

SUAREZ, HOBBS AND THE SCHOLASTIC TRADITION IN ACTION THEORY

The actions of adult humans have often been thought to involve specially rational or reason-involving motivations - motivations that are not available to mere animals, or even to children and mental defectives. One use of the notion of *will* is to pick out these rational motivations, or the psychological faculty in which they occur.

But I want to go further and suggest that the notion of will or *voluntas* was used, at least in late medieval and early modern scholasticism, and I suspect before, to construct a distinctive conception of what fully voluntary agency or action is: a *practical reason-based* conception of agency. According to this conception, to perform an intentional action is to exercise reason practically. To perform an intentional action is to respond to a specifically practical or action-guiding reason. Any account of when and how a concept of the will developed needs, *inter alia*, to be a discussion of when and how this particular conception of agency developed.

The much-discussed division between intellectualism and voluntarism in medieval action theory should not be allowed to obscure a far more fundamental consensus - a consensus about the essential nature of action itself. The practical reason-based conception was property common both to a philosopher customarily classed as intellectualist such as Aquinas and to one customarily classed as voluntarist such as Scotus. It defined a broad mainstream in scholastic action theory, a mainstream that could accommodate intellectualist and voluntarist alike. An assault on scholastic action theory that was to be truly radical - that was to confront it on fundamentals - would have to be an assault on precisely this conception of action.

So when Thomas Hobbes engaged in his famous dispute about liberty with John Bramhall, it was the practical reason-based conception of action that Hobbes was concerned to attack and supplant. For Hobbes, Bramhall was merely a mouthpiece, and (in Hobbes's view) a not particularly impressive mouthpiece, for a whole school tradition in action theory - a tradition one of whose more formidable recent representatives Hobbes rightly took to be Francisco Suarez. In what follows I shall be discussing the form which the practical reason-based conception took in the work of Suarez, the connexion between Suarez's work and earlier accounts of the conception in Aquinas and Scotus - and then the radical polemic directed against the practical reason-based conception by Hobbes.

(a) *Suarez*

A practical reason-based conception of agency characterises human agency as the exercise of a distinctive capacity for rationality - the exercise of a capacity to be moved or directed by a specifically practical or action-guiding reason. Such a conception of agency is not current in modern English-language philosophy, nor is it generally identified as a feature of past action theory.¹ But it was such a feature; and is of immense historical and philosophical importance. In the work of Suarez, and of predecessors in his intellectual tradition, such as Aquinas and Scotus, it took a particular and distinctive form.

Consider Scotus's account, to which Suarez himself referred. Scotus used the term *praxis* for voluntary action. For Scotus, *praxis* occurs as the exercise of a faculty that has the function of being moved and directed by reason; specifically, by a practical or *praxis*-guiding reason as it directs the operation of faculties besides the intellect itself.

Also note that *praxis* or practice is an act of some power or faculty other than intellect, that naturally follows an act of knowledge or intellection, and is suited by nature to be elicited in accord with correct knowledge if it is to be right².

In other words voluntary action occurs as the exercise of a capacity to be moved or directed by practical reason - to respond motivationally to cognitions of practical reason that direct us to the good or to some other practical value. The exercise of this rational capacity may of course be defective as well as competent: the practical reason-based conception of voluntary agency allows for voluntary action that is irrational.

This faculty where *praxis* occurs, according to Scotus, is the will. As he puts it:

From all this it follows that nothing is formally *praxis* except an imperated or elicited act of will, because no act other than that of will is elicited in agreement with a prior act of the intellect.³

¹The idea of a practical reason-based theory of agency is introduced in my 'Reason and agency' in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* May 1997. See also my 'Action, will and law in late scholasticism' in Jill Kraye and Risto Saarinen (eds) *Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity* (Dordrecht 2004), and in my forthcoming *The Ethics of Action*, volume 1 *Self-Determination* (Oxford University Press)

²Sciendum etiam est quod *praxis* est actus alterius potentiae quam intellectus, naturaliter posterior intellectione, natus elici conformiter intellectioni rectae, ad hoc quod sit rectus.

Scotus, *Lectura*, prol. pars 4, qq. 1-2; see also Allan Wolter (ed) *Duns Scotus on the Will and Morality* (Washington: CUA Press) pp 126-8.

³Ex hoc sequitur quod nihil est *praxis* formaliter nisi actus voluntatis imperatus vel elicited, quia nullus actus sequitur actum intellectus cui conformiter elicited nisi

The will then is the faculty in which we exercise our capacity to respond to practical or *praxis*-governing reason.

Scotus's account of *praxis* was noted and endorsed by Suarez himself, in his commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima*, using, unusually for Suarez, Scotus's own term *praxis*. There Suarez distinguishes an *actus practicus* of the intellect - an exercise of the intellect that involves arriving at a conclusion about what is to be done - from *praxis* or voluntary action itself:

...for an *actus practicus* is that exercise of the intellect which orders or directs some action, while *praxis* surely is the action which is regulated and ordered by the *actus practicus*...⁴

Suarez also entirely shared Scotus's view as to the location of voluntary action in elicited and imperated or commanded acts of the will, as we shall see.

A central feature of a practical reason-based conception of human agency, is that it is going to be dual structure. That is, we are going to have two levels of human action. Besides the first order level, at which we move our hands, look out the window and the like, there can be the prior point at which we decide or form intentions to do these things. And this point of decision making and intention formation, of *intentio* and *electio*, is going to be an action too - a second order, action-generating action.

For the point at which I decide to look out the window as opposed to continue reading my book is, intuitively, a point at which I am indeed exercising, correctly or incorrectly, a capacity to be moved by practical reason. For a natural conception of decisions and intention formations is that they have the function of applying our prior deliberations or reasonings about what to do, by ensuring that thereafter we are and remain motivated to act as we have deliberated that we should. Our decision making capacity or will was viewed generally in the schools as a rational motivational power - a motivational capacity that is responsive to reason in practical form, as it concerns the good or some other relevant practical value. And so on a practical reason-based conception of human agency, that makes the exercise of the will itself a case of action - which is precisely what scholastic proponents of a practical reason-based conception of agency held the exercise of the will to be.

actus voluntatis, quia omnes actus aliarum potentiarum possunt praecedere actum intellectus, sed non actus voluntatis. Scotus *ibid*.

