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The Tragedy of Verbal Metaphysics

Leon Chwistek

Translated by Adam Trybus with the assistance of Bernard Linsky

This is the first English translation of Leon Chwistek's "Tragedia werbalnej metafizyki (Z powodu książki Dra Ingardena: Das literarische Kunstwerk)," *Kwartalnik Filozoficzny*, Vol. X, 1932, 46–76. Chwistek offers a scathing critique of Roman Ingarden's *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (translated into English as *The Literary Work of Art*) and of the entire Phenomenology movement. The text also contains many hints at Chwistek's own philosophical and formal ideas. The book that Chwistek reviews attracted wide attention and was instrumental in winning Ingarden a position as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Lwów in 1933. Chwistek's alienation from his fellow logicians of the Lvov-Warsaw school is clear from his ridicule of Leśniewski's project.

The Tragedy of Verbal Metaphysics

On Dr. Ingarden's *Das literarische Kunstwerk*

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Translators' Note

This is the first English translation of a review by Leon Chwistek of Roman Ingarden's *Das literarische Kunstwerk*, (1931), published in Polish as "Tragedia werbalnej metafizyki (Z powodu książki Dra Ingardena: Das literarische Kunstwerk)," *Kwartalnik Filozoficzny*, Vol. X, 1932, 46–76. Ingarden's book was translated as *The Literary Work of Art* (1979). Quotations from the original are taken from this translation. Chwistek's page references are to the original German version. References to the translation are added to Chwistek's page references, e.g. "(371 / 357 en)". B. Linsky assisted the translator with the notes and some points of translation.

Roman Ingarden (1893–1970) had been a doctoral student of Edmund Husserl at Freiburg and then went on to be the leading figure in the school of Phenomenology in Poland. *The Literary Work of Art*, originally published in German, attracted wide attention and was instrumental in winning Ingarden a position as Professor of Philosophy at Lwów University in 1933. From 1939 through 1941 Lwów was occupied by the Soviet Army. After the German invasion of 1941, Ingarden stayed at the University, although as a teacher of German literature. In 1957 a ban from teaching was lifted by the Communist government and Ingarden concluded his career as a professor at Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

Leon Chwistek (1884–1944) was a painter and Professor in the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics at the University of Lwów from 1929 to 1941. In 1941 Chwistek went to the Soviet Union and after teaching in Tbilisi, Georgia and some involvement with the Soviet's League of Polish Patriots, died in a hospital near Moscow in 1944. Chwistek and Ingarden were thus colleagues for eight years at Lwów. Chwistek is known among logicians for his early work on the theory of logical types in Whitehead and Russell's *Principia Mathematica* (1910) and one book, published in English as *The Limits of Science* (1948). He is best known in Poland as a painter of the "Formist" school of abstract art.

The review translated here was published just one year after Rudolf Carnap's "Überwindung der Metaphysik durch logische Analyse der Sprache" (1931), a more famous exchange between one of the new analytic philosophers and a member of the school of Phenomenology. This review has been available in Polish since its publication, but, surprisingly, is only now being published in English. We believe that Chwistek's argumentative style, characteristically full of insult and sarcasm, is as philosophically substantial as Carnap's dead pan ridicule of Heidegger. This exchange did not put Ingarden off from engaging in further debate with the new school. At the 1934 World Congress of Philosophy, he presented a paper "Der Logistische Versuch einer Neugestaltung er Philosophie" (The Logical Attempt at a New Formulation of Philosophy, 1936), in which he argued against the "verification principle" of the Vienna Circle. Ingarden is known among students of Phenomenology for having been an early critic of Logical Positivism, although details of this paper are not well known. Both Rudolf Carnap and Otto Neurath were in the audience for Ingarden's paper, and their comments are published in the "Discussion" after the Ingarden's paper in Proceedings (*Actes du VIII-Eme Congrès internationale de Philosophie à Prague*, 1936). A translation and discussion of this 1934 paper, and the responses by Carnap and Neurath that are

published with it, is in progress by F. Jeffry Pelletier and Bernard Linsky.

This, then, is one of the few explicit exchanges in the 1930's between a member of the Polish school of Philosophy and Logic or the Vienna Circle, and the school of Phenomenology.

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1. Verbal Metaphysics

The death of metaphysics is slow and filled with suffering. It is a desperate struggle, full of hopeless hanging on to fluid and frail phrases, saturated with the ocean of unconscious falsities, sucked from the deepest abysses of the soul and devoid of any kind of consolation, any kind of permanent result, any single statement that would not have raised doubts and would have had to be accepted. There is grandeur in this unparalleled struggle. Even if my opinion about it—namely that it is simply obstinacy and stubbornness—turns out to be correct, it is still undeniable that such stubbornness is only possible when accompanied by a vision imposed on humankind by some formidable individual and fixed through the practices of generations and eternal tradition.

The notion of metaphysics is not defined precisely and can span all the problems related to the notion of reality. As so conceived metaphysics is, of course, always valid and will last until humanity abandons its highest concepts. However, I am not interested in such kinds of problems. Rather, what I have in mind is a specific type of metaphysics, the one that was born in Greece out of Socrates's belief that through honest and free discourse it is possible to reach the essence of the concepts hidden behind the words uttered in common language, such as "good", "love", etc. This ridiculous belief of Socrates that he, who knows so much that he knows nothing, can find out something by extracting and bringing to the surface the thoughts hidden at the bottom of the minds of the commoners, has had an enormous influence on the development of the history of philosophy. In order for this method to be rational, one has to accept, as was done by Plato, that somewhere there exist ready-made schemas of concepts, ideas that are perfect and immutable, with which we are acquainted in our past incarnations and which we remember when spurred by a conversation. Clearly, this notion

corresponded well with the mythological and artistic inclinations of the Greeks and consequently had a great impact on their culture. Plato's thought sunk deep into Christian culture and through it has reached our own times. Stifled initially by the rapid development of natural sciences, it came back to life with full force at the end of the nineteenth century as a result of a seemingly insignificant, yet constantly widening influence of Fr. Bolzano on the one hand and an unexpected development of Cantor's bold doctrine on the other.[1] Since Cantor's doctrine had been presented within the well-known mathematical framework, it turned out to be extremely influential. Its subsequent evolution seems to indicate that the Platonic element in it played merely the role of a narcotic allowing humanity to enter into the area where Greek mathematics had put a bogeyman of paradox and madness. This fetish of madness took revenge on Cantor himself but his students were able to hold on to the areas conquered by him and will no doubt be able to show that these are indeed as simple and as free from metaphysical assumptions as good old mathematics. Cantor took from Plato what was great in him, that is the ability to come up with a bigger-than-life vision, ignoring however the tradition of common language and the belief in its fertilising potential. This unwelcoming and barren landscape has been probed by the spiritual followers of Fr. Bolzano, creating what I called a verbal metaphysics that, after a prolonged and unparalleled period of running rampant, seems to be dying out recently. The main representative of this type of metaphysics is Geheimrat Edmund Husserl, a professor at Freiburg, who was able to create an extremely powerful school of phenomenologists.[2] This school has had a colossal impact on German spiritual culture, making its mark on all its aspects, from law to art. Around this school, there has emerged a number of smaller verbalist schools with one of these being the school established here by Professor Twardowski.[3] This school, despite having made some interesting contributions in terms of analysing the notion of a natural outlook on the world, soon enough dissolved in fruitless formalisms. Nowadays, Professor Leśniewski, who has recently published a number of articles in "Przegląd Filozoficzny", is the most prominent representative of this school.[4] This author fights against Cantorism in the name of a pitiful doctrine that the empty class is an absurd notion and because he considered it necessary for mathematics to be founded on Aristotle's vague

[1]Bernard Bolzano (1781–1848), mathematician and philosopher whose work influenced the development of research on the foundations of mathematics into the Twentieth Century. Georg Cantor (1845–1918), mathematician whose pioneering work on sets and infinite numbers founded the mathematical theory of sets.

