II.3 Phenomenology in German-speaking Areas, Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Poland

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Phenomenology in German-Speaking Areas and in Russia

The contributions of phenomenology to the study and theory of literature are as numerous as they are diverse in their perspectives. For over a century – as long as modern literary theory itself –, phenomenological conceptions of literature have circulated in very different cultural and intellectual contexts, crystallising in highly varied shapes and forms: from the early writings on language and aesthetics of Edmund Husserl to Jacques Derrida's deconstructions of the text or Henri Maldiney's interpretation of the literary work as 'compelling the impossible' (*contrainte à l'impossible*), without forgetting the subtle ontological analyses of Roman Ingarden, the hermeneutic approach of Gustav Shpet, Martin Heidegger's idea of poetry as world disclosure, Jean-Paul Sartre's existential literature or Maurice Merleau-Ponty's fascination for the 'speaking word' (*parole parlante*). This diversity derives of course primarily from the longevity and the dynamic, international nature of the phenomenological movement itself, which spread quickly from its early German epicentre to Russia, Central Europe, France, Italy or North America, and which underwent thereby a constant, radical process of reflexive criticism and deepening of its own methodological assumptions. Because phenomenology constantly evolved and was profoundly transformed by its successive reappraisals and transfers – in particular from pre- and inter-war Germany to post-war France –, it is but to be expected that its approach to literature would mirror this complex development.

Beyond its own internal diversity, phenomenology is also remarkable for the recurrent and essential role it played in the dynamic system of exchanges and transfers that powered both the rise and the evolution of literary theory as a discipline. At various points in time and to varying degrees, phenomenological ideas provided impetuses that were crucial to the development of many of the major traditions of literary theory (Russian and German formalism, structuralism and post-structuralism, materialist dialectics, hermeneutics, reader-response criticism, deconstruction, etc.). To take here but the clearest examples, one can mention the productive confrontation between Russian formalism and Gustav Shpet (Shapir 1994) or Jakobson's evocations of a phenomenological framework to anchor his conception of *poetic language* (Holenstein 1975; Fontaine 1994). Similarly, the conceptual debt owed to phenomenology by the Geneva School, Wolfgang Iser's and Hans-Robert Jauss's reader-response criticism, Hans Blumenberg's metaphorology or Derrida's deconstruction is so obvious that these are more often than not directly categorised as 'phenomenological' (Magliola 1977; Lobsien 2012).

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Neither the manifold of phenomenological ideas on literature nor their contributions to the main schools of literary theory, however, can hide the fact that no autonomous, 'specifically' phenomenological literary theory seems to exist. Although there is no doubt that the likes of Husserl, Heidegger, Ingarden, Sartre or Merleau-Ponty can be grouped together under the banner of 'phenomenology', it is not clear that their writings and ideas on literature are connected by more than their common participation to phenomenology as a general philosophical project. This problem is compounded by the often 'peripheral' nature of most phenomenologists' interest in literature and, especially, in its theorisation. Husserl himself did not write on literature and only very sparingly on the topics of art and aesthetics (Sepp and Embree 2010; Steinmetz 2011). Even in the cases of Heidegger, Sartre or Merleau-Ponty, for whom literature played a much greater role, reflexions on this subject are always subsumed to their wider philosophical project. Only Ingarden seems to have pursued the aim of explicitly formulating or contributing to a 'theory of literature'. Within phenomenology, literature thus often appears only as a particular object upon which to direct (specific types of) phenomenological inquiry and to confirm general phenomenological intuitions about existence, perception, expression, the life-world, Being, etc. Even in the rather lax terms in which one can refer to a 'formalist literary theory', it is thus hardly convincing to talk of a 'phenomenological literary theory' – as is also confirmed by the partial nature of the few attempts to provide an overview of phenomenology's ties with literature and literary theory (Konstantinović 1973; Magliola 1977; Vandevelde 2010; Lobsien 2012).

