



Quodlibet II.2.1: An Auvergnian Text in Aquinas

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Abstract

This article takes up the long dormant issue of the relationship of Thomas Aquinas to William of Auvergne. Taking Aquinas' *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 as an overlooked point of comparison, this article demonstrates a deep metaphysical compatibility between the Parisian Bishop and the Dominican Friar regarding the essence-existence distinction and even suggests that behind this *Quodlibetal* question is perhaps William's *De Trinitate* I-II and *De Universo* IIa-IIae 8. Thus, to the extent that one is a follower of Aquinas' metaphysics of *esse*, the present paper suggests that they are not merely a Thomist but also (perhaps unknowingly) an Auvergnian.

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It is generally acknowledged that William of Auvergne to some degree prefigured and served as a source for Aquinas' doctrine of being. As he was the Bishop of Paris, who overlapped with Aquinas in Paris from 1245-1248, Aquinas would have been aware of William. As William was also keenly interested in receiving the newly translated Greek and Arabic philosophical materials, taking from them what was in accordance with the truth and correcting what was in error, his theological and philosophical project in many ways prefigured that of Aquinas. Yet, if this is generally known, still there has been relatively little in the way of direct comparison between the Friar and the Bishop, nor do many scholars of Aquinas possess a detailed knowledge of the Auvergnian corpus. Furthermore, Gilson's article 'La notion d'existence chez Guillaume d'Auvergne' is often taken to be the key work that shows that although William was likely as source for Aquinas, their doctrines of being remain fundamentally different.¹ However, it seems to me that a detailed consideration of

¹ Étienne Gilson, 'La Notion D' Existence chez Guillaume D' Auvergne' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 15 (1946), 55-91. Leo Davis states that "to St. Thomas, he [William] bequeathed the legacy of an existentialist metaphysics". Leo Davis, 'Creation According to William of Auvergne,' in *Studies in Mediaevalia and Americana, Essays in Honor of William Lyle Davis, S.J.*, ed, Gerard G. Steckler and Leo D. Davis, (Spokane: Gonzaga University Press), 71. See also Armand Maurer's introduction to: Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, trans. Armand Maurer, 2nd ed. (Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies: 1968), 23. Maurer suggest that Aquinas had William's *De Trinitate* before him when he composed the *De Ente et Essentia*.

William's text ought to lead us to go so far as to plausibly regard Aquinas as an "Auvergnian" in his metaphysics.

To substantiate this claim, I will examine a text which I take to be of crucial metaphysical significance for Aquinas but which is also, so it seems to me, rather Auvergnian in its character: *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 (Advent 1269).² As William's metaphysics has received very little attention in the last 20 years and given that almost none of the existing literature on William suggests such a compatibility with *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 it is worthwhile to consider this matter here.³ These *Quodlibetal* questions occur in Paris, and given that *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 concerns the composition of essence and existence in angels and given that William of Auvergne appears to be the first scholastic Master to have explicitly taught that angels are not composed of matter and form, it is likely that such a question would recall the late Bishop to mind.⁴

² For the dating of this *Quodlibet* question see: Pasquale Porro, *Thomas Aquinas: A Historical and Philosophical Profile*, trans. Joseph G. Trabbic and Rodger W. Nutt (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 307. Jean-Pierre Torrel, *Saint Thomas Aquinas: His Person and His Work*, Vol. 1, trans. Robert Royal (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 245. Aquinas, *Thomas Aquinas's Quodlibetal Questions*, trans. Turner Nevitt, Brian Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), xxvi.

³ As far as I can see, there is no existing (and certainly no recent) literature comparing Aquinas and William on the basis of this text. The text goes unmentioned by Roland Teske in *Studies in the Philosophy of William of Auvergne*, (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006). Nor is this text examined by Teske's student Kevin Caster in, 'The Real Distinction Between Being and Essence According to William of Auvergne,' *Traditio* 56 (1996), 201-223 or 'William of Auvergne and St. Thomas Aquinas on the Real Distinction between Being and Essence' in *Being and Thought in Aquinas*, ed. Jeremiah M. Hackett, William E. Murnion, and Carl N. Still, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), 75-108. Nor does Amato Masnovo discuss this text in his still very important *Da Guglielmo d'Auvergne a san Tommaso d'Aquino*, 3 vols. (Milan: Società Editrice, 1945-1946). Joseph Owen addresses *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 and touches on the teaching of William of Auvergne but does not connect them in 'The Accidentality and Essential Character of Being in the Doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas,' *Mediaeval Studies* 20 (1958), 1-40. *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1, ad 2 may inform Stephan Schindele's view that William's doctrine of *esse* is hardly different from that of Aquinas. However, Schindele's discussion is very brief, is now over 125 years old and is largely unknown in the English speaking world of Aquinas scholarship. Schindele holds that William, like Aquinas, regards existence as an accident, but states that this ought not to be taken literally. Schindele does not, however, examine *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 in any detail. Stephan Schindele, *Beiträge zur Metaphysik des Wilhelm von Auvergne*, (Munich: Kastner&Lossen, 1900), 23. Gilson notes Schindele's position, but expresses some reservations since, according to Gilson, Schindele puts too much emphasis on *esse* being an accident and so misses the fundamental difference between the metaphysics of William and Aquinas. See Gilson, 'La notion d'existence chez Guillaume d'Auvergne,' 80 (especially no. 1). Caster's 'The Real Distinction Between Being and Essence According to William of Auvergne' is a direct response to Gilson.

⁴ Roland Teske, 'William of Auvergne's Debt to Avicenna,' *Studies in the Philosophy of William of Auvergne*, (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006), 228-231. The editions of William's works that I refer to are: William of Auvergne, *De Trinitate: An Edition of the Latin Text with an Introduction*, ed. Bruno Switalski, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies: 1976). For William's *De Universo* see Guilelmi Alverni Episcopi Parisiensis, *Opera Omnia*, ed. François Hotot, 2 vols., with Supplementum, ed. Blaise Le Feron (Orléans-Paris, 1674; facsimile reprint Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1963). As we have no critical edition of the *De Universo* I have also consulted the *Vat.Lat.848* manuscript which dates to sometime before 1300, the *Vat.Lat.850* manuscript which dates to before 1400 and the *Paris, BnF, MS lat. 15756* which dates to sometime prior to 1300. In light of this, I have found all the key texts cited here to be reliable, but with some possible errors in the *Opera Omnia*. For online access to these manuscripts and their approximate dating see: *Biblissima*, <https://portail.biblissima.fr/ark:/43093/mdata2ecae49b3b0809f12a362a781bc3e3e198c12032>; Vatican Library,

It is not, however, a fact universally accepted that *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 is of central importance to Aquinas' metaphysics. In his article 'Which *Esse* Gives the Answer to the Question: "Is it?" for St. Thomas,'⁵ on the basis of the fact that in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 it is the act of being which appears to answer the "is it" question instead of the *esse* of a true proposition, Lawrence Dewan hoped to have cast doubt on the authenticity, or at least the dating, of this text.⁶ Yet, *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 is one of the most concise distillations of Aquinas' metaphysics of *esse* – with nearly every metaphysical commitment bearing some parallel discussion in Aquinas' *corpus*. Furthermore, this text is one of the most significant for understanding the *sui generis* nature of the essence-existence composition, how such a composition is unlike and more fundamental than that of matter and form and is therefore of particular value for thinking about existence. What follows is, thus, something of a commentary on *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 that aims to 1) explicate Aquinas' teaching, 2) note its parallel texts so as to try and assuage something of Dewan's worries and 3) observe how Aquinas seems to be following William's metaphysics.⁷ This analysis brings to light a deep metaphysical consonance between the two thinkers which has not been fully appreciated. Furthermore, this metaphysical consonance ought to lead us to regard William as perhaps one of the most important influences on Aquinas' metaphysical thought, an influence Aquinas began to receive from his very earliest student days in Paris where he surely encountered the works of one of the most eminent men in the Parisian contexts: the prior Master of Theology and then Bishop of Paris.⁸ Commencing with this comparison on the basis of *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1, for the sake of coherence, I first examine Aquinas' *respondeo*, pivot to note the same teachings in William, and then consider the objections together with their respective responses.

1. Aquinas' *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1

Quodlibet II, q.2, a.1 is devoted to the question of whether an angel is substantially (*substantialiter*) composed of essence and existence. The authority cited by Aquinas to answer this question in the affirmative is the *Liber de Causis*, implicitly referring to

MSS Vat. Lat. 848, <http://www.mss.vatlib.it/guii/console?service=shortDetail&id=238393>; Vatican Library, MSS Vat. Lat. 849, <https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/238394>. Also see: Jennifer Ottman, 'List of Manuscripts and Editions,' *Autour de Guillaume d'Auvergne (+1249)*, ed. by F. Morenzoni and J.-Y. Tilliette (Brepols, 2005), 387-388.

⁵ Lawrence Dewan, 'Which *Esse* Gives the Answer to the Question: "Is It?" for St. Thomas,' *Doctor Communis* N.S. 3 (2002): 80-97.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁷ As this analysis is rather involved and considers a number of texts, I have labeled Aquinas' texts as [A-1] and William's texts as [W-1] and so on. For precision I have also retain many of the key Latin terms throughout the paper. All translation, unless otherwise indicated, are my own.

