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REVISITING *DE ENTIBUS RATIONIS*  
WITHIN *DISPUTATIONES METAPHYSICAE*  
BY FRANCISCO SUÁREZ –  
A BRIEF HISTORICAL OUTLINE

**Abstract:** The aim of this article is to outline the historical context of Suárez’s crucial treatise *De entibus rationis* (*On Beings of Reason*) – a work by the renowned Spanish theologian and philosopher of the post-Tridentine era – in the context of his *Disputationes metaphysicae*. The author, drawing on sources and supplementary literature, presents this topic in three subsections, though more in a general and opinion-forming manner than as a systematic exegesis of the structure and content of the treatise. To this end, the author considers, first, a brief but fundamental definition of the subject of Suárez’s metaphysics, adopting his leading understanding of “real being” (*ens reale*) without which it is impossible to coherently present the entire doctrine of being of reason (*ens rationis*). Second, the author moves on to describe the general significance of Suárez’s *Disputationes metaphysicae* to place the concept of “being of reason” within the context of his thought. Further on, the author addresses the provenance of the treatise *De entibus rationis* and ultimately defines its application and positioning within Suárez’s metaphysical theory. The article also includes a few concluding remarks and a somewhat longer quote from Suárez’s treatise that illustrates the fundamental assumptions of his project regarding the entire theory of being of reason.

**Keywords:** Francisco Suárez, *ens rationis*, being of reason, mind-dependent being, *Disputationes metaphysicae*.

The concept of a being of reason (*ens rationis*) still leads to ambiguous definitions<sup>1</sup>. Some interpreters even fall into meanings completely divorced from the original

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<sup>1</sup> These terms of “being of reason” and “mind-dependent being” are commonly interchangeable in the literature. They are even being deliberately overlapped by scholars. One may find their evident application in John N. Deely’s translation of q. II (*On mind-dependent being*) from the *Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus* by J. Poinset (vol. I: *Ars logica Secunda Pars*, q. II: *De ente rationis logico, quod est secunda intentio*), as questions deliberately selected within *Tractatus de signis* (*Treatise on*

theories. Most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century literature referring to this concept, often superficially, fails to account for beings of reason, and this brings a distortion in the way Suárez's theory is perceived. This is most noticeable on occasions in the post-scholastic tradition up to contemporary philosophers who have not had source knowledge in applying this topic to a proper context, thereby revealing their apparent lack of understanding, and even undermine the significance of a being of reason in other sciences beyond metaphysics. Their treatment of this topic is usually conflicted with metaphysical evidence. As one of many proficient Spanish theologians and philosophers, Suárez endorsed an appropriate application of a being of reason in his *De entibus rationis* (*On beings of reason*). Suárez offers a reliable historical overview of the thorough research mind and attainment concerns of a being of reason, expanded into a kind of metaphysical confidence of non-being, false and imaginary ones.

Suárez's *De entibus rationis*, placed as the last question within his metaphysical lectures in the much larger *Disputationes metaphysicae*, is a systematic approach to a being of reason and a profound summary of the preceding quarrels over mind-dependent entities in the Latin West, but at the same it does not close the debate<sup>2</sup>. Based on the sources examined, the far-reaching accurate account of

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*Signs*). Another form is used in J.P. Doyle's translation of q. LIV (*On beings of reason*) from Suárez's *Disputationes metaphysicae*. See J. Poincot. *Tractatus de Signis. The Semiotic of John Poincot*. The translation arrangement by J.N. Deely, in consultation with R.A. Powell. Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 1985 p. 664, esp. *First Preamble: On mind-dependent being, in three articles* p. 44-64; F. Suárez. *On Beings of Reason*. Translated by J.P. Doyle. Milwaukee 1995 p. 137. I use these terms interchangeably, but the basic one is a "being of reason". I also refer to other translations of Suárez's *De entibus rationis* as appropriate below. Unless otherwise indicated, all Latin translations in the text are entirely mine.

<sup>2</sup> For further details on a being of reason in Suárez and Renaissance scholasticism, as the background of traditional views, see J.P. Doyle. *Suárez on Beings of Reason and Truth* (1). "Vivarium" 25 (1987) p. 47-75; Idem. *Suárez on Beings of Reason and Truth* (2). "Vivarium" 26 (1988) p. 51-72; Idem. *Suárez on Truth and Mind-Dependent Beings: Implications for a Unified Semiotic*. "Semiotics" (1983) p. 121-133; J.F. Yela Utrilla. *El ente de razón en Suárez*. "Pensamiento" (1948) no. 4 (número extraordinario) p. 271-303; A. Millán-Puelles. *Teoría del objeto puro. Colección Cuestiones Fundamentales*. Madrid 1990 p. 465-466; G. Klima. *The changing role of entia rationis in mediaeval semantics and ontology*. "Synthese" 96 (1993) no. 1 p. 25-59; D.D. Novotný. *Arriaga (and Hurtado) against the Baroque Mainstream: The Case of Ens rationis*. "Filosoficky Casopis" 64 (2016) p. 119-144; Idem. *Suárez on Beings of Reason*. In: *A Companion to Francisco Suárez*. Eds. V.M. Salas, R.L. Fastiggi. Leiden 2015 s. 248-273; Idem. *Ens Rationis From Suárez to Caramuel: A Study in Scholasticism of the Baroque Era. Medieval Philosophy: Texts and Studies*. New York 2013; Idem. *Twenty Years after Suárez: Francisco de Araújo on the Nature, Existence, and Causes of Entia rationis*. In: *Hircocervi & Other Metaphysical Wonders: Essays in Honor of John P. Doyle*. Ed. V.M. Salas. Milwaukee 2013 p. 241-268; Idem. *Rubio and Suárez: A Comparative Study on the Nature of Entia Rationis*. In: *Bohemia Jesuitica 1556-2006*. Eds. P. Cemus, R. Cemus. Prague 2010 p. 477-490; Idem. *Forty-Two Years after Suárez: Mastri and Belluto's Development of the «Classical» Theory of Entia Rationis*. "Quaestio" 8 (2008) p. 473-498; Idem. *Prolegomena to a Study of Beings of Reason in Post-Suárezian Scholasticism, 1600-1650*. "Studia Neoaristotelica: A Journal of Analytic Scholasticism" 3 (2012) p. 117-141; Ch. Shields. *Shadows of being: Francisco Suárez's Entia Rationis*. In: *The Philosophy of Francisco*

Suárez, which may be discerned in the course of his arguments, becomes visible. For Suárez, there is an intense need for a deeper understanding of the relation between the classical division into what exists independently of the mind (*ens reale*) and what exists only within, such as mental or purely intentional beings (*entia rationis*). Distinguishing a being of reason (*ens rationis*) from the real one (*ens reale*) is a purposeful thread of his metaphysical cognition<sup>3</sup>. Due to this approach, he accordingly seems to be trying to define *ex professo* as an adequate subject of *primae philosophiae*, which for Suárez is the final concept of being inasmuch as it is a real being (*ens inquantum ens reale*), though abstracted and involving the second intentional order or reflexive apprehension and then defined as the widely considered *esse essentiae* (essential being)<sup>4</sup>. In this way, Suárez's metaphysics, which also deals with immaterial entities, such as the essence and the existence of God, and thus, with created and uncreated beings, becomes the most perfect in the order of natural sciences (*suprema omnium scientiarum naturalium*)<sup>5</sup>. Metaphysics, considering being (*ens*) in its total extend (*ad totum ens eodem modo cognoscendum*), provides cognitive unity to science (*unum scientiae habitum*) rendering in it the

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Suárez. Ed. B. Hill, H. Lagerlund. Oxford 2012 p. 57-74; R. Goczał. *Onto-teo-logia. Status bytu realnego i myślnego w metafizyce Francisco Suáreza*. Warszawa 2011 p. 300-374.

