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## THE BASIC DISTINCTIONS IN *DER STREIT*

by

Ingvar Johansson

The paper presents Ingarden's views on what he calls 'modes of being' ('ways of existence') and 'existential moments'; the latter being constitutive parts of the former. Mainstream analytic philosophy has been dominated by the view that 'existence' can mean only existence *simpliciter*. Ingarden, on the other hand, discerns four possible modes of being, one of which is of special interest to semiotics: purely intentional being. It is of relevance for the ontological understanding not only of texts, but also of pictures and other sign-related entities. At the end, an extrapolated Ingardenian semiotic triangle is presented.

### 1. Ontological and metaphysical investigations – first part

Volume I of Roman Ingarden's *Der Streit um die Existenz der Welt* has the subtitle "Existentialontologie," volume II the subtitle "Formalontologie," and volume III "Über die kausale Struktur der realen Welt." This paper will present the basic distinctions of the first volume.<sup>1</sup>

Ingarden distinguishes between four different kinds of philosophical investigations: *existential-ontological*, *formal-ontological*, *material-ontological*, and *metaphysical*. Existential-ontological investigations examine what modes of being or ways of existence that are in principle possible, i.e., what modes are not self-contradictory or internally absurd in some other way. In formal-ontological investigations the more precise nature of various kinds of entities such as those labeled 'autonomous individual object', 'heteronomous individual object', 'idea', 'state of affairs', and 'relation' are investigated. The third volume is a formal-ontological investigation of causality.

The distinction between formal-ontological and material-ontological investigations is based in a specific form-matter distinction where, as usual, there can be no form without matter. Material-ontological investigations lie outside *Der Streit*; in such investigations, the possible or actual matter of a certain kind of entity is meant to be examined. In outline, they may be thought of as scientific investigations.

Every possibly existing entity has to exist in a specific mode of being, have a form, and have some kind of matter. In metaphysical investigations one tries to find out whether a certain possible entity really exists. *Der Streit* is meant only as a precursor to such investigations, even though it shines through what some of Ingarden's metaphysical views look like. He is a realist with respect to a spatiotemporal external-world, and he is a realist with respect to universals. Of interest for semiotics is the fact that he ascribes fictions and so-called 'pure pictures' a special mode of being, that of purely intentional being; this mode is presented at length in Sect. 4. Ingarden belongs to a small realist branch within phenomenology that has interesting implications even for semiotics.

Together, Ingarden's existential-ontological and formal-ontological investigations can be seen as an attempt to find strict classification slots for all the basic entities that philosophers

have posited and which does not seem outright impossible or self-contradictory (1964a: 78). Looking at similarities and dissimilarities between such entities, Ingarden comes to the conclusion that it is not enough to distinguish between different *kinds* of entities; even different *modes of being* of entities have to be distinguished.

## 2. Modes of being – first presentation

What, then, is a *mode* of being or *way* of existence? And why, to start with, isn't it enough to talk about different *kinds* of entities? Answer: every discussion about whether a certain kind of entity (call it *F*) exists necessarily or contingently is a question about *in what way* (*modus*) such *F*s exist; it is not about what kind *F* is. In this sense, certainly, philosophy needs the notion of 'mode of being', but, equally certainly, this does not prove that different modes of being are possible. Perhaps, everything has to exist either necessarily or contingently.

Famously, in the early days of analytic philosophy, Bertrand Russell denounced Alexius Meinong's distinction between the modes of being *existence* and *subsistence*. Russell claimed that beliefs in purportedly subsisting entities such as the non-existing present King of France, was an illusion fostered by everyday language. He claimed that his predicate logic based analysis of definite descriptions showed that there is no need to postulate subsistent entities; the expression 'the present King of France' needs on analysis no referent at all. It should be exchanged for the existential quantifier of predicate logic plus a description: 'there is an *x*, such that *x* is the present King of France'. An assertion such as 'the present King of France is bald' would then be equivalent to 'there is an *x*, such that *x* is the present King of France, and *x* is bald', which is directly false. Here, the expression 'there is an *x*', not the expression 'the present King of France', functions as the referring expression; and there is in this case nothing that it refers to. About all this, see, e.g., (Marek 2008: Sect. 4) and (Irvine 2010: Sect. 3.); let it here be added that Meinong himself only meant that states of affairs, not objects, can subsist (Findlay 1963: 73f).

Notwithstanding the fact that Quine apart from physical entities posits sets as Platonic entities, I think it is fair to say that analytic-philosophical metaphysics has been dominated by the view that talk of different modes of being makes no sense or borders on self-contradiction. It has reached its peak, I would say, with David Lewis' analysis of the distinction between necessary and contingent truths. Necessary truths are said to be true in all possible worlds, but since everything that exists has to have the same way of existing, i.e., actual spatiotemporal existence, every possible world is in fact an actual world, too; even though different from our (Lewis 1986, Hall 2010: Sect. 1). Lewis regards even fictional objects as objects existing actually in some possible world (1983: Truth in Fiction). If I may take Ingarden's notion of 'purely intentional being' as already known, then I would say that I am fairly sure that Ingarden would say that Lewis is right in putting possible worlds and fictions on a par, but it is absurd to ascribe them the mode of being of the real; both belong to the mode of the purely intentional (see Sect. 4). Lewis is in this sense the contrary opposite of Ingarden.

