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University of Tlemcen
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Department of English

**Joseph Goebbels'propaganda and its impact on
modern communication**

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Presented by

Mrs Amel YOUSFI

Supervised by

Prof.Daoudi FRID

Board of Examiners

Prof. Mohamed KHELLADI	Professor	President
Prof. Daoudi FRID	Professor	Supervisor
Dr. Meriem MENGOUCHI	MCB	Examiner

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Dedication

To the pure and loving memory of my father, whose presence continues to guide and inspire me every step of the way. To my beloved mother, sister, and my dear children, the light of my life, for your unwavering love and constant support. Your strength and belief in me have been my greatest source of motivation. And to my wonderful husband, whose patience, encouragement, and love have been my steady foundation throughout this journey. This work is a tribute to all of you, with heartfelt gratitude.

Amel YOUSFI

General Introduction

Throughout history, few individuals have harnessed the power of communication as effectively as Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda for Nazi Germany. Goebbels' calculated manipulation of media and mass communication played a crucial role in shaping public opinion during the Third Reich. His legacy, though intertwined with the horrors of the Nazi regime, offers significant insights into the mechanics of influence and control, which continue to echo in today's media and communication practices. The role of propaganda became particularly prominent during major global conflicts such as World War I and World War II, where it was used as a tool by governments to justify actions and rally public support.

Joseph Goebbels, a master of this art, was instrumental in shaping the Third Reich's propaganda efforts. By utilizing a wide range of media outlets—newspapers, films, radio broadcasts, and public speeches—Goebbels mobilized public opinion in favor of Nazi ideology. His work established many principles that still influence contemporary communication strategies, particularly in political communication, advertising, and media manipulation.

This study aims to critically analyze the propaganda techniques used by Joseph Goebbels and assess their influence on modern communication practices. By examining Goebbels' diverse strategies—ranging from mass rallies to orchestrated news broadcasts—this research seeks to uncover how these techniques have been adapted and applied in contemporary contexts. The study's objectives are to examine the methods and strategies used by Joseph Goebbels in Nazi propaganda, analyze the lasting impact of Goebbels' propaganda techniques on modern communication practices, explore the ethical implications of employing propaganda-inspired methods in contemporary media and politics, and identify parallels between historical propaganda strategies and current communication techniques, particularly in political campaigns and mass media.

This research seeks to address two core questions : how Goebbels' propaganda machine functioned

to shape public perception and rally a nation toward war and genocide, and in what ways the principles and tactics developed under Goebbels' direction have manifested in modern media, political campaigns, advertising, and digital communication. The following research questions guide the study : What were the key elements of Joseph Goebbels' propaganda strategy? How have Goebbels' techniques influenced modern communication, particularly in political and media contexts? What ethical concerns arise from the use of propaganda techniques in today's communication strategies? How can the study of Goebbels' propaganda inform our understanding of media manipulation and control in contemporary society? The hypothesis of this study is that Joseph Goebbels' propaganda techniques have had a significant and enduring influence on modern communication strategies, particularly in political messaging, media manipulation, and public relations. While these techniques have been effective in shaping public opinion, they raise profound ethical concerns when applied in contemporary settings.

The study will adopt a combination of historical, descriptive, and analytic methods to achieve its objectives. The historical method will involve an in-depth review of primary and secondary sources related to Joseph Goebbels and Nazi propaganda. By tracing the development and execution of Goebbels' strategies, this method will provide historical context for the analysis of his work. The descriptive method will be used to detail the various propaganda techniques employed by Goebbels and explore their application in modern communication. The descriptive analysis will also focus on how these strategies have been adapted in contemporary media and political discourse. The analytic method will be employed to critically assess the impact of Goebbels' propaganda on modern communication practices. This analysis will include an evaluation of the ethical implications of using propaganda-based techniques in shaping public opinion and political messaging. By integrating these methods, the study aims to offer a comprehensive understanding of Joseph Goebbels' propaganda and its lasting influence on modern communication.

This research is divided into two main chapters, following a general introduction and concluding with a comprehensive summary of the findings. The first chapter explores the concept of propaganda and its significant impact on modern communication. It begins with a historical overview, tracing the development of propaganda from early forms of mass persuasion to its strategic application during global conflicts, such as World War I and World War II. The chapter also delves into the core principles of propaganda, examining its techniques, psychological mechanisms, and its role in shaping public opinion and media practices today. Additionally, it addresses the ethical implications of propaganda, particularly in political messaging and digital media. The second chapter focuses specifically on the

propaganda efforts of Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, and how his methods have influenced modern communication practices. This section analyzes Goebbels'; techniques, including his mastery of mass media—such as radio, film, and public speeches—and how they were used to manipulate public perception and spread Nazi ideology. Through specific case studies, the chapter highlights the lasting impact of Goebbels' strategies on contemporary political communication, media control, and

public relations. The work concludes with a general conclusion that summarizes key insights and reflects on the ethical challenges posed by the continued use of propaganda-inspired techniques in modern media.

By exploring the intersection of historical propaganda and modern communication strategies, this research will contribute to the broader discourse on media ethics, the persuasive power of rhetoric, and the responsibilities of communicators in an increasingly globalized world. The study seeks to illuminate the enduring effects of Goebbels³⁹; propaganda and its relevance to contemporary debates on media manipulation and ethical communication.

Chapitre 1

Propaganda and its Impact on Modern Communication

1.1 Introduction

In a time of swift technical progress and widespread digital media, the definition of propaganda has changed dramatically from its historical foundations. Propaganda, which was once mostly connected to attempts during times of war to mobilize supporters or vilify opponents, is now present in many aspects of contemporary communication and has an impact on social movements, political debates, and even consumer behavior. This chapter explores the complex nature of propaganda, looking at its definition, background, and methods used to influence public opinion through manipulation and tailored messages. The role of technology plays in enhancing propagandistic efforts will be examined in this chapter, along with the psychological effects on audiences—many of whom are not conscious of their vulnerability to such influences—and their implications.

Propaganda-related ethical issues will also be closely examined, posing moral dilemmas regarding the relative benefits of employing deceitful methods vs the possible harm that comes with spreading false information. This chapter seeks to provide readers the knowledge and skills they need to identify and combat propaganda in their own lives by promoting an understanding of these components. In the end, we shall discover its significant ramifications for society as a whole when we examine the complex link between propaganda and contemporary communication.

The importance of communication and access to information has increased in today's society, shaping how opinions are created and decisions are influenced. Because technological developments have made this process more efficient, many governments have used it to ensure power and dominance over society. Propaganda has played a pivotal role in shaping public opinion throughout history. It serves as a powerful tool for influencing individuals' thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors. In the point of view of Hobbs and McGee (2014,p57) Propaganda involves in the intentional sharing facts, opinion, and ideas designed to change behavior or motivate action. Propaganda as a historical term is defined by scholars from both social sciences and humanities acknowledge it is simultaneously a philosophical, psychological, and sociological concept Propaganda is a form of communication that is different from persuasion because it attempts to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist Public opinion and behavior change can be affected by propaganda.

Communication has been defined as a convergence process in which sender and receiver, either through mediated or nonmediated means, create and share information. When the information is used to accomplish a purpose of sharing, explaining, or instructing, this is considered to be informative communication. People seek information when they need to understand their environment.

1.2 The Definition of Propaganda

According to encyclopedia Britannica, propaganda is the dissemination of information—facts, arguments, rumours, half-truths, or lies—to influence public opinion Deliberateness and a relatively heavy emphasis on manipulation distinguish propaganda from casual conversation or the free and easy exchange of ideas.(Britannica). The word propaganda during Goebbels' time was not burdened with the same

negative connotation that it has today.

Propaganda, as a concept, has a rich historical context that has significantly shaped its evolution and impact on societies. Defined as information deliberately spread to influence and manipulate public opinion, propaganda has been utilized throughout history to serve various political, social, and ideological agendas. Its historical roots can be traced back to ancient civilizations, where rulers and leaders employed persuasive tactics to sway the masses. Over time, propaganda has adapted to modern mediums, including multimodal content comprising text and images, presenting a unique challenge for AI researchers.

