

Ana Zhorzholiani (Tbilisi)

### **SOME ASPECTS OF THE MANIPULATION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ANCIENT GREECE AND CONTEMPORANEITY**

Manipulation is a necessary element of individual and social life. Manipulation means to mislead the other person, group of persons, the public with a definite purpose. The goal may be personal or political. Manipulator knows what the truth is and proceeding from his (her) own political and selfish interests, distorts the truth consciously.

History shows that manipulation is a necessary element of social and political life. Human activity or political activity requires necessarily the multiplicity of supporters and neutralization of opponents. In Antiquity manipulation or to win over a neutral position man to own side was the main sign of demagogues, sophists. It is widely distributed in the society in which the main means of implementing of power is a word.

Manipulation is a characteristic of political life of distorted form of democracy. One form of image manipulation is an image, or revealing a politician's best side, or in such a way as public sentiment requires. With the difference of manipulation an image is a different form of manipulation. Antiquity rather used to create a positive image of practice, than a political means of manipulation. With the difference of Antiquity, today manipulation is one of the main elements of political process. But today there is no manipulation in a rough form. It combines image, public relations, political advertisements.

Today the manipulation takes the form of the one single time action, but it is a necessary element of the policy and permanent process. The ratings, the election campaigns make this. The manipulation may be where the imperfect democracy and is not a transparency of political process.

As soon as the first society had been created there appeared the desire of working with it. The creative product of the earliest period of the mankind spiritual culture – even the myth, fulfilled the formation function the same way as it does the contemporary theoretical, social, political or scientific myth.

Regis Debrei, in his book *Course de mediologie generale* tries to formulate a definite system of exchange of opinions and means of interrelations. According to his theory, after appearance of a written language in the public relations three spheres of relations have changed each-other: a logosphere, a graph sphere (where the written word dominated) and a video sphere (when the printing practice is changed by audiovisual one). Of course, Debrei considered the development of these spheres in diachronic section, which did not exclude their synchronic coexistence. We can nominate the contemporary epoch as the best sample of active use of all three spheres. The development of technologies and communications has created the so called fourth power – media, which, according to Debrei's theory is the most effective mean of formation of public opinion through the tandem of logo, graph and video spheres and through manipulation with it.

We've put the question, whether it was possible that in the first democratic city-state – Athena there were a synchronic like logo, graph and video spheres?! It is true that the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the antique epoch are too far from each other for giving a possibility to make direct parallels, but there are the principle and systematic relations, resemblance of which should give a rather interesting picture in the context of a dialogue of cultures between the epochs.

It might be said that in the Greek world there has not been left any of the non-mastered resource, which gave possibility of manipulation with public relations and public opinion.

In nearly all polices of Antique Greece, despite the fact was it democratic as Athena or oligarchic as Sparta, by all means there existed two most important spaces of public relations – agora and theatre which gave the most effective results in the issue of formation of public opinion.

Agora, as a political, and the theatre, as the spaces of cultural relations, in Athena were in service of common state purposes (or the authorities). You should know that theatrical festival was not able to be the host none of the plays and the dramatist who would not be “given a green light” (permitted by) from Archonta. And on Agora where numerous people were crowded, at the People's meeting the state, public or private issues

have been discussed, such a censorship could not be worked. Instead of it here worked well the Institute of sycophants or professional informers.

It is clear that the verbal side occupied a leading position in Antique Greece, but nearby there existed a great experience as well. Using the term of Debrei the tradition of execution the monumental epigraphic inscriptions have appeared rather interesting among the graph-sphere, which achieves the highest stage of development in the classical epoch. The epigraphic inscriptions which help us in restoration of historical reality in its time, of course, have been prepared with the quite other aim. The content and, correspondingly, the destination, as well, of epigraphic inscriptions are of various types. A special interest provokes the epigraphic inscription of different contents created in the name of the state. Already by the 7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> cc. BC in many polices of Greece it has become habitual a tendency to bring to the society a Constitution, Decrees and various texts of state significance. These inscriptions which have been executed on the stone stelas have been allocated on the most noticeable places of public gathering, by which they appear as the archaisms of the contemporary billboards. The rather interesting systematic relativities should be indicated between the billboards and the epigraphic inscription.

As you know, the word "billboard" means an advertizing, poster board which is located in the central, crowded street or road of the city. The image of modern great cities is unbelievable without the advertizing information containing the different dazzing information. Its purpose is to create an instant and indelible impression, accordingly, to have an influence on the conception and action of a man. It is the truth that the billboard are mainly of commercial destination, because of which it has not been thought of among the media types but in some cases it plays much more important role in spreading of information of noncommercial purposes and in the issue of influence of one and the same message simultaneously through transferring to a wide group of various individuals. Consequently, an attempt of effecting the informational influence might be considered as one of the most important common signs among the modern billboard and epigraphic inscriptions.

