

## **“Contiguity” as a process of semiotic lenition in Polish socialist realism art (1949–1953)**

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### **Abstract**

This paper investigates one aspect of the socialist enterprise that was imposed on Eastern Europe starting from 1945: the reflection of Marx’s communist ideology in the art of the period. Socrealism was but a brief episode on the Polish artistic scene, spanning only several years of the apogee of Stalinism (1949–1953). The *raison d’être* of this type of creative output can be circumscribed by two main tenets: (i) utter repudiation of formalism in art and stressing the need of constant vigilance for any traces thereof, and (ii) a conviction of the absolute ideological utilitarianism of art. Our project aims to semiotically inquire into the repercussions of refuting formalism in art and to disambiguate the semiotic mechanisms behind ideologically loaded artistic expression of the period, focusing on the dynamic aspect of semiosis. This will be done using the paradigm of the Tartu-Moscow school of semiotics and tropology in art (Chrzanowska-Kluczevska e.g. 2014). In particular, we will concentrate on the Tartu concepts of entropy, vacuous interlocutor, semiotic transparency and the metaphor-versus-metonymy dyad. The emerging category is contiguity: in Peircean as well as in cognitive terms. The study is informed by materials from the collections of Muzeum Śląska Opolskiego (Museum of Opole Silesia), in particular those presented in the exhibition *Sztuka musi być zrozumiała dla mas* [Art must be comprehensible for the masses] (Opole, Poland 2012, curator: Joanna Filipczyk) in particular paintings and texts, and by material excerpted from selected issues of the art

journal of the period, *Przegląd Artystyczny* [Art Review] from the years 1949–1953. The study shows that the processes underlying this type of output can be classified as semiotic reduction relying on contiguity.

### **Key words**

Communist discourse, contiguity, visual textuality, socrealism, metaphor-metonymy

## **Kategoria „przyległości” jako proces semiotycznego osłabienia na przykładzie polskiej sztuki socrealistycznej (1949–1953)**

### **Abstrakt**

W artykule badamy jeden z aspektów socjalistycznego przedsięwzięcia narzuconego Europie Wschodniej od 1945 roku a mianowicie odbicie komunistycznej ideologii marksistowskiej w sztuce tego okresu. Realizm socjalistyczny (tzw. ‘socrealizm’) był tylko krótkim epizodem na polskiej scenie artystycznej, obejmując zaledwie kilka lat apogeum stalinizmu (1949–1953). *Raison d’être* tego typu twórczości sprowadzało się do dwóch głównych zasad: (i) całkowitego odrzucenia formalizmu w sztuce i podkreślania konieczności nieustannego wypatrywania jego śladów; oraz (ii) przekonania o bezwzględnym ideologicznym utylityzmie sztuki. Nasz projekt ma na celu zbadanie pod kątem semiotycznym rezultatów programu odrzucenia formalizmu w sztuce oraz ujednoznacznienia mechanizmów semiotycznych stojących za naładowaną ideologicznie ekspresją artystyczną tego okresu, skupiając się na dynamicznym aspekcie semiozy. W analizie wykorzystamy paradygmat tartusko-moskiewskiej szkoły semiotyki jak również teorię tropologii w sztuce (Chrzanowska-Kluczevska np. 2014). W szczególności skupimy się na tartuskich koncepcjach entropii, tajemniczego rozmówcy (ang. *vacuous interlocutor*), semiotycznej przezroczystości oraz diadzie metafora / metonimia. Wyłaniającą się kategorią jest przyległość: zarówno w ujęciu Peirce’a, jak i poznawczym. W badaniach wykorzystano materiały ze zbiorów Muzeum Śląska Opolskiego, w szczególności prezentowane na wystawie Sztuka musi być zrozumiała dla mas (Opole, 2012, kurator: Joanna Filipczyk) w szczególności obrazy i teksty, oraz materiał wyekscerpowany z wybranych numerów ówczesnego periodyku artystycznego *Przegląd Artystyczny* z lat 1949–1953. Badanie

pokazuje, że procesy leżące u podstaw tego typu produkcji można sklasyfikować jako redukcję semiotyczną polegającą na przyległości.

### **Słowa kluczowe**

dyskurs komunistyczny, przyległość, tekstowość wizualna, socrealizm, metafora-metonymia

## **1. Prolegomena**

*When you arrive at a fork in the road,  
take it.*

The movement of socialist realism appeared in the USSR as an ideational and propaganda tool of the communist regime, officially proclaimed in 1934 during the Rally of Soviet Writers in Moscow.<sup>1</sup> Soon the style, which took on the name 'socialist realism' (the clipped form in Polish: *socrealizm*), became the only official method of creative activity in the USSR, encompassing all realms of artistic expression. After the end of the Second World War it 'naturally' spread into all the brotherly nations of the Socialist camp (China included).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Some aspects of the issues presented in this paper were presented during international conferences as: 'La trahison des images in Polish socrealist art (1949–1953)' [14th April Conference New Perspectives in English and American Studies. Krakow 20-22 April 2017]; 'Semiotyczne procesy lenicyjne w polskim realizmie socjalistycznym (1949-1953)' [Terium conference XX; Język trzeciego tysiąclecia. Kraków 21-23.03 2018] 'Ekphrastic linkages in Polish Socrealist art' [21–22.06. 2021 Łomża, International Ecolinguistic Conference 2021. Beyond the critical discourse and the crisis discourse towards the expanded science of life processes. 'Contiguity as lenition in Polish socrealist art' [Powsin 08.09–11.09. 2021. Eco-communicology and worldwide crisis: Exploring Lived Experiences of Multitextual Narratives and Multi-voiced Judgements in an Age of Globalization].

<sup>2</sup> The notions 'socialism' and 'communism' appeared centuries before they were fostered by Karl Marx, Friederich Engels and their subsequent followers, already then lacking specified and unanimous semantic content. For the in-depth disambiguation of the differences between the two concepts, as well as their historiography, see e.g. Ładosz 1985. Crucially, as the author points out, even within the Marxist thought, "we are dealing with systematic,

‘Socrealism’ in post-war Poland covers but a few years of the apogee of Stalinism (approximately 1949–1953) at the time, when guided by Marxist ideology, the tenet of a socialist state began to be implemented. In Poland, the introduction of social realism as the only licit method of artistic expression went into effect starting from 1949, the official sealing taking place in September 1949 during the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Fine Artists in Katowice. The tenets were inoculated mainly through meetings of apparatchiks with particular artistic milieus and through punditry in art journals. Manifestations of ‘new art’ were channelled through a variety of nation-wide exhibitions, the trailblazer being *Ogólnopolskie Wystawy Plastyki* ‘Polish nationwide fine arts exhibitions’. There were four of them in total. Most of the works accepted and exhibited during these events were subsequently purchased by the state: the sole benefactor of artworks of the time. The purchased artefacts were then stocked in the central warehouses of the ministry of Art and Culture, from where they were dispatched in batches according to decoration needs. A large share of stock was also given to particular museums.<sup>3</sup>

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intended, not accidental ambiguity of the terms ‘socialism’ and ‘communism’” (Ładosz 1985: 11). In this paper the terms ‘socialism’ and ‘communism’ are applied as elaborated in the canon of Marxist-Leninist ideology and as extracted from the database quotations (see also database for the papers by Haładewicz-Grzelak 2010, 2012). Socialism is thus taken as a form of polity for the future, and at the same time, the imagined reflection of that societal structure as well as the movement that is to implement socialism on the road to communism (cf. also Ładosz 1985: 13). It should be mentioned here that one of the 23 amendments of the constitution from 1956 (The law of 10 February 1976) as amended <http://prawo.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU19760050029/O/D19760029.pdf> added the denomination ‘socialist’ into the official name of the People’s Republic of Poland (Article 1: ‘The People’s Republic of Poland is a socialist state’). We realized that in the western academia the eastern bloc tends to be referred to as ‘communist countries’, however, in any aspect—ideological or pragmatic, there is a full justification to retain the name ‘Socialist block’.

<sup>3</sup> For a general introduction to the pragmatic background of Stalinism in Poland and bibliographical cues, consult e.g. Śliwińska (2006); Włodarczyk (1986); also Haładewicz-Grzelak (2010, 2012) for more references on propaganda in socialist Poland. All section introduction quotes by Lawrence (Yogi) Berra are taken from [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/y/yogi\\_berra.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/y/yogi_berra.html). – the working unofficial title for this paper was also a transposition of Yogi’s dictum: *Half the lies they tell about socrealism aren’t true*. Citations

The philosophy of state orders was succinctly exposed by Włodzimierz Sokorski (one of the leading apologists of the 'new order') during the 5<sup>th</sup> Rally of Polish Fine Arts in 1952 (the Rally followed the second of the Polish nationwide exhibitions):

[1] Let us be frank. The People's State spent 2.1 million zlotys (turning a blind eye to the value), to purchase the paintings from this exhibition alone, and at least one painting was bought from each of the exhibitors. In 1952 the People's State allocated in total 4 million zlotys [for the purchase of artworks]. This was money earned through the toil of the working class. Given these conditions, shouldn't the nation, through their representatives in the form of [art] Union executives, the Committee of evaluations, the jury, as well as representatives of party and union officials, have the right to demand that this money, the hard-earned money of the working class, be spent on paintings that show the struggle of the working class and its labour? *PA*

Another leading activist of the movement and a socrealist painter, admonishing the priority of the first Nationwide exhibition, wrote in a similar vein:

[2] The national exhibition in 1950 will stand out as the first creative mobilization of Polish fine artists, it will be the first wide surge of our artists, embarking on a battle with the backward ideological heritage of the bourgeois' art, undertaking the struggle for restoring full civilian honour to artists, who were in the capitalist regime shoved into the margin of social life. *PA*

The criteria of evaluating submissions to the exhibitions were grounded as follows:

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marked as *PA* in the text were excerpted from selected issues of the nationwide journal *Przegląd Artystyczny* ['Art Review'] from the period 1949–53 (cf. the database description in this section further on). All translations in the paper are mine, M.H.-G. My own translations from non-English originals go in single quotation marks. All photos of the collections of the Museum of Opole Silesia (Muzeum Śląska Opolskiego, henceforth MŚO) reproduced by courtesy of permission, author of the photos: Joanna Filipczyk. Author of the remaining photos and of the graphs: Małgorzata Haładewicz-Grzelak.

