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Ingarden's Aesthetic Argument against Husserl's Transcendental Idealism Turn

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Słowa kluczowe: Roman Ingarden, Edmund Husserl, idealizm–realizm, fenomenologia, estetyka

Abstract

Husserl's allegiance to realism came under attack following his *Ideas*. Ingarden was a fierce critic of his teacher's turn to transcendental idealism, and provided compelling arguments both for his idealist reading of Husserl and for his rejection of idealism. One of the main arguments Ingarden devised against Husserl's turn was based on his aesthetics. Against Husserl, Ingarden established literary works and fictional objects as purely intentional objects that are (1) doubly structured, *vis-à-vis* their formal ontology, and (2) endowed with spots of indeterminacy. These facts, Ingarden argues, necessitate the transcendence of the purely intentional object. In this paper, I explore his argument, while establishing the ontological foundation on which it rests.

I

Following his *Ideas*, Edmund Husserl kicked off a hot debate revolving around whether he had taken a turn to *transcendental idealism*. Roman Ingarden, one of Husserl's most prolific students, interpreted the Husserl of *Ideas* onwards as indeed advocating a metaphysically idealist view of the world and its objects, as opposed to his *Logical Investigations*' realist stance.¹ Ingarden, of course, did not change his position and remained a vehement advocate of metaphysical realism. Not only so, Ingarden, troubled with his teacher's turn, devoted almost all his philosophical works to proving Husserl wrong. Therefore, Ingarden's rich phenomenological corpus rests on the idealism–realism debate. Ingarden's aesthetic investigations are also inspired (or provoked?) by Husserl's turn. As we find in the Preface to the first German edition of his *The Literary Work of Art*, Ingarden describes his project thusly:

¹ For the purposes of this article, I will assume Ingarden's interpretation of Husserl is accurate; of course, while presenting Ingarden's arguments in favor of the latter. Many commentators have confirmed Ingarden's reading of Husserl as entailing a turn to transcendental idealism (cf. Haefliger, 1990; Küng, 1993, 1975, 1973, 1972; Makota, 1995). Others have dismissed Ingarden's interpretation of Husserl's idealist turn (cf. Holmes, 1975; Sokolowski, 1977; Wallner, 1987; Hall, 1982; Ameriks, 1977). While I believe Ingarden's idealist reading of Husserl is correct, I do not share his conviction that Husserl started his idealist project in *Ideas*. As is noted by Byrne, Husserl's inclination toward transcendental idealism can already be felt in his *Investigations*. Whereas his 1901 philosophy remains neutral as regards realism/idealism, Husserl's *Second Investigation* unapologetically disavows metaphysical realism, ruling out across the board the existence of mind-independent objects. It also sets forth his method of suspending all reality's metaphysical definitions [cf. Husserl, 1984, p. 129]. Further indications that clearly align with Husserl's transcendental idealism are found in the *Fifth Investigation*, in which a bold borderline is drawn between metaphysical and phenomenological deliberations [cf. p. 401], and the *Sixth Investigation* where he reproaches Kant's metaphysically stained philosophy [cf. pp. 729–732]. Moreover, Husserl's 1906–07 lecture course, "Introduction to Logic and the Theory of Knowledge" [Husserl, 1985], outlines his three "paths" to the *epoché* and the transcendental reduction. It is, therefore, evident that Husserl's transcendental project started way before *Ideas*. The question is, how did Ingarden not pick up on that? (2020, p. 515, footnote 3). This is not, however, meant to undermine Ingarden's interpretation of Husserl, for it is indeed *Ideas* that marks the full maturity of his transcendental idealism.

Although the main subject of my investigation is the literary work, or the literary work of art, the ultimate motives for my work on this subject are of a general philosophical nature, and they far transcend this particular subject. They are closely connected to the problem of idealism–realism, with which I have been concerning myself for many years. (1973, p. IXXII)

Put differently, Ingarden devises his aesthetic findings to counter Husserl's newly held position. To elaborate, Husserl, following *Ideas*, concluded that the world, together with all its objects, is mind-dependent. This, contrary to his realist convictions in the *Logical Investigations*, marks Husserl's adoption of idealism. Writing in his *Motives*, Ingarden explains the idealism–realism division:

