

Non itaque velut absentem se quaerat cernere, sed praesentem se curet discernere. Nec se quasi non norit cognoscat, sed ab eo quod alterum novit dignoscat. Ipsum enim quod audit, Cognosce te ipsam, quomodo agere curabit, si nescit aut quid sit cognosce aut quid sit te ipsam? Si autem utrumque novit, novit et se ipsam: quia non dicitur menti, Cognosce te ipsam, sicut dicitur, Cognosce Cherubim et Seraphim.. Neque sicut dicitur, Cognosce voluntatem illius hominis, quae nobis nec ad sentiendum ullo modo nec ad intelligendum praesto est, nisi corporalibus editis signis et hoc ita ut magis credamus quam intelligamus. Neque ~~ita~~ ita ut dicitur homini, Vide faciem tuam, quod nisi in speculo fieri non potest... Sed cum dicitur menti, Cognosce te ipsam, eo ictu quo dicitur te ipsam, <sup>quo intelligit</sup> cognoscit se ipsam; nec ob aliud quam eo quod ~~ita~~ sibi praesens est.

Xix12 980

What is this presence? It is the presupposition of the reflexion by which the mind attends to what goes on in itself. It is the presupposition of <sup>for example,</sup> the reflexive logic that conceives, affirms, and states how the mind should act, whether or not in particular cases individuals are guilty of fallacies. It is not some object that falls under the intentio intendens of intellect; it is that intentio itself in its conscious wonder and its intelligent inquiry and its critical pause. It is not some object attained by some act; rather it is what is constituted by the act, namely, the actually sentient or actually intelligent subject. It is not knowledge through any conceptual distinctions; from the contrast between cernere and discernere, Aquinas concluded, 'Ex quo dat intelligere

consciousness, but on a later reader's understanding of what Augustine meant and of what 'consciousness' means.

In Aquinas things are more complex, for the simple reason that he had Augustine among his sources yet did not live in an intellectual milieu that permitted the development ~~of~~ and the simultaneous use of the ~~various~~ techniques of historical investigation and psychological introspection. In any case, he had more basic tasks to perform; he had to overcome the Platonist tendencies of his age, to understand and transform Aristotle, to cast the wealth of Augustinian thought in the transformed Aristotelian categories. He took over the Augustinian distinction between experiential statements and normative statements about the ~~mind~~ mind, and rethought them in terms of the particular and the universal, the factual (quod est) and the explanatory (quid sit). He repeatedly established the difference between universal and explanatory self-knowledge and, on the other hand, Augustinian presence, but only occasionally does there come through evidence He repeatedly established the difference between Augustine's presence of mind to itself and, on the other hand, his own universal and explanatory knowledge of the nature of mind. But he would have to have employed later techniques to make clear conceptually and consistently the difference between that presence and his own particular and ~~his~~ factual knowledge.

It remains that there are other contexts in which it comes through quite clearly that Aquinas knew about consciousness. Consider:

.. hoc quilibet in se ipso experiri potest, quod quando aliquis conatur aliquid intelligere, format aliqua phantasmata

V10<sup>8</sup>

III 46<sup>6</sup> II 76<sup>13</sup>

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sibi per modum exemplorum, in quibus quasi inspiciat quod intelligere studet.

.. homo enim abstrahit a phantasmatibus, et recipit mente intelligibilia in actu; non enim aliter in notitiam harum ~~operaxianum~~ actionum venissemus nisi eas in nobis experiremur.

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.. secundum Aristotelis sententiam, quam magis experimur... secundum modum cognitionis nobis expertum....

881c

.. anima human intelligit se ~~x~~ ipsam per suum intelligere, quod est actus proprius eius, perfecte demonstrans virtutem eius et naturam.

8823m

.. Species ~~rei~~ igitur rei intellectae in actu est species ipsius intellectus; et sic per eam se ipsam intelligere potest. Unde et supra Philosophus per ipsum intelligere et per illud quod intelligitur scrutatus est naturam intellectus possibilis.

III<sup>9</sup>724

Clearly, besides the conceptualized affirmation of insight into phantasm, of abstraction from phantasm, of the reception of intelligibles in act, of Aristotelian doctrine, there is an experience of these events. It is upon that experience that Thomist intellectual theory rests, and that is why it does not appeal, as do so many manuals, to universal concepts but to the act of understanding itself, ipsum intelligere.

