FINALITY WITHOUT FINAL CAUSES? – SUÁREZ’S ACCOUNT OF NATURAL TELEOLOGY

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As many scholars have observed, late medieval authors increasingly conceived of all of the four Aristotelian causes after the model of efficient causes. This case-study on Francisco Suárez’s theory of natural teleology examines what kinds of problems this general tendency to conceive of causes on the model of efficient causes gave rise to, when it came to account for natural teleology. Even though Suárez can allow for distinctive final causes that satisfy his general theory of causes, or so I argue against the more pessimist conclusions of recent commentators, Suárez’s theory of final causation is strictly speaking—and against his own confession—only applicable to the explanation of the teleology involved in the actions of finite rational agents, while the teleology displayed by natural processes can no longer be seen as a proper and univocal instance of final causation. In this, Suárez provides a striking example for how the increasing restriction of the notion of cause to the notion of the efficient cause brought late scholastic theories to a point where the notion of a final cause became unusable for what it was initially introduced: for the explanation of teleological phenomena.

Keywords: Suárez; final cause; teleology, efficient cause, causation

I. Introduction

It is commonly acknowledged that Aristotle employed a much broader notion of cause than most philosophers do nowadays. While Aristotle famously distinguished between four kinds of causes, which were later systematized as formal, material, efficient and final causes, we tend to apply the term “cause” only to entities (most often to events) that *produce* or *bring about* certain effects. Thus, if our notion of a cause has anything to do with Aristotelian causes at all, it seems at

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best to be restricted to his notion of an *efficient cause*.¹ Unsurprisingly, our rather restricted philosophical notion of cause has a history,² and as recent scholarship has shown, this history runs decisively through medieval philosophy, in which Aristotle's theory was developed by reconciling it with central Islamic and Christian doctrines and by enriching it with other philosophical traditions. So, in her monumental investigations on late medieval natural philosophy, Anneliese Maier (1949; 1955; 1964) argued that late scholastic philosophers tended to stress the role of efficient causes for the investigation of natural processes. Robert Pasnau (2011: 560) has explained that late scholastic authors increasingly held that "substantial forms are something like an internal efficient cause that sustains and regulates the existence of a substance."³ And recently, Henrik Lagerlund (2011) has reminded us that William Ockham and John Buridan struggled with the notion of final cause since they were puzzled about how ends can play a genuine causal role. However, most of the history of conceptions of causes in the 15th and 16th century lies still in the dark—as it is the case for many figures and theories of this period.⁴ This paper cannot change this lamentable situation. Nor is it what it intends. Rather, I want to explore some of the results of this late medieval tendency to conceive of causes after the model of efficient causes by focusing on Francisco Suárez's extensive theory of final causes, which he develops in his *Disputationes Metaphysicae* (1597). As I will point out, Suárez endorses a rather restricted conception of causality, which takes efficient cause to be the paradigm kind of cause by requiring efficient causes to exert a distinct influence or *influx* to qualify as genuine *causes*. Now, as I will go on to point out, this conception of causes makes it hard to account for teleology in general and natural teleology in particular: if explanatorily relevant ends are to qualify as final causes, they need to exert a distinct kind of influence, yet, it is hard to see how ends can exert such an influence on all the things whose behavior Suárez wants to explain in a teleological way. While this might be a defensible view

1. This claim has to be read with some care: As it is well known, Aristotle's efficient cause is only a moving cause, which operates on pre-existing entities, rather than a productive cause, which brings about new entities from scratch as it were (cf. Gilson 1958). Moreover, Aristotle's four causes form an integral package of various factors, which constitute an Aristotelian process conceived of as an actualization of a form. Therefore, it is strictly speaking impossible to retain only one of the *Aristotelian* causes while dropping the others. Hence, when I say that we tend to restrict the notion of cause to the notion of an efficient cause, I mean that we take the feature of *having an effect*, which Aristotle only assigned to his efficient cause, to be *the* essential feature of causes in general.

2. As Frede (1987: 218) has argued, our conception of causes as active principles traces back to the Stoic view that a "cause is that because of which in virtue of its being active the effect comes about."

3. See also Pasnau (2004).

4. An exception on this score is Des Chene (1996: 169–211) who discusses the theories of final causes of Iberian late scholastics, such as Fonseca, Toletus, Suárez and the *Conimbricenses*, even though his discussion of final causation remains rather sketchy.

with regard to finite rational agents who can recognize their goals and be attracted by them, it seems that this view is not applicable to natural substances, which lack cognitive faculties, or to God, who, as a perfect being, cannot be influenced by anything. Even though Suárez employs a good deal of sophistication to solve this problem, I will argue that he ultimately fails to provide a satisfying solution.

By restricting my focus on Suárez, I do not want to suggest that he faces unique problems with accounting for final causes, problems, that is, which were foreign to other late medieval philosophers. Nor do I want to claim that Suárez's general strategy to solve these problems is particularly original. My restricted focus on Suárez is rather owed to the fact that Suárez provides the most extensive and systematic discussion of final causes of the (late) medieval period,⁵ which quite clearly brings out an inherent tension of the scholastic tradition that sought to provide teleological explanations in terms of final causes and yet conceived of them after the model of efficient causes. This paper offers a case-study of Suárez's highly sophisticated theory of final causality and its ultimate failure. The case-study shows how a restricted understanding of the notion of cause brought late scholastic theories to a point where the notion of a final cause could no longer be used for what it was initially introduced, that is, the explanation of accepted teleological phenomena.

My discussion is divided into four sections. In the first section, I set out Suárez's *influxus*-theory of causality, according to which "the term 'cause' is primarily predicated of the efficient cause" (DM 27.1.10 [25, 952a]). This theory provides both the background of Suárez's theory of final causes and the source of his worry about the causal status of explanatory ends. In the second section, I turn to Suárez's *influxus*-theoretical account of final causes, which analyses the distinctive causality of ends in terms of a 'metaphorical motion', by means of which ends entice or allure finite rational agents to choose them. Despite satisfying his *influxus*-theory, this account has the startling consequence that final causes seem to be restricted to finite rational agents and seem therefore not to be responsible for the finality of natural processes or divine actions. In the third section, I will reconstruct Suárez's attempt to accommodate divine and natural teleology without relying on some sort of metaphorical motion. As I will point out, Suárez's sophisticated solution is problematic since it makes the notion of a final cause as applied to God (and consequently to nature) and to rational creatures equivocal. In fact, these two applications cannot even count as analogical (in the technical scholastic sense) anymore. Therefore, Suárez seems ultimately committed to conceding that some cases of finality are not due to final causes in the strict sense of the term. By way of conclusion I will finally come back to the general history of the transformation of

5. As Freddoso (2002: xxvii) notes, Suárez's treatment of causation in his *Disputationes Metaphysicae* is "the longest and most meticulous such tract in the history of scholasticism."

the notion of cause and point out what we can learn about this history by studying Suárez's sophisticated theory of final causality and its difficulties accounting for natural teleology.

2. Suárez's *Influxus*-Theory of Causes and the Obscurity of Final Causes

Final causes—together with material, formal and efficient causes—are the cornerstones of Aristotle's explanatory framework, which has become known as his doctrine of four causes.⁶ According to a widespread view of scholastic philosophers, final causes even enjoy a special status among all other Aristotelian causes insofar as they are the noblest causes of all.⁷ Most famously perhaps, Thomas Aquinas, following Avicenna, called the final cause the "cause of all causes", insofar as there would be no causality whatsoever if there were no final causes.⁸ And although Suárez takes some pains to accommodate the Thomist doctrine of the priority of the final cause,⁹ he frankly concedes that "the influence of the final cause is very obscure" (*DM* 17.1.3 [25, 531b]). This is striking. How can a committed Aristotelian thinker like Suárez find the cause of all causes obscure?

An important reason for Suárez's difficulty in understanding final causes is to be found in his general conception of causality. He develops this conception in disputation 12 by articulating a common concept of cause by which all four Aristotelian causes—the material, formal, efficient and final causes—can be counted as genuine causes and be distinguished from other explanatory principles. After having examined several candidates, Suárez comes up with the following suggestion:

A cause is a principle that *per se* infuses being into another thing. . . . By the term "*per se* infusing" privation and all accidental causes, which do not transfer or infuse being into something else *per se*, are excluded. The word "infusing", however, is not to be understood strictly, in its customary sense as it is particularly attributed to the efficient cause, but in more general sense, so that it is synonymous with "giving or communicating being to another thing". (*DM* 12.2.4 [25: 384b])¹⁰

6. The *locus classicus* of Aristotle's doctrine of four causes is his *Physics* II.3, 194b23–35.

7. See Suárez *DM* 17.praef. [25: 530b].

8. See Thomas Aquinas, *De principiis naturae* (1976: §4.18–36).

9. See *DM* 26.3.3, 26.3.5, 27.2.10, and 27.2.13. I will come back to this issue in the conclusion of this paper.

10. "Causa est principium per se influens esse in aliud; . . . Per illam autem particulam, *per se influens*, excluditur privatio, et omnis causa per accidens, quae per se non conferunt aut influunt esse in aliud. Sumendum est autem verbum illud *influit* non stricte, ut attribui specialiter solet causae ef-

According to Suárez's suggestion, causes are to be conceived of as items that have the ability to impart or "infuse"¹¹ being into another thing in the sense of giving or communicating being to another thing. Let me call this the *influxus-theory of causation*. Although Suárez stresses that the word "infusing" ("*influer*") must not be understood as only applying to efficient causes, he is aware of the fact that it is the efficient cause that complies best with his *influxus*-criterion of causation since "the efficient cause infuses being most properly."¹² This sets a hard task for Suárez. In order to be able to follow his tradition in conceiving of forms, matter and ends as causes, he must show that they all satisfy his *influxus*-theory and thus qualify as causes in the proper sense of the term. And it is precisely this task that Suárez takes up in his following disputations by arguing that matter, forms and ends all satisfy the *influxus*-criterion, insofar as they each display a distinct form of causation (*causatio*), by which they communicate being in one way or another. So, Suárez argues that "the causality of matter with respect to the form . . . is nothing but the proper union of such a form with matter,"¹³ while conversely "the union of the form with the matter is the causality of the form."¹⁴ Thus, formal and material causality for Suárez are two correlative modes of causality that form and matter mutually exert on each other when they compose a substantial or accidental unity, and form and matter qualify as causes insofar as they "communicate being" to the composite that they constitute (cf. *DM* 12.2.7 [25, 385b]).

