The Role Of Films In Promoting Nazis Propaganda

Posted on September 25, 2019

View this essay online:
https://academic-master.com/the-role-of-films-in-promoting-nazis-propaganda/

Introduction

Nazi Germany period is the period between 1933 and 1945 when Germany was transformed into a totalitarian state by Dictator Adolf Hitler through the Nazi Party (NSDAP). During this time, the country was transformed, and even the official name of the state was changed two times, i.e., the German Reich (1933-1943) and the German Reich (1943-1945). during that time, the German state was also known as the Third Reich (Baird 450). The Third Reich nation ended after the Allied Powers defeated the Nazi regime in May 1945, which led to the end of World 2 in Europe.

Hitler came to power in 1933 after he was appointed by the president of the Weimar Republic, Paul Von Hindenburg. After his appointment, the Nazi party began to remove and eliminate all opposition political factions in the country. All opposition leaders were arrested or either killed; this enabled Hitler to consolidate power. After President Hindenburg died, Hitler assumed powers in the Presidency and Chancellery (Baird 452). After he assumed power, the referendum was held in August 1934, making Hitler only the leader of Germany. Therefore, all power was centralized around him; thus, he became law and constitution, and all his words were above the laws. During the time, the government was not organized; instead, it was a faction of people struggling for power with the aim of getting Hitler's approval. To gain public popularity in Germany in the wake of the great depression, the Nazis ensured economic stability through military employment and spending. Also, public works were undertaken, and they restored economic stability.

Racism, in particular anti-Semitism, was the Nazi's main agenda. Therefore, the Nazis viewed Germanic peoples as the purest race in Germany and were considered master race among other races. Other races, including Jews, were deemed unworthy, and they were killed in the Holocaust. Any opposition leader in Germany was suppressed and was either arrested or killed. Also, the liberal, socialist and communist groups individuals were murdered, exiled or arrested (Baird 558). Also, the church leaders were oppressed, and most clergies were arrested and imprisoned. Nazis education system focused on military skills, racial biology and population policy. Women were not allowed to work.

All the recreation and tourism were organized under a program known as Joy, and the 1936 Summer Olympics showed the Third Reich nation to the world. The Nazis used propaganda to promote their

agendas. The Nazi's minister of Propaganda used films, public rallies and Hitler's salute to sway the public to support them. The government controlled everything, including all artistic work and expression, while promoting specific forms of artistic work and banning others. The Nazis used. The Nazis used film as their propaganda instrument. Hitler and His minister of propaganda were very interested in using film to promote Hitler's agendas of racism and hatred. Therefore, the paper discusses the role of films in promoting Nazis Propaganda.

Nazism And Cinema

Therefore, Nazism created a well-organized propaganda system which used the 20th-century technology of Cinema. Thus, the main propaganda tool was cinema, and they courted numerous public slogans which involved people's emotions. The Nazis used film as their propaganda instrument. Hitler and His minister of propaganda were very interested in using film to promote Hitler's agendas of racism and hatred. The film was used in the early 1930s during the National Socialist German Workers Party; hence, this led to Hitler utilizing them as a tool of propaganda. The films that were used to spread propaganda include Jew Süss (1940), Münchhausen (1943), and Kolberg (1945).

Jew Süss (1940)

Jew Suss is a film used by the Nazis to propagate its agenda. The film was produced by Terra Film and is considered an anti-Semitic film of all time. The movie's lead actor was known as Ferdinand Marian, while Kristina Soderbauma and Werner Krause played supporting roles in the movie. Viet Harlan directed Jew Suss, and he was also the writer of the screenplay (Noakes 11). The film was characterized by anti-Semitic themes, and it was a great success in Germany. The minister of propaganda at the time, Reichsmarks, encouraged people to watch it, especially the police and members of the SS. The film remains one of the most used movies when studying the history of the anti-Semitic agenda of the Nazis. After it ended, the film cast was arrested and tried for a "crime against humanity."

Münchhausen (1943)

The film was ordered in 1943 by German Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels. The movie was ordered to celebrate the 25th anniversary of UFA Film Studio. The movie was used to propagate the Nazis' agenda, and it also served as a distraction from the war against the people. The film was characterized by anti-Semitic themes, and it was a great success in Germany. Also, the film portrayed other Nazis agenda such as the Holocaust, German militarism, female promiscuity, and the total war (Noakes 12).

