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## Intuitionism in Contemporary Polish Ethics. Part II. Elzenberg – Ingarden – Wojtyła – Styczeń – Przełęcki

The first part discusses the developmental motif of axiological and ethical intuitionism in Polish philosophy in the era of modernism and the Lviv-Warsaw School, including an insight into the works of Julian Ochorowicz, Edward Abramowski, Stanisław Brzozowski, Florian Znaniecki, Kazimierz Twardowski, Władysław Tatarkiewicz, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, and Tadeusz Czeżowski. No argument can be found there that would demonstrate the meta-ethical (meta-axiological) evolution of intuitionism, but rather the multiplicity of sources and types of recognizing intuition as a basis for identifying and justifying moral judgements and ethical judgements. An overview of the positions discussed there suggested an attempt to build a typology of ethical intuitionism in accordance with epistemological (Empiricism – Rationalism), cognitive (Intellectualism – Emotionalism), objective (Value – Deontology) criteria. This part will also present the variety and multifacetedness of more or less closely connected traces of intuitive cognition in ethics, but also in-depth attempts to explain it. We will focus on selected important philosophers of the areas of value and morality, whose works are outside the mainstream of the Lviv-Warsaw School, although they sometimes correspond to it. Last but not least, in an attempt to form a conclusion, we will return briefly to one of the last philosophers of value and ethics who worked within the methodological paradigm of this school.

## Intuitionism in the Axiology and Ethics of Henryk Elzenberg (1887–1967)

Educated in the circle of French philosophy of value and literature, Henryk Elzenberg, after his studies and doctorate in France (1909), where he sat in on lectures by H. Bergson, obtained his post-doctoral degree on the ethics of Marcus Aurelius in Kraków in 1921. He did not belong to any philosophical group – he was an individualist, critical of those philosophers of the Lviv-Warsaw School who abused formalism, who imposed the requirement of unambiguity on the description of experience, which was by no means unambiguous in his opinion. He himself was an excellent analyst of experience in the broad sense of the term, striving for verbal precision in his descriptions, tracking down errors in attempts to explain values and justify ethical obligations. It was precisely his broad understanding of experience, which encompassed a rich world of values, combined with analytical criticism, that brought him closer to Czeżowski on many issues when he took up lectures at Stephan Bathory University in Vilnius, and later when he took up the Chair of Philosophy at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń alongside Czeżowski in autumn 1945. In the following years intuitionism in ethics continued to hold a strong position on the map of Polish philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

The core of Elzenberg's philosophical research was the world of values. He had extensive knowledge of history and contemporary axiological philosophy and ethics. In axiology, he distinguished between its formal and substantive types. He treated the former as a theory of value that seeks an answer to the question of what value is, and the latter – as an answer to the question of what is a value and what it appertains to. It was formal axiology, i.e. value theory, that caused him the greatest problems. However, he was trying to find a conceptual apparatus and theories that would be better suited to experience the world of values. The attempts that he made slightly advanced our knowledge of the meanders and limits of rational value penetration. Numerous doubts, the overcoming of which exceeded the limits of rational analysis, led him to mysticism.

Axiology in Elzenberg's philosophy is born out of a need for meaning, and is linked to the question of the meaning of life. Here is how he explained it: "The need for meaning is the driving force of axiology.

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<sup>1</sup> A full and multidimensional picture of Henryk Elzenberg's philosophy is contained in Włodzimierz Tyburski's monograph, *Elzenberg* (Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna, 2006).

Value creates meaning, gives meaning, meaning derives from value".<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere he argued that meaning should be understood as "an axiological justification for the existence of something".<sup>3</sup> The search for meaning rather than its creation in the world was a task that Elzenberg set for himself, because it is values that determine the meaning of the world and the meaning of living in it, so as not to be deceived by the chaos of experiences, to avoid misrecognitions, and not to be overcome by doubt. Yet the overall perspective of his philosophy of value and ethics will be dominated by pessimism, which might be overcome by saving one's own moral value in perfecting oneself. It is understandable that in this context he called ethics "the science of being valiant towards being".<sup>4</sup> Over time, it became the most important challenge for his inquisitive mind and his will to deal with the meaninglessness of the world.

In matters of value, reason is not enough and ethics cannot follow only the paths of logic. He believed that reason and its tools can and must be used as widely as possible in axiology and ethics, bearing in mind that they do not lead to absolute knowledge. Here reason appears as a tool for deciphering the hidden mystery of value, for revealing the unrecognized, as an organiser of the procedures of discourse and the binding of values into the system, yet reason without the intuition of values, without capturing and experiencing them, is able to create purely formal structures, as it does elsewhere. His persistent exploration of the subject in time became known as the 'religion of values'.

So what is value? The term value is not unambiguous to Elzenberg. In his fundamental short text *Pojęcie wartości perfekcyjnej* (The concept of perfect value) (1935), which was later incorporated into a collection of selected treatises, he made a distinction between the concept of 'utilitarian value', which describes a wide and complex world of objects of human desires and needs, and the concept of 'perfect value', which is 'more important', 'more momentous', 'more elevated', deserving the name 'value' in the full sense of the word. The latter is characterized by absoluteness in a twofold manner: first, it means that they are not relative, that is to say, their worthiness is not linked to human needs, desires and the related choices; secondly, perfect value is a sufficient basis to justify the obligation of its embodiment. He wrote: "Judgements of perfect value [...] constitute an absolutely sufficient justification for the judgements stating that 'it should be so and so' that 'it is how it should be'. A given perfect value, whether or not it can be embodied, should

<sup>2</sup> Henryk Elzenberg, *Aksjologiczne pojęcie sensu* (5 I 1942), in: idem, *Z filozofii kultury. Pisma*, vol. 1, ed. Michał Woroniecki (Kraków: Znak, 1991), 345.

<sup>3</sup> Idem, "Czy tak zwany sens może być życiu nadany?", in: idem, *Z filozofii kultury. Pisma*, vol. 1, 378.

<sup>4</sup> Idem, *Kłopot z istnieniem. Aforyzmy w porządku czasu* (Kraków: Znak, 1963), 143.

in principle be embodied".<sup>5</sup> This is a reference to the understanding of values in neo-Kantian philosophy as marked by the obligation to exist (*seinsollen*). The perfect value is the ultimate value as opposed to utilitarian derived values.

Elzenberg further reflected on this issue, which can be found in his rich archival legacy. The research and editions of these materials showed the philosopher's reflections on the world of values and gave an impulse for their interpretation. The most important of these seems to be the reflection that relates to his lectures in Toruń from 1946/1947, that value is the relation of compliance between the state of things as it should be and the state of facts.<sup>6</sup> Value is not a feature here, but a fact, a state of possessing a feature that a given object should possess. Value is, and let us stress it, the state of possessing a feature that should be possessed by an object. It is puzzling that he called a 'should-be' feature a 'value-creating' or 'value-giving' feature, which is also a value criterion. "It is not a value", he wrote, "nor does it have a value, but it is something supreme, something that value itself comes from. It is, if you can name it, the only 'thing' that (is) 'exists' for itself. It is the only thing of which one can say that it 'should be' – but conditionally, if something exists. (This is a natural feature that can be pointed out)".<sup>7</sup> There were some vague terms that also appeared in Elzenberg's lectures – 'overvalue' and 'hypervalue', which, in the light of interpretation, were supposed to mean that property of a value-creating (positive) feature deserving that it should be, deserving to be pursued, something that stands above value, something close "to the sphere of the Undefined?".<sup>8</sup> Things became complicated, and so Elzenberg abandoned his deliberations for some time, but they reappeared in the last archival records.

Let us, for now, have a more realistic view of rooting values in what they appertain to. The value of an object is conditioned here by the possession of this natural feature which, in the empirical perspective, is, from the axiological point of view, the supreme (ultimate) state for its occurrence. Value is therefore something that cannot be reduced to the description of the natural world, a state of equivalence between an

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<sup>5</sup> Idem, *Wartość i człowiek. Rozprawy z humanistyki i filozofii* (Toruń: Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, 1966), 11.

<sup>6</sup> More in: Bogusław Wolniewicz, "Myśl Elzenberga", *Studia Filozoficzne* 12 (1986): 61 et seq.

