

can be pushed to a far fuller development, and then the self-correcting learning ^{to} will bring us to an understanding of the common sense of another place, time, culture, and cast of mind.

The phrase, understanding another's common sense, must not be misunderstood. It is not a matter of understanding what common sense is: that is the task of the cognitional theorist. Again, it is not making another's common sense one's own, so that one would go about speaking and acting like a fifth-century Athenian or a first century Christian. But, just as common sense itself is a matter of understanding what to say and what to do in any of a series of situations that commonly arise, so understanding another's common sense is a matter of understanding what he would say and what he would do in any of the situations that commonly arose in his place and time.

At this point a word must be said about what has been named ^RRomantic hermeneutics. Derived from Winckelmann and developed by Schleiermacher and Dilthey to be attacked by contemporaries under the influence of Heidegger,

See Hans-Georg Gadamer, Wahrheit und Methode, Tübingen (Mohr) 1960, pp. 162-250.

^RRomantic hermeneutics considers the text as expression (Ausdruck), the exegete's task as empathy (Einfühlen), and the criterion of his success as the ability to say just why the author in each phrase expressed himself in the very manner in which he did (Reproduzieren). Now to conceive the text as expression and its interpretation as a matter of empathy is quite relevant to the intersubjective, symbolic, artistic, and evaluative components in the text. Further, such ~~an~~ a word as Einfühlen

conversion. In that case a genuine ^{interpretation} ~~conversion~~ will be met with the incredulity and ridicule, as was St. Paul when he preached in Rome and was led to quote Isaiah: "Go to this people and say: you will hear and hear, but never understand; you will ~~be~~ look and look, but never see" (Acts 28, 26).

At this point it becomes apparent how the functional specialty, interpretation, opens out upon the functional specialties, history and dialectic. For the classical text can be regarded as historical cause, the series of interpretations as historical effects. Moreover, they are effects in two distinct manners: overtly inasmuch as the interpreter studies the classical text; covertly inasmuch as his own cultural conditions his interpretation yet has been development has been an assimilation of the tradition which the text has influenced. now is the time for all good men the classical text; covertly inasmuch as his ability to study and interpret is the result of the culture he has assimilated, and that culture itself has been influenced by its classical texts.

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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. ~~that reconstructed context that determines which further~~ ~~questions might be relevant now is the time for all good~~ The key to such reconstruction is, of course, a grasp of what was going forward. To such a grasp one's study first builds up in a series of discoveries. But sooner or later a point is reached; when returns diminish; one can amass more information; but the further information ^{tends to be} ~~is~~ just that and no more; there are no further insights; and ~~one can think~~ of no further relevant questions. now is the time for all ^{any} more, while further insights have a bearing, not on the issues one has uncovered, but on other ~~quite different issues~~ issues ever more remote.

— See Insight, pp. 289-299. —

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. 289-299.

My doctoral dissertation was on the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas on gratia operans. A Jesuit trained in Jesuit schools, I began my investigations a convinced Molinist. Within a month it was completely evident to me that the medieval state of the question was totally different from the approaches of Molina and Bañez in the sixteenth century.

The context of a text, accordingly, is something to be discovered. Before one begins an investigation, one can say, of course, that the context of a word is the sentence, the context of a 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, his problems, prospective readers, scope and aim, etc. But the real meaning of context is something quite different. It is the interlocking or interweaving of questions and answers in limited groups. To answer one question gives rise to further questions. To answer the ~~same~~ ^{further} questions gives rise to still more. But while this process can recur a number of times, while it can go on indefinitely if the topic is changed again and again, still it does not go on indefinitely on the same topic.

To interpret a text, then, is to stumble upon a nest of interwoven questions and answers. One does the stumbling by endeavoring to understand the object, the words, the author and, if need be, oneself. But once one has discovered that

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. The key to such reconstruction is, of course, a grasp of what was going forward. To such a grasp one's study first builds up in a series of discoveries. But sooner or later a point is reached where returns diminish. One can amass more information, but the information tends to be just that and no more, while further insights have a bearing, not on the issues one has uncovered, but on other issues ever more remote.

R. G. Collingwood has praised ~~his own~~ "... the famous advice of Lord Acton, 'study problems, not periods.'" In turn, H. G. Gadamer has praised Collingwood's insistence that knowledge consists, not in propositions, but in answers to questions, so that to know the meaning of the answers one has to know the questions as well. Not only does this accord perfectly with my own analysis of human knowing, but I would add a still further reflection. Questions group and answers group. I mean that the answer to one question gives rise to another or to several others. The new answers give rise to still further questions and, while this can recur a number of times, still it does not go on indefinitely without of times, while it can go on indefinitely if the topic is changed, still it does not go on indefinitely on the same topic.

