

Edyta Sokalska, Małgorzata Augustyniak

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Edyta Sokalska*

Małgorzata Augustyniak**

* Katedra Historii Państwa i Prawa Polskiego i Doktryn Polityczno-Prawnych

** Katedra Filozofii i Polityki Prawa

Wydział Prawa i Administracji UWM

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Introduction

Johanna “Hannah” Arendt was a German political theorist. Being often described as a philosopher, she rejected that label. She described herself rather as a political theorist who used to live in the United States of America. Arendt’s work deals with the nature of power, and the subjects of politics, direct democracy, authority and totalitarianism. Being the author of such books as *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, *Men in Dark Times*, *Adolf Eichmann Trial*, *The Human Condition*, *Meaning of Revolution*, *On Violence* Hannah Arendt seems to be rather more popular in the United States than in Europe. In Poland there are few authors who are interested in her thoughts concerning her reception of politics, law and society. The purpose of this article is to show the function of law in political and social conditions of the contemporary world where pluralism exist on the basis of Hannah Arendt’s deliberation on politics, law and human nature. At first there will be shown a short outline of Arendt’s methodology. Next, there will be introduced the concept of *plurality* that for Arendt is one of the main conditions of the human’s actions.

„Never before there were people in so many countries around the world [...] so helpless struggling in a whirlwind of contradictory, causing confusion, kakafonic ideas. [...] Every day brings a new fashion, a scientific discovery, religion, a new movement or manifesto”¹. As a result, the system in which

¹ A. Toffler, *Trzecia fala*, PIW, Warszawa 1997, p. 440.

there are clear divisions into classes or ideology disappears. There is an eclectic “configurative society” where there are mixed varied (often enumerative) minorities create loose, temporary configurations². From this perspective, it is not surprising that the turn of the century brings a clear revival of interest in pluralism and it can be observed a shift in the way of analyzing this issue. The main context of the discussion is no longer the issue of distributive justice and the issues related to the possession of material goods and the legitimacy of ownership. There are questions such as: whether people have the right to have what they have, or whether justice requires that someone else in that possession also should have a part in?

The above questions give a way to the other questions, more related to the issues of cultural diversity in the societies in the internally and globally dimensions. In the centre of philosophical discourse there are presently the issues of diversity, pluralism and multiculturalism, and the emphasis is placed more on the issues of identity and worldview rather than – as it took place before – on the economy. This shift of the interest in a large extent is determined by the changes taking place in the societies of the Western world. Increasingly, their homogeneity is broken and on many levels of society there is an increasing diversity. A lot of the changes taking place in the spiritual culture are associated with the rapid development of new technologies, especially information technology that enhances the social system with new communication layers. Connected computer networks intensify human minds. They are capable of storing, processing and sharing large amounts of data. This is an announcement of an unprecedented situation in the history of mankind in which individuals begin to have basically unlimited access to a growing knowledge base and getting wider social memory. This phenomenon influences on the change of forms and recipients of contemporary media. They undergo a process of “off mass”. The sender’s intentions and the expectations of the recipients fall outside any attempts of a top-down harmonization. In the social scale it contributes to the progress of destandardization in varied areas.

The situation can be observed not only in the sphere of media but also in education, communication, ideology, consumption, government, politics, etc. There the mass production has been gradually giving way to individualism: unity – diversity, rigidity – flexibility. The pressure of news combined with the speed of changes taking place simultaneously at multiple levels enhances the crossing a variety of needs, ideas and believes. That is why more and more inadequate to the reality there are divisions based on general quantifiers such as *left – right*, *strong – weak* leader. Deeply rooted patterns of governance are changing and traditional sources of legitimacy, such as reli-

² Ibidem, p. 624.

gion, tradition or charisma are depleting³. This also contributes to the modification of views on the role of the state that is rather a partner in negotiations and coordinated collective decisions than the supervisor who authoritatively decides what should be done⁴. Gradually, the importance of the state institutions solving social conflicts is changing. Frequently heteronomous and one-sided mode of litigation or penalties becomes ineffective. The development of various types of non-repressive methods of resolving conflicts involving stakeholders such as mediation and negotiation becomes the alternative.

Fundamental to the modern approach to the politics becomes the belief that in addition to the interest in forms of inequality resulting from the economic distribution should be also the analysis of other forms of oppression, occurring, for example, when social relations are conditioned by the interaction of inequalities due to gender, culture, religion, race, etc. That situation creates favorable conditions for the discussion on the issue of pluralism and the related concepts of "equality and diversity". A significant voice in this debate is the voice of Hannah Arendt. For her the plurality category is of particular relevance. It pervades all of her political reflection and affects the main conclusions. Margaret Conovan states that if we had to assign one word to the any of major political thinkers that they had introduced into the thinking circle in our world, the word that should be regarded as a manifestation of penetrating response to specific and definitely a new experience of your time, such a word that in the case of H. Arendt it would have been "plurality"⁵.

Political philosophy that Hannah Arendt deals with to large extent is determined by an anthropological perspective. In this part of the article on the function of law in political and social conditions of pluralism from the perspective of Hannah Arendt there will be introduced some aspect of Arendt's philosophical thoughts, plurality in the political and law context and consequently, the threats of social pluralism.

The field of human affairs with its unpredictability puts the author in this kind of wonder about the world (*thaumadzein*), which since ancient times has been regarded as the beginning of all philosophy. In the interests of Arendt there are questions about the nature of politics, the specificities of its aspects, and the location of a man in a public space. In analyzing these issues she highlights the difference between philosophical reflection, political

³ More about traditional sources of legitimization of authority see, M. Augustyniak, P. Polaczuk, *Typy idealne panowania. Założenia epistemologiczne i metodologiczne*, UWM, Olsztyn 2010, p. 209–230.

⁴ See, L. Morawski, *Główne problemy współczesnej filozofii prawa. Prawo w toku przemian*, Lexis Nexis, Warszawa 2005, p. 132.

⁵ M. Conovan, *Hannah Arendt. A Reinterpretation of Her Political Thought*, Cambridge University Press 1994, p. 280–281.

practice and the danger hiding in the attempts to identify them. The specificity of philosophy is the tendency to formulate a single, universal theory that "lay claims to be free from particular points of view and to embody the truth as such, creating the absolute importance of itself"⁶. Philosophy takes care of eternal things. It investigates the universal order of the world. It is different from the policy which is characterized by instability, inherent in living and mortal men⁷. Therefore, the status of truth in the philosophy and politics should be understood differently⁸. The practice of philosophy omitting the truth is barren, while the functioning of the political space that offers only one truth, denies this discursive space character which in the Arendt's assessment should be the basis. Thus, the philosophical truth can not be the whole truth. Philosophy can only pass as part of the widespread rational communication as intermediaries between the human and the actual number of truths. In other words, the political space, unlike in the philosophy, the mind only is not enough for something to be considered for the truth. We need also some social conditions, among which the freedom of discussion is crucial⁹.