These preliminary remarks are important insofar as they free us both from the utopian requirement of providing an account of phenomenological contributions to literary theory as a coherent, unified tradition and from the need to consider much of the phenomenological thinking *on* or *about* literature that does not clear the threshold of at least aiming towards a 'systematic' literary theory. Given the specific perspective of this volume, we can turn instead to the moments where phenomenology did encroach upon and contribute to literary theory as such, and where the general patterns of trans-cultural, trans-disciplinary exchanges that characterise both their histories are revealed most clearly. We propose to briefly explore here just three examples of such moments in the German-speaking world and in Russia. Interestingly, none of these examples are particularly well-known, suggesting how much of phenomenology's century-long entanglement with literary theory, along with the precise extent of literary theory's methodological and philosophical debt to phenomenology, all still need to be explored and clarified.

1 From phenomenological aesthetics to reader response theory

Our first example revolves around the early attempts to derive or articulate an 'objective' theory of literature directly from the principles of phenomenology. The name most commonly associated with this approach is of course that of Roman Ingarden, thanks in particular to his seminal work, *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (1931, *The Literary Work*). In many anthologies of literary theory, Ingarden's study is presented as the first consequent application of Husserlian phenomenology to the domains of aesthetics and literature – and, as such, both as the most convincing realisation of a phenomenological theory of literature *and* the most obvious, direct phenomenological source of inspiration for the development of new criticism and reader response theory amongst others. This relatively straightforward intellectual genealogy between Husserl, Ingarden and later phenomenological approaches (Iser, Blumenberg, etc.) is still at work in one of the most recent attempts, made by Eckhard Lobsien (2012), to cast light on the conceptual significance of phenomenology for literary theory. While there can be no doubting the operative reality of the theoretical bond linking Husserl to Ingarden and Iser, Jauss or Blumenberg, however, a closer look reveals this single line to be but the best-known thread of a larger network.

First of all, one needs to remember that Ingarden's was not the first attempt to articulate a theory of literature in the terms of Husserlian phenomenology: such an attempt is to be found much earlier, in Waldemar Conrad's "Der ästhetische Gegenstand: eine phänomenologische Studie" ("The Aesthetical Object: A Phenomenological Study"), published in 1908 in the *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* (*Journal for Aesthetics and the General Science of Art*). A student of Husserl in Göttingen just like Ingarden himself, Waldemar Conrad (1878–1915), explicitly sets out in his essay "to apply the so-called 'phenomenological' method to the field of aesthetics" (Conrad 1908, 71). After a short methodological introduction, which he bases largely on Husserl's *Logische Untersuchungen* (1900–1901, *Logical Investigations*), Conrad turns to a more detailed investigation of various arts, namely music, literature (*Wortkunst*), and painting, in order "to establish the essence of the 'aesthetical object' [*ästhetischer Gegenstand*] in general" (Conrad 1908, 80). The entire second part of his study is devoted exclusively to literature and provides an extensive phenomenological discussion of the essential features of the literary object as such.

The interest of Conrad's little-known article lies not so much in the fact that it predates *The Literary Work*, but in the contextualisation it provides to the project of applying Husserlian phenomenology to the study of aesthetics and literature

also pursued by Ingarden. As mentioned, Conrad's article appeared in the pages of the *Journal for Aesthetics and the General Science of Art*, a journal in which many other early phenomenological contributions to 'aesthetics' or 'literary theory' also feature. One can mention here in particular Moritz Geiger and his important study "Phänomenologische Ästhetik" (1925, "Phenomenological Aesthetics"), but also a raft of other figures such as Maximilian Beck, Antonio Banfi, Fritz Kaufmann and, of course, Ingarden himself. Additionally, the *Journal of Aesthetics and General Science of Art* contains numerous reviews both by phenomenologists and of phenomenological texts, which all contribute to firmly bind the budding phenomenological aesthetics to other contemporary schools and traditions.

