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It's Not Just about Anselm: Aquinas' *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1 and Early Franciscan Illumination Theory

Abstract: Although Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae*, Ia, q. 2, a. 1, appears to be a straightforward discussion of Anselm's *Proslogion*, ch. 2–3, a study of theologians from the preceding decades suggests that the text is also, and perhaps principally, a deliberate contribution to a conversation that was taking place among Franciscan theologians in the 1240s–50s about how to reconcile theories of divine illumination emerging at Oxford and Paris in the 1220s–30s. On the basis of his own highly particularized understanding of divine illumination, which centers on how concupiscence causes fallen human persons to lose access to the illumination of the possible intellect, Aquinas criticizes Bonaventure and the *Summa Halensis* for arguing that God's existence is naturally known prior to demonstration, by drawing upon Richard Rufus' earlier criticism of *Proslogion* 2 as well as a modified version of the *Summa Halensis*' argument that God can be naturally known as the object of desire. Read in this context, q. 2, a. 1 can be seen as a deliberate attempt to place the beginning of theology within the broader context of 13th-century divine illumination theory, and to identify the starting point for the fallen intellect in knowing and naming God.

Thomas Aquinas' *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1 ('whether God's existence is *per se notum*') is customarily presented as a straightforward discussion of Anselm's *Proslogion*.¹ There are good grounds for this reading: something akin to Anselm's argument from *Proslogion* 2 is presented in objection 2, and Aquinas cites Anselm himself directly in earlier discussions of the topic.² But the very fact that Aquinas does not cite Anselm by name in this text should give us pause before interpreting the text solely as a discussion of Anselm. No one would wish to deny that the consideration of Anselm is *necessary* for a proper understanding of Aquinas' text. But one might reasonably ask whether the consideration of Anselm is *sufficient*, or whether a more complete under-

1 For the texts of Thomas Aquinas, I will be relying on the Leonine edition, unless otherwise noted: Thomas Aquinas, *Opera Omnia iussu impensaue Leonis XIII*, 50 vols (Rome; Paris: Commissio Leonina, 1882–). References to the Leonine edition will be abbreviated 'Leon'. For the text of *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1, see Leon., 4:27–28.

2 See *In I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, ar. 2, obj. 4, in Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super Sententiis*, vol. 1, ed. Pierre Mandonnet (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929), p. 93; *De veritate*, q. 10, ar. 12, co. and ad s.c. 1 (Leon., 22:340, 342); *De Trinitate*, pt. 1, q. 1, ar. 3, ad 6 (Leon., 50:88); and *Summa contra Gentiles* 1.10–11, in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, *Editio Leonina Manualis* (Rome: Apud sedem Commissionis Leoninae, 1934), pp. 8–9.

standing of the text also requires the consideration of the reception history of Anselm in the mid-13th century.

This chapter will outline the conversation about Anselm's *Proslogion* that took place among theologians at Oxford and Paris in the mid-13th century, and suggest how Aquinas' *ST Ia*, q. 2, ar. 1 may be connected to it. In the first part, I will trace the development of two branches of divine illumination theory: that of Robert Grosseteste at Oxford, and that of John of La Rochelle at Paris. In the second and third, I will examine the introduction of language from Anselm's *Proslogion* into the discussion of Paris illumination theory in the *Commentary on the Sentences* of Odo Rigaldus, as well as the critical reception of both Oxford and Paris illumination theories in the *Summa Halensis*, Richard Rufus, and Bonaventure. In the fourth and fifth, I will document the ways in which Aquinas accepts elements of both Oxford and Paris illumination theories into his understanding of the Creation, Fall, and Redemption of the human intellect, and show how Aquinas' *ST Ia*, q. 2, ar. 1, can be read as a critical discussion and reception of early Franciscan illumination theory. Aquinas rejects Bonaventure's idea that God's existence is *per se notum* on logical grounds, as well as the common Franciscan idea that God's existence is habitually impressed upon the mind, but Aquinas does not therefore reject the early Franciscan illumination tradition altogether. Rather, Aquinas draws upon the *Summa Halensis* and Rufus to illustrate how the need to demonstrate God's existence is actually part of the structure divine illumination itself.

The Development of Oxford and Paris Illumination Theories: Robert Grosseteste and John of La Rochelle

The 1220s and early 1230s witnessed a radical shift in the scholastic understanding of our knowledge of God. While figures like William of Auxerre were giving the apophaticism of the long 12th century its characteristic shape,³ the period also witnessed what has been called the 'invention' of analogy,⁴ and the development of several different cataphatic approaches to knowing and naming God. One of the key figures in

³ On the apophaticism of equivocity during this period, see Louisa Valente, *Logique et théologie: Les écoles parisiennes entre 1150 et 1220* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2008), pp. 74, 206–32; on the apophaticism of univocity, see Valente, *Logique et théologie*, pp. 234–57. William's *Summa aurea* was written between 1215–25. On its dating, see Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre's Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: PIMS, 1963), p. 158, n. 28.

⁴ Jan Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor (ca. 1225) to Francisco Suarez* (Boston: Brill, 2012), p. 8.

the development of mid-13th century cataphaticism was Robert Grosseteste.⁵ The impetus behind Grosseteste's work appears to have been an effort to harmonize the epistemology of divine illumination, which he received from the Augustinian tradition, with the epistemology of abstraction, which he found in Aristotle.⁶ The first place that we find expression of this 'Aristotelian-Augustinianism' is Grosseteste's *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*,⁷ which he wrote as a *magister artium* in the 1220s.⁸

In Grosseteste's work, knowledge and love are inseparably wed. Love has priority, but love does not surpass knowledge so much as it disposes us towards it.⁹ All things being equal, humanity would love God above creatures and that love would dispose us towards a direct illumination of the mind by God. But all things are not equal: sin has caused humanity to love the sensations and phantasms of the human body more than God. Consequently, sin has disposed us to know only those things which can be acquired through abstraction from the sensations and phantasms of the body.¹⁰ Knowledge acquired by abstraction is still dependent on God, but its dependence is indirect; Grosseteste thinks that God is the light in which the created order becomes intelligible to the fallen mind.¹¹

The indirect dependence of the fallen mind on divine light creates an analogical link between fallen knowledge and unfallen knowledge. When fallen knowledge alights on a created truth through abstraction, it ascends by an awakened desire through exemplar causality to know God as basis of that truth. The more this desire is healed by grace, the more the soul gradually ascends once more towards the direct knowledge of God for which it was created.¹² Formal exemplar causality thus opens to the mind a path from the knowledge of creatures to the knowledge of God. The

5 On Grosseteste's theological formation, see Joseph Goering, 'When and Where did Grosseteste Study Theology?' in *Robert Grosseteste: New Perspectives on his Thought and Scholarship*, ed. James McEvoy (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), pp. 9–51.

6 There are many divergent readings of Grosseteste's *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*. I follow Christina van Dyke, 'An Aristotelian Theory of Divine Illumination: Robert Grosseteste's Commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*,' *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* 17:4 (2009), pp. 685–704. For a summary of the divergent views of Grosseteste on this question, see *ibid.*, p. 686.

7 The text of the *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics* can be found in Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in Posteriorum Analyticorum Libros*, ed. Pietro Rossi (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1981). For the summary of Grosseteste that follows, I rely on Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition: Anselm's Argument and the Friars* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 93–95.

8 Pietro Rossi, Introduction to Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in Posteriorum Analyticorum Libros*, p. 21.