[2]Edmund Husserl (1859–1928). The founder of the school of "Phenomenology". Chwistek and Ingarden make numerous references to his *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900 and 1901), translated by J. N. Findlay as *Logical Investigations* (Husserl 1970). Leon Chwistek visited Göttingen in 1908–09, and there attended lectures of Edmund Husserl and David Hilbert, who were professors, and one lecture by the French mathematician Henri Poincaré (1854–1912), who was a visitor in 1909.

[3]Kazimierz Twardowski (1866–1983), a student of Franz Brentano at the University of Vienna, whose 1894 thesis *Content and Object* (published in English as Twardowski 1977) was an important contribution to Phenomenology. After the First World War Twardowski established the study of philosophy at the newly-established Polish university in Lwów. Roman Ingarden was one of his students at Lwów. Twardowski is considered to be the founder of the "Polish school of philosophy" that flourished between the world wars and was allied to the "Lvov-Warsaw" school of mathematics and logic of which Chwistek was a marginal member. See Woleński (1989). Wolenski describes Chwistek's position in the school in a section titled "A Pole Apart".

[4]Stanislaw Leśniewski (1886–1939), professor at Warsaw, was the founder of the "Lvov-Warsaw School of Logic". His one doctoral student was Alfred Tarski (1902–1983) who transported the Polish school of logic to Berkeley California, where he was a professor from 1944 to his retirement and death in 1983. Leśniewski's distinctive system of "Mereology" is founded on a primitive notion of part and whole. It is the subject of recent investigation, such as Simons (2000). Chwistek's dismissive remarks about Leśniewski indicate at least part of the explanation his marginal status among his colleagues and logicians since.

S-is-*P* schema, more on which later. Leśniewski's system is immensely complex and more doubtful than *Principia Mathematica* by Whitehead and Russell that he criticized so much.[5] I have to admit that despite the best intentions, I have not been able to find anything worthwhile in it, that would go deeper than merely to touch upon the outlined problems.

Far more interesting is the school of phenomenologists, the greatness of which lies in stubborn and passionate belief in the possibility of absolute knowledge. This belief, at every step brought to absurdity by the phenomenologists themselves, pushes them nevertheless to continue making unparalleled efforts that have a definitely exciting effect on the mind, and as such incline those who oppose it to go beyond the sphere of comfortable conventionalism. Not withstanding all this, the sin of verbalism, sanctified by the pitiful "pure grammar" of Husserl, eats at the school from within and pulls it from the dreamed heights down to the sorrowful vale of everyday life. Pure grammar still lives in one of the latest works by Husserl, more on which later, and bears on the intriguing book by Dr. Ingarden that has become a starting point for this analysis.

Pure grammar is supposed to be the answer to the criticism regarding the limits of natural language made by natural scientists and those of the epistemologists that were inclined toward more natural explanations. Such researchers focused on the problem of meaning of the seemingly innocent and natural philosophical questions thus preceding strict analyses performed later on by logicians, most notably by the famous Bertrand Russell. Among others, the questions included the following. What is truth? What is matter? What is a human being? What is good? What is a piece of art?

[5]Chwistek is best known among historians of logic for having won his position at Lwów in a competition to which Alfred Tarski also applied. Bertrand Russell wrote a letter of support recommending Chwistek. See Feferman and Feferman (2004). An account of the letter and of Chwistek's work on Russell's logic can be found in Linsky (2011, 54–57).

Science, by giving up on such questions, was supposedly getting out of touch with reality and had entered the realm of fiction: re-establishing this connection with reality was the main aim of the phenomenologists. And in order to achieve this, superhuman efforts were not spared. The phenomenological literature today is so vast that it must overwhelm even the most ardent of historians. A sea of neologisms, often very unpleasant and unsavory, obscuring the notions that are the most ambiguous and elusive, a scarcity of examples and arguments that are so complex and inflated by pseudo-scientific jargon, all create the Great Wall of China of sorts that keeps laymen away and at a safe distance. And yet, it does awaken one's interest and, despite the strongest inclination to disagree, a sort of respect and appreciation. Working consistently toward an idea is always commendable and cannot be completely fruitless. Who knows what would happen if we dived deep into this area without prejudices and try to separate what is really valuable from an unfortunate self-deception and self-will resulting from excessive zeal? This article, however, cannot possibly claim to achieve this aim. Rather, it is an attempt at initiating a matter-of-fact and non-partisan discussion that should aim at pointing to the area, where critical rationalists could find—not a complete, as this is impossible, but at least partial—agreement with phenomenologists, similarly to what happens in everyday life.

2. Husserl's Illusions

The verbalist tendencies show up in Husserl's work in a twofold manner. Firstly, as a result of his criticisms of psychologism, there is this clinging to various words, as well as an entirely superficial and artificial creation of regressions *ad infinitum*. Secondly, when it concerns the creation of the foundations of logic, at each step we see arbitrary, subjective analyses, which instead of providing basis for building a system of logic, introduce an

unparalleled welter of ideas, without sense and direction. I shall now justify this thesis with a number of examples.

2.1. Critique of Hume's Nominalism

This concerns the thesis of Hume that "an individual idea becomes general at the moment, when it is bound with a general term, e.g. such that by means of a habit has been bound with many other ideas and as a result entered with them into a relation, thanks to which these are easily presented to our imagination" (Logische Unters. II, 119 1).[6] This thesis seems to me to be a valid one and I cannot see any way of putting forward a reasonable argument against it, hence it comes as no surprise that I have not been able to find any such argument in what Husserl writes about it. If I am not mistaken, Husserl does not even try to look for such an argument at all. His entire effort is focused somewhere else. Hume did not stop at just stating the thesis but tried to explain the process of how a word combines with particular ideas. It is obvious that such explanations can only be of secondary importance as these phenomena are so elusive and complex that it is not even clear what explaining them would truly mean. What is important in Hume's thesis, is that we do not *have to* accept the existence of universals as there is nothing against us assuming that words or expressions replace them completely. It is well known that a calculator allows us to solve complex numerical problems without the need for an in-depth analysis of arithmetical concepts. The development of modern logic and semantics irrefutably shows that the entirety of logic and mathematics can be reduced to a number of practical rules governing the use of letters, which are understandable by any printer. Hence, the proper material for logic and mathematics consists in expressions which can be obtained without familiarity with their contents. Obviously, we do not stop here and aim to understand the contents of such expressions, being aware, however, that this is only about our own experiences and nothing else. What is really objective, really independent from us is that which can be automatically deduced from our automaton. In order to observe this phenomenon, it is enough to focus on elementary arithmetic. A look at the entirety of *a priori* sciences is needed merely to convince oneself that there is no area of abstract thinking that is high enough not to feature this phenomenon. On the surface, Cantorism and the existence of non-constructive objects accepted by him seems to go against the thesis put forward here.

The research I have conducted irrefutably shows that Cantorism can be reconstructed within pure semantics—that is, it can be reconstructed so that all that is closely related to idealism is eliminated.[7] The work is still far from being completed and it is hard to predict if this reconstruction would not force us to give up certain interesting notions. In such a case we would be at worst forced to conclude that nominalistic mathematics is to some degree limited but the question would remain whether the excluded theorems were not of the same character as the mythological speculations of the Alexandrian school.