[3] The evaluation committee had to exclude from participation works (...) attesting to the straightforward misapprehensions of the criteria of socrealism, as well those works in which the authors did not take the trouble to take into account the basic criteria of the exhibition. The framing criteria of the qualification committee accommodated: raising the current thematic issues, revealing new content to our life and undertaking a quest for new realistic means of representation. *PA*

The 1955 exhibition of young artists in Warsaw's Arsenal *Against War, against Fascism* is usually given as the definite end of Polish socrealism. After this interlude, the socrealist output disappeared from public view and was, with a sense of shame, shelved as 'muzealia'. Until then, however, the Polish artistic milieu had to adapt to ideological pressures.

Włodarczyk (1986) offers a concise and insightful presentation of the conflux of pragmatic and artistic factors that led to the formation of socrealism both in Poland and in the USSR, including such topics as the activity of Peredvizhniki (Передвижники) - a group of opposing Russian realist artists, active since 1870 and formally dissolved in 1923, whose traditions significantly influenced the formation of the principles of socialist realism, the activity of the organization "Proletkult" or the category of "national form" in the 1920s. He points out that the tradition which the socrealist paintings related to, and which was understood as a set of accomplished deeds to take patterns from, stood in evident contradiction to the tradition understood as a properly hierarchized set of norms corresponding to that set. These norms were in socrealism dependent on ideological interpretations (Włodarczyk 1986: 16). The scholar also presents a detailed analysis of the artistic and academic milieu of the period, and inquiries into the nature of 'artistry' of this type of art - its poetics - from a perspective that is superior to the analysed period: the art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As the scholar points out, Polish socrealism, in contrast to the socrealism developing in the USSR, was in fact a multifaceted phenomenon

and it is impossible to trace any common formal denominator for the creative output of the time: there were in fact several various socrealisms depending on the particular group of artists. A very important fact is that a lot of artwork that originated as *socrealism*, and which was approved by the authorities, did not have much in common with 'canonical' socrealist stipulations. For example, the ideological 'rightness' of a painting could be achieved solely by means of a properly formulated title – a blatantly colourist work showing a woman and a girl reading was 'approved' when entitled *The country is reading* (Włodarczyk 1986: 77).

Socrealist painting availed itself of relatively free facture, consisting in thickly applied pigment with a medium-sized brush. As far as artistic space is concerned, Włodarczyk, following Boris Uspensky's work on artistic perspectives, mentions two types of artistic gimmicks being employed to construct it: one is a worm's-eye view, which served to 'monumentalize' protagonists, and another, a conscious deformation of linear perspective, which enhanced and unnaturally brought to the fore the painting of the protagonists of the depicted events.<sup>4</sup> The next feature was forgoing the compositional role of light, which was allotted only the descriptive role. The 'plot' of the majority of socrealist paintings takes place in diffused light, falling from the side of the spectator (Włodarczyk 1986: 17).

In this paper, we offer a semiotic foray into that facet of communism in Eastern Europe, which implied harnessing art to propagate ideology, through the guiding light of the concept of 'contiguity'. The present research is informed by materials and exhibits from the exhibition held at Muzeum Śląska Opolskiego 8.11-10.03.2012 *Sztuka musi być zrozumiała dla mas* [Art must be comprehensible for the masses], the author and custodian of which was Dr Joanna Filipczyk. The study also draws on artefacts from art collections of the Museum of Opolian Silesia

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<sup>4</sup> It could be observed at this point that we have not found in the inspected database of Polish socrealist painting support for the particular importance of the worm's eye perspective.

(Muzeum Śląska Opolskiego). The illustrative material provided is aimed to show the variety of approaches the artists took to official guidelines.<sup>5</sup> on discourse excerpted from selected issues of the nation-wide journal *Przegląd Artystyczny* ['Art Review'] from the period 1949–53 (citations marked as *PA* in the text).<sup>6</sup> The journal was the leading platform relating to art and art history of the period, featuring texts on required artistic formation, ideological pamphlets, letters from and to artists of the Soviet Union and presentations of realist painting, both in retrospective and contemporary, as well as the retrospective presentation of realist art from Poland and other countries of the socialist block. Hence, reading the excerpts provided as illustrative material, it must be constantly borne in mind that they were taken from the trailblazing art journal.

Juxtaposing the analysis of the verbal with the visual texts points to the parallels of the construction of the world through propaganda discourse in the press of the period following assertions by Marcello Danesi on conceptual cohesion: “metaphorized concepts are detectable not only in language, but also in gesture, art, science, and in the other representational codes that make up the ‘signifying order’ of a culture” (Danesi 2001: 134). In this sense, the language of the ‘art propaganda’ is a structural parallel of the ‘mere’ propaganda of the period. However, there is also an extra semiotic dimension of the texts related to art, featuring something additional, which was absent in ‘ordinary’ propaganda discourse: manipulation of the signing

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<sup>5</sup> The nature of the data gathered for this analysis does not give insights into Polish artists’ point of view and attitudes to socrealism. Informal interviews we conducted, however, seem to point out that most of them viewed socrealism as a transitory illness to be quietly allowed to pass. The current study focusses only on the semiotic implications of the first-hand data gathered.

<sup>6</sup> Edited by Helena Krajewska, a socrealist painter herself, and deeply involved in communist ideology already before the World War II. For this analysis, we inspected all issues from the period 1949–1953, however, the database was compiled from the following sample: No 4-9 (1950), No 4-6 (1951), No 4 (1951), 1953 – all issues. In the body of the text, we provide as an illustrative sample some excerpts from that database. Particular points [1-4] are a compilation of thematic threads, usually from several issues.



structure. The subsequent analysis will attempt to disambiguate some dimensions of this procedure.<sup>7</sup>

To apprehend semiotic mechanisms hidden in the seemingly paradoxical and pleonastic phrases excerpted from the database, we have to take into account the fact that they were in fact carefully pre-planned ideological credos. Although a discussion on Marxist philosophy and its impact on humanity with the application in Eastern Europe is beyond the thematic scope of this paper,<sup>8</sup> we might mention in passing that the greatest

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<sup>7</sup> In that, it is a continuation on the project on Stalinist propaganda reported in Haładewicz-Grzelak (2010 and 2012). It might be pointed out that the conclusions arrived at in those previous semiotic studies on Stalinist propaganda were confirmed *de dextre à sénestre* by the present database. All the aspects of the embellishment discourse, dichotomization of endemic microcosm, vilification of the opponent, power percolation, destruction of the phenomenological space and local community identified there also appear with regard to pamphlets on socrealist art (e.g. *American imperialists, Wall street-speculants who perpetrated a bandit aggression on Korea, war instigations who must be harnessed by millions of peace-loving folk*), *dark forces, hysterical shriek of bloody barbarians*, etc. These expressions, reflecting a particular mythopoetic discourse will not be discussed further. It should be emphasized though that communist discourse has always relied on what might be dubbed 'discursive gagging', that is, pre-assuming the epistemic stance where anyone in disagreement with the imposed ideology is straightforwardly called *fascist, kulak, imperialist, war instigator or enemy to peace and equality* (cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak 2012).

<sup>8</sup> See e.g. Solzhenitsyn ([1973] 1974) on political imprisonment during Stalinism. Marcuse (1963) provides an in-depth analysis of subsequent stages and particular varieties of Marxism (as proposed by F. Engels), W. Lenin and Stalin. In the subsequent parts selected quotes from that book will be provided as a support for analytical insights. For example, according to Marcuse, the culminate notion of that ideology is the objective historical coincidence between revolutionary action of the industrial proletariat and the progress of the civilization. As a transitory notion itself, "le révolution prolétarienne abolit, avec la liquidation de toutes les classes, le prolétariat en tant que classe et crée par là un nouvel agent de progress –la communauté d'hommes libres qui organisent leur société en accord avec les possibilités d'une existence humaine pour tous les membres" (Marcuse 1963: 14). After a temporary possible regress, due to the lack of maturity, "la pression révolutionnaire renaîtrait, et le conscience de classes du prolétariat organisé connaîtrait une vigour accrue. Mais, la situation change de tout a tout si, avec ou sans révolution vaincue, l'évolution du capitalisme dans sa maturité fait apparaître dans les nations industrielles avancées une tendance à long terme à la collaboration de classes plutôt que à la lutte de classes, aux divisions nationales et internationales plutôt que' à la solidarité prolétarienne" (Marcuse 1963: 14ff).

danger that Marxism carries, according to Karl Popper, consists in its seemingly scientific historic prediction. Marxism predicted that the era of communism would inevitably come. Logical conclusions ensued: the predestined victory of the social revolution of workers will give rise to a social world where only one class will exist: the class of workers within the New World Order. The correctness of this conclusion, as Popper emphasises, was believed by countless intellectuals: biologists, physicists etc. The conviction was that if the reasoning is correct, then we have an irrefutable duty to do our utmost to promote the coming of socialism so that its inception could occur as peacefully and efficiently as possible (Popper 1993[1962]: 11). Hence there is no need to even think of any rebellion: simply, one should follow along with the flow of things. Needless to say, any possible discord was named 'fascism' or 'imperialism'.