The issue that permanently took part in the canon of political reflection is related to an attempt to determine whether the events in the field of public affairs are fundamental philosophical impulse and they are the key to interpretation or, on the contrary, it should be taken into account that the first is philosophical experience and evaluate all the public in its light. This last assumption leads us towards sofocracy that on the basis of a priori reasons the law should be enacted and the citizens must obey that law and the political system. Plato is the classic of this approach in the European tradition. He first designed the state subordinated to philosophical perspective, which fundamentally changed the earlier Greek conception of politics. Founder of the Academy has assigned the truth contained in the ideas of absolute and universal nature and its cave metaphor expresses perfectly the tension inherent in the relationship preacher of truth with others¹⁰. Experienced philosopher is associated with some type of insulation. He has to turn away from the material world. He has to be able to see what are the things in themselves to understand their eternal essence. A philosopher must refrain from the empirical analysis of specific countries to focus on the rational cognition, objective, consistent and transcendental idea of the state. So a kind of alienation from the world, which share a philosopher, he pulls on

⁶ H. Arendt, *Salon berliński i inne eseje*, Prószyński i S-ka, Warszawa 2008, p. 141.

⁷ See, H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, Prószyński i S-ka, Warszawa 2007, p. 112.

⁸ H. Arendt, *Prawda a polityka*, „Literatura na Świecie” 1985, no. 6, p. 167.

⁹ The way of comprehension of the truth proposed by Hannah Arendt corresponds to the attitude of J.S. Mill. See, J.S. Mill, *O wolności*, A. Kurlandzka (trans.), WN PWN, Warszawa 1959, p. 143.

¹⁰ See, H. Arendt, *Salon berliński...*, p. 117.

the risk of common sense, this “common sense”, without which it is impossible to understand the common world¹¹. “If a philosopher begins to speak in the common world of common sense, which also includes our common shared belief and superstition, always threatening him that he would speak in terms of nonsense, or [...] that will put common sense on its head”¹².

The primacy of philosophy in the country meant that it should provide standards, rules and yardsticks by which you can be overcome, resulting in individual freedom, unpredictability and instability of the human world. According to Arendt, this approach is subject to error, which consists of ignoring the basic condition of politics: the fact that it is grown in the midst of many human beings, everybody is entitled to specific differences, to determine his own goals and to initiate his own activities. In this perspective, the results of an interaction must be the result of continuing the findings of many people. It can not be a priori design. It can not depend on the theoretical findings of opinion of one person or a selected group¹³. If the goal is to implement the political leadership, philosophy to absolute standards of political space, may herald a tragic end, as in serious prejudice to the conditions under which the practice of politics is possible.

Arendt points out that totalitarian regimes are based on bad essence of politics. Only because politics arises between people awareness that all the rules – both good and bad, true and false, so far as they govern their operation, can not be imposed from the outside, they must develop from the bottom up in the same community. The domain of politics is therefore freedom enjoyed by none. The public space organizes those “who are absolutely dissimilar from the outset with a view to their relative equality, and despite their relative differences”¹⁴. Since the fundamental meaning of politics is freedom, that wherever there is a monopoly of violence based on the use of force, there also have to deal with the end of political action. Regimes based on fear destroy “the substance of the human being together”, isolating people from each other and make them helpless and they try to destroy the human diplomacy. Also warfare requiring mindless obedience should be excluded from the political sphere.

The outline of hannah arendt's methodology

To understand Arendt's writings it is worth to pay attention to the specificity of her research approach. The author does not attempt to provide

¹¹ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 62–63.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 68.

¹³ H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, Aletheia, Warszawa 2010, p. 23.

¹⁴ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 127.

a coherent philosophical system or a political agenda. She interweaves together varied trains of thought, she uses metaphors and reversals. She often spots out and reconstructs the various events of the past, confronting them with contemporary problems. With these “moments of history” she creates a sort of Weberian “ideal type” – a single, mental image that “connects certain relationships and events of historical life into one space of links. As for the content, this design has the characteristics of utopia which we have obtained by enhancing certain elements of reality in the mind”¹⁵.

The examples of such thought models in Arendt’s writing are Greek polis, the Roman Republic, the French and American revolutions. Arendt also comes back to the achievements of a lot of masters, sometimes seemingly very distant one from another. She is inspired by Socrates, St. Augustine, Kant, Tocqueville, the Founding Fathers of the United States, Nietzsche, Lessing, Jaspers, Heidegger. At the same time, among the multitude of sources, there is one special source that is returning in the Arendt’s deliberations. It is philosophy political practice of ancient Greece. The author tries to find there a still uncontaminated source of political organization of life.

Going beyond the widespread theories, schemes and systematizations is the hallmark of Arendt. Throughout her life, she followed a Socratic way for reflection, based on the conduct of the never-ending dialogue with oneself and the others. She promoted this kind of cognitive openness with which the mind is ready to eliminate its own constructions. That antidogmatic approach is formulated in a metaphor of the process of thinking: “Penelope’s weaving cloth”, “building a spider web”, “thinking without stabilizers (rail)”. Arendt sees herself as “being the questioner”¹⁶, and actually during reading her writings it is obvious that she did not take care on the transfer to the others of her own interpretation of the world. She was rather interested in the fact that she should have better understood the phenomenon of the surrounding reality. In this attempt of understanding she masterfully manages to combine an analysis of the socio-political facts and intuitive psychological insight and individual assessment of the phenomena. The author of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* avoids explicit political statements, avoids any -isms, and she is aware that the search for truth apart from reason and solid knowledge requires also imagination and moral sensitivity.

According to Hannah Arendt in the European political philosophy, starting from Plato, there is a tendency of trying to determine who the “man in general” is. As a rule, it is accompanied by a presumption of the existence of

¹⁵ M. Weber, „Obiektywność” poznania społeczno-naukowego i społeczno-politycznego, [in:] idem, *Racjonalność, władza, odczarowanie*, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, Poznań 2004, p. 172–173; E. Sokalska, *Max Weber’s perception of bureaucracy and modern rational models of administration*, „Studia Prawnoustrojowe” 2010, no. 11, p. 143–160.