9 Grosseteste, *Commentarius in Posteriorum Analyticorum Libros* 1.14 (Rossi, pp. 215–16).

10 Van Dyke, 'An Aristotelian Theory of Divine Illumination,' pp. 690–92.

11 Van Dyke, 'An Aristotelian Theory of Divine Illumination,' pp. 700–4.

12 Robert Grosseteste, *Commentarius in Posteriorum Analyticorum Libros* 1.14 (Rossi, p. 216): '[I]n quantum avertitur amor a corporalibus corruptibilibus in tantum convertitur aspectus ad suum lumen et in tantum reperit ipsum.'

result, which Grosseteste continued to reaffirm in his *De veritate* (c.1235),¹³ is that ‘just as the truth of a [created] thing can only be understood in the light of the highest truth, so likewise everything that supposits for the noun “truth” includes a reference to the highest truth.’¹⁴

Grosseteste’s influence on the subsequent philosophy and theology of the Franciscan Order has been so well documented that it needs no elaboration here.¹⁵ What is less well-known is that there was another, equally influential strand of illumination theory among the Franciscans from approximately 1231 to at least 1250, which developed in parallel to that of Grosseteste: the illumination theory of John of La Rochelle.¹⁶

John’s initial account of our knowledge of God can be found in his treatise *De divinis nominibus*, which is roughly contemporaneous with Grosseteste’s *De veritate*.¹⁷ It is based upon Avicenna’s theory of impressed concepts. According to Avicenna, all cognition begins with ideas or forms impressed upon the mind by the ‘giver of forms’ (*dator formarum*), whom Christian Avicennians identified with God.¹⁸ Avicenna him-

13 On the date of this work, see Goering, ‘When and Where did Grosseteste Study Theology?’ p. 41.

14 Robert Grosseteste, *De veritate* (Baumker, p. 139): ‘Sicut enim veritas rei nec intelligi potest nisi in luce veritatis summae, sic forte nec supponitur per nomen veritatis nisi cum significatione veritatis summae.’ On the relationship of Grosseteste’s *De veritate* to the work of Anselm by the same name, see Timothy Noone, ‘Truth, Creation, and Intelligibility in Anselm, Grosseteste, and Bonaventure,’ in *Truth: Studies of a Robust Presence*, ed. Kurt Pritzl (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), pp. 114–20. On Grosseteste’s analogical knowledge of God, see *ibid.*, pp. 116–17. On the relationship between sin and knowledge, see *ibid.*, p. 117.

15 See the bibliography of sources in Servus Gieben, ‘Robert Grosseteste and the Evolution of the Franciscan Order,’ in *Robert Grosseteste: New Perspectives on his Thought and Scholarship*, ed. McEvoy, p. 216, n. 4.

16 On the life of John of La Rochelle, see Jacques Bougerol, Introduction to John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1995), pp. 9–13. On his works, see Jacques Bougerol, ‘Jean de la Rochelle: Les oeuvres et les manuscrits,’ *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 87 (1994), pp. 205–15. Upon Alexander’s entrance to the Order, John was assigned Alexander’s *socius*. He may or may not have succeeded him to the magistral chair in 1238. See Sophie Delmas, ‘Alexandre de Halès et le studium franciscain de Paris: Aux origines de la question des chaires franciscaines et de l’exercice quodlibétique,’ in *Les collèges réguliers en Europe au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, eds. A. Sohn and J. Verger (Paris: Winkler de Bochum, 2012), pp. 37–47.

17 For an introduction to the treatise, see Jacob Wood, ‘Forging the Analogy of Being: John of La Rochelle’s *De divinis nominibus* (Trier, Abtei St. Matthias, 162) and the *Summa Halensis* on Knowing and Naming God,’ in *The Summa Halensis: Doctrines and Debates*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), pp. 31–57.

18 For Avicenna’s doctrine of impressed concepts, see Avicenna, *Prima philosophia* 1.5, in Avicenna Latinus, *Liber de philosophia prima*, ed. Simone van Riet (Leiden: Peeters, 1977), vol. 1, pp. 32–33. For their applicability in a medieval context, see Jan Aertsen, ‘Avicenna’s Doctrine of the Primary Notions and Its Influence on Medieval Philosophy,’ in *Islamic Thought in the Middle Ages: Studies in Text, Transmission and Translation*, in *Honour of Hans Daiber*, eds. Anna Akasoy and Wim Raven (Boston: Brill, 2008), pp. 21–42; Lydia Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology: Between Authority and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 70–73; Jacob W. Wood, *To Stir a Restless*

self does not specify a 'first' impressed concept, but John identifies it with 'being' (*ens*). According to this line of reasoning, the concept of being, impressed upon the mind by God, gives the soul a knowledge of its own being without any reference to exterior creatures.¹⁹ Unlike in Grosseteste, where the knowledge of any created truth would include an implicit knowledge of God's existence in virtue of exemplar causality, John thinks that in order to arrive at the knowledge of God, the soul has to undertake a process of analogical reasoning based upon efficient causality.

John's reasoning runs thus: the soul knows that it exists, because the concept of being has been impressed upon it by God; however, the soul is also aware that it has not always existed; its being must therefore have come to it from another; John identifies this other with God.²⁰ The metaphysics of causality thus open for us a pathway to predicate being of creatures and God analogically. Following the Dionysian *triplex via*, John has us deny creaturely limitations on being (the *via negationis*); acknowledge God as the cause of being in creatures (the *via causalitatis*); and apply 'being' (*ens*) supereminently to God (the *via eminentiae*). In this way, John thinks that we can predicate *ens* of God *per prius* and of the soul *per posterius*. A similar process obtains for other names which we use of God, such as 'good' (*bonum*). Once we distinguish the *ratio* of good from the *ratio* of being, we can predicate 'good' of God *per prius* and of creatures *per posterius* by a similar process of analogy.

In a different context, and with a different but related goal in mind, John thus developed an alternate, cataphatic illumination theory to that of Grosseteste. Where Grosseteste relied on the exemplar causality by which God illuminates truth in the mind to establish an analogical knowledge of God, John relied on the efficient causality by which God creates the soul and impresses concepts in the mind. As we shall see in a moment, Franciscan theologians of the 1240s and 1250s recognized these as two distinct ways of approaching the question of divine illumination. In order to facilitate our discussion of their thought, we can label the two theories based upon their respective places of origin. Grosseteste's theory, which is based upon exemplar causality, we will call 'Oxford illumination theory'. John's theory, which is based upon efficient causality, we will call 'Paris illumination theory'. It is important to note that these labels are not intended to suggest anything about the future reception of these theories; the labels have merely been selected as a convenient way of distinguishing the two theories based upon their location of origin. In fact, both theories received significant attention from authors on both sides of the English Channel.

Heart: Nature, Grace, and the Desire for God in Thomas Aquinas in Henri de Lubac (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2019), pp. 91–92.

¹⁹ This is the basis of Avicenna's famous 'flying man' argument. See Therese Scarpelli Cory, *Aquinas on Self-Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 24–26.

²⁰ The summary of John's argument is based on Wood, 'Forging the Analogy of Being,' pp. 41–51.

A *Ressourcement* of Anselm: Odo Rigaldus

In 1240–42, Odo Rigaldus became the first Franciscan to write a *Commentary on the Sentences*, lecturing under Alexander of Hales, and possibly also John of La Rochelle.²¹ As Davis and Delmas both note, Odo had two *exempla* to follow: that of Alexander's earlier *Glossa on the Sentences*, which was more in the earlier style of a *glossa continua*, and the more recent and more heavily edited example of a Dominican, Hugh of St Cher.²² What Odo lacked was an example from a member of his own order of the sort of more heavily edited commentary that was expected of him. This meant that he had to make editorial decisions about where to include theological material that had become important to Franciscan theologians since the composition of Alexander's *Glossa*, and which was not of as much interest to a member of a different order, like Hugh. The material on divine illumination was of this sort.

