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INDETERMINACY IN THE LITERARY WORK

I

"Indeterminacy", as we understand the term here, is a synthetic quality which appears within the literary work due to the nature of its material, and may appear in it as a result of conscious operations of the writer. Its immediate source is in elements which are not fully qualified. As such, they belong to the work and constitute a part of its structure, irrespective of the process of perception and the perceptive powers of the person appreciating the work.

The presence in the work of elements which are liable to different interpretations has been known in literary scholarship under various names, including plurisignation, multiple meaning, and suppression. Out of the number of works devoted to particular aspects of the problem¹ (in Poland: Głowiński 1975; Markiewicz 1974; Skwarczyńska 1947; Szczepańska 1972), the two basic ones must be mentioned at this point: William Empson's *Seven types of ambiguity* and Umberto Eco's *Opera aperta*. The former is the first attempt at a systematic classification of the phenomenon, yet deals primarily with the language of the work in relation to psychic processes of the writer and the reader: Empson has no clear-cut model of the work to apply his analyses to, and does not differentiate between the work and the psychic experience. The latter work, viewing the artefact as a stage in the communication process and using categories of the information theory, introduces the notion of the "openness"—the fundamental ambiguity of artistic communication—inherent in any work of art which, though finished and "closed" as an organism, is at the same time "open" to numerous interpretations. Eco's discussion, however, refers to art in general and does not

¹ A particularly interesting discussion of Ingarden's conception of 'spots of indeterminacy' has been carried out by Wolfgang Iser in (Iser 1971) and, against a more general background in (Iser 1978; first published in 1976 as *Der Akt des Lesens. Theorie Ästhetischer Wirkung*). A consideration of Iser's views, or of the other articles mentioned, however, would require a separate article, and cannot be carried out here. Ingarden's and Iser's views on the problem of indeterminacy have been recently compared by Menachem Brinker (1980).

seek to find out which specific properties of the work of literature are responsible for its "openness".

Our discussion of the quality defined above will be based on the model of the literary work proposed by Roman Ingarden (1931, English edition 1973 a), into which certain modifications have been introduced. The notion of elements not fully determined within the stratum of represented objects—the "schematicity" of this stratum—is essential to Ingarden's theory and serves as a basis for the differentiation between the work and its concretizations. Ingarden introduced the concept of "spots of indeterminacy" (*Umbestimmtheitsstellen*) belonging to the content of represented objects and being responsible for their schematic character in *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (1931). Although there is no mention there of such spots in other strata, their presence within them seems to be implied by such terms as typicality of sound (as different from the actual sounding), incompleteness or potential components within the meaning stratum, and the "schematized" nature of aspects. In *The cognition of the literary work* (1937, English edition 1973b) Ingarden speaks of spots of indeterminacy as appearing in strata other than the objective one, and in an article published in Polish (1947) he already speaks of such spots as present in all the strata of the work (1947:54).

Eco (1962) goes a step further than Ingarden and makes clear what Ingarden intuitively felt but never formulated in a systematic manner. Eco differentiates between two degrees of openness: the first typical of any aesthetic form capable of being the object of perception, and the second "intentional", in the sense of being the result of a conscious effort to increase the meaning of the message—an invitation to cocreate the work, the structural elements of which are given in a manner which disregards the laws of necessity. *Opera aperta* confirms, in terms of information theory, the validity of Ingarden's intuition:

The number and distribution of spots of indeterminacy in the represented world varies. It is not without significance for the genre the work represents, or the style, and for its individual artistic stigma. (Ingarden 1947: 39).

Yet, though aware of the presence of spots of indeterminacy within all strata of the work, Ingarden considers them rather in terms of a structural property of the work, and does not speak of any quality which they may originate. In our attempt at a systematic description of such a quality we shall refer to Ingarden's observations concerning specific characteristics of the work, and we shall abide by the categories of the structural model that he devised.

II

The literary work, according to Ingarden (1973a), consists in its essential structure of four strata: (1) the stratum of word sounds and the phonetic formations of higher order built upon them; (2) the stratum of meaning units of various orders; (3) the stratum of manifold schematized aspects and aspect continua and series, and (4) the stratum of represented objects and their vicissitudes, which we shall interchangeably call here the represented world. With

the exception of the third stratum, i.e., of manifold schematized aspects, and with the exception of certain functional bearings of the represented world stratum, the Ingardenian model is adopted here without modifications.

The point which requires some explanation and commentary (cf. Kalaga: forthcoming) is the stratum of schematized aspects held in readiness, the need of which, according to Ingarden, results from the fact that the represented objects cannot attain intuitive apprehension through states of affairs, though they can be exhibited by them. Ingarden bases his argument on the analogy occurring between real objects and intentional objects with regard to their sensory and quasi-sensory apprehension respectively. During the perception of a real object we experience extrapersonal, but not objectively given, aspects of this object, which are not the object itself, although the latter appears in them. The perceived object does not change due to the act of perception, although it is perceived in a continuous manifold of changing aspects. For example, the perceived red sphere is spherical, but its aspects do not contain "sphericity"; we perceive it as a "red disk" with reference to sphericity only. Similarly, a circular steering wheel appears to us in various elliptical forms depending on the angle from which we perceive it (Ingarden 1973a: 258). In the process of perceiving an object the aspects keep changing:

Aspects that we experience in the course of the experience of one and the same thing change in various ways, and something which in a previous aspect appeared only in the form of an unfulfilled quality is present in a later one in the form of a fulfilled quality, and vice versa. (Ingarden 1973a: 260—61).