¹⁶ See, H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 66.

a substantially uniform human nature¹⁷. This approach focuses on the identifying of the universal truth concerning man, playing down the fact of diversity and variation of human. “The idea of the multiplicity of human history, the world is transformed into one entity, which is then called humanity. This is the source of the monstrous and inhuman aspect of the story that finds its full and brutal end in the politics”¹⁸. The consequence of such an approach is a kind of cognitive monism and the inability to determine the relationship between political philosophy and reality of the world. Arendt tries to break this perspective and she sticks to the tradition of nominalism, stating that terms such as “humanity”, “man in general” do not exist as real entities and they are merely an abstraction, a metaphor¹⁹. In fact, we are able to deal with generalization of human beings in the sphere of philosophy but not in the sphere of politics. As a basis we should take “plurality”, the fact that there a lot of people who are inhabitants of the world and nobody is the same, people are unique. It is possible in philosophy to use some human generalizations, it is unacceptable in the area of politics that takes the basis from the human multiplicity, the fact that “the people and not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world”; “We are all human beings and we live in such a way that no one has ever lived the same life and no one will have live in the future”²⁰. That multiplicity is a necessary and prior concept to determine what is politics and what is political, “it is a particular condition – not only a *conditio sine qua non*, but the *conditio per quam* – of all political life”²¹. Therefore, we attempt to analyze the conceptual structure describing the political condition of a man that is focused just on the category of

¹⁷ These kinds of assumptions help in building monistic visions of the word that are criticized by Hannah Arendt. These visions assume: 1) sameness of the human nature that influence on the fact that human have the same essence consisting of specific abilities and possibilities; 2) axiological and ontological priority the likeliness over the diversity; 3) socially transcendent character of the human nature; 4) cognizability of the human nature and possibility of formulating on that basis the principles of good life. See, B. Perekh, *Moral philosophy and its anti-pluralist bias*, [in:] D. Archard (ed.), *Philosophy and pluralism*, Oxford – Cambridge 1996, p. 130–132.

¹⁸ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 126.

¹⁹ Compare, H. Arendt, *Korzenie totalitaryzmu*, Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza, Warszawa 1993, p. 336. In the context of nominalistic description of a man it could be taken into account the concept of guilt and collective responsibility (B. Perekh, op. cit., p. 132). For Arendt usage of such concepts is a kind of falsehood. In practice, everybody is not to be blame, even if the truth is different. The concept of blame and innocence is justified only in the case of an individual. The slogan of “everybody is guilty” in fact served culprits in being absolved from sins (H. Arendt, *Odpowiedzialność i władza sądenia*, W. Madej, M. Godyń (trans.), WN PWN, Warszawa 2003, p. 54, 62). Taking into account the tradition of nominalism, H. Arendt a lot of her works wrote on the occasion of specific events. About a lie in politics she wrote on the occasion of the famous history of the Pentagon Papers, on the occasion of civil disobedience protests in Vietnam, the banality of evil she judged in the context of the Eichmann trial.

²⁰ H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 25–26.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 25.

plurality. It should be taken into account that it is in the mutual association with other determinants and manifestations of human activity. Arendt systematizes them in *The Human Condition* by including the following areas with their specific elements²²:

1. The determinants of human existence: the multiplicity of life, the ability to birth, mortality, world, Earth.

2. The basic forms of human activity: within *vita activa* – work, production, actions; and within *vita contemplativa* – thinking, will, the ability of judgment²³.

3. The areas of human activity: a private space, a public space.

All of these conditions and other related aspects create outlines “the human condition”²⁴. It covers not only the conditions on which a person has been given life on Earth, and partly outside it, but also everything that people make constantly, as their own circumstances. Thus, in addition to things and natural phenomena “everything comes in any lasting relationship with human life, instantly becomes a condition of human existence. That’s why people, no matter what they do, they are always conditioned beings. Whatever enters the human world itself, or is drawn into it by human effort. It becomes part of the human condition”²⁵. Arendt emphasizes that neither the specific biology nor culture do determine us in an absolute way. To some extent we are able to free ourselves from the dictates of genes from both. Also the impact of normative acts, economical or historical circumstances cannot determine the human’s life in an absolute way.

Arendt carrying out multi-level analysis of the factors that constitute the human condition is not intended to construct a permanent, closed model designating humanity and defining human nature. It’s not her ambition to create, by means of these categories, the foundations of a single philosophy or political theory. The aim is to examine Arendt’s policies in the light of basic human experiences and conditions that have been existing during this area, and clearing it from the traditional concepts and judgments that clung to it, but that have their origins in a very different experience²⁶. Atrophy of Judgment is also extremely dangerous for the public, in which “to take on

²² In Polish literature the analysis of Arendt’s process of thought can be found in: W. Heller, *Hannah Arendt: źródła pluralizmu politycznego*, Instytut Filozofii UAM, Poznań 2000.

²³ From the “contemplative” activity associated with the human condition Arendt developed an analysis in the next two monographs *Thinking, Willing*. The author’s death in December 1975 stopped her work on the third part of it – *Judging*.

²⁴ The notion of “human condition” Arendt seems to refer to the philosophy of M. Montaigne and to K. Jaspers. The first combines the awareness of the possible risks associated with human condition, signalized by conflicts from the seventeenth century. In Jaspers the concept of the human condition and the philosopher explanations can be found – K. Jaspers, *Wiara filozoficzna wobec objawienia*, Kraków 1999, p. 403.

²⁵ H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 27.

²⁶ H. Arendt, *Salon berliński...*, p. 118.

something quite. Consequently, our involuntary is the price we pay for it, we do not live alone, but in the midst of other people, and the ability to act, being active par excellence political, can be attained only in one of the many complex forms of human coexistence”²⁷.

The category of plurality

Jerome Kohn rightly pointed out that: “One of the difficult things that Arendt understood, was that the great thinkers who have so often sought inspiration from Plato and Aristotle to Nietzsche and Heidegger, I never noticed that the promise of human freedom – folding sincerely or hypocritically as a political objective – it is performed by people in their multiplicity if and only if they act in a political way. Even Kant, [...], he could not see, or at least did not express it conceptually, in a political sense, the multiplicity is the same as freedom”²⁸. Only Socrates, which is extremely important for Arendt, inspiration, passion for the consideration of different opinions, the relative truths and individual points of view, acknowledged that only through this kind of confrontation between the Athenian polis may be open to the multiplicity of its citizens.

Hannah Arendt uses the same term – to describe the plurality of two different, though related phenomena. The first is an existential, is one of the main determinants of the human condition, is its inherent feature and it is an essential starting point for the second – the political dimension plurality. The first approach assumes that the essence of human condition is that people who live in the world undergo continuing changes. New “individuals” grow and spread into the human world by speaking and acting, and it is like joining “the second birth”. In the words of the Holy Augustine: *Initium ut Esset, creatus est homo* (man was created so that was the beginning), Arendt points out that the beginning of everything is a new birth and everybody is assumed to be a new beginning²⁹. Natality overcome mortality, because the most striking thing in human life is not that we die, but we give birth, not only children, but also new ways of living, thinking and acting. “The space of human life which goes towards death, inevitably would have brought all that is human, to collapse and destruction. If not, the ability to break this cycle and the start of something new, the ability to inherently contained in the action as something that always reminds the people, though must die, are not born to die, but to start”³⁰.