Plato was not a one-mode-of-being ontologist. His ontology contains entities of four different modes of being: (A) ideas or forms, i.e., the upper part of the world of ideas; (B) concepts and mathematical entities, i.e., the lower part of the world of ideas; (C) primary sensible spatiotemporal entities; and (D) copies of such sensible entities, i.e., shadows, statues, pictures, etc. Ingarden thinks, somewhat analogously, that exactly four main modes of being are possible; some of them, though, are ascribed important sub-modes or varieties (1964a: §33, 1964b: Ch. V). Below, the main ways of existence are listed (with a brief association creating example within parenthesis):

- |     |                            |                                      |
|-----|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (A) | Absolute, Timeless Being   | (think of the monotheistic God)      |
| (B) | Extratemporal Being, Ideal | (think of numbers as Platonic ideas) |
| (C) | Temporal Being, Real       | (think of ordinary material things)  |
| (D) | Purely Intentional Being   | (think of fictions)                  |

On Ingarden's analysis, it always makes good sense to ask a philosopher in which of these four modes a proposed kind of entity is meant to exist. For instance, one may ask her or him: do you mean that God exists absolutely, extratemporally (ideally), temporally (really), or only purely intentionally?; do you mean that the mathematical numbers exist absolutely, extratemporally, temporally, or only purely intentionally?; do you mean that the material things exist absolutely, extratemporally, temporally, or only purely intentionally?; do you mean that Hamlet exists absolutely, extratemporally, temporally, or only purely intentionally?

According to Ingarden, all modes of being are *complex*; and the constituting parts are called 'existential moments'. They will be presented in the next section. As kinds can be divided into genera-kinds and species-kinds, modes can be divided into modes and sub-modes.

Existence is not a property, Kant said; existence is not a predicate, G. E. Moore said. For the purposes of this paper, these statements can be regarded as making equivalent claims; one claim is directly about the world and the other about the language we use when we talk about the world. Is Ingarden's claim that there is more than one possible mode of being in conflict with this Kant-Moore thesis? The answer is: no, it isn't (1964a: 73, 1964b: 35). A way of existence is no more a property than existence as such is. This is shown by the fact that subject-predicate sentences can be used to describe both the form and the matter of an entity even if its mode of being is unknown. If, for instance, a person is described, it can be either a real person or a fiction. It is not a property of Shakespeare that he has had a spatiotemporal existence; and it is not a property of Hamlet that he is a fiction.

An acceptance of Ingarden's four different modes of being does not imply that the straightforward question 'Does the entity *E* exist?' is meaningless. It means merely that the question is shorthand for 'Does entity *E* exist in any of the modes A, B, C, or D?' No entity can have more than one mode of being.

The predicate logic that Russell once thought should help the philosophical world to get rid of curious modes of being such as Meinong's subsistence, can easily be amended to take account of the positing of many modes of being. An unspecified first order predicate formula such as  $(\exists x)Fx$ , 'there is an *x*, such that *Fx*', has only to be read as saying the same as 'in one of the four modes of being, there is an *x*, such that *Fx*'. Another possible move is to restrict the predicate logic quantifiers to one specific mode of being. This can be done with the help of subscripts; the symbols A, B, C, or D can as subscripts indicate what mode of being a quantifier is meant to accept. A formula such as  ${}_B(\exists x)Fx$  should then be read 'there is an *x* in the mode of being B, such that *Fx*', and  ${}_C(\forall x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$  should be read 'for all *x* in the mode of being C, if *Fx* then *Gx*'.

### 3. Existential moments

According to Ingarden, modes of being are complex unities of existential moments; no mode of being can consist of only one existential moment. One and the same existential moment, on the other hand, can be part of several modes of being.

There are at least three pairs of existential moments from which every possible mode of being has to contain one of the contrary opposite moments. I will explain the pairs one by one; the German terms within the parentheses are Ingarden's own, not a translator's. In my order of exposition, the first pair is:

➤ Originality (*Ursprünglichkeit*) – Derivation (*Abgeleitetheit*)

It is tempting to say that entities that have the existential moment of *originality* are entities whose essence implies existence. However, this is not exactly what Ingarden says. Perhaps he thinks that such a statement would belong to a metaphysical and not to an existential-ontological investigation, since the latter should only be concerned with possible existence. Instead, he says that original entities are entities that cannot have been created (1964a: 87, 1964b: 52). That is, either they exist in and of themselves or they cannot (despite not being logical contradictions) come into existence at all. Examples (mine) could be God in medieval philosophy, the Idea of the Good in Plato's philosophy, and Necessary Existents in contemporary analytic metaphysics. All entities that lack originality have the moment of *derivation*, and need something that makes them come into existence in their specific mode of being. Everything that exists absolutely must have the moment of originality.

➤ Separateness (*Selbständigkeit*) – Inseparateness (*Unselbständigkeit*)

Entities that have the moment of *separateness* can (when they have come into being in some way or other) exist in themselves for a while, whereas entities that have the moment of *inseparateness* are dependent on something else for their continued existence. Cartesian material and mental substances have the moment of separateness, but their properties have the moment of inseparateness. That is, such properties cannot be separated from the substances in which they inhere. Another way to phrase the same thing is to say that property instances are existentially dependent on (inseparable from) a property bearer, whereas Cartesian substances are not for their existence dependent on anything else (they can exist in separation).

