"In As Many Ways As Something Is Predicated . . . in That Many Ways Is Something Signified to Be": The Logic behind Thomas Aquinas's Predication Thesis, *Esse Substantiale,* and *Esse in Rerum Natura*

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Abstract: Thomistic commentators agree that Thomas Aquinas at least nominally allows for "to be" (*esse*) to signify not only an act contrasted with essence in creatures, but also the essence itself of those creatures. Nevertheless, it is almost unheard of for any author to interpret Thomas's use of the word "*esse*" as referring to essence. Against this tendency, this paper argues that Thomas's *In V Metaphysics* argument that every predication signifies *esse* provides an important instance of Thomas using "*esse*" to signify essence. This reading of *In V Metaphysics*, which this paper defends against Gyula Klima's alternative interpretation, suggests significant reinterpretations of Thomas's technical terms "*esse substantiale*" and "*esse in rerum natura*" as well as Thomas's use of "is," both as a copula and as a principal predicate.

Most[1] philosophers today, Thomists included, think that understanding words, like "existence" or "to be" (*esse*), is peculiarly connected to understanding what are today called "existential propositions."[2] These are propositions loosely characterized by either having "is" or "exists" as the principal predicate or being equivalent to ones in which "is" is the principal predicate. Thus, these authors tend to develop their understanding of existence or *esse* from their interpretation of the predicate "is" as either reducible to some other predicate or irreducible.[3] This contemporary debate greatly obscures Thomas's own understanding of being and predication. In *In V Metaphysics*, Thomas comments on a text from Aristotle that he cites throughout his career[4] as giving the various senses of "being" (*ens*) and "to be" (*esse*).[5] Central to Thomas's extensive commentary there is his thesis that every predication is a predication of being and that *esse* is signified in every predication.[6] Call this the "Predication Thesis." All authors writing on *esse* in Thomas's thought admit that there are (at least nominally) three ways in which "*esse*" can be used. "*Esse*" can be used (a) for quiddities and natures, (b) for the act of essence, contrasted with essence, or (c) for the truth of a proposition in the mind.[7] We

will refer to these as "*esse essentiae*," "*esse existentiae*," and "*esse ut verum*," respectively.[8] Most authors admit Thomas uses *esse ut verum* occasionally,[9] but the judgment of Fr. Armand Maurer on *esse essentiae* seems to state the implicit assumption of most interpreters: "Although the use of *esse* to mean essence had a long tradition in the Middle Ages, going back at least to Boethius, St. Thomas himself reserved the term *esse* to mean the act of existing."[10] Using *In V Metaphysics*, I challenge this claim.

In what follows, I present an interpretation of Thomas's Predication Thesis in which Thomas uses "*esse*" to refer primarily to *esse essentiae*. As an interlocutor, I have chosen Gyula Klima, who interprets this same thesis in an existential way. I have focused on the alternative interpretation of Klima principally because his views offer considerable common ground from which to argue for my own opposing view. In defending my own view, I hope to suggest two things: first, that Thomas's notion of *esse existentiae* has no peculiar connection to the principal predicate "is"; and second, that ubiquitous terms in Thomas's works—like "*esse substantiale*" and "*esse in rerum natura*"—might often refer to essence. While I think the argument of this paper would suffice to show that Aquinas's *In V Metaphysics* uses "*esse*" to refer primarily to *esse essentiae* were it the case that *In V Metaphysics* had been the only place Aquinas addressed the senses of "*esse*," in actual fact, Aquinas obviously wrote a great deal about "*esse*" in outside works. Since this paper does not engage these outside works in any great detail—largely consigning them to the footnotes—there is always the looming threat that, if my argument here were extended to those works, that procedure would reveal the *reductio ad absurdum* of my own position. For this reason, the goal of the present paper is not to show definitively that the primary sense of "*esse*" for Aquinas is essence, but instead merely to suggest that this might be so on the basis of a rather definitive text. The prospect of extending my conclusion to Aquinas's personal writings is addressed in the final section of this paper, which touches on Fr. Stephen Brock and Ralph McInerny's interpretation of "*esse substantiale*."

Gyula Klima's Existential Interpretation of the Copula

Gyula Klima discusses Thomas's Predication Thesis both in his 2002 article, "Aquinas' Theory of the Copula and the Analogy of Being," and in his 1996 article, "The Semantic Principles Underlying Saint Thomas Aquinas's Metaphysics of Being." These papers interpret Thomas's thesis in slightly different ways. Since the 2002 paper is newer, discusses the issue at hand directly, and, unlike the 1996 one, is not intended for a non-Thomistic audience, I focus on the 2002 paper.

The bulk of Klima's 2002 article is devoted to explaining why, for St. Thomas, every predication is a predication of being, and the signification of the copulative "is" in light of this thesis. During the course of the article, Klima presents four pairs of sentences.

Pair 1	Pair 3
(1) Socrates is sighted.	(1") Socrates is with respect to *his* sight.
(2) Socrates is blind.	(2") Socrates is with respect to *his* blindness.
Pair 2	**Pair 4**
(1') Socrates's sight is (exists).	(1''') Socrates is with respect to sight.
(2') Socrates's blindness is (exists).	(2''') Socrates is with respect to blindness.[11]

According to Klima, Pair 1 is related to Pair 2 by a biconditional.[12] But Klima claims that, because of St. Thomas's "inherence theory of predication,"[13] the predicates in Pair 1 are just qualifications of the predicate "is."[14] When we say, Socrates is blind, we mean that Socrates is in respect of blindness. Thus, for Klima, Pair 3 is just a more explicit way of signifying what Pair 1 signifies, according to how St. Thomas would interpret Pair 1. From this identification of Pair 1 and Pair 3, Klima concludes that the qualified "senses of being" found in Pair 1 are the same as those found predicated of a subject in Pair 2.

> In these two propositions [Pair 3] the sense of the predicate "is" is explicitly qualified by the addition of the significata of the predicates of (1) and (2) in the suppositum of their subject, namely, Socrates's sight, and his blindness, respectively. But then we are certainly entitled to claim that the senses of being thus qualified are exactly the senses in which "is" (or "exists") can be predicated of these significata in (1') and (2'). So in this way it is clear that regarding (1) and (2) as expressing the qualified predications of being explicated by (1″) and (2″) also allows us to regard (1') and (2') as predicating being of their subjects precisely in the senses thus qualified, where these subjects are nothing but the significata of the predicates of (1) and (2). In general, on this basis we can claim that any ordinary predication of a common term is but a qualified predication of being, in which the significate of the common term in the suppositum of the subject specifies the sense in which that significate can be said to exist.[15]

Here, Klima makes the implicit assumption that Pair 2 must be a predication of being since it predicates "is" alone. Then he reasons from the premise that predicates qualify the copula to the conclusion that the predicate in Pair 2 has the same meaning as the copula in Pair 1. Thus, Pair 1 is a predication of being. Klima concludes that "the copula is not just a merely syncategorematic particle with the sole function of joining the predicate to the subject, but it retains the primary signification of the verb 'is,' which predicated in itself signifies the actual existence of the thing of which it is predicated."[16] So, when "is" is predicated by itself, Klima interprets "is" to signify *esse existentiae*; but when a predicate is some form, "the act of existence the

verb 'is' signifies is not the absolute existence of the suppositum of the subject, but the qualified existence of the form signified by the predicate, namely, the inherence of this form in the suppositum of the subject, which renders the suppositum actual in respect of this form."[17]

Having reached this conclusion, Klima sees that "is" means many different things depending on how it is qualified by the principal predicate. It may mean substantial existence (e.g., if there is no predicate), accidental existence (e.g., if the predicate is "sighted"), or *ens ut verum* (e.g., if the predicate is "blind"). But this seems to contradict what Thomas says in *In V Metaphysics*, when he indicates that the copula always has the same meaning—namely, the truth of the composition in the mind between subject and predicate (*ens ut verum*).[18] To resolve this apparent contradiction, Klima introduces Pair 4. The difference between Pair 3 and Pair 4 is that whereas the qualifying predicate in Pair 3 is an individual form, which is the ultimate thing signified by "sighted" or "blind," the qualifying predicate in Pair 4 is the nature absolutely considered, which is the immediate thing signified by "sighted" and "blind."[19] Klima asserts that non-beings and natures absolutely considered have the same ontological status. Both are beings of reason.[20] Thus, Pair 4 predicates always qualify the copula "is" of their Pair 1 equivalent in the same way—namely, as *ens ut verum*.[21] So, the "is" of statements, like those in Pair 1, must be taken both with respect to the ultimate signification of the predicate (Pair 3) and with respect to the immediate signification thereof (Pair 4). With respect to the ultimate signification, the meaning of "is" may vary from case to case. But with respect to the immediate signification, the meaning is always the same—*ens ut verum*. In this way, Klima reconciles St. Thomas's apparently incompatible claims that every predication is a predication of being, that predicates serve to qualify the verb "is" into different senses, and that the copula always signifies the same sense of "is"—namely, *ens ut verum*.

Philosophical Difficulties with Klima's Copula

Before evaluating Klima's theory of predication as an interpretation of St. Thomas, let us glance at some problems for it as a true theory. In the next section, we will consider Klima's theory as an interpretation of Thomas. The first philosophical problem for Klima's theory is this: Klima falls into a dilemma concerning simple statements. If his description of predication is correct, then it seems that one of two highly doubtful consequences must follow. Either, on the one hand, every predicate, besides "is," is a compound predicate, or, on the other hand, adjectives like "white" and "just" can never be predicates. Take the example, "Socrates is white." Klima asserts that "is" in such a sentence signifies existence—that is, the *esse* contrasted with form or essence in Thomas's thought.[22] If that is the case, then the word "white," which signifies a certain form, necessarily signifies something other than what the copula "is" signifies. But if that's the case, then, in the sentence, "Socrates is white," either (a) "is" is not predicated, or (b) "white" is not predicated, or (c) there are two distinct predicates. Klima cannot deny that "is" is predicated since the purpose of his paper was to show that every predication is a predication of being. Thus, Klima must either deny that "white" and other quintessential predicates are in fact ever

predicates—making them instead something akin to adverbs[23]—or he must assert that quintessentially simple enunciations are in fact not simple, but rather have two predicates. In either case, Klima must part ways with our common understanding predicates and enunciations, and he must part ways with St. Thomas, who said both that "white" is a predicate and that "Socrates is white" has only one predicate. In *In II Peri hermeneias*, he writes:

> We should consider that the verb "is" is sometimes predicated in an enunciation by itself (*secundum se*), as when it is said, "Socrates is." By this, we do not intend to signify anything other than that Socrates is in the nature of things (*in rerum natura*). Sometimes, however, ["is"] is not predicated by itself (*per se*), as the principal predicate, but as conjoined to the principal predicate such that the principal predicate can be connected to the subject. For example, when it is said, "Socrates is white," it is not the intention of the speaker that he assert Socrates to be in the nature of things, but that he attribute to Socrates whiteness by means of the verb "is." And for this reason, in such cases, "is" is predicated as added to the principal predicate. And it is said to be a "third" [by Aristotle], not because it is a third predicate, but because it is the third thing said that is put in the enunciation, which—together with the predicated name—makes one predicate. As such, the enunciation is divided into two parts and not three.[24]

Let us ignore, until a later section, Thomas's understanding of sentences in which "is" alone is predicated. What is relevant here is that, for Thomas, "white" is the principal predicate in the sentence, "Socrates is white." Moreover, the enunciation has only two parts, one subject and one predicate. Since the name "white" doesn't imply its own being predicated, it must be supplemented by the verb "is," which, as a verb, implies predication.[25] "Is" and "white" constitute one predicate[26] in which "white" signifies a form, and "is" implies composition with a subject, but does not signify any added notion.