The word itself is derived from the Latin word 'de propagare' meaning to spread or propagate, or more well-known in Catholic Rome as 'de propaganda fide' or 'the propagation of the faith', which involved the worldwide missionary activity aimed at securing converts to Catholicism (Linebarger, 1972, p15). It referred to the gardener's practice of introducing fresh cuttings of a plant into the soil to multiply it (Brown,1991,p10) . Here, the term is used in the context of transformation through artificial practices.

Although this word was used when discussing the war like activities of the Reformation and Counter-reformation periods, today the word has developed into a term of political persuasion often synonymous with lies, deceit, disinformation, misinformation and warfare on the opinion of the adversary. Throughout this study we will have opportunity to illustrate how Goebbels indeed marshaled all of these forms of persuasion, often involving deceit his own country. This negative form of propaganda that is understood today is on occasion referred to as 'black propaganda'.(Becker ,1949). Today, several definitions of the term propaganda are used, some of which fall short in their explanation, while other definitions manage to present a very concrete idea of what propaganda is. According to the RAE :Real Academia Española, propaganda is "the action and effect of making something known with the aim of attracting followers or buyers (RAE Official Dictionary) ." This definition does not refer to the more specific characteristics of propaganda but rather aligns more closely with what we understand today as advertising. We can infer that this definition falls short in explaining the term.

"Propaganda is the systematic use, more or less deliberately planned, of symbols, primarily through suggestion and similar psychological techniques, with the intention of altering and controlling opinions, ideas, values, and ultimately changing public actions according to predetermined lines. It operates within a specific structure without which its psychological and cultural aspects cannot be understood."(Young, K. 1991p 19). In his book 'Propaganda', Bernays (1928,p66) defines the term propaganda as a new approach to attain broad objectives : '. . . the new approach in adjusting an individual to the group or to creating a desired group behavior in him'. It is important to distinguish propaganda from ideas, theories, or beliefs. Propaganda is any notion or thought that is meant to be disseminated or supported for a reason other than the search for the truth. Lastly, what sets propaganda apart from other forms of communication is its structure and content. Propaganda causes people to react intuitively rather than logically, which is how it differs from "education." Propaganda therefore has a lot more in common with the idea of conditioning, which is a mental or psychological attitude that develops naturally as a reaction mechanism before any argument, discussion, or ratiocination. Propaganda is also defined as a systematic strategic mass communication conveyed by an organization to shape perceptions and manipulate the cognitions of a specific audience. Its ultimate goal is to direct the audience's behaviour to

achieve a response that furthers the political objectives of the propaganda organization (Romarheim,2005 p 3). Organizations use propaganda as a form of communication to influence and shape the opinions and views of a certain audience. It is a methodical and calculated strategy meant to mold people's attitudes and actions to suit specific political goals. Directing the audience's behavior to support the objectives and interests of the propagandist group is the ultimate purpose of propaganda. Propaganda can take several forms, such as advertising, public relations campaigns, or political messaging. It often involves the use of persuasive techniques, selective information, and emotional appeals to influence public opinion and mobilize support for a particular cause or ideology. Propaganda can be both overt and covert, and it is commonly associated with efforts to spread misinformation or manipulate public discourse. Propaganda is a powerful tool for influencing public opinion and decision-making processes overall. Propagandists attempt to manipulate public perception of particular subjects and events by directing the narrative and presenting them in a particular way.

The word "propaganda" carries a lot of bad connotations, and it really appears more and more inappropriate for the field of public relations and the communications that it handles on behalf of its customers and organizations. The word itself has religious origins in the Roman Catholic Church and is derived from the Latin verb *propagare*, which means to develop or extend. Its original meaning, in a positive, even benign way, related to the "propagation" of the religion. The term's usage soon spread to include definitions in law, politics, and advertising, as well as lyrical legacies from the Italian Renaissance, before focusing on power dynamics in communication. (Huzen,2020 p 15). Propaganda is different from disinformation⁴, in particular with reference to the truth value of the managed information and its goal(Da San Martino al ,2020.p4827)

Defined as the dissemination of information, ideas, or rumors, propaganda aims to promote a particular ideology or agenda. It can take various forms, including written, oral, and visual mediums. A significant aspect of propaganda is its persistence and legacy. Some historical samples illustrate the long-term effects of propaganda. The French Revolution's slogans, such as "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," (encyclopedia Britannica) still resonate over two centuries later. Comparable, Nazi propaganda foreshadowed the strengths and threats of the country's political system.

1.3 Types of Propaganda

Propaganda is a powerful tool that has been used throughout history to shape public opinion and influence attitudes and behaviors.

Propaganda can be classified into diverse types depending on various criteria and perspectives. All these types of propaganda largely fall under two categories known as black propaganda and white propaganda, according to Valentina Nerino (2023,p07).

1.3.1 Black Propaganda : Deception and Psychological Manipulation

Black propaganda is one of the most deceptive forms of propaganda, where the propagandist deliberately conceals their identity and falsely claims to represent another party. This covert form of

communication is designed to mislead the audience, often employing falsehoods and conspiracy theories to manipulate public perception. The primary aim of black propaganda is to incite hatred or opposition against the target by presenting information that is characteristically false, misleading, and designed to provoke emotional or psychological reactions (Ng and Li, 2023, p. 145). Black propaganda is often used in wartime or during political conflicts to undermine enemy morale, create divisions, or sow distrust among opponents.

Under black propaganda, movements can be classified as covert propaganda and counter-propaganda. Covert propaganda refers to efforts where the source of the message remains hidden, creating the illusion that the information comes from an impartial or enemy source. This technique seeks to deceive the audience into believing the propagandist's message without questioning its origin or motive (Ng and Li, 2023, p. 147). On the other hand, counter-propaganda aims to combat opposing propaganda through similar deceptive means. By disseminating false or misleading information, the propagandist seeks to disrupt and weaken the opponent's messaging (Ng Li, 2023, p. 150). Black propaganda operates within the realm of psychological warfare, as it aims to manipulate the emotions and beliefs of its audience. Its effectiveness lies in its ability to distort reality, often incorporating conspiracy theories or fabricating narratives that seem plausible but are intentionally misleading. For example, during World War II, the Nazis used black propaganda to demoralize British troops by broadcasting fake reports of military defeats and civilian casualties through radio stations that posed as legitimate British broadcasts (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2019, p. 210). The intention was to create confusion and undermine British confidence in the war effort by planting seeds of doubt in the minds of both soldiers and civilians. In the modern context, black propaganda can be seen in disinformation campaigns conducted through social media, where false stories are spread under the guise of legitimate news. For instance, state-sponsored actors often use black propaganda to spread false information that appears to come from credible sources, such as foreign governments or reputable media outlets. These campaigns are designed to sway public opinion or interfere in the political processes of other nations. The Russian disinformation campaign during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, which involved the spread of fake news stories attributed to American journalists and activists, is a contemporary example of black propaganda (Pomerantsev and Weiss, 2014, p. 35).

1.3.2 White Propaganda : Transparency and Credibility

In contrast, white propaganda operates in a transparent manner where the source is openly acknowledged, and the message is grounded in truth and factual evidence. White propaganda is designed to build credibility and trust with the audience by presenting information in a way that is perceived as objective, reliable, and close to the truth. The propagandist's identity is clear, and the message is aligned with the values and goals of the sender, typically involving governments, commercial entities, or media outlets (Da San Martino et al., 2019, p. 72).

White propaganda is categorized into two primary types : government propaganda and commercial propaganda. Government propaganda focuses on promoting policies, initiatives, or national interests in a manner that appears straightforward and credible. For example, public health campaigns, such as those

encouraging vaccinations, often fall under the umbrella of white propaganda because they provide factual information supported by scientific research and openly state their objectives (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2019, p. 216). In contrast, commercial propaganda typically promotes products, services, or corporate interests, with the goal of building brand credibility and fostering positive public perceptions. An example of this would be advertising campaigns that present the benefits of a product in a factual and transparent way, without deceptive tactics.