The discussion will evolve as follows. At first, we will sketch the theoretical support for the discussion, then we will focus on the issue of vacuous interlocutors, then we will proceed to enquire into the relations between form and ideology, focusing on the fact that the output of the time was bent on total refutation of the importance of form in art. We will attempt to investigate what is left after the form is denied in terms of semiotic categories. We will also posit that the so-called socialist art is not actually realist: on top of the supposedly realistic depiction it leaks unrealistic content: we propose thus to call the underlying semiotic mechanism the 'mystical mechanics' of socialist art.

The scrutiny of the data indicates that what happened in so-called socialist art on the level of sign mechanics was a multi-layered process of reduction (lenition). Of course, a caveat must be made that there was no uniform formula of Polish socialist art. However, the postulates to be claimed below should be treated as 'guidelines' to which eventually all artistic effort was to be directed, a tendency that was singled out as a blueprint to be constantly upgraded in the foreseen unavoidable and jerky transition from socialism to communism.



**Figure 1**

Sample stamps from the period  
(from the collection of Zbigniew Haładewicz).

Graphic elaboration: Aleksandra Mika

## 2. Theoretical underpinnings

*In theory there is no difference  
between theory and practice.  
In practice there is.*

The present work relies on several theoretical axes, which, in the final analysis, are shown to conglomerate. First of all, the achievements of the Tartu-Moscow School of semiotics are used. Also, the analysis benefits from the work by Chrzanowska-Kluczevska on figuration both in verbal and visual language. Finally, the results are cast with the Peircean Theory of Categories.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> For canonical spatial analyses of discourse, see e.g. Cap (2010), who develops a model of analysis of political discourse involving “legitimization of actions which a political speaker/actor chooses to undertake in order to neutralize a threat to his or her geopolitical camp” (Cap 2010: 119). In doing so, he uses work on proximization, aspects of which conceptually bind the entities placed inside the deictic centre. Chilton (2004) provides an overview of the language of politics and (Chapter 8) develops a framework of deictically

## 2.1. Tartu-Moscow work on the language of art

Tartu-Moscow scholars devoted considerable analytical attention to the study of art within the hierarchy of modelling systems, a synopsis of which falls beyond the bounds of this paper. In particular, Borys Uspensky and Juri Lotman devoted immense scholarly effort to semiotically inquiring into the artistic dimension of human communication. Uspensky (cf. e.g. 1994: 275) elaborated the terminological division into primary and secondary modelling systems. Language was conceived of as a primary modelling system, which models reality. Over it, secondary systems are built, modelling partial aspects of that reality. An example par excellence of such a secondary system is art. Lotman also stresses the centrality of the hierarchical structures in cultural mechanisms: creating a hierarchy of languages was for him a much more compact way of storing information than increasing ad infinitum the number of messages in one language. Moreover, there are some types of information that can be stored and conveyed only through a special type of language (e.g. chemical or algebraic information). A particular generator of that type of languages is art that serves humanity by applying to one of the most complex and unclear aspects of human activity (J. Lotman 1970 [1973]: 29).<sup>10</sup>

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specified spaces of reality. Ensink and Sauer propose that “‘perspective’ reflects the fact that the content of the discourse necessarily presupposes some point of view. Both ‘frame’ and ‘perspective’ thus denote practices which are essential for the discourse participants to orient towards” (Ensink – Sauer 2003: 2). The present research, however, is not framed within these latter paradigms but follows the semiotic space investigation established in Haładewicz-Grzelak (2010, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> See also a phenomenological perspective on artistic vision, as recalled by Susan Petrilli “We can only reach this original level [of *primary iconism*] as Husserl says (1973 [1948]) by way of abstraction achieved either through a phenomenological reduction of the *epoché*, by bracketing the already given world and relative interpretative habits or through artistic vision. The image is the otherness of that which is, the strangeness to itself, its double. And art refers precisely to the image, for it depicts the other face of being. Artistic discourse does not represent reality, but depicts its double” (Petrilli 2010: 266).

For this research school, each natural language is constituted of signs, characterized by the existence of the determined extra-linguistic content, and of syntagmatic elements, the content of which not only reproduces extra-linguistic liaisons, but also, to a significant degree, possesses a formal character. Lotman points out that between these groups of linguistic facts there exists constant inter-penetration: on one side, the significant elements become accessory, on the other, the accessory elements constantly become semanticised. However, in natural languages this process of inter-penetration is so imperceptible that the two aspects can be neatly discerned. Art, for Lotman, is an example of the constant tendency to formalize the elements that carry content and relocate them into the domain of the code (J. Lotman [1970] 1973: 47). A complex artistic structure built from the linguistic material thus allows conveyance of such an amount of information that would be impossible to transmit through the means of elementary structure proper to a language (J. Lotman 1970 [1973]: 20).

The rise in the complexity of the character of the transmitted information inevitably leads to the complexification of the semiotic system that is used for that transmission:

[l]'art verbal, bien qu'il se fonde sur la langue naturelle, ne s'y fonde que pour la transformer en sa propre langue, secondaire, le langage de l'art. Et ce langage de l'art lui-même est une hiérarchie complexe de langages mutuellement corrélés, mais non semblables. À cela est liée la pluralité de principe des lectures possibles d'un texte artistique (J. Lotman 1970 [1973]: 55).

The concept of key importance for the present analysis is the Tartu understanding of the entropy of the artistic text. Lotman warns in this respect not to intermingle two entropic types: it is of crucial importance to distinguish between the entropy of the codes of the author and of the reader and the entropy of different levels of the code: "dans les travaux de vulgarization on mélange parfois le concept quantitatif de la grandeur de l'information avec le concept qualitative de sa valeur" (J. Lotman 1970

[1973]: 58).<sup>11</sup> An equally important issue is the concept of play / game in Lotmanian thought. A game is a particular association of fortuitous and regular processes (J. Lotman 1970 [1973]: 54f). For Lotman, both creating and perceiving requires a particular artistic behaviour, which has much in common with game behaviour. The recipient lives through the emotions that would be evoked by the analogous real situation and, at the same time, they realize the fortuitous level of experience.

Lotman points out that art is an *analogon* of the reality (an object), translated into the language of a given system. A work of art then is 'fortuitous' and should be received at the same time as 'similar' and not 'similar'. Placing emphasis on just one of the inseparable aspects destroys the modelling function of art (J. Lotman 2002: 50). The mechanism of the game effect consists not in the static, simultaneous coexistence of various significances but in the constant realization of the possibility of other meanings than the ones that are currently received. 'The play' effect consists in the fact that various significances of one element do not coexist statically but they 'twinkle' (2002: 63).

Uspensky was another Tartu scholar who devoted a substantial part of his research to studying the semiotics of art. The scholar crucially emphasizes the centrality of the point of view to the semiotic study of artworks, in particular to these realms that are bi-planar, that is, that have a distinction between signified/ signifier (Uspensky 1995: 9). The problem of the viewpoint, for Uspensky, is not so relevant in artistic forms, which are not concerned with the semantics of the expressed, but

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<sup>11</sup> To illustrate this claim, Lotman gives the following example. The question "Does God exist?" offers the possibility of making one choice out of two. On the other hand, the proposition to choose a course in a good restaurant allows one to exhaust a much larger entropy. However, can we say that this fact testifies to a greater value of the information received by the second means? (J. Lotman 1970 [1973]: 59) As Lotman stipulates elsewhere, the possibility of change in a semiotic system is connected with treating it as *alteration* by the collective which is using it. This means that a given semiotic system is perceived not as the only possible one but as one of the possible variants. This attitude is possible only as a result of juxtaposing one language with another. Accordingly, the basis of the dynamic mechanism is contrasting and cooperation of one language with another (J. Lotman 2002: 71).

rather with its syntax, for example, abstract painting. The exemplary planes are tentatively defined as the phraseological, ideological plane, next the plane of spatio-temporal characteristics, and the psychological plane (Uspensky 1995: 15).

## **2.2. Tropology and semiotic figuration: "Figurative worlds as text-words"**

The present analysis will also look at both verbal and visual texts of so-called realist art from the point of view of figuration.<sup>12</sup> The topic of the interrelation of visual and linguistic sciences has always been the cynosure of attention of Elżbieta Chrzanowska-Kluczevska, especially from the point of view of artistic expression (see, in particular, Chrzanowska-Kluczevska 2012, 2013, 2017). The scholar has always emphasized the phenomenological and transcendental nature of a work of art and upheld the necessity of looking for figurative patterns not only in verbal language, but most of all, in the visual one. She points out in this regard that since the work by Roman Jakobson (1956)<sup>13</sup> regarding the metaphoric-metonymic dyad underlying literary texts and also cinematographic art and painting, "we have witnessed an ongoing debate [...] on whether visual metaphor exists at all, and whether it actually can be seen in art" (Chrzanowska-Kluczevska 2012: 71). Siding with art historians and philosophers such as, for example, Ernst H. Gombrich, Roland Barthes and Seweryna Wysołuch, the scholar upholds the claim that it is fully justifiable to talk about tropes such as, for example,

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<sup>12</sup> There have been a variety of different semiotic approaches to artwork. In particular, worth mentioning is the project developed in subsequent works of George Somov (e.g. Somov 2006), where the scholar proposes the analysis along interconnecting three information creating mechanisms, which are embedded in coding mechanisms. Somov calls these sub-mechanisms intentional codes, organizing coded and objective codes (Somov 2006: 149).

<sup>13</sup> Also, for example, Jakobson in the publication (1960) points out that 'considering surrealist metaphor, we should not omit the painting by Max Ernst, Salvador Dali or movies by Luis Buñuel *Un chien andalou* or *L'âge d'or*. In short, many poetic phenomena fall not only within the scope of knowledge about language, but also in the range of the whole theory of signs, i.e., of general semiotics' (Jakobson 1960: 431).

metonymy, metaphor synecdoche and irony in arts (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2012: 72).<sup>14</sup> In what follows we will concentrate, however, on the basic dyad only, that is metaphor and metonymy, as mostly relevant to the collected material.

