

DOMINATION THROUGH INFORMATION AND THE FUNCTION OF THE CONSTITUTION

FRIEDRICH LACHMAYER
Austria

Information is just one section of human communication. There is no reason for narrowing the notion of communication, because information determines the relations between human beings. Further kinds of communication are, e.g., genetic, kinetic, economic and charismatic communications.

Genetic communications serve the genetransfer. As kinetic communication, one can subsume, e.g., kinetic agressions such as acts of violence. Economic communications consist of the flow of money and goods. Charismatic communications are those which place the magic and religious aspect in the foreground as it happens with the transfer of charisma. But there is also a secularized social magic which can show a charismatic positive or negative aspect.

All these communications have in common that they can be seen as determining the relations between human beings:

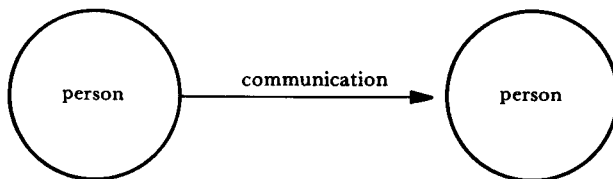


Fig. 1

Information can be divided into an indicative (descriptive) and a normative (prescriptive) one.

Domination is not possible without descriptive as well as prescriptive information.

It is evident that normative informations are connected with domination, as they are somehow a kind of output of the domination. Concerning this, it is paramount that the question be dealt with whether indicative informations do not also have a special function for creating domination.

Information originates in the process of the semiosis and has a pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic dimension. The illustration above stresses the pragmatic dimension of communications. From the pragmatic flow of information you have to distinguish the semantic relation between the information and the object. This semantic relation is called "reference". The reference does not change the object, it only puts the information in relation to the object described by the information.

A very special form of semantic relation is that of projections. If there is a projection, the object is overlapped by a further additional object. This overlap does not happen in reality, but only in the conscience of the persons involved in this process of communication. There is no doubt that the person submitted to projections can behave as if the projections were real.

Projections can also be related to persons. In this case, the person to which the projection relates is given a 'coat' or 'aura'.

Informations which encompass projections are in this function of information as real as other informations. But there is a difference concerning the object of the information. Projections produce their object while common informations refer to an already existing object.

Just because these projections are not visible on the one hand, but are supposed to give an orientation for human behaviour on the other hand, it is necessary to buttress them with signs. These symbols indicate the outline and the characteristics of the projections. Above all this becomes clear with collective projections, especially with collectively binding projections. One can prove this with the existence of uniforms.

Collective projections do not limit themselves by granting a certain status to the member of a group, but lead to the creation of a focal point of the organisation.

Such a group internal focus is the role of a tribe's chief or of a king. Especially for leaders, the enrichment of symbols becomes clear. This symbolic factor will be relevant not only for a person but also for architecture and the territory.

A special effect of collective projections is the unity of a group. It

is a quasi-ribbon which encircles the group. At the external focus of collective projections, one has, above all, to mention metaphysic instances.