²⁷ J. Kohn, *Wprowadzenie*, [in:] H. Arendt, *Odpowiedzialność i władza sąđenia*, p. 186.

²⁸ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 20.

²⁹ H. Arendt, *Korzenie totalitaryzmu*, p. 516.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 279.

In Arendt's reception the multiplicity of human beings is also associated with the fact that everyone has the right to use the power of judgment, to use his own reason and is constituted as an autonomous moral agent, capable of consciously, not instinctively chooses between good and evil. This approach is close to ethical intellectualism where wisdom is a prerequisite for the implementation of good. This wisdom is not a priori nature. We will not be provided with it by any normative system. The main source of this wisdom is a continual self-reflection, which runs as a silent conversation between two in one³¹. This internal dialogue is an integral part of being and living among others. The inner integrity – undeniably the conflicting thoughts and not expressing thoughts is the starting point to open up to the "I" of the other people. This approach was characteristic of Socrates who said that „the only one who knows how to present himself and is prepared to be among the others. Own „I” is the only person from whom I can not escape that I can not leave, with which I am involved and for all. This is why “I would prefer the situation where most of the people do not agree with me than one individual human being had to wear the internal rift and deliver conflicting thoughts”³². This sentence is crucial to recognize that peace of mind is based on the ability to conduct an internal dialogue, an investigation into the reasons that convince us and act according to them. The words that show themselves are essential to show off to the others, and to establish a dialogue with the others³³.

Moral standards are embedded in the individual power of judgment, which in turn is not only a right but also a duty of a man. With this power they may internalize certain values, which are the main guarantees of their respect, far more important than justification transcendental or formal. For example, the primary reason for that someone should not be killed; there is not the fear of temporal or eternal punishment, but the fact that we condemn ourselves to living with a murderer for the rest of the days. In this respect, personal responsibility will be primarily a matter of conscience³⁴. If we make self-reflection in an honest way, we have to answer within themselves to the question, to what extent we will be able to live in harmony with

³¹ A similar perspective is presented by I. Kant who writes: „Thinking is the same as the conversation with ourselves [...], and also an internal listening” – I. Kant, *Antropologia w ujęciu pragmatycznym*, E. Drzazgowska, P. Sosnowska (trans.), IFiS PAN, Warszawa 2005, p. 105.

³² Platon, *Gorgiasz*, [in:] idem, *Dialogi*, part I, W. Witwicki (trans.), Antyk, Kęty 1999, p. 393.

³³ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 54.

³⁴ The personal is different from political responsibility. When it comes to the nation that “it is clear that each generation, by the very fact of appearance in a historical continuum, both burdened with the sins of the fathers as well as benefits from the actions of their ancestors. Anyone who assumes the political responsibility, there will always be a point where he can say with Hamlet: »The world came out of the form and I also have to come back to the norm!«” – H. Arendt, *Odpowiedzialność i władza sądzienia*, p. 60.

each other after the commission of certain acts. Thus, the refusal to do bad stems mainly from desire to maintain relationships based on respect with itself. Self-analysis and decision-making show the advantage of minimizing the risk of reducing the role of human cog in the system. The habit of thinking makes us to be autonomous units, ready to take responsibility of their choices. On the other hand, if we abandon such activity, we can be led to the direction of so-called “banal wrong”. This is a kind of “wrong committed by anyone who refuses to be a person. [...] Self-villain who refuses to reflect on what he is doing, and also the fact that unwittingly thinks to go back to it and remember [...], in fact, he has not constituted himself as human beings. By staying stubbornly impersonal everyone proves that he is unable to dialogue with others who – good, bad or indifferent – are at least people”³⁵.

The term plurality, as outlined earlier, is the notion of an initial and indispensable for the definition of the concept of politics. Plurality is the condition of human action, which in turn is a prerequisite for any political life. Arendt repeatedly stated that the existing rules in the common world are not a priori, not submitted in advance in the sense of transcendental-religious, political or speculative. The source of these rules is the human variety and the right related to the individual judgment of the world that make people free in sharing with the others.

The fact of human plurality is expressed not only in the fact that the Earth is populated by a lot of human beings. Plurality is not equivalent to the amount of the intelligent creatures that for some independent grounds themselves are forced to live together and make one politic body³⁶. Human multiplicity is neither a multiplicity of objects, made with a single design, nor the multitude of varieties within a species biodiversity. “Just as there is no person as such, but only the men and women who, in their absolute differences are the same, that is human, so the word is a common human identity equality, in turn, it manifests itself only in the absolute otherness of those who are the equal. [...] Thus, while the action and speaking are two major political activities, so diversity and equality are two basic elements of political bodies”³⁷. In the quoted passage, we can see the multiplicity of a unique combination of the two essential aspects. They are manifested both as – sameness (equality) and as the other – difference (diversity)³⁸.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 140.

³⁶ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 92.

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 93.

³⁸ The two aspects of equality and diversity correspond with the Aristotle reception of justice as the coincidence of equality and good proportions; see, M. Augustyniak, *Sprawiedliwość w myśli Arystotelesa*, [in:] B. Kruszewska and others (eds.), *Sprawiedliwość. Wybrane koncepcje*, UWM, Olsztyn 2010, p. 19–23.

Explaining what is equality in the field of public affairs, Arendt refers to the republican tradition in which being a citizen or belonging to a small number of equal “*homoiōi*” meant to be allowed to live among equals³⁹. It was the equality of the not equal, who need to align only in some ways and for specific purposes. Was assumed that from birth, or from nature (*physei*) people are not equal and that is why they need an artificially created political institution with the position to make them equal by virtue of his law (*nomos*). So, equality existed only in the specific world of politics, where people came in contact as citizens and not as individuals. Making equal factor did not come either from God or from the nature. It was created by people in their own. They organized a public space with equal rights that those who are individually dissimilar had guaranteed to each other. Such understanding of equality is not the same as the example of Christian thought of the equality of all men by God, or the same fate of all with facing death. Neither one nor the other is directly connected with the politics and there is no meaning for it. Arendt says that equality indicates equality in terms of possibility of acting producing effects in the public space. “The foundation that supports the Republican political body is the experience of co-existence of those who are equal in strength, and the joy of republican virtue that we are not alone in the world. Alone is the only one who does not live among equals”⁴⁰.

