

# PREPRINT VERSION

ETYKA 50, 2015

## Axiological Intuitionism in the Lvov-Warsaw School<sup>1</sup>

Anna Brożek, University of Warsaw

The article discusses the metaethical views of the philosophers associated with the Lvov-Warsaw School, namely Tadeusz Czeżowski, Tadeusz Kotarbiński, Marian Przełęcki, and Władysław Tatarkiewicz. The common feature of their views is the presence of axiological intuition, understood as direct cognition of values. The similarities as well as the differences between the views of the mentioned authors are listed. These analyses are preceded by conceptual distinctions between types of intuition and kinds of intuitionism.

### 1. The mystery of axiological intuition

There is something semantically mysterious in the term “axiological intuition.” As Józef Maria Bocheński used to say, where there is a mystery, there is also gibberish. I would express it more carefully. A given expression seems to be mysterious usually because its users feel they know how to use it, but in fact this expression is not understandable to them. There are various reasons for the fact that an expression is not understandable. Firstly, it may happen that such an expression does not have any sense: that it is nonsense. Yet, this is not always the case. Secondly, expressions may be not understandable when they are overfilled with sense. Representatives of the Lvov-Warsaw School called such expressions “notoriously ambiguous.” Such terms are “dangerous” because often one does not know in which sense they are used by a given philosopher in a given context. Of course, mysteriousness is, thirdly, a property of such expressions that their *denotatum* itself is mysterious (unknown, undetermined etc.) for users of these expressions.

---

<sup>1</sup> The article was prepared within the project supported by the National Science Center, Poland (number of the project: 2015/18/E/HS1/00478). I would like to thank Alicja Chybińska, M.A., Prof. Jacek Jadacki, and two anonymous reviewers for their comments which helped me to improve the paper.

# PREPRINT VERSION

Unfortunately, even the philosophers belonging to the Lvov-Warsaw School used such undesirable expressions, despite the fact that they considered precision to be the *sine qua non* condition of good philosophizing.

In this paper, I will concisely analyze the terms “intuition” (in general) and “moral (ethical) intuition” (in particular) and reconstruct the role of some kinds of intuitions in the metaethical views of the members of the Lvov-Warsaw School.

## 2. Intuition: disposition, act, or product

Let us start with noticing the fact of the categorial ambiguity of the term “intuition.” In order to illustrate this, let us examine some definitions of this term. Senses of the term “intuition” in natural (ethnic) languages can be found in dictionaries of these languages. Here are some of them:

*Cambridge English Dictionary*:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) Intuition: (Knowledge from) an ability to understand or know something immediately based on your feelings rather than facts.

The parenthetical suggests that intuition may be both an ability to cognize something and the result of such cognition. The same ambiguity is seen in the following definition:

*Oxford English Dictionary*:<sup>3</sup>

- (2) Intuition: (i) The ability to understand something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning. (ii) A thing that one knows or considers likely from instinctive feeling rather than conscious reasoning.

Here, these two different categorial senses are distinguished in two different formulas. *The Dictionary of Polish Language [Słownik języka polskiego]* shows an even “higher” ambiguity of the term. It registers two common-language senses of “intuition:”<sup>4</sup>

- (3) A feeling of the future, ability of prediction, instinct, anticipation.<sup>5</sup>  
 (4) Not sufficiently motivated but probable judgment about something, a hunch.<sup>6</sup>

2 *Cambridge English Dictionary*, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org> [11.2015].

3 *Oxford English Dictionary*, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com> [11.2015].

4 *Słownik języka polskiego PWN [Dictionary of Polish Language PWN]*, <http://www.sjp.pwn.pl> [11.2015].

5 In Polish: “Wyczucie przyszłości, zdolność przewidywania; przeczucie, instynkt, antycypacja.”

6 In Polish: “Niezbyt umotywowany, ale prawdopodobny sąd o czymś, przeczucie.”

## PREPRINT VERSION

as well as two special meanings of the term:

- (5) [In psychology:] Conviction which cannot be fully justified and is not preceded by conscious reasoning.<sup>7</sup>
- (6) [In philosophy:] Direct, irrational cognition which consists in capturing the truth by the use of inner conviction without the support of reasoning or experience.<sup>8</sup>

Formulas (3) and (6) indicate the fact that “intuition” is also used to signify the act of cognition. It was also noticed by Frazier:<sup>9</sup>

- (7) “Intuition” can refer to the thing intuited as well as the process of intuiting.

It seems that the considered term may be applied to three categories of objects: (1) a disposition to certain cognitive acts, (2) cognitive acts as such, as well as to their (3) results (products). Just like one distinguishes the ability to see, the act of seeing and the product of this act (a visual presentation), one has to distinguish the ability to intuit and the act of intuiting, as well as a product of it.

What are products of intuiting? The quoted definitions call them “judgments,” “convictions” or “things.” The last term is not too adequate, but, at least, it does not make an impression that only cognitive contents may be intuited. Especially in the case of axiological intuition, I would not like to be prejudiced in favor of the results of intuitive acts being true or false; namely I would not want to have to commit to moral cognitivism. In order to avoid speaking of judgments or convictions as the results of acts of intuiting, and in order to avoid an ambiguous “thing,” let us call these results “position.”<sup>10</sup>

7 In Polish: “Przekonanie, którego nie można w pełni uzasadnić, nieopprzedzone świadomym rozumowaniem.”

8 In Polish: “Poznanie bezpośrednie, irracjonalne, polegające na uchwyceniu prawdy dzięki wewnętrznemu przekonaniu, bez pomocy rozumowania lub doświadczenia.”

9 R. L. Frazier, *Intuitionism in Ethics*, [in:] Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, London, Routledge, 1998. doi: 10.4324/9780415249126-L041-1.

10 I use this term in Petrażycki’s sense. See L. Petrażycki, *Nowe podstawy logiki i klasyfikacja umiejętności* [*New Foundations of Logic and Classification of Science*] 1939, in *O nauce, prawie i moralności* [On Science, Law and Morality], Warszawa, PWN 1985, p. 5. As used by Petrażycki, the term “pozycja” is a neologism. It is usually translated into English as “position” (which is also a neosemanticism in English). See also J. Jadacki, *Being and Duty: The Contribution of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Philosophers to the Theory of Imperatives and Norms*, Kraków, Copernicus Center Press, 2013; J. Wróblewski, *Philosophical Positivism and Legal Antipositivism of Leo Petrażycki*, [in:] *Sprache, Performanz und Ontologie des Rechts*, eds. W. Krawietz and J. Wróblewski, Berlin, Duncker&Humbolt 1993, pp. 357–380. It is similar in other languages see e.g. Володимир Титов in Ukrainian (“позиційна логіка”).