In this sense, the *Journal of Aesthetics and General Science of Art* provided a 'privileged' forum for the development of a phenomenological aesthetics (Henckmann 1972, Flack 2016), which itself was 'crucial' to Ingarden's phenomenology of the literary work. Indeed, the principles laid out by Conrad – in particular his focus on the essence of the aesthetic object and its definition as 'ideal' and 'intentional' – were taken up by Geiger and Ingarden and used as a basis for their own theories (Henckmann 1972, Krenzlin 1998). To be more precise, while Conrad provided a first impetus marked by a rather crude Platonic interpretation of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, Geiger and Ingarden sought to improve his definition of the 'intentional aesthetic object', leading them eventually to Ingarden's famous 'stratification model' (*Schichtenmodell*). These improvements, it is important to note, came not from a study of individual literary works, but from reflexions of a philosophical nature on the features of the aesthetic object in general and the phenomenological method itself. In stark contrast to the Russian formalists, for whom philosophical models were only ever but a tool to support their 'specifications' of concrete literary works and traditions, the early phenomenological approach to literature was defined by its focus on clarifying the methodological conditions and principles of an objective study of aesthetic objects in general.

Crucially, in the forum of the *Journal of Aesthetics and General Science of Art*, methodological reflexions on the 'nature of aesthetics' and the 'aesthetic object' were not conducted exclusively in a phenomenological perspective, but in the animating spirit of the two initiators of the journal, Max Dessoir and Emil Utitz. That spirit was defined in turn primarily by two guiding principles: to establish a scientific, objective approach to aesthetics and the general science of art, *and* to do this on the basis of a "disintegration of disciplines" (Henckmann 1972, xv), in which various approaches, ranging from psychological (Volkelt, Hamann) or empirical aesthetics (Lipps) to idealist philosophy (Croce) and of course phenomenology, could be confronted with each other. As such, the development of a phenomenological aesthetics itself was conditioned and strongly influenced by other sources than Husserl. Theodor Lipps and his theory of empathy (*Einfühlung*) is

particularly prominent. But the most interesting figure, the tradition he brings to bear, are Utitz and the School of Brentano.

Like Conrad, Emil Utitz (1883–1956) is an almost forgotten figure. A Jewish-German philosopher and specialist of aesthetics born in Prague, he was a student there of the Brentanians Anton Marty and Christian von Ehrenfels and later became close to the Munich phenomenologist Geiger. In his most important work, the two-volume *Grundlegung der allgemeinen Kunstwissenschaft* (1914–1920, *Foundation of a General Science of Art*), Utitz clarifies one of the fundamental insights of the *Journal of Aesthetics and General Science of Art*, which is to separate the field of 'aesthetics' proper from that of the 'general science of art'. Geiger (1922) provided a positive review of this work in the pages of the *Journal* itself. To a certain extent, although it is inspired primarily by Brentanian psychology, Utitz's aesthetics can even be considered phenomenological (Henckmann 1972) and is on many points hard to distinguish from the theories of Geiger and Ingarden. Indeed – again according to Henckmann – Utitz was among the first to take steps towards an Ingardenian 'stratification model'. In short, Utitz's role in the development of a phenomenological aesthetics confirms that it emerged not solely – and to some extent not even primarily – out of Husserlian phenomenology, but that it also had strong roots in the ideas of Lipps, Munich phenomenology and Brentanian psychology.

All these elements are interesting enough in themselves, revealing as they do both a more intricate and more specifically psychological and realist genesis of Ingarden's literary theory within the phenomenological movement. But the addition of Utitz also allows us to make a further interesting connection. Besides playing an important role for Ingarden, Utitz was indeed also a major influence on the Czech structuralist Jan Mukařovský (Henckmann 1972, xix). This sudden convergence with structuralism is less surprising than it seems when one remembers that Utitz's Brentanian teachers, Marty and Ehrenfels, were also precursors of structuralist thought: Ehrenfels with his contribution to Gestalt psychology, Marty with his distinction between 'categorematic' and 'syncategorematic' terms and concepts of *inner form* (significant also for Shpet). As an aside, Marty's categorematic/syncategorematic distinction – which distinguishes terms that can have a meaning on their own (e. g. nouns), from those who need to be used together with others (e. g. pronouns) – was also important both for Husserl's fourth *Logical Investigation* (itself significant for Jakobson), and for an interesting analysis of the literary notion of 'tension' (*Spannung*) put forward by Gustav Hübener – another Göttingen student of Husserl – which anticipates in many ways Tynianov's conception of *dominant* and *constructive factor*.

