

**Teresa Pekala**

*Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin*  
*teresa.pekala@umcs.lublin.pl*

## **PHILOSOPHICAL AND AESTHETIC CONTEXTS OF THE PHENOMENON OF MARGINALIZATION IN LATE MODERNITY**

**Abstract:** In the postmodern period we are dealing with many manifestations of marginalization, the understanding of which requires the use of a different language and different categories than those employed during the high phase of modernity. Giving an axiological meaning to the manifestations of marginalization in art is a comparatively recent phenomenon, a product of modernity. Divisions of art before and after its autonomization occur according to different rules. The article recounts the views of J. Habermas, C. Greenberg, and J. F. Lyotard on the central and the marginal in art, and it asks the question about their usefulness today in analyzing the phenomena of the marginal. To understand the ongoing paradigmatic change it might be advisable to consider the reflections of D. Mersch, who points out the ambivalent status of the concept of art and the avant-garde, which permits us to vindicate other concepts, for example that of the rearguard (*arrière-garde*). The age of modernity produced and already partly overcame the totalizing discourse on art, which condemned whole areas of artistic activity to exclusion. The size of the margins seen from this perspective turns out to be variable and dynamic, which calls into question the practice of giving an axiological meaning to the concept. The arguments for the change in thinking that take place in late modernity is the positive appreciation of events and individual experiences, the phenomena of the ephemeral as understood by G. Böhme, and the return to the idea of the whole built on different foundations.

**Keywords:** margins, exclusion, postmodernity, art, discourse, decline of metaphysics.

Marginalization is a manifestation of a certain state of affairs consisting in being ‘outside’, ‘beside’, ‘in the background’, or ‘not in the center’. In the title of the article I am deliberately using the term ‘phenomenon’ rather than ‘problem’ because one of the central ideas of this text is the belief that in the

epoch of late modernity we are dealing with many manifestations of marginalization but they are no longer treated as such a significant problem as it was not long ago. Even if some scholars still regard the existence of margins (fringes, periphery) and marginalization as a leading issue, the diagnosis of the phenomenon is presented in the problem framework inadequate for the times in which we live.

According to the PWN Dictionary of Polish [*Slownik języka polskiego*] the word “margin” has the following meanings: 1. the rim of a page not filled with writing or print; 2. something that is secondary, less important; 3. that which happens outside of the mainstream of economic, political or cultural life; 4. the expectation that something will come into existence. Only one of the foregoing meanings has explicitly negative connotations, saying that something that is marginal is less important. The margin of a page is neither more nor less important, it is a space which divides and at the same time joins a text with that which still belongs to the written page but is no longer a text. Such spaces/places “in between” are favorite metaphors in postmodernity. In the literal sense, similar margins provide historians with invaluable knowledge about the reception of a text, its authors, owners, and readers. The meaning that describes the fact of remaining outside the mainstream of some sphere of life, including art, does not necessarily refer to less significant events for a whole: it usually makes this whole more specific. The pejorative implication stems from a particular axiology that an era, its culture, or a group adopts, thereby favoring some spheres while denying significance to others. The history of European art is a good example that aesthetic criteria vary, retaining, however, certain constant paradigmatic determinants. It is only far-reaching civilization changes that radically violate canonical values. When examining the phenomenon of the marginal in art we should therefore remember that it is historically relativized and is not universal. We could risk a thesis that the axiological meaning of margins and the marginal in art is a comparatively recent phenomenon and a true child of modernity. Divisions in art in former times, before its autonomization, occurred according to different rules than those arising from art theory founded on the myth of the aesthetic. Art as part of the project of modernity, both in the Heideggerian and the Schillerian versions, had a mission to accomplish and it was only modern art that was able to realize this mission. Despite significant differences between many projects of modernity, they shared a belief in the important role of art in strengthening or saving something that could be called the idea of modernity. How this special role to be played by artists is understood renders the internal divisions characteristic of all modernity. An example of the ambivalence of attitudes in estimating the success of the mission assigned to art are the views of J. Habermas. He does not share the