On commonsense judgements, see Insight, pp. 289-299.

R. G. Collingwood, Autobiography, London (Oxford U. P.) 1939, ⁵1967, p. 130.

Ibid., p. 30. Gadamer, op. cit., p. 352.

Now it is this interlocking of questions and answers in limited groups that makes it possible to bring an ~~invest~~ investigation to a close

interweaving

Now it is this ~~interlocking~~ of questions and answers in limited groups that brings to light what is meant by context. Without it, one has no way of telling where context begins and ends. 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 something far more complex: it includes the opera omnia of the ~~author~~ author, his background, his sources, his contemporaries, the questions of the times, the ~~author's~~ author's prospective readers, his aim and scope in writing the book, etc.

In fact, there probably is no specific topic or question to which all of this is relevant. But to have a specific topic or question one has to have discovered what was going forward. I did my doctoral dissertation on "St. Thomas' Thought on Gratia operans." I discovered what was going forward when I discovered why it was that what now is called actual grace was lacking in his earliest treatments, gradually developed in various ways in later works, and reached full stature in the Summa theologiae. That process defined my context for me. It enabled me to judge which further questions were relevant and had to be answered and which questions might indeed arise but could not affect the issue. I later did a study of Aquinas thought on Verbum. In that case what was going forward was the ^{expression} ~~insertion~~ of a brilliant piece of Augustinian psychology ~~into an Aristotelian context~~ in the language of Aristotle's metaphysical psychology and then a transposition by analogy from the human mind to the trinitarian processions. ~~That defined the context that had to be investigated~~

I have mentioned Collingwood and I had best explain the differences between his re-enactment of the past and my reconstruction. His concern seems to be epistemological: re-enactment means that the past lives into the present and so can be known in the present. My concern is not epistemological: I do not hesitate to speak of interpretation as reconstruction because I have quite general answers to the problem of the objectivity of knowledge and no special problem regarding the objectivity of exegesis or history. So much for a first difference. A second difference had best be put in terms of a concrete example. It is one thing for Thomas Aquinas to have effected a development of the theological doctrine of grace. It is quite another to go back over the successive writings of Aquinas and discover the long and complicated series of steps in which this development was effected. To say that the exegete or historian re-enacts the Thomist development of the doctrine of grace is either merely metaphorical or quite inaccurate. What the exegete or historian does is reconstruct the process of development in its general lines though not in all its details; and he does not attempt to do so in all the details, first, because his information is insufficient for that purpose and, secondly, because it is unnecessary for his purposes.

See The Idea of History, pp. 282-302. While Collingwood is speaking of history and I am speaking of interpretation, it does not follow that this is not the place for the present comment. The question whether an interpretation is true, is a historical question.

See Insight, chapter 13.

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(Notes p. 19 continued)

No doubt, Aquinas consciously performed all the operations in the development. But to perform the operations consciously is one thing. ^{It is quite another to} go back in memory or study after a dozen years, to collect all that are relevant to the development, to understand what in the past had only gradually and piecemeal been coming to light, and to pass judgement on the accuracy of one's understanding. There is no evidence that Aquinas went through this second process. Only if he did, would the exegete or historian re-enact his activities.

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So far we have been speaking merely of the possibility of judging the correctness of one's interpretation of a text. Actual judgement depends on a multitude of factors. An exegete can grasp exactly what was going forward. His ~~xxx~~ understanding can be confirmed by multitudinous details. If really there are no further relevant questions, his interpretation will be certain. But he can possess this general understanding and be assured by multitudinous confirmations yet also ~~have~~ see that there are further relevant questions, which, for lack of evidence, he cannot answer. They may be many or few, of major or minor importance or even apparently insignificant. It is this range of possibilities that leads exegetes to speak modestly with a greater or less confidence in their views and with many distinctions between what is more and what is less probable in their interpretation.

What is true, then, in Schleiermacher's contention is that the interpreter may understand very fully and accurately something that the author knows about only in a very vague and general fashion. Moreover, this precise knowledge will be of great value for the interpretation of the text. But it does not imply that the interpreter will understand the text better than the author did. Again, with respect to Collingwood, it is true that the interpreter reconstructs, but it is not true that he reproduces the past. In our example, what Aquinas was doing, was developing the doctrine of grace. What the interpreter was doing, was ^{building up the} ~~collecting~~ evidence for an element in the history of the theology of grace.

