

Observations on Explication of Content of "Political Manipulation" Notion

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Դիտարկումներ «քաղաքական մանիպուլյացիա» հասկացության բովանդակության էքսպլիկացիայի վերաբերյալ

Վարդանյան Լ. Գ.

Փիլիսոփայական գիտությունների թեկնածու, Երևանի պետական համալսարանի քաղաքական գիտության և տեսության ամբիոն (Երևան, Հայաստան)

Պողոսյան Վ. Ո.

ԵՂՀ Միջազգային հարաբերությունների ֆակուլտետի Տարածաշրջանային քաղաքականություն բաժնի մագիստրանտ (Երևան, Հայաստան)

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Ամփոփում: Ներկայացված հոդվածում մանիպուլյացիան դիտարկվում և քննարկվում է քաղաքագիտական ուղղվածության համատեքստում: Ներկայացվում են «մանիպուլյացիա» հասկացության ծագումնաբանական-հասկացութային քննարկումները, սահմանման և մեկնաբանությունների էքսպլիկացիոն մոտեցումները: Բացահայտվում և վերլուծվում են զանգվածային քաղաքական գիտակցության և զանգվածային քաղաքական վարքագծի մանիպուլյացիայի բնորոշ առանձնահատկությունները սոցիալ-քաղաքական հետազոտությունների տեսանկյունից: Քաղաքագիտական էքսպլիկացիան թույլ է տալիս մանիպուլյացիան դիտարկել որպես բարդ գործընթաց՝ իր տարբեր բնութագրումներով: Իհարկե, առանձին անհատների միջև կարող են լինել մանիպուլյատիվ փոխհարաբերություններ, բայց որպես կանոն մանիպուլյատիվ գործողություններն այսպես կամ այնպես ընկած են սոցիալ-քաղաքական ծրագրավորված և իրացվող նպատակների, գաղափարների հիմքում՝ պայմանավորված լինելով իշխանությամբ, կարգավիճակով, ռեսուրսներով և այ գործոններով:

Վճռորոշ բառեր՝ մանիպուլյացիա, քաղաքական մանիպուլյացիա, ազդեցություն, հոգեբանական ազդեցություն, քաղաքական գիտակցություն, էքսպլիկացիա, մանիպուլյատոր, հմտություն, կառավարում, թաքնված բնույթ, մանիպուլյացիայի սուբյեկտ, մանիպուլյացիայի օբյեկտ

Некоторые наблюдения по поводу экспликации содержания понятия

«политическая манипуляция»

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Резюме: В представленной статье манипуляции рассматриваются и обсуждаются в контексте политологической направленности. Представляются генеалогические и концептуальные обсуждения понятия "манипуляция", экспликационные подходы к определению и интерпретации. Выявляются и анализируются характерные

особенности массового политического сознания и манипуляции массовым политическим поведением с точки зрения социально-политических исследований. Политологическая экспликация позволяет рассматривать манипуляции как сложный процесс с его различными характеристиками. Конечно, могут быть манипулятивные взаимоотношения между отдельными лицами, но, как правило, манипулятивные действия так или иначе лежат в основе запланированных и реализуемых социально-политических целей, будучи связанным с властью, статусом, ресурсами и т.д.

Ключевые слова: манипуляция, политическая манипуляция, психологическое влияние, политическое сознание, экспликация, манипулятор, умение, управление, скрытый характер, субъект манипуляции, объект манипуляции.

Introduction

In the present article manipulation is viewed and discussed in the context of the political science. The genealogical-conceptual discussions of the concept of "manipulation", as well as the explication¹ approaches to the definition and comments have been presented. The peculiarities of manipulation of political consciousness and mass political behavior have been revealed and analyzed from the viewpoint of the socio-political studies.

Regardless of the fact that the issue of the manipulation, including the political manipulation, has been repeatedly discussed in the scientific and publicist literature by various approaches, interest in it especially conditioned by the factors of topicality has been steadily increasing. At present, the scientific community (political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, linguists and others) are attempting to penetrate into the essence of this complex and contradictory process. It should be noted that there is no common approach to the manipulation as a socio-political phenomenon by various social sciences.