<sup>7</sup> I am quoting an archival material titled *Konstrukcja pojęcia wartości* (The construction of the concept of value) from: Lesław Hostyński, *Układacz tablic wartości* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 1999), 51.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Andrzej Lorczyk, "O nadwartości, powinności i sensie. Prolegomena rekonstrukcji późnej aksjologii Elzenberga", in: *Człowiek wobec wartości w filozofii Henryka Elzenberga*, ed. Andrzej Lorczyk, Ryszard Wiśniewski, Robert Zaborowski (Warszawa: Stakroos, 1988), 114.

obligation, given in experiencing value, and the possession of a value-creating feature by an object. The definition of value therefore involves the issues of the ontology of value that are difficult to describe, but the ontological structure of value-creating features cannot be dealt with here. The subject of the deliberations undertaken in this article leads to the question of Elzenberg's theory of value cognition. It is unquestionably intuitional. In an intriguing text entitled *Nauka i barbarzyństwo* (Science and barbarity) (1930), he wrote the following about values: "They are not given *a priori*; on the contrary, in some broad sense, they could be called empirical; based on a contact with a thing that states it is such and such, good or bad, beautiful or ugly. [...] Values are not determined through senses or through introspection. In order to define them, there is nothing else left but to reach for a term which is unsatisfactory, yet capable of experiencing some kind of orientation, at least approximate, and calling them intuitive. Intuition is at the heart of valuing; to establish and strengthen the foundations of some valuing discipline is to develop intuitions rather than insights or introspective data, even in the main part of the task, nor data *a priori*".<sup>9</sup> This is not only a matter of science, but also of culture. The belief expressed in the journal entitled *Kłopot z istnieniem* (Problem with existence) that "We discover the good in the world as we ourselves become better; ethical improvement is an indispensable condition to break through to a world of value" is not without significance in this context. [...] the personal value of the cognizing entity is the organ of cognizing a world of value".<sup>10</sup>

There can be no doubt that Elzenberg's axiological and ethical philosophy is cognitively embedded in the intuition of values, that individual assessments create a kind of empirical field of open cognition on value. The intuitive source of valuing consciousness is the starting point for reason, which organizes and explains this field of intuition, but also leads to doubts as to whether it enables one to close the path of cognition in a system that gives meaning to the presence of man in the world, or to the world. Here, intuitive cognition from the starting point, under the influence of critical analysis of data and various theoretical doubts, opens up a place for reflection on the unknowability of the world and the helplessness of reason in the face of the fulfilment of the aspiration to know an absolute value, which leads to axiological mysticism, the impossibility of expressing values.

From an analysis of publications and archival materials subjected to very thorough research by Elzenberg, the image that emerges is of a thinker who has come a long and complicated way from the recognition of the cognitive meaning of primary value intuitions in a rational

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<sup>9</sup> Elzenberg, *Wartość i człowiek*, 154.

<sup>10</sup> Idem, *Kłopot z istnieniem*, 270.

process of building ethics, to the feeling of the helplessness of reason in the face of the fundamental issue of the cognitive approach to absolute value. It should be added here that this path was accompanied by deepening pessimism and an attitude of withdrawing from the social world, focusing on oneself in order to experience the undefined from this perspective. Therefore, his philosophical attitude has two periods: the first was axiological, ethical; the second was sceptical, pessimistic, mystical, religious in a non-social sense. This can also be understood as two ways of recognising values, from two perspectives. In the late archival records entitled [*Uwagi na temat Ludwiga Wittgensteina*] [Notes on Ludwig Wittgenstein] of 1965, on the one hand he agrees with Wittgenstein that no representation of a fact implies a judgement of absolute value, that ethics is a matter of value, but he also vaguely declares a far-reaching (scientific) doubt about cognition, defined by the word 'anepistemism'.<sup>11</sup> This should be interpreted as follows: In a dubious cognitive-scientific image of the world we are not given values, but we can commune with them in a quasi-religious intuition saturated with silence, expressing them by our acting ethically and courageously towards being. Intuition is the beginning and the end of communing with absolute values. This brings to mind the association with previous reflections on overvalue and hypervalue as the highest rationale (intuitions?) for the empirical value-creating (positive) traits to have an obligation that having these traits is a value in a perfect, absolute sense.

T. Czeżowski, from the position of a university colleague of Elzenberg, wrote about him posthumously as of an intuitionist in ethics, drawing attention to the empirical starting point that contained an emotional moment, the awareness of possible errors of judgement at this stage, the importance of a rational analysis of the experience of values aimed at building a complete axiology and ethics.<sup>12</sup> But this is the image of Elzenberg from the perspective of the selected texts published during his lifetime. Capturing intuitionism in Elzenberg's ethics turns out to be simple from this point of view, because irrational ethical intuitions are a declared starting point that is subject to a certain degree of rationalization. The full rationalization of what is 'transrational'<sup>13</sup> at the starting point complicates everything. Exploring the essence of values turns out to be a continuously open and unfulfilled task, as well as waiting for the world

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. idem, *Z historii filozofii*, ed. Michał Woroniecki (Kraków: Znak, 1995), 475–479.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Tadeusz Czeżowski, "Henryk Elzenberg jako teoretyk etyki", *Etyka* 4 (1969): 91–112.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Elzenberg, *Kłopot z istnieniem*, 280 – where the author uses the term 'transrationality' to define the irrational moment in cognition. "When we find irrationality (I would say 'transrationality') at the bottom of some decent, rational investigation, it guarantees us that we are dealing with reality".

to improve, in a word, scepticism and pessimism on the borders of cognizing values lead to a completely different intuition, known in religions. Hence the reference, or a turn towards the “sphere of the undefined”. In conclusion, cognition contains a moment of irrationality both in the intuitive starting point, often difficult to articulate, semanticization, as on the horizon of the limits of intellectual cognition of values, in the mystical intuition of pure values, outside the world of being.<sup>14</sup>

## Phenomenological Intuitionism in the Ethics of Roman Ingarden (1893–1970)

Roman Ingarden also struggled with the issue of value, and he was convinced that recognizing data in experiencing values is the key to understanding morality and shaping ethics. He began his reflections on intuition at an early stage, under the influence of Bergson, and he raised doubts about its understanding in his diary of 1911.<sup>15</sup> He came into closer contact with Bergson’s philosophy in his work on his doctorate, which he defended in Freiburg in 1917 under the supervision of Edmund Husserl (*Intuition und Intellekt bei Henri Bergson*, 1921; *Intuition and intellect in Henry Bergson*, 1963), in which he critically analysed his anti-intellectualistic concept of intuition. Inspired by the phenomenology of his teacher, he had no doubt that direct cognition allows cognitive access to the external world and its forms, but it lacks the absolute in the starting point. It is the intellect that analyses the data of the intuition. Intu-

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Henryk Elzenberg i mistyka*, ed. Jan Andrzej Kłoczowski (Kraków: Znak, 1990). Elzenberg’s inspirations were pursued by Krzysztof Stachewicz, *Milczenie wobec dobra i zła. W stronę etyki sygetycznej i apofatycznej* (Towards a Sygetic and Apophatic Ethics) (Poznań: Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2012), where he analyses the inexpressibility and silence of experiences at the level of specific moral intuition as well as in a metaphysical perspective.

<sup>15</sup> Quote from: Radosław Kuliniak, Mariusz Pandura, “*Jestem filozofem świata*” (*Κόσμον φιλόσοφος εἰμι*). *Roman Witold Ingarden (1893–1970). Część pierwsza: lata 1893–1938* (Kęty: Wydawnictwo Marek Derewiecki, 2019), 98 – where we read: “[...] intuition in its present state, i.e. in a state in which it has not yet developed any extralogical strong means of expression, would be a factor = 0 in our spiritual life, because providing no translation of intuitive content by means of logical symbols to the content presented through thinking – we would not have this intermediary between our intuition and our thinking. Well, I do not really care that something is captured in intuition, if I cannot express it, I cannot understand it. Although it cannot be denied that this expression is never sensual, that all my digressions are almost inapplicable against intuition, but as I said above, we do not yet have a recipe for intuitive cognition, we do not have a method for it, so for the time being we still have to limit ourselves to a logical construction and try to improve the intuitive method and put our method away at the same time”.

ition is intentional, there is no intuition without its object. It is the world of experience, the forms of what is given, the content of experience, the way in which the object of experience exists, that have captured Ingarden's research passion. However, over time he took a different path from Husserl, who transferred his research interests to the a priori structures of the necessary relations between ideas revealed in eidetic cognition. Unlike Husserl and, in ethical terms, unlike Scheler, he rejected idealism, trying to understand the manner in which that what experience reveals exists.<sup>16</sup> However, we must leave aside the intricate issues of *Spór o istnienie świata* (1947–1974) (Dispute about the Existence of the World) and other key works on epistemology by Ingarden, in which he sought his own path in the current of phenomenological philosophy in order to focus on understanding the role of intuition in his ethics and philosophy of moral values. There is also no place here to discuss in detail the contexts of general axiology, especially aesthetics, which is forced by the concise comparative perspective we have adopted here.