➤ Autonomy (*Autonomie*) – Heteronomy (*Heteronomie*)

In my and many others opinion, Ingarden's conception of *heteronomy* is by far both his most original and most important contribution to ontology. It was worked out already in *The Literary Work of Art* (1973 [1931]), although the term is mentioned here only in passing (1973: 122). In *Der Streit* he gives examples of two kinds of entities that have the moment of heteronomy: fictions and empirical possibilities. The moment of heteronomy must by no means be conflated with the moment of inseparateness. Think of a property instance such as the sphericity of a certain presently existing ball. The existence of such a property instance is inseparable from the existence of the ball, but nonetheless it differs radically from fictions and empirical possibilities. The difference, according to Ingarden, is captured by the distinction between autonomy and heteronomy. An instance of sphericity has the moment of *autonomy*; it is in and of itself a *completely determinate* something with *existential inertia*. This is not true of fictions and empirical possibilities. Let me explain.

From an ontological point of view, fictions may, and normally do, contain what Ingarden calls *spots of indeterminacy*. Finding out the height of Hamlet is not an epistemological problem; it is an ontological impossibility. Why? Answer: because Shakespeare created a fictional figure without a determinate height. Nothing like this can be true of ordinary things and their property instances. They are always ontologically determined, even though, for epistemological reasons, we may happen to have knowledge only about some small number of them. If one assumes, as I think Ingarden does, that the future need not, from an existential-ontological point of view, be completely determined, then even empirical possibilities have spots of ontological indeterminacy.

Although the concept of *existential inertia* (1964a: 113, 1964b: 80) is, as far as I know, Ingarden's own invention, he left it unexplained. Let me therefore attempt an explanation.

According to classical mechanics, all material things have a state-of-motion inertia. That is, they resist both changes in their speed (rest included) and in their direction of movement. An external force is needed to change a state of motion, but nothing is needed in order to sustain an already existing one. To have existential inertia means to resist going out of being. Ideal entities have existential inertia in the strongest possible sense: they cannot go out of existence. Real entities, both property bearers and property instances, have it in the sense that something is needed to make them go out of existence. Otherwise, they continue to exist. This is not the case with fictions and empirical possibilities. If people completely forget a fiction, then it simply goes out of being *without any resistance at all*. Analogously, if the actual world changes from state S1, which contains the empirical possibility E, into a state S2 that does not contain E, then E goes out of being without any resistance.

As there can be sub-modes of the main modes of being (see the next section), there can be sub-moments of the main moments of existence. The following pair of existential moments contains sub-moments of the moment of separateness:

➤ Self-Dependence (*Unabhängigkeit*) – Contingency (*Abhängigkeit*)

Every entity that exists with the moment of separateness has to be either self-dependent or contingent, even though it can be self-dependent in one respect and contingent in another. An organism has, as an organism, the existential moment of *self-dependence*. As a father, however, the same organism has the moment of *contingency* (1964a: 122, 1964b: 90). What Ingarden says suggests that this is his way of making the distinction between monadic features (being round, having a determinate height, being an organism, etc.) and so-called relational features (being rounder than the moon, being taller than Shakespeare, being the father of someone, etc.). In what follows, I will neglect this pair of moments.

All existential moments do not come as contrary opposites where each possible mode of being has to contain one of the opposites. In one case there is a fourfold partition of moments. According to Ingarden, each of the most specific modes of being has to contain exactly one of the four following moments; the main mode temporal being (C) contains the first three:

➤ Actuality (*Aktualität*) – Post-Actuality (*Post-Aktualität*) – Empirical Possibility (*Empirische Möglichkeit*) – Non-Actuality (*Nicht-Aktualität, Inaktualität*)

In order to introduce the moments, one has to turn Ingarden upside down. He uses the moments in order to distinguish the temporal from the non-temporal, i.e., the notions of the moments are to Ingarden logically prior to the notion of the temporal, but when introducing them, one has to regard temporality as already being understood. Moreover, time should be conceived along the lines of what in the philosophy of time is called ‘presentism’. That is, the now should be assumed to exist in a stronger sense than the past and the future do. However, the past and the future should not in Ingarden’s account be conceived of as absolutely non-existing; neither as being exactly on a par. According to Ingarden, what exists presently exists with the moment of *actuality*, what exists in the past exists with the moment of *post-actuality*, and what exists in the future exists with the moment of *empirical possibility*. The term ‘*non-actuality*’, however, cannot be taken to mean having no relation to time, since Ingarden ascribes this moment also to fictions, and fictions are created at a certain point of time. And actuality is ascribed not only to presently existing entities, but to absolute timeless beings, too (1964a: 202 n16, 1964b: 111 n19).

Even though mostly neglected by commentators, *Der Streit* contains two more pairs of existential moments:

- Fissuration (*Spalthaftigkeit*) – Non-Fissuration (*Nicht-Spalthaftigkeit*)
- Fragility (*Gebrechlichkeit*) – Persistence (*Nicht-Gebrechlichkeit*)

The reason for the negligence is that Ingarden himself does not list them together with the others, but brings in them only at the end of volume one; this in order to discuss in what way the absolute mode of being and the temporal present differ. I will say some explanatory words about these pairs in Sect 4.1 below. Let me here only add that in my opinion, the term pair ‘fissuration – non-fissuration’ could well be exchanged for ‘self-fissuration – non-fissuration’, and the pair ‘fragility – persistence’ for ‘self-nullifyability – persistence’. According to Ingarden, organisms are fragile in the special sense now at issue, which means that they are pre-programmed to die, i.e., it is of their essence to nullify themselves (1964a: 236–245, 1964b: 146–156).

