



John Searle's theory of institutional facts in the context of Roman Ingarden's existential ontology

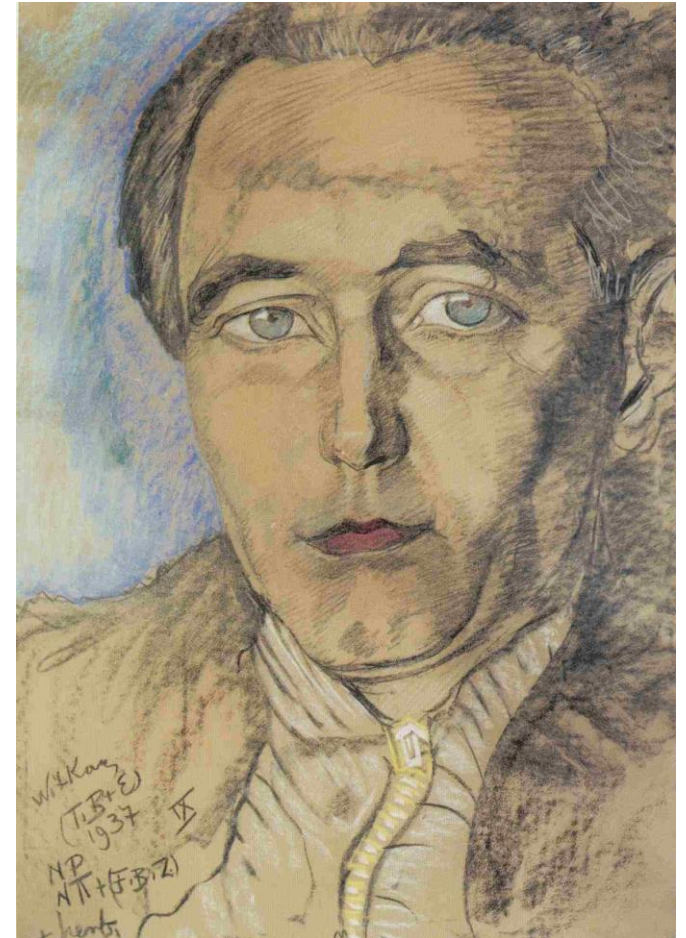
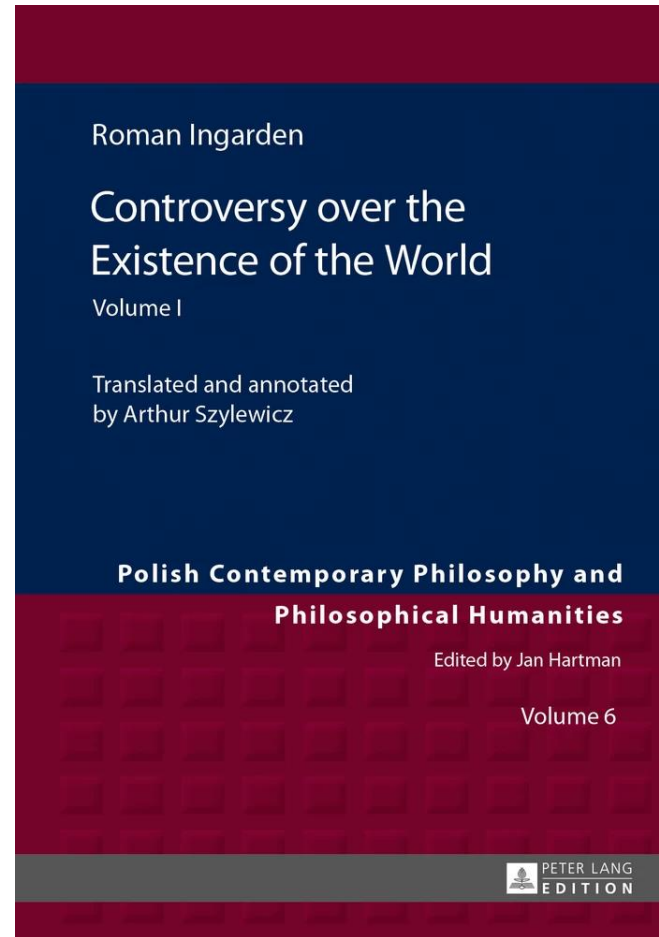
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Agenda