The political manipulation of the mass political behavior, the mass political consciousness and masses, which is considered to be as one of the topical issues of nowadays, is not only a widespread phenomenon, but it has also become a daily political practice. That is to say, the study of the political manipulation has become more relevant in terms of its theoretical and practical issues. The study of these issues is also important because if the victims of interpersonal manipulation may be individuals, the victims of the political manipulation may also be some groups of people, large masses (sometimes the whole peoples). And in general, the manipulation of consciousness is nowadays deeply reinforced in such areas of social interaction as advertising, public relations, political PR, etc., which, of course, are of great interest to researchers dealing with these issues. The importance of the study of the political manipulation issues is also conditioned by the

widespread use of manipulation technologies in the modern world as one of the primary means of regulating relations in the spheres of economy and business, politics and public communication.

Our prediction is that the political manipulation or the manipulation of the mass political consciousness with all its variety of means, methods, techniques and technologies is conditioned by the fact what features are being used in the given process, what is the purpose and what results are being recorded. At the same time, political manipulation performs as a special form of political process, expressing the socio-political interaction between the subject and the object of manipulation.

Substantial Issues of Political Manipulation and Explication

The term "manipulation" (from latin *manipulus*) has two connotations. In its translation it is understood and presented as a fist, a palm, a handful (*manus* is *hand* and *ple* is to *fill*). It is translated into Armenian as *ձեռնածոյթյուն*. [1, p. 935], *ձեռնափորթյուն*. In the dictionaries of the European languages, this word is interpreted as an attitude towards an object conditioned by some purpose (for example, management with a hand, physician's examination of a patient with a hand, etc.) [16, pp. 133-134]. Presenting these circumstances, it is taken into account that such cases require skill, ingenuity and training. Manipulators are the amenities created for the management of mechanisms in the technique, which are in some way considered as the continuation of the hand through the processes (levers, bars, etc.). The modern metaphorical meanings of this word appeared from here as a skillful and witty attitude towards people, the ability to manage behavior, the purposeful influence on the consciousness and spiritual world that pursue the fulfilment of certain goals.

The term "manipulation" in its secondary meaning is understood as a small group of people (a handful). In this meaning the term originated from the Ancient Rome and implies "a small, very mobile detachment of soldiers" - the meaning of "manipulus". In the military art history the

¹ **Explication** [from latin *explication* - explanation, clarification, interpretation] - 1. An explanatory text, clarification. 2. A process that reveals the content of some unity, the whole, and its constituents become independent and may differ from one another.

manipulative phalanx² occupied an important place, which was discussed in detail by the military historians. Thus, German military historian Hans Delbrück (1848-1929) notes that each manipulus consisted of 120 people. The Legion consisted of 30 manipulus... and the manipulative order with its organizational tasks required strict discipline, which was executed by the management and influence of the commanding staff, who guided and psychologically organized the members of the manipulus [10, pp. 204-205]. We agree with some researchers that the manifestations of the manipulation can be seen in the presented process, which have been widely used in today's political and public practice, especially in the electoral period, particularly through the advertisements and through the mass media [19, p. 19].

The presented psychological impact or psychological manipulation has existed at different times of the public life, also substantiating different political processes, and the transition to the information society only contributes to the transformation of psychological manipulation³ by spreading it across the different spheres of the public life, i.e. politics, diplomacy, commerce and so on. That is to say, the modern conditions, in essence, have given common nature to the information-psychological influence and the use of political manipulation in communication processes.

We think that these two studies and explanations of the term "manipulation" can be also applied unequivocally while discussing the various issues related to the political manipulation.

The 20th century became a century of masses and mass actions. The discoveries made by Gustav Lebon (1841-1931), Gabriel Tardy (1843-1904), Jose Ortega i Gasset (1883-1955), Wilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), Serge Moskvich (1925-2014) and other researchers in the field of the political psychology have given a new impetus to the study of mass movements. It was conditioned by the conceptualization of different models of management, from the totalitarian model of management (which turned the unification of masses into an organizational power through threats

and ideological elaborations) up to the propaganda of individual values, the process of the "atomization" of the society, etc. And it is no coincidence that the manipulation as a scientific concept was put into circulation in the 40s-50s of the 20th century by the western political scientists and psychologists. As is well known, the phenomenon of manipulation has been the subject of a serious debate in the works of political science as this term was used in its metaphorical meaning was used just in the political sphere, gradually spreading on the issues related to mass consciousness. The political manipulations include both interpersonal relationships and mass manipulations. In the first case, the manipulator uses certain techniques for their implementation, i.e. the manipulation techniques operating on the interpersonal level. In the second case, the manipulator uses the manipulation technologies, which, with the help of managerial results, attempt to influence the public opinion to achieve certain goals. In this case, communication problems with the masses are primarily regulated through the mass media (radio, press, television, internet, etc.), which simultaneously act as manipulative tools.

