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HANNAH ARENDT ON POLITICAL (EX)COMMUNICATION IN THE LIGHT OF HAROLD LASSWELL'S COMMUNICATION MODEL

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Introduction. Political communication acts as a fundamental constituent of the democratic public sphere. However, today's post-totalitarian world reveals manifold totalitarian manifestations like propaganda techniques expansion, ideological content circulation and fictitious reality formation applied by authorities. Without addressing the totalitarianism-related investigations, it wouldn't be possible to understand how powerful relations influence the development of the public sphere of today.

Aims. The article examines a political communication process in the totalitarian context. The purpose is to elicit the specifics of communication in a totalitarian society using Arendt's communicative concept as a theoretical framework and to reconsider Arendt's interpretation of communicative nature of power relations representing it as a model. Specifically, the research focuses on H. Arendt's descriptions of the communication model units.

Methods. The methodology is based on H. Lasswell's communication model and J. Habermas's theory of communicative action. The comparative analysis of three subfields of communication and political science (totalitarian, political and mass communication) has also contributed to the theoretical and methodological foundation of the research. The conceptual framework has been provided by an interpretive approach to Arendt's works.

Results. A concept of political excommunication has been introduced and critically examined. Political and communicative characteristics of the sender and the addressee of totalitarian communication have been identified. The specifics of totalitarian messages have been discovered. Political and communicative effects of the totalitarian communication process have been described.

Conclusions. The findings allow constructing a totalitarian communication model promoting a more nuanced understanding of the contemporary political process. It is argued that

totalitarian communication does not set stage for building trust and consensus, creating awareness about politics, educating people, exchanging political ideas or receiving any political response. In contrast, its only purpose is organizing masses. Therefore, the addressee of such communication is not a communicative actor influencing the political process.

Keywords: communication model; political communication; public sphere; totalitarianism; propaganda; excommunication; elite; masses; Hannah Arendt; Harold Lasswell

INTRODUCTION

Political communication plays an especially important role in advanced democracies acting as a fundamental constituent of the democratic public sphere. Not incidentally, it has become the subject of a serious academic inquiry and the object of intense interest from politicians, journalists, advertisers, and public relations practitioners. One of the issues at the heart of a particular concern for both scholars and professional communicators is to determine the dominant means of influence in historical and contemporary situations and to understand how best to exercise influence for their own purposes (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 2004, p. 138).

As a matter of fact, 'no part of a society's past disappears once and for all' (Skovajsa, 2011, p. 35). That is, today's post-totalitarian world reveals manifold totalitarian manifestations like propaganda techniques expansion, ideological content circulation and fictitious reality formation applied by authorities. The propaganda influence of post-totalitarianism countries on the contemporary public sphere reflects significant continuity with the totalitarian ideology on mental and linguistic levels (Andrews, 2011; Navarro and Romero, 2016; Postoutenko, 2010; Roşca, 2013; Savka and Yatsyshyn, 2015). At the same time, the ideological influence of the last remaining totalitarian (North Korea) and quasi-totalitarian (Belarus, Cuba, Libya, and Turkmenistan) regimes should not be forgotten. As a result, political party leaders, media representatives and intellectual elites actively exploit the totalitarian terminology and associated way of thinking. Besides, the totalitarian past still echoes in the word and action of the actors in such institutional settings as the army, administrative offices, trade unions, educational institutions, agricultural enterprises, etc.

Without addressing totalitarianism – 'the system which seeks to make people equally worthless in order to take exclusive control over the whole man and every man' (Borowski, 2017, p. 93), it would not be possible to understand how powerful relations influence the development of today's public sphere. Thus, a process of political communication in the totalitarian context is worth a careful study. In this regard, Hannah Arendt's theoretical heritage, namely *The origins of totalitarianism*, *The human condition* and *Truth and politics* is indispensable as 'a reminder of what is in the present and is still real future possibility' (Bernstein, 2011, p. 26).

Despite the fact that Arendt repeatedly took references to communication and its various components (communication channels, communication instruments, participants of communication, language of communication, etc.), little research has been carried out on political communication in an Arendtian thought. It should be noted that political communication in its broadest sense unites three principal elements: various communicative practices undertaken by political actors to influence the political environment; communication addressed to political

actors by non-politicians; and communication *about* political actors and their activities by the media, comprising print, broadcasting and online channels (McNair, 2011, pp. 3–14). Although some researchers have paid attention to communicative aspects of power and violence in Arendt's works (Bernstein, 2011; Calabrese, 2010; Duarte, 2007; Habermas, 1977; Navarro and Romero, 2016; Саликов и Жаворонков, 2018), a process of political communication in the totalitarian context hasn't been widely discussed until now.

The most important previous studies that are relevant for the current research have addressed three subfields of communication and political science, namely totalitarian communication, political communication, and mass communication. They are respectively examined further below.