- Ingarden's ontological framework
- Searle's model of social ontology
 - Searle's social ontology as *façon de parler*
 - Case study: the corporation
- The existence of corporations in the context of Ingarden's existential ontology
- Ingarden versus Searle: differences and similarities



Ingarden's ontological framework





Ingarden's ontological framework

- Absolute being
- Ideal being
- Real being
- Purely intentional being

Ingarden's ontological framework

- autonomous - heteronomous (§12, pp. 109-117)
- original - derivative (§13, pp. 118-146)
- self-sufficient - non-self-sufficient (§14, pp. 147-152)
- independent - dependent (§15, pp. 153-54)

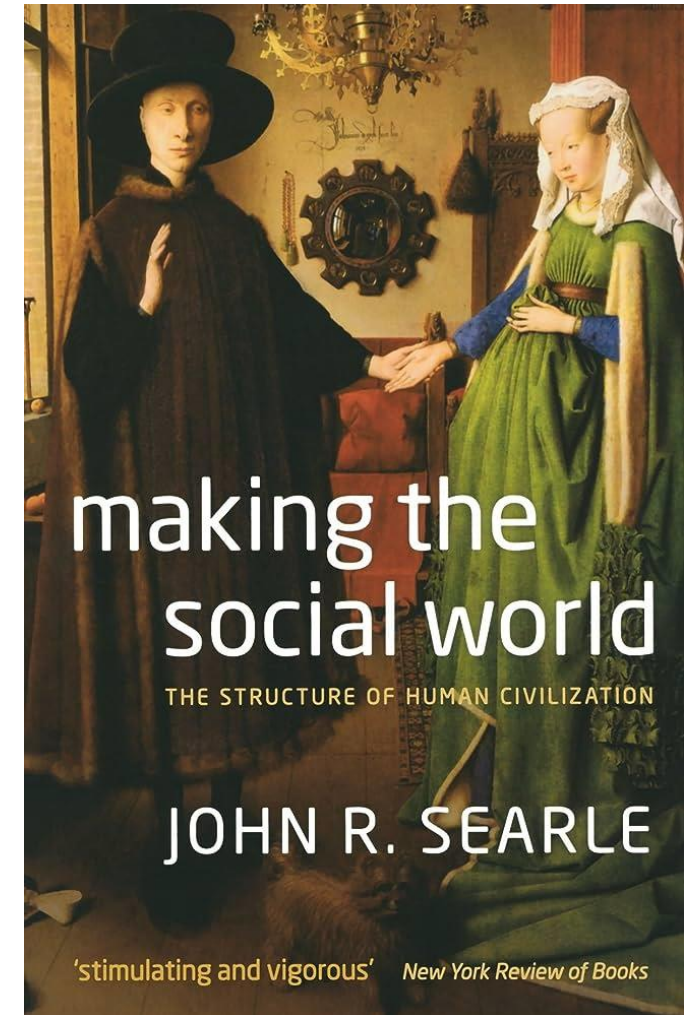
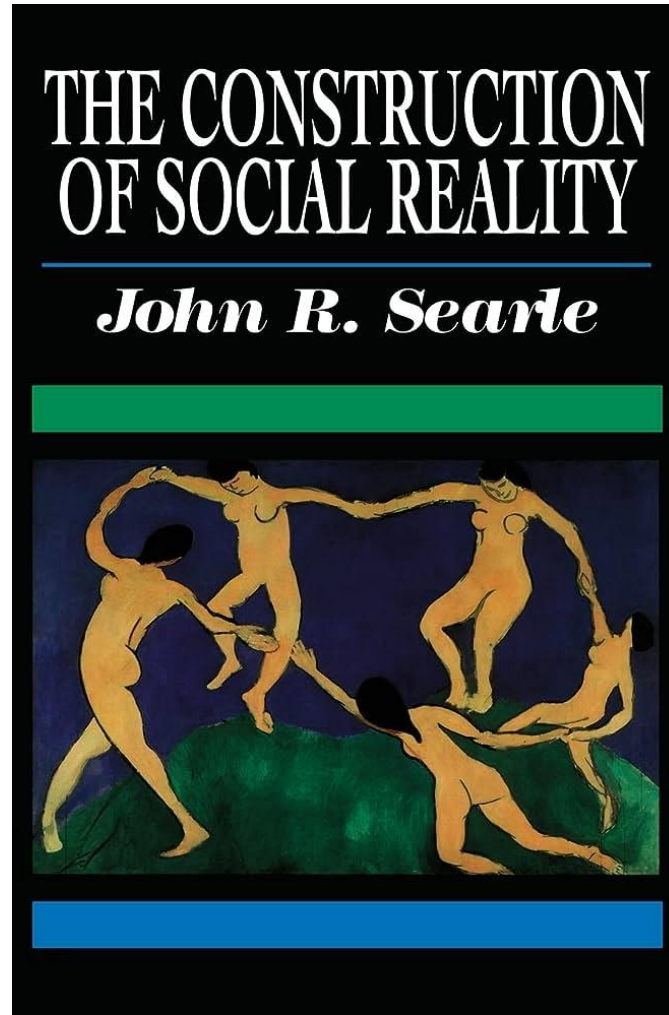
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Purely intentional objects in their existential characterization (Ingarden, 1947/2013, pp. 295):