While white propaganda is closer to the truth, its ultimate purpose remains persuasive. The goal is to shape public opinion in favor of the sender's political ideology, product, or cause. As Jowett and O'Donnell (1986) note, white propaganda "attempts to build credibility with the audience" by positioning the propagandist as the "good guy" with the best ideas or intentions (p. 21). The key to white propaganda's effectiveness is its reliance on reputable sources and verifiable facts, which aim to enhance the audience's trust in the message and its source.

Unlike black propaganda, which seeks to deceive, white propaganda is characterized by its open and honest presentation of the propagandist's identity. By maintaining transparency, white propaganda is able to build long-term credibility, fostering a relationship of trust between the sender and the audience. However, despite its reliance on truth, white propaganda is still designed to influence public perception and behavior. For instance, during World War II, Allied forces used white propaganda to inform their citizens of military victories and progress, aiming to boost morale and maintain support for the war effort (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2019, p. 219).

1.3.3 Gray Propaganda : Ambiguity in Source and Truthfulness

Gray propaganda refers to propaganda where the source may or may not be correctly identified, and the accuracy of the information presented is deliberately ambiguous. This form of propaganda lies between white propaganda, which is typically truthful and openly identifies its source, and black propaganda, which conceals the source and disseminates outright falsehoods. In gray propaganda, the lines between truth and deception are blurred, and the origin of the message may be obscured, leaving the audience unsure of the information's legitimacy (Jowett and O'Donnell, 2019, p. 92).

The primary goal of gray propaganda is to create confusion and uncertainty. By presenting information whose veracity is questionable, gray propaganda sows doubt in the minds of its audience, making it difficult for them to discern fact from fiction. This ambiguity weakens the audience's ability to critically assess the information they are receiving, often leading to indecision or mistrust toward all sources, including credible ones. As Jowett and O'Donnell (2019) argue, gray propaganda "introduces doubt, enabling the propagandist to manipulate public perception without being directly accountable for the information's truthfulness" (p. 95).

A significant feature of gray propaganda is that it may not be entirely false, but it often contains selective truths, half-truths, or distorted facts. The propagandist may present factual information but omit key details that could alter the audience's interpretation. This tactic makes the information difficult to verify, but because some aspects of it are true, it can still be persuasive (Cunningham, 2002, p. 129). For instance, gray propaganda is often employed in conflict zones where competing narratives make it challenging to establish a clear version of events. Combatants may release information with vague attributions or partial truths to influence domestic and international opinion,

without providing full transparency about the source or intent behind the message.

A notable example of gray propaganda is the use of "unattributed leaks" in political campaigns, where the source of the leak is unclear, but the information—whether fully true, partially true, or speculative—is released to sway public opinion. During the 2016 U.S. Presidential election, for example, some leaks of emails and other information were deliberately unattributed or presented by ambiguous sources. While the contents of these leaks may have been based in fact, the uncertainty surrounding their origins and the selective nature of their release made it difficult for the public to fully trust the information (Howard and Kollanyi, 2016, p. 12).

Similarly, gray propaganda has been employed in state-sponsored disinformation campaigns. For example, Russia's use of gray propaganda during its 2014 annexation of Crimea involved spreading information where the source was uncertain, and the facts were difficult to verify. Russian media outlets, which were tied to the state but did not always openly declare their affiliations, provided skewed narratives about the conflict that contained elements of truth but were manipulated to justify the annexation. This created a situation where both domestic and international audiences struggled to discern the accuracy of the reports (Pomerantsev and Weiss, 2014, p. 32).

The effectiveness of gray propaganda lies in its ability to destabilize public trust. By presenting information that is neither fully credible nor fully false, propagandists can create an environment of doubt. This uncertainty can lead to public confusion, apathy, or mistrust of both the propagandist's message and legitimate sources of information. As Jowett and O'Donnell (2019) note, "gray propaganda is particularly dangerous in its potential to foster cynicism among the public, where individuals become so overwhelmed by conflicting information that they disengage entirely" (p. 98).

Both black and white propaganda serve specific purposes within the larger framework of persuasive communication, but they do so through very different means. Black propaganda, with its covert operations and deliberate deception, focuses on manipulating the audience's perception by blurring the lines between truth and falsehood. White propaganda, in contrast, seeks to influence by building credibility and maintaining transparency. While black propaganda often thrives in secrecy and disinformation, white propaganda operates openly, providing factual evidence and maintaining a clear distinction between the propagandist and the subject. Both forms play critical roles in shaping public opinion, with one relying on psychological manipulation and the other on fostering trust through honesty and openness.

Gray propaganda, therefore, plays a significant role in contemporary media landscapes, where the rapid spread of information, particularly on social media, can easily blur the boundaries between credible reporting and manipulative messaging. The challenge for audiences is heightened by the anonymity of digital platforms, where the source of information is often obscured, making it difficult to assess the intent or accuracy behind the content (Cunningham, 2002, p. 131).

Propaganda techniques are commonly classified into different categories based on their methods and goals. It is a powerful communication tool utilized by a diverse range of actors with varying motives, including state and intelligence agencies, political extremists, and even teenage groups. Their aims are to encompass social control, political alterations. Additionally, the organizational structure of propagandist actors varies significantly in terms of capacity, coordination, and resources.

1.3.4 Characteristics and Examples of propaganda

Propaganda contain various defining characteristics, including emotional appeals, loaded language, and the use of symbols. These techniques are regularly employed in diverse contexts, such as political campaigns, publicizing, and wartime informing, to impact and and mislead the audience.

Furthermore, propaganda techniques often leverage the emotions of the audience and rely on logical fallacies to convey persuasive messages.

Governments frequently employ propaganda as a means to influence public opinion and shape societal beliefs in support of their policies and ideologies. Propaganda is used to mold collective consciousness and steer public sentiment, often by focusing on single issues that incite mass action. This is achieved through semiotic and affective methods designed to tap into a universal inclination toward emotional responses and subsequent actions. In the realm of governance, propaganda is pivotal in both responding to and shaping preexisting public opinion, highlighting its crucial role in contemporary political discourse. A thorough understanding of the psychological and sociological impacts of propaganda is essential for analyzing its influence on individuals and society at large. In the political sphere, propaganda serves as a potent tool for governments, political parties, and interest groups to sway public opinion and construct political narratives. The strategies employed in political propaganda are diverse and include techniques such as misinformation, demonization of opponents, emotional appeals, and the selective presentation of information. These tactics are meticulously designed to shape societal attitudes and behaviors.

Furthermore, the political discourse within mass media often utilizes a range of rhetorical tools, including alliteration, rhyme, euphemisms, dysphemisms, and inversion. These linguistic techniques are strategically employed to conduct propaganda and ideological conflict, ultimately shaping public opinion. The impact of political propaganda on public sentiment and the role of linguistic manipulation in persuasion are therefore critical areas of study. Propaganda employs a variety of features and methods aimed at manipulating and influencing audiences. In the context of religion, for example, propaganda leverages religious beliefs and symbols to influence individual behavior and belief systems. This often involves the strategic use of religious texts, symbols, and figures to guide people's perceptions and actions. Religious propaganda can be disseminated through various mediums, such as literature, art, and digital media, to reach a wider audience. The effects of religious propaganda on individuals and society are significant, as it has the power to shape cultural norms, impact political decisions, and even contribute to social conflicts.

In the field of education, propaganda encompasses a broad spectrum of persuasive strategies employed within educational institutions to influence students' beliefs and behaviors. The use of propaganda in schools, universities, and other educational settings is a topic of critical examination. Various techniques, including the selective presentation of information, framing, and the use of emotionally charged language, are utilized to shape students' perceptions and ideologies.

