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for solving them. So one comes to set aside one's own initial interests and concerns, to share those of the author, to reconstruct the context of his thought and speech.

On commonsense judgements, see Insight, pp. 28³~~8~~-299.

My own experience of this change was in writing my doctoral dissertation. I had been brought up a Molinist. I was studying St. Thomas' Thought on Gratia Operans, a study later published in Theological Studies, 1941-42. Within a month or so it was completely evident to me that Molinism had no contribution to make to an understanding of Aquinas.

But what precisely is meant by the word, context? There are two meanings. There is the heuristic meaning the word has at the beginning of an investigation, and it tells one where to look to find the context. There is the actual meaning the word ~~acquires as one develops one's initial horizon and comes to~~ acquires as ~~one~~ one moves out of one's initial horizon and moves to a fuller horizon that includes a significant part of the author's.

Heuristically, then, the context of the word is the sentence. The context of the sentence is the paragraph. The context of the paragraph is the chapter. The context of the chapter is the book. The context of the book is the author's opera omnia, his life and times, the state of the question in his day, his problems, prospective readers, scope and aim.

Actually, context is the interweaving of questions and answers in limited groups. To answer any one question will give rise to further questions. To answer them will give rise to still more. But, while this process can recur a number of times, while it might go on indefinitely if one keeps changing

the topic, still it does not go on indefinitely on one and the same topic. So context is a nest of interlocked or interwoven questions and answers; it is limited inasmuch as all the questions and answers have a bearing, direct or indirect, on a single topic; and because it is limited, there comes a point in an investigation when no further relevant questions arise, and ^{then} the possibility of judgement has emerged. When there are no further relevant questions, there are no further insights to complement, correct, qualify those that have been reached.

Still, what is this single topic that limits the set of relevant questions and answers? As the distinction between the heuristic and the actual meanings of the word, context, makes plain, the single topic is something to be discovered in the course of the investigation. By persistence or good luck or both one hits upon some element in the interwoven set of questions and answers. One follows up one's discovery by further ~~up~~ questions. Sooner or later one ~~hits~~ hits upon another element, then several more. There is a period in which insights multiply at a great rate, when one's perspectives are constantly being reviewed, enlarged, qualified, refined. One reaches a point when the ~~ever~~ overall view emerges, when ~~or~~ other components fit into the picture in a subordinate manner, when further questions ~~yield~~ yield ever diminishing returns, when one can say just what was going forward and back it up with the convergence of multitudinous evidence.

The single topic, then, is something that can be indicated generally in a phrase or two yet unfolded in an ^{often} enormously complex set of subordinate and interconnected questions and answers. One reaches that set by striving persistently to

understand the object, understand the words, understand the author and, if need be, understand oneself. The key to success is to keep adverting to what has not yet been understood, for that is the source of further questions, and to hit upon the questions ~~directs~~ directs attention to the parts or aspects of the text where answers may be found. So R. G. Collingwood has praised "... the famous advice of Lord Acton, 'study problems, not periods.'" So H. G. Gadamer has praised Collingwood's insistence that knowledge consists, not just in propositions, but in answers to questions, so that to understand the answers one has to know the questions as well. But my present point is not merely the significance of questions as well as answers -- though, of course, that is in full accord with my cognitional theory -- ~~to do so~~ but also regards the interlocking of questions and answers and the ~~closure~~ eventual enclosure of that interrelated multiplicity within a higher limited unity. For it is ^{the} emergence of that enclosure that enables one to recognize the task as completed and to pronounce one's interpretation ~~as~~ as probable, highly probable, in some respects, perhaps, certain.

R. G. Collingwood, Autobiography, London (Oxford U. P.) 1939, 51967, p. 130. See also The Idea of History, Oxford (Clarendon) 1946, p. 281.

H. G. Gadamer, op. cit., p. 352.

~~It will help clarify what I have been saying if I contrast the above position with Collingwood's. First, then, my account of meaning and especially of meaning as constitutive component in human living accords with his main views on human nature and human history.~~