In the reflection of Arendt, equality is not a value in itself, or autotelic, but it significantly determines the realization of the other values, particularly justice and political freedom. Explaining what this freedom is, the author comes back to the model “*polis*”, where freedom indicates: “not to be subordinated to the life necessities or other orders and not to command himself. This meant do not to rule or do not to be ruled”⁴¹. From this perspective, the rulers themselves, as such, can not be said they are free, because embracing domination over other people, they break away from equal people, and only among the equal they can be free. Thus, a necessary condition for freedom is the presence of others – equal but different people. Law is an instrument of equality of citizens in the public sphere. By means of law it is possible to create a space being able to organize those “who are absolutely dissimilar from the others, and from the very beginning taking into account their relative equality, despite their relative differences”⁴². That sort of political relations was defined as “*isonomy*” – equality to the law. It was not an equality of living conditions, existed only in the specific world of politics, where people met as citizens not as individuals. Basically, equality in the

³⁹ See, H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 61.

⁴⁰ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 98.

⁴¹ H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 52.

⁴² H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 127.

Greek city-state was not a property of the people, but attribute of the “polis”⁴³. It was not guaranteed with the birth, it was not treated as a given by nature, but by the power of a conventional human product which is the law⁴⁴. It was the law that should have set the frame of freedom and protected the irregularities in the government. In a multitude of human, the law should have stand an identification pole, it should have been the common good that sets rules of the game of political system and it is the source and guarantee of individuals’ dignity. For the purposes of this dignity Arendt alluded to Immanuel Kant, who insisted that the human being will have never served to others or themselves as the agent for other purposes⁴⁵.

Plurality in the political and law context

The multiplicity of equal, in some respects, citizens requires a public space as a politically organized and legally protected space, free from violence, in which people are visible to each other; they can reveal their unique personal identities, talk to each other, articulate their reasons and take action. The life of a free man requires the active presence of the others. This presence is not accidental, involuntary relationships, just as the ability to speak is not the same as conversation. In the public space the point is a kind of presence that allows you to influence the way of life, create new beginnings, make promises to forgive, it’s about the kind of speech that can make sense and it can have a persuasive meaning. According to Arendt, for the public dimension of the world, there is essential to build symbolic and communicative space. It allows to meet people who carries a lot of different opinions⁴⁶. The space it is compared to the table located among the people sitting around him – it collects them together, but at the same time it is not

⁴³ It could be remind here that Greek did not involve law legislation into the political activities. The creator of law was someone like the builder of the town’s defensive walls. The similar situation was of a craftsman or an architect who had the task to build defined structure and to create space for the activities of inhabitants. He could have been a person outside the town, but he should have finished his work before the political activities took place. The laws were not treated as the result of political actions – H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 225.

⁴⁴ See, H. Arendt, *O rewolucji*, M. Godyń (trans.), Czytelnik, Warszawa 2003, p. 33–34.

⁴⁵ Kant states that a person “is obliged on the basis of his actions to recognize the dignity [...] in every human being. This obligation requires respect to every human being” – I. Kant, *Metafizyka moralności*, WN PWN, Warszawa 2005, p. 347.

⁴⁶ Arendt shows the distinction between opinions and dealings (businesses). The dealings are deeply rooted into economic situation that described class or group of people is involved. Their antagonistic character is determined by material needs. As far as opinions are concerned, they come from reasonable premises, from entitled to the human the power of judgment, or an individual, personal capacity to judge certain phenomena without subjecting them to the general rules and standards. The diversity of opinions can be destroyed because of their identification with the interests of a group or mass, which took place in totalitarian systems.

allowed to stumble on each other. They can all meet around the table and everyone will be seen and heard, but every person occupies the other place and may perceive issues in a different way. Politics without this kind of discursive nature is barren, and any tendency to a mass convergence of views and tastes leads to the degradation of a common world. "The End of a common world is coming when the world is seen only in one aspect and it is not allowed to present only from the one perspective"⁴⁷.

Arendt points out that the public space is also harmful to public confusion and arguments based on the opinions, from those related to business. They are rooted in the economic situation in which there is a particular group or class. Their antagonistic character is determined by domestic and material needs which as was previously explained, they belong to the realm of necessity. As far as the opinions are concerned, the situation is different. Basically, they flow from the premises of rational and moral reflection, using owed to man the power to judge, that is an individual, personal ability to judge certain phenomena without subjecting them to the general rules and standards⁴⁸. The opinions may be related to interest, but they can not be reduced to them. Diversity of opinions can be destroyed because of their identification with the interests of group or mass that take place in totalitarian systems. Arendt notes the close relationship between the rise of totalitarianism and the annihilation of the discursive nature of the public space, resulting in the loss of social ability to establish common sense.

The equality guaranteed by the law in the public sphere, in any event should not lead people to mass standardization, conformity and mediocrity. On the contrary, it has a starting point to be able to stand and through specific actions or qualities to show that it is possible in some ways better than others; you can experience the uniqueness of every human being. Without equality, the highlighting of the word it would be difficult. In the world of political affairs recognition of one's charisma or another capacity may manifest itself only to other individuals, each of whom shall have the same right to existence and action in public space. Arendt says that true greatness concerns only those who have a need for the offense above mediocrity, to prove that they are the best (*aristoi*) and "immortal fame submit the mortal things"⁴⁹. In spite of the fragility of the human condition, they strive to create works, deeds and words that will be remembered by others and thus

⁴⁷ H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 79.

⁴⁸ The concept of judgment Arendt drew from Kant. For him judging is a separate ability of our mind and has nothing to do with the operations of logic: judging is not the output or deduction or induction. Judging is a specific type of talent that can be continually practiced, but it can be learned. See, H. Arendt, *Myślenie*, H. Buczyńska-Garewicz (trans.), Czytelnik, Warszawa 2002, p. 258.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 38.

they will live in a common world. Those who come from the private world to the public world need to get rid of, as far as possible, those features that destroy and prevent the operation of the joint, or pride, envy, shame, blame. This sounds idealistic but only understanding of the politics was interesting for Arendt. She equated the policy with the highest form of realization of the human community and therefore its cultivation requires – as long as the policy is a form of a happy human life – selflessness. Doing politics, people have to keep each other and the dialogue between them and continually look for new forms of collective action, in which it is possible to report good of the community.

Assumptions presented by Arendt's are in opposition to the classics of political realism, such as Machiavelli and Max Weber⁵⁰. In view of the allegations that the author of *The Human Condition* does not include in her concept of baseness of human nature and the fact that the policy ambition and lust for power prevail over the idea of joint action, that the policy will inevitably produce systems of subordination. Well, ambition – perhaps better to say, excessive ambition – is a form of evil, a form of thoughtlessness. Policy and can only deal with people who think and only when they really want to deal with it. Arendt repeatedly states that no one has the right to force anyone to go into the interior of the oikos. Politics is for volunteers and for those who choose it themselves, who tend to be in a pluralistic and diverse world and they want to meet together in the world and to have pleasure from doing things together.

