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Propaganda and its masks of virtue
La propaganda y sus máscaras de la virtud

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Article abstract

From the negative connotation it receives in Marx's theory to the idea that from birth we live in a network that is imbued with it, as Mannheim claims, ideology has always aroused the interest of researchers. The promotion of an ideology, and the change of one by another, is made possible by propaganda. However, for propaganda to succeed in promoting an ideology legitimizing a certain course of events, it must be based on a series of values deeply rooted in society. The propagandist discourse will appeal to the axiological universe to motivate and mask actions, facts, and ways of thinking. From a political point of view, all forms of societies use propaganda; in this regard, it is important to look at how varied the values used in propaganda discourse are and what they are masking.

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Discours « vertueux » et démobilisation de la pensée / “Virtuous” discourse and demobilization of thought / Discurso « virtuoso » y desmovilización del pensamiento

Social values and propaganda: theoretical perspectives of key concepts

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De la connotation négative qu'elle reçoit dans la théorie de Marx à l'idée que dès la naissance nous vivons dans un réseau qui en est imprégné, comme le prétend Mannheim, l'idéologie a toujours suscité l'intérêt des chercheurs. La propagande est ce qui permet d'asseoir une idéologie, d'en changer une par une autre. Pour que la propagande réussisse à promouvoir une idéologie légitimant un certain cours des événements, elle doit toutefois s'appuyer sur une série de valeurs présentes dans la société. Le discours propagandiste fera appel à l'univers axiologique pour motiver et masquer des actions, des faits, des manières de penser. Politiquement, tous les types de société utilisent la propagande, mais dans quelle mesure les valeurs utilisées dans le discours de propagande sont-elles différentes ?

Mots-clés : information, éthique, axiologie, société, manipulation.

From the negative connotation it receives in Marx's theory to the idea that from birth we live in a network that is imbued with it, as Mannheim claims, ideology has always aroused the interest of researchers. The promotion of an ideology, and the change of one by another, is made possible by propaganda. However, for propaganda to succeed in promoting an ideology legitimizing a certain course of events, it must be based on a series of values deeply rooted in society. The propagandist discourse will appeal to the axiological universe to motivate and mask actions, facts, and ways of thinking. From a political point of view, all forms of societies use propaganda; in this regard, it is important to look at how varied the values used in propaganda discourse are and what they are masking.

Keywords: information, ethics, axiology, society, manipulation.

De la connotación negativa que recibe en la teoría de Marx a la idea de que desde el nacimiento vivimos en una red que está impregnada de ella, como afirma Mannheim, la ideología siempre ha suscitado el interés de los investigadores. La propaganda es lo que permite asentar una ideología, cambiar una por otra. Sin embargo, para que la propaganda logre promover una ideología que legitime un determinado curso de los acontecimientos, debe basarse en una serie de valores presentes en la sociedad. El discurso propagandístico apelará al universo axiológico para motivar y ocultar acciones, hechos, modos de pensar. Políticamente, todos los tipos de sociedad utilizan la propaganda, pero ¿en qué medida son diferentes los valores utilizados en el discurso propagandístico?

Palabras clave : información, ética, axiología, sociedad, manipulación.

Nothing appears more surprising to those who consider human affairs with a philosophical eye, than the easiness with which the many are governed by the few; and the implicit submission, with which men resign their own sentiments and passions to those of their rulers. When we enquire by what means this wonder is affected, we shall find, that, as FORCE is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them, but opinion. It is therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the freest and most popular. The soldan of EGYPT or the emperor of ROME, might drive his harmless subjects, like brute beasts, against their sentiments and inclination: But he must, at least, have led his mamelukes, or praetorian bands, like men, by their opinion.

(Hume, 1987, pp. 32-33)

Introduction

The relationship between propaganda and social values is complex and can be analyzed from several perspectives, exemplified by the following questions:

1. Is propaganda a good, positive thing, or a bad, negative one? Can propaganda be analyzed through the filters of ethical or social values?
2. In the rhetoric specific to propaganda, are society's values used or referred to? Can we find social values in the ideology that masks propaganda?
3. What moral values can be promoted in society through propaganda?

