Informational influence and ethnic myths as factors of enemy image's formation

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Abstract— *The number of ethnic conflicts increased several times during last decades (Ukraine, Karabakh, Syria). The article presents a research of one of the main factors of ethnical aggression - informational influence, which always has an aim of changing the behavior of a person. The ethnical conflicts are structured on the bases of informational influence, symbols and social myths, images of the hero and enemy which can determine the intensification of aggressive behavior of different social groups. First phase of our research was the content analysis of information, provided by mass media in Armenia in concrete time – 30.11.2015 till 30.12.2015.In this article we will focus only on one common topic awareness and the discussion of ideas that emerged as a result of it. According to our investigation, the first place, as a repetitive topic, belongs to "Armenian Genocide". During our study almost every day there was a reference to media agenda (events, conferences, exhibitions, book presentations, churches speeches) dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the genocide. In one day the word "genocide" was repeated 13 times. On the second phase the method of free associations gave the chance to output the following characteristics of Enemy (the Turk and Azerbaijani, the traitor, the deceiver, the villain, the governor tyrant) in representations of respondents. So, the sources of formation of prototypes of the national hero and enemy are the history of people, ethnic myths and activity of mass media, etc.*

Keywords— *informational influence, ethnical myth, national hero, enemy, mass media.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The number of ethnic conflicts increased several times during last decades. However, the interesting fact is that nowadays ethnical hatred is forming between ethnically close social groups (e.g. Russians and Ukrainians), which in objective reality don't have any reason for conflict, but those are forming in symbolic communication sphere and become hot conflicts. One of the main factors of ethnical aggression is an informational influence, which has an aim of changing the behavior of a separate person, as well as the whole social and ethnic groups. Based on this, the translators of information and informational myths can achieve any desired goal, such as psychological identification of nation with concrete ideas and symbols, the change of political course of the country, national revolutions. Both national revolutions and ethnical conflicts are structured on the bases of informational influence, stereotypes and symbols, political and social myths, which can determine the intensification of aggressive behavior of different social groups.

With the help of informational communications the objective reality is changing, which, in turn, leads to formation of aggressive behavior of whole social groups on different social levels (intergroup violence, world wars and colored revolutions).

The socio-psychological dichotomy "We-They" is the base for propaganda of ethnical myths. Usually the opposition cannot be only on symbolic level and is being materialized in issue of land's belonging, which is forming conflicts on different levels. This way the whole social groups become the object of manipulation of psychological, informational operation, which, in its turn, intensify verbal and non-verbal aggressive behavior and hurts psycho-emotional wellness of a person and society. Psychologists, political scientists, sociologists and representatives of different social sciences discuss human's behavior programming throughout different times. - (Taylor P. M. 1995, Thomas T. L. 2000, Pruitt D. G., Carnevale P. G. 1993) According to S. Moscovici, millions of people, who simply read their newspapers, who consensually listen to radio, are framing absolutely new type of crowd: non-materialized, spread and domestic. Moreover, this is a public, even publics: readers, listeners and watchers. Due to all differences, they are alike [6]. According to Tard, these people are representing the pure novelty of our era. "The psychology of crowd is created, he writes, the public psychology is to be created [12].

With the help of media the perception and interpretation of important events is being made. By its nature, the media it totalitarian, as are trying take under the control the will of people, their cognitions and emotions, this way limiting the freedom of person, manipulating him. If this happens, the changes are taking place, which is called informational influence. Summarizing, the aim of informational influence is a change of behavior of object by transforming already existing cognitive "Map of the world" in his consciousness. It is needed to be mentioned, that by appealing sensual, irrational, emotional-

wiliness elements of social consciousness, such as love towards motherland, national-patriotic moods etc., media can mobilize the support of remarkable layers of nation to different actions of ruling circles or separate interested groups, can stimulate the formation of aggressive behavior, and sometimes even social violence. As a rule, the changes in mass consciousness are having short-term nature and after the end of propaganda campaign on current matter, everything comes back to normal. But this is only from the first sight, as in case the levels of aggression, stress and anxiety of the whole social group are increased with the help of external, informational factors, the high level of aggression, anxiety and violent behavior will be noted on different social levels, such as family, work etc.

Very often, the national politics becomes rational form of crowd's irrational nature usage. "The crowd is not capable of abstract propositions, the crowd must be suggested, not be proven. Its verity is the myth. That's why the control of crowd is based on knowing the archetypes." [3, p. 141].