#### 4. Modes of being – second presentation

I will now present the main modes of being (A: Absolute, B: Extratemporal, C: Temporal, and D: Purely Intentional) and some of their sub-modes by means of their constitutive existential moments (Ingarden 1964a: §33, 1964b: Ch. V). The mode of most interest to semiotics is that of purely intentional being; and this will be given most space.

It is tempting to think that Ingarden’s modes of being can be linearly ordered according to an overarching dimension such as *strength of existence*, but this is not possible. In an intuitive sense, the moment of originality is stronger than derivation, the moment of autonomy stronger than heteronomy, and the moment of actuality stronger than non-actuality. But, as shown in the table below, the pair actuality–non-actuality does not fit the left-to-right order of the other two pairs (temporal being is represented by one of its sub-modes: the present).

Absolute, Timeless Being (A)	Extratemporal Being, Ideal (B):	Temporal Being, Real; Present (C):	Purely Intentional Being (D):
Originality	Originality	Derivation	Derivation
Autonomy	Autonomy	Autonomy	Heteronomy
Actuality	Non-Actuality	Actuality	Non-Actuality

If more existential moments were brought in, then the impossibility of a linear order that is not relative to one or two existential moments would become even more obvious.

##### 4.1 *Absolute, Timeless Being (A)*

Think of the present as a *now* that has a small temporal extension, and that in a metaphorical sense moves from the past towards the future. It can be called both a self-fissurating and a self-nullifying entity. As soon as it exists it starts to nullify itself, and it even splits up into parts in the very small extension it has. Think next of God as conceived in the monotheistic religions. He (or she) cannot possibly be characterized as self-fissurating and self-nullifying; he is a complete unity (non-fissuration), and he is absolutely immortal (persistence). In this sense he is the contrary opposite of the now that is in an everlasting flux. Also, unlike entities existing in the mode of the present, he has not been created by anything else (originality). On the other hand, he shares with the entities in the present that he is a determinate something (autonomy), and that he exists in a very strong sense (actuality).

From the point of view of the philosophy of religion, it might be interesting to note that Ingarden speculates that there are two sub-modes of absolute being. One is described by the existential moments mentioned in the paragraph above; the other differs in having non-fissuration exchanged for self-fissuration (1964a, p. 257; 1964b, p. 157–158). Perhaps (my

example) Spinoza's God-Substance-Nature would have to be ascribed this mode of absolute being; it splits or fissures itself into its attributes and modes.

#### 4.2 Extratemporal Being, Ideal (B)

Ingarden thinks that so-called 'Platonic entities' make up a special and possible mode of existence. They are in each and every aspect of their being determined, i.e., they have the moment of autonomy. Even though not having a God-like way of being they have never come into being and can never stop existing, i.e., they have the existential moment of originality; they differ from God-like entities in having the moment of non-actuality. The combination originality and actuality typical of absolute entities gives for Ingarden rise to the epithet 'timeless' (*überzeitlich*), whereas the combination originality and non-actuality typical of Platonic entities gives rise to the epithet 'extratemporal' (*ausserzeitlich*).

Ingarden lays claim to having shown that it is possible that there can be entities that exist in the mode of the extratemporal, but it is quite clear that he also thinks that there actually are such entities. In particular, he seems to ascribe this mode of being to two kinds of universals: ideas (*Ideen*) and pure qualities (*reine Qualitäten*).

All extratemporal entities have the moments of originality, non-actuality, and autonomy, but they can differ with respect to the other existential moments, i.e., there are sub-modes even here. Some extratemporal entities can exist in separation from other extratemporal entities (separateness), and some cannot (inseparateness).

#### 4.3 Temporal Being, Real (C)

With respect to the temporal mode of being, Ingarden introduces several sub-modes (as I say) or varieties (as he himself says). These sub-modes can be represented as being orthogonal to each other in the way, for example, that hue and intensity are often represented as being orthogonal to each other in the classification of colors. In one dimension, what exists temporally can be classified as existing in the way of *objects, processes, or events*, but in another they can be classified as existing in the way of being *present, past, or future*. Perceived entities such as stones, chairs, trees, cats, and persons exist in the temporal-present-objectual mode of being. Ingarden regards both organisms and persons as enduring objects with a *stratiform structure* and *dynamic* kind of enduring identity (1964a: 232–245, 1964b: 141–156). Let me go through these sub-modes in more detail. The first dimension of the temporal looks like this:

- (C1) objects (real entities existing in the objectual sub-mode),
- (C2) processes (real entities existing in the processual sub-mode), or
- (C3) events (real entities existing in the event-sub-mode).

Events are necessarily punctual, and processes necessarily have duration (1964a: 194, 1964b: 102). According to Ingarden, events such as the starting- and end-points of something are punctual, but he never says whether the punctual is necessarily infinitesimally punctual or not; compare (Haefliger & Küng 2005: 30–33). Ingarden's tripartition should be contrasted with bipartite distinctions such as that between *endurants* (objects) and *perdurants* (processes) made by D. Lewis (1986: 202–205) and that between *continuants* (objects) and *occurrents* (processes) made by W. E. Johnson (1964 [1921]). Objects/endurants/continuants have no temporal parts, and are in this sense numerically (but not necessarily qualitatively) identical in the interval of time where they persist, whereas processes/perdurants/occurrents persist by unfolding temporal parts. I think Ingarden is right. Both objects/endurants/continuants and processes/perdurants/occurrents are extended beyond the now, which can be regarded as punctual, but a complete ontology must also take account of what is punctual and non-persisting.