<sup>3</sup> In contrast, an approach based on the semiotics is attributed to the primary tasks of John Poinso's (John of St. Thomas) semiotical logic by J.N. Deely, leading him to the definition of signs as a relational concept between the real and mind-dependent beings. Following Poinso's survey, Deely considers his definition of signs as a foundational point in the entire doctrine of semiotical logic by Poinso. Cf. "[...] the analysis of the sign – semiotic – provides a point of view that is superior to what is independent of mind (*ens reale*) and what is dependent upon in (*ens rationis*), because in the sign, as in experience both orders of being are found". J.N. Deely. *Introducing Semiotic: Its History and Doctrine*. Bloomington Indiana 1982 p. 58. "Thus the first task of the semiotician, in Poinso's judgment, is to secure a standpoint superior to the division of being into what exists independently of our cognition (*ens reale*, «mind independent being») and what exists dependently upon cognition (*ens rationis*, «mind dependent being»)". Ibidem p. 169. See also J.N. Deely. *Four Ages of Understanding – The First Postmodern Survey of Philosophy from Ancient Times to the Turn of the Twenty-first Century*. Toronto – Buffalo – London 2001 p. xxxi, 462-463, esp. 468-479 (*The Foundation of the Perspective Proper to the Doctrina Signorum*). Some similar indications can be also read from the *doctrina signorum* by Domingo de Soto (†1560). Cf. E.E. Ashworth. *Domingo de Soto (1494-1560) and the Doctrine of Signs*. In: *De Ortu Grammaticae: Studies in Medieval Grammar and Linguistic Theory in Memory of Jan Pinborg*. Eds. G.L. Bursill-Hall, S. Ebbesen, K. Koerner. Amsterdam 1990 p. 35-48.

<sup>4</sup> See F. Suárez. *Disputationes metaphysicae*. In: *Opera Omnia*. Vol. 25-26. Editio nova a C. Berton. Parisiis 1866 disp. I, sec. 1, a. 12-13; also disp. XVIII-XXX (hereinafter as: *Disputationes metaphysicae*).

<sup>5</sup> *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. I, sec. 3, a. 2, 8. Cf. also: "At vero scientia de Deo et intelligentiis est suprema omnium naturalium; et ideo nihil supponit cognitum per altiore scientiam, sed in se includit quiddam necessarium est ad sui obiecti cognitionem perfectam, quantum per naturale lumen haberi potest; eadem ergo scientia, quae de his specialibus obiectis tractat, simul considerat omnia praedicata quae illis sunt cum aliis rebus communia, et haec est tota metaphysica doctrina; est ergo una scientia". *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. I, sec. 3, a. 10.

principles of universal knowledge of all beings<sup>6</sup>. It rises above all matter, above physics and mathematics, focusing on the consideration of being classified conceptually as the essential reality<sup>7</sup>. The reality is an inherent transcendental essence of things, and for that deep-rooted reason, we can apprehend a real structure of being in our concepts (*ratio entis realis*)<sup>8</sup>. Metaphysics, therefore, examines real existence in an intentional or objective order (*ordo objectivus*) and considers it not only in terms of abstract cognitive principles (*secundum rationem* or *ex parte cognoscentis*), but mainly in terms of rational principles relating to existence (*secundum esse*)<sup>9</sup>. It examines being in two foremost aspects: created and uncreated<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> F. Suárez. *Commentaria una cum quaestionibus in libros Aristotelis De Anima*. Vol. 1-3. Introducción y edición crítica por S. Castellote. Madrid 1991 disp. VIII, sec. 2, a. 9.

<sup>7</sup> "Ratio eius est, quia metaphysica abstrahit ex parte obiecti a materia; ergo et principia metaphysicae abstrahunt a materia; ergo et demonstrationes. Sed haec sententia limitatione indiget, nam causa materialis ut sic, et in tota sua latitudine sumpta, latius patet quam materia sensibilis, aut intelligibilis seu quantitativa, a quibus abstrahit metaphysicae obiectum". *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. I, sec 5, a. 42; see Aristotle. *Metaphysica*. In: *The Works of Aristotle*. Vol. VIII. Translated J.A. Smith M.A. & W.D. Ross M.A. Oxford 1908 VI, 1025b18-1026a24; VII, 1029b29-33; IX, 1061a28; IX, 1064a15-b4; XI, 1061a28; XIII, 1077a36-b14 (hereinafter: Aristotle, *Metaphysica*); Sancti Thomae Aquinatis. *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis*. In: *Opera omnia iussu impensaue Leonis XIII. P. M. Edita*. Tomus II. Romae 1884 lib. I, lec. 1, n. 1-2; L.Oeing-Hanhoff. *Abstraktionsgrade*. In: *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. Bd. 1 A-C. Hrsg. von J. Ritter. Basel 1971 p. 165, also 147-159 ("Abstraction"). Cf. Silvester Mauro's view: „Quartus et ultimus est logicus, qui considerat esse cogniti, quod est immaterialius quam esse reale: nam esse reale non consistit in ipsa elevatione a materia, et esse cogniti consistit in hac ipsa elevatione, cum idem sit cognosci ac habere esse elevatum a materia; idem sit cognosci cognitione perfectiore et perfectiore ac habere esse elevatius a materia". S. Maurus. *Quaestiones philosophicae*. Vol. I. Ed. M. Liberatore. Paris 1876 q. V, ad 10, 153; cf. J.P. Doyle. *Silvester Mauro, S.J. (1619-1687) on four degrees of abstraction*. "International Philosophical Quarterly" 36 (1996) p. 472 (more 461-474). On Mauro's philosophy, see C. Sommervogel, A. & A. de Backer. *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*. Vol. VII. Bruxelles 1896 kol. 765-769; C.L. Comneno. *Los comentarios de S. Mauro a la Física de Aristóteles*. "Revista de Filosofía" 8 (1949) p. 459-468; U. Baldini. *Italiaen: Die Schulphilosophie*. In: *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie: Die Philosophie des 17. Jahrhunderts*. Vol. 1. Hrsg. J.-P. Schobinger. Basel 1998 p. 619-769.

<sup>8</sup> *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. VIII, sec. 2, a. 15. Cf. also: "[...] «metaphysica» dicta est, quasi post physicam, seu ultra physicam constituta; post (inquam) non dignitate, aut naturae ordine, sed acquisitionis, generationis, seu inventionis; vel, si ex parte obiecti illud intelligamus, res de quibus haec scientia tractat dicuntur esse post physica seu naturalia entia, quia eorum ordinem superant, et in altiori rerum gradu constitutae sunt. Ex quo tandem appellata est haec scientia aliarum «principes et domina»". Ibidem disp. I, sec. 1, a. 1.

<sup>9</sup> "Metaphysica vero dicitur abstrahere a materia sensibili et intelligibili, et non solum secundum rationem, sed etiam secundum esse, quia rationes entis quas considerat, in re ipsa inveniuntur sine materia; et ideo in proprio et obiectivo conceptu suo per se non includit materiam". Ibidem disp. I, sec. 2, a. 13.

<sup>10</sup> "[...] huiusmodi sunt ratio entis creati vel increati, substantiae finitae aut infinitae, et similiter accidentis absoluti vel respectivi, qualitatis, actionis, operationis aut dependentiae et similibus. De quibus observandum est plures posse abstrahi rationes communes rebus materialibus et immaterialibus, quarum consideratio iuxta principium positum in rigore deberet ad hanc scientiam spectare,

Thus, in doing so either on the plane of *rebus materialibus*, in which it considers the high-priority essences of being (such as categories of being, substance, transcendental principles, knowability of being, good, truth, oneness)<sup>11</sup>, or on the plane of *rebus immaterialibus*, in which it addresses immaterial, supersensible, or supernatural things, having as its subjects God, angelic beings or other spiritual beings that do not belong to the order of the physical world<sup>12</sup>. Metaphysics appears to be a science whose subject is the most universal or common concept of being (*ens commune*), which is being captured at the highest level of abstraction, and respectively, also refers to God and angels or the separate substances (*substantia separata* or spiritual beings)<sup>13</sup>.

In the second part of *Disputationes*, Suárez ends with six sections devoted to beings of reason or mind-dependent beings (*Disputatio* LIV)<sup>14</sup>. Reflecting on beings of reason, he reopens the scholastic debate on the cognitive and ontological structure of purely intentional beings, including objective and exclusively intentional entities that are constituted by reason, such as beings of reason and fictive beings. At the same moment, he reopens an exceedingly relevant controversy

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ut est communis ratio viventis, quae abstrahi potest a rebus materialibus et immaterialibus”. Ibidem disp. I, sec. 2, a. 15.