A second problem facing Klima's theory concerns his claim that the predicate qualifies the existence that is predicated by the copula. Let us, for the moment, grant that the copula signifies existence. Even if we grant this, we should not grant that the predicate qualifies the existence being predicated in such a way that the copula signifies the existence of the thing predicated. As we saw, Klima believes that (1') "Socrates' sight is" predicates being of Socrates' sight precisely in the sense qualified by the sentence, (1") "Socrates is with respect to his sight."[27] But this means that whenever we predicate an accident of a subject, the copula attributes that accident's accidental existence to the subject as if the subject itself had accidental existence. But this does not seem to be what actually happens when we predicate accidents. When we predicate "white" of Socrates, we do not predicate whiteness's accidental existence of Socrates, as if *he* were accidentally existing.[28] Rather, we predicate "white" of Socrates, *implying* that whiteness accidentally exists in him. In short, if

the copula signifies existence, as Klima claims, and if it is qualified by accidental predicates, then it does not seem as though there is any way to predicate the copula, so qualified, truthfully of a substance.

The Logic of St. Thomas's Predication Thesis

The problems raised in the last section suggest that we should find an alternative to Klima's interpretation of St. Thomas's Predication Thesis. To see the textual difficulties with Klima's view and to establish an alternative, let us quote at length the text in which Thomas explicitly defends his thesis.

> Note that "being" cannot be contracted in this way to something determinate, as a genus is contracted to species by differentiae. For a differentia, since it does not participate the genus, is outside the essence of the genus. Nothing, however, can be outside the essence of being, such that it would constitute some species of being by addition to being. For what is outside of being is nothing (*nihil*) and cannot be a differentia. Whence . . . being cannot be a genus.

> Whence we must say that being is contracted to diverse genera according to a diverse mode of predicating (*modus praedicandi*), which results from a diverse mode of to-be (*modus essendi*); because "insofar as 'being' is said"—that is, in as many ways as something is predicated—"in that many ways is 'to be' signified"—that is, in that many ways is something signified to be. And on account of this, those things into which being is first divided are called the "predicaments," because they are distinguished according to a diverse mode of predicating.

> Because, therefore, of the things that are predicated, some signify what (*quid*)—that is, substance—some what sort (*quale*), some how much (*quantum*), and so on, it follows that in any mode of predicating, a "to be" signifies the same thing. For instance, when it is said, "Man is an animal," "to be" signifies substance. But when it is said, "Man is white," it signifies quality, and so on. For it should be noted that predicates can relate to a subject in three ways. In one way, [they can be related] as the that-which-is (*id quod est*) of the subject, as when I say, "Socrates is an animal." For Socrates is that which is the animal. And this predicate is said to signify first substance, which is the substance of a particular of which all are predicated.

> In a second way, [predicates can be related to a subject] such that what is predicated is taken according to what is in the subject (*inest subiecto*) . . . In a third way, [predicates can be related to a subject] such that what is predicated is taken from that which is outside the subject (*extra subiectum*) . . .

> But because some things are predicated in which "being" is not obviously predicated—as when it is said, "A man walks"—Aristotle goes on to remove this [objection]. He says that in all such predications something is signified to be. For any verb whatever is resolved into the verb "is" and a participle. For it in no way differs to say, "A man is convalescing," and "A man convalesces." The same goes for other cases. Whence it is clear that in as many ways as predication is made, in so many ways is "being" said.[29]

The first thing to note about St. Thomas's line of reasoning is that he assumes an equivalence between predicating "is" and predicating "being" or "is a being." He considers any predication to be a predication of *ens* so long as the predicate either includes the word "is" or is equivalent to one that includes the word "is"—even as a copula. Indeed, not a single one of Thomas's examples includes an explicit predication of the word *ens*. Klima seems to agree that "is," for Thomas, is equivalent to "is a being" since he makes use of this equivalence in his 1996 article.[30]

The second thing to note about Thomas's argument is something Klima gives the grounds for recognizing, but which Klima does not draw attention to in his discussion of this passage. That is this: In the passage above, Thomas uses the abstract word *"esse"* not to refer to an abstractly signified notion, but to refer to the notion signified by the concrete words "is" or "is a being." As Klima correctly argues when discussing Thomas's semantics:

> [T]he function of abstract terms seems to be precisely this, namely, to afford us the linguistic means to refer in a proposition to the significata of their concrete counterparts, since the concrete terms do not refer to their significata but to the things actually having their significata. Thus, whenever we need to refer not to the supposita but to the significata of a concrete term, we need an abstract term, corresponding to the concrete term.[31]

Now, in the passage above, it is clear that Thomas is using *"esse"* in this way. We can see this from the fact that, when Thomas gives examples of "*esse* being signified," the abstract term "to be" never occurs. Rather, the concrete "is" is found. Consequently, it is a mistake to think, when Thomas says *esse* is signified in every predication, that Thomas thinks every predicate predicates the abstract notion *esse*. By comparison, suppose someone were to say that every time "white" or "blue" is predicated, there is a predication of color in which color is signified. There is a wrong way and right way to interpret this thesis. Interpreted correctly, the abstract word "color" is used to signify the notion signified concretely and implicitly in the predicate "white"— namely, the more general concrete notion "color*ed*." The wrong way to interpret this thesis would be to suppose that, whenever someone predicates "white" or "blue" they also predicate the abstract notion "color" of the colored surface. The surface is not a color, but color*ed*. Likewise, when Thomas says that *esse* is signified in every predicate, he does not mean that *esse*, taken abstractly, is always predicated. Rather, Thomas merely employs the abstract term *"esse"* to refer to what is predicated in every predication, namely, some specific version of "is a being."

A third thing to note about the passage above is that Thomas shows no interest in predications in which "is" or "exists" is the final word or principal predicate. Klima argues that all predications are predications of being because they are somehow equivalent to or entail a predication in which "is" is the principal predicate. In contrast, Thomas considers all predications to be predications of being merely because they include (implicitly or explicitly) a copulative "is." Thus, he considers it an objection to his thesis that there are sentences in which no copula is found—namely, sentences with a verb other than "be." And, likewise, he takes it as a sufficient response to this objection to show that such sentences are equivalent to ones with an explicit copulative "is."

Now, this equivalence between verbs, on the one hand, and "is" plus a participle, on the other, is something that follows from Thomas's Aristotelian definition of verbs and participles in *In I Peri hermeneias*, l. 5. It, however, would be undermined should we assert, with Klima, that the copula "is" signifies the *esse* contrasted with created essences. To see this, let us briefly review Thomas's definition of the verb. In l. 5, Thomas assigns three specific differences to the verb, one of which is held in common with the name (*nomen*) and participle (*participium*).[32] The remaining two specific differences serve to clarify the nominal distinction between names and verbs, given in the previous lecture (l. 4). There St. Thomas nominally distinguished names from verbs on the grounds that names signify substances and verbs signify actions or passions.[33] But it is not necessary, for Thomas, that names always signify substances and verbs always signify actions or passions.[34] After all, "dehydration" is a name, and "lives" is a verb. St. Thomas ultimately distinguishes names from verbs not by *what* they signify, but by *how* they signify—that is, their consignification or mode of signifying (*modus significandi*). What is necessary is that names signify in the manner (*per modum*) of a substance, and that verbs signify in the manner of an action or passion. But an action, for St. Thomas, is something that precedes from an agent with motion.[35] Likewise, a passion is a motion in a subject from something else.[36] Thus, there are two distinguishing features of a verb. First, it must consignify the order of time that follows on motion, and, second, it must consignify a relation to some agent or patient from which motion arises or in which it inheres. Accordingly, unlike a name, a verb consignifies time (i.e., it is tensed).[37] In this respect, a verb is like a participle (e.g., "running"), which is also tensed.[38] Thus, to distinguish verbs not only from names, but also from participles, St. Thomas says that verbs are always signs of something said of something—that is, verbs always consignify their own being predicated of some other word.[39] Hence, verbs strictly speaking are never the subject term whereas names and participles may be subjected or predicated.

This conclusion gives St. Thomas the challenge of explaining infinitive verbs, which obviously can be the subject of a sentence, such as, "To walk is to be moving."[40] To resolve this problem, St. Thomas notes that infinitives are not verbs, strictly speaking.[41] Whereas a verb *con*signifies the procession or inherence of the predicated notion, an infinitive *directly signifies* this procession or inherence. In this respect, infinitives are like names, not verbs. Yet, since infinitives signify what verbs consignify, we can extend the title "verb" analogously to them. Strictly speaking

verbs always imply predication. And, moreover, since implying predication is what defines a verb, nothing at all can be predicated except through a verb, which, for this reason, constitutes the formal part of an enunciation.[42] Thus, either the predicate itself is a verb, or it is some other part of speech predicated by means of the verbal copula, "is" ("was," "will be," etc.).[43] If the predicate is a verb other than "is," then it signifies some notion as proceeding from or inhering in the notion of the subject and it signifies this notion with tense. For instance, the verb "kicks" signifies the motion of a foot towards an object *in* the present tense and *as* proceeding from the notion signified by the subject term. Now, the participle "kicking" also signifies this motion and signifies it as present. Thus, the only difference between "kicking" and "kicks" is that "kicks" consignifies composition with a subject. Since Thomas thinks the copula-participle pair, "is kicking," is equivalent to the verb, "kicks," Thomas evidently takes it to be the case that the copula adds nothing to the principal predicate, "kicking," besides the consignification of composition, which is included in the verb and absent from the isolated participle. Thus, Thomas does not think that the copula adds any signification to the principal predicate. It does not signify *esse existentiae*, for instance. Nor does it *signify* predication—that is, the composition of subject and predicate.[44] Rather, it merely adds the *con*signification of predication in virtue of which the principal predicate can function as a predicate.

Now, this conclusion may lead us to think that "is" signifies nothing. We may think it is like a conjunction or preposition, which does not signify, but merely relates other significant words. St. Thomas denies this.[45] But if the copula neither signifies nothing nor signifies something distinct from what the principal predicate signifies, the only remaining option is that the copula signifies the same thing as the principal predicate—albeit indeterminately. This is indeed what Thomas seems to think. In this respect, Klima is right that the function of the predicate term is to qualify the signification of the copula "is."[46] Where he goes wrong, as we have said, is to suppose that the copula signifies the *esse* that is contrasted with essence, and, therefore, that predicates qualify the notion of existence. Rather, "is" signifies the concretely signified analogical notion of being. Thus, predicates function not to qualify *esse existentiae*, but to qualify concrete *ens*. This is why, as we saw earlier, Thomas thinks that in the sentence, "Socrates is white," the words "is white" constitute a single predicate.[47] The relationship of "is" to "white" is comparable to the relationship of "animal" to "human" in the phrase, "human animal," since the way in which specific natures are added to the common notion of being is the way in which a species is added to a genus, which signifies the same thing as the species term, but does so indistinctly.[48] Of course, whereas "animal" is a strict genus, predicated univocally of its determining species, "being" is analogical, predicated simply of some more determinate notions (i.e., substances) and *secundum quid* of others (accidents, motions, negations).[49] Moreover, since "animal" is a genus, it signifies something determinate (i.e., sentience) on its own, before "human" is added. In contrast, "is" signifies nothing determinately apart from what the principal predicate determines it to signify. Despite these differences, the point remains that "is" and the predicate "being" neither signify nothing nor do they signify something distinct

from the principal predicate. Rather, they signify merely the natures signified by any predicate whatsoever, but they signify these notions implicitly and indistinctly until the copula "is" is determined to one signification or another by a conjoined principal predicate.