The following scholars can be mentioned among the western authors presenting the researches on the issues of the political manipulation: Herbert Frank (1920-1986), Herbert Schiller (1919-2000), Everett Shastrom (1921-1992), Robert Goodin (born in 1950) and others. The two primary issues have been discussed in detail in the political literature since the 1960s. The first was dedicated to the discovery of the manipulative nature of the mass media (in the Soviet literature this criticism was presented with bourgeois or imperialist definitions and analyzes). The second one was related to the brain washing practice (in the Soviet Union and in China this process concerned the propaganda conducted by the government and the party and the work carried out by the special services). Of course, as we have mentioned, many works (especially in the 80s) were of a bourgeois propaganda nature [6; 7; 8]. From the professional point of view, the problems related to the political manipulation in the Soviet era have not been raised in the professional literature. Various scientific and publicist studies of different nature on the phenomenon of "manipulation" have started emerging after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They have covered the spheres of the political science, psychology, philosophy, public management, socio-economic and other spheres [4; 5; 11; 12; 13; 15; 28]. At the same time, it should be noted that each of them, having its own peculiarities, at the same time complements one another, making the mentioned studies more comprehensive and complex.

² Phalanx / Falange (from Greek *φάλαγγα* [falanga]) – an Ancient Greek regiment, a heavily linear infantry. Phalanx has been well known since in the Trojan War. It was improved by Philip the Macedonian. The Spanish fascist party and the community projected by utopian-socialist Charles Fourier were also called phalanx (the latter would have 1600-1800 people).

³ **Transformation** (from latin *transformatio* - conversion, transformation, conversion, reformation, modification). 1. A model mutually promoting to the changes of social act. 2. The function (functionality) of social institutions, which is conditioned by the targeted influence of nominal affirmations. 3. The transformation of the different spheres or processes of the public life.

In the modern Armenian society such processes are also available and have unique forms of manifestation. Many of the current crisis phenomena are based on the fact that the manipulation of the mass consciousness makes the citizens' free and conscious choice a formal act, a pre-programmed process of the formation of mass consciousness by professionals.

It is generally accepted that the political manipulation is defined as *hidden modes and means of the social management of political consciousness and behavior of a social subject (an individual, a social group, masses, a society) which are aimed at the psychologically influence (affect) and force them to act (or to be inactive) contrary to their own interests*. In other words, the political manipulation is the skill and psychological influence (affect) on the political consciousness of the citizens as a latent form and processing of management. The following components are taken into account in terms of the explication of the content of the concept of "manipulation": the main feature of the manipulation (psychological influence), the subject, the object, the purpose, the method.

The manipulation used as regards the people is a social, psychological, political influence, whose purpose is to change other people's perceptions or behavior through the hidden, false, or ingenious practices. As a rule, these methods are based on the interests of the manipulator, so they can be considered as exploitative, unfair, out of ethics and so on. The manipulation can be applied in different areas: family, business, work or among friends, in interpersonal relations, public life, mass media.

Aristotle, the greatest Ancient Greek thinker (384-322 BC), stated that the man is a social being, and that all the beings living outside the Polis community have been either higher than human, i.e. superhuman beings, gods, or they have been lower than human, i.e. morally underdeveloped beings, or animals [3, c. 382]. This means that people's interactions in the society are very diverse and can be presented and perceived differently. Thus, the individuum, as an independent individual and a separate unit, in its informative sense is an abstract, which was formed in the 17th century, during the emergence of the modern Western society. The Latin word "individuum" is the translation of the Greek word "atom", which means "inseparable", because man originates and exists only as a result of interactions with other people and their influences. A child, who was brought up by wild animals (such cases have been known and studied) cannot be a human and cannot survive. The biological program of behavior put inside us is not enough for us to be a human. It is supplemented by cultural signs and corresponding symbols, the registered and

associated programs. And it is viewed as a program of collective work [12, c. 14]. It follows from this that our behavior always depends on the influence of other people, and it is in principle impossible to protect us from that influence through some severe barriers. *The question arises what type of influence can be considered as manipulation.*

The explication of the term "political manipulation" has first of all negative connotation. By using it, we are referring to the impact (and first of all, the psychological impact) that drives us to perform some actions that are perceived as a failure or an inaccurate action by the evaluation of the results. To follow the process of the formation and development of the manipulation phenomenon, we think it is necessary to refer to the notion of "influence" and especially "psychological influence", which, as mentioned above, is a key feature of manipulation. In the modern Armenian explanatory dictionary, the word "influence" is presented as an action (to affect, to influence), an impression, an action aimed at someone to achieve something [1, c. 7]. Without considering it as necessary to deepen into the discussions of the notions of "influence" and "psychological influence" [11; 14; 24; 25], it should be noted that influence is understood as a purposeful transfer of information and movement between interacting participants [18]. There are several strategies of influence: imperative (ordering, commanding, demanding, dictating), developing and manipulative.