<sup>11</sup> “Unde, sicut philosophia considerans de variis speciebus substantiarum materialium, considerat subinde communem rationem materialis substantiae, et adaequata principia, et proprietates eius; rursusque agens de variis speciebus viventium, considerat communem rationem viventis ut sic, et propria principia, et proprietates eius; ita scientia humana (ut sic dicam) considerans varios gradus et rationes entium, necesse est ut consideret communem rationem entis. Item, cum varias substantias speculetur, et varia accidentia, necesse est ut consideret communes rationes substantiae et accidentis; hoc autem non praestat, nisi per hanc universalem et principem scientiam”. Ibidem disp. I, sec. 2, a. 14.

<sup>12</sup> “[...] atque hoc modo, quia haec scientia considerat de Deo, consequenter in eo considerat rationem primae causae finalis, efficientis, et exemplaris, et considerans de angelis, inquirat quam virtutem causandi habeant in reliqua entia”. Ibidem disp. I, sec. 2, a. 18. “Itaque metaphysica humana (de qua tractamus) de his demonstrat et disserit, quantum humanum ingenium naturali lumine potest. In rebus autem quae sensibilem aut intelligibilem materiam seu quantitatem concernunt, non est id simpliciter verum, etiam ex parte ipsius scientiae, sed quatenus in eis reperiuntur transcendentalia praedicata, vel eis aliquo modo applicantur metaphysicae rationes et media abstrahentia a materia, ut per ea aliquid de eis demonstraretur. Tertio addere possumus, hanc scientiam agere de omnibus non in se, sed in causis suis, quia disputat de universalissimis causis rerum omnium, et praesertim de Deo”. Ibidem disp. I, sec. 5, a. 14.

<sup>13</sup> „Nam, licet Deus et intelligentiae secundum se consideratae, videantur altiori quodam gradu et ordine esse constitutae, tamen prout in nostram considerationem cadunt, non possunt a consideratione transcendentium attributorum seiungi. Unde etiam confirmatur, nam perfecta scientia de Deo et aliis substantiis separatis tradit cognitionem omnium praedicatorum quae in eis insunt; ergo etiam praedicatorum communium et transcendentium”. Ibidem, disp. I, sec. 3, a. 10.

<sup>14</sup> Translations in Spanish and French are available. See F. Suárez. *Disputaciones Metafisicas*. Edición bilingüe, editora y traducción de S.R. Romeo, S.C. Sánchez, A.P. Zanón. *Biblioteca Hispanica de Filosofía*. Vol. 7. Madrid 1960-1966; Idem. *Les êtres de raison: dispute métaphysique LIV*. Texte latin présenté, trad. et annoté par J.-P. Coujou. Paris 2001.

regarding whether a being of reason is an object of reference to metaphysics or to logic. The fact that Suárez included the debate on such entities in the metaphysical space as the last disputation within his inquiry is also significant. This is especially crucial for both philosophical and theological purposes where we also consider metaphysically both the real being and the being of reason; in particular, bearing in mind the impression that when we focus on God, wondering whether and how He knows and creates mental entities, ideas etc., or merely exerts influence on the human process of abstracting them in the space of our intentional or noetic cognition.

### 1. SUÁREZ'S DISPUTATIONES METAPHYSICAE AND DE ENTIBUS RATIONIS

As for the methodology and formal aspect, in the *Disputationes metaphysicae* by Suárez we deal with an evident departure from the classical approach to the metaphysical questions taught so far in *ad mentem Divi Thomae* or *ad mentem Scoti*, which was a long-lasting practice in the previous centuries. The distinctiveness in Suárez is definitely visible both in the form of the lecture, which differs from the classic pattern of treatises in the form of commentaries on Aristotle or short *opuscula*, and also in a new interpretation of all metaphysical topics and perplexities included in the widely known *Corpuus Aristotelicum*, in which Suárez sought to clarify metaphysical issues. Suárez's work illustrates the increasingly new method of critical and polemical treatises originating from the Modern Era, written in the form of *disputationes* or metaphysical manuals (*philosophia recepta*), which reflected contemporary trends in philosophy after René Descartes (†1650)<sup>15</sup>. As it seems, Suárez's disputations reflect a different approach to the subject of metaphysics and a decisive departure from the past masters, with their perception of the role of metaphysical cognition as a holistic theory within the commentaries of his great predecessors. Suárez's work also manifests its deeper discerning of the threefold dimension of truth (*tripliciter distingui veritatem* – truth is distinguished threefold)<sup>16</sup>, including metaphysical reflection on the essential attributes of God

<sup>15</sup> "L'importance de Suárez provient justement du fait qu'il a été le premier à ériger un ensemble métaphysique en un temps où l'on ressentait la nécessité de disposer d'autre chose que d'une série de commentaires aristotéliens, ou d'une philosophie rhétorique à la Pierre Ramus, ou d'une vague théorie sceptique". J.F. Mora. *Suárez et la Philosophie Moderne*. Tr. from Spanish by P.-X. Despillho. "Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale" 68 (1963) p. 59. Die *Disputationes metaphysicae* des Suárez bedeuten den Uebergang von den Metaphysikkomentaren zu den selbständigen Metaphysiklehrbüchern. M. Grabmann. *Die Disputationes Metaphysicae des Franz Suárez*. In: *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*. Vol. 1. München 1926 p. 539.

<sup>16</sup> Suárez distinguishes three basic categories of truth: in signification (*in significando*), in cognition (*in cognoscendo*) and in being (*in essendo*). The previous two are subordinated to the last one

either (disp. XXX)<sup>17</sup>. J.P. Doyle, in his preface to the English edition of *De entibus rationis*, indicates that Suárez' work may have had its predecessors in the following works: *Sapientiale* by Thomas of York (†1260), *Summa Philosophiae* attributed to Robert Grosseteste (†1253), and *Delucidarium metaphysicarum disputationum, in Aristotelis decem et quatuor libros Metaphysicorum* by Agostino Nifo (†1538). The latter work is classified as a commentary written *per modum quaestionis*<sup>18</sup>. The basis for Suárez's dissimilarity from the previous treatises lies not only in a diverse comprehension of being, but also in a distinctive methodology of metaphysical questions, namely as a comprehensive model of knowledge divided into real being and being of reason. Suárez's work became a turning point in the conventional practice of metaphysics, and, at the same time, gave a new shape to philosophical discipline, including logical topics as well. In some respects, most scholars recognize Suárez' system to be nominalistic or, more precisely, essentialistic in shape and to be close to the new orientation of modern philosophy, particularly subjectivist or transcendental trends, but it also remains widely considered as a genuine *corpus* of scholastic doctrine<sup>19</sup>. In his profound metaphysics, we find similarities with

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and must be based on it. Cf. "Posterior veritatis consideratio est quasi formalis, et (ut sic dicam) in actu signato, scilicet, inquirendo quidnam ipsa veritas in rebus sit, et quotuplex, et quando ad ens comparetur. In quo est rursus observandum triplicem solere distingui veritatem, scilicet, in significando, et cognoscendo, et in essendo. Prima veritas proprie reperitur in vocibus vel scripturis, aut etiam in conceptibus quos non ultimos vocant. Secunda est in intellectu cognoscente res, seu in cognitione et conceptione ipsarum rerum. Tertia est in rebus ipsis, quae ab illa denominantur verae". *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. 8, *Ordo disputationis*.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. F.G. Martínez. *Algunos principios diferenciales de la metafísica suáreziana frente al tomismo tradicional*. "Pensamiento" 4 (1948) p. 11-30. More on Suárez in this respect, see C. Giacón. *La segunda Scolastica*. Vol. 3: *Precedenze teoretiche ai problemi giuridici: Toledo, Pereira, Fonseca, Molina, Suárez*. Milano 1947 p. 169-202 (*Intr. allo studio del Suárez* p. 203-230, *La gnosología del Suárez*).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. F. Suárez. *On Beings of Reason* p. 8-9, footnote 50. On Thomas of York, see M. Grabmann. *Die Metaphysik des Thomas von York (ca. 1260)*. In: *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*. Supplementband I. Münster 1913 p. 181-193; E. Longpré. *Thomas d'York, O.F.M. La première somme métaphysique du XIIIe siècle*. "Archivum Franciscanum Historicum" 19 (1926) p. 875-920. Some interesting opinions on Robert Gosseteste, see Ch. King McKeon. *A study of the Summa Philosophiae' of the Pseudo-Grosseteste*. New York 1948. On Agostino Nifo, see E.P. Mahoney. *Antonio Trombetta and Agostino Nifo on Averroes and Intelligible Species: A Philosophical Dispute at the University of Padua*. In: *Storia e cultura al Santo di Padova fra il XIII e il XX secolo*. Ed. A. Poppi. Vicenza 1976 p. 289-301.