Noam Chomsky notices that David Hume, the Scottish philosopher, describes “the paradox that in any society, the population submits to the rulers, even though force is always in the hands of the governed (people). Ultimately the governors, the rulers, can only rule if they control opinion – no matter how many guns they have. This is true of the most despotic societies and the most free, he wrote. If the general population won't accept things, the rulers are finished”. (Chomsky, 2012, pp. 129-130)

But Hume, in his essays, also provides a description of opinion and its classification: opinion of interest and opinion of right. An opinion of interest, through its persuasive power, can ensure great security for any government, as long as it prevails on the state. It consists of the belief that the current government is advantageous for everyone, just like any other form of governance that might replace it; it is about pursuing the public interest. Regarding the opinion of right, the philosopher makes a clear distinction between the right to power and the right to property. Opinions regarding the right to power can easily be seen in a people's admiration for previous forms of government and for heroic historical figures or revered leaders. When the right to power becomes overwhelmingly important, a contradiction may appear in the human mind and society: when men act in a faction (or a group, party, etc.) they can easily ignore honor and morality in order to be of use in the respective faction. But, when the faction is based on a principle or a right, its members become fiercer, more determined as well as have a greater sense of justice and fairness. As for the opinion of right to property, it could be found in all the issues that the government dealt with in Hume's time. Currently, the vast majority of the world's economies are based on the right to own private property. We can talk about ideologies favorable to property rights.

These are the most important opinions on which governments are founded, but they are not the only ones. Hume adds three other opinions or principles that can influence governments, limiting them, strengthening them, or changing the way they work: self-interest, fear and affection. They can only have influence when they are in relation to the original opinions. Self-interest means the expectation of people in positions of power to receive various rewards, different from the general protection received from the government, which could have the effect of increasing their authority. Fear and affection are also related to the authority of the government, more precisely, of the person in charge. Fear of the sovereign or affection for his wisdom or virtues are only possible if he has a certain authority. Otherwise, no one would fear the anger of a person with limited physical strength, and no one would admire a sovereign, if he had not previously been invested with a public character.

What David Hume describes are some examples of how the governed can be influenced by certain opinions to accept, without opposition, those who govern them. As he himself remembers, this process involves persuasion. Nowadays, such examples can be found in theories that offer explanations of how propaganda works.

What is propaganda? Is propaganda a positive, good thing or a means of doing harm?

Public opinion can be controlled by those who govern through the use of propaganda. Trying to identify the way in which propaganda is defined and perceived, we started by consulting its definitions in a number of well-known dictionaries.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary propaganda consists in “information, ideas, opinions or images, often only giving one part of the argument that are broadcast, published, or in some other way spread with the intention of influencing people’s opinions”.

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines propaganda as:

- a. “the spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause or a person.”
- b. “ideas, facts or allegations spread deliberately to further one’s cause or to damage an opposing cause.”

Harrap’s Chambers Dictionary has another definition of propaganda: “the spreading of ideas to influence public opinion” or “material used for this, e.g. posters, leaflets”.

As we can see, the definitions differ with regard to some of the aspects they insist upon: although all of them refer to the action of spreading or giving information, ideas, images etc., Cambridge and Harrap’s Dictionaries also highlight the idea of influencing people or the public. Even from the definitions one can observe a general perception regarding propaganda:

- it is used intentionally/deliberately, in order to influence people;
- it often gives only one part of the argument;
- it can be used in order to help/further or injure/damage an institution, a cause, or a person.

In general, persuasion, influencing people, or manipulation are perceived by public opinion as something bad, with negative repercussions or effects that prevent the understanding of the facts. The electronic thesaurus of the English language also does offer a positive perception of propaganda, because among the synonyms of this phenomenon we find terms such as “disinformation,” “indoctrination,” “brainwashing,” “hogwash,” “proselytism,” terms with negative

connotations. Some positive aspects are reflected in the definition of the Merriam Webster Dictionary, because propaganda is also used to help people or to further one's cause.