### 3. Intuition: unconscious reasoning or direct experience

The first reason for controversy concerning the term “intuition” is its aforementioned categorial ambiguity. The second reason is the fact that this term is used in reference to both (disposition, act, or result of) unconscious reasoning and (disposition, act, or result of) direct cognition.<sup>11</sup> Formulas (1)–(5) show this second kind of ambiguity very well.

The scale of these conceptual difficulties becomes evident when we realize that reasoning (also when it is unconscious, I suppose) is an indirect method of cognition. (By the way, it seems that there is no criterion for distinguishing between convictions which are acquired directly from convictions which are acquired by unconscious reasoning; if one’s reasoning is unconscious, then one is, at the most, aware only of its result, namely of its conclusion).

Intuition understood as unconscious reasoning plays an important role e.g. in heuristics. It is often claimed that many spectacular discoveries are the results of such intuition, which is, however, based on real knowledge possessed by a given person and unconsciously analyzed.

Intuition understood as direct cognition is compared to other, more typical kinds of direct cognition, namely perception (extraspection, sensory cognition) and introspection (cognition of our own mental states).

In what follows, primary attention will be paid to intuition-as-direct-cognition. Various contexts in which the term “intuition” appears in philosophical texts and discussions certifies the fact that this term may be used to refer to any kind of direct cognition which is neither extraspection, nor introspection. As such, the term is semantically very capacious and may have a lot of shades. I am able to throw light on only some of them.

Firstly, despite the fact that intuition-as-direct-cognition is often compared to perception, numerous differences between them are also stressed. Perception has its organs, namely eyes or ears etc. There is no such an organ in the case of intuition. Secondly, the results of extraspection—sense data—are vivid and distinct, and the results of intuition are such to a much lesser degree. It is hard to deny these differences. However, let us only notice that introspection—as a kind of direct cognition—also does not have any special organ and the results of it are also much less vivid than the results of perception.

---

<sup>11</sup> J. Bobryk, *Pojęcie intuicji w psychologii poznawczej* [*The Notion of Intuition in Cognitive Psychology*], [in:] *Wiedza a intuicja* [*Knowledge and Intuition*], ed. A. Motycka, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN 2008, pp. 129–148.

# PREPRINT VERSION

Secondly, intuition-as-(disposition-of)-direct-cognition is considered either as an *a priori* (intellectual) ability or as an *a posteriori* (experiential) ability. This division is to some degree connected with another one: into intuition as an infallible source of cognition (and, thus, a source of certain convictions) and intuition as a fallible source of cognition (and, thus, the source of uncertain convictions).

## 4. The concept of intuitionism

In dictionaries and encyclopedias, intuitionism is usually characterized very roughly. For instance, Dębowski in *The Dictionary of Philosophical Notions* [*Słownik pojęć filozoficznych*] writes:<sup>12</sup>

Intuitionism: the belief that intuition plays a crucial role in cognitive processes.<sup>13</sup>

Compare Runes' formulation:<sup>14</sup>

In general: any philosophy in which intuition is appealed to as the basis of knowledge, or at least of philosophical knowledge.

After such a general definition, a short history of various branches of intuitionism usually appears. This shows how difficult it is to distinguish a concept from the theory in which the concept functions.

In order to explicate the concept of intuitionism as a methodological standpoint (and, in particular, as a metaethical one) let us analyze the problem more carefully.

Speaking generally, a scientific discipline is characterized by the following elements: (1) a given domain of objects; (2) language (vocabulary and language rules) linked with a conceptual scheme; (3) a set of sentences (or more general: positions) expressed in this language and concerning this domain.

In the set of sentences of a given discipline, one distinguishes between the so-called base-sentences (*resp.* base-positions) (in the case of empirical sciences, these are protocol sentences) and *sensu stricto* theories, namely general sentences (*scil.* laws) ordered by logical relations (first of all: by the relation of logical consequence). Theories are confirmed or falsified by their empirical base; one may also predict base-sentences on the ground of laws. In theories, one sometimes distinguishes axioms, i.e. sentences

12 J. Dębowski, "Intuicjonizm" ["Intuitionism"], [in:] *Słownik pojęć filozoficznych* [*Dictionary of Philosophical Notions*], eds. R. Banajski & W. Krajewski, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar 1996, p. 94.

13 In Polish: "Przekonanie o wyjątkowo doniosłej roli intuicji w procesach poznawczych."

14 D. D. Runes "Intuitionism (philosophical)" [in:] *The Dictionary of Philosophy* ed. D. D. Runes, New York, Philosophical Library 1942.

accepted without proof, from which other sentences belonging to the theory may be inferred by the use of determined rules of inference.

This is the situation of empirical disciplines. Formal disciplines do not have an empirical base: they are said to be independent from experience.

Now, a methodologist may ask, what are (or should be) the ways of discovering sentences belonging to the theories (axioms included) and the empirical base, or what are (or should be) the ways of justifying them. By the way, let us stress that the traditional methodological difference between discovery and justification occurs only in the case of theories; I would hazard a statement that in the case of base-sentences, discovery and justification fuse.

Intuition in methodology may be considered as the ability or act of discovering base-sentences, theories, or axioms, as well as the ability or act of justifying base-sentences, theories, or acts.

Methodology has two sides or aspects: the descriptive (saying how research creates science) and the normative (saying what researchers should do in order to make the results of their work good). Intuitionists may simply state that researchers make use of intuition—or may say that they should make use of it.

Finally, one should add that we may have moderate or extreme intuitionism with respect to the fact of whether one states that all positions of a certain kind are discovered/justified by intuition or only some of them.

To summarize, we have the following types of intuitionism:

- Discovery and justification intuitionism (intuition in the context of discovery/ /intuition in the context of justification).
- Base-sentence-creating and law-creating intuitionism (intuition as the source of base-sentences/intuition as the source of laws).
- Descriptive and normative intuitionism (one uses intuition or one has to or should use intuition).
- Moderate and extreme intuitionism (all or only some positions are/should be discovered/justified by intuition).

## 5. Kinds of methodological intuitionisms

After intersecting these divisions, we got the following methodological standpoints:

- Extreme, descriptive, discovery, base-sentence intuitionism: One discovers base-sentences only by intuition.