<sup>19</sup> In recent years, some works pointing the aspect of existential metaphysics in Suárez's thought have been published in irregular succession. Cf. S. Ziemiański. *Was Suárez essentialist?* "Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric" 15 (2009) no. 28 p. 9-23; V.M. Salas. *Immanent Transcendence. Francisco Suárez's Doctrine of Being*. Leuven 2022. Victor Salas argues that the central place in Suárez's approach is rather occupied by the existential orientation, which most researchers have overlooked in favor of reducing Suárez to a metaphysician of essence or what is generally conceivable by that.

René Descartes (†1650)<sup>20</sup>, Pierre Gassendi (†1655)<sup>21</sup>, Baruch Spinoza (†1677)<sup>22</sup>, John Locke (†1704)<sup>23</sup>, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (†1716)<sup>24</sup>, Alexander Baumgarten

<sup>20</sup> For more on these dependencies and relevant connections, see J. Hellín. *Sobre el ser esencial y existencial en el ser creado. Descartes de un punto de vista suáreziano*. In: *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Filosofía, Barcelona, 4-10 octubre 1948, con motivo del Centenario de los filósofos Francisco Suárez y Jaime Balmes*. Vol. 2. Madrid 1949 p. 517-561; J.A. Nuño. *La raíz psicologista de la analogía del ser en Suárez como antecedente del idealismo cartesiano*. "Cultura Universitaria" 64 (1958) p. 67-73; R. Dalbiez. *Les sources scolastiques de la théorie cartésienne de l'être objectif. A propos du Descartes de M. Gilson*. "Revue d'Histoire de la Philosophie" 3 (1939) p. 464-472; T.J. Cronin. *Objective Being in Descartes and in Suárez*. Rome 1966; Idem. *Eternal Truths in the Thought of Suárez and Descartes*. "The Modern Schoolman" 38 (1961) p. 269-288; J.C. Doing. *Suárez, Descartes, and the Objective Reality of Ideas*. "The New Scholasticism" 51 (1977) p. 350-370; B. Paź. *Epistemologiczne założenia ontologii Christiana Wolffa*. Wrocław 2002 p. 48-55. On the influence of the scholastic tradition on Descartes' philosophy, see A. Koyré. *Descartes und die Scholastik*. Darmstadt 1977; J. Bohatec. *Die cartesianische Scholastik in der Philosophie und reformierten Dogmatik des 17. Jahrhunderts*. I. Teil: *Entstehung, Eigenart, Geschichte und philosophische Ausprägung der cartesianischen Scholastik*. Leipzig 1912 kap. I, 13-30, kap. II, 30-71, kap. III, 72-145; G.G. von Hertling. *Descartes' Beziehungen zur Scholastik*. München 1914.

<sup>21</sup> On the influence of scholasticism on Gassendi's metaphysics, see P. Pedzig. *Pierre Gassendis Metaphysik und ihr Verhältnis zur scholastischen Philosophie*. I. Teil: *Pierre Gassendis metaphysik*. Bonn 1908, rep. 1969 and 2015.

<sup>22</sup> See C.G. Noreña. *Suárez and Spinoza: the Metaphysics of Modal Being*. "Cuadernos Salamantinos de Filosofía" 12 (1985) p. 163-182; J. Freudenthal. *Spinoza und die Scholastik*. In: *Philosophische Aufsätze: Eduard Zeller zu Seinem Fünfzigjährigen Doctor-Jubiläum Gewidmet*. Inhalt, Vischer, Widmung. Helmholtz, Zählen und messen III. Leipzig 1887 p. 83-138.

<sup>23</sup> On the influence of scholasticism on Locke, see. W. Küppers. *John Locke und die Scholastik: Inaugural-Dissertation zur Erlangung der Philosophischen Doktorwürde Verfasst und mit Genehmigung der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Bern*. Berlin 1895, rep. 2017.

<sup>24</sup> "Mas elocuente todavía es el caso de Leibniz que se licencia en Leipzig con al tesis «Del Principio de individuacion», siendo profesor Thomasio (J.). Un trabajo que no sólo delata influjos de Suárez sino que es continuación de su Disputatio 5, en la se apartó el de los escotistas, tomistas y nominalistas. «Pono ergo omne individuum tota sua entitate individuum», es la posición de Suárez-Leibniz" (J. Irriarte. *La proyección sobre Europa de una gran metafísica – o Suárez en la filosofía de los días del Barocco*. "Razón y Fe" 138 (1948) número extraordinario p. 248-249. Some researchers of Suárez's philosophy indicate that in fact his influence on Leibniz's work was minor. Cf. J.-F. Courtine. *Suárez et le système de la métaphysique. Épiméthée. Essais philosophiques*. Paris 1990 p. 445-519. Courtine compares the influence of Suárez' *Disputationes* on Leibniz' *Disputatio metaphysica de principio individui*, published in 1663, where he poits that, in fact, Leibniz was closer to the nominalists than Suárez. See also J.O. Fleckenstein. *Der Aristotelismus von Suárez und der Funktionalismus in der Wissenschaft des Leibniz*. In. *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Filosofía* vol. 2 p. 317-325, or Trad. Española ed. "Revista de Filosofía" 7 (1948) p. 747-754; P. Mesnard. *Comment Leibniz se trouva placé dans le sillage de Suárez*. "Archives de philosophie" 18 (1949) no. 1 p. 7-32; R. von Nostiz-Rieneck. *Leibniz und die Scholastik*. "Philosophisches Jahrbuch der Görresgesellschaft" 7 (1895) p. 54-67; J. Jasper. *Leibniz und die Scholastik: eine historische-kritische Abhandlung*. Münster 1898/99; F.J. Rintelen. *Leibnizens Beziehungen zur Scholastik*. "Archiv für Gescgichte der Philosophie" 16 Bd. Neue Folge 9 (1903) p. 157-188; J.S. Gamazo. *El problema de la libertad en Leibniz y los antecedentes escolásticos españoles del siglo XVI*. "Verdad y Vida" 21 (1963) p. 281-290. The Polish philosopher of the first decade of the 20th century, B. Jasinowski, proves in his dissertation (*Die lytische*



(†1762)<sup>25</sup>, Christian Wolff (†1754)<sup>26</sup>, Immanuel Kant (†1804)<sup>27</sup>. Suárez's approach even, to some extent, makes apparent a path to phenomenology. As J.R. Weinberg has convincingly demonstrated, some discernible connections can be found with George Berkeley (†1753) and David Hume (†1776), who also contributed to Suárez's approach, as well as certain similarities to thinkers who dealt with issues of intentionality, analogy of being, *a priori* knowledge, etc. One can also be deceived by Suárez's seeming anticipation of the following thinkers, such as Adolf Reinach (†1916), Alexius Meinong (†1920), Edmund Husserl (†1938), James Daubert (†1947), Bertrand Russell (†1970), all of whom probably had not read Suárez's *Disputationes* or *De entibus rationis*, though they may have encountered his thoughts indirectly through Christian Wolff, the Wolffianist Friedrich Baumeister (†1785), and Alexander Baumgarten<sup>28</sup>. This may have been possible due to the fact that the *Metaphysics* of Baumgarten formed the basis for Kant's pre-critical lectures, and through Kant for others, especially those who were closely related to the circles of the Albrecht University in Königsberg (Albertus-Universität Königsberg). There has long been a prevailing belief among scholars that the growth of modern rationalism resulted from the previously formed *apparatus* of concepts and systems of medieval and Renaissance scholasticism, which was an anticipation of modern trends, e.g. including essentialism, mentalism, subjectivism, and critical transcendentalism from the period of Kant's "Copernican revolution". The visible influence of revivalist scholastic thought, especially that of Suárez, can be discerned among the outstanding professors from Königsberg during their teaching of metaphysics and logic at the university in the years 1703-1770, such as Paul Rabe, Abraham Calov, Heinrich Oelmann, Johann Böse, Christian Gabriel Fischer, Thomas Burckhard, Georg Friedrich Rogall, Daniel Salthenius, Karl Heinrich Rappolt, Daniel

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*Urteilslehre Leibnizens in ihrem Verhältnis zu seiner Metaphysik*, 1918) that, in fact, Leibniz's theory of identity between the subject and the predicate was based on Suárez's concept, and it is entirely contained in his system. Suárez assumed such identity only when there is non-contradiction between eternal law (*lex aeterna*) and first principles (*prima principia*). According to Jasinowski, Suárez's concept was a scholastic theory of the distinction between essential and accidental predicates, as well as between eternal law and contingent laws. Cf. J.F. Mora. *Suárez and Modern Philosophy*. "Journal of the History of Ideas" October 1953 p. 546, footnote 18 (more 528-547), p. 66, footnote 18.