Kolberg (1945)

This was the last movie of the Third Reich Nation. The movie's intention was to promote the Nazis' agenda, and it wanted to encourage German people to resist the influence of the Allies. The moves tell a story of the besieged town of Kolberg. This move was ordered by the propaganda minister of the Nazis.

Themes Of Jew Süss (1940), Münchhausen (1943), And Kolberg (1945) And How The Films Demonstrated The German History Circa 1939-1945

Hitler used propaganda to enrol people in his agenda. The main propaganda tool was cinema and films, which courted the public by using lies and slogans that captured people's attention and emotions. The Nazis used film as their propaganda instrument. Hitler and His minister of propaganda were very interested in using film to promote Hitler's agendas of racism and hatred. The film was used in the early 1930s during the National Socialist German Workers Party; hence, this led to Hitler utilizing them as a tool of propaganda. Therefore, the above movies help in spreading Nazis agendas and can help in showing what the Nazis era of 1939-1945 was like. Themes in the Movies include:

Anti-Semitism Agenda

Racism, in particular, and anti-Semitism were the Nazi's main agenda. Adolf Hitler's governance was centred on an anti-Semitism agenda. In the movies which were ordered by the Nazi propagandists, they played a wide role in spreading German anti-Semitism. Thus, Hitler and his propagandists blamed Jews for their problems. They claimed that Germanic people were pure while considering other smaller races as unworthy. Thus, the movies depicted a situation where Jews were blamed for the misfortunes of the German population. The propagandists accused Jews of ripping off their handwork while they didn't undertake physical jobs. Thus, Hitler's mission was to eliminate the Jewish community. He named three vices of Jewish Marxism, which included democracy, internationalism and pacifism. Also, he claimed that Jews were responsible for Marxism, communism and Bolshevism. Joseph Goebbels's declarations of the Anti-Bolshevist Exhibition, which declared that Jews and exhibition were the same thing were depicted in the movies. Therefore, the Nazis viewed Germanic peoples as the purest race in Germany and were considered master race among other races. Other races, including Jews, were deemed unworthy, and they were killed in the Holocaust. Any opposition leader in Germany was suppressed and was either arrested or killed. Also, the liberal, socialist and communist groups individuals were murdered, exiled or arrested. Also, the church leaders were oppressed, and most clergies were arrested and imprisoned. Nazis education system focused on

military skills, racial biology and population policy.

The movies depict the German society of 1939-1945, which was centred on anti-Semitism. To achieve an anti-Semitism agenda, used the movies to attack the Jewish community. The Jews were portrayed as child kidnappers who used blood for their religious sacrifices. The use of the films to spread anti-Semitism led to an increase in anti-Semitic acts. The Anti-Semitism during 1939-1945 (During World War 2) propaganda was used to serve different objectives and purposes. First, it hoped that people in Allied countries would be convinced that Jews were to blame for the war. Thus, the propaganda in movies aimed to persuade the Allied countries that Jews were to blame for the war and not the Nazis. Also, the Nazis wanted to ensure the German population that there doing everything in their power by taking extreme measures to punish the Jewish population on their behalf. By doing shows, the Nazis wanted to incriminate Jews and used it as an opportunity to increase their people's loyalty to them. The announcement that Jews were being killed made the Nazis unite to continue with the war. The anti-Semitic propaganda led to the suffering of Jews who were murdered and killed in mass.

Therefore, based on the movies and history during World War 2, German society can be depicted as an ant-Semitic society which didn't value the lives of people who were not Germans.

The Holocaust and War (1939-45)

The Anti-Semitic propaganda led to World War 2, which caused the holocaust. In 1939, German troops occupied western Poland. The German police started operations to force thousands of Polish Jews out of their home. Their properties were given to ethnic Germans from either Reich or Polish. The Jews were forced out of their home to live in barbed wire surrounded ghettos where they weren't fed nor did they have work to do. Thus, Jewish was left to suffer from poverty, hunger, and overpopulation. Also, they suffered from diseases such as typhus. Also, Hitler instituted facilities which were used to gas the disabled to death and a program known as Euthanasia. Over 270,000 people were killed under the program; thus, Euthanasia formed the background of the Holocaust (Rentschler 61). By 1940, German troops had conquered five European countries, namely France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, and Luxembourg. All the Jews from all over the continent were transported to Polish ghettoes. Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union killed more than 500,000 Jews. All the Jews from the German territory were marked with the yellow star, making them an open target. Most of the Jews were transported to ghettoes and German-occupied cities. The holocaust started when an experiment for the mass killing method was invented in Auschwitz was successful. The Hitler troops used the pesticide Zyklon-B to conduct the killing. The SS ordered a huge volume of the gas, an indication of the unavailing of the holocaust.

