

THE *LOGICA MAGNA* OF JUAN SANCHEZ  
SEDEÑO (1600)

A SIXTEENTH CENTURY ADDITION TO THE  
ARISTOTELIAN CATEGORIES

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Although there were literally hundreds of commentaries on Aristotle's *Organon* published during the first one hundred and fifty years of the era of the printing press, one of the most interesting by far is that of Juan SÁNCHEZ SEDEÑO, a master at the convent of San Esteban in Salamanca around the turn of the sixteenth century. His *Aristotelis Logica Magna*<sup>1</sup> was published at Salamanca in 1600 and his *Quaestiones ad Universam Aristotelis Logicam* sixteen years later in Mainz.

One of the things that makes Sanchez' work so interesting is his tendency to meet head-on the difficult issues which many of the other logicians and commentators of his time either avoided or else treated briefly or cryptically.

A fine example of his boldness may be found in his question X of Book II «*De Universalibus*», entitled «*Utrum in secundis intentionibus possit constitui praedicamentum*»<sup>2</sup>. That he raises this

1. Sánchez' work is a commentary on (a portion of) the *Organon* of Aristotle, as opposed to the *Summulae Logicales*, a treatment of logical terms. By Sanchez' time the *Summulae* were also referred to as the *Logica Minor*, and were treated as an introduction to the Commentaries or *Logica Magna*. For more on this point, see V. MUÑOZ DELGADO, *La Lógica Nominalista en Salamanca*, Madrid, 1964, p. 45.

2. Johannes SÁNCHEZ SEDEÑO, *Aristotelis Logica Magna... Salmanticae*, 1600, p. 181ff.

question<sup>3</sup> or that he answers it in the affirmative<sup>4</sup> does not make his work unique. But his detailed treatment of it, together with his presentation of a kind of predicamental «tree» for the entities of the new category, makes this chapter one of the finest in the entire late scholastic logical literature.

In a somewhat dense treatment which covers some four folio pages, SÁNCHEZ makes numerous interesting points regarding this new category<sup>5</sup>. I have chosen to draw your attention to four of them which, I think, form the core of his argument. First, he argues that the usual move, that of distributing *entia rationis* among the ten real categories, and more particularly that of locating relations of reason within the category of real relations, will not work. Second, he contends that *ens rationis* cannot be *genus generalissimum* to any category. Third, he submits that the essential requirement for the establishment of a new category, that it be an ordering from individuals to their most general genus in a «quidditative» manner, can be satisfied. Finally, he suggests, it is necessary to use abstract terms to describe and define the elements of the new category.

Perhaps the most popular opinion, the one held by the majority of late scholastic thomists, regarding the ultimate disposition of relations of reason was that they could be located in the category «*ad aliud*». The reasoning was that since this category is in any event a somewhat «loose» one, it would do no harm to include rational relations there. SÁNCHEZ rejects this opinion, appealing to

3. It was not uncommon among medieval and late scholastic authors to raise this question. Radulphus Brito, Walter Burley, John Buridan, Augustinus Niphus, Franciscus Toletus and Gaspar Cardillus Villalpandeus, were among those who raised the possibility of an extra category, only to reject it.

4. There were also those who argued for an extra category or categories, but none as thoroughly as Sánchez. Among these were Petrus Nigrus, Paulus Venetus, Dominicus de Soto, Didacus Masius and Hieronimus Pla. Masius and Pla were both teaching at Valencia at the end of the sixteenth century and, after Sanchez, offer the most complete accounts of what this category might look like.

5. As we shall see, Sánchez proposes not one, but three new categories. Since this paper has stringent limitations with respect to its length, I shall concentrate only on his new category for relations of reason, ignoring those for privations and negations.

the distinction between relations «*secundum esse*» and relations «*secundum dici*». Whereas relations between real entities, such as between a father and a son, consist only in being «*ad aliud*», and thus are «*secundum esse*», the rational relations of which SÁNCHEZ writes, such as «species», are «*secundum dici*». They are said to be relative (*ad aliud*) only secondarily; primarily they have a form or essence which relations «*secundum esse*» lack.

In applying this distinction in this manner SÁNCHEZ both demonstrates the impossibility of including rational relations within the real category «*ad aliud*», and sets up, with his reference to «forms» or «essences», the expectation of a legitimate category for rational relations.

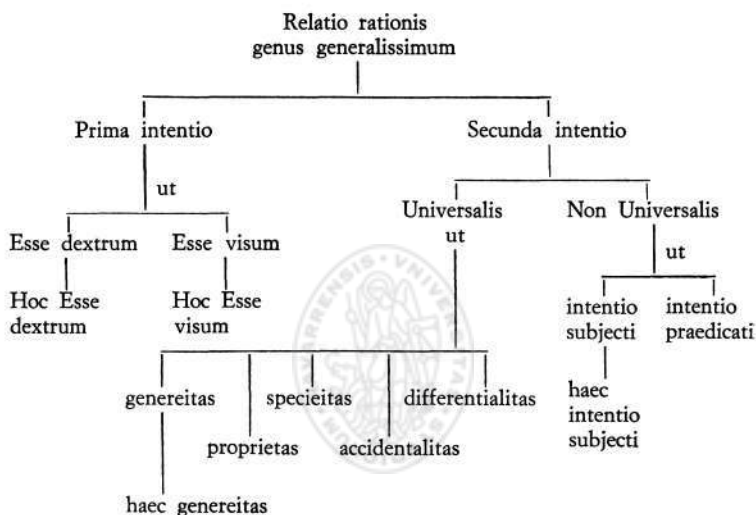
SÁNCHEZ' second point is that *ens rationis* may not serve as a most general genus, as some had claimed. Just as is the case with real being in relation to its categories, rational being is present at every level of the categories which pertain to it. The function of a generic term, he reminds us, is to draw ultimately different species together into a class, and to determine them, and this is of course a task that it cannot perform if it is included among them or their individuals.