An imperative strategy does not touch upon the deep structures of the individual, it rather supports the cognitive structures and as far as possible operates in extreme situations.

A developing strategy is oriented to the long-term outcome, the measurements of an individual, and is implemented in the process of long-term interpersonal communication with the people [20, c. 46].

The third of the considered strategies, i.e. the manipulative strategy, is the most interesting one, because it remains secretive and unnoticed by those to whom this manipulative influence is directed. Of course, not every influence we are subjected to can be considered as the manipulation. One of the first books dedicated to the manipulation is the work of German sociologist Herbert Franke "Manipulated Man" (1964). In this book, the author gives the following explanation to the manipulation: it can be understood as a secretly conducted psychological influence, therefore, it is harmful for the people to whom it is directed [26, c. 7]. Russian scientist Sergey Kara-Murza (born in 1939) also gives a similar characterization in his "Manipulation of Consciousness" work. According to him, in the

modern sense, the manipulation is understood as such a behavior of the masses' aspirations and opinions, their moods and even mental state planning, which is needed to those who possess manipulative tools [13, c. 24].

Other features of the manipulation of consciousness are also distinguished: ingenuity and concealment as ways of programming of human behavior [12, c. 14]. So, the person subjected to manipulation even should not know what kind of behavior the manipulator is trying to achieve. The ingenious actions applied by humans are presented as manipulative principles, management tools. And when all of these manipulative principles began to be applied in the human management technology, a modern manipulation process emerged and was formed as the programming of people, groups, aspirations, and opinions that are needed by those who possess the manipulation tools.

There are two main models of political manipulation: psychological and rational. The main characteristic of the first model is the use of an individual's mechanical response to one or another psychological motivation. In this case the essence of manipulation is conditioned by the selection of impulses acceptable for the operation of psychological mechanisms that are capable of producing the desired response for the manipulator.

Manipulation of the rational model is conducted rather through deception and deceit than through the use of psychological motivation.

The manipulation forms related to this model include the following:

- a) reducing the amount of information accessible to an ordinary citizen;
 - b) the use of propaganda, that is, to some extent true but deliberate information presented to citizens,
 - c) the use of confidentiality, i.e. the intentional concealment of information, which is capable of destroying the official political course, and so on.
- The sense of such an approach is that difficulties for receiving and accessibility of information are created for citizens, which in their turn force them to accept and rely on officially presented information.

Summarizing the characteristics of the manipulation given by the researchers, one can distinguish its main features. According to the first feature, it is a type of spiritual, psychological influence (not physical violence or threat of violence). The target of the manipulator's action is the psychological structure of a human individual, his spiritual field [11, c. 56].

The manipulation is a means of influencing one's psyche, whose feature, in comparison with other psychic effects, is that the manipulator seeks to conceal one's own tendencies and aspirations.

According to American psychologist George Simon (born in 1948), the effectiveness of the psychological manipulation is primarily determined by the extent to which the manipulator:

- 1) conceals aggressive aspirations and behavior;
- 2) recognizes the psychological features of the victim to determine which approach will be most effective;
- 3) deals with the manifestations of cruel treatment so as not to disturb the victim at the moment of damaging [21].

According to the second feature, manipulation is a covert influence, and this fact should not be visible by the manipulation object. One of the leading experts in the American mass media, Professor of the University of California Herbert Schiller, observes that "the manipulation should go unnoticed in order to succeed. The success of the manipulation is guaranteed, when the manipulated person believes that everything that happened is natural and inevitable. In short, manipulation requires a false reality that does not allow to feel its presence." [29].

These manipulative false realities are created by the mass information means (mass media, newspapers, radio, television, the Internet, which are transmitters of authoritative opinions that are perceived by people becoming their own conclusions.

Erich Fromm in his book "Escape From Freedom" expresses the following thought: "It seems to people that it is they who make decisions, that it is they who wish something, but in reality they are subjected to the pressure of external forces, internal conditions, and "want" exactly what they should do." [27].

