

William of Auvergne
Time, Perpetuity, and Eternity

"[T]he being of time began and had a first moment of its being. Therefore, its non-being before there was time was either perpetual or eternal. It cannot be said to have been eternal, since it was ended or was limited by the creation of the first instant of the whole of time. But it cannot be said to be perpetual, since it did not begin and because it ceases. We, therefore, lack a proper name for it. I say, then, that perpetuity stands as the opposite to the non-being of time, for the perpetual has a beginning without an end, but the non-being of time has an end without a beginning...

"Eternity, however, preceded time by the whole of itself, and by the whole of itself it is after time. The reason for this is that, since eternity is always whole, nothing of it passed away, and nothing of it was at all. Hence, it does not follow that, if the whole of eternity was before time or preceded time, nothing of it will, on this account, be future. It is the same way as if one said God is wholly in heaven and above the earth; therefore, nothing of God is on earth or below the earth. For His being in heaven and above the earth does not prevent His being on earth or below the earth, since He is whole everywhere...

"But if one asks whether eternity is in time, one must without a doubt distinguish, just as when one asks whether God is in time. For He is not in time in such a way as to be measured by it, as is often said, but as concomitant to it, so to speak. He is, then, when time is and whenever any part of time exists. But if anyone said that this concomitance alone made God to be in time, you could say to him in accord with this mode that He is in every house and in every city, because He is where every city and house is. You know on this point that being in time and being in place are not said with one meaning." -*De Universo*

From The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: "William of Auvergne or Paris, (ca.1180/90–1249), Bishop of Paris from 1228 until his death in 1249, was one of the first wave of thinkers in the Latin West to engage with the writings on natural philosophy and metaphysics by Greek, Islamic and Jewish thinkers that had recently become available in Latin translation...He was a canon of Notre Dame [Paris] and a master of theology by 1223, and is mentioned in bulls of Pope Honorius III in 1224 and 1225. The story of his elevation to the episcopacy in 1228 paints a picture of a man of great determination and self-confidence...[When the bishop of Paris died, William put himself forward as a candidate.] He made a favorable impression, for the Pope, impressed by his 'eminent knowledge and spotless virtue,' as he put it both ordained him priest and made him Bishop of Paris, a position he retained until his death in 1249...William's most important philosophical writings form part of a vast seven-part work he calls the Magisterium Divinale et Sapientiale...He viewed it as having two principal parts. The first part is comprised of *De Trinitate*, *De universo*, and *De anima*. In this, the most philosophical part of the *Magisterium*, William proceeds by 'the paths of proofs' or philosophizing rather than by an appeal to the authority of revelation...The works comprising the second part of the *Magisterium* are more expressly theological in nature and appeal to the authority of revelation. Nevertheless, William continually recurs to his philosophical doctrines in all his works, and even his most theological writings contain material of considerable philosophical interest."