The concept of unity in unism – reconstruction

The aim of this article is to adequately reconstruct the concept of unity which can be found in Władysław Strzeminski’s theory of unism and to show its essential contents by recalling and confronting a few most important and most fundamental interpretations of Strzeminski’s thought and works, with special attention paid to latest research results. Usually the concept of unity is discussed in the context of modernistic rules of constructing the paintwork. It is the most obvious context pointed by Strzeminski himself. Among other factors influencing the theory and practice of unism the researchers mention Gestalt psychology, the cooperation of Strzeminski with Kazimierz Malewicz in Moscow and Witebsk, as well as the conceptions of organicism, unity in plurality, unity of matter and form, uniform relation between art and world. Social functions of art and leftist trends in constructivist avantgarde (to which Strzeminski belonged), its utopic pursuits and even gnostic tendencies are also recalled. Strzeminski claimed that the problem of unity is the most important one in the contemporary art and that its resolution will determine new theoretic paradigm allowing to fully uncover the essence of painting and other plastic artifacts such as sculpture or architectonic work.