1.3.5 Propaganda as a Tool of Political Power

For a very long time, political groups, governments, and other powerful figures have used propaganda as a tool to shape public opinion and maintain control over social narratives. Propaganda has been used historically to enforce political goals, bolster authority, and quell opposition. Its power to control feelings, sway opinions, and influence behavior comes from its ability to provide just the most relevant details, frequently paired with strong language and imagery.

Propaganda has been used historically to support ideologies, legitimize wars, and uphold the status quo. For example, governments have used propaganda to incite civilians to support the war effort, vilify opponents, and boost national morale during times of conflict. Propaganda has been used during political upheaval to weaken resistance, delegitimize opponents, and forge a united front among the public. By carefully crafting propaganda, individuals in positions of authority may keep control over the dissemination of information and, consequently, shape public opinion and behavior.

The development of mass media and technology in the contemporary period has dramatically increased the reach of propaganda. Propaganda may now be distributed more swiftly and extensively than ever because to the development of television, radio, and the internet. Distinguishing between propaganda and manipulation, political campaigns, state-run media, and social media platforms are all employed to disseminate messages that support certain political goals. Propaganda's ongoing relevance as an instrument of political power is shown by its pervasiveness in daily life.

1.4 Propaganda and Communication

Propaganda refers to the systematic effort to manipulate beliefs, attitudes, or actions on a large scale. Efforts to influence public opinion may be traced to the dawn of human civilization, although the term propaganda was not used in this sense until after World War I.

Communication and propaganda are two related concepts that have been thoroughly examined in a number of academic disciplines, including political science, media studies, sociology, and psychology. Disseminating facts or ideas with the intention of swaying public opinion or behavior in favor of a specific cause or viewpoint is known as propaganda. Conversely, communication is the process of sharing knowledge using a variety of mediums, including text, voice, and visual media. Propaganda and communication have a complicated relationship as propaganda frequently uses successful communication techniques to further its objectives.

Although attention to propaganda in communication studies was largely neglected. Information , persuasion,propaganda, misinformation and indoctrination are recurrent terms in studies of advertising, public relations and social control (Tomaselli,1992,p106). The interplay between these concepts—information providing the foundation for understanding ; persuasion shaping attitudes ; propaganda pushing specific agendas ; misinformation creating confusion ; and indoctrination fostering uncritical acceptance—illustrates how advertising and public relations serve not only commercial interests but also broader societal influences on behavior and thought processes.

1.4.1 Communication and the Power of Mass Media in Propaganda

Before pursuing an any explanation, let us briefly excavate the original meaning of the concept of communication. This latter comes from the Latin , communis (to make common to many) and communicare (to establish a community or to share). Communication is the dialogue (Tomaselli, ibid) and the style of communication is an indication of the kinds of relationships, or bondage, exploitation and resistance. Communications may be categorized as verbal or oral communications, nonverbal or graphic communications, and interpersonal or mass communications. Verbal communications involve spoken or written words while nonverbal aids understanding in terms of feelings, attitudes, and opinions through signs, symbols, and gestures. Interpersonal communications occur between two or more people through face-to-face contact, telephone connections, and other means while mass communications are directed to many receivers through one-way channels. These channels may be print media, broadcasting, and modern communications media.

Mass media is the preferred system of communication .The study of propaganda held a privileged place in communication and many researches at that field come from the early 1940's to the 1960's.The concept of propaganda reflects the deterministic history of communications discipline as a whole (Joweth and O'Donell,1986) ;It was regarded as the quintessential example of the overall communications process.

Mass media plays a pivotal role in the dissemination of propaganda, influencing public opinion and shaping societal beliefs. Television, film, and social media have become powerful tools for propagandistic content, reaching a wide audience and perpetuating specific ideologies. According to (Peace Ireju, 2012) . The concept of "mass" refers to a specific form of collective behavior within society, directed towards a particular object of attention. This underscores the significant impact of mass media in shaping public discourse and perpetuating propaganda.

Television, film, and social media have the potential to shape societal norms and expectations, influencing perceptions of social change and cultural consumption. As mass media continues to evolve, it is essential to recognize its pervasive nature in contemporary society and its role in perpetuating propaganda.

The objective of this study is to examine the way mass media is used for propaganda. The analysis will focus on fifty specific films and TV-broadcast programs that fall into seven subject categories. Other media, such as newspapers, magazines, and the Internet, are, however, powerful and dangerous they convey emotions and views almost unconsciously. They create illusory realities, have broad social reach, and penetrate the private sphere. In fact, the purpose of propaganda is to send out an ideology to an audience with a related objective. Propaganda is communication that is primarily used to influence or persuade an audience.

1.4.2 Propaganda as a Form of Communication

Otherwise ,Persuasion as a subset of communication is usually defined as a communicative process the purpose of which is to influence. A persuasive message has a point of view or a desired behavior for the recipient to adopt in a voluntary fashion.((Joweth and O'Donell,op cite,28). People respond to persuasion that promises to help them in some way by satisfying a want or need. That is why

the persuader must think in terms of the persuadee's needs as well as his or her own.

Propaganda may appear to be informative communication when ideas are shared, something is explained, or instruction takes place. Information communicated by the propagandist may appear to be indisputable and totally factual. The propagandist knows, however, that the purpose is not to promote mutual understanding but rather to promote his or her own objectives. Thus, the propagandist will attempt to control information flow and manage a certain public's opinion by shaping perceptions through strategies of informative communication (*ibid* ,50).

Persuasion is a fundamental aspect of human communication, where individuals or groups aim to influence the beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors of others. A persuader's role is not merely to present information but to engage with their audience in a way that fosters mutual understanding and satisfaction of needs. This involves a strategic approach to communication that goes beyond mere information dissemination.

As noted by McCroskey (1969, p102), evidence plays a crucial role in enhancing the credibility of the persuader. When a persuader presents facts, statistics, or testimonials, they are not just providing information ; they are building trust with their audience. The effectiveness of persuasion often hinges on how well the evidence is integrated into the overall message. While evidence alone does not guarantee persuasion, it significantly bolsters the persuader's position and can lead to more favorable responses from the audience.

Persuaders, in contrast, do not aim to present themselves as mere informants. A skilled persuader strives to clarify their intent as much as possible to facilitate a change in attitudes or behaviors. Research indicates that when conclusions are explicitly stated, they are twice as likely to elicit the desired response from the audience compared to those that are merely suggested. While propagandists may seem to have a clear objective and often provide an overt conclusion, their actual intentions are frequently hidden (See Cialdini, R.B. (2009).Petty, R.E., and Cacioppo, J.T. (1986)and McGuire, W.J. (1968))

1.5 Propaganda and Modern communication

Propaganda is a form of communication that is intended to influence the attitude of a community toward some cause or position. It often presents facts selectively to encourage a particular synthesis or perception. Technology plays an essential role in propaganda by influencing the presentation and dissemination of certain ideas or values. Technology can widen the influence of propaganda techniques by allowing for the creation of mass culture and mass communication. Propaganda techniques such as appeals to fear, glittering generalities, bandwagon, or logical fallacies were used in the past by early civilizations, churches, kings, great leaders, political parties, and groups who felt threatened by a competing ideology.

However, the capacity for mass cultural change influenced how potent, pervasive, and enduring propaganda could be. The myths of advanced technology being perceived as evil, dangerous, or dehumanizing have occurred since the advent of technological society. Another myth is the belief that communication technologies are neutral tools that are socially malleable. Elements of a sophisticated technology filter out usage that is uncontrolled by mass culture and preindustrial social structures.

Technology played an essential role in propaganda by influencing the medium through which message

systems operate rather than the processing at the other end of the nozzle. A formed belief depends less on facts in evidence than on cute linguistic switches and dog whistles employed to make unwanted truths indigestible. Propaganda can focus on different aspects of certain events in a factual manner to promote a certain conclusion or tone about a specific event. The more stakes change hands, the higher the quantity, quality, and clearer the direction of propaganda projection that comes into play.