It should be indicated that there are available the definite marketing accounts concerning to what kind and forms of inscriptions must be performed on the billboards for providing the best results. As a rule, the advertising billboards are adorned with a slogan constituted of several words which are distinguished by bold print and bright/sharp colors.

It should be noted that the definite rules of fulfilling the inscription existed in the Antique Greece. E. g., The resolutions of the People's

Meeting have been written in strictly established form. It is possible that the resolution, as a juridical document is not the best example, but we can't avoid the formula with which the text, as a rule, had been initiated: "It has been resolved by the Meeting and the People." The indicated formula was followed by the information about the membership of the Committee of Five hundreds' Board, secretary of the meeting, chairman of the People's Meeting and the personality of Archont-Eponimos, and only after this it was written the text of the resolution itself.

Besides the resolutions the epigraphs contained the information on various great constructions, names of officials, names of the winners of the championships and those perished in the fights, Decrees of religious societies, etc. All these served to propagate the state interests, underline its powerfulness, both from the political and economical points of view.

The contemporary advertising signboards of noncommercial content are decorated by the slogans and photos of the persons or association participating in this or that elections, the religious appeals, images of famous sportsmen and artists which aim at popularization of various public activities. The memorial plaques and monuments of soldiers perished in battles have been erected which are not only the indicators of respect to the heroically perished, but aims as well at the propagation of national policy.

Number of inscriptions in Athena has been sharply increased after 460 years when finally had been formed a Democratic Slave-owning state.

According to the existing rule in Athena the State Treasury stipulated the special expenses for inscriptions. The cost for inscription depended not only on the number of lines and letter-marks, on the quality of an inscription, size of symbols, but on those materials as well on which the inscription should be executed. In Athena, fulfilling the 100 line inscription on the marble tile, where in each line there would be several decades of marks in the IV c. cost 60 Drachma.

It is worth-mentioning that in accord to the form and material, both the billboard and the epigraphic monuments have been distinguished by diversity. If in Antiquity they used the stone, cliff, wall of the building, memorial plaque, pillars and stelas for execution of monumental inscription, the contemporary billboards are prepared of metal constructions on which the digital, painted and other advertising banners. As well there are widely used the walls of the buildings. In spite of multi-century distance between the epochs, it is still arranged to search out even one resembling sample. For example, in the city of Miletus for the inscriptions on the agora there were available the special wooden plaques

– kirbs of prism form, on which the laws or decrees have been written in paints. The indicated kirbs, were rotating, for more clearness, around own axis. I think that you've not a single time the advertising billboard of like construction.

For epigraphic texts of special importance a rocky cover was widely used. As an example we can state the inscription of Gortin available on the isle Creta which otherwise is called the first constitution of Europe. The resolutions of the People's Meeting on establishment of a democratic system in the cities of Erifra, Colophon, Millet. It is especially interesting a resolution received about the city of Erifra which determines a new system of city management.

This tradition of stamping on the rock was widely spread not only in Antique Greece but in the Near East as well. E. g. in Iran, on the way from Baghdadi to Teheran, between the cities of Kermanshah and Hamadan there was the cliff of Behistoon on which is curved an inscription fulfilled by the order of Darios I. The inscription has been located on the height of 152 meters from the surface of the ground, on the territory of Old Midii and it was well seen from the way which once had communicated once upon a time Babylon and Ekbatan. Sizes of the inscription constitute 7 meters in height and 22 meters in width. Here has been depicted as well a bas-relief on which in front of the king Darrius there are standing 9 kings whose hands a necks are chained And on the tenth king stands Darios by foot. This inscription which has been performed in Persian, Babylonian and Newelamic languages is some kind of manifest of the King of Persia, Darios the First. Imprinting on high rock of an inscription and bas-relief for it were visible for everybody, demonstrates us clearly the purpose – to consolidate over the society the influence, confidence, fear and respect.

All the above mentioned can be summarized in the following way: the question which concerns the synchronization of the logo, the grapho and the video spheres, obviously coexisted in the ancient world (in different forms, but not within a single institution).

The similarities of the so-called Out-door Media and epigraphic inscriptions, which are shown by the visualizations and the usage of technical means for achieving the above mentioned effects, once again reminds us that everything new is well forgotten old and proves that notwithstanding the distance between Antiquity and other epochs, it's influence and connection can be found in any sphere of human activities.