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## Mass manipulation

Albert Speer, minister for armaments in Adolph Hitler's government, said these words when he publicly apologized during the Nuremberg trial:

***Hitler's dictatorship differed in one fundamental point from all predecessors in history: it was the first dictatorship in the present period of modern technical development, a dictatorship that made complete use of all technical means for the domination of its own country. Through technical devices like the radio and the loud-speaker, eighty million people were deprived of independent thought.***

Since the days of Hitler, the technological tools that a dictator can use to manipulate the masses have come a long way. In addition to radio and loud-speakers, cinema and the press, available to Hitler, we now have television, sound and image recording, mobile phones that provide countless information, computers capable of processing it, and social networks, which are becoming one of the most powerful instruments of social manipulation in existence.

As I said in [another post on this blog](#), these tools are neither good nor bad: what is good or bad is their use. All can be used well, and all can be misused. Do we have controls to prevent their being misused? Or do we know that they are actually being misused?

Let us quote Hitler himself:

***To be a leader means to be able to move the masses.***

***The driving force which has brought about the most tremendous revolutions on this earth has never been a body of scientific teaching which has gained power over the masses, but always a devotion which has inspired them, and often a kind of hysteria which has urged them into action. Whoever wishes to win over the masses must know the key that will open the door of their hearts.***

***All effective propaganda must be confined to a few bare necessities and then must be expressed in a few stereotyped formulas, [whose] constant repetition will finally succeed in imprinting an idea upon the memory of a crowd.***

Hermann Rauschning, author of ***Conversations with Hitler***, wrote this about Nazi methods to manipulate masses, in particular making the population march from one town to another:

***This keeping of the whole population on the march seemed to be a senseless waste of time and energy. Only much later was there revealed in it a subtle intention based on a well-judged adjustment of ends and means. Marching diverts men's thoughts. Marching kills thoughts... Marching is the indispensable magic stroke in order to accustom the people to a mechanical, quasi-ritualistic activity until it becomes second nature.***



Aldous Huxley

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Plato in *The School of Athens* by Rafael

In principle –not always– intellectuals are more difficult to manipulate than the masses, because they tend to think. That is why dictators consider them as enemies. Thus the tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse received Plato at first as a sage, but ended up selling him as a slave (his friends had to raise money to free him). Let us look at something that Hitler wrote about intellectuals:

***Intellectuals run this way and that, like hens in a poultry yard. With them one cannot make history; They cannot be used as elements composing a community.***

What do tyrants usually do with real intellectuals? Before reaching power, ***they are attacked and silenced with shouts***. After power is reached, they are eliminated. As

Hitler put it, ***[The masses are always convinced that] right is on the side of the active aggressor.***

Sociologists are aware that masses are easily manipulated. Humans assembled in small numbers are less prone to it. Let us see what Aldous Huxley, who was not religious, says about this:

***In all the world's higher religions, salvation and enlightenment are for individuals. The kingdom of heaven is within the mind of a person, not within the collective mindlessness of a crowd. Christ promised to be present where two or three are gathered together. He did not say anything about being present where thousands are intoxicating one another with herd-poison.***

We are witnessing the attempt of the dominant ideology, the ***single thought***, to take complete control of society and convert us all into mass, into herd. The methods they are using are the usual, but now they have many more ways to reach us. Are we going to let them?

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