⁸ Nor is it surprising that William goes unnamed by Aquinas due to the medieval practice of not explicitly naming contemporaries. Nevertheless, the full substantiation of the claim that William is one of Aquinas' most important sources would require a far greater analysis than can be provided here.

proposition IX, which holds that an intelligence or angel *habet essentiam et esse*.⁹ This is one of the most metaphysically significant teachings of the *Liber de Causis* for Aquinas and is also referred to most notably in *De Ente et Essentia*:¹⁰

[A-1] in the commentary on the ninth proposition of the *Liber de Causis* it is said that an intelligence has form and *esse*, and there form is taken to be the quiddity or simple nature itself.

Beginning the *respondeo*, Aquinas writes:

[A-2] in two ways something is predicated of another. In one way essentially (*essentialiter*) and in another way by participation (*per participationem*). For light is predicated of an illuminated body by participation, but if there were a separate light it would be predicated of it essentially. According to this, therefore, *ens* is predicated of God alone essentially because in him [his] divine existence (*esse divinum*) is absolute subsisting existence (*esse subsistens et absolutum*). However, of every creature [*ens*] is predicated by participation, for no creature is its own existence (*suum esse*) but has existence (*habens esse*).¹¹

Aquinas begins here by making a linguistic point about predication and then moves on to its ontological ground. Light is predicated of an illuminated body by participation because it is something that receives light. If, however, there were a separate light (and this is one of William's favorite images of the Divine)¹² "light" would be predicated of it essentially for it would be pure light. This also calls to mind Aquinas' common example of whiteness being received into a subject such that there is a composition of the thing which is white (*id quod est*) and that by which (*quo est*) it is white. Yet, if there were a separate subsisting whiteness, it would be white essentially. In this passage, therefore, the predication of something by participation is grounded in the reception of an actuality by a subject. "*Ens*," then, is predicated of God essentially because he is *esse subsistens et absolutum*. But it is predicated of creatures by participation because no creature is its own *esse* but has *esse*. This, then, is the meaning of participating in being: having and receiving, but not being identical to one's own being. This is also a common teaching of Aquinas' for in *Summa Contra Gentiles* II.15 we find:

⁹ *Quodlibet* (*Quod*). II, q.2, a.1.

¹⁰ *De Ente et Essentia* (*De Ente*) IV: "Unde in commento none propositionis libri de causis dicitur quod intelligentia est habens formam et esse: et accipitur ibi forma pro ipsa quidditate vel natura simpliciter".

¹¹ *Quod*. II, q.2, a.1: "quod dupliciter aliquid de aliquo praedicatur: uno modo essentialiter, alio modo per participationem. Lux enim praedicatur de corpore illuminato participative; sed si esset aliqua lux separata, praedicaretur de ea essentialiter. Secundum ergo hoc dicendum est, quod ens praedicatur de solo Deo essentialiter, eo quod esse divinum est esse subsistens et absolutum; de qualibet autem creatura praedicatur per participationem: nulla enim creatura est suum esse, sed est habens esse".

¹² We find William using this metaphor in *De Trinitate* VII, *De Universo* Ia-Iae, 30, *De Universo* IIIa-Iae 26.

[A-3] What is said essentially (*per essentiam*) is the cause of all which is said by participation (*per participationem*), as fire is the cause of all things on fire insofar as they are on fire. God, however, is *ens per essentiam suam* because he is *ipsum esse*. Every other *ens* is an *ens per participationem*, because the being (*ens*) which is its own existence (*suum esse*) can only be one.¹³

Here Aquinas makes the same point as [A-2], namely that God is *ens per essentiam* because his essence is his *esse* while creatures are *ens per participationem* because their essences are not their *esse*. And again, like [A-2], Aquinas connects this metaphysics to predication such that the distinction of essence and existence is the ground of “*ens*” being predicated of something by participation. Take again, for instance, *Summa Theologiae* I, q.3, a.4 where we find:¹⁴

[A-4] That which has existence (*habet esse*) and is not [its own] existence, is an *ens per participationem*. God, however, is his essence, as was shown. If therefore he is not his own existence (*suum esse*), he will be an *ens per participationem* and not *per essentiam*. He will not, therefore, be the First Being (*primum ens*), which is absurd to say. God, therefore, is his own existence (*suum esse*).

Note for the third time the teaching that what has *esse* but is not its own *esse* is an *ens per participationem*. Dewan insightfully comments on this teaching that “of course, ‘*ens*’ includes *esse* in its meaning, so much so that an *ens* which is not its own *esse* is an *ens* by participation”.¹⁵ We, thus, see the coherence of [A-2] with other of Aquinas’ texts.

Turning now to William’s *De Trinitate* I, in the context of showing how *ens* and *esse* have many meanings (*intentiones*) and so do not have a single definition or ratio, he writes:

[W-1] For everything which is said of something is either essential (*essentiale*) to it or accidental (*accidentale*) that is, either it is the essence itself or of the essence as a part of the essence, or it is in every way beyond the essence (*praeter essentiam*) and this we call “accidental” and we say it is had or said by

¹³ *Summa Contra Gentiles* (SCG) II.15: “Quod per essentiam dicitur, est causa omnium quae per participationem dicuntur: sicut ignis est causa omnium ignitorum in quantum huiusmodi. Deus autem est ens per essentiam suam: quia est ipsum esse. Omne autem aliud ens est ens per participationem: quia ens quod sit suum esse non potest esse nisi unum ut in primo ostensum est”.

¹⁴ *STh.* Ia q. 3 a. 4 : “illud quod habet esse et non est esse, est ens per participationem. Deus autem est sua essentia, ut ostensum est. Si igitur non sit suum esse, erit ens per participationem, et non per essentiam. Non ergo erit primum ens, quod absurdum est dicere. Est igitur Deus suum esse”.

¹⁵ Lawrence Dewan, ‘St. Thomas and the Seed of Metaphysics’ in *Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 43.

participation (*secundum participationem*). *Ens*, therefore, is said of everything either substantially or by participation.¹⁶

This text makes Aquinas' exact point from [A-2]. For both William and Aquinas something can be predicated of another either essentially or by participation. When *ens* is predicate of something by participation, this is due to the fact the *esse* it has is *praeter essentiam* and in this sense it may be referred to, for William, as "accidental". Such a reality is not, as Aquinas says, its own *esse* (*suum esse*) but has *esse* (*habens esse*). William expands on this point in *De Universo Ila-Iae* 10 saying:¹⁷

[W-2] I say that *esse* is not said of the creator and other things according to one meaning, nor univocally (*univoce*), as white is said of the color and of the surface equivocally (*aequivoce*). For white is called a color essentially (*essentialiter*) and not by participation (*secundum participationem*). For it is not called "white" in having (*in habendo*) or by participating in whiteness (*participando albedinem*) but in being whiteness itself. But the surface or wall is white in the opposite way. So the creator is not called an *ens* by having (*in habendo*) *ipsum esse* but in being *ipsum suum esse* so that in every way what it is (*quod est*) and that by which it is (*quo est*) are understood to be the same in him. But in nothing else is it so, for in everything else (*in omni*) that which is is one thing (*aliud*), and that by which it is is another (*aliud*), and generally everything other than the creator is called an *ens secundum participationem*.

From these texts we see that both William and Aquinas explicitly hold that God is not something having being in the sense of having *esse* as something other than, or beyond, his essence. If this were not the case, and God just so happened to have being in a particular modality, then he would be a being by participation. In this regard Aquinas' (and William's) example of God as a separate light is insightful. A separate light would not be some illuminated thing that has light. Rather, it would just be pure light. Such a light would be the source of the illumination received by other things, but would not itself be in need of an illuminating source. Indeed, such a light would

¹⁶ *De Trinitate* I (Switalski 17-18): Omne enim quod de quocumque dicitur, aut essentiale eidem est, aut accidentale, hoc est, aut essentia ipsius aut de essentia, quae est pars essentiae, aut omnino praeter essentiam, et hoc est quod vocamus accidentale, quodque secundum participationem haberi et dici dicimus. Ens igitur unoquoque aut substantialiter aut participatione dicitur.

¹⁷ *De Universo Ila-Iae* 10 (*Opera Omnia* Vol. 1, 695): dico, quia esse de creatore, et rebus allis, non dicitur secundum unam intentionem, neque univoce, sicut album de colore, et de superficie aequivoce dicitur. Color enim dicitur albus essentialiter, et non secundum participationem. Non enim dicitur albus in habendo seu participando albedinem, sed in essendo ipsa albedo. Superficies vero alba, vel paries albus econtrario; sic creator non dicitur ens in habendo ipsum esse sed in essendo ipsum suum esse, ut per omnia idem intelligatur in eo quod est, et quo est. In nullo autem aliorem sic est, in omni namque alio aliud est, quod est, et aliud quo est, et secundum participationem generaliter omne aliud a creatore dicitur ens.

be nothing among the things that are illuminated. And so, again explicitly for both William and Aquinas, God is *suum esse*.¹⁸

Continuing with *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1, Aquinas then pivots to the notion of the good, to help explain the meaning of participating in being. As Aquinas writes,¹⁹

[A-5] God is called good essentially, because he is goodness itself. Creatures, however, are called good by participation because they have goodness (*habent bonitatem*). For everything, insofar as it is, is good according to Augustine in *De Doctrina Christiana* I, for insofar as we are, we are good. However, whenever something is predicated of another by participation, it is necessary that there is something beyond (*praeter*) that which is participated. Thus, in every creature the creature itself, which has existence (*habet esse*), is other (*aliud*) than the existence which it has (*ipsum esse eius*). This is what Boethius says in *De hebdomadibus*: that in everything, but the First, *esse* and *quod est* are other (*aliud*).