The controversy between realists and idealists concerning the existence of the real world is not about the question whether the real world, the material world in particular, exists in general (even Berkeley would protest energetically if somebody told him that he affirmed the non-existence of the material world), but about the mode of the world's existence and what its existential relation is to acts of consciousness in which objects belonging to this world are cognized. (1975, p. 31)

In light of the established realism–idealism debate, Ingarden strived to determine the external world's *mode of being*. In order to bring about a comprehensive ontology of the world and its objects, Ingarden sought to investigate the formal–ontological constituents of various objects. His findings, discussed mainly in *Controversy* (2013/2016), led him to conclude that there are *mind-dependent* objects as well as *mind-independent* objects, contrary to what Husserl's transcendental idealism upheld, which is a depiction of the world and the entirety of its objects being mind-dependent. The objective of Ingarden's ontological deliberations, therefore, can be seen as arguing against the purported *pure intentionality* of the external world. In this paper, I shall formulate Ingarden's aesthetic argument against Husserl's depiction of the world as being purely intentional. Before doing that, I shall first explore Ingarden's idealist reading of Husserl and critically examine his arguments.

II

Ingarden first expressed his skepticism about Husserl's turn toward transcendental idealism in a letter he addressed to his teacher in 1918.² With that said, Ingarden's arguments against Husserl gained full maturity in his *Motives*. This is where Ingarden unleashed the full extent of his arguments against Husserl's turn, and it is this book that will serve as my point of departure. Ingarden structured his book into two main parts: one part presenting Husserl's position and another critically analyzing it. The latter is analyzed in conjunction with four themes: (1) the concept of philosophy as rigorous science, (2) the limits of the phenomenological reduction, (3) the analysis of outer perception and the theory of constitution, and (4) the formal-ontological sources of Husserl's idealist solution. My analysis of Ingarden's reading of Husserl will follow these four points.³

As is well-known, Husserl intended his phenomenology as a *science*, a form of inquiry that can lead to indubitable cognition. Following his *Logical Investigations*, Husserl turned his attention to epistemological issues. Among these, the issue of "outer sense perception" was of special importance to Husserl's project. He believed that outer perception could guide him to the kind of knowledge that would ensure his phenomenology is on a par with science. Soon, however, Husserl concluded that such cognition cannot be achieved by resorting to outer perception. Consequently, indubitable cognition must be pursued some other way:

In these investigations it very soon became evident that outer perception could not yield indubitable cognition. The question then arose if such cognition could be found in inner or, more exactly, immanent perception. This thought must have occurred to Husserl, he was, after all, Brentano's pupil and he introduced the concept of "inner consciousness": by means of it a cognition was to be gained which could not be doubted. Thereby it was suggested that immanent perception was to be analyzed and its cognitive value to be discovered. (Ingarden, 1975, p. 11)

² For details, see Ingarden (1976), pp. 419–438.

³ Mitscherling's (1997) analysis of Ingarden's interpretation of Husserl will be crucial to the general structure of this Section.

Following his recognition of outer perception as a dead-end, *vis-à-vis* his pursuit of indubitable knowledge, Husserl turned instead to inner perception or "immanent perception." To be more explicit, Husserl held that "by means of the initial formal *epoché* [...], we are enabled to attend to the perception itself, regarding the act of outer perception as transcendent to this 'immanent' perception itself" (Mitscherling, 1997, p. 52). Ingarden interprets Husserl's turn to immanent perception as opting for

the directly opposite point of view, treating the sense of the object constituted in the cognitive process exclusively as the creation of the acts coming into consideration. Consequently, he treats the analyzed objects from the beginning exclusively as *intentional correlates of these acts* and these objects have *only* in these acts the source and basis of their existence and such and no other formation of their contents. (1975, p. 37)

This way of going about the issue does not necessarily commit us to an idealist position, as Ingarden makes clear. It would not be an idealism to assert that phenomena are dependent on intentional acts of perception, as long as we can return to the objects "appearing through the analyzed phenomena." But Husserl forbids this return, which Ingarden describes as a major shortcoming in his reduction method (Ingarden, 1975, pp. 37–38). In her (1987) work, Wallner argues the opposite, maintaining that Husserl emphasized time and again the necessity of returning to the objects perceived. For her, Husserl's reduction does not isolate us from the concrete manifestations of the world. "On the contrary, we are 'led back' to the original evidence of the world as experienced and experienceable" (p. 19). Mitscherling (1997) argues against Wallner's line of reasoning on two counts. First, the concrete manifestations of the world, Husserl posits, are to be found in acts of consciousness, and not in in the transcendent physical world, to which, as she claims, the phenomenologist is "led back." Second, Wallner seems to have neglected the significant impact "as" has on both her own formulation and on Husserl's. The world *as* experienced and *as* experienceable is not the same as the real, transcendental world. Put differently, her formulation depicts the world as a "phenomenon of consciousness," the immanent world, not the world of "realities" (p. 54).⁴