Of course, given Utitz's own obscurity and the generally selective interest afforded to Mukařovský – focussing more on his links with the Prague Linguistic

Circle and the Czech Herbartian tradition of aesthetics (Zich, Hostinsky, etc.) – the personal and conceptual ties between Utitz and Mukařovský have not been explored at length. That they share conceptual affinities, however, and that their theoretical efforts converged is borne out in interesting fashion by the fact that, next to Ingarden, they both attracted the interest of none other than the reader response theorists. Mukařovský, as is well-known, was an important influence for Jauss in particular (Striedter 1989, 221–229); as for Utitz, it is worth noting that the only significant re-edition of one of his works, the *Foundation of a General Science of Art*, is to be found in the *Theorie und Geschichte der Literatur und der schönen Künste* (*Theory and History of Literature)* series directed by Jauss, Iser and Max Imdahl. In summary, rather than the bearer of an independent, uniquely phenomenological theory of literature taking its place in a relatively clear sequence of successive, separate schools of literary theory, Ingarden's work thus appears to have constituted a node that was tightly integrated in a complex network of personal and conceptual exchanges that partially collapses our usual distinctions both between disciplines (ontology, aesthetics, psychology, literary theory itself) and intellectual traditions (phenomenology, Brentano School, structuralism, reader response theory).

2 'Formal' phenomenology

Our second example of phenomenology's entanglement with literary theory is its critical encounter with Russian formalism. The main actor of this encounter is the philosopher Gustav Shpet (1879–1937), yet another student of Husserl in Göttingen. As is well documented, Shpet introduced Husserl's thought in Russia (Haardt 1993; Dennes 1998), in particular through his major work, *Iavlenie i smysl* (1914, *Appearance and Sense*, 1991), published in 1914. In this work, Shpet did more than simply present Husserl's philosophy, but already critically engaged with it and developed his own, largely original interpretation. Although nominally focussed on the *Logical Investigations*, Shpet's reading is already markedly influenced by the *Ideas* (1913), a fact that sets him apart from Conrad, Geiger or Ingarden, who remained famously sceptical of Husserl's 'transcendental' turn. Indeed, with its inspirations taken from Hegel, Humboldt, and the tradition of Hermeneutics (Tihanov 2009), the phenomenological theory put forward by Shpet could in many ways not be further apart from the objective and realist project of the *Journal of Aesthetics and the General Science of Art*.

While it set the scene for phenomenology in Russia, moreover, *Appearance and Sense* is not primarily concerned with matters of aesthetics, let alone liter-

ature. It is only in later works, by turning to aesthetics (*Esteticheskie fragmenty*, 1923, *Aesthetics Fragments*) and elaborating on the question of language (*Vnutrenniaia forma slova*,1927, *Inner Form of the Word*), that Shpet put forward a philosophy of poetry and provided elements for a literary theory. These later texts are less explicitly phenomenological, drawing rather on sources such as Humboldt, Marty and Alexandr Potebnia. As Maryse Dennes has shown, however, the main features of Shpet's philosophy (in particular his addition of a third type of 'intelligible' intuition [*intelligibel'naia intuitsiia]* to Husserl's binary distinction), remained stable both throughout his forays into linguistics and aesthetics and his turn to other disciplines and intellectual traditions (Dennes 1998). As such, it is correct to interpret Shpet's later contributions on literature as having an essentially phenomenological origin. That said, one cannot fail to notice that his path towards a theory of literature is one that led him ever further away both from Husserl and from phenomenology itself. His objective, in contrast to Conrad's project, was not to apply Husserlian ideas to aesthetics and literature, but to cement and deepen his own original understanding of phenomenology and his ideas on the poetic function of language.

In itself, Shpet's approach is quite typical of the way most phenomenologists dealt with the problem of literature, namely as a 'peripheral' object or domain whose analysis could strengthen their own interpretation of phenomenological philosophy. Thanks in particular to his confrontation with Russian formalism, however, Shpet's approach does raise a number of very interesting questions as to the relation between phenomenology and literary theory. In effect, it is well known that Shpet and his formal-philosophical school became increasingly antagonistic towards the Russian formalists, refuting some of their major methodological positions – in particular their thrust towards isolating literature or 'literariness' (*literaturnost'*) as an autonomous object of inquiry. There are of course many reasons for this antagonism, which revolves around issues – such as the relation of literature or art to other spheres (social, cultural, political) – that were of particular relevance in the Soviet context of the 1920s. But, as is made clear in a number of articles by Shpet's colleague Rozalija Shor (1894–1939), one of the core disagreements at the heart of the dispute – over the essentially expressive or communicative, social essence of language – could be and was articulated in specifically phenomenological terms.