The topic of "Propaganda and New or modern Communication" explores the relationship between contemporary communication techniques and propaganda strategies. With the development of communication technology, propaganda—the disseminating of inaccurate or biased information with the intention of influencing public opinion—has also changed. The emergence of new media platforms, including social media, online news sources, and digital advertising, has changed how propaganda is received and distributed. Analyzing propaganda's impacts on society and creating counterstrategies require an understanding of how it functions within these new communication channels.

Communication is considered essential for establishing relationships. Contemporary communication methods provide individuals with opportunities to maintain connections. To comprehend communication in today's world, it is crucial to raise awareness regarding the use of various technologies. These technologies utilized by individuals across different areas and sectors include phones, iPads, laptops, and computers.

1.5.1 Communication in Modern Era

Language and communication are undergoing transformations in a period of time. with the advent of modernization and globalization, the individuals are making use of technologies and modern and innovative methods in communicating. . In order to achieve their goals and objectives, it is vital that they should promote effective communication with others.

The culture has an impact on communication. The communication methods of individuals from different cultures differ from one another. In the past, words used to describe things have been freely chosen by people from different civilizations. People from all walks of life, backgrounds, and social classes must realize that it is improper for them to use language or phrases that disparage other people. Facilitating communication in an efficient manner is necessary to foster well-being and goodwill. The idea of social connection has grown in importance and meaning in the modern day. A multitude of elements allow people to identify the ways in which their communication abilities might be improved. It is through communication that the individuals can continue innovations, and discoveries. The individuals need to express their experiences. The individuals need some ways to express themselves to share their experiences. When adults are engaged in learning, they are allowed to share their experiences with others.

In the modern era, the individuals are required to get engaged in number of tasks and activities. Some important activities that require the individuals to recognise the meaning and significance of communication are, negotiating, convincing, persuading, assigning, discussing and encouraging (Kapur,2017,p65) Modern communication involves a thorough comprehension of its meaning and importance in today's society. It is marked by its widespread presence and significant influence on various facets of human interaction, such as social, cultural, and economic areas (Simon and Slay, 2011,p57). Additionally, the

advancement of communication technologies has been crucial in shaping the current landscape of communication.

The evolution of communication technologies has seen a transition from conventional methods, such as written documents and physical couriers, to a wide range of contemporary communication platforms, including the internet, satellite transmission, and email. These innovations have not only enhanced global communication but have also altered the nature of international relations, diplomacy, and cultural interactions.

Modern communication is underpinned by several key technologies that have transformed the way people interact and exchange information. The Internet and World Wide Web serve as the foundational infrastructure for a myriad of communication activities, facilitating the transfer of data and enabling a wide range of communication services. These technologies are not only instrumental in shaping contemporary communication dynamics but also continue to evolve, driving further innovation and expansion in the field of modern communication.

Throughout history, humanity has had to navigate various methods and techniques that can affect changes in people's ideologies, emotions, behaviors, and attitudes. Ancient Greece is recognized as the birthplace of rhetoric theory, while the period leading up to the Second World War marked the beginning of conceptual reflections on propaganda. Since that time, there has been a continuous struggle involving ideas, ideological propaganda, disinformation, and mass manipulation, with each historical epoch influencing its own methods of propaganda and disinformation. This evolution has led to a transformation in media that adapts to new historical contexts.

The advent of the digital era signifies a shift from traditional modernity to a new form of civilization, where the rise of social media fundamentally alters how messages, perceptions, events, news, and meanings are generated, disseminated, and consumed. As public spheres transition into mass spheres within this new digital civilization, illusionary ideologies often overshadow factual interests, objective realities, scientific knowledge, historical facts, and reasoned arguments. Consequently, these ideologies serve as the foundation for political decision-making processes and influence behavioral adjustments in society.

1.5.2 The Importance of Modern Digital Communication in Propaganda

The ideas surrounding contemporary, digital, and modern communication have gained considerable importance, particularly in relation to propaganda and the creation of illusions. As propaganda increasingly spreads through social media platforms, there is a growing scientific focus on the methods of persuasive communication.

Digital propaganda provides a comprehensive overview of the subject, detailing its definition, historical background, essential features, and goals. This type of propaganda poses unique challenges for researchers in artificial intelligence due to its multimodal characteristics, which blend both text and visual components. It employs a variety of persuasive strategies designed to sway public opinion via digital channels.

Researchers have been examining how propaganda uses modern means of communication to influence public opinion and sway perceptions in recent years. They attempt to identify vulnerable populations

targeted by propaganda campaigns, identify patterns of disinformation, and suggest remedies to lessen the detrimental impacts of misinformation by examining the strategies used by propagandists in digital domains. In order to effectively resist propaganda, multidisciplinary techniques incorporating knowledge from political science, psychology, sociology, and communication studies are necessary due to the dynamic nature of current communication technology.

All things considered, the study of new communication and propaganda emphasizes the importance of critically analyzing media messages and developing a sophisticated grasp of the creation, dissemination, and consumption of information in modern society. Through an analysis of the intricate relationship between communication technology and propaganda strategies, scholars may support initiatives that aim to advance media literacy, educate citizens, and defend democratic principles in a world getting more interconnected.

This concept has gained particular relevance in the context of social media, where propaganda techniques are frequently used to manipulate or mislead users. These techniques encompass a wide range of strategies, including but not limited to, the dissemination of fake news, clickbaiting, and the use of satire (Da San Martino et al., 2020,p6).

Modern propaganda employs a variety of methods to effectively influence public perception and behavior. One prominent technique is the use of emotional appeals, which harnesses feelings such as fear, pride, or empathy to elicit strong emotional responses from audiences. Research has shown that emotionally charged messages can significantly enhance persuasion by creating a deeper connection with the audience (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012, p. 745). By tapping into these emotions, propagandists can motivate individuals to align with specific viewpoints or take particular actions.

Another critical method in modern propaganda is the selective presentation of information. This involves highlighting certain facts while omitting others to construct a biased narrative that supports a particular agenda. According to Entman (1993), this technique not only shapes how issues are perceived but also influences the public's understanding of complex topics by simplifying them into more digestible narratives (p. 55). The strategic omission of information can lead audiences to draw conclusions that may not reflect the full reality of a situation.

Repetition is also a fundamental strategy utilized in modern propaganda. By reinforcing messages through consistent exposure across multiple platforms, propagandists can increase message retention and acceptance among audiences. As noted by Cacioppo and Petty (1980), repeated exposure to a message can lead individuals to develop familiarity with it, which often translates into increased agreement or belief in its validity (p. 725). This method capitalizes on the psychological principle known as the mere exposure effect, where people tend to favor things merely because they are familiar with them.

Lastly, social proof plays a significant role in modern propaganda techniques. This method leverages testimonials or endorsements from influential figures or groups to validate a message and encourage acceptance among wider audiences. Research indicates that individuals are more likely to adopt beliefs or behaviors when they see others—especially those they admire—doing so (Cialdini, 2006, p. 116). By showcasing endorsements from respected authorities or popular figures, propagandists can enhance credibility and persuade individuals toward specific viewpoints or actions.

These methods are intricately designed not only to inform but also to persuade individuals toward specific viewpoints or actions.

1.5.3 Psychological impact on audience

The psychological impact of propaganda on an audience is profound and multifaceted. Propaganda is designed to manipulate emotions, shape beliefs, and influence behaviors through various techniques that exploit human psychology. Understanding these impacts requires examining how propaganda operates and the specific psychological mechanisms it engages.

— Emotional Manipulation

One of the primary ways propaganda affects audiences is through emotional manipulation. Techniques such as fearmongering, name-calling, and appeals to emotions are commonly employed to evoke strong feelings that can lead to immediate responses. George Orwell, in his essay "Politics and the English Language," noted how political language can be used to make "lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind" (Orwell, 1946, p. 8). This reflects how fear-based propaganda can create a sense of urgency or panic, compelling individuals to act in accordance with the propagandist's agenda.