A review of the totalitarianism-related literature reveals a twofold interpretation of totalitarian communication: (1) as an attribute of totalitarian society and (2) as a special case of social communication (Postoutenko, 2010, p. 11). Supporters of the first approach highlight the defining role of language in the establishment and functioning of any totalitarian regime. From their point of view, the totalitarian regime is characterized by a monologic communication model presupposing 'a clear, universal communicative hierarchy where one person speaks and the rest listen' (Gronskaya et al., 2012, p. 278). Furthermore, totalitarian communication serves as a means of public opinion control and conformity development (Kecskemeti, 1950) which results in citizens' mass enthusiasm for the 'successes' of the totalitarian system (Borowski, 2017, p. 80). Supporters of the second approach underscore the importance of the totalitarian language not only as the basis of the national propaganda discourse but also as an intermediate link on the way to the informative discourse, which is the foundation of the democratic public sphere (Roşca, 2013). The role of totalitarian communication as 'a complex process of social engineering and an attempt to create and implement a more or less artificial collective identity' (Hanisch-Wolfram, 2010, p. 213) has been also observed. Additional research touches upon traces of certain 'totalitarian' patterns of public communication in Eastern Europe, Russia, and China in times of post-totalitarian era (Andrews, 2011; Langenohl, 2010).

To name important studies that are part of the heritage of political communication research, we should consider (1) H. Lasswell's propaganda theory viewing political propaganda as a means of reducing the material cost of expanding and defending power (Lasswell, 1927; Lasswell, 1951); (2) K. Deutsch's cybernetic approach to politics that has become an essential element in the interactive computer modelling of national and international political processes (Deutsch, 1963); (3) W. Lippmann's concept of influencing public opinion through the press that underlined the media's inability to help citizens be well-informed (Lippmann, 1922); (4) D. Easton's conceptual framework of political life containing a 'feedback loop' between social and political environments (Easton, 1965a; Easton, 1965b); (5) G. Almond's input-output analysis concentrating on a political system as a set of interactions including free communication between state and society (Almond and Verba, 1963). Despite these scholars were not political communication researchers as we see the term today, they contributed much to the modern understanding of the academic professionalization, the expansion of disciplinary boundaries, and field-specific substanti-

ation. Concerning Lasswell and Lippmann, their analytical writings are meant to be the most authoritative among scholars working at the intersection of communication and politics (Karpf et al., 2015, p. 1893). Moreover, Lasswell is renowned for his productivity in verbal modelling of the political process. The title of his book *Politics: who gets what, when, how* still serves as a mapping sentence for the study of politics (Marvick, 1980, p. 219) and a standard definition of the phenomenon in political science. Lasswell's seven-stage model of decision making (intelligence, promotion, prescription, invocation, application, termination, and appraisal) also exerted a powerful influence on public policy studies (Turnbull and Hoppe, 2019).

As for political communication scholars, they have never suffered from a shortage of issues to study (Moy et al., 2012, p. 252). Specifically, most studies of political communication have examined this phenomenon as 'the creation, shaping, dissemination, processing and effects of information among actors from the political system, the media and the public' (Esser and Pfetsch, 2017, p. 327). Herewith, researchers concentrate either on its particular feature, such as the purposeful nature of political communication (McNair, 2011, p. 4), or a combination of various intertwined elements of politics, namely activities aimed at attaining and retaining power, the transmission of citizens' interests and demands, the symbolic legitimization of authority, and the clarification of alternative options in policy making (Blumler, 2016). Whatever the approach, political communication is understood as a fundamental constituent of modern democracy (Jevtović et al., 2012; Delli Carpini, 2004). In addition, such essential component of the political communication process as the public has been studied primarily in democratic contexts; whilst the field reflects the absence of similar research concerning other political regimes (Moy et al., 2012, pp. 248–249).

As far as political communication has been closely connected with the mass media since the beginnings of communication study (Rogers, 2004, p. 4), previous research has dwelled upon several conceptual models of mass communication applicable to the political field: (1) the Lasswell five-question communication model *Who says what to whom via which channels with what effects?* valid for identifying communication acts, constructing mass communication definitions and conducting content analysis of media messages (Lasswell, 1948; Sapienza et al., 2015, p. 618); (2) the agenda-setting model articulating the media power in encouraging the audience to accept certain political views (Alp, 2016); (3) the Lazarsfeld 'limited effects' model highlighting the complementary role of the media in the formation of public opinion (Simonson, 2013); (4) the Herman-Chomsky propaganda model focusing on news production framed within the political and corporate elite interests (Mullen and Klaehn, 2010); (5) the unified model of strategic influence and global engagement contributing to the development of government communication directed to foreign audiences through international broadcasting (Hacker and Mendez, 2016); and (6) the communication mediation model emphasizing media influence on civic and political participation on the individual and the societal levels (Shah et al., 2017). Mass communication studies examine the media from diverse angles: their propaganda dimension in postindustrial democracies (Pedro-Carañana, 2011a; Pedro-Carañana, 2011b); their print, broadcasting and electronic formats providing platforms for expressing political views, interests and values of powerful

message senders (McNair, 2011); new modes of content production and information delivery technologies (Bennett and Iyengar, 2008); the media's institutionalized news criteria and the patterns of public affairs coverage (Laursen and Valentini, 2015); the media as actors of propaganda influence (Savka and Yatsyshyn, 2015). As a result, mass communication research is often criticized for being too media-centric and tending to conflate 'the public sphere' with 'the media' (Baisnée, 2007, p. 500).

In summary, past research on political communication within the totalitarian framework has concentrated only on two broad issues: (1) the propaganda discourse and totalitarian language functioning and (2) the influential power and transformative potential of the mass media. Considering the issue of propaganda usage by totalitarian governments in particular, the literature is almost silent on the totalitarian manifestations of the political communication units. Consequently, we have an incomplete picture of the political communication process in the totalitarian context.

