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**CHALLENGES OF HYBRID WAR:  
INFORMATION DIMENSION**

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## PSYCHOLOGY OF MASS INFLUENCE: FROM DICHOTOMY TO TYPOLOGY

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Today, the issue of mass influence is extremely actual from the view of free expression of will of personality and also from the view of democratization, tolerance of social relations, entry of Ukraine into the European context of socio-political changes. This problem is not new and has an interdisciplinary nature being at the intersection of sociology, political science, neuroeconomics and various areas of psychological and pedagogical researches. As a complex socio-psychological phenomenon, the mass influence has been investigated by many foreign (Ph. Zimbardo, G. Le Bon, S. Sighele, G. Tarde, Z. Freud, K. Jung, R. Cialdini, A. Gierzynski etc.) and domestic scientists (L. Orban-Lembrick, G. Pocheptsov, V. Tatenko, etc.).

In order to understand the psychology of mass influence it is necessary to research its basic aspects. The **aim** of the study is to reveal the main types of the mass psychological influence and actual forms of their functioning.

The **mass influence** represents such kind of an act that a particular person (a specialist in the mass communication) applies to other people by generating the same moods and thoughts, and on the basis of the formed mass consciousness unite those people in the mass (public, crowd) where each person can demonstrate predicted or unpredicted by the specialist common emotional, volitional, intellectual and physical reactions.

The main types of mass psychological influence are emotional contagion, suggestion and manipulation.

**Emotional contagion** is an act that is revealed not through the conscious acceptance of a particular information or a pattern of behavior, but through the transmission of a particular emotional pathogen or «mental state». There is a special «reaction of infection» when the emotional pathogen is amplified by



repeated reflection of a model of the usual chain reaction. First of all, the effect of emotional contagion works in the unorganized, spontaneous masses (crowds) and it is a kind of «accelerator» that «accelerates» a certain emotional pathogen, for example, in situations of mass aggression and mass panic.

**Suggestion** is a special kind of mass psychological influence that is aimed at the consciousness and behavior of a group of people in order to create a certain mental state or to induce to certain actions, and it predicts a decrease of the level of awareness of the perceived information and critical thinking. Suggestion differs from the belief because it causes a mental pathogen directly, without requiring evidence and logic (V. Bekhterev, 1903), it is connected with the attitude (L. Lange, D. Uznadze) that means a readiness to accept another person's mental state as his or her own vision, it is a factor of appropriate adaptive behavior. In the course of the study of suggestion some regularities that help to understand in what situations and under what circumstances the effect of suggestion increases have been established. So, if we are not talking about medical practice, but about the cases of «social suggestion», we can make a conclusion that suggestion effect depends on the age and the general emotional, physical state of the person: in general children are more able to suggestion than adults; tired, sad, physically exhausted people are more suggestive. For the first time the importance of «social suggestion» was stated by V. Bekhterev («Suggestion and its role in public life», 1903). He accepted the position of «monism» in reflexology and considered hypnosis as an artificially caused biological reflex of inhibition that is caused by the suppression of active concentration («dominant», O. Ukhtomsky). Therefore, the scientist believed that for successful suggestion it is necessary to suppress active attention. Suggestion is also classified according to the form of influence. If the suggestor uses only words, this is a verbal suggestion. In this case words and intonation are the real pathogen of the cerebral cortex. Non-verbal suggestion uses facial expressions, gestures, postures, sign systems, etc. A phenomenon that illustrates a measure of resistance to suggestion is called counter-suggestion («mental self-defense»). In the results of experimental research, it has been found out that the decisive condition for effectiveness of suggestion is the authority of the suggestor that creates a special, additional factor of action – trust to the source of information (the «trust effect»). The authority of the suggestor functions as a so-called indirect argument, a kind of a compensator of the lack of direct argumentation. Therefore, if the counter-suggestion («psychic self-defense») is a distrust to the suggestor, it can be overcome by additional information about the suggestor. This complex of means is called a counter-counter-suggestion [2, p. 51].