⁴ Ingarden confirms this formulation in a lecture delivered in Oslo in 1967 (cf. 1992, p. 280).

In (2), Ingarden (1975) further delves into Husserl's phenomenological reduction. He concedes that Husserl's method is not only useful but necessary, as far as the critique of knowledge is concerned. Nonetheless, Ingarden does not think the phenomenological reduction is indispensable. When it comes to ontological investigations, of various kinds, the phenomenological reduction is not necessary (pp. 40–41). Epistemology as the critique of cognition faces the danger of a *petitio principii*. There are two main aspects of this *petitio principii* threatening the “objectivity” of cognition. The first aspect pertains to epistemology begging the question of the applicability of reasoning's concepts and understanding to an objective, external world, i.e., of the relation between the object of cognition and the act of cognition. The second aspect concerns epistemology, begging the question of the legitimacy of the fundamental reasoning principles used to investigate this very reasoning itself, i.e., of the “objectivity” of the cognition that studies cognition. Husserl was certain he had averted both aspects of the *petitio principii* with his phenomenological reduction. The first aspect of this danger, Husserl maintained, can be solved with the use of his formal *epoché*, or the “bracketing” of existential presuppositions about the external world. With the use of the reduction method, existential presuppositions about the external world are put on hold, allowing only what is phenomenologically given (i.e., immanent to consciousness). The second danger, Husserl held, can be overcome with the use of the “epistemological reduction.” Building on the suspension of existential prejudices (formal *epoché*), the epistemological reduction suspends logical, ontological, and psychological presuppositions. The main advantage of this method is “enabling us to investigate the various levels of cognition through a series of ‘genetic’ analyses, extending to the lowest, most basic level of the fundamental assumptions of reasoning.” As regards the illegitimacy of the relation between the act and object of cognition, the epistemological reduction helps us avert this problem, for the act of cognition becomes itself the object of cognition. Formulated as such, any uncertainties about the act/object relation at this phenomenological level must be directed at an abstract distinction between two aspects of the act of cognition *per se* (Mitscherling, 1997, pp. 55–56).⁵

⁵ Husserl (1982) suggested this formulation, but he left the problem of *petitio principii* in need of further elaboration. It was Ingarden (1921) who offered such an elaboration.

Tymieniecka (1976) points to another danger threatening the validity of Husserl's phenomenological reduction. This danger is related to the second aspect of the *petitio principii*. As Ingarden indicates in his criticism of *Cartesian Meditations*, the foundation of Husserl's phenomenology is infected with an incurable disease:

On Husserl's theory we have to assume the specific nature of the transcendental consciousness in order to conduct the phenomenological reductions leading to the attainment of the level of self-evident cognition, while it is precisely first through the proper practice of the phenomenological reductions that the transcendental consciousness can be revealed in its nature.

This, Ingarden believes, leads to a vicious circle, which Husserl cannot escape. The reason for the latter is that Husserl's phenomenological method rests on the notion of the intentional character of all conscious acts embedded in the phenomenological method. It is the notion of the intentional that results in a conception of a self-sufficient consciousness (p. 249).

Ingarden takes issue with Husserl's notion of the intentional. According to Ingarden (1975, p. 39), Husserl's pursuit of indubitable cognition based on the phenomenological reduction leads to the confinement of all inquiry to the immanent. The question now is, is not what appeared at first sight to be merely a methodological operation now a *de facto* operation, with which the manner and course of phenomenological research is predetermined to be that of pure consciousness?