II<sup>6</sup>304-8

Thomist psychological method is a method based on consciousness, but it did not reach the techniques of a theory of consciousness.

The indirect type of evidence that can be had for Thomist knowledge and use of consciousness may be illustrated in another fashion. Aquinas had no use for the Plotinian separation of the One and of Mind, and so he could not accept the Plotinian psychological doctrine that self-knowledge involved a real duality in the knower. On the other hand,

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b) Besides the communication of a commonsense understanding of the text, one can envisage the communication of a scientific understanding of the text.

Such an understanding operates on the basis of a systematic conceptualization, a Begrifflichkeit. It proceeds from a basic set of terms ~~fix~~ and relations, and it employs them in communicating the understanding of any text.

judgement of the interpreter.

If anyone fancies he rids himself of his preconceptions, prepossessions, and prejudices, he is merely deceiving himself in the crudest fashion imaginable. The only way in which that could occur would be by a reversion to infancy, or to some other equivalent of the mental blank page on which nothing as yet has been written.

What has to occur is something quite different from "ridding oneself," "eliminating," etc. It is a matter of obtaining the richest possible experience, the fullest possible development of understanding, the nearest approach one can manage to an ideal wisdom in judgement. The manner in which this attainment is brought about is through a prolonged effort to grow up to the intellectual and-or spiritual level of the author to be interpreted. One reads, understands something, reads some more and finds one's understanding inadequate; one keeps on reading and rereading, understanding and correcting one's understanding, until eventually, later rather than sooner, one approaches a limit of familiarity, of ease and readiness at reaching an understanding that locks on to the object and is not unlocked by further reading.

When one has reached such an understanding, one can begin to communicate to others what one has understood in the author. That communication will not consist in repeating publicly one's self-correcting process of learning: it will not, for the simple reason that that process is far too complicated, far too subtle, far too multifarious, to be set down in volumes; it will not, because that process was my process, and the way someone else learns will be his way; the job of the interpreter is make the next learner's work easier, shorter, simpler; his doing so will be something like establishing a thesis, and anything else is just rhetorical faking.

To let the author speak for himself, to let him be his own interpreter, may be taken literally, but then it consists simply and solely in editing the text and providing abundant indices, references to sources, to parallels, etc. In that case the whole work of interpretation is handed on to someone else.

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The work of interpretation is not letting the author speak for himself (he did that some centuries ago); it is having someone familiar with the contemporary horizon, with its blocks, its oversights, its superficiality, repeat the author's message within a new context so that the message will correct the blocks, oversights, superficiality, and so manage to come ~~through~~ through.

The value of an interpretation is measured, not by questions about "seeing what is there," having no preconceptions, not desiring to establish a thesis, but by the simple and basic question, Is the interpretation true? Does it offer an invulnerable set of insights into the author's meaning?

#### 8. Text and Author.

Romantic hermeneutics (Winckelmann, Schleiermacher, Dilthey) conceives the text as an expression, emanation, Ausdruck of the author's mind, heart, feeling, imagination, sentiment. It conceives the interpreter's job as an exercise of empathy, an Einfühlen, in which the ~~author~~ interpreter arrives at possessing a similar mentality, point of view, affectivity, mode of imagination. It takes as its criterion the interpreter's ability to reproduce the original work, to say just why the author used this phrase and not that, how he came to think this and not that.

f) Absolute Context.

Commonsense understanding of texts leads through commonsense statement to scientific statement of that understanding; and scientific statement heads one into the problem of the foundations of scientific statement.

One may with Bultmann rely on the historical process of successive investigations to bring to light the correct Fragestellung,

or with Rothacker one may grant that "Alle Synthesis ist von Willen geleitet,"

or with Historismus one may find oneself caught in a complete relativism of all norms and values

[Ignacio Escribano Alberca, Gewinnung theologischer Normen aus der Geschichte der Religion bei E. Troeltsch, Münchener Theologischer Studien, II, 21, München, Max Hueber, 1961]

One may adopt the role of the "conservative" Catholic rejecting the very idea of any higher criticism because liberal higher criticism is both new and wicked,

or one may adopt the the role of the "syncretist" Catholic accepting critical techniques in so far as they happen not to conflict with the doctrine of the Church

[The syncretist usually is also historicist, maintaining that specialist studies are totally independent of any systematic position].

