THE VEER TOWERS OF THE NEW MODERNISM: PROCEDURALISM OR TIMOCRACY?

Abstract: Veer Towers (2010) – one of the architectural works designed by Helmut Jahn – is here only a good allegory of the healthy scepticism after 9/11, regarding the new modernism. They may be seen as being iconologically linked with the philosophical question of its founding, namely, with the reasons for its perception as new in relation to the historical modernism. To this end, it is first necessary to consider the concept of the end of modernity. We can argue that, contrary to the claims of Gianni Vattimo, postmodernism can be viewed as a necessary development or return of modernism, which is primarily the mission of the post-Kantian proceduralism of Jürgen Habermas. However, a major role in the proposed strategy for the sustainable inclusion of the Other should be again played by anger, as suggested by Peter Sloterdijk. Must then the new - contortive or loose - modernism veer into another disaster? Will this attempt to control resentiments – such as the anger of the political Islam – force a turn to some timocracy well-known from the past, if proceduralism is in fact only a tortuously delayed voluntarism or quasi-occasionalism?

Keywords: anger, new modernism, proceduralism, public reason, timocracy.

The project of modernity, part of the wider phenomenon of modernism as a cultural formation, has been rightly linked with Jürgen Habermas and his theory of reason. In his book Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne (1985), he presented an analysis of the Hegelian concept of overcoming the dialectic of the Enlightenment and the reconciliation of the subjective and objective spirit in the self-created Absolute. However, the philosophical and political programme of an Aufhebung of the pluralism unleashed after the Great French Revolution, according to the German philosopher remained “an unfinished project”. In the same year Gianni Vattimo published La fine della modernità, the work inconsistent in many aspects with the book of Habermas, because it is an apologia of the positive consequences of Nietzscheanism. In both cases, the diagnosis – counterintuitive in relation to one another – was equally loudly and widely commented, to give a chance to a possible synthesis, which I am trying to link with the problem of the new modernism.

Vattimo, like Habermas, also previously concentrated on the possibility of dialectical reason (ragione dialettica), considering that the weaknesses of the post-Hegelian tradition revealed in the face of hermeneutical reason (ragione ermeneutica) entitle one to talk about the end of modernity seen in the post-Nietzschean perspective of “fulfilled nihilism”. However, Habermas – as

1 J. Habermas, Der philosophische Diskurs der Moderne. Zwölf Vorlesungen, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1985; idem, Filozoficzny dyskurs nowoczesności, Universitas, trans. by M. Łukasiewicz, Universitas, Kraków 2000.
Verfechter der Moderne\textsuperscript{5} – has never accepted the postmodern section or rather vivisection of modernism and he devoted his later work to the criticism of this agonal resignation from the rightful claims of the human reason, but in a manner which accepts the valid elements present in postmodernism. Ultimately, however, he had to acknowledge at least some of the arguments of postmodernists, as can be seen from his concept of “public reason”. It seems that – as in the case of Wolfgang Welsch – the problem of postmodernism is shown in a reactive way, namely through the legitimisation of the post-Kantian theory of reason or rather its selective use. This lays the foundation for the further development of modernism. It would be “our postmodern modernity” (\textit{Unsere postmoderne Moderne}) which commands respect for true pluralism\textsuperscript{6} – with the help of the so-called “transversal reason”\textsuperscript{7}. Similarly Habermas showed enough ingenuity to defend the liberal achievements of modernism, which – due to the nihilistic orientation of the postmodernists – are no longer obvious. Let us try to consider whether his demand for “the inclusion of the Other” may be a project that we could define as the new modernism. So, what would the adjective “new” mean in this context? Under what circumstances and for what reasons would it be possible to call this an innovation on historical modernism?

\textbf{The problem of origins: development or return of modernity?} 

Vattimo, to recall his argument, associated the end of modernity and the coming of post-modernity with Nietzsche’s concept of “perpetual return” and Heidegger's concept of the destruction of metaphysics. This perspective of Heideggerian post-metaphysical hermeneutic, which retains the Nietzschean concept of circular motion, gives one an opportunity to recognize the new modernism as a repetition, foreseen by postmodern thinkers as a return of a utopian idea – “an eternal charm” (to use the Marxist phrase for religion). The possible return of modernism would not go beyond the framework of “positive nihilism”. Therefore, the new project of modernization does not mean revisionism (still disseminated since 11 September 2001), according to which history comes back to life in all its monstrosity. The postmodern thinkers would be rather inclined to accept that the hypothetical new modernism is another

\textsuperscript{5} S. Müller-Dophm, \textit{Jürgen Habermas. Eine Biographie}, Suhrkamp Verlag, Berlin 2014.


