ON EFFICIENT CAUSALITY: METAPHYSICAL DISPUTATIONS 17,18, AND 19. By FRANCISCO SUAREZ. Translated By ALFRED J. FREDDOSO. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994. Pp. xx, 428.

A quick scan of the leading figures in Western Philosophy reveals that relatively few have made a name for themselves by defending intuitive, natural, and sensible positions. Aristotle is one, and perhaps Aquinas is another. Francisco Suarez, the sixteenth-century Spanish scholastic, would be a third. His invariable working procedure is to give copious consideration to the various ancient and medieval views, and then to find some sensible compromise position. But today Suarez can hardly claim to have a broad readership. Of his 54 *Metaphysical Disputations* (*DM*), only nine have now been published in English, while his other works remain almost entirely untranslated. This clear and accurate new translation aims to show readers what they have been missing.

What is most immediately impressive about this long and dense volume is the light it shines on medieval and early modern thought. Suarez's copious references to earlier figures -- to Plato and other ancients, and to dozens of earlier scholastics -- makes his work valuable as an historical document. On the other hand, his wide readership in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries makes him important for students of the early modern period. It is less clear, however, how much this volume has to offer on a strictly philosophical level. In his brief Introduction, Freddoso writes that *DM* 17-19 "constitute, as far as I know, the longest, most profound, and most thorough tract ever written on creaturely efficient causality from an Aristotelian

perspective" (xvii). Those that make it through *DM* 17 and 18 with strength enough to begin *DM* 19 will indeed be rewarded. Here Suarez takes up freedom and necessity, and he offers a detailed and sophisticated analysis of human action. But *DM* 17 and 18 (which are almost entirely independent of *DM* 19) seem far less interesting. Here Suarez offer a general account of efficient causality, but it is often difficult to see how his Aristotelian perspective sheds light on modern questions about causality.

Still, perhaps this Aristotelian perspective can be valuable without shedding light on modern (i.e., Humean) problems about causality -- indeed, perhaps it can be valuable precisely because it offers a different perspective. Freddoso thinks so: "in presenting this translation... I hope to contribute to the current resuscitation of Aristotelian metaphysics" (xvi). So what does an Aristotelian theory of causality look like? As one might expect, Suarez gives separate treatment to the four kinds of Aristotelian causes. The present volume is devoted to efficient causality, which is of course the variety that corresponds most closely to our modern idea of a cause. In *DM* 17 Suarez clarifies a great deal of standard scholastic terminology, explaining what efficient causes are, and then the different types of efficient causes, including *per se* vs. *per accidens* causes, principal vs. instrumental causes, and univocal vs. equivocal causes. As readers with an interest in the medieval period will immediately see, this whole discussion is extremely valuable as a guide to earlier usage. Readers with no special interest in the terminology will likely be less impressed.

DM 18 is much more ambitious. It begins by asking "whether created things really effect anything" (37), a question that leads Suarez to reject occasionalism. Then, over the next 200+ pages, Suarez takes up a detailed metaphysical analysis of how one thing can be the efficient cause of another. Here the reader looking for a promising theory of causation faces considerable impediments, because almost the entire account presupposes an Aristotelian metaphysics that is not readily transferrable into modern lines of thought. Suarez argues, among other things, that form and not matter will always be the principle of causality (51); that accidents can be instrumental causes in the production of a substance (62) but that the substantial form will be the principal principle involved in such causation (52); that among accidents only qualities are *per se* principles of acting (117). Are these interesting claims? It is certainly not immediately evident that they are; on the other hand it would be foolish to dismiss them as uninteresting relics. Evaluating these issues would be a major task.

This is a task that Freddoso has already taken up, not just with this translation but in a series of published articles. Yet even in this splendid translation Suarez often seems to be moving in a closed theoretical circle. One senses his philosophical skill, but often feels frustrated in trying to connect his concerns with our concerns. Even when the debate shifts to a more concrete level, and examples are offered, the gulf still remains. The examples he considers (e.g., in discussing the possibility of action at a distance, how magnets work (209), and why the bottom

of a kettle is cooler than the boiling water above it (203)) will be of interest to historians of science, but don't advance the philosophical debate as we now define it.

It is clear, in contrast, that *DM* 19 deserves a broad philosophic audience. Suarez's basic position is that "freedom exists formally in the will and not in the intellect" (337). This gets explained and defended in terms of a sophisticated action theory. Like all the appetitive faculties, an act of will is "an intrinsic and spontaneous tendency or inclination toward the object" (340). This means that desires and inclinations are not commanded or chosen by will, but simply *are* will's commands and choices. Only such inclinations count as intrinsically voluntary. Other human actions, including intellection, are extrinsically voluntary, and therefore cannot be formally free.

In all of this Suarez attempts to follows Aquinian lines, but he seems at crucial points to make concessions to the voluntarism of earlier figures like Olivi and Scotus. Thus Suarez maintains that it is probable, though not certain, that will can choose either of two objects even when intellect has judged one of the two to be better (356). And he later holds that even at the instant at which a choice is made, the will must be both capable of choosing the act and capable of not choosing it. To explain how this can be true even at that instant at which the choice is made, he distinguishes between temporal instants and instants of nature (380).

Freddoso is medieval philosophy's best and most prolific translator. Here, as in his earlier works, the English is both

clear and faithful to the original. The translation is literal enough to satisfy philosophers, but not so ploddingly literal as to wear down the reader. Frequent footnotes help make sense of obscure references and tangled arguments. In comparing forty pages of the translation with the original Latin I was unable to find a single significant mistake, omission, or even questionable rendering.

Some minor complaints: Freddoso's practice is to leave Suarez's sources as they stand in the Latin. As a result, readers must either recognize on their own names like Henry, Gabriel, Durandus, the Master, Hervaeus, etc., or discover on their own that full names and dates are provided in the index (although there Durandus [of St. Pourçain] is wrongly identified as William Durandus). Also, Freddoso includes without comment the paragraph titles of the standard 1866 edition, which suggests that these are Suarez's own headings. That assumption strikes me as dubious.

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