Odo selected two places to insert the material on divine illumination. In book 1, distinction 8, which concerns our knowledge of the divine attributes, he inserted John's account of how the soul arrives at the knowledge of God.²³ In book 1, distinction 2, Odo did something more radical. As Matthews observes: 'The second distinction, as Odo states, is concerned with showing evidence for the Trinity from the Old and New Testaments. Yet, because unbelievers do not accept authorities, we should not hesitate to provide reasons, where we seem able, for those things that the Catholic faith holds most certainly concerning God.'²⁴ In the service of this goal, Odo decided to utilize John's proof for the existence of God as 'unreceived being' outside of the Christian narrative of sin and grace.

Ironically, although Odo's intention was to prove the existence of God to unbelievers, the genre in which he was writing demanded that he ground his arguments in theological authority. Accordingly, Odo engaged in a *ressourcement* of 11th and 12th-century thinkers, whom he understood to have also proved the existence of God to non-believers. He settled on two. First, he chose Richard of St Victor, who in his *De Trinitate* offers a series of arguments for the existence of God as well as the identification and distinction of certain divine attributes. Second, he chose Anselm of Canterbury, who in *Proslogion* 2 argues that God is that greater than which

21 Adam Davis, *The Holy Bureaucrat: Eudes Rigaud and Religious Reform in Thirteenth-Century Normandy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 14–17; Sophie Delmas, 'Odo Rigaldus, Alexander of Hales, and the *Summa Halensis*,' in *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), pp. 267–84.

22 Davis, *The Holy Bureaucrat*, p. 16; Delmas, 'Odo Rigaldus, Alexander of Hales, and the *Summa Halensis*.'

23 See Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, p. 61.

24 Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, p. 60.

nothing can be thought, and in *Proslogion* 3 argues that God cannot be thought not to be.²⁵

Odo's use of Richard of St Victor makes Richard sound a lot like John of La Rochelle: Odo has Richard assume that creaturely being is caused, argue for the existence of a first cause on that basis, and establish various attributes of the first cause from the fact that a first cause exists (eternity, simplicity, omnipotence, wisdom, immutability, and goodness).²⁶ His use of Anselm is similar. Rather than merely rehearsing what Anselm says, Odo makes creative use of a mixture of the arguments in *Proslogion* 2 and 3. We can best make sense of this mixture if we consider Odo's use of Anselm in light of John's use of Avicennian impressed concepts: Anselm's argument in *Proslogion* 2 concerns the order of being, while his argument in *Proslogion* 3 concerns the order of knowing; since Avicenna's view of human thought effectively merges the order of knowing with the order of being, it would make sense for a scholar utilizing Anselm to support Avicenna's view of human thought to want to merge Anselm's two arguments. We can best appreciate what Odo is trying to achieve if we put to one side the question of what Avicenna or Anselm thought, and take Odo's argument on its own merits.

Odo's argument runs thus: God is a being than which nothing greater can be thought to be; such a being either exists or it does not; if it does, Odo rests his case; if not, then since having being is better than not having being, we would be forced to say that any being whatsoever is better than that being which cannot be thought not to be, which is impossible; therefore God must exist, and must possess all the attributes which befit 'goodness and nobility' (e.g. ultimate simplicity, eternity, omnipotence, etc.).²⁷ Odo does acknowledge that, notwithstanding his reworking of Anselm's argument, people have and do in actual fact deny the existence of God. But recurring to what is in fact John's analogy of being, Odo holds that no one can be ignorant of God's existence simply speaking; although the Fall has caused the

25 For the text of Odo, I rely on Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS 14910. For further study of the manuscripts, see F. M. Henquinet, 'Les Manuscrits et l'Influence des Écrits Théologiques d'Eudes Rigaud O.F.M.,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 11 (1940), pp. 324–50; Sophie Delmas, 'Appendix: List of Manuscripts,' in Delmas, 'Odo Rigaldus, Alexander of Hales, and the *Summa Halensis*.' For Richard of St Victor, see Richard of St Victor, *De Trinitate*, ed. Jean Ribailier, *Textes Philosophiques du Moyen Age VI* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1958). For Anselm's *Proslogion*, see Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*, in *Opera Omnia*, ed. F.S. Schmitt (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1946), vol. 1, pp. 89–122. Chapters 2 and 3 can be found on pp. 101–3. There was a certain logic to Odo's selection of Richard and Anselm, as well as to the ahistorical order in which he placed the texts. As Schumacher (*Early Franciscan Theology*, p. 110) observes, Richard provided subsequent thinkers with something of a paradigm for reading Anselm.

26 Odo Rigaldus, *In I Sent.*, d. 2, ar. 1 (Paris, BnF lat. MS 14910, f. 6vb–7ra).

27 Odo Rigaldus, *In I Sent.*, d. 2, ar. 1 (Paris, BnF lat. MS 14910, f. 7rb–7va).

human intellect to ‘deteriorate’ to a certain extent,²⁸ the knowledge of being remains naturally present in the soul, as does the awareness of the fact that the soul receives being from another. A person can only err concerning the determinations of being by which we arrive at God through the knowledge of creatures. Odo’s example is justice: a person, while knowing that God exists, could have a hard time seeing that God is just; on that basis he could deny that God exists insofar as he is just.²⁹

Assessing Oxford and Paris Illumination Theory: The *Summa Halensis*, Richard Rufus, and Bonaventure

After Odo, it became customary for mid-13th-century Franciscans to adapt the text of Anselm’s *Proslogion* to support their own attempts at a critical reception of Grosseteste and John of La Rochelle. In this way, Anselm’s words and phrases became part of a common tradition in search of a contemporary understanding of divine illumination. Since the object of this chapter is ultimately to arrive at an understanding of Thomas Aquinas, we will look briefly in this section at three Franciscan works/figures with which he appears to interact: the *Summa Halensis*, Richard Rufus, and Bonaventure.

In its understanding of the knowledge of God, the *Summa Halensis* attempts to merge Oxford and Paris illumination theory. With John and Odo, it argues that human intellection begins with a series of impressed concepts.³⁰ The first of these is being, which we can know without reference to creatures. By comparing being with creatures, we can come to distinguish the first determinations of being: one, true, and good.³¹ Each of these impressed concepts taken individually can also lead us to a cataphatic knowledge of God by an analogy.³²

At this point in the reasoning process, the *Summa Halensis* shifts to something more akin to Grosseteste. The first determinations of being have a logical structure: they are arranged into a *vestigium trinitatis* which links the faculties of the soul (memory, reason, will), by means of the knowledge that God impresses in the soul (one, true, good), with the persons of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).³³ As Schumacher has shown, it is by means of this analogical *vestigium* that the Sum-

28 See Odo Rigaldus, *In II Sent.*, d. 29, q. 3, ad 2, in Jean Bouvy, ‘La nécessité de la grâce dans le Commentaire des Sentences d’Odon Rigaud,’ *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 28 (1961), p. 94.

29 Odo Rigaldus, *In I Sent.*, d. 2, ar. 1 (Paris, BnF lat. MS 14910, f. 7rb).

30 Wood, *To Stir a Restless Heart*, pp. 92–93.

31 Wood, *To Stir a Restless Heart*, p. 92; Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, p. 161.

32 Wood, ‘Forging the Analogy of Being,’ pp. 52–55.

33 Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, p. 161.

mist situates our knowledge of God within the Christian narrative of sin and grace.³⁴ All things being equal, the soul's analogical ascent to the one God by individual concepts through efficient causality, will open up into an analogical ascent to the triune God by exemplar causality in relation to the *vestigium Trinitatis* discovered in such concepts.³⁵ However, sin prevents this analogical pathway from coming to complete fruition in every person, because concupiscence obscures our awareness of that transcendental pathway.³⁶ In this context, the healing of the will by grace restores our awareness of divine illumination, and our ability to come to the knowledge of God through it.³⁷

Like Odo, the *Summa Halensis* bolsters its discussion of the knowledge of God with reference to Anselm's *Proslogion*. The argument from *Proslogion* 2 it quotes *verbatim*.³⁸ It takes a more creative approach to *Proslogion* 3. According to the Summist, there are really two kinds of knowledge of God: habitual and actual. Our habitual knowledge of God is the latent understanding of God's existence, which exists in the soul and is unaffected by sin: 'The knowledge of God in habit is naturally impressed upon us, since there is naturally in us an impressed habit, namely, a similitude of the first truth in the intellect, whereby it can be known by the rational soul that [God] is and it cannot be not known.'³⁹ If we are speaking of this kind of knowledge, Anselm's argument from *Proslogion* 3 holds true. Our knowledge of God in act is the conscious knowledge, which proceeds from an analogy of efficient causality establishing God's existence to an analogy of exemplar causality which perceives the Trinity in the *vestigium* of the transcendentals. If we are speaking of this kind of knowledge, Anselm's argument from *Proslogion* 3 does not necessarily hold true; its efficacy depends upon the love of God, which may or may not be present in an individual soul, or may only be present to a certain degree.