**Manipulation** is different from the usual process of suggestion because it has a technological and professional basis, it is planned and controlled by the communicator. Manipulative influence is uncontrolled, unconscious, hidden for the addressee, it happens without his or her will and desire. The phenomenon of mass manipulation is considered through the following concepts:



- subject of manipulation (social group (elite), with privileged status in the economic, political, cultural life of society);
- the object of manipulation (wide sections of the population, dependent majority of this society, which is excluded from real participation in political, economic, cultural life);
- the social distance between the manipulator and the group of manipulated people (determined by the peculiarities of economic society and political regime, and the sphere of cultural life);
- goals and means of manipulation (primary interests of the manipulator);
- strategy and techniques of manipulation (technical, methodological, political-ideological means and propaganda);
- knowledge of the object of manipulation (knowledge of basic expectations, needs, motives, stereotypes of the mass consciousness) [2, p. 54].

Strategic mass manipulation is based on the formation in the consciousness of people the values, attitudes, aspirations, ideas, habits, beliefs which contribute to support of stability of a political or economic system. It can continue during the long period of time (several years, sometimes decades). For instance, the wide masses of the population act as it has planned by the manipulator (vote or not vote, go on a strike, massacre, show disobedience, discipline, apathy, etc.).

The aim of technologies of mass influence is the massification of people, creation of artificial masses (public, mass) and management over them. Nowadays the mass-media is an industry that implements this function. «Virtual Massification of the 21st Century» does not require the physical presence of people, their direct integration. Despite of this the main means of uniting people are the mass communication, the latest technologies of its outspreading. The result of virtual massification is the phenomenon of social telepathy when people start thinking and feeling by the same way: a large number of anonymous individuals, who have never seen or known each other are fascinated by the same emotion and idea, react to the same music or slogan and they turn into a joint collective creature. This is the method that is called as a «quiet influence» (hidden influence), when nobody coerces anyone or calles to activity, however it gradually forms mass consciousness, mass patterns of behavior, a way of thinking and a mood [2, p. 55]. The British philosopher, K. Popper notes that information does not exist in its pure form, any information has a certain tendency. It means that the influence of the mass media is not limited only by information, so today mass media are «educators», «agitators», «propagandists» [3, p. 44]. As a result, media content is a social-cognitive, behavioral representation that shapes or changes the «image of the world» of a person and himself or herself in it.

On the other hand, the media addressee (a child or an adult) becomes a potential carrier of media introjects: categories, images, values, actions with that he identifies himself as a kind, spiritual, action, free, beautiful or ugly, primitive,

marginal, dependent person. So, the rhetorical question «What is primary: news or social action?» turns into another one «Is the news containing so much violence because the world is so cruel, or is the world becoming more violent because of such news?».

A. Gierzynski (Professor of Political Science), believes that entertainment media influences the mentality of people not less as serious media. He explains the mental changes as follows: «We don't consciously learn everything that we actually learn. We acquire a lot of things in a more passive or indirect way. There's a great theory in psychology that argues that our state of mind when we're transported into a story is very different than when we're processing information people are trying to give us. It's called narrative transportation theory. When we leave our beliefs behind and even lose awareness of what's going on around us, we're not in the real world anymore; we're transported. Hell, movie theaters are designed to do this – sensory deprivation outside of the screen. In that state, our cognitive energy is focused on being transported in the story. It is an emotional-based state, and it is driven by imagery. Because of that, we are more susceptible to the messages that entertainment delivers»[1, p. 2]. In this connection it is worth remembering the fact that the ranks of the skinhead increased almost three times after the mass watching movies such as «Romper Stomper» and «American History X».

To sum up, nowadays, the mass psychological influence comes in the form of a hidden, technologically planned of manipulator process of psychological pressure on the recipient while he or she is unaware of this pressure.

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