It cannot be denied that conceiving of the mutual union of form and matter as their correlative modes of causation appears to be strained. This is even admitted by Suárez, who writes in another passage that "matter and form, rather than properly infusing being, compose it by themselves, and therefore it seems—according to this reasoning—that the term 'cause' is primarily predicated of the efficient cause, but it is transferred to matter or form by analogy."¹⁵

Given that Suárez tells us in disputation 12 that there is a common concept of cause, which applies to all causes, this is a startling thing to say. How can there be a common concept if matter and form are only causes in an analogical sense? Now,

ficienti, sed generalius prout aequivalet verbo dandi vel communicandi esse alteri." (*DM* 12.2.4 [25: 384b]) Here and in the following all translations from Latin are my own.

11. This translation of Suárez's term "*influer*" was suggested to me by an anonymous referee. I very much like the suggestion and I am grateful to the referee for this.

12. "Nam efficiens propriissime influit esse." (*DM* 27.1.10 [25: 952a])

13. "[Hinc ulterius addo,] causalitatem materiae in ipsam formam (quando forma talis est ut a materia causetur et pendeat), non esse aliud a propria unione talis formae cum materia". (*DM* 13.9.10 [25: 432a])

14. "Unio formae ad materiam est formae causalitas." (*DM* 15.6.7 [25: 520a])

15. "[Nam efficiens propriissime influit esse;] materia autem et forma non tam proprie influunt esse quam componunt illud per seipsas, et ideo secundum hanc rationem videtur nomen causae primo dictum de efficienti; ad materiam autem vel formam esse translatum per quamdam proportionalitatem." (*DM* 27.1.10 [25: 952a])

this is only a problematic thing to say if one thinks that things which fall under a common concept *C* cannot be called *Cs* in an analogical sense since falling under such a concept makes them *Cs* in a perfectly univocal sense. This is no doubt a traditional thing to think.¹⁶ However, it is not Suárez's view on the matter, at least, not in general. As he sees it, different *Cs* can also be called *Cs* in an analogical sense if they all fall under a common concept while complying with the characteristics of being a *C* in different ways. Suárez calls this kind of analogy "analogy of intrinsic attribution."¹⁷ So, the function of a common concept invoked in an analogy of intrinsic attribution is not to establish a univocal class of *Cs*,¹⁸ but to characterize a general metaphysical structure to which things can comply in various ways. Accordingly, things analogous to one another according to an analogy of intrinsic attribution are all genuine *Cs*, but they count as analogous since they qualify as *Cs* in different ways. Suárez's paradigm example for such an analogy of intrinsic attribution is the analogy of being. As he explains, there is a common concept of being, which applies to all beings, although they qualify as beings in different ways: God is a being by his very essence, while finite things are beings to the extent that they are created and held in existence by God. Moreover, among finite things, substances are *per se* or independently existing beings, while accidents can, at least naturally, only exist in substances and are thus essentially dependent beings.¹⁹

Now, Suárez's common concept of a cause, which he spells out in terms of his *influxus*-theory of causation, has precisely the function of revealing an analogy of intrinsic attribution among Aristotelian causes:²⁰ "infusing being into something" or "communicating being" defines a general characteristic of causes, to which dif-

16. Traditionally, analogies were considered as a subdivision of equivocations, thus as forms of predication, which are not backed up by a common concept; see Ashworth (1995: 51f.).

17. For Suárez such an "analogy of intrinsic attribution" is distinguished by the fact that "there is one common formal and objective concept because the analogates are properly and intrinsically so constituted and truly agree in such a nature, which the mind can conceive of in an abstract and precise way by one concept that is common to all./ datur unus conceptus communis formalis et obiectivus, quia analogata proprie et intrinsece talia sunt vereque in tali ratione conveniunt, quam potest mens abstracte seu praecise concipere uno conceptu omnibus communi." (*DM* 28.3.14 [26: 18a], cf. also *DM* 2.1.14 [25: 69f.]).

18. As Suárez explains (*DM* 2.2.36 [25: 81b]) with regard to the concept of being, a common concept only establishes a class of univocal things, if this concept applies to these things in the same respect (*habitus*) and order (*ordo*).

19. For the analogy of being between finite beings and God see *DM* 28.3.10–17 [26: 16–19]; for the analogy of being between substances and accidents see *DM* 32.2.11–16 [26: 322–324]. Detailed discussions of Suárez's conception of analogies of being can be found in Doyle (1969), Ashworth (1995) and Salas (2014).

20. Or so Suárez suggests by saying that "among causes there is not only a somehow metaphorical proportionality (otherwise one could not call them all causes in proper way). Rather, there is a true and real agreement, as it can also be confirmed by the given definition and its exposition/ inter causas autem non solum est proportionalitas aliqua metaphorica, alioqui non de omnibus illis causa cum proprietate diceretur, sed est vera et realis convenientia, ut ex definitione data et expositione eius confirmari etiam potest" (*DM* 12.2.14 [25: 388a]).

ferent causes comply in different ways, so that all Aristotelian causes qualify as genuine causes. Still, Suárez holds that different kinds of causes can comply with the general characteristic of a cause varying well: while efficient causes comply with this characteristic most properly, so called “internal causes” like matter and form only comply with it more loosely, insofar as they do not communicate a being that is external to them, but in that they constitute a being by engaging in a substantial or accidental union to compose this being by themselves.²¹

We will come back to Suárez’s conception of the analogy of causes, when we assess his full-blown theory of final causes. For now it is enough to see that Suárez’s *influxus*-theory of causation renders efficient cause the paradigm kind of cause while the causal status of all other traditional Aristotelian causes requires some justification. In particular, it becomes plain why Suárez has difficulties in understanding final causes as genuine causes. After all, for final causes to be causes in the proper sense of the term, they must exert some sort of influence. And as Suárez himself concedes, it is the most obscure of all issues in what the distinct *influx* or causality of a final cause consists in,²² such that it is *prima facie* unclear how final causes should satisfy his *influxus*-theory.

This gives rise to another question. Why would Suárez devise a theory of causation that threatens to undermine the Aristotelian doctrine of the four causes? The reason for Suárez’s comparatively narrow notion of cause arises from a demarcation problem. In spelling out a common notion of cause, Suárez is primarily concerned with the problem that the characteristic feature of a cause must not be too loose. In particular, it has to exclude other explanatory principles invoked by the Aristotelian framework, such as privations and non-causal forms of ontological dependences (as they are assumed to explain the mystery of incarnation),²³ which are not ranked among the four classical Aristotelian causes. Causes in the proper sense of the term are to be more robust than mere explanatory principles

21. There is a reason to worry here: apart from analogies of intrinsic attributions that are governed by a common concept, Suárez also allows for “analogies of proportion”, according to which things are called analogous to the extent that they are in some sense proportional or similar to each other (cf. *DM* 28.3.4 [26: 13f.]). Now, when Suárez claims that “it seems . . . that the term ‘cause’ . . . is transferred to matter or form by analogy (*proportionalitas*)” (*DM* 27.1.10, cf. footnote 15), he seems to conceive of matter and form as “causes” in the sense of an analogy of proportion. Yet, this would fly in the face of his view that “among causes there is not only a somehow metaphorical proportionality” (*DM* 12.2.14, cf. footnote 20). To avoid this difficulty I suggest reading the expression “it seems (*videtur*)” in Suárez’s problematic classification of matter and form as causes in a proportional sense as a way of distancing himself from actually endorsing this classification. For a more pessimist reading of this passage see Fink (2015).

22. In *DM* 23.1.9 [25: 845b] Suárez introduces his investigation of final causes by raising the question “what, finally, does its causality consist in, for this is the most obscure of all ‘issues’ /in quo denique consistat eius causalitas, quod hic est omnium obscurissimum”? See also *DM* 12.2.7 [25: 385b].

23. See *DM* 12.2.2 [25: 384a] and *DM* 12.2.11–12 [25: 386f.].

and Suárez argues that causes are just those principles that have the capacity to infuse being into another thing.

Suárez's *influxus*-theory of causation might strike one as rather un-Aristotelian in that it conceptually privileges efficient causes. However, it might not have been all that surprising to his scholastic contemporaries. Already Thomas Aquinas, in his *De principiis naturae*, tried to explain why Aristotle had not included the principle of privation in his list of causes by distinguishing between principles and causes:

Every cause then may be called principle and every principle may be called cause. Nonetheless, "cause" appears to add something to "principle" in the common language, since that which is first—whether there follows a posterior being or not—may be called principle. But cause is called only this first thing out of which there follows the being of a posterior thing, and therefore one says that a cause is something out of whose being another follows; and thus one cannot call this first thing from which a change begins a cause *per se*, but only principle. Therefore, privation is ranked amongst the principles, but not amongst the causes, for the privation is the thing where the generation begins. (Thomas Aquinas 1976: §3.65–83)²⁴

Aquinas distinguished mere principles from causes by pointing out that causes in the strict sense of the term are items from which 'the being of other things' follows. Hence, by stating his *influxus*-theory of causation, Suárez expresses in the emanation-theoretical terminology of "infusing" a concept of cause, which can already be discerned in Aquinas—at least by giving his loose talk of 'following of another being' a sufficiently strong interpretation.²⁵

Suárez's rather narrow conception of cause as a principle that has the power to communicate or infuse being into something is thus nothing revolutionarily new, but already implicit in his tradition. Moreover, Suárez's *influxus*-theoretical characterization of causes is fully in line with a general transformation of the notion of cause towards a more concrete conception of causes in the late medieval period that has been observed by many scholars.²⁶ According to this concrete conception,

24. "Omnis enim causa potest dici principium, et omne principium causa. Sed tamen causa videtur addere supra principium communiter dictum, quia id quod est primum, sive consequatur esse posterius sive non, potest dici principium. . . . Sed causa solum dicitur de illo primo ex quo consequitur esse posterioris: unde dicitur quod causa est ex cuius esse sequitur aliud. Et ideo illud primum a quo incipit esse motus, non potest dici causa per se etsi dicatur principium: et propter hoc privatio ponitur inter principia, et non inter causas, quia privatio est id a quo incipit generatio." (Thomas Aquinas 1976: §3.65–83).