The basic concept of the theory of the cognition of values, and in particular the moral values which are of interest for us here, is the experience of values, their direct emotional and volitional experience, intuition. In the dissertation (paper) *Czego nie wiemy o wartościach* (1964/1965) (What We do not know about values), he uses the term intuition in a sense corresponding to direct acts, first-hand, primary data, oriented in terms of cognition to the quality of the object, to what cognitively determines the object. According to him: "we have this peculiar quality in our intuition, which we really want to explain. [...] it is not certain whether the underlying intuitive contact with an object (a given quality) is a reliable intuition that reliably instructs us about what is given in it".<sup>17</sup> Elsewhere, he pointed out that the obstacles to a clear intuitive capturing of the quality of an object have inaccuracies in the concepts with which we express them or a confusion of values (when, for moral reasons, we deprecate the aesthetic value of something).<sup>18</sup> What is essential is that the

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Andrzej Póltawski, "Czy Roman Ingarden był fenomenologiem?", *Acta Universitatis Lodzensis, Folia Philosophica* 22 (2009): 10 – where we read: "I think that this doubt was due to the understanding of phenomenology, not as what the representatives of this movement claim, nor how someone managed to describe their experience, but as a fully responsible philosophy, a philosophy that practises full criticism and *actually* builds its concepts on the basis of unwavering phenomena – does justice to the world. This, on the other hand, is an asymptotic goal of pursuing, and not something we can fully achieve. But it requires an effort to realize the starting point of our entire conscious life, including all knowledge and teachings, namely the entire world of human experience – and a careful effort to philosophize on the basis of that full experience".

<sup>17</sup> Roman Ingarden, "Czego nie wiemy o wartościach", in: idem, *Dzieła filozoficzne. Studia z estetyki*, vol. 3 (Warszawa: PWN, 1970), 224.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, 252.



moral intuitions contained in experience have undoubtedly a cognitive-practical heuristic value, and that they are a source of insight into the experience directed towards something that obviously absorbs our feelings and generates reflection on its object and attitude, in the face of what the experience introduces into our consciousness. Ingarden first spoke about the experience of values as a way of capturing them in cognitive terms (at the starting point), especially moral values, in *Lectures on ethics* (1931/1932, 1937/1938, 1961/1962), but he did so with a sense of ambiguity of cognition and the difficulties that the study of values encounters. In an unauthorized edition of *Lectures* we read: "In our immediate experience, there is a sense of something special about values which is not sufficiently explained and which we temporarily interpret with a word that is supposed to tell us something more. Nicolai Hartmann speaks of *Geltung des Wertes* [...]. One might say that every value has a certain 'significance' (not: 'importance'), its 'gravity', its 'momentousness'. This word is not made up, because it represents some obscure intuition that we have when we deal with values and which demands explanation".<sup>19</sup> This 'obscure intuition' introduces us to the world of values of something (traits, qualities, relationships, things), whenever we experience acts of justice, honesty, nobility *in concreto*, or experience harm, humiliation, etc. The awareness of the prevailing good or evil that moves our emotions and will confronts us with the need to respond to it, but also to explain what is being experienced, how and why.

In the basic texts of Ingarden's philosophy of values (general axiology), such as *Remarks on the Relativity of Values* (1947) and *What we do not know about values* (1964/1965), it is not difficult to see the lack of an appropriate, separate theoretical problematization of the way values are cognized.<sup>20</sup> This lack is also addressed by Ingarden towards the end of his Kraków lectures on ethics in the words: "a certain lack [...] in the field of research on the ways of cognizing values has yet to be established. This is a whole section of the theory of cognition in which there

<sup>19</sup> Idem, *Wykłady z etyki*, ed. Adam Węgrzecki (Warszawa: PWN, 1989), 333–334.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Krzysztof Stachewicz, *Człowiek i jego ethos. Studia – szkice – polemiki z antropologii filozoficznej* (Poznań: Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2011) – where the author, in the text *Dwie teorie poznawania wartości: Tadeusz Czeżowski – Roman Ingarden*, explicitly states: "The problem of cognizing values has not been systematically investigated by Ingarden anywhere" (p. 360). Cf. also Maria Gołaszewska, "Romana Ingardena filozofia moralności" (Roman Ingarden's philosophy of morality), *Etyka* 9 (1971) – among the problems through which she captures Ingarden's views on morality, she finds no issue for the theory of cognizing moral values. Also, Waldemar Kmieciowski, *Etyka między doświadczeniem a ontologią. Krąpiec – Ingarden – Czeżowski* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Warszawskiej Prowincji Karmelitów Bosych, 2013) – who carries out a reconstruction of cognitive relation of experience to the ontology of values in Ingarden using the general characteristics of phenomenological theory of cognition.

are some primitive attempts to delineate certain facts that would come into play here, as well as controversial, opposing views".<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, there is also a sketch of possible research paths, according to which out of three attempts to describe the manner of cognizing values: sensualistic (through the senses), intellectualistic (through understanding and *a priori* judgement), emotionalistic (through the feelings they evoke) – the sensualistic and emotionalistic assume some kind of experience, and the intellectualistic excludes it. But to what extent and on what kind of experience the manner of cognizing values is based, according to Ingarden, may depend on the kind of value. It is clear that he was against a naturalistic reduction in value with regard to what is available through the senses, but also against a reduction in value with regard to emotion, which would undermine the objective intentionality of value. However, emotionality in experience arouses reactions in the form of 'responding to values' (from D. Hildebrand). There is a recognition of the value contained in the response to it (*Wertantwort*), which is added to the experience also in a direct act, as we read: "this emotional response may also lead to a certain mental crystallization, to understanding, to a judgement, but not to an evaluating judgement. [...] Evaluation, assessment, is undoubtedly a cognitive act in itself, an act granting value to something".<sup>22</sup> The process of thought created on the basis of experiencing value and the emotional and volitional reaction to it are, if we understand Ingarden well, a sphere of theoretical judgements. The complexity of the issues is summarized as follows: "Well, I would like to distinguish between the experience of values, response to values, evaluation and theoretical judgements about values. If we were to carry out this distinction as a preliminary one, we would simply delineate the path for further reflections on the subject, and we would have a chance to explain something about this very dark area of cognizing values".<sup>23</sup>

The experience of moral values and the associated experience of obligation are acts of direct cognition, they are intuitive. On the other hand, evaluations and theoretical judgements of value in the context of *Lectures* are statements that result from cognitive reflection, intellectual work on what is given directly; they are rooted in intuition, but are not intuitive. To be more precise, evaluations are sentences which state that certain individual objects have such and such value. As sentences, they seem to be qualifiable, logical, justifiable. Issuing an evaluation requires both knowledge of the object of the evaluation and the experiencing of the value that provides knowledge about the qualities that are carriers

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<sup>21</sup> Roman Ingarden, *Wykłady z etyki*, ed. Adam Węgrzecki (Warszawa: PWN, 1989), 346.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, 349.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*.

of value, i.e. the criteria of value. In *Lectures* we read: “Well, the evaluation of a certain individual case or class of cases is only true if it is based on some experience. A blind person cannot talk about colours, nor about a painting, nor about abstract painting, because this must be seen. In the same way, someone who evaluates someone’s actions must, firstly, know them in order to be able to apply the evaluation criteria, and secondly, they must not only understand what good and evil, honest and dishonest mean, [...] but must also have the conviction that, what has been achieved in the given case is what he or she understands to be good or evil. If this has not been done, then they have no right to make a positive evaluation, and by making it they make a false, completely unjustified evaluation”.<sup>24</sup> Evaluations are, therefore, sentences mediated in both experience-based axiological cognition and factual knowledge of specific structures of reality, on the basis of which values are realized. Hence the fundamental statement: “The condition not only for the truthfulness or falsity of the evaluations, but also for making them, is the *modus existentiae* of values, the fact that one actually comes across something like that in reality, and by evaluating it – connects with that reality”.<sup>25</sup>