In (3), Ingarden further deconstructs the above question in the context of Husserl's analysis of perception. In his *Ideas*, Husserl devises the inadequacy of outer sense perception to consolidate his turn to transcendental idealism. In outer perception, material things always seem to present themselves *aspectually*, i.e., from one aspect or another, and we can never be sure if the perceived object really exists, or if it is the same thing that is perceived. In immanent perception, the objects perceived are always (indubitably) fully determined in all their aspects. This is expressed in Husserl's labelling of sect. 46 of *Ideas I*: "*Zweifellosigkeit der immanenten, Zweifelhaltigkeit der transzendenten Wahrnehmung.*"⁶ Even if accurate, this distinction between immanent and transcendental perception does not

⁶ "Indubitability of Immanent, Dubitability of Transcendent Perception."

entail any essential difference in the mode of existence of the objects given in these perceptions. It certainly does not entail what we find in Husserl's labeling of sect. 44: "*Bloss phänomenales Sein des Transzendenten, absolutes Sein des Immanenten.*"⁷ It also does not entail what we find in sect. 55: "*Alle Realität seiend durch Sinngebung.*"⁸ It is incontestable that synthetic intentions are entities of sense, and that these entities are designated by their respective perceptions, but it would be wide off the mark to state that these objects are identical with the "things" appearing in these sense unities; and hence are (things) merely "phenomenal" (1975, pp. 47–48).

Ingarden rightly detects a metaphysical turn to transcendental idealism in Husserl's "constitution." The view of constitution laid out in *Ideas*, as has been stated above, clearly shows Husserl's equation of "thing" with a built "noema-consciousness." Following the phenomenological reduction, one can speak of "reality" as a mere correlate of consciousness. In this view, reality is regarded as a *meaning*, not as a totality of physical objects. With the use of the reduction, we are able to further analyze the world as meaning. What we then unearth is a multi-layered meaning-structure constituted through several acts of synthesis (Mitscherling, 1997, p. 59). Ingarden argues that a heterogeneity-based view of reality and consciousness cannot be given up for a view along Husserlian constitution, for that would commit us to "idealism":

If Idealism be in this meaning tenable, then the theory of constitution would be identical with metaphysics, and a part of it identical with the metaphysics of the external world resp. with the science of nature. I cannot bring myself to agree with this [kind of] idealism. The essential heterogeneity between consciousness and reality (resp. more generally: 'being') I cannot give up. (1976, p. 424)

Although Ingarden backed his reading of Husserl with textual evidence from Husserl's work, there are some philosophers who maintain that Ingarden simply could not fathom Husserl's subtle language. Further, there are some philosophers who understand Ingarden's criticism of Husserl as attributing to him a Berkeleyan idealism. This is, of course,

⁷ "The merely phenomenal being of the transcendent, the absolute being of the immanent."

⁸ "All reality exists through the dispensing of meaning."

a misrepresentation of Ingarden's criticism, for he made clear Husserl's idealism is not the same as Berkeley's:

By this emphasis on the difference of material things in relation to the experiences of perceptions in which they are given, Husserl's idealistic solution is different from other "idealisms" e.g. that of Berkeley. This transcendence is also a certain *formal-ontological moment* of the situation occurring between the real objects and conscious experiences in which they are given, a moment emanating from, for instance, the formal-ontological assertion about the condition for the unity of the whole of objects, and from the assured difference between the essence of lived experience and material things. (1975, pp. 32–33)

Haefliger (1990) defends Ingarden (particularly against Sokolowski and Wallner), and compellingly makes the case for the accurate representation of Husserl's reduction and constitution provided by Ingarden:

The systematic of a constitutive reflection outlined by Ingarden in the 'Idealism-letter' (1918) is taken up again in the later 'Oslo' lectures (1967). As a matter of fact these read here and there like a clarification of the earlier programmatic statements. They thus offer proof that Ingarden had integrated into his philosophy the operation of the transcendental reduction, the general Husserlian distinction between noesis and noema, and in particular the program of a constitutive 'legitimacy reflection'. In particular, however, they show that Ingarden had in no way wrongly understood the special Husserlian concept of constitution as it is presupposed in the framework of a transcendental analysis: Ingarden always made it quite clear that we're dealing here, as we should, with the constitution of noematic 'senses' and not with the 'constitution' (that is to say, the intentional 'creation') of 'things.' (p. 112)

