

Joseph Goebbels and nazi propaganda



"Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer"

"Führer command, we will follow!"

"The Jews are our Misfortune."

"catch-the-thief"

"Germany, the Saviour"

"We are true fighters of God"

Joseph Goebbels

- 29 October 1897, Germany
- 1 May 1945 committed suicide
- Ph.D in Heidelberg University in 1921
- Doctoral thesis on 18th century drama
- after work as journalist, bank clerk and caller on the stock exchange



Joseph Goebbels

- ▣ Became a nazi party member 1924
- ▣ 5 may 1927 party's weekly newspaper, Der Angriff
- ▣ Married Magda Quandt 1931 and had 6 children
- ▣ Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, from 1933 to 1945



Nazi Propaganda

- Focus on the Jews
 - reason for bad economics
- Imminent victory
- Need for security
- Treaty of Versailles



Nazi Propaganda

- Public opinion could be manufactured and streamlined.
- radio news and commentaries were very important in use of propaganda.
 - second was entertainment
 - third education
 - Bring culture to the masses (example cheap radios)
- Propaganda as daily routine



Ways of propaganda

- mass meetings
- Books
- press, journalist under pressure
- Cheap radios, broadcasting propaganda



Ways of propaganda at movie theatre

- films and short films (1935, 140 short propaganda films by ministry)
 - mobile cinema vans (1935, 1500 vans)
- Film studios made light romances and comedies which gathered mass audience, but first were shown propaganda newsreels and Nazi epics



Goebbels' propaganda style

- Seldom told complete lies
 - skills in twisting ideas and conceal facts
 - double talk
 - a master in subtle lies, re-interpretations and innuendoes
- Later in speech: simplicity-repetition
 - reduce problems (vs. downplay)
- Use of history (Anschluss, 1848 image of "Greater Germany")
- Play with questions and answers (especially after Stalingrad)



Five aspects of Goebbels propaganda s.412

1. Tendency to unmask (the opponent)
2. To belittle and to ridicule
3. Method of distortion
4. The fine art of keeping silent
5. Reply to some of the more insular arguments

From Brandsted, E. Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda 1925-1945



Use of propaganda in extreme crisis

(genuine or manufactured)

- Playing emotions of the masses
 - romanticism
 - national integration
 - on the majesty of "the historic hour"
 - aggressiveness
 - intolerance
 - the urge to crush the weaker
 - "inferior" nation or race



1936-1939

- "German is not only an Island of peace—she is an armed Island of peace", Germany enjoys hers peace "because she is in a position to defend her freedom"
- Example:
 - March 1936 Militarising Rhineland, bold move from Hitler--> blame for France and Soviet Union



Propaganda at War

- The use of the lightning German victories (Poland and in Scandinavia)
- totalitarian control
- protect the world from the enemy, blame for the enemy. We were forced to....
 - Preventive actions



Goebbels' speech during Russian winter 1942

- appeal for gratitude (s. 249)
- The abnormal winter
- Justification of the blameless High Command
- A task for the people
 - Need for things
 - Very effective speech

- Heroism of the German soldiers, used romantic and semi-poetical language.



Second period of War

- ◆ Check people's moods from reports etc. and uplift those which Goebbels wanted
- ◆ Taking people into his confidence, impression that he was serving public and telling "news" (s.273)
- ◆ When to admit mistakes? analysis and judgement



Goebbels

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73p0qvKR-1944>



End of war Propaganda

- Revenge
- appeal to fear, prefer to die
- Miracle weapons, new submarine, jet and V2
- "as often before, God will throw Lucifer back in to abyss.."



Litterature

Bramsted, E. Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda 1925–1945, 1965. Michigan State University Press.

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Zeman, Z. Nazi propaganda, 1965. Oxford University Press: London.