In intuitionism of the empirical type, as opposed to the *a priori* model of cognition (where fundamental judgements of value are certainties, accepted *a priori*), there is a need to clarify the fact and the object, which would defend the objectivity of experience against the accusation of subjectivity. Czeżowski sketched out the metaphysical theory of transcendentals, treating values as *modi entis*. Elzenberg conducted research into formal axiology to answer the question of what value is. Ingarden asks about the *modus existentiae* of values to the same end. In ethics, he focused on the issue of value theory, distinguishing between two fundamentally different questions; the first is of a theoretical nature and aims to explain what values are, the second is to indicate moral values, to indicate “[...] what is good, what objects have, or can have, moral values or a value ‘good’ in a moral sense”.<sup>26</sup> A little further on, he puts it in the following words: “As far as the fundamental issue is concerned, it has two quite distinct aspects. It can be a formal issue, or, when the second aspect is taken into account, a material, content issue”.<sup>27</sup> This approach does not mean that the experience of values would not be possible without the theory of these values, but that it would be incomprehensible from the perspective of ethics as a normative discipline and would not provide a rationale for applied ethics. Indeed, in the starting point, in genetic order, the experience of values precedes value theory, but in theoretical

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<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, 164–165.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, 165.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, 128.

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, 129.

order, it needs clarification.<sup>28</sup> It would seem that the research findings outlined by Ingarden in the field of continuous analytical penetration of experience indicate that theoretical ethics with its core in the form of value theory is not a futile occupation from a practical point of view.

In order to address the problems of value theory, Ingarden tries to analyse the ambiguity in understanding values from the perspective of the relativity attributed to them, he traces back the manifestation of their absoluteness, specifically to moral values, but also asks about relationships with other values, including relationships between absolute values. However, the main problem of value theory seems to be his view of the dispute between objectivity and axiological subjectivity. Ingarden rejects both the extremely intentional subjectivity and, objectivity, which ignores subjective conditions of cognition, whether in an ideal or purely naturalistic form. In *Lectures* he draws attention to the shortcomings in value theory and confesses: "It is difficult to answer the question of which of these two options is right. As far as I am concerned, I think that both are false, yet I cannot justify it. Values are neither real, in the sense in which the current flowing through the wire is real, [...] nor are they merely intentional equivalents of our feelings, desires, thoughts or judgements. We would have to look for some kind of indirect way, some different *modus existentiae*".<sup>29</sup> If the values were purely intentional, he continued, it would not be possible to build a "justified theory of morality [...] or any normative ethics".<sup>30</sup> This does not mean that values are completely objective entities, let alone ideal entities, as in Plato, Scheler, or N. Hartmann. However, they are somehow embedded in the objective world of human practical reality, in human behaviour, personal intentions and the effects of human acts. The ontological space for the realization and presentation of moral values is located, in Ingarden's opinion, in the world of quality, phenomena, built over the real entity, in the world of culture, and more precisely in the reality of human behaviour. In his investigations, he wants to "seek ways and means [...] to obtain a sound basis for the legitimate recognition of values as objective determinations of a particular kind".<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The following observation does not testify to it: "an ethic which seeks to establish certain moral norms must have theoretical ethics as its basis, as a justification for these norms and not other norms, must have a theory of moral values, not only some general theory of categories of moral values, but must know the categories of the various moral values and different relationships between them (of dependence, superiority, inferiority, etc.), and must have a further theoretical element, i.e. evaluation criteria". *Ibidem*, 165–166.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, 337.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, 338.

<sup>31</sup> *Idem*, *Czego nie wiemy o wartościach*, 220.

This is evidenced by the considerations contained in the short paper *Remarks Concerning the Relativity of Values* (1947), which consists mainly of questions about the sense of relativity of values (especially aesthetic, vital, or utilitarian ones), but among them also those concerning moral values. Ingarden lists the following dilemmas here: 1. Is a value an illusion of the subject, or quite the contrary, is it effectively embedded in the object? 2. Does value change depending on the relationship in which the object is entangled, or quite the contrary, is it an absolute, unchanging qualification of the objects? 3. Is the value of a directly given object a 'relational' quality, in the sense that it is valuable for some other object, or quite the contrary, is it not conditioned by any such value-creating reference and is an absolute quality. 4. Is the value appearing in an object, or underlying an object, clearly determined in its existence by its relationship with another object, or quite the contrary, is its existence and qualitative traits determined only by the properties of its object? 5. Here the question is more complex, but it boils down to whether the existence or manner of existence of values depends on the existence or manner of existence of other objects, or quite the contrary, is the existence of values the same as the object which possesses it, real or more perfect than the existence of real (absolute) things? 6. Is the value of an object cognizable by any subject, or quite the contrary, is its availability and cognition possible only for subjects specially gifted for this purpose? According to Ingarden, the answer to these questions should be given separately to particular types of values. While vital values seem to be relational, aesthetic, non-relational, the problem is to determine the status of moral values. Here, however, he considers the first dilemma to be the most pressing issue, which puts us in a position to argue about the illusory nature of values, which would be supported by the historical and cultural variability of moral assessments. Ingarden is convinced that more detailed research into the way in which values exist and the question of their relationality or non-relationality would make it possible to go beyond these assumptions.<sup>32</sup>

Attempts to explore the way in which values exist lead to complicated, yet not always clear issues or ontological descriptions, which Ingarden fails to develop understandably enough. The conceptual apparatus developed in the *Controversy over the existence of the world* seems to be insufficient to describe the way in which values that constitute the logic of the structure of various fields of practical reality exist. When reflecting upon what makes objects worthy or why worthiness belongs to their qualitative traits, he argued that worthiness is the essence of value in the sense that "[...] it is something that is necessary for every value, but itself

<sup>32</sup> Idem, *Uwagi o względności wartości*, in: idem, *Dzieła filozoficzne. Studia z estetyki*, vol. 3, 207–219.

is neither a form, nor matter, it is not a manner in which value exists, although it entails a difference between the form of value and the form of the object, which is not value itself. It also entails a particular modification of the way values exist".<sup>33</sup> It would appear that Ingarden, somewhat similarly to Elzenberg, would distinguish three concepts here: worthiness (in Elzenberg it is 'overvalue' or 'hypervalue'), a value and an object, which is not a value in itself, although it may be a bearer of a value (it may have value-creating characteristics). In principle, however, it is difficult to separate worthiness from value, because worthiness does not exist outside the values, but without it, values would not be what they are. What is the worthiness of value then? Apart from referring to the expressions of values as meaning, significance, importance of objects, their significance, the obligation to exist inscribed in them (*Seinsollen*) which are known in literature – Ingarden calls it 'relevance', something that has *dignitas*, something that carries values beyond the way of existence of their bearers, it is a form for the matter of values.

Thus, in Ingarden's philosophy one cannot accept the cognitive role of intuition in ethics without understanding value, its form, matter, and the manner of its existence, without ontological analysis. Therefore, values do not exist realistically, because it is impossible to reduce them to the world of things, or ideally, because it is impossible to treat them as ideas outside time and space. They are not intentional values either, because it is impossible to reduce them to subjective projections or fictions. They are, in a way, embedded in the real world. We get to know different values in different ways, appropriate to their subjective, ontical, concrete structure. Moral values are a manner of existence, which is theoretically difficult to explain, built over the real personal world, inscribed in its qualities, determinations, but always concretely, in a different manner, namely in a way that we experience a categorical obligation to recognize them, to realise them.<sup>34</sup> Various difficulties contribute to the fact that in the last phase of his creative work Ingarden concentrates on the ontology of the bearer of moral values, on the relation of the subject to the axiologically complex structure of the world of values, on the specificity of moral values in relation to other values, without reference to which morality would not exist (interpersonal relations are, after all, mediated in relations of a factual nature (the sphere of utilitarian values). Formal issues of theoretical ethics are not enough, the ontology of values, deep

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<sup>33</sup> Idem, *Czego nie wiemy o wartościach*, 232.

<sup>34</sup> Attention is drawn to the problematic relationship between the existence of value and the obligation of its existence. K. Stachewicz asks "How can a moral value demand its realization when it does not exist before a moral act, which is the answer to this demand? Cf. Stachewicz, "Problemy etyki z ontologią", in: *Człowiek i jego ethos. Studia – szkice – polemiki z antropologii filozoficznej* (by the same author).

as it may be, does not lead to a fuller understanding of experiencing values if material ethics is not taken into account. However, its result is that the conviction of objective importance of experiencing moral values is strengthened.