optimism associated with the influence of “the rearguard of Enlightenment” on artists or philosophers. “Communication processes need a cultural tradition covering *all spheres* (...). A rationalized everyday life, therefore, could hardly be saved from cultural impoverishment through breaking open a *single* cultural sphere – art.”<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, he does not deny that “the idea of modernity is intimately tied to the development of European art.”<sup>2</sup> In the kind of thinking that saves modernism, art tends to function as the rearguard, i.e. in the positive role of the guard of Enlightenment. Without entering at this point into a dispute with the authors of the Enlightenment project and other differently understood projects of modernity, I would only like to draw attention to the place of art, as a certain form of activity, in modernist theories, mainly in philosophy. In the modernist period, art treated as a concept comprising all its varied meanings belongs to central rather than marginal categories. This position is confirmed by the historically established meanings of the term “modernism”. In the narrower sense, it refers to the changes in art and in aesthetic consciousness in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although the project of modernism presupposes many options and standpoints, their status is established by reference to the idea of the whole. In the broadest meaning of modernism, which comprises the main ideas of modern times, art occupies a prominent position. Artistic activity contributes to a differing degree to the so-called grand metanarratives: the Enlightenment idea of human emancipation (Schiller), teleology of the Spirit (German idealist philosophy and its continuators), and the hermeneutics of sense (Heidegger, Gadamer, Ricoeur). In each of these grand narratives, art and artists are granted an important position, sometimes a favored one. Art, alongside philosophy or as its most sensitive instrument, is expected to lead mankind towards better times or save the idea of humanism and other precious values of the Western culture. It is thereby an important element of Utopian thinking. Therefore, the position that art occupies in the discourse of modernity is definitely not marginal. The modernist autonomization of art was both the result and the causative factor of modernization processes. However, far-reaching caution should be exercised when approaching a generalizing interpretation that makes possible similar conclusions about art as a whole in the epoch of modernism. In general, it can be said that examination from the time perspective of late modernity requires that we formulate non-categorical judgments, which at best convey the ‘spirit of modernism’ rather than its specific forms. It is only the analysis of the

<sup>1</sup> J. Habermas, *Modernizm – niedokończony projekt*, [Modernity – An Unfinished Project], in: *Postmodernizm. Antologia przekładów*, ed. R. Nycz, Wydawnictwo Baran i Suszczyński, Kraków 1997, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

phenomenon of modernity from different points of view, and accepting discontinuity and separation of the meanings of modernist philosophy in art and in economics that reveals the whole complexity of the position of art in/and among various discourses<sup>3</sup>. A separate but important problem is the analysis of the concept of art made by the avant-garde. In Clement Greenberg's classical interpretation, the avant-gardes were a reaction to the modernist attempt to retain the radically purist idea of the autonomous work of art<sup>4</sup>. According to Hermand's classification, avant-gardism is distinguished from modernism as pure innovation by its social involvement. The juxtaposition of the discourse of modernity in the broad sense and aesthetic discourse shows the aporeticity of the thinking that apparently accepts multiple interpretations of the images of the world created by science, morality and art, but at the same time it does not want to abandon the idea of the Enlightenment project as a whole. Thus, when the seemingly internal problem of aesthetics, which is the position of the avant-garde in relation to the whole of the modernist art, is examined in the context of the global antinomies of the period, the borderlines and leading concepts become even more problematic. The general question of the present volume: 'what are artistic margins, how to interpret the phenomenon of the marginality of certain categories, concepts or subjects?' has to take into account the historical and thematic distinctness of modernism in the broad sense. Why modernism rather than another epoch? It appears that it is within modernism, based on metaphysical tradition, that such a strong opposition was able to develop: between the center and the peripheries, between the essential and the marginal, between that which – in art but not only in it – is permanent, and that which is ephemeral, transitory, and phenomenal. A separate issue is the current relevance of this development, which I will discuss later, and the validity of the question about the marginal (margins) and the marginalization of certain phenomena at the phase of modernism termed postmodernity or late modernism/modernity. We shall stop for the time being at the stage of the discussion which defined the research perspective at the time of entry into the phase of mature modernity, within which there was a reckoning with modernism in the writings of Lyotard, Welsch, Derrida, Deleuze, Guattari, Baudrillard, Virilio, Vattimo and many other philosophers. Without returning to the details and the main concerns of that debate, we can treat it as a terminal point not so much of the evolution of modernism as of the discourse on it. As I have already written several times, I do not think that