\textsuperscript{7} Idem, \textit{Vernunft. Die zeitgenössische Vernunftkritik und das Konzept der transversalen Vernunft}, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1995.
example of an unstable being, which cannot constitute a fundam and, because it does not bring about anything fundamentally new and does not seem to be an eschaton. In the postmodern perspective, the main question is: why have we become so interested in our location in time, in history? Why does the issue of Erörterung take on particular importance for us again? Where does this quite pointless appropriation of sense derive from – the counterproductive appropriation of history by the new modernism, which falls into the practical-inertial realm?

Another opportunity was seen by Habermas, for whom history did not end, but its course was only temporarily disrupted by postmodernism. However, this is understood in the end not as a threat, but as an inspiration. Thus, the continuity of the process of enlightenment would be still preserved here and Kantian ideas would be inspiring. This would – as Vattimo predicted – bring postmodernity into the frame of modernity. The Italian philosopher believed, however, that such an act is impossible, because it would be as if suspended in a vacuum in the context of post-history (post-histoire described by Arnold Gehlen). If we consider an end to history, we also have to acknowledge the invalidity of the criterion of novelty. What then would be the use of the novelty of modernism as another one of its founding values, which have proved to be after all interchangeable and only utilitarian?

Vattimo asked the question about the possibility of a new beginning, after Heidegger and Nietzsche questioned the existing foundations without proposing any other grounds. The question comes at the time when we have to choose whether we wish to localise ourselves in history, i.e. in modernity, or already in the area of thinking demarcated by the prefix post? Is the location still valid for us at all, since the foundations of historical and progressive thinking have been undermined? Looking for arguments in favour of this location, which is like a return to the sources of modernity, to its basic principles, we have to find some sense or a vital necessity in what we are doing.

It is an opportunity that history is offering us, because finding such sense gives us a chance to reflect again on the great issues – the twilight of the West, which results from the past modernization processes as well as their current continuation. Here are some of those issues to be considered when assessing the possibility of new modernism:

1. The rapid and ongoing spread of technology, and especially the use of new information and communication technologies, shows that modern civilisation seems to be very much alive. Its progress has not been stopped, though since
the 1930s it has been highly criticised and there has been increasing scepticism towards technocracy, especially in Heidegger’s critique of the negative consequences of technology. In Poland, this trend was represented by Stanisław Piasecki – the editor of the nationalist weekly ABC, which was inspired in its criticism of modern industrialisation, standardisation, futurism, mechanism and productivism by Aldous Huxley, Nikolai Berdyaev, and some voices originating from American literature. Similarly to Heidegger, the ABC’s linked its attack on technocracy with the rebirth of the nation, contrary to the more humanist criticism of Bogdan Suchodolski. However, the postmodern nihilists ignore both this battle, which resembles Don Quixote’s struggle with the windmills, and the adaptation of nations to the advances in technology in the globalised world of today. They understand the increasing use of technology – absorbed or neutralised in the postmodern world – as a routine way of relating Da-sein to reality – the modus operandi based on the category of Ge-Stell, identified by Heidegger as a historical modus of human perspective initiated by Parmenides’ henological metaphysics. The repeated aggressive and provocative attempts by technocrats to dominate “the World-picture” through the spread of technology are not a sufficient reason to believe that this makes possible a new modernism. After all, the progress of technology – the introduction of new models of machines – is a normal and regular feature of our everyday life. Therefore, there is no reason to commit ourselves to building a new idolatry of modernism. At this point one can say, after Heidegger and Vattimo: if the essence of technology isn’t something that is technical, similarly the mythical – or fabulous – essence of progress is not exhausted by the type of rationalism forcefully upheld by the naive technocrats.

2. The same holds for the question of catastrophism. Even the most expansive pessimism does not establish any important turning point in the postmodern culture – as well as the aforementioned optimistic progressivism, which is a reversal of catastrophism. Regress – for example, the fear of the economic crisis or nuclear annihilation, characteristic for the critical awareness of modernity, although still indelible – no longer paralyzes our imagination. Moreover, it has been pointed out that postmodernism is “a legalised crisis”. There are even