In a first article, "Vyrazhenie i znachenie: Logisticheskoe napravlenie v sovremennoi lingvistike" (1927, "Expression and Signification: The Logicist Trend in Modern Linguistics"), Shor sets out to critically comment Husserl's *Logical Investigations*, interpreting them in a clearly 'Shpetian fashion' and focussing on the inter-subjective foundations of the essential relation – the 'inner form' – between *expression* (or expressive linguistic sign) and *signification*. As her article makes

abundantly clear, because of the relative autonomy of the expressive sign as an arbitrary symbol, the relation between expression and signification needs to be methodologically explained and guaranteed by a stable, collectively shared socio-cultural tradition of mutual understanding. In a second article, published in the same year, "Formal'nyi metod na zapade" (1927, "The Formal Method in the West"), she then attacks Roman Jakobson, condemning the central role he attributes to the 'disruptive', 'autotelic' function of poetic language, which in her eyes renders 'expression' too independent from 'signification' and from its roots in socio-culturally stabilised forms of linguistic meanings.

Shor's opposition to Jakobson – which she formulates in the language of Husserl's phenomenology and which itself implicates the fundamental way in which the Russian formalists decided to define poetical language, namely through its autotelic, defamiliarising properties focussed on linguistic expression itself – are already puzzling in themselves. It is widely acknowledged, indeed, that Jakobson was sympathetic to the teachings of phenomenology, and particularly those of the *Logical Investigations* (Holenstein 1975). It is also thanks to Shpet himself, during his frequentation of the Moscow Linguistic Circle, that Jakobson was acquainted with phenomenology (Haardt 1993). Furthermore, one could add, Jakobson's conception of language does seem to share many of Shpet's concerns. Nonetheless, it is also clear that one of the central planks of his conception of 'poetic language', its autotelic, self-reflexive nature, is diametrically opposed to Shpet's concept of 'expression', which is always intrinsically tied to 'signification' (by contrast, for Jakobson 'expression' and 'signification' are only functionally related). In that sense, Shor is fully justified in emphasising a radical difference between Jakobson's and her own, 'Shpetian' reading of Husserl.

This confusing picture is further muddled when one takes into consideration the work of Maksim Kenigsberg (1900–1924), a scholar who died prematurely and is absent from canonical accounts of both Russian formalism and literary theory. Kenigsberg was a member of the Moscow Linguistic Circle, specialising in poetry and verse studies. A student of Shpet, he put forward a theory of verse of phenomenological inspiration. Indeed, Maksim Shapir goes so far as to speak of Kenigsberg's "Phenomenology of Verse" (Shapir 1994). The most stunning feature of this phenomenology of verse, which certainly warrants its mention here, is that it is eerily similar to the verse theory put forward at about the same time by Iurii Tynianov (Shapir 1994). As Shapir notes, there is no suggestion of mutual influence between the two scholars, only the clear conceptual similarities of their theoretical conclusions. But even this pure convergence – to which one could add the both phenomenological and almost Tynianovian analysis by Gustav Hübener of the concept of *tension* (Hübener 1913) – is enough to put us in front of the following paradox: how could a formalist theory of verse, elaborated well within the

framework set out by the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (Obshchestvo izucheniia poėticheskogo iazyka, OPOIaZ), end up being similar if not identical with verse theories derived from Shpet's or Husserl's phenomenology – which, as we just saw through Shor's polemic with Jakobson, differ from it precisely on the phenomenological question of the 'expressiveness' or 'poeticity' of language?