At one point the Summist merges *Proslogion* 2 and 3. It is in an objection stating that 'if (...) the divine essence most truly is (*verissime est*) and is the most true thing (*verissima*), it cannot not be, nor can it be thought not to be.'⁴⁰ While the proximate source of the objection is not clear, the reply suggests that one purpose of raising it was to utilize the Summist's blend of Paris and Oxford illumination theories to respond to Odo's evangelistic use of Paris illumination theory. We will quote the Summist's reply in full, since it would later form the basis of *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1, ad 1.

34 Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, pp. 89–92.

35 Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, p. 161.

36 Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, p. 91.

37 Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, pp. 89, 92.

38 Alexander of Hales, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica* (*SH*), 4 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924–48), I, P1, In1, Tr1, Q1, C1 (n. 25), p. 42.

39 *SH* I, P1, In1, Tr1, Q1, C2 (n. 26), p. 43: 'Cognitio de Deo in habitu naturaliter nobis impressa est, quia ipsa naturaliter est in nobis habitus impressus, scilicet similitudo primae veritatis in intellectu, quo potest concipere ipsum esse et non potest ignorari ab anima rationali.'

40 *SH* I, P1, In1, Tr1, Q1, C2 (n. 26), p. 43: 'Si (...) divina essentia verissime est et verissima, ergo non potest non esse, nec cogitari non esse.'

The knowledge of something can happen in two ways: in a general conception (*ratio communis*) and in a specific identity (*ratio propria*). Therefore, something can be known in a general conception and yet remain unknown in its specific identity, like when someone knows honey under a general conception, namely that it is a soft, reddish substance, however he does not know it under its specific identity; and for this reason when he sees that gall is a soft, reddish substance, he mistakenly thinks that it is honey (Aristotle, *Soph. Elen.* 5; 167b18–20). Similarly, the knowledge of happiness and the desire for it is innate in us in its general conception, which ‘is a state made perfect by the amalgamation of all that is good’ (Boethius, *De cons. phil.* 3, pros. 2), yet some people do not know it in its specific identity. That is why different people seek it in different things. (...) Likewise we should say that idolaters are not unaware of God in a general conception, which is being (*ens*), principle (*principium*), almighty (*omnipotens*); yet they do not know God under his specific identity, and that is why they say of the God, who is triune, one, and true, that he is not God, and of an idol, that it is God.⁴¹

This reply is a reworking of a passage in William of Auxerre’s *Summa aurea*.⁴² William had wanted to know whether a pagan, worshipping an idol, identifies that idol with the true God. In response, he had distinguished two kinds of pagans: those who know the true God but identify him with an idol, and those who do not know the true God, but attribute to an idol some attribute of God (William’s example is omnipotence). The Summist implicitly rejects William’s distinction, because it would mean that some pagans were capable of thinking that God does not exist. Instead, he takes a distinction adapted from Avicenna between a general idea of something and a knowledge of its specific identity, a distinction which Avicenna had said that ‘even the mistaken and the simple grant,’⁴³ and uses it to put every pagan into

41 *SH I*, P1, In1, Tr1, Q1, C2 (n. 26), p. 43: ‘Cognitio alicuius potest esse duobus modis: in ratione communi et in ratione propria. Potest ergo aliquid cognosci in ratione communi et tamen ignorari sub ratione propria: sicut cum aliquid cognoscit mel sub ratione communi, videlicet quia est corpus molle, rubeum, ignorat autem ipsum sub ratione propria; et ideo, cum videt fel esse corpus molle, rubeum, deceptus credit ipsum esse mel. Similiter cognitio beatitudinis et appetitus ipsius nobis innatus est in ratione communi, quae est “status omnium bonorum aggregatione perfectus;” tamen in ratione propria ab aliquibus ignoratur. Unde diversi in diversis ponunt. (...) Similiter dicendum quod idololatrae in ratione communi Deum non ignorant, quod est ens, principium, omnipotens; Deum tamen sub ratione propria ignorant, et ideo dicunt de Deo, qui est trinus et unus et verus, quia non est Deus, et de idolo quia est Deus.’

42 William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* 1, tr. 4, c. 5, sol., ed. Jean Ribailier (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1980), vol. 2, pp. 51–52.

43 The substance of the distinction can be found in Avicenna, *Primus naturalium*, tr. 1, in *Avicenna Latinus, De causis et principiis naturae*, ed. Simone van Riet (Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 9–14; the terminological labels of *ratio communis* and *ratio propria* appear to be adapted from Avicenna, *Prima philosophia*, 1.8 (van Riet, 1:60): ‘Si autem illae multae res convenerint in una intentione, tunc iam significavit ex sua locutione unam intentionem. Si vero non convenerint, tunc nomen est commune, et sine dubio potest unaquaeque illarum designari proprio nomine, et haec omnia concedunt erronei et imbecilles.’ [‘However, if many things come together in one intention, then he has already signified one intention by his speaking. But if they do not come together (under one intention), then the noun is common, and without a doubt each one of them can be designed by its own noun. Even the mistaken and the simple grant these things.’]

William's first category. This appears to be an implicit warning about the efficacy of Odo's use of illumination theory outside the context of sin and grace. As Odo indicates, one can fail to know that the one God exists, at least by habitual knowledge. But knowing that the one God exists does not necessarily mean that a given person will identify the one God with the triune God of Christianity.

After the *Summa Halensis'* attempt to reconcile the double-tradition, both Richard Rufus of Cornwall and Bonaventure made their own attempts at a critical reception of it. Rufus leans in the direction of the Paris illumination tradition, while Bonaventure leans in the direction of the Oxford illumination tradition. Rufus' understanding of divine illumination is consistent in both his *Commentaries on the Sentences*: the first, which he lectured at Oxford c.1250;⁴⁴ and the second, the so-called *Abbreuiatio* of Bonaventure's *Commentary on the Sentences*, which he lectured either at Paris from 1253–56, or at Oxford from 1256–59.⁴⁵ For the purposes of understanding Aquinas, we will concern ourselves with the first of these *Commentaries*.

Rufus has a maximalist view of illumination. On the one hand, he agrees with Grosseteste that human knowledge requires a divine illumination of the objects known; on the other, he also agrees with John of La Rochelle that it begins from certain theoretical knowledge impressed upon the soul at creation.⁴⁶ This distinction between two kinds of illumination had an important effect on how Rufus received Grosseteste's understanding of the relationship of the Fall to human knowledge. Rufus agrees with Grosseteste that humanity would have known God immediately prior to the Fall, but according to Gál, Rufus associates that immediate knowledge with the second kind of illumination (i.e. John's), not the first (i.e. Grosseteste's).⁴⁷ Consequently, Rufus does not think that post-lapsarian man retains any implicit analogical knowledge of God's existence the way that Grosseteste did.