In relation to this research, it is worth pointing out that Husserl focused neither on formal logic nor Cantorism but dived into the illusory area of psychological explanations instead, hoping that by undermining their authority he would find a proper basis for his idealistic thesis. Let us see what this tilting at windmills consists of.

Hume points out that the process of associating idea and expression is based on similarity. Thus, a white ball is to some

[6] Husserl's discussion of Hume on general ideas is in *Logical Investigations* (1901, II §5).

[7] Chwistek is referring to his "The Theory of Constructive Types, (Principles of Logic and Mathematics), Part I" (1923). These technical works on the theory of types present a formal system of logic which does not contain existence claims of the sort of Whitehead and Russell's "Axiom of Reducibility", that Chwistek criticized as "Idealistic" or Platonistic. See Linsky (2009).

degree similar to a white disk etc. This similarity means that both these objects are categorized by us as white.

It is obvious that this is not an explanation. The goal here is nothing more than to claim that a certain association process is taking place; to provide examples of this process; and to give it a name.

However, Husserl sees things in the following manner. Since the feature of color is reduced to similarity, then there are no colors but only similarity, and similarity is a kind of general feature, hence it should also be reduced to something else and so on, indefinitely.

This argument is so obviously a subterfuge that it is truly hard to imagine how could it ever be taken seriously by anybody.

It is clear that according to Hume, there are no colors or similarities considered as separate objects. What there is, is only the impressions of particular colors and their ideas; as well as impressions of similar objects and their ideas. Impressions and ideas of colors are independent of impressions and ideas of similar objects, meaning that in order to state that both the disk and the ball are white objects one does not have to claim in addition that these are similar. This statement is of a direct character and that is all there is to it. The remark that we deal here with an association based on similarity belongs to a higher level of analysis and is given not as a significant element of the phenomenon's description but as additional characteristics allowing one to automatically transfer the description to other types of examples.

If we were to consistently use Husserl's method, we would have to reject all psychological analyses and abandon such enterprises altogether, as it is clear that every analysis has to be based on something that is not analyzed and simultaneously very complex, namely on everyday language and its more or less clearly defined meanings. The apparatus that we use should be clearly separated from the analyzed material. If we show a child a sparrow saying that it is a bird and the child seeing a cockerel the next day exclaims: a bird!, then it cannot be said to know anything about similarity, and it does not need to; it is for us to conclude that it is the association of ideas on the basis of similarity that is the decisive factor in this process.

Here, the notion of similarity is a part of the apparatus that we use and that does not fall within the scope of our analysis. If, in turn, we would like to focus on the problem of ascertaining similarities and point e.g. to an example where it is stated that a sparrow is similar to a cockerel or that a lime tree is similar in some sense to a spruce, then, obviously, when trying to characterize this process we are forced to refer to the notion of similarity of a higher order, which sooner or later inevitably leads us to an infinite hierarchy of similarity types. But even if this hides a regression *ad infinitum*, it is no problem or obstacle to anything. I simply say: the problems of similarity of the n-th order are analyzed using the notion of similarity of the $n+1$-th order. Obviously, I cannot describe everything at once, and I do not really want to do so, as it serves no real purpose.[8]

The misunderstanding arises from the fact that Husserl treats this as if it were a definition, i.e. an answer to the question *what is this?* and not a simple description of nature.

This simple, unassuming and honest answer by Hume utterly destroys Husserl's sophistry. It is truly touching that now, after so many years, when everyone knows that Husserl's pure grammar, which should be called rather a verbal metaphysics of logic, is a barren fantasy and when the nominalistic logic, inspired by Hume's work, goes through a period of unparalleled development, the aged Husserl, trying to salvage himself in the mind of posterity gives up on so many things, as witnessed

[8]Husserl discusses the notion of reducing universals to relations of similarity in *Logical Investigations*, II, §5. Bertrand Russell presents an argument for the existence of universals based on the impossibility of such an infinite regress of relations of "similarity" in Chapter IX of *The Problems of Philosophy* (1912). Russell rejects the notion of an infinite hierarchy of relations of similarity of ever higher "logical types", that Chwistek here allows.

in the aforementioned work *Formale und Transzendentale Logik* (Husserl 1929). In this work, Hume is hailed as a great genius, who, without being aware of it, truly established the school of phenomenology and was the first to pose a particular question of transcendental philosophy (p. 226), with formal logic being treated as the basis for "explanatory" analyses, which, truth be told, explain nothing. I shall now endeavor to briefly describe this work as a second example of Husserl's verbalism.

2.2. Pure Grammar

As *Logische Untersuchungen* are considered a bit outdated by the phenomenologists, I have been looking with interest into *Formal and Transcendental Logic* to see what influence the development of formal logic had on Husserl.[9] I am painfully disappointed. It turns out that Husserl only noticed Hilbert's method and as a result identifies formal logic with a set of inconsistency free formulas. Obviously, such a pure conventionalism not only cannot shake Husserl's idealism, it even reinforces it to the greatest degree. After all, it disguises various theorems related to ideal objects such as the extremely idealistic Zermelo principle which is introduced at different times under different names.[10] It is only natural that such a standpoint motivates further research and critique. The point is that Husserl has nothing to say about it. The idea of pure grammar dominates his mind. The belief in the primacy of the *S*-is-*P* schema and that that analysis can still be fruitful, leads him to conduct arbitrary and completely barren analyses. He says for example that S in the proposition S is P_1 is not exactly the same as S in the proposition S is P_2 (p. 260). Every logician would expect an attack on the notion of propositional function. Yet this is nothing of the kind, as the problems related to the construction of the system are set aside here. What it amounts to is an abstract statement of some difference and nothing else. It is obvious that one can either agree with that or hold an opposing view. The shapelessness and elusiveness of the atmosphere of intuitions and fictions is immediately palpable. This is exactly the same situation as in the case of the dialectial attack on the $A = A$ principle. Here, the left hand side character is different to the right hand side one and nothing prevents us from assuming that both characters change constantly. The point is that such differences are practically negligible and do not lead one to confuse, say, the letter B with the letter A, hence there is no danger of some major confusion arising.

Husserl, similarly to Leśniewski, would be content for logic to be founded on the *S*-is-*P* schema but there is no doubt that he does not fully understand it. One should bear in mind that it is a different matter to say *Socrates is a man* than to find this proposition written down in a book. Even uttering such a proposition can have different meaning depending on circumstances. If I believe that Socrates existed and if his idea is strong enough for me, then I speak of him in a similar way as, say, about my late father. Socrates is then, and only then, a proper noun. It could be, however, that I doubt Socrates existed or suppose that there were a few Socrateses, in such cases the word "Socrates" becomes a class symbol, similar to the word "human". Even if I do believe that only one Socrates existed but I do not have a specific idea of such an individual, I have to consider Socrates as a class symbol determining a one-element class. If I want to stay as close as possible to what is written in a book and do not wish to add my own interpretation, which would perhaps be alien to that of the author's, then I have to consider all tendencies to view the word "Socrates" as a proper noun as false

[9] *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, translated by Dorion Cairns as *Formal and Transcendental Logic* (Husserl 1969).

[10] Zermelo's "well ordering principle" asserts that every set can be arranged in a possibly new order in which each subset has a least member. Chwistek sees as "extremely idealistic" the notion that we can assert that there always is such a well ordering, even if we have no idea how to find it for a given set.

and simply conclude that it is a class symbol. Hence, apart from purely subjective statements, which are inaccessible for logic, the proposition *Socrates is a man* has to be interpreted as synonymous with the proposition *The Socrates class is a subclass of the human class*.