For instance, during wartime, governments often use fear to galvanize public support for military action, portraying the enemy as a dire threat to national security. This emotional response often overrides rational thinking, leading people to make decisions based on fear rather than factual analysis. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), fear-based messages can be particularly persuasive when they suggest clear and immediate threats, leading to compliance or belief change (APA, 2020, p. 24).

— Cognitive Dissonance

Propaganda can also induce cognitive dissonance in individuals when they encounter information that conflicts with their existing beliefs or values. Leon Festinger, who developed the theory of cognitive dissonance, described it as the mental discomfort experienced by a person who holds two or more contradictory beliefs simultaneously (Festinger, 1957, p. 3). This discomfort may lead individuals to either reject the new information or alter their beliefs to align with the propagandist's message.

For example, when propaganda challenges deeply held beliefs, individuals may experience dissonance and attempt to resolve it by changing their attitudes or rationalizing the inconsistency. This process can make people more entrenched in their views, making them less open to alternative perspectives and reinforcing polarization within society. As noted by Festinger and Carlsmith (1959), people are motivated to achieve consistency between their beliefs and behaviors, often leading them to adjust their beliefs to reduce dissonance (Festinger and Carlsmith, 1959, p. 208).

— Social Identity and Group Dynamics

Propaganda often leverages social identity theory by appealing to group affiliations and collective identities. By framing messages in terms of "us versus them," propagandists can strengthen in-group loyalty while fostering animosity toward out-groups. Henri Tajfel's social identity theory

explains how individuals derive part of their identity from the groups to which they belong, leading to a natural bias towards in-group members and prejudice against out-group members (Tajfel, 1982, p. 23). This dynamic can lead to increased conformity within groups as individuals seek acceptance from their peers, further entrenching divisive ideologies and behaviors. Propaganda that exploits these dynamics can exacerbate social divisions, as seen in many nationalist and political movements that use "othering" to create unity within the in-group while demonizing the out-group.

— Desensitization

Repeated exposure to propaganda can lead to desensitization among audiences. When individuals are continually bombarded with emotionally charged messages or imagery, they may become numb to the content over time. This desensitization can diminish empathy for affected groups or issues being portrayed negatively in propaganda campaigns.

According to George Gerbner's cultivation theory, long-term exposure to media content can shape perceptions of reality, leading to desensitization or normalization of violence, stereotypes, and other harmful narratives (Gerbner, 1969, p. 42). As a result, harmful ideologies can persist without significant challenge, as the audience becomes less responsive to emotionally charged content.

— Behavioral Change

Ultimately, the goal of propaganda is often behavioral change—whether it be voting for a particular candidate, supporting a cause, or purchasing a product. By effectively manipulating emotions and perceptions through targeted messaging strategies, propagandists can drive audiences toward desired actions that align with their objectives.

B.F. Skinner's theory of operant conditioning illustrates how behaviors can be shaped by reinforcement and punishment, which propaganda often uses to encourage desired responses from its audience (Skinner, 1953, p. 65). For example, propaganda that glorifies certain behaviors or punishes dissent can lead to widespread behavioral conformity, as seen in authoritarian regimes where state-controlled media plays a significant role in shaping public behavior. The psychological impact of propaganda on an audience encompasses emotional manipulation, cognitive dissonance, social identity dynamics, desensitization effects, and behavioral changes driven by persuasive messaging techniques. By understanding these mechanisms, we can better recognize and resist the manipulative power of propaganda in various forms.

1.6 Conclusion

In contemporary society, communication and access to information are more vital than ever, influencing opinions and decisions on a global scale. The rise of new communication technologies has amplified the potential for both positive and negative influences on public discourse. Propaganda, a powerful tool for shaping public opinion, has historically played a central role in manipulating perceptions and behaviors. Defined as the intentional dissemination of information, ideas, or rumors to achieve a specific agenda, propaganda has evolved over time, adapting to new media and communication methods

to maintain its effectiveness.

Historically, figures like Joseph Goebbels exemplified the strategic use of propaganda to achieve political objectives, leaving a profound impact on how propaganda is understood and practiced today. Goebbels's techniques, which often involved deception, emotional manipulation, and misinformation, highlighted the potential for propaganda to wield considerable influence over public opinion and behavior. While his use of propaganda was deeply rooted in the context of Nazi Germany, the core principles he employed have persisted, adapting to the changing landscape of modern communication.

Today, propaganda takes on many forms, from overt advertising and political messaging to covert psychological manipulation. It employs diverse strategies, including emotional appeals, loaded language, and the selective presentation of information, to sway public opinion and behavior. In particular, black and white propaganda illustrate the spectrum of techniques used to manipulate audiences, from falsehoods and misinformation to more transparent, factual communication intended to build credibility.

Modern communication platforms, such as social media, digital news, and online advertising, have transformed the reach and impact of propaganda. These platforms facilitate the rapid dissemination of persuasive messages, often blurring the line between factual information and manipulated content. The increasing prevalence of digital propaganda underscores the urgent need for a critical examination of its effects on public opinion and democratic processes. In conclusion, understanding the legacy of historical propaganda, particularly as practiced by figures like Joseph Goebbels, and its influence on modern communication is crucial for navigating today's complex media landscape. As propaganda continues to evolve in the digital age, it remains a powerful tool for influencing public discourse. It is essential for scholars, policymakers, and media professionals to remain vigilant in analyzing and addressing the ethical implications of propaganda to promote transparency, media literacy, and democratic values in an interconnected world.

Chapitre 2

Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda and its influence on modern communication

2.1 Introduction

Goebbels Joseph, propaganda minister of the Third Reich led by Adolf Hitler, is known to be one of the most influential manipulators in modern history. His ability to shape public opinion and manipulate the emotions of the masses allowed him to wield unprecedented power during the Nazi regime in Germany. To understand the psychological profile of this dark character, it is necessary to analyze his personality, motivations and manipulation tactics.

From an early age, Goebbels displayed exceptional intelligence and ambition, excelling in his studies and developing an interest in politics and rhetoric. However, his childhood was marked by illness, as he suffered from a physical disability in his leg that marginalized him from his peers and generated feelings of inferiority and resentment. These early experiences of exclusion and vulnerability contributed to forging his manipulative and power-hungry personality. His inflammatory rhetoric and fanatical fervor led him to stand out as a skilled and ruthless propagandist, capable of mobilizing the masses and sowing hatred and intolerance.

2.2 Biography of Joseph Goebbels



Joseph Goebbels, one of the key figures in Nazi Germany, was the architect behind one of the most notorious propaganda machines in history. As Minister of Propaganda under Adolf Hitler, Goebbels had immense control over what the German population saw, heard, and believed. His propaganda efforts played a crucial role in shaping public opinion and solidifying the Nazi regime's power.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Joseph-Goebbels>

From his early life, Goebbels was a manic depressive and a loner. He was rejected by the army in World War 1 due to a club foot and had to take a degree at Heidelberg and then the University of Bonn. This was because he was only able to take courses that were not oversubscribed. It has been suggested that Goebbels' upbringing and his later feelings of inferiority helped him to understand the concept of the "little man," which he exploited in his propaganda.

Joseph Goebbels is perhaps one of the best known figures in Nazi Germany after Adolf Hitler. His role as the Minister for Propaganda has cemented his place in history. But , who was really Joseph Goebbels ?

2.2.1 Early Life and Education

<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/joseph-goebbels-as-a-young-man-fpg/5QFFcM-naWoGA>



Joseph Goebbels was born Paul Joseph Goebbels on October 29, 1897, in Rheydt, a small industrial town in the Rhineland (Longerich, 2015, p. 24). His father, Fritz Goebbels, managed a modest textile factory, while his mother, Maria Katharina, was a devout Catholic. The family, though not wealthy, owned a two-story home and was considered part of the lower middle class (Longerich, 2015, p. 25). Goebbels was one of four siblings, with two brothers, Konrad and Hans, and a younger sister, Maria, born many years later.