Chrzanowska-Kluczewska defines metaphor as a “trope of subjectivity, whose ‘double- vision structure’ (as Werth called it) can play both on a newly recognized similar of entities and on disparities and differences. A ‘common ground’ is a valuable methodological concept for interpreting two metaphorical domains – source and target (vehicle and tenor, respectively)” (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2013: 65). Hence metaphor can be described as “the iconic trope of the subjectively perceived similarity” (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2013: 66).<sup>15</sup> Metonymy, on the other hand, is seen as “the indexical trope pointing to the objectively existing adjacency” (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2013: 66). Furthermore, the contiguity implied in metonymical relation does not denote only physical or temporal closeness, but relates to “all kinds of relationships between objects, ideas, such as causal, possessive, agentive connections” (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2013: 66). Raymond Gibbs’ definition, rephrasing this concept in contemporary cognitive terms as quoted in Chrzanowska-Kluczewska, stipulates that metonymy constitutes a basic part of our conceptual system (Gibbs 1994: 319–320 as quoted in Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2013: 67). Similarly, the research by H.V. Shelestiuk shows that

Metonymy as a mechanism of semantic change and a set of cognitive patterns is quite widespread, in our material it is more widespread, vying with functional transfer (analogy), specialization and generalization for frequency. Concomitance and contiguity, lying at the core of metonymy, are those relations that the concept logically implies [...] – the conceptualization inside concomitant or contiguous domains (and the semantic development of a

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<sup>14</sup> For example, in one of her analyses, she shows how *capriccios* of Arcimboldi are, “from the point of view of semiotic construal, [...] a multi-layered iconic construal” (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska 2012: 73).

<sup>15</sup> See also e.g. Nöth (1990: 132ff) on metaphoric iconicity.



corresponding word). Metonymy is generally more 'natural' [less marked] and produces less striking effect than metaphor, the reason for it being that the source and target domains of metonymy are frequently homogenous, of the similar kind – the semantic shift is less marked" (Shelestiuk 2005: 142)

In accordance with the Jakobsonian theory, two axes should be singled out: the axis of choice and the axis of combination. Acts of choice are governed by the principle of equivalence, difference or similarity. Combination, on the other hand, which is needed to build a series, is ruled by the mechanism of contiguity. Poetic function, according to Jakobson, consists in the projection of the rule of equivalence from the axis of choice to the axis of combination whereby "equivalence becomes a constitutive tackle of the series" (Jakobson 1960: 441). The key aspect to remember is that the act of choice can be captured by the mechanism of metaphor and can be denoted as a principle of metaphorization, while combination – relies on metonymical dynamics. Metaphor and metonymy – paradigmatic association and syntagmatic chain – intermingle with each other and final meanings actually depend on the transformation of one into another.

Chrzanowska-Kluczevska (2013), providing an exhaustive historiography and synopsis of theorizing the two terms, juxtaposes several models starting from Vico's ideas in contemporary reformulation. Tables 1 and 2 show selected aspects from these juxtapositions.

In what follows we will build on that juxtaposition, with the reservation that metonymy can also imply indexical relation.

**Table 1**

The Vichian tetrad in Hayden White's Interpretation  
(adapted from Chrzanowska-Kluczevska 2013: 58)

Trope	Basis for identification
Metaphor	similarity, analogy, the figure of totality and identity
Metonymy	dispersal, reduction, objective association of objects and events through contiguity (adjacency); the figure of exteriority and alienation
Synecdoche	integration of parts into unity thought essentiality/salience of features, the figure of interiority, (inner reconstruction) and generalization.

**Table 2**

Tropes in language and thought  
(adapted from Chrzanowska-Kluczevska 2013: 61)

Textualization	Conceptualization	The order of signs	The mean of thought
Metonymy	Mechanical <sup>16</sup>	Icon	Abduction
Synecdoche	Organic	Index	Induction
Metaphor	Conceptual	Symbol	Deduction

### 3. Vacuous interlocutors: intercepting the signage

*It's like déjà-vu, all over again.*

A feature that showed prominently in the database of texts is a constant dialectal relation to an external entity, which in the simplest manner could be denoted by the Tartu term of vacuous interlocutor, entailing a split into 'I-sender' and 'I-receiver'. (M. Lotman 2002: 19). As M. Lotman (2002: 16) claims, the question of whether to take into account the third member of the communication process (apart from the addressor and

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<sup>16</sup> If we add to that e.g. Freudian psychological insights (Chrzanowska-Kluczevska 2013: 60), metonymy would imply *displacement* and metaphor – *condensation*. We are disregarding here the division which the scholar introduced within the realm of metaphor into particular catachrestic types.

addressee) was one of the differences between the Jakobsonian and Tartuvian models of information transfer. This third participant of the communicative situation is called the interceptor (M. Lotman 2002: 16). The category of vacuous interlocutors was also used by other Tartu scholars, e.g. by Pyatigorsky and Zilberman (1976) who assumed the existence of a 'non-sign' and tried to develop a special 'non-semiotic' approach to its explanation:

For this purpose, we distinguish between the possibility of 'non-sign' usage and that of natural unconceivability of sign-understanding which may occur in certain situations. That is, in order to introduce the presumed 'un-semiotics' as logically opposed but in fact entwined (in a matter of understanding) with the ordinary 'semiotics', we shall properly divide the psychological and ontological statuses of its subject being (Pyatigorsky and Zilberman 1976: 255).

This cathartic effect of the vacuous sign is clearly seen in the discourse under inspection. The final effect of the artists' semiotic battle has to relate 'back' to the interceptor, e.g. *The work of art passes the exam only if, paraphrasing the words of Karl Marx, "the idea of art, empowering masses, becomes their material force"*. The interceptor thus functions semiotically as a 'loophole', reverting the referent back to itself. This loop is particularly evident in the passage where the PA Editorial Board submits a self-critique for the deficiencies in the critical assessment in the material published in PA:

[4a] The Editorial submits a self-critique referring to deficiencies in its academic critique (literally: *Redakcja składa samokrytykę odnośnie braków w swojej krytyce*). The Editors did not pay attention to the increase of the danger of schematism, to the revival of certain formalistic tendencies relenting before difficulties carried by socrealism. In particular, [this happened] in the sector of painting and sculptures, on the aspects of carelessness and self-pacification in the environment of fine artists.

[4b] The Council calls on all Polish critics and scholars to make more belligerent and to ‘partify’ (Pol. *ubojowienia i upartyjnienia*) evaluation criteria for bolder and more active disclosure of deficiencies, bolder and more active talking about the great truth of our time and of our struggle.

In most cases, however, the interceptor is embodied in direct invocation to the Soviet Union:

[5a] Artists of the Czechoslovak Republic, after the liberation of the maverick Red Army, assisted by its heroic working people and by President Clement Gottwald, embarked upon the path of the development of new visual art, drawing from folk sources and united with the people. At present, already the overwhelming majority of our artists (..) makes efforts to create a true realistic art, which could revive the people in their daily creative work on the establishment of a higher, socialist order in our country. **Works of Soviet fine artists are for us a model of combat**, a true humanist, beloved by the people, art, fusing the hearts of millions of working strong faith in the victory of progress and peace in the world. **We assure you, dear Soviet comrades** [direct invocation] that we will use all our capabilities to prevent the unleashing of a new bloodshed in the world, and that we will show it in our works.

[5b] The resolutions of the Central Committee of our party very convincingly showed every activist of socialist culture the importance attached by the CK WKP to the literature and to art, as the factors of the communist upbringing of the workers, in particular the young Soviet generation. **The CC of the Bolshevik Party set particular tasks for each of us** - creating works of a profound ideological sense, artistically valuable, such works that in an accessible realistic form present in a profound sense the life of a socialist society and **the nobility of the Soviet people fighting** for the communist future.

The texts above feature invocations also from Czechoslovak artists, not only Polish ones, but we found no difference in relating to any brotherly nation in that discourse, although the lexeme

‘nations’ (Pol. *narody*) features quite often in the investigated database.<sup>17</sup> The so-called style by designation is the same everywhere – hence the second figure shows, for example, Chinese woodcuts, and Fig. 3 – a Czechoslovak poster.



**Figure 2**

Left: Poznański, *Serving Poland*. Right: H. Krajewska: *Threshing in a State Agricultural Farm (PGR)*. Photos: J.F.



**Figure 3**

Left: Chinese New Year picture. Right: Chinese woodcuts, entitled ‘Contemporary Chinese woodcuts’ (reproduced in *PA* 1951)

<sup>17</sup> The semantic field of that lexeme had been changed to imply the proletariat living within the remit of particular brotherly nations, e.g. the State of GDR, People’s Republic of Poland etc. (cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak 2012).

The visual material in Fig. 2. relates to another Marxist tenet – a qualitative change which characterized the first phase of socialism, presupposes “l’activité d’un prolétariat ayant une conscience de classe (...). Seule une crise virtuellement permanente pourrait maintenir l’acuité de la lutte des classes et la conscience de classe du prolétariat contre le système capitaliste, comme sa <négation absolue>. C’est à ces conditions que le prolétariat remplirait sa <mission historique>” (Marcuse 1963: 20 ff).<sup>18</sup> The proletariat is thus *the emerging* entity, it is in a constant dialectic process of formation. It needs to be aware of that homogeneity, of the new emerging collectivity and fraternity of all, regardless of state boundaries. The socialist art was to instil, reiterate and foster the acquisition of that consciousness.