The relational concept of solving the dispute about the way values exist, formulated in theoretical research, corresponds to the anthropological-ontological insight into the space of the realization of values, which was included in the *Little Book about Man* (1972), in a volume containing, among other things, the Polish translation of *Über die Verantwortung. Ihre ontischen Fundamente* (1970). Ingarden enters here into the issue of the subjective, personal, foundation of morality. He also pays more attention to the objective field of experience, to the reality that affects man. In order to understand the permanence of experience, especially the experience of values, the key issue of the subjective foundation of morality is time (*Man and time*). Leaving aside the various concepts of time, let us note that the experience of values is not ephemeral, it is not just a moment, but it leaves a trace, it accumulates in the integrated identity of the human being, and therefore it can be accessible at any time. "Both the past and the future are therefore fundamentally different in their modes of existence from something real in some 'now', but it cannot be said that both do not exist at all",<sup>35</sup> the condition for cognizing moral values turns out to be, in the light of the treatise *Man and time*, mentioned and also contained therein, man that is conscious, experiencing and accumulating experiences of himself and the outside world, preserving its personal identity as if in spite of the passage of time, free in a determined world, which is contrasted with values (their experience), accepting at least a certain degree of their objectivity, recognising their call for responsibility. Man lives in a world that is subject to the laws of causality, but he is free if, in the field of determinism, he is able to oppose his personal self-determination, being guided by the call for responsibility that comes from recognizing values and objectively establishing them. Man experiences himself in a world to which he is constantly subjected; he experiences his own values, self-preservation over time, and confirms the objectivity of values with his actions, in acts of responsibility. This is a brief presentation of the essence of Ingarden's path to cognition and explaining the value contained in his last work.

In response to the question of whether the explanation of how values exist justifies their evaluation, we are inclined to take the position that a multi-faceted description of the existence and functioning of values in practical reality (understood in terms of relationality) creates a cognitive condition for justifying the veracity of evaluations. Values are forms

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<sup>35</sup> Roman Ingarden, *Książeczka o człowieku* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1972), 179.

built over the world of things, their states and characteristics, they are aspects of existence, entities, they simply *are*, and we know it because we experience them. Whether this experience is falsified or somehow adequate, we find it in the evaluations mediated in the theoretical knowledge about the manner of existence and value structures in the world to which they somehow relate. Man, as a subject that learns and realizes values, is part of this world. The cognitive wheel closes and continues to spin, our moral intuitions can be perfected or disintegrate as we strive for it. This seems to be the lesson of intuitionism in Ingarden.

## Intuitionism in the Ethics of Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005)

Contemporary Christian ethics in Poland is indelibly grounded in Thomism, in which it was common to refer to man's moral experience, but this was not the dominant motif, as in the whole tradition of the Aristotelian ethics. Karol Wojtyła – and it is his ethics from before his election as Pope that we will briefly address here – in the mid-1950s, in his post-doctoral thesis, directed his ethical interests towards the phenomenological ethics of Max Scheler, his material ethics of values and criticism of formalism in Kant's ethics.<sup>36</sup> He posed the question: "can we try to interpret Christian ethics with Scheler's system and to what extent?"<sup>37</sup> Although he formulated there an accusation that the German phenomenologist had narrowed down the content of moral experience, the idea of an emotional intuition of values appealed to him. At the same time, thanks to this research, he discovered the personalistic nature of ethics, which is important for Christian ethics. Wojtyła accused Scheler of ignoring the fact that man experiences good and evil in the acts of his own doing, that he experiences himself as the doer of acts, which allows him to separate ethics from the philosophy of being, and to suspend it in an ontological vacuum. Phenomenology in his critical perspective stands in the way of a comprehensive and objective view of morality, but on the other hand it teaches the analysis of moral experience.

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<sup>36</sup> The subject of his postdoctoral examination in 1953 was a dissertation entitled *Próba opracowania etyki chrześcijańskiej według systemu Maxa Schelera* (An attempt to develop Christian ethics according to the system of Max Scheler), published in Lublin in 1959 under the title *Ocena możliwości budowy etyki chrześcijańskiej przy założeniach systemu Maxa Schelera* (Evaluating the possibilities of building Christian ethics under the system of Max Scheler).

<sup>37</sup> I am quoting the edition of the dissertation contained in the volume: Karol Wojtyła, *Człowiek i moralność. II Zagadnienie podmiotu moralności*, ed. Tadeusz Styczeń, Jerzy W. Gałkowski, Adam Rodziński, Andrzej Szostek (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 1991), 32.



Therefore, ethics as a philosophical discipline has an experiential foundation, whereas as a theological discipline it draws on Revelation. In its philosophical output, he held on to this distinction consistently. He wrote: "Ethics as a moral philosophy is to serve as a 'complete' explanation of this reality, which is morality. Parallel and analogous to ethics, moral theology is the 'complete' explanation of that reality, which is morality, in the light of the teaching of that reality in the sources of Revelation".<sup>38</sup> The task of ethics, then, is to seek an adequate description and understanding of the experience of morality, and then to seek the rooting of morality in anthropology and metaphysics. Experience is therefore the starting point of ethics, but anthropology and metaphysics are its explanation, and in the background there is the justifying power of Revelation. All of Wojtyła's later work would somehow develop within the confrontation of the ethical thought of Thomas Aquinas and Scheler, but to some extent it would correspond to the inquiries by Roman Ingarden.

The capacity of will is actualized in the deeds of man. He wrote: "Every conscious action of man is the actualization of his rational nature and therefore constitutes some kind of perfection of the human being. If this action corresponds to the truth about the good cognized by man (*bonum sub ratione veri*), then it represents the moral improvement of being. Otherwise it contributes to moral evil – the entire rational human being devalues and deteriorates in it".<sup>39</sup>

The essence of morality lies, according to Wojtyła, in acts of will. Man experiences his own will, tension of will, effort, self-determination. Will is revealed in the experience of the personal causality of an act, which leads to the ethics of responsibility, because the awareness that one is the cause of one's own actions is a necessary psychological basis for experiencing ethical responsibility for those actions. "For it is this experience on which ethics is based, that indicates, says Wojtyła, that a person who experiences himself as the cause of relevant acts simultaneously experiences himself as the subject of ethical values, moral good or evil".<sup>40</sup> Man consciously strives for the good that improves him, and in this striving, moral value is embedded. Man is not only the subject of experiences, man is a real entity. The ethical idea of perfectionism, rooted in Thomism, influences the cognitive-practical attitude of man towards values.

Also embedded in the historical perspective is Wojtyła's criticism of extreme emotionalism in experiencing values and duties based on

<sup>38</sup> Karol Wojtyła, "Etyka a teologia moralna", *Znak* 19, 9 (1967): 1078.

<sup>39</sup> Wojtyła, *Człowiek i moralność*, 207.

<sup>40</sup> Idem, "Zagadnienie woli w analizie aktu etycznego", in: *Człowiek i moralność. II Zagadnienie podmiotu moralności*, 189.

the example of David Hume, which allows reason to be treated instrumentally. On the other hand, Immanuel Kant's extreme rationalism is subjected to criticism – he rejects a radically empirical starting point in ethics.<sup>41</sup> Such a critical reflection on the sources of moral cognition allows Wojtyła to prepare the ground for the theory of morality, but this happens parallel to the development of Wojtyła's fundamental philosophical ideas contained in his book *Osoba i czyn* (1969) (The acting person). In this work, a more precise dissection is made of the role of experiencing the process of self-determination of man (person) in his deeds. The cognitive and ontological conditions of human self-fulfilment are discussed. The empirical foundation is strongly outlined, alongside the intellectual nature of ethics. He wrote: "every human experience is also an understanding of what I experience. It seems that such a position is opposed to phenomenalism – but it is appropriate for phenomenology which, above all, emphasizes the unity of the act of human cognition. Such a perspective is also of key importance for the study of the person and the act. We take the position that an act is a special moment of viewing, or experiencing, a person".<sup>42</sup> However, let us leave this work aside and move on to the analysis of theories of cognition in ethics.