Just as God is *ens per essentiam* because his *esse* is his essence, He is also good essentially, while creatures are good by participation because they have goodness. The difference here is between merely having goodness (and by extension *esse*) and being goodness itself (and by extension being *ipsum suum esse*). Thus, whenever there is something predicated of another by participation, it is necessary that there is something beyond (*praeter*) that which is participated i.e. such a being is resolvable into what participates and what is participated. And so, in every creature, the creature itself is other (*aliud*) than the *esse* which it has. The implication is clearly that the creature is what participates and the *esse* is what is participated. Aquinas then connects this to Boethius's *De Hebdomadibus* such that in everything other than the First Being *esse* and *quod est* are other. This [A-4] text is, however, remarkably similar to William's *De Trinitate* I:²⁰

[W-3] Know that *ens* and *esse* have many meanings and they do not have one account or definition... They seem, however, to have meanings similar to those

¹⁸ Note that like Aquinas, William rejects the univocal predication of terms of God and creatures.

¹⁹ *Quod.* II, q.2, a.1: "Sic et Deus dicitur bonus essentialiter, quia est ipsa bonitas; creaturae autem dicuntur bonae per participationem, quia habent bonitatem: unumquodque enim, in quantum est, bonum est, secundum illud Augustini in I de doctrina Christiana, quod in quantum sumus, boni sumus. Quandocumque autem aliquid praedicatur de altero per participationem, oportet ibi aliquid esse praeter id quod participatur. Et ideo in qualibet creatura est aliud ipsa creatura quae habet esse, et ipsum esse eius; et hoc est quod Boetius dicit in Lib. de Hebdomad., quod in omni eo quod est citra primum, aliud est esse et quod est".

²⁰ *De Trinitate* I (Switalski 16-17): Scito, quod ens et esse multices habent intentiones et quod non est eis ratio vel definitio, sicut doceberis in sequentibus. Videntur autem similes habere intentiones eis, quas assignant ei, quod est bonum. Bonum namque dicunt, aut substantia, aut participatione, quemadmodum color albus substantia sive essentialiter dicitur eo, quod essentia eiusdem ipsa albedo sit, superficies vero alba dicitur participatione, in habendo scilicet sive participando albedinem, non in essendo albedo ipsa. Sic et bonum essentialiter dicitur eo, quod eius essentia ipsa bonitas est, qua dicitur bonum, aliud vero participatione, in habendo scilicet vel participando bonitatem, quae ipsa essentia participantis non est.

which they assign to the good. For good is said [of something] either by substance or by participation, just as color is said of white by substance or essentially (*essentialiter*) because its essence is whiteness itself, but a surface is called white by participation, in having (*in habendo*) or by participating in whiteness, not in being whiteness itself. And so good is said of something essentially because its essence is goodness itself by which it is called good or else by participation, in having or participating goodness, which is not the essence itself of the participating [thing].

Exactly like Aquinas in [A-5], William pivots to the notion of the good in order to help explain how something can be said to have being essentially or by participation. As such, Boethius figures prominently in the minds of both Parisian Masters. As in [W-2] we now again see William employ the distinction between the color white itself which is white essentially and the surface which merely has or participates in whiteness. God is good essentially because his essence is goodness itself, while everything other than God is good by participation, or in having (*in habendo*) goodness. This, indeed, is the exact point Aquinas makes in stating: “*creaturae autem dicuntur bonae per participationem, quia habent bonitatem*”. Continuing in *De Trinitate* I William writes:²¹

[W-4] In this way there is an *ens*, whose essence is for it *esse* and whose essence we predicate when we say ‘*est*’ so that it and its *esse*, which we designate when we say ‘*est*,’ are one thing in every way. Something else is called [an *ens*] by participation, in having (*in habendo*) something which is in no way one thing with the essence of the being itself, nor is it of the essence of the thing, indeed, it is beyond the account of the substance (*praeter rationem substantiae*) of the being itself.

We see here that there is something whose essence is its *esse* (*essentia est ei esse*) and that in it essence and *esse* are one in every way. In these passages, then, William is dealing with ontological composition since he holds that essence and *esse* are identical in God and distinct in everything else. A merely logical distinction between our concepts would be totally irrelevant in the context. This point is also seen clearly from [W-2]. Furthermore, William states in this text that *esse* is signified by the word “*est*”. This indicates for William a close connection between *esse* and the word “*est*” which answers the ‘is it’ question. This too is confirmed in *De Trinitate* II where, in giving a version of what is known to Aquinas scholars as the *intellectus essentiae* argument, William states that the *esse* “which is indicated by this word ‘*est*’ is beyond the

²¹ *De Trinitate* I (Switalski 17): Ad hunc modum et ens, cuius essentia est ei esse et cuius essentiam praedicamus, cum dicimus ‘*est*’, ita ut ipsum et eius esse, quod assignamus, cum dicimus ‘*est*’, sint res una per omnem modum. Aliud vero dicitur participatione, in habendo scilicet quoddam, quod nullo modo cum essentia ipsius entis est res una, sed neque de essentiali ipsius est, immo, omino praeter rationem substantiae ipsius entis.

definition (*rationem*) of each thing. For in no definition (*ratione*) is *esse* found, for whatever we imagine, whether it is a man, or an ass or something else, in its definition (*in ratione eius*) *esse* is not understood”.²² Thus, here in [W-4] William connects the word “*est*” which is the *est* of a true proposition and the answer to the “is it” question with the *esse* of a thing, such that the word “*est*” indicates real existence.²³ This, to my mind, pushes William very close to the position we will find Aquinas taking in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1, namely that the existence of a thing pertains to the “is it” question.²⁴ Immediately following [W-4] in *De Trinitate* I William writes:²⁵

[W-5] Concerning this you read in the *De hebdomadibus* of Boethius that every simple [thing] has *esse suum* and that which it is (*id quod est*) as one. Otherwise, the simple [thing] would be divisible (*partibile*) into that which it itself is and *esse suum* and this would be resolvable (*resolubile*) into what participates (*participans*) and what is participated (*participatum*) since the *ens* itself would be one thing (*aliud*) and its *esse* would be another. It would therefore be [composed of] what participates and what is participated as if conjoined from these two (*coniunctum ex illis duobus*) [principles], that is, the being itself would not be simple in the ultimate [degree].

William, now, just like Aquinas in [A-5] cites Boethius’ *De Hebdomadibus*. Aquinas and William, in fact, use Boethius to make the same point, but differently. Where Aquinas states “*quod in omni eo quod est citra primum, aliud est esse et quod est*”, William writes “*omne simplex, esse suum et id quod est, unum habet*”. The point is that, as we have already seen from *De Universo* IIa-Iae 10 [W-2], in God *quod est* and *esse* are the same while in everything else they are other. Otherwise, says William, that simple reality would not really be simple at all, but would be divisible (*partibile*) into *id quod est* and *esse suum* and would be resolvable into what participates and what is participated

²² *De Trinitate* II (Switalski 21).

²³ This is confirmed again in *De Universo* IIIa Iae 26 (*Opera Omnia* Vol.1, 794): *sicut declaratum est tibi in prima parte totius sapientialis, ac divinalis magisterii, esse quod praedicatur per hoc verbum est, hoc est, esse, quo unumquodque est, hoc inquam est, de unoquoque aliorum dicitur accidentaliter, sive secundum participatione. This text is explicitly referring back to De Trinitate II.*

²⁴ As Dewan writes, “Thomas several times famously distinguishes between essence and the act of being of creatures by means of the fact that one can know what something is and not know whether it is.... Such a procedure strongly suggests that the act of being provides the answer to the question ‘is it.’” I would simply add that this is not simply the procedure of Aquinas, but also of William. Dewan, ‘Which *Esse* Gives the Answer to the Question: “Is It?” for St. Thomas,’ 90. See also Gregory Doolan, ‘Aquinas on Answering the “Is It?” Question about Singulars: What the “Is” Signifies in the Proposition “Socrates is”,’ *Acta Philosophica* Vol. 34 (2025), 27-48.