The interceptor also has a polarizing effect of a prism, which in semiotic terms translates as enhancing the salience of particular signs. The PA texts – both visual and verbal – show a tendency towards the polarization / axiologizing of feelings: lexemes such as *hatred*, *love*, to *whip with disdain* occur very frequently with relation to the teleology of art (cf. e.g. Fig. 3 (left)). It has been generally known that art in Stalinism was to be an ideological tool – however, its tectonics are much more intricate – hatred, dichotomization and struggle appear to be pendula on which that world was suspended, hence art, just as any discourse, was also a tool for the vilification of anyone who did not agree with the dominant ideology. Although the overall ideological mission in painting was to show exclusively the pragmatics of the working class (cf. [1-3]), in drawings – in particular in posters – the vilification tactics and hatred was allowed to flourish freely. Fig. 4 juxtaposes verbal with visual excerpts from the PA.

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<sup>18</sup> Hence, paradoxically, for Marxist ideology, any period of stability and prosperity under capitalism means the destruction of the proletariat under the dominion of capitalist ideas (Marcuse 1963: 22). The essence of the **new emerging social class** called ‘proletariat’ is its historic force (Marcuse 1963: 23).

[6] Who hates war more than artists, who are co-creators of the just social order / The oeuvres of Soviet artists have helped the Soviet nation in its victory over the Hitlerian invader, the works of Geriasimov, Manitzer etc. kindle the faith in man-creator, and inflame the hatred for fascism/ apotheosis of creative constructors of the future, stigmatizing war instigators/ one cannot start work without nourishing the feeling of deep pique and hatred for the destructors / at the numerous art exhibitions you will not find one single painting, sculpture, which would perpetrate war, the ideas of hatred towards humankind our painters are extolling the Soviet man- constructor and creator, lash the concoctions of American imperialism/ the paintings of our artists should lash with biting contempt and sharp satire the enemies of people and traitors of the nation / lashing political satire.



**Figure 4**

Juxtaposition of verbal and visual violence from the database issues of *PA*. The last photo shows a poster commemorating the 1948 Czechoslovak *coup d'état*, known as Victorious February.

This leads us to another dimension of the interceptor: there is its dyadic pole, which is also discursively constructed.<sup>19</sup> In other words: there is US, in the centre with a pre-assumed epistemic stance of defending equality and constructing the new world, there are also INTC<sub>1+</sub> and INTC<sub>2-</sub>. The INTC<sub>1+</sub> has a centripetal dynamics, while its negative pole, referred to as, for example, fascists or imperialists with a plethora of flourishing epithets (cf. below: “to destroy the rotting world of imperialism and commence to edify on its debris the world of justice and freedom”), is of centrifugal dynamics, spinning the endemic communist microcosm so as to separate it from any part of the universe that had been relegated to the peripheries.

Phenomenologically, communist discourse emerges from the database as a sort of *salle de miroirs*, or planting in front of the addressee an infinity of cushion-concepts (with such highlights as *fraternity, equality of brotherhood of all*).<sup>20</sup> The vacuous sign, interfering in the communication, reverses its directionality. For example, “in the numerous art exhibitions you will not find one single painting, carving, which would perpetrate war, the ideas of hatred towards humankind”. Yet, in another excerpt we can read this admonishment to artists: “You cannot get down to work without feeling deep bitterness and hatred of the destroyers of all that is good”. The illustrative modalities show that breeding hatred by discourse means was exactly what the apparatchiks were doing, yet their actions are attributed to their (hypostasized) opponents (INTC<sub>2-</sub>). The signs mingle with their reflexes, engaging into a carefully engineered trap, largely

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak (2012) for an analysis of the polarization of discourses regarding *Generalissimus* Stalin.

<sup>20</sup> It should be pointed out that the investigated stretch of communist discourse is much more than just Marxism. In part it can be due to a series of avatars of the ideology in subsequent writings by Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (later known by the alias Lenin) as well as Ioseb Besarionis Jughashvili (known to the posterity as Joseph Stalin) but it could also be due to many other intervening factors and influences (e.g. ascribing to your opponent your exact tactics) which cannot be extracted by a purely semiotic framework.



surpassing the notion of propaganda,<sup>21</sup> where both syntax (cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak 2010) and the level of phases (Haładewicz-Grzelak 2012) are harnessed to build a cosmogony and destroy history / tradition. However, not only the reception of the sign is blueprinted, but also the act of creation is scripted.

[7] We assure you, dear Soviet comrades, that we will use all our abilities to prevent new bloodshed breaking out in the world and we will show in our works that the future of the world belongs to honest people, working people, who with their hearts filled with love, believe in peace in the world. Those who in silence and inaction observe historical strife of our times, [they] with their indifference support the camp of destruction, they are enemies of creativity, they are not, and they cannot be called, artists. / Artists of all countries – let there not be a lack of one single talent in the great front of the fight for peace! In these historic days, where the fight of the nations for peace is spreading over the globe, we ask you, masters of art, (..) did your art contribute to defending the nations against the slavery of unbridled Wall-street monopolists? **Our victory is inevitable.** Our goal, **our great task is to precipitate the victory of the huge peace front.** We summon you: be worthy of your nations, be with us, help us with your art to defeat aggressors.

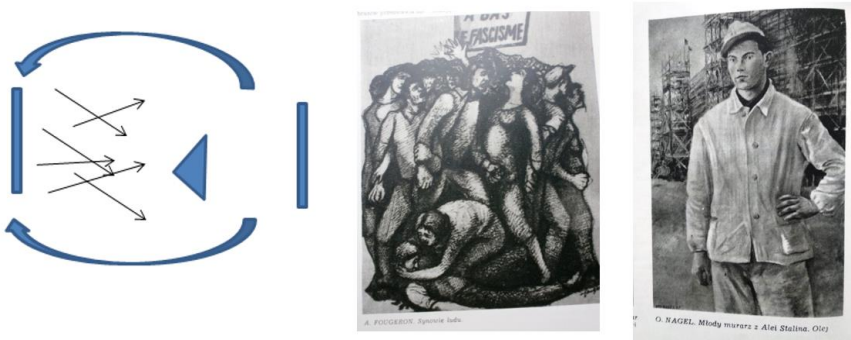
[8] Just as creativity has emerged from blind alleys of decadent aestheticization of the past years and embarked upon the road of expressing crucial and veritable contents, into the insightful road of cognizing and expressing the world, social reality as well as the fight for truth, justice and freedom, so the exhibitions stopped being events of an aesthetic and commercial character, and turned into an educational momentum, mobilizing and shaping human consciousness (..). The renaissance of art, the renaissance of its

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<sup>21</sup> As regards the ideological side, Marcuse observes in this respect: "Dans ces conditions il semblerait justifiée d'en écarter le marxisme soviétique comme étant une pure et simple <propagande>. C'est une solution trompeuse, parce que la distinction entre <propagande> et <vérité> présuppose une vérité démontrable à laquelle la propagande peut être opposée. S'il on soutient que la vérité ne s'exprime que dans la pratique et non dans la théorie du marxisme soviétique, et que la théorie ne sert que d'outil pour la manipulation des masses, il faut alors prouver cette affirmation" (Marcuse 1963: 45).

key societal function, the renaissance of its progressive role, the renaissance of immense cognitive, moral and cognitive significance, the renaissance of art as a weapon wielded for the magnitude and happiness of a human being, can happen only in a society which was able to destroy the rotting world of imperialism and commence to edify on its debris the world of justice and freedom. [...]. This society, thanks to the victory of the great October revolution, is the Soviet Union. And after the Second World War, thanks to the victory over fascism, also our Polish society.

[9] The peace camp cannot forgo artists or art historians. / The role of progressive artists cannot be limited to verbal declarations. / Artists, more and more commonly express their unwavering will for peace by creating particular art works, lifting up spirits of the fight for peace. / The immense camp of nations willing peace has increased with the mass of 500 million in People's China together with the art avant-garde, who devoted their beautiful art of painting to the issue of peace and socialism.



**Figure 5**

Left: A suggestion for socrealist semiosis with the interceptor. Middle and right photos of pages from P.A. 1953 showing: middle: 'Away with fascism' French poster: emotions channelled through vacuous sign, creating surrogate local communities unified within the posited reality; right: A page from PA 1953 showing a painting by A. Nagel as one of the highlights of III German [GDR] art exhibition, entitled *Young mason from Stalin alley*

To understand the semiotic impact of the interceptor with regard to contiguity, we need to recall the inherent entropy of an artistic text (redundancy). What happens with the vacuous sign and interceptor is creating a loop, redirecting from the signified back to the sign itself. Contiguity is slipped into the semi-osis process. As a result, like in a Mobius strip, the referent IS the signifier, the sign that points to itself. The loop is possible through prior manipulating of the levels of artistic reception in the form of a game: neutralizing the variegated, intermingling ('twinkling') levels of perception. This art was to create the "reality", not artistically re-create it.

#### **4. *La trahison des images:* Phenomenological reduction**

The previous section motivated the relegation of art as a material resource / catalyst and catharsis for 'history' and society, implying the social level of pragmatic context, which however, as we have seen, was ideologically grounded.<sup>22</sup> Now let us move towards the theoretical implications behind so-realism as proclaimed by the apparatchiks themselves, that is the incompatibility of so-realism with art schools such as *realism*, *formalism* and *naturalism*. The fact that so-realist art was utterly opposed to formalism (subsuming, e.g. abstract or colourist movements) and to naturalism has often been pointed out when assessing the so-realist credos. However, the semiotic motifs for that repugnance have not been investigated.

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<sup>22</sup> This is an ontological trap since, as has been shown in Haładewicz-Grzelak (2010, 2012), the Marxist communist discourse aimed to marginalize history, in particular specific national events and swap them for cosmogony, that started with the victory of the Soviet Revolution in 1917. The lexeme 'nation' still existed in wide usage, of course, but referred only to communist/socialist events. The elimination of local traditions and of the binding force of local communities also subsumed taking decisive moves against religious beliefs.



