

rově korektního jazyka neúnosně prodlouží jazykový projev, měl/a by si srovnat délku textu genderově korektního, formulovaného podle výše uvedených zásad, s textem, kde osoby jsou vyjadřovány v tzv. generickém maskulinu. Doporučuji též se stopkami v ruce zkusit přečíst dvě takové verze jednoho textu. Obecně platí v genderově vyspělých společnostech, že jazyková úspornost není tak významným faktorem, aby jí muselo ustoupit zviditelnění poloviny populace.

Zda si pod tolik oblíbenými a „ženy zahrnujícími“ mužskými názvy osob vybavíme ženy, jsem nedávno znovu zkoumala v asociačních testech s 37 studujícími pedagogické fakulty (34 žen a tři muži). Metodika testu (která bude předmětem některé příští publikace) zaručovala, že testování neměli ponětí, na co zaměřuji hlavní pozornost. Vzorek byl sestaven z 10 běžně užívaných „generických“ maskulin jako *student*, *vědec*, *lékař* a dalších. Výsledek jsem sice očekávala, ale přesto mne – již po tolikáté – šokoval: z celkem 370 položek spojili dotazovaní v 348 případech s „generickým“ maskulinem právě obraz muže. Pod pojmem *student* si vybavily ženu pouhé dvě z 37 posluchaček a posluchačů vysoké školy...

Pod označením *vědec* si nevybavil ženu NIKDO. Jestliže chceme veřejnost přesvědčit o tom, že věda, pracovní trh a veřejný prostor vůbec jsou *pro ženy*, o *ženách* a *se ženami*, bez změny jazykových praktik to jednoduše nepůjde. K tomu uvádím ukázky z tisku a internetu:

Hledejte náznak, že byly vůbec přítomny ženy:

- Prvního února 2003 havaroval raketoplán Columbia a v jeho troskách zahynuli všichni členové posádky. (100+1 ZZ)
- Trojice vynálezců z pražského ČVUT vyvinula přístroj, který umožňuje ovládat počítač pouhým pohybem očí. (LN)

- V americkém San Francisku se v tomto týdnu konalo symposium specialistů na nervové procesy. (www.scienceworld.cz)

Hledejte vědkyni:

- V americkém San Francisku se v tomto týdnu konalo symposium specialistů na nervové procesy. Také zde se referovalo o příznivém vlivu hudby a o tom, že hudba zlepšuje paměť – a to opět nejen u lidí. Toto odvážné tvrzení si dovolily prezentovat hned dvě dámy – Fra Rauscherová a Hong Hua Li. Pro své tvrzení přitom předložily dostatečně pádné důkazy. Potkání, kterým dámy pokusně hrály Mozartovu sonátu, vykazovali vyšší hodnoty aktivity u řady genů, které se podílí na stimulaci mozkových nervových buněk – a také na změnách propojení těchto buněk. (www.scienceworld.cz)

Pozn.: V článku vědomě střídám *-i* a *-y* v *-ovém* participiu (*naslouchali*, *abychom vystihly*). Čtenářky a čtenáři nechtě posoudí, zda a) jim bylo toto střídání nápadné, b) zda jej chtějí považovat za chybu nebo zda připouštějí možnost takového vyjadřování. Velmi uvítám odezvy na adrese valdrova@pf.jcu.cz.

Poznámky

1 Znění směrnic uvádím na svém webu www.eamos.cz/gender – Genderové obory – Gender v jazyce a řeči.

2 Srov. můj článek v archivu článků na uvedeném webu *Novinové titulky z hlediska genderu*.

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HOW TO SAVE THE PUBLIC SPACE /

TIJANA MILOSAVLJEVIĆ-ČAJETINAC

The world, for Hannah Arendt, is nothing other than a space for politics. This is the human world, built between individuals, created and developed in the process of *communication*. Language is indispensable in creating this world.