²⁵ *De Trinitate* I (Switalski 17): *De hoc ergo legis in libro De Hebdomadibus Boethii, quoniam ‘omne simplex, esse suum et id quod est, unum habet.’ Alioquin simplex ipsum partibile esset in id, quod ipsum est, et esse suum, et hoc ipsum ens resolubile esset in participans et participatum, cum aliud esset ens ipsum, aliud eius esse. Essent igitur participans et participatum quasi coniunctum ex illis duobus, hoc est, ipsum ens non esset simplex in ultimo.*

since the being itself would be other than its *esse*. The implication then, just like Aquinas' [A-5], is that *id quod est* or essence is that which participates and *esse* is that which is participated. Then again making clear that this is an ontological composition, William states that such a being would not be simple in the ultimate degree but would be composed from these two principles (*coniunctum ex illis duobus*).²⁶

What all this means is that *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 and *De Trinitate* I follow the same methodology. Both authors 1) distinguish the meaning of *ens* said of something by participation or essentially by first making a point about predication and then moving on to its ontological ground, 2) they both then pivot to the notion of the good to help make this point and 3) both authors then employ Boethius' dictum that in everything other than the First Cause *id quod est* and *esse* differ. As such there is here a common synthesis taking the Avicennian metaphysics of essence and existence and explicating it in the Boethian language of participation and the difference of *id quod est* and *esse*.²⁷

In *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 Aquinas, however, goes beyond William by distinguishing two ways in which something can be participated. Immediately following [A-5] we find:

[A-6] It must be known that something is participated in two ways. In one way as existing of the substance of the participating thing (*substantia participantis*), as a genus is participated by a species. In this way, however, *esse* is not participated by a creature, for the substance of a thing is what falls in its definition. *Ens*, however, is not put in the definition of a creature because it is not a genus or a difference. Whence [*esse*] is participated not as something [belonging to] the essence of the thing. Whence the question "is it?" (*an est*) is other than [the question] "what is it?" (*quid est*). And since everything which is beyond the essence of a thing (*praeter essentiam rei*) may be called an accident (*accidens*), the *esse* which pertains to the question '*an est*' is an accident. Thus, the Commentator says in *Metaphysics* V that the proposition '*Socrates est*' is predicated accidentally insofar as it imports the being of a thing (*entitatem rei*) or the truth of a proposition.²⁸

²⁶ For another text that indicates the real distinction of essence and *esse* in William and is of central importance for Caster see: *De Trinitate* VII, (Switalski, 43-44): "Quoniam autem ens possibile non est ens per essentiam, tum ipsum et eius esse, quod non est ei per essentiam, duo sunt revera, et alterum accidit alteri, nec cadit in rationem vel quidditatem ipsius. Ens igitur, secundum hunc modum, compositum est et resolubile in suam possibilitatem sive quidditatem et suum esse. Ex quo manifestum est ipsum esse causatum ab educante possibilitatem eius in effectum essendi, et a coniungente ipsum esse cum possibilitatem ipsius".

²⁷ Nor am I the first to make this point, see the introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas, *An Exposition of the "On the Hebdomads" of Boethius*, trans. Janice L. Schults and Edward A. Synan (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), xxvi-xxvii.

²⁸ *Quod.* II, q.2, a.1: "Sed sciendum est, quod aliquid participatur dupliciter. Uno modo quasi existens de substantia participantis, sicut genus participatur a specie. Hoc autem modo esse non participatur a creatura. Id enim est de substantia rei quod cadit in eius definitione. Ens autem non ponitur in definitione creaturae, quia nec est genus nec differentia. Unde participatur sicut aliquid non existens de essentia rei; et ideo alia quaestio est an est et quid est. Unde, cum omne quod est praeter essentiam rei, dicatur accidens; esse quod

First, this passage recalls two of the three apparently different kinds of participation Aquinas refers to in his *Commentary on the De Hebdomadibus*. There Aquinas writes:²⁹

[A-7] To participate is as if to take a part. Thus, when something receives in a particular manner that which pertains to another in a universal manner it is said to participate, as man is said to participate animal because it does not have the *rationem* of animal according to its total commonality and for the same reason Socrates participates man. Similarly, [in a second way] a subject participates in its accident, and matter participates in its form because a substantial or accidental form, which of its nature is common, is determined to this or that subject.

In both [A-6] and [A-7], the first kind of participation occurs when the *participatum* is contained within the definition or intelligible structure (*ratio*) of the participator. Aquinas' examples are telling. In [A-6] he gives the example of how a genus is participated by the species and in [A-7] how man participates animal or Socrates participates man. This is what Wippel has termed a "logical participation" since it entails no real composition of man and animal or of Socrates and man.³⁰ Rather, animal is precisely what man is and man is precisely what Socrates is. And so, what is participated pertains to, or is contained within, the substance of the participant.

As Wippel also observes, the second kind of participation in [A-7] "clearly" involves "real composition between a participant and a participated perfection".³¹ According to [A-6], in the second kind of participation the participated perfection is not of the essence of the thing. In [A-7], as examples, Aquinas lists how matter participates form, and a subject participates in an accident. The key features here are, I believe, that what is participated is beyond the *ratio* of the participator and relates to it as act to potency. As such, real ontological composition is required. And insofar as the participated perfection is *praeter essentiam*, Aquinas observes, it may be called an accident. To help illustrate how this is the case, a given form, for example, is not contained within the "ratio" of primary matter. Thus, it is accidental (in this loose

pertinet ad quaestionem an est, est accidens. Et ideo Commentator dicit in V Metaphysice quod ista propositio, 'Sortes est,' est de accidentali praedicato, secundum quod importat entitatem rei, vel veritatem propositionis".

²⁹ *Expositio Libri De Hebdomadibus (In De Hebd.)* II: "Est autem participare quasi partem capere; et ideo quando aliquid particulariter recipit id quod ad alterum pertinet, universaliter dicitur participare illud; sicut homo dicitur participare animal, quia non habet rationem animalis secundum totam communitatem; et eadem ratione Socrates participat hominem; similiter etiam subiectum participat accidens, et materia formam, quia forma substantialis vel accidentalis, quae de sui ratione communis est, determinatur ad hoc vel ad illud subiectum". The two kinds of participation here are also different from the way in which something may be said to participate in its cause. See Gregory Doolan, 'Aquinas on *esse subsistens* and the Third Mode of Participation,' *The Thomist* Vol.82, no. 4 (Oct 2018), 611-642.

³⁰ John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 127.

³¹ Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 127.

sense of the word) for any given parcel of primary matter considered absolutely to be informed by this or that substantial form (even though primary matter can never exist without being informed by some substantial form). To put the matter another way, the primary matter in question can, but need not, have this or that particular form.

Commenting on the second kind of participation mentioned in the *Commentary on the De Hebdomadibus* II [A-7] text, Wippel cautions that “one should not place Thomas’s account of the participation of beings in *esse* under this member of Thomas’s division”.³² Wippel’s interpretation is, however, slightly mistaken for two reasons. First, it has, I think, been refuted by Daniel De Haan.³³ Secondly, in the parallel *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 text [A-6], Aquinas clearly means to include participation in *esse* in the second kind of participation mentioned there. Indeed, in the later text there is nowhere else to put it. Oddly, Wippel seems to note that *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 [A-6] parallels the discussion in the *Commentary on the De Hebdomadibus*, but he does not allow the *Quodlibet* text to help condition his interpretation as to which mode of participation the ens-esse composition belongs.³⁴ Participation in *esse*, on my reading, applies to this second kind of participation (even though the ens-esse composition is quite different from that of matter and form or subject and accident, as we shall see) insofar as 1) *esse* relates to essence as act to potency and therefore 2) *esse* is not contained within the essence (ratio) of any creature but is received as something *praeter essentiam*.

As Wippel has rightly noted, however, in regarding *esse* as an *accidens* Aquinas “does not mean by this that *esse* (the act of being) is a predicamental accident, but only that it is not part of the essence of any creature”.³⁵ In this limited sense, Aquinas seems perfectly happy to call *esse* an *accidens*. And in this respect, I see no meaningful difference between the teachings of William’s [W-1] and Aquinas’ [A-6] on the accidentality of *esse* in creatures. Rather, both Masters just mean that *esse* is not part of the essence of creatures, but is *praeter essentiam*. Furthermore, even though Aquinas takes issue with Avicenna for regarding *esse* as an accident superadded to essence,³⁶ this loose sense in which *esse* may be called an accident is repeated in *Quodlibet* XII.4 and is implied in *Summa Contra Gentiles* I.22, on both occasions under the authority of

³² Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 128.

³³ Daniel De Haan, ‘Aquinas on Actus Essendi and The Second Mode of Participation,’ *The Thomist* 82, no. 4 (2018), 573-609.

³⁴ Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 105.

³⁵ Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 106.

³⁶ Aquinas, *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis exposition*, IV, lectio 2, no.46, ed. M.R. Cathala and R. Spiazzi (Turin-Rome, 1950): “Sciendum est autem quod circa hoc Avicenna aliud sensit. Dixit enim quod unum et ens non significant substantiam rei, sed significant aliquid additum. Et de ente quidem hoc dicebat, quia in qualibet re quae habet esse ab alio, aliud est esse rei, et substantia sive essentia eius: hoc autem nomen ens, significat ipsum esse. Significat igitur (ut videtur) aliquid additum essentiae.... Sed in primo quidem non videtur dixisse recte. Esse enim rei quamvis sit aliud ab eius essentia, non tamen est intelligendum quod sit aliquod superadditum ad modum accidentis, sed quasi constituitur per principia essentiae. Et ideo hoc nomen ens quod imponitur ab ipso esse, significat idem cum nomine quod imponitur ab ipsa essential”.