But if one wishes to find the common ground on which dogmatic theology and ~~xxx~~ scriptural exegesis meet,

if one wishes to match Liberal, Existential, Hegelian, etc., Higher Criticism constructively, by erecting a Catholic Higher Criticism,

then one has to face the issue of absolute context.

Absolute context is ultimate horizon, the horizon of being: on the side of the subject, it is the pure desire to know; on the side of the object, it is everything about everything, i.e., being.

Absolute context is found in every man; it is the structure of all his experiencing, ~~think~~ understanding, thinking, judging; it is the basis of public human knowledge and of rational human communication.

Though found in every man, absolute context becomes explicit only in the philosopher.

Though found in every man, absolute context is not pure in every man. Hence, dialectical analysis, both of the authors to be interpreted, and of the interpreters, and of the critics of both authors and interpreters. Such dialectical analysis is the use of the norms, immanent and operative in every man, to effect ~~the~~ advertence to counter-positions and, in the critic, their reversal.

Though found in every man, absolute context has not unfolded to the same degree of development, of differentiation and integration, in every man. Hence, genetic relationships:

~~e.g., Undifferentiated consciousness; religious specialization, mysticism; profane specialization, Ancient High Civilizations; from collectivism to individualism; the differentiation of theory and common sense; classicism and historical consciousness.~~

### 11. Communication and Scientific Statement.

We have outlined four aspects of coming to understanding the text and then added a brief account of judgement on the correctness of that understanding. The two stand in tension. The work of understanding is alive: it is understanding the thing, understanding the words, understanding the author, and understanding oneself. The work of judgement is meagre and dry-as-dust: it limits the exegete to the modest, restricted assertions of what he can be certain of.

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This tension has been noted. G. Ebeling, Die Bedeutung der historisch-kritischen Methode, ZfThK, 47(1950), 33:

Es hat die Einsicht an Boden gewonnen, dass eine rein objectivierende, nach dem Ideal der naturwissenschaftlichen Methode arbeitende Geschichtsbetrachtung, die sich mit der Feststellung dessen begnügt, wie es einmal gewesen ist, der Aufgabe des geschichtlichen Verstehens gar nicht gerecht wird und auch nur in gewissen Grenzen durchführbar ist, das dabei die Geschichte gerade stumm bleibt und es nur zu einer aufhäufung toten Materials kommt statt zu einer lebendigen personalem Begegnung mit der Geschichte.

The foregoing procedure may readily be contrasted with the procedure of earlier exegetes who transposed the meaning of the biblical authors into the categories of, say, Thomist theology. This is to be found largely even in a work of the beginning of this century, F. Prat, *La théologie de saint Paul*, Paris 1908.

To be contrasted with both is R. Bultmann's use of Heidegger's existentials. Cf. John Macquarrie, *An Existential Theology*, London SCM 1955, 21960.

Such existentials aim at escaping the relativism of a Lebensphilosophie, which is bound to be involved in a Weltanschauung, which in turn is the product not only of the knowledge of a particular people at a particular period of their history but also of their free choices. ~~XXX~~

Erich Rothacker, *Logik und Systematik der Geisteswissenschaften*, Bonn 1947, p. 144:

"... das zweite Glied einer neuen Kritik der Vernunft. Es gälte nicht nur zu zeigen, dass der Einfluss von Weltanschauungen auf das Erkennen und Schaffen ein mehr oder weniger grosser, sondern dass er ein radikaler ist. Als neues Glied müsste in diesem Zusammenhang die Erkenntnis treten, dass es primär Forderung des Willens und nicht kognitive Akte sind, die hinter diesen Weltanschauungen stehen... Alle Synthesis ist vom Willen geleitet."

Though this is too sweeping, it seems to be valid against Lebensphilosophie, i.e., the refusal of the theoretic interest, attitude, world.

At the same time such existentials, while the product of reflection, of thematization, none the less aim to state with minimum distance the understanding of life contained in living. The existenzial is the objectification of the existenziell.

Against Bultmann, it may be objected that his procedure yields inadequate results. Macquarrie argues that Bultmann can formulate in the existentials part but not all of the NT.

Still this objection, while it discredits Bultmann, does not necessarily discredit his procedure as such.