It is clear that the Socrates class, similarly to the human class, remains undetermined as long as a given book does not determine some of its properties. As there is no specific body of text on which to build, the indeterminacy cannot be completely eliminated from any written work. What can be done at most is to reduce this indeterminacy to some practical rules, accessible to the reader who is used to a common way of thinking, as it happens in the semantic system of logic. Everything else is subjective and, from the point of view of theory of knowledge, fruitless. [Chwistek's footnote: Cf. Whitehead and Russell, *Principia Mathematica*, Vol. I, p. 46, Cambridge 1910.]

In the face of such an analysis, Husserl is helpless. At most he can claim that this analysis is arbitrary, which is precisely what I think about his own attempt and this disagreement shows that absolute belief in the primacy of the *S*-is-*P* schema is ill-founded.

3. The Dream of Intersubjective Content of Sentences

The project of Dr. Ingarden's work was born of the dream of answering the simplest questions that every child can ask. This thinker focused on the questions: what is a literary work of art, one of the most vital and clearly-defined questions of this kind. Dr. Ingarden decided to tackle this question and use the force of the phenomenological method in answering it.

"Almost daily"—we read in the Introduction (p. 3 en)—"we deal with literary works. We read them; we are moved and enthralled by some, while others do not appeal to us; we evaluate them and pronounce various opinions on them; we discuss them; we write essays on individual works and take an interest in their fates. Their existence seems to us as natural as the air we breathe. Thus it would appear that we know the objects of our concern universally and exhaustively. And yet, were someone to ask us what a literary work actually is, we should have to admit with some surprise that we cannot find an accurate and satisfactory answer to this question."

I am not certain if the amazement the author expresses is honest or if it is merely a literary gesture, I suppose however that the latter is the case. The insurmountable difficulties that Dr. Ingarden has to try to overcome in the book, as well as the answer that is far away from being simple and clear, strongly indicate that the author must have realized the immense complexity of this deceptively simple question.

Dr. Ingarden's conclusion can be summed up in the statement that a literary work of art has neither an independent nor a real existence; something with which most intelligent and science-oriented people would agree. The author does not want, however, to stop here. He thinks it appropriate to adopt a new type of being, dubbed by him heteronomous being and which is different to both ideal and real being. The article *Bemerkungen zum Problem Idealismus Realismus* (Ingarden 1929) [Chwistek's footnote: Jahrbuch fur Philosophie u. Phenomenologische Forschung (Husserl-Festschrift), Halle a. S. 1929.], which has been kindly made available to me by Dr. Ingarden, tells us that an object exists in a heteronomous way, if it in itself is about nothing and the basis of its being is in some other object.[11] I am not sure if my rendering is accurate, for when reading things like that one senses immediately that the author touches upon very subtle differences and, modeling himself after his master Husserl, does not shy away from using precise names with

[11] The "Husserl Festschrift" cited here and below is: *Festschrift, Edmund Husserl zum 70 Geburtstag gewidmet*, *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung*, supp. vol. 1929.

changing and questionable meanings. "Redness" is an example of an autonomous object that, according to Dr. Ingarden, is in itself what it is, which is determined by something specific to itself, and which contains this description in itself.

Again, I cannot be sure if my rendering is correct, I suspect however that this is roughly what all this is about; one cannot hope for more precision on such slippery ground. A literary work is an example of heteronomous object, the existence of which is dependent on our consciousness.

Assuming either that literary work is an ideal or that it is a real object goes against common sense, stating that an object like a literary work does not exist at all—would make science impossible, hence to arrive at a contradiction. There is only one way out—to assume a separate type of being, the one referred to by the author as heteronomous and to agree that a literary work's being is of this type. One should keep in mind however that such a heteronomous being is possible only, when both ideal and real objects actually exist. Taking this into account allows one to understand the intersubjective identity of sets of sentences, including literary works, for various agents (p. 378).

It is impossible to sum up all the immense efforts made by the author to introduce us to the world of heteronomous objects. I shall focus on the problem of the relation between intentional correlates of sentences and real facts (p. 169 / 163 en). A statement regarding some real event for phenomenologists is not a simple reaction to an external stimulus. Such an interpretation seems to them to run contrary to common sense. For a sentence to have its proper content, a sentence describing a real event has to match the content, or rather factual state of affairs, which is called an intentional correlate of a sentence, with a real event. Here one encounters immensely subtle and complex analyses, which can lead a reader who is not trained in such a style of thinking to despair. First, one stumbles upon the transmission of an intentional correlate of a sentence into the sphere of real being, an extremely important action, the discovery of which is to be credited to one Mrs. Conrad-Martius. It is, to be sure, a fictional action, never actually performed by anybody and hence one can be excused for having serious doubts about its existence. This problem, however, is representative of the entirety of this mythology.

If we assume that we have a guardian angel that protects us from evil and a devil that induces us to sin, then reality can never reject such a belief. For whenever we do good, it is said that it is the angel that is to be credited, whereas in the opposite circumstances, it is obviously the devil that gained the upper hand. Similarly in this situation, one deals with some sort of subconscious action performed on something that also one cannot be fully aware of; all this ensures that the results will be most reliable. When I finally had come to terms with such a state of affairs and read on, I was surprised to find out that this fictitious action is nevertheless not enough. It turns out that one also needs to be convinced that the content of the purely intentional correlate of a sentence is matched from certain point of view to some sphere of being so perfectly that it can be identified with this sphere from this given point of view. As, obviously, I had not previously thought about anything of this kind, despite having made my opinions known about any number of real events. I looked at this theory with amazement. Hence all this is not only about some unconscious action but also about some unconscious belief.

When stating that my pen lies on the table not only do I transmit the intentional correlate of the sentence "the pen lies on the table" into the real sphere, where my pen is, but in addition I believe that this correlate is in some sense identical with the fact of the pen lying on the table. Without this process, communication between people, science, culture, etc., would have been impossible. It transpires that it is a very important process, and yet it has gone totally unnoticed. So we all have been going

through it unconsciously. But if this were the case, what would the benefits be? I am getting tangled up in difficulties and there seems to be no way out. I sense that what I am dealing with here is something serious, requiring monstrous and deep efforts, which are always deserving of respect, and yet one cannot shake the feeling that there is a horrible void behind all this. I alternate between attributing this feeling to my own stupidity and to the oversensitive fantasy of the author. Then, I start thinking that perhaps it would be better to say simply that stating that a pen is lying on a table is an automatic reaction to a certain stimulus, deeply rooted in us by means of repetition during childhood. Granted that this explains nothing but how can we claim to be able to explain anything of this kind? We cannot even explain phenomena that are much simpler, such as the falling of a stone, since it is well-known that the law described by Newton is a description, not an explanation. Why assume that we would be able to explain a phenomenon of this level of complexity? But never mind. If somebody came up with such an explanation, we would be thrilled, provided that it does truly explain something. The addition of fictional action and fictional belief explains nothing, it merely creates an illusion of explaining something and for this reason we would do better without it.

All this unparalleled effort seems to me to be completely lost. Despite constantly trying to get a feeling of the subject matter, I do not believe in the existence of the intersubjective content of any sentence, not only now but also far into the future. I also do not believe that such a hypothesis is at all necessary. I do not believe for a moment that a sentence has no sense if one does not assume the existence of as many objects as there are nouns. All this seems very childish to me. But never mind. As I have already mentioned, I shall accept Dr. Ingarden's hypothesis for the sake of the argument. Let there be such heteronomous objects as literary works of art. Once there were Twelve Olympians and truly there was no way of proving their existence to be absurd. They were even useful at times, but above all funny and poetic. There was ether, now we have electrons and uncountable sets, why not have an intangible, unreal and non-ideal but still different heteronomous object *Sir Tadeusz*.[12] Admittedly, one does not really know what to do with such an object as in real life one has to do only with the copies with "*Sir Tadeusz*" written on them and with the thoughts evoked by reading the characters present in a given copy. But this is not what metaphysicians are looking for. *Entia sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*, there is no reason to be shy. Things are worse off, however, with the intersubjective sense of sentences and of literary works of art. This hypothesis enters our lives and imposes illusions that can be the source of bitter disappointments. It is no doubt tempting to believe that ultimately everything can be explained but the entire history of humankind and—above all—our everyday experiences, witness against it. For my part, I have made every effort to try to fully understand Dr. Ingarden's work. I am afraid, however, that Dr. Ingarden would say that I have not understand a word of it.