25. For a discussion of the emanation-theoretical background that might have influenced Suárez in devising his *influxus*-theory of causation, see O'Neill (1993: 27–55).

26. For references, see my Introduction.

causes are taken to be productive active entities rather than mere explanatory principles, and hardly anything could express this concrete conception of causes better than requiring that causes exert a distinct *influx* in order to qualify as causes.

Despite the advantage of delivering a clear-cut criterion that distinguishes genuine causes from mere explanatory principles, such as privation, Suárez's *influxus*-theory of causation has the manifest disadvantage of rendering the causal status of ends mysterious. What does the proper *influx* of an end consist in?

3. Final Causality and the Theory of Metaphorical Motion

How can there be final causes, if every cause must exert a certain *influx*, or “communicate being” in one way or another in order to qualify as an actual cause? This is a serious problem. Usually the ends with regard to which we explain processes or actions are only brought about by these very processes, and, even worse, if these processes go awry, these ends are not even brought about at all. How then could such non- or not-yet-existing-ends exert any *influx* on these actions or processes and thus figure as genuine final *causes*? An obvious solution to this problem consists in maintaining that it is not the end as such that figures as a final cause of an action, but only the end insofar as it is represented by an intelligent being. Why is the end of having fun the final cause of my going on a hiking tour? Well, I am going on a hiking tour because I *want* to have fun and I *know* that hiking is fun for me. Thus, it seems to be my *thinking* about ends that enables them to motivate me to perform certain actions and thereby figure as their final causes.

The prospects for an account of final causality that is in line with Suárez's *influxus*-theory of causation look most promising with regard to the purposeful agency of humans. It is not surprising therefore that—following the Aristotelian methodological principle to start with what is best known to us—Suárez suggests developing his account of final causation with regard to human agency and then expanding and adjusting this account to the case of God and nature.

The case of purposeful human agency suggests a necessary condition for final causation: whatever ends there might be for me, they can only exert an influence on me when I recognize them as such ends. It is quite natural therefore that Suárez requires that “in order that an end may cause, it is entirely necessary that it is recognized in advance.”²⁷ This requirement that ends can only figure as causes if they are recognized in advance was perfectly standard in medieval accounts of final

27. “ut finis causet, necessarium omnino est ut praecognitus sit.” (DM 23.7.2 [25: 875a]) On account of this condition ends must be *cognitively present* to the agents in which they act as genuine final causes. Suárez takes this to be an important analogy to efficient causes, which have to be *locally present* to the patients on which they exert their distinctive causal *influx* (see DM 23.8.10 [25: 881a]).

causes.²⁸ Let us call it the *cognition-condition*.²⁹ But what does the specific influence of recognized ends consist in such that they qualify as genuine final causes of our actions? Suárez answers this question by appealing to his theory of metaphorical motion (*motio metaphorica*) that he develops in the fourth section of disputation 23.³⁰ According to his theory, the genuine influence of ends, due to which they qualify as proper causes of a distinct kind, consists in the appeal or attraction they exert on us when we recognize them as ends and choose them. To the extent that we recognize ends as ends we take them to be good and they appear appealing to us.³¹ Now, our being attracted by a recognized end's goodness is paralleled by our spontaneous striving to choose this end.³² This process of aligning our will with this end is but a spontaneous actualization of our will, which is again a particular motion (*motio*) in the technical Aristotelian sense of the term: our will turns from only potentially willing a certain end to actually willing it. This very motion can be conceived of from two sides, so to speak. On the one hand, our will's alignment with a specific end can be described as arising from the spontaneous and free activity of the will itself. In this case the will's alignment with its end is conceived as a "real motion" that is efficiently caused by the power of the will. On the other hand, however, the will's alignment with an end can also be described as arising from the end, which appears appealing to us. In this case our will's alignment with its end is

28. Indeed, this requirement seems to have been adopted by virtually all late medieval philosophers after it has been explicitly articulated by Avicenna in his *Metaphysics* IV.5. For a discussion, see Pasnau (2001). As Pasnau expounds, many of these medieval authors disagreed about whether the end itself figures as a final cause (i.e. according to its *esse reale*), or rather the end insofar as it is represented by an intellect (according to its *esse obiectivum*). This question is also investigated by Suárez in *DM* 23.8. He argues that the will aspires to the end insofar as it is real, and not insofar as it is recognized and thus concludes that the end is a cause according to its *esse reale* (which however only means, that if I go jogging for the sake of my health, that I do so in order to be *really* healthy, and not in order to think to be healthy). An illuminating reconstruction of Suárez's arguments in these matters is given by Åkerlund (2011: 116–128).

29. There is an awkward problem lurking here: the cognition of an end, which is supposed to render its causality possible, seems at the same time to rule out its causality. This seems to result from the following three Suárezian tenets: (1) only real beings can be causes (*DM* 12.2.4); (2) recognized ends which move us need not even be possible, let alone actual (*DM* 23.8.7); and (3) merely recognized things are being of reasons, which are no proper beings at all (*DM* 54.1.10; and as a comment Shields 2012). I will not further dwell on this problem. For an excellent exposition see Åkerlund (2011: 116–128).

30. The most concise articulation of this theory is given in *DM* 23.4.8. For a detailed account of Suárez's theory of metaphorical motion, see Schmid (2014).

31. It is thus central for Suárez's account of final causes that ends can only be causally operative under the guise of the good. The close connection between final causes and their (apparent) goodness is discussed by Seiler (1936: 27–32).

32. Suárez is anxious to stress that the attraction (or metaphorical motion) exerted by an approved end is simultaneous with the spontaneous actualization of the will, which is an instance of efficient causality (see *DM* 23.4.8 [25: 861]) and thus distances himself (in *DM* 23.4.5–7 [25: 860f.]) from those who take the metaphorical motion of the end to precede the motion of the will.

conceived as a “metaphorical motion”. And it is in this metaphorical motion that the final causality of ends consists such that attractive ends qualify as final *causes* in the proper sense of the term.

Suárez’s appeal to a metaphorical motion in order to explain the distinct *influx* or causality of ends appears problematic at first sight. How can ends be *genuine* causes if their causality only consists in a *metaphorical* motion, that is, in a somehow ‘non-real’ motion? It is not surprising that Suárez’s theory of metaphorical motion led recent commentators to conclude that Suárez has eliminated ends from the list of distinct proper causes.³³ This conclusion is premature though, for Suárez is quite aware of this worry. In fact, he himself raises the objection that ends must lack a proper causal status if their causality only consists in a metaphorical motion (*DM* 23.1.4)—and dispels it: As he explains, a final cause’s “motion is called metaphorical, not because it is not real, but because it does not happen through an effective *influx* nor through physical motion but through intentional and spiritual motion. And therefore nothing prevents it from being the case that its causality is true and proper.”³⁴ Hence, by his theory of metaphorical motion Suárez does not deny the causal status of ends or reduce their causality to the efficient causality of the will. Rather, he establishes the proper causal status of ends by showing how motivating ends conform to his *influxus*-criterion of causation. But why, then, does Suárez choose such a misleading term? Why does he call an end’s distinctive *influx* or causality “metaphorical”, if he does not want to dispute its reality? The answer is, I think, historical in nature: starting with Henry of Ghent, who introduced the term “metaphorical motion” to describe the distinctive causality of ends,³⁵ it became standard scholastic terminology to describe final causation in terms of metaphorical motion.³⁶ So, even Suárez maintains that “all would classify this causality as a metaphorical motion”,³⁷ but insists that it has to be made clear what precisely the metaphorical or non-efficient-causal motion of final causes consists in. And,

33. Olivo (1997: 102) maintained that Suárez’s theory brings final and efficient causes to collapse, while Carraud (2003: 161) argued that Suárez reduced finality to efficient causation. For a critical discussion of these assessments, see Schmid (2014) and Penner (2015). I will also return to this issue in my conclusion.

34. “Eius autem motio dicitur metaphorica, non quia non sit realis, sed quia non fit per influxum effectivum, nec per motionem physicam, sed per motionem intentionalem et animalem: et ideo nihil obstat, quominus vera ac propria sit eius causalitas.” (*DM* 23.1.14 [25: 847a]) Note that the Vivès edition fatally omits the underlined words, which can be found in the older Salamanca edition. For more on this see Penner (2015).

35. See Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* I, q. 14, (1979: 89). This manner of speaking is happily adopted by Duns Scotus (for instance in his *Lectura* II, dist. 25, n. 18 and 97. 1993: 233, 262).

36. To give just two examples: In his *Commentary on Aristotle’s Metaphysics*, vol. 2, c. II, q. 10, s. 4 (1615: 159–161), Peter Fonseca cites Avicenna, Aquinas and Scotus as having held the view that the nature of final causation consists in a “metaphorical motion”. Similarly Paul Soncinas argues in his *In libros Metaphysicae Aristotelis actuissimae Questiones*, V, q. 2 (1579: 49a), that “final causality consists in the metaphorical motion of the will”.