Like John, therefore, Rufus identifies the beginning of the fallen mind's knowledge of creatures with the soul's knowledge of itself,⁴⁸ and with certain ideas impressed upon the mind at creation,⁴⁹ arguing that the fallen soul must demonstrate the existence of God from this knowledge of creatures. Rufus gives a variety of such demonstrations, but most follow the general pattern of John's Dionysian *triplex via*:

⁴⁴ On the authenticity and dating of this commentary, see Peter Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall and the Tradition of Oxford Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 20–39.

⁴⁵ On the authenticity and dating of this commentary, see Raedts, *Richard Rufus of Cornwall*, pp. 40–63. An edition of book 1, distinction 2 of both commentaries can be found in Gedeon Gál, 'Viae ad existentiam Dei probandam in doctrina Richardi Rufi OFM,' *Franziskanische Studien* 38 (1956), pp. 177–202. References to Rufus' text will be made on the basis of Gál's edition.

⁴⁶ Gál, 'Doctrina Richardi Rufi,' p. 179.

⁴⁷ Gál, 'Doctrina Richardi Rufi,' p. 180.

⁴⁸ On the soul's knowledge of itself, see Gál, 'Doctrina Richardi Rufi,' p. 178.

⁴⁹ Gál, 'Doctrina Richardi Rufi,' p. 179.

removing limitations to creaturely perfections, and seeing their source as that which pre-possesses them without any admixture of imperfection.⁵⁰

Like Odo, Rufus is open to the idea that demonstrating God's existence in this way is in principle open to non-believers, because it is based upon an encounter with Creation. But like Grosseteste, Rufus also thinks that such knowledge needs to be understood within the context of the healing of the will by grace. As the will is healed, the intellect passes through four stages of knowledge, which Gál summarizes: 'bodily sight (...), the imagination (...), intellectual vision, (...) ideal *rationes* in the eternal Word.'⁵¹ At this point, the intellect reaches the limits of its power in this life, even under the influence of grace. Rufus identifies a fifth stage of love beyond knowledge, into which the soul passes as it is perfected by grace in this life.⁵²

Perhaps because of his more severe stance towards fallen knowledge, Rufus critiqued Odo's use of Anselm in a manner that anticipates Aquinas.⁵³ According to Rufus, we need to distinguish carefully between the arguments in *Proslogion* 2 and 3. The argument in *Proslogion* 3 concerns merely the question of what a person is capable of thinking; Rufus sees no fundamental problem with Anselm's reasoning: it is a contradiction in terms to say that a person can think that 'that-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought' can be thought not to exist.⁵⁴ But this does not prove the existence of God. The argument stays at the level of intention, and does not touch upon the divine nature itself except *per accidens*.⁵⁵ Rufus is even more sanguine about the argument in *Proslogion* 2. Perhaps in an ironic allusion to Grosseteste's *Commentary on the Posterior Analytics*, Rufus argues that since the mere thinking of a being-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-thought does not necessitate that such a being actually exists, it would seem that in order to be an atheist, one merely needs to affirm that what is signified by 'that-greater-than-which-nothing-can-be-thought' has no supposit.⁵⁶

Bonaventure's understanding of divine illumination is expressed throughout the *corpus* of his writings, but for the purpose of understanding of Thomas Aquinas, we may focus on three of them: his *Commentary on the Sentences*, which he lectured from 1250–52 at Paris, his *Quaestiones Disputatae De scientia Dei*, which he disputed at Paris in 1254, and his *Itinerarium mentis ad Deum*, which he composed at Alverno

50 Gál, 'Doctrina Richardi Rufi,' p. 181. For specific applications of this argument to being, power, goodness, knowledge, essence, truth, and simplicity, see Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis* 1.2 (Gál, pp. 194–200).

51 Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis* 1.2 (Gál, p. 181): 'Primus consistit in visione corporali, secundus in visione spirituali, in imaginatione scilicet et imaginabilibus, tertius in visione intellectuali, quartus autem assurgi in rationes ideales in Verbo aeterno.'

52 Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis* 1.2 (Gál, pp. 181–82).

53 Gál, 'Doctrina Richardi Rufi,' p. 183, notes the anticipation of Aquinas here.

54 Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis* 1.2 (Gál, p. 193).

55 Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis* 1.2 (Gál, p. 193).

56 Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis* 1.2 (Gál, pp. 191–92).

in 1259.⁵⁷ In the *Commentary on the Sentences* and the *De scientia Dei*, Bonaventure distinguishes more clearly than other authors considered so far at least three distinct kinds of illumination: a light which enlightens the objects of knowledge, a light which enlightens the power of the mind itself (i.e. the agent intellect), and the light of eternal reason in God.⁵⁸ While scholars dispute whether Bonaventure thinks that the intellect itself is darkened by the Fall or whether it is merely that our use of the intellect is impeded by a wounded will,⁵⁹ scholars agree that Bonaventure thinks that the Fall prevents us from using our intellectual powers the way that God intended. As Bonaventure expresses clearly in the *Itinerarium*, God gave us an intellect with a supernatural calling to use the objects of this world as sacramental signs pointing us to God; sin turns us towards creatures in such a way as to prevent us from fulfilling that calling.⁶⁰

Notwithstanding the effects of the Fall on human intellection, Bonaventure is clear that any act of human knowledge still requires the coordination of different illuminative lights: the light of divine wisdom needs to shine on the mind, the light of the agent intellect needs to shine on an object, and the light of the object itself needs to shine back at the agent intellect.⁶¹ When these processes concur, the agent intellect indirectly sees the truth of the created object in the eternal *rationes* of the divine intellect in an act called 'contuition' (*contuitio*). As Scarpelli explains succinctly, 'the created essence directs man upwards to the Divine Idea which is its truth, while the Divine Idea illuminates the mind in such a way as to enable it to understand the immutable truth which constitutes the ultimate reality of a created essence.'⁶² The result is that Bonaventure arrives at an understanding of the knowledge of God which is very similar to that of Grosseteste: in any knowledge of a created truth, the soul implicitly knows divine truth as its exemplar. *A fortiori*, the soul also knows the existence of divine being.⁶³

57 On the dating Bonaventure's works, I follow Jacques Bougerol, *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure*, 2nd ed. (Paris: J. Vrin, 1988).

58 Therese Scarpelli, 'Bonaventure's Christocentric Epistemology: Christ's Human Knowledge as the Epitome of Illumination in *De scientia Christi*,' *Franciscan Studies* 65 (2007), p. 67. For the texts of Bonaventure, I will be relying on the Quaracchi edition: Bonaventure, *Opera Omnia*, 10 vols (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902). In at least two texts, *In I Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, ar. 1, q. 1, ad 5 (Quaracchi, 1:70), and *In IV Sent.*, d. 49, pt. 1, ar. 1, q. 2, co. (Quaracchi, 4:1004), Bonaventure also discusses a fourth kind of light, that of John of La Rochelle's Avicennian impressed concepts.

59 For the view that the intellect is not darkened by the Fall, see Scarpelli, 'Bonaventure's Christocentric Epistemology,' p. 75; Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine's Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 132, 143–53. For the view that it is, see Nathaniel Gray Sutanto, 'Questioning Bonaventure's Augustinianism? On the Noetic Effects of Sin,' *New Blackfriars*.

60 See Schumacher, *Divine Illumination*, pp. 137–41.

61 Scarpelli, 'Bonaventure's Christocentric Epistemology,' p. 66. See also Schumacher, *Divine Illumination*, pp. 129–31.