⁴Tam forte dissensio est de nomine, nam actus practicus dicitur ille actus intellectus quo ordinat aut dirigit operationem aliquam, praxis vero dicitur illa operatio quae regulatur et ordinatur per actionem practicam intellectus, nam 'praxis' nomen graecum est, latine 'operationem' significans. Et hic videtur communis usus vocabulorum. Et ita communiter praxis est actus alterius potentiae ab intellectu; actus ver practicus est elicited ab ipso intellectu. Suarez *Commentaria una cum quaestionibus in libros Aristotelis De anima* Vol 3 Disputatio Nona p250 Madrid 1991

Much of Suarez's work on the voluntary, as indeed was typical practice in 16th century Iberia, given the increasing centrality at that time of Aquinas to the intellectual life of the Catholic church, took the form of an extended commentary on Aquinas's *Prima Secundae* discussion of the same topic. Not that Suarez was an uncritical disciple. The *Thomistae* are referred to as a class with whom Suarez feels under no absolute obligation to agree; and disapproval of Aquinas's own views can be strongly expressed (as in the highly critical discussion of Aquinas's views on virtue and passion). Suarez was working within a generally Thomist framework. But he used that framework to express a view of freedom and agency that is far more voluntarist in tendency than Aquinas. That is, as we shall see, Suarez saw the will as operating to a fairly great degree independently of the intellect; and viewed the will as the sole locus of human freedom, to the clear exclusion of the intellect. Whereas Aquinas tied the operation of the will closely to that of the intellect; and refers to the intellect's free judgment of reason in characterising our freedom.

It is important to note, though, that in fundamentals Aquinas's basic theory of agency still falls clearly within the practical reason-based model which we have been discussing. On this question, there is simply no disagreement between Scotus, Suarez or Aquinas. Aquinas, after all, characterises a voluntary action as a rational operation - the exercise of a capacity for rationality.⁵ The relevant kind of exercise is one which involves the agent being moved by a practically rational cognition - by cognition of an end.⁶ And voluntary actions thus characterised are clearly to be found in actions of the will: for an act of will

...is nothing other than a certain inclination proceeding from an internal cognitive principle⁷

In Aquinas, as in Scotus and Suarez, we find the same view of voluntary agency as located in elicited and imperated or commanded acts of the will. For Aquinas, the voluntary - our exercise of agency, of what lies within our power - is to be found in the exercise, whether competent or defective, of our capacity to be moved by practical reason, and so in the occurrence of acts of the will. If Aquinas ties the operation of the will far more closely than Suarez does to the intellect, both Aquinas and Suarez share the same conception of voluntary action as involving the exercise of a will-based capacity to be moved by practical reason.

I have argued that Suarez inherits a practical reason-based conception of voluntary agency - a conception that involves a dual structure conception of agency. Not only that. It is also true that Suarez saw the second order actions of the will as fundamental to agency - indeed as the primary and immediate

⁵...voluntarium est actus qui est operatio rationalis. Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* 1,2 q6 a1

⁶...ad rationem voluntarii requiritur quod principium actus sit intra, cum aliqua cognitione finis. Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* 1,2 q6 a2

⁷actus voluntatis nihil est aliud quam inclinatio quaedam procedens ab interio principio cognoscente Aquinas *Summa Theologiae* 1,2 q6 a4 resp

cases of agency. And in this too he was, I think, only being faithful to his intellectual inheritance.

Fully human agency was conceived, as we have noted, as the exercise of a rational capacity - a capacity to be moved by reason. But for Suarez, as for his predecessors, this brought an important kind of dualism to bear on the theory of action. This was faculty dualism. Rational cognition and motivational responses to rational cognition took place in special rational faculties - those of intellect and will. And these faculties, as befitted the dignity of reason that placed it above matter, were immaterial. They lacked a bodily organ, and survived bodily death without corruption. In so far as voluntary action involved the exercise of a reason-motivational capacity, its primary occurrence must be within one of these immaterial rational faculties - that is, in particular, within the motivational faculty of will.

Suppose someone performs a first order action - take an example which Suarez considers, the action of giving alms: *actus dandi eleemosynam*. Suarez terms this an external act - *exterior actus* - by contrast to internal actions of the will, such as deciding to give alms; and, as an action involving limb motion, locates this external action in the exercise of a corporeal locomotive capacity. The action occurs then, in a corporeal organ. What then makes this first order action a voluntary action?

It cannot be that the exercise of the locomotive capacity of itself constitutes a case of being moved by some cognition of practical reason. For as we have seen, rational responsiveness to such a cognition must take place in an immaterial faculty. Suarez combines the conviction that first order bodily actions, such as giving alms, are exercises of and occur within corporeal locomotive faculties, with a conviction that the process of responding to and being moved by a rational cognition, and so the primary occurrence of agency, must occur within an immaterial faculty of will. So we cannot explain the voluntary status of giving alms directly in terms of the practical reason-based model.

Instead we have to explain the voluntary status of a corporeally located action in terms of its being in a certain relation to a prior act of the will to which the practical reason-based model directly applies. Whenever I voluntarily give alms, the following occurs: first, there is an intrinsically voluntary or active event of my willing that I give alms, the status of which as agency being explained by its very nature - as my exercise of my immaterial capacity to be moved by reason. This is an elicited act of the will - elicited in relation to the will because an act of the very faculty of will itself. This elicited act of the will has as its object the first order action of giving alms - an action which it then efficiently causes and informs. The first order action of alms giving then occurs as an imperated or commanded act of the will - as an effect and object of the first elicited act that occurred within the will itself. The elicited act is intrinsically voluntary; the imperated act is only extrinsically voluntary, by virtue of its standing as effect and object of the prior eliciting action:

Voluntariness in the way of an imperated act, is nothing else than a certain character or denomination of the imperated act received from an elicited act, of which the imperated act is object and effect. For an

imperated act is termed voluntary simply because it proceeds from an elicited act of the will, and is in a measure informed by it, and with it constitutes one morally significant act.⁸

So one effect of faculty dualism is to make unavoidable, for Suarez as for the mainstream of his predecessors, a hybrid account of voluntary agency. The overall theory is practical reason-based. Whenever human action occurs, there must be some intrinsically voluntary action, the status of which as voluntary arises out of its constituting an exercise of an immaterial rational motivational capacity - a capacity to be moved by some rational cognition. But the status of first order actions that are exercises of corporeal faculties then has to be explained in other terms - by virtue of their being objects and effects of the intrinsically voluntary actions of the will. Let us call *motivation-based*, a theory of voluntary action that characterises an action as the effect of a motivation to do it, such as a desire or will to do it. Then Suarez's theory of action contained a practical reason-based account of the voluntary status of second order, elicited actions. But it supplemented this with a quite different, motivation-based account of the voluntary status of first order, imperated actions. This hybrid feature of mainstream scholastic action theory is vital to bear in mind when we come to Hobbes's reaction to the theory; as we shall see, it did not escape his critical notice.

There is one important feature of Suarez's theory of the voluntary that deserves especial notice; and this is Suarez's formulation of the voluntary status of elicited acts. Elicited acts of the will, we have seen, are acts of the rational appetite itself - of a capacity to be moved by practically rational cognitions. But it is important that, for Suarez, the voluntariness of these elicited acts involves their possessing a reflexive quality:

Voluntariness in an elicited act of the will comes to nothing else than being an act that, in coming immediately from the will, is inherently self-willed through a virtual and inherent self-reflexion⁹.

Being willed is, as we've seen, a characteristic of imperated acts. But for Suarez it is a characteristic of elicited acts too, though not in the same way. By contrast with the case of imperated acts, the inherently willed character of elicited actions does not involve their being the object and effect of any prior and distinct act of will. Rather it is a reflexive relation they bear to themselves, simply as elicited acts of the will.