The information delivered by propaganda is not chosen randomly. Behind the propaganda process there are people, groups, organizations with an agenda or an ideology that they want to spread. As with propaganda, ideology has not escaped its negative connotations, either.

Some important political thinkers insisted on the negative connotations of ideology: "The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class" (Marx, Engels, 1992, p. 52, p. 55). In their work, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels underline the importance of propaganda in relation to how the bourgeoisie used it to influence the working class thereby inducing its obedience to the rules and the order established in society by the rich. In Marxist theory, the world is perceived as consisting of two classes: that of the bourgeoisie, which owns the large properties and means of production, and the proletarians, i.e. the working class, which is subjugated by the first. The proletarians come to acquire the values of the bourgeoisie, their standards regarding the notions of freedom, culture, law, family, education; they gradually lose the ability to think about the world in a different way, submitting to the existing class condition. Thus, they come to believe that a paradigm shift would lead to the dissolution of the world. On the other hand, they also noticed the benefit that propaganda would bring to spreading the communist revolutionary ideology. It is not for nothing that communist propaganda has become such a well-known model for the dissemination of left-wing ideology. Its success may be one of the reasons why propaganda is perceived as a bad thing. It was used for political indoctrination, to make acceptable or to legitimize laws, measures, and practices that violated the human rights and the moral values in society.

Disinformation as a function of propaganda

Other thinkers (V.Volkoff, 2002; N. Chomsky, 2012, 2013) focus on the disinformation function that propaganda can be used for. They consider propaganda as means by which the political class or big corporations distract the public's attention from the real problems in society, misleading the people. In such cases propaganda serves as a psychological weapon, ensuring the acceptance and docility of the masses to the programs, projects, or changes that governments or corporations intend to implement. In this manner, the problems are not presented in their complexity, values are presented as virtues allowing certain aspects to be intentionally hidden from the public, while others are persistently promoted. Disinformation is obtained by distorting information and those who have the opportunity to manipulate public opinion often resort to disinformation. Although disinformation can appear spontaneously, due to the way in which the events were narrated or depending on the personality of the informant and that of the listener, frequently the information is transmitted intentionally erroneously hidden under values that are not respected. Volkoff presents three cases where disinformation is used more often:

- to obtain a certain attitude from the public in order to carry out a particular action;
- with the aim of selling a product;
- to convince the public of the superiority of a certain cause, party, or candidate.

Especially in the case of the last example, the truth is distorted by lies: it doesn't matter how just the cause is, how respectable the party or how good the candidate. If it is observed that the public would be more receptive to a lie, then that lie will be used to ensure its success. The preferred

method to be used consists in the accentuation of the contrasts: “so that the white appears pure as snow, the black is presented as the devil in person.” (Volkoff, 2002, p. 16)

Manufacturing consent

The expression “manufacturing of consent” reflects the idea that the consent of the population should be manufactured by a select group of political or corporate elites (a specialized class, responsible and capable of understanding what must be done for the benefit of all), while the rest of the population (“the bewildered herd,” incapable of) should only have the role of witnessing what is happening on the economic and political level, without intervening. The term was used by Walter Lippman in his book *The Phantom Public* (1993, p.145), and was then adopted by Noam Chomsky and used to make known his critical ideas regarding this concept. The way in which people’s consent is manufactured, which actually represents the control of citizens, takes place through easily accessible and usable means, such as propaganda campaigns and persuasion. Through these, the resolutions of the decision-makers are accepted without many objections, and their actions are legitimized without effort. In this sense propaganda serves as a “political requirement of social order.” Lippman believed that common people (the citizens, or, in his words “*The Phantom Public*”) were not able to see their common interests, due to conflicting interests existing in the society, something that makes them act arbitrarily and difficult to control. The population’s attention is intentionally directed towards certain concerns, events, interests, while other topics are avoided (Farçaş, 2017, p.178; Chomsky, Herman, 1988, p.332; Chomsky, 2013, p.p. 35-36). Chomsky is aware of the fact that people understand that political parties do not really care about them and that is why they are dissatisfied with the ruling parties, but he explains that this great dissatisfaction is directed towards the government through business propaganda, which is prevalent in the media. (Chomsky, 2012, p.242)

Both Lippman and Chomsky confirmed with examples in their works what Edward Bernays said in 1928:

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country. (Bernays, 1928, p. 9)

Although he sees the unpleasant aspects of propaganda, Bernays does not perceive it as something negative. In fact, he considers that propaganda is indispensable to an orderly life.