<sup>25</sup> See A.G. Baumgarten. *Metaphysica Alexandri Gottlieb Baumgarten Professoris Philosophiae*. Editio III. Halae Magdeburgicae 1750.

<sup>26</sup> See Ch. Wolff. *Philosophia prima, sive Ontologia*. Francofurti et Lipsiae 1736, rep. Hildesheim: G. Olms 1962 § 75, 79, 85, 101-102, 135.

<sup>27</sup> See J.M. Alejandro. *La filosofía del conocimiento en Suárez y Kant*. In: *Actas del 4. Centenario del nacimiento de Francisco Suárez 1548-1948*. Madrid 1949 p. 231-233; M.F. Couselo. *Los juicios sintéticos „a priori” en Suárez y Kant*. In: *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Filosofía* vol. 1 p. 363-377.

<sup>28</sup> See M.F.Ch. Baumeisteri. *Elementa philosophiae recentioris usibus juventutis scholasticae accommodata et pluribus sententiis exemplique ex Veterum Scriptorum Romanorum Monimentis illustrata Methodo Wolfi adornata editio tertia veneta, post XV Wittembergensem Auctior & Emendatior*. Lucae, sed prostant Venetiis typis Jacobi Caroboli. Venetiis 1776.

Heinrich, Konrad Gottlieb Marquardt, Martin Knutzen, Karl Andreas Christiani, Matthias Friedrich Watson, Friedrich Johann Buck, Johann Gottfried Teske, Daniel Lorenz Salthenius, Johann Georg Bock<sup>29</sup>.

The *Disputationes metaphysicae*, comprising two volumes in quarto format over 1,000 pages each, was reprinted 17 times in Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany in the period of 40 years since its first publication, thus becoming a basic *compendium* of knowledge in the field of traditional ontology of being and medieval scholasticism: Salamanca 1597, Venice 1599, Mainz (Mainz) 1600, Venice-Mainz-Paris 1605, Cologne 1608, Venice 1610, Geneva (2<sup>nd</sup> editions) – Cologne – Mainz 1614, Paris-Venice 1619, Cologne 1620, Mainz 1630, Geneva 1636<sup>30</sup>. After Suárez's death, the *Disputationes* were further published in 1655 in the *Opera Omnia* collection by Portuguese monks from the Society of Jesus (10 volumes), and they had another Venetian edition during the publication of 23 volumes in folio format between 1740 and 1757<sup>31</sup>. Eventually, the *Disputationes* were also included in the 28-volume collection *Opera Omnia: Editio Nova, a Carolo Berton* that was issued in Paris at the turn of 1856 and 1866. The modern editions mostly include the *Compendium metaphysicum* published in Madrid in 1901 by Father Gregorio Iturria SJ, containing an outline of the basic theories of Suárez's metaphysics. Moreover, a reprint of the 1861 edition was published by the Georg Olms Verlag publishing house in 1966 in Hildesheim, and then in 1998. The *Disputationes*, in full form, was also published in Spanish translation in a bilingual edition (Latin-Spanish) in the years 1960-1966<sup>32</sup>. The first three disputations were also published in Italian

<sup>29</sup> See M. Sgarbi. *Abraham Calov and Immanuel Kant. Aristotelian and Scholastic Traces in the Kantian Philosophy*. "Historia Philosophica" (2010) no. 8 p. 55-62; Idem. *At the Origin of the Connection between Logic and Ontology. The Impact of Suárez's Metaphysics in Königsberg*. "Anales Valentinus" 36 (2010) no. 71 p. 145-159; Idem. *Metaphysics in Königsberg Prior to Kant (1703-1770)*. „Trans/Form/Ação” 33 (2010) no. 1 s. 31-64. On the influence of medieval and Renaissance scholasticism on Kant, see H. Siegfried. *Kant's Thesis about Being Anticipated by Suárez?* In: *Proceedings of the Third International Kant Congress. Synthese Historical Library (Texts and Studies in the History of Logic and Philosophy)*. Vol 4. Springer. Ed. Lewis White Beck. Dordrecht 1972 p. 510-520; M. Sgarbi. *Logica e metafisica nel Kant precritico. Ambiente intellettuale di Königsberg e la formazione della filosofia Kantiana*. Frankfurt 2011; W. Ertl. *Kant und die Scholastik heute. Vorüberlegungen zu einer Neueinschätzung*. "The Geibun-Kenkyu: Journal of Arts and Letters" 105 (2013) no. 2 p. 20-40; C. Esposito. *The Hidden Influence of Suárez on Kant's Transcendental Conception of "Being", "Essence" and "Existence"*. In: *Suárez's Metaphysics in Its Historical and Systematic Context*. Ed. L. Novák. *Series Contemporary Scholasticism* 2 Bd. Berlin – Boston 2014 p. 117-134.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. J. Irriarte. *La proyección sobre Europa de una gran metafísica – o Suárez en la filosofía de los días del Barocco* p. 236. See also E.-M. Rivière, R. de Scorraile. *Suárez et son oeuvre à l'occasion du troisième centenaire de sa mort. I: La bibliographie des ouvrages imprimés et inédits*. Toulouse – Barcelona 1918 p. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. F. Suárez. *On Beings of Reason* p. 7, footnote 47.

<sup>32</sup> See Idem. *Disputaciones Metafisicas*. Vol. 1-7. Edición bilingüe, editora y traducción de S.R. Romeo, S.C. Sánchez, A.P. Zanón. *Biblioteca Hispanica de Filosofía*.

translation in 1965 and 1996 (reprint)<sup>33</sup>, as well as in French in 1998<sup>34</sup>. Individual disputations were also published in irregular succession in English translation between 1947 and 2020 (e.g. disp. 5-7, 10, 11, 17-19, part of 23, 28-29).

The *Disputationes*, taken in their entirety, are a subtle and outstanding exposition of the 17th-century philosophical thought of the Latin West, the last great work of the inevitably approaching dusk of the era of Latin *Christianitas*. Considered from a historical perspective, this work is a project synthesizing the impacts of the philosophy of ancient Greece, Rome, Byzantium (Constantinople), Arab thought, and most of the authors of the medieval scholastic tradition<sup>35</sup>. It is assumed that out of 7,709 quotations, Suárez refers to 245 philosophical positions of individual authors, considering metaphysical problems in the context of numerous, often different philosophical systems<sup>36</sup>. Suárez was distinguished by his incredible insight and deep-penetrating mind, capable of embracing with high competence a wide range of problems in a historical and analytical manner. He was characterized by a great thoroughness of research and an extensive knowledge of various opinions. His truly scholastic aptitude for synthesizing the long-winded medieval debates can be seen in both his philosophical and theological works. Apart from the *Disputationes*, it is worthwhile to mention his *De anima* (*Commentarium una cum quaestionibus in libros Aristotelis De anima*), which is

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<sup>33</sup> See Idem. *Disputazioni metafisiche I, II, III*. Milano 1965-1996.

<sup>34</sup> See Idem. *Disputes métaphysiques I, II, III*. A cura di J.-P. Coujou. *Bibliothèque des textes philosophiques*. Paris 1998.