If Heidegger's existentials are not sufficient for an interpretation of the NT, might they not be complemented and corrected by drawing on such a work as G. Morel's, *Le Sens de l'existence selon saint Jean de la Croix*, Paris Aubier 1960 1961, 3 vols.

In turn, it may be urged that Morel is too much involved in Hegelianism. But if this granted, one can still ask whether the job or similar jobs might not be attempted in which the "too much Hegelianism" is eliminated.

What is the issue?

It is whether the exegete can state the meaning of the text adequately



Clearly such communication is (1) by specialists and (2) for specialists. It is only by years of study and scholarly investigation that such understanding is acquired in the first place; and once it is communicated, it shortens the labour of others in reaching the same goal

More basically, distinguish<sup>1</sup> (1) historical consciousness, (2) historical relativism, and (3) historical method.

Historical consciousness is concerned with man, not as a nature (e.g., as characterized by the properties found in man asleep) but as a subject experiencing, understanding, judging, choosing, acting.

The formal constituent of man as subject, knower, chooser, agent, of his actions and his institutions, of his art, language, literature, history, science, philosophy, theology is in the intentional order, the order of meaning, purpose, intention, significance. Man is a symbolic animal (Cassirer); man is a symbol (Morel, e.g., Xt on Cross).

Meanings develop, and their development is the development of man from primitive to cultured and civilized, the development of all his institutions, the development of all his cultural achievements.

This development occurs in and through human intentions but to results that are above and beyond them; it ~~does~~ depends not only on what man intends but also on what he overlooks. There are anagke and tukhe; fata volentem ducunt, nolentem trahunt; there is divine providence; die List der Vernunft; the unseen hand of the laws of supply and demand; the dialectic of the forces and relations of production.

Classicist concentration on man prout sempiternis rationibus esse debeat, its prescinding from temporal contingencies, its ready-made universals, ideals, laws, precepts, rules, models, exemplars, ~~is~~ amount to a systematic disregard of the facts, of human reality.

From historical consciousness one moves to historical relativism by noting that (1) meaning is contextual and (2) the historical context, the Weltanschauung, is a matter of ~~omnibonamindichsan, and~~ not at all of die reine Vernunft but of vitality, artistry, adventure, of practical intelligence, of will, decision, choice, deed, power

From historical consciousness one moves to historical relativism if one does not have a philosophy competent to deal with the issues.

In general, an extrinsecist philosophy is not competent: it is a matter of words and propositions, of abstract concepts and necessary principles; but the words and propositions are in the historical flux; the abstract concepts and necessary principles cannot reach down to the concrete as concretexamamha, the singular as singular, the empirically intelligible but unnecessary.

An immanentist philosophy is equally powerless: Hegelianism does indeed attempt to combine the absolute with the singular and the concrete, but its a priori Nature is grossly misconceived and its a priori History is just speculation when confronted with the facts.

Karl Löwith, Die Dynamik der Geschichte und der Historismus, Eranos Jahrbuch, 21 (1952), 231:

Der Ausweg zwischen Dogmatismus und Sketizismus kann nach ihm (Dilthey) nicht mehr durch eine vernünftige Kritik der überlieferten Metaphysik öffnen, sondern nur durch eine geschichtliche Behandlung aller metaphysischen Systeme. Es gibt auch keine immer gleiche Natur des Menschen, "Der Typus Mensch zerschmilzt in dem Prozess der Geschichte." Die Weltgeschichte wird infolgedessen für Dilthey, noch mehr als schon für Hegel, zum Weltgericht, indem sie über jedes philosophische System als relativ auf seine Zeit und Gesellschaft das Urteil spricht. Was aber in einer bestimmten Zeit an Lebenserfahrung und Weltansicht zum Ausdruck kam, ist - unter Voraussetzung eines rein historischen Denkens - prinzipiell gleich-wahr, gleich-richtig, und gleich-berechtigt. Die Philosophie kann ~~ke~~ keinen unbedingten Wahrheitsanspruch erheben und in diesem Sinn "System" und "Metaphysik" sein wollen, sie muss bewusstermassen ihre geschichtliche Situation übernehmen und sich auf "Besinnung," "Verstehen," und "Deuten" einschränken p. 232 even this verstehen and deuten change with each successive age.