11 S. Piasecki, Nowy wspaniały świat życia ułatwionego i technokracji, “ABC” 1933, no 74.
13 Bunt amerykańskiej literatury przeciw maszynie i standaryzacji, “ABC” 1933, no 84, p. 6.
14 M. Reutt, Koniec industrializmu początkiem odrodzenia narodowego, “ABC” 1934, no 101, p. 5.
15 B. Suchodolski „Oskarżenie techniki”, Pion 1933 (25 XI); idem, „Walka z maszyną”, Pion 1935 no. 17, p. 2-3.
16 G. Vattimo, Koniec nowoczesności, op.cit., p. 25.
militarists who are considering the limited use of nuclear weapons for the so-called “de-escalation” of conventional military conflicts (in the official defence doctrine of Putin’s Russia). “Shock and awe” (or “rapid dominance” inspired by Harlan K. Ullman’s and James P. Wade’s military doctrine) was withheld by George W. Bush. The expected paralysis of the enemy’s perception of the battlefield and the destruction of its will to fight by the overwhelming power of the US Army and its spectacular display of force, were in fact unsuccessful in Afghanistan and Iraq. For the Muslim terrorists – for example the ones currently based in Syria – it is impossible to be paralysed by the fear of any humans because they fear only Allah. In this sense, in relation to modern catastrophism, Vattimo is right that pessimism (or regress) is fully tamed or neutralised by postmodernism as is progressive optimism. According to the governments in Europe and America, people have to learn to live alongside terrorists.

3. An unquestionable novelty is the disintegration of the unipolar hegemony of the United States of America, which is of course a geopolitical problem for the West. Its civilisation was the mainstay of modernity. The knowledgeable in this field argue that it has always been so in history that the hegemony of a superpower over the Rimland had to be replaced by the dominance of a new pretender (viz. Carthage vs Rome). Thus, the claims to reign in the Rimland by the new players, specially such as China, which – according to such experts as RAND Corporation\(^\text{17}\) – will sooner or later lead to World War III, indeed marks a new quality for the global culture, focusing on the Asian patterns of the new centre of the world. The nations would be probably made to understand modernisation in another than liberal way. The possible reorientation towards the Far East, namely China, would radically reorganise our – individualistic rather than collective – perception of modernity. A horrible introduction to that was the modern totalitarianism in Europe since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Both Communism and Nazism began to rapidly grow in strength thanks to the fast pace of industrialisation and further militarisation of the state. China is showing now that another model of hybrid modernisation is not difficult to imagine in the face of the competition or an unpredictable scenario of the war – the so-called AirSea Battle – between China and the USA or – more generally – between the East and the West\(^\text{18}\).

5. The demographic catastrophe difficult to estimate – both an unprecedented population growth in Africa and the particularly shocking extinction of entire


nations in Europe – undermining the liberal base of the civilization of the Old Continent, also creates a new context. It is estimated that in the near future the huge part of the population of Africa and Asia will move to Europe, which will fundamentally change its character. The massive and aggressive cultural migration of people from the underdeveloped areas of the world, which we now observe in southern and western Europe, is a major challenge and calls for appropriate responses. The current migration of people from Africa and Asia and the disappearance of civilizational and cultural borders pose a significant risk of impairing or nullifying the greatest achievements of the Enlightenment as a result of the undeniable Islamization of the West.

6. These challenges lead to a new tribalisation of Europe, creating – as a defensive reaction – sufficient concerns about safety due to the possibility of a religious war between the Europeans and the immigrants, or even a civil war, because of the increasing hostility between the pro-immigration radical left and the national fronts, especially in France, where the successive governments cultivate the neutrality of the republican state vis-à-vis religion. The most pessimistic prediction is that part of the Muslim society in Europe is facing annihilation. A genocide would be necessary in order to defend the current quality of life in the consumer society. This is a direct warning of the possibility of a new Holocaust, whose logic was reconstructed by Zygmunt Bauman. It is due to the structural repeatability of genocide – as Piotr Nowak has noted in his article “Are we preparing a Holocaust for the immigrants?”19, in which he discourages the refugees from settling in Europe. This is very probable, because the modern life – devoid of traditional, religiously motivated values – no longer possesses any inhibitions. In defence of their endangered welfare and comfort the permissive, consumer, opulent Western societies can and must commit a crime as great as in the past. To support its argument it refers to the situation of the old liberal democracies which have to live in fear every day and as if in a permanent state of emergency, restricting their civil liberties. Therefore, there is the danger that authoritarian governments will use force to manage large-scale conflicts.

All of the above points or circumstances are undeniably relevant to the new modernism or rather to the most important determinants of its possible return. Conditions 1 and 2 aren’t new, because they were generated directly by the historical modernism and today seem quite tamed by postmodernism. However, conditions 3 – 6 are undoubtedly serious and decisively new, which

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cannot be ignored or neutralized by saying that this is what happened more than once in the long history of the West. As in the case of the classic modernity from the late 18th century until the mid-20th century, the new modernism would be also stimulated in statu nascendi by the social conflicts on the global scale, especially since the economic crisis of 2008. Their novelty would be determined by these conflicts, affecting the postmodern culture and slightly modifying its function compared to the original concept of Vattimo. In the near future the abovementioned conditions must initiate the processes similar to those during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the contradictions of modernism reached the stage of crystallization and could not be further overcome, which led to World War II.