37. “[O]mnes ponunt hanc causalitatem in motione metaphorica” (*DM* 23.4.3 [25: 859b]).

as we have seen, for Suárez this metaphorical motion is nothing but the attractive influence an end exerts on a will at the very moment the will spontaneously aligns itself with this end by an efficient causal operation.³⁸

This account of final causes surely satisfies Suárez's general *influxus*-criterion of causation. Strictly taken, however, Suárez's theory of metaphorical motion is not yet able to account for every form of teleology—not even among actions of finite rational agents. The problem is that metaphorical motions only take place within an agent when she actualizes her will. Such an actualization of the will is an “immanent action,” as scholastics used to say, that is, an action the effect of which takes place in the agent (or even in a faculty of the agent) who performs the action.³⁹ Yet, we also explain our “transeunt actions” in a teleological way, that is, our actions the effects of which obtain outside of us.⁴⁰ If someone asks me, for example, why I go to the library, it can be correct to say that I am going to the library in order to have a look at Fonseca's *Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*—although Fonseca's *Commentary* did not exert an attracting influence on my legs. This makes plain that not every teleologically explainable action or process is in itself an instance of a metaphorical motion, which is confined to the actualization of the will inside an agent. It is equally clear, though, that my going to the library stands in an obvious causal relation to my will to have a look at Fonseca's *Commentary*, so that my going to the library is at least indirectly due to a genuine final causal *influx* that is primarily responsible for my wanting to have a look at Fonseca. It is exactly such kind of reasoning which brings Suárez to modify his account of final causality such that it can also be extended to transeunt actions:

In this matter one has to state first that the external effects which are produced through these [i.e. transeunt] actions can only be effects of the final cause insofar as the actions through which they come about are caused in some way in its genus by a final cause and depend on it. (*DM* 23.4.15 [25: 863a])⁴¹

38. One might wonder why the fact that the will's alignment can be conceived as being finally caused by its end should constitute an indispensable feature of this alignment if this very alignment is efficiently caused by the spontaneous activity of the will. Isn't final causality merely epiphenomenal to the will's efficient causality? As I have argued in Schmid (2014), I think that Suárez's libertarianist account of freedom provides him with good reasons to counter this charge of epiphenomenalism. I will briefly come back to this in my conclusion.

39. So, Suárez explicitly claims in *DM* 23.3.2 [25: 852a], that the primary effects of final causes (in rational agents) are “acts or affects in the will itself”.

40. Suárez spells out the distinction between immanent and transeunt actions in *DM* 48.2.1 [26: 873f.].

41. “In hac re imprimis statuendum est, effectus exterioris, qui per has actiones producuntur, in tantum esse posse effectus causae finalis, in quantum actiones, per quas fiunt, causantur aliquo modo in suo genere a causa finali, et ab ea pendent” (*DM* 23.4.15 [25: 863a]).

Even though transeunt actions and their effects are not immediate effects of final causes, they can still be conceived of as effects of final causes because they depend on a preceding instance of final causality or metaphorical motion, which takes place within an agent who has chosen to pursue this end rather than another. In a derivative sense then, transeunt actions of finite rational agents can also be said to be subject to final causality if they are indirectly caused by causally operative ends.

In this vein Suárez can give a coherent account of the teleology involved in finite rational actions in terms of final causes, which conform to his *influxus*-theory of causation. However, his theory of metaphorical motion still does not yet cover all instances of teleology. Since a metaphorical motion can only occur when an intelligent agent aligns her will with an end that she has recognized as good, Suárez's theory of final causality seems not to work for natural substances, which can neither recognize ends as ends nor be attracted by them through a metaphorical motion.⁴² This problem was well known among Suárez's scholastic forerunners, who also accepted the cognition-condition according to which only cognized ends can qualify as final causes.⁴³ Virtually all of them were happy to account for the teleology among natural substances by appeal to God. Perhaps most famously, Aquinas argued that although natural substances do not recognize the ends of their operations by themselves, God does, and this is sufficient for the satisfaction of the cognition-condition.⁴⁴ Thus, final causes can also be found within the natural realm because God recognized them and directed natural substances towards them.

Suárez cannot immediately adopt this widespread theistic account of natural teleology, for this account presupposes that it is unproblematic that God's actions are subject to final causes (indeed, it explains the teleological ordering of nature in terms of the teleological character of God's creation). Yet, it is exactly this presupposition that turns out to be problematic for Suárez: his theory of final causality in terms of metaphorical motion requires that final causation involves a genuine motion—namely the actualization of a will (or at least an appetite). But since God is a perfect being or pure act (*actus purus*), as scholastics used to say, God cannot have any unactualized faculties or potentialities. God is an eternal and immutable

42. Higher animals (*bruta*) play an intermediary role here. As Suárez points out, higher animals can – in virtue of their instinct and estimative power—judge things as beneficial or disadvantageous to them so as to strive for it or flee. For this reason, their “triggered appetition is without doubt caused by an objective metaphorical motion of an agreeing good/ appetitio elicita sine dubio causatur ex metaphorica motione obiectiva boni convenientis” (*DM* 23.10.15 [25: 889b]). Yet, Suárez specifies that since these animals cannot conceive of what they so judge to be beneficial for them *as* an end they do not act formally for the sake of an end.

43. See footnote 28 above.

44. See for instance *STh*. I-II, q. 6, art. 1, corp., and *STh*. I q. 103 art. 1 ad 3.

being and as such there can be no sort of change in God.⁴⁵ Nor can there be any motion in him, be it only metaphorical, so that “the end cannot exert its proper causality on the divine will insofar as it is directed towards its immanent actions or free determinations of his will.”⁴⁶ Due to his perfection, then, God’s will is not susceptible to any sort of causal influence whatsoever—not even to the influence of final causes, “because the act of the divine will with regard to its essential and necessary entity cannot have any true cause of any genus, for as such he is an essential being and entirely independent.”⁴⁷

4. Suárez’s Account of Natural and Divine Teleology

How can natural substances display teleological behavior if neither they nor God, who has created and arranged them in their peculiar manner, are liable to any metaphorical motion, which Suárez has identified as the distinct causality of final causes? Does Suárez think that there are forms of teleology that are not due to final causes in the strict sense of the term? Let us address this question by having a closer look at Suárez’s treatment of natural teleology. As Suárez makes plain, he wants to abide by the traditional view that natural processes are also due to final causes, although he qualifies this view in light of the fact that natural agents are not directly susceptible to a final causal influence:

Nonetheless, the proper mode of speaking in this matter is that the actions of these natural agents are for the sake of an end and an effect of a final cause. Yet not insofar as they precisely arise from the natural agents themselves, but insofar as they simultaneously stem from the first agent who operates in and through everything. Or conversely (and this roughly amounts to the same), insofar as the proximate agents themselves are subordinate to the direction and intention of the superior agent. And therefore it is less said that natural agents are operative for the sake of an end, rather than that they are directed towards an end by the superior agent. (*DM* 23.10.5 [25: 887a])⁴⁸

45. In *DM* 30.3.6 [26: 74a] Suárez argues that God must, in virtue of his perfection, be a most simple being, which includes being devoid of any internal causal structure. Thus, the lack of every form of causality in God is also due to his absolute simplicity.

46. “[Unde dicendum est] finem non posse exercere causalitatem suam in divinam voluntatem quantum ad actus immanentes seu determinationes liberas eiusdem voluntatis.” (*DM* 23.9.3 [25: 882b])

47. “[Secundo declaratur amplius,] quia actus divinae voluntatis, quoad entitatem sibi essentialem ac necessariam, non potest habere ullam veram causam in aliquo genere, quia ut sic est ens per essentiam et omnino independens.” (*DM* 23.9.4 [25: 883a])

48. “Nihilominus, proprius modus loquendi in hac materia est, actiones horum agentium naturalium esse propter finem, et esse effecta causae finalis. Non tamen ut praecise egrediuntur ab ipsis

There are at least two points worth mentioning here. The first is that Suárez carefully specifies in which respect natural processes can be conceived of as effects of final causes. Natural processes are only effects of final causes insofar as they stem from God. Suárez goes on to spell out this idea in a subsequent passage, to which we will turn shortly. The second point worth mentioning is that Suárez thinks that the operations of natural substances are, due to their indirect dependence on final causes and God, not properly *performed for the sake of* certain ends, but rather *directed towards* these ends by God. Given that natural substances do not engage in their typical causal processes out of being attracted by recognized ends, this is a plausible thing to say.⁴⁹

Let us get back to the first point. How is it that the operations of natural substances can be effects of final causes according to one respect (“insofar as they simultaneously stem from the first agent”), but not according to the other (“insofar as they precisely arise from . . . themselves”)? Suárez elucidates this distinction between these respects immediately:

And so it comes that with regard to these [natural] actions, insofar as they arise from natural agents, there is no proper final causality, but only a disposition towards a certain *terminus*; insofar as they arise from God, however, there is final causality in them as there is in the other external and transeunt actions of God. (*DM* 23.10.6 [25: 887b])⁵⁰

In considering the finality of natural processes one has to distinguish between two aspects of their directedness. On the one hand, natural processes exhibit a kind of directedness on account of arising from natural substances with a specific form. On the other hand, their directedness is also due to God, and it is only this kind of directedness that Suárez takes to involve genuine final causality. I will refer to the first kind of directedness as “dispositional directedness” and to the latter as “teleological directedness.”

If natural substances, like elements and animals, engage in natural processes (or “actions” in the broader scholastic sense of the term), they do so in virtue of

naturalibus agentibus, sed ut simul sunt a primo agente, quod in omnibus et per omnia operatur. Vel e converso (et fere in idem redit), prout ipsa proxima agentia substant directioni et intentioni superioris agentis. Et ideo ipsa agentia naturalia non tam dicuntur operari propter finem, quam dirigi in finem a superiori agente.” (*DM* 23.10.5 [25: 887a])

49. Indeed, Suárez is not original in this, but picks up on an established distinction of his tradition. Already Ockham and Buridan maintained that natural processes are not literally *for the sake of* something since they are not directly liable to final causation. For a discussion and references, see Pasnau (2001: 309–315), Lagerlund (2011: 593–600).