METHODS (THEORETICAL BASIS)

The methodology of the research is based on Harold Lasswell's communication model still undervalued and underused in the field of political studies (Sapienza et al., 2015, p. 618). At the same time, the model gives an option of placing mass communications content in the context of domestic and international politics (Almond, 1987, p. 262). Its elements (communicator, message, medium, audience, effect) have been found fundamental for analyzing a communication process at present; and it allows characterizing a separate communicative act as well as a communication process to the full extent (Чихарев и др., 2015, с. 218). Furthermore, in comparison with other models, the Lasswell construct gives insight into theorizing audience effects – 'the end result as the most important aspect of the whole process' (Madhukar et al., 2018, p. 33). Moreover, the Habermas theory of communicative action serves as the ground for determining political effects of totalitarian communication. The characteristics of three subfields of communication and political science (totalitarian, political and mass communication) have also contributed to the theoretical and methodological foundation of the current research. The conceptual framework has been provided by an interpretive approach to Hannah Arendt's works *The origins of totalitarianism*, *The human condition* and *Truth and politics*, which have not lost their relevance today.

Against this background, the purpose of the article is to elicit the specifics of communication in a totalitarian society using Arendt's communicative concept as a theoretical framework and to reconsider Arendt's interpretation of communicative nature of power relations representing it as a model. More specifically, this research has five objectives: (1) to introduce a concept of political excommunication into scientific discourse; (2) to determine the purpose of totalitarian communication; (3) to identify political and communicative characteristics of the sender and the addressee of totalitarian communication; (4) to discover the specifics of totalitarian messages; and (5) to describe political and communicative effects of the totalitarian communication process.

The remainder of the article is structured as follows. First, a conceptual framework of political excommunication comprising a brief historical overview, the word origin and its meaning in the Arendtian sense is presented. Next, a totalitarian communication model integrating Lasswell's construct with Arendt's descriptions of its communication units is outlined. In addition, this research attempts to investigate whether totalitarian communication sets stage for building trust and consensus, creating awareness about politics, educating people, sharing opinions, exchanging political ideas or receiving any political response. The findings of the study are then discussed and summarized. They are expected to assist scholars and professional communicators with a more nuanced understanding of the contemporary political process. The article concludes with a summary of the study's research contributions and directions for further research on political communication in an Arendtian thought.

RESULTS

Conceptualizing political excommunication

According to the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, the word *excommunication* was introduced into the English language through the Late Latin in the middle of the fifteenth century when it was applied to the process of putting a person out of the community. Not surprisingly, in medieval Europe the word was used in the religious sphere relating to an individual who had experienced temporary withdrawal or suspension of church membership rights and privileges. Ironically, the contextual interpretation of *excommunication* has not virtually changed since the Middle Ages and its contemporary usage is still limited to religious practices.

As for Arendt, she addresses the notion *excommunication* when discussing the issue of political status loss by a human being. However, having put deprivation of political rights on par with the ancient and medieval custom of outlawry and the outdated ecclesiastical and civil death praxis (Arendt, 1962, p. 302), the philosopher has never conceptualized the term political excommunication in her writings. To eliminate the aforementioned controversy, it is important to establish the meaning of *political excommunication* in the sense that Arendt has given it and to formulate a clear definition of the term.

In Arendt's terminology, rightless people are thrown back into a peculiar state of nature. Examining the general human condition of those who have been forced out of all political communities, Arendt compares it with the tragedy of savage tribes inhabiting an unchanged nature which they cannot master or living and dying without having contributed anything to a common world (Arendt, 1962, p. 300). As she has noted, 'The human being who has lost [...] his political status in the struggle of his time, and the legal personality which makes his actions and part of his destiny a consistent whole, is left with those qualities which usually can become articulate only in the sphere of private life and must remain unqualified, mere existence in all matters of public concern' (Arendt, 1962, p. 301). In other words, those who have lost all distinctive political qualities have become human beings and nothing else (Arendt, 1962, p. 302).

Common sense, equality and togetherness are foremost among those distinctive political qualities the possession and use of which encourages the formation of the public sphere. Remarkably, Arendt has managed not only to characterize these political qualities and show the interconnections between them but also convincingly illustrate the consequences of lacking or losing them with respect to the political status. These political qualities are examined in greater detail below.

The highest rank in the hierarchy of political qualities is occupied by *common sense*, as it is 'the one sense that fits into reality as a whole our five strictly individual senses and the strictly particular data they perceive' (Arendt, 1998, p. 208). It is emphasized that common sense regulates and controls all senses data which in themselves are unreliable and treacherous (Arendt, 1962, pp. 475–476). The significance of common sense is in its potential to ultimately provide critical insight on reality beyond the boundaries of the private sphere; and reality in its turn quite frequently offends the soundness of commonsense reasoning (Arendt, 2000, p. 564). It is possible to see reality in the round and to develop a high commonsense level when an individual can experience sharing a common human world with others who look at it from different perspectives (Arendt, 1998, p. xiii). On the contrary, an individual's subjective experience is based on feelings, wants, and desires or single sense perceptions, each of which may be an illusion (Arendt, 1998, p. 274). That is, limitedness of the private sphere means 'remoteness from reality' (Arendt, 2000, p. xxvi). To compound matters, atomized individuals are obsessed by a desire to escape from chaotic, accidental and incomprehensible reality in favour of man-made fiction of relative consistency (Arendt, 1962, p. 352). In this case common sense is replaced by ideological super sense as 'the key to history and the riddles of the universe' giving the contempt for reality and factuality its cogency, logicality, and consistency (Arendt, 1962, pp. 457–458). It should be reminded, however, that common sense as a political quality is most visibly reflected in a historical reality demanding a political response (Arendt, 2000, p. x).