Recently, however, a series of works have appeared through which the specialists in communication, linguistics, political philosophy, and propaganda try to educate the population with regard to disinformation and the means used to this end, such as persuasion, manipulation or fake news and how we can fight against them. From this arises another reason why propaganda is perceived as something negative: through it the people are deceived and lied to, so they are not aware of the power they possess that can be used to improve their living conditions.

Propaganda is the mechanism used to disseminate ideas in society, as Bernays also observes, it is “an organized effort to spread a particular belief or doctrine.” (Bernays, 1928, p. 20). Despite the negative connotations associated with the term “propaganda,” he insists that our judgement about whether propaganda is good or bad must rely on whether its cause is a good or bad one. The correctness of the information provided by propaganda should also be verified when we make such an assessment. According to Bernays the term “propaganda” suffered a distortion during the First World War and it should be considered vicious only when it is used to disseminate lies or when its

effects could prejudice the common good. He uses a series of quotes to show that he adheres to the idea that in any society propaganda is a legitimate method of making known beliefs of any kind, be they religious, political, or social. Moreover, in his book dedicated to propaganda, he brings a series of examples in which this method was used for the common good in human history.

Humanity has known important achievements thanks to the support of certain beliefs, ideas, and values through propaganda. Thus gender equality was achieved, women's suffrage was adopted due to propaganda campaigns after they organized themselves into groups and movements that had a common, clearly formulated goal. Once the right to vote was obtained, women's involvement in political life was possible, culminating today in organizations/associations of women or female politicians with a great influence or efficacy in the governance process. This achievement is all the more relevant because, especially at the beginning, the suffragettes had to face overwhelming opposition, the majority of the population being against the ideals they were promoting. They managed not only to capture the attention of society, but also to make their ideas accepted. In the educational field propaganda also led to successes, this being the case of American universities and colleges that managed to obtain the financial support they needed. They did this by winning public support through propaganda and obtaining donations, which allowed them to continue their activity. In order to keep in touch with the general public and keep interest in the educational process alive, these institutions have developed news bureaus. Another positive effect was found in the dissemination of the results of scientific research carried out by educational institutions, which could reach the public more easily. According to Bernay, the field that had the greatest need for propaganda and uses it continuously is social service. In this field of activity there are many examples: from campaigns to eradicate some diseases, to research aimed at eliminating inequalities or undesirable practices in society. The churches understood the importance of propaganda, making use of billboards, newspapers, or pamphlets, both for the ecumenical activity or the social work activity they carried out.

A surprising study from 1925 addresses the positive effects that health propaganda can have on the public, especially in the prevention of various conditions that can appear in a territory. Health propaganda is seen as a means of educating the masses on the topic of public health and its branches. But the expected success can only be achieved after public interest has been aroused for health issues, only then is the propaganda better received by the citizens. This means that the public will first have to understand how public health administration takes place in all branches, because without knowing anything about a field it is hard to become interested in it (Beggs et al., 1925, p.56). On the other hand, more recent studies focus on the analysis of propaganda in the field of health and its negative effects on society. Eileen Gambrill (2012) highlights a series of practices contravening any professional ethical code on the helping professions: hiding information about harmful side effects in drugs, overemphasizing the importance or effectiveness of some treatments or practices, hiding the information regarding the production cost of vitamins or medicines.