⁸voluntarium per modum actus imperati, nihil enim aliud est, quam habitudo, seu denominatio quaedam in actu imperato ab actu elicito, cuius est obiectum et effectus, non enim alia ratione actus imperatus voluntarius dicitur, nisi quia procedit ab actu elicito voluntario, et ab ipso quodammodo informatur, et cum illo constituit unum actum moralem...Tota ergo difficultas revocatur ad actus elicitos. Suarez *De voluntario et involuntario in genere, deque actibus voluntariis in speciali*, Opera Omnia Paris 1856 Vol 4 p160 .

⁹esse voluntarium in actu elicito, nihil aliud esse quam esse actum, ita immediate manentem a voluntate, ut per se ipsum intrinsece sit volitus per virtualem, et intrinsecam reflexionem in ipso inclusam. Suarez *ibid* p160

Suarez appeals to Augustine, Anselm and Scotus to vindicate this view of elicited acts of will, appealing to what I shall call the reflexion principle that '*omnis volens ipse suum velle necessario vult*' - anyone who wills necessarily wills his own willing. And Suarez uses this reflexion principle, in traditional manner, to explain why acts of will cannot be coerced or subject to *coactio*. For, he argues, coercion or *coactio* of an act of will would involve the occurrence of a willing despite the willer at the same time willing it not to occur. But then since the willer, by the reflexion principle, was also willing that same willing to occur, it would follow that he would be at one and the same time willing something to occur, and willing it not to occur - which in Suarez's view is impossible.¹⁰

And Suarez also uses the reflexion principle to argue for a view that locates freedom and the voluntary in the will and what is subject to it, to the exclusion of the intellect. So Suarez uses his view to buttress his own form of voluntarism - his view that freedom is located not in the intellect, but only in the will and in what is subject to the will; and that in so far as the will operates freely, its operation must be undetermined by the intellect. Suarez's general method of argument is as follows. Voluntariness, he argues, is to be found only in the will and what is subject to the will. But voluntariness, is a necessary, though not sufficient condition of freedom. And so freedom is to be found only in the will and what is subject to the will. Let us just go through the steps in more detail.

First, Suarez argues that though intellectual acts of cognition are exercises of reason that make us capable of the voluntary, these intellectual acts themselves fall outside at least the intrinsically voluntary. In fact, just as much as exercises of corporeal capacities, intellectual acts of cognition can only count as voluntary, when and if they do, extrinsically - by occurring as imperated objects of prior willings that they occur. Why? Consider assenting to a conclusion:

...assent to a conclusion in itself is not voluntary, but something natural, except in so far as it can occur as an act imperated or commanded with respect to its exercise by the will. For it is neither inherently self-willed, as an appetitive act is, nor does it proceed from cognition of the object at which it is directed, but rather is itself the cognition of that object.¹¹

Acts of cognition are not what the inherently voluntary must be - self-willed motivational responses to prior cognitions of objects.

Then, Suarez uses the reflexion principle to tie freedom to the voluntary - and so clearly exclude it from the intellect. Freedom or *libertas* is conceived by Suarez as the freedom of alternatives or a freedom to do otherwise. And he conceives freedom thus understood to occur as an indifference between

¹⁰Suarez *ibid* p196

¹¹assensus enim conclusionis per se non est voluntarius, sed naturalis, nisi quatenus imperari potest a voluntate quoad exercitium, quia neque per se est intrinsece volitus, sicut actus appetitus, neque procedit ex cognitione sui proprii obiecti circa quod versatur, sed potius ipse est cognitio sui obiecti...Suarez *ibid* p162

opposites which excludes determination by prior necessity. For a faculty to operate freely, its operation must not be determined by necessity from without. In fact, Suarez thinks, for a faculty to operate freely, its operation must be self-determined. But self-determination presupposes voluntariness:

The faculty can however only be self-determining by willing its operation, because it is impossible to understand how a faculty that is of itself indifferent between opposites, should be determined to one of them, unless because it wills to be so determined; hence it is necessary that that free determination be inherently voluntary.¹²

Suarez agreed with Aquinas's intellectualism to this extent, that the willing of a particular object presupposed some judgment picking out that object as in at least some respect good. So he agreed that essential to human freedom was the fact that the intellect presents the will with alternative objects of volition that are represented as each being good in certain respects.

But then Suarez's account of freedom left intellectualism behind. By contrast to Aquinas, Suarez argues, as we have just seen, that the intellect itself is not a locus of freedom. Freedom belongs only to the will that the intellect serves to guide. Since the intellect is not a locus of freedom, and freedom is inconsistent with being determined by what is not free, the intellect cannot determine the free operation of the will.

So, provided that there are alternatives each of which is judged to possess some good, no judgment of the intellect prior to the will's operation in favour of a given object serves to determine the willing of that particular object. For example, I can freely will an action that I judge to be worse than alternatives, provided I judge it to be good in at least some respect. So in general, in this life - *in via* - the operation of the will is free. That will not be true in heaven - *in patria* - where the absolute goodness of the beatific vision will be an offer the blessed are not free to refuse.

So Suarez has a general conception of the voluntariness of human acts as involving subjection to the will - as involving the status of occurring as something willed. This willedness is an inherent and reflexive characteristic of elicited acts of will. It is an extrinsic feature of imperated acts of other faculties.

A further important feature of the practical reason-based theory of action we find in Suarez, has to do with its account of the actions of non-rational humans - children and the mad, *pueri et amentes* - and of non-rational animals. Clearly, a practical reason-based model cannot strictly apply to beings incapable of reason. But it can dictate what, by virtue of their analogy to human actions, are going to count as actions within these beings. And so we come to the distinction between what Suarez calls the perfectly voluntary - agency as it occurs in rational beings such as adult humans; and the imperfectly voluntary - the analogue of this agency in non-rational beings.

¹²...non potest autem se determinare nisi volendo talem operationem, quia intelligi non potest, quod potentia ex se indifferens ad opposita, ad alteram partem determinetur, nisi quia vult; ergo necesse est ut illa determinatio libera sit voluntaria per se ipsam Suarez *ibid* pp169-70

If the intrinsically voluntary in humans is the exercise of a capacity to be moved by practically rational cognitions, there is going to be an obvious analogue of that in the non-rational.