According to the third feature, manipulation is an influence that requires mastery and knowledge. There are, of course, talented people with strong intuition, who are capable to conduct manipulation, by influencing the consciousness of members of family, collective, and other types of groups. But when the matter is about the public consciousness, politics (at least at the local level), as a rule, the professionals are involved in the action, who are somehow know and familiar with the manipulation technologies, have some knowledge about them [13, c. 12]. And since the manipulative process of the public consciousness has become a technology, so the professionals, who have some knowledge of this technology, appear.

In general, it should become clear that manipulation is not a violence, it is rather an enchantment and temptation. Everyone is given freedom of spirit and will. Therefore, he is full of responsibility not to fall into the seduction or the temptation. The science has created intellectually useful tools for human, which serve as barriers

against the manipulation. Intellect (from Latin: intellectus - sense, perception, understanding, comprehension, reasonableness) is a mental feature that enables to adapt to new situations, learn on the basis of the experience, understand and apply abstract concepts, use one's own knowledge to manage the environment, etc.

If manipulation is interpreted as a skill to influence or manage people, a certain behavior as a form of covert management, as an elaboration, it should be taken into account that it can also have a positive connotation. Similarly, political manipulations may have both negative and positive connotations (for example, the influence on the masses can be directed at increasing the level of political participation and activity). This term was originally perceived in a very positive sense in terms of management, support, assistance. That is to say, the importance of the analysis of the manipulation phenomenon is also conditioned by the fact that other informative meaning of the given phenomenon is presented in the society at present. In the recent times, the manipulation has been discussed and viewed as an independent issue. This is conditioned by the fact that in the modern society there is a comprehensive rationalization of different spheres of the social life that cannot but have its influence on the manipulation processes. The rationalization of "manipulation" also takes place by this approach, whose frequent use in the daily life gives it a positive connotation (an additional feature). Today the application of manipulation is also perceived as a means of solving problems, achieving a goal, a rational process, a guarantee of success, and so on.

Within the framework of the mass theory, the object of manipulation can be represented through the concepts of "mass", "crowd", "audience" and other concepts. The problem of mass manipulation, as we have already mentioned, became important at the beginning of the 20th century. The fear towards the crowd as a leading social force has forced the researchers to speak about the fact that "in the modern age, the manipulation is necessary, when the masses are claiming to the management of the society without having the appropriate abilities for it. And as the Spanish philosopher Ortega i Gasset (1883-1955) has rightly observed, the "mass man" cannot think [23, c. 309-349]. In this terms, the manipulation is presented, on the one hand, as a coercive means, and, on the other hand, the crowd itself is in need of manipulation.

But it should be acknowledged that at the end of the 20th century and especially at the beginning of the 21st century, the society was undergoing some transformation, and the tendencies of an individual were significantly strengthened, and an attitude towards manipulation changed. According to the

researchers, who study the social influence and the consequences of the manipulation, the "mass man" is passive in the expression of his opinion, he does not have sufficient information, is incapable of rational analysis and therefore incapable and cannot independently elaborate proper political decisions. That is why the political elite presents ready decisions to the "mass man", also offering relevant ideas, judgments, norms of behavior, and so on. All this is the basis of the conviction that the manipulation of political consciousness is not only inevitable and necessary, but also, as a system of subtle or covert oppression means, is viewed as a technology of humanitarian attitude towards the man, a unique form of spiritual management. In fact, manipulation comes up as a legitimate means in terms of the issues of the orientation of the people's behavior. The manipulation of the masses requires the knowledge of their psychology, the peculiarities of the social behavior.

We consider it as necessary to discuss another approach to the meaning of the word "manipulation". It is also considered as a machination and a deception. Thus, the encyclopedia dictionary of political science gives the following definition: The manipulation (in politics) is a mechanism of psychological influence or a system that is oriented towards the introduction of illusory perceptions [17].

It should be noted that it is now accepted to differentiate between manipulation and machination. Manipulation is related to various management issues, and the machination is an action directed at a certain interest, profit pursuit, an action conducted in an illegitimate way. If the manipulation is aimed at changing the behavior of other people, affecting and managing them, the machination does not have such a goal. However, manipulation and machination have a hidden motivation, and these motives should not be presented or discovered to succeed. In both cases, the object should not know that he is being manipulated or machinated. The majority of scholars generally agree that the manipulative actions should be hidden and carried out confidentially, taking into account that the covert nature of manipulation is a defining feature of the given phenomenon. There are also some researchers, who, in contrast to the covert nature of manipulation, also bring as an example the obviously represented threat, which is perceived as an open, non-hidden form of manipulation [5, c. 57].