Moving on to (4), where Ingarden explores the formal–ontological foundations of Husserl's idealism. Ingarden works explicitly with two major elements from Husserl's formal ontology. The first is that a *unity* of parts can only be obtained if they share one *essence*. The second holds that consciousness and physical objects have different essences, and for that a unity of the two cannot be obtained (1975, p. 66). We can summarize Ingarden's position as follows. As the aforementioned elements indicate, as far as existential and material ontology is concerned, Husserl can be considered a *pluralist* (and hence distinguished from Berkeley's monistic idealism). The real world,

ideal objects, and consciousness all exist. They, however, differ, *vis-à-vis* their essences, with regards to their mode of being and their material. Armed with the two formal–ontological elements just laid out, Husserl was driven to assert the unattainability of a *whole* combining the three *parts*. Therefore, we wind up with a view of consciousness cut off from the world. As a result, phenomenological investigations should be exclusively restricted to what is given immanently. The phenomenologist is thereby advised to treat all acts of consciousness as having their immanent contents as their objects, outside of which there is nothing. So depicted, Husserl’s idealism is of a unique form (Mitscherling, 1997, p. 63). In Ingardenian terminology, Husserl’s position can be construed as denying the world “autonomy”:⁹

Husserl’s answer is clear and univocal: The material things given in perception and thought in the cognitive acts super-structured over perception are not an autonomous (separate in relation to conscious experiences) sphere of autonomous being in itself; they are only something that exists in its essence “for” the conscious subject performing the perceptive acts. They are only intentional units of sense and beyond that “*ein Nichts*” (nothing). (1975, p. 32)

Ingarden further articulates his stance on Husserl’s exclusion of the real world from the sphere of autonomy:

Reality exists only insofar as it is something ‘in itself’. That for what it can be intended [*vermeint*] is actually irrelevant to it. It is that what it is ‘in itself’ and as such. It is a being completed at all times, and universally determined [*bestimmt*]. There is no indeterminedness in the world, except as indeterminedness of a potency which itself would be *totally* determined. (1976, p. 426)

With this eloquent passage, I conclude my presentation of Ingarden’s idealist reading of Husserl. In the next section, I shall establish Ingarden’s aesthetic argument against Husserl’s turn, which, as the above passage showcases, foregrounds Ingarden’s vehement denial of the objective world as lacking autonomy.

⁹ I will explore Ingarden’s distinction between “autonomy” and “heteronomy” in Section III.

III

If Husserl is right, then all the objects that can be found in the world are purely intentional. In the spirit of scientific research, all it would take to debunk Husserl's hypothesis is to find at least one object that is metaphysically and epistemologically mind-independent, i.e., an object that exists as something over and beyond a pure *intentionale*. Ingarden overdid himself and established multiple objects that are *doubly structured*, with regards to their formal ontology.¹⁰ In other words, Ingarden's investigations helped him reach multiple objects that are both purely intentional and derive their ontic foundation from existent, mind-independent objects. These objects are primarily *art works*. We can talk of the literary work of art, the musical work, the architectural work, the picture, etc.; all these objects have been ontologically analyzed by Ingarden, as to determine their status and relation to both consciousness and the external world.¹¹

One of the main doubly structured objects that Ingarden explored in his works are fictional objects. Fictional objects best exemplify Ingarden's heteronomy/autonomy distinction, which he devised to explain ficta's ontological status. To elaborate, a fictum is a *heteronomous* entity, meaning that it is "an entity which draws its being and its collective stock of attributes from the enactment [*Vollzug*] of an intentional conscious experience, which in a specific integrated fashion is endowed with a content, and it would not exist at all without this enactment" (Ingarden, 2013, p. 113). Put in simpler terms, heteronomy entails that the object to which it accrues exists only as the product of an intentional act, say imaginative act. On its own, a heteronomous entity does not amount to anything. The intentional acts leading to the generation of fictional objects are themselves *autonomous*, for they exist without being dependent on some other entity. That is to say, "an entity (in the sense of any something at all [*irgend Etwas überhaupt*]) exists autonomously (is existentially autonomous) if it has its existential foundation within itself" (Ingarden, 2013, p. 109). It is, therefore, safe to say that fictional entities' being is ontologically grounded by the intentional acts underlying their descriptions. We can understand the purely intentional acts generating fictional

¹⁰ For a study of Ingarden's intentionality and ontology that bears in mind their affinities with Husserl's (and Brentano's), see Chrudzimski (1999).