Nowadays, propaganda can be also used for positive action. Non-governmental organizations and civil associations use propaganda to support certain desired changes in society in order to improve the living conditions of disadvantaged people or to draw attention to some problems that need to be solved, such as environmental protection legislation or respect for animal rights. The lobbying process used by these public institutions includes advocacy activities, where they collaborate with journalists or media trusts to disseminate information that promotes the desired changes. It is within these organisations, that people specialized in different fields such as legislation, communication, or public relations are employed. Their aim is being up to date with

the changes in perception and legislation in their field of activity, but also to bring to the public's attention the causes for which they campaign and how the desired changes will have an impact on society.

Although positive examples seem to be rarer, it cannot be denied that propaganda can have a positive impact on society. The logical conclusion is that propaganda can be used as an instrument to do good or bad to someone or to some institutions/organizations. From this point of view we cannot say that propaganda is a negative or a positive thing, as it can be used for both. What matters are the intentions, actions, or the purposes of those using propaganda, because they can be judged from a moral point of view, taking into account the values in society.

The relationship between propaganda, ideology, and values

From a political point of view, a characteristic of ideology is that it takes ideas and values from political doctrines, and later it is going to make them known or implement them into society for the common good. So, unlike doctrines which are theories about how human society should be governed so that everyone can do well, political ideologies have a practical component, which encourages action by setting up the desired changes in society in order to obtain a better life for the people. The way in which ideologies enter society is largely due to propaganda.

If we consider ideologies at a general level, we can say that we live in an ideological world, because every society has its own ideas, values, concepts about social life, governance, health and so on. Viewed from this standpoint, ideology accompanies us throughout life. One of the supporters of the idea that we cannot avoid ideologies is Karl Mannheim. According to him, the ideas and sentiments that motivate a person do not originate in him alone, but rather also in the group he belongs to (Mannheim, 1954, pp. 2-3). The group can be extended to society. The individual is born in a society where he learns how to speak, and thinks in the manner the group thinks, with the same patterns of thought based on which he tries to find the right answers to face new challenges and situations. Mannheim mentions the important changes in thinking that took place in history, changes that led to the replacement of values in society with new ones, just like in his time ``the dominant modes of thought are supplanted by new categories when the social basis of the group of which these thought-forms are characteristic, disintegrates or is transformed under the impact of social change`` (Mannheim, 1954:73, 74). His conclusion is that all the meanings that make up our world (including categories or values) are not absolute but rather are historically and socially determined. They change when the social situation changes. Regarding the concept of ideology, the author integrates the existing knowledge in a society; the existing relationships between the elements of meaning refer to each other in a given situation *“and they derive their significance from this reciprocal interrelationship in a given frame of thought.”* (Mannheim, 1954, p. 76) Therefore, a certain historical period will be marked by a certain ideology, depending on the level of knowledge reached, the existing social relations, and the specific frame of mind. Knowledge can be extracted from the experience of individuals in actual life situations and the norms that arise from these life situations come to constitute behavior patterns and sanctions for conduct. In different types of historical existence, the systems of meanings and hierarchies of values are also different.

Daniel Șandru offers a complex definition of ideology, inspired by the works of Ricoeur and Rorty and which comes close to Mannheim's meaning:

A system of ideas and beliefs outlined in any society, a system located at the level of the sociopolitical imaginary and which has the role of drawing a normative and actionable framework regarding the style of functionality of that society. (Șandru, 2014, p. 20)

For him ideology shapes a certain social space in the cultural, historical, and political context of an era. The evolution of ideologies is due to attempts to adapt to new social-historical conditions; they take place along with the evolution of societies. In terms of values, the author agrees with Michael Freeden, when he claims that ideologies organize the fields of social values that groups want to promote and that each ideology conveys a certain combination of ideas, so a certain set of values from many others. In this way, ideologies become sorting mechanisms, both regarding the concepts of ideas existing in society, as well as values.

Ideologies have a major role in politics and socially, as Freeden notes. They can sway political decision-makers and public opinion:

In countries enjoying open politics, ideologies seek to justify their bids for support through activities ranging from persuasion to propaganda. Socialist parties through the 20th century have enlisted such support by producing pamphlets for working-class people (...), by publishing their own newspapers, and by providing social services to their members when those services were unavailable or too expensive to purchase on the open market. (Freeden, 2003, p. 34)

Of course, not only the socialist parties made use of propaganda through the methods listed above. These continue to be used for the same purposes, by diverse interested parties that are not necessarily related to politics, with the difference that now mass media and the development of information technologies have led to an increase in the channels and techniques used to disseminate ideologies through propaganda (paid advertisement on radio or television, internet such as news sites, forums, social networks).