The political qualities needed for coming into power are closely connected with *being an equal among equals* as humans, citizens, and political beings. According to Arendt, 'our political life rests on the assumption that we can produce equality through organization, because man can [...] build a common world together with his equals and only with his equals' (Arendt, 1962, p. 301). Although Arendt considers the franchise and eligibility for office to be the very quintessence of citizenship (Arendt, 2000, p. 237), the philosopher also recognizes that 'even if there is communication between representative and voter, between the nation and parliament [...] this communication is never between equals but between those who aspire to govern and those who consent to be governed' (Arendt, 2000, p. 531). In other words, the formula 'government of the people by the people' has been replaced by the formula 'government of the people by an elite sprung from the people' even in a democracy (Ibid.). One of the best indicators of social equality – *who speaks* and *who is silent* – shows that government, ministries, state institutions, political leaders, state presidents and political parties dominate as sources of information in the influential media, while academicians and ordinary citizens merely play a role of a 'table decoration' (Jevtović et al., 2012, p. 281). The loss of one's right to equality is tantamount to the loss of that freedom of action which is specifically human (Arendt, 1962, p. 301).

Arendt determines *human togetherness* as a state when people are *with* others and neither for nor against them in the public realm (Arendt, 1998, p. 180). Powerful relationships convert this state into a political quality, because power always comes from men acting together, 'acting in concert'; alternatively, isolated men are powerless by definition (Arendt, 1962, p. 474). No special conditions are needed for the establishment of this political quality except the coming together and acting together of a certain number of people on a non-temporary basis. As a result, various organizational forms of togetherness emerge, namely neighborhood councils, territorial councils, revolutionary councils, councils of writers and artists, students' and youths' councils at universities, military councils in the army, councils of civil servants in the ministries, workers' councils in the factories, and so on. In Arendt's analysis, the formation of a council in each disparate group turns a merely haphazard togetherness into a political institution (Arendt, 1962, p. 500). As for the lack of togetherness, it leads to finding oneself only for or against other people. Arendt has exemplified it by modern warfare, 'where men go into action and use means of violence in order to achieve certain objectives for their own side and against the enemy' (Arendt, 1998, p. 180). Moreover, the loss of contacts with fellow men brings about the loss of understanding of the reality around them; for together with these contacts, men lose the capacity of both experience and thought. The ideal subject of totalitarian communication is not a convinced supporter, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction and the distinction between true and false no longer exist (Arendt, 1962, p. 474).

Therefore, Arendt argues that the possession of a political status entails, in particular, reliance on a combination of the aforementioned political qualities, namely common sense, equality, and human togetherness. However, psychological, institutional and organizational obstacles and restrictions towards the formation of these political qualities breed escape from reality, equal powerlessness (Arendt, 2000, p. 468), and isolation. Since the contemporary status of people outside of the public realm of politics, from Arendt's viewpoint, is comparable to the ancient custom of excommunication, the term political excommunication, which doesn't have any fixed meaning yet, may gain renewed momentum. Thus, it is proposed to define political excommunication as political status loss by a human being or a whole group of human beings caused by the absence of adequate conditions for the development and reinforcement of political qualities indispensable for political action.

Outlining a model of totalitarian communication

The purpose of this section is to present a political (totalitarian) communication model integrating Lasswell's construct with Arendt's descriptions of its elements or communication units. Apparently, some clarifications need to be made about the choice of the communication model and the usage of the term totalitarian communication.

The selection of Lasswell's model has arisen from the fact that it can be utilized for a diverse range of theoretical and conceptual needs and allows analyzing the communication process at micro, meso and macro levels (Sapienza et al., 2015,

p. 612). In terms of the research logic, its potential applicability to the political sphere in general and specifically to Arendt's scientific heritage is of prime importance. In this context, it is worth mentioning at least three aspects of the model's expected contribution to Arendt's political theory: (1) organizing fragmented ideas related to totalitarian communication into an integrated whole; (2) constructing a model-aided definition of political (totalitarian) communication from an Arendtian perspective; and (3) describing each element of the political communicative process with a focus on totalitarian communication effects.

It should be noted that this article uses the terms political communication and totalitarian communication almost interchangeably, since political communication in the totalitarian context is currently under discussion. By totalitarian communication, we understand a variety of political communication not necessarily related to totalitarianism, but displaying some traces of certain 'totalitarian' patterns of public communication in the post-totalitarian world.

In spite of the fact that the attribute 'totalitarian' has been coined in political theory to refer to societies or political orders at large (Langenohl, 2010, p. 301), the term totalitarian communication has the right to be broadly described in political analysis: (a) as a reliable indicator of authoritarian tendencies and specific practices not specifically associated with totalitarianism (Postoutenko, 2010, pp. 12–13); (b) as a complex process of social engineering aimed at creating and implementing an artificial collective identity anchored in pre-existing social structures, value and belief systems, social hierarchies, etc. (Hanisch-Wolfram, 2010, p. 213); and (c) as an acceptable theoretical framework connecting the sender's intentions, the message content and structure, the ways messages are being perceived, as well as the ways they are translated into action (Langenohl, 2010, p. 302).