Goebbels was a bright student and developed an early interest in literature. His schooling was marked by physical challenges; he contracted polio as a child, leaving him with a permanent limp. This disability profoundly affected his psychological development, contributing to feelings of inferiority and resentment. Goebbels later turned these feelings into a political tool, channeling his personal frustrations into understanding and exploiting the grievances of the "little man" in his propaganda (Longerich, 2015, p. 33).

Goebbels attended university, first at Bonn and later at Heidelberg, where he earned a Ph.D. in German literature in 1922. His dissertation focused on 18th-century drama, and his academic career marked the beginning of his engagement with radical political ideas, including socialism and communism (Longerich, 2015, p. 57). He also began to develop his literary ambitions, writing plays and a novel in diary form during the early 1920s (Longerich, 2015, p. 66).

2.2.2 Joseph Goebbels : Political Rise and Role in Nazi Germany

Joseph Goebbels is infamous as one of the most effective political propagandists in history, serving as the chief architect of Nazi propaganda. His introduction to the Nazi Party occurred in the early 1920s, drawn to the movement's far-right, nationalist ideologies. Initially aspiring to a career in literature and journalism, Goebbels possessed a keen understanding of the power of words and media. This intellectual background, combined with his exceptional oratory skills and deep grasp of mass psychology, quickly earned him a prominent position within the party.

By 1926, Adolf Hitler appointed Goebbels as the leader of the Nazi Party in Berlin, recognizing his talents in organizing propaganda and shaping public perception (Longerich, 2015, p. 145). His success in the capital helped the Nazis gain substantial traction, and in 1929, Goebbels was appointed Chief of Propaganda for the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP) (Longerich, 2015, p. 145). This role marked the beginning of his influence over the party's messaging, solidifying his control over the narratives promoted to the public.

When the Nazis seized power in 1933, Goebbels was elevated to Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, a position that gave him near-total authority over Germany's media, culture, and public opinion. He oversaw all forms of communication, including newspapers, radio, theater, and film. As president of the newly formed Reich Chamber of Culture, Goebbels controlled the artistic and intel-

lectual landscape of Nazi Germany, censoring content that conflicted with Nazi ideology while promoting materials that glorified the regime (Evans, 2005 ; Kershaw, 2000).

Goebbels' propaganda methodology was methodical and psychologically astute. He believed in the power of repetition and emotional appeal, tailoring messages to resonate with the fears and aspirations of the masses. His strategies included the use of powerful imagery, repetitive slogans, and the exploitation of cultural symbols to foster a sense of national pride. Crucially, he also recognized the need for scapegoats to unify the populace around a common enemy. His fervent anti-Semitic campaigns dehumanized Jews and other marginalized groups, providing a rationale for their persecution and rallying public support for discriminatory policies (Kershaw, 2008, pp. 45-47).

Through his work, Goebbels was instrumental in rallying support for Nazi policies, including militarization and anti-Semitic measures, which played a key role in both domestic governance and the lead-up to World War II (Longerich, 2015, p. 259). His legacy as a propagandist endures, as many of his techniques—such as the manipulation of media and public sentiment through emotionally charged, repetitive messaging—continue to influence modern political communication.

2.2.3 Personal Life and Marriage



Goebbels married Magda Ritschel in 1931, and the couple had six children together (Longerich, 2015, p. 218). Magda was from an upper-middle-class background and became a key figure in the Nazi regime's public image. The Goebbels family was often portrayed as an ideal German family, a symbol of Nazi ideals of loyalty, discipline, and strength. However, Goebbels's personal life was fraught with tensions. His numerous extramarital affairs caused significant strain on his marriage, although Magda remained loyal until the end (Longerich, 2015, p. 220).

<https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-devil-s-devoted-disciple>

2.2.4 Propaganda and War Efforts

Goebbels's skill as a propagandist became particularly crucial during the war years, especially after Germany's defeats at Stalingrad and in North Africa. He played a pivotal role in maintaining public morale, despite the growing despair in the latter years of the war. In a famous speech delivered in February 1943 at the Berlin Sports Palace, Goebbels called for "total war," urging the German people to commit all resources to the war effort (Goebbels, 1943).

Goebbels propaganda machine churned out messages emphasizing sacrifice, duty, and the righteousness of the Nazi cause, even as the war turned increasingly grim. After the failed assassination attempt on

Hitler in July 1944, Goebbels influence surged. He became one of Hitler's most trusted confidants, playing an essential role in maintaining the regime's grip on power as Germany faced impending defeat (Longerich, 2015, p. 370).

2.2.5 Final Days and Legacy

As the war drew to a close, Goebbels remained fiercely loyal to Hitler. After Hitler's suicide on April 30, 1945, Goebbels briefly assumed the role of Chancellor of Germany. However, his tenure lasted just one day. On May 1, 1945, Goebbels and his wife Magda poisoned their six children before taking their own lives (Longerich, 2015, p. 427).

Joseph Goebbels legacy is one of manipulation, hatred, and destruction. His mastery of propaganda enabled the Nazis to carry out some of the most heinous crimes in history, including the Holocaust. Goebbels' control over the German media stifled dissent and created an environment in which millions of people were led to commit atrocities in the name of the Third Reich (Longerich, 2015, p. 451).

Goebbels' story serves as a chilling reminder of the power of propaganda and the consequences of its unchecked influence. His methods have been studied extensively by historians, psychologists, and political scientists, as they provide a blueprint for how totalitarian regimes can manipulate information to control entire populations (Longerich, 2015, p. 455).

The biography of Joseph Goebbels provides a deeply comprehensive and intricately detailed account of his remarkable life and multifaceted character. It meticulously delves into the formative struggles and profoundly influencing his subsequent personal development and meteoric political ascent.

2.3 The psychological characteristics of Goebbels's personality

The psychological characteristics of Joseph Goebbels reveal a complex and deeply troubling personality, marked by traits typical of a master manipulator. His psychological

profile highlights several key characteristics that were instrumental in his role as the Nazi regime's chief propagandist.

Firstly, Goebbels possessed an extraordinary level of charisma and persuasion. His magnetic charisma and inherent ability to connect with people on an emotional level allowed him to effectively sway public opinion. Goebbels was a gifted orator whose eloquence and capacity for emotional resonance enabled him to garner the trust and loyalty of his followers. This personal charm was a tool he wielded skillfully, manipulating the emotions of the masses to align with his political objectives and to further the agenda of the Nazi regime (Bytwerk, 2004, p. 56).

Another significant aspect of Goebbels personality was his profound narcissism and egocentrism. Goebbels exhibited a constant need for admiration and attention, fueled by an inflated sense of his own superiority and infallibility. This narcissistic self-image drove him to pursue power and influence relentlessly, often at great cost. His belief in his own importance allowed him to rationalize his manipulative and often unethical actions as necessary means to achieve his political ambitions and to maintain

his position within the Nazi hierarchy (Koonz, 2003, p. 121).

Lastly, Goebbels psychological profile was marked by a disturbing lack of empathy and a capacity for cruelty. Despite his ability to emotionally engage with the masses, he was devoid of genuine empathy for others. Goebbels manipulation of human emotions was not only calculated but also cruel, as evidenced by his systematic use of propaganda to disseminate falsehoods, incite hatred, and justify acts of violence. His contempt for human dignity and individual freedom was apparent in his treatment of people as mere tools to be used in his quest for power (Rees, 2012, p. 89).

2.4 goebbels propaganda techniques

There is no debate over the fact that the primary objective of Nazi propaganda was to further the Nazi party and its leader. However, it is the opinion of Mary Fulbrook that, *quot ;The picture of a monolithic, all-embracing propaganda machine, exercising complete control over the media and manipulating public opinion at will, is clearly a myth.quot ;* (Fulbrook, 1992, p. 6).