The phenomenon of people is that on the one hand without a certain level of uniformity they would not have been able to understand each other. They would have not been able to communicate in either the past or the present times. "Without that, departing towards potential human immortality is not possible, strictly speaking, no politics, no common world or any public area. [...] It goes beyond (a common world) – our life equally in the past and the future, it was here before we have come, and survived our short staying there. We share it not only with the people we modern, but also from those who were here before us and those who come after us"⁵¹. On the other hand, without the diversity expressed in diversity of each person, the agreement would occur almost automatically and instinctively. It would not demand any speech, persuasion or action, and the language of signs would be enough to signal one another essentially identical needs and biological necessities⁵².

⁵⁰ About Max Weber see for example, E. Sokalska, *Biurokratyczny model funkcjonowania nowoczesnej administracji w twórczości Makska Webera*, [in:] E. Kozerska and others (eds.), *Wybrane problemy nauki i nauczania prawa*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2010; see also, E. Sokalska, *Max Weber's perception of bureaucracy...*, p. 143–160.

⁵¹ H. Arendt, *Myslenie*, p. 75–76.

⁵² *Ibidem*, p. 206.

The kind of multitude together with the equality is a fundamental condition for the development of specific human faculties of speech and actions that Arendt considered to be the most political. They enable the creation of new beginnings and forgiveness of the past.

Arendt pays much attention to the phenomenon of forgiveness that is a unique, “miraculous” human ability. It allows taking off the tragic burden of irreversibility from the human activities. Forgiveness gives you a chance to exit “from the inability to unravel what someone has done, even though he did not know and could not know what he did”⁵³. It is a kind of “catharsis” that allows you to break the automaticity of certain reactions, destroy the works of the past, the “sins” hang like a sword of Damocles over every new generation. That effort seems to be essential in the public space, as it has the power to restore the freedom of both: the person who harms because it allows him to throw off the burden of guilt and the victim, because it triggers a chain reaction in which is the simplest answer and would be revenge for harm. Arendt places the phenomenon of forgiveness into the human condition and underlines that it is conditioned by the human plurality, the presence and action of others with their right to communicate – “nobody can forgive himself and nobody may feel obliged with the promise to himself; forgiveness taking place in the solitude is unrealistic”⁵⁴. It is important to emphasize that Arendt denies such categories like guilt and collective responsibility and as a consequence she puts in question the mass character of forgiveness. That means that no external factor should deprive the right of individual victims to forgive the wrongdoer. So, while forgiveness is always done in a social context, the vehicles (carriers) of the process are exclusively individuals.

The threats of social pluralism

Political rights provide orientation in the issues of community and allow to take part directly or indirectly – by the assembly, association, elections and other forms – in collective decisions. The law gives a person the chance to transcend the biological conditions and the better realization of *vita activa* dimension associated with involvement in public affairs. From this perspective, the area of private life, work, family, etc. perform only a “servant” function. They are related to the need of supporting the life of individual and the species. For the Greeks, it was clear that the possession of certain material goods enabled a person “being his own master”. On the other hand, misery

⁵³ Ibidem, p. 269.

⁵⁴ Ibidem.

forced a free man to behave like a slave, but concern for the possession of the property it was treated merely as means and one from the conditions for political life, and it was not equated with the objective of politics⁵⁵. The household (*oikos*) served for the biological needs to liberate from life, production, or delivery of goods and equipment. It was treated as necessary, giving dimension stability and roots. But it was just a starting point for another, more sublime dimension of life – *bios politikos*. According to Arendt, the present problem of our times is that work and consumption are treated as the first matter and we place them into the sphere of politics. This results in penetration of conceptual categories and issues that generally come from two different spaces – private (determined by necessity) and public – the area of potential freedom. The difference between these spheres lies in the fact that politics is not about life, but about the world in which we live, and to live. The world requires an to overcome an individual passivity and comfort-loving nature inertia and laziness and taking the full risk of the emergence of others – equal people. Moreover, by reducing *vita activa* to activities related to the ensuring of welfare, we move away from the political dimension of freedom to the direction of mass society in which life is determined by the consumption and material well-being. Oriented in a substantially uniform implementation of their welfare people are starting to be more and more confirmed with their individuality. They are moving away from the dimension of plurality. Arendt with anxiety writes that contemporary politics is often treated as a necessary evil. People withdraw themselves from the common world and from their obligations. It results in that the world bears a tangible loss, and always “the something that is unique dies »among«, the something that should have been created between the individual and his companions”⁵⁶.

Modern Western societies arose as a result of the development of civilization in the countries that meet certain conditions relating in particular to the development of economy, technology and the mechanisms of the free market. A large part of members of the public has become beneficiaries of the benefits arising from increased productivity and constantly expanding range of goods and services. Although, in previous eras it contributed to the improvement of living standards, but it could also result in axiomatic transformations. There was increased importance of material, utilitarian and hedonistic goods⁵⁷.

⁵⁵ „Polis did not infringe on the private life of its citizens. The borders of the ownership were almost holly. It took place not because the private ownership was respected in our meaning, but without any house the man could not have been able to take part in world's affairs, because he exactly has no place in that world” – H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 49.

⁵⁶ H. Arendt, *O człowieczeństwie w mrocznych czasach. Myśli o Lessingu*, A. Jacki, B. Młynarz (trans.), „Znak” 1986, no. 7–8, p. 43.

⁵⁷ K. Matsuyama, *The Rise of Mass Consumption Societies*, “Journal of Political Economy” 2002, no. 110, p. 36.

Life determined by material prosperity narrows minds and horizons. There are only short-term benefits and withdrawal from the Community dimension of the world. Reflexivity begins to give the way to vulnerability, to political and commercial marketing tricks. The citizen becomes a consumer. The magnitude of the choice of goods and services creates the illusion of freedom. In fact, this excess cripples our ability to autonomous decision-making and opens the way to manipulate the structure of man and his needs. Arendt warns that in a consumer society man will live in a kind of totalitarian system run by the Gestapo in velvet gloves. In this context, a threat to plurality of the public space is mass man who is a prisoner of the role. The role that is connected with the function of society that should have standardized and unified public opinion where there is no place for exchanging opinions among equals and there is no place for different tasks⁵⁸. The characteristic feature for mass societies is hypocrisy, conformity and the pursuit of happiness designated by the boundaries of private existence. Everything exposes us to the loss of being-in-the-world as being together with others it is manifested above all in thought, speech and initiative of actions⁵⁹. So, reducing the *vita activa* to activities related to the welfare, the citizens are moving away from the political dimension of freedom in the direction of the ideal society of consumers. "That ideal is not new; unquestioned assumption of classical political economy clearly indicated that the ultimate goal of the *vita activa* it is enrichment, an abundance of goods and »luck the great amount of people«. At the end, what else could be this ideal of modern society if not the ancient dream of the poor and destitute. That ideal of society can have its charm, while it is a dream, but in reality turns into a paradise of fools"⁶⁰.