So far we have been concerned merely with the possibility of judging the correctness of one's interpretation of a text. Actual judgement is a further matter that depends on a great many factors. I can indicate them only briefly. An exegete may grasp exactly what was going forward. His understanding can be confirmed by multitudinous details. If really there are no further relevant questions, his interpretation will be certain. But there may be further relevant questions that he has overlooked, and so he will speak modestly. Again, there may be further relevant questions; he may advert to them quite clearly; but he may be unable to find the evidence that would answer them. Such further questions may be many or few, of major or minor importance. It is this range of possibilities that leads exegetes ^{to speak} with greater or less confidence or diffidence in their views and with many distinctions between what is less and what is more probable in their interpretations.

argued. First, then, my instracⁿe was from the history of
ideas

to be added introspective attention, inquiry and understanding, reflection and judgement, before knowledge of one's own activities is reached. Secondly, while there are authors greatly preoccupied with their own activities, still they are the exception rather than the rule; self-scrutiny is time-consuming and heads into the impasse of scrutinizing the self-scrutinizing self. Thirdly, the selected instance was a development spread over many years. Here, obviously, there is something exceptional but, I would suggest, the exceptional element is that the development can be documented. Any notable development occurs slowly; the insight that provokes the cry, Eureka, is just the last insight in a long, slowly accumulating series of insights. Moreover, adequate expression of a notable development may occur in a single document. Then, document; then, there will be lacking the temporal series of distinct texts and the opportunity for the comparative method that discovers and relates differences. But this lack will be compensated by the presence of a logical structure that combines in a single view all the aspects and implications of the development. The clearer and firmer that structure is, the better the author will know just what he has achieved, and

value of a seminar that repeats previous discovery. One takes some complex and basically convincing monograph and one re-enacts the spade-work behind it by directing one's students to the clues and trails in the original source that ~~have~~ led the author to his results and, if they are keen, will lead them to ~~repeat~~ repeat his discoveries. It is an exhilarating experience for the student and it is well for him in one of his seminars to have been confronted with a finished piece of work and to understand why ~~it was finished~~ and in what sense it was finished.

Besides his colleagues ^{in his own field} ~~in exegesis~~ and his pupils, the exegete speaks to the theological community, to those engaged in other quite different areas and those working in different functional specialties. Here there are two possible procedures and both the employment of both will yield, I think, the best results.

~~One~~ The basic procedure I derive from Albert Descamps' description of a biblical theology. He conceived such theology as the exegesis, not of the whole bible, but of its religious context now is the time for all good men to come description of the biblical theologian as exegete.

~~Thirdly, knowledge of the process as a whole, if based~~

Thirdly, only a process of discovery can take one from the fragmentary experiences, that are the source of the historian's data, to knowledge of a process as a whole. Like a detective, in a set of clues that at first leave him baffled, the historian has to discover the evidence that will yield a convincing account of what happened. The basic task in historical investigation, then, is an interlocked series of discoveries, of ~~own~~ original insights. Now is the time for all discoveries, of a cumulation of original insights that correct and complement one another.

I have been saying that one and the same process of developing understanding fulfils many different functions. It is heuristic, for it uncovers the relevant evidence. It is ecstatic, for it leads the inquirer from prior perspectives to the perspectives proper to the object. It is selective, for out of a totality of data it selects as evidence only what proves relevant to the occurrence of understanding. It is critical, for it removes from the present context and assigns to another context data that might be thought relevant to the present inquiry. It is ~~xx~~ constructive, for the data it does select are linked together in an intelligible unity.

3.4 The Analysis of Critical History

In terms of a precise cognitional theory I have offered
an analysis of the genesis of a work of critical history

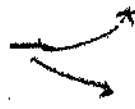
3.4 Insight and Verstehen

German writers on hermeneutics and history have been employing the word, Verstehen, from the days of Schleiermacher. While their usage of the term has developed down the years, it still is far more limited in scope than my use of "insight" or "understanding." Accordingly, a brief explanation of the differences seems in order.

3.4 The Analysis of Critical History

Critical history had to be discovered and developed before it could be analysed, and a successful analysis presupposed the attainment of an adequate cognitional theory. It will serve both to enrich, to clarify, and to confirm the outline we have just presented, if we go back over the ideas that have been entertained on the nature and method of critical history. The development runs through three stages. There is the thought of and on the German originators. There is the positivist interlude. There has been the reaction against the positivists by such men as Carl Becker, Karl Heussi, R. C. Collingwood, and Henri Irénée Marrou.

Faculty Ψ



interpersonal analysis

established subject

vs theory practice

transcendental method

Mark

My idea

Functional specialization

Good

Values

Meaning

Religion

in context of human knowledge

- Pedagogy

future

Eric

- Future Studies, Pt I