However, independently of this classification, temporal entities can exist in the following three ways:

- (CI) as entities in the (sub-mode of the) present,
- (CII) as entities in the (sub-mode of the) past, or
- (CIII) as entities in the (sub-mode of the) future.

Ingarden is hereby not taking stance in the philosophy of time, claiming that presentism in some form is true, and that four-dimensionalism and eternalism are false. He is saying that presentism in his sense is not self-contradictory. If, after a metaphysical investigation, it should turn out that four-dimensionalism has to be regarded as true, then this would to Ingarden mean only that everything temporal does as a matter of fact exist in the sub-mode of the present, and that the sub-modes of the past and the future are empty slots in his existential-ontological classificatory schema. He ascribes the present and the past the moment of autonomy, but the future that of heteronomy. If, after a metaphysical investigation, it would turn out that determinism is true, then even the real future is autonomous, and the mode of being that Ingarden calls ‘the future’ would contain no entities.

Similarly, Ingarden is in relation to the object-process-event tripartition not saying that the actual world contains all these sub-modes; only that all of them are possible. If, for instance, a Whiteheadian process ontology can be shown to be true, then everything temporal does as a matter of fact exist only in the sub-mode of processes.

It should be noted that Ingarden is of the opinion that “*One and the same thing cannot exist first in one mode of being, and then in another,*” and that “*We say that ‘such and such case which heretofore had merely been a possibility, has become an actuality.’ However, this is only a certain manner of speaking that should not be taken literally (1964a: 74, 1964b: 37).*”

If this is meant to apply to sub-modes just as well as to the main modes, then these statements have to be interpreted in such a way that they become compatible with Ingarden’s view that objects (C1) can endure, i.e., be numerically the same, through time. In my opinion, this can only be done by allowing some kind of relation to bridge the gap between the sub-modes of the present and the past. The chair I was sitting on two minutes ago (which now exists in the sub-mode of the past) cannot with Ingarden’s ban on trans-mode entities be regarded as being completely identical with the chair I am sitting on now (which exists in the sub-mode of the present). But even Ingarden must of course admit that the “pastly” existing chair have some special kind of relation to the presently existing chair. Ingarden needs some notion of a counterpart relation that does not make the counterparts completely numerically distinct. A presently existing thing must be able to have some kind of counterparts in the past.

#### 4.4 *Purely Intentional Being (D)*

I will introduce this mode of being by means of our everyday conception of fictions. Normally, no one thinks that fictions in novels and plays have an eternal existence of the kind imputed to Platonic entities. That is, fictions are ascribed the existential moment of *derivation*; necessarily, they are created entities. Furthermore, unlike ordinary things and processes, they have no clear position in ordinary space-time; this makes the moment of *non-actuality* part of their way of existing. The most characteristic moment of fictions, however, is that of *heteronomy*; fictions (as explained in Sect. 3) have ontological spots of indeterminacy and lack existential inertia. In order to explain why Ingarden has given this mode the name ‘*purely intentional being*’, some words about his Husserlian analysis of intentionality are needed; more words can be found in (Johansson 2010).



#### 4.4.1 *Intentional objects in general.* Ingarden's basic view can be stated thus:

- in every *Intentional Act* there is an instance of an *Intentional Universal* by means of which the act is directed at an *Intentional Object*.

The statement above contains the famous Act–Content–Object triad (stemming from Kazimierz Twardowski) but with 'content' exchanged for 'intentional universal'. Let me present one by one Ingarden's views on these parts.

First, each intentional act (perceptual act, reading act, thinking act, dreaming act, etc.) is assumed to exist in the temporal mode and be a real spatiotemporal entity.

Second, in conformity with the phenomenological tradition in general, Ingarden takes it for granted that as matter of brute fact there are irreducibly intentional phenomena. We are in perception, in language, in thinking, and in imagining *directed at* something, and this directedness cannot possibly be reduced to a number of entities that completely lack directedness. Also, Ingarden takes it for granted that nominalism and conceptualism are false, and that there are both universals and instances of universals. (For an introduction to the problem of universals, see (Armstrong 1989).) Most importantly, there are universals with directedness, intentional universals; Husserl calls them 'intentional essences'. Necessarily, an act cannot be intentional if it does not contain an instance of an intentional universal, but it can of course contain instances of non-intentional universals, too. In principle, there can be many numerically different intentional acts that are qualitatively identical. That is, they contain instances of the same intentional and non-intentional universals. What mode of being the universals as such have (temporal or extratemporal) can be left out of account, but all the instances in an intentional act must exist in the same mode as the act itself, i.e., in the temporal mode.

Third, the intentional object is what an act is *directed at*; the instantiated intentional universal is something *by means of which* the act gets its directedness. Neither an instance of an intentional universal in an act, nor the intentional universal as such, is identical with the intentional object of the act. This means that, in principle, an intentional object can have any mode of being, and, in particular, the mode of the purely intentional.

The last point implies a rejection of all so-called representational analyses of intentionality, i.e., analyses that claim that the subject of an intentional act is *directed at a representation*, which, *in turn*, has a relation of representation to the intentional object (be this representation relation analyzed along the lines of what is nowadays called 'internalism' or 'externalism'). According to Ingarden, the subject of a visual intentional act does not look at the so-called representation, but rather *through* it (and thereby at the intentional object). Ingarden is not in this connection using the foreground-background distinction, but I would very much like to say that the intentional object makes up the foreground of an intentional act, whereas the instantiations of the intentional and non-intentional universals make up the background. When I am reading about a fictional object this object is the foreground and the meaningful text the background.