The new modernism – understood as a critical-regulative project – would therefore be primarily a reflection on the main tendencies which create the aura, the mechanisms and tools for generating a new form of social anomie. The processes of anomie – as Habermas has already observed in his theory of communicative action – has been the main focus of modern sociology. At present, it is hard to understand the critical-regulative sense of the new modernism, if we do not accept the possibility of a new Holocaust. The new modernists would therefore be aware that the danger of genocide cannot be removed from the social life. Postmodernism has attempted to minimise this risk by the deconstruction of the religious and ideological foundations of societies and by the reorientation of what Vattimo has called pensiero debole (weak thought). The belief in the potential inevitability of a Holocaust is therefore important, if it is argued that Zygmunt Bauman's diagnosis or treatment is correct. In his Modernity and the Holocaust (1989)20, the Holocaust is no longer explained only as a result of anti-Semitism, but is viewed as a product of modernization – as a consequence of the post-Enlightenment sense of order (form) and of the efficient organization of work. Bauman was able – insightfully and in a completely new way – to encapsulate the significance of the historicity of the Holocaust, which originated in the old tensions in the Euro-Christian world, particularly the logic of the economy of that modern civilisation. At that time, genocide in the history of mankind had industrial, commercial or – as claimed by Bauman – engineering nature. Bauman has not exhausted the historical sense of the Holocaust, which goes back to the times of Homer and Moses. But his new research perspective has made evil less mysterious, opaque, metaphysical, religious and mystical or poietic. Evil in modernism is no longer so obviously irrational. The study of evil has become more exciting, since it has been found to possess a certain type of rationality. New modernism would have to view this

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attribute as an ineradicable unpleasant illness – a derivative condition of the fanatical cult of order, which may or even must be restored in the face of the new challenges of the postmodern society. Thus one can speak of new modernism in this sense.

**Thymós in the public use of reason**

Ideological fundamentalism must assume a claim to the truth and thus be associated with what Nietzsche described as the will to power. This does not mean that one has to be a Nietzscheanist to recognize the relationship between fundamentalism and some sort of inevitable violence. A fresh look into this matter was provided by Peter Sloterdijk, who recalled the classic concept of the founding of social order by anger \(^\text{21}\). Anger is “the first word of Europe” – according to Sloterdijk, tracking its history in our world, shaped by the archaic areté of Homer's *Iliad*, God's anger of the Judaic and Christian apocalypticism, the tumults of the jealous and rebelling masses in the modern era. In modern times, the cumulation of hostility and anger exploded in bloody revolutions. This gave rise to avant-garde art, which is unthinkable without anger. Finally, it was in evidence during the two world wars, especially World War II, in the eliminationism and genocide, up till the post-communist era when the tormented Europe began to rebuild its societies, pacifying the overgrown totalitarian anger and distracting it in the era of the media. Sloterdijk's work *Zorn und Zeit* (2006) is a study not only of anger (Greek, *menis*), but also of the history of the validation of wrath as righteous anger (a virtue, like justified pride), known in the classical tradition as *thymós*, and of the clever capture of this rationalized passion (*fureur*) by modern cunning (Greek, *metis*). According to Sloterdijk, anger crops up in the peripheries, but it is not able to annex the center, which no longer exists in the postmodern networked society. The digital civilization – in its most advanced stages – can afford a flashmob of the various “outraged”.

But as has been demonstrated in the recent years, according to Sloterdijk's intuition, anger – despite of that “organized powerlessness” – cannot be reduced further and wrath still has a promising future, as we have seen during the Arab Spring (2010 – also the year of the death of the Polish President at Smolensk, which divided the Polish people \(^\text{22}\)) or the Maidan in Kiev (2014) and during

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Putin’s recent aggression in the Ukraine. Sloterdijk’s book met with the criticism of such researchers as Axel Honneth, alleging that the author is suffering from groundless ingenuity or an extremely fertile wit. Honneth was annoyed by Sloterdijk’s disbelief in the future free from resentment. But with time, after the careful consideration of the arguments of the Frankfurt school and the critical left, which wants to get rid of anger and – according to the classical theory of *thymós* – therefore of truth, we are closer here to the intuition of the return of history with its archaic demons: Hybris and Eris (with her daughter Ate) or Nemesis. *Reise in die Zukunft* is perhaps possible again.