Let us summarize our conclusions thus far. We saw that, for Thomas, any time in which "is" is predicated, even as a copula, there is a predication of being. Thomas takes "is" to be equivalent to "is a being." Likewise, even if the word "is" does not occur, but a predicate merely consignifies in the manner of a copula, Thomas still considers this to be a predication of being. But we saw that, for anything to be predicated, it must be a verb or be predicated through a copula.[50] If it is a verb, it consignifies in the manner of a copula and is equivalent to "is" plus a participle. It follows syllogistically that every predication is a predication of being. The middle term in this syllogism is the consignification of all predicates in the manner of a copula. The middle term has nothing to do with what we would, today, call "existential propositions." But why should we agree with Thomas that whatever consignifies in the manner of a copula is a predication of being? To see that Thomas's assumption is reasonable, suppose for the sake of argument that there are meaningful existential propositions (e.g., "Socrates is") that do not reduce to propositions with a copula (e.g., "Socrates is a substance"). If so, then there are two different senses of "is": the existential sense and the copulative sense. But even if that is so, the copulative sense is still more familiar to everyone. Thus, if we want to say what "being" and "is" signify (which is Thomas's goal in *In V Metaphysics*), then we ought to start by describing what the copula signifies.[51] But as we have seen, the copula signifies indeterminately every predicable notion whatsoever, but is only determinate with respect to its consignification—namely, its consignifying composition. Thus, every predicate whatsoever (e.g., "kicks," "is just") is a more or less determinate instance of the copula "is." Since the notion of the copula gives us our primary notion of what "being" signifies, it is appropriate to conclude that every predication is a predication of being from the mere fact that a predicate signifies something in the manner of a copula.

As we saw earlier, in *In V Metaphysics*, Thomas says that *esse* is signified in every predication not because every predicate predicates the abstract notion of *esse*, but because Thomas intended the abstract term *"esse"* to refer to what the concrete term "is" signifies. Accordingly, since what the concrete term "is" signifies is every predicable nature whatsoever, it follows that, in *In V Metaphysics*, when Thomas uses the word *"esse,"* he is primarily using it in the sense of *esse essentiae*. Later in the lecture, he expands predicable notions to include not only essences outside the mind, but also beings of reason—thereby making *"esse"* to cover not only *esse essentiae*, but also *esse ut verum*. But *"esse,"* in the quotation from *In V Metaphysics* above, signifies the essences or natures signified implicitly and indistinctly by the concrete copula "is." This is why Thomas says:

> Because, therefore, of the things that are predicated, some signify what (*quid*)—that is, substance—some what sort (*quale*), some how much

(*quantum*), and so on, it follows that in any mode of predicating, a "to be" signifies the same thing. For instance, when it is said, "Man is an animal," "to be" signifies substance. But when it is said, "Man is white," it signifies quality.[52]

Some authors have tried to insert the words "existence of" into their translation of this passage, so that it reads, "When we say 'A man is an animal,' for example, the "is" signifies [the existence of a] substance."[53] At this point, it should be clear how much this distorts the meaning of Thomas's text. Thomas does not say that "is" signifies *the existence of a substance.* No, he says it signifies *substance.* And moreover, Thomas does not use "is" to speak about what "is" signifies. Rather, he uses the abstract *"esse"* to refer to what "is" signifies. *In V Metaphysics*—the crucial text in which Thomas lays out the many senses of "being" referenced throughout his career—is a text in which Thomas makes ample use of the first meaning of "*esse*," in which *"esse"* refers to essences in the ten categories. Moreover, Thomas has good reason to do so since abstract terms function to refer to what their concrete correlate signifies, and every predication is a more or less determinate concrete correlate of *esse*.

Esse in Rerum Natura and *Esse Substantiale* in *In V Metaphysics*

At this point, we have shown that Thomas's Predication Thesis does not indicate that every predicate predicates *esse existentiae*, but only that every predicate predicates *esse essentiae* or *esse ut verum*. To appreciate this conclusion, we must consider how Thomas interprets "is," not as a copula, but as a principal predicate. Most Thomists interpret this "is" as signifying existence. Already we have seen that, for Thomas, when "is" is the principal predicate we signify nothing else than that something is "*in rerum natura*."[54] Now, it would be odd to interpret "*in rerum natura*" as referring to *esse existentiae*. First of all, St. Thomas does not invent this locution, but gets it from authors who are not usually associated with Thomas's notion of existence. For instance, Augustine and Boethius use the phrase to describe the difference between what is a certain way according to its extramental nature, on the one hand, and what is only according to our way of thinking about it, on the other.[55] In conformity, with this ancient precedent, Thomas, in *In V Metaphysics*, l. 9, identifies *esse in rerum natura* with *ens extra animam* and sets it in opposition to *esse ut verum*, which is only in the mind.[56]

A second reason not to think that "is" as a principal predicate signifies *esse existentiae* is that it is hard to see how "*esse in rerum natura*" could be analyzed grammatically to mean *esse existentiae*. Thomas gives an exhaustive list of the ways in which we can use the preposition "in" in *In IV Physics*[57] and, again, in *In V Metaphysics*.[58] The meanings of "in" are in brief: the relation of (1) something contained to a container, (2) an integral part to a whole, (3) a genus or differentia to a species, (4) a more specific notion to a more generic one, (5) form to matter, (6) a whole to its material parts, (7) an effect to its agent cause, and (8) an agent to its effect. Finally, Thomas explains that nothing can be "in itself" strictly speaking. So, the phrase "in itself" really signifies the negation of one of the earlier senses of being

"in."[59] Now, in the phrase "*esse in rerum natura*," the preposition terminates in the word "nature." If we interpret "in" in sense (1), we could see "*natura*" as the space outside the mind, and "*esse in rerum natura*" as equivalent to the ostensive notion *Dasein* or "being *there*." But this would be an unusual use of the word *natura* for Thomas, who tends to use "*natura*" as a synonym for essence.[60] Alternatively, if "*natura*" is interpreted as "essence," then we can interpret "*esse in rerum natura*" in one of two ways since there are two senses of "essence." "Essence" either refers to the whole individual or that by which the individual is what it is.[61] If "*natura*" refers to the individual, then when Thomas says "is" signifies that a thing *est in rerum natura*, he is using "in" negatively like the phrase "in itself" since the term of the preposition "in" would be the same individual as that to which the subject term refers. This interpretation causes problems, however. First, it would imply that when we apparently affirm "is" of some subject, we are really negating something.[62] Secondly, if "*natura*" refers to individuals, it is hard to see how the genitive "*rerum*" can attach to it. Thus, the phrase "*in rerum natura*" probably employs "*natura*" to refer not to individuals, but to the essence by which things are. Hence, "in" would be used in sense (4) to signify the relation of a more particular to a more universal. When Thomas says "is" predicated alone signifies the subject to be *in rerum natura*, all Thomas means is that "is" indicates the subject's subjection to some predicate, whatever that be. So, "is" as a principal predicate has the same meaning as the copula "is"—namely, every predicable nature whatsoever—but unlike the copula, it isn't determined by another word to signify one particular nature.[63]

Of course, "being" is not a univocal predicate. So, when "is" is predicated unqualifiedly, it is taken in the primary sense.[64] But "is," said simply, signifies the subject to be in act, not in potency.[65] This is presumably why Thomas (and previous authors) associate *esse in rerum natura* with being outside the mind as opposed to mental beings. Although we can truthfully say, "A dinosaur is a substance," or "A phoenix is an animal," in a derivative sense of "is" in which we really mean, "A dinosaur *was* a substance," and "A phoenix *would be* an animal," we cannot make these predications in the primary sense of "is" since a phoenix and a dinosaur are only subjects receptive of predicates by the mind's conceiving them as such. Since Thomas uses "*esse in rerum natura*" to describe how "is" said alone predicates any nature whatsoever indeterminately, but actually, of a subject, "*esse in rerum natura*" exactly corresponds to extramental being, as we would expect from the usage of Thomas and others.[66] The consequence of this interpretation is that the modern distinction between existential and attributive predications is wholly anachronistic to Thomas's thought.

Thomas's *In V Metaphysics*, l. 9 gives us an example of how to read "is" as a principal predicate that, read in context, confirms our interpretation of "*esse in rerum natura*" and shows us how to read the similar phrase "*esse substantiale*." As we have seen, Thomas divides the senses of "*ens*" and "*esse*" by the different kinds of predicates. The three most general kinds of predicates are: (1) those stating *what* the subject is, (2) those denominating the subject from what is in it, and (3) those denominating the subject from something outside of it. The first gives us the

category *substance*; the second, the categories *quantity*, *quality*, and *relation*; the third, the last six categories. These ten categories constitute the highest genera of what Thomas calls perfect being outside the mind (*ens perfectum, extra animam*).[67] But since being outside the mind causes truth in the mind, which is a similitude to what is outside it, truth in the mind can be called "being" by analogy to the ten categories.[68] *Ens extra animam* and *ens ut verum*, then, constitute two "modes of being" (*modis entis*) for Thomas.

> Note, however, that this second mode [i.e., *ens ut verum*] compares to the first [i.e., *ens extra animam*] as an effect to a cause. For from the fact that something is in the nature of things (*in rerum natura est*), truth and falsity in a proposition follows, which the intellect signifies by the verb "is," as it is a verbal copula. But because the intellect considers something as if it were a certain being, which is, in itself, not a being, as negations and other such things, it follows that sometimes "to be" is said of something in this second way, and not in the first. For we say that blindness (*caecitas*) is in the second way from the fact that the proposition is true, which asserts something to be blind (*caecum*). We do not say it to be true in the first way, however. For blindness does not have some to-be in things, but rather is the privation of some to-be. It is accidental, however, to anything that something true be affirmed of it by an intellect or a voice. For a thing is not referred to knowledge (*scientia*), but the converse. But the to-be that anything has in its nature is substantial. And for this reason, when it is said, "Socrates is," if that is taken in the first mode, then it is a substantial predicate. For "being" is superior to any one being, as animal is with respect to man. If, however, it is taken in the second mode, it is an accidental predicate.[69]

Whereas in the previously quoted passage from *In II Peri hermeneias*, Thomas only interpreted the principal predicate "is" as *esse in rerum natura*, now he gives two meanings to this word. First it may signify *ens ut verum*, which is only accidentally predicated of anything. Alternatively, it may also signify *esse in rerum natura*, which is *ens extra animam*.[70] In the latter case, Thomas characterizes the *esse* a thing has in its nature as "substantial." Interpreted as such, the predicate "is" is a substantial predicate. In the context of the lecture, the adjective "substantial" has clear technical significance as applied to *esse* and predicates. Thomas has just finished dividing *esse* and predicates into substantial ones, inhering ones, and external ones. A substantial predicate is one that signifies *what* the subject is—that is, its quiddity. In short, not only does Thomas use "*esse in rerum natura*" to speak about a predication of essence, so too, Thomas uses "*esse substantiale*" for this purpose too.[71] Moreover, Thomas gives no indication that "is" as a principal predicate has anything to do with *esse existentiae*. Rather, he is quite clear that it signifies essences—albeit indeterminately.

Rearguard Defense of *Esse Substantiale* as Essential

As was noted in the introduction of this paper, the argument of this paper focuses on an isolated interpretation of a small part of one lecture of Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Thus, if someone were to have strong convictions based on Aquinas's outside works that Aquinas uses "*esse substantiale*" to designate a substantial act of existence and "*esse accidentale*" to designate an accidental act of existence, then what I have said may be dismissed as, at best, accurately describing an anomalous text where Aquinas doesn't express his own views or, less favorably, misinterpreting a text by trying to read it in isolation from the rest of Aquinas's corpus. This objection cannot, of course, be countered without setting out to do more than this paper intends—namely, a comprehensive study of how Aquinas uses "*esse substantiale*" and "*esse accidentale*."