## PREPRINT VERSION

- Moderate, descriptive, discovery, base-sentences intuitionism: One discovers base-sentences also by intuition.
- Extreme, normative, discovery, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should discover base-sentences only by intuition.
- Moderate, normative, discovery, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should discover base-sentences also by intuition.
- Extreme, descriptive, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One justifies base-sentences only by intuition.
- Moderate, descriptive, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One justifies base-sentences also by intuition.
- Extreme, normative, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should justify base-sentences only by intuition.
- Moderate, normative, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should justify base-sentences also by intuition.
- Extreme, descriptive, discovery, base-sentence intuitionism: One discovers laws only by intuition.
- Moderate, descriptive, discovery, base-sentences intuitionism: One discovers laws also by intuition.
- Extreme, normative, discovery, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should discover laws only by intuition.
- Moderate, normative, discovery, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should discover laws also by intuition.
- Extreme, descriptive, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One justifies laws only by intuition.
- Moderate, descriptive, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One justifies laws also by intuition.
- Extreme, normative, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should justify laws only by intuition.
- Moderate, normative, justification, base-sentence intuitionism: One may/is able to/should justify laws also by intuition.

This is a list of the possible kinds of intuitionism or a net of possible (in the Ingardenian sense) kinds of methodological intuitionisms. Another question is: Which of these possible kinds are realized in constructed metaethical conceptions and why only these ones?

When one considers ethics through the prism of analogy between it and (other) sciences, it is easy to notice that it may be understood either as similar to empirical sciences, or as a formal (axiomatic) discipline. (I omit the cases in which it is not considered to be any systematized discipline at all.) In both cases intuition may be taken into consideration as a source of laws (theories and axioms) and in the first case also as a source of base-sentences.

## 6. Kinds of axiological intuitionism

From the perspective of previous analyses of the concept of intuition and intuitionism in general, let us now look at the concept of axiological intuitionism. It is immediately clear that the application of the concept of intuition to the domain of ethics makes the issue even more complicated.

At first, let me mention some well-known classifications of ethical intuitionism:

(1) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:<sup>15</sup>

Varieties of intuitionism differ over what is intuited (for example, rightness or goodness?); whether what is intuited is general and abstract or concrete and particular; the degree of justification offered by intuition; and the nature of the intuitive capacity.

(2) *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*:<sup>16</sup>

[Intuitionism] takes . . . three forms. Perceptual intuitionism holds that only judgments relating to the rightness or wrongness of particular acts are intuitive. Dogmatic intuitionism holds that some general material propositions relating to the rightness or wrongness of kinds of acts may also be intuited, e.g. that promises ought to be kept. Philosophical intuitionism holds that it is only certain general propositions about what is right or wrong that are intuitive, and that these are few and purely formal.

(3) *New World Encyclopedia*:<sup>17</sup>

Firstly, varieties of intuitionism may be distinguished from one another in terms of differences in the content of what is intuited . . . Secondly, various forms of intuitionism may be distinguished from one another in terms of

<sup>15</sup> R. L. Frazier, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> T. Honderich ed., *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> New World Encyclopedia contributors, "Ethical intuitionism," *New World Encyclopedia*, [http://www.new-worldencyclopedia.org/entry/Ethical\\_intuitionism](http://www.new-worldencyclopedia.org/entry/Ethical_intuitionism) [11.2015].



## PREPRINT VERSION

the generality of what is intuited. Thirdly, various forms of intuitionism may be distinguished from one another in terms of the source of what is intuited. Intuitionists are here divided into two camps: rational intuitionists and perceptual intuitionists . . . Fourthly, various forms of intuitionism may be distinguished according to the degree of justification intuition confers on belief.

(4) *Tropman*:<sup>18</sup>

According to rationalist intuitionists, some moral propositions are self-evidently true, and we can non-inferentially recognize these truths by carefully exercising our rational capacities . . . Motivated in part by a dissatisfaction with a rationalist picture of non-inferential moral knowledge, other intuitionists focus instead on our emotions and other felt responses, such as guilt, anger, resentment, disapprobation, or a sense of injustice, to account for non-inferential moral knowledge . . . For other intuitionists, intuitionism's target moral beliefs are justified by how things appear to the judging subject.

Let us note that: (a) the classification proposed in (2) seems to be a result of the intersection of a few different classifications; (b) the classification into general and concrete intuitionism as well as the classification "with respect to the generality of what is intuited" is an analogue of the previously described division into base-sentence and laws intuitionism; (3) it seems that a division "according to the degree that justification of intuition confers on belief" is in fact a reflection of different views on intuition-disposition mentioned in § (3).

What is specific to ethical intuitionism, is a division with respect to: whether intuited positions are evaluative or normative (or impulsive, I would add) and whether positions are intellectual (rational) or emotional.

## 7. Axiological intuitionism in the circle of the Lvov-Warsaw School.

### Introductory remarks

Axiology was not the main subject of research in the Lvov-Warsaw School. Representatives of this intellectual formation were, first of all, concentrated on logic (broadly understood, including formal logic, methodology, and semiotics), epistemology, and ontology. On the other hand, they were far from avoiding axiological problems or treating them as meaningless. On the contrary, they were aware of the importance of axiological issues, but also that it is difficult to make progress in this domain.

18 E. Tropman, *Variety of Moral Intuitionism*, 'Journal of Value Inquiry' 2014 48, pp. 177–195.

## PREPRINT VERSION

In the Lvov-Warsaw School, there were a lot of moderate axiological intuitionists (in one of the senses of this term). Intuitionistic elements were present in the works of Twardowski, Witwicki, Kotarbiński, Tatarkiewicz, Czeżowski, Ajdukiewicz,<sup>19</sup> and of philosophers referring to the tradition of the School, i.a. Przełęcki. I shall not discuss all their conceptions in detail here. I shall limit myself to analyzing the views of four of them: Kotarbiński and Tatarkiewicz, often called the main ethicists of the Lvov-Warsaw School,<sup>20</sup> as well as Czeżowski, who developed the ideas of Twardowski,<sup>21</sup> and Przełęcki, who developed the ideas of Ajdukiewicz.<sup>22</sup> Some of them used the term “axiological intuition,” and some of them used the concept of intuition but matched it with different terms.<sup>23</sup>

Let us start with some general remarks on their philosophical standpoints.

Twardowski (1866–1938) never finally systematized his ethical views; he used to say that he was “a person looking for ethics.” However, some of his ethical views were explicitly expressed by him, and some of them can be easily reconstructed. In many of his ethical papers, elements of intuitionism appear. Two metaethical ideas are essential to his standpoint: the idea of the independence of ethics and the idea of ethics as a

19 Elements of intuitionism in views of many representatives of the Lvov-Warsaw School were noticed, i.a., by Woleński in chapter 14 “Etyka” [“Ethics”] of the Polish version of his monograph on the School. See J. Woleński, *Filozoficzna szkoła lwowsko-warszawska* [*Philosophical Lvov-Warsaw School*], Warszawa, PWN 1989, pp. 291 (“many representatives of the School accepted intuitionism”), 287 (on Czeżowski), and 289 (on Tatarkiewicz).