The starting point for ethics is moral experience, but at the same time it is important here to distinguish between 'the experience of morality' and 'moral experience' (which is also found in Dietrich von Hildebrand). The former values experience. The latter captures morality as a fact of experiencing one's own morality, the perpetration of a deed and its value. In short: The experience of morality is the essence of moral experience. Wojtyła explained it as follows: "[...] the meaning of the term 'experience of morality' is, in relation to moral experience, both deepening and clarifying. This has serious consequences for the whole concept of ethics, which is not only a science of moral facts, but as a science of morality it has its own homogenous rooting in experience".<sup>43</sup> The experience of morality is linked to the experience of man as a subject of morality; as an ethical experience, it is in fact an experience of the obligation of the act and the moral value of the deed, its good and its evil. The issue of experiencing morality is connected with the act of conscience, the question of responsibility and happiness. Taking the ethics of the experience of morality as a starting point autonomizes ethics at the

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. Idem, "O kierowniczej lub służebnej roli rozumu w etyce. Na tle poglądów Tomasza z Akwinu, Hume'a i Kanta", in: idem, *Człowiek i moralność. II Zagadnienie podmiotu moralności*.

<sup>42</sup> Karol Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn* (Kraków: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1969), 13.

<sup>43</sup> Idem, "Problem doświadczenia w etyce", *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 17, 2 (1969): 18.

starting point.<sup>44</sup> Here, too, the question of the nature of moral experience, described in the history of ethics as a 'moral sense', or 'sense of morality' or 'moral feeling', is important. "A feeling, an emotional experience [...] – he wrote – has a kind of a guiding meaning for capturing the very specificity of morality. [...] It can be said that moral values have been 'indicated' in the emotional sphere. It could also be said that they are 'indicated' by the wide range of emotions associated with it. However, the mere inclusion of these values, and thus the very fact of arriving at morality in its own specificity, remains a matter of some kind of mental reflection".<sup>45</sup>

The experience must be adequately captured, described, and understood, but it must also be explained anthropologically, ontologically, thoroughly. This is an issue of morality theory. We cannot stop at describing the content of moral experience, we need a philosophical explanation of the fact of experience, and the fact that particular content is given in the experience. Ethics must therefore refer to the ontology of human being, to the structure and nature of reality in which morality exists as a fact and as a normative content.

From the very beginning, Wojtyła lays the emphasis on the normative character of ethics. When studying Scheler, attention is drawn to the issue of values, but also to the weakness of focusing on the problem of value. In his philosophy of morality, which analyses the content of the experience of morality, he shows the relationship between the experience of obligation and value. The norms are a reflection of axiological reality, the truth about this reality, and they guard this truth. Therefore, we cannot attribute negativism to norms, or a restrictive function towards aspirations. Norms transform the axiologically established human obligation into real, concrete recommendations of conscience.

In the early 1970s, Cardinal Wojtyła worked on a book on ethics together with Father Tadeusz Styczeń, extending the research presented in *The acting person*, analysing what had been only briefly mentioned there.<sup>46</sup> The starting point for the considerations was to be the experience of morality, the interpretation of morality as an empirical and problematic field of ethics. In this field, man was to be shown as a conscious entity, discovering the axiological reality contained in becoming a good or bad person through his actions. Next, the formal aspect of ethics was to be considered, which is incorporated in the understanding of ethics

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. idem, "Problem teorii moralności", in: *W nurcie zagadnień posoborowych*, ed. Bohdan Bejze, vol. 3 (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sióstr Loretanek, 1969), 226.

<sup>45</sup> Idem, "Problem doświadczenia w etyce", *Roczniki Filozoficzne* 17, 2 (1969): 23–24.

<sup>46</sup> See Karol Wojtyła, *Człowiek w polu odpowiedzialności*, ed. Andrzej Szostek (Rzym–Lublin: Instytut Jana Pawła II KUL, 1991).

as a normative discipline, with the underlying experience of obligations that leads to capturing the ‘norm of morality’, the principle of action, through which a person becomes good. The ethical norm, which is rooted in the experience of morality, turns out to be “the principle of being a good person [...] and doing good deeds”.<sup>47</sup> The final part was to be devoted to linking the norm as the core of an axiological reality, revealed by the consciousness of the acting person, with a deeper understanding of the content of the norm and relating it to ultimate reasons. This is a return to the initial question of ethics: “What is morally good and what is evil, and why?”. Searching for answers to this question gives ethics a deeply philosophical dimension. Wojtyła is convinced that every moral norm has a hidden theoretical dimension which must be revealed and explained. Ethics as a normative science does not so much create norms as recognize them, organize them in the light of the truth about the human being. In other words, ethics is the understanding and interpretation of the morality given in experience, the systematization of norms revealed in experience and their reductive justification. And here, instead of the traditional derivation of norms from metaphysics, Wojtyła proposes to reduce them to the ontological dimension, and at the same time to verify them in the ontological dimension. The axiological and ontological dimensions complement each other here: there is no gap between being and obligation, because ‘obligation’ is inscribed in the structures of human being.

## Intuitionism in the Ethics of Tadeusz Styczeń (1931–2010)

Fr. Tadeusz Styczeń was Cardinal Wojtyła’s student and, later on, his closest partner in research.<sup>48</sup> The post-doctoral dissertation entitled *Problem możliwości etyki jako empirycznie uprawomocnionej i ogólnie ważnej teorii moralności. Studium metaetyczne* (Lublin 1972) (The problem of the possibility of ethics as an empirically empowered and generally valid theory of morality. The study of meta-ethics), of which Wojtyła was a reviewer, seems to have been the peak achievement of Styczeń’s ethical

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<sup>47</sup> Ibidem, 60.

<sup>48</sup> Fr. T. Styczeń obtained his Master’s degree, doctorate, and post-doctoral degree in ethics at the Catholic University of Lublin. Cardinal K. Wojtyła was the supervisor of his Master’s and Ph.D. thesis and a reviewer of his post-doctoral thesis. The Master’s thesis was on the Concept of virtue in Mikołaj Hartmann (*Koncepcja cnoty u Mikołaja Hartmanna*), whereas the Ph.D. on the possibility of scientific ethics in John Locke (*Możliwość etyki naukowej u Johna Locke’a*, 1963). Both works were published in: Tadeusz Styczeń, *Dzieła zebrane. 1. Metaetyka. Nowa rzecz czy nowe słowo*, ed. Andrzej Szostek MIC (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Instytut Jana Pawła II KUL, 2011).

work. Although his further work on ethics and meta-ethics is very wide and interesting, it develops around the assumptions and research results of his post-doctoral thesis. Styczeń explored and developed the process of the methodological reorientation of ethics at the Catholic University of Lublin leading to the legitimacy of the empirical starting point in moral cognition. In his ethical legacy, Styczeń developed K. Wojtyła's basic research findings. There are some analogies to Ingarden's research, but also, interestingly, he showed an understanding of the 'independent' ethics practised by some thinkers of the Lviv-Warsaw School, independent 'empirical' ethics (T. Czeżowski), and 'independent' ethics (T. Kotarbinski). Styczeń and his collaborators confronted their research with the most important meta-ethical trends in Europe. Based on the Thomistic foundations of ethics and the constructive criticism of phenomenological and independent ethics, the methodological orientation of ethics at the Catholic University of Lublin underwent a change in the circles of Wojtyła and Styczeń.<sup>49</sup>

A turn towards moral experience, i.e. what was given directly, was intuitively facilitated, as Styczeń claims, by 'living morality', by moral intuitions accumulated in everyday experience, by the language of morality, and by literature, with its descriptions of conflicts of conscience, in which the protagonists take the side of the non-rejectable experience of human dignity. "Moral experience turns out to be [...] too strong a reality for it to miss a place in the general concept of scientific experience".<sup>50</sup>

As with other intuitionists, the content of moral experience requires clarification, in-depth understanding, and then explanation of the fact of morality. The essence of experience is the absolute obligation of affirmation of one person by another. Actually, the *datum morale* boils down to 'I should', and ethics is interested in the general sentences that form the *datum ethicum*. It is therefore necessary to move from 'I should' to

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. Tadeusz Styczeń, "Refleksja metaetyczna na Katolickim Uniwersytecie Lubelskim", *Zeszyty Naukowe KUL* 19, 2 (1976): 62 – where we read: "Although the methodological programme of independent ethics seemed to shake the structure of ethics cultivated at our University, the apologetic attitude was fundamentally alien to us. We never wanted to defend the 'philosophicity' or 'theologicality' of ethics at any cost".