¹¹ Cf. Ingarden (1989).

entities as imaginative acts. Husserl would agree with Ingarden's imaginative account, at least the Husserl between 1898–1904/05.¹² According to Husserl (1994), an intentional act necessitates a *content*, not a real object (p. 76). This mirrors Ingarden's conviction, which states that intentional acts bring about dependent ficta that do not share the same ontological status as real objects. What Husserl (1979) means by an intentional act's content is the ability to depict an object in various ways, with the object being *intended* as such. In this view, an imagined object is determined by its content (p. 333). Ingarden, too, takes intentional acts as being *ascriptive* in this sense. That is, a fictional object, considering it an imagined object, can be said to possess many properties by virtue of its *intendedness*. A fictum's properties are not the same properties real objects possess. Ingarden (2013) describes fictional properties as being merely "intended" or "allotted." Fictional properties are contrasted with "immanent" properties, which only real, autonomous objects possess (pp. 115–116). When we say that *Anna Karenina is a woman*, we, *à la* Ingarden, do not mean that the fictum possesses *Womanhood* in the same way Angela Merkel, for example, does. The proposition rather means that *Anna Karenina* is intended to be a woman in the fiction, and, *à la* Husserl, it is this content that is at issue when we consider such fictional (intentional) propositions, not a real woman that exemplifies the property in question.¹³

Up until here, Ingarden and Husserl are on the same page. They would both agree that fictional objects are mind-dependent, following their generation as (purely) intentional entities. But a problem arises when we consider ficta to be mind-dependent. If fictional objects are dependent on the imaginary acts that bring them into being, wouldn't that make them *constantly* dependent on those acts? And if the latter is answered in the affirmative, we would end up with problematic ficta that, as Wolterstorff (1980, p. 43) describes them, "flit in and out" of existence. Sartre adopted such an account.

¹² Following Jansen (2005), pp. 121–122; (2016), pp. 69–70.

¹³ This is rather an oversimplification of Husserlian imagination. For a thorough examination of imagination in the early and later Husserl, see Płotka (2020), pp. 37–45. It is worth mentioning Twardowski's (1894) account, in which he distinguishes among an intentional act's "content," "object," and "presentation" (p. 3). The act is linked to its object via its content; the object cannot be reduced to the act. Twardowski's theory influenced Husserl's intentionality. Twardowski also influenced Husserl's attack on psychologism. Not to mention, Husserl wrote a review of Twardowski's *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* (Płotka, 2017, pp. 81–82).

According to him, our imagination is the source of ficta's life. Once we stop thinking about them, they cease to exist (1991, pp. 177–178). One obvious problem with Sartre's view is what Wolterstorff termed as flitting in and out of existence. The view that ficta can ontologically appear and disappear depending on their being imagined does not sit well with many. This and two other problems pertaining to Sartre's imagination are explored by Thomasson. According to her, Sartre's conception runs contrary to how we ordinarily approach fictional entities, and it complicates our fiction experiences, for Sartre believes our imagining of ficta *recreates* the imagined ficta afresh (1999, p. 22). These problems are indeed thorny for proponents of ficta as imaginary objects. Ingarden's imaginary account of ficta, nonetheless, is fundamentally different. In a way, the problem of ficta as imaginary objects can direct us toward the solution of the idealism–realism controversy. What I mean is, invoking Ingarden, we can both (a) solve the constant dependency of ficta on mental acts and (b) refute Husserl's transcendental idealism.

As regards (a), Ingarden resorts to literary works to avert the problem of constant dependence on mental acts. For him, when an author creates a fictum, they create a fictum within a literary work. These works are comprised of sentences and fictional propositions. These sentences are in turn endowed with what he terms a “borrowed intentionality”:

Both isolated words and entire sentences possess a borrowed intentionality, one that is conferred on them by acts of consciousness. It allows the purely intentional objects to free themselves, so to speak, from immediate contact with the acts of consciousness in the process of execution and thus to acquire a relative independence from the latter. Being purely intentional, the objects “created” by the units of meaning remain both ontically heteronomous and ontically dependent, but this ontic relativity of theirs refers back directly to the intentionality immanent in the units of meaning and only indirectly to the intentionality of the acts of consciousness. (1973, pp. 125–126)

Because they enjoy a borrowed intentionality, sentences and fictional propositions are able to carry the weight of ficta, so to speak. It is, therefore, no longer necessary for mental acts to be directly involved in the subsistence of ficta. Compared to Sartre's, Ingarden's view makes more philosophical sense. Instead of postulating problematic ficta that flit in and out of existence and ascribing to imagination the power of recreating afresh ficta every time they

are imagined, Ingarden puts forth a view of *ficta* that aligns with our intuitions about *ficta* and fiction. Anna Karenina, for instance, does not rely on our imagining her to remain in existence, nor is her subsistence dependent on Tolstoy's generative mental acts. There are numerous books containing Anna Karenina, and these books' sentences borrow Tolstoy's intentionality. In other words, the literary works in which Anna Karenina features are now the link between her subsistence and Tolstoy's conscious acts that first brought the character to life.