The new modernism, tackling the issue of its origins, faces the problem of a new outlook on this force, which already Platon tried to control in his concept of the harmonious co-existence of rationality (*nous*), impetuosity (*thymós*) and lust (*epithumia*). This concept represents a certain ideal of the philosophical formation of a citizen serving a well-organised state. That ethical and political demand has been discussed at length both by Aristotle, Kant and by the contemporary Kantians, such as Rawls and Habermas. The new modernism would also have to raise the question of justice and social order, and consequently should deal with the issue of its timotic motivation. It is impossible to ignore this problem, which is shown by Aristotle, particularly in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in the program of harnessing the unreasonable and dangerous anger born of the body, which seems unconsciously to govern people’s actions. Therefore – according to Aristotle – it is difficult to reprove people for the acts performed against their will. On the other hand, calling the deeds performed in anger independent of our will seems absurd, since we should rightly explode with anger when provoked, ergo in the particular circumstances we have to look at anger as if it was desirable and excused. We are also able to control our anger, guided by our will and educating our nature, dispositions and virtues, that is doing everything in our power. Aristotle’s aim was legitimizing anger in the heart of the man who knows how to value his dignity and justified pride. However, he also drew attention to the passions that abundantly disturb cognition, because they obscure the *nous* in *aisthesis*, thus undermining intuition – an important tool for acquiring scientific knowledge. It is incredibly difficult for the person

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26 Ibidem, p. 90.
who is guided in life only by passions to get to know the truth. And even when
such a person has learnt the truth, it does not bring him benefit, as he is unable
to control himself. Although the irrational part coexists with the rational part
in the soul, like convexity and concavity on the circle’s circumference, which
cannot be separated, from the cognitive point of view life which is “hellbent on
pleasure” is unproductive. Aristotle considers the passions, including anger, as
some basic acts of the soul, but he separates them from the ability to experience
the particular passions, and from the educated, rational and permanent
disposition for experiencing passions. Thus anger is a passion, which we can
but do not have to experience, because some individuals may be unable to
experience the *menis*, and thus they are not able to develop rational anger –
thymós. Anger must be subject to the right assessment by reason, if it is so easy
to fall into wrath, and we can be angry too much or too little. Anger is in fact
a passion with which we can deal properly or improperly. Therefore, we can
be angry in a wrong way. It is not the passion of the egotistical megalomania
of someone with excessive ambition (*filotimos*) but of fortitude, virtue, honour,
civic sense of injustice and an angry demand for justice with the right of vengeance.
This claim is no longer a general commandment coming down from Heaven,
from the Gods, for the human community. Now *ortos logos* – the “right reason”– is a situationally determined, empirical measure of anger (*phronesis*), and not
an idealistic, a priori-understood justice with no place for revenge. Only if we
accept that this measure should not be exceeded, will rage and mindless anger
not wreak unnecessary havoc. But the person who cannot get angry and lets
others get away with any kind of insult, because he is a man without ambition
(*afilotimos*), is not worthy of respect. Such a man is as harmful as an impetuous
man, who knows no measure in anger and is not guided by reason. The person
who is unable to get angry (*aorgetos*), does not reassert justice, because such
a citizen has neither strength nor the will to fight for it, until finally this man
starts doubting that righteousness is possible. Anger allows one to assess some
of the people’s actions and properties, their social status within the timocracy
(the concept Aristotle inherited from Plato, who identified it with a political
system based on ambition, accepting and conferring of honours and privileges).
Moral duty requires that we should learn to be angry, to recognize the person’s
position when angry, the degree of anger, its circumstances and time, as well
as the purpose and the manner of expressing this passion. Rather than being

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27 Ibidem, p. 80.
28 Ibidem, p. 100.
31 Ibidem, p. 117.
governed by furious anger, distending our nostrils like animals, we should approach this disturbance on the basis of knowledge, that is, without bravado and excessive wrath. One must foresee its consequences and should be always guided by fortitude, moderation, and tact or a good sense of the situation (*aisthesis*) in the practice of anger, which must have a clear and legitimate aim, and not a low, vulgar motivation – for example the pleasure of revenge. At a critical moment we must always choose a morally beautiful death, avoiding life in shame. Therefore, the rational disposition to experience anger, ambition and pride (*filotimia*), which opposes the inability to feel anger (*aorgetia*) and lack of ambition (*afilotimia*)\(^\text{32}\), is important in Aristotle’s aretology.