For those who possess at least a capacity for sense cognition can be led towards cognised things by an elicited act of a genuine appetite, and be moved by that appetite, and so in some way act voluntarily.¹³

For non-rational agents will still possess some capacity to cognise, on the basis of which they can be motivated. Children and the mad are not morally responsible because they have no conceptual grasp of the *honestum* - of the good as befits a rational nature - and so no grasp of moral good and bad. But they are capable of conceiving of things as generally *commodus* or *incommodus*, and of conceiving of means to ends. Animals are not even capable of fully grasping things as in any way good, or of fully grasping them as providing alternative means to ends. But animals are still capable of cognitions that present goods to them, though not formally representing them *as goods*, and of being moved by such cognitions to adopt, on the basis of instinct, what are in fact means to attaining these.¹⁴

These motivational responses to non-rational cognitions are the imperfect analogues in animals of the intrinsically perfectly voluntary in us. They are therefore the primary locus of intrinsically voluntary agency in animals. But such non-rational motivations occur in us humans too. For we too make motivational responses to non-rational cognitions. These are our passions - the acts of our sensitive appetite, a corporeal capacity, which we share with the animals, to be moved by non-rational cognitions of the senses and imagination. The passions are the non-rational and corporeal analogues, common to humans and animals, of the immaterial acts of the rational appetite or will which only humans and higher beings can perform. So the passions are importantly categorised by Aquinas as those actions falling within the voluntary that are common to us and the animals.¹⁵

Suarez is faithful to this tradition. He gives an important categorisation of the voluntary at the beginning of his commentary on Aquinas's account of the passions:

¹³At vero, quae participant cognitionem, saltem sensitivam, possunt proprio appetitu a se elicto ferri in res cognitatas, et ex illo appetitu moveri, atque ita aliquo modo voluntarie operari. Suarez *ibid* p180.

¹⁴See Suarez *ibid* p23

¹⁵See the introduction to Quaestio 6 of the *Prima Secundae*: within the voluntary two kinds of acts are to be considered:

Et quia beatitudo est proprium hominis bonum, propinquius se habent ad beatitudinem actus qui sunt proprie humani, quam actus qui sunt homini aliisque animalibus communes. Primo ergo considerandum est de actibus qui sunt proprii hominis: secundo, de actibus qui sunt homini aliisque animalibus communes, qui dicuntur animae passiones.

Among human acts, some are of themselves free and so human and moral, and are wholly internal and immaterial; others are wholly external, and are efficiently caused by the internal actions with a certain necessity: others are as it were middle actions - *alii sunt quasi medii* - as actions of the sensitive appetite which we refer to thoughts or acts of the imagination.¹⁶

These middle actions are the passions of the soul.

We can see now that we have a conceptualization of the voluntary that is rather alien to that which comes naturally to modern philosophers. We naturally think of the voluntary as first and foremost including the actions that are explained by prior decisions or intentions to perform them - as first and foremost our first order actions. Some of us also countenance second order actions of deciding to act. But even for those of us who countenance these, I think, second order actions of the will are dubiously *paradigms* of the voluntary. The paradigm, surely, is still found in the first order actions which it is the function of second order actions to determine and guide.¹⁷ And then passions, desires and emotions tend to fall outside the voluntary altogether - though they may be important causes of or influences on the voluntary.

As we can see, things were quite different for Suarez. The paradigm of the voluntary were those perfectly voluntary internal and immaterial second order actions, where the practical reason-based model of the voluntary directly and perfectly applied. Furthest from the paradigm were the external actions, where the model didn't directly apply at all. These actions fell within the voluntary on extrinsic grounds, as we've seen. In between come the passions; and it is clear why, in that their voluntariness, though imperfect, is at least intrinsic. They are motivational responses to cognitions, albeit non-rational cognitions.

This feature of mainstream scholastic action theory is of great importance for an understanding of how the precise boundary between humans and animals was then conceived - in particular, for understanding disputes about whether some sort of freedom might be found among animals.

One standard view of freedom understood as a freedom to do otherwise, certainly Suarez's as we have seen, was that such freedom presupposed perfect voluntariness. Suarez regarded freedom as characterising a perfectly voluntary response to cognitions that presented objects as alternatives to each other that were only good in some respects. Hence though there was

¹⁶Humanorum actuum quidam per se liberi, atque adeo humani, et morales sunt, et omnino interiores, et immateriales, alii sunt prorsus exteriores, qui ab interioribus necessitate quadam efficiuntur: alii sunt quasi medii, ut actiones appetitus sentientis quas ad cogitationes seu actus phantasiae revocamus. Suarez *De actibus qui vocantur passiones*, *Opera Omnia* Paris 1856 Vol 4 p455

¹⁷In my *The Psychology of Freedom*, (Cambridge University Press 1996) I argue that first order action is paradigmatic of agency in this sense: first order action is the action with which practical reason is primarily concerned, practical reason's concern with second order action being derivative and secondary.

voluntariness in non-rational animals, because this voluntariness was imperfect, because objects were not presented to animals as partially but not wholly good alternatives to each other, there was no freedom. Nor was there any freedom in our passions except in so far as they were subject to the will.

But for one Jesuit contemporary of Suarez, Molina, there could be a trace of freedom, a *vestigium libertatis*, even in imperfectly voluntary animals. An animal, tired of sitting down, might be faced by a choice of routes to move. Its action would be unfree and necessitated in so far as one particular route was presented as having features that left it clearly better than another. But if this were not so, the animal would be free to follow a given route or not. So Molina argues that provided the animal's cognitions are not such as to necessitate the appetite to command a particular motion, the animal will be free to perform the motion or not perform it. In particular, it is not necessary for this freedom that the animal represent to itself both options - that of making the motion and not making it - which, Molina agrees, may exceed the animal's conceptual capacity. The important point is that the locus of this *vestigium libertatis*, the contingency that gives the animal a limited control over how it moves, is the animal's sensitive appetite - its passions; provided its operation is not necessitated the animal's appetite is free - is able both to command or not command a given motion:

When freedom, or a trace of freedom is present in the appetite, then provided the object's character doesn't so forcefully move the appetite as to necessitate its operation, that freedom or trace of freedom is enough for the appetite not to command the movement which it has the capacity to command, and so it's not necessary that there also be cognition of the movement's negation ...¹⁸

If not only the voluntary, but freedom, is to be found in animals, then the natural primary locus of that freedom is to be found, not in any capacity for first order external action, but in second order form in the passions - which are, after all, the analogues of the primary locus of the perfectly voluntary in humans. For scholastics working within a practical reason-based conception of the voluntary, the dual structure theory of agency is applied all the way down to the realms of the non-rational, by analogy with the domain of the perfectly voluntary to which that theory perfectly applies.

One further aspect of agency as conceived by Suarez needs to be considered. I have talked of the theory as a dual structure theory. That is, the rational appetite is the primary locus of fully voluntary agency - a second order, action-generating intrinsically voluntary agency which consists in the operations of a decision making capacity whereby we determine which first order actions we perform. But that is not all there is to our intrinsically voluntary agency, as conceived by Suarez.