50. “Atque ita fit ut in his actionibus, ut sunt a naturalibus agentibus, non sit propria causalitas finalis, sed solum habitudo ad certum terminum; ut vero sunt a Deo, ita sit in illis causalitas finalis sicut in aliis externis et transeuntibus actionibus Dei.” (*DM* 23.10.6 [25: 887b])

their forms, which endow them with distinctive causal powers or dispositions. Fire, for instance, is in virtue of its substantial form naturally disposed to strive upwards or to produce heat by which it is capable of igniting flammable materials; and similarly—although in a much more complex way—rabbits are by nature disposed to beget rabbits. On account of the simple fact then that natural substances figure as efficient causes by exerting their causal powers, their operations are intrinsically directed towards determinate effects. They are related to their effects as the endpoints or *termini* of their operations.⁵¹ This view is a natural result of an Aristotelian conception of actions or causal processes in general. According to this conception, causal processes are nothing but manifestations of certain causal powers that give rise to certain effects. The process of igniting, for instance, is nothing but the fire's manifesting its power in a piece of flammable material, and this process is naturally directed at the actualization of a certain form, which, at the same time, sets the condition of success for this very process. That is, the fire's igniting a piece of wood is successful if the wood's potential to burn is actualized, and the fire fails to exert its power if it falls short of igniting the piece of wood.

Holding a broadly Aristotelian conception of causal processes,⁵² it is clear for Suárez that natural substances display a kind of intrinsic directedness towards the effects they are disposed to cause in virtue of their form. That is, just in virtue of being Aristotelian efficient causes (which act out of certain causal powers) natural substances engage in processes which exhibit a kind of internal teleology in the sense that these processes are intrinsically directed towards a certain outcome or *terminus*. Yet, arising from the mere dispositional directedness of natural processes this internal teleology does not require any influence of a final cause in Suárez's strict sense of the term. It seems therefore that the teleology in nature could simply be accounted for in terms of the dispositional directedness of natural substances so that it is unnecessary to additionally appeal to final causes. Suárez explicitly considers this option (*DM* 23.10.8), yet rejects it for two reasons.

The first reason is not very illuminating. Suárez just insists that "it is *per se* absurd" to assume that the teleological order of nature is merely due to the fact that natural substances strive, in virtue of their causal powers, to bring about certain effects. As Suárez points out, from this assumption it "follows that nature acts in a perfect ordered way by tending toward an end without any direction or intention

51. In *DM* 43.2.16, Suárez even describes actions or causal operations in general as being "transcendentally related" to their effects. A transcendental relation is (amongst others) distinguished from so called categorical relations in that such a relation does not require its *terminus* (i.e., its second relatum) to exist (see *DM* 47.4). And indeed actions are intrinsically directed toward certain outcomes, even if they fail, and their outcome is never attained. For an overview of Suárez's theory of causal operations see Schmid (2015).

52. I say "broadly" because Suárez wants to allow for a *creatio ex nihilo* which, unlike Aristotelian actions or operations, need not to inhere in a pre-existing patient; see his *DM* 20.1.11.

of an end.”⁵³ This would surely be absurd. Yet, it is all but clear why a proponent of a dispositionalist account of natural teleology has to concede this inference. She could simply insist that it is the very point of her suggestion that natural operations have their distinctive direction and intention towards ends, because they tend to bring about these ends in virtue of their natural dispositions.

Suárez’s second reason is more convincing in that it points to a real shortcoming of a merely dispositionalist account of natural teleology that explains the finality of natural processes merely in terms of their dispositional directedness.

Second, I add, that even if *per impossibile* God did not immediately and *per se* concur with all the actions of natural agents, they should still be said to be mediately ordered to the end by the author of nature, who also gives to natural agents such perfections for such actions and wants their actions to be for the sake of certain ends and for the sake of the good and the preservation of the universe in general. (DM 23.10.9 [25: 888a])⁵⁴

Suárez calls our attention to the fact that even if the internal teleology displayed by natural substances were (*per impossibile*) not due to God (but simply due to their dispositional directedness), this would still not be enough to account for the overall teleological organization of the universe. The powers of natural substances could at best account for the internal teleology of their proper activities, that is, for the fact that they intrinsically strive for bringing about certain effects. But such an account leaves untouched what one might call external teleology, which natural substances exhibit insofar as they are part of a teleologically organized universe. In other words, with regard to the natural substances’ dispositional directedness one cannot explain why natural processes often serve each other; why for instance enough plankton grows in the sea to serve as nutriment for fish which in turn can

53. “ex illa hypothese impossibili sequi, naturam ordinatissime operari tendendo in finem, sine ulla directione vel intentione finis, quod per se est satis absurdum.” (DM 23.10.9 [25: 888a]) See also DM 29.3.29 [26: 57b], where Suárez writes that it is absurd to assume that “all things tend by a natural inclination toward their ends, as toward certain *termini*, without any causality of an end”, for “although all things have these natural inclinations toward their ends, nevertheless, this same constitution of those things indicates that they are not from themselves, but have been created by and have received these inclinations toward their ends from a higher agent./ [dicere quis posset] omnia tendere naturali inclinatione in suos fines tanquam in terminus quasdam absque causalitate finis; [hoc autem absurdissimum est:] quanquam enim res omnes habeant has inclinationes naturales in suos fines, tamen haec eadem earum constitutio declarant, eas non esse a se, sed a superiori agente esse conditas, et propensiones in suos fines accepisse.”

54. “Adde deinde, quod si, per impossibile, Deus per se et immediate non concurreret ad omnes actiones agentium naturalium, nihilominus mediate dici deberent ordinatae in finem ab auctore naturae, qui et naturalibus agentibus dedit tales virtutes propter tales actiones, et ipsas actiones esse voluit propter certos fines, et generatim propter bonum et conservationem universi.” (DM 23.10.9 [25: 888a])

be caught and eaten by humans. Plankton might indeed have the intrinsic disposition to grow and to propagate, but it certainly does not have an essential disposition to enable human beings a good life which allows them to worship God. Such a teleologically structured universe, in which every process exists for the sake of another process and is ultimately directed towards God, can indeed hardly be explained with regard to the causal powers of natural substances alone.⁵⁵ And it is exactly for this reason that a simple dispositional account of natural teleology has to be abandoned in favor of a theistic account that also can do justice to the universe's overarching teleological structure and its directedness to God.

Suárez thus thought to have good reason to account for natural teleology in terms of God, who created the universe in a purposeful way. However, given Suárez's theory of final causation in terms of metaphorical motion, it is unclear to what extent he can make any reference to final causes in the strict sense of the term in giving such a theistic account of natural teleology. How do natural processes become subject to proper final causality "insofar as they simultaneously stem from the first agent who operates in and through everything"? And what does it mean in the first place that natural processes 'simultaneously arise from God who operates in everything'?

Let me begin with the latter question. By saying that natural processes—which are performed by natural substances after all—simultaneously arise from God, Suárez appeals to his theory of divine concurrence. According to this theory, finite substances are unable to bring about effects on their own, and thus need the assistance or concurrence of God.⁵⁶ On account of this, actions (or causal operations in general) of finite substances do not only arise from these substances, but also from God, who concurs with them to bring about their effects. Thus, when Suárez insists that there is final causality in the operations of natural substances "insofar as they arise from God," he means that natural processes are due to final causes, insofar as they are co-products of God's concurrence. This is also clear from the passage quoted above, where Suárez assumes for the sake of the argument that "*per impossibile* God did not immediately and *per se* concur with all the actions of natural agents" (underlining mine).

This immediately leads to the second question. Why do natural operations become subject to final causality in the proper sense of the term only because they are somehow co-caused by God? This question is particularly pressing if one thinks that God's concurrence is but an instance of efficient causality. But this assumption would be misguided. As Suárez argues, God does not only concur as

55. Similarly, Hennig (2011: 198f.) distinguishes between ends which are internal to a process and others which are external to a process. In his terminology, it is only the end internal to the natural operation that can be accounted for in terms of a thing's essential disposition.

56. Suárez extensively deals with the problem of concurrence in his *DM* 22. For an excellent exposition of Suárez's views on these matters see Freddoso (2002: xcv-cxxi).

an efficient cause but also as a final cause. Indeed, God's final causal concurrence with the operation of finite substances is intimately linked with his efficient causal concurrence:

For as the first agent performs all his actions by the intellect and will, he performs all his actions, in a far more excellent way than any other agent, for the sake of an end; and so every action, insofar as it is transient outside of God and immediately flows from God, is caused by some end that is also intended by God. (*DM* 24.2.7 [25: 896b])⁵⁷

On account of this consideration, Suárez is convinced that "as the ultimate end God concurs in a final way with all actions of creatures for the sake of an end."⁵⁸

We are now in a position to understand why Suárez thinks of natural processes that "insofar as they arise from God . . . , there is final causality in them as there is in the other external and transeunt actions of God."⁵⁹ This is but an expression of his attempt to conceive of natural teleology as a consequence of his general *concursus*-theory, according to which God not only concurs with the operations of natural substances as an efficient but also as a final cause such that all their operations are directed towards certain ends and ultimately towards God himself. This is a highly subtle suggestion. It allows Suárez to substantiate the common scholastic tenet that God is the final cause of all things by his theory of final causality in general. And unlike other scholastic authors,⁶⁰ Suárez does not need to declare this tenet to be a non-literal expression of the (indeed efficient causal) fact that God has endowed the world with a teleological order when he created it. For Suárez the fact that natural processes occur for the sake of certain ends, which serve the beauty and harmony of the universe that again exists for the sake of God, is rather grounded in (a) God's universal concurrence with these processes by which he endows them with genuine final causality, and (b) in his having created the universe in a purposefully arranged way.