Thus, in closing, I would merely like to point out difficulties for two authors who, to my mind, are the most persuasive adherents to the existential interpretation of "*esse substantiale*" and "*esse accidentale*": Ralph McInerny and Fr. Stephen Brock.[72] Unlike most authors who merely assume that "*esse*" in these phrases means existence, not essence, Fr. Brock, in one place, argues explicitly for this interpretation.[73] Unfortunately, this paper does not have space to respond to his argument, but only to his conclusion, which, for McInerny, is an assumption and not a conclusion. Two central texts in Fr. Brock and McInerny's interpretation of "*esse substantiale*" are *Prima secundae*, q. 18, a. 1 and *Expositio De ebdomadibus*, c. 2.[74] Fr. Brock takes the former text to imply that every substance has multiple beings (*esse*), substantial and accidental, which together make up the substance's fullness of being (*plentitudo essendi*). McInerny takes the latter text as exhibiting Aquinas's distinction between form and existence. This interpretive assumption is based implicitly on the fact that, in the text in question, Aquinas says form is the principle of *esse*, but nothing can be the principle of itself.[75] We will address these lines of reasoning briefly and in reverse order.

McInerny's implicit argument fails to necessitate his conclusion. In the passage in question—and parallel ones such as in *De Principiis* and *Prima pars*, q. 5, a. 1, ad1—it is substantial and accidental forms that Aquinas calls the principle of *esse substantiale* or *esse accidentale*, respectively. But such forms are distinct not only from any hypothesized existential act, but also from the essence of the composite substance (e.g., a human) and the accidental compound of substance with accident (e.g., a white human). So, it would seem inconclusive whether the distinction between form and *esse* in these texts is a distinction of form and *esse existentiae* or a distinction of a form and composite essence. Yet, here again, Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle seem to shed light on how to resolve this ambiguity. In *De Principiis*, c. 1, Aquinas explicitly gives "*hominem esse*" and "*hominem esse album*" as examples of *esse substantiale* and *esse accidentale*, respectively. The former is also called "*esse simpliciter*" and the latter "*esse secundum quid.*" These examples and the whole discussion of *De Principiis* appears to differ only in wording from that of *Expositio De ebdomadibus*, c. 2, and *Prima pars*, q. 5, a. 1, ad1. But when we look to Thomas's commentaries on Aristotle, he explicitly states that "*esse hominem*" and other such phrases refer

to quiddity or what-it-was-to-be. For instance, in *In III De Anima*, to distinguish a subject from its quiddity, Thomas writes:

> "Magnitude is other than for-magnitude-to-be (*magnitudini esse*)"—that is, magnitude is other than its that-which-it-is. For the to-be which pertains to magnitude names the quiddity of it. Likewise, "water and for water to be (*aque esse*)" are distinct "and the same goes for other cases"—that is, in all mathematical and natural cases. For this reason, [Aristotle] gave two examples, magnitude being a mathematical case and water a natural case.[76]

Again, in the *Metaphysics* commentary, Aquinas comments on Aristotle as follows:

> When [Aristotle] says "that this is (*hoc esse*)" or "for this to be (*huic esse*)," he means the that-which-it-was-to-be of the thing. For example, "for man to be (*homini esse*)" or "that man is (*hominem esse*)" means that which pertains to the that-which-man-is. But that it is the "that the musical is (*musicum esse*)"—that is, the that-which-it-is itself of the musical—does not pertain to your that-which-you-are.[77]

These passages show Aquinas explicitly identifying the examples of *esse substantiale* from outside works as technical expressions of the Aristotelian that-which-it-was-to-be or quiddity. So, if the outside texts, which call substantial form a principle of *esse substantiale* and accidental form a principle of *esse accidentale*, are in themselves ambiguous as to whether they employ *esse existentiae* or *esse essentiae*, these passages from Aquinas's Aristotelian commentaries could resolve the ambiguity in favor of *esse essentiae*.[78] Having mitigated the impact of McInerny's implicit argument, we must turn to Fr. Brock's analysis of *Prima secundae*, q. 18, a. 1, which concerns how a thing has the fullness of to-be through its acquisition of *esse substantiale* and *esse accidentale*.

Fr. Brock's interpretation of *ST* I–II, q. 18 requires that what is being described as having the fullness of being be a substance to which successive beings (*esse*) can be attributed. For instance, by substantial form, a substance receives substantial being; and by whiteness or virtue, a substance receives some accidental being. These taken together constitute the fullness of being. But even if we grant that it makes sense to attribute accidental existence to a substance inasmuch as substances are in a certain way (e.g., virtuous) accidentally, still, we surely cannot attribute both substantial and accidental existence to an accident. But Fr. Brock leaves off commenting on the corpus of *ST* I–II, q. 18, a. 1 just as Aquinas begins to attribute *esse substantiale* and *esse accidentale* to an accident—namely, a human action. After having said that goodness consists in the fullness of being such that, if something defects in any way from the fullness of being, it won't be good simply, but only in a certain respect, Aquinas concludes:

> So it must be said that every action, insofar as it has something of to-be, in that degree does it have goodness. Inasmuch as it defects from something of the fullness of to-be, which is owed to human action, in that degree it defects from goodness.[79]

Here, what has the fullness of being by possessing all due beings (*esse*) and by not lacking any due beings (*esse*) is not a substance, but a human action signified abstractly in the mode of substance.[80] To my mind, the plainest reading of this text is that the beings (*esse*) lacking to evil actions or had in fullness by good actions are nothing else than the due circumstances of an action, which constitute the species and accidents of human action. But if an accident (i.e., a human action) here can have both *esse substantiale* and *esse accidentale*, then we can hardly say, with Fr. Brock, that these phrases refer to so many acts of existence and that that to which both *esse substantiale* and *esse accidentale* are ascribed is substance. Because, *contra* Fr. Brock, "*esse substantiale*" and "*esse accidentale*" seem to be nothing else than what is signified by an essential predicate (e.g., human) and an accidental compound (e.g., white human), respectively, there is no problem attributing to both substances and accidents *esse substantiale* inasmuch as accidents have essences by analogy to substances.[81] Thus, in another place, Aquinas says that, in the sentence "Color is," the "is" predicated of the abstractly signified accident, "color," is a "substantial predicate" answering the question "what is it?" when "is" is taken according to the first sense of "being"—the being that signifies something "existing in nature" and which "is divided by the ten genera."[82]

Notes

1. This paper employs the following abbreviations for Aquinas's works: Thomas Aquinas, *Opera Omnia* [=Leon.], (Rome: Leonine Commission, 1882–), the used parts of which are abbreviated as: *In Aristotelis libros Peri hermeneias* [=*In Peri.*], *In Aristotelis libros Physicorum* [=*In Phys.*], *Summa contra Gentiles* [=*ScG*], *Quaestiones Disputatae De Veritate* [=*DV*], *Quaestiones De quolibet* [=*QDq*], *Quaestiones disputatae de malo* [=*DM*], *De ente et essentia* [=*De ente*], *Sentencia libri De anima* [=*De anima*], *Sententia libri Ethicorum* [=*In Ethicorum*]; ibid., *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum* [=*In Sent.*], ed. R. P. Mandonnet and R. P. Maria Fabianus Moos, tomi 1–4, (Paris: Sumptibus P. Lethielleux, 1929–1947); ibid., *Quaestio disputata de unione Verbi incarnati* [=*De unione Verbi*], ed. PP. M. Calcaterra, T. S. Centi, 10th ed. (Taurini: Marietti, 1965); ibid., *In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis Expositio* [=*In V Metaphysicorum*], ed. M. R. Cathala, Raymundi Spiazzi, 3rd ed. (Italy: Marietti Editori, 1977); ibid., *Quaestiones disputatae*, ed. P. M. Pession and E. Odetto, 10th ed. (Taurini: Marietti Editori, 1965), the used parts of which being abbreviated as *De potentia* [=*DP*] and *De Virtutibus in Communi* [=*De Virtutibus*]; ibid., *Summa theologiae* [=*ST*], ed. John Mortensen and Enrique Alarcón, (Lander, WY: The Aquinas Institute for the Study of Sacred Doctrine, 2012); ibid., *De Principiis Naturae* [=*De Principiis*], ed. Joseph Bobik, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Pess, 1998); ibid., *An Exposition of the "On the*

Hebdomads" of Boethius [=*In hebd.*], ed. Janice Schultz and Edward Synan ed., (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2001). All translations from the Latin are my own.

2.   One exception that has received surprisingly little attention in the Thomistic literature is Patrick Lee's paper in which he argues that "is" as a principal predicate is really a second order way of referring to some other proposition: "Existential Propositions in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 52.4 (1988): 605–626. While this paper agrees with Lee's claim that "existential propositions" have nothing peculiar to do with what Thomas means by "*esse*," it does not agree with Lee's second order interpretation of "*esse*."

3.   Philosophers tend to fall into three camps concerning their interpretation of "is" as a principal predicate. Either (a) they say that such a predicate as "is" or "exists" says nothing, or (b) they say this predicate is reducible to some other form of predicate, or (c) they say that this predicate is irreducible. Fr. Brian Davies initially took view (a): "Aquinas, God, and Being," *The Monist* 80.4 (1997): 501–502: "My thesis is that it is right to say that 'Brian Davies exists' says nothing of Brian Davies." In a later article, Davies seems to have jumped ship to view (b)—albeit without too much being substantively different in his later view. Davies, "The Action of God," In *Mind, Method, and Morality: Essays in Honour of Anthony Kenny*, ed. John Cottingham and Peter Hacker, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014) 165–184. Peter van Inwagen represents the predominant opinion among analytic philosophers when he takes view (b), saying "I am" is reducible to the more basic statements, "Not everything is not I" or "The number that is I is not zero." Peter Van Inwagen, *Existence: Essays in Ontology*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), esp. 57 and 60–62. Although views (a) and (b) are technically different, the proximity of Davies's early view to both Van Inwagen's view and his own later view shows that (a) and (b) are often, in practice, roughly the same. Most Thomists take view (c). E.g., Étienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 2nd ed., (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949), 187–188: ". . . another class of judgments is required, namely, those by which we state that what the thing is, actually is, or exists. Such is the composite operation which we call a judgment of existence. By saying that x is, we mean to say that x is a certain esse (to be)." Cf. Ibid., 190–215; John Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being*, (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), esp. 26, 212; John Knasas, *Being and Some Twentieth-Century Thomists*, (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003), 205–206; Peter Geach, *God and the Soul*, 2nd ed., (South Bend: St. Augustine's Press, 1969), 53–60. Jacques Maritain seems, at one point, to go so far as to reduce all predicates to existential ones: Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, trans. Lewis Galantiere and Gerald Phelan, (New York: Paulist Press, 2015), 10. The body of this paper does not compare its own interpretation of Thomas with the extant interpretations of "existential propositions" in the literature. Nevertheless, it is worth stating in brief how this paper's thesis compares with those extant interpretations. The thesis of this paper falls either within view (b) or (c). On the one hand, I maintain "is" as a principal predicate is significant and irreducible to any more basic proposition. On the other hand, I take "is" as a principle predicate to be logically (not grammatically) equivalent to an attributive predication with a copula. Nevertheless, my own interpretation of "existential judgments" is very different from those of the authors who have previously defended (b) or (c). Unlike those previously defending (b), I do not reduce "existential propositions" to negative universal or negative numerical propositions. Unlike the aforementioned defenders of (c), I do not interpret "is" as signifying existence either directly or denominatively.

4.   *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1, ad1 (Mandonnet 488); *De ente*, c. 1 (Leon. 43.369:1–10); *QDq*, II, q. 2, a. 1, co (Leon. 25.214–215); *QDq*, IX, q. 2, a. 2, co (Leon. 25.94–5); DP, q. 7, a. 2, ad1; *DP*, q. 7, a. 9, co. Often Thomas does not explicitly refer to *V Metaphysics*, but clearly paraphrases that text. E.g., *In I Sent.*, d. 28, q. 2, a. 3, exp (Mandonnet 684); *In I Sent.*, d. 33, q. 1, a. 1, ad1 (Mandonnet 766); *ST* I, q. 3, a. 4, ad2; *QDq*, XII, q. 1, ad1 (Leon. 25.399); *DM*, q. 4, a. 3, co.