For Husserl, it is clear that the word "something" has a simple meaning. The experience connected with the understanding of this word is no doubt of a complex character but the meaning is definitely not (*Logische Untersuchungen*, II 1).

To me, this statement is just an empty platitude, as I cannot see anything different to the ideas occurring to me when thinking about the use of the word "something" in everyday language that would deserve to be called the "*meaning*" of this word.

This misunderstanding is deeply-rooted and cannot be removed by any means. When one has spent half of one's life building systems of logic, one clearly realizes that the essence of precise thinking lies in the manipulation of some precisely-defined expressions using precisely-defined rules, with these

[12] A national epic poem written by Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855), who is called one of the "three Bards of Polish literature".

manipulations being such that their results could be interpreted using everyday language and that in simple, familiar, cases—like the theorems of elementary arithmetic—these two areas would be perfectly compatible.

The expressions that are used in such a case do not have any *a priori* meaning. These are just some common expressions, the importance of which lies merely in the fact that we have rules allowing the construction of new expressions in such a way that only these, and no other, expressions can be constructed. If, for example, in Hetper's semantic arithmetic an expression $*cc$ is used to denote the number 1, one should not think that there is some sort of definition that would provide a meaning for such an expression.[13] Things are exactly the opposite. Interpreting the entire system, we accept the definition, according to which the expression 1 is a shorthand for $*cc$, which by this virtue does not stop being the same thing it has been from the very beginning, i.e. just an expression. This definition is justified only by the fact that when complemented with other analogous definitions, it would allow one to obtain the theorems of the kind $2\times2 = 4$ together with all the remaining theorems of elementary arithmetic.

We see that there is no place for assigning specific meanings to expressions and that the very notion of such a meaning becomes unnecessary. Getting into this sort of thinking was problematic even for such a nominalist as Poincaré, hence it is not surprising that the phenomenologists, who are used to the idealistic notion of meaning, are incapable of moving in this direction. Yet, if that is the case, then how one can even think of mutual understanding? This understanding would require phenomenologists to abandon their dreams, which has become the essence of their lives, and of nominalists to be subjected to a kind of astonishing illumination that would impose entire worlds on them, where now they see emptiness and nothingness. The phenomenologists will forever accuse us of short-sightedness or even blindness and we will accuse them of naivety and fanaticism. But let us count the very existence of this debate as the proof of our superiority, as it is we who constantly claim that understanding between people is only possible to an extent, that there are no meanings of the words in our language that sooner or later have to become evident for all, and that the area where such an understanding is indeed possible is no bigger than the sphere of everyday life and purely practical considerations.

The only way of rationally extending this sphere is to create systems, such as those found within logic and mathematics or those, on which law is based. It is obvious that such methods clearly give up the dream of absolute knowledge that has been with us for ages and is for idealists something that they refuse to give up even today. Such a dream, notwithstanding its naivety, is not something to be ignored and is no doubt marked by greatness; hence it is hard to abandon it and I do not intend to convince anybody to do so. Let me point out, however, that if two people give each other the right to accept different systems or sets of regulations, then these should no doubt be considered as being on a higher level than those, who believe that it is only they that have access to the absolute truth and that all the others are left in the dark and as such should be considered second-class individuals. This way of thinking leads to the creation of the most despicable maniacs, such as the pre-war German officers and officials and the entirety of Austrian bureaucracy that

[13] The formalization of the theory of natural numbers of Chwistek's student W. Hetper is cited and discussed in *The Limits of Science* (Chwistek 1948), and was later developed by John Myhill in a series of papers in the *Journal of Symbolic Logic* in the 1950's, including Myhill (1950). The gist of the construction is shown with the example of the number 1, which is the *successor* of the initial natural number 0. Hetper's idea is that the successor of a number n is simply the pair of n with itself, in set theoretical notation $\{n, n\}$. In Hetper's notation this pairing operation is indicated with the asterisk, "*" and the number 0 with "c", so "$*cc$" replaces the numeral "1". Myhill is indebted to Chwistek and Hetper only for the spirit of their "constructive" account of mathematics and for this detail of notation.

is based on such an approach. It might be that I am alone in my opinion but I much more prefer to be terrorised in the name of someone's superiority than this unparalleled and mad oppression that is forced upon me when asking me to accept something I consider foolish and evil in the name of the absolute truth, the representative of which is my opponent.

I have plunged into such considerations while knowing full well that they have nothing to do with scientific rigor precisely because I do not believe that there is a space for scientific argumentation when it comes to the problem of whether sentences have an independent meaning. I must admit that if somebody truly believes in the existence of such an independent meaning of sentences, then it is nigh impossible to persuade them otherwise. They would explain all the difficulties and inconsistencies with the fact that we are insufficiently prepared and the ongoing tragedy of philosophy would present itself to them as just an episode, after which, maybe even tomorrow, there will be the dawn of a new era. One cannot argue with such a belief, but one can but ask whether humanity would be better off with or without it. I for one believe it would be good riddance and let me add that I do consider this a plausible scenario. It should also be noted, however, that the agony of the belief I have described at the beginning of this article might be a slow one and that recurrences of it of great intensity are not only plausible but nearly certain, with it even remaining in existence indefinitely being a distinct possibility.

Let us, however, get back to the work of Dr. Ingarden. We do well to notice that in the penultimate chapter the author is taken hold by doubts that deserve our attention. "Almost at the end of our study"—we read at page 370 / 356 en—"we came upon the phenomenon of the 'life' of a literary work and the interrelations between the work itself and its concretizations and, hence, its relation to subjective operations and experiences. After taking into account the entire range of these issues, we see that a certain danger that was supposed to have been practically overcome arises anew: the literary work, taken purely in itself, appears at first to be a totally rigid formation, and, in its rigidity, it is also fully secured as regards its identity . . . After taking into consideration the situations that are produced when the work is read by a number of readers, it again seems to be threatened in its identity and in its proud heterogeneity with respect to subjective experiences. In spite of all the differences that we have established between it and its concretizations, it seems to dissolve in their manifold variety and to lose, thanks to the close ontic relations and interrelations of essence between concretizations and subjective experiences, its heterogeneity with respect to these experiences. Thus the old question crops up again: is it not the psychologistic conception of the literary work right, after all? Would it not, instead of speaking of *one* literary work, expressed in many concretizations, be simpler and more correct to 'reduce' the literary work to these various concretizations and simply consider it a theoretical, abstractly obtained fiction which does not 'truly' exist?"

It would perhaps be enough to stop quoting here but what follows is so wise and so self-critical that ignoring it seems unacceptable.