Since the combination of the communication units from Lasswell's model can act as a meta-definition allowing the researcher to conceptualize operational, lexical, and stipulated definitions of mass communication (Sapienza et al., 2015, pp. 615–616), it is worth applying the model together with Arendt's descriptions to a definition of totalitarian communication. The possible outcome looks as follows: *Who* (totalitarian mass leaders), *Says what* (totalitarian propaganda messages), *How* (through propaganda forms and channels), *To whom* (the masses), *With what effect* (lack of political activity of the masses). This is preceded by a detailed discussion of each of the communication units.

The totalitarian mass leader as the 'who' of communication

The major role of the 'who' of communication in the communication process is a generally accepted fact within academia. Nevertheless, there is still a need to analyse what, how and why the elites intercommune with the masses and what this means for the structures of power (Mullen and Klaehn, 2010, p. 215). It is widely acknowledged that political elites initiate messages filtered through mass-media channels to influence the public (Shah et al., 2017, p. 493). The distinct feature of these initiatives is presenting personal, party or religious preferences as public interests; symbolizing the truth, instead of becoming a true social authority; and marginalizing ideological opponents and public hearings (Jevtović et al., 2012, p. 284). In Arendt's

terminology, 'One Man of gigantic dimensions' corresponds to the 'who' of totalitarian communication (Arendt, 1962, p. 465).

Critically, Arendt's term should be considered as a metaphor for a large group of individuals and entities linked in one way or another to the political realm and structured like the onion with the leader located in the centre and acting from within (Arendt, 2000, p. 468). The group represents a hierarchy including the Leader himself, his immediate surroundings, elite formations, party members, and even ordinary followers (Arendt, 1962, p. 382). Powerful elite formations, in fact, are composed by government circles, corporate leaders, media owners and executives and 'the assorted individuals and groups who are assigned or allowed to take constructive initiatives' (Mullen, 2010, p. 675). The onion structure, in Arendt's words, makes the system organizationally shockproof against the factuality of the real world (Arendt, 2000, p. 469).

What each member of such generalized character of the 'who' of totalitarian communication is expected to do depending upon his rank, is to react to the changing lying statements of the leaders and the central unchanging ideological fiction of the social and political order (Arendt, 1962, p. 382). Moreover, politicians' messages are now amplified not only conventionally but also online by thoroughly cultivated and mobilized followers (Shah et al., 2017, p. 495). Even the most fantastic or false statements communicated by the totalitarian mass leaders and widely spread by their followers are perceived by the masses as 'their superior tactical cleverness' (Arendt, 1962, p. 382).

Totalitarian propaganda as the 'what' of communication

Since Arendt has not offered a working definition of totalitarian propaganda, we choose to adopt here the one recently proposed by totalitarian communication scholars. It states that totalitarian propaganda is 'a complex and elaborated communication strategy aimed at promoting and implementing a collective identity encompassing (nearly) all aspects of life – from political opinions and attitudes to values and ways of life in the private sphere' (Hanisch-Wolfram, 2010, p. 198). Furthermore, propaganda serves as the dominant means of influence not only in the sphere of politics, but also in other societal domains, namely economic, war/military, diplomatic, didactic, ideological, and escapist (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 2004, pp. 138–141).

As Arendt points out, politicians create propaganda messages with the benefit of business practices and methods used by the advertising and public relations industries (Arendt, 2000, p. 567). In particular, an in-depth description of propaganda techniques both verbal and emotional requires several dozens of pages (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 2004, pp. 164–192). Political discourse experts indicate such style and tone features of totalitarian propaganda as (Gronskaya et al., 2012, pp. 279–280): triumphalism, symbolization of core political concepts, heightened criticism, exaggerated level of abstraction, generalizations at the expense of logic, and similar traits. These communications tactics can be demonstrably illustrated by psychological, linguistic, and discursive specifics of propaganda messages identified by Arendt (Arendt, 1962, pp. 343, 345–346, 351, 353, 357). To this extent,

instead of practicing direct threats and crimes, the authorities use indirect, veiled, and menacing hints against political dissenters. The strong emphasis is made on ideological 'scientificity' as distinguished from the old-fashioned appeal to the past. Statements take the form of predictions to avoid discussion by releasing an argument from the control of the present and by saying that only the future can reveal its merits. Mysterious topics are intentionally invented or borrowed from traditionally accepted mysteries. The authorities apply slogans coined by others and tried out before to free themselves from the unnecessary originality. Combining lies with certain true social and political elements and real experience is aimed 'to bridge the gulf between reality and fiction'. The inevitably arising contradictions between messages targeted to the foreign non-totalitarian public and domestic ideological content are camouflaged by the need of 'a temporary tactical maneuver'.