By analogy, the objects in the literary work appear to us in a variety of "semi-sensory" or internal (i. e., referring to mentality) schematized aspects. Because they are not perceived by any one psyche, but instead are rooted and have their potential existence in the states of affairs or represented objects projected by meaning units, they are "schematized": they are

predetermined schemata of aspects [which] are always being completed and filled out as one reads by various details which actually do not belong to them and which the reader draws from the contents of other, formerly experienced concrete aspects [...] it is impossible for the reader to actualize with complete precision the same aspects that the author wanted to designate through the structure of the work (Ingarden 1973a: 264—65).

The aspects held in readiness which, according to Ingarden, make up a stratum within the literary work, must possess certain unique characteristics and must be differentiated from those aspects which the objects only may *possibly* have:

Speaking purely theoretically, to the represented objects 'belong' all those schematized aspects in which these objects may generally be given. But then this 'belonging' signifies only a *coordination*, arising on the basis of a strict predetermination, between *possible* schematized aspects and corresponding represented objectivities (Ingarden 1973a: 265).

For such "coordinated" only aspects to be actualized other factors are necessary, factors which lie beyond the represented objects. Some of these factors, Ingarden says, can be evoked by the properties of the work itself, while others

inhere in the psychic individual who experiences the work, and who is thus indispensable for the concretization and actualization of the aspects. If a literary work is constructed in such a way that it contains, in at least some of its parts, factors of the former type, the aspects

though they are not yet actualized (since an experiencing individual is still indispensable for this), are, so to speak, prepared for this actualization, so that they are forced upon the reader in the event of a reading. We are saying that here the schematized aspects are not merely coordinated to the represented objectivities but at the same time 'held in readiness' [...]. Schematized aspects that are held in readiness pass from the state of more possibility, in which they find themselves by virtue of a simple coordination with represented objectivities, into a mode of a certain actuality, which, however, is not the actuality of a concretely experienced aspect, nor is it simple potentiality. (Ingarden 1973a: 265—66).

The conception of schematized aspect as a separate stratum of the literary work arouses some doubts. At this point Ingarden's theory, otherwise objectively seeking to extract the *fundamental* structure of the literary work, irrespective of its artistic level, tends to be evaluative: aspects held in readiness are not aesthetically neutral but, being "suggested by artistic means" (1973a: 269), virtually behave as aesthetically active components of the work. Ingarden acknowledges this fact when he concludes that the stratum of aspects held in readiness "is *de facto* an essential element, whose removal would transform a literary work of art into a mere written work" (1973a: 287). Therefore these aspects, according to Ingarden, are indispensable for the work in order for it to become *a work of art*. This, however, does not mean that they belong to the essential structure of the work *regardless of its value*. Unlike the other strata, which only *may* possess artistic value qualities, Ingarden seems to regard the stratum of aspects as inherently endowed with them (I have discussed this problem in detail in a paper entitled: "An approach to states of affairs in the literary work", delivered at the International Methods of Research and Teaching Conference, Cracow 1978, to appear in a forthcoming publication of the Jagiellonian University of Cracow).

Since for the sake of our analysis we need a model of the literary work which would consist only of essential elements, i. e., a model which in itself would be aesthetically neutral and would only *permit* the presence of artistic value qualities in those elements, we cannot include the stratum of aspects held in readiness in our model, because to do so would spoil its "neutral" character. The schematized aspects held in readiness, though they may certainly "enliven" the represented objects, are not essential for their existence, and therefore do not conform to the organicity of the structure of the work and to the virtual interdependence of its strata which our model presupposes.

As the third stratum of the literary work we shall instead include the stratum of states of affairs. States of affairs appear in the work as the effect of the "projection function" of sentences. The sentence is an intentional unit which points to something different from itself. The intentionality of the sentence is neither nominal, i.e., like the indicative-determining intentionality of the noun, nor

verbal, like the developing intentionality of the verb. What it points to is a "state of affairs", a synthesis of the two kinds of intentionality mentioned above (Ingarden 1973a: 115). Its fundamental structural function within the literary work is that it

creates a sentence correlate, and at the same time also 'coordinates' this correlate to the sentence. In particular, the state of affairs created and developed by the sentence is transcendent with respect to the sentence content yet, according to its essence, belongs to it. In other words, in its existence the state of affairs is essentially relative to the sentence or to its meaning content; it finds its ontic basis in it. Hence, there is no developed state of affairs without a sentence, and there is no sentence without a developed sentence correlate. (Ingarden 1973a: 116).

The characteristics which predispose states of affairs to the position and function of a separate stratum within the literary work are the following:

1. as the effect of the projection function of sentences they are present in any literary work, irrespective of its artistic quality;
2. they are transcendent with regard to the meaning stratum, though they are ontically dependent upon it;
3. they are indispensable for the appearance of the represented objects which are revealed through them: an object is "ensnared" into a net of states of affairs;
4. they are in themselves aesthetically neutral, though they may have their own voice in the polyphony of aesthetic value qualities.