**Figure 6**

Catching the moment. All documented pictures: property of MŚ.

Photos: J.F. Left: M. Tomaszewski, *Dzierżyński on the balcony*.

Middle: A. Lubniewicz: *street repairs*. Right: H. Krajewska:

Threshing in a State Agricultural Farm (PGR)

The decisive denial of formalism and naturalism in artistic representation could be seen as a 'negative' definition in the present attempt to disambiguate the semiotics mechanism behind this movement. Our database features a particularly large bulk of texts justifying the scripted perception of a work of art as well as guidelines for the creativity. Let us start with a sample discourse on disfavoured artistic perspectives (the charges are often intertwined) in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Juxtaposing the problematic issues for non-socialist creativity from the database texts

Naturalism and impressionism	Formalism and realism
1) Continuing the fight against formalism, in all its manifestations, we must not forget about the harmful effects of Impressionism and naturalism. A Naturalist with protocol precision copies randomly perceived groups of people or objects, he shows and rearranges random phenomena as important. An Impressionist perpetuates random moments,	1) The degeneration and decay of contemporary bourgeois art that we see today in the countries of the west is a direct consequence, and a pictorial reflection, of the general decay and stagnation in which the whole bourgeois culture is found in connection with the structural crisis. This art, with shocking clarity, evinces the filthy face of the bourgeois

trying to render only their fleeting, subjective impressions, ignoring completely what is important, typical.

2) This view of the composition means, in both cases, giving up generalization and typification, leading to a distortion of reality and no further possibility of creating full-value ideological and artistic works. /Naturalistically boring and impressionistically random./ The relationship between people has not been shown here, the essence of the subject has not been extracted. Now we are missing many talented artists that are under the implicit influence of imperialism. Their skills and methods have been formed on the basis of an erroneous concept of idea-less art, which proclaims the indifference of the artist to ideological content and to the subject in painting. Hence the indifference of the artist for deep inquiry and real representation of life, for man, for his activity, for the psyche of thoughts and feelings. The authors of a series of paintings in the pursuit of painting and mood look at man only as an object of the play of light. Such a landscape approach to man is alien to sorealism. The creative assimilation of cultural heritage is associated with a consistent struggle against false innovations, which strips art from the content of life, makes it estranged to the people and detaches it from the development of its own nation. But this is the goal of cosmopolitanism, which is a child, and

world, its moral nihilism, its hostility to knowledge and progress, **furious hatred for man.** The largest debauchery of reactionary arts occurred in the US. *This decrepit art wandered there from Germany and France, and having encountered a vulnerable soil, it blossomed luxuriantly and hideously.*

2) The aim of [that formalist] work is the blackout of the viewer's consciousness, damping the struggle of the masses. The case of formalism requires particularly meticulous and vigilant critical analysis.

3) In the States: surrealism depicting the senseless flimsies of a morbid fantasy. / The way of ridiculous combination of objects that have nothing to do with each other. But what pleases aesthetic snobs cannot, of course, be intended for the mass audience demanding from the artist images that are simple, understandable and accessible.

4) American realism – this sleek, stylized painting has nothing to do with a real, insightful tearing of the contradictory American life. The [realist] artists carefully avoid the sensitive problems of contemporary reality and the struggle of the people, focusing **primarily on the details of the embellished everyday life, concealing the antagonistic character of capitalism, creating a sad image of undisturbed prosperity.**

5) In choosing artists and directing their creativity to a specific theme by subsidizing 'useful painting', (but see the quotations

<p>at the same time an instrument, of imperialism.</p> <p>3) We must not let ourselves be misled by the seeming antagonisms of the two tendencies of American art. The first introduces confusion in human consciousness by denying and destroying all moral principles, all humanistic and democratic aspirations, <b>the second creates a falsified image of capitalist reality, blurs and conceals the monstrosity of the system by creating the ideal of flat bourgeois happiness, primitive and limited.</b></p> <p>4) The main ideological error of this direction is the unbelief in the aesthetic value of our life, which supposedly needs to be adorned with 'beautiful painting'.</p>	<p>in [1-3]) American merchants and industrialists pursue a deeply thought-out plan of sophisticated propaganda – they bemoan the average townspeople, maintain admiration for the American way of life and faith in the imperturbability of the capitalist system. This demoralizing influence of the capitalist protectorate is already apparent to some American critics, they are already aware that there can be no question of freedom of art when directors of joint stock companies not only dictate the subject of the image to the artist, but also determine the approach to the subject. / Unjust striving to make your work beautiful with the help of worn off formal means.</p>
<p>Art as a means for typification</p>	
<p>1) The deep truth of discerning what is typical from what is mediocre, but which does not constitute typification (..) / the fight for the unity of form and content. / We have to see in our epoch what is typical, although at present it might not be numerically predominant. / The peculiarity of an art painting consists in its typicality; the force and depth of a generalization does not contradict a widely conceived individualization. Typification is a form of artistic generalization and serves cognitive purposes. An artist effectuates it [the typification] according to a general law of Marxist-Leninist gnoseology, by proceeding from the concrete to generalization and back to the concrete.</p> <p>2) A primary sensation, the generalization of the sensation and expressing the results of the generalization in the form of a unitary phenomenon- this is the dialectic process of the harnessing of reality by the artist. The painting, which is an equivalent reflection of a thing, informs us about its nature, that is, shows its idea. / The pictorial apprehension of the world has an active character, because it contains the moment of evaluation of an idea, because it not only reflects the reality but it also creates a new fact of the very reality. The artistic painting is thus not only a mirror reflection of the reality – an artist shows by means of a painting not only what exists, but also what could exist according to probability and opportunity.</p>	

Finally, to complete its cognitive function, a painting must be communicative, commonly readable [...]. Practical confrontation of a painting with reality occurs in the process of the consumption of art. It is thus the final test of its truthfulness (excerpts of an essay 3) The painters who embarked on the road to progressive creativity, aspire in their actions to a realistic manner of painting, to subjectification and to a clear ideological direction / An artistic painting as a cognitive form of art is characterized by concreteness, sensuality, individuality, uniqueness, characteristicity, typicality, agreement with laws directing the reality, communicativeness. The paintings in art are **sensuous because they show the appearance of a given thing and not its concept, because all generalization occurs in them in the form of a unitary, one-off act, divested by the author from all accidental features.**

(excerpts of an essay *O prawidłową terminologię*)

The above adduced selection makes evident several issues. Realism and naturalism had to be rejected because they lacked ideological grounding. Impressionism, on the other hand, focused on random moments, without any "master plan", and relied on compositional perfection. Formalism, most seriously of all, is said to flout conventional expectations. It starts from these expectations and proceeds beyond them. The 'soc-' version of realism is expected to stay within conventionality, conveying even as circular: where the signified refers only to signified, in Baudrillard's terms, it covers the abstraction of reality. What all those "apostate" movements seem to have in common is the game effect, the 'twinkling' of signification, being one thing and another at the same time, and entropy, which implies lack of determined contiguity.

The semiotic aspects to be abstracted from the juxtaposition in Table 3 emerge as follows: dialectic relations, spurring creation back and forth from the preceding stage, confrontation with what is posited as "reality", abstracting typical features, disregard and irrelevance of the pragmatic actual *status quo*, intertwining mirrors in a transmission of the message that are collocating the receiver in a discursive *salle de miroirs* where the

discourse attributed to the other party is nothing but the exact tactics of the sender.<sup>23</sup>

All of these aspects involve one primary aspect – contiguity; that is, cognitive adjacency: endlessly reverting indices and icons. The sceneries as in, for example, Fig. 4, only pass for reality, as in any other embellishment texts of the period, by a carefully chosen *mise-en-scène*, and the swap of the posited reality for the experiential level is effectuated (cf. Marcuse in footnote 19). In other words, paradoxically, formalism (subsuming abstract painting) had to be rejected because it had to refer to un-reality by multiplicities of significations at the same time: (inherent entropy and game effect), building the artistic suspense only through the artistic clash in the spectator. Socrealism operated only with the posited sign, the sign *in absentia*,<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. e.g. this extract: “the second creates a falsified image of capitalist reality, blurs and conceals the monstrosity of the system by creating the ideal of flat bourgeois happiness, primitive and limited” – compare also with Fig. 5 and quotes showing the miserable conditions of life in the period in footnote.

<sup>24</sup> In Haładewicz-Grzelak (2010: 181) it was called, using the terms by Roland Barthes, *signe bâtarde*, “à la fois elliptique et prétentieux” (Barthes 1957: 28). Covering the posted reality (and attributing to the other party can be seen recalling two excerpts cited also in that work, e.g. “Heading: “The deadline for submitting questionnaires for coal allotment up to April 25. Municipal Fueling Enterprises are ensuing questionnaires for the heating of edifices for the winter season 1949–1950. In this connection all state offices, self-government, social, Political Parties, Workers’ Unions, etc., are to delegate their representatives to Municipal Fueling Enterprises, situated at 3 Stalin Alley to collect the questionnaires, which, after filling in, should be submitted by April 25, 1949, to the Municipal Fueling Enterprises. Whoever fails to comply with the above formalities to schedule, will not receive any fuel.” 2) “The rationing of leather for members of trade unions. The Economics Department of the Warsaw Council of Trade Unions in agreement with the Warsaw Co-operative of Consumers has arranged for the retailing of sole leather for the working world. All members of trade unions can purchase once per week sole leather for one pair of shoes. When buying, members of trade unions are obliged to present their work certificate or the confirmation from their place of work. In order to prevent possible abuse, the shop will seal after the purchase both the legitimating document and the certificate of the purchasers” (TL March 16, 1949)”. 3) “fats should be purchased within a tightly specified time. Failure to realize the coupon in the allotted decade will cause the loss of the right to realize the coupon in the following decade” (TL 18 March)” (in: Haładewicz-Grzelak 2010: 206). These were of course reflection of the miserable economic situation, clashing with the ‘reality’ as showed in e.g. Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. Eidetic reduction was of course the salvo out of that conundrum: “We



that is why it was incompatible with formalism. Let us also recall here that J. Lotman sees art as an *analogon* of the reality (an object), translated into the language of a given system. A work of art, then, is for him 'fortuitous' and should be received at the same time as 'similar' and not 'similar'. Placing emphasis on just one of the inseparable aspects destroys the modelling function of art (J. Lotman 2002: 50).