62 Scarpelli, 'Bonaventure's Christocentric Epistemology,' pp. 70.

63 Noone, 'Truth, Creation, and Intelligibility in Anselm, Grosseteste, and Bonaventure,' p. 122.

Matthews observes that the association between divine truth and divine being on the basis of exemplar causality is so strong for Bonaventure, that when he was composing book 1 of his *Commentary on the Sentences*, he reworked Odo's editorial separation of the material that proves the existence of God (which Odo had placed in distinction 2) and the material that discusses divine illumination (which Odo had placed in distinction 8). The separation would have been superfluous to Bonaventure, because he thought that our knowledge of divine truth is our strongest pathway to the knowledge of divine being. Accordingly, Bonaventure moved the material about the existence of God – including Odo's references to Anselm's *Proslogion* – out of distinction 2 into the discussion of divine truth in distinction 8.⁶⁴

Even the framing of Bonaventure's engagement with Anselm in distinction 8 is indicative of his association between our knowledge of divine truth and our knowledge of divine being. He asks 'whether the divine being is so true that it cannot be thought not to be?'⁶⁵ In response, Bonaventure signals his indebtedness to Grosseteste by returning to Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*. Bonaventure's engagement with Aristotle is significant; we will see below that Aquinas responds directly to it in question 2, ar. 1. Following *Posterior Analytics* 1.4 (73a34), Bonaventure argues that a proposition is self-evident (*notum in se*) if the cause of its predicate is contained in its subject. Applying this to the proposition 'God exists', Bonaventure argues that, 'God, or the highest truth, is being itself; therefore he cannot not exist, nor be thought not to exist. For the predicate is contained in the subject.'⁶⁶ How, then, can there be atheists? Exchanging the *Summa Halensis*' Avicennian distinction between *ratio communis* and *ratio propria* for the Aristotelian distinction between knowledge *quia* and knowledge *propter quid*, Bonaventure gives us an updated version of Odo's distinction between knowing God's being and knowing his other attributes: since we are not born knowing *what* God is, a person might have trouble perceiving or understanding divine justice, and consequently be led to deny the existence of divine being.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Matthews (*Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, p. 116) helpfully observes the significance of Bonaventure's shifting the Anselmian material to d. 8, but wrongly infers that Bonaventure does not, therefore, consider his own adaptation of Anselm's argument to constitute a proof for the existence of God.

⁶⁵ Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, ar. 1, q. 2 (Quaracchi, 1:153): 'Utrum divinum esse sit adeo verum quod non possit cogitare non esse.'

⁶⁶ Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, ar. 1, q. 2, co. (Quaracchi, 1:155): 'Deus sive summa veritas est ipsum esse, quo nihil melius cogitari potest: ergo non potest non esse nec cogitari non esse. Praedicatum enim clauditur in subiecto.'

⁶⁷ Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, ar. 1, q. 2, co. (Quaracchi, 1:154). It should be noted that although Bonaventure prefers the Oxford tradition, he does not in all respects reject the Paris tradition. He merely thinks that the Oxford tradition provides a stronger account of our knowledge of God. As a sort of post-script to his discussion of Anselm's *Proslogion*, Bonaventure lists a number of other proofs for God's existence that he thinks also work. Here we find John's argument affirmed: that the soul is

Aquinas on Illumination before the Fall

Thomas Aquinas' theory of human intellection is most often presented outside of the Christian narrative of sin and grace. However, Aquinas himself situates his understanding of human intellection within it.⁶⁸ Since this context is key to understanding the relationship between *ST Ia*, q. 2, ar. 1 and the Oxford and Paris theories of divine illumination, we will begin our discussion of Aquinas by outlining his understanding of pre-lapsarian and post-lapsarian intellection, and then proceed to examine the structure and text of q. 2, ar. 1 in light of this context.

Aquinas presents two different versions of the relationship between the human intellect and the Fall at different points in his career. In his *Commentary on the Sentences*, which he lectured at Paris from 1252–56, and his *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, which he disputed as a regent master at Paris from 1256–59, the early Aquinas thought that Adam's intellect knew God in two ways prior to the Fall.⁶⁹ Adam's first kind of knowledge began with grace: he received by grace an illumination of the sort that angels receive by nature, a created intelligible species impressed directly upon the possible intellect by God, from which he could arrive at the knowledge of God by acts of judgment and reasoning under the light of the agent intellect.⁷⁰ The second kind of knowledge that the early Aquinas attributed to Adam began with nature. In addition to the knowledge of God that Adam formed from impressed, intelligible species, Adam could also use his agent intellect to abstract intelligible species directly from sensory perceptions, and then arrive at the knowledge of God by analogical acts of judgment and reasoning based upon them.⁷¹

For the early Aquinas, there was a dependence in Adam of nature's abstractive knowledge upon grace's illuminative knowledge. In the *De veritate*, Aquinas gives the example of a teacher to explain this dependence. A teacher, teaching a problem to a student, already knows the answer; but in order to teach a student how to arrive at the answer, he can imaginatively place himself in the position of a student as though figuring out that problem for the first time. The teacher in this situation is not exactly like a student, since the teacher already knows the answer; but the exer-

naturally aware of being which is received from another, and consequently can recognize that the existence of being which is not.

68 On the general importance of placing Aquinas' account of illumination within a broader theological context, see Schumacher, *Divine Illumination*, pp. 154–60. I prescind here from several of the particular questions taken up by Schumacher in terms of the authentic interpretation of Augustine and Anselm, as well as the question of which of the medieval scholastics represents their best interpreter.

69 For the dates of Aquinas' works, I follow Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Cerf, 2017). The relevant texts are *In II Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, ar. 1–2, in *Scriptum super Sententiis*, ed. Pierre Mandonnet (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929), vol. 2, pp. 571–78; *De veritate*, q. 18, ar. 1–2 (Leon., 22:529–537).

70 *In II Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, ar. 1, co. (Mandonnet, 2:573); *De veritate*, q. 18, ar. 1, ad 1 (Leon., 22:533).

71 *In II Sent.*, d. 23, q. 2, ar. 1, co. (Mandonnet, 2:573); *De veritate*, q. 18, ar. 1, ad 1 (Leon., 22:533).

cise can help the teacher explain the steps by which a student might arrive at the answer which the teacher already knows. In a similar way, Adam arrived at a clear knowledge of God's existence through the intelligible species impressed by grace upon his intellect. This put him in the position of a teacher. But if he so chose, he could also play the part of the student and try to 'figure out' those same things through the intelligible species he abstracted from corporeal creatures.⁷² In this context, the Fall caused something of a shock to Adam's intellect. Adam was deprived of the illumination whereby he had previously known God, and he was also cast into the position of having to depend exclusively upon his abstractive powers for the first time.

During Aquinas' Roman Period (1265–68), during which he composed the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*, he changed his view of divine illumination in Adam. The change, which I have documented elsewhere in relation to natural desire, had two parts. The first part concerned the agent intellect, and was based on a mistake in Moerbeke's Latin translation of Themistius' paraphrase of Aristotle's *De anima* (1267).⁷³ Themistius held that there was a single agent intellect for all persons, but Moerbeke made Themistius out to say that this single agent intellect was complemented by an individual agent intellect in each human person. The text appears to have given Thomas a conceptual framework for seeing God's illumination of the agent intellect as itself a form of divine illumination, a concept which Schumacher has observed throughout *Summa Theologiae*.⁷⁴

The second part of the change in Aquinas' view of divine illumination concerned the possible intellect, and appears to have been based on Thomas's reading of John of La Rochelle's *Tractatus de multiplici divisione potentiarum animae*.⁷⁵ John's text convinced Aquinas that the 'proper' mode of apprehension for a spiritual creature is by the natural infusion of intelligible species from God. In the *Quaestiones disputatae de anima*, q. 15, Aquinas applied this view of human intellection to the separated soul.⁷⁶ In the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*, he applied it to Adam:

God is seen more eminently through intelligible effects than through sensible and bodily ones. However, in his present state, man is impeded from a complete and clear consideration of intelligible effects through the fact that he is distracted by and busy with sensible things. Yet, as is said in Ecclesiastes 7[.29], *God made man upright*. However, the uprightness of man when he was created by God was such that his inferior [powers] were subject to his superior [powers], and his superior [powers] were not impeded by his inferior [powers]. For this reason, the first man was not impeded by exterior things from a clear and stable contemplation of the intelligible effects, which he saw shining forth in rays from the first truth, whether *by natural knowledge* or gratuitous knowledge. For this reason Augustine says in *De Genesi ad litteram* 11[.33.43] that *perhaps*

⁷² *De veritate*, q. 18, ar. 2, co. (Leon., 22:536).