Plurality may be also under the threat from the side of mechanisms of representative democracy because they do not provide the real impact and effects for citizens. In terms of cultural and axiological differences, categories of "general will", unanimity or majority equity are becoming increasingly inadequate. It turns out to be illusory the emergence of the social consensus through political parties that focus on collecting votes. The vote itself is a ritual, a symbolic meaning – it gives citizens a sense of equality and confirm that they have the power. In fact, most of them can feel free bond with "their representatives". To deepen the gap between voters and elected contributes also significant for the present, the speeding up of life. It makes

⁵⁸ An insightful analysis of the mass society phenomenon is proposed by P. Polaczuk. See, idem, *Spoleczeństwo masowe w ujęciu Hannah Arendt. Zagadnienia wybrane*, [in:] J. Justyński, A. Madeja, (eds.), *Moralność i władza jako kategorie myśli politycznej*, Wolters Kluwer, Warszawa 2011, p. 373–388.

⁵⁹ See, H. Arendt, *O rewolucji*, p. 114.

⁶⁰ H. Arendt, *Kondycja ludzka*, p. 160.

a lot of problems emerging between the election and the modes of fallen into routine legislative and administrative machinery. In reality, everyone may feel cut off from the possibility of exerting influence on decision making. Thus, Arendt indicates that the threat of social pluralism is the rise of the central state organs which limits the sphere of interaction and communication between people to passive membership or to support representative institutions. Such an indirect form of participation in political life was the author of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* only impoverished version of the ancient civil activities. This kind of “democratic centralism” is in her assessment unable to create in people already mentioned passion of “standing out” or “desire to not only be equal or similar but to exceed”⁶¹.

Speech and action are the basic abilities, giving essentially powerless to individuals the opportunity to establish a legally protected public space in which they themselves are the main driving force. Tense of power coming from the multiplicity is the principle of political action. In contrast to that, the anxiety and fear destroy the unique power produced by people working together. It isolates people from each other, trying to destroy their political attitudes. Totalitarianism is just a kind of tragic attempts to deny the human multiplicity. It is the desire to exclude a man as the author of the event, it is an attempt to reduce a man to the level of being usable by others. Being spontaneous in action will be replaced by the predictable response. The reaction of a man is like in the experiment where actions are predictable and controlled. The source of the current system of evil is largely this desire to “dehumanization”, depriving people of the chance to diversity by preparing them on a mass scale to perform two main roles: perpetrators or the victims.

Another destructive factor to the human condition that arises from the elimination of the multiplicity is present in the totalitarian phenomenon of isolation and loneliness. Firstly, it is associated with the political context, and secondly it relates to the social sphere. The isolation is “an impasse where people after the destruction of the political spheres of life are thrown, the one in which they operate together following the common interest”⁶². The isolation does not mean depriving a man of his capacity and appearing interactions within a relationship. Work done by *homo faber*, or *animal laborans* can even serve as a tool to isolate and keep people away from the public space. The core insulation is based on the elimination of significant forms of human activity, involving the possibility of adding something to the common world of their own. The core of isolation is based on the elimination of an important form of people’s activity – the possibility of adding some-

⁶¹ H. Arendt, *O rewolucji*, p. 82.

⁶² H. Arendt, *Korzenie totalitaryzmu*, p. 511.

thing own to the world. Something that can be perceived by others, accepted or rejected. Depriving people of the possibility of interaction creates the most susceptible ground to the terror and eventually, all terror leads to isolation. Tyrannical governments are only available the situations where people are isolated from each other: the coercion “with its ironing ring compresses the isolated mass of people and keeps them in a world that becomes their desert”⁶³. The following thing is the eradication of human which means that a man has no place sophistication guaranteed by others.

Of course, the phenomenon that Arendt called isolation in the political sphere does not include all of the relationships between people. There is still the whole sphere of private life, the ability to live, to create, and to judge. Only when it is destroyed, have to deal with the loneliness which is more overwhelming and all-encompassing and which relates to human life as a whole and it is based on a sense of complete absence of links with the world. “When people lose contact with their neighbors, and also with the surrounding reality; along with those contacts people lose the ability to both – experiencing and thinking”⁶⁴. Therefore, isolation is not necessarily associated with loneliness, but it can be a perfect base for it. Loneliness is also distinguished from loneliness. Loneliness is sometimes necessary for the processes of thinking and creating⁶⁵. It is essential to carry out (as Socrates did) a silent dialogue with himself. Loneliness requires living in solitude, while a man living in solitude is surrounded by other people, but he is not able to establish contact with them, or he is exposed to the hostility. The core of the loneliness is that you personally feel the lack of human companionship along with this particular bond, through which empathy, altruism, kindness, or trust are possible. We are overwhelmed by the consciousness of the impossibility to conciliate the understanding and support from others. This kind of experience is shared by people who live in constant danger, for example systems-based manipulation, coercion and violence⁶⁶. Then, we begin to doubt in the authenticity of other people and of us. This is accompanied by the threat of losing oneself, which to confirm its own identity needs a trustworthy company and equal people, people that use their of power of judgment which is contributed to them. Contrary to appearances, the model subjects of totalitarian are not convinced nazis or communists, but just a man alone,

⁶³ Ibidem, p. 510.

⁶⁴ Ibidem.

⁶⁵ Separation from the others is a necessary condition of every mastery. The mastery demands being alone with the idea, being alone with the recognizant image of thing that will have been created – H. Arendt, *Korzenie totalitaryzmu*, p. 463.

⁶⁶ Arendt points out that in totalitarian systems category of suspected includes all the society. “Every thought that is not in line with the official and stable line becomes suspected. It does not really matter which kind of human activity it concerns. Human individuals are suspected simply by definition” – ibidem, p. 463.

whose boundaries between fact and fabrication and between truth and falsehood become unclear.

Well then, Arendt shows the tragedy that the elimination from the public space of its main determinants can lead. She describes the degeneration resulting from efforts to reduce human multiplicity and diversity of the totalitarian regimes that served as the “One Man of gigantic dimensions”⁶⁷. To reach this purpose, everybody should have been reduced to unchanging repetitive responses. The man should have been deprived of the spontaneity of actions and the ability to create new beginnings. The creation of such a non-existent in the human reality monotype of man, would have led the man rather to the animal species, which the only kind of “freedom” would consist in preserving the species⁶⁸.