Moreover, Suárez's *concursus*-theoretical account of natural teleology elegantly avoids a serious charge that theistic theories of natural teleology are prone to. It is often argued that theistic accounts of natural teleology cannot do justice to

57. "Quia primum agens, sicut in omni actione sua operatur per intellectum et voluntatem, ita in omni sua actione operatur propter finem longe excellentiori modo quam quodlibet aliud agens; atque ita omnis actio, quatenus extra Deum est transiens et a Deo immediate manat, causata est ab aliquo fine, ab ipso etiam Deo intento." (*DM* 24.2.7 [25: 896b])

58. "Deus ut finis ultimus concurrit finaliter ad omnes creaturarum actiones propter finem." (*DM* 24.2.8 [25: 896b])

59. *DM* 23.10.5 [25: 887b]; for Latin quotation see footnote 48.

60. See William of Ockham (1967–1986: 299, *Quodlibet* IV.1.2; *OTh* IX) for instance, who denies that one can legitimately ask for the sake of which non-rational substances perform their operations.

an intrinsic form of natural teleology since they tend to assimilate the purposeful behaviour of arational substances to the purposeful behaviour of artefacts, which is imposed on them from without.⁶¹ With regard to his *concursum*-theoretical account of natural teleology Suárez can easily rebut charges of this sort. First, when God concurs with the operations of natural substances, he does so primarily for the sake of the natural ends of these substances. By concurring with natural substances in view of their natural ends, God makes sure that these ends become genuine final causes. Moreover, since natural processes gain their finality in virtue of God's concurrence, their teleological directedness is intimately built into these processes and not imposed on them from without.⁶²

Still, there seems to be a weak spot in Suárez's elegant account of natural teleology. It consists in the fact that it is not clear how God's transeunt actions can be literally due to a final cause if God, as a perfect being, is not subject to any kind of causation whatsoever. Suárez is very clear on this and explicitly addresses this worry in section 9 of his disputation 23. As he puts it,

The reason for doubting is taken from what we have said about the created intellectual agents so far. For in them no final causality takes place with regard to external actions, except by an intermediary causality in the very will of the causing agent. But an end cannot have its causality in the will of God, nor, consequently, in the external effects or actions, which proceed from that will. But to the contrary, God is most properly the end of all creatures, so that it is properly said that he does everything for his own sake. Consequently, he is the final cause of all things and actions which proceed from him. (*DM* 23.9.1 [25: 882a])⁶³

The problem Suárez raises here can be most perspicuously presented as a trilemma:

61. See McLaughlin (2001: 143–145) and Des Chene (1996: 197) who directs this charge even against Suárez. I hope that my reconstruction shows that this charge is unjustified.

62. Menn (2000) has similarly argued against Des Chene, who responded (in Des Chene 2000: 154ff.) by confessing that he is “inclined to agree” with Menn on this point. How does God's final causal concurrence manage to “imbue” the operations of finite agents with final causality and not just accompany their activities by a teleological act of assistance? This is a difficult question, which however applies to every form of divine concurrence that has to make sure that finite things do not perform any action on their own. For a discussion of this problem see Freddoso (1994) and for Suárez's stance on this his *DM* 22.1.

63. “Ratio dubitandi sumitur ex hactenus dictis de agentibus intellectualibus creatis; nam in his non habet locum causalitas finis quoad actiones externas, nisi media causalitate in ipsam voluntatem causae agentis; sed finis non potest habere causalitatem suam in voluntatem Dei; ergo neque in effectus vel actiones externas quae ab illa voluntate procedunt. In contrarium vero est, quia Deus propriissime est finis creaturarum omnium, unde et proprie dicitur omnia propter seipsum operari; ergo est causa finalis rerum omnium et actionum quae ab ipso procedunt.” (*DM* 23.9.1 [25: 882a])

- (1) The final causality involved in transeunt actions of rational agents is derived from the final causality involved in their antecedent (immanent) acts of will.
- (2) God's immanent acts do not involve any final causality.
- (3) God's transeunt actions involve final causality.

Since these three sentences are jointly inconsistent, at least one of them has to be given up. As we have just seen, denying (3) is no option for Suárez, who insists on God's being literally "the final cause of all things and actions which proceed from him." Indeed, Suárez even considers the suggestion, which he gleans from Gabriel Biel,⁶⁴ that "an end and a final cause are not entirely the same since the end as such only indicates a *terminus* to which an operation tends or to which a motion is ordered, while a final cause is that which moves an agent to operate," such that "it can truly be said that God performs everything for the sake of himself as the proper ultimate end to which everything is ordered, yet, not through any final causality, but through a more eminent way that is free of every causality."⁶⁵ This suggestion would have the advantage that one could safely reject sentence (3) without thereby being forced to abandon a range of testified Christian truths such as that "the Lord hath made all things for his own sake" (Proverbs 16:4 Geneva Bible). Nonetheless, Suárez decidedly rejects this suggestion as unsatisfactory, first "because it is the view of all theologians that God is the final cause of all things [and], second, because Aristotle defines the final cause as that for the sake of which something is made, while God is truly and properly that for the sake of which creatures are made."⁶⁶

Suárez is equally clear about his abiding by (2). Since God is a perfect being it is no option for Suárez to concede that there is some form of final causality in God.

64. Suárez refers to Gabriel's *Collectorium circa quattuor libros Sententiarum* II, Dist. 1, q. 5 (1984: 69). Unlike Suárez reports, Gabriel does not, strictly speaking, distinguish between an end and a final cause at this place. Instead, he argues that something can become the end (or object) of one's love, not because this thing operates as a final cause, but because it operates as an efficient cause. In these considerations on final causes Gabriel closely follows Ockham's discussion of these topics (in his *Quodlibet* IV.1.2) and particularly his distinction, which comes close to the one drawn by Suárez, between *having a final cause* and *being finally caused*. For more on Ockham's account of final causality see Schmid (in press).

65. "[Ut enim notat Gabriel . . .] finis et causa finalis non omnino sunt idem; nam finis ut sic solum dicit terminum ad quem tendit operatio, vel ad quem motus ordinantur; causa autem finalis est quae movet agens ad operandum. . . . [Sic igitur] vere dici potest Deus omnia operari propter se ut propter finem ultimum in quem omnia ordinantur, non tamen per causalitatem finis, sed per eminentiorem modum ab omni causalitate liberum." (DM 23.9.8 [25: 884])

66. "[Primo quidem,] quia ex omnium theologorum sententia Deus est causa finalis omnium rerum, . . . Secundo, quia Aristoteles definit causam finalem esse *id propter quod aliquid fit*; Deus autem vere ac proprie est *id propter quod creaturae fiunt*." (DM 23.9.9 [25: 884b])

Suárez corroborates this conviction by arguing against Soncinas, who defends the view that there is proper final causality in God's will "because the motion of the end is only metaphorical, but in God there is such a metaphorical motion because the divine goodness, for the sake of which God acts, moves the will of God."⁶⁷ Given that for Suárez the distinct motion of the final cause is only called "metaphorical" to the extent that it is not a kind of "physical" motion as exerted by an efficient cause, but not because it would not be real or proper, it is not surprising that he denounces Soncinas's view that the divine will involves proper final causality as "completely false" (*DM* 23.9.3 [25: 882b]). Suárez explains:

Just as God loves himself through himself without any causality . . . , so it is to be understood that God loves himself for his own sake and other things for the sake of his goodness in a most eminent way without any final causality with respect to the same love for himself or other things. And thus if he is said to love himself by being metaphorically moved or enticed by his goodness, this is a metaphorical way of talking that is taken from the way by which we conceive of divine things in a human way. (*DM* 23.9.5 [25: 883b])⁶⁸

On Suárez's view then, assuming a form of final causality or metaphorical motion in God, along the lines that Soncinas suggests, is only to be had at the price of an equivocation:

One has to take heed of an equivocation in the expression "metaphorical motion". For with respect to us, the adjective "metaphorical" is added in order to distinguish that motion from the motion of an efficient cause, but not in order to exclude it from the whole extension of motion and real causality properly said. However, if God is said to be moved or enticed by his goodness, this whole expression is metaphorical in order to explain only the nature of the divine will. (*DM* 23.9.6 [25: 883b])⁶⁹

67. "quia motio finis tantum est metaphorica; sed in Deum cadit haec metaphorica motio, quia divina bonitas, propter quam Deus agit, movet voluntatem Dei; ergo et causalitas finalis cadit in divinam voluntatem." (*DM* 23.9.2 [25: 882b]). This is Suárez's summary of Soncinas's main argument that is to be found in his *In libros Metaphysicae Aristotelis actuissimae Questiones*, V, q.2 (1579: 49a).

68. "[S]icut Deus eminentissimo modo se per seipsum amat sine ulla causalitate . . . ita intelligendum est Deum eminentissimo modo amare se propter se et alia etiam propter bonitatem suam absque ulla causalitate finali circa eundem amorem vel sui, vel aliorum. Atque ita, cum dicitur se amare, metaphorice motus vel illectus a bonitate sua, locutio est metaphorica, sumpta ex modo quo nos concipimus res divinas ad modum humanarum." (*DM* 23.9.5 [25: 883b])

69. "[C]avenda est aequivocatio in vocabulo metaphoricae motionis; nam respectu nostri illa particula, *metaphoricae*, additur ad distinguendam illam motionem a motione efficientis causae, non vero ad excludendam illam a tota latitudine motionis et causalitatis realis proprie dictae; cum vero

This leaves Suárez in the following position: Given that he firmly accepts the view (3) that God's transeunt actions involve genuine final causality and (2) that God's immanent acts do not involve any final causality, the only possibility for Suárez to avoid the trilemma mentioned above is to reject assumption (1) that the final causality of God's transeunt actions is to be derived from the final causality involved in his immanent acts of will. And indeed, this is exactly the option Suárez embraces.