As far as the topic specification is concerned, this strategy can be called silencing by omission. By narrowing the realm of the topics that should be portrayed (to the working class and their paraphernalia) there occurs discursive gagging. So, when we look at these paintings, apart from art as a tool and apotheosis, it is also a tool of symbolic violence, symbolic exclusion and rejection of any other reality that is not the one posited by the apparatchiks.

Furthermore, inspecting the excerpts in Table 3, there appear significant parallels with another type of reduction, as proposed by Husserlian phenomenology. Staying on a very basic level of philosophical enquiry,<sup>25</sup> as Michał Paweł Markowski and Anna Burzyńska emphasize, in classical Husserlian phenomenology, 'cognition is not dependent on how one knows what they know, but it consists of completely disconnecting the truth from changing circumstances of capturing it' (Markowski and Burzyńska 2007: 84). For Husserl, this ultimate measure was logic. Relativism results from anthropologisation, subjectivization and psychologization of truth. The issue is then not what a man experiences in the world, but what they experience in pure intuition, limited only to consciousness. Concepts should be rooted in intuition, *Anschauung*, created by the idealization of abstraction. This ideational abstraction 'should free the individual experiences of the untranslatability into general concepts' (Markowski and Burzyńska 2007: 86).

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have to see in our epoch what us typical, although at present it might not be numerically predominant".

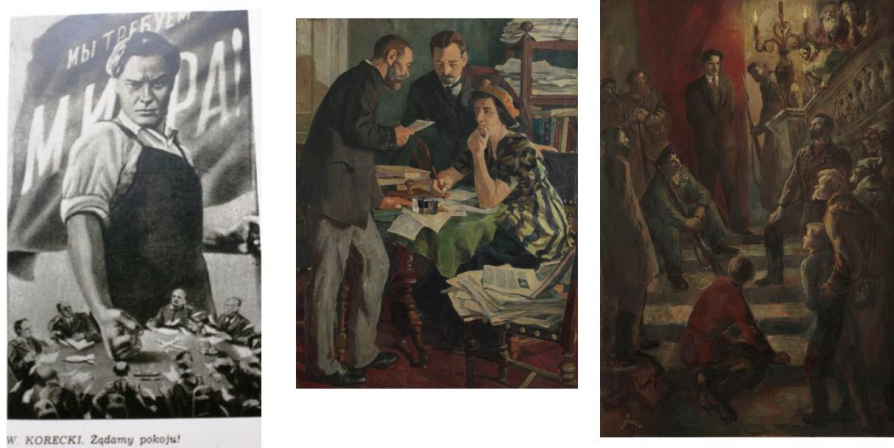
<sup>25</sup> For an in-depth discussion on Husserl, see e.g. works by Robert Sokolowski (e.g. 2000) and Dan Zahavi (e.g. 2003).

The epitome of that take is called eidetic reduction – from Greek *eidōs* (species). As Markowski and Burzyńska explain further on, this perspective is supposed ‘to reveal what in the given object constitutes its essence and is not dependent on changing cognitive perspective’ (Markowski and Burzyńska 2007: 87). This is one of the most crucial issues about Husserlian phenomenology: capturing pure beings given to pure consciousness. The scholars also cite Husserl admonishing that it is enough merely to see – but *to see* (perceive) it is necessary to be blind to what is accidental (Markowski and Burzyńska 2007: 87).

At this point we are unable to explain why communist acolytes adopted eidetic reduction as a basis for the so-called manner (of course, without giving credit to Husserl for the idea). The most plausible solution might rely precisely on reductive schemes: eidetic reduction by definition is a reduction to an entity which Eleanor Rosch (e.g. 1973) would call *a prototype*, which has, however, been aprioristically engineered in so-called manner as a posited sign. (cf. above: “an artist shows by means of a painting not only what exists, but also what could exist according to probability and opportunity”). Yet, the prototype construction in Eleanor Rosch’s oeuvre proceeds bottom up: abstracting from phenomena typical features, while the so-called manner prototype works exactly *à rebours*: top down so to speak, that is, starting from the posited signifier and construing its prototypical signified. This type of reduction originally implies a prior combination (syntagmatic chain), or rather concatenation, out of which *essence* is emergent, while in its so-called manner mirror version: deconstruction through contiguity.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> With respect to the aspect of primary iconism Susan Petrilli observes cogently that “similarity is homogeneity that stands out against heterogeneity: ‘homogeneity or similarity’ says Husserl varies in the degree to the very limit of complete homogeneity – that is, to equality without differences. In a relation of contrast with similarity, there more or less always exists a certain degree of dissimilarity. Homogeneity and heterogeneity are the result of two fundamental modes of associative union. Husserl discusses ‘immediate association in terms of ‘primary synthesis’ which enables a datum, a quality to present itself, specifying that an ‘immediate association’ is an association thought similarity” (Petrilli 2010: 268).



**Figure 7**

Catching the moment in socrealist art. Left: a picture reproduced in *PA* by W. Korecki entitled “We demand peace”. Right: Zdzisław Głowacki: Editing the appeal. Marchlewski and Róża Luksemburg (1951) [property of MŚO], left: Jan Marcin Sznacer: Majkowski is reciting (1952). Property of MŚO. Photos: J.F.

As Jakobson pointed out (1960: 439), through the extending of the perceptibility of the sign, the poetic function deepens the basic dichotomy sign – object. So, we can also infer the opposite: the less perceptible and salient the sign, and the more the poetic function is suppressed, the less important the distinction sign – object. The lenition thus, the reduction of the semiotic meaning, is spurred by the fortition of pragmatic means. This is again compliant with the theory of J. Lotman. For example, in his paper co-authored with Piatigorski, the scholars point out to the importance of the existence of opposing forces acting both in language and in culture: in every text, language meaning and text meanings are in constant competition. This translates on a broader plane into two opposing forces acting on culture: semiotizing and desemiotizing processes. These two contrasting tendencies also indicate that texts and non-texts can be juxtaposed with sub-textual meanings. Since the textual meaning, as proposed by Alexandr Piatigorsky and J. Lotman (1975

[1968]: 106ff.), is opposed to purely linguistic meaning, semiotic value would fit into the textual meaning, and would increase or decrease depending on the criterion of the cultural function. Even if the language level as defined by Piatigorsky and Lotman (1975 [1968]) remains unchanged, the semiotic value may change depending on the relational configuration of a given sign. In so-called socialist art, according to those criteria, it is definitely the case of desemiotization: the fortification of the linguistic layers (e.g. emotionally loaded lexemes, multiplication of adjectives in verbal text, appearances of realism and attention to detail in visual texts) which in fact means the lenition of the textual (semiotic) layer.

To showcase some of the aspects discussed so far, Fig. 8 shows samples of interior decoration at the Bistro Aurora in Karpacz (Poland). The décor of the pub was specifically designed to transfer the customer to the “good old days” of socialism.<sup>27</sup> The posters (design by Valerij Barikij), hung amongst other paraphernalia of communism (portraits of communist leaders, press clippings, and even Kalashnikov replicas, etc.), are supposed to be a safe proxy of socialist art. However, they do it on a different cognitive level, at least for those customers who still happen to have a first-hand experience of what socialism was like. There is a visible game effect and a visual pun: the play comes into being by clashing the topic, which is a staple socialist theme (workers on a construction site), with erotic undertones. Such an undertone was one of the primary aspects totally banned from socialist artistic expression.

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<sup>27</sup> However, as shown in Haładewicz-Grzelak – Lubos-Kozieł (2016), this is a staple constructivist move of intersubjective dialogical relations in third space.



**Figure 8**

Part of a decoration of the interior of Bistro Aurora in Karpacz, featuring newspaper clippings and posters by Valerij Barikij (Poland). A contemporary artistic vision based on the socrealist manner of painting. Photos: M.H.-G.

## 5. Peircean extension

*The future ain't what it used to be.*

Previous sections have identified reductions and distortions of semiosis on several semiological levels. Communist discourse of the investigated period was shown to be a syntagmatic manipulation of cognitive processing which results in eliminating the game effect in art and eliminating entropy: a sort of cognitive lenition. What happens semiotically in this type of creative output is, first of all, banning interpretation. This is a straightforward task to achieve in the case of verbal texts, but quite tricky in the media relying on interpretation *par excellence*. Casting

the results against pivots of Peircean theory of categories shows how all those lenitions converge.<sup>28</sup>

Bypassing the precise details and ontological implications of subsequent Peircean reformulations, we can roughly recall here, after Mat Bergman, two canonical definitions where the interpretant is embedded in a general notion of the sign,<sup>29</sup> that is,

(1) A *sign* is a thing that serves to convey knowledge of some other thing, which is said to *stand for* or *represent*. This thing is called the object of the sign, the idea in the mind that the sign excites, which is a mental sign of the same object, is called an interpretant of the sign. (*Peirce EP 2*: 13) as cited in Bergman 2003: 9).