Hilary of Poitiers. In *Quodlibet* XII, q.4, a.1 speaking of *esse*, and having criticized what he takes to be the position of Avicenna, we find that:

[A-8] properly speaking, it is not an *accidens*. And Hilary says, I call that an *accidens* in a loose [manner of speaking] all that is not part of the essence. And so *esse* [is an accident] in created things because only in God is *esse* his essence.³⁷

Thus, properly speaking *esse* is not an accident. But on the authority of Hilary, in a loose manner of speaking *esse* is called an accident because it is not part of the essence of a creature. Obviously, there is no substantial difference between this text and the *praeter essentiam* of [A-6] in *Quodlibet* II q.2, a.1. Note *Summa Contra Gentiles* I.22 as well:

[A-9] For Hilary says in the book on the *Trinity*, *esse* is not an *accidens* in God, but is subsisting truth.³⁸

The implication is that in some sense *esse* is an accident in creatures. Thus, when these parallel texts are taken into consideration, Aquinas calling *esse* an accident in [A-6] is unproblematic. Aquinas, however, then goes on in [A-6] stating that the *esse* that pertains to the question “an est” is an *accidens*. Thus, “Socrates is” is an accidental predication insofar as it signifies (*importat*) the being of a thing (*entitatem rei*) or the truth of a proposition (*veritatem propositionis*).

At this point a few comments are required. First, given the context (both proceeding and following) the phrase *entitatem rei* refers to existence or the act of being.³⁹ This language is a little strange for Aquinas since he normally uses the word *esse* and has already used the word *esse* several times in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1. Yet, it is not unheard of for Aquinas to use the word *entitas* as it is found in the *Commentary on the Sentences* and there seems synonymous with *esse*, although in *Summa Theologiae* I, q.48, a.2 ad 2 it appears to mean essence.⁴⁰ Interestingly, William also uses the word

³⁷ *Quod.* XII, q.4, a.1: “sic proprie loquendo, non est accidens. Et quod Hilarius dicit, dico quod accidens dicitur large omne quod non est pars essentiae; et sic est esse in rebus creatis, quia in solo Deo esse est eius essential”.

³⁸ SCG I.22: “Ait namque Hilarius, in libro de Trin.: esse non est accidens Deo, sed subsistens veritas”.

³⁹ Nevitt and Davies translate this passage thus: “‘Socrates exists’ [is] an accidental predication insofar as it indicates the existence of a thing or the truth of a proposition”. Aquinas, *Thomas Aquinas’s Quodlibetal Questions*, 223. Also see Owens, ‘The Accidentality and Essential Character of Being in the Doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas’, 18.

⁴⁰ *Scriptum Super Sententiis (In Sent.)* II d.1, q.1, a.1, (Mandonnet.2.12-13): “Aliter apparet ex ipsa rerum natura. Invenitur enim in omnibus rebus natura entitatis, in quibusdam magis nobilis, et in quibusdam minus; ita tamen quod ipsarum rerum naturae non sunt hoc ipsum esse quod habent: alias esse esset de intellectu cujuslibet quidditatis, quod falsum est, cum quidditas cujuslibet rei possit intelligi etiam non intelligendo de ea an sit. Ergo oportet quod ab aliquo esse habeant, et oportet devenire ad aliquid cujus natura sit ipsum suum esse; alias in infinitum procederetur, et hoc est quod dat esse omnibus, nec potest esse nisi unum, cum natura entitatis sit unius rationis in omnibus secundum analogiam; unitas enim causati requirit unitatem in causa per se; et haec est via Avicennae, 8 *Metaphysicorum*. *STh* I, q.48, a.2, ad 2 : sicut dicitur in V *Metaphys.*,

entitas synonymously with *esse*, and in contrast to essence. For instance, William writes in *De Universo* IIa-IIae, 8 (at text concerned with the ontological composition of angels): “in everything other [than the First], the being (*ens*) itself is other (*aliud*) than its *esse* or *entitas*”.⁴¹ Aquinas’ rare use of the word *entitas* in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 is, therefore, perhaps suggestive of an Auvergnian influence.

Secondly, it is the statement that the *esse* which pertains to the “is it” question is the act of being – the real existence of the creature and not the *esse* of a true proposition – that draws the suspicion of Dewan. Dewan notes several texts all of which leave “us quite unprepared for... *Quodlibet* 2.2.1”.⁴² Let us examine *Sentences* II, d.34, q.1, a.1, as Dewan does, as it is perhaps the clearest text to compare to *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 [A-6]:⁴³

[A-10] The philosopher showed that *ens* is said in many ways. In one way *ens* is called that which is divided into the ten genera, and this way *ens* signifies something existing in nature, either it is a substance as man, or an accident as color. In another way, *ens* is called that which signifies the truth of a proposition.... *Ens, however, is predicated differently according to either of these ways because taken in the first way it is a substantial predicate and pertains to the question ‘quid est.’ But according to the second mode it is an accidental predicate, as the Commentator says, and pertains to the question ‘an est’.*

In this text we see that *ens* signifies a quiddity belonging to one of the ten categories and insofar as it pertains to the question “quid est” is a substantial predicate. As it pertains to the question “an est” it is an accidental predicate and this is the being which signifies a true proposition. There is no reference here to the act of being corresponding to the “is it” question, just the *ens* which signifies the truth of a proposition. Nevertheless, it is not as though being in the sense of a true proposition is missing from *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 [A-6]. Rather, as Aquinas explicitly says, the being which pertains to the “is it” question is an accidental predication insofar as it *importat entitatem rei* or the *veritatem propositionis*. Thus, Aquinas is going beyond the *Commentary on the Sentences* II, d.34, q.1, a.1 text, but I hardly see [A-6] as a definitive

ens dupliciter dicitur. Uno modo, secundum quod significat entitatem rei, prout dividitur per decem praedicamenta, et sic convertitur cum re”.

⁴¹ See [W-7] below.

⁴² Dewan, ‘Which *Esse* Gives the Answer to the Question: “Is It?” for St. Thomas,’ 82.

⁴³ *In Sent.* II d.34, q.1, a.1, (Mandonnet.2.872): “quod Philosophus ostendit quod *ens* multipliciter dicitur. Uno enim modo dicitur *ens* quod per decem genera dividitur: et sic *ens* significat aliquid in natura existens; sive sit substantia, ut homo; sive accidens, ut color. Alio modo dicitur *ens*, quod significat veritatem propositionis.... *Ens autem secundum utrumque istorum modorum diversimode praedicatur: quia secundum primum modum acceptum, est praedicatum substantiale, et pertinet ad quaestionem quid est: sed quantum ad secundum modum, est praedicatum accidentale, ut Commentator ibidem dicit, et pertinet ad quaestionem an est*”. My italics.

break with the earlier texts.⁴⁴ Furthermore, there are other texts not observed by Dewan that certainly point to *esse* as grounding predication and so might be said to pertain to the “is it” question. And so, while the answer to the “is it” question might be said to be the *esse* of a true proposition this is, in turn, grounded in the *esse* of the thing. Observe how this element of predication is preserved in *Compendium Theologiae* I.11:⁴⁵

[A-11] In whatever thing its essence is other than its *esse*, it is necessary that which is (*quod sit*) is other than that by which (*quo*) it is. For through its existence (*esse suum*) we say of a thing that it is and by its essence we say what it is.

Or note *Summa Contra Gentiles* I.22:⁴⁶

[A-12] Every thing is through this, namely that it has *esse*.

Esse, as Aquinas and William say so often, is that by which something exists. Thus, the answer to the “is it” question must ultimately be grounded in the *esse* of a thing. Being in the sense of a true proposition is to say of what is that it is, but Socrates only is through having an *esse* which is other than his essence. [A-11] captures this well insofar as it states that through its *esse* a thing is *said* to be. And as we saw in [W-4] William also closely connects the *esse* of a thing with the word “est”. With these considerations in mind couple with the fact that Aquinas is not even excluding the truth of the proposition from [A-6], *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 appears consistent with Aquinas’ general principles. Importantly, in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 Aquinas also retains the sense found in *Commentary on the Sentences* II, d.34, q.1, a.1 that *ens* is also in a way an essential predicate. Immediately continuing on in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 Aquinas writes:⁴⁷

[A-13] But it is true that this name *ens*, according as it signifies the thing to which it belongs to have *esse*, signifies the essence of a thing and is divided by the ten genera. Nevertheless, not univocally because *esse* does not belong to all things

⁴⁴ Dewan even notes other text were the act of being seems to answer the “is it?” question. Dewan, ‘Which *Esse* Gives the Answer to the Question: “Is It?”’ for St. Thomas,’ 89-92. Note especially *De Spiritualibus Creaturis* (*De Spir. Create.*) VIII ad.3.

⁴⁵ *Compendium Theologiae* (*Comp. Theol.*): “In quocumque enim aliud est essentia, et aliud esse eius, oportet quod aliud sit quod sit, et aliud quo aliquid sit: nam per esse suum de quolibet dicitur quod est, per essentiam vero suam de quolibet dicitur quid sit”.

⁴⁶ SCG I.22: “Omnis res est per hoc quod habet esse”.