⁷³ Wood, *To Stir a Restless Heart*, pp. 269–75.

⁷⁴ Schumacher, *Divine Illumination*, pp. 173–78.

⁷⁵ Wood, *To Stir a Restless Heart*, pp. 262–63.

⁷⁶ See Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae de anima*, q. 15, co. (Leon., 24.1:136).

(...) *God previously used to speak to the first human beings as he speaks with the angels, illuminating their minds with his unchangeable truth (...).*⁷⁷

Aquinas here produces something close to a mixture of Grosseteste's narrative of sin and grace and Paris illumination theory. Prior to the Fall, Adam was illuminated naturally and supernaturally. Naturally, he received the impression of intelligible species in his possible intellect in a manner similar to that of the angels, as well as an influx of light in his agent intellect; supernaturally, he received the impression of other intelligible species in his possible intellect by grace. Beginning from either set of intelligible species, Adam could engage in acts of judgment and reasoning under the light of his agent intellect. At the Fall, Adam lost access to the direct impression of intelligible species by grace on account of sin, as well as the ability to 'see' naturally impressed intelligible species on account of concupiscence. But Adam did not lose access to the illumination of his agent intellect. The result is that, having been turned towards corporeal creatures, he could – and we can – still abstract intelligible species from them, and engage in acts of judgment and reasoning under the light of the agent intellect.

For the later Aquinas, grace repairs the damage done to divine illumination by the Fall, but does not restore it in exactly the same way that humanity possessed it previously. The reparation of illumination by grace begins with the charism of prophecy, whereby certain people receive a supernatural guidance and strengthening of their intellect for judging supernatural truths revealed by God; this judgment may be accompanied by the supernatural infusion of intelligible species directly into the possible intellect (Aquinas gives the examples of Solomon and the Apostles), but it may leave the species to be abstracted either from imaginative or corporeal visions mediated by the angels,⁷⁸ or from imaginative or corporeal visions given to others.⁷⁹ The reparation of illumination by grace continues with the grace of faith, received in

⁷⁷ ST Ia, q. 94, ar. 1, co. (Leon., 5:413–14, emphasis added): 'Cognoscebat tamen Deum quadam altiori cognitione quam nos cognoscamus: et sic quodammodo eius cognitio media erat inter cognitionem praesentis status, et cognitionem patriae, qua Deus per essentiam videtur. Ad cuius evidentiam, considerandum est quod visio Dei per essentiam dividitur contra visionem Dei per creaturam. Quanto autem aliqua creatura est altior et Deo similior, tanto per eam Deus clarius videtur: sicut homo perfectius videtur per speculum in quo expressius imago eius resultat. Et sic patet quod multo eminentius videtur Deus per intelligibiles effectus, quam per sensibiles et corporeos. A consideratione autem plena et lucida intelligibilium effectuum impeditur homo in statu praesenti, per hoc quod distrahitur a sensibilibus, et circa ea occupatur. Sed, sicut dicitur Eccles. VII, *Deus fecit hominem rectum*. Haec autem fuit rectitudo hominis divinitus instituti, ut inferiora superioribus subderentur, et superiora ab inferioribus non impedirentur. Unde homo primus non impediatur per res exteriores a clara et firma contemplatione intelligibilium effectuum, quos ex irradiatione primae veritatis percipiebat, sive *naturali cognitione* sive gratuita. Unde dicit Augustinus, in XI *super Gen. ad Litt.*, quod *fortassis Deus primis hominibus antea loquebatur, sicut cum angelis loquitur, ipsa incommutabili veritate illustrans mentes eorum (...).*'

⁷⁸ ST Ia, q. 111, ar. 1, co. (Leon., 5:515); ST Ia, q. 111, ar. 5, co. (Leon., 5:520).

⁷⁹ ST IIa-IIae, q. 173, ar. 2, co. (Leon., 10:386–387).

baptism, in which Aquinas says the faithful are ‘illuminated’ (*illuminentur*),⁸⁰ and in which an individual mind adheres to God as first truth, granting its assent to what has been proposed for belief by revelation through prophecy.⁸¹ This illumination is complemented by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, specifically understanding (which strengthens our apprehension of supernatural truths);⁸² knowledge (which strengthens our discretion of supernatural truths);⁸³ and wisdom (which strengthens our judgment concerning supernatural truths).⁸⁴ It is completed in glory, when the blessed are strengthened by the light of glory, God himself becomes the intelligible species in their possible intellect,⁸⁵ and, since concupiscence is finally abolished, the natural illumination of the possible intellect is restored.⁸⁶

Aquinas on Illumination after the Fall: *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1

By situating Aquinas’ understanding of human intellection within the Christian narrative of sin and grace, we can better appreciate Aquinas’ engagement with Oxford and Paris illumination theory in *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1. In this final part of the chapter, we will detail that engagement through a step-by-step commentary on the article.

The article follows the classic shape of many articles in Aquinas’ *Summa*: it consists of three objections, a single *sed contra*, a *corpus*, and individual replies to each of its three objections. The beginning of the article asks whether the existence of God is *per se notum*; even the question situates the article against the backdrop of Bonaventure’s *ressourcement* of the *Posterior Analytics* in support of Grosseteste.⁸⁷

Objection 1 summarizes a basic point common to both the Oxford and Parisian illumination traditions and utilizes their most common proof-text. It offers a definition of *per se notum* as those things whose knowledge is naturally within us. On the authority of Damascene, that ‘the knowledge of God has been naturally placed within us,’⁸⁸ it argues that the knowledge of God is of this sort. Aquinas will use this objection as an opportunity to respond to the *Summa Halensis*.

⁸⁰ *ST* IIIa, q. 69, ar. 5, co. (Leon., 12:110).

⁸¹ *ST* IIa-IIae, q. 1, ar. 1–2 (Leon., 8:7–11).

⁸² *ST* IIa-IIae, q. 8, ar. 1, co. (Leon., 8:66).

⁸³ *ST* IIa-IIae, q. 9, ar. 1, co. (Leon., 8:74).

⁸⁴ *ST* IIa-IIae, q. 45, ar. 1, co. (Leon., 8:339).

⁸⁵ *ST* Ia, q. 12, ar. 2 (Leon., 4:116–17).

⁸⁶ *ST* Ia, q. 89, ar. 1, ad 3 (Leon., 5:371).

⁸⁷ Matthews (*Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, pp. 146–47) notes the dependence of Thomas on the earlier tradition, without connecting individual objections and replies with specific members of that tradition.

⁸⁸ John Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa* 1.2, in *De fide orthodoxa: Versions of Burgundio and Cerbanus*, ed. Eligius Buytaert (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 1955), p. 12.

Objection 2 offers a different definition of *per se notum*. On the authority of a position that Aristotle mentions in *Posterior Analytics* 1.3 (72b5–7), it describes those things as *per se notum* which are understood when their terms are understood. Based on this definition, the objection argues that the name ‘God’ (*Deus*) means ‘that greater than which nothing can be signified (*significari*),’ and that the greatest thing that can be signified is one which exists ‘both in reality and in the intellect’ (*et in re et in intellectu*). The use of the verb *significari* is important. Anselm had used the verb ‘to be thought of’ (*cogitari*); Rufus’ *significare* had been deliberately chosen to drive a wedge between the order of knowing and the order of being. Aquinas will use this objection as an opportunity to respond to Rufus.