The intentional states of affairs within the literary work make up a stratum which, although belonging to the "objective" level of the work (as opposed to the linguistic level), should be differentiated from the stratum of the represented world. The two strata are strictly connected and reciprocally indispensable to each other, just as the strata of meaning and sound are on the linguistic level. However, as we have said before, to the stratum of states of affairs belong only those states which have been projected by the sentences of the work, and in the order in which they have been projected. The represented world, on the other hand, is a configuration of objects in the broadest sense of the phrase, and includes the relations between them, the changes they undergo, etc., thus reaching far beyond the contents of the states of affairs actually projected by the sum of the sentences of the work. The represented world is a microcosm governed by its own temporal-spacial rules.

The modified Ingardenian model used for the following discussion of indeterminacy consists thus of the following strata: (1) phonetic formations; (2) meaning; (3) states of affairs; (4) represented world.

III

Indeterminacy within the sound stratum results primarily from the opposition between typical sound qualities which, according to Ingarden (1973a) appear in the text as Gestalt characters, and the actual sounding of words. The actual sounding of a word is only a realization (one of the infinite number of possible realizations) of a model-like word-sound. The same word may be pro-

nounced in a variety of manners depending on the idiosyncracies of particular readers. In the work, its sounding is given in a schematic form, each phoneme being the basis upon which the actual acoustic material can be realized. As a schematic phenomenon it possesses spots of indeterminacy, i.e., it is never univocally determined. Yet, though the actual acoustic material may be different in each realization, the basic word-sound quality will always remain the same.

The suprasegmental phonetic phenomena, which arise when words are joined to make longer utterances, open a large field for the appearance of indeterminacy. Each sentence has its inherent melody, pitch, rhythm and tempo, implied not only by its typical segmental material but also by its sense. These phonetic characters of higher rank are never strictly determined by the sound stratum of the work, but are only generally outlined. The reader concretizes an utterance in one of many possible ways. The relation here is, *mutatis mutandis*, an extended relation of a phoneme to its realization in speech.

The second of the linguistic strata of the literary work—the stratum of meaning—constitutes in its material a much more fertile soil for the growth of indeterminacy. Perhaps it should be stressed at this point that what we mean by “material” is only meaning itself, and not the object related to it. The term “meaning” is used in the sense in which it is used in *The literary work of art* (1973a): it is carried by word-sounds, has its own internal properties, and constitutes a foundation for derived intentional objects. The reservation seems necessary particularly with regard to fiction, since in the course of reading a novel we usually tend to direct our attention immediately upon what is represented and to pass through the stratum of meaning as through a diaphonous shell. In poetry, the new contexts, the clashes of unusually juxtaposed words, and the peculiarities of syntax more often drive our attention towards the stratum in which they appear.

Indeterminacy within the stratum of meaning has its origin within single words and within semantic phenomena of a higher order. The capacity of a word to convey more than one meaning and to equip those meanings with various overtones has received the scrutiny of critics since the appearance of the already mentioned *Seven types of ambiguity*, wherein Empson writes: “Thus a word may have several distinct meanings; several meanings connected with one another; several meanings which need one another to complete their meaning; or several meanings which unite together so that the word means one relation or one process” (1930: 5). Empson demonstrates these properties of words in practical analyses of literary texts. His work, though inspiring, is, nevertheless excessively blurred by his psychologistic approach and, consequently, by notions such as “the mind of the author”, or divisions into “logical psychological degrees” of ambiguity. Under the heading of “ambiguity” used with reference to a word in isolation, Empson seems to include phenomena of diverse kinds: both those occurring on the sound-meaning axis and those which are dependent on the properties of the word meaning itself. In our discussion, for the sake of clarity, we shall limit the scope of the term, and use it to refer to the property

of a typical word sound character which allows it to carry more than one meaning [for example (ha:t) as "heart" and "hart"]. Ambiguity of this kind may be a source of indeterminacy within the literary work; it must be differentiated, however, from certain properties which internally belong to the word meaning, irrespective of its relation to the sound which functions as its carrier.

In order to single out the elements of the word which give rise to indeterminacy within the meaning stratum we shall follow the analysis of the word meaning carried out by Ingarden in *The literary work*. The so called function words (e. g., of, in, to, and, but) are not taken into consideration since their significance in the text is mainly syntactic. Ingarden (1973a) distinguishes five elements of nominal meaning: 1. the intentional directional factor (the degree of particularity of the word meaning); 2. the material content (which defines the qualitative constitution of the object intended); 3. the formal content; 4. the moment of existential characterization, and 5. the moment of existential position. Verbal meaning differs from nominal meaning in that it does not possess the intentional directional factor (1973a: 63—84).

The element most relevant to the problem of indeterminacy is the material content of the word meaning, the element responsible for the qualitative constitution of the intentional object. Due to the different type of intentionality involved, the material content of nominal meaning differs from the material content of verbal meaning. In the case of nominal meaning we are confronted with a static "objectification" of certain properties, which is to say that the intentional object is "'statically filled' with qualitative moments through the material content" (Ingarden 1973a: 78). A thing, a property, a state, or an activity (in the case of gerunds) is projected "as something *completed* and *existing in its completion*" (Ingarden 1973a: 77). Verbal meanings, on the other hand, do not have such a "static" feature-bearing subject: an activity is developed dynamically—it is unfolded "in the character of pure happening, it is represented without being conceived as something... This 'unfolding in pure happening' is the essential function of the finite verb" (Ingarden 1973a: 80).