5.   A note on translation: Some authors translate Thomas's "*esse*" as "being" and translate his "*ens*" with an indefinite article, as "a being." See, e.g., Fr. Joseph Owens for a defence of this practice: Owens, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics*, (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), 62. This translation scheme creates two problems. First, Thomas says that *ens* and *id quod est* relate to *esse* as *currens* and *id quod currit* relate to *currere*. *In hebd.*, c. 2 (16:40–18:60). But this proportion only makes sense if "*esse*" is an infinitive. Secondly, as Fr. Stephen Brock has noted (in a different context), refusing to put an article before "*esse*" imposes a Platonic interpretation of Thomas's *esse*. Stephen Brock, "On Whether Aquinas's '*Ipsum Esse*' Is 'Platonism,'" *The Review of Metaphysics* 60.2 (2006): 292–293. Just as we do not translate "*angelus sit ipsa forma subsistens . . .*" (e.g., *ST* I, q. 50, a. 2, ad3; ST I, q. 50, a. 5, co) as "angel is form itself subsisting," but as "an angel is a form itself subsisting," so too, it is most natural to translate "*ipsum esse*" or "*ipsum esse subsistens*" with an article before the word "*esse*." To put Brock's point differently, *esse* and *ens* do not differ according to quantity, as the "being"—"a being" translation would suggest. On the other hand, neither should we translate "*esse*" as "*existence*" since this would imply that *esse* has nothing to do with the copula, which is an unfair assumption. Thus, in this paper, I translate "*esse*" as "*to be*" when referring to a word and *to-be* when referring to what the word signifies. Unless paraphrasing or responding to another author in their own words, I avoid the word "existence." Likewise, outside of those contexts, I always reserve the word "being" for *ens*.

6.   *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 890.

7.   *In I Sent.*, d. 33, q. 1, a. 1, ad1 (Mandonnet 766): "esse dicitur tripliciter. Uno modo dicitur esse ipsa quidditas vel natura rei, sicut dicitur quod definitio est oratio significans quid est esse; definitio enim quidditatem rei significat. Alio modo dicitur esse ipse actus essentiæ; sicut vivere, quod est esse viventibus, est animæ actus; non actus secundus, qui est operatio, sed actus primus. Tertio modo dicitur esse quod significat veritatem compositionis in propositionibus, secundum quod 'est' dicitur copula." Sometimes Thomas groups the first two senses into one sense that includes both the essence of a thing and the *actus essendi*. E.g., *DP*, q. 7, a. 2, ad. 1: "ens et esse dicitur dupliciter, ut patet V *Metaph* . . . Quandoque enim significat *essentiam* rei, sive actum essendi; quandoque vero significat *veritatem* propositionis." Sometimes Aquinas simply drops the *actus essentiae* sense, e.g., *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1, ad1 (Mandonnet 488): "esse dicitur dupliciter: uno modo secundum quod ens significat essentiam rerum prout dividitur per decem genera; alio modo secundum quod esse significat compositionem quam anima facit; et istud ens Philosophus, V *Metaph.*, text. 14, appellat verum." Cf. DM, q. 1, a. 1, ad19 (Leon. 23.8: 468–477). For some authors discussing this threefold division, see: Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 24; Keith Buersmeyer, "The Verb and Existence," *The New Scholasticism* 60.2 (1986): 156–158; Maurer, "Introduction," in *On Being and Essence*, 2nd ed., (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediæval Studies, 1968), 15–17; Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 224.

8.   Thomas initiates the use of the phrase "*esse essentiae*," by saying the three persons of the Trinity are united in *esse essentiae divinae*, which in God is the same as *actus essentiae*, since in God *essentia* and *actus essentiae* are one. *In I Sent.*, d. 33, q. 1, a. 1, ad1. Some Thom-

ists interpret "*esse essentiae*" as a decadent scholastic notion of a being pertaining to essences apart from the existence they receive from God. Owens, *Christian Metaphysics*, 105n12 and 134n8. Such a notion, if it has any foundation in later scholasticism, should be unequivocally rejected. But this paper intends the phrase only to refer to Thomas's first sense of "*esse*" which is not an existence belonging to pure essences, but the essences themselves. For a defence of the phrase "*esse essentiae*," see Thomas Osborne, "Continuity and Innovation in Dominic Bañez's Understanding of *Esse*: Bañez's Relationship to John Capreolus, Paul Soncinas, and Thomas De Vio Cajetan," *The Thomist* 77.3 (2013): 368–369.

9. E.g., *ST* I, q. 3, a. 4, ad2; *In II Sent.*, d. 34, q. 1, a. 1, co; *DM*, q. 1, a. 1, ad19. For helpful secondary literature on *ens ut verum*, see: Christopher Martin, *Thomas Aquinas: God and Explanations*, (Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 50–79; Gyula Klima, "The Changing Role of '*Entia Rationis*' in Mediaeval Semantics and Ontology: A Comparative Study with a Reconstruction," *Synthese* 96.1 (1993): 25–58; Klima, "The Semantic Principles Underlying Saint Thomas Aquinas's Metaphysics of Being," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5 (1996): 87–141; Ralph McInerny, *Being and Predication*, (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), esp. 204–228; Gaston LeNotre, "Thomas Aquinas and the Method of Predication in Metaphysics," PhD diss., (The Catholic University of America, 2016), esp. 168–88. See also Turner Nevitt, "Aquinas on Essence and Existence," PhD diss., (Fordham University, 2015). Nevitt's thesis is rare in the literature in that it argues *esse ut verum* is dispensable. Ibid., 145–178.

10. Maurer, "Introduction," 15–16. See also Janice Schultz and Edward Synan, eds., "Introduction," in *In hebd.*, xxvii, who endorse Maurer's thesis. There are two noteworthy exceptions to the rule that modern Thomists dismiss the first sense of "*esse*." One exception to this is Gregory Doolan in his unpublished paper, "Aquinas on The Distinction Between *Esse* and *Esse*: How the Name *"esse"* Signifies Essence in Metaphysics Δ.7," on Academia.edu. Another is Msgr. John Wippel. Like the present paper, Wippel interprets "*esse*" in one paragraph of *In V Metaphysics* l. 9, as referring to substance, quality, quantity, etc. (Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 212). But he does not extend this interpretation to the rest of the lecture or outside texts, nor does he explain why it makes sense to interpret "*esse*" in this way.

11. Klima, "Theory of the Copula," 163, 166. Emphases are my own. The nomenclature of "pairs" is not found in Klima's article, but he does group the propositions in the same way I have numbered them, so it is appropriate, for the sake of clarity in this summary, to give these groupings official titles—namely, Pair 1, Pair 2, *et cetera*.

12. Ibid., 163.

13. For further explanation of the "inherence theory of predication," see Klima, "Semantic Principles," 97–110. There are some outstanding difficulties and ambiguities with the inherence theory of predication, some of which have been suggested more recently by Klima himself among others. It is also an open question whether Thomas did in fact espouse such a theory. For these problems, see: Klima, "Geach's Three Most Inspiring Errors Concerning Medieval Logic," *Philosophical Investigations* 38.1–2 (2015): 34–51; Thomas Osborne, "Which Essence Is Brought into Being by the Existential Act?" *The Thomist* 81.4 (2017): 471–505 (at 482–484); John Malcolm, "A Reconsideration of the Identity and Inherence Theories of the Copula," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 17.4 (1979): 383–400.

14. Klima, "Theory of the Copula," 163. See also, Klima, "Semantic Principles," 124: "Just as in 'ordinary predications' we can attach various qualification to the predicate, so these 'ordinary predications' themselves may be regarded as various qualifications of the

predication of being. According to this analysis, therefore, when we say, 'A man is blind,' this is equivalent to saying, 'A man's blindness is' which in turn, is equivalent to saying, 'A man is with respect to his blindness.'"

15. Klima, "Theory of the Copula," 163.

16. Ibid., 164–165.

17. Ibid., 165.

18. Ibid. See: *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 895–896.

19. Klima, "Theory of the Copula," 166.

20. In this paper, I do not have space to address Klima's premise that the nature absolutely considered is a being of reason. Nevertheless, this premise seems to be a further problem for Klima's argument. The whole point of Thomas bringing up the nature absolutely considered (e.g., *De ente*, c. 3) is to abstract the quidditative content of a being from any particular mode of to-be, such as in the mind or in an individual outside the mind. If the nature absolutely considered were a being of reason, then it would be identical to the nature in the mind, which would undermine Thomas's claim that the nature absolutely considered is what is common to individuals outside the mind and species in the mind. Cf. Osborne, "Which Essence Is Brought into Being by the Existential Act?" 472: ". . . the essence absolutely considered is an essence to which it makes absolutely no sense to attribute existence."

21. Klima, "Theory of the Copula," 166–167.

22. E.g., ibid., 167.

23. Owens, *Christian Metaphysics*, 75: "The nature cannot take on an adverbial relation to its being [*esse*]. Man cannot be regarded as basically a certain portion of being that exists humanly."

24. *In I Peri.*, l. 2 (Leon. 1.79–80:2): "Ad cuius evidentiam considerandum est quod hoc verbum est quandoque in enunciatione praedicatur secundum se; ut cum dicitur, *Socrates est*: per quod nihil aliud intendimus significare, quam quod Socrates sit in rerum natura. Quandoque vero non praedicatur *per se*, quasi principale praedicatum, sed quasi coniunctum principali praedicato ad connectendum ipsum subiecto; sicut cum dicitur, *Socrates est albus*, non est intentio loquentis ut asserat Socratem esse in rerum natura, sed ut attribuat ei albedinem mediante hoc verbo, *est*; et ideo in talibus, *est*, praedicatur ut adiacens principali praedicato. Et dicitur esse tertium, non quia sit tertium praedicatum, sed quia est tertia dictio posita in enunciatione, quae simul cum nomine praedicato facit unum praedicatum, ut sic enunciatio dividatur in duas partes et non in tres."

25. The reason names cannot be predicated without a verb, but that verbs can be predicated through themselves will be discussed in the next section.

26. Besides the authority and reasoning of Thomas, this thesis is also accepted by: McInerny, *Being and Predication*, 174; Kenny, *Aquinas on Being*, 179; Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 224–225.

27. Klima, "Theory of the Copula," 164.

28. *De Principiis*, c. 1, 2: "subiectum est quod non habet esse ex eo quod advenit, sed per se habet esse completum; sicut homo non habet esse ab albedine . . . Unde, simpliciter loquendo, forma dat esse materiae, accidens autem non dat esse subiecto, sed subiectum accidenti." Some Thomists *do* attribute accidental existence to substances as a secondary existence accruing to a substance after its substantial existence. That is because these authors

identify Aquinas's "*esse accidentale*" and "*esse substantiale*" with *esse existentiae*, not *esse essentiae*. Moreover, they largely ignore "*esse accidentis*." Cf. Owens, *Christian Metaphysics*, 148; Ralph McInerny, *Boethius and Aquinas*, (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1990), 192 and 207–209; Brock, "Harmonizing Plato and Aristotle on Esse: Thomas Aquinas and the '*De Hebdomadibus*,'" *Nova et Vetera* 5.3 (2007): 489–491; ibid., "How Many Acts of Being Can a Substance Have? An Aristotelian Approach to Aquinas's Real Distinction," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 54.3, 215 (2014): 317–331. As will become clear later, the contention of this paper is that "*esse accidentale*" and "*esse substantiale*" usually use "*esse*" in the sense of essence. Thus, the indisputable fact that Aquinas attributes "*esse accidentale*" to substances throughout his works does not contradict my claim that accidental existence is not attributed to substances. Moreover, even if *esse accidentale* were an accidental existence attributed to substances (and not rather an accidental composite of essences, as I interpret it), then this would still undermine Klima's argument since, in that case, although we now attribute accidental existence of Socrates with respect to his sight, we can no longer attribute the same accidental existence to Socrates's accident of sight. In any case, I do not think that accidental existence is attributed to substances since, by "accidental existence," I mean what Aquinas signifies by "*esse accidentis*," not what he signifies by "*esse accidentale*." As the name suggests, "*esse accidentis*" is clearly attributed to accidents, not substances. On the nature of *esse accidentis*, see: Note 29. Further reasons not to view *esse accidentale* as an act of existence are given in the final section of this paper.