As we know, the essence of modernism – according to Sloterdijk – was the capture of anger by cunning (*metis*). Modernism lost the sense of God and measure in the hostility and anger in the social life, and the critical response to this situation catastrophic for civilization gave birth to postmodernism. The new modernism – under the pressure of the return to history in the beginning of the current century – should be able to open postmodernity to timocracy. Sloterdijk – in his intelligent and vigorous style – has already criticized the European shaming of anger, defending *thymós* against the trivialization of anger by the Freudian psychology, and now by the welfare state (*Muttistaat*). Since World War II the modern timocracy has been effectively pacified and discredited. The angry emotional reactions or the various symptoms of more or less justified pride have been banished from the ideology of the European Union, which supposedly conserves its prejudices and the historic evil. Sloterdijk has rightly called this European society without resentments an institutionalized “old age retirement home”. The postcolonial societies of Africa and Asia – suffering from poverty, war and terror – claim their right to extrapolate their discomfort to the European states or to the total Western population, because the people in the West unjustly live in peace and harmony in their affluent, well-organized world (this rationalization of terror was well described by Sloterdijk). Bringing with them terror, suffering and menis, the strangers are a material for the new social engineers, postulating the need for an instrumental creolisation of the traditional, national communities in Europe.

Undoubtedly, one of these engineers of the new-left modernist order is Habermas – *der Skeptiker der Widervereinigung, des Deutschtums und des Nationalismus, der Philosoph als Weltreisender* – who in his book *Die Einbeziehung des Anderen* (1996)\(^\text{33}\) has outlined a theoretical framework for the activity in

\(^{32}\) Ibidem.

the public sphere, which must be controlled by the principles of liberal democracy, based on the respect for constitutional order and the rule of the law. The new modernism is not something completely original, because it refers to the Kantian project of perpetual peace. Kantianism was largely the logic of the modern culture, whose primary feature was its critical-regulative function. Postmodernism has stopped the dynamism of this Enlightenment program, but it does not erase completely the ambition of this project. It is worth noting the very informative concept of the public reason, especially Habermas' objections concerning the philosophy of John Rawls and his theory of the public use of reason.

According to Rawls' theory of justice, the autonomy of the citizens is safeguarded by laws, which benefit them only if they are equal, free and moral persons. Habermas does not want to identify laws with good or values, as was done by Rawls. Like Kant in his formalistic conception of the categorical imperative, he rejects any laws founded on the material ethics. In the post-religious and post-metaphysical society, organised by the radical pluralist democracy, which is subjected to the pressure of fallibilism, such references of the justice theory are difficult to maintain, as well as unnecessary. Habermas allows merely the deontological sense of the laws. Only the norms, when we recognize them, instantly have for us an absolute meaning of unconditional and universal validity, thus determining our fair actions. Habermas does not want to refer to any external goods or values as objectives of our action, because they must be redistributed or have yet to be achieved, and this needs time and the fulfilment of certain requirements. However, the recognition of the norms – in his opinion – immediately binds us unconditionally. The recognition, rejection of the norms, or refraining from applying them in our life is as instantaneous as assertoric sentences. If we identify laws with goods, then Rawls' deontological distinction between laws and goods makes no sense. For Habermas practical reason has only consistently procedural content, which is devoid of any substantial connotations. Thus he interprets Kant's categorical imperative in the light of the ethics of discourse, which requires from people as the actors in a moral play to recognise the need for the public procedure of intersubjective demonstration of argumentation, which obligates all of the participants in this game to go beyond their interpretational perspectives and thereby successfully eliminate “the curtain of ignorance.” Discourse ethics is inclusive and free from violence, because it concerns the free and equal participants, each of whom –

34 J. Habermas, *Uwzględniając Innego*, op.cit., p. 66.
36 Ibidem.
on the basis of arguments – must be capable of assuming the perspective of the others as his own, that is, as the perspective of all of us. Each participant of this procedure is required to accept the solidarity perspective of We, appointed by the presuppositions of the public use of reason, which is inscribed into any reasonable activity.\footnote{Ibidem, p. 76.}

On the one hand, Habermas protects the public reason from the religious, metaphysical or other assertoric fundamentalism, in favour of legalism (the autonomy of the law, the supremacy of the Constitution within the legal system), but on the other – to be consistent with the procedural impartiality of the public use of reason – he cannot discredit completely the perspective of the theory of justice on the principles of a true, metaphysical or religious doctrine. Therefore, Habermas must be willing to listen to everyone who wants to contribute to the public debate. He must tolerate – from his perspective of die Philosophie der nachmetaphysichen Moderne – the followers of different religious doctrines, accepting on the input “a reasonable disagreement”, that is, a discord among the participants, controlled by the legal procedures of the public use of reason.\footnote{Ibidem, p. 77.}