In the later period of Peirce's scholarly output, this definition changed its ontological premises, as Bergman observes:

(2) The essential nature of the sign is that it mediates between its Object, which is supposed to determine it and to be in some sense, the cause of it, and its meaning, or as I prefer to say, in order to avoid certain ambiguities, its *Interpretant*, which is determined by the sign, and is, in a sense, the effect of it; and which the sign represents to flow as an influence from the object ([MS. 318: 158 f.] Peirce as cited in Bergman 2003: 13).<sup>30</sup>

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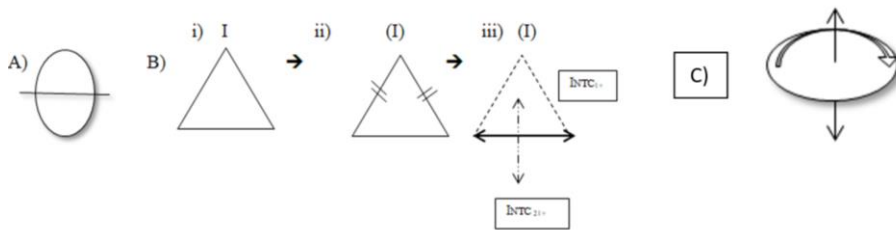
<sup>28</sup> The aim here is solely to apply some canonical aspects of Peircean theory to help to analyze the gathered data. Peircean categories have been more than extensively addressed, theorized, discussed and compared with other frameworks, in particular within this journal (cf. e.g. Ponzio (1985); Grillo (2007), Lee (2016); Eicher- Catt (2016) to name but a few).

<sup>29</sup> See this reference for a longitudinal study of the transformations of the concept of the 'interpretant' in Peirce's works (based on Peirce's paper "On a new list of categories" and the insights from around 1907 documented in the manuscript "Pragmatism"). Also, cf. Ponzio (1985) for the aspect of alterity in the "endless succession of interpretants" (Ponzio 1985: 262). For the present scope, the canonical accepted definition is sufficient.

<sup>30</sup> See also a quote in Eric Grillo: "such a mediating representation might be termed an interpretant, because it fulfills the office of an interpreter, who says what a foreigner says the same thing which he himself says (*CP. 1553* as cited in Grillo (2007: 322)).

For the purposes of this analysis, we can assume that the interpretant is an entity (mental or in processual terms), emerging as a result of an inference. *No* to interpretation entails *no* to subjectivity, hence *no* to the interpretant in the Peircean sense. The loop, redirecting from the signifier back to the sign itself, concocted in that output was possible through prior manipulation of the levels of artistic reception in a form of a game: neutralizing the variegated, intermingling levels of perception. We can postulate that as a result of semiotic interception, the entity of the interpretant is moved somewhere else – blending into secondness.

Yet, the reduced semiotic triangle is not the same as a dichotomist sign of de Saussure. A dyadic Saussurean sign is a complete entity that did not come into being by reduction of anything (cf. Fig. 6).<sup>31</sup>



**Figure 9**

Suggestion of the interpretation of the contiguity reduction.

A) a schematization of a Saussurean sign. B) Reductions evident in the Peircean model. C) the resulting impoverished Peircean sign (own elaboration: M.H.-G.)

The figure is to be understood as follows. A) shows for illustrative purposes a dichotomist sign of de Saussure, which stays unaffected, since at this stage of the research I am not able to model the so-called processes in the Saussurean perspective. In the figure it functions as an exemplar of a holistic, complete paradigm which is dyadic in nature. B) shows: i) a complete

<sup>31</sup> Cf. M. Lotman (2002) for a discussion of the difference in the theory of the sign in the oeuvre of the two contemporaries.

triadic model, on which, ii) lenitive processes (cf. Batesonian double binds) begin to operate. Both relations to the interpretant become delinked. As a result, the semiosis becomes impoverished, iii) reverting back or forward without the I (interpretant). However, the Stalinist communication, as was postulated above, involves also two interceptors, entities dyadically positioned, which could be modelled as a central axis  $INTC_{1+}$  and  $INTC_{2-}$ . Since the hatred of the  $INTC_{2-}$ <sup>32</sup> and the emulation of  $INTC_{1+}$  are the rotors for this endemic microcosm, the final result can be represented as a (circular) platform, rotating between the two remaining Peircean elements: Object and Sign, along the interceptive axis.

There is one more thing to be specified about this resulting impoverished sign platform following Peircean theory. As Deborah Eicher-Catt points out, “Peircean categories are phenomenological (and evolutionary) models of being” (Eicher-Catt 2016: 263). Also, synopsising briefly Peirce as quoted in Yunghee Lee,

firstness ‘is the mode of being of that which is such as it is positively and without reference to anything else [CP 8.328]; secondness is ‘the mode of being of that which is such as it is with respect to the second, regardless of any third’ [CP 8.328]; thirdness is ‘the mode of being of that which is such as it is in bringing a second and third into relation to each other’. [CP 8.328]. We experience the categories in a form of sign under theory of thirdness as a feeling, action and thought. Among the three, firstness is fundamental, involving a feeling as consciousness. Thus, a sign of a possibility as pure Icon which object as a Firstness is manifested in a substantive form of hypoicons: images, diagrams and metaphors [CP 2.277]. (Lee 2016: 169).

Some canonical features of Peirce’s categories are juxtaposed in Table 4.

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<sup>32</sup> E. g. *Nie można przystępować do pracy bez uczucia głębokiego rozgoryczenia i nienawiści do niszczycieli wszystkiego, co dobre*. Gloss: ‘You cannot get down to work without feeling deep bitterness and hatred of the destroyers of all that is good’.



**Table 4**

Juxtaposition of key aspects of Peircean categories

Theory of categories		
Firstness	Secondness	Thirdness
spontaneity, variation, monadic ( <i>quale</i> ) randomness, ambiguity	actuality, dyadic, discreteness	generality, continuity, triadic mode, habits

The juxtaposition makes evident how the previously identified aspects involved in artistic output, against which the communist apparatchiks formulated their most acute charges, converge in the categories of firstness and thirdness. In other words, artistic schools such as naturalism, impressionism and, most of all, formalist painting, are organized mainly within the firstness and thirdness – these two play primary roles in both the reception and ontology of a work of art. Our interpretation posits a reduction to secondness: in so-called realism both firstness and thirdness were made irrelevant (absent/ redundant), by which only secondness remained, or alternatively; secondness spread onto the remaining two qualities. Furthermore, when we abstract the Peircean components and facets of secondness (cf. Table 4), they could all be conflated in the aspect that was before singled out as contiguity, showing pre-eminently both in the figuration (eliminating symbolism, metaphors and leaving only metonymical aspects) and in the dialogical relations in the reception – only direct, contingent transfer of messages is permitted, involving the interception to make sure the correlate is taken care of.

This paper reported a semiotic study (subcategorized in a somewhat Derridean way as *pharmakon semiotics*) of so-called realist art in post-war Poland as indexed by the concept of contiguity. The process that emerged from the analysis, and which recurs in all of the analysed threads, is semiotic lenition due to the manipulation of signing relations. The analysis proceeded in

accordance with the stipulations of Danesi, who reminds us cogently that a key problem of semiotics, psychology, linguistics and the other ‘sciences of the mind’ is to establish how abstract concepts are created and how they are understood. Furthermore, “[r]elated to this problem is the question of which abstractions are more or less ‘productive’ in a culture, i.e. which are used to a greater or lesser degree for representational, ritualistic, and communicative purposes and activities” (Danesi 2004b: 399). We also showed that the schemata in the studied corpus of paintings “derive their functions in relation to other concepts and systems of reference” (Danesi 2004b: 401).

This discussion showed that signage is also a means for pragmatic reduction. First of all, there is need to break the universe down into particular sphericules (cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak 2012) and then, as its negation create new consciousness.<sup>33</sup> In the analysed database, this proceeded through the elimination of entropy, game effect in art, intercalating two interceptions: one as a positive and the other as a negative pole. Interceptor mediation enhances contiguity. On the topological level, this amounted to the prevalence of metonymical expression (relying on contiguity), ideologically backed by eidetic reduction. In the semiological extension to Peircean categories, we interpreted the results as eliminating the interceptor and thus impoverishing the sign representation. The two remaining categories are immediately contiguous, without relating to the interpretant. Finally, the results were cast against the theory of categories, where it was postulated that secondness, as dominated by discreteness centrifugally, involves contiguity that emerged as the ultimate prime involved in the lenitions.

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<sup>33</sup> <la négation déterminée> de la phase precedente (Marcuse 1963: 16). Yet, it should be pointed out that the famous Marxist dialectic goes much further back than even Hegelian thought (<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/hl/hl333.htm#0719>, date of last access: 18.09.2018).

## Appendix

The exhibition *Sztuka musi być zrozumiała dla mas*, apart from showcasing paintings and sculptures of so-called socrealist art from the museum collections, also featured a presentation of a sample of works by a Polish painter who was a contemporary of the artists presented above, Jan Cybis (1897–1972). For a variety of reasons, Cybis did not create according to the socrealist guidelines but followed his own, mostly colourist, manner. This cost him a chair at the Fine Art Academy of Cracow and exiled him to a life of extreme misery throughout the investigated period of Stalinism in Poland.<sup>34</sup> Below we provide a sample of his output from the period from the collections of Muzeum Śląska Opolskiego, which help to enhance the dimension of contrast and showcase the specificity of the material discussed in the main body.



**Figure 10**

Paintings by Jan Cybis from the collections of MŚO. Left: Kwiaty (Flowers// Blumen), canvas, oil// Leinwand, Öl [73 x 54] 1951 MSO/ S/1184. Middle: On the field – Święta Katarzyna // Auf dem Feld – Święta Katarzyna, canvas, oil// Leinwand, Öl [46 x 61] [1952]. MSO/S/1201. Right: A still life with a bottle and a Silesian beer mug // Stilleben mit Flasche und oberschlesischem Bierkrug, canvas, oil// Leinwand, Öl [60 x 73]. 1953. MSO/S/969.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Joanna Filipczyk (2017) for exhaustive historiography of the author.

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