Totalitarian language also deserves to be highlighted as an essential verbal tool of creating propaganda messages. It is mainly characterized by a good versus bad representational schema in which there is no place for reality and its communication symbols. Also referred to as Newspeak or wooden language, the totalitarian one is based on contrasting values, fictitious reality categories and their subdivisions (Andrews, 2011, p. 1). As such, the so-termed universal, or nearly universal, positive values (i.e. progress, science, prosperity, happiness, harmony, justice, freedom, peace, etc.) are opposed to their negatives (i.e. regress, stagnation, superstition, unhappiness, friction, injustice, oppression, ugliness, etc.). The categories on the *good* side describe the state, its organs, its ideology, and the 'people'. The *bad* side, in its turn, includes 'enemies of the state and the people' and the alien ideologies. Additionally, there are subgroups within each category; for example, the 'enemies of the state and the people' comprise such 'bad-guys' as diversionists, terrorists, fascists, revanchists, reactionaries, revisionists, deviationists, etc.

Numerous research works in totalitarian communication reveal that all these psychological, linguistic, and discursive 'tricks' in creating propaganda messages remain 'an efficient though absurd method in terms of the content' (Borowski, 2017, p. 92). Arendt herself considers the content of propaganda messages 'no longer an objective issue about which people may have opinions' and compares its untouchability in the eyes of the masses with the rules of arithmetic (Arendt, 1962, p. 363). Therefore, in case of the 'what' of totalitarian communication there is superiority of the form over the content of the message. Put simply, extralinguistic means of communication (forceful style, emotional tone, avoidance of direct meanings, etc.) prevail over linguistic ones.

The masses as the addressee of communication

From the viewpoint of the totalitarian communication purpose, propaganda messages are targeted at several categories of the domestic and foreign public. They include (Arendt, 1962, p. 342): the population of non-totalitarian countries abroad; the non-totalitarian strata of the population at home; those segments of domestic population whose sufficient indoctrination have not been completed; and groups of sympathizers who are not yet ready to accept the true aims of the totalitarian regime. In Arendt's words, the addressee of totalitarian communication is

the masses with 'the appetite for political organization' (Arendt, 1962, p. 311). What is most remarkable is that this task can be successfully completed by totalitarian propaganda which genuine goal 'is not persuasion but organization' (Arendt, 1962, p. 361).

Defining the term masses, Arendt implies large numbers of neutral, politically indifferent people who cannot be integrated into any organization based on common interest: a political party, a municipal government, a professional entity or a trade union. In comparison with such large groups of people as classes, masses have not enjoyed a political quality of togetherness and a precise understanding of political goals (Arendt, 1962, p. 311). Among the basic characteristics of the masses, special mention should be made of the following ones (Arendt, 1962, pp. 314–315, 316–317, 348, 474): shortage of self-interest, lack of sound social relationships, noninvolvement into all social ramifications and normal political representation, bias against surrounding community and the world around, readiness to sacrifice themselves, and isolation. Indeed, isolation of the masses identified as 'a state of affairs where people live together without [...] sharing some visible tangible realm of the world' is described by Arendt in terms of political and physical homelessness and spiritual and social rootlessness experienced by the masses to a greater or lesser degree of intensity and misery (Arendt, 2005, pp. 356–357).

The way in which the addressee of totalitarian communication is active in seeking information, composing messages, and providing feedback to the content creators is closely connected with one of the chief characteristics of modern masses particularly emphasized by Arendt, i.e. their specific perception of reality and their own experience. This is reflected in their cynicism about anything visible or audible including facts and even invented facts and, by contrast, belief in their imaginations based on universality and stability. What convinces masses is 'only the consistency of the system of which they are presumably part' (Arendt, 1962, p. 351).

Not coincidentally, even optimistic authors who write about great changes in the nature of audiences thanks to the recent developments of the media (Shah et al., 2017, p. 494) are silent about how the new media stimulate the public's political participation. Moreover, scholars have noted very little public's involvement in either domestic or foreign politics and debates. Remarkably, active and passive forms of non-participation have been identified and described for a new typology of political engagement (Ekman and Amnå, 2012, p. 294). Besides, there is no evidence that political involvement has increased since the end of the 20th century (Baisnée, 2007, pp. 500–501). Independent assessments detect multiple inaccuracies and errors in the so-called 'Twitter revolution' statistics and conclusively prove that 'millions of protesters' turn out to be 'a few hundred thousand' of the discontented (Curran et al., 2012, p. 162). Additionally, in the digital era, masses may undergo powerful control over the media, whereby public awareness of political issues would suffer greatly. Undesirable political activities are effectively prevented by the authorities using technological levers of internet surveillance: blocking social network and video-sharing sites such as Facebook and YouTube, deleting online groups, and marginalizing or criminalising internet activists (Curran et al., 2012, pp. 155, 161).

Propaganda forms and channels as the 'how' of communication

The 'how' of totalitarian communication seems to be the least explored component in Arendt's works. Objectively, one can hardly find the philosopher's comprehensive description of communication forms and channels. Moreover, as the research was made until the beginning of the internet age, it conceivably excludes the ways of sending propaganda messages by means of electronic and digital tools. It is possible, however, to discover direct and indirect evidence of totalitarian propaganda dissemination through traditional mass media channels, namely print and broadcast mediums, and mass participation events.