<sup>35</sup> "Suárez is not only an outstanding philosopher in his own right but also an gifted and erudite historian of philosophy who is thoroughly familiar with Hellenistic, Patristic, Jewish, and Islamic sources. In addition, because he comes upon the scene late in the sixteenth century, he is in a position to draw upon all of his most important scholastic predecessors. The result is a synthesis of impressive proportions; problematic issues are lucidly delineated, and the best arguments thus far for the main competing positions are laid out in depth." A.J. Freddoso. *A Suárezian Model of Efficient Causality*. University of Notre Dame 1990 p. 6; See also A.J. Freddoso. *Suárez on Metaphysical Inquiry, Efficient Causality, and Divine Action*. In: F. Suárez. *On Creation, Conservation, and Concurrence: Metaphysical Disputations 20, 21, and 22*. South Bend 1999 p. xi-cxxi.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. J. Iturrioz. *Fuentes de la metafísica de Suárez*. "Pensamiento" (1948) número extraordinario p. 39. Among those mentioned are: Aristotle (1735 times), St. Thomas (1008), Duns Scotus (363), St. Augustine (334), Cajetan (299), Soncinas (Paulus Barbo) (192), Averroes (179), Durand of Sancto Porciano (153), Sylvester of Ferrara (124), Capreolus (115), Pedro Fonseca (114), Gregory of Nazians (117), Javellus (97), St. Albert the Great (96), Henry of Ghent (95), Plato (92), Gabriel Biel (86), Avicenna (84), Giles of Rome (78), Hervaeus Natalis (77), Dominic Soto (75), Alexander of Hales (71), St. John Damascene (71), Ockham (67), Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite (56), Alexander of Aphrodisias (52), Peter Aureoli (46), Simplicius (41), Antonio Andreas (40), St. Bonaventure (38), Marsilius of Inghen (37), St. Anselm (36), Richard of Middleton (35), Boethius (33). Cf. also F. Suárez. *On Beings of Reason* p. 11, footnote 5.

a commentary on Aristotle, in which Suárez quotes over 300 different authors and approximately 4000 viewpoints<sup>37</sup>.

## 2. THE LOCATION OF BEING OF REASON IN SUÁREZ'S METAPHYSICS

According to Suárez, the study of a being of reason, its formal distinction from other metaphysical entities (e.g. real beings, formal and objective ones) becomes surprisingly a partial subject of metaphysics, and even an intra-logical one within it. Hence, the issue of the intentional existence of mental objects seems to be necessarily considered in the light of the relation to real being (*ens reale*). For Suárez, the latter is simply the adequate and direct subject of metaphysics extensively taken (*obiectum huius scientiae esse ens reale in tota sua latitudine*)<sup>38</sup>. The former is only a supplementing theory to the whole doctrine, though it is a significantly fundamental one, and, for that reason, it has been placed as the last exposition of Suárez's metaphysical analysis. Although in the first disputation Suárez rejected the opinion that a being of reason is included in the metaphysical considerations<sup>39</sup>, nevertheless in the last disputation LIV (*De entibus rationis*) he indicated that the ontology of mental entities must be complementary to the entire system (the intellect renders it knowable), as can be noticed from the following sections in the treatise. This makes the concept of a being of reason unique and highlights the substantial need for its definition. As Suárez claimed, it seems to be an underlying task for all metaphysicians. On this basis alone, it can be assumed that though this being is an inadequate subject of metaphysics, nevertheless, for Suárez, it should be included in this science as an essential but partial concept<sup>40</sup>. Knowledge on these entities is decisive for defining boundaries between the *quasi*-transcendental nature of *ens rationis* and the genuinely transcendental one of real being. Consistently, Suárez argues that without knowing the structure of pure objects of the intellect and cognitive fictions within, or rather of non-entities, we would obviously have difficulty in proper teaching in metaphysics and natural philosophy, and even more in logic

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Idem. *De anima*. In: Idem. *Opera Omnia*. Vol. 1-3. Editio nova a C. Berton. Parisiis 1851. Among the most frequently mentioned are: Aristotle (900), St. Thomas (600), Cajetan (150), St. Augustine (120), Albert the Great (ca. 120), Averroes, Duns Scotus, Philoponus (70). See also Idem. *Commentaria una cum quaestionibus in libros Aristotelis De Anima* vol. 3 p. 543-565 (*Index nominum*).

<sup>38</sup> *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. I, sec. 1, a. 3.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem* disp. I, sec. 1, a. 3-6.

<sup>40</sup> "Quanquam in prima disputatione huius operis dixerimus ens rationis non comprehendi sub proprio et directo obiecto metaphysicae..., nihilominus ad complementum huius doctrinae, et ad metaphysicum munus pertinere existimo, ea, quae communia et generalia sunt entibus rationis trader". *Ibidem* disp. LIV, prol.

and theology<sup>41</sup>. Each of these deals with the examination of real being that contrasts severely with a being of reason. Knowing the nature of purely-mental and intelligible entities is therefore one of the cognitive priorities and tasks for true cognition that is being gained in metaphysical scope.

Suárez argues that a being of reason does not bear a direct existential basis in real things, but is recognized as the object of second operation of the intellect within an objectifying reflection based on the relation of reason (*reflexio in actu signato*)<sup>42</sup>. Therefore, it is an overall cognitive entity (*ens cognitum*) of the second intentions (*secundae intentiones*), namely, in structure, it is an objective concept of a purely rational realm which has been abstracted from the “mental concepts” and has a rational existence in the intellect (*pure rationis*). In Suárez’s approach, in which he considers an abstracted concept of real being (*ens reale*), the metaphysics containing mental entities plays a key role for settling an adequate object of metaphysics, which, in fact, is an independent being bearing a real existence outside the intellect (*extra intellectum*). Metaphysics is then a real science that studies an existential realm essentially abstracted with all its denominations (i.e. substances, accidents, transcendentals, finite and infinite being, etc.)<sup>43</sup>. Suárez’s metaphysics

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<sup>41</sup> “Est enim eorum cognitio et scientia ad humanas doctrinas necessaria; vix enim sine illis loquimur, vel in metaphysica ipsa, vel etiam in philosophia, nedum in logica; et (quod magis est) etiam in Theologia. Nec vero potest hoc munus ad alium, quam ad metaphysicum spectare”. Ibidem.

<sup>42</sup> When it comes to a being of reason, its nature by signification is extrinsic in nature (*denominatio extrinseca*), while knowing of real being refers to intrinsic denomination (*denominatio intrinseca*). It is because such an internal signification applies only to real beings which have their own transcendental by their own real nature. Cf. “Unde ad hoc genus spectant imprimis relationes omnes, quae in utroque extremo fundantur tantum in denominatione extrinseca, ut est relatio signi ad placitum, quae tam in signo, quam in signato est relatio rationis [...]. Cum enim haec impositio ad significandum nihil rei ponat in signo nisi denominationem extrinsecam, neque etiam in signato, non potest fundare relationem realem, ut omnes docent”. Ibidem disp. LIV, sec. 6, a. 4. On extrinsic denomination, see ibidem disp. XXXIX, a. 6-7, 37; disp. XVI, sec. 1, a. 24; disp. II, sec. 1, a. 1; disp. XXIII, sec. 8, a. 8; disp. XXV, sec. 1, a. 31-32; disp. XLVII, sec. 14, a. 5. See also Ioannis a Sancto Thoma. *Ars Logica seu forma et materia ratiocinandi*. In: Idem. *Cursus Philosophicus Thomisticus, secundam exactam, veram, genuinam Aristotelis et Doctoris Angelici mentem*. Nova Editio a P.B. Reiser in Collegio Internationali Sancti Anselmi de Urbe Philoophic Professore Exarat. Taurini: Ex Officina Domus Editorialis Marietti anno 1820 condita nunc Marii E. Marietti Editoris, Sanctae Sedis Apostolicae, S. RR. Congr. Et Archiepiscopi Taurinensis Typographia, 1930 q. II (*De Ente Rationis Logico, Quod Est Secunda Intentio*); J.P. Doyle. *Prolegomena to a Study of Extrinsic Denomination in the work of Francis Suárez S.J.* “Vivarium” 22 (1984) p. 121-160.