Irrespective of the kind of intentionality involved, whether nominal or verbal, the material content of the word meaning does not qualify its intentional correlate in a manner that is fully and completely determined. According to Ingarden, the material content of the word contains moments of two kinds: constant and variable. This means that the intentional correlate is fully qualified only in certain respects. The variable moment is a source of indeterminacy on the level of isolated words, since it allows changeability of particular qualitative moments within the general range delineated by the material content. Ingarden exemplifies the difference between the constant and the variable moments, using the material content of the word "coloured" (referring to some coloured thing). The constant moment of the material content qualifies the object as being "of a colour"—in this respect the intentional object is univocally determined. The variable moment, on the other hand, allows the object to be "of any colour" (or any mixture of colours). In other words, the material content, due to its

variable moment, does not specify the qualities "lower" than "being coloured", and hence allows all kinds of individual concretizations within the limits superimposed by the constant moment. The ratio of the constant to the variable within the material content of the word meaning varies, according to the degree of the word's particularity. The variable moment in the material content of the word "red" will allow *any* shade of redness within the limits of the quality of "being red": the possibility of variation is evidently smaller than in the case of "coloured".

Independently of the constant and variable moments of the material content, certain words may possess what Ingarden calls "actual" and "potential" stocks of meaning:

Each word meaning of a *noncompound* nominal expression which in its formal content intends something in *objective* structure is an *actualization* of a *part* of the *ideal* sense that is contained in the concept of the corresponding object, assuming, of course, that such a concept exists. Above all, this actualization creates the material and formal content of the meaning. Each ideal concept has a number of word meanings for the same object. That aspect of the ideal sense of the concept that is actualized in each case creates the *actual stock* of the meaning. On the other hand, that which is still contained in the given concept and ensues directly from the actual stock constitutes the *potential stock* of the given meaning, i. e., that which can also be actualized without the already actual stock of the meaning having to be altered in any way. (Ingarden 1973a: 87—88)

If we accept Ingarden's conception, which requires at least a hypothetical acceptance of what he calls "ideal sense", we may further claim that the phenomenon is not limited only to nominal meanings. The potential stock of a word meaning may to various extents be actualized by the context in which it appears (not only the nearest one); or, even though it is not effectively introduced into the text, it may be "suggested" to the reader by the context. The degree of such suggestability is not determined strictly by the text, and its effectiveness depends to a large extent on readers' personal idiosyncracies. The incompleteness of an actualization of a notion may be thus another indeterminacy—forming factor on the level of isolated words.

The above mentioned properties of word meaning belong to the sphere which we may call "denotation", though in doing so we are using the term in a specific sense as referring to the relation of a word to its intentional correlate. Within the literary work those properties of isolated words are subject to modifications under the influence of the context, and their indeterminacy—forming potentiality is reduced. The ambiguity of a polysemic word, as we understand it here, is usually completely eliminated, unless it is purposefully retained and performs an artistic or structural function (e.g., in puns). The variable component of the material content of the word meaning is to a varying extent reduced by its semantic environment: by delimitation of the neighbouring context or by its relation to appropriate semantic units in any place of the work. The elimination of the variables is usually greater in the case of nominal meanings, which are more elusive if considered in isolation. The material content of a verb denotes the type of activity (or state, transition etc.) only in a general manner, leaving

a wide margin for a particular mode of executing this activity. If in the case of nominal material content the reduction of the variable component does not necessarily have to take place, in the case of the material content of a verb appearing in a sentence context it *must* occur. Of course, the degree of reduction of the variable component of word meaning will vary in a multitude of ways, yet it can never be eliminated completely. Indeterminacy within the meaning stratum is thus a complex phenomenon dependent on the one hand on the properties of words and on the other on their semantic interrelations within higher meaning units.

The other semantic sphere connected both with individual words and with higher units of meaning, *connotation*, on the other hand, is not, or is only slightly diminished by the word's appearing in a context, and may occasionally be transposed upon this context (we realize the inadequacy of the denotation/connotation dichotomy, yet it still can be helpful in our discussion). Connotation is an ambiguous term, and we are using it here only to refer to the associative and emotive moment which, though "accompanying" the word, does not strictly belong to its meaning (in the sense in which Ingarden uses the term "meaning"; see Ingarden 1973b: 24—25). The connotative capability of words and of larger meaning units is fundamental as an indeterminacy-forming factor. The variety of plausible actualizations of the connotative moment is much greater than in the case of denotation, since it chiefly depends on the individual background and personality of the reader. Empson unknowingly provides us with a good example of how the connotative moment is actualized and how it may differ from what the word actually denotes. In the following passage he discusses the word "fall" in "Brightness falls from the air", a line from Nash's "Summer's last will and testament":

Evidently there are a variety of things the line may be about. The sun and moon pass under the earth after their period of shining, and there are stars falling at odd times; Icarus and the prey of hawks, having soared upwards towards heaven, *fall* exhausted or dead; the glittering turning thing the sixteenth century put on top of a building may have *fallen* too often. In another sense, hawks, lightning, and meteorites *fall* flashing from heaven upon their prey. Taking *brightness* as abstract, not as meaning something bright, it is a benefit that light *falls*, diffusely reflected, from the sky. In so far as the sky is brighter from the earth (especially at twilight) brightness is natural to it; in so far as the earth may be bright when the clouds are dark, *brightness falls* from the sky when there is a threat of thunder. (Empson 1947: 26).