"And would it not then be a mere difference of words"—continues Dr. Ingarden (p. 371 / 357 en)—"to speak of 'intentional correlates' instead of simply 'imaginings', as in the psychologistic conception? The conception of the literary work developed here may be finer and more subtle, and any talk of 'imaginings' may still be very crude and primitive; but do they not ultimately come to the same thing . . . ? Can the literary work, however, really be reduced to the manifold of concretizations? Is it not contradicted by the numerous differences we have shown between the work itself and its concretizations? Someone might answer us by saying that these differences exist only when at the outset one posits the idea of a literary work expressing itself in

its concretizations, which is what has actually happened in our study so far. But what guarantees for us the identity of the work with respect to all its concretizations, especially when it is conceded that the individual concretizations differ widely among themselves and that the reader very frequently absolutizes the concretization he has at the moment and believes that in it he has apprehended the work itself? And, in particular, if the work is read by different readers, what guarantee do we have of its identity, i.e., its *intersubjective* identity? And what is identical in that case? . . . it would perhaps be most correct to say that in the individual readings it is merely similar 'concretizations' that arise and that it is only a special delusion or error if we all believe that we are reading one and the same work. Finally, if the literary work is only a formation of subjective operations, which cannot exist with ontic autonomy, the question arises, how does the work exist when it is not read by anyone?"

These questions become so threatening and suggest themselves with such an overpowering force that one can not but view this as a truly tragic event. Here we have the author, who upon finishing his work of art is not the same person as the one who started it. The first chapters saw him as a self-assured follower of phenomenology, who was looking up to his master. The final chapters reveal an independent and deep thinker, who is sure to stop at nothing in order to truly, and at any price, find out who he really is. The tragedy in the quoted fragments is only comparable to the metaphysical experience of Descartes that forced him to doubt the existence of the real world. Such a situation is typical of transition from one reality to another. The author, who, having came out of natural reality went deep into the reality of ideas and visions, and as a result of a sudden internal shock thrusts himself into this very reality of ideas that he despises the most and of which he is afraid with his entire soul. The dreamed-up heaven of intentional correlates vanishes into thin air and is replaced with the despised psychological scepticism, the same that has been condemned by the author to inevitable perdition. But it is in this desperate moment when, out of internal misery and desperate crisis, that a true, self-conscious philosopher is born.

Dr. Ingarden states simply that he cannot resign from the intersubjective meaning of sentences as then no ideal science, common to all, would be possible. He is still deluding himself that he could bring out this common-to-all meaning of sentences by using phenomenology but this begins to look like a hopeless task. It would require new, very deep and extensive, analyses, one would have to write a new book and this is, for now, out of the question. Therefore, Dr. Ingarden finds a new way. He *assumes* the autonomous existence of ideal concepts and bases his heteronomous objects on that. I emphasized that he *assumes* it as in the mouth of a phenomenologist this sounds extraordinarily paradoxical. It is a witness to a crushing defeat of the most diligent student of Husserl's but also to a joyful cry from a newborn creative philosopher.

4. The Question of Art

The tragedy of verbal metaphysics reaches its pinnacle there, where, on the surface, one could expect its liberation to begin. It would seem that the thinkers, who have got so deep into the essence of words that can see the mysterious beings hidden within, which are inaccessible to a mere mortal, would uncover for us new ways of understanding literature and especially poetry, which in recent years has undergone such an unparalleled evolution.

Dr. Ingarden's book, together with the thoughts of various Ammanns, Pinders, Russacks, Stanzels, Révészs, Schmarsows or Walzels quoted there,[14] is in this respect completely disap-

[14]These are most likely: Hermann Ammann (a philosopher of language), Franz Karl Stanzel (b. 1923, an Austrian literary theorist), Géza Révész (1878–

pointing. These are indeed very subtle analyses. The aim is to define notions such as "an expression" or "the sound of an expression". There is a lot of talk about the meaning of expressions, the tone they are pronounced with and the impact of this tone on their meaning. But the principal worry of this entire school seems to be that authors, using "strong" and "full of life" words should be able to uncover their experiences in such a way as to allow the reader a direct access to them (*Das Literarische Kunstwerk*, p. 39 / 44 en). The sounds related to expressions are only a surface, which hides a content, and their role in a poetic work of art is to uncover the proper content of the work for us (*op. cit.* 57). It is clear that everything revolves around the notion of knowledge, which, not surprisingly, has nothing to do with the artistic experience. Poetry and literature are not about the everyday content hidden in the expressions—and no one would dare to assign any other content to them. Only a theoretician, who did not even reach as far as Słowacki, can seriously claim that the contents of expressions impose themselves directly upon us owing to their force or liveliness. I am now thumbing through *King-Spirit*[15] and wonder in the name of what principle would anybody endeavor to uncover the author's thoughts in this welter of metaphors and innuendos and why on earth that would be useful even for anybody but an historian of literature. Then I reach far into the past and wonder about the charm of Dante's *terza rimas* and the pitiful role of commentators. Why would I, for goodness sake, struggle with all this and risk doing away with the ecstasy that brings thoughts and visions, which might have nothing whatsoever to do with the thoughts contained in these *terza rimas*, yet precious and important to me to the point that anything else is not even worth mentioning? I move from Dante to our lyrical poetry and remember the poems by Młodożeniec, Jasieński and Czyżewski, to which I owe many an unforgettable emotion.[16] And then I stumble upon a question, how it is possible that a theoretician, no doubt familiar with such phenomena, would completely ignore them. I get back to Dr. Ingarden's book and search for a trace of understanding for the charm of newly created phrases and arrangements of expressions, to no avail. The notion of going beyond the everyday content of the words, which is indispensable for understanding what is going on in poetry today seems completely alien to him. For surely, a poem like this of Jasieński, where he writes

The flower fell,
It will drip onto the stairs

is, for God's sake, neither about a flower falling nor about it dripping onto the stairs as it is too commonplace and banal an event and relates to nothing more. Similarly, the poem by Młodożeniec containing the fragment

Here or there

is not really about his location. And yet these are masterpieces and if Dr. Ingarden is of a different opinion, he should take into account that this would be the opinion of all those, who in lyrical poetry are looking for more than aesthetic pleasure or emotion. Art in general, and lyrical poetry in particular, can become a powerful drug.[17] Of course, "drug" is a relative notion with different people succumbing to different drugs. It is certain that sport, good cuisine, card games or chess can become

1955, a Hungarian-Dutch psychologist), Oskar Walzel (1864–1944, an Austrian literary theorist).

[15] An unfinished narrative poem by Juliusz Słowacki (1809–1849), who, similarly to Mickiewicz, is called one of the "three Bards of Polish literature".

[16] Bruno Jasieński (1901–1938), a Polish poet involved in the futurist movement; Stanisław Młodożeniec (1895–1959), a Polish poet, one of the creators of the futurist movement; Tytus Czyżewski (1880–1945), a Polish painter and poet who was one of the artists labeled as Polish expressionists.

[17] Chwistek's use of the notion that art is like a drug is not meant as derogatory. See the discussion of the role of drugs in the circle around Witkiewicz in Feferman and Feferman (2004, 58–63).

such powerful drugs for some that they become insensitive to the drug of art or even "drugs" proper. A similar immunization can occur when it comes to ideas. Those taken over by an idea fall for it as though it were a powerful drug and become insensitive to anything else. I have never met a true socialist who would care for art. The same can be said about many natural scientists and phenomenologists. Phenomenologists drug themselves with the vision of fictitious objects, which they have multiplied reaching an unheard of number. The world they inhabit is so rich that it can only be compared to heavens teeming with angels. No wonder that in art they are only looking for what strengthens the sense of that world; that they are mostly interested in finding a place for art in that world. The essence of art is for a phenomenologist a well-defined subject of research. They care next to nothing that new phenomena, of which nobody heard of even yesterday, constantly enter this arena; that for example the pseudo-classic aesthetics was, and had to be, defined using concepts valid at the time; and that, according to pseudo-classical criteria, Mickiewicz was already an absurdity with Słowacki simply an outrage. They do not care that the "essence" of a given race cannot be known until the race is over; and that art is precisely that kind of race, which started centuries ago and it is doubtful that it will ever end. Witkiewicz,[18] who is sympathetic to phenomenologists, is admittedly of the opinion that art is already dead but this sentiment is not shared by phenomenologists themselves; anyhow, it cannot be expected that such a claim is to be taken seriously in the era of such great developments in experimental sciences which are opening new creative avenues. Together with the development of art, aesthetic criteria change as well and their rate of change can be very fast. Viewing it, as phenomenologists together with all the representatives of German aesthetics, from such a distance, is more or less the same as developing phlogiston chemistry or Aristotelian logic today. Yet even a closer look at ancient literature and art could shake the faith those gentlemen have in themselves, if they really were to indulge in it. If, however, one rejects primitivist paintings, ignores Cézanne and spares no thought for Eastern art or if, as it seems to be the case of Dr. Ingarden, one focuses on Schiller and considers Thomas Mann and Bernanos pinnacles of modernism, then it should not be surprising that one does not reach the level of art becoming a drug and does not go beyond the generalities that mean nothing to any modern artist.