20 I intentionally pass over the great work of Maria Ossowska, as well as of Władysław Witwicki and Izydora Dąbska, who need separate treatment (planned). English readers can learn about Ossowska’s ethical views from I. Lazari-Pawłowska, *Maria Ossowska as a Moral Scientist*, ‘Dialectics and Humanism’ 1977 4, pp. 197–208.; Witwicki’s main ethical views are presented by Stefan Konstańczak, *Independent Ethics in Poland*, ‘Ethics and Bioethics (in Central Europe)’ 2013 3, pp. 139–147. Some of Dąbska’s papers on ethics were recently translated into English and published in Izydora Dąbska, *Knowledge, Language and Silence*, Leiden & Boston, Brill & Rodopi 2016. The volume contains also an article on these views written by the editors. The overall picture of Polish ethics in the 20th century—see for instance: L. Gawor and L. Zdybel, *Elements of Twentieth Century Polish Ethics*, in *Polish Axiology: The 20th Century and Beyond*, ed. S. Jedynek, Cardinal Station (Washington), The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy 2005, pp. 37–61.

21 Some of Twardowski’s ethical papers were recently published in English in K. Twardowski, *On Prejudices, Judgments and other Topics in Philosophy*, Amsterdam, Rodopi 2014. See also K. Twardowski, *Etyka* [Ethics], Toruń, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek 1994; J. Jadacki, *Etyka Kazimierza Twardowskiego* [Kazimierz Twardowski’s Ethics], ‘Kwartalnik Filozoficzny’ 1993 21, pp. 170–183; D. Łukasiewicz, *Kilka uwag do metaetycznych poglądów Kazimierza Twardowskiego* [Some Remarks to Kazimierz Twardowski’s Metaethical Views], ‘Etyka’ 2004 37, pp. 215–226; W. Rechlewicz *Nauka wobec metafizyki. Poglądy Kazimierza Twardowskiego* [Science against Metaphysics. Kazimierz Twardowski’s Views], Kielce, Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego 2015, especially chapter 9, “Poglądy etyczne” [“Ethical Views”], pp. 501–591.

22 For Ajdukiewicz’s ethics—see: M. Przełęcki, *Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz o poznawczej roli uczuć* [Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz on Cognitive Role of Feelings], in *O rozumności i dobroci* [On Rationality and Goodness], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper 2002, pp. 175–180.

23 For instance, Kotarbiński often used the term “conscience.” Sometimes this term is used in order to refer only to the faculty of evaluation of our own acts. It seems, however, that Kotarbiński used it in a broader sense.

## PREPRINT VERSION

scientific discipline. These ideas were spotted by his students, mostly Kotarbiński and Czeżowski.

The ethical system of Kotarbiński (1886–1981) is considered in Poland as one of the most original ethical systems in the 20th century. He was in the small group of Twardowski's pupils that proposed some elements of normative ethics, namely the system of the so-called ethics of the reliable protector. The metaethical ideas of Kotarbiński are not a coherent whole. Here, I will concentrate on those elements of his doctrine which show him as a representative of a kind of intuitionism.<sup>24</sup>

Besides having created some terrific ethical miniatures, Czeżowski (1889–1981) was the author of metaethical studies in which he analyzed different kinds of ethical systems, as well as the problem of the ontological status of values and the logical status of axiological sentences.

Tatarkiewicz (1886–1981) was not a direct student of Twardowski, but he considered himself to be very close to Twardowski's group. He used to say that if he was to be considered a philosopher, the domain of his strictly philosophical considerations was the theory of values. The most evident manifestation of his intuitionism is his paper *O bezwzględności dobra* [*On the Absoluteness of Good*].<sup>25</sup>

Ajdukiewicz (1890–1963) reveals his metaethical positions in his text *Postępowanie człowieka* [*Human Behaviour*].<sup>26</sup> His short comments about the cognition of values were later developed by Przełęcki (1923–2013). The latter called himself “the last Mohican of positivism” and it is his logic of empirical theories which guaranteed him a lasting position in philosophy. However, he differed from classical neopositivists by claiming that outside of scientific knowledge, there is axiological knowledge and that axiological properties—values—really belong to objects and are not only ascribed to them. He was convinced that evaluative sentences are true or false, even if evaluative predicates are vague to a greater degree than descriptive predicates are. The role of intuition in his metaethical and ethical views was marked by the title of his book: *Intuicje moralne* [*Moral Intuitions*].<sup>27</sup>

Now, let us look at their views more carefully.

24 However, Czeżowski saw mostly deontic and principal elements in Kotarbiński's views. One may rightly say that his ideas evolved.

25 W. Tatarkiewicz, *O bezwzględności dobra* [*On Absolutness of Good*], [in:] *Droga do filozofii i inne rozprawy filozoficzne. Pisma zebrane* [*The Road to Philosophy and Other Philosophical Dissertations*]. Vol. I. Warszawa: PWN 1971, pp. 211–289.

26 K. Ajdukiewicz, *Postępowanie człowieka* [*Human Behaviour*], [in:] *Język i poznanie* [*Language and Cognition*], vol. I, Warszawa, PWN 1960, pp. 317–364.

27 M. Przełęcki, *Intuicje moralne* [*Moral Intuitions*], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper 2005.

## 8. The generality of intuitions

There is no doubt that for Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, and Przełęcki—intuition is a source of *a posteriori* individual moral positions.

Let us start from Kotarbiński. According to him, an ethical criterion is established in two stages, where the first is based on intuition. At this stage, one intuitively recognizes acts which are evidently good (honorable) and evidently bad (shameful):

An [ethical *axiom*] . . . has the form of statements that this-and-this is evidently honorable and that-and-that is evidently shameful. Such statements are acquired by a researcher by means of observation of various kinds of acts. . . . It is an empirical procedure to the same degree as the act of examining with one's own sense of taste which liquids are sour. The method of discovering which features are common to all types of honorable or shameful acts is also empirical.<sup>28</sup>

Let us stress that the term “axiom” (in Polish: “pewnik”) is used here in a specific sense. Kotarbiński did not mean by it a basic sentence of an axiomatic system but rather sentences about individual facts which cannot be refuted in the face of (specific) experience. Kotarbiński's examples of such evidently honorable and evidently shameful acts are as follows:

Good people adopted an orphan and raised him with great care as their own child. Of course, they deserve respect. A bad man, a sadist or home tyrant, abuses his children, hits them and abuses them without any reason. He is rightly condemned for it.<sup>29</sup>

In his description of ethical systems, Czeżowski takes a neutral, descriptive attitude. However, he indirectly reveals his sympathy for the intuitionist metaethical standpoint:

A starting point of axiological ethics is axiological experience which gives us premises in the form of singular elementary evaluations: “This is good.” Such evaluations are analogous to perceptual judgments: the latter appear on the basis of a presentation of the object in perception when we pay attention to it; the former are produced when we direct at them a specific evaluative attitude which is very well known to moralists.<sup>30</sup>

28 T. Kotarbiński, *Zasady etyki niezależnej* [*Principles of Independent Ethics*], [in:] *Studia z zakresu filozofii, etyki i nauk społecznych* [*Studies in Philosophy, Ethics and Social Sciences*], Wrocław, Ossolineum 1970, pp. 195–206.