¹⁸Etenim quando libertas, vel libertatis vestigium ex parte appetitus adest, neque obiectum tam vehementer promovet vel appetitum pro sui qualitate necessitet, sola libertas, aut libertatis vestigium sufficit, ut eum motum non imperet, quem potest imperare, atque adeo necessaria non est notitia negationis motus, ut motum non imperet: Molina *Concordia* Disputatio 47 Paris 1876

Consider again the general model of agency with which Suarez is operating. To act is to exercise a capacity to be moved by some practically rational cognition - towards some object as good, say. But the object to which we are moved need not be a first order action. It could be another human person, or a supernatural being. We could be moved to love of neighbour or God. Or to joy at a situation we find ourselves in. Emotions, such as love and hate, joy and sadness, all these can have objects other than actions. And on Suarez's practical reason-based conception of agency, as such they may still fall within the bounds of the perfectly voluntary. They can still do so, if they are exercises of our capacity to be moved by practical value - to respond to rational cognitions of the value of their objects. And as perfectly voluntary, at least in this life - *seclusa beata visione*, the beatific vision in heaven aside - they can be free. It can be directly within our power whether we have such emotions.

So the will or rational appetite is not just a locus of free decisions, where decisions are second order actions directed at external and imperated first order actions. Second order agency directed at and productive of first order agency, is only a special case of a more general inner agency of the will: an agency whereby we move ourselves to favour or become averse to a variety of objects, objects of which first order actions and their effects are only one kind.

Suarez is emphatic that for every passion or emotion of the sensitive appetite - every exercise of a capacity to be moved by non-rational cognition - there is a corresponding perfectly voluntary act of the rational appetite:

For in truth all the acts enumerated above [ie passions] are found in the rational appetite, no less distinct from each other, whether they too are given the name passions or not.¹⁹

This is a view of the inner agency of the will which we may well find very alien. Some of us may allow that we have a capacity for strictly second order action: for deciding on which particular first order actions we perform, which decisions are up to us and within our control, ie actions too. But we do not readily conceive of the possibility of a fully voluntary version of every motivational or emotional state that can occur in us. Yet Suarez really did. And his practical reason-based conception of agency naturally led in this direction, in so far as it allowed for full voluntariness in every motivational affect that could occur as a response to a practical value presented with rational clarity.

At this point, we need to stand back, and look in very general terms at the work which the practical reason-based conception of agency was doing for Suarez - and why it mattered so much that the voluntary occur in particular as an inner elicited agency of the rational appetite.

¹⁹nam revera omnes actus supra numerati in appetitu rationali reperiuntur, et non minus distincti, sive illis detur passionis nomen, sive non. Suarez *De actibus qui vocantur passiones*, *Opera Omnia* Paris 1856 Vol 4 p476

One way an agency of the rational appetite mattered was as a locus of specifically second order action - as a locus of action directed at, imperating and determining first order action. For Suarez the fact of agency's occurrence at second order level matters partly because of a natural and, I think, defensible theory of human freedom. Freedom worth the name must take the form of rational self-determination - a capacity to apply our deliberations about how to act, in a deliberatively based free act of self-determination. Moreover, this self-determination must, for Suarez, involve freedom from prior necessitation from without - from other than our own past free agency.

But this capacity for rational self-determination is unconvincingly to be found at the point of first order actions alone, which after all are determined by prior decisions of the will. Suppose decisions are not a further, second order locus of free agency. Then our first order actions, as determined by prior decisions of the will, would be necessitated from without - by other than by our own free actions. There would be no rational *self*-determination. So freedom as a capacity for rational self-determination requires there to be freedom and agency at the point of the will: action-determining decisions have to be free actions themselves.

But there was another and deeply important pressure on Suarez. He needed to make sense of the demands on us of divinely promulgated law. But this law makes demands on our emotions - and in particular, on the emotion of love. The natural law contains for example, as one precept that we should love God:

Secondly, we suppose that natural law contains a special precept that we should love God as the author of nature...²⁰

The idea that we are under an obligation to love God and neighbour is absolutely central to Christianity. It is Christ's summation in the new law of the old law presented in the Decalogue. But of course, the idea places great pressure on the voluntary. For it is very natural to suppose that laws and commands address our fully voluntary agency - laws can only require us to do things, or refrain from doing them. Laws cannot be passed that we feel feelings or experience passions. At least this is clearly so for human or positive law. And why should the natural or moral law be any different? Yet is love really a fully voluntary action that can be commanded or made legally required? Is it not just another passion?

One response to the thought that love is morally obligatory might be to detach at least the specifically moral law from agency. If the obligations of positive human law address agency alone, the same - on this view - is not true of moral obligations. We find this approach in secular form in Hume, where the Christian commandment to love becomes a natural duty to benevolence - an obligation that applies to a motivation that exists in us as an inherently passive characteristic. But this was not Suarez's response. For Suarez, the precepts of law in general, moral or positive, address free and so perfectly or

²⁰Secundo, supponimus legem naturalem continere speciale praeceptum diligendi Deum ut auctorem naturae, quod in materia etiam de charitate ostendendum est. Suarez *De legibus et legislatore deo*, *Opera Omnia* Paris 1856 Vol 5 p126

fully voluntary agency - and free agency alone: *lex tantum datur de humanis actibus* - law is only given regarding human, ie free and fully voluntary acts.²¹

The only possible response, then, is to voluntarize love as much as possible - to the point of making a species of that emotion a perfectly voluntary and free act of the rational appetite - and then to explain the law of love as applying to that emotion in so far as it falls within the required category of the voluntary. And it is the latter which Suarez does. In this he was not the first. In *De Veritate*, Aquinas noted as a problem the appearance that we could merit by our passions:

It seems [he noted] that we do, for we merit by fulfilling precepts. But by divine precepts we are induced to rejoice, to fear, to grieve, and to have other such passions...²²

But then, Aquinas notes, these precepts or laws aren't really directed at imperfectly voluntary passions; nor could they be. Precepts or laws can only address the perfectly voluntary rational will, and what is subject to it. For we can only merit in the strict sense through our exercise of the will and what is subject to it.²³

Since we are speaking of merit with respect to reward, to merit in the strict sense is rather to acquire something for oneself as reward; which only happens if we give something which is equal in worth to what we are said to merit. But we can only give what is ours, and over which we are master. But we are masters of our acts through the will; not only of those which are elicited from the will immediately, such as loving and willing, but also of those commanded by the will and elicited in other faculties, such as walking, speaking and the like.