29. *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 889–893: "Sciendum est enim quod ens non potest hoc modo contrahi ad aliquid determinatum, sicut genus contrahitur ad species per differentias. Nam differentia, cum non participet genus, est extra essentiam generis. Nihil autem posset esse extra essentiam entis, quod per additionem ad ens aliquam speciem entis constituat: nam quod est extra ens, nihil est, et differentia esse non potest. Unde . . . ens, genus esse non potest. Unde oportet, quod ens contrahatur ad diversa genera secundum diversum modum praedicandi, qui consequitur diversum modum essendi; quia 'quoties ens dicitur,' idest quot modis aliquid praedicatur, 'toties esse significatur,' idest tot modis significatur aliquid esse. Et propter hoc ea in quae dividitur ens primo, dicuntur esse praedicamenta, quia distinguuntur secundum diversum modum praedicandi. Quia igitur eorum quae praedicantur, quaedam significant quid, idest substantiam, quaedam quale, quaedam quantum, et sic de aliis; oportet quod unicuique modo praedicandi, esse significet idem; ut cum dicitur homo est animal, esse significat substantiam. Cum autem dicitur, homo est albus, significat qualitatem, et sic de aliis.—Sciendum enim est quod praedicatum ad subiectum *tripliciter* se potest habere. *Uno modo* cum est id quod est subiectum, ut cum dico, Socrates est animal. Nam Socrates est id quod est animal. Et hoc praedicatum dicitur significare substantiam primam, quae est substantia particularis, de qua omnia praedicantur.—*Secundo modo* ut praedicatum sumatur secundum quod inest subiecto . . . *Tertio modo* ut praedicatum sumatur ab eo quod est extra subiectum . . . —Quia vero quaedam praedicantur, in quibus manifeste non apponitur hoc verbum est, ne credatur quod illae praedicationes non pertineant ad praedicationem entis, ut cum dicitur, homo ambulat, ideo consequenter hoc removet, dicens quod in omnibus huiusmodi praedicationibus significatur aliquid esse. Verbum enim quodlibet resolvitur in hoc verbum est, et participium. Nihil enim differt dicere, homo convalescens est, et homo convalescit, et sic de aliis. Unde patet quod quot modis praedicatio fit, tot modis ens dicitur." For a parallel division of being according to modes of predicating, see: *In III Phys.*, l. 5. Also, cf. *In I Peri.*, l. 5, (Leon. 1.27:18): "Quamvis enim omne verbum finitum implicet esse, quia currere est currentem *esse*, et omne verbum infinitum implicet *non esse*, quia non currere est non currentem esse."

For a general overview of this division of being into categories in Aquinas's *In V Metaphysics* and *In III Physics*, sticking closely to Aquinas's wording with minimal interpretation, see: Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 208–228. For a critique of Wippel, which attempts to explain the division of being into categories according to the three modes of *per se* predication, see Paul Symington, "Thomas Aquinas on Establishing the Identity of Aristotle's Categories," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Lloyd Newton, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 119–144. For a study of modes of predicating in light of medieval semantics, see Buersmeyer, "The Verb and Existence," 159; Keith Buersmeyer, "Aquinas on the *Modi Significandi*," 93; E. J. Ashworth, "Signification and Modes of Signifying in Thirteenth-Century Logic: A Preface to Aquinas on Analogy," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 1 (1991): 39–67. For a standard attempt to explain the structure of Aquinas's *In V Metaphysics*, l. 9, which is the context for this division of the categories according to modes of predication, see: McInerny, *Being and Predication*, 190–228. For a general ahistorical attempt to explain what we have called Aquinas's Predication Thesis in light of Aquinas's commentary on *Peryermenias*, see: Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Sense of Mystery: Clarity and Obscurity in the Intellectual Life*, trans. Matthew Minerd, (Steubenville: Emmaus Academic, 2017), 62–72. Although it differs in its conclusions and arguments, Garrigou-Lagrange's study takes roughly the same approach to Aquinas's Predication Thesis as the discussion to follow in the present paper inasmuch as it (implicitly) attempts to illuminate *In V Metaphysics* by means of *In I Peryermenias*. Thus, we refer to Garrigou-Lagrange where our opinions differ or agree in relevant ways.

Besides *In V Metaphysics*, l. 9, important texts for understanding what Thomas means by *modi essendi* include Thomas's division of "being" in *In IV Metaphysicorum*, l. 1 and *DV*, q. 1, a. 1, co., as well as Thomas's definition of 'person' in *ST* I, q. 29, and *DP*, q. 9. In *In IV Metaphysicorum*, l. 1, Thomas lays out four *modi essendi* corresponding respectively to (a) substances, (b) accidents, (c) change, and (d) negations. He describes the first as *per se*, the second as in a subject, the third as towards some other being, and the fourth as only in the mind. There are interpretive disagreements both concerning the epistemic relation of *modi essendi* to *modi praedicandi* as well as the ontological status of *modi essendi* in themselves. In the epistemic realm, Buersmeyer believes that Thomas uses prior knowledge of *modi essendi* to discover the *modi praedicandi*. Buersmeyer, "Aquinas on the *Modi Significandi*," 93; Buersmeyer, "The Verb and Existence," 159. Msgr. Wippel correctly (in my opinion) interprets Thomas to mean that the *modi praedicandi* reveal the *modi essendi*. Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 211.

There are also differing views on the metaphysical role of *modi essendi*. The most popular position is that the *modi essendi* are equivalent to the essence or form that receives existence. See, e.g., Gerald Phelan, "The Being of Creatures: St. Thomas' Solution of the Dilemma of Parmenides and Heraclitus," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 31 (1957): 124; W. Norris Clarke, *Person and Being*, The Aquinas Lecture, 1993, (Marquette University Press, 2004), 28; William Carlo, "Commentary on Gerald B. Phelan (A)," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 31 (1957): 128; Owens, *Christian Metaphysics*, 152n13; Francis Cunningham, "Averroes vs. Avicenna on Being," *The New Scholasticism* 48.2 (1974): 203; Matthew Schaeffer, "The Thick-*Esse*/Thin-Essence View in Thomistic Personalism," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 89.2 (2015): 223–251. Klima could be interpreted as cautiously identifying forms or essences with *modi essendi* (cf. Klima, "Semantic Principles," 136–137 and 140), but he has denied this identification on Academia.edu. Msgr. Wippel also could be interpreted to have partially identified *modi essendi* and essence, and I know of no place where he denies it. He argues against Carlo, that

it is wrong to reduce essence to "nothing but a given mode of existence." Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 190–192. Wippel's statement grammatically implies that essence is, *in part*, a mode of existence.

Jacques Maritain and Tomarchio both maintain that essence is not at all a *modus essendi*. Rather, Maritain maintains that the modes of being are terminations of essence by which the essence is suited to receive existence. Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, trans. Gerald Phelan, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 246; ibid., *Existence and the Existent*, 54–55. In a slight, but positive twist, Tomarchio says instead that the *modi essendi* are determinations or termini of existence, not essence. Tomarchio, "Aquinas's Division of Being According to Modes of Existing," *The Review of Metaphysics* 54.3 (2001): 585–613 (esp. 600–603, 606). Nevertheless, Tomarchio denies that the *modi essendi* are reducible to existence. Ibid., 602. Moreover, Tomarchio seems to identify the *modi essendi* with the categories, ibid., 597: "the categories constitute modes of universal being." See also ibid., 589, 596. Whereas the previous authors, who are explicit on the matter (excluding Maritain), place *modi essendi* within a two-fold division between essence and existence, Tomarchio sees a three-fold division between existence, essence, and the categories, as if the categories were outside of the essences of creatures. My own position is that "*esse*" (i.e., *esse existentiae*) signifies the *modi essendi* indeterminately.

I agree with Tomarchio that the *modi essendi* determine *esse*, but do not see how it is possible simultaneously to affirm this and also to deny that the *modi essendi* are reducible to *esse*. Just as species are reducible to the sum of differentiae, so too, *esse* is reducible to the *modi essendi* that determine it. In one of Thomas's longest passages devoted to the distinction between *esse* and essence in all creatures, Thomas says that, whereas form is that by which a thing is, *esse* is that by which a thing is "denominated a being." *ScG* II, c. 54 (Leon. 13.392). But Thomas is very clear, in *In IV Metaphysicorum*, l. 1, 539 and in *In I Ethicorum*, c. 7 (Leon. 47.26:165–27:210), that the way in which things are denominated "beings" is from their diverse proportions to a common subject—namely, substance. So, for instance, that by which an accident is called a being is its inherence. As Thomas says throughout his career, "esse accidentis est inesse et dependere" (*In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 3, co). See also: *In I Sent.*, d. 46, q. 1, a. 2, co; *ST* I–II, q. 110, a. 2, ad3; *DP* q. 7, a. 7, co; *DP* q. 8, a. 2, co; *QDq*, IX, q. 3, ad1 (Leon. 25.99:66); *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 894; *In VII Metaphysicorum*, l. 4, 1352. Msgr. Wippel makes a brief comment to dismiss an interpretation like the one I am taking, but to defend my position would require a further paper. See Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 235. Here, I will note one advantage to my interpretation is that it explains why there are three senses of "*esse*." The primary function of "*esse*" in Latin seems to be to signify the predicate through indirect speech. But predicates can signify either real beings or beings of reason. And moreover "*esse*" can be used either for what is principally predicated in speech or for that in virtue of which the predicate is a predicate—namely, the consignification of the verb "is." Thus, there are three things "*esse*" can signify: (a) real being (*ens perfectum, extra animam*), (b) beings of reason (*ens ut verum*), or (c) the *modi essendi*, corresponding to the *modi praedicandi* (i.e., mode of consignification of composition) of the predicate. This last one seems to be the *esse* contrasted with essence in Thomas's philosophy. It is the actuality of forms because it is that in virtue of which forms are acts with respect to some subject.

30. Klima, "Semantic Principles," 120. See also Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Sense of Mystery*, 52: "Every proposition is composed of at least two parts—the subject and the predicate—reunited by the copula, which is reduced to the verb 'to be.' However, it happens that a proposition is sometimes expressed as a single word. For instance, consider the

Latin *sum*. . . . Nevertheless, the sense of these is: *ego sum existens*." Other Thomists, such as Gilson, deny that "is" is equivalent to "is a being" (Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 209). Wippel also implies that he is unwilling to read "is" as "is a being" since he denies that Thomas's conversion of verbs into "is" plus a participle in *In V Metaphysics* extends beyond "attributive judgments" to "existential statements" (Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 212).

31. Klima, "Semantic Principles," 113. Wippel also implicitly endorses this reading of "*esse*" in the passage in question. When Wippel sees the word "*esse*" here, he rightly interprets it as meaning what is signified by "is an animal," "is white," etc. Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought*, 212. Far more than modern English speakers, Latin philosophers would be inclined to recognize the value of infinitives as abstract terms to refer to the signification of concrete terms since classical Latin always uses infinitives in this function within indirect speech.