Objection 3 engages Bonaventure’s association of divine truth with divine being. It argues that the existence of truth is *per se notum*, pointing out the paradox inherent in the truth-claim that ‘truth does not exist.’ It goes on to argue that since God is truth, God’s existence is *per se notum*, which was the crux of Bonaventure’s argument for the unthinkability of God’s non-existence. Aquinas will use this objection to respond to Bonaventure.

The *sed contra* grounds Thomas in the broader illuminationist conversation, using the existence of atheists, a thorny problem from Odo onwards, as proof against the idea that God’s existence is *per se notum*.

The *corpus* takes up the Oxford and Paris theories of divine illumination in turn and includes a subtle response to a question about the relationship between divine illumination and the Fall that could be raised in relationship to Paris illumination theory. It begins with a response to the Oxford Tradition, grounded in Bonaventure’s use of the *Posterior Analytics*. Aquinas accepts Bonaventure’s definition of *per se notum*, as well as Bonaventure’s argument that the proposition ‘God exists’ is *per se notum*, because the predicate is included in the subject. But relying on the authority of Boethius, Aquinas differentiates between something being *per se notum* in itself and *per se notum* to us.⁸⁹ Bonaventure was right that God’s existence is *per se notum* in itself because God is his being. But in order for it to be *per se notum* to us, we would have to have *propter quid* knowledge of the subject and the predicate, something which Bonaventure had said we lack. Consequently, the knowledge of God’s existence is not *per se notum* to us.

The distinction between what is *per se notum* in itself and what is *per se notum* to us raises a subtle question that would have occurred to a contemporary of Aquinas, but is likely to be obscured for readers at a distance from that historical context: given that he thinks that Adam received, and the saints in heaven do receive, a natural impression of intelligible species in the possible intellect, when Aquinas says that the knowledge of God is not *per se notum* to us, is he saying that it is *per se*

⁸⁹ Boethius, *De hebdomadibus* 1, in *De consolatione philosophiae; Opuscula Theologica*, ed. C. More-schini (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2005), p. 187. On Aquinas’ identification of Boethius’ common conceptions with Aristotle’s self-evident principles, see Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, pp. 240–41.

notum to them in virtue of their natural illumination, and that therefore the Parisian tradition is fundamentally correct about the unthinkability of God's non-existence, even if their argument only applies to Adam and the saints? The last sentence of the *corpus* answers this question in the negative. 'But since we do not know what God is, [the proposition "God is"] is not *per se notum* to us; rather, it needs to be demonstrated by those things which are more known to us, namely, *by effects*.'⁹⁰ Notice that Aquinas does not distinguish at the end of this sentence between corporeal and intelligible effects. The fact that Aquinas does not make that distinction here indicates that he intends the phrase '*per se notum* to us' to apply not only to fallen individuals, who must demonstrate God's existence from intelligible species that are abstracted from corporeal creatures, but also to Adam, who had to demonstrate it from intelligible species impressed upon his possible intellect, as well as the saints, who, though they enjoy something close to *per se notum* knowledge of God's existence from the beatific vision, do not enjoy that same benefit from the intelligible species naturally impressed upon their possible intellect.

The reply to objection 1 takes up the distinction between *ratio communis* and *ratio propria* from the *Summa Halensis* and offers a different way of reworking it than the one which Bonaventure had suggested. If man does not have the kind of innate knowledge of God's existence that the *Summa Halensis* supposed, whether habitual or actual, does that mean that there is no natural knowledge of God whatsoever in the soul? Aquinas thinks that there is, but that it is of a more oblique kind. In order to explain this sort of knowledge, Aquinas borrows the *Summa Halensis*' idea that our natural desire for happiness is accompanied by a natural knowledge of happiness. In the *Summa Halensis*, that knowledge arose from an impressed concept of the good, and so had a direct, analogical orientation towards God. For Aquinas, it arises from a desire for happiness in general without an impressed concept of the good; its content is derived from our sense of what it would mean to have our desires fulfilled. The result is an Augustinian awareness of having something within us that objectively can only be fulfilled in God, together with an equally Augustinian appreciation for how widely our fallen desires can miss the mark in attempting to identify and grasp the object of their fulfillment.⁹¹

The reply to objection 2 offers a rather uncritical reception of Rufus. Apart from an initial musing about the possibility of a person who hears the word 'God' and does not know what it means, which critiques Rufus' assessment of *Proslogion* 3, the text repeats Rufus' argument against *Proslogion* 2 almost verbatim, claiming that those who admit that the word 'God' means 'that greater than which nothing

⁹⁰ ST Ia, q. 2, ar. 1 (Leon., 4:28, emphasis added): 'Sed quia nos non scimus de Deo quid est, non est nobis per se nota: sed indiget demonstrari per ea quae sunt magis nota quoad nos, et minus nota quoad naturam, scilicet *per effectus*.'

⁹¹ We find an expression here of Aquinas' understanding of the natural desire for God. The key text in the *Prima Pars* in this regard is ST Ia, q. 12, ar. 1 (Leon., 4:114–15). I have provided a contextual reading of this article in Wood, *To Stir a Restless Heart*, pp. 291–95.

can be signified' do not therefore admit that such a thing can be found among the things of nature.

The reply to objection 3 offers a critical response to Bonaventure, and through him to the Oxford tradition. It also is based upon the distinction in the *Summa Halensis* between *ratio communis* and *ratio propria*. The intellect's natural orientation is towards 'truth in common' (*veritas in commune*), not towards God as first truth. Just as the will has to break through the veil of desire to find the source of 'happiness in general' in the *Summum bonum*, so does the intellect have to break through the veil of demonstration to find the source of 'truth in common' in the *Prima veritas*. Moreover, just as there are a great many temptations to which the fallen will might succumb along the way, so are there a great many errors into which the fallen intellect might stumble, as it labors to know the existence of God with nothing but its abstract powers.⁹²

Conclusion

While *ST* Ia, q. 2, ar. 1, appears as a straightforward treatment of Anselm when abstracted from its mid-13th-century context, even a short study of theologians from the preceding decades suggests that the text is also, and perhaps principally, a careful and deliberate contribution to a specific conversation about divine illumination which was well-established among Franciscan theologians at the time when Aquinas was writing. In this context, the words and phrases of Anselm had long since been abstracted from their original context and reworked to support critical receptions of Oxford and Paris illumination theory in the *Summa Halensis*, Richard Rufus, and Bonaventure. Read in this light, Aquinas' mature work offers his own critical reception of Oxford and Paris illumination theory, in which the possible intellect of Adam received the impression of intelligible species both by nature and by grace, and his agent intellect received an influx of light from God. At the Fall, sin removed our access to the illumination of the possible intellect by grace; concupiscence removed our access to the illumination of the possible intellect by nature; but the illumination of the agent intellect survived to form the basis of our ability to abstract intelligible species from corporeal effects.

Since Aquinas thinks that, in both the pre-lapsarian and post-lapsarian state, God's existence has to be demonstrated by acts of judgment and reasoning from intelligible species, q. 2, ar. 1, carefully criticizes the arguments of Bonaventure and the *Summa Halensis* that God's existence is naturally known prior to demonstration, by drawing upon Rufus' criticism of Anselm's argument in *Proslogion* 2, as well as a modified version of the *Summa Halensis*' argument that God can be naturally known as the object of desire. The text of q. 2, ar. 1, thus serves as an important

⁹² *ST* Ia, q. 1, ar. 1, co. (Leon., 4:6).

part of Aquinas' contribution to the common mid-13th-century goal of developing an Aristotelian-Augustinian account of human understanding. In that light, it also functions as a hinge between question 1 (on theology in general) and the articles that follow it in question 2 (on the demonstration of God's existence). It situates the beginning of theology within the broader context of divine illumination and identifies the starting point for the fallen intellect in knowing and naming God.