He speaks of beings of reason as «closed up» (*clauditur*) in the things ultimately differentiated within any rational category and therefore not able to serve as their genus any more than *ens reale* can serve as *summum genus* for a real category. The terms «*ens reale*» and «*ens rationis*» are for SÁNCHEZ both «transcending» (*transcendens*) terms.

SÁNCHEZ' third point is an extremely important one. Since a category may be defined as «a certain order of things predicable according to the principle of quidditative superiority or inferiority», there will be not only one legitimate new category, but three; there will be one for each of the most immediate analogates of *ens rationis*, namely, negation, privation and rational relation. All that he has to do to establish such categories is to demonstrate that he can produce individuals, species, genera, and so on, right up to the most general genus in each case, which follow «quidditatively» an ever widening pattern of applicability. «Quidditatively» here just means that there will be an ascending order of answers, each more general than the preceding one, to the question «what essentially

is it?» Further, this order will terminate in the most general genus, said non-analogically of all its inferiors.

But is there indeed such a «quidditative» ordering among relations of reason? I shall present SÁNCHEZ' argument that there is one, and I shall offer an analysis in more contemporary terms to support his claim. But first, a sketch of this category as he presents it schematically.



Beginning at the base of his «tree» we find individual relations of reason: this specieity, for example, or this genereity. SÁNCHEZ is quite insistent that the specieity founded upon horse and the specieity founded upon man are rationally numerically distinct in as important a sense as individual horses or individual men are really numerically distinct from one another. Moreover, just as we may ask of this individual man and that individual man «what essentially is it?», thus arriving at the level of species (in this case man), we may ask of this specieity founded on horse and that specieity founded on man «what essentially is it?», also arriving at the level of species (in this case specieity). Specieity may be abstracted from this specieity and that, just as individuality may be abstracted from this individuality and that, genereity from this ge-

nerity and that, and so on for the rest of the predicables<sup>6</sup>. The predicables, in turn, are species of the genus «universal», whose more general genus is «second intention», whose more general genus «relation of reason» serves as the *genus generalissimum* for the entire category.

Employing our contemporary notions of class inclusion ( $\subset$ ) and class membership ( $\in$ ), we can see that the same relations may be found in the category for relations of reason which are found in the category for substance. In the real category substance we get «this man» standing as element to the classes man, animal, living body, and so on up to the most general genus substance: this man  $\in$  man, this man  $\in$  animal ... this man  $\in$  substance. As we ascend the hierarchy from man to substance, the relation becomes class inclusion: man  $\subset$  animal, animal  $\subset$  living body, living body  $\subset$  substance.

In SÁNCHEZ' rational category we get the same pattern of relations: this specieity  $\in$  species, this specieity  $\in$  universal, this specieity  $\in$  second intention, and this specieity  $\in$  relation of reason. Also, correspondingly, we get species  $\subset$  universal, universal  $\subset$  second intention, second intention  $\subset$  relation of reason.

Put in contemporary terms, what SÁNCHEZ has done is to provide us with a taxonomy of taxonomic terms used by the logician to «put things in their order». Further, this second level taxonomy reflects the logical relations of the first level taxonomy. More traditionally speaking, he has provided a hierarchy of second level concepts which utilizes the relations among the first level concepts which it is designed to describe.

A final point concerns SÁNCHEZ' use of concrete and abstract terms, an issue which may already have been of some concern to those who have followed the argument closely. Quoting a passage from *De Ente et Essentia*, he says that it has been necessary to put the terms of the category in the abstract<sup>7</sup>, and this because generic terms are more properly abstract, and concrete only by means

6. In another interesting move Sánchez treats «individual» as a sixth predicable.

7. Unfortunately, Sánchez' schematic presentation of the category does not reflect this commitment consistently.

of reduction. Why is this important for him? First, he is anxious to demonstrate that there are among *entia rationis* «individuals in an extended sense». He uses abstract terms to denote these entities. Second, he wants to make sure that all his ontological commitments are well founded, that is, that he can tie each term down to the things from which it has ultimately been abstracted. For SÁNCHEZ the term «abstraction» has none of the negative sense that it has, for example, for Quine. It is rather a positive term which indicates that a move has been made which can ultimately be traced back to concrete particulars. SÁNCHEZ' «abstract entities» are in this sense always well grounded.

Third, his project is to avoid platonism on the one hand and nominalism on the other. For SÁNCHEZ, as for most late scholastic thomist logicians, universals are neither just found, nor are they just terms. Rather, they are constructed in a manner which involves a unique partnership between the found real things of the world and man's intellectual powers. Abstract universals are thus for him primary because he held the view that there are some similarities which are more important than others in the setting of things in order, and that it is these «quiddities» which allow such an ordering. He is a part of the late scholastic thomist solution of the problem of universals, i.e., how to have natures without platonism: but his rendering of the consequences of that solution is extremely rare. Whereas the tendency among most late scholastic aristotelians was to try to dispose of *entia rationis* as somewhat embarrassing uninvited guests, SÁNCHEZ welcomes them as full and important members of the family, and he even enlarges his ontological house by at least one story to accommodate them.

In accomplishing this task he offered a solution to a problem which had harried logicians since the time of Porphyry: namely, what is the relation of the predicables to the categories?