These claims sound conventional: language is a specific human achievement and politics is not possible without communication. However, Hannah Arendt seems to be trying to tell us something more about language than what is usually revealed in discussions about the origins of language and the existence of the pre-linguistic mind. These discussions sometimes result in a dubious political correctness: babies are usually excluded from the linguistic community, but computers are included. The only important achievement of language, in Arendt's opinion, is admission to the community, where people make connections neither *for* nor

against but *with* each other (Arendt 1958: 10). This dimension of language is more a matter of spontaneity than biological necessity. Arendt thus suggests that we accept the phenomenon of language as something new and unexpected. Consequently, language cannot define us but can only create us and make us *who* we are, as persons; it creates our world as a world of pluralities. Plurality is a key word for understanding not only the nature of language but also how we are possible as human beings. It is not just a simple matter of a quantity of individuals that exist in this world, but is also a matter of the many different experiences of the world told to others through a variety of stories, creating a variety of relations between individuals and within each individual; the different ways in which we appear to others and the many different ways in which they appear to us.

A person is not possible without this plurality within herself. The capacity for dialogue within the self makes connections with other human beings possible, and vice versa.

When viewing plurality in this way, language cannot merely be a medium between the world and ourselves. After overcoming the problem of the origin of language, this is another challenge to traditional theories, which claim we use language to describe the world that is „out there“. But there is nothing like this relationship between us on the one side and the unknown world waiting for our intervention on the other. If this relationship exists, Arendt would consider it more a matter of labor and work¹ than a matter of the political. „To be *political*... meant that everything was decided through words and persuasion and not through force and violence.“ (Arendt 1958: 37)

As a medium, language appears to be closed to any possible answer from the other side, so it does not *open up any space for dialogue*. This is the language of defining; imposing its own frames and values, it becomes the language of directives and instructions, excluding any kind of interactivity. The realm of political, however, is the only realm where we can resolve our problems and conflicts without force and violence, so only language and communication remain as something essentially political. However, it is for this reason that Arendt found the separation of the political from the other two spheres of human life – the private and the public – so important. The private realm is built in the domestic sphere and is closely connected with labor: „According to Greek thought, the human capacity for political is not only different from but stands in direct opposition to that natural association whose center is the *home* (*oikia*) and the family.“ (Arendt 1958: 36) Labor is a reproductive activity concerned with life and biological needs. It does not produce anything new in the world the way *work* does. Work is more related to the realm of the public; it produces tools, artifacts or monuments; it creates our culture. Therefore, it is involved in changing nature, changing the form of materials, and violating nature. The relations between people in this sphere are concerned with interests and the exchange of goods. Unlike both the private and the public spheres, the political sphere is related to what Arendt calls *action*. Action is free from any contact with the material world and any kind of physical intervention. With regard to making connections with other human beings, not because of personal interests but because of the commitment of oneself as a political being in the world, this activity is not only indifferent to the sphere of production, but excludes it as a sphere of violence that is capable of disturbing the political space. Action is always directed from people to people, and not to objects or to people as objects.

However, cultural feminists have criticized Arendt for this separation. This way – they argue – she relegates women back into the private sphere and renders them invisible, leaving the space for public and political struggle to men. In reality, in *The Human Condition* she describes the domestic sphere as tied to women. Although it is true that sexism and

the exclusion of women from public affairs is a real consequence of the separation of the private from the public, is this really a part of Hannah Arendt's conception?

Writing about the private realm as belonging to women, she was describing an historical fact, but she did not claim that this realm belongs to women *essentially*. She moreover accorded the private sphere particular importance. Arendt acknowledged the „Frauenproblem“, but never analyzed it explicitly.² There are two facets to her relationship to the position of women. First, she never suggested that everyone has a right and responsibility to engage in public life, whether this be a man or a woman. Her own biography is perfect proof of this. She also recognized the gap between formal equality and the real obstacles that still kept women in a dependent position (maternity, lower salaries, traditional property relations, etc). Second, she was critical of feminist movements, but this does not automatically imply sexism or traditionalism. Nevertheless, some feminists have dangerously trivialized the way in which she criticized the emancipation movements. As Elisabeth Young-Bruehl notes, Arendt agreed with Rosa Luxemburg that women's movements were too abstract and too focused on women's issues, ignoring the more general problems of the working class (Young-Bruehl 1997; transl. 2002: 492³), and as a consequence they were not political enough, so they „never succeed in articulating concrete goals (other than humanitarian ones)“ (Arendt 1993: 69). Therefore, the main objection here should not be directed at the alleged sexism in her writings, but to the fact that she never addressed as issues the historical position of women and the existing obstacles that prevented their engagement. The private and the public spheres, in her opinion, were not only separate but also in permanent conflict, demanding that their actors decide between them. Upon entering the public/political sphere one must abandon all one's personal interests and problems and be prepared to „expose oneself“ outside the shelter of privacy. In this situation, the price that women are required to pay for this political right is higher: the institutionalization of a woman's engagement in public affairs looks impossible until she gives up not only her privacy, which is a matter of a free and personal decision that both men and women must make, but also forgoes the possibility of pregnancy and maternity. It follows that the question is not a matter of who has the formal right to enter public life, but how to find ways to make it easier.