One of the important characteristics of the manipulation is its non-violent nature, which means that belief, information, non-verbal tricks, etc. are used during the manipulation. Russian researcher E. L. Dotsenko concludes that no less vital situations can be recalled in which the manipulation can be

shown as a positive thing, since these manipulation problems can be presented and raised to the level of humanitarian relations [11, c. 147]. There is no doubt that in case of such a perception we will depart from the negative nature of manipulation.

The political manipulation is connected with the authorities, it is manifested as a technology of the power. For example, various slogans, ideas, entertainment programs, different shows presented by the political elite through which they strive to distract the masses' attention from different economic, social, political issues put before the country (the high level of inflation, the poor work of the government, the low level of wages, etc.). According to political scientist E. Qalantaryan, the situational manipulation is widely used in politics, as it allows to act unnoticed, at the same time communication takes place through other people, in different situations, providing long-lasting influence, exerting deep pressure on human consciousness, sub-consciousness, and hence behavior [2, c. 68-72].

The general technology of manipulation exercised by the authorities is usually based on the political myths and illusory ideas embodied in the mass consciousness, which should be accepted on this or that level by people without rational and critical reasoning. The myths make the basis of the illusory description of the whole world. Thus, the presentation of private property as a source of social evil, the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism and the victory of socialism, the factors of the role of the leader of the Communist Party, and so on were considered as important myths for the manipulation by the communist system. According to American researcher Herbert Schiller, the main ideals in the United States that confirm the power of the managing elite are the following social myths:

- individual freedom and personal choice of citizens;
- the neutrality of the most important political institutions (the Congress, the court system, the presidential authorities, mass media),
- the unchanging selfish nature of the human, the consumer disposition,
- the absence of social conflicts, exploitation and pressure in the society;
- the existence of pluralism, including the presence of mass media [29, c. 25-40].

Conclusion

Coming to the conclusions, the following points should be noted. The first, the political manipulation is generally perceived as a process. The second, when describing or defining the political manipulation, the object and subject are presented, which indicates its managerial nature, that is, it is

related to the processes of political management in the society. The third, it is emphasized that the main purpose of the political manipulation is the change of the behavior of the object. The fourth, the use of special means stresses its technological peculiarity.

We agree with some authors in the issue that the definitions given to the manipulation, and especially the political manipulation, are insufficient, and to some extent they should be expanded or perhaps should be more inclusive [22, c. 113-115]. The manipulative phenomena are more emphasized in the political life. Moreover, the political manipulation is specifically connected with the manifestations of the model of political management formed in the society. All this provides a basis for presenting the explication attempts of the notion "political manipulation" in the context of political science knowledge. Of course, when viewing the manipulation as a political phenomenon, one cannot neglect its psychological nature. The manipulation often implies forced demands and motivations that should be perceived by the object (individual, group, mass, society, etc.) as "his own". In other words, manipulation uses the following: from the weak psychological influence on the consciousness up to the total (whole) political influence, making the human a puppet in a certain sense. If the manipulation touches upon the political projects and relations, such manipulation processes are considered as political.

The political explication allows the manipulation to be viewed as a complex process with its various characteristics. Of course, there may be manipulative relationships between separate individuals, but as a rule, manipulative actions in this or that way underlie the programmed and realized socio-political goals and ideas, being conditioned by the power, status, resources, and other factors.

When we speak about the manipulation, including the political manipulation, it should be accepted that both the subject and the object have some political status. In addition, the manipulation is a part of political relations, that is why it can be talked about as a special form of political interaction.

The manipulation always implies a two-way interaction between the object and the subject. The manipulator's further steps depend on the manipulated person's responding reaction, which should not violate the basic conditions of the manipulation - the confidentiality of the subject's intentions and the action that he or she intends to take. If we view the manipulation phenomenon as a political phenomenon, the perceptions about the object and subject of manipulation change. According to this approach, both the object and the

subject can have multiple and group nature. A social group can act both as a subject and as an object. The reality mentioned during the political manipulation is very clearly manifested when the political elite performs as a subject and the electorate (the electing mass) performs as an object. In fact, we are dealing with the political manipulation, which is the psychological, socio-political covert influence that is strategically and tactically exerted on the social subject by the use of modern communication technologies that can lead to the transformation of political relations.

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