But then joy, fear, love and the like can also occur as elicited acts of will - or even if mere passions may occur as imperated acts subject to and explained by decisions that they occur. And so Aquinas replies:

²¹Suarez *De bonitate et malitia humanorum actuum*, *Opera Omnia* Paris 1856 Vol 4 p293. Suarez is absolutely insistent that precepts of law only address free, and so perfectly voluntary acts: *Addo praeterea, loquendo de propria lege, de qua nunc agimus, tantum esse posse propter creaturam rationalem: nam lex non imponitur, nisi naturae liberae, nec habeat pro materia, nisi actus liberos...* *De legibus*, *Opera Omnia*, Vol 5, p7

²²Quaeritur utrum passionibus mereamur. Et videtur quod sic. Implendo enim praecepta meremur. Sed divinis praeceptis inducimur ad gaudendum, timendum, dolendum, et alias huiusmodi passiones, ut Augustinus dicit, XIV *de Civitate Dei*, cap. IX. Ergo passionibus meremur. Aquinas *De Veritate* q.26 a.6, p495 Marietti Rome 1964

²³Cum autem mereri respectu mercedis dicatur, *proprie* mereri est aliquid sibi magis acquirere pro mercede; quod quidem non fit nisi cum aliquid damus quod est condignum ei quod mereri dicimur. Dare autem non possumus nisi id quod nostrum est, cuius domini sumus. Sumus autem domini nostrorum actuum per voluntatem; non solum illorum qui immediate ex voluntate elicitor, ut diligere et velle, sed eorum qui a voluntate imperantur per alias potentias elici, ut ambulare, loqui, et huiusmodi. Aquinas *De Veritate* q.26 a.6, p496 Marietti Rome 1964

So to the first point, we should say that by God's precepts we are admonished to rejoice or to fear in so far as joy and fear and the like consist in acts of the will and are not passions...or also in so far as such passions follow from the will.²⁴

Suarez argues that the divinely promulgated law requires of us only that we love in so far as this love is a perfectly voluntary action - an action of the rational appetite or will - that lies within our power. Hence it is only necessary that we love God on certain appropriate occasions, and that on these occasions we at least love him above other things '*quod potest homo in hac vita praestare*' which humans can do in this life. It is not required that we love him with the greatest possible intensity, or that we do this at all times. Nor, as the Protestant heretics wrongly suppose, exaggerating the demands of the law to make it quite impossible for us to obey, are we required to be motivated by the love of God in all our actions.²⁵

Suarez uses the fact that some actions of the will - emotion-constituting actions - need not be directed at action, need not be strictly *second order* actions, to establish conclusions about the moral worth of internal intrinsically voluntary actions. This was a matter of considerable controversy within Suarez's intellectual tradition. And it is easy to see, in broad terms, why. For the everyday ethical consciousness is inclined to find an independent moral worth in the successful performance of external actions. It is actually helping the poor that many of us immediately have in mind when we think of charitable action; not simply intending to help the poor. And ordinarily laws are naturally understood as addressed at external actions and their effects: we are required not to kill, not simply not to intend to kill.

But the practical reason-based conception took internal actions of the will, not external actions as the primary and underived locus of the voluntary. For it was to these inner actions of the will that the practical reason-based model directly applied. In which case the intuition that moral worth and moral law were concerned with external, imperated actions to a degree that went beyond their concern with elicited inner willings, became particularly problematic. And so there was a long debate between those such as Scotus, who tried to accommodate belief in some genuine and independent moral worth of external actions - some worth additional to that of the internal actions which gave rise to them; and those, on the other hand, who denied external actions any moral worth, or who more moderately accepted the moral worth of external actions, but as an extrinsic feature of them, like their very status as voluntary acts - extrinsic because wholly derived from the moral worth of internal actions.

Suarez's considered view, is that the moral law addresses both elicited internal actions of the will and external actions - but external actions only as

²⁴Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod praeceptis Dei admonemur ad gaudendum et timendum, secundum quod gaudium, timor, et huiusmodi, in actu voluntatis consistunt, et non sunt passiones...vel secundum quod huiusmodi passiones ex voluntate consequuntur. Aquinas *De Veritate* q.26 a.6, p497 Marietti Rome 1964

²⁵Suarez *De bonitate et malitia humanorum actuum, Opera Omnia* Paris 1856 Vol 4 p307

imperated and caused by internal actions.²⁶ And while moral worth attaches intrinsically to internal actions, it attaches only extrinsically to external actions, derived from the moral character of the acts of will that cause them. It followed, in Suarez's view, that holding fixed facts about an agent's internal agency, the occurrence or non-occurrence of a given external action - such as whether an agent who has decided to give alms, actually manages to do so and thereby does relieve poverty - makes no direct difference to the moral worth of the agent.²⁷

And this brings us back to Suarez's theory of fully voluntary emotions, such as the love of God. Suarez notes what he takes to be the particularly implausible view of Cajetan as regards the moral relation between internal and external actions. Cajetan's view was that internal actions only have a derived moral value - a value they have as causes of the external actions which provide their objects, where alone intrinsic moral worth is to be found. Suarez dismisses this view as very implausible. And he dismisses it by first adverting to the evident moral worth found in internal acts such as loving God. Suarez's point is that the object of the love of God is God - not some first order action with a given moral worth that it is the function of this inner act to cause. Cajetan's theory, Suarez argues, clearly cannot apply to this sort of highly morally worthy inner action of the will. So why should it apply at all?²⁸

I have said that Suarez conceives of the voluntary as something essentially willed and subject to the will, whether reflexively in elicited acts, or as the object of a distinct act of will in imperated acts. Notice further that connectedly at the heart of Suarez's conception of humans as rational beings, is a hierarchical conception of intellectual and even appetitive faculties as to some degree subject to the will. This is importantly the case in relation to the sensitive appetite. The sensitive appetite is not like the locomotive faculties, subject to the will *ad nutum*. It does not obey on the nod. That is because, as an imperfectly voluntary faculty, the sensitive appetite has its own cognitively presented objects, at which its exercise is directed. So we cannot will away the repugnance or attraction which the sensitive appetite feels for various objects. Nevertheless, the sensitive appetite's capacity to motivate action is in particular subject to the will - and this is essential to Suarez's conception of humans as forming a whole ordered by reason, an order that the fall has damaged without removing entirely:

²⁶Suarez *ibid* p427

²⁷Dicendum primo formalem bonitatem actionis humanae solum esse intrinsece in interiori actu voluntatis, in exterioribus vero solum esse per denominationum tantum extrinsecam. Suarez *ibid* p424 ...actus exterior praecise et per se sumptus, non addit homini formalem bonitatem moralem, nec reddit illum magis studiosum. p426

²⁸Suarez *ibid* p308

Whenever the will efficaciously commands the sensitive appetite that it possess a motivating desire for or aversion of some object, the sensitive appetite always and necessarily obeys.²⁹

Why must the sensitive appetite be subordinate at least to this degree to the rational appetite? Suarez's reply is that since there are these two distinct appetites - these two distinct motivational capacities - occurring in one and the same soul, there had to be an ordering of them, with the lower as subordinate to and subject to the higher:

for a multitude without order brings forth confusion; and so the lower appetite has a natural tendency to obey the higher even against the lower's own particular inclination, as both light and heavy things incline to fill a vacuum outside their natural locations.³⁰

This notion of rational order and hierarchy lies at the heart of Suarez's conception of voluntary agency. Voluntariness flows from the higher rational motivational faculty into other faculties of the soul, and thereby helps order the psyche.