<sup>50</sup> Stanisław Kamiński, Tadeusz Styczeń, "Doświadczalny punkt wyjścia etyki", *Studia Philosophiae Christianae* 4, 2 (1968): 32. This was undoubtedly in line with T. Czeżowski's concept of recognising moral empiricism as the foundation of scientific ethics. The problem, however, is that Styczeń (and not only he) interpreted Czeżowski's concept of ethics as inductive and thus unambitious ethics. In the first part of the article it was pointed out that in Czeżowski's ethics a more important role is played by the scientific method of analytical description, which leads through the axiomatization of experience (the intuitive moment) to the construction of deontological ethics with the structure of a deductive theory to be verified in the field of moral experience.

'one should', which would be unquestionably justified. Here, intuition appears for the second time. It is otherwise well known in science and ethics as an act of axiomatization of the content of experience (formed by the induction or analytical description, eidetic insight), usually called 'universalising intuition'. In the face of the apodictic obligation elevated to the rank of an absolute ethical principle, one should explain why a fact of morality of a given moral content, and not another, occurs. In order to understand and explain this, it is necessary to penetrate comprehensively into the structure of the human being and of the relationship between people, and answer the question of why a person is entitled to be recognized, respected, or loved by another person. Therefore, the path of explanation leads through anthropology and metaphysics, set aside at the starting point, because ethics, in the light of Thomism, requires an ultimate explanation. This is the explanation that Styczeń finds in the justifying Necessary Reason, which is the bridge between ethics and metaphysics, between explanation and justification, between obligation and existence.<sup>51</sup>

Although traditional classical ethics followed Aristotle's ethics and developed moral teleology from the perspective of human deliberate aspirations for good (experience of values), after some time the final metaphysical justification of ethics created a methodological framework of ethics in which experience was taken into account. In the school of Wojtyła and Styczeń, this empirical foundation of ethics was strongly emphasized, bringing ethics closer to man. To be philosophical ethics par excellence, Christian ethics should be independent of anthropological and metaphysical assumptions at the starting point, although without anthropological and metaphysical explanations it cannot be justified, in Styczeń's opinion.

This is not the end of Styczeń's attempt to demonstrate the possibility of empirical and universal ethics, because in the early 1990s he is no longer turning his attention to dignity as a moral reason given in the experience of obligation, but to the problem of truth as a reference point for freedom, 'freedom in truth'. This is again shared with the reflections of Cardinal Wojtyła / John Paul II (cf. *Veritatis Splendor* encyclical). Styczeń who started with the thesis that "each act – and at the same time fact – of cognition is marked by empirical obviousness",<sup>52</sup> focused on the analysis of the act of stating the truth, recognizing in this act

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<sup>51</sup> This point of view is contained mainly in the works in: Tadeusz Styczeń, *Dzieła zebrane. 2. Etyka niezależna*, ed. Kazimierz Krajewski (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Instytut Jana Pawła II KUL, 2012).

<sup>52</sup> Idem, "Etyka jako antropologia normatywna", in: idem, *Dzieła zebrane. 4. Wolność w prawdzie*, ed. Kazimierz Krajewski (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Instytut Jana Pawła II KUL, 2013), 362.

a self-imperative, a self-obligation to be guided by the recognized truth, or otherwise to be denying oneself, annihilating oneself, one's dignity. In the motto to the dissertation *Etyka jako nauka normatywna* (Ethics as a normative science) he wrote: "What I stated myself, I must not deny", and he developed this in order to acknowledge that ethics is a normative anthropology right at the starting point. In the act of cognition, man becomes a witness to the truth he has recognized about himself and the world around him. Fidelity towards the truth about the person becomes the basis for ensuring dignity for the person.<sup>53</sup>

## Moral Intuitions in the Philosophy of Marian Przełęcki (1923–2010)

Marian Przełęcki, a student of T. Kotarbiński and K. Ajdukiewicz dealing with the theory of empirical sciences (*The Logic of Empirical Theories*, London 1969), took interest in moral issues and their epistemological status (*Poza granicami nauki. Z semantyki poznania pozanaukowego*, Warszawa 1996) (Beyond the borders of science. Semantics of non-scientific cognition), and he publicly expressed his moral convictions in the spirit of the dialogue (*Chrześcijaństwo niewierzących*, Warszawa 1989) (Christianity of non-believers). Przełęcki draws attention to his ethical work by consistently combining empiricism with logic in science on the one hand, but also by attempting to treat moral empiricism in an analogous way (in doing which he is similar to T. Czeżowski's intuitionism), and on the other hand, by great, even utopian, respect for the evangelical value of love of neighbour, but also foes (as pointed out by ethicists from the Catholic University of Lublin), while recognising its systemic independence from the Christian religion. His moral intuitionism and the 'call to self-perdition' in another person seem to combine, at the end of the twentieth century, various methodological attempts to embed ethics in the experience of values and obligations, with an ever closer proximity to the ideas of ethical humanism and Christian personalism. All this reasoning necessarily does not guarantee that ethics is justified, because it makes it formally dependent on an apodictic belief in learning the truth.

In this article, we cannot go into the details of Przełęcki's position, but as we move closer to its conclusion, we want to draw attention to the understanding of intuition in ethics after a hundred years of discussion on the methodological soundness of accepting intuition at the root of ethics. The aforementioned broad understanding of empiricism is

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<sup>53</sup> A more comprehensive discussion of the author's works in English: Ryszard Moń, Sylwia Tondel, Jan Krokos, Andrzej Waleszczyński, *Tadeusz Styczeń* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Ignatianum, 2019).

associated with the conviction that moral experience is similar to sensual experience, but is more subjective. In a discussion with Jacek J. Jadacki, he claimed that, taking into account the specificity of the world of morality, this thesis remains valid. "I think that ethical intuition enables us to recognize the moral value of a concrete behaviour, given to us in direct experience. A general principle of altruism would be a generalization of such elementary assessments. Lesser intersubjectivity of moral experience, compared to sensual experience, is manifested, among other things, in the fact that it is more difficult to establish in theory and more difficult to put into practice the conditions which guarantee the credibility of this type of experience".<sup>54</sup>

Taking into account the subsequent output, one can reduce the description of intuitionism in ethics, to which he clearly admitted, to the following theses:

1. Moral intuitions precede reflection on its cognitive status. His intuitions corresponded to the evangelical call to, as he put it, "self-perdition in another person". He was convinced that the Christian principle of love of neighbour was right, but it did not need a religious justification for its legitimacy (after Kotarbiński).
2. Moral intuitions are created in contact with an individual, concrete act, so they are *a posteriori* and have an emotional character, they are revealed in feelings (Kotarbinski, Elzenberg, Ingarden, Wojtyła). Moral assessments embedded in intuitions are intersubjectively transferable.
3. Moral intuitions are deprived of certainty: they may be fallible (intuitions of senses can also be fallible, to a lesser extent though). Fallibility can be limited in the processes of recurrence of intuitions, in the inductive procedure, as well as in the attitude of an impartial observer or in the attitude of reflectively controlling the conditions of making an assessment. One can improve one's assessments.
4. Therefore, ethical principles are the result of induction (inductive intuitionism) and, like any induction, it does not guarantee certainty (subsequent intuitions may weaken it). Induction, or what others (e.g. Styczeń) call cumulative moral experience, is a sign of progress.
5. Ethics is autonomous, it is characterized by a cognitive procedure which is analogous to science, but it does not meet the postulates

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<sup>54</sup> "Fikcje dowolnie bliskie rzeczywistości. Z Marianem Przełęckim rozmawia Jacek Juliusz Jadacki", *Filozofia Nauki* 1, 2–3 (1993): 16.



of science perfectly, although it uses methods of rational ordering and legitimizing beliefs in a world discovered with feelings.<sup>55</sup>

Marian Przełęcki, as a philosopher of science, although he tried to inscribe the cognitive content of ethical intuition into the structure of empirical sciences, claimed that the world of values, given at the very starting point of moral cognition, does not fit into scientific philosophy. Nevertheless, he considered this world of values to be a more important issue for philosophy than the scientifically described world of things. In the aforementioned discussion which summarized his views formed back in the 1980s, he claimed that the philosophy of value is doomed to metaphoricity, describing values (ethical, aesthetic, metaphysical). Literature, or some kind of philosophical works describe it better than scientific philosophy. In an interview with Jadacki he said: "This 'dooming' of philosophy that seeks the meaning of the world to metaphoricity and indirectness is of a factual, not logical, nature. It simply turns out that it is difficult to convey this kind of philosophical ideas in a literal and direct way. This indirectness of the message consists in the fact that a certain valuation of the world is expressed by means of such a description of it, which 'entails' (contains, implies, or suggests). A philosopher builds a certain theory of the world, but in fact he does so in order to respond to this world with regard to valuation. I have tried to describe this relationship between philosophical theory and valuation somehow, but I have to admit that I have not managed to explain much about it".<sup>56</sup> What he did may be likened to Czeżowski's ethics, but his attempts to rethink the methodological status of ethics based on moral experience are not as conclusive as those of Czeżowski. Przełęcki said in a concise form that values are given somehow differently, and although they are rooted in reality, they are fictions from the perspective of describing this reality. They are, however, part of human life and therefore, in a way, are real and objective, but they should be assimilated cognitively inasmuch as we do not renounce rationality.