Dr. Ingarden claims that the literary work of art is a polyphony of any number of layers, which, when put together, are the essence of its internal harmony. He justifies this claim in a very detailed and thorough manner as if he anticipated a heated reaction from opponents. But all this is truly just an illusion. No art enthusiast would argue with such a claim as it is neither contentious nor does it excite any discussion. The same applies to Dr. Ingarden's metaphysical qualities. All works of literary art contain such metaphysical qualities, with the bad ones often having more of them than the good ones. They are contained both in *New Heloise* and in *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and can even be found in the works of Rodziewiczówna.[19] In the mind-numbing *Forsyte Saga* by Galsworthy and in the lamentable Bernanos, mentioned by Dr. Ingarden, the reader can truly bask in those. Of course, it can always be claimed that all this boils down to the skills with which the author uses such qualities but this is tantamount to admitting one's helplessness in the face of this problem. Whereas the most important problem, namely

[18]Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz (1885–1939), a Polish writer, painter and philosopher. Witkiewicz' portraits of Tarski, Chwistek and Ingarden suggest that they were all part of the same circle of philosophers and mathematicians described in Feferman and Feferman (2004, 58–63).

[19]Maria Rodziewiczówna (1864–1944), a Polish writer touching on themes such as patriotism, religiousness and tradition.

that—say—for Dr. Ingarden *Don Carlos*[20] is a masterpiece and Dostoevsky's *Idiot* or *King-Spirit* a complete failure, when for me this very failure is the highest achievement of literature, whereas *Don Carlos* is at most a venerable historical document, remains completely elusive on those grounds, notwithstanding its unnerving and deeply disturbing character. I took liberties in choosing examples as Dr. Ingarden avoids clearly-stated opinions about literature but that is beside the point. The point is that a fundamental and unquestionable difference in opinions on the value of literary works is too important to not be at the forefront of every theoretic enquiry into literature. The crux of the matter is that there is not a single literary work of art that could not be considered valueless by somebody or that could not be considered perfect, if only by its author. Even if we agreed that there is such an ideal, or, as Dr. Ingarden would like it, heteronomous, object as the literary work of art, there would be nothing that can be done about it that for some people this object is valueless and for others immeasurably precious and that no discussion could ever be conclusive as it will always be stopped in its tracks by the problem of what one considers to be the "essence" of art. I deliberately avoid calling it a definition for if I did, I would be told that this is not about an arbitrary convention. This problem requires some more attention.

Mathematicians often talk about the usefulness or the conventional character of definitions. This approach is particularly vexing for phenomenologists, who care nothing about practical considerations or about conventional resolutions of problems. This should be settled once and for all. When mathematicians talk about usefulness, they do not mean anything other than finding out the truth. Mathematicians care about the truth and nothing but the truth and if they say: I accept this or that definition, this or that assumption because I like it or because I find it useful, then they are simply saying: the acceptance of this or that definition, this or that assumption is *useful in finding out the truth*. The same applies to the entire field of philosophy and aesthetics in particular. Let us, for example, consider the problem of cinema. On the surface, the problem whether cinema is an art form seems purely conventional. Nonetheless, no person who did not experience similar emotions in cinema as in theatre would be likely to consider cinema an art form. If, however, one came into contact with engaging films that arouse in one the enthusiasm of a high art, one is likely to view cinema as an art. The notion of artistic emotion and enthusiasm is obviously primitive in a sense that it cannot be reduced to anything simpler, and, if only for that reason, it cannot be the basis for mutual understanding if there is no pre-defined formal system within which it can be used.

As a result, those trained in precise thinking, wanting to avoid unnecessary discussions which are in their view doomed to bear no fruit anyway, will be content at merely accepting a conventional statement that cinema is to be considered an art form. But the situation might also be quite different. Someone can approach the phenomenon of art from a social point of view and take into account the fact that some percentage of intelligent individuals consider cinema an art. In such a case, even with personal enthusiasm not playing a role, one can view cinema as art for the sake of the usefulness of this position. This usefulness is, of course, related to the fact that when talking about art we would not be forced to ignore phenomena that should not be ignored precisely in the name of the truth this entire endeavor is about. For, if I have no grounds for claiming that those considering cinema an art form fall victims to an illusion of sorts, then I should take their opinion into account, provided I do not want to take the extreme individualistic attitude.

Let me add here, what I have said already somewhere else, that when it comes to aesthetic criteria I consider myself a sup-

[20] Most likely *Don Karlos, Infant von Spanien*, a historical tragedy by a German poet Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805).

porter of extreme individualism. Only that which is personally experienced and felt can play a proper role here. Anything else is nondescript, baseless and dead. Some might consider this a cruelty on my side but I would like aesthetics to be taken away from pure philosophers, the way logic and psychology have been. I believe that aesthetics can be properly developed only in a close connection with the creation, or at least with experiencing the creation, of new artistic forms, on the basis of specific examples and experiments. If, for example, I want to deal with the language of poetry, I have to analyze not only such phenomena as de-emphasis of rhythm for the sake of assonance, which has recently been the practice, but predominantly I have to look into my own relation to these creations and answer, at least, such a seemingly trivial question as whether I like it or not. The point is that such things are not everyone's cup of tea and in order to understand them on an emotional level one needs to go through a certain internal effort, which would be beyond the reach of many. There are poets, who distinguish between dark and light words and go as far as connecting these to particular colors. To laymen this might seem pure poppycock as they can hardly understand it. What one should do, instead, is merely to state how things are and try to maintain a distance when evaluating it. In any case one should try to extend one's range as far as possible.

In the process of the futurist revolution, the lyrical poetry created an entire world of new, greatly disturbing, forms, which were also noticed by the linguists (Łoś).[21] It turned out that one can move far beyond the everyday content of the words, giving a fluid meaning to poetic sentences, which is yet very suggestive in terms of creating the narcotic visions. In some cases, even sentence structure has been abandoned for the sake of lyrical arrangements of words; some (Młodożeniec, Wat, Tuwim)[22] went as far as to introduce bold deformations of words, obtaining truly interesting results. The game is not over yet. The younger generation digests the literary output of futurists in a very conscious and careful manner, so that the newly-created forms are accepted by us without opposition. If however, someone wished to compare such things with the pre-war poetry and reached a conclusion that these are mutually incompatible and that both these approaches cannot conceivably be called lyrical poetry, there would also be some merit to that position.