⁴⁷ *Quod.* II, q.2, a.1: “Sed verum est quod hoc nomen ens, secundum quod importat rem cui competit huiusmodi esse, sic significat essentiam rei, et dividitur per decem genera; non tamen univoce, quia non eodem ratione competit omnibus esse; sed substantiae quidem per se, aliis autem aliter. Si ergo in Angelo est compositio sicut ex essentia et esse, non tamen est compositio sicut ex partibus substantiae, sed sicut ex substantia et eo quod adhaeret substantiae”.

according to the same *ratione*, but to substance per se and to other things differently. If, therefore, there is in an angel a composition of essence and *esse*, it is nevertheless not a composition as from parts of substance but from substance and that which adheres to substance.

If the phrase *entitatem rei* in [A-6] meant the essence of a thing, then given [A-13], Aquinas would clearly be contradicting himself. Rather, *ens* insofar as it imports or signifies the *esse* of a thing, as Dewan noted, is said of a creature by participation and God alone essentially. However, when *ens* imports (or signifies) *a thing* to which *esse* belongs in some modality, then it signifies the essence of a thing and, in this sense, it is divided by the ten categories.⁴⁸ In this way *ens* and *res* are transcendental “properties” of everything that is, such that, if something is a *res* it is an *ens* and if it is an *ens* it is a *res*. As Nathaniel Taylor’s recent Marquette dissertation has put the matter, this can be called the categories sense of being per se. Yet, substance is that to which it belongs to exist, such that when it exists, it exists not in another. In this sense substance is said to be an *ens per se*, while accidents are in another (*ens in alio*).⁴⁹ This is, as the same dissertation has put the matter, the substance sense of being per se. There are then, for Aquinas, different connotations to *ens*. All the categories, insofar as they are kinds of quiddities, are in a sense *ens per se*. In another sense, substance can be said to be an *ens per se* since it exists not in another. And because his essence is his *esse*, God is *ens per essentiam* while all other things are *ens per participationem*. In sum, all three of these different senses of *ens* – the God sense of *ens per essentiam* (A-2), the categories sense of *ens per se* (A-13) and the substance sense of *ens per se* (A-13) – are present in *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1. Thus, when the text is read carefully, it is quite consistent with Aquinas’ general metaphysical commitments even if, as Dewan rightly notes, the reference to Averroes is a bit different from the same reference in the *Commentary on the Sentences*.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ For one of the key texts on the signification of “*ens*” see *Expositio Libri Periermeneias (In Peri Herm.)* I.5: “*ens nihil est aliud quam quod est. Et sic videtur et rem significare, per hoc quod dico quod et esse, per hoc quod dico est. Et si quidem haec dictio ens significaret esse principaliter, sicut significat rem quae habet esse, procul dubio significaret aliquid esse. Sed ipsam compositionem, quae importatur in hoc quod dico est, non principaliter significat, sed consignificat eam in quantum significat rem habentem esse*”. I would suggest then that insofar as *ens* principally signifies essence – or *the thing* which has *esse* – then in this sense *ens* is an essential predicate and so every being is an *ens per se*. However, if we focus in on the *esse* which *ens* consignifies, then since no creature is its *esse* it is also an *ens per participationem*. See *De Ente* I: “*ens per se dicitur dupliciter, uno modo quod dividitur per decem genera, alio modo quod significat propositionum veritatem*”.

⁴⁹ Nathaniel Taylor, *The Categories Argument for the Real Distinction Between Being The Categories Argument for the Real Distinction Between Being and Essence: Avicenna, Aquinas, and Their Greek Sources*, (PhD diss., Marquette University, 2023), 16.

⁵⁰ Dewan seems right to note that “Averroes is certainly not well represented by Thomas” here. Dewan, ‘Which *Esse* Gives the Answer to the Question: “Is It?” for St. Thomas,’ 89, note. 26.

2. Objections

One of the most interesting and metaphysically significant features of [A-13], is how Aquinas concludes the passage. Concluding [A-13] Aquinas states that the composition in an angel of essence and existence is not a composition *ex partibus substantiae*, but “*ex substantia et eo quod adhaeret substantiae*”. Thus, substance itself is on one side of this distinction and *esse* is on the other.⁵¹ Dewan too has noted Aquinas’ teaching in the present text and, while commenting upon it, states that “properly speaking, by ‘the creature’ is meant the subsisting thing, *not a merely inherent item*: it is the subsisting thing which ‘has esse.’”⁵²

The nature of this peculiar composition is clarified in the responses to the two objections. The first objection states that the essence of an angel is the angel itself for the quiddity of a simple thing is the simple thing itself (*quidditas simplicis est ipsum simplex*). If, however, an angel is composed of essence and existence, then it would be composed of itself and another (*ex seipso et alio*) and this is incoherent. What is also noteworthy about this objection is that the statement *quidditas simplicis est ipsum simplex* is an Avicennian quotation that Aquinas repeats in a number of contexts.⁵³ The objection is thus appealing to a principle Aquinas himself accepts. To this objection Aquinas writes:⁵⁴

[A-14] sometimes from those things which are simultaneously conjoined there results a third thing (*res tertia*), as humanity is constituted from soul and body, which is man. Whence man is composed from soul and body. Other times, however, from those things that are simultaneously conjoined a third thing (*res tertia*) does not result but there results a certain composite ratio, as the ratio of white man is resolved into the *rationem* of man and the *rationem* of white. And

⁵¹ In SCG II.53 we again see that the substance itself is on one side of this distinction and *esse* is on the other as the very actuality of the substance: “In substantia autem intellectuali creata inveniuntur duo: scilicet substantia ipsa; et esse eius, quod non est ipsa substantia, ut ostensum est. Ipsum autem esse est complementum substantiae existentis: unumquodque enim actu est per hoc quod esse habet”. Also observe: *Quod. II*, q.2, a.2, ad 2: “ipsum esse non sit de ratione suppositi, quia tamen pertinet ad suppositum”.

⁵² Lawrence Dewan, ‘The Distinction of Form and Esse in Caused Things’ in *Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), 191, no.12. My italics.

⁵³ Avicenna, *Liber De Philosophia Prima Sive Scientia Divina* V-X, V.5 Édition critique de la traduction latine médiévale, par S. VAN RIET (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), 274: “Quidditas autem omnis simplicis est ipsummet simplex: nihil enim est ibi receptibile suae quidditatis”. *De Ente* III: “Unde Avicenna dicit quod quidditas simplicis est ipsummet simplex, quia non est aliquid aliud recipiens ipsam”. See also *De Potentia* (*De Pot.*) q. IX, a.1 (Parma.8.177): “Et hoc patet per philosophum et per Avicennam, qui dicit, in sua metaphysica, quod quidditas simplicis est ipsum simplex”.

⁵⁴ *Quod. II*, q.2, a.1, ad.1: “Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod aliquando ex his quae simul iunguntur, relinquatur aliqua res tertia, sicuti ex anima et corpore constituitur humanitas, quae est homo, unde homo componitur ex anima et corpore. Aliquando autem ex his quae simul iunguntur, non resultat res tertia, sed resultat quaedam ratio composita, sicut ratio hominis albi resolvitur in rationem hominis et in rationem albi; et in talibus aliquid componitur ex seipso et alio, sicut album componitur ex eo quod est album et ex albedine”.

in such a case something is composed of itself and another, as a white thing is composed from that which is white and from whiteness.

What makes this response interesting is how it seems to agree with the objector. Indeed, after a clarification about composition Aquinas seems to merely deny the objector's conclusion: that such a composition is incoherent. Crucially, in this response Aquinas contrasts the essence-esse composition with that of body and soul, and therefore of matter and form. Whereas soul and body come together to constitute a *res tertia*, the essence-esse composition is *ex seipso et alio*. In making this point Aquinas employs the man-whiteness composition as a better illustration for thinking about the essence-esse composition (as William has done and, as we shall see, will do again).

But what exactly does Aquinas mean by stating that essence and *esse* do not constitute a *res tertia*? Insofar, as *esse* is not a part of a substance, and given Aquinas' man-whiteness example, this ties in well with the loose sense in which it may be called an accident. And yet, in his next response, Aquinas makes a point about how existence is unlike categorical accidents. As the response to the second objection indicates, existence is too fundamental to merely be regarded as one more part among others, or one more actuality among others. Rather it is the actuality of all the other actualities. The second objection holds that no accident falls within the substantial composition of a substance. Yet, states the objector, the *esse* of an angel is an *accidens* for, according to Hilary, in God *esse* is not an accident but subsisting truth (*non sit accidens ei, sed subsistens veritas*). Thus, an angel is not substantially composed of essence and existence (*essentialiter compositus ex essentia et esse*). As we have seen, Aquinas has already called *esse* an *accidens* and cites Hilary on this exact point in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and *Quodlibet* XII. q.4, a.1. And so, like the first objection, this one also appeals to a principle that Aquinas accepts. In his response to this objection, while affirming the loose sense in which *esse* is an accident, Aquinas shows his deeper understanding of *esse*. There he writes:

[A-15] *esse* is an *accidens*, not as if accidentally related (*per accidens se habens*) [to the substance], but as the actuality (*actualitas*) of whatever substance. Whence God himself, who is his own *actualitas*, is *suum esse*.⁵⁵

Here *esse* is an accident, but not as though it were related merely accidentally to the substance whose existence it is. Rather, it is the actuality of the substance itself and in this sense is far more fundamental than a categorical accident.⁵⁶ It is not as though

⁵⁵ *Quod.* II, q.2, a.1, ad. 2: "Ad secundum dicendum, quod esse est accidens, non quasi per accidens se habens, sed quasi actualitas cuiuslibet substantiae; unde ipse Deus, qui est sua actualitas, est suum esse".