29 Ibidem, p. 196.

30 T. Czeżowski, *O etyce niezależnej Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego* [*On Tadeusz Kotarbiński's Independent Ethics*], ‘*Studia Filozoficzne*’ 1976 3, p. 28.

## PREPRINT VERSION

Instead of the term “intuition,” Czeżowski uses the term “axiological experience” here. An analogy of axiological and perceptual cognition, marked by Kotarbiński, is much more evident here. It is similar in Przełęcki who stressed:

In this intuitionist conception of axiological cognition, it is essential that the final instance of this kind of cognition is the voice of our direct intuition of values; it refers to singular facts, given to us in all of its concreteness and definiteness.<sup>31</sup>

Here, intuition is something that accompanies a “standard” perception of evaluated objects.

By all of these three authors, primary evaluations expressed in singular positions are then generalized.

In the case of Kotarbiński, during the second step of establishing a moral criterion, one analyzes the gathered acts in order to find the criterion of shamelessness and honorability. This procedure is compared by him to the procedure of establishing the criterion of being-sour in chemistry or being-yellow in physics:

People know very well the sensation which they experience when they say about certain liquids that they are sour. For ages they must have asked themselves the question which bodies are sour. In the first phase of investigation, several such bodies must have been identified by separating them from the totality of the bodies found in the surroundings, e.g. by pointing to the juices of certain fruits. Then, chemistry took over and established that there was a similarity of structure in the molecules of sour bodies. The same with colors. . . . Now I propose a similar method, let us turn around, so to speak, and find in our surroundings what is honorable and what is despicable, just as it was done when yellow things were identified.<sup>32</sup>

The inductive generalization of axiological experience was characterized by Czeżowski as follows:

Singular elementary evaluations are generalized, again similarly as with perceptual judgments. This generalization leads to establishing criteria of evaluation. Stating that objects of the same evaluation have in several cases the same feature is a basis of the generalization that every object with this property should be evaluated.<sup>33</sup>

31 M. Przełęcki, *Poza granicami nauki. Z semantyki poznania pozanaukowego* [Beyond the Limits of Science. On Semantics of Extrascientific Cognition], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo PTS 1996, p. 38.

32 T. Kotarbiński, *Zasady etyki niezależnej*, p. 195.

33 T. Czeżowski, *O etyce niezależnej Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego*, p. 163.

In Przełęcki's paper, we read:

Starting from singular moral evaluations based on direct moral experience, we come by induction to moral generalizations defined by some empirical properties. On the basis of this kind of generalization, we may further qualify some acts with respect to morality, even if they are not given to us in direct moral experience. It is enough if we know that these acts fall under the empirical characteristics contained in these generalizations.<sup>34</sup>

It seems that these inductive generalizations by all three authors have the form of the following quasi-law:

$$\forall x (Dx \rightarrow Mx).$$

where "D" is a descriptive predicate and "M" is a moral predicate. Being-D is an empirical property sometimes called "a moral criterion." Czeżowski writes openly:

The criterion of evaluation is always a certain empirical property, while the value stated in evaluation is not empirical.<sup>35</sup>

Przełęcki makes it even more evident:

According to the metaethical standpoint supported by us, the dependence between "emotional qualities" and empirical properties . . . has not a definitional but rather a substantial character.<sup>36</sup>

Tatarkiewicz would agree with Przełęcki and Czeżowski that good is not an empirical property. He wrote:

It is not possible to deductively infer sentences about values from sentences about facts. . . . It is not possible to make an induction about values on the basis of such primitive sentence, or of which not one concerns value.<sup>37</sup>

However, the problem of the generality/singularity of intuited positions is presented differently by him. This is where he sees the role of intuition:

Sentences about good and evil which we accept as primary sentences, namely sentences without proof, are not sentences about concrete things but about some simple properties. . . . Sentences about the value of simple properties are

34 M. Przełęcki, *Sens i prawda w etyce [Sense and Truth in Ethics]*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo PTS 2004, p. 91.

35 T. Czeżowski, *O etyce niezależnej Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego*, p. 163.

36 M. Przełęcki, *Sens i prawda w etyce*, p. 3.

37 W. Tatarkiewicz, *O bezwzględności dobra*, p. 268.

## PREPRINT VERSION

accepted without proof not as assumptions of an axiomatic theory, which may be arbitrary, if only they are not contradictory. We accept them as “intuitive” axioms.<sup>38</sup>

Examples of these “intuitive” axioms that Tatarkiewicz gives are taken from the history of philosophy (from Plato, in particular), for instance: “Prudence is good” [“Rozwaga jest dobrem”], “Impiety is bad” [“Bezbożność jest złem”].

It seems that Tatarkiewicz treats intuition not as a way of recognizing values of concrete objects but as a way of (intellectually?) recognizing values understood as abstract but simple properties, such as prudence-in-general. Simple properties are absolutely and evidently good or bad. However, objects are usually compound and contain both good and bad properties.

Moreover, goodness has to be distinguished from rightness: the latter depends on the circumstances:

Let us take, for instance, a property of nobility. It is naturally good; whenever it appears in any act, this act is good with respect to it. But is such an act always also right? No, an act possessing this property may be right but also may not be right. One may cause by a noble act, i.a. noble forgiveness, more evil than good.<sup>39</sup>

## 9. Some ontological background

Kotarbiński did not provide any deeper analysis of what values are. As a reist, he preferred to speak about valuable objects and axiological sentences stating that such-and-such objects are valuable. Przełęcki, a student of Kotarbiński, was also filled with the reistic spirit. However, he makes some ontological comments:

Stating particular axiological facts, which are different from all empirical facts, these expressions assume a certain ontology, which—apart from empirical, descriptive properties—allows extraempirical properties: besides “qualities,” it allows “values.” These assumptions entail some epistemological standpoint. Perception is considered the source of cognition of every empirical property. It, of course, does not suffice as a source of cognition of these extraempirical properties, in particular, of ethical values.<sup>40</sup>

38 W. Tatarkiewicz, *O bezwzględności dobra*, pp. 269, 271.

39 W. Tatarkiewicz, *O bezwzględności dobra*, p. 284.

40 M. Przełęcki, *Sens i prawda w etyce*, p. 24.

## PREPRINT VERSION

For both Kotarbiński and Przełęcki, the basic objects of moral values are human acts. (Dogmatic reists should say here, of course, that human beings act morally well/badly.) These acts, apart from standard, descriptive properties, known by standard experience, possess some additional, “axiological” characteristics which are revealed to us in axiological experience. Unfortunately, the difference between the descriptive and the axiological properties of acts is not characterized in detail. Let us only repeat that in Przełęcki there is a substantial (Polish: *rzeczowa*) dependence between the standard perceptual properties of object and axiological properties.

