mind, we can make sense of Suárez's claim that God determines the human will since 'that determination is something [*aliquid*], which cannot come about without God' (Suárez 1858: 89). That is, the volition of the will is itself an effect of the will. But the will is a secondary cause that, according to (iii) can only exercise its causality if the primary cause (God) exercises His. A number of important corollaries arise from Suárez's account.

First, it is clear that, to Suárez's mind, the will's (free) actions (i.e., its effects) enjoy some true, entitive reality. In its willing, the will truly exercises secondary causality the effects of which are dependent upon the human will, even though the will acts in concert with divine concurrence. There can be no mistaking the Suárezian account for an early form of occasionalism. Second, God, by conferring His 'proportionate concurrence' to the will's choice(s), is intimately connected to that choice. For Suárez, God's concurrence can take one of two forms: ordaining or permitting (see Esposito 2014: 125). In supplying divine concurrence to all free choices, it is not that God causes or ordains the choices that are evil. 'It is certain from faith', argues Suárez, 'that God does not predetermine the will nor incline it by any other way to formal sin' (1858: 94). God 'permits' such actions on account of human freedom which moves itself to such an (evil) action—that is, the will determines itself according to proposition (4) as we shall see—but He does not 'ordain' them. Third, the will acts freely precisely because of God's effecting it. God's causal concurrence, in other words, is itself one of the necessary prerequisites for acting. But, as Suárez explains, '[T]o determine the will is nothing other than to effect its determination' (1858: 89).

To return to the second point made above, while Suárez marks a difference between God's ordained and permissive will, Calvin is of an entirely different mind. As noted above, Calvin thinks that God ordains Adam's fall together with all of humankind. The reason for this claim, again, is at least in part to ensure that God's providential decrees are infallibly realized. But if there is strict necessity in all creation, including in free human acts, for the sake of securing divine providence and prescience, then how does one reconcile that account of providence with the reality of sin? One is left with no other conclusion than that God ordains evil, for, '[I]f God so necessitates the will so as to compel it to act, God will be the author of sin in evil [actions], which Calvin consequently admits with the ancient heretics' (Suárez 1857: 269). Calvin himself say, 'It is evident [God] creates light and darkness, He forms good things and bad things; no bad thing happens that He Himself has not made' (1576: 51). Thus it is not the case that God merely permits evil, as Suárez thinks; for Calvin, God is the very author of evil. If such a claim strikes one as utterly abhorrent, as it does Suárez, this is simply because, on Calvin's reckoning, the weakness of our understanding [*imbecillitas*] cannot understand how one and the same thing should be desired and not desired by God (1576: 51). While Calvin may be content to retreat to the ineffable mystery of the divine will, Suárez thinks that if God truly is the author of our evil works then 'all moral quality is inept, inasmuch as it is only passion' (Suárez 1857: 269). That is to say, human beings are not truly (moral) agents that exercise their own efficacy but are entirely passive to the designs of providence.

Be that as it may, if, as Suárez thinks, God determines the will, it is not in the sense of imposing absolute necessity upon it. Thus to keep proposition (3) in balance he establishes proposition (4). In order for the will truly to determine itself it must first have by its own nature and in its power 'everything that is necessary for its self-determination' (1858: 90). Suárez thinks this claim is entirely consistent with the aforementioned propositions, especially (3), since if any of those requisite conditions are lacking, the will would not be able to exercise its own free self-determination, which simply means, the will would not be free. The will has within itself the power to determine itself but only because God sustains the secondary causality of the will (*ibid.*). Once again it is the congruence of both the divine concurrence as well as the will's own power of self-determination that a free act results. In short, God Himself is the ultimate source and ground of a truly efficacious human freedom.

The Confrontation with Calvin

We have seen that in developing his account of the freedom of the will, Suárez often touches upon the thought of the 'innovators', if only in passing. Nevertheless, in one passage from his *De gratia* Suárez offers a direct, albeit brief,

critique of Calvin's account of free will. This critique is located within a broader discussion of various thinkers—old and new—who have erred with respect to the nature of human freedom relative to grace. Again, though my present concern is with the will in its natural operations, the implications of the various theological theories discussed directly bear upon our topic. As mentioned above, there were a number of thinkers who denied freedom of the human will for diverse reasons, going so far as to introduce a 'certain fatal necessity' (*fatalem quamdam necessitatem*) in human actions (Suárez 1857: 267).

On the part of the 'Innovators' (*novatores*) this 'fatal necessity' is introduced as a consequence of sin, and—as Suárez points out—for the innovators free will did not remain in man (1857: 267–68). Indeed, apart from the efficacy of divine predestination, the Reformers held that 'nothing could effect our will' (1857: 268), presumably this means not even the will itself. Yet, herein Suárez marks a tension within the Innovators' position. According to them, human beings lost freedom because of sin and now operate according to the necessity of grace. But predestination is not introduced because of sin but because of divine providence. Thus, if predestination introduces necessity, there is no less necessity imposed upon Adam in the state of innocence than now obtains among fallen man. Thus, the claim that liberty is lost through sin seems to be problematic (1857: 268).