---

<sup>3</sup> W. Welsch, *Nasza postmodernistyczna moderna* [Unsere postmoderne Moderne], transl. R. Kubicki, A. Zeidler-Janiszewska, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 1998, p. 93.

<sup>4</sup> C. Greenberg, *The Notion of Postmodern*, in: *Zeitgeist in Babel. The Postmodernist Controversy*, ed. I. Hoesterey, Bloomington 1991, pp. 42-49.

there was any crucial turning point between modernism and postmodernism. At this point I agree with Peter Strasser, author of the well-known article *Epochen-Schwindel*, who challenged the thesis of the innovative nature of postmodernism. For the discourse on modernity, however, it was an important moment because it made us realize the highly antinomic character of the period, which was established enough to be summed up<sup>5</sup>. It was then that the basic divisions functioning in practice within art were explicitly named, and attempts were made to sum up the experiences of the avant-garde and answer the question of why some determinants of art were rejected while others were regarded as negligibly important, i.e. marginal. Of even greater importance than the attempts to sum up the already gained experience of the avant-garde and its consequences for the establishment of the phenomena regarded as artistically marginal was the question about the claim of the avant-garde discourse to be universally valid. Characteristic of the direction of that discussion were the reflections of Dieter Mersch. He begins with the most relevant issue important for understanding the paradigmatic change taking place at that time: he asks about the starting point in the description of the ongoing process. Should art be situated in relation to the avant-garde or the avant-garde in relation to art? Today, this question may seem hardly revealing. Several conceptions of art can be mentioned such as contextual or institutional art, which showed the incompatibility or even flaw of this question by demonstrating differences between the evaluative and descriptive concept of art. Mersch's merit lies in pointing out the historical nature of both the concept of art and the concept of the avant-garde. Just as there is no timeless concept of art, so too there is no one concept of the avant-garde, Mersch insisted.<sup>6</sup> Reconstruction work is necessary which would provide, as Mersch writes, a road map in the development of modernism. In a processual interpretation, relationships between the avant-garde and art should be treated as mutual at each stage of the historical development of modernism. The distinction of a certain logic of the process permits us to see that not only aesthetic manifestations, kinds of pictures, objects and installations change then, but at the same time so do the space of art, its *limits*, time limitations, that which art names and that which it does not: in a way also its institutional order, the system of differences, that in which art is distinct through its *othernesses*<sup>7</sup>. Only in this comprehensive presentation of the process of transformations, in which the changing avant-garde changes art and the

<sup>5</sup> P. Strasser, *Epochen-Schwindel*, in: *Postmoderne – Philosophen und Arabeske*, Frankfurt am Main 1989, pp. 36-49.

<sup>6</sup> D. Mersch, 2002, *Reflexion und Performativität. Ausbruch der Kunst aus dem Ghetto der Avantgarde*, [http://nyitottegyetem.phil-inst.hu/kmf1/MERSCH/kunst\\_1.htm](http://nyitottegyetem.phil-inst.hu/kmf1/MERSCH/kunst_1.htm) [12.07.2014].