I allow myself to use other terms than Ingarden. He makes the distinction between 'instantiated intentional universal' and 'intentional object' in terms of 'intent' and 'target of an intention'; he writes:

The word "intentional," used so frequently in modern philosophical literature, is ambiguous. At times, that which contains an "intention" is called "intentional." In this sense, conscious acts, for example, are "intentional." Wherever there is a danger of misunderstanding, we will use in these cases the term "intent" instead of "intentional" (e.g., "an act of intent" [i.e., an act with an instantiated intentional

universal]). At other times, that objectivity is called “intentional” which constitutes the target of an intention [the intentional object].” (Ingarden 1973: 117, 1960: 122; he repeats the remark in 1965b: 194 n22)

As soon as the distinction between an intentional universal plus its instances and the corresponding intentional object is accepted, the following question enters the agenda:

- an instantiated intentional universal is by definition an internal part of an intentional act, but what about the intentional object, is it internal or external to the act?

The very question does not imply, note, that there must be one single general answer: *all* intentional objects are either internal or external to their acts. Some kinds of acts may have internal and others external intentional objects. Ingarden distinguishes between two kinds of intentional objects, the first of which is, in turn, divided into two sub-kinds:

- purely intentional objects
  - *originally* purely intentional objects
  - *derived* purely intentional objects.
- also-intentional objects.

The above contrast between ‘originally’ and ‘derived’ must not be conflated with the distinction between the two existential moments originality and derivation. All purely intentional objects have the existential moment of derivation.

4.4.2 *Originally purely intentional objects.* If in a novel you are reading about a house that is wholly created by the author, then this house is the purely intentional object of your reading acts.<sup>2</sup> If you in a travel advertisement are reading about a famous really existing house, then this house is the also-intentional object of your reading acts. Also-intentional objects (hyphenation mine) are all those objects that (i) can exist independently of all intentional acts, but *also* (ii) can be the target of intentional acts. Material things and their properties, and extratemporal entities if such exist, can be also-intentional objects. When you are reading in the travel advertisement mentioned, the house that is your also-intentional object is external to your reading act. If you travel to the house and look at it, then, it becomes an also-intentional object of your perceptual act. Whether, now, you should regard the house as being external to or being directly given in your assumedly veridical perception depends on your metaphysical views.

Representational external-world realists claim that, metaphysically seen, the naïve realism of our everyday world must be rejected, and that material things such as real houses have to be regarded as being external to our perceptions. In contemporary philosophy, representationalism is defended by John Searle (1983). He explains the distinction between veridical and non-veridical perceptions by means of what kinds of causes different kinds of perceptions have; non-veridical perceptions lack brain-external causes. True direct realists (under which heading some contemporary ‘disjunctivists’ fall) have the opposite view. They regard, even from a metaphysical point of view, the veridically perceived house as a partly internal part of the perception. Unhappily, Ingarden does not make it clear whether he is a representational realist and thinks that *all* veridical perceptual acts directed at the external world have an external intentional object, or whether he is a true direct realist and thinks that at least some such acts can have an intentional object that is internal to the perceptual act.

This direct-realism problem of veridical perception need not, however, concern us here, since I will only discuss *conceptual-descriptive* and *pictorial* intentional acts; and all such acts have by definition an intentional object that is external to the act. When you read a text or look

at a picture, what the text is about and what the picture depicts exist outside of the text and the picture, respectively. External also-intentional objects can exist separated from the intentional acts in question, but external *originally* purely intentional objects cannot. If Ingarden is right, then there is a kind of external intentional object that for its existence is dependent on intentional acts. This means, which I will come back to, that ‘external’ here takes on a new and unusual meaning, since normally ‘being external-to-x’ is taken to imply ‘capable of existing independently of x’. Such “external” purely intentional objects exist in the sub-mode of being called ‘originally purely intentional being’.

Ingarden is by no means of the opinion that intentionality is tied only to language, and that originally purely intentional objects are confined to language. As in relation to texts we distinguish between real and fictional discourses, in relation to pictures Ingarden distinguishes between, for instance, portraits and *pure* pictures (1989); a picture may portrait a certain person that exists or has existed, but it can also be a picture of a completely non-existing person. Portraits have also-intentional objects whereas pure pictures have a purely intentional object; even the intentional objects of pure pictures have an “external” existence.<sup>3</sup>

Three remarks in order to avoid misunderstandings that my simple presentation otherwise may give rise to. First, a novel can contain a mix of also-intentional and purely intentional objects, i.e., a story about fictional persons can take place in the very real setting of an existing city, and so can pictures. For instance, a picture can have the also-intentional object of a real room in which a non-real purely intentional person is placed. As I say in Sect. 3 of my other paper in this issue (“The Ideal as Real and as Purely Intentional”), I think Ingarden does not get everything right when he analyzes such mixes.

Second, Ingarden accepts of course that there can be layers of encapsulated purely intentional entities. An author can let a fictional figure in a novel read about another fiction, and an artist can paint a pure picture of a person looking at another picture. His framework allows even fictional figures that are reading texts with also-intentional objects. There is nothing in his framework that immediately makes it inapplicable to various new kinds of literary genres where there are very complex such encapsulations. Novels where the main figures in the novel are not only based on events of the author’s and her friends’ lives, but are really intended *partly* to be the author and her friends as also-intentional objects and only *partly* to be purely intentional objects, seem rather for their analysis to presuppose a distinction such as Ingarden’s. However, I will concentrate on cases where the intentional object is wholly either also-intentional or purely intentional.