The strongest form of propaganda, in Arendt's viewpoint, is a mass meeting, because 'each individual feels more self-confident and more powerful in the unity of a mass'. As the philosopher asserts, the principal purpose of any mass meeting – 'the enthusiasm of the moment' – can be achieved only through organization, discipline, and systematic training (Arendt, 1962, p. 357). At the present day, mass meetings are also on top of their relevancy. Together with party conventions, pre-election meetings, political rallies, protest events and support actions, they are designed to translate the propaganda lies into a functioning reality and to induce their participants to act and react according to the rules of a fictitious world. There can be no dispute that 'organization and propaganda [...] are two sides of the same coin' (Arendt, 1962, p. 364).

Characterizing mass media channels, Arendt accentuates a relatively recent phenomenon of mass manipulation of fact and opinion as it has become evident in the rewriting of history, image making, and actual government policy. The mass media assist totalitarian leaders to masterfully deal with established facts denying, neglecting, substituting, or trivializing them to follow mass sentiments and mass desires. Even most respectable newspapers publish materials typical of the highly non-respectable literature of science fiction, but the banality of the statement cannot escape the impression of its extraordinariness (Arendt, 1998, p. 2). As a result, the composed information product looks greater in the public eye than the original (Arendt, 2000, pp. 564–565).

Recent research works in the field of media studies have developed Arendt's academic views on the 'how' of totalitarian communication. Essentially, the media system has been acknowledged as a totalitarian apparatus that is closed, controlled, static, self-sufficient, and even de-professionalized. That is particularly evident in (Jevtović et al., 2012, pp. 284–285): inconsistencies between professional journalistic standards and existing media practices; the imbalance of information sources in favour of those from the authority; the violent ideologisation of content; deliberate silencing of important events; distracting the public's attention from the current political decisions by superficial publications; and, pertinently, creating the illusion of reality instead of reporting on it. Consequently, the audience not provided with the qualitative and reliable political production are unable to formulate political choices (McNair, 2011, p. 40); and pluralism of social and political opinion is absent.

Lack of political action as the effect of communication

It is noteworthy that all the multiple variations of Lasswell's model from 1940 to 1979 have such a constant element as effect(s) or result of reaching the audience (Sapienza et al., 2015, p. 607). Some scholars have put an increased focus on the importance of the effect of totalitarian communication over other components of the communication model (Borowski, 2017, p. 92). From an Arendtian perspective, the most progressive communication effects are translated into the place the audience take in the political realm of action (Arendt, 1962, p. 475). The ground from which action originates thus deserves consideration.

Action occupies the highest position among the chief human activities as it relates to the political sphere of human life (Arendt, 2000, p. 169). To act, in its most general sense, means to take an initiative, to begin, to set something into motion (Arendt, 1998, p. 177). This process becomes possible only through the instrumentality of speech; notably, action requires speech if any other human performance does (Arendt, 1998, p. 179). A man of action, in Arendt's viewpoint, should be both the doer of deeds and the speaker of words. Without verbal accompaniment, action loses its powers to identify an individual as 'the actor, announcing what he does, has done, and intends to do' (Ibiden).

Speech, in its turn, is tightly intertwined with talk and communication with others 'to survive the moment of experience and to remain sure of itself' (Arendt, 1962, p. 495). As for political talk, it has been recently put in a mediating position between news consumption and civic engagement as interpreting and making sense of media content directly or indirectly influences political participation (Shah et al., 2017, p. 492). Communication, if we refer to the Habermasian concept of communicative action, serves as a verbal and/or extra verbal means of achieving an understanding about the action situation, action planning, and coordination of actions by way of agreement (Habermas, 2004, p. 86).

It turns out, however, that under totalitarian conditions, citizens are not acting men but: Pavlov's dogs reduced to the most elementary reactions (Arendt, 2000, p. 136); marionettes without the slightest trace of spontaneity (Arendt, 2000, p. 137); performing robots destitute of the accompaniment of speech (Arendt, 1998, p. 178); or human beings who lost their specifically human unpredictability of thought and action (Arendt, 2005, p. 350). The destruction of all private and public channels of communication safeguarded in democracies by freedom of speech and opinion determines the success of making every person incommunicado in the totalitarian context (Arendt, 1962, p. 495). The place of speech proves to be occupied by 'never-communicated information' (Arendt, 1962, p. 435), i.e. general facts known by the population at large, but a priori forbidden to be discussed publicly like prison conditions, forced disappearance, arrests of innocent people, etc.

Speechless action, as Arendt argues, would no longer be action (Arendt, 1998, p. 179). In its stead, totalitarian rule relies upon the principle not of action, but of constant motion (Arendt, 2005, p. 344). Metaphorically speaking, people have been melded together in the desert of isolation and atomization and then introduced a gigantic motion into the tranquillity of the cemetery (Arendt, 2005, p. 348). Numerous research works support Arendt's findings of the effect of totalitarian communication. In short, they characterize this phenomenon as: the impression

that the leader and the led are joined in a cooperative effort to the mutual benefit of both (Johnson-Cartee and Copeland, 2004, p. 146); mass enthusiasm in loco intellectual, spiritual, or artistic initiatives (Borowski, 2017, p. 91); and obedience and passivity of the audience as a final target (Jevtović et al., 2012, p. 285). Stated differently, totalitarian communication removes human beings from the political realm of action converting them into 'politically marginal figures' (Arendt, 1998, p. 180) which is equivalent to political excommunication.