This particular type of connotation depends on subjective associations or the reader's (Empson's in this particular case) susceptibility to "suggestions" or "implications" in the text. Connotation, however, may also be of a more intersubjective nature, when a word is capable of bringing to mind objects or notions common to a specific culture or a sub-culture; it may, for example, refer the reader to archetypes, symbols, myths, commonly known literary phenomena and patterns, etc.

Indeterminacy within sentence complexes within the meaning stratum of the literary work may arise not only on purely semantic, but also on syntactic

grounds (though again the dichotomy is by no means simple). Ingarden refers to this problem in terms of "structural features" which may be responsible for the "clarity" or "obscurity" of sentences. "Clarity" and "obscurity" as terms are as relative and vague as the phenomenon itself. However, although the criteria of judgement of whether the syntactic relations are "clear" or "unclear" depend on the subjective attitudes and abilities of readers, one has to agree with Ingarden (1973a: 212) that "'clarity' (or obscurity) is a character of the *sentence* itself, in whose structure it has its ontic foundation". Due to certain individual characteristics of the structure, the meaning of the sentence may become indeterminate, or its inherent indeterminacy resulting from the previously discussed properties of sense units may be reinforced.

Indeterminacy within the stratum of meaning is to a large extent decisive with respect to indeterminacy within the two "objective" strata (states of affairs and represented objects), a phenomenon which is due to the structural organicity of the literary work and to the special ontic function that the stratum of meaning performs. Since an intentional state of affairs is a direct product of the sense of a sentence, indeterminacy within the meaning stratum must of necessity be reflected within the stratum of states of affairs. On the other hand, if compared to a real state of affairs which we can fully apprehend through our senses, an intentional one, unfolded by the meaning of a sentence, though it pretends to be "real", cannot be completely determined due to the fact that the "informative" capacity of a sense unit is virtually limited. The reader is given only a skeleton of data which, moreover, are themselves not completely determined for the reasons discussed above (variables, connotation etc.). A state of affairs within the literary work is therefore indeterminate with regard both to the number of data and their cognitive content. The indeterminacy increases if the sentence projecting the state is either semantically ambiguous or lacks structural clarity. In the latter case it introduces a certain amount of disorder into the state of affairs; in the former, it produces a polymorphous or, as Ingarden says (1973a: 142-43), "opalescent" state.

Ingarden directly refers only to what he calls "ambiguous sentences"; however, his statement is, *mutatis mutandis*, relevant to any sentence within the literary work, since all sentences are to some extent indeterminate due to the properties of their components, and thus liable to different interpretations. The stratum of states of affairs, therefore, inherits its indeterminacy from the stratum of meaning to which it is ontically and "informatively" indebted.

Since the stratum of states of affairs performs, within the literary work, the function of constituting and representing the objects, indeterminacy within that stratum is reflected within the objects (or, more exactly, in that sphere of an object which the state actually presents). Indirectly, this indeterminacy also reaches back to the stratum of meaning and to the properties of the meaning units which, via the states of affairs, determine those objects. However, if the objects were intentionally projected only by sentences, i.e., if they appeared only in a definite number of completed states of affairs, the number of their

determinations would also have to be finite, since the "completion of each state of affairs leads . . . to the constitution of an absolute determination of the object of the subject (of the sentence), or of the objectivities partaking in the given state of affairs" (Ingarden 1973a: 248). Indeterminacy, then, would have its source only in the properties of word meaning discussed above. However — as Ingarden observes (1973a: 246—54), represented objects have what he calls "spots of indeterminacy" due to the fact that they are projected within the literary work in a twofold manner: by sentences and by nominal expressions. A real individual object, according to Ingarden, is unequivocally and universally (i.e., in every respect) determined, and all its determinations jointly constitute a primary concrete unity. In contrast to this, the intentional object appertaining to a simple nominal expression "is projected explicitly and actually with respect to its material make up only in *one* moment of its constitutive nature" (1973a: 248). However, since "by virtue of their formal content, nominal expressions project their objects as primary units", the form of a nominally projected object is "the form of a primary concrete unit which potentially contains an infinite manifold of essence determinations" (Ingarden 1973a: 248). For instance, in the case of the nominal expression "man", an intentional object is materially determined as such (i. e., as "man"), yet all its innumerable properties are not unequivocally determined, though they are co-intended. Thus, as emerges from Ingarden's discussion, in the case of a represented object, "only a formal schema of infinitely many spots of determinacy is projected, but almost all remain unfilled". (1973a: 250). It should also be noted that the indeterminacy of a represented object must lend itself, peripherally at least, to the state of affairs in which that object appears, since it constitutes an "element" of this state.