32. Below, I focus exclusively on the differentiae by which the verb is separated from the name and participle. On the relation of other parts of speech to the name and verb, see *In I Peri.*, l. 1, (Leon. 1.9:6). Buersmeyer, "Verb and Existence," 149n13: "The word '*nomen*' is ambiguous in Latin since it can refer to either a '*nomen substantivum*' such as '*homo*' or a '*nomen adjectivum*' such as '*albus*,' with the result that the noun and adjective were classed together." The secondary literature on Thomas's theory of verbs and names is sparse. Nevertheless, there are some who have touched on the issue in the context of Thomas's theory of signification. For these discussions, see: Ibid.; Buersmeyer, "*Modi Significandi*"; Klima, "Semantic Principles"; Ashworth, "Signification and Modes of Signifying in Thirteenth-Century Logic"; Umberto Eco, et al., "'*Latratus Canis*' or: The Dog's Barking," in *Frontiers in Semiotics*, ed. John Deely, et al., (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 63–73.

33. *In I Peri.*, l. 4 (Leon. 1.19–20:1).

34. Cf. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.24:5, 25:9); *In I Sent.*, d. 22, q. 1, a. 1, ad3 (Mandonnet 532–33).

35. *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 3, ad3 (Mandonnet 225): "actio, secundum quod est prædicamentum, dicit aliquid fluens ab agente, et cum motu; sed in Deo non est aliquid medium secundum rem inter ipsum et opus suum, et ideo non dicitur agens actione quæ est prædicamentum, sed actio sua est substantia."

36. *In III Phys.*, l. 5.

37. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.23–24:2): "Ponit autem tres particulas in definitione verbi: quarum prima distinguit *verbum* a *nomine*, in hoc scilicet quod dicit quod *consignificat tempus*."

38. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.24:4); *In I Peri.*, l. 4 (Leon. 1.20:7). An important difference between the way participles are tensed and the way in which verbs are tensed is this. Whereas verbs consignify time directly inasmuch as they signify motion, participles consignify time only insofar as they signify a subject as underlying a certain motion. To avoid confusion, it is important to note: In English, unlike in Latin, we often use the grammatical form of the participle to signify action abstractly in the way that both Thomas and English speakers use the infinitive. For instance, whereas Aquinas sees "*currens*" as something that runs, we would not attribute the predicate "runs" to the English grammatical equivalent of "*currens*," namely, "running." Likewise, we would consider the sentences, "To run is an action," and "Running is an action" as equivalent; Aquinas would not say "*Currens est actio*," but "*Currens est homo*." Here, we see an ambiguity in our English grammar that obscures the clarity of Thomas's logic. In Thomas's Latin, it is rare to find a participle used abstractly in a way that would make it synonymous with the infinitive. Presumably, English prefers the participle to

the infinitive for this abstract reference because of the clunky form in which infinitives are written in English.

39. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.24:4): "Tertia vero particula est, per quam distinguitur verbum non solum a nomine, sed etiam a participio quod significat tempore; unde dicit: *Et est semper eorum, quae de altero praedicantur nota*, idest signum: quia scilicet nomina et participia possunt poni ex parte subiecti et praedicati, sed verbum semper est ex parte praedicati." *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.25:9): "*Verborum . . . de altero praedicantur*, non est sic intelligendum, quasi significata verborum sint quae praedicantur; quia cum praedicatio videatur magis proprie ad compositionem pertinere, ipsa verba sunt quae praedicantur, magis quam significent praedicata.—Est ergo intelligendum quod verbum semper est signum quod aliqua praedicentur, quia omnis praedicatio fit per verbum ratione compositionis importatae, sive praedicetur aliquid *essentialiter sive accidentaliter*."

40. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.24:5).

41. Ibid.: "Potest autem actio significari tripliciter: uno modo per se in abstracto, velut quaedam res, et sic significatur per nomen . . . alio modo, per modum actionis, ut scilicet est egrediens a substantia et inhaerens ei ut subiecto, et sic sgnificatur per verba aliorum modorum, quae attribuuntur praedicatis. Sed quia etiam ipse processus vel inhaerentia actionis potest apprehendi ab intellectu et significari ut res quaedam, inde est quod ipsa verba infinitivi modi, quae significant ipsam inhaerentiam actionis ad subiectum, possunt accipi ut verba, ratione concretionis, et ut nomina prout significant quasi res quasdam."

42. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.25:9): "omnis praedicatio fit per verbum ratione compositionis importatae, sive praedicetur aliquid *essentialiter sive accidentaliter*." *In I Peri.*, l. 8 (Leon. 1.37:9): "cum enunciatio constet ex nomine et verbo, quare non facit mentionem de nomine, sicut de verbo? . . . quia, sicut supra dictum est, verbum est nota eorum quae de altero praedicantur. Praedicatum autem est principalior pars enunciationis, eo quod est pars formalis et completiva ipsius." *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.24:3): "Potest etiam aliter dici quod quia verbum importat compositionem, in qua perficitur oratio verum vel falsum significans, maiorem convenientiam videbatur verbum habere cum oratione, quasi quaedam pars formalis ipsius, quam nomen, quod est quaedam pars materialis et subiectiva orationis." *In I Peri.*, l. 6 (Leon. 1.31:5): "Exponit ergo qod dixerat aliquid partium orationis esse significativum, sicut hoc nomen homo, quod est pars orationis, significat aliquid, sed non significat ut affirmatio aut negatio, quia non significat esse vel non esse. Et hoc dico non in actu, sed solum in potentia. Potest enim aliquid addi, per cuius additionem fit affirmatio vel negatio, scilicet si addatur ei verbum." See also: *In I Peri.*, l. 3 (Leon. 1.18:13). Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Sense of Mystery*, 48: "As regards judgment, the verb is the very soul of the judgment."

43. Garrigou-Lagrange calls both "to have" and "to be" "fundamental verbs," and is rather ambiguous about what he means by this (Ibid., 49).

44. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.28:22): "Ideo autem dicit quod hoc verbum EST consignificat compositionem, quia non eam principaliter significat, sed ex consequenti."

45. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.27:19): "Unde Porphyrius aliter exposuit quod hoc ipsum ens non significat naturam alicuius rei, sicut hoc nomen homo vel sapiens, sed solum designat quamdam coniunctionem . . . Sed neque hoc convenienter videtur dici: quia si non significaret aliquam rem, sed solum coniunctionem, non esset neque *nomen*, neque *verbum*, sicut nec praepositiones aut coniunctiones." See also *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.28:22).

46. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.28:22): "Ideo autem dicit quod hoc verbum EST consignificat compositionem, quia non eam principaliter significat, sed ex consequenti; significat enim

primo illud quod cadit in intellectu per modum actualitatis absolute: nam EST, simpliciter dictum, significat *in actu esse*; et ideo significat per modum verbi. Quia vero actualitas, quam principaliter significat hoc verbum EST, est communiter actualitas omnis formae, vel actus substantialis vel accidentalis, inde est quod cum volumus significare quamcumque formam vel actum actualiter inesse alicui subiecto, significamus illud per hoc verbum EST, vel *simpliciter* vel *secundum quid*: simpliciter quidem secundum praesens tempus; secundum quid autem secundum alia tempora."

47. *In I Peri.*, l. 2 (Leon. 1.79–80:2). Cf. Note 26.

48. *DV*, q. 21, a. 1, co. (Leon. 22.592–3:90–135): "tripliciter potest aliquid super alterum addere: uno modo quod addat aliquam rem quae sit extra essentiam illius rei cui dicitur addi, sicut album addit aliquid super corpus. . . . Alio modo dicitur aliquid addere super alterum per modum contrahendi et determinandi, sicut homo addit aliquid super animal, non quidem ita quod sit in homine aliqua res quae sit penitus extra essentiam animalis, alias operteret dicere quod non totum quod est homo esset animal sed animal esset pars hominis; sed animal per hominem contrahitur quia id quod determinate et actualiter continetur in ratione hominis, implicite et quasi potentialiter continetur in ratione animalis . . . nulla enim res naturae est quae sit extra essentiam entis universalis quamvis aliqua res sit extra essentiam huius entis. Secundo autem modo inveniuntur aliqua addere super ens quia ens contrahitur per decem genera, quorum unumquodque addit aliquid super ens, non quidem aliquod accidens vel aliquam differentiam quae sit extra essentiam entis sed determinatum modum essendi qui fundatur in ipsa existentia rei."

49. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.27:19): "ens non dicitur proprie aequivoce, sed secundum prius et posterius; unde simpliciter dictum intelligitur de eo, quod per prius dicitur." See also *In IV Metaphysicorum*, l. 1, 536; cf. ibid., l. 2, 555.

50. Some authors have thought that there were languages, such as Russian, without any copulative "is." E.g., Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 192, 195. This could make the existential sense of "is" (if there is an existential sense) more familiar than the copulative sense. Aquinas himself was familiar with authors who abolished the copula, and he rejected their theories. *In I Phys.*, l. 4 (Leon. 2.14–15). Moreover, as Gyula Klima has pointed out, in languages, such as Russian and Hungarian, in which there is no spoken copula in the present tense, the copula is still clearly implied in the present tense inasmuch as a copula is needed in other tenses. Klima, "Semantic Principles," 119.

51. This is, of course, exactly the opposite of the procedure proposed by Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 199: "To say that x is, is to say that x exercises the very first of all subjective acts, which is to be. The problem is not to know how is has come to signify existence, it is rather to know why it has been singled out to play the part of the copula." I, on the other hand, think that the significance of the copula is more obvious than the significance of "is" as a principal predicate. So it is with the copula that we ought to begin any inquiry into the meaning of "being." In any case, Thomas begins with the copula in *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9.

52. *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 890.

53. Martin, *God and Explanations*, 61. Brackets original.

54. *In I Peri.*, l. 2 (Leon. 1.79–80:2).

55. Here is not the place to discuss whether the common tendency to separate Augustine and Boethius from Thomas's notion of *esse* is fair. But there are many cases where they use

the phrase "*esse in rerum natura*." E.g., Augustine, *De Libero Arbitrio libri tres*, *Opera Omnia*, Patrologiae Latinae [=PL] Elenchus 32 (PL 32), 3.5.13: "atque ex his quatuor elementis aliae innumerabiles nobis, numeratae autem Deo rerum species formaeque variantur. Potest ergo esse aliquid in rerum natura, quod tua ratione non cogitas. Non esse autem quod vera ratione cogitas, non potest." Augustine, *Contra Iulianum haeresis Pelagianae defensorem libri sex,* PL 44, 6.7.20: "Bonus est oleaster in rerum natura, sed in mysteriorum scriptura malum significat; sicut lupi." The citations of *Patrologiae Latinae* for Augustine are from www.augustinus.it/latino. In the first quotation, Augustine contrasts how many natures there are outside the mind with how many we know. In the second quotation, he contrasts the goodness of substance according to its nature with its evil according to a spiritual significance imposed on it externally. This use of "*in rerum natura*" to indicate the extramental opposite of some mental being is also found in Boethius, *Philosophiae Consolationis*, in *Theological Tractates*, ed. G. P. Goold, Loeb Classical Library 74, (Edinburgh: St. Edmundsbury Press, 1973), III, c. 10, 274:5–10: "In quo illud primum arbitror inquirendum, an aliquod huiusmodi bonum quale paulo ante definisti in rerum natura possit exsistere, ne nos praeter rei subiectae veritatem cassa cogitationis imago decipiat."