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

changed art co-determines further innovations, can we understand changes that took place in the period of modernism. The transformation taking place in this way can be described as a transition from *the art work to the event*. Finally, some *exit of art from the avant-garde ghetto* can be found<sup>8</sup>. Quoting from Adorno, the German scholar further analyzes the rifts and splits within modernism based on the example of art. For our discussion Mersch's stance is important as it emphasizes the ambivalent status of the concept of art and the avant-garde, thereby pointing out the instability of the point of reference in determining the central and the marginal. It should be added that philosophers who refer to the experience of the avant-garde, for example Lyotard, pointed out many years ago that discourse strategies are exclusive. Just as there is no one order of art, no inviolable essence of it, so too there is no universal language at all. Within language games, which are the only order of discourse, there is no superior criterion for choice or universal rules. Each statement, also about art, creates a situation, in which something will be rejected, suppressed or passed over. In his study *La differend* (1983) Lyotard explicitly presented the problem of justice-injustice – although it was examined in the area of linguistics and social life, yet the revealed mechanisms of how discourses function can be interpreted as going beyond this domain. Lyotard's study is, I believe, fundamentally important for the analysis of phenomena of marginalization and exclusion, and it can be treated as a philosophical prolegomena to late 20th- and early 21st-century debates on this subject. There is no room here to present the details of the history of the debate, in which Lyotard's study mattered so much. Of significant importance is keeping a distance, observed already at that time, towards the basic divisions within modernism together with their consequences. The outcome of the discussions at that time was that the influence of the totalizing avant-garde discourse on the image of art, not only most recent but also that of long ago, was noticed. In my book *Awangarda, ariergarda. Filozofia sztuki nowoczesnej* [Avant-gardes, arrière-gardes. Philosophy of modern art] I analyzed these phenomena using the concept of rearguard<sup>9</sup>. The critical function of this concept consists, on the one hand, in revealing latent discourses and themes marginalized and suppressed by the avant-garde discourse. These include many categories that, in some cases even today, are regarded as marginal, irrelevant for understanding contemporary art. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that like the concepts of art and the avant-garde (as pointed out by Mersch), the concepts of the avant-garde and the rearguard are opposed only within historically limited discourse. In

---

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> T. Pękala, *Awangarda i ariergarda. Filozofia sztuki nowoczesnej*, Wyd. UMCS, Lublin 2000.

practice, different avant-gardes and rearguards may change places in the history of art. Using the concept of the rearguard one can not only reveal “the margins” of art and excluded discourses, but also reinterpret the whole image of art. I regard this as a useful but not the only tool for “rewriting modernity” in relation to art. At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the rearguard trends returning to discourse helped problematize the firm modernist oppositions such as new/old, original/derivative, present/past, or center/peripheries. There are many examples of weakening the axiological undertone of the existing divisions. Their theoretical outcome was, *inter alia*, several studies, crucial to the then ongoing changes, on the discourse of originality, which, as theorists like R.E. Krauss insisted, co-occurs with the discourse of copy, and archetypal models compete with intellectual ones. In the contexts of reckoning with the legacy of the avant-garde, the history of the Western concepts of art and beauty were closely examined, paying attention to their ambivalent status. The most important achievement of the finished modernism/post modernism debate was without doubt gaining critical distance towards the different forms of the conceptualization of artistic experience. Just as the meta-artistic consciousness of postmodernism was expressed at that time in references, citations, stylizations and allusions to the art of different epochs, including the recent legacy of the avant-garde, similarly metatheoretical reflection supported radical pluralism in interpretive strategies. The result of these processes was re-evaluation of the aesthetics of content, historicism, regionalism, decorativeness, and the enormous career of *design*. To sum up this theme, it should be emphasized that the period of modernism produced and already partly overcame the totalizing discourses on art which condemned large areas of artistic activity to exclusion. The size of the margins seen from this perspective turns out to be changeable and dynamic, which calls into question the recognition of this category as a distinctive feature of creative activity. Should we therefore look for the sources and the sense of contemporary marginalization when they are both challengeable categories?