The illusion that leads to relativism is a failure to distinguish between data and facts: data are given to out'sense or in consciousness; facts are what is to be known in particular, concrete true judgements. Data of themselves are not defined, precise, unified, related: they become unified, related, defined, precise through understanding and conception. Facts are definite, precise, related, but their definiteness and relationships can be explicated only through a very large ~~number~~ number of other true judgements that form the context of the given judgement of fact.

In so far as the critical historian settles the facts, he also settles their objective structure, because knowledge of fact presupposes and includes understanding. In so far as the critical historian is unaware of his use of his understanding, in so far as he identifies his "facts" with what are only data, he lays claim to an objectivity ~~that~~ to which he is not entitled. Other historians come along, understand the data in their way, and produce another set of structured facts.

From Historismus as naive (assuming an identity of data and facts) one moves to Historismus as relativism: there is die fließende Vergangenheit; its manifold of data can be structured in as many manners as there are Weltanschauungen, vast assemblies of unnoticed Selbstverständlichkeiten, from which the structuring is done.

On the other hand, when disillusionment arises, when facts and data are distinguished, when the historian becomes aware of the fact that he has a mind with an unexplored manifold of habits, then the applications of critical methods leads to no more than the edition of texts with indices, notes, and critical apparatus.

##### 5. ~~The Catholic and Critical History.~~

Every question and every statement is involved in a philosophic context; it has philosophic suppositions and implications; and specialized historical methods are incapable of coping with such issues. The historian as a specialist has to presuppose a philosophy and, if he is honest, he will recognize the fact.

Every religious question and answer is involved in a theological context; it has theological suppositions and implications.

One's stand on theological issues is one's answer to the question of conversion, of belief or disbelief. Belief is not independent of historical matters of fact. But the question of conversion and belief cannot be ~~addressed~~ adequately within the framework of specialist historical method.

Every historical work is engaged in the task of either carrying on a tradition or else pulling down one tradition and setting up another.

Critical history has been, as a historical phenomenon, a component in the process of eliminating the Catholic tradition and providing historical perspectives that make sense from a protestant or secularist point of view.

Critical history has been not merely that: it has been the emergence of historical consciousness; getting beyond classicist limitations; getting at the historical facts in their historical perspective. Progress and decline mix dialectically.

The de facto destructive component in critical history has not been without its influence on critical method: the method with its Vorurteil gegen Vorurteile überhaupt und damit die Entmachtung der Überlieferung ~~is not an adequate historical method.~~

Catholicus dubitat nemo Deum sapientia, bonitate, potestate infinitum ita hunc mundum aspectabilem creare atque gubernare potuisse, ut mala existerent nulla. Quod tamen potuit Deus, hoc non fecit. "Melius enim iudicavit de malis bene facere quam nulla mala esse permittere." [Aug. Enchir., 27; PL 40, 245; S. Thomas, Sum. theol., I, q. 48, a. 2 ad 3m]

Quam divinam intentionem tum mala permittendi tum de malis maiora bona faciendi non solum probat summorum theologorum auctoritas sed etiam ipsa divina revelatio manifestat atque inculcat. Mortuus enim est Christus illa morte quae erat poena peccati; et tamen mortuus est ut resurgeret, ut nos redimeret atque iustificaret, ut ipse in se ipso experiretur quod mentibus nostris alte infixum voluit de malis fieri bonum. Tardiores nos sane cognovit et tamen huius saltem ratiocinii capaces iudicavit servum domino maiorem non esse et Dominum nostrum advenisse non "ut ministraretur ei, sed ut ministraret et daret animam suam redemptionem pro multis" [Mc 10, 45].

Quod si aetas nostra malis opprimitur et multis et maximis et novis, <sup>omnino</sup> ~~nonnullum~~ rite concluditur et ista mala a Deo esse permissa, et ea ideo esse permissa ut ex his maiora bona efficiantur, et aliam non esse viam de malis bene faciendi quam elegit atque demonstravit Christus Dominus noster.

### 11. Statement of the Meaning of the Text.

We have discussed (1) understanding the text and (2) passing judgement on the correctness of one's understanding.

Between the two there is a notable tension. Understanding moves forward by ~~forming probable hypotheses~~ by gaining insights only to complement, qualify, correct them by still further insights. At no point does it feel that complete understanding has been won; indeed, its notion of the classic is that complete understanding is an ideal goal that is not to be actually reached [cf DB 2314]. Judgement on the other hand aims at selecting what is certain, what is definitive, what is not due for change as a result of future development