Holocaust death camps were instituted in 1941 and continued to exist until 1945. In late 1941, Jews were transported from the ghettoes to concentration camps, starting with those that were viewed as least useful. The first mass killing started in Belzec camp, where Jews were gassed to death in numbers. Other five killing camps were instituted where all the atrocities were committed. The

biggest camp was Auschwitz-Birkenau. From 1942-1942, Jews from all over Europe were transported to those camps.

The Nazi's operations were kept secret, but the scale of the killing made it known to people. People who saw the Nazi's atrocities presented their evidence of the holocaust to Allied countries. The Allied nations were criticized for not taking action against manslaughter. The news of the Holocaust was met with denial since people couldn't believe such atrocities were possible. Over a million people were killed by the Nazis. Only Jews have been gassed. Other people died of starvation and diseases. Between 1942 and 1945, it is estimated that 12,000 were killed every day (Rentschler 30).

Nazis used propaganda to hinder their atrocities. German propaganda emphasized the prowess of their troops. The Nazis used propaganda to show to German people that they were protecting them and won the war. Before 1943, German propaganda was based on anti-Semitism and their powerful army. However, after Stalingrad, their propaganda theme changed to portray Germany as the sole defender of Western European Culture. Nazis introduced V-1 and V-2 weapons were a threat to Britons that they could not win a war against them. Due to the accusation of atrocities, Nazis allowed Red Cross to investigate the concentration camp in Theresienstadt to dispel accusations about Final Solution. In reality, the Theresienstadt was a transit camp. Nazis produced a film to show how Jews were treated, but after the completion of the shooting, the cast members were transported to concentration camps.

German militarism

Prior to Stalingrad, the propaganda of the Nazis Propaganda was based on their power of the military. The Nazi's propaganda movies spread lies about their Military power. They launched V-1 and V-2 to scare allied nations that they could not win a war against them. The Nazis regime addressed great depression by recruiting people to the military. Thus, most youths joined the military to seek employment. The movies helped spread propaganda about the Nazis Army. The German military portrayed aggressive and ruthless tactics to so the so-called enemy of the state or Jews. In 1939 when the Nazis decided to invade Poland, Germany had about 98 divisions ready to take action. Germany's army comprised about 1.5 million. Also, their military had nine panzers, each with 328 tanks. By 1940, the German military grew, and it had 2.5 million men and over 2500 tanks. By 1941, it had about 3 million officers plus two hundred thousand from its allies (Rentschler 15). The Germans focused on the production of fighting equipment and machinery. They lost their fight against the Soviet Union. Adolf Hitler created a people's militia, which guarded the German cities against the attack of the army. The movies propagated the power of the German military and its influences. During the holocaust, the military used weapons and gasses of the masses to conduct their atrocities.

Political Opponents

After Hitler came into power, opposition leaders in Germany were suppressed and were either

arrested or killed. Also, the liberal, socialist and communist groups individuals were murdered, exiled or arrested. Also, the church leaders were oppressed, and most clergies were arrested and imprisoned. Thus, the power belonged to Hitler and Hitler alone. They eliminated their political opponent and killed all parties. Nazis did not value democracy. Hitler was a dictator who spread fears and lies to instil fear in people.

Female promiscuity

Women's movies were subjected to Nazism doctrines; this was the same case for women in Nazi German. Thus, women were eliminated from apolitical activities in Third Reich nations. They were also banned from working in executive bodies and committees. Therefore, the Nazis party admitted that women would not be accepted in administrative committees, but this did not prevent women from participating in the party activities. The Nazi doctrine emphasises on men's combat skills. Women were eliminated from the responsibilities of offering services and work, particularly academic duties and political jobs. Thus, women were supposed to be mothers and spouses. Nazi society, women were not supposed to have careers, but they were supposed to take off their children and undertake chores. Therefore, women were responsible for their children's careers. Women were supposed to refrain from working.

Comparison Between Jew Süss (1940), Münchhausen (1943), And Kolberg (1945) And Triumph Of The Will (1934), Hitler Youth Quex (1933), And La Habanera (1937)

Triumph of Will (1934)

Triumph of the Will movie was released in 1935. The movie is a propaganda movie about Nazis, and it contains footage of the Nazis leaders' speeches to Congress. The Movie propagated that Hitler was the Leader who would return Germany to true military power. Hitler was an unofficial producer of the film. The movie is regarded as one of the propagandist movies in the history of the film.