I place the foregoing doubts within the framework defined by the diagnosis of the history of modernity as a permanent process which gradually but systematically weakens its metaphysical foundations. I concur here with the interpretation of Vattimo’s *Verwindung* made by Iwona Lorenc, who argues that the process of weakening the vitality of cultural and mental structures based on metaphysical premises has accompanied modern thought from the time of Erasmus, Rousseau, and the Romantics, intensifying in Nietzsche and Heidegger, postmodernism being only its culmination and the realization of

hidden tendencies<sup>10</sup>. Taking a longer temporal perspective, Scott Lash voices his views from a similar standpoint: unlike Lyotard cited above, he notices the rejection of the “grand narratives” already within modernism, which is evidenced by Nietzsche’s views, who condemned fundamentalism not only in the aesthetic domains<sup>11</sup>. Nietzsche’s highlighting of the rhetorical dimension of culture shifts the boundaries between the aesthetic and the historical, thus anticipating the change of whole cultural discourses, especially the process of the aestheticization of reality. The observations that arise after one follows the history of modernity support the conclusion that everything concerning art is part of the long-term process of reinterpreting the foundations of Western culture. Thinking about art needs to take into account the stage in thinking about modernity that has conducted philosophical criticism of modern culture. Relationships between the aesthetic and the philosophical and between the aesthetic and the domain of practical living also determine the direction of thinking about art and in a sense create the framework of its internal axiology. I believe that the emphasis on the essential, the original and the central in opposition to the phenomenal, the transitory and the marginal still lies in metaphysically established thinking. The lesson taught to us by contemporary culture is, first, dealing with facticity, non-identity and the fragmentary that were still underestimated not long ago. Second, it is a challenge to not yield to the temptation of the rhetoric of breaking and denying all continuation. This attitude is not the “winding down” of metaphysics. The changes in today’s art should therefore be treated with great caution. The concept of the margin and the marginal is encumbered with the ideas not entirely free from metaphysical entanglements. A common attitude in the social and artistic discourse in the last decades has been to expose all manifestations of exclusion and stigmatize marginalization, which is sometimes accompanied by the attribution of exceptional importance to the incidental. The discussion on present-day social problems focuses on two issues: exclusion and universalism. Both of them give rise to many ethical questions as evidenced by the dispute concerning the theory of E. Laclau<sup>12</sup>. Summing up this dispute, Tomasz Szkudlarek writes: “Exclusion is no longer a moral problem, although it still remains on the list of social problems”<sup>13</sup>.

---

<sup>10</sup> I. Lorenc, *Minima aesthetica. Szkice o estetyce późnej nowoczesności*, Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2010, p. 11.

<sup>11</sup> S. Lash, *Dyskurs czy figura? Postmodernizm jako “system oznaczania”* [Discourse or Figure. Postmodernism As A Regime of Signification], in: *Odkrywanie modernizmu*, ed. and intr. R. Nycz, Wyd. Universitas, Kraków 2004, p. 472.

<sup>12</sup> E. Laclau, *Ethics, Politics and Radical Democracy – A Response to Simon Critchley, Culture Machine*, 2004, vol. 4, cited after: T. Szkudlarek, *Ekskluzywność: polityka, estetyka, panika*, in: *Powrót modernizmu*, ed. T. Pękala, Wyd. UMCS, Lublin 2013, pp. 80-83.

<sup>13</sup> T. Szkudlarek, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