(b) *Hobbes*

Thomas Hobbes's most sustained engagement with late scholastic accounts of the voluntary was in an extended debate with John Bramhall, the Anglican bishop of Derry and fellow royalist exile in Paris. Not that Hobbes ever took Bramhall to be his most imposing intellectual antagonist on this topic. Indeed, Hobbes made it charmingly clear that to address Bramhall on the subject of the will and its freedom was very much to address the monkey rather than the organ grinder. Hobbes drily reported that he had found nothing in Bramhall on free will and on free will's relation to God's concurrence that could not have been read earlier in Suarez' *Opuscula*.³¹

Suarez, we saw, has a paradigm of the voluntary: a paradigm designed for the case of humans - humans who are distinguished from mere animals by possessing special, immaterial rational faculties. It is in exercising our capacity for making immaterial motivational responses to distinctively

²⁹ *Quandocumque voluntas efficaciter imperat appetitui sensitivo, ut appetitione absoluta appetat vel fugiat aliquod obiectum, ipse semper et necessario obedit. Suarez De voluntario et involuntario in genere, deque actibus voluntariis in speciali, Opera Omnia Paris 1856 Vol 4 p272*

³⁰ *nam multitudo sine ordine parit confusionem: et propterea inferior appetitus habet naturalem propensionem ad obediendum superiori etiam contra propriam et peculiarem inclinationem, sicut levia et gravia ad replendum vacuum extra sua loca naturalia. Suarez ibid p272*

³¹ *Hobbes in The Questions Concerning Liberty, Necessity and Chance, clearly stated between Dr Bramhall Bishop of Derry, and Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury London 1656 p28*

rational cognitions - in exercising our specifically rational appetite or will - that we humans perform fully voluntary actions.

Hobbes's view was fundamentally different; and here lies the heart of the disagreement. Humans, for Hobbes, possess wholly material minds, just like the material minds of other animals. Human thoughts and actions are wholly corporeal, and determined by prior necessity. Granted, humans are rational, as animals are not. But human rationality does not consist in any psychological discontinuity from the animal case - and certainly not in the possession of special psychological faculties not found in animals.

What constitutes distinctively human rationality, then, is not any special rational faculty within the human mind, but merely humans' ability to develop and use a particular physical tool, namely language. By language humans can use words to express their thoughts - which otherwise are just like animal thoughts, occurring within a wholly corporeal imagination. Reasoning involves nothing more than the deduction of consequences from the defined terms or words of a language - and is carried out in speech or in the same corporeal imagination we share with animals. As Hobbes put it bluntly to Bramhall:

Reason and understanding are acts of the imagination, that is to say they are imaginations.³²

There is then nothing about any human motivational responses to cognitions to distinguish them as at all different in kind from animal motivational responses to sensorily or imaginatively based cognitions. Bramhall does his best to express a practical reason-based conception of agency. He tries to explain the voluntary by talking of reason making representations to a specifically rational appetite or will - and by claiming that it is thanks to will's receptiveness to reason that acts of the rational appetite are voluntary and free. But Hobbes is wholly dismissive of all this. Liberty cannot be limited to a distinctively human rational appetite, or be peculiar to rational humans, because there is no distinctively rational appetite, nor any distinctively rational representations to such an appetite:

For I do not fear it will be thought too hot for my fingers, to shew the vanity of words such as these, Intellectual appetite, conformity of the appetite to the object, rational will, elective power of the rational will; nor understand I how reason can be the root of true liberty, if the Bishop (as he saith in the beginning) had the liberty to write this discourse. I understand how objects, and the conveniences and inconveniences of them, may be represented to a man by the help of his senses; but how reason representeth anything to the will, I understand no more than the Bishop understands there may be liberty in children, in beasts, and inanimate creatures. For he seemeth to wonder how children may be left at liberty; how beasts imprisoned may be set at liberty; and how a river may have a free course.³³

³²*ibid* p309

³³*ibid* pp35-6

In every case humans and animals alike are responding motivationally to the same sensorily based and corporeal representations of actions and their possible consequences. As such, animals can deliberate as well as we. If, unlike the animals, we can reason about how to act, that is simply because as language users we use and understand words - words whose implications we can by reasoning deduce. It does not follow that action is generated in us by deliberative processes different in kind from those found in animals.

Hobbes's approach, then, is to build a theory of agency that directly fits the case of the least complex motivations and actions, and so, in particular, the agency of non-human animals. For he is persuaded that there will be no difference of principle arising in more complex cases. Rather than, like Suarez and Molina, semi-voluntarizing animal emotions and passions on the pattern of some analogy to a rational will, Hobbes de-voluntarizes the will on the basis that there are no action motivations different in kind from the most humdrum appetite. A favourite Hobbesian example is the appetite of hunger:

...nor can a man more determine his will than any other appetite; that is, more than he can determine when he shall be hungry and when not.³⁴

Motivations, for Hobbes, whether in animals or humans, are linked to evaluations:

to love a thing and to think it good are all one...³⁵

Now how far for Hobbes these evaluations come to anything more than aspects of the very appetites to which they are linked - how far they are cognitions of anything independent of those desires - is obscure. But we do not need to settle the matter here. The important point is that for Hobbes, the motivations behind our first order actions are all on a level; and they do not differ in kind from a simple appetitive state such as hunger.

The practical reason-based model of voluntary agency, we saw, was designed directly to fit a class of supposedly reason-involving motivational responses - responses that centrally include the operation of our decision making capacity. Other non-rational motivations - the passions - take on a semi-voluntary role by virtue of some supposed imperfect likeness to the special class of reason-involving motivations.

But for Hobbes, there is no special and distinct class of reason-involving motivational responses. If you want to consider the voluntary status of any motivational response, your search might as well start and end with something basic, like being hungry. For such an appetite is perfectly representative. If, considered on its own terms, being hungry looks as distant from voluntary action as anything does, that settles the matter. Voluntary actions cannot occur in second order form as motivations.

³⁴*ibid* p25

³⁵*ibid* pp301-2

And so Hobbes's model of voluntary agency is single structure, not dual. A voluntary act is what follows from and is explained by the will - by motivations to act such as hunger or a desire to win an argument. There is no second order agency of the will - of our motivation itself.

Hobbes, of course, determinist as he was, had no interest in a conception of the will as a locus of unnecessitated self-determination. Nor had he any other commitment from his ethical theory to a dual structure theory of agency. Hobbes was in fact rather unhappy with the idea of laws as specifically addressing the will. Bramhall, Hobbes says, claims that

...that law is unjust and tyrannical which commands a man to Will, that which it is impossible for him to will. Whereby it appears he is of opinion, that a law may be made to command the will. [But Hobbes disagrees]. The stile of a law is Do this or Do not do this; or if thou do this, thou shalt suffer this; but no law runs thus, Will this or Will not this; or if thou have a will to this, thou shalt suffer this.³⁶

But anyway, the issue did not matter too much, because Hobbes was happy to allow that in any case blame can still be addressed to the will. For blame is no more than a negative evaluation. Now negative evaluation, just thinking badly of something or someone, does not presuppose the voluntary or free nature of what is evaluated. So blame, in particular, does not presuppose the freedom or voluntariness of what people are being blamed for. So if people are motivated or willing to do what is against the law, Hobbes says:

I answer, they are to be blamed though their wills be not in their power. Is not good good and evill evill though they be not in our power? And shall I not call them so? And is that not praise and blame? But it seems that the Bishop takes blame not for the dispraise of a thing, but for a praetext and colour of malice and revenge against him that he blameth.³⁷

A further, and vital component to Hobbes's hostility to Suarezian action theory has to do with the theory's hybrid nature: its combination, thanks to faculty-dualism, of a practical reason-based theory of elicited acts of will, with a motivation-based theory of imperated acts of will.