Nevertheless, the innovators were not without reasons for their positions, and they themselves noted problems in allowing an absolute and unchecked freedom of the will. If a robust sense of freedom is allowed to human nature, then how can both the necessity of divine grace as well as the infallibility of divine providence be sustained? The horns of the dilemma, then, seem to be as follows: on the one hand, one can secure the freedom of the will, but to do so one must reject divine grace, since grace seems to function as a form of coercion that would determine the will and thus dissolve freedom. On the other hand, one can defend the necessity of grace, but to do so would be to undermine, at least in some measure, the freedom of the will. Yet, as Suárez sees it, the Catholic position forms a median between the two horns of the dilemma. If that median is going to be achieved, Suárez is convinced it can only be as a result of his account of freedom articulated, as we have seen, in terms of indifference. If that indifference of the will is not preserved, then intractable problems emerge. Such is precisely the case, Suárez thinks, with respect to Calvin's account.

Calvin, as Suárez notes, is much more sophisticated in his account and does not merely deny human freedom *simpliciter*. Indeed, the Reformer holds that:

We count among the natural faculties of man, approving, rejecting: willing, refusing: striving for, resisting: often approving vanity, rejecting a firm good: willing an evil, not willing a good: striving for wickedness, resisting justice (1576: 76).

Be that as it may, for Calvin, though those actions are willed freely, they are still necessitated by God's ordinance. To be necessitated, however, is not necessarily to be coerced, we recall. Thus God necessitates the will but does not coerce it. Here one might ask: does maintaining that God necessitates the will commensurate with Suárez's above-mentioned proposition (3) that God determines the will?

It strikes me that Calvin's view is incommensurate with Suárez's account for a number of reasons. Though the Jesuit admits that God determines the will in the sense of proposition (3) discussed above, it is not in the sense of absolute necessity. In further addressing the manner in which God moves the will, Suárez marks a distinction between necessity taken in the 'composed sense' as opposed to the 'divided sense'. These two senses of freedom were a subject of controversy in the disputes between the Dominicans and Jesuits, but, for Suárez, the difference amounts to this: in the composed sense the will's freedom consists in its ability to act or not to act, once all the prerequisites for acting (including God's concurrence) are in place (Suárez: 1857: 11–12); in the divided sense it is possible for the will not to act once all the prerequisites are given, but only if one of those prerequisites is removed. That is to say, in the divided sense if all the prerequisites for acting remain in place, the will cannot not act (Suárez 1857: 10). Matava explains the difference between the composed and divided sense as the difference between necessity *de dicto* and necessity *de re* or, what is the same, between the 'necessity of the consequence' and the 'necessity of the consequent' (2015: 83–84). Thus, Suárez thinks it is possible for the will to be necessitated in the composed sense yet, because such necessitation is only hypothetical, the will remains free (1861: 706). But necessity in the divided sense, which Calvin here seems to espouse, is such that it destroys freedom because the will's indifference is compromised (1857: 12). Calvin, however, is entirely content to reject such indifference or even the idea that the human will 'cooperates' with divine grace (Calvin 1576: 58).

Finally, Suárez complains that, on the view of the Reformers, there is given no explanation why the necessity of divine motion should have more efficacy after the fall of man than before. The consequence of their argument is that they have simply denied contingency. 'And therefore all the heretics, who, [on account of] divine prescience, providence, or predestination, have removed liberty... have [thereby] simply denied contingent things, and have introduced necessity into every creature, every state, and every time' (Suárez 1857: 269). If there is no contingency, there is no potency. Finally, if there is no potency, there is no intrinsic power to act efficacious across all creation, to say nothing of man. In short, Calvin, it would seem, has played his own role in the long history of denying secondary causality.

Conclusion

Given the historical development of Catholic and Reformed theologies proceeding from the Tridentine period, although Trent did reject certain Protestant propositions regarding free will, no consensus on all the issues surrounding the nature of freedom and the necessity of grace was or even could be achieved. This should hardly be surprising as no agreement was reached even within Catholicism itself. The matter is unavoidably rendered all the more complicated when the topic of grace is introduced into the mix. The almost abrupt and anticlimactic conclusion of the *Congregatio de Auxiliis* only underscores the irresolvable tensions. While Pope Paul V assured both parties involved in the dispute that neither could justly be condemned as heretical and that both viewpoints represented licit theological *sententiae*, that pronouncement did little actually to resolve the theoretical tensions that existed between Dominicans and Jesuits, to say nothing of Catholics and Reformers. Nevertheless, perhaps such a situation is inevitable since apart from the doctrine of the Trinity, there seems to be no reality shrouded in greater mystery than freedom. Citing Augustine, Suárez is only too aware of the obscurity of this mystery:

The question of free will is the most obscure and with great danger in turning to either side. Therefore, both those deny free will to defend grace and, conversely, those who fight for free will against grace, must most carefully advance by the middle way, which the Catholic truth professes (Suárez 1857: 267).

Whatever the contours of that mystery may be, Suárez subscribed wholeheartedly to its truth and devoted himself to the speculative unfolding of its intelligibility. For the Jesuit, despite the 'obscurity' of human freedom, one thing is clear: man has been redeemed by God, and one's salvation now depends upon his truly free response to that fact.

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