Third, Ingarden is of course well aware of the fact that the reading acts of different readers of a novel are not qualitatively identical. In order to account for this, he distinguishes between a literary work as such and the readers’ different “concretizations” of it.

Ingarden presents the notion of ‘purely intentional being’ as follows:

By a purely intentional objectivity we understand an objectivity that is in a figurative sense “created” by an act of consciousness or by a manifold of acts or, finally, by a formation (e.g., a word meaning, a sentence) exclusively on the basis of an immanent, original, or only conferred intentionality and has, in the given objectivities, the source of its existence and its total essence. [...] the determination above will serve only to distinguish the purely intentional objectivity *in terms of its idea* from objectivities that are *ontically autonomous* [emphasis mine] with respect to consciousness. It is entirely accidental that the latter objectivities (if they exist at all) become targets of conscious acts and thus in a secondary manner become “also intentional” objectivities. (1973: 117, 1960: 121–122)

Let us compare Hamlet the fiction with Shakespeare the real person with respect to conceptual-descriptive originally intentional acts. According to Ingarden's analysis of the triad intentional act, intentional universal, and intentional object, the following holds: *all numerically different but qualitatively identical true descriptions of Shakespeare have the same numerically identical intentional object*, namely the real Shakespeare or some aspect of him. Shakespeare is an also-intentional object, and here it is easy (given Ingarden's analysis of intentional acts) to understand how many numerically different intentional acts can have one numerically identical intentional object in common. But what happens when purely intentional objects are brought in? Can even the following be true: *all numerically different but qualitatively identical true descriptions of Hamlet have the same numerically identical intentional object in common*, namely Hamlet as such or some aspect of him? Ingarden writes:

[It] must be remembered that every intentional act indeed "has" *its own* purely intentional object but that, despite this, a *discrete* manifold of acts can have one and the same purely intentional object. The object is in that case *individually the same* [emphasis mine]. (1973: 123; 1960: 128)

And some pages earlier he has said:

Purely intentional objects are "transcendent" with respect to corresponding [...] conscious acts in the sense that no real element (or moment) of the act is an element of the purely intentional object, and vice versa. (1973: 118, 1960: 123)

I take it for granted that Ingarden puts the words 'has' and 'transcendent' within scare quotes in order to indicate that they do not have their ordinary meaning. The originally purely intentional object is not *transcendent* (external) in the ordinary sense, since it has no existence that is independent of all conscious acts; and no intentional act *has* its intentional object literally, since the intentional object is not a part of the act. The quotations above are from *The Literary Work of Art*, and later in *Der Streit* he makes in fact an explicit distinction between 'radical transcendence' and 'structural transcendence in the strong sense' (1965a: 225), but I will continue to talk about transcendence and "transcendence." Now we can ask: where is the "transcendent" or "external" Hamlet to be found?

To repeat: necessarily, if different intentional acts have the same directedness, they have one and the same numerically identical intentional object. (Remember in what follows that my discussion is confined to conceptual-descriptive and pictorial intentional acts.) If the intentional objects would be only qualitatively the same, then the intentional object would be reduced to a class ("discrete manifold") of intentional objects; the very view that Ingarden criticizes in *The Literary Work of Art*. In spite of the fact that there is no mind-independent (mind-separable) external Hamlet, all the different (but qualitatively identical) acts have a common numerically identical intentional object, the mind-dependent (mind-inseparable) "external" Hamlet. This view follows from a simultaneous acceptance of these two views: (a) that there are instances of intentional universals directed at fictions, and (b) that such instances are distinct from intentional objects. If true, Ingarden's view immediately explains the everyday phenomenon that different persons seem to be able *literally* to talk about the same fiction, i.e., that they are able to identify and re-identify the very same fiction.

Philosophers who dismiss talk about universals as metaphysical nonsense must, I guess, find Ingarden's analysis of literary and pictorial works of art absurd. To those who accept that there are universals, i.e., that there is a kind of entity that can be numerically the same in many different and disconnected spatiotemporal places, the problem is to extend this way of thinking

*one-in-many* to fictions. As there can be one-universal-in-many-instances, there can be one-fiction-in-many-reading-acts.

Philosophers who take it for granted that of necessity the intentional object of an intentional act must be internal to the act, may also find Ingarden's analysis of originally purely intentional objects extremely hard to comprehend. The analysis implies that what kind of intentional object a factual assertion has cannot be decided by the assertion alone. If an assertion such as 'the house is red' is true, it has an also-intentional object, but if it is false it has a purely intentional object. But this is not as curious as it might first seem. Remember that on Ingarden's analysis, what the instantiated intentional universal looks like can be decided by the assertion alone. However, even in my opinion, Ingarden has not discussed all the problems that his analysis brings with it. For instance, as argued elsewhere (Johansson 2010), I think that Ingarden should have distinguished between at least two kinds of originally purely intentional objects: necessarily purely intentional objects (for instance, the objects of fictional discourse) and contingently purely intentional objects (which are the objects of the factual assertions that happen to be false). Our ability to switch, with respect to a single text, between a fictional and a factual understanding is commented on in Sect. 3 of my other paper in this issue.