The overall objective of a research design was to explore totalitarian communication from Arendt's perspective and to describe all the communication units of the process. To our knowledge, it is the first attempt of analyzing totalitarian communication in an Arendtian thought aided by Lasswell's communication model. Apart from some notable exceptions addressing communicative aspects of totalitarianism (totalitarian language, totalitarian discourse, totalitarian ideology, totalitarian propaganda, totalitarian media, totalitarian communication practices), totalitarian communication taken as a whole has not been investigated up to the present.

CONCLUSION

The results indicate that Lasswell's construct is entirely applicable for analyzing totalitarian communication as both Arendt and contemporary researchers see it. This has made it possible to articulate and validate a meta-definition of totalitarian communication combining the Lasswellian model with Arendt's descriptions of its components: *Who* (totalitarian mass leaders), *Says what* (totalitarian propaganda messages), *How* (through propaganda forms and channels), *To whom* (the masses), *With what effect* (lack of political activity of the masses). Moreover, the study succeeded in establishing the meaning of political excommunication in the sense that Arendt has given it and formulating a clear definition of the term.

Firstly, a concept of political excommunication has been introduced into scientific discourse. It is proposed to define political excommunication as political status loss by a human being or a whole group of human beings caused by the absence of adequate conditions for the development and reinforcement of political qualities indispensable for political action.

Secondly, the purpose of totalitarian communication has been determined. It is argued that totalitarian communication does not set stage for building trust and consensus, creating awareness about politics, educating people, exchanging political ideas or receiving any political response. In contrast, its only purpose is organizing masses.

Thirdly, political and communicative characteristics of the sender and the addressee of totalitarian communication have been identified. The sender (the 'who') is a generalized character of a totalitarian mass leader including individuals and entities linked to the political realm who initiates propaganda messages to influence the public. The addressee of such communication is the masses – large numbers of politically indifferent people not armed with political qualities of common sense, togetherness, and equality but with a penchant for the unity of a mass to feel more self-confident and powerful.

Next, the specifics of totalitarian messages have been discovered. There is superiority of the form over the content of the message: extralinguistic means of communication (forceful style, emotional tone, avoidance of direct meanings, etc.) prevail over linguistic ones represented by totalitarian language not reflecting reality.

Finally, political and communicative effects of the totalitarian communication process have been described. Being monologic in nature, totalitarian communication removes human beings from the political realm of communicative action marginalizing them, which is equivalent to political excommunication. Not constituting a communicative actor, the audience of totalitarian communication cannot in any fashion influence the political process. To return to what Arendt has highlighted, 'action is not expected of citizens' (Arendt, 2005, p. 360).

The confidence in the described results could be strengthened with further research on political communication in Arendt's thought. Some limitations, however, might be related to the proposed model and the content of the term political excommunication. Special mention should go to at least three of them: (1) the employment of restricted number of communication models as a totalitarian communication model base; (2) the absence of contemporary data connected with changes to the media system and communication channels; and (3) ambiguities upon the specifics of propaganda messages targeted at domestic and foreign publics and the results achieved under the corresponding audience segmentation. The analysis of how these crucial contextual variables operate might improve our understanding of the relationships between power and communication and inspire scholars to define their future research agendas.

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ХАННА АРЕНДТ О ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ (ЭКС)КОММУНИКАЦИИ В СВЕТЕ КОММУНИКАЦИОННОЙ МОДЕЛИ ГАРОЛЬДА ЛАССУЭЛЛА

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Введение: политическая коммуникация является основой демократической публичной сферы. Вместе с тем, для современного посттоталитарного мира характерны тоталитарные проявления в виде экспансии технологий пропаганды, циркуляции идеологического контента и создания властями вымышленной реальности. Поэтому исследования, посвященные тоталитаризму, могут быть полезными в понимании того, как властные отношения влияют на формирование публичной сферы.

Цель: выявление особенностей коммуникации в тоталитарном обществе, используя концепцию Х. Арендт в качестве теоретического базиса и переосмысление идеи о коммуникативной природе власти в инструментальном ключе, представив ее в виде модели. Предпринята попытка описания элементов коммуникационной модели с точки зрения Х. Арендт.

Методы: методология основана на использовании коммуникационной модели Г. Лассуэлла и теории коммуникативного действия Ю. Хабермаса. Проведен сравнительный анализ подсфер теории коммуникации и политической науки – тоталитарной, политической и массовой коммуникации. Концептуальная основа исследования обеспечена использованием интерпретативного подхода к работам Х. Арендт.

Результаты: введен и критически осмыслен концепт политической экс-коммуникации, определены политические и коммуникативные характери-

стики отправителя и получателя тоталитарной коммуникации, выявлена специфика тоталитарного сообщения, описаны политические и коммуникативные эффекты процесса тоталитарной коммуникации.

Выводы: результаты исследования позволяют использовать модель тоталитарной коммуникации для более полного понимания современных политических процессов. Утверждается, что тоталитарная коммуникация не способствует установлению доверия и консенсуса, осведомленности о политике, просвещению граждан, обмену политическими идеями или получению политического отклика. Ее единственной целью является организация масс. Тем самым, адресат тоталитарной коммуникации не является коммуникативным актором, влияющим на политические процессы.

Ключевые слова: модель коммуникации; политическая коммуникация; публичная сфера; тоталитаризм; пропаганда; экскоммуникация; элита; массы; Ханна Арендт; Гарольд Лассуэлл

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