The conceptualization of *ficta* as being *derived* is key in Ingarden's phenomenological ontology. The existential foundation of fictional entities, Ingarden posits, is derived. To elaborate, Anna Karenina's "immediate" existential foundation is traceable to the sentences and propositions of the literary works in which she is described. Since sentences and propositions are also purely intentional, they in turn have their immediate existential foundation in the mental acts of an author and a competent reader (cf. 2013, p. 117).¹⁴ This is what marks *ficta* as derived entities, and which, consequently, shields Ingardenian *ficta* from the problematics of merely imaginary objects.

Now about (b). Ingarden's reply to the charge explored above also contains his reply to Husserl's transcendental idealism. This argument is primarily aimed at Husserl's formal-ontological considerations in favor of idealism. As has been explored in the fourth motive that led Husserl to transcendental idealism, his formal-ontological deliberations convinced him that a unity of consciousness and the world cannot be obtained, and that the world should be excluded in favor of consciousness.¹⁵ Ingarden

¹⁴ For more on the role of readers, especially in connection with the concretization of the literary work's aesthetic value, see my essay (2022).

¹⁵ Ingarden believed that, before considering the validity of idealism, we should thoroughly examine the possible relations between the world and consciousness. With this in mind, Ingarden (1976, pp. 435–436) pointed out to Husserl four possible formulations of reality and consciousness, stressing the importance of the separability/inseparability of each's *essence*. Piwowarczyk (2020) argues that, in comparison with Twardowski's, Ingarden's existential conditionings and their opposites as being implied by the essences of the objects they define fare better. The theory of dependence adopted by Twardowski is similar to the one advocated by analytic philosophers. "According to this approach, *x* is dependent on *y* iff it is necessary that *x* exists only if *y* exists." An undesirable consequence of this approach is that it makes objects dependent on all necessary objects. To dodge this problem, it is helpful to treat dependence and existential conditionings in terms of *essence*. Here, Ingarden follows Husserl. Ingarden's take

responds in kind, i.e., his reply is based on his formal–ontological deliberations on intentionality and intentional objects. This is the topic of his § 47 “The Form of the Intentional Object that Corresponds to a Straightforward Act of Meaning” (2016). The objective of Ingarden in this section is two-fold. He attempts to demonstrate that (1) the purely intentional object, *qua* existentially heteronomous entity, does not derive its ontic foundation from consciousness alone, and that (2), *contra* Husserl, there are autonomous entities that exist independently of conscious acts.

Ingarden is concerned here with fictional works, considering them entities that are formally doubly structured. To make manifest this double structure, Ingarden analyzes Rilke's “DAS LIED DES AUSSÄTZIGEN” (the song of the leper). Aware of the complicated nature of this purely intentional object,¹⁶ Ingarden restricts his analysis to only one partial complex, that which forms the “reality” (*Wirklichkeit*) of the work. The reality of the poem is located in the following: (1) the spoken words comprising the poem's text, (2) that about which the words speak (e.g., the leper's relation to his surroundings), and (3) that which is expressed by these words (e.g., the leper's felt hatred). These features jointly constitute the poem's reality. This is what gives us the sense of a self-sustaining (*eigenständigen*) reality, whereas in effect everything about the poem is intentionally projected. What we have here is a mere “figment (*Fiktion*),” put together following various acts of intending (*Intentions-Akte*). The being of the poem is, therefore, the being of a purely intentional (heteronomous) entity, which can be traced back to the (autonomous) intentional acts of Rilke. If one wishes to explore the poem's *actual* properties (formal and material peculiarities), they will find that the creative acts of Rilke are existentially founded in other entities (e.g., in script, in several ideal connections, in conceptual units, etc.). The poem has two “facets.”