Understanding the relationship between ideology and values is paramount, because behind any group, institution, party, government, or corporation that uses propaganda there is a certain ideology, so a certain set of values that are sought to be advocated and included in society.

A theory of values

In the course of propaganda campaigns, in order to attract the public's attention, they appeal to people's fears, desires, values to motivate the changes they want to implement or to call on people to act in a specific way. The authors (Stănciugelu, 2012; Chomsky, 2003, 2006, 2012) who offer advice on resistance to manipulation in propaganda campaigns also analyze which values are most used in this process¹. The result of Romanian research in the fields of sociology and political sciences, P.R.I.N.T. pyramid of social manipulation (P- Poziții/Positions; R- Relații/Relations; I- Identități/Identities; N- Norme/Norms; T- Tehnici de manipulare/Manipulation techniques) was successfully used to determine the model according to which social manipulation or an influencing process takes place. Maslow's pyramid of needs was used as a model: the top of the pyramid consists of the Manipulation techniques used; the second level includes the social contexts – social Positions between the communicator and the public, social Relations (for example the propagandistic message wants to transmit the relation of equality among the members of a group), Identity of the participants, socially accepted Norms, sensations, space, time. The essential elements of the manipulation act are capitalized above. The third level (the base) of the pyramid includes the social values and their negative counterparts.

1. Chomsky analyzes the way how some terms used in propaganda change their meaning, thus masking the values that emerge from the propagandist statements with other meanings, which are not revealed to or easily seen by the masses.

The analysis of the cases of manipulation carried out by the Romanian researchers was conducted by taking into account the structure of the P.R.I.N.T. pyramid. The pyramid analysis grid is composed of 5 sections: the general frames of the message, the text of the message, the manipulated social values, the manipulated social contexts, and the manipulation techniques used. It was observed that the main manipulated values are three key values of society, in fact, one can talk about a triad of values: trust - respect - equality. The manipulator (in our case the term can be replaced with that of propagandist) will have to gain the trust of the crowd first. For this he will use several techniques: he will either try to present himself on an equal footing with the listening public (in this way showing that he is in the same situation, that he is equal and understands its fears or needs), or he will build an image of a savior/capable hero or leader who notices the existence of some problems that need to be solved and then is the one who comes up with the solutions (message based on inequality – the manipulator/propagandist is in a superior position to the public), thus deserving the trust and respect of those who listen to him.

Also, the propagandistic (manipulative) discourse, in order to be more convincing, will reference certain values accepted at the level of society in an attempt to bring about or to justify the desired changes. These values can be used as virtues to hide the contradictions. To suggest equality, terms that refer to the fears, desires, or values common to the group or society will be used.² In more recent speeches there is also the component that refers to the progress of mankind until now (representative examples are pro-vaccination speeches or those seeking to obtain funds for various scientific investigations). This type of speech uses values that have led to the scientific or technological developments of today: the thirst for knowledge, courage, curiosity or inquisitive spirit, critical thinking, the conquests of science, the ability to learn even from negative experiences, adaptation to adverse conditions. Freedom is often used by the manipulator, as he seeks to “create the illusion of freedom” (Stănciugelu, 2012, p. 373), because each person wants to be the master of their own decisions and to make their own choices, unconstrained by anyone else.