⁵⁶ Eric Perl captures the radicalness of this distinction quite well saying, "a thing's existence is not properly an accident because existence is always already presupposed in any essence or accident.... existence is thus not merely an additional actuality, alongside of or superadded to the forms (substantial and accidental) of the thing". Rather, "existence... is what is most fundamental about all things, more fundamental than what

there is first the substance, then its existence and then there is an accidental relation between the two. This would be to reify *esse*. On the contrary, existence is the actuality, the is-ing-ness or manifestation of the being. Thus, while there is a distinction between form and *esse* in all creatures, for Aquinas, as Dewan has so often noted, they are also intimately connected. Nowhere is this intimate connection displayed more subtly than in *Summa Contra Gentiles* II.54:

[A-16] Form is not *esse* itself, but there is a certain order between them. For form is compared to its *esse* as light to shining or whiteness to being white.⁵⁷

Esse is often compared to light in Aquinas works, but here it is the form which is like the light and *esse* is like the *shining* of the light. Viewed in this way, the distinction almost defies detection. And so, while the distinction between a thing and its *esse* is real, it is also quite subtle. It is as subtle as light and the shining fourth of the light, between the thing itself and its act. Or to put the matter another way, it is a distinction between the thing itself and the is-ing-ness of the thing: an is-ing-ness (*entitas*) which the thing's essence cannot account for.

How does all of this stand with William? As we have seen, William understands *esse* as that by which (*quo est*) a thing is and as accidental to a creature insofar as it is not a creature's essence or part of its essence. Like Aquinas, William also distinguishes the essence-*esse* composition from the matter-form composition and like Aquinas' [A-14] uses the man-whiteness example as the best model for thinking about the essence-*esse* composition. Here the key text comes from *De Universo* IIa-IIae 8 where William is also discussing composition in angels and, like Aquinas, denies that they are composed of matter and form:

[W-7] In everything other [than the First], the *ens* itself is other than its *esse* or *entitas*. And this is the understanding of the wise man [Boethius]... Every other *ens* is in a certain way composed of that which is (*quod est*) and that by which it is (*quo est*), whether its *esse* or its *entitas*, as a white thing is white from [the composition of] the subject and whiteness. But this conjunction of the white thing and whiteness is not a composition in the true sense of the word, or a proper composition (*propria composition*) namely through which another new thing is constituted (*aliud novum constituatur*), since it is clear to you from what has been elsewhere, which you learned concerning the white thing, that it is

they are, because without existence there is no whatness, no actuality, no being at all". Eric Perl, *Thinking Being: Introduction to Metaphysics in the Classical Tradition* (Boston: Brill, 2014), 155. Caster, "William of Auvergne and St. Thomas Aquinas on the Real Distinction between Being and Essence," 79: "Although being is the most fundamental actuality of a thing and is necessary to make the essence a reality, it is nevertheless accidental. Being is an accident in the teaching of St. Thomas because it is outside the essence. That which is not a part of the essence or is outside of it is an accident in the wise sense of the term".

⁵⁷ SCG II.54: "nec forma est ipsum esse, sed se habent secundum ordinem: comparatur enim forma ad ipsum esse sicut lux ad lucere, vel albedo ad album esse".

impossible for something to be or to be made out of substance and accident. For an accident does not come to substance so as to constitute something new (*constituendum novum aliquid*) but rather to order, decorate, and perfect with extrinsic perfections the substance to which it comes. Therefore, that talk of this wise man's [about composition] should not confuse you, as if you were forced to believe that every substance, whether spiritual or corporeal, is composed of matter and form. But you ought to attend carefully to the example of the white thing and whiteness that I have laid down for you. For it is a most appropriate example for what was treated, namely created being (*ente creato*) and *entitate*, and this is because *esse* or *entitas* occurs (*accidit*) to each thing and comes to it beyond its complete substance and *rationem* (*praeter completam ejus substantiam, et rationem*), except for the first principle, to whom it is alone essential and one in an ultimate unity.⁵⁸

For William, as was said above, there is no hylomorphic composition in angels. Yet, they are not as simple as the First Cause because in everything other than God there is a composition of *quod est* and *quo est* or *esse*. William, then, pushes the essence-*esse* composition away from the matter-form composition since angels are not composed of matter and form and employs the man-whiteness model – very similarly to what Aquinas had done in [A-14]. William states that the man-whiteness composition is the most appropriate model for thinking about the essence-*esse* composition and states that the substance-accident composition, apparently unlike the matter-form composition, does not *constituendum novum aliquid*. This seems to anticipate Aquinas' statement in [A-14] that essence and *esse* do not constitute a *res tertia*. William's language is perhaps more awkward than Aquinas' but his following statement that *esse* or *entitas* occurs to everything *praeter completam ejus substantiam, et rationem* seems to clarify his meaning. This latter statement is rather evocative of Aquinas' statement that the composition of essence and *esse* is "*ex substantia et eo quod adhaeret substantiae*". Aquinas, I think it fair to say, has greater precision and clarity of language, but his text is clearly reminiscent of William insofar as, for both authors, the complete substance is on one side of this distinction and *esse* is on the other.

⁵⁸ *De universo* IIa-IIae 8 (*Opera Omnia* Vol.1, 852): In omni igitur alio est aliud ipsum ens aliud ejus esse, seu entitas. Et iste est intellectus sapientis illius de hoc et hoc. Et omne aliud ens est quodammodo compositum ex eo, quod est, et ex eo, quo est, sive esse suo, sive entitate sua, quemadmodum album est album ex subjecto, et albedine. Haec autem conjunctio albi, et albedinis, non est veri nominis, et propria compositio, videlicet per quam aliud novum constituatur, cum manifestum tibi sit ex aliis, quae alibi didicisti, impossibile esse ex substantia, et accidente aliquid esse, vel fieri. Accidens enim non advenit substantiae ad constituendum novum aliquid, sed magis ad ordinandam, decorandam et perficiendam perfectionibus forinsecis ipsam, cui advenit, substantiam. Non debet igitur conturbare te sermo iste sapientis illius de hoc, et de hoc, tamquam per ipsum cogaris confiteri omnem substantiam compositam esse ex materia, et forma, sive spiritualis sit illa, sive corporalis. Sollicite autem attendere debes exemplum, quod posui tibi de albo, et albedine. Convenientissimum enim est ad id, de quo agebatur videlicet de ente creato, et entitate, et hoc, quoniam esse, sive entitas unicuique accidit, et advenit praeter completam ejus substantiam, et rationem, praeterquam primo principio, cui soli essentiale est, et unum cum eo in ultimitate unitatis.

With these considerations, I am suggesting that William is certainly moving in the direction of how Aquinas will come to understand the nature of *esse* and that the Dominican may very well be following the teachings of the Bishop. This is strengthened by the fact that in *De Universo* IIa-Iae 11, William also understands the *esse* of a creature as its *actus essendi* and the very *actualitas* of the essence. As such, this text is also quite evocative of [A-15]. Here William writes that the universe

[W-8] confesses that its potentiality and that it is possible to exist per se (*sibi esse possibile esse per se*). For which reason it confesses that its potentiality or possibility of existing is natural to itself and comes from itself, but that it has received its actuality (*actualitatem*) or its act of being (*actum essendi*) from elsewhere... The reason is that the possible or the potential as such does not come into the act of being or *esse* through something similar insofar as it is similar, that is, insofar as it is potential or possible. Rather, it remains in its potentiality or possibility insofar as it lies in itself. Hence it remains in non-being according to act or in non-being actually.⁵⁹

Notice that in creatures *esse* is received from another as that by which a creature exists and without which it would remain in non-being. In this way, for William too, *esse* is radically unlike categorical accidents for it makes a thing to be. *Esse* is also explicitly understood as the actuality of the possibile essence and the *actus essendi*. Thus, sometime in the 1230s, when Aquinas was still a child, William already articulated an understanding of existence as the *actus essendi* and the very actuality of the essence. This text, I submit, should also condition the line in [W-7] which might suggest a more superficial relationship of essence to existence which worried Gilson: “an accident does not come to substance so as to constitute something new (*novum aliquid*) but rather to order, decorate, and perfect with extrinsic perfections the substance to which

⁵⁹ *De Universo* IIa-Iae 11 (*Opera Omnia* Vol. 1, 696): Confitetur enim potentialitatem suam, et sibi esse impossibile esse per se; quare confitetur potentialitatem, seu possibilitatem essendi esse sibi naturalem, et a seipso. Actualitatem autem, sive actum essendi recepit aliunde, sive ab alio, et hoc est, quoniam possibile, sive potentiale, in quantum quod huiusmodi, sive per hoc quod huiusmodi, non venit in actum essendi, sive ad esse, sed neque per aliud simile in quantum simile, hoc est, in quantum potentiale, sive possibile, sed remanet in sua potentialitate, et possibilitate quantum in eo est; quare et in non esse secundum actum, sive, in non esse actualiter. The first line of this passage reads *sibi esse impossibile esse per se* in the *Opera Omnia*. However, the three manuscripts I have consulted (see footnote 4) read *sibi esse possibile esse per se*. As the manuscripts are of accord, are closer to the language of Avicenna upon whom William is clearly depending and as this reading makes better philosophical sense, I have gone with the manuscripts and corrected the *Opera Omnia*. Furthermore, based principally on this text, regardless of whatever position one takes on the “fact of being vs. act of being” debate, William is clearly regarding being as the *actus essendi*. Perhaps Gilson’s analysis would have been different had he not considered this text. For a discussion of this debated question see Kevin White, ‘Act and Fact: On a Disputed Question in Recent Thomistic Metaphysics,’ *Review of Metaphysics* 68 (2014), 287-312. see also John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 141, 407 and 588. For a view that pushes back on Wippel see Perl, *Thinking Being: Introduction to Metaphysics in the Classical Tradition*, 154.

it comes". Rather, William understood that *esse* does not belong to the essence of a creature and so of necessity he had to turn to the substance-accident relationship as a model for thinking about existence. Nevertheless, for William *esse* is received by the whole complete essence as the very *actualitas* of that essence. But, as was said, insofar as *esse* is not the essence of a creature it may be called an accident and in this way the man-whiteness composition is only a model for thinking about the essence-esse composition, just as Aquinas realized in [A-14].