I have to say, however, that Dr. Ingarden's work does not contain any indication that literature has been undergoing such drastic changes recently. Dr. Ingarden devotes a sizeable chapter to the problem of literary language but he does not go beyond tame examples and descriptions fit for literary notions used in Lessing's times. Everything there revolves around popular notions. Let me point to a specific example (p. 150 / 148 en). The author deals with the problem of relations among sentences. The reader, who is knowledgeable in poetry can immediately see, by the choice of examples used that the author, despite claiming that *there are various relations possible*, does not find it pertinent to deal with any other than everyday relations among the sentences and the arrangements such as the following:

My son got a good report card. He is very content and plays joyfully in the garden.
The child is crying. It has two equal diagonals, which are perpendicular to each other.

which he considers to be worthwhile of a detailed analysis. All this can suggest the reader that these examples are meant to illustrate the eccentricity of style that is mentioned on p. 159 (/153 en).

This limitation of scope I consider to be a substantial drawback of Dr. Ingarden's work. In any case, it should have been

[21] It is unclear whom Chwistek has in mind here.

[22] Aleksander Wat (1900–1967), a writer and a poet, one of the members of the futurism movement. Julian Tuwim (1894–1953), one of the most famous Polish poets.

mentioned that the problems of purely rhythmic or purely visual arrangements of sentences are put aside for this or that reason. As things stand now, the reader, who is not forewarned of this, has to conclude that the hypothesis on the proper content of sentences must lead to misunderstandings that show the evolution of contemporary poetry in a completely wrong light.

While the notion of a literary work of art proposed by Dr. Ingarden seems to me too narrow and perhaps too closely related to a traditional approach to such things, it has nevertheless, by virtue of very deep and insightful analysis of the topic, become something quite original and interesting. Everything done with true conviction and enthusiasm deserves to be called great. This can be said about only a handful of Polish philosophers and Dr. Ingarden is definitely one these few.

The most important fragments of Dr. Ingarden's work include the chapter on the space of the literary work of art.[23] It is this chapter I wish to talk about now in order to showcase the creativeness of the author, who, I am sure, is capable of many more fine things in the future.

It should be credited to phenomenologists that they undertake the defense of natural reality, which is definitely not inferior to any other as it does not lead to contradiction and impresses on us, in what often are long stretches of our lives, as the only true reality. What is a misunderstanding is a belief that this reality is the only one possible and the reality that science deals with is a fiction concocted with achieving certain goals in mind. This view, perhaps most explicitly expressed in the works of M. Geiger, we find between the lines of Dr. Ingarden's book. Hence, for example, on p. 224[24] we find out that there exists the real, unique space of the universe that is opposed to the space of impressions and to the literary space. The latter is an invention of Dr. Ingarden and is a truly fruitful one. I am afraid, however, that a belief in the unique real space of the universe prevents the author from reaching the final conclusions stemming from his own invention.

Observe that this belief is an addition to the natural interpretation of the world as imposed on him by science from the period preceding Lobachevsky's results. Aristotle did not know objective space, all he knew were spatial objects and he only allowed talk about the space each occupies. This interpretation of the world is by all means natural and it would seem that it is this interpretation that should be the most fitting for phenomenologists. Euclidean space, viewed as a real space of the universe has nothing to do with the natural interpretation of the world, if only because it belongs to the sphere of ideal notions, imposed on us as a result of refined scientific enquiries based on assumptions that are far removed from primitive intuitions and close to only those students of mathematics who manage to go through the Euclidean system but have no time to deal with Lobachevsky or Riemann.

Even at the time of Klein and Poincaré, belief in the primacy of Euclidean geometry was already considered a relic, and since then a lot has changed. Poincaré was forced to emphasize the simplicity of calculations made within Euclidean geometry as something that distinguishes it from the point of view of economy of thinking that was in vogue at the time. However, it is not always the case that simple calculations can be considered economical. If, for example, it turns out that these do not reach as far as we wished for and force us to come up with complex additional hypotheses, such as the Lorenz hypothesis, their simplicity becomes illusory; and also their seemingly natural starting point might now look complex and artificial. This is the way, in which those young physicists, who were raised to accept Einstein's theory and related Riemannian geometry, look at this question. For them, Riemannian geometry is not only simpler but is even more natural than Euclidean geometry and

[23] Entitled "The Stratum of Represented Objects" in the English translation.
[24] Perhaps pp. 222–23 en.

a philosopher wishing to construct the natural geometry of the universe on the basis of Euclidean geometry is treated with the same condescension as the theory of Ptolemy must have been treated by the supporters of the Copernican system.

If one is to analyze such notions deeper, one is forced to realize that the notion of real space of the universe must be done away with sooner or later, notwithstanding one's views on reality and even more so in the case when one limits oneself to considering natural reality exclusively. At this point, it would occur to one that the difference between mathematical and literary spaces simply boils down to the fact that the former is properly developed and forms a complete whole, whereas the latter is but a fragment or a loose collection of fragments, which do not necessarily satisfy the principle of non-contradiction.

I am beginning to think that the capabilities of literary space have not yet been properly investigated. Apart from an amusing theory from Dante, nothing else comes to my mind. Perhaps, the theory of Dr. Ingarden will find its proper application here. I must add that the entire discussion of space found in Dr. Ingarden's book is, from a literary point of view, immensely interesting. It is also valuable for another reason. It no doubt introduces us to the notion of what I called sometime ago the reality of ideas, that is to the atmosphere of dreams and fiction grown to such size as to impose on us directly as reality. Trying to extend the boundaries of natural reality, phenomenologists often move into this mysterious and little-known area of experience, preparing valuable materials for future researchers in the process. This tendency is markedly more visible in Dr. Ingarden's work, perhaps because the natural longing for natural reality is stronger and more honest in him. If Dr. Ingarden were able to move one step forward in his analysis and notice the difference between what *exists* and what *I wish existed*, his book would truly be an important step forward. For now, it contains too many elements that are disconcerting to those from outside the school.

Now let me dwell a little on the work by Jadwiga Conrad-Mauritius entitled *Farben* (*Husserl Festschrift*, Halle a. S.), to which my attention was directed as a result of Dr. Ingarden's remarks.[25]

In opposition to Dr. Ingarden, who tries to be very objective and at every step hides his personal attitude towards literary works, Mrs. Conrad-Mauritius does not shy away from describing the whole range of her personal feelings toward colors and, as a result, creates something that could have been a true poem, if the author recognised such a possibility. From the objective point of view, this creation is useless, as no painter would concede that e.g. green is from the "ontic" point of view something simple; whereas orange something complex. Orange is for me equal in every way to green and digressions with regard to the simplicity or complexity of colors seem to me completely dependent on color arrangements, within which such colors are to be found. So, for example, in a picture of an orange against a blue background, the color orange is to my mind a simple element, whereas the color green is complex in a picture where a green strip of trees lies between a blue sky and a yellow area of growing crops. I write all this because I consider it interesting and worthy of attention. If it were clearly said that the point is to present an individual approach of the author to the world of colors, her work should be considered as having high scientific value. As a result of it having an unfounded pretension of detecting the "ontic" essence of the world of colors, the whole thing immensely gains in literary charm by teasing and disturbing and at the same time forcing one to dream and dive into the vision of the world of colors, but simultaneously becomes false from the scientific point of view and as such has to be rejected.

The same applies, to various extent, to the entire phenomenological literature. Conceitedness and self-confidence of the discoverer of new worlds would not be so annoying and would

[25]Conrad-Mauritius (1929).

rather elicit the desired excitement if not for the unfounded pretence to objectivity and discovering the essence of things and the burden of unnecessary, linguistically hard to bear, pseudo-scientific terms, which seem to be purely superficial imitations of the notions used in mathematical textbooks. All this can bring the reader to despair, if they are not saved by a personal respect for the author's high intelligence and the great, almost superhuman, love of truth that resides within him.

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