

Řehulková, Hana

## Résumé

In: Řehulková, Hana. *Angloamerická recepcce Ingardenova pojetí uměleckého literárního díla*. Vydání první Brno: Filozofická fakulta, Masarykova univerzita, 2015, pp. 121-123

ISBN 978-80-210-8058-4

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/135147>

Access Date: 08. 12. 2023

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Pokora, Timoteus

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# RÉSUMÉ

The book *The Anglo-American Reception of Ingarden's Conception of the Literary Work* presents Ingarden's ontological and epistemological theory of the literary work from the viewpoint of criticism from Anglo-Saxon philosophy. The remarkable nature of this reception was expressed simply, though aptly, by Wojciech Chojna in book *A Companion to Aesthetics*, in which he wrote, "More than seventy years after the publication of *The Literary Work of Art*, Ingarden's contribution to the philosophy of art has remained unique – and almost unknown, particularly among Anglo-American philosophers." The reasons for the limited interest among Anglo-American scholars in Ingarden's answer to the question of the ontology of the literary work are the result of both the divergent development of the history of philosophy in continental Europe and the English-speaking world during the course of the twentieth century and the differences in the preferred tasks of philosophical investigation arising from this divergent development. The result is a bewildering situation in which Ingarden's theory of the literary work of art, unique to this day in its coherence and thoroughness, is very often neglected in contemporary philosophical and aesthetic discussion of questions of the ontology of art, in which the approaches of analytical philosophy, which tends to accept the phenomenological approach to only a limited degree, are applied to a pronounced extent. The whole situation is underlined by the fact that Ingarden's key work *The Literary Work of Art* of 1931 and his related work *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art* of 1936, extensively annotated and studied in continental European philosophy, were not published in an English translation until 1973. The two texts are mentioned in the expert Anglo-American literature only extremely rarely, in fact hardly at all, until this time.

Even today, when almost half a century has passed since the translation into English of Ingarden's aforementioned works, the response from Anglo-American philosophy and aesthetics remains limited. The only original monograph is Mitscherling's work *Roman Ingarden's Ontology and Aesthetics*. Other papers on the reception of Ingarden's conception of the literary work in this environment have been collected in the anthologies of expert studies *On the Aesthetics of Roman Ingarden: Interpretations and Assessments* by editors B. Dziemidok and P. McCormick and the set of studies edited by A. Chrudzimski under the title *Existence*,

*Culture, Persons: The Ontology of Roman Ingarden.* The contribution made by Ingarden to their scholarship is also reflected by, for example, A. Thomasson, B. Smith and M. Brinker. A precise specification of authors and topics is made difficult both by frequent crossover into thematically divergent areas of Ingarden's research and by frequent ambiguities concerning its Anglo-American reception when we consider that much of the linguistically Anglo-American discussion of the available texts originates from Polish and other authors.

Roman Ingarden was one of Husserl's most distinguished pupils, for which reason it was only natural that he applied and developed a phenomenological approach in all his philosophical work. Although *The Literary Work of Art* and his other aesthetic studies in general remain his most famous work to this day, his primary interest was always in ontological questions (his work *The Controversy over the Existence of the World* of 1947–1948 can rightly be considered his most important work in this regard). His interest in the problems of a literary work, or any piece of visual art or film, were, for him, merely suitable examples for the demonstration of what were, first and foremost, philosophical problems. The most important philosophical question to which Ingarden devoted himself was the issue of the conflict between idealism and realism.

For this reason, our publication is, of Ingarden's extensive work, devoted merely to the conclusions arising from *The Literary Work of Art* and *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art* which represent the basic source of his conception of a literary work. In the first of these texts, Ingarden formulates the fundamentals of his ontological conception of the literary work of art, while in the second, following up from the first, he elaborates questions arising from this "ontological basis" for the problems of recognition of a literary work of art (i.e. the "epistemological basis"). In line with his phenomenological approach, he asks two questions in the very first sentence of *The Literary Work of Art*, and all his further work is, *de facto*, directed towards answering these questions: 1) what is the basic structure of a literary work? and 2) what are the forms of existence of a literary work? He applies this approach in an attempt to achieve a resolution to the problem of "what is a literary work of art?", the essence of which is not unproblematically an ideal entity, nor can it be considered merely a real entity – Ingarden believes that a literary work of art is an example of a purely intentional objectivity. He finds a basic structure in the "essential anatomy" of the work which is comprised of four heterogeneous stratas (the strata of sound structures, the strata of meaning units, the strata of schematized aspects, and the strata of represented entities) which then by the manner of their being (which we label the "physiology of the literary work" in line with Ingarden's terminology) are represented in their polyphonic nature. In *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art*, Ingarden follows on from the conclusions made in *The Literary Work of Art* and develops their epistemological consequences, first and foremost in connection with the term concretisation which can be understood as the process of reading.

In Anglo-American philosophy and aesthetics, six basic topics from Ingarden's theory, which are more systematically developed, can be found: 1) stratification, 2) intentionality, 3) quasi-judgements, 4) concretization and points of indeterminateness, 5) aesthetic attitude, aesthetic object and aesthetic experience, and 6) aesthetic value and criterion of assessment. There are a number of remarkable facts here: interest in these topics from Anglo-American scholars differs in several instances from the focus of interest of continental scholars (for example, the great interest in points of indeterminateness in Europe contrasting with the lack of interest in the same topic in Anglo-American research); similarly, prob-

lems related to epistemological questions tend to be of greater interest to Anglo-Americans interested in Ingarden's theory, in spite of the fact that the focal point of Ingarden's theory lies, first and foremost, in the ontology of the literary work. The most remarkable aspect is the fact that the Anglo-American reception is characterised by the repeated occurrence of annotations on Ingarden's work that strive to determine the consequences of Ingarden's theory to the assessment of literary works or to issues closely associated with artistic criticism.

Having gathered and reviewed the studies and objections of Anglo-American scholars, we can attempt to answer Chojna's question given at the beginning of our investigation. The reason for the unfamiliarity with Ingarden's conception of the literary work of art in the Anglo-American environment, in spite of interest in the issues examined by Ingarden, is more specifically both the generally limited acceptance of the phenomenological approach to the investigation of philosophical questions, which is reproached for its lack of clarity and the ambiguous nature of certain terms and their meanings, and criticism of the lack of applicability of such knowledge in questions associated with practice, such as, for example, art criticism.

We have, therefore, attempted to gain an insight into Ingarden's theory of the literary work of art in the light of the above. We have studied Ingarden's conception with a view to the critical comments of it, and have tried to shape it into arguments that might contribute to an unambiguous definition of certain terms and issues. We have, by means of this process of "argumentation", created a kind of Ingarden theory that might be better accepted within the environment of Anglo-American philosophy and aesthetics or within the discourse of analytical philosophy. In connection with the second objection, we have taken as our starting point the conception of analytical aesthetics as presented by Monroe Beardsley which emphasises its close correlation with art criticism. We have attempted, against the example of a specific text and criticism of it, to define criteria which may be important in the assessment of a literary work of art on the basis of Ingarden's theory.

Ingarden's conception of the literary work of art remains to this day, in terms of its coherence, an unsurpassed attempt at resolving the ontology of a literary work of art, expanded to take in epistemological issues. Ingarden's work soon attracted extensive comment in the European environment, though his contribution has been neglected in the world of Anglo-American philosophy and aesthetics and, by extension, within the scope of analytical discourse. Despite the differences in the approaches of the phenomenological current and philosophical currents shaping the nature of Anglo-American philosophy, Ingarden's theory can be considered useful and worthy of study in many regards within the framework of analytical discourse.