Marian Przełęcki's ethical and meta-ethical thought is pervaded by an important feature of 20<sup>th</sup> century Polish ethics. Its intuitive starting point and the search, on different methodological paths, for forms of legitimizing the content of moral experience (intuition), which is subject to intellectual clarification, where the attempts to explain the fact that this experience occurred, explaining the theoretical, ontological, or metaphysical with it, were not without significance. Intuitionism, which is

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<sup>55</sup> He articulated these views over the course of his creative years – here we refer mainly to the volume of his works: Marian Przełęcki, *Intuicje moralne* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 2005). See also Anna Jedynak, "Poglądy etyczne Profesora Mariana Przełęckiego", *Etyka* 47 (2013).

<sup>56</sup> *Fikcje dowolnie bliskie rzeczywistości*, 18–19.

in essence anti-naturalistic, in fact did not rule out, although it is complicated and not always convincing, attempts at a naturalistic explanation of the fact of morality, the fact of primitive intuitions, basically characterized by taking an emotional stand for or against what is perceived. It is puzzling that intuitions are understood as being independent of the image of the world, but it was also difficult to reject the cognitive condition of the image of the world for the creation of intuition. One might say that while intuitions were for Polish philosophers the starting point for the inductive justification of ethical principles, and while they were the basis for the axiomatization of ethical systems (universalising intuition) tested successively in the field of experience, it was difficult to reject the question of how it is possible that such content, as that given in the intuitions, exists. The question of how the intuition of value or obligation exists must therefore turn to naturalistic or supranaturalistic explanations. Values somehow exist and indicate the perspective of obligation and responsibility (responding to a call for their recognition or realization).

## Conclusions

Henryk Elzenberg shared Wittgenstein's conviction that the presentation of a fact can never imply an absolute value, but let us note that without a 'presentation of a fact', without a picture of the world, without accepting the fact of the existence of anything and anyhow, the assessment of values would be meaningless, would be irrelevant, and ethical systems would have purely formal significance. Hence the split between the description of the world of facts, the world of things, between what is the content and form of the natural world, and the world of values and norms that inform about the states of obligation or non-obligation, which is perplexing for ethical intuitionism. Values, for an intuitionist who is an anti-naturalist and cognitivist in an axionormative dimension, cannot be derived from the image of the world. What is absolute in value cannot be derived from the image of the world. This situation can be described in terms of cognitive-ethical parallelism, in which the image of the world and the awareness of values create a pair of mutual interactions between irreducible cognitive orders, switching roles or forces of mutual influence. There is an analogy here to Konrad Lorenz's famous thesis that the fin of a fish is a reflection of the structure of water and the wing of a bird – the structure of air. The intuition of value could be understood as a reflection of the structure of the value of being embedded in the real world.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> This analogy has its limitations owing to the incomparable ontological complexity of water or air with the practical reality of morality, but at least it proves

In the main positions of ethical intuitionism briefly presented here, Henryk Elzenberg described and explained the emotional intuitions of values in the language of categories capable of an adequate conveyance of the essence of value, but his efforts led to deep scepticism about the realization of value in the real, social world. Hence the appearance of mystical intuition in later investigations. Roman Ingarden's phenomenological way of cognizing values led from the emotional experience of the values to their theory and studied the form, content and the way values exist, i.e. to the ontology of being rooted in the personal world. Hence the anthropology and ontology of responsibility are an extension of ethics. Karol Wojtyła, in a similar phenomenological mode, starts from the intuitive experience of morality in order to describe the fact of moral experience in the perspective of the analysis of a person and his act, a man who recognizes the good and evil of his actions. Methodologically autonomous ethics at the starting point finds explanation and justification in anthropology. Tadeusz Styczeń develops this motif, and from the experience of obligation, following the need for ultimate clarification inherent in Thomism, he moves on to the anthropology of man as a finite being and the metaphysics of the justifying Necessary Reason, which is the foundation of all existence, that is, both the content and the fact of morality. Finally, Marian Przełęcki recognized the emotional nature of moral intuitions as the cognitive foundation of the world of values. To some extent, he compared ethical cognition with the structure of empirical sciences, but a deeper cognitive penetration of the world of values does not fit in scientific cognition, leading to metaphysical intuitions. However, the existence of values cannot be underestimated. What in the starting point of all the aforementioned thinkers appears as a moral emotion is subjected to intellectual ordering (clarification), induction, and analysis explaining the way values exist (Elzenberg, Ingarden), a moral fact (Wojtyła, Styczeń) which is supposed to strengthen the assertiveness of ethical cognition. Values generally appear in some way in connection with the obligation to recognize them or to realize them, becoming here, more or less as in Ingarden, the basis for formulating an ethic of responsibility, perfectionism, personalistic perfectionism, the affirmation of man, his dignity through freedom in truth, through a 'call to self-perdition'. Thus, in the works of Elzenberg, Ingarden, Wojtyła, Styczeń, and

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that on the higher ontological level the principle of relational adequacy also seems to work. And just as a fish swims without knowing the structure of the water, so man experiences values without any special theory, but man lives in a completely different, higher reality, and the instinct shaped by nature is not enough to create culture. What is needed here is the self-awareness of the presence in the world of values as the intertwining of relations between man and his natural and socio-cultural environment.

Przełęcki we have a full range of similar varieties of intuitive, empirical, emotionalist, and axiological (deontological in Styczeń) ethics.

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## Summary

The article is a continuation of the comparative analysis of intuitionism in contemporary Polish ethics published in volume LXXV no. 3 (2019). It centres around the theoretical and cognitive foundations of ethics of Henryk Elzenberg, Roman Ingarden, Karol Wojtyła, Tadeusz Styczeń and Marian Przełęcki. These thinkers share an empirical starting point in the interpretation of moral cognition as the material for building philosophical ethics. They assume that moral experience is the cognitive basis of ethics, which requires its clarification, ordering and explanation in order to continue to justify it as far as possible. Individual differences between the thinkers lie in the attempts to legitimise the principles of ethics or the ethical ideal. Elzenberg, in his ambitious perfectionist understanding of eth-

ics, falls into a pessimism and meta-empirical (metaphysical) mysticism. Ingarden seeks to explain the experience of moral values in ontology, but his attempts have not gone further than an anthropological turn (towards examining the ontological foundations of responsibility). Wojtyła found an explanation for the experience of morality in anthropology of the person fulfilling himself in action, assuming the metaphysics of the identity of being and value in the background. Styczeń, for the ultimate explanation of the experience of obligation of a person's affirmation indicated the metaphysics of the justifying 'Necessary Reason' to be the basis of a universal ethical norm, and subsequently the anthropology of man and truth. He treats ethics as an empirical science based on moral intuitions, but in an attempt to explain it, he refers to the metaphysics of neighbour. The article demonstrates that basing ethics on moral experience is usually connected with the notion of moral experience that is emotional, and directed objectively to a value connected with the experience of obligation. Although moral intuitions are not apodictic at the starting point (the possibility of error is assumed), but open to the cognitive work of the intellect, at the end of the path of ethical cognition, in a manner that is more or less clear, the analysed thinkers refer to intuition in a different, often universalising, perspective that is anthropological, metaphysical, or mystical.

**Keywords:** moral intuition, ethical intuition, moral experience, experience of values, experience, Henryk Elzenberg, Roman Ingarden, Karol Wojtyła, Tadeusz Styczeń, Marian Przełęcki