Hannah Arendt never thought of herself as a feminist. She never referred to anything resembling what cultural feminists refer to as the „specific female experience“, and as a result they have criticized her for exhibiting a kind of „conservatism“. Why then is her philosophy an issue in feminist discussion? Is it a question of the responsibility of a woman philosopher to speak from such a position, or is it the only possible position for a woman to speak from? Finally, is there any other position from which a human being can think, act, feel and experience the world that is not necessarily charged by any sexual designator?

We may be able to find an answer in an aspect of Arendt's concept that was unusual for traditional philosophy and political theory: what is interesting about her concept of communication is that it embodies the main context in which political power appears. Her concept of power is different from that of Max Weber, for example. In his opinion, power is the possibility to influence and shape other people's will according to our own. For Hannah Arendt, however, Weber's conception is more a matter of force than of power, and ultimately there is the possibility that this force can turn into violence. Moreover, for Arendt violence is not only something other than power, but it is the very lack of it – it is powerlessness (see Arendt 1970). It is the lack of any possibility for consensus, and that is in fact the lack or impossibility of communication. How is this possible? In her opinion, power is never the property of an individual but is inter-subjective, which must imply communication. This inter-subjectivity should be institutionalized, which means that not only are institutions meant to serve people's interests, but also that the institutions themselves can survive by respecting these interests. When institutions survive without respecting the traditions and purposes that people founded them on, communication is prevented. The only way that people will „respect“ the institutions afterward is if people are forced to „respect“ them.

Arendt's reflections on the differences between force, violence and real power can be identified as „female“ or at least as a challenge to the dominant discourses and practices. Consequently, she has been criticized not only by cultural feminists, but also by authors that we usually consider as „conservative“. According to Habermas, she neglected the political reality in which force is one of the strategic elements (Habermas 1977; transl. 2002: 267).

Hannah Arendt was criticized then from two different sides, which otherwise ought to negate each other. This would appear to be impossible until we realize that the two sides neglected some important aspects of her experience. Both criticisms are worth taking seriously, but what they both omit is the experience of the holocaust. In Arendt's opinion the experience of the holocaust was a radically new historical experience that in many ways provoked an original perception of politics that pays much more attention to the structures of communication than is usual in political theory. Concentration camps were places where these structures were radically destroyed and were replaced by relations of blind force. That kind of force is no longer a part of the real political strategy, but is all that remains after the destruction of communication structures. As to the feminists' remarks, Arendt would say that all kinds of discrimination, repression and exclusion of certain groups from the dominant social streams that existed before the holocaust were still within the sphere of the human. But the evil of the holocaust, the mass deportations to concentration and extermination camps, making human beings superfluous as humans (see Arendt 1951), appeared to her to be something beyond all possible human relations, including those

between men and women. The old narrative frames could not explain this evil, and she proposed that new ones be sought.

In the light of this experience, she decided to recover the concept of the political. This is the fundamental motive behind her search for the authentic human experience of the political in the *polis*: the ancient Greeks insisted on a separation of *oikos* from *polis*. Only free individuals could enter the political space, leaving *oikos*, which, however, by no means implied the destruction of the private. Another question is who were the free individuals in ancient Greece and how the position of women was affected, but what Arendt was probably trying to suggest is that freedom as such is the *conditio sine qua non* for the political. However, totalitarianism had to access all spheres of human life to survive, including the private sphere. By making individuals the „coils of the system“, requiring them to report to the Party, totalitarianism violated their private sphere, and opened the way to tyranny, where even the „privacy of one's own thinking“ was not possible. By destroying the private sphere, totalitarianism destroyed the political as well: forced to report to the Party, the individual was deprived of even the possibility of communication in terms of interactivity and spontaneity. The separation Arendt suggests therefore appears more like the protection of privacy than the act of excluding and making it invisible. Just as the crime of the holocaust goes beyond all human relations, Arendt's concept of the political goes beyond not only conservatism and liberalism (see Young-Bruehl 1997), but also the distinction between falocentrism and gynocentrism. Existing cultural/linguistic frameworks were incapable of either preventing or explaining the evil of the holocaust. So we have to think beyond them. But does this imply that we also have to think beyond existing gendered categories as culturally imposed? That would mean thinking politically. Such thinking seems to be free from sexual designators, and it recognizes the infinite variety of human experiences and the very fact of plurality. Cultural feminism ignores this when it favors the specifically female experience and excludes the variety of women's experiences that it does not necessarily recognize as female – or male either.