Czeżowski provided a more subtle ontological background to his theory of moral cognition. The point of departure for him is the analysis of the difference between descriptive and axiological properties. The explanation of this difference is ontological: values are not properties of objects but modes of existence of objects:

Indeed, such qualifications as “beautiful” or “good” differ fundamentally from such as “round,” “colourful,” “loud” etc., while they belong to such qualifications as “existing,” (“actual”), “possible,” “necessary,” “possible” etc. In philosophical terminology, the latter received the name “transcendentalia,” that is qualifications lying beyond the range of categories . . . Existence is asserted in the sentences “It is true that,” and similarly, other transcendentals are asserted in the sentence “It is necessary that,” “It is good that,” “It is beautiful that” etc. The adjectives “true” and “good” are morphologically similar to predicates but they are not predicates syntactically since they correspond to the sentence forming the functors mentioned above.<sup>41</sup>

Values are modes of being similar to *transcendentalia*. In such a standpoint, it is not surprising that they are not cognizable by senses.

For Tatarkiewicz, values are properties, and objects are characterized as valuable with respect to these properties. Tatarkiewicz proposes some simple approach of dependencies between values and the objects possessing them. An object with only good properties—or a majority of such properties—is good; an object having only bad properties—or a majority of such properties—is bad. At the same time, it is not excluded that an object with a certain good property is not good, and that an object with a certain bad property is not bad.

---

41 T. Czeżowski, *What are Values?*, in *Knowledge, Truth and Values*, Amsterdam, Rodopi 2000, pp. 188–189.



## PREPRINT VERSION

## 10. (Un)certainty of moral intuition

The directness of cognition is often connected with its certainty. It is not so in the case of moral intuition—at least according for Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, and Przełęcki.

We read in Kotarbiński:

[“Deserving respect” and “deserving contempt”] does not mean simply “respected” or “contemned,” because we may be wrong in evaluations. We may respect something that deserves contempt or feel contempt for something that deserves respect.<sup>42</sup>

The voice of conscience, which is clear in simple situations, starts to become gibberish in the face of the complications of human relations, which is presented to it by the maturing knowledge about these complications. In many situations, our conscience, which is adequately informed about the complicated situations, leaves us without an answer. We are left without any answer as to what to do in order to act as a noble man.<sup>43</sup>

Czeżowski writes in a similar spirit:

[Elementary evaluations] are—analogously to perceptive judgments—somehow evident, but they may be mistaken and are checked by repetition of the same kind of evaluations of various conditions. . . . Ethics understood in this way is not static; it develops with the development of social relations; criteria of goodness are changeable; they are constantly controlled by enriching axiological experience.<sup>44</sup>

The same position was held by Przełęcki:

Judgments based in direct intuition of values may be false. Our intuitions of values are not infallible. They lead to truth only in favorable conditions, similarly to our sensory perceptions. However, here it is difficult to say what this optimality of conditions consists in, and it is more difficult to practically realize them.<sup>45</sup>

It seems that—for all these authors—evidence does not guarantee certitude.

42 T. Kotarbiński, *Zasady etyki niezależnej* [*Principles of Independent Ethics*], *Studia z zakresu filozofii, etyki i nauk społecznych* [*Studies in Philosophy, Ethics and Social Sciences*], Wrocław, Ossolineum 1970, p. 194.

43 T. Kotarbiński, *O istocie oceny etycznej* [*On the Essence of Ethical Evaluation*, in *Wybór pism* [*Selected Works*], vol. I, Warszawa, PWN 1957, p. 705.

44 T. Czeżowski, *O etyce niezależnej Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego*, pp. 28, 31.

45 M. Przełęcki, *Poza granicami nauki. Z semantyki poznania pozanaukowego*, p. 39.

Evidence of intuition was also stressed by Tatarkiewicz. However, it seems that he connected it with certitude:

Our intuitions speak for the fact that these sentences are obvious: they are true and do not need any justification. Pleasure is good and distress is bad, we know it with all evidence. It is not possible to accept as true a sentence that pleasure does not have positive value or that it possesses negative value.<sup>46</sup>

## 11. Emotional intuitions and cognitivism

Most of “ethicists” from the Lvov-Warsaw School emphasized the role of emotions in the cognition of values, but they specified this role in a different manner.

Kotarbiński introduced the concept of emotional evaluations and contrasted it with the concept of utilitarian evaluations. The latter appears when “valuable” means simply “being suitable for something,” “necessary to achieve a certain goal.” Emotional evaluations express an emotional attitude towards the evaluated object.

Kotarbiński’s idea—shared and developed by his colleagues and pupils—was that this emotional attitude reveals certain axiological truths. Kotarbiński (in accordance with the old European tradition) calls them sometimes poetically “evidences of the heart” (in Polish: “oczywistości serca”).

Przełęcki—a student of both Ajdukiewicz and Kotarbiński—mentions, however, the former philosopher as the predecessor. Przełęcki stresses that in his conception, intuition is not any mysterious ability of the mind: he only ascribes specific cognitive function to the ability commonly accepted by philosophers and psychologists, namely the ability of emotion:

Some postulate the existence of some specific cognitive power which is, however, refuted by representatives of other metaethical standpoints as unjustified philosophical speculation. An answer which I am willing to accept has another methodological status. I do not postulate any specific mental faculty, but I ascribe a specific philosophical interpretation to a certain commonly accepted psychical faculty. This faculty, to speak concisely, is our ability for emotional experiences, interpreted as a certain ability of not only emotional but also cognitive power. Emotions are the ultimate source of cognition of all values, including moral ones.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> W. Tatarkiewicz, *O bezwzględności dobra*, p. 271.

<sup>47</sup> M. Przełęcki, *Sens i prawda w etyce*, p. 25.