Hitler Youth Quex (1933)

The movie was released in 1933, and it focused on spreading propaganda about Nazi ideas to society. The movie was the first film the Nazis used to spread their lies and propaganda. The movie is based on the novel about the Nazi Propaganda. The film was based on a true story, and the Nazis used it to spread propaganda.

Jew Süss (1940)

Jew Suss is a film used by the Nazis to propagate its agenda. The film was produced by Terra Film and is considered an anti-Semitic film of all time. The movie's lead actor was known as Ferdinand Marian, while Kristina Soderbauma and Werner Krause played supporting roles in the movie. Jew Suss was directed by Viet Harlan, who was also the writer of the screenplay."

Münchhausen (1943)

The film was ordered in 1943 by German Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels. The movie was ordered to celebrate the 25th anniversary of UFA Film Studio. The movie was used to propagate the Nazis' agenda, and it also served as a distraction from the war against the people. The film was characterized by anti-Semitic themes, and it was a great success in Germany. Also, the film portrayed other Nazis' agenda, such as the Holocaust, German militarism, female promiscuity, and total war.

Kolberg (1945)

This was the last movie of the Third Reich Nation. The movie's intention was to promote the Nazis' agenda, and it wanted to encourage German people to resist the influence of the Allies. The moves tell a story of the besieged town of Kolberg. This move was ordered by the propaganda minister of the Nazis.

Compare and Contrast

Triumph of the Will (1934), Hitler Youth Quex (1933), and La Habanera (1937) were used to promote Nazis ideas, while Jew Süss (1940), Münchhausen (1943), and Kolberg (1945) were used to promote anti-Semitic agenda. But all movies were used to promote Nazi propaganda. Jew Süss (1940), Münchhausen (1943), and Kolberg films were used to promote the anti-Semitic agenda. The movies depict that Germany of 1939-1945 was centred on anti-Semitism. To achieve an anti-Semitism agenda, the movies attack the Jewish community. The Jews were portrayed as child kidnappers who used blood for their religious sacrifices. The use of the films to spread anti-Semitism led to an increase in anti-Semitic acts. The Anti-Semitism during 1939-1945 (During World War 2) propaganda was used to serve different objectives and purposes. First, it hoped that people in Allied countries would be convinced that Jews were to blame for the war. Thus, the propaganda in movies aimed to persuade the Allied countries that Jews were to blame for the war and not Nazis (Lane et al., 24). Also, the Nazis wanted to ensure the German population that there doing everything in their power by taking extreme measures to punish the Jewish population on their behalf. By doing shows, the Nazis wanted to incriminate Jews and used it as an opportunity to increase their people's loyalty to them. The announcement that Jews were being killed made the Nazis unite to continue with the war. The

anti-Semitic propaganda led to the suffering of Jews who were murdered and killed in mass.

Triumph of the Will (1934), Hitler Youth Quex (1933), and La Habanera (1937 films were used to spread propaganda about Nazi doctrine and ideas. The Movie propagated that Hitler was the Leader who would return Germany to true military power. Hitler was the unofficial producer of the film. The movies helped the leaders to gain publicity (Lane et al. 23). To gain public popularity in Germany in the wake of the great depression, the Nazis ensured economic stability through military employment and spending. Also, public works were undertaken, and they restored economic stability. Thus, the films were used to persuade people that there was a problem in a German setting.

Works Cited

Baird, Jay W. “From Berlin to Neubabelsberg: Nazi Film Propaganda and Hitler Youth Quex.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 18.3 (1983): 495-515.

Brunaeur, E Caukin. (2018). “*National Socialist Youth”.*

Confino, Alon, Paul Betts, and Dirk Schumann, eds. *Between mass death and individual loss: the place of the dead in twentieth-century Germany*. Vol. 7. Berghahn Books, 2008.

Hinton, David B. “Triumph of the Will”: Document or Artifice?.” *Cinema Journal* 15.1 (1975): 48-57.

Mayo Jr, James M. “Propaganda with design: Environmental dramaturgy in the political rally.” *Journal of Architectural Education* 32.2 (1978): 24-27.

Lane, Barbara Miller, and Leila J. Rupp, eds. *Nazi ideology before 1933: a documentation*. Manchester University Press, 1978.

Noakes, Jeremy, and Geoffrey Pridham. *Documents on Nazism: 1919-1945*. Viking Pr, 1975.

Rentschler, Eric. *The ministry of illusion: Nazi cinema and its afterlife*. Harvard University Press, 1996.