It should be said that although the final cause does not properly cause its effects unless it is mediated in a certain way by an agent, who is moved and attracted to operate, still, for an end's being the proper cause of an agent's effect, it is not necessary that there is some proper causality in the agent beforehand. For this <only> happens to be the case in created intelligent agents because they immediately move or turn themselves towards operating or loving by a certain real motion and proper causality. However, this is not necessary in the uncreated intellectual agent because he determines (as it were) or turns himself towards the free loving and operating without any self-movement or real addition, dependence or causality, but in the most simple and eminent way. (*DM* 23.9.9 [25: 884b])⁷⁰

Ends need not always exert some attractive influence in order to qualify as final causes. As Suárez explains, such an influence is only required for finite rational agents, who first have to make up their minds before they can act for the sake of something. This is different with respect to God. As a perfect and immutable being he does not form his intentions in response to being enticed by something. From eternity, he has—without any self-movement, real addition, dependence or causality—always already freely loved himself and out of this eternal love he has created the universe. Thus, for an end to qualify as a proper final cause of God's action, this end simply has to be the object of his will by which this action proceeds. Or, as Suárez concisely puts it, “the final causality of God with respect to the effects outside of him consists in the fact that God produces the effects outside of him by the intuition and love of his goodness.”⁷¹

Deus dicitur moveri aut allici a bonitate sua, tota locutio est metaphorica, ad explicandam solam rationem divinae voluntatis” (*DM* 23.9.6 [25: 883b])

70. “dicendum est quod, licet causa finalis non causet proprie effectus suos nisi quodammodo medio agente, quod movet et allicit ad operandum, tamen, ut finis sit propria causa effectus agentis, necessarium non est ut prius habeat in ipso agente aliquam causalitatem propriam. Nam, licet hoc contingat in agentibus intellectualibus creatis, eo quod immediate ipsa se movent, seu applicant ad operandum, vel amandum per aliquam realem motionem, et propriam causalitatem, tamen in agente intellectuali increato id non est necessarium, quia sine ulla sui mutatione, vel reali additione, dependentia, aut causalitate, simplicissimo et eminentissimo modo sese applicat (ut ita dicam) seu determinat ad libere amandum et operandum.” (*DM* 23.9.9 [25: 884b])

71. “Consistit autem causalitas finalis Dei respectu effectuum ad extra in hoc, quod Deus intuitu et amore suae bonitatis effectus extra se producit.” (*DM* 23.9.9 [25: 884b])

This makes plain enough that Suárez tries to save his account of final causality from the trilemma by denying (1) that the final causality of God's transeunt actions must be derived from the final causality of his immanent actions. But how convincing is this strategy? Given the fact that Suárez criticizes Soncinas's account of final causality in God's will as *equivocal*, it seems that Suárez's account of the final causality in God's transeunt actions should not count as less equivocal.⁷² Recall Suárez's criticism: When Soncinas argues that the will of both God and intelligent creatures is 'metaphorically moved' by the ends with which it aligns itself, Soncinas is guilty of an equivocation. For in the case of finite agents this metaphorical motion is a real, albeit non-efficient causal motion, while in God's will there is no real motion such that God's will can only be said to be moved in a figurative or metaphorical sense insofar as its acts are conceived in analogy to the acts of the human will. This very same criticism can, *mutatis mutandis*, also be launched against Suárez's account of the final causality in God's transeunt actions. If transeunt actions of finite rational agents involve final causality, they do so, because they *inherit* their final causality from the final causality of the agents' intentions or acts of will from which they depend. However, the final causality in God's transeunt actions cannot be inherited or derived from the final causality of his immanent acts (for there is no such causality in God). Instead it is simply due to the fact that "God produces the effects outside of him by the intuition and love of his goodness." Thus, it is just as equivocal for Suárez to say that divine and creaturely transeunt actions involve both "final causation" as it is equivocal for Soncinas to hold that intelligent creatures and God are both "metaphorically moved" by their ends. Accordingly, God seems not to qualify as a genuine final cause of the universe either. If God engages in his external actions out of his free love for his own goodness, he does so as an *efficient cause*—and there is no single step in this process where God's goodness would exert any distinctive attractive influence: God eternally intuitively and loves his own goodness from which his external actions emanate and consequently exhibit a specific teleological order. Hence, if God is called the "final cause" of his transeunt actions, this must—despite Suárez's protestations to the contrary—amount to a mere equivocation.

It seems then that Suárez's elaborated theory of teleology in terms of final causality is flawed: The teleological structure of God's actions, and hence the teleological structure of the operations of natural substances, which depend on God's concurring with them, cannot be due to a proper form of final causality.

However, this is not quite the end of the story yet. Suárez might try to reject this charge of failure by returning to considerations of analogy and argue that there is no single univocal sense of "final causality" that is applicable to divine and crea-

72. This equivocation of final causality in Suárez is also observed by Åkerlund (2011: 74), who, however, does not take it to be particularly problematic.

turely actions alike. Nonetheless, intentional human and divine transeunt actions both display *proper final causality*. It is just that divine and human actions exhibit slightly different forms of proper final causality. Indeed, it is a common scholastic view that concepts do generally not apply to God in the very sense as they apply to finite beings. After all God is an infinite being. And in fact Suárez argues that “the nature of cause said of God and of matter and form cannot be univocal for the very reason that neither a notion of being nor of any other real predicate that is common to God and creatures can be univocal.”⁷³ Given that God is an infinite being while, “in the genus of being, matter and form are incomplete and in some way imperfect entities,”⁷⁴ it is only plausible to hold that these entities are also causes in different ways. And we have already seen that Suárez maintains that matter and form are only causes in an analogical sense insofar as they “rather than properly infusing being, compose it by themselves”.⁷⁵ And indeed, Suárez maintains that the fact that predicates apply differently to different kinds of beings entails that “not only the notion of cause in general is not univocal, but even the notion of an efficient cause (and the same holds for the end).”⁷⁶ Again, this makes perfect sense: being omnipotent and infinitely good, God infinitely excels the causal capacities of finite efficient and final causes, and thus it is only to be expected that God is not an efficient and final cause in the very same sense that finite things are efficient or final causes.

Unfortunately, this defense seems not to help Suárez out here. The reason for this is that the difference between the final causality as it is to be found in the actions of finite rational agents and the “final causality” of God’s transeunt actions is of the wrong kind to constitute a relevant analogy of *final causality*. This can be brought out most clearly by comparing the alleged analogy between finite and infinite final causality with (i) the analogy between the causality of final and efficient causes and the causality of material and formal causes and (ii) the analogy between the infinite and finite efficient causes. As Suárez argues, (i) material and formal causes are, in comparison to efficient and final causes, only causes in an analogical sense since they do not literally infuse or communicate being to any thing, but rather constitute or compose being in that they unite themselves to form a complete substance. Thus, matter and form are only causes in an analogous sense to the extent that they exert a rather different kind of *influx* than efficient and

73. “ratio causae dicta de Deo et de materia et forma non potest esse univoca propter eamdem rationem, qua nec ratio entis aut cuiusvis alterius praedicati realis communis Deo et creaturis potest esse univoca.” (DM 27.1.9 [25: 952a])

74. “in genere entis, materia et forma sunt entia incompleta et aliquo modo imperfecta” (DM 27.1.2 [25: 950a])

75. DM 27.1.10. [25: 952a]. For Latin text see footnote 15; for a discussion of the worries this passage might raise footnote 21.

76. “[Quae duae rationes] non solum [probant] rationem causae in communi, sed etiam rationem causae efficientis (et idem est de fine) non esse univocam” (DM 27.1.9 [25: 952a])

final causes do by means of their action or attraction. In fact matter and form do not properly influence anything but, by means of their union, jointly compose a complete substance. So, (a) matter and form and (b) efficient and final causes are analogical kinds of *causes* insofar as they display only analogous forms of causality or *influx*. The same holds for (ii) the relation between finite efficient causes and God. These are only efficient causes in an analogous sense because God's power to exert his distinctive efficient causal *influx* is incommensurably greater than the power of finite efficient causes: while God is able to act completely on his own and can even bring about things out of nothing (and thus engage in a *creatio ex nihilo*), finite causes can only act if they are assisted by God, and even then they can only operate on a given patient.

It is crucial to note that all these analogies are legitimate analogies of causes according to Suárez's standards that we have set out above. In all cases these things can be legitimately called "causes" since they all exert an *influx* of a certain form and thus fall (in some way or other) under the common concept of a cause. This seems different with regard to the final causality involved in God's transeunt actions. In the way Suárez spells out this notion, the "final causality" of divine transeunt actions is neither distinguished by exhibiting a special sort nor a particularly high power of final causal *influx*. Rather, the "final causality" of God's transeunt actions does not involve any *influx* at all. These actions are only said to involve "final causality" to the extent that they arise from God's free self-reflexive love. None of these elements involve anything similar to the *final causal influx* that is at play in the final causality of human transeunt actions. God's free self-reflexive love is devoid of any sort of causality whatsoever—recall: God's free love proceeds "without any self-movement or real addition, dependence or causality"⁷⁷—and the emanation of God's transeunt actions out of this love is but an instance of efficient causality. Hence, calling the final causalities of divine and human transeunt actions analogical is simply wrong.⁷⁸ Divine actions just do not involve a kind of *influx*, which the final causality of creaturely intelligent actions could be analogous to. Thus, talking about the "final causality" in God's actions amounts to a mere equivocation or at least to a metaphorical, and metaphysically improper, way of speaking.⁷⁹

77. "[I]n agente intellectuali increato id non est necessarium, quia] sine ulla sui mutatione, vel reali additione, dependentia, aut causalitate [, simplicissimo et eminentissimo modo sese applicat (ut ita dicam) seu determinat ad libere amandum et operandum.]" (DM 23.9.9 [25: 884b])

78. Perhaps it is not, if one insists that being "mediated by an agent, who is moved and attracted to operate" (DM 23.9.9, quoted in footnote 77) is not a necessary constraint for an end to count as a *final cause* of an agent's transeunt action. However, this only shifts the problem: While one might now say that the final causality of transeunt actions in finite and infinite agents is due to the fact that these actions proceed from acts of will, this makes the talk of final causality in immanent and transeunt actions equivocal in that only the former involves a final causal *influx*.