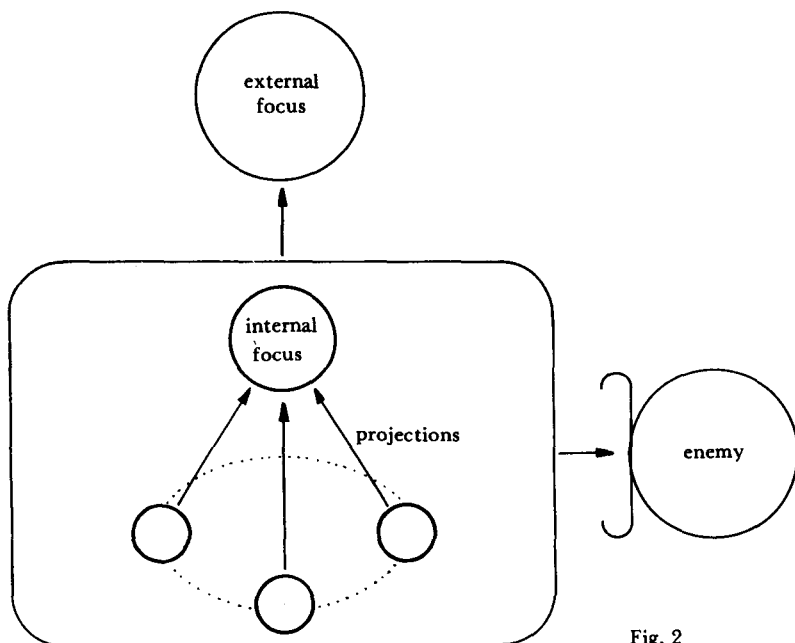


Fig. 2

In the field of ideology, the focus of the "enemy" has quite an important significance. In this case one deals with highly mass effective and aggression creating collective projections. The projections of the "external enemy" precedes the war, that of the "internal enemy" precedes the revolution or other actions within the group comparable to the revolution from the point of view of aggression.

Therefore the disposition over effective and collective projections is an important basis for domination.

The social position of these collective projections depends on the resonance of the addressees. If projections are accepted and the addressees behave according to the projections and respect the limits and the marking social releasers, then the consumption of information, including projections, is as important for domination as the effective consumption of normative information.

Actually, most of the time people will be forced to consume both kinds of information: a mechanism of control and sanctions as well as norms, which will guarantee the respect of projections. Domination is a function of resonance and so a support for projections and norms.

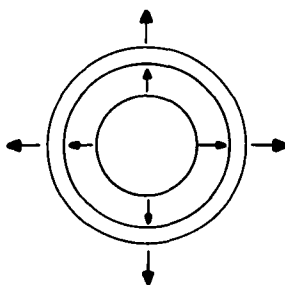
The capacity to respect projections and norms represents an advantage of selection for the group. Therefore, the function of education is also to make it thoroughly familiar not only with norms but also with collective projections and to sensitize the members of the collective with projections and their marking signs. Projections are relatively secret since their structure is not easily comprehensible for external people.

Personal identifications have got a completely different structure. Thereby it is not meant the identification of a person with a certain role but the identification of a person with another person. Personal identification is an archaic function of consciousness deriving from shamanism.

It behooves the shaman to slip into the skin of the captured animal. His fear is to become unmasked. On the other hand, the social releaser, originating in the masking, strengthens the retarding mechanism.

Personal identification can be active, if one person imagines himself to be another person, or passive, if one person considers himself to be fulfilled by another one. Personal identification is to be strictly distinguished from the actions of genetransfer, but can actually use those symbols.

The internal person operates through the external person:



personal identification

Fig. 3

Personal identifications play an important part for the constitution of collective consciousness. One faces the enemy, the captured material, but one identifies with the friend. The 'we-feeling' emerges.

Personal identifications therefore are most relevant for domination. The acceptance of the according 'identification patterns' is essential for domination. The creation of an "internal hollow space", which has to be filled by a different person, plays an important part in mysticism. Obsession on the other hand is a negative variant thereof. Questions of personal identification are in principle strongly tabooed, sometimes even more than sexual problems. Anyhow, the psychological-mechanisms of personal identification are highly effective and, therefore, they are of essential importance for individual as well as for collective consciousness.

Projections as well as identifications are being created by informations: consciousness is being produced.

A person can be seen from the angle of the input as well as from the output. First, for the person there is the phase of information input. Another phase of information processing is the accumulation of the evident. Finally, one can assume the output-phase. The output of the person needs to consist not only of the transformation of information; all kinds of communication are thinkable.

Normative informations are related to output: they prescribe a behaviour, an act. Normative domination is domination by means of output.

This is different than cognitive domination, with domination by means of indicative informations. In this case, one has to transmit to the addressee an interpretation which filters accordingly the input of information. The sensibility of the processing of the input is the basis for the evidence and for the output. Cognitive domination therefore, is the basis of normative domination.

In the archaic tribe the two aspects of the production of information belong to different organizing positions. On the one hand, it is the shaman, on the other hand, the chief. The shaman produces, inter alia, projection and identification patterns; the chief produces norms. Beyond that the chief is the motoric one who applies power to accomplish the respect of the norms.