Such questions will obviously not find a definitive answer here, but they do pinpoint one crucial fact, already visible in the apparently seamless switching between phenomenological, structuralist and Brentanian traditions observable in the context of the *Journal of Aesthetics and General Science of Art*: methodological and philosophical models were not being applied rigorously or dogmatically by figures such as Geiger, Utitz, Shpet or Jakobson, but used to experiment with new approaches and new definitions of aesthetic, literary and linguistic objects. Points of disagreements on specific aspects, for example the exact nature of the link between poetic expression and signification, did not preclude moving sometime closer together (Kenigsberg, Tynianov), or sometime taking explicitly divergent paths (Jakobson, Shor). All this obviously relativises and problematises the role of phenomenology as a 'conceptual source' or 'framework' for literary theory. Indeed, phenomenology can be seen here playing a flexible, filigrane role – providing impetus all while almost divesting itself of its own principles (for example by veering towards Marty and hermeneutics in Shpet's philosophy) or running in parallel to non-phenomenological theories (such as Tynianov's analyses of verse), but then re-emerging (in Kenigberg's work or in Jakobson's later Prague period) as a sort of constant, fixed conceptual orientation point.

3 'Neo-Kantian' phenomenology and structuralism

One can further trace this persistent, yet complex and flexible presence of phenomenology within the field of literary theory in our third example, which is concerned with the relation between phenomenology and structuralism. Much of the exchanges between these two traditions, of course, happened on the terrains of philosophy of language, linguistics and aesthetics, in Prague, both within the Prague Linguistic Circle – which Husserl famously graced with his presence – and through the Prague School linguists' exchanges with the Brentanian and phenomenological *Cercle philosophique de Prague* (Kozák, Kraus, Landgrebe, Patočka, Utitz, etc). On both these geographical and disciplinary counts, these exchanges fall mostly outside the scope of this chapter. Some of the most interesting insights into the convergences and meeting of structural and phenomenological approaches

to the study of literature, however, are provided by another – yet again relatively 'obscure' – figure, the Dutch philosopher and linguist Hendrik Pos (1898–1955).

A student of Husserl and of the neo-Kantian philosopher Heinrich Rickert in Freiburg, Pos was one of the most significant philosophical interlocutors of the Prague School (Fontaine 1994). He published an important article, "Perspectives du structuralisme" (2013 [1939], "Perspectives on Structuralism"), in the volume of the *Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague* (*Works of the Linguistic Circle of Prague*) commemorating Trubetskoi, in which he comments favourably on the epistemological and explanatory potential of structural linguistics and phonology. Conversely, both Trubetskoi and Jakobson referred to Pos as an important philosopher of language, whom they saw, alongside Karl Bühler and Marty, as having paved the way for phonology (Trubeckoi 1936; Jakobson 1974). In his dissertation, *Zur Logik der Sprachwissenschaft* (*The Logic of the Language Sciences*), published in 1922, Pos had indeed sought to put linguistics on a philosophical footing and, although he did not do this from an explicitly structuralist point of view (his main inspiration and point of orientation was the transcendental idealism of his master Rickert), his efforts led to a theory of linguistics with striking similarities (and important differences) with Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916, *Course in General Linguistics*) (Salverda et al. 1991).

Furthermore, Pos's real claim to being included here derives as much from his relation with the Prague structuralists as from the fact that he is also the author of philological work in which he specifically sought to apply phenomenological methods to the study of literature. In his *Kritische Studien über philologische Methode* (1923, *Critical Studies on Philological Method*), published just one year after his dissertation, he gives a strong phenomenological turn to his neo-Kantian approach, precisely while moving from the study of language in general to the specific investigation of literature and poetic language. In a certain way, Pos's methodological intention in *Critical Studies on Philological Method* seems to match that of Conrad, namely to directly apply the principles of phenomenological philosophy to literary objects. Pos's outlook, however, also differs significantly from Conrad's: most obviously, Pos doesn't rely on aesthetics as an intermediary discipline, starting off instead from the 'linguistic' framework outlined in his dissertation.