Other criticism of Arendt's communicative concept of political/power refers to the possibility of ideological manipulation (Habermas 1977; transl. 2002: 269), personal projections, and a selective reading of the ancient philosophers (Molnar 2000: 148). These are very serious arguments based precisely on the abuse of language in totalitarian propaganda. Habermas correctly remarked that it is hard to distinguish the susceptibility to ideology from the impression of common agreement. Even so, Arendt might have called this argument a „masculine question“ as well: language should be exact, leaving no space for deviation from reality. However, this argument may again rely on a deep belief in the existence of the world on one side and us on the other side – a notion that we discarded at the very beginning of this paper. Applied to the political sphere, this notion can turn

into the kind of behavior that acknowledges a Party on the one side and us on the other.

Still, do we really believe that there is only one story that we can tell about our world? With no experiences, no moral edifications, no ethical or emotional dimension? Is there only one authority that has the exclusive right to tell this story? We cannot honestly believe that, and we need not go far to prove it. If we just think of ourselves, we find that already there is more than one story that each one of us can tell about our own lives. How many stories then can be told by the many people around us? Is it relativism, personal projection, selective memory, or simply our right to see the world as we see it and tell our story about it? According to Julia Kristeva, Arendt proposes something that we could call a kind of personal projection or even „fiction“. This much resembles the search for new narrative frames. It is not her intention to affront history but to face it, and the only way she can do this is to tell a story about it, which is more than the simple reproduction of pure facts. At the end of her text Kristeva wrote: „Story is an authentic dimension in which human being lives... the political life and/or action told to the other people. The first overlapping human being and life is the story; the story... is authentically political..., the authentic story itself is diffused in peculiarities and infinities of narrative.“ (Kristeva, 1999; transl. 2002: 441)⁴ Acting makes sense „only if it remains in memory“, only if spectators „are those who ‘complete’ the narrative, the history; thanks to thinking that comes after an action“. Stressing the role of the spectator as opposed to that of the actor, Arendt refers to the close connection between politics and theater. There is an interaction between the event and the proposed story, an interaction that differs from the traditional relationship in which the story is a kind of static *mimesis*. The story can express its essential logic „only when becomes action itself, revealing itself as ‘drama’, or ‘play’... not freezing as an object...“. In this manner Arendt shuns Heidegger’s notion that „Thinking is an expression of the dictate of Being“, recognizing the risk that – here Kristeva relies on Taminiaux – a thinker of Being could become a real judge of human things. Kristeva notes that Arendt thinks that „no one has a right to perform as a master and impose its own systematic point of view“, which in the final instance could lead to tyranny and dictatorship. If language implies even the possibility of ideological manipulation, which is what really happens in our world, even in today’s politics, what is the alternative? If we accept and recognize the force as a reality, we appear to be choosing the status quo, resigning from the political, and ceasing to play.

As we have seen, the crucial moment in the political, surprisingly, is not just that which is happening on the stage. What is happening on the stage would make no sense, and would moreover not even be possible, without the eye of the spectator. However, spectators, the public, are usually expected to be passive receivers, who are removed from the „scenario“. They appear indifferent to what is happening outside. Whenever we accept this point of view, we cre-

ate room for indifferent people – those who cannot decide and influence the sphere that remarkably affects their lives. Moreover, they do not recognize the public space as belonging to them as well. Who then creates the scenario – and for whom? The spectator in Arendt’s point of view, though not directly involved in the public event, is a subject who observes, judges and decides. The spectators make the scene of political action public – visible. Visibility is the only way to prevent manipulation and conspiracies hinging on the involvement of personal interests in common affairs, etc. Moreover, the position of the spectator is not just one side of the relationship but is also the privileged side. Only the spectator knows what is happening on the stage because the spectator’s position enables him/her to see the whole. Whoever is in the middle of the event cannot see the whole. That is why actors need spectators; they are not autonomous, they are dependent on the spectators’ judgment. Therefore, the real subject of change is the spectator.

