

According to Thomas Aquinas, “That which first falls in the intellect is *being*, and therefore everything that we apprehend we consider as being, and consequently as *one*, and as *good*, which are convertible with being.” Hence we say, “*essence [essentia = quidditas (i.e., whatness)] is being and one and good*”(ST, I-2, Q. 55, a. 4).

Commenting on this, Beer says: “Being in any degree implies value, since all things participate, more or less, in God’s being. All being is good. . . . Evil exists, but only as privation of being. That relative privation is necessary for the perfection of the created world, which consists in its comprehension of every order of being from the greatest to the least” (*To Make a Nation*: 36).

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