The detail of Pos's philologico-phenomenological analyses, which – as far as we can tell – had strictly no impact on the development of literary theory, will only interest us here because of the general framework for applying phenomenology to linguistic and literary objects they formulate and demonstrate. For Pos, linguistic as well as literary or philological inquiry require a double perspective, that of the 'objective scientific fact' on the one hand, and of the 'living, experiencing subject' on the other. Only in their combination, for example by taking into account the objective grammatical description of a language and the subjective experience of

a speaker, is it possible to provide a complete, adequate account of language. This double principle, which imposes a strong neo-Kantian twist to the ideas of phenomenological 'reduction' and 'eidetic description' (Willems 1998), also applies to the analysis of literary facts. In that sense, there is a certain continuity in Pos's approach in *The Logic of the Language Sciences* and *Critical Studies on Philological Method:* which mixes neo-Kantian and phenomenological methodological principles to account both for general linguistic and specifically literary objects.

The strong neo-Kantian element in Pos's phenomenological approach is highly interesting in relation to our two first examples of entanglements between phenomenology and literary theory. On the one hand, the context of the *Journal of Aesthetics and the General Science of Art* was indeed characterised by the almost complete absence in its midst of neo-Kantian approaches, such as for example the philosophy of art of Broder Christiansen, a figure who was of course in turn very important for the Russian formalists. On the other hand, much more than phenomenology or any other philosophical model, neo-Kantianism – and in particular Rickert – seems to have provided the basic methodological framework for Russian formalism, as witnessed either by the indirect influences of Christiansen and Belyi's Rickertian reinterpretation of Potebnia, or by the direct mentions of neo-Kantian epistemology by figures such as Ėikhenbaum or the commentator of Russian Formalism Boris Ėngelgardt. Lest one forget, it is precisely and explicitly to Pos's particular, neo-Kantian brand of phenomenology – even more than to Husserl himself – that Trubetskoi and Jakobson refer in the 1930s, i. e. in the already mature period of Prague structuralism and phonology (Trubeckoi 1936; Jakobson 1974).

All these contrasts and convergences, obviously, cannot lead us here to any kind of strong conclusions on the complex web of relationship between neo-Kantianism, phenomenology and structuralism as competing *or* complementary 'frameworks' of literary theory (or indeed as 'paradigms' for the human sciences). But they do emphasise even more strongly the paradoxical extent to which phenomenology – whether as a general methodological framework or as the provider of punctual insights for example on the expressive structure of language or the nature of the aesthetic object – seems to only have been operative within the field of literary theory through its hybridisation with other perspectives (Brentano, hermeneutics, neo-Kantianism, structuralism, etc.). At the same time, they also highlight how phenomenology accompanied the development of literary theories and approaches much more consistently and persistently than any other epistemological or philosophical traditions. This last observation is only strengthened by looking at the post-war history of literary theory, whose development is even less conceivable without the fundamental inputs of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty or Derrida.

In conclusion, one might be tempted to simply reiterate our introductory remarks, now confirmed by a few more examples: in Germany and Russia, phenomenology played a constant role in the development of literary theory, without however ever crystallising into a literary theoretical tradition or school in its own right. Because literature or indeed aesthetics and the arts were rarely one of its main concerns, phenomenology seems to have mostly evolved independently of literary theory, providing a renewed source of insights on language, perception or experience on the one hand, but also only managing to apply these insights to literary phenomena by crossing over into other traditions and abandoning some of its own tenets on the other hand. In this interpretation, one obtains a slightly more complex and detailed picture, in which phenomenology remains only marginally relevant to literary theory, as an episodic 'dynamiser' and 'provider' of conceptual insights, but also as a mostly independent, fundamentally philosophical tradition.

The entanglements of phenomenology with literary theory we have detailed here, the fact that these entanglements have been mostly ignored and overlooked, and the productive tensions they have revealed even between the different ways of applying phenomenological methods of analysis to literary phenomena, however, point towards another possible interpretation. All this suggests indeed that a better assessment of the transformations undergone by phenomenology in its moments of entanglement with the Brentano School, structuralism or neo-Kantianism on the specific field of literary theory – coupled in particular with a better contextual and comparative analysis of the relation of these moments to each other – would perhaps allow us to inscribe them in a 'coherent historiographical narrative'. This in turn could modify our understanding of what phenomenology itself owes not only to its encounters with literature or poetry, but to its recurrent, if hybrid attempts to theorise literary and poetic phenomena.

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