Hobbes's hostility to this feature of the theory is open and frequently expressed. The schoolmen, as Hobbes sees it, are appealing to the operations of a given faculty, the will, to characterise and make intelligible a given phenomenon - voluntary action. They are characterising first order actions, in motivation-based terms, as products of a will to perform them. And that, in Hobbes's view, is quite all right. But having done this, it appears that the very phenomenon that was to be clarified, voluntary agency, turns up as an essential feature of the very same faculty of will that was supposed to have

³⁶*ibid* p138

³⁷*ibid* p40

clarified it. The very faculty that was used to characterise what agency is, now turns out to operate as an instance of voluntary agency itself.

And this Hobbes regards, not just as circular and question-begging in a theory of the voluntary, but as downright incoherent. In particular, the scholastic idea that the will is a locus of elicited second order action is viewed by Hobbes as involving a serious confusion - the confusion of a power to act with the person who acts. For if, in our account of first order action, we characterise such actions as voluntary in virtue of being effects of the will, we are treating the will as, precisely, a power to perform voluntary actions - as what provides our capacity to perform voluntary actions and explains their performance. But a power or capacity to perform voluntary actions doesn't perform voluntary actions itself:

As if it were not Freedom enough for a man to do what he will, unless his will also have power over his Will, and that his will be not the power itself, but must have another power within it to do all voluntary acts. ³⁸

And where he [Bramhall] says our wills are in our power, he sees not that he speaks absurdly; for he ought to say, the will is the power...³⁹

And later Hobbes exclaims in exasperation:

Can any man but a schoolman think that the will is voluntary? But yet the will is the cause of voluntary actions. ⁴⁰

Hobbes thinks that the only category of voluntary action, as conceived by Suarez and his allies, that is at all respectable, is the category of imperated act - the category of willed actions explained by prior and distinct willings of them. At one stage in the debate, Bramhall introduces the elicited/imperated act distinction within the voluntary, in the following, by now familiar, terms:

There is a double act of the will, the one more remote, called imperatus, that is in truth the act of some inferiour faculty, subject to the command of the will, as to open or shut one's eyes; without doubt these actions may be compelled. The other act is neerer, called actus elicited, an act drawn out of the will; as to will, to choose, to elect; this may be stopped or hindered by the intervening impediment of the understanding, as a stone lying on a table is kept from its natural motion, otherwise the will should have a kind of omnipotence; but the will cannot be compelled to an act repugnant to it, for that is both to incline, and not to incline, to the same object, at the same time, which implies a contradiction. ⁴¹

³⁸*ibid* p38

³⁹*ibid* p40

⁴⁰*ibid* p256

⁴¹*ibid* pp215-16

Hobbes's response was clear: imperated acts as effects of the will, are acceptable, allowing for reservations about the term 'imperated': but elicited acts of the will itself qua power to act, are unintelligible.

As Hobbes puts it:

Wherein letting pass that Metaphoricall speech of attributing command and subjection to the faculties of the soul, as if they made a commonwealth or family among themselves, and could speak to one another, which is very improper in searching the truth of this question; you may observe first that to compell a voluntary act, is nothing else, but to will it; for it is all one to say, my will commands the shutting of mine eyes, or the doing of any other action, and to say, I have the will to shut my eyes. So that *actus imperatus* here, might as easily have been said in English, a voluntary action, but that they that invented the term, understood not anything it signified.

Secondly, you may observe, that *actus elicitus*, is exemplified by these words, to will, to elect, to choose, which are all one, and so to will here is made an act of the will; and indeed, as the will is a faculty or power of a man's soul, so to will is an act of it, according to that power. But as it is absurdly said, that to dance is an act allowed or drawn by fair means out of the ability to dance; so it is also to say, that to will is an act allowed or drawn out of the power to will, which power is commonly called, the will.⁴²

The will is the power of the person to act. It does not itself perform actions. To suppose otherwise is a gross confusion, akin to supposing that our capacity or power to dance, goes in for dancing itself.

Hobbes returns once more to underline the acceptability of imperated acts, once you remove the implication, in the term 'imperated', that the will is some specifically rational faculty with authority over other lesser faculties and capacities:

He [Bramhall] says that *Actus Imperatus* is when a man opens or shuts his eyes at the command of the will. I say when a man opens and shuts his eyes according to his will, that it is a voluntary action; and I believe we mean one and the same thing.⁴³

Hobbes further developed his case against elicited acts of the will by turning the reflexion principle against the very dual structure theory of will agency that contained it, and against the allied conception of freedom and the voluntary as involving self-determination at the point of the will. Hobbes agrees that to occur as willed is a defining characteristic of the voluntary:

⁴²*ibid* pp217-18

⁴³*ibid* p236

The question is whether the will to write, or the will to forbear, come upon a man according to his will...⁴⁴

But he crucially disagrees that this feature is to be found in our motivations themselves:

I acknowledge this liberty, that I can do if I will, but to say, I can will if I will, I take to be an absurd speech.⁴⁵

And here we come to a fundamental difference between Hobbes's psychology of action, and the psychology proposed by his opponents.

Suarez and Hobbes both saw subjection to the will, or willedness, as defining the voluntary. But for Suarez, it is vital that the phenomenon of being subject to the will - of occurring as something willed - be fairly extensive. In particular, it is vital that our own motivations, both rational and non-rational, be, to varying degrees and in various ways, subject to the will. Suarez, remember, saw the reflexive and inherent willedness of elicited willings - the reflexive subjection of the will to itself - as vital to the will's character as a locus of self-determining freedom. And he saw the qualified subjection of the sensitive appetite to the rational appetite as an essential feature of a rational order within the human psyche.

Hobbes denied the possibility of either kind of will subjection in respect of motivation. In so doing, he was not only expressing a rejection of Suarez's theory of human agency as a locus of a capacity for a distinctively rational self-determination. He was also rejecting Suarez's conception of human psychology as located in faculties varyingly related to reason and so consequently exhibiting a reason-derived hierarchy of order and subordination. Hobbesian voluntary agency is nothing more than the scholastics' motivation-based imperated agency - only now merely motivated, not imperated by some rational psychological authority. Hobbes, in his own eyes, had preserved the solid motivation-based core of scholastic action theory, removing the extraneous practical reason-based category of elicited acts. In so doing he had abandoned a link between the voluntary and a faculty-based rational psychological order that was fundamental to Suarezian action theory. The claim that appetites or motivations are not subject to the will expressed Hobbes's profound rejection of and incomprehension of this link.

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⁴⁴*ibid* p29

⁴⁵*ibid* p29