heteronomous + derivate + self-sufficient + dependent

Searle's
model social
ontology



Searle's social ontology as *façon de parler*

- Barry Smith (2003) points out that, if Searle wants to be consistent in his naturalistic approach to the social realm, he must assume that 'X' and 'Y' in the constitutive rule 'X counts as Y' refer to the same physical object (p. 18).
- Baker points out that since social ontology is based on his philosophy, a subjective ontology, Searle does not deal with social reality from the ontological ground in his reflections, but from the epistemic ground. In other words, when people assign functions to persons or objects, their activities concern the epistemic ground (Baker, 2019, p. 4).

Case study: the corporation

- Searle realizes that the model drawn in *The construction* has its limitations. He noted that it is problematic in reference to the ontological assumptions he made to explain how an entity such as the corporation comes into being. He points out in the paper, in which he wrote with Smith, that speech acts allow for utterance of this type, such as a promise (Smith & Searle, 2003, p. 305).
- On the other hand, for Smith, the that Searle indeed agrees on the grounds of his ontology with the existence of so-called 'freestanding Y'. Thus, this is a kind of entity that ontologically does not coincide with any part of physical reality (Smith, 2003, p. 19)
- In faith, Searle in his second book on social ontology, *Making the social world* (2010), modified his position and wrote that corporations are an example of entities that are characteristic of sophisticated societies. For him, this means that within developed societies, it is possible to produce the kind of entities that do not need a physical substrate for their existence. In his view, such entities come into being by virtue of a declaration.

Case study: the corporation

When one creates a corporation one thereby creates an entity that can do business and that has such positions as the president of the corporation, the board of directors, and the stockholders. When a corporation is created, its status functions accrue to actually existing people, even though the corporation can retain its identity through changes in the people who occupy the various positions of status function within it. (Searle, 2010, p. 98)



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The existence of corporations in the context of Ingarden's existential ontology





Existential characteristics of corporations

- The corporation does not appear as a three-dimensional physical object that would be ontologically autonomous, like a rock.
- It is an entity that derives its existence and its total attributes from the fulfilment of the intentional experience of consciousness.
- For instance, corporations appear as entities that do not exist solely as part of the psyche of the CEO and their employees, nor is their existence reduced to the presence of their headquarters. They seem to come into existence solely by virtue of a declaration, but they are dependent on a physical foundation.

Ingarden *versus* Searle: differences and similarities

	Existential ontology	The model of institutional facts from <i>The construction</i>	The model of institutional facts from <i>the Making</i>
Heteronomous	✓	✓	✓
Derivative	✓	✓	✓
Self-sufficient	✓	X	X
Dependent	✓	X	X
Naturalism	X	✓	✓
Ontological pluralism	✓	X	X

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