## PREPRINT VERSION

The conception of “emotional intuition” (let us call it so) situates this idea dangerously closely to the emotivists’ standpoint. However, Przełęcki sees a crucial difference between his metaethical standpoint and that of the emotivists:

This common element [of the emotivists’ and Przełęcki’s metaethical position] is the agreement that axiological predicates are expressions of our emotional-volitional states and that these states are an essential aspect of our axiological convictions. The basic difference lies in the interpretation of these states. . . . I am inclined to ascribe the status of cognitive states to them, The emotional character of these experiences does not exclude, in my opinion, such an interpretation of them . . . On the ground of such an interpretation of emotional experience, equating some axiological reactions with some emotional experiences does not make them devoid of cognitive function. As an emotional experience, our moral reaction to a given act is a reaction which “reveals” to us a moral value which exists in this act; this act appears to us as cruel or merciful, shameful or noble. Thus, it is a certain cognitive experience which enables us to identify directly the value of a given act.<sup>48</sup>

While Przełęcki considers emotion to be something which “reveals” values to us, Czeżowski did not deny the presence of emotions in axiological experience but he was convinced that they appear after an evaluation which is prior to them:

Evaluations appear in our inner experience as the constituent of aesthetic feelings, e.g liking, admiration etc. or of the feelings of value, such as joy or, conversely, anger fear, or terror. These feelings are complex phenomena. For instance, the liking induced at the sight of a beautiful flower is based on the representation of that flower, which is given to me either in perception, or in recollection, or even in pure fantasy. That representation, when I assume the aesthetic stance, becomes a motive for an evaluation—not necessarily expressed consciously in the sentence ‘This flower is beautiful but often experienced only as a vague sensation. After that there comes an emotional quality, i.e. specific pleasure, which completes the whole experience. . . . The objectivist . . . regards the evaluation as a primary constituent which conditions the appearance of an agreeable or disagreeable feeling which pervades the whole experience. . . . I do not consider something beautiful because I like it or good because it satisfies me. On the contrary, the liking or pleasure appear only on the ground of the evaluation in which I ascertain that something is beautiful or good.<sup>49</sup>

48 M. Przełęcki, *Intuicja wartości jako rodzaj poznania* [*Intuition of Values as a Kind of Cognition*], [in:] *Intuicje moralne* [*Moral Intuitions*], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper 2005, pp. 91–92.

49 T. Czeżowski, *What are Values?*, p. 188.

# PREPRINT VERSION

It seems that in Przełęcki the moral emotion which is attached to the perception of certain acts “reveals” the value of those acts and motivates the issue of moral judgment, while in Czeżowski emotion appears after an evaluation, which is based on a presentation of the evaluated object. Is there any way of answering the question, what is first: moral judgment (position) or moral emotion?

Czeżowski’s conception of relation between emotions and evaluations was commented by Hołowka as follows:

It is doubtful whether . . . [evaluations] appear before emotions. It is commonly believed that values ride ‘piggyback’ on emotions, not the other way round. Czeżowski gives no explicit argument for the opposite claim. All these reservations must make us suspicious of Czeżowski’s contention that values are as real as observable objects.<sup>50</sup>

Let us notice that Hołowka also gives no explicit argument for the claim that emotions precede evaluations (except of *argumentum ad populum*). Czeżowski was probably convinced that only his view could escape from relativism on the one hand and dependence on ethics on the other hand. Przełęcki was of the opposite opinion but made a reservation that only an appropriately shaped intuition-ability delivers emotions which rightly reveal values to us.

## 12. Shaping intuition

In order to enable intuitionism to support other metaethical standpoints, such as objectivism and absolutism, it has to be supplemented by an assumption of the general agreement of people’s intuition; this assumption was, speaking generally, made by the members of the LWS. However, none of the respective philosophers treated intuition as something ready and invariable in time.

Czeżowski describes the evolution of intuition-ability as follows:

The ability to evaluate can be perfected by practice as much as attentive observation, like the skill in using a micro-scope or the ability to differentiate the murmurs by a doctor who performs auscultation. Skillful evaluation results from elimination of faulty responses.<sup>51</sup>

50 J. Hołowka, *The Project to Create Empirical Ethics*, [in:] *The Vienna Circle and the Lvov-Warsaw School*, ed. K. Szaniawski, Amsterdam, Rodopi 1989, p. 200.

51 T. Czeżowski, *O etyce niezależnej Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego*, p. 28.

## PREPRINT VERSION

Kotarbiński wrote:

I persist with the thesis on basic identity [of conscience] in various nations and in various historical periods. I am convinced that basic situations in which this voice is created repeat permanently. Everywhere and always one has to and one will have to protect wards, gaining respect for that or gaining contempt for cowardice, stagnation, torpor, or selfishness. . . . All deviations are placed within the basic framework which is permanent.<sup>52</sup>

Przełęcki analyses the problems of the source, commonness, and shaping of intuitionistic metaethics while refuting the criticism of intuitionism. According to him, the discrepancy of moral evaluations is the most serious objection to this metaethical standpoint. Przełęcki stresses, firstly, that (1) the concept of infallibility concerns solely these moral judgments in which only quasi-observable (not theoretical) moral predicates occur; (2) some of the differences in evaluations are caused by differences in accepted descriptive sentences, and (2) if there are real, basic differences in evaluations, they may be caused by different shapes of moral intuition. According to Przełęcki, the unquestionable fact that moral intuition is shaped by our environment does not interfere with intuitionism:

This or that genesis of ethical convictions does not logically exclude any epistemological status of them. The fact that this or that factor influences our moral beliefs, does not discredit their intuitive interpretation.<sup>53</sup>

A strong argument to support this view is taken from analogy with perception. There is no doubt that our ability to see colours and shapes evolves in time, is formed by our environment and is to some degree culturally dependent. But (almost?) nobody denies the directness or obviousness of perception (at least in the case of simple qualities as colours, shapes etc.).

Another thing stressed by Przełęcki is the difference between the genesis and the essence of intuitive cognition:

The genesis of science, the circumstances of its appearance and development is generally known. It is known how various factors—of a psychological and sociological nature—influence the content and acceptance of scientific theses. We also know what instrumental function is played by science as an element of

52 T. Kotarbiński, *Istota oceny etycznej* [*The Essence of ethical evaluation*], [in:] *Studia z zakresu filozofii, etyki i nauk społecznych* [*Studies in Philosophy, Ethics and Social Sciences*], Wrocław, Ossolineum 1970, p. 112.