While in the sphere of social life opposition against marginalization will be desirable as long as unjust exclusions take place, this problem is not so axiologically obvious in the area of artistic practices. Taking inspiration from Szkudlarek, we might ask whether exclusion is no longer a problem of art. This question is partly answered by J. Ranciere<sup>14</sup>. In the world of universal aestheticization, art exercises a political function in the sense that it establishes the boundaries of perceptibility and shifts beyond them the whole area of that which, for whatever reason, is not recognized by the authorities as important for building the community. An aesthetic criterion for exclusion can be a beautiful place, which is demonstrated from different positions by W. Welsch and by the already mentioned J. Ranciere. It should be remembered what the experience of the avant-garde has taught us: it is easy to fall into the trap of another dominant discourse, this time focused on a different kind of values. The superficial aestheticization of the world results in diminishing in daily life the excluding role of that which, for aesthetic reasons, could be regarded as exceptional, exclusive. ‘The palliing of exclusivity refers us [...] to *exclusion becoming commonplace*, to the wide distribution and mass dissemination of exclusion as a strategy for constructing the reality. Exclusions are visible and legal; therefore, the modernist strategy for criticism meant to expose exclusions does not make sense’<sup>15</sup>. There is no room here to dwell longer on the theme of the social context of the exclusion problem. As the foregoing statements show, it is also important in understanding the role of art. On the one hand, one can see the weakening of art’s critical potential in unmasking exclusions, which are present on the surface of social life anyway. On the other hand, art and its next avant-gardes are permanent players on the market of symbolic goods. Highly instructive in this respect are analyses of the literary field carried out by P. Bourdieu. He shows how selection rules are made, what decides about the discovery of a work of art, and how nostalgic reference to once rejected canons can become a new orthodoxy. Bourdieu’s opinion is another important voice that relativizes the category of the marginal in art. He argues that it is not enough to say that the history of the art field is the history of struggle for a monopoly to impose valid categories of perception and assessment: it is the *struggle* that creates the history of the field, which gains a temporal dimension through struggle. It is clear what position in this struggle for life and survival is assigned to *distinctive features*, which distinguish galleries, groups and

<sup>14</sup> Cf. J. Ranciere, *Estetyka jako polityka*, [L’Esthetique comme politique], transl. J. Kutyła, P. Mościcki, Wyd. Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>15</sup> T. Szkudlarek, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

painters from one another<sup>16</sup>. The distinctive features, on the basis of which recognizable, leading and central trends are distinguished, and the absence of which (features) causes other trends and phenomena in art to be regarded as marginal, are termed by Bourdieu as *false concepts*, which, as tools of practical classification, produce a new quality; it is these that create similarities and differences by naming them. Once again the problem of the power of discourse returns. In this context Bourdieu refers to the dynamism of meanings of the avant-garde and the rearguard to illustrate the variability and conventionality of similar classificatory meanings. ‘The avant-garde painters have much more in common with the avant-garde of the past than with the rearguard of this avant-garde’<sup>17</sup>. The author of ‘reflexive anthropology’ is largely in opposition to the author of ‘aesthetics as politics’ (J. Rancière), arguing that the world of art is governed by specific laws, and, along with the relationships of art with the world of politics and power, it is necessary to take into consideration the whole complex system of artistic institutions that draw a particular art work into complicated interrelations. It is also important to restore in research the category of creative subject which changes the emergent ‘fields of cultural production.’ The voice of the French sociologist is consonant with the voices that criticize discourse, long present in philosophical and aesthetic discussions, in favor of returning to concrete individual experience. Mersch (referred to above) used similar terms, speaking of the process of transition from the work of art to event. The main object of interest should not be an artistic fact deprived of individual context but a participating event.

Incidenitality, facticity, resists discourse – representatives of radical hermeneutics argue. However, the rhetorical epoch did not end with Nietzsche’s writings, we are almost in the middle of it. No wonder, therefore, that radical hermeneutists raise an ethical point, warning against disregarding the truth of individual experience. J. Caputo’s post-Nietzschean philosophy explicitly calls into question the actual applicability of cultural beliefs hidden in discourses to local, casual experiences<sup>18</sup>. That which is associated with the transitory, the finite, and the mortal, as well as that which is incidental and ephemeral eludes language. The question arises whether experiences of this type – in a way marginal for the history of human history – can be explored by art? The question is only seemingly rhetorical. We can agree that art has always entered these areas and, due to evidence, reminded us of their

---

<sup>16</sup> P. Bourdieu, *Reguły sztuki. Geneza i struktura pola literackiego* [Les règles de l’art], transl. A. Zawadzki, Universitas, Kraków 2007, p. 244.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 234.