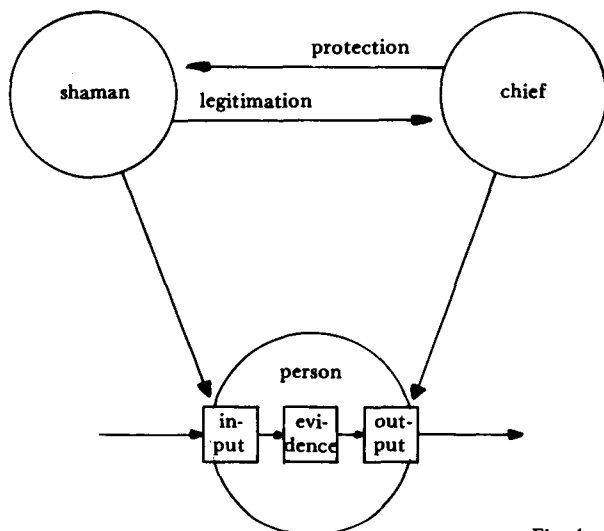


Fig. 4

Churches and, in the following the ideology, producing parties are the product of the organisation of the shamanistic focus. Contrary to that, the focus of the chief is expanded to the organisation of the state. The legal system, especially the constitution, belongs to the field of normative domination.

The field of normative information is of tremendous importance for the normative domination because there the decision on the marking of the targets is taken. The above described hostile image is the condition for the motoric aggression. The interpretative attack, the negative projection, precedes the motoric attack.

It rarely happens that individuals live entirely without a hostile image. The christian dogma claims it, but in practice it is rarely realized. It seems that a psychological balance needs hostile images. The harder it is to take the hostile image entirely out of the collective consciousness, the much easier it is to leave the hostile image as it is to mount them to other persons. If the hostile image is mounted to the emitting person or the emitting group, it can lead to individual or collective suicide. Problems also emerge when a person changes the objectives of the hostile images, but the other opposing persons would still keep to their former projections. The same happens with the change of identification patterns. This can lead to contradictory expect-

tations. Above all one has to distinguish between the real, objective danger, and the subjective consciousness of this danger, which expresses itself in the hostile image. Because of the fact that an objective danger is not seen to be dangerous the objective danger is not eliminated. On the other hand, undangerous situations will not become dangerous through negative projections. It is clear that collective projections do not stay without real effects, especially when peoples' actions are determined by them.

Cognitive domination is also connected with the normative and kinetic domination through the fact that, on the one side, it legitimates the normative and kinetic one, while on the other side it is protected by the normative and kinetic one. This protection can be normative as well as kinetic.

In this tension between the cognitive and the normative domination one has to elaborate on the function of the constitution.

One has to depart from the fact that modern society is divided into several subsystems, one of which is the normative one. The constitution is part of this normative area, delimiting, however, all subsystems of the society.

According to the initially, mentioned kinds of communication, one can divide the subsystems of society into genetic, kinetic, economic, informatic, and charismatic ones, the informatic one consisting of an indicative and normative one.

The constitution can take towards ideology, thus towards the area of cognitive domination, in different ways: the constitution can declare ideologies to be compulsory (officially recognized ideology), it can regard the ideology as being indifferent (ideological tolerance), or it can prohibit it. In the last case, the ideologies become part of the subversive area of society.

In some states one can detect some hesitancy of the constitution to regulate the ideological area. One has to ask oneself whether this is not an old remain of the archaic chief's hesitancy towards the shamans.

It is otherwise when the cognitive domination has ruled out the normative domination and ideology acquires the most important role. Then the law, thus also the constitution, contains a prohibition for competing ideologies. The ideologically filtered law takes part—and this without fear—in the ideological competition. The ideological market-shares and thus the ideological monopoly are in this way being legally determined.

Apart from cases of entire infiltration of the law by the ideology which in the case of developing countries can be the consequence of

a transfer of ideology, every constitution is derived from a traditional ideological root. The constitution is not to be seen isolated but as being a part of the whole system of society.

One of the duties of the constitution is to find a balance between freedom and protection, above all, protection against dangerous projections and identification patterns. This also expresses itself in the relevant rules of international law and of the constitutions, for instance, Art. 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights.