

Shared narratives as a tool for modern strategic communication in political sphere

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Current situation in political field is a point of interest of many scholars worldwide: new circumstances have widely spread effects on every area of human life, including politics and electoral decision making, but the tools for managing political communications in terms of these new effects still have to be understood and adapted for the new media ecology.

These new effects and challenges are described by Russian and foreign scholars: mass media outlets have lost control under the news dissemination; the information flow has grown hugely and gained power to drown political news in the messages from friends and celebrities, new TV-series or Instagram lifestyle posts; the anonymity and ability to create fake accounts annihilates responsibility for the fact-checking and makes the spread of fake-news much easier; etc. [2].

This situation prompts to look for tools which could be used efficiently specifically for building strategic communications in the political sphere. This kind of strategic communications becomes significant for political actors, as they allow to develop a long-term image that is essential for the highly fluid information environment [7].

Storytelling as a technique to build this image has its tools, and shared narratives as a tool could be highly useful for the aims of strategic communications. Thus, cross-disciplinary analysis - including literary studies of Soviet scholars (A. Veselovsky, O. Freydenberg, V. Propp, V. Zhirmunskiy), analytical psychology and the concept of "collective unconscious" (C. G. Jung, J. Campbell, M. L. von Franz), philosophy and current communication studies in the field of storytelling (the approach of Homo Narrans: W. L. Bennett, C. M. Condit, M. Edelman, W. R. Fisher, J. L. Lucaites) - shows the ability of migrating plots (A. Veselovsky) become a basis for the shared narrative constructions (F. Meyer) [5]. The following can be used to build a master narrative or grand narrative (J.F. Lyotard), that affects and frames the long-term vision of the state, nation and its path.

The psychological power of narratives makes these constructions heavily used - and even overused - when the topic is about major political decisions, public diplomacy, and international relationships. In the following research, we will try to describe several specific features of narrative constructions which are in high demand for strategic communications.

The first is the feature of gaining more credits with just repeating the narrative constructions of the same kind (the snowball effect) [3].

The second is the opportunity of fantasy-escape for the receiver of the political information [3].

The third is the power to reshape beliefs within the narrative logic and gaining the status of master narrative, that allows shielding the firm belief against information attacks. Thus, a society with the dominant master narratives will try to avoid cognitive dissonance and ignore the information that contradicts the master narrative [4].

Taking this into account, we should ask the following question: where is the fringe between strategic communication and propaganda within political sphere and usage of the narratives? The possible answer may be lying in the nuances of ecological and non-ecological usages of narrative constructions by the political actors [6]. In this case, ecological usage denies manipulations with the narratives, denies the cultivation of passivity among the electorate,

denies sturdy framing and situations, which are widely known as echo-chambers, filter bubbles, and the politics of post-truth as it is.

While narratives are still the best way of explaining the reality and giving the answers to the difficult questions, as a tool of strategic communication in political sphere they could be used to build and strengthen the skills of political and media literacy among the citizenship [1]. Aiming to create the stable and politically strong society with the open relationships between the citizens and political actors, strategic communication may become a way to release the narratives from the ideological and propaganda burden. But this way has still to be worked from the very beginning.

Источники и литература

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