Developing a theory of values, Tudor Vianu made a classification of values, grouping them according to their characteristics into economic value, vital value, legal value, political value, theoretical value, aesthetic value, moral value, and religious value. These classes of values can be grouped into pairs also, according to other considerations: goal values - means values, real values - personal values, spiritual values - material values, and adherent values - free values, amplifying values - perseverative values or the triad integrable values - integrative values non-integrable values. Values can have a real, tangible support (in this case they are attributed to things) or a personal one (they are attributed to people), but also material or spiritual support. Real values are not always material and personal values are not always spiritual either. “Finally, value is found in a relation of adherence or freedom to the things or persons, material or spiritual, to whom we attribute it.” (Vianu, 1998:93)

While aesthetic values cannot exist without support (a beautiful painting, a person with a well-proportioned body), theoretical values (or a scientific truth) can be presented in various ways, which is why they can be connected to several supports. For this reason, theoretical values are free from their support. They can be presented through words, images, and experiments and do not depend on a single support. Values are not only connected to their support; they are also

2. For example, in the case of a propaganda speech whose target is a nation or a people, reference will be made to the national or social identity, to the respect for the nation's history and heroes, to the values and qualities that the respective people attribute to themselves: bravery, courage, capacity in situations to recover the crisis, dignity, correctness, love for the country, etc. Appeals to the fears or threats perceived at the level of society can also be used: terrorism, tyranny, social dangers, as well as appeals to general desires: safety, equality, well-being, justice.

connected to each other. When one value can help achieve another, the first one will be a means value, and the value obtained or realized through it will be called a goal value.³ According to the way they are perceived in human consciousness, values can be absolute or relative goals. Absolute goal values are those to which all people aspire; there are no goals higher than these, many of them being categorized as virtues: theoretical values, moral values, aesthetic values; and religious values. Another way of connecting the values refers to whether they can be integrated into comprehensive axiological structures. Thus, we have integrable values (economic values), non-integrable values (aesthetic values); and integrative values (religious values). From the perspective of the role that values can fulfill in relation to the human being, they are classified into perseverative values (they have the role of preserving the individual or the collective - for example political or economic values) and amplifying values (which lead to enrichment, exaltation, the elevation or purification of the being - theoretical, aesthetic; or religious values) (Vianu, 1998, pp. 92-96).

The human universe is a complex universe, which can be judged or interpreted according to the values it cherishes. Between values and people there are multiple kinds of relationships and different forms of representation. In propaganda there are values that can be classified according to this axiological model: moral values - which are personal, spiritual, goal, integrable, adherent, amplifying; religious values - personal, spiritual, purpose, integrative, adherent, amplifying; theoretical values - real, spiritual, goal, integrable, free, amplifying; economic values - real, material, medium, integrable, free, perseverative; aesthetic values - real and personal, spiritual, goal, unintegrable, adherent, amplifier etc. Regarding the triad of values manipulated by propaganda, trust-respect-equality, we notice that these are part of the goal values, they are moral values, which have the effect of an improvement, a means of the growth/development of the human being – they are amplifying, personal, adherent, which makes them superior. All people want to obtain them.

Conclusion

Propaganda uses the values specific to the ideology of some groups, parties, institutions, and individuals. These values are promoted as target values with the intention of bringing about social or political change. In each historical period, propaganda appeals to the values that characterize the respective time period, in order to capture the public's attention and to motivate certain actions. This is possible because the ideology behind the propaganda is the bearer of the values of the time. In order to attract the public's attention, the prevailing values are evoked through propaganda. But, for the propaganda to be successful, the propagandist or the institution dealing with the propaganda campaign must be perceived as possessing the three cardinal virtues mentioned previously: he must receive the respect of the masses, appear trustworthy, and use in his interest the concept of equality or inequality. Therefore, a dual use of values can be observed: to support certain ideas and to instill certain qualities in the propagandist (in the eyes of the public). It does not matter if the virtues with which the propagandist or the institutions that resort to propaganda are real or not, as long as the public comes to believe that these are their assets. The virtues and values with which they try to build a public character that inspires trust and respect will be used without scruples. As Bernays points out "in the ethical sense, propaganda bears the same relation to education as business to politics. It may be abused. It may be used to overadvertise an institution and to create in the public mind artificial values." (Bernays, 1928, pp.133-134)

3. Economic values are only meaning values because we can obtain other values through them, such as political ones - political power, theoretical ones - the accumulation of knowledge, vital ones - maintaining health, etc.