on the realism–idealism dispute is embedded in his equation of Husserl's givenness modes with ways of existence. “Combinations of the possible ways of existence of pure consciousness with the possible ways of existence of the world are possible solutions to the realism—idealism controversy.” The idealistic solutions depict the world as existing heteronomously in relation to pure consciousness. The realistic solutions advocate an autonomous world [cf. Ingarden, 2013, pp. 167–226]. Husserl's idealism, therefore, endows consciousness with originality, autonomy, and independence, *vis-à-vis* the world, and the latter with derivativeness, heteronomy, separability, and dependence as regards consciousness [cf. Ingarden, 2013, pp. 180–181] (pp. 539–540).

¹⁶ See Ingarden (1973) for details.

One facet pertains to the “content” in its reality, and the second pertains to the poem as a formally purely intentional object. The latter is characterized by properties that may be *eidetically* reached. One of these properties, for instance, is the property of *content*, which the purely intentional object must possess. With that said, through eidetic analysis, *à la* Husserl, we can only examine what is immanently given in an intentional act; in our case, the structure of the act. This means that we cannot rely on eidetic analysis to further examine the intentional object’s property of content. Thus, eidetic analysis cannot refer the content of the purely intentional object back to the three aforementioned features. In simpler terms, eidetic analysis considers the content (*Gehalt*) of a purely intentional object as being part of the content (*Inhalt*) of a conscious act, which so makes it unable to refer the *Gehalt* to its ontic foundations lying outside consciousness (2016, pp. 206–214).

Husserl’s confounding the content of a purely intentional object with the content of an autonomous object is made explicit when we consider the case of literary works. Adhering to Husserl’s eidetic analysis, the ontic foundations that ground the content of a literary work lie outside the scope of consciousness and would hence be eliminated, but they nonetheless exist. These ontic foundations cannot be restricted by the purported immanence of consciousness. According to Ingarden, autonomous entities are not doubly structured. It is only purely intentional objects (such as literary works and ficta) that enjoy a formally double structure. These objects are, *contra* Husserl, both existentially heteronomous with regards to an author’s conscious acts and derive their existential ontic foundation from autonomous, mind-independent entities.¹⁷ Moreover, Ingarden (2016) explores another component that formally separates purely intentional objects and autonomous objects. Building on his analysis of perception, Ingarden notes the *indeterminate* character of literary works and their objects. Autonomous objects, by contrast, are fully determined in their qualitative endowment. The purely intentional object is, by its essence, full of “spots of indeterminacy” (*Unbestimmtheitsstellen*). This, however, only affects that which is implicitly “co-intended” in the content of an object. The content’s facets established above remain wholly determined. To be more explicit, Rilke’s “the leper,” e.g., can be described in only so many ways. Whatever we say of him would merely constitute one “horizon” of the character, leaving out an infinite

¹⁷ Cf. Ingarden (2016), p. 213.

number of ways in which he can be further described. Spots of indeterminacy, therefore, can be construed as the result of the *finitude* of intentional acts and the *infinitude* of the determinations that can be ascribed to ficta. This, Ingarden argues, leads to a new sense of *transcendence*, in which the autonomous object transcends the cognition that grasps its properties, for the finite acts of cognition can never exhaust them (pp. 214–218). Ingarden proceeds to discuss five concepts of transcendence in §48, but only one of them is particularly related to our current problematic, namely “Transcendence of the Plenitude of Being (*des Seinsfülle*).” This concept of transcendence characterizes the purely intentional object. Here, Ingarden posits that it is the content of the purely intentional object *as a whole* that falls prey to spots of indeterminacy. To elaborate, the purely intentional object’s “plenitude of being,” with its full content and spots of indeterminacy, is transcendent to the individual correlative act of consciousness (p. 221).

IV

In conclusion, Ingarden’s analysis of the literary work’s double structure and spots of indeterminacy illustrates the transcendence of this seemingly mind-dependent object. Ingarden, therefore, not only shows that, *contra* Husserl, there are mind-dependent and mind-independent objects in the world, but also demonstrates that there are objects that exhibit both features, i.e., objects that are both purely intentional and derive their ontic foundation from existentially autonomous entities. The literary work of art and fictional entities, thus, constitute Ingarden’s *aesthetics*-based defense of realism over transcendental idealism.

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