In his discussion of spots of indeterminacy Ingarden considers represented objects taken, as it were, "in isolation". Apart from the properties of intentional objects discussed above, an important source of indeterminacy within the represented reality is the net of relations into which objects enter among themselves. Since only some of those relations are directly indicated and others only ensue from a specific (relatively determined) arrangement of objects, there remains a sphere of the represented world (as a dynamic configuration of objects organized according to its own temporal-special principles) which is merely more or less vaguely suggested, and thus liable to different "readings" or "interpretations".

The specific properties of particular strata discussed so far which lead up to the appearance of indeterminacy constitute an inevitable characteristic of the literary work, and ensue from its specific mode of existence and its essential structure. For that reason, indeterminacy arising from those properties is also an inherent quality of the work and is thus artistically neutral. This could be, roughly speaking, related to what Umberto Eco (1962) calls openness of the first degree. However, indeterminacy within the literary work may arise from a number of different factors which the properties discussed above do not exhaust: it may be a result not of the specific inherent structure of the literary work, but of a conscious artistic procedure which can effect indeterminacy as

an artistic value quality. Then it may serve as a quality cooperating with others within the work to achieve some artistic end, or it may even be an end in itself. Viewed from such an angle, indeterminacy within each stratum may be generally typologized as follows:

- a. inherent, i. e., having its source within the specific mode of existence of the literary work; artistically neutral;
- b. inherent, but manipulated, so that it becomes artistically functional;
- c. imposed, i. e., effected by means of endowing the work with properties which do not essentially belong to its structure.

Indeterminacy of type (a) is of interest only in so far as the ontological model of the literary work is concerned—its differentiation from concretization, for example. Types (b) and (c), if they appear at all, may perform an important artistic function and contribute to the polyphony of the work. However, it is hardly possible to differentiate *a priori* between types (a) and (b) since both types arise on the basis of properties inherently belonging to the work, the functionality of type (b) being determined by its position within the context of other qualities. For example, it may be difficult to state when precisely syntactic unclearness becomes a source of functional indeterminacy (though it evidently does so in some of Faulkner's works). The border between types (a) and (b) may turn out to be indistinct even in specific analyses of particular works. Type (c), on the other hand, depends in specific instances on the individual technique of a writer and is limited only by the nature of the material of particular strata (the stratum of objects allows especially numerous possibilities here). For critical analyses of individual works only types (b) and (c) can be considered as relevant. The brief outline of functional indeterminacy presented below is meant to exemplify its nature within particular strata, and to point to the interdependence of strata in this respect, yet it cannot be exhaustive and all-inclusive, and is not meant to be so: unlike type (a), functional indeterminacy is largely dependent on the inventive and artistic powers of the writer and his ability to subdue the material he creates in. The two types of indeterminacy, however, the neutral and the functional, will be juxtaposed in order to provide a matrix for specific analyses.

The sound stratum is the least liable to contain indeterminacy of the functional type, since it offers relatively little possibility of manipulation. The best known device leading to supersegmental phonetic features acquiring an indeterminate nature is the elimination of punctuation marks, which results in a kind of tension in which several intonational and emphatical patterns struggle for priority, none of them being able to attain preponderance over the others. Such instances are encountered in poetry rather than in prose, if we accept the conventional dichotomy. Similarly, omissions of phrases and words which the context presupposes may lead to a certain suspension of melody and an indeterminate length of interval between separate sound units. Indeterminacy of this kind may achieve various degrees of significance within the literary work, depending contextually on other qualities within the work and on the role that the sound stratum

performs with regard to the other strata: it can only be a means of carrying the meaning, or, alternatively, it may be an important voice in the polyphony.

Due to the essential connection between sound and meaning within the literary work, functional indeterminacy within the sound stratum, being a result of an operation carried out upon linguistic units, will always be reflected within the stratum of meaning and, consequently within the other strata (it should be also noted that the meaning stratum, reversely, restricts to some extent the possible number of intonational patterns, even though punctuation is eliminated). Omissions of words and phrases will result in a certain *hiatus* within the meaning unit, its functionality depending on the contextual importance of the missing, but presupposed element. Elimination of punctuation marks resulting in a multiplicity of possible linear word relations, particularly in non-inflectional languages, is an extreme example of what we have formerly termed, after Ingarden, syntactic obscurity (or syntactic ambiguity). Indeterminacy resulting from syntactic obscurity of a less forcible kind may border upon the neutral type (a). As a functional type it may be deepened or co-created by a phenomenon, typical of texts consisting of more than one sentence, which Ingarden calls a gap between units of sense, particularly sentences (1947: 63). This kind of *hiatus* results from the impossibility of continuing one thought endlessly in one direction, or from the necessity of selecting the semantic material to serve the purpose of the presentation of a given fragment of the represented world (hence it is artistically neutral as an indeterminacy-forming factor); it may, however, be a conscious and purposeful (and hence artistically functional) disruption. Apart from syntactic ambiguity, functional indeterminacy may have its source in the formerly discussed properties of words and meaning units, which may be purposefully exposed by the context. As a peripheral, but very effective means one should also consider case-words and some kinds of coinages (e. g., in Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" or in Joyce's *Finnegans wake*).

Indeterminacy within the meaning stratum, whatever its immediate source, will always be reflected within the stratum of states of affairs due to the ontic connection between the two. The effect of an ambiguous sentence upon its intentional correlate has already been mentioned. However, the stratum of states of affairs may also produce indeterminacy out of its own resources, an indeterminacy which will have its immediate source within the properties of states of affairs, without necessarily being accompanied by functional indeterminacy within the meaning stratum. An important factor in this respect is a certain type of modality of states of affairs.