The values promoted or actualized by propaganda are, in the vast majority of cases, absolute, goal values, with an amplifying role for human consciousness. Of course, when propaganda is addressed to disadvantaged groups, economic or political values can be brought into discussion (if an increase in income is desired, the problem of financial or material gains or of the qualified labor force will also be mentioned - economic values). Although there is a great variety of values in the human universe, the specific values chosen by certain propaganda campaigns will depend on several factors: the social positions of those involved (propagandist versus audience, positions of superiority, equality or inferiority), the type of established relationships between parties (positive, neutral, negative), identities (the specific ways of thinking or acting, qualities or defects that they attribute to themselves), norms (refers to both the unwritten norms of behavior and the legislative ones). All these factors sum up the social contexts or situations.

An eloquent example in this regard is the analysis of posters used in war propaganda. The values that the American government used are values that existed at the social level in the collective mind: justice, patriotism, freedom, which had the role of legitimizing the participation of the USA in the world wars. The precarious economic conditions caused by the cost of the war forced the appeal to other goal values, such as civic responsibility. This was emphasized through messages that used other means values: feminine qualities were mentioned such as the maternal instinct, women's ability to be care givers, their greater suitability to alleviate the mental and physical suffering of soldiers, to motivate women to enroll in the nursing services. Personal values were promoted, such as moderation, the spirit of economy of food and resources, in order to prevent waste and carelessness among citizens. Productivity was encouraged; the participatory spirit and diligence in vital sectors of the economy were praised, in order to secure the resources needed for the war. During this time, the slogans that had the role of dehumanizing the enemy presented his so-called defects, as an antithesis to American values. Also, the problems at the economic level that America faced once entering the war were not mentioned at length. Instead, the propaganda masked their existence by appealing to the values and qualities that any good citizen should adhere to or cultivate. This model could be observed in war propaganda in general, being followed by all the active participants in the conflagrations.

During communist regime in Romania, the collectivization process lasted decades. Communist propaganda used the modernization of Romanian agriculture and the introduction of socialist structures in the villages as reasons for the means used or as the final goal for this process. These final goals were elevated to the rank of values by the oppressive regime. The peasantry constituted the majority of the country's population, but it was also the preserver of the traditional way of life, of the old values, continued from generation to generation. The Marxist ideal, that the proletariat (which included the peasantry or the farmers) would end up collectively owning the means of production did not match the old traditions and values. Therefore, it was necessary that the land and the means used by the peasants to work the land (cattle, horses, and machinery) be confiscated and put under the ownership of the state. All those who opposed the collectivization suffered humiliation, being demeaned, imprisoned, or even killed because they defended their property.

The arguments the Communist Party relied on referred mostly to economic values, such as profitability - it was argued that the former type of peasant property was unprofitable and could not adapt to the requirements of the modern economy, and was destined to disappear. Even if this might have seemed possible, due to the economic situation of the country caused by the effects of the Second World War, the economic arguments were accompanied by ideological ones, those of the party, coming from the Marxist doctrine. This ideology, which seeks to remove the

thinking and values of capitalism, considers small property as one of the generators of capitalism, the state being the only one capable of implementing modern agricultural technology at the country-wide level in order to support the socialist urbanization and industrialization process. The social reorganization of the village through collectivization based on expropriation aimed at the exploitation of the peasantry that was to be transformed into a proletariat engaged in the realization of the communist ideal (Tismăneanu et al., 2007, p. 238, 239). Therefore, the acts of cruelty committed by all of the state institutions involved in the collectivization process were hidden under the mask of economic and ideological values. The propaganda of the time avoided addressing the difficulties that prevented the realization of the Marxist ideal. Propaganda focused on a continuous presentation of communist values, the negative effects of collectivization being hidden or presented in a distorted manner, as necessary steps to reach the utopia desired by the regime.

Although the general perception of propaganda is negative, it can be the vector through which positive changes are produced in society. In democratic societies, successful campaigns have encouraged disadvantaged groups to take action in order to gain support for improving living conditions.

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