Mass media informational influence becomes more in-depth by the formation of political, social and ethnic myths. In ordinary representation the myths is a fairy tale, fiction, that's why a person, who considers himself rational being, does not want to recognize the idea that his actions and thoughts might be determined by myths. A. Tsuladze thinks that our ideas about the surrounding world have mythical nature and adds that mythology is the only possible reality [8]. According to E. Kassirer, the human needs mediator, which will help him to percept the reality it this or other way, to develop an attitude towards it. Moreover, this mediator is the myth [2]. According to M. Eliade, The mythical thinking can easily leave its previous forms and adapt to new cultural forms, but it will never disappear completely. [10]. A. Losev is adding that all things of our everyday experience are mythical and the only difference from actual myth is that it is less bright and less interesting [5]. The most important aspect of Levi-Strosse theory is the detection of mythical thinking mechanisms, which, according to him, is logical in its unique way and can even be "scientific" [4]. Malinowski rated myth from its pragmatic aspect as a tool of critical problem is solving which is related to individual's well-being in the society. J. Sorel thinks that myth is the symbolic translation of rationality to the language of crowd, which activates their total mobilization. Social structure is a result of myths images and crowd's will (mobilization). The main dignity of the myth is its communicativeness From one hand it is a language construction, on the other hand is a unique language: about this talks also V. I. Propp who mentioned that genetically myth must be concerned not with the literature but the language, which also does not have an author. Shomova S.A is describing ways of work with myth, which is using structures from the collective unconscious, which are used to be called as social thinking archetypes. It is about using already established images of mythological thinking in nowadays political reality and about activation these images in different forms of communications. According to author, the society's life's development can be determined with the "ready" mythical structures in conscious [9].

Myth and the archetypes – is exactly the type of information, which exists in depth level in everyone, But at the same time myth is a phenomenon of collective psyche. Being connected with the myth, the individual psyche becomes a part of social psyche. Myth seems to bring all people under a common denominator. And that's why myth is a powerful tool of human manipulation. Archetypes in their clear form are existing in myths, fairy tales, legends and folklore. Jung brings several well-known motives: the imagery of Hero, Savior, and Dragon (which is sally linked to Hero image, which needs to win the Dragon. According to Jung, archetypes cannot be realized, they appear in forms of images, which can be understood only if compare to the historical parallels. Archetype is a model, which determines the structure of human thinking, the most common and universal type. When collective unconscious contents are activated, we start to discover something definite in surrounding people [11].

As it was already mentioned, informational myths are used to program human behavior. Our analyses of nowadays informational filed in Armenia, Russia and Ukraine shows that the political ideology in these and other countries, which form ethic myths, contains eschatological (myth about end of the world) image of reality, the note of people's confusion and image of enemy-seducer, the announcement of confusion's reasons and enemy's secret intentions. As an example, in Ukraine, during the formation of national myth, the reality is modified beyond the recognition and based on the image of enemy-Russia, which attempts to the central element of the identity: the territorial integrity. In young country Azerbaijan, the whole state and national ideology is based on the opposition with Ancient Armenia.

Ethnical myths have following phases of development; in each, we can notice the elements of aggression:

- The picture of the world (the point of time, related to sources of national history and culture)

- The moment of nations' highest glorification or heavy trauma (featured glory or ethno trauma)

- The picture of the future (perception of the return to the Golden Age sources) and in-depth opposition "we-they" (the aim of ethical myth is the opposition to another ethnicity, which already contains the elements of aggressions).

It is important to understand, that the construction of myth always filled with real historical events. Consider these steps on the example of Armenians. Two main versions of Armenian ethno genesis are existing: one is migration-mixed hypothesis, which is dominating in world historical science. In Armenia, the most popular is the autochthonous version of Armenian ethno genesis, based on Hayasa hypotheses, according to which ethnic Armenians inhibited Armenian highlands from much more earlier times. Armenian ethnicity is considered to be one of the ancient in the world, which in the base of social-psychological picture of Armenians and the image of Armenia.

The mythological version of ethno genesis also existing- myth about forefather Hayk, which after unsuccessful building of Babylonian tower, moved to north, where he won the Bell who was pursuing him, and on that place he founded Hayk ("Hay" means Armenian and "k" is a plural). As mentioned, Armenian ethno genesis in mythology starts from the winning on external enemy. The wining above enemy as a mythologeme in Armenian ethnic myth is still actual nowadays, related to Karabaкh`s conflict.

The moment of national glory or heavy trauma can also be easily described in Armenian myths. Arminian world understanding represents as the highest point of national glory the times of Armenian King Tigran the Great (95–55 y. BC). By that time Armenia located between Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. We can assume that point of glory is connected again with territorial integrity. The element of ethno trauma in Armenian "picture of the world" is the image of Armenian Genocide in 1915. According to S.V. Lurie, for nation's survival, the ability of reality analysis is not as important, as the ability to rationalize it. In addition, Armenians are not unique in this. And social myth has the rationalization function. The ethno trauma from 1915 events is experienced more than 100 years and is presented in mass conscious and collective unconscious, also straighten the image of enemy(after Turks, those are Azerbaijani, which also called Turks by Armenian people) [1].