Conclusions

Formulated by Hannah Arendt the category of *plurality* is one of the main determinants of the human condition. It is also an essential starting point for the functioning of the citizens in the public space. Plurality manifests itself as both: the sameness (equality) and the difference (diversity). The combination of these two aspects is through the right that is helpful in organizing of those assist in the organization of those “who are absolutely dissimilar, and from the very beginning taking into account their relative equality, and despite their relative differences”⁶⁹. So, the law should help in shaping the politics, establishing freedom, the freedom that is the foundation of the state and social order and that precludes the usage of political violence and reduces the hierarchical relationship of subordination.

Arendt points out that the typical values of consumerism overcome social life; they become primary reference point for the success of individuals and society. The ubiquitous dominance of consumption begins to act as one of the most important regulators of social processes, thus overwhelming the other spheres of life such as the development of intellectual, spiritual, and finally – actions in public space. The primacy of the material and the quantity that makes the main measures of performance are the development and continuous production growth. Human action is centered on the quest for prosperity and progress; it has set the direction of “modernity”, aimed mainly in pragmatic utility. These trends shift consumption in the upper realm of the hierarchy of values, making it the regulative idea of the twenty-first century.

⁶⁷ Ibidem, p. 500–501.

⁶⁸ Ibidem, p. 471.

⁶⁹ H. Arendt, *Polityka jako obietnica*, p. 127.

Arendt criticizes the doctrine that glorify the importance of economics and free market, showing a tendency to portray the economy as an impersonal supply-demand machine, while ignoring the other values in wealth creation community. A discussed author presents the assumption that life based on ownership is less free than life based on the action. She stresses that society morally decadent, aesthetic, political, or environmental is not progressive, even if it is the richest and the most technologically advanced. It can contribute to much broader understanding of the progress – this can not be defined or automatically achieved only by means of quantitative and material categories.

The law is designed to protect individuals and groups against natural interference or excessive control not only by the state, but also by the other powerful groups, organizations or corporations seeking to control the vulnerable groups and to reduce public dialogue. Arendt stresses the communicative role of law in the society of free and diverse people. Such a society is not, and should not even be deprived of rivalry and conflicts but there should also be the place for compromise which allows the coexistence of different lifestyles, ideologies, values and principles.

Arendt underlines the role of law as a discursive factor that enabling the public space. The dialogue in this area requires the active presence of another man, his readiness to accept cultural or ideological differences. And it is not only the fact that we allow the others to be different from us. It is important the ability of the introduction of this otherness as an enrichment of the own thinking. That means that for our own development we need to learn about different truths. Conversation allows you to understand better your own arguments, which shows that the validity does not exclude the other one truth. Truth can rely on the co-existence of different truths. This approach requires mental and cognitive openness, constant search, which takes place both: within themselves and among people.

It should be mentioned that Hannah Arendt is a fierce promoter of grass-roots and direct forms of political activity. She treats with reserve representative democracy in conditions of mass society. In her assessment, only the ability to channel political participation of citizens in the state institutions is not enough to put off the threat of totalitarianism. If the political life of citizens takes place mainly through the bureaucratic public offices, parties, unions and parliament, on the one hand it increases the susceptibility to the mass manipulation, on the other hand there appears an illusory sense of personal control, contributing to the unconcern and withdrawal into the sphere of the inner life and private life. As a result, the state becomes less and less considered by citizens as their own. It does not act in accordance with their recommendations and ideas. The “alienation” of existing political structures becomes clear and they present specific “autism”.

Arendt's vision of politics stems from the adoption of two basic assumptions: first, if people want to have such a state and a society that suits them, they must take responsibility for co-government, and secondly it requires both: active and conscious attitudes of citizens and the form of the political system in which no one is entitled to make decisions in behalf of the citizens. The concept of *res publica* does not imply that any system is the best to meet these demands. So, the modern democracy is a dominant political system and finds approval in the civilized Western world. Admittedly, it is far from Arendt's admiration, especially in a representative form that can promote conformist tendencies that lead to the dictatorship of the majority. Arendt points out that in addition to manipulate the image of the common good, we need a public space in which citizens can participate actively and on his own unfettered. In short, citizens establish a joint action of the political sphere, which simply does not exist without them.

Arendt assumes that the source of power flows from individual freedom, which is the primary political phenomenon. This freedom is expressed in the human capacity to act, to start something new, and its main symptom is speech. The speech allows to lead a dialogue and to exchange views among various actors in the society. The withdrawal of the individuals from the political dimension of life is the threat against this freedom, and thus against the plurality. There is an escape to privacy that is often accompanied by the recognition of material prosperity as its main objective efforts which result in mass consumerism. On the other hand, the threat to the plurality are authority systems based on the destruction of the human being together, depriving the public space of a discursive character. In a well-ordered public space the citizens do not have to be afraid. Fear is not only wrong in itself, but it is also a bad counselor. Who is anxious about his own life, about the good of his family, he will not be a good member of the political society, the meaning of which is to ensure that all citizens have not only the right to participate in decision-making process but also the right to liberty and security.

Streszczenie

Funkcja prawa w politycznych i społecznych warunkach pluralizmu w ujęciu Hannah Arendt

Słowa kluczowe: uwarunkowania polityczne, uwarunkowania społeczne, pluralizm, funkcje prawa.

Powrót do filozofii starożytnej Grecji pozwolił Hannah Arendt na przedstawienie wymiaru etycznego aktywności politycznej ludzi w połączeniu z dobrem własnym jednostki i dobrem powszechnym. Jako propagatorka oddolnych, bezpośrednich form aktywności politycznej z rezerwą odnosiła się

do demokracji reprezentacyjnej w warunkach społeczeństwa masowego. W jej ocenie sama zdolność do skanalizowania udziału politycznego obywateli w instytucjach państwa to zbyt mało, by zażegnać groźbę totalitaryzmu. Jeśli życie polityczne obywateli odbywa się głównie za pośrednictwem zbiurokratyzowanych urzędów publicznych, partii, związków, parlamentu, to z jednej strony wzrasta podatność na masową manipulację, z drugiej pojawia się poczucie iluzoryczności indywidualnego wpływu, przyczyniające się do obojętności oraz wycofania się w sferę życia wewnętrznego i prywatnego. W rezultacie państwo w coraz mniejszym stopniu uważane jest przez obywateli za własne, za postępujące zgodnie z ich zaleceniami i poglądami, coraz wyraźniejsza staje się „alienacja” istniejących struktur politycznych, ich swoisty autyzm. Koniecznym warunkiem wolności jest obecność innych – równych wobec prawa, a zarazem różnorodnych ludzi. Przy czym równość należy pojmować jako zrównanie nierównych z natury, ale tylko w pewnych aspektach i dla określonych celów. W warunkach ludzkiej wielości prawo stanowi biegun identyfikacyjny, jest dobrem wspólnym, które wyznacza reguły gry systemu politycznego, a jednocześnie jest dla jednostek źródłem i gwarantem ich godności.