<sup>43</sup> “Praeterea hoc recte probatur illa ratione quod metaphysica, quae est realis ac vera scientia, haec demonstrat de ente”. *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. III, sec. 1, a. 10. “Denique hic solum agimus de divisione entis, quod supra diximus esse proprium metaphysicae obiectum; hoc autem non est ens, ut abstrahit ab ente reali et rationis, sed ens reale tantum”. Ibidem disp. IV, sek. 8, art. 4. “[...] ens reale per se, eo modo quo possit habere aliquam unitatem rationis seu conceptus in rebus fundatam, ratione cuius sit capax et proprietatum et divisionum realium. Atque hinc fit, si divisio illa entis in unum et multa sumatur in eo sensu, in quo coincidit cum praedicta divisione entis in per se et per accidens, sic quidem posse dici priorem divisione entis in finitum et in infinitum”. Ibidem

does not deal with knowing the reality of being through a direct path, but rather analogically, that is, indirectly at the upper level of essential apprehension, including a being of reason as its essential contrast, especially as one that is adequate and undifferentiated by genus and species concept of real being (*adaequatos conceptus*).

The fundamental concept which also allows Suárez to develop a consistent theory of real being in metaphysics is the one that refers to its opposite, that is, to the concept of being of reason (*ens rationis*). Although metaphysics is the realistic system and complex theory on the real being as such, nevertheless, to be completed whole, it assumes the prior definition of mental entities by which it leads to non-contradiction of its subject. This happens due to the definition of mental entities and their totally rational nature (otherwise also called as *esse essentiae*). Unlike a real being, which has both the *esse existentiae* and *esse essentiae*, a being of reason holds exclusively the *esse essentiae* (essential existence in the mind). The theory of real being by distinguishing the subject of metaphysics in reference to mind-dependent entities assumes necessarily an interposition of both the definition of objective being (*ens obiectivum*) and being of reason (*ens rationis*) by its very nature, and *ipso facto* induces the definition of proper acts of our intellect<sup>44</sup>.

If one takes Suárez at his word, regardless of certain similarities with others, it becomes clear and certainly can be deduced from his basic assumptions that he was quite aware of both some references to the application of being of reason in the field of other sciences (dealing with real beings) and of its special role within them. Thus, for Suárez metaphysics is also a relevant determinant both for theology and other sciences which simply define the concept of real being as a real nature (essence) of things adapted to their real potencies, powers, and goals<sup>45</sup>. In metaphysics, all comes down to a real cognition anyway. He reserves priority for metaphysics though, as confirmed in the following passage in prologue to the disputation LIV:

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disp. IV, sec. 8, a. 5), “[...] per ipsam essentialem rationem entis demonstrari, sive hoc sit per distinctionem ipsarum rerum inter se sive in ordine ad conceptus et discursus nostros, ita ut unum vere sit ratio alterius, quod ad scientiam humanam et demonstrationem sufficit”. Ibidem disp. III, sec. 3, a. 7.

<sup>44</sup> See E. Elorduy. *El concepto objetivo en Suárez*. “Pensamiento” 4 (1948) p. 335-423; R. Darge. *Ens in quantum ens: Die Erklärung des Subjekts der Metaphysik bei F. Suárez*. “Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales” 66 (1999) p. 335-361.

<sup>45</sup> “[...] ad complementum huius doctrinae, et ad metaphysicum munus pertinere existimo, ea, quae communia et generalia sunt entibus rationis tradere. Est enim eorum cognitio et scientia ad humanas doctrinas necessaria; vix enim sine illis loquimur, vel in metaphysica ipsa, vel etiam in philosophia, nedum in logica; et (quod magis est) etiam in Theologia”. *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. LIV, prolog. “Prior pars huius assertionis communis est, ut patet ex communi usu et modo loquendi, tam in Theologia, quam in Philosophia. Patet etiam ex distinctione superius tractata de relatione reali et rationis, nam relatio rationis, ens rationis est”. Ibidem disp. LIV, sec. 1, a. 4.

[...] Even though in the first disputation of this work we said that being of reason is not the proper and direct subject of metaphysics<sup>46</sup>, and thus it was subsequently excluded from these considerations – even by the Philosopher himself in Book. VI of *Metaphysics*<sup>47</sup> – nevertheless, I think that it complements this doctrine, and explaining what beings of reason are universally and in general is the task for a metaphysician. Cognition and knowledge about these entities is necessary for human science. In fact, without this knowledge we can hardly talk about metaphysics itself or natural philosophy, even less about logic, and even less about theology. Moreover, this task actually belongs to no one else than the metaphysician... First, since beings of reason are not true beings, but shadows of being (*quasi umbrae entium*), they are not intelligible in themselves, but are so through a certain analogy and connection with true beings<sup>48</sup>. Therefore, they are not in themselves scientifically knowable (*nec etiam sunt per se scibilia*)<sup>49</sup>, nor is there any science that was established specifically for the purpose of knowing them in a separate way. The fact that some attribute this task to dialectics is in fact a dialectical error. The aim of this science is only to direct and reduce human intellectual activities to the dimension of art, in which these mental activities are not beings of reason, but rather real entities. Hence, no craftsman (*artifex*) or any science primarily pursues knowledge about beings of reason (*per se primo intendit entium rationis cognitionem*), but they are considered insofar as they are related to knowledge about real beings. In this way, the natural philosopher deals with privation, considering the object relative to the form, and considers emptiness by comparing it to some place. The same applies to other beings of reason [such as negations or thought relations – RG].

2. Therefore, it is proper for metaphysics to consider beings of reason as such, and also to consider their general character, properties and divisions. All these features in beings of reason are in their own way quasi-transcendental and cannot be understood [in themselves], but only by comparison with the true and real features of real, transcendental or essential beings, which are properly metaphysical. What is fictitious or apparent must be understood by comparison with what really exists. Thus, although other sciences, such as physics or dialectics, sometimes address the issue of certain mental entities, as we have shown with examples, they cannot, on the basis of their own sources (*ex propriis*), explain the quasi-essential properties of these entities. Therefore, this task belongs in a more primary way to metaphysics, as it was shown by Alexander

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<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Ibidem* disp. I, sec. 1, a. 4-6.

<sup>47</sup> See Aristotle. *Metaphysica* VI, 1027b34-1028a3.

<sup>48</sup> Elsewhere, Suárez claims that beings of reason possess a second intelligibility. See F. Suárez. *De anima*. In: *idem, Opera Omnia* vol. 2, lib. IV, a. 1. 4. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, especially in Jesuit schools, thinkers distinguished between the intrinsic and extrinsic intelligibility. As for a being of reason, we can only talk about an extrinsic intelligibility, while a real being has an intrinsic intelligibility. See J.P. Doyle. *Extrinsic Cognoscibility: A Seventeenth Century Supertranscendental Notion*. “The Modern Schoolman” 68 (1990) p. 57-80.

<sup>49</sup> See *Idem. Suárez on the Unity of a Scientific Habit*. “The American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly” 65 (1991) p. 311-334, esp. 327-333.

of Aphrodisias<sup>50</sup> and St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>51</sup>, as well as others. In this way, they explain Aristotle, as we noted above<sup>52</sup>. Because Aristotle himself did not fully explain these difficulties in his *Metaphysics* (VI), as is clear from book IV, chapters 1 and 2<sup>53</sup>, as well as the last chapter of book VII<sup>54</sup>. Therefore, we must consider this issue in the present disputation, in which we will first explain the nature and causes of this entity, then, supplementing this with the division, we will demonstrate the different classes of these beings, touching in particular on all those problems that essentially belong to this doctrine [...]<sup>55</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Alexander de Aphrodisias. *In Aristotelis Metaphysicam Commentaria*. Ed. M. Hayduck. In *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca*. Vol. I. Berolini 1891 p. 458.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Sancti Thomae Aquinatis. *In Metaphysicam Aristotelis Commentaria*. Taurini 1826 lib. IV, lec. 4, 193-196, esp. a. 574-576.

<sup>52</sup> *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. I, sec. 1, a. 4-6.

<sup>53</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysica* lib. IV, 1003b 8-11.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem* lib. VII, 1027b 18.