56. *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 889–896: "Deinde cum dicit 'secundum se' distinguit *modum entis per se*: et circa hoc tria facit. Primo *distinguit ens, quod est extra animam, per decem praedicamenta*, quod est ens perfectum. Secundo ponit alium modum entis, secundum quod est tantum in mente . . . —Sciendum est autem quod iste secundus modus comparatur ad primum, sicut effectus ad causam. Ex hoc enim quod aliquid in rerum natura est, sequitur veritas et falsitas in propositione." For other instances of Thomas using "*in rerum natura*" to describe the first half of an opposition between extramental and mental being, see, DV, q. 1, a. 5, ad15 (Leon. 22.21:435): ". . . unde illa relation quae significatur in comparatione paternitatis ad subiectum non est in rerum natura sed in ratione tantum." *ScG* I, c. 11 (Leon. 13.24): "Deinde quia, dato quod ab omnibus per hoc nomen *Deus* intelligatur aliquid quo maius cogitari non possit, non necesse erit aliquid esse quo maius cogitari non potest in rerum natura. Eodem enim modo necesse est poni rem, et nominis rationem. Ex hoc autem quod mente concipitur quod profertur hoc nomine *Deus*, non sequitur Deum esse nisi in intellectu." See also *In I Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, a. 1, co; *In V Met.*, l. 14, 18; *DV*, q. 1, a. 5, ad16, ad17; *DP*, q. 3, a. 16, ad16.

57. *In IV Phys.*, l. 4 (Leon. 2.155).

58. *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 20, 1084: "Octo autem modi essendi in aliquo in quarto Physicorum positi sunt . . ."

59. *In IV Phys.*, l. 4 (Leon. 2.157): "Sciendum tamen quod aliquando dicitur aliquid esse in seipso, non secundum intellectum affirmativum, sicut hic reprobat Philosophus, sed secundum intellectum negativum, prout esse in seipso non significat nisi non esse in alio." St. Thomas does not mention this sense of "in" in *In Metaphysics*. That's presumably because it isn't one of the basic eight senses of "in," but is understood by reduction to those senses inasmuch as negations are understood by what they remove. Nevertheless, Thomas does address the phrases *secundum se* or *per se* in *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 19. The third sense of *secundum se* in *In V Metaphysics* is the negation of any cause. For instance, the proposition "Man is man" is *secundum se* since no middle term causes it to be true. This is, then, a negation of the seventh sense of "in." The fourth sense of *secundum se* in *In V Metaphysics* is that used to describe something that is alone or separate. This is a negation of the fifth sense of "in" in which a form is in matter.

60. For Thomas's different uses of the term *natura*, see: *In II Phys.*, l. 1–2; *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 5.

61. *In I Sent.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 1, co. (Mandonnet 555–556).

62. The view that when we say, "I am" or "Socrates is," we are really making a negative judgment is popular in analytic philosophy. E.g., Davies, "Aquinas, God, and Being," 506; Van Inwagen, *Existence*, 57–62. Cf. Note 3. Gilson criticizes a different theory in Brentano that, like the one at large today, has the highly implausible consequence that ostensibly affirmative propositions turn out to be negative ones. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 195.

63. Someone may also try to read "*esse in rerum natura*" as signifying the *esse* that is in a nature or essence as in a subject. This would be the fifth sense of "in." But the problem with such an interpretation is that, from the context of *In I Peri.*, l. 2 and *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, it is clear that Thomas's word "*esse*," here, refers to the concrete significate of "*est*." The phrase "*esse in rerum natura*" is an abstract way of speaking about the significate of the concrete predicate in the sentence "Socrates *is in the nature of things*." Thus, what is being said to be in the nature of things is not *esse*, but that of which *esse* (i.e., *est*) is predicated. But the subject of predication (i.e., Socrates) is obviously not in any nature as in a subject. So, "*esse in rerum natura*" cannot be using the fifth sense of "in."

64. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.27:19): "Sed haec expositio non videtur conveniens, tum quia ens non dicitur proprie aequivoce, sed secundum prius et posterius; unde simpliciter dictum intelligitur de eo, quod per prius dicitur: tum etiam, quia dictio aequivoca non *nihil* significat, sed *multa* significat."

65. *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.28:22): "nam EST, simpliciter dictum, significat *in actu esse* . . . *simpliciter* vel *secundum quid*; simpliciter quidem secundum praesens tempus; secundum quid autem secundum alia tempora." See also: *In I Peri.*, l. 5 (Leon. 1.25–26:12–14).

66. See Notes 55–56.

67. *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 889: "Primo *distinguit ens, quod est extra animam, per decem praedicamenta*, quod est ens perfectum. Secundo ponit alium modum entis, secundum quod est tantum in mente, ibi, 'Amplius autem et *esse* significat.' Tertio dividit ens per potentiam et actum: et ens sic divisum est communius quam ens perfectum. Nam ens in potentia, est ens secundum quid tantum et imperfectum, ibi, 'Amplius *esse* significat et ens.'"

68. Cf. *In IV Metaphysicorum*, l. 1, 539–540: "ita etiam et ens multipliciter dicitur. Sed tamen omne ens dicitur per respectum ad unum primum. Sed hoc primum non est finis vel efficiens sicut in praemissis exemplis, sed subiectum . . . Item negationes eorum quae ad substantiam habitudinem habent, vel etiam ipsius substantiae *esse* dicuntur. Unde dicimus quod non ens est non ens. Quod non diceretur nisi negationi aliquo modo *esse* competeret. Sciendum tamen quod praedicti modi essendi ad quatuor possunt reduci. Nam unum eorum quod est debilissimum, est tantum in ratione, scilicet negatio et privatio, quam dicimus in ratione *esse*, quia ratio de eis negociatur quasi de quibusdam entibus, dum de eis affirmat vel negat aliquid. Secundum quid autem differant negatio et privatio, infra dicetur." On the asymmetric relation of truth to *esse* outside the mind, see: *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 17; *DV*, q. 21, a. 1, co. An important consequence of the analogy between *ens ut verum* and *ens extra animam* is that *ens ut verum* is itself divided analogically into categories according to the ten genera of being that may be reflected in the mind's conception of extramental being. For instance, a subject in the mind is a substance by analogy with one outside the mind.

If I am correct, this undercuts Klima's reading of *In V Metaphysics* in which *ens ut verum* is understood as a univocal predicate.

69.   *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 896: "Sciendum est autem quod iste secundus modus comparatur ad primum, sicut effectus ad causam. Ex hoc enim quod aliquid in rerum natura est, sequitur veritas et falsitas in propositione, quam intellectus significat per hoc verbum est prout est verbalis copula. Sed, quia aliquid, quod est in se non ens, intellectus considerat ut quoddam ens, sicut negationem et huiusmodi, ideo quandoque dicitur *esse* de aliquo hoc secundo modo, et non primo. Dicitur enim, quod caecitas est secundo modo, ex eo quod vera est propositio, qua dicitur aliquid *esse* caecum; non tamen dicitur quod sit primo modo vera. Nam caecitas non habet aliquod *esse* in rebus, sed magis est privatio alicuius *esse*. Accidit autem unicuique rei quod aliquid de ipsa vere affirmetur intellectu vel voce. Nam res non refertur ad scientiam, sed e converso. *Esse* vero quod in sui natura unaquaeque res habet, est substantiale. Et ideo, cum dicitur, Socrates est, si ille est primo modo accipiatur, est de praedicato substantiali. Nam ens est superius ad unumquodque entium, sicut animal ad hominem. Si autem accipiatur secundo modo, est de praedicato accidentali."

70.   Cf. *QDq*, IX, q. 2, a. 3, co. (Leon. 25.96:50–52).

71.   By saying this, I do not mean to suggest that "*esse in rerum natura*" and "*esse substantiale*" are synonymous. But adequately distinguishing them would require an extensive digression into the derivative sense in which predicamental accidents can be said to have a substance or essence. Cf. *In VII Metaphysicorum*, l. 1–4; *De ente*, c. 6.

72.   Cf. Note 28, where I give additional arguments against the view that "*esse accidentale*" should be understood as accidental existence.

73.   Brock, "How Many Acts," 320 and 325n27.

74.   *In hebd.*, c. 2 (22–24:150–190).

75.   See: McInerny, *Boethius and Aquinas*, 192 and 207–209.

76.   In *III De Anima*, c. 2 (Leon. 45.210:125): "*aliud est magnitudo et magnitudini esse*, id est aliud magnitudo et quod quid est eius (esse enim quod est magnitudini appellat quiditatem eius), et similiter aliud est *aqua et aque esse et sic in multis* aliis, id est in omnibus mathematicis et naturalibus; unde signanter duo exempla posuit, nam magnitude est quid mathematicum, aqua autem est quid naturale."

77.   *In VII Metaphysicorum*, l. 3, 1310: "in omnibus sequentibus per hoc quod dicit hoc esse, vel huic esse, intelligit quod quid erat esse illius rei; sicut homini esse vel hominem esse, intelligit id quod pertinet ad quod quid est homo. Quod est autem 'musicum esse,' idest hoc ipsum quod quid est musicus, non pertinet ad hoc quod quid es tu."

78.   It becomes more complicated to determine whether Thomas uses "*esse hominem*" and "*esse substantiale*" to signify *esse essentiae* or *esse existentiae* in his Christological treatises. He does deny that *esse hominem* is the *esse simpliciter* of Christ whereas in other texts Aquinas identifies *esse simpliciter* with *esse substantiale*. Cf. *ST* III, q. 16, a. 9, co; *ST* III, q. 16, a. 6, ad1. But, even in making this unusual denial, Aquinas simultaneously implies that the reverse is the case in normal creatures. For Thomas, "*esse substantiale*" may still mean essence, but because of the idiosyncrasies of Christ's supernatural unity, "*esse substantiale*" is too coarse a term. Thomas no longer distinguishes just *esse substantiale* and *esse accidentale*, but instead *esse substantiale principale*, *esse substantiale secundum quid*, and *esse accidentale*. *De unione Verbi*, q. 4, co. All interpreters of this text from *De Unione* have assumed Thomas uses "*esse substantiale*" to signify *esse existentiae*. These interpreters may well be right in the context

of this article, and I do not intend to defend a contrary interpretation here. For various interpretations of *De Unione*, a. 4—a text which superficially seems to contradict parallel texts—see Osborne, "Which Essence," esp. 502–505; Victor Salas, "Thomas Aquinas on Christ's *Esse*: A Metaphysics of the Incarnation," *The Thomist* 70. 4 (2006): 577–603; J.L.A. West, "Aquinas on the Metaphysics of *Esse* in Christ," *The Thomist* 66.2 (2002): 231–250.

79. *ST* I–II, q. 18, a. 1, co: "Sic igitur dicendum est quod omnis actio, inquantum habet aliquid de esse, intantum habet de bonitate, inquantum vero deficit ei aliquid de plenitudine essendi quae debetur actioni humanae, intantum deficit a bonitate."

80. That accidents signified abstractly are signified in the mode of substance, see *In V Metaphysicorum*, l. 9, 894; *De Virtutibus*, q. 1, a. 11, co: "formae per modum substantiarum signantur in abstracto, ut albedo, vel virtus."

81. *In VII Metaphysicorum*, l. 4, 1355: "definitio quae est ratio eius quod quid erat esse, et ipsum quod quid erat esse, solum est substantiarum, sicut prima solutio habebat. Vel est primo et simpliciter earum, et per posterius et secundum quid accidentium, ut in secunda solutione dicebatur."

82. *In II Script.*, d. 34, q. 1, a. 1, co. (Mandonnet 872): "Philosophus, in V *Metaphys.*, text. 14, 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 . . . Quæcumque ergo dicuntur entia quantum ad primum modum, sunt entia quantum ad secundum modum: quia omne quod habet naturale esse in rebus potest significari per propositionem affirmativam esse, ut cum dicitur: color est vel homo est . . . secundum primum modum acceptum est prædicatum substantiale, et pertinet ad quæstionem quid est."