The notion of the modality of states needs some specification as an indeterminacy-forming factor. Any state of affairs projected by a sentence other than indicative affirmative can be said to bear the feature of modality, but only certain kinds, notably those which, generally speaking, bear the feature PLAUSIBLE, will result in indeterminacy. Let us compare, for example, correlates of three similar sentences which might be used in a literary work:

1. He got here in an ambulance.
2. He must have got here in an ambulance.
3. Perhaps he got here in an ambulance.

The essence of each of the states projected by those sentences is "getting here in an ambulance", but only in the case of sentence (1) is the essence fully realized in the intentional reality of the represented world. In the case of the remaining two sentences the states of affairs are projected, but they are not actually installed in the reality, as if deterred by the specific features with which the meaning of the projecting sentences endowed them. They remain in a kind of suspension: the sentence allows the possibility or possibilities of the state achieving realization, without, however, giving the final—positive or negative—specification. In other words, states of affairs are projected, but they are not brought to full realization within the fictional world, though at the same time their realization in this world is not negated. Indeterminacy arises from the tension between the equal probability of both realization and non-realization.

Indeterminacy of a state of affairs will always be to some extent reflected in the respective object appearing within that state. This has been penetratingly observed by Ingarden (we have to remember, however, that Ingarden does not introduce the notion of indeterminacy as a quality, nor does he differentiate states of affairs as a separate stratum):

It may happen that the duality of the state of affairs does not split the identity of the represented object but rather attributes to it, as it were, two different properties, though in such a way that neither of them definitively pertains to the object but, instead, both simultaneously claim to pertain to it; consequently, neither of them is capable of fully entering with it into the primary unity of existence. From this there stems a certain tension in the object, a state in which equilibrium is destroyed. The object is inclined, so to speak, to possess both properties; but cannot do so, since the properties that are to pertain to it mutually repel and attempt to supplant each other. (1973a 254).

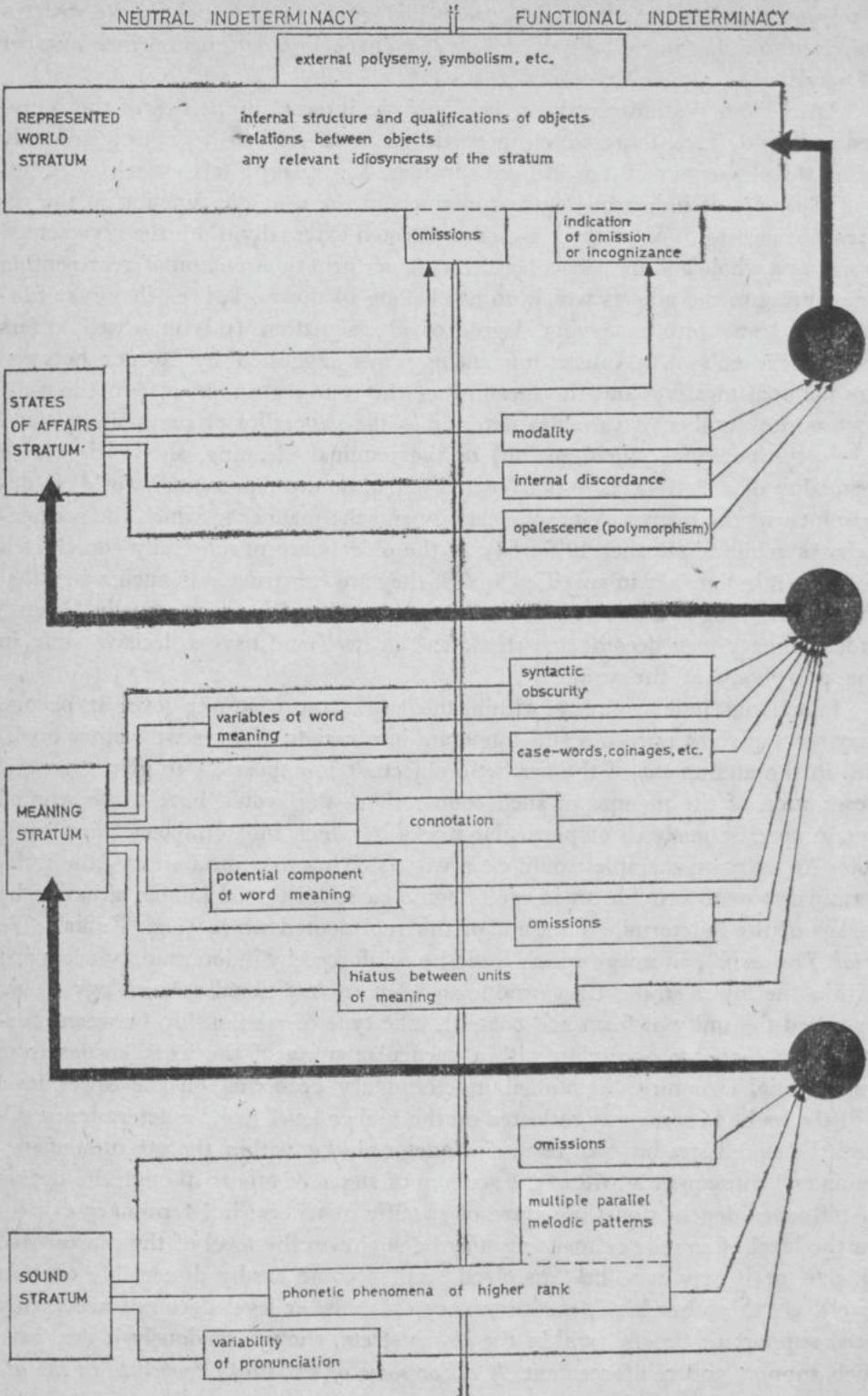
The degree to which functional indeterminacy of the stratum of states of affairs will be reflected within the represented world will naturally depend first of all on the intensity of the former and on the structural importance of the objects represented within the functionally indeterminate states: indeterminacy thus transposed upon the represented world may attain the status of a quality deciding its nature ("opalescent", as Ingarden would say), but it may as well be dissolved within otherwise determined objects, relations and processes.