Third phase has the mythologeme of Golden Age- the recognition of Genocide, returning of historical lands (land as key element of ethnical identity), strengthen of security and independency of Armenia.

Goal - Research and identification of psychological features of information influence and ethnical myths' influence on formation of enemy's image formation in Armenia.

II.   RESEARCH METHODS

In our investigation we used two psychological methods- the method of content-analysis and the method of free associations.

1. Content analysis is widely used method for mass media content research and considers analysis of different categories (units) in the text and/or visual series ad their quantity interpretation. The content analysis of informational flow is the source for secondary information and is used to identify the tone of concrete informational source towards the situation, campaign and help to reconstruct possible informational-mythological strategy of the country. Informational flow quality analysis has an aim of reconstruction of informational myths based on current information. In this article we will focus only on one common topic awareness and the discussion of ideas that emerged as a result of it.

2. The method of associations with stimulus-word is based on method of free associations that was suggested by psychoanalytic theory. The stimulus question was formulated: "What do the words "Hero" and "Enemy" personally mean for you"? Participants had an opportunity to give any answers. Answers have been registered and the participants could not be able to repeat each other's response as content analysis method requires research with each participant individually. Data processing was made with the method of content-analysis. The Scale indicators not asked initially, and to be formed after the detection of the internal structures of meaning.

III.   THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The research procedure included 2 phases. The first phase of our research was the content analysis of information, provided by mass media in concrete time – 30.11.2015 till 30.12.2015. The second phase, as it was already mentioned, was content analysis of texts and words that were collected from survey with the help of free associations with stimulus-word. Data processing was made with the method of content-analysis. The Scale indicators not asked initially, and to be formed after the detection of the internal structures of meaning.

Sample- We has investigated 500 persons of both genders and different age groups. The persons participated in the investigation on a voluntary basis. After getting acquainted with the purpose and objectives of the study, they have agreed in writing. Answers were anonymous and confidentiality.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to our investigation (the first phase of our research was the content analysis of information, provided by mass media in concrete time – 30.11.2015 till 30.12.2015), the first place, as a repetitive topic in daily informational programs, belongs to "Armenian Genocide"- 100 % (it was mentioned in every informational program during our investigation) and conflict in Karabach – 100% (it was mentioned in every informational program during our investigation). During our study every day there was a reference to media agenda (events, conferences, exhibitions, book presentations, churches speeches) dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the genocide. During every media broadcast there was 3 genocide mentions out of 18. In one day the word "genocide" was repeated 13 times. The second place belongs to international news as the conflict in Syria – 74% and only the 4-th place belongs to Armenian economic development and IT technologies – 67 %. In such a condition it becomes obvious the results of the second part of the investigation, according to which the most popular answers within Armenians on word "enemy" was "Muslim"(Conflict in Syria), "Turkish" (Armenian genocide) and "Azerbaijani" (Conflict in Karabach).

In the data received by us from method of free associations "Muslim" often acts as association of "enemy". This fact is interesting from the point of view of formation of the main information influence of ethnic ideology.

The analysis gave the chance to output the following characteristics of the Hero in representations of respondents. The following characteristics received the highest quantity of mentions among respondents:

1.   Courageous, fearless - 424 mentions

2.   The defender (soldier) – 378 mentions

3.   The fighter for justice – 207 mentions

4.   The savior – 204 mentions

5.   The person with big will – 154 mentions

6.   The wise man – 62 mentions

As we can see most of them describe a person who is able to protect the society from aggressive enemies. The image of the Enemy which was also brought out of associations of respondents included the following characteristics:

1.   The traitor– 415 mentions

2.   The Muslim, Turk, Azerbaijani – 408 mentions

3.   The deceiver – 303 mentions

4.   The villain – 254 mentions

5.   The governor tyrant – 78 mentions

In our opinion, this image bears in itself stereotypic representations that is characteristic for an archetype, and is supported with information influence. Treachery, deception and evil in the Bible are considered as sins. As for two last associations, they, in our opinion, have ethno psychological and informational specifics.

So, the informational influence and the national myths may affect formation of enemy and determine the aggression in national groups. The sources of formation of prototypes of the national hero and enemy are the history of people, ethnic myths and activity of mass media, etc. As a result of it, standards of an assessment can be universal, local, culturally caused.

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