<sup>18</sup> J.D. Caputo, *Radical Hermeneutics. Repetition, Deconstruction and the Hermeneutic Project*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis 1987, p. 209.

existence more accurately. We are now, however, in the field of influence of another stage in art evolution, in which, after having challenged its own rules, art appears to be returning to essential questions and trying to redefine its place. Its main asset is no longer the aesthetic; on the contrary, the task of art is, according to Welsch, anaestheticization. The above-cited contexts of discussion on what is the leading theme at present, what builds the new field of art – to use Bourdieu's term – do not give an unequivocal answer. Many conceptions, however, confirm the critical distance to the originally modern antinomy of the existing differentiations into the central and the marginal. In the contexts of the ongoing debates one can feel the wish to return to the idea of the whole built, however, on entirely different foundations than the one promoted by the modern era. An example of similar tendencies is the interest in *aisthesis*, which takes into account the cognitive character of aesthetic experiences and appreciates the role of sensory cognition. Artistic activity interpreted in terms of experience and event is by nature less receptive to the rhetoric of exclusion and marginalization. Experience, in the sense assigned to it by Dewey, and recently by Gernot Böhme, is treated precisely as a whole which abolishes the divisions into subject and object, nature and art, or theory and practice. In the increasingly clear tendency of postmodern aesthetics to restore contact with the sphere of everyday life and popular opinion, to regain the ties with practice and action, and with the sphere of emotions and the senses, the problem of the margins of life, revealed by art, recedes into the background. An interesting example of totalizing ideas in art can be architectural projects that change the concept of the external and the internal, and start from a new understanding of the human surroundings. The theories of Gernot Böhme influenced architectural thinking all over the world, as exemplified by the work of such architects, artists, and theorists as Herzog and De Meuron, Olafur Eliasson, James Turrell and Bruno Latour. The leading principles of the new realizations and new aesthetics are atmosphere, synesthesia, and physiognomies, i.e. the concepts involving multisensory cognition and contact with Nature. In Böhme's conception this is accompanied by the enhanced appreciation of the ephemeral, i.e. of that which is often explored by performative art focused on the experiences of the corporeal<sup>19</sup>. At present it is difficult to observe some universal logic of transformations, a logic that would define the perspectives of art in the aestheticized world, and further specify the aesthetic itself. Representatives of weak thought, like G. Vattimo, assert that as long as our thinking is based on

<sup>19</sup> G. Böhme, *Die sanfte Kunst des Ephemeren*, in: *Sichtbarkeiten 1: Erscheinen. Zur Praxis des Präsentativen*, ed. M. Fliescher, F. Goppelsröder, D. Mersch, Diaphanes, Zürich–Berlin 2013, p. 90.