Thus, the new modernism from the start of the public debate takes into account a dispute, but it does not absolutize a hassle, like the postmodernists headed by Jean-François Lyotard. Incidentally, Habermas has finally appreciated the crucial element of postmodernity, that is, deferred knowledge. But he did not consider that this concept of meaning or sense delay is permanently binding. Like John Stuart Mill, Habermas believes in the power of ideas. According to him, today this is the only way of understanding justice, namely as a purely procedural fairness, based on the discursive ethics aimed at achieving a consensus. It is a transition from the material aretology (die Tugendzumutung) to the rational legitimacy of deliberative democratic decisions (die Rationalitätsvermutung). This desire for consensus in an intersubjective procedure opens the way for citizenship and sets out a framework for public statements. Only this is politically fair which is reasonable and common in these disputed systems of faith, and the truth of the procedural justice is deferred. What remains, according to Habermas, is the Lessingian tolerance for the non-rational images of the world, since today only such procedural legitimacy has primacy over the substantially – religiously or metaphysically – understood goods. Habermas’s proceduralism as a framework for the perspective open to the activity of the Other resembles the precession of the perfectly horizontal and vertical lines in Helmut Jahn’s design of the Veer Towers in Las Vegas (2010), described as a good example of the new modernism. The main character of the Other was played there by

\footnote{Ibidem, p. 76.}
\footnote{Ibidem, p. 77.}
Richard Long, who applied mud – as Habermas did with religion etc. – in his hand-made drawings on the walls, in the lobbies of both the west and the east tower. After 9/11, the Veer Towers can be a good allegory of the new modernism with its proceduralism and timocracy.

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The concept of the public use of reason is thus a simple procedural foundation of the new modernism as its rational-legal legitimization, and this is what differentiates it fundamentally from the historical modernism, which was neither intersubjective, dialogic or inclusive (but rather highly individualistic or – on the contrary – collective and ideological or totalitarian) nor linguistic and diaporetic (but rather empirical, more materialistic, and dialectic or exclusive). The new modernism respects deliberative proceduralism and tries to avoid any dangerous angry motivation, consistently following the formalist ethics of Kant in the contemporary democratic society: “Deliberative politics acquires its legitimating force from the discursive structure of an opinion- and will-formation that can fulfil its socially integrative function only because citizens expect its results to have a reasonable quality”39. The context here is the larger issue of religions, myths, superstitions and resentments (menis and its instrumentalization by metis or anger rationalization as thymós) in the public use of reason. Habermas – der Meister der Kommunikation proposes to improve the procedures for the use of religion in his discussions with the assumptions of the justice theory of Rawls. Would they have to remain what they are with their dynamism, as Habermas has probably separated the public use of reason from the timiotic, authentic claim to the truth? The hopelessness of this situation, involving both the fundamentalists, including the former fanatical modernists (and the nihilists) or the fallibilists and the supporters of proceduralism, is primarily psychological, because both sides equally fit the characterization of Carl Gustav Jung included in his Psychology and Religion (The Terry Lectures, 1938): “It is true that an overwhelming majority of educated people are fragmentary personalities and have a lot of substitutes instead of the genuine goods”40. The proponents of timocracy tend to disregard procedures, while the supporters of proceduralism too easily ignore the spirit which needs to animate or warrant the self-sufficiency of these procedures. However, there are thinkers who recognize this attitude or philosophy of relying on substitutes as a chance. Religion, which in

the historical modernism was systematically excluded from the public sphere, would therefore be a good that allows modernity to restore its strength and shine. Religious timocracy would be an attempt to produce a center of thought, but its claims to the truth could be acceptable in the social life only through some admission procedures (see the Canadian criminal story of Mary Wagner – a Catholic anti-abortion activist). Timocracy can only be tolerated in the case of the public use of reason. Then, religion – especially in its most obscurantist, fanatical form, like the radical political Islam – would become again the field of modernization, which had been abandoned by the postmodernists in the recent decades. This process should not result in the unnecessary costs to our civilization, such as desacralisation, nihilism, the pragmatic idea of the death of God, and genocide (nevertheless, risk-taking is here a pre-requisite to making progress in the new modernism). The solution is not to focus on the postmodern conclusion that it is impossible to accept the idea of divinity as a fetish by theism or atheism, but rather on the inventiveness that provides the opportunities to involve the claims of religion in the process of the public use of reason. This would bring hope of overcoming the crisis of modern humanism, which was associated with theism since the anthropological creationism of Pico della Mirandola, before it was modified by the atheistic positive nihilism of Nietzsche. Here is the power, authority and mission of the new modernism. The result of this re-modernization in the West, for example in the UK, is the prevailing social practice of the transfer of certain cases of the crimes committed by Muslims against other Muslims to the sharia courts (contrary to the French Republican idée fixe of a purely secular space – for example, a beach unspoilt by burkini or habits). Obviously the field of art has also become a field of this mission. Therefore, some anti-Muslim artists face a safety gap. The Swedish cartoonist Lars Vilks must live under 24-hour police protection at his home, because he is the author of Muhammad’s caricatures. Such anti-Muslim irreligion of the new modernism seems to reintroduce heroism to the clearly tired and resigned culture of the West, especially in the so-called Old Europe. Irreligious art which contests the radical political Islam can evoke positive images in the individual and collective imaginary of the postmodern societies, which have forgotten about optimism, determination, and faith, and their unique qualities. The new modernism can have nothing to do with the slogan Alles wird gut! recently extremely popular in Germany. Religious timocracy would tolerate both the misrepresentation and the normativity of the new modernity. But in the public sphere only such religion would be tolerated which manifests the desire for peace (as Habermas has predicted in the Kantian style, which is perhaps consistent with the positive nihilism of Vattimo). Thus, Islam would be subject to the obligation of modernisation (enlightenment or Europeanisation and Westernization). As we know, Christianity, especially the Catholic Church, has
decided to gradually renounce violence (as we have been recently reminded by Sloterdijk – a historical optimist as regards the education of the Euro-Islam).