53 M. Przełęcki, *Sens i prawda w etyce*, p. 54.

human evolution. But all of this does not dissuade us from ascribing cognitive value to science. Being a result of evolution and education, it is at the same time a source of truths about the world. According to intuitionists, it is the same with ethics.<sup>54</sup>

### 13. Intuitionism in the Lvov-Warsaw School

To sum up:

- (1) In the Lvov-Warsaw School, various forms of intuitionism are present.
- (2) For Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, and Przełęcki, intuition is a source of individual moral evaluations; for Tatarkiewicz—a source of general judgments about simple moral properties.
- (3) For Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, and Przełęcki, intuition is considered to be an evident but fallible way of cognition.
- (4) Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, and Przełęcki emphasized the role of emotions in intuitive cognition.
- (5) According to them, the results of intuition are generalized by induction in order to formulate general ethical hypotheses.
- (6) An important role in ethical cognition is assigned by them to emotions which “reveal” values to us.

An imposing question is whether intuitionism of these representatives of the Lvov-Warsaw School is something surprising against the background of the other views they held. At first glance, it may seem so. Philosophers representing the school of anti-irrationalism, clear thinking, and strict speaking, now decided to make strong ontological and epistemological assumptions in order to support the intuitionistic view. However, there are some important reasons for the fact that the analyzed representatives of the Lvov-Warsaw School supported intuitionism. There were probably three reasons for that: (a) they wanted to view ethics as more similar to empirical sciences; (b) they believed in the possibility to create independent, normative ethics; (c) they were cognitivists and absolutists in the domain of values, and intuitionism is, from among metaethical standpoints, the easiest to reconcile with cognitivism and absolutism in axiology. And maybe (d) it was simply a kind of their . . . metaethical intuition. Przełęcki, for instance, mentions that his metaethical (and also ethical) standpoint was, to some degree, dictated by his very personal experiences. It is possible

---

<sup>54</sup> Ibidem, p. 55.

## PREPRINT VERSION

that similar moments were experienced by other philosophers. It is somewhat surprising that every one of them lived in the most difficult times of the 20th century but sustained the conviction about the absoluteness of good and the general concordance of axiological intuitions.

#### 14. Meta-intuition

Axiological intuitionism in the Lvov-Warsaw School is an important part of the more broadly understood intuitionistic trends. Conceptions of Kotarbiński, Czeżowski, Przełęcki, and Tatarkiewicz are interesting attempts to answer the Humean question in the manner typical for philosophy practiced in the Brentanian spirit. This spirit was characterized by Chrudzimski as follows:

Brentano and his followers . . . generally accepted Hume's claim that emotions constitute the basis of our moral evaluations but developed interesting strategies to avoid his relativistic conclusions.<sup>55</sup>

One also has to stress its peculiarities with respect to ethics in other branches of analytic philosophy. Wiśniewski describes them as follows:

The Lvov-Warsaw School did not succumb to the inclination to the destruction of normative ethics, which was characteristic for the relative currents: British analytic philosophy and logical positivism. It is a certificate of its peculiarity and maturity. The source of this position may be found in the Aristotelian roots of the school, mediated by Franz Brentano but also in junction with the positivistic aim to make philosophy a science with antipositivistic pretensions to justify the experience of values.<sup>56</sup>

A question arises whether the intuitionistic conceptions formulated within the Lvov-Warsaw School have only historical importance or may be treated as up-to-date today. I am not ready to answer this question conclusively. However, many authors stress that ethical intuitionism has become more and more popular recently, e.g.:

While intuitionism is frequently dismissed as implausible, the theory has

55 A. Chrudzimski, *Brentano, Marty and Meinong on Emotions and Values*, [in:] *Values and Ontology*, eds. B. Centi and W. Huemer, Frankfurt, Ontos-Verlag 2009, p. 171–172.

56 R. Wiśniewski, *Dyskusje metaetyczne w kręgu i wokół Szkoły Lwowsko-Warszawskiej [Metaethical Discussions Within and Around the Lvov-Warsaw School]*, [in:] *Polska filozofia analityczna: W kręgu Szkoły Lwowsko-Warszawskiej [Polish Analytical Philosophy: Within the Lvov-Warsaw School]*, eds. R. Wiśniewski and W. Tyburski, Toruń, Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK 1999, p. 128.

## PREPRINT VERSION

received renewed interest in the literature. Several philosophers have defended updated intuitionistic theories and argue that the theory is not as objectionable as previously alleged.<sup>57</sup>

It fell into disrepute in the 1940s, but towards the end of the twentieth century Ethical Intuitionism began to re-emerge as a respectable moral theory. It has not regained the dominance it once enjoyed, but many philosophers, including Robert Audi, Jonathan Dancy, David Enoch, Michael Huemer, David McNaughton, and Russ Shafer-Landau, are now happy to be labelled intuitionists.<sup>58</sup>

It seems that some elements of ethical intuitionism in its Polish version—such as the fallibility of the results of intuition, its science-like construction, empirical character,<sup>59</sup> and various interpretations of the role of emotions in axiological cognition—may be inspiring for contemporary intuitionists.

One could rightly say that everything I have said about axiological intuition in general and intuitionism in the Lvov-Warsaw School in particular also applies to intuition, or rather to a certain meta-intuition. Such a meta-intuition, if it is to be a tool of a rational discussion, should also be analyzed. I will not propose such an analysis because I do not have any clear . . . intuitions on metaintuitions.

The results of my analyses must remain only possible hypotheses.

## Abstract

### Intuicjonizm aksjologiczny w Szkole Lwowsko-Warszawskiej

Artykuł zawiera omówienie poglądów metaetycznych członków Szkoły Lwowsko-Warszawskiej i filozofów związanych ze Szkołą, a mianowicie: Tadeusza Czeżowskiego, Tadeusza Kotarbińskiego, Mariana Przełęckiego oraz Władysława Tatarkiewicza. Wspólną cechą ich koncepcji jest obecność intuicji aksjologicznej rozumianej jako bezpośrednie poznanie wartości. Wyszczególniono zarówno podobieństwa, jak i różnice między koncepcjami wspomnianych autorów. Analizy te zostały poprzedzone rozróżnieniami pojęciowymi między odmiennymi typami intuicji i rodzajami intuicjonizmu.

<sup>57</sup> E. Tropman, *Variety of Moral Intuitionism*, 'Journal of Value Inquiry' 2014 48, p. 157.

<sup>58</sup> P. Stratton-Lake, "Intuitionism in Ethics," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), E. N. Zalta ed., <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/intuitionism-ethics>.

<sup>59</sup> Empirical character of ethics is considered by Hołówka (*The Project to Create Empirical Ethics*, p. 191) as "the most important and long-lasting" contribution to moral philosophy made by Lvov-Warsaw School (and—Vienna Circle).