seeking firm metaphysical foundations that establish, for example, the thematic center and margins, it will not be able to positively experience this truly postmodernist epoch, which is postmodernity”<sup>20</sup>. The lack of distance to the ongoing processes is probably one of the causes that make our thoughts roam the margins of postmodernity.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Böhme G. (2013) *Die sanfte Kunst des Ephemeren*, in: *Sichtbarkeiten 1: Erscheinen. Zur Praxis des Präsentativen*, ed. M. Fliescher, F. Goppelsröder, D. Mersch, diaphanes, Zürich–Berlin 2013, pp. 87-108.
- Bourdieu P. (2007) *Reguły sztuki. Geneza i struktura pola literackiego* [Les règles de l'art], transl. A. Zawadzki, Universitas, Kraków.
- Caputo J.D. (1987) *Radical Hermeneutics. Repetition, Deconstruction and the Hermeneutic Project*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis.
- Greenberg C. (1991) *The Notion of Postmodern*”, in: *Zeitgeist in Babel. The Postmodernist Controversy*, ed. Hoesterey I., Bloomington, pp. 42-49.
- Habermas J. (1997) *Modernizm – niedokończony projekt* [Modernity – An Unfinished Project], in: *Postmodernizm. Antologia przekładów*, ed. R. Nycz, Wydawnictwo Baran i Suszczyński, Kraków.
- Laclau E., Ethics, *Politics and Radical Democracy – A Response to Simon Critchley, Culture Machine* 2004, vol. 4, <http://www.culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/viewArticle/268/253>.
- Lash S. (2004) *Dyskurs czy figura? Postmodernizm jako “system oznaczania”* [Discourse or Figure. Posmodernism As a Regime of Signification], in: *Odkrywanie modernizmu*, ed. and intr. R. Nycz, Wyd. Universitas, Kraków, pp. 471-506.
- Lorenc I. (2010) *Minima aesthetica. Szkice o estetyce późnej nowoczesności*, Wyd. Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa.
- Mersch D. (2002) *Reflexion und Performativität. Ausbruch der Kunst aus dem Ghetto der Avantgarde*, [http://nyitottegyetem.phil-inst.hu/kmfil/MERSCH/kunst\\_1.htm](http://nyitottegyetem.phil-inst.hu/kmfil/MERSCH/kunst_1.htm) [12.07.2014].
- Ranciere J. (2007) *Estetyka jako polityka*, [L'Esthetique comme politique], transl. J. Kutyła, P. Maścicki, Wyd. Krytyki Politycznej, Warszawa.
- Strasser P. (1989) *Epochen-Schwindel*, in: *Postmoderne – Philosophen und Arabeske*, Frankfurt am Main, pp. 36-49.
- Szkludlarek T. (2013) *Ekskluzywność: polityka, estetyka, panika*, in: *Powrót modernizmu*, ed. T. Pękala, Wyd. UMCS, Lublin, pp. 80-83.

---

<sup>20</sup> G. Vattimo, *Koniec nowoczesności*, transl. M. Surma-Gawłowska, Universitas, Kraków 2006, p. 13.

- Vattimo G. (2006) *Koniec nowoczesności*, transl. M. Surma-Gawłowska, Universitas, Kraków.
- Welsch W. (1998) *Nasza postmodernistyczna moderna* [Unsere postmoderne Moderne], transl. R. Kubicki, A. Zeidler- Janiszewska, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa.

### **FILOZOFICZNE I ESTETYCZNE KONTEKSTY ZJAWISKA MARGINALIZACJI W PÓŹNEJ NOWOCZESNOŚCI (streszczenie)**

W epoce ponowoczesnej mamy do czynienia z wieloma przejawami marginalizacji, których zrozumienie domaga się użycia innego języka i innych kategorii niż w latach rozkwitu modernizmu. Nadanie aksjologicznego znaczenie przejawom marginalności w sztuce jest zjawiskiem stosunkowo młodym i jest wytworem modernizmu. Podziały w sztuce przed jej autonomizacją i po jej przekroczeniu przebiegają według innych zasad. W tekście przypomniano poglądy J. Habermasa, C. Greenberga, J.F. Lyotarda na temat tego, co w sztuce centralne i marginalne, by następnie zadać pytanie o ich przydatność do analizy zjawisk marginalności obecnie. Do zrozumienia dokonującej się zmiany paradygmatycznej pomocne być mogą refleksje D. Merasha, który zwraca uwagę na ambivalentny status pojęcia sztuki i pojęcia awangardy, co pozwala rehabilitować inne kategorie, jak na przykład pojęcie ariregrady. Epoka modernizmu wytworzyła i częściowo już przezwyciężyła totalizujące dyskursy o sztuce, które skazywały na wykluczenie całe obszary działalności artystycznej. Obszar marginesów widziany z tej perspektywy okazuje się zmienny i dynamiczny, co stawia pod znakiem zapytania nadawanie znaczenia aksjologicznego pojęciu marginesów. Argumentami za dokonującą się zmianą w myśleniu w okresie późnej nowoczesności jest pozytywne dowartościowanie zdarzeń i doświadczeń jednostkowych, zjawisk efemeryczności, jak u G. Böhme, a także powrót do zbudowanej na innych podstawach idei całości.

**Słowa kluczowe:** marginesy, wykluczenie, ponowoczesność, sztuka, dyskurs, upadek metafizyki.