Before I reconsider the problem of how spectators in Arendt’s conception influence the public space, I will refer to another sense in which the position of the spectator was traditionally assigned to women. As Simone de Beauvoir writes in *The Second Sex*, woman, as an Other, is in a position away from the public stage, which belongs to men, and there she plays the role of the spectator. Men, however, also need a public; they need women to observe and judge them (de Beauvoir 1949; transl. 242). De Beauvoir also recognized a kind of man’s dependency on women’s judgment. The woman is the measure of values. Inspired by the Hegelian relationship between master and slave, de Beauvoir acknowledged that man needs the Other not only to possess it, but also to be recognized by it. Woman is capable of being impartial because of her position. Men are too occupied with action, so they too are unable to see the whole. There is almost no difference between the concept of the spectator in Arendt’s and de Beauvoir’s reflections, but we can hardly expect that woman’s position in this context was usually the position of the subject, which is what follows from Arendt’s conception. Unfortunately, there is one important difference that takes us back to the reality of tradition, and de Beauvoir is entirely right in recognizing it: „woman does not claim the values *other* than those that man claims“ (Ibid). Her role is to confirm his values, to hold them, and to prevent any possible change that could challenge his position. But it is still the man who creates these values. That is why woman does not appear as a real subject. Arendt’s spectator, positioned at a distance from the action, observes and judges only by him/herself. The spectator does not accept established values – pre-conceived narrative frames – as givens, confirming whether or not they are upheld on the stage; the spectator is free from them and is able to repeatedly challenge and revise them.

This brings us again to the problem of how the spectator influences the public space. Again, there is no question about who the spectator is, or at least, we cannot find any reference that Arendt’s spectator is a man. The situation re-

sembles the question of who has a right to leave the private and enter the public space. As I mentioned above, Arendt did not give any special consideration to the problem of how to make it easier for women to do so, meaning how to open the road for them to engage in public affairs *as women*. We can see something similar in the case of her reflections on the role of the spectator. However, here I think we should refrain from fussy criticism. It is a pity that she did not live long enough to complete her work on *The Life of The Mind*, in which we may have been able to find some answers. Or, maybe not. But then could we not do it on our own, by reading carefully to discern what she was trying to tell us throughout her opus? Here the concept of spontaneity arises again. Deeply connected with plurality, spontaneity is the motion of something new and unexpected. Totalitarianism prevented and sanctioned these motions. Even then, people succeeded in overcoming it. Arendt would consider it only an alibi not to use this possibility. If we decide to undertake an action, not only must we decide to give up our privacy, but we must also be aware that there are not any extenuating circumstance that would enable our action (see Fenichel Pitkin 1998; transl. 2002: 535). We certainly ought to rely on the experiences of our predecessors, listen to their stories, and use the existing ways of engagement in public life, but we should not expect to encounter any beaten paths when doing something new and unexpected. We must start from where we are. Arendt would have said something similar with regard to judging and contemplation. Not just intellectuals and philosophers but, in Arendt's view, everyone is able to gather and articulate their own experiences and draw lessons from them. Of course, Arendt paid particular attention to those who refused to think and act, and neglected those who really cannot think and act. Nevertheless, it is up to the rest of us to remain aware that the world also belongs to us.

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Notes

1 „Labor corresponds to the biological process of the human body. The human condition for labor is life itself... *Work* corresponds to unnaturalness of human existence...; provides an *artificial world of things* distinctly different from all natural surroundings. The human condition for work is *worldliness*.“ (see Arendt 1958)

2 Except in her text „On the Emancipation of Women“, a short review of the book of A. Rühle-Gerstel.

3 If the second year is introduced, it refers to Serbian translation that I used where the original issue was not available. The first year always refers to the original issues, also introduced in references.

4 The English interpretation is mine, based on a Serbian translation from 2002 (see the references). Having no access to the original text or probable English translation, some terminological variations are possible. However, I have made every effort to adhere as much as possible to the notional frameworks. Further quotations are from the same source, if not referred to otherwise.

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