To regard Hamlet as "transcendent" and as existing in the purely intentional mode, is not to look upon him *as if* he existed the way real persons do, nor to *pretend* that he exists the way real persons do (as Searle says, 1979: Ch. 3). It is to look upon him as existing in another way than real persons do. Surely, in one sense Hamlet does not exist; he does not exist as a mind-independent object in the temporal, extratemporal, or absolute mode. He exists as a mind-dependent object in the purely intentional mode.

4.4.3 *Derived purely intentional objects.* In a certain sense, many purely intentional entities can be completely separated from intentional acts. When someone is reading about a fictional house in a novel, then this house is an originally purely intentional object; but when no one is reading the novel the house can nonetheless in some way be said to exist in the text. Ingarden says that it then exists as a derived purely intentional object. Using Aristotelian terminology, I would like to say that to be a derived purely intentional object is to *exist potentially* as an originally purely intentional object; with the qualification that at least once before, it has been an originally purely intentional object.

In a world completely devoid of minds there can be no originally purely intentional beings, but if earlier there have been minds there can nonetheless be texts and pictures, i.e., entities that have a potentiality to give rise to originally purely intentional objects. It is a remarkable fact that linguists have been able to decipher texts from so to speak dead languages and cultures; and that archaeologists can decipher cave drawings.

Originally purely intentional objects make up one sub-mode of the purely intentional mode, and derived purely intentional objects make up another. Both have the existential moments of derivation, non-actuality, and heteronomy, but differs in that the first sub-mode has the moment of inseparateness (from minds), and the second has that of separateness. But this difference should not be stressed too much. Derived purely intentional objects have the moment of separateness because they only potentially are intentional objects. One might say that derived purely intentional objects are doubly derived. They are derived from originally purely intentional objects that, in turn, are derived from subjects/minds that have created them.

Potentialities and dispositions cannot be described in any other way than by means of descriptions of their actualizations. Therefore, a derived purely intentional object can be described only by means of the originally purely intentional object that it can give rise to. I have earlier in passing mentioned Ingarden's distinction between a work of literary art and its concretizations. Of course, descriptions of the concretizations should not be included in descriptions of derived pure intentional objects.

Since derived purely intentional objects exist in abstraction from intentional acts, in the triad Intentional Act–Intentional Universal–Intentional Object at least the first part has to be exchanged. Instead of the acts there are only texts and pictures, let us for brevity’s sake say that there are only signs. However, if ‘intentional act’ is exchanged for ‘sign’ conceived in abstraction from minds, then the other parts of the triad have to be exchanged, too. If there are no minds, there are no instances of intentional universals; and if there are no such instances there can be no intentional objects either. The solution is to bring in again the notion of potentiality. Where there is a sign there is potentially an instance of an intentional universal, and where there is such a potentiality there is potentially an intentional object, too. As far as I can see, we obtain through extrapolation the following triad:

➤ Sign–(potentially) Intentional Universal–(potentially) Intentional Object.

I think this triad has to be taken as being Ingarden’s counterpart to Peirce’s classical semiotic tripartition: Sign–Interpretant–Object. When confined to language, it is also Ingarden’s intentionality based counterpart to Ogden’s and Richard’s famous causality based triangle of meaning: Symbol–Thought–Referent. With respect to Saussure, who puts the third part in these triads within brackets, I think Ingarden’s pair Sign–(potentially) Intentional Universal comes close to Saussure’s pair Signified–Signifier.

Ingarden’s basic distinctions in *Der Streit* are worth thinking through even in relation to general semiotics, and not only, as is usually thought, in relation to ontology, metaphysics, and works of art.<sup>4</sup>

## About the author

Ingvar Johansson

email: ingvar.johansson@philos.umu.se

Professor emeritus in theoretical philosophy, Umeå University, Sweden

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> This presentation rests in many respects on my papers (Johansson 2009, 2010). I do not know Polish, and all my references are to works in English or German. In these languages, brief overviews of Ingarden’s whole philosophy have been written by Thomasson (2008) and Wachter (2000: Ch. 2); book overviews have been written by Mitscherling (1997) and Rynkiewicz (2008). Unfortunately, there are in the English literature sometimes different translations of one and the same German term used by Ingarden. I will use the English terms in (Ingarden 1964b). The different translations are registered in (Johansson 2009: notes 5 and 22). The German titles and subtitles of *Der Streit* should, in turn, be translated: “The Controversy over the Existence of the World,” “Existential Ontology,” “Formal Ontology,” and “About the Causal Structure of the Real World.”

<sup>2</sup> More precisely, the house is the *content* of a purely intentional object. Ingarden says that purely intentional objects have a certain duality or two-sided nature, a structure and a content (1965a, §47a), but I will for the sake of a brief presentation write as if a purely intentional object can be identified with its content.

<sup>3</sup> It might be argued that I am now misinterpreting Ingarden. He says things like this: “In the case of the picture [...] the object presented in the picture is—as we shall soon see—a *merely* [emphasis added] intentional object that is projected by a determinate visual aspect reconstructed in the picture. And quite independently of how intuitively its presence appears to the viewer, this presence is still merely ‘appearance’, a ‘phantom’, that cannot exist in its full embodiment of its determinations (Ingarden 1989: 153).” In my view, ‘merely intentional object’ does not here mean the same as ‘purely intentional object’; it means ‘non-presentational intentional object’, i.e., an intentional object that is not given the way objects are given in veridical perceptions.

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