Still, William's thought on the essence-existence distinction cannot be completely reducible to that of Aquinas. For one thing, overall, William seems to be more inclined than Aquinas to refer to *esse* as an accident, even if I am unable to discern a meaningful disagreement in their respective teachings on this point. Secondly, William seems to regard *esse* as in some sense a "part" of a thing, which may appear a bit hard to square with *De Universo* IIa-IIae 8, as well as [A-13] and [A-14], even if William seems to be anticipating these later texts of Aquinas.⁶⁰ For in *De Universo* Ia-Iae 3, in the context of arguing against the Manicheans he writes:

[W-9] For everything composite in any way is caused in some way from its parts from which its totality consists (*ex quibus consistit totalitas ipsius*) and by the uniting composer who gathers those parts and brings them together and makes them into a totality... every effect of this kind is *possibile esse per se* and receives *esse* upon itself (*recipiens esse supra se*) which is other than itself (*quod est aliud ab ipso*) and, for this reason, it is in potentially or by possibility, because it is an accident of it (*ei accidens*), something that comes to it (*adveniens ei*) and is received (*receptum*) upon its whole complete essence.⁶¹

Teske sees this passage as a clear indication of William anticipating the real distinction of Aquinas.⁶² And while this passage is quite similar to a number of passages in Aquinas (in virtue of its point about a composite requiring a cause), the regarding of essence and *esse* as "parts" seems somewhat unfitting per *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1. Nevertheless, even here William regards *esse* as received by the whole complete

⁶⁰ Then again, maybe not. For an account of how essence and existence can be considered "parts" of a thing see Michael Gorman, *A Contemporary Introduction to Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2024), 92-94.

⁶¹ *De Universo* Ia-Iae 3 (*Opera Omnia*, Vol. 1, 594): omnino enim compositum quolibet modorum causatum est ex partibus, ex quibus consistit totalitas ipsius, et est compositoris adunantis, seu aggregantis, partes illius, et adducentis, in totalitatem ipsius. Jam ante declaratum est in prima parte primae philosophiae, quia omne huiusmodi causatum est possibile esse per se, et est recipiens esse supra se, quod est aliud ab ipso, et propter hoc est in eo potentialiter sive possibiliter, quoniam est ei accidens, hoc est, adveniens ei, et receptum ab ipso supra totam completam essentiam suam.

⁶² Roland Teske, 'William of Auvergne and the Manichees' in *Studies in the Philosophy of William of Auvergne* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press: 2006), 88.

essence of a thing, again recalling [A-14]. Thus, to whatever extent *esse* may be regarded as a “part” it is a part in a very different way than matter and form are parts.⁶³

Esse as Intimum

Finally, one of the greatest similarities between William and Aquinas is that they both regard *esse* as most interior – *intimum* – within a thing and God therefore as intimately present to all things as causing their existence. Perhaps the most famous text for Aquinas on this point is *Summa Theologiae* I, q.8, a.1 where Aquinas argues that God is in all things, but not as an accident, nor as a part but as an agent is present to that upon which it works. Aquinas writes:

[A-17] God is *ipsum esse per suam essentiam*, whence it is necessary that created being (*esse creatum*) is his proper effect as to ignite is the proper effect of fire. This effect, however, God causes in things, not only when they first begin to be, but as long as they are conserved in *esse*, as light is caused in the air by the sun as long as the air remains illuminated. As long, therefore, as a thing has *esse* it is necessary that God is present to it according to its mode of being. *Esse*, however, is that which is most intimately present (*magis intimum*) to each thing and is most deeply present in all things since it is formal with respect to all which is in a thing... whence it is necessary that God is in all things most intimately.⁶⁴

Notice in particular that *esse* is *magis intimum* within a thing and God is, therefore, in all things most intimately. Aquinas’ point parallels William’s *De Universo* Ia-Iae 30, where it is said that “the creator is next to (*proximus est*) and most present (*praesentissimus*) to each of [his] creatures, indeed he is also most interior (*intimus*) to each of them”. And so, if one could subtract away all accidental and substantial forms the last thing to remain would be *esse* or *entitas* and therefore its giver (*dator ipsius*). Thus, if you could subtract from Socrates all forms, the last thing that would remain is *esse* and it “will remain for him like his most intimate garment or undershirt (*quasi*

⁶³ A more significant issue that requires more detailed consideration than I can provide here is that William often states that in everything other than God *esse* is separable from the thing in act or *in ratione sive intellectu*. See *De Universo* IIa-IIae 8 for one of a multitude of instances. I believe this language is compatible with real distinction, but it is not Aquinas’ terminology since the language of *esse* being separable from essence can be quite misleading. Thus, while I have presented Aquinas and William as deeply compatible, this is one place where Aquinas seems to at least be modifying the Auvergnian language. For discussion see Caster, ‘The Real Distinction between Being and Essence according William of Auvergne,’ 213-214.

⁶⁴ *STh* I, q.8, a.1: “Deus sit ipsum esse per suam essentiam, oportet quod esse creatum sit proprius effectus eius; sicut ignire est proprius effectus ignis. Hunc autem effectum causat Deus in rebus, non solum quando primo esse incipiunt, sed quandiu in esse conservantur; sicut lumen causatur in aere a sole quandiu aer illuminatus manet. Quandiu igitur res habet esse, tandiu oportet quod Deus adsit ei, secundum modum quo esse habet. Esse autem est illud quod est *magis intimum* cuilibet, et quod profundius omnibus inest, cum sit formale respectu omnium quae in re sunt, ut ex supra dictis patet. Unde oportet quod Deus sit in omnibus rebus, et intime”.

intimum indumentum et velut interula) by which the Creator clothed him”.⁶⁵ Like Aquinas then, for William *esse* is the *actualitas* and the *actus essendi* of an essence, which all creatures possess by participation and without which they would be nothing, but is also what is most *intimum* within a thing, leading to God being intimately present to all things.

3. Conclusion

As for the conclusions I hope to draw from this study, first, nearly every philosophical commitment of *Quidlibet* II, q.2, a.1 has parallels in Aquinas’ corpus. Thus, although there is an oddity with the reference to Averroes, there is no point in the text where Aquinas definitively breaks with his teachings in other texts. Thus, unlike Dewan, I do not question the text’s authenticity.

Secondly, I hope to have shown the deep metaphysical compatibility of William and Aquinas, a point we would do well to recall today. It could very well be that behind *Quodlibet* II, q.2, a.1 are both *De Trinitate* I-II and *De Universo* IIa-IIae 8. As a professor at the University of Paris and then Bishop of Paris, who also overlapped with Aquinas and given their striking metaphysical parallels, like Maurer I conclude that William is very likely a source for Aquinas. Yet, unlike Gilson and Maurer, I submit that the metaphysical compatibility between Aquinas and William is far greater than has originally been thought. I would even go so far as to suggest that to the extent that one takes oneself to be a follower of Aquinas’ metaphysics of *esse* one is also (perhaps unknowingly) not merely a Thomist but also an Auvergnian. True, Aquinas’ works, as a whole, are more developed and refined than William’s and as an expositor of Aristotle he *far* exceeds William. Yet, as Sokolowski writes, “The Thomistic metaphysics of *esse* is worked out in the context of God as sheer existence and the world, with all its beings, as possibly not existing”.⁶⁶ While an accurate and pithy summary of Aquinas’ metaphysics, such a statement would most accurately represent the thought of William of Auvergne, as well.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ I have taken these translations from William of Auvergne, *The Universe of Creatures: Selections Translated from the Latin*, trans. Roland J. Teske (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press: 1998). For the Latin text see: *De Universo* Ia-Iae 30, (*Opera Omnia* Vol. 1, 625).

⁶⁶ Robert Sokolowski, *The God of Faith and Reason: Foundations of Christian Theology*, (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 42.

⁶⁷ The sixth and seventh chapters of William’s *De Trinitate* especially develop this point.