<sup>55</sup> “Quanquam in prima disputatione huius operis dixerimus ens rationis non comprehendi sub proprio et directo obiecto metaphysicae, ideoque ab ipso etiam Philosopho ab hac tractione exclusum fuisse in libro VI suae Metaphysicae, nihilominus ad complementum huius doctrinae, et ad metaphysicum munus pertinere existimo, ea, quae communia et generalia sunt entibus rationis tradere. Est enim eorum cognitio et scientia ad humanas doctrinas necessaria; vix enim sine illis loquimur, vel in metaphysica ipsa, vel etiam in philosophia, nedum in logica; et (quod magis est) etiam in Theologia. Nec vero potest hoc munus ad alium, quam ad metaphysicum spectare. Nam imprimis, cum entia rationis non sint vera entia, sed quasi umbrae entium, non sunt per se intelligibilia, sed per aliquam analogiam et coniunctionem ad vera entia, et ideo nec etiam sunt per se scibilia, nec datur scientia quae per se primo propter illa solum cognoscenda sit instituta. Quod enim hoc aliqui tribuunt dialecticae, error dialecticus est; nam finis illius scientiae non est nisi dirigere et ad artem revocare rationales hominis operationes, quae non sunt entia rationis, de quibus nunc agimus, sed entia realia. Itaque nullus artifex nullave scientia per se primo intendit entium rationis cognitionem, sed haec tradi debet quatenus cum cognitione alicuius entis realis coniuncta est; quomodo physicus agit de privatione, quae coniuncta est cum materia ad formam, et agit de vacuo per comparisonem ad locum, et sic de aliis. 2. Hoc igitur modo, Metaphysicae proprium est agere de ente rationis ut sic, et de communi ratione, proprietatibus et divisionibus eius, quia hae rationes suo modo sunt quasi transcendentales, et intelligi non possunt nisi per comparisonem ad veras et reales rationes entium, vel transcendentales, vel ita communes, ut sint proprie metaphysicae; nam quod fictum est, vel apparens, per comparisonem ad id quod vere est, intelligi debet. Quare, licet aliae facultates, ut physica, vel dialectica, aliquando attingant aliqua entia rationis, quae cum suis obiectis coniuncta sunt, ut iam exemplis ostendimus, tamen non possunt ex propriis rationes quasi essentielles eorum exponere. Hoc ergo ad metaphysicum quasi ex obliquo et concomitanter spectat, ut Alexander, D. Thomas et alii, VI Metaph., notarunt, et Aristotelem ita exponunt, ut supra advertimus; et ideo nec ipse Aristoteles, in sua Metaphys., illa omnino praetermisit, ut patet ex lib. 4, cap. 1 et 2, et lib. 7, cap. ultimo. Hoc itaque in praesenti disputatione praestandum a nobis est, in qua prius qualemcumque naturam et causas huius entis declarabimus; deinde, adiuncta divisione, varia genera horum entium indicabimus, ea omnia in particulari attingendo, quae ad hanc doctrinam pertinere videbuntur”. *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. LIV, prol. See comparatively also a similar translation of this passage: F.Suárez. *On Beings of Reason* p. 57-58.



## CONCLUSION

For Suárez, there are basically two categories of being in material reality and in the nature of the intellect: a real being, which has many referents or denominations, as well as a being of reason, which is a being wholly dependent on the reflection of the intellect<sup>56</sup>. Only a real being is the direct, adequate subject of metaphysics, while a being of reason (*ens rationis*) can only be a certain complement to this science, becoming a regulative concept within all metaphysical assumptions<sup>57</sup>. The theory of real being by oppositional reference to the objective being and accordingly by its objective (intentional) existence, which somehow unifies in the intellect all denominations analogous to the concept of being in general (*ens commune*), is the context that allows Suárez to define all cognitive relations in reference to the knowing intellect and its purely mental structure<sup>58</sup>. It is quite a common opinion that Suárez introduces the theory of objective being along with the theory of first and second intentions of the intellect (*primae et secundae intentionis*), which seems to constitute the basis of all reasoning within his ontology<sup>59</sup>. His concept of a being of reason and the cognitive apprehensions, that is, the first and the second order of abstraction, is close to the theory of the first and second intentions by John Duns Scotus (†1308), William of Ockham (†1347), and Paul of Venice (†1428)<sup>60</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> “Secundo responderi potest, de ente dupliciter posse nos loqui: uno modo, ut comprehendit tantum vera entia realia, et illa omnia transcendit et sub se continet. Alio modo, ut extenditur ad multa, quae vere et intrinsece entia non sunt, solumque per quamdam attributionem extrinsecam entia dicuntur, ut sunt privationes, vel entia omnino per accidens aut rationis”. Idem. *A Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics – Index locupletissimus in Metaphysicam Aristotelis*. Translated by J.P. Doyle. Milwaukee 2004 lib. IV, cap. II, q. 2.

<sup>57</sup> “[...] unde satis expresse plura numerat, quae vera entia non sunt, ut privationes et similia, quae ipsemet excludit ab objecto metaphysicae, directo, scilicet, et adaequato”. Ibidem.

<sup>58</sup> “[...] in priori enim cum adaequatum objectum metaphysicae constituat, agit de ente secundum proprium ejus conceptum objectivum; in hoc vero capite agit de tota amplitudine significationis nominis entis”. Ibidem.

<sup>59</sup> See *Disputationes metaphysicae* disp. II, sec. 1-2; See also M. Forlivesi. *La distinction entre concept formel et concept objectif: Suárez, Pasqualigo, Mastri*. “Les Études Philosophiques” 1 (2002) p. 3-30; J. Hellín. *El concepto formal en Suárez*. “Pensamiento” 18 (1962) p. 407-432; N.J. Wells. *Esse cognitum and Suárez Revisited*. “American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly” 67 (1993) p. 339-348.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. S. Swieżawski. *Les intentions premières et les intentions secondaires chez Jean Duns Scotus*. “Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge” 9 (1934) p. 205-260; W. Ockham. *Summa logica*. Translated by T. Włodarczyk. Warszawa 1971 lib. I, chap. 2 p. 55-58; P. Venetus. *Logica Parva*. Translated and edited by A.R. Perreiah. Leiden – Boston – Köln 2002 chap. 2: *On Supposition*, sec. 2: *Material and Personal Supposition*, or München edition 1984 p. 144-147. On the second intentions, see A.D. Conti. *Second Intentions in the Late Middle Ages*. In: *Medieval Analysis in Language and Cognition*. Ed. S. Ebbesen, R.R. Friedmann. Copenhagen 1999 p. 453-470.

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POWRÓT DO TRAKTATU *DE ENTIBUS RATIONIS*  
W RAMACH *DISPUTATIONES METAPHYSICAE* FRANCISCO SUÁREZA –  
KRÓTKI ZARYS HISTORYCZNY

**Streszczenie:** Celem niniejszego artykułu jest zarys historyczny przełomowego traktatu Suáreza *De entibus rationis* (*O bytach myślnych*) – znanego hiszpańskiego teologa i filozofa epoki potrydenckiej – w kontekście jego *Disputationes metaphysicae*. Autor, bazując na źródłach i literaturze uzupełniającej, przedstawił to zagadnienie w trzech podrozdziałach, choć raczej w ujęciu ogólnym i opiniotwórczym niż w formie systematycznej egzegezy struktury i treści tego traktatu. W tym celu wziął pod uwagę, po pierwsze, krótką, ale zasadniczą definicję przedmiotu metafizyki Suáreza, przyjmując jego wiodące rozumienie „bytu realnego” (*ens reale*), bez którego nie da się spójnie przedstawić całej doktryny bytu myślonego (*ens rationis*). Po drugie, przeszedł do opisu ogólnego znaczenia *Disputationes metaphysicae* Suáreza, aby umieścić koncepcję „bytu myślonego” w kontekście jego myśli. W dalszej części podjął kwestię proveniencji traktatu *De entibus rationis*, a ostatecznie określił jego zastosowanie i umiejscowienie na tym tle teorii w metafizyce Suáreza. Wprowadził także kilka uwag końcowych i nieco dłuższy cytat z traktatu Suáreza, który ilustruje zasadnicze założenia jego projektu co do całej teorii bytów myślnych.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Francisco Suárez, *ens rationis*, byt myślny, byt zależny od umysłu, *Disputationes metaphysicae*.