Naturally, artistically relevant indeterminacy may be achieved without functionally indeterminate states of affairs. The distinction which must be kept in mind at this point is that between *what there is not* in the work and gives rise to indeterminacy, and *what there is* and acts to the same effect. In the case of the former, certain elements, properties or features of objects, relations between them, effects of processes and processes themselves, which the internal logic of the work implies, may be hidden from the reader either by omission or by indication of nescience (e. g., narrator's). In the case of the latter, certain objects, relations etc. may be purposefully introduced into the represented world in such

a manner that those of their properties which could be essential for the structural clarity of that world bear the token of equivocality, or function in a number of ways.

Apart from the indeterminacy arising from internal properties of the represented world (i. e., those which in particular instances can be investigated only when the elements of the world are considered in relation to themselves), a potential source of indeterminacy is contained in the semiotic function of the represented world, i. e., in the properties directed externally. Both the represented world as a whole and its particular elements perform the function of representing or pointing to the objects which do not belong to the work, i. e., they may function as signs with a varying degree of plurisignation (this approach differs from Ingarden's). An interesting analogy was suggested by Rosner between the nominal meaning and the meaning of the represented objects: in the same way as the number of variables determines the generality or particularity (and hence the potential plurisignation) of the nominal meaning, so the degree of generality of a sign (i. e., a represented object or the represented world) is determined by the degree of its schematicity and the manner in which the schematicity is achieved (Rosner 1977: 64). If the objects are purposefully constructed as polysemic signs or, in specific cases, if they are constructed in such a way that their functioning as signs is made more important than what they actually "mean", indeterminacy may become an artistic end in itself and have a decisive voice in the polyphony of the work.

Functional indeterminacy within the work, on whatever level it occurs, may serve diverse purposes and cooperate in a variety of ways with other qualities in the attainment of the aesthetic object. It is impossible to give a general description of the manner of such cooperation—this would have to be worked out in specific analyses of particular works in which indeterminacy plays some role. An extreme example would be a work striving to communicate „the indeterminate" or to provide an image of some basic existential human situation by means of the indeterminate nature of the represented world (e.g., Kafka's *The trial*, *The castle*), an image which could be reinforced by indeterminacy occurring within the lower strata, thus producing what in traditional terminology would be called the unity of form and content. The type of relationship between indeterminate elements occurring within particular strata of the work ensues from its essential structure: functional indeterminacy occurring on the lower level will always be in some way reflected on the higher level (e.g., indeterminacy within the sound stratum will result in indeterminacy within the stratum of meaning and consequently within the stratum of states of affairs, though the degree of influence depends on the nature of specific instances: indeterminacy evident on the level of sounds or meaning may be slight on the level of the represented objects, or it may even be "dissolved" and become hardly discernible on that level). On the other hand, indeterminacy on a higher level does not necessarily need support or "roots" within the lower strata, though obviously it can have such support and reinforcement. *If all or some of the strata cooperate in the at-*



tainment of indeterminacy, it may in specific instances become a synthetic artistic value quality.

Close by is given a diagram representing the interdependence of indeterminacy within the literary work. The functional type is open: any indeterminacy-forming factor can be added.

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NIEDOOKREŚLONOŚĆ W DZIELE LITERACKIM

STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł zajmuje się niedookreślonością w dziele literackim. Niedookreśloność rozumiana jest jako syntetyczna jakość występująca w dziele w sposób nieunikniony jako rezultat jego specyficznego tworzywa lub mogąca pojawić się w nim dzięki świadomym działaniom autora. Analiza przeprowadzona została w oparciu o zmodyfikowany ingardenowski model dzieła literackiego i Ingardenowi zawdzięcza w przeważającej mierze aparat terminologiczny. Rozróżnia się trzy rodzaje niedookreśloności: inherentną, mającą źródło w samej ontycznej charakterystyce dzieła (artystycznie neutralną), inherentną, ale wykorzystaną i manipulowaną przez autora (artystycznie funkcjonalną) oraz narzuconą (artystycznie funkcjonalną). Załączony diagram ilustruje zależności pomiędzy poszczególnymi warstwami dzieła w powstawaniu niedookreśloności zarówno neutralnej jak i funkcjonalnej artystycznie.