It was – perhaps – written in a sneaky way by those who promote the idea of a more modernized federal Europe without islamophobia. But isn’t it naive to think that it is possible to reach a consensus between the defenders of the Western civilization and the Islamists? The extreme philosophical interpretation of the Koran was formulated by Al Ghazali at the turn of the 11\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th} centuries. The Western type of knowledge and faith cannot be founded on the basis of this occasionalism. This radical voluntarism of the Koran in Al Ghazali’s interpretation is compatible neither with the Christian theology of the Incarnate Word of God (Jesus Christ as Logos) nor with the rationalism of the modern mathematical natural sciences. The causal links of the natural world, according to Al Ghazali, are only Allah’s habits (sic!)

41. The words of the ethical principles and legal procedures have no permanent sense, because their sense depends absolutely on the will or whim of Allah. The tradition of Islam consists of the method of invalidation (naskh) of some Koranic verses by others, and even – this possibility was introduced by Al Ghazali – some verses of the Koran could be annulled in the event of conflict by the practice of the Prophet Muhammad (sunna). Therefore, the voluntarism of Islam, especially its occasionalist interpretation, is highly destructive both to Christianity or even to the Muslim communities (let us recall the criticism of the ISIS’ terror voiced by some moderate imams), and to the classical and modernist tradition in its rationalist trend (perhaps with the exception of the contemporary non-monotonic logic in which some conclusions can be invalidated by adding more knowledge). When we listen for instance to Peter Vogel, a German proselyte, it seems that after a period of postmodernism, the Übermensch in the new guise – of the Salafi scholar – has returned to Europe and has settled in Germany. On the other extreme are those modern imams who teach in a new manner, as Tareq Oubrou in Bordeaux – a pioneer of the “French Islam”, which respects and honours the republican principles and tolerance towards homosexuality. Moreover, it seems that the voluntarism of the Islamic theology is spreading quickly and taking over the authority in a peaceful and democratic way. Therefore, occasionalism can catalyse the new synthesis of voluntaristic and arbitrary morality of the West with the authoritarianism of Islam.

Similar comments can be made about Habermas' proceduralism as a special kind of modernised post-Kantianism in the context of fallibilism, since Kant had established directions for the development of Fichte’s voluntaristic philosophy

of action and German idealism. In *The Inclusion of the Other*, procedure gives occasion to dispute - it sets out its legal requirements and moderates - like God in the past - any possible content of the world under discussion. Will this purely procedural new modernism seen as deliberation be able to react suitably to the possible clash between the voluntaristic modernism and political Islamism, if it deprives itself of the substantial, real power that every civilization draws from the *thymós* for an illusion of purely formal, procedural coercion? Wouldn't the new modernism as a belief in “the force of the better argument” (Habermas), although it is badly needed and a dramatic cry of this moment, turn out to be another catastrophe resulting from our inability to debate in order to reach ideally justified decisions? According to Habermas, legitimacy is based on deliberation that combines descriptive and normative elements. But there still remains the sceptical argument of Philip Pettit's and Christian List's discursive dilemma that democratic deliberation does not guarantee successful implementation in practice of the best possible decisions. Paraphrasing this argument, it may be concluded that some participants wish to cast their vote for competent experts, others are calling for the full participation of laymen and ignorants (and even dangerous Others) in the dispute which may influence the quality of the deliberation. In the near future, it remains to be seen whether the soft or hard Euro-Islam should be - obviously in accordance with the procedures - a new proceduralism or a new timocracy. The Veer towers of the new modernism - which of them will be the first to collapse?

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VEER TOWERS NOWEGO MODERNIZMU: PROCEDURALIZM CZY TYMOKRACJA? (streszczenie)


Słowa kluczowe: gniew, nowy modernizm, publiczny rozum, proceduralizm, tymokracja.