79. As we have seen above, Suárez concedes to Soncinas that God's acts of will can be metaphorically (as opposed to literally) conceived of as being attracted by his own goodness. As Suárez

Let me be clear. I do not deny that Suárez's accounts of the *finality* involved in God's and intelligent creatures' transeunt actions are structurally highly similar and to this extent also analogous to each other. In both cases the teleological directedness or finality of transeunt actions is due to the fact that these actions arise or emanate from intentions or acts of will. What I do deny, however, is that these analogous accounts of the finality involved in transeunt actions are sufficient to establish an analogy of *final causality* between these actions. Even though God's actions might exhibit a teleological directedness or finality in that they arise from and hence are directed by God's acts of will, Suárez ultimately fails to vindicate that they exhibit a proper form of final causality.

5. Conclusion: Finality without Final Causes?

Looking at Suárez's subtle and highly sophisticated theory of final causes one cannot avoid the impression that by the end of the 16th century scholastic philosophy reached a point where its inherent tensions could be conceived in such clarity that they must strike one as insoluble. As I have argued here, one of the tensions apparent in Suárez arises from his restricted understanding of causes, which is reflected in his *influxus*-theory of causation according to which explanatory principles qualify as genuine causes only if they exert a distinct influence. This renders efficient cause—that infuses being most properly—the paradigm kind of cause while it threatens the status of the other traditional Aristotelian causes. Nonetheless, Suárez displays a great deal of ingenuity to save the causal status of ends. With regard to the actions of finite rational agents, Suárez argues that they involve proper final causality in that they result from the fact that these agents are attracted or enticed by ends. The operations of non-rational substances involve final causality to the extent that they are co-caused by God, whose actions involve final causality insofar as they emanate from his free love for himself. Despite its ingenuity, though, Suárez's strategy turns out to be unconvincing in the end. If there is any final causality involved in God's actions this final causality is not mediated by any kind of *influx* and so it is at most an equivocal form of final *causality*.

What then is the general lesson we can draw from Suárez's struggle to account for final causes within the framework of his *influxus*-theory of causation?

First of all, Suárez's elaborated theory of final causality provides us with a more nuanced picture of the transformation of the notion of cause, which I have described at the outset of this paper. There is no doubt that Suárez's *influxus*-theory of causation privileges efficient causes in rendering them the paradigm kind

makes sufficiently clear, though, this anthropomorphist way of conceiving of God's willing is metaphysically inadequate since it is inconsistent with God's perfection.

of cause: the kind of causes, after which all other kinds of causes are modelled. However, it is important to adequately assess the kind of privilege that Suárez attributes to efficient causes. The *influxus*-theory first and foremost establishes a *conceptual priority* of efficient causes and this kind of priority does not immediately entail that efficient causes would also be ontologically prior to all other kinds of causes. Hence, it would be premature to conclude that Suárez eliminated final causes or reduced them to efficient causes as Gilles Olivo and Vincent Carraud have argued.⁸⁰ Or that final causes would only indirectly communicate being via the real action of the will, as Tad Schmaltz has submitted.⁸¹ To the contrary. Suárezian final causation, which is explained in terms of metaphorical motion, is neither reduced to efficient causation nor eliminated: it is not eliminated since an end's metaphorical motion is no "unreal" motion, but consists in the very actualization of the will insofar as it aligns itself with an approved end. Nor is final causation reduced to efficient causation since the fact that a free will's actualization is directed towards an end, makes this actualization intelligible in a way it would not be intelligible if it were only an instance of efficient causation that arises from the free will's spontaneous actualization. For, inasmuch as Suárez holds a libertarian account of free will, the will's actualization is not due to any efficient cause external to the will, but only due to the will's spontaneous activity.⁸² Accordingly, the free activity of the will would be unintelligible if it could only be explained with regard to efficient causes: being free this activity can only be due to the will's own spontaneous causal power. Yet, since the will's actualization involves final causation too, its spontaneous alignment with an end can be explained with regard to this end, and so libertarian choices of a free will are not completely unintelligible. Why, say, did Sally choose option A rather than B, if her will was not efficient causally determined? Well, Suárez can answer, just because A appeared more attractive to her. So, final causes play an explanatory role in Suárez's libertarian account of freedom that can in principle not be fulfilled by efficient causes and so final causes are not reducible to efficient causes.⁸³

This leads me to the second general remark on Suárez's theory of causation. Since the view that the efficient cause is conceptually prior to all other kinds of causes does not imply that efficient causes are ontologically prior to all other kinds of causes, it would also be premature to hold that Suárez immediately contradicts himself by following Aquinas's view that the final cause is the cause of all causes in maintaining that "the final cause is in some way the principal of all causes and

80. See Olivo (1997: 94–102), and Carraud (2002: 145–148).

81. See Schmaltz (2004: 29).

82. Suárez spells out his libertarian account the free will and its operation in his *DM* 19.2.18 [25: 698f.]. For a discussion see Penner (2013).

83. This is an admittedly sketchy defense of the irreducibility of final causes in Suárez, which I have spelled out in more details in Schmid (2014).

even prior «to all of them».”⁸⁴ To the contrary. Suárez’s theory of final causality provides him with strong reasons for doing so: Since matter and form would not engage in substantial and accidental unions if they were not efficiently caused in the first place, material and formal causation depends on efficient causation. Yet, since there would be no creaturely efficient causation if God were not to concur with finite efficient causes, creaturely efficient causation depends on God’s concurrence. However, God only performs actions, i.e., acts of efficient causation in general and acts of concurrence in particular, because he wants to do so, and he only wants to do so because he decides to do so out of his eternal love for himself. Hence, there would be no causality at all if God did not act for the sake of his own love, that is, if his transeunt actions of creation and concurrence did not involve final causality (for depending on God’s love is what it *means* for God’s transeunt actions to involve final causation).

So much for Suárez’s argument for the ontological priority of final causes.⁸⁵ As I hope it has become clear in the course of this paper, there is a bitter irony to this argument. This irony consists in the fact that Suárez’s defence of the priority of final causes depends on the assumption that there is genuine final causality in God’s transeunt actions and it is precisely this assumption that Suárez ultimately fails to justify by his own standards. Strictly speaking, and *pace* Suárez, there is no genuine final causality involved in God’s transeunt actions, for God performs his transeunt actions without being literally influenced by an end and so there is no point in the emergence of God’s transeunt actions where genuine final causality would play any role.

This brings me to the third general lesson we can draw from our examination of Suárez’s theory of final causes. Suárez’s struggle for an account of final causes sets a striking example of the fact that not all scholastic authors were conscious of the consequences of the comparatively restricted notion of cause they employed. By his *influxus*-theory of causation Suárez is ultimately committed to at least two views that he would not have been happy to concede. The first of these is that, except for intentional actions of finite rational agents, it is indeed *efficient causality*,

84. “finalis causa praecipua quodammodo omnium sit atque etiam prior” (*DM* 23, prooemium [25: 843b]). See also *DM* 26.3.3 [25: 926b], and *DM* 27.2.7 [25: 954b]. For Thomas Aquinas’s view on the priority of final causes see his *De principiis naturae* (1976: §4.18–36), and as a comment see Schmid (2011). That Suárez contradicts himself by endorsing this view is insinuated by Schmaltz (2004: 29–36), yet convincingly refuted by Penner (2015).

85. This is a charitably enriched version of Suárez’s own argument for his priority claim in *DM* 27.2.10 [25: 955b], which is confined to show that the final cause is the cause of the efficient cause to the extent that efficient causes have to be enticed by ends to acts as causes at all. In order for this argument to be applicable to all instances of efficient causation, Suárez must appeal to the final causality involved in God’s concurrence. For the claim that material and formal causation presupposes efficient and thus final causation see *DM* 26.3.2 [25: 926]. For more on Suárez’s priority claim, see Penner (2015).

which is ontologically prior to all other causes for, as said, matter and form would not be able to engage in mutual unions if they were not produced in the first place. The second and perhaps even more startling view is that there is finality which is not due to genuine final causation: when the world exhibits a teleological order and if the single operations of finite substances are goal directed, this is not due to the fact that they would involve genuine forms of final causality, but that they are due to God's benevolent and wise *efficient causal* acts of creation and concurrence that he performs out of his eternal love for himself.

In his theory of natural teleology, then, Suárez pursues two incompatible goals. On the one hand, he wants to give a theory of final causes that satisfies his general *influxus*-theory of causality, which he does by advancing his theory of metaphorical motion. On the other hand, he also wants to account for natural and divine teleology in terms of final causes. For this purpose Suárez is bound to extend his theory of final causes to God and to natural substances that both cannot be subject to an end's characteristic influence. Since this is not possible, Suárez's talk of final causes in God and nature becomes equivocal. Explanatory ends in nature do qualify as final causes not because they exhibit a certain form of causality, i.e., by exerting a distinct influence, but because they are non-causally intended by a benevolent first cause who has created the world in a purposeful way.⁸⁶ Thus, Suárez's *influxus*-theory of causation, which requires causes to exert some influence, renders the term "final cause" inappropriate to perform the explanatory task it was originally introduced for, namely to pick out certain valuable states of outcome, with regard to which one can explain processes or configurations of things in a teleological way.

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86. Note that Suárez's problem of final causes is slightly different from the one famously described by Frede (1987: 126): "A good part of the unfortunate history of the notion of a final cause has its origin in the assumption that the final cause, as a cause, must act and in the vain attempt to explain how it could be so." By his theory of metaphorical motion Suárez can very well explain how ends can act (in a causally distinct way) on agents able to conceive them. The crucial problem is rather that this explanation cannot be successfully transferred to natural substances and God.

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Abbreviations

DM = Suárez, Francisco (1866). *Disputationes Metaphysicae*. In Charles Berton (Ed.), *Opera Omnia* (Vols. 25–26). Vivès. Cited by the number of the disputation, section, and paragraph, with the volume and page number of Suárez's *Disputationes Metaphysicae* according to the Vivès edition in square brackets.
STh = Thomas Aquinas (1952-). *Summa Theologiae*, Paulo Caramello (Ed.), Marietti. Cited by part, question (q.), article (art.) and element.

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