This might be the case, since not all Germans were *quot ;victimsquot ;* of propaganda in many ways. Goebbels made an effort to sway public opinion by using contemporary technological innovations to gain the knowledge he needed to maintain complete control over public opinion. Weekly meetings of a special committee were held by Goebbels throughout his tenure as propaganda minister. Created in 1933, the Volk and Propaganda group included Goebbels personal advisors as well as the chiefs of numerous other propaganda organizations, including the army and foreign ministries, starting in October 1942. These sessions, presided over by Goebbels, examined the state of politics in general and assessed the material in terms of psychological warfare and its application in forming and influencing public opinion. Using such methods and techniques, Goebbels had established a belief that Nazi propaganda was, in fact, an invisible weapon. (Fischer, 1948, p. 71 cited in Welch, 1983, p. 179).

Because propaganda is always a tool to obtain an advantage over its target, there is a strong association between this idea and propaganda. Prominent marketing initiatives were launched in an effort to secure the required funding. Although the *quot ;Life Donation quot ;* and *quot ;Winter Aidquot ;* campaigns were little more than forced means of obtaining funds and guaranteeing the implementation of all propaganda, Goebbels saw them as opportunities to display public duty.

Throughout history, a variety of methods have been used to promote and influence particular attitudes and beliefs. Every able leader recognizes the potent force of propaganda, whether it be in forms of written, oral, or visual context. Propaganda allows one man to control the thoughts of many. It can be displayed by using noble acts done in the past, giving false impressions, or even outrightly changing history. Before an investigation can be made into the techniques used by Goebbels, it is first necessary to give the definition of propaganda and the nature of his role in Nazi Germany. David Welch suggests that, *quot ;The term propaganda does not have fixed connotations in this period, and in some respects is anachronistic. It is best looked at here as an instrument of state, especially in times of war, to obtain a specific objective... This assumed the form of control of information, censorship... and control of public opinion...quot ;* (Welch in Passey, 1992, p. 2). For the purpose of this essay, Welchs definition of

propaganda will suffice. The Nazi government under the control of Hitler and, in particular, the role of Joseph Goebbels aimed to censor and obtain full control of public opinion through the use of propaganda during a period of war.

Interpretations of Joseph Goebbels and his propaganda are typically negative, largely due to our general tendency to view propagandists as ruthless and manipulative figures. Ironically, many of the efforts to discredit Adolf Hitler and his regime have centered on scandal, thus overshadowing nuanced understandings of figures like Goebbels. Goebbels himself remarked that “censorship is a question of proper beginnings,” reflecting his calculated approach to controlling information (Longerich, 2015, p. 201). Despite his notorious role in Nazi propaganda, Goebbels also gained post-war recognition for his scientific contributions, including his work as a biologist and museum curator, and for writing extensively on science and technology (Evans, 2005, p. 324). His later work, such as serving as president of the National Society for the Preservation of Science and Technology, further complicates his legacy (Kershaw, 2008, p. 112). However, Goebbels' reputation remains indelibly tied to his propaganda efforts. With an incomplete and fragmented picture of Goebbels, it becomes difficult to fully grasp the essence and mechanics of his propaganda. Given the vast scale of Nazi propaganda and Goebbels involvement in all aspects of German culture, developing a theory specific to his propaganda is a complex task. For now, this study aims to examine the principles of propaganda that Goebbels applied (Rees, 2012, p. 156).

2.4.1 Goebbels propaganda strategies

The aim of propaganda is to influence people's opinions and therefore their actions, for some end. It is a systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.

The considerably biased nature of the information being presented is a key characteristic of propaganda. Propaganda can be found in all aspects of communication including : books, newspapers, posters, radio, television, and so on. The manner in which information is transmitted can vary greatly and is subjected to the technological advancements in media. With the dawn of the internet age, propaganda is becoming more and more prevalent due to the relative ease with which information can be transmitted to an audience.

Often information presented in one form of media is not necessarily the manner in which it is received and interpreted by its audience. Even a large and overt attempt to persuade an audience may be unsuccessful, thus propaganda effectiveness can vary. In the case that the information does not change an individual's confirmed beliefs it may still be successful in reinforcement to strengthen the existing beliefs. Usually the definitive success of

the propaganda can be only judged retrospectively, This process involves analyzing the outcomes of the propaganda campaign to assess its effectiveness in shaping the desired perceptions, beliefs, and actions. To sustain his control over public opinion and propagate Nazi ideology, Goebbels developed a range of psychological manipulation techniques that proved to be devastatingly effective. The following

are propaganda techniques derived from Goebbels theories, as outlined by Doob (1950) in his article *Goebbels' Principles of Propaganda* (as cited in Adnan, 2021, p. 140). These principles offer a comprehensive and detailed framework for creating persuasive propaganda.

1. manipulation of mass media

Throughout his career, Joseph Goebbels employed various methods to gain and maintain the support of a country that was slowly growing to distrust the Nazi party. One such method he employed that effectively established Nazi ideology in the minds of the German public was the manipulation of the mass media. Goebbels realized that to establish Nazi ideology, the support of the German people would have to be gained, as well as having to change the hearts and minds of those who did not initially support the party's views. The most effective way to do this would be to employ propaganda to shape and manipulate public opinion.

The most effective means of mass communication at the time were the printed media, and the relatively new forms of communication which included the radio and film. Throughout his time as the leading power over German propaganda, Goebbels used all these forms of media to proclaim his message, and was largely successful.

— controlling newspapers and radio



Goebbels' realization that the party's programs could not succeed without the use of mass media to successfully get the message out to the German people was crucial to the creation of Nazi propaganda in the mid-1930s. Within the Nazi party, a recognition of the significance of propaganda developed for a number of reasons. The vast majority of Germans were the group that the Nazis most wanted to endorse their policies, or at the very least tolerate them passively. It would be difficult to accomplish this without actively participating in the party and being aware of its policies.

<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/the-moral-failings-of-american-press-coverage-of-nazi-germany>

During their ascent to power, the Nazi party's leaders were successful in implementing their policies locally throughout Germany. Nevertheless, they regularly felt let down by the results of national elections and encountered opposition when attempting to enact laws at the federal level. Occasionally, a problem helped someone obtain power, only to have that authority later lost because of a shift in public sentiment. Some in the Nazi party felt that Hitler should reveal his intentions in order to seize power, but this led to the failed 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. (Britannica)

— Using Photography and Film

<https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo/gestapo-poster.html?sortBy=relevant>

He shaped public opinion and advanced Nazi ideology by taking use of photography's immediacy, emotional impact, simplicity, and accessibility. Photographs were employed under his supervision to shape the narrative, create a cult of personality around Adolf Hitler, condemn



Goebbels did not give photography any thought as a propaganda tool when he first started his profession. His belief was that photographs were too malleable, as seen by his statement, "The photograph is too subjective to be able to press it into the service of a great reality that is the will of our historical mission." (Bate , D 2016) Besides, he had thought it was cheaper to hire foreign picture companies and that Germany could not compete with the likes of France and the UK. But Goebbels grasped the necessity of visual propaganda as the Second World War approached. Because photography evokes emotions and conveys messages quickly, it has great potential for use in propaganda, as noted by Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany.

imagined opponents, and exalt Aryan principles. Along with keeping morale up and legitimizing the regime's discriminatory policies, these pictures were crucial in galvanizing support for the war effort. Goebbels recognized the persuasive power of film, which he saw as an effective medium to convey Nazi propaganda to the masses. He once stated, "Film is a weapon. Its pictures pass directly to the heart" (Goebbels, n.d., p. 156). Goebbels tightened his grip over the German film industry in an attempt to use the medium for propaganda. In 1933, Hitler established the Reich Film Chamber, which was in charge of supervising all facets of the creation, distribution, and display of motion pictures. Goebbels was able to guarantee that movies promoted the appropriate themes and were in line with Nazi ideology thanks to this agency. Goebbels also played a direct role in the production of films, often providing guidance on scriptwriting, casting, and editing. He was involved in the creation of over 1,000 films during his tenure as Reich Minister of Propaganda (Welch, 2002). Many of these movies included overt propaganda, like the Leni Riefenstahl-directed 1935 picture "Triumph of the Will," which exalted Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party. Joseph Goebbels realized that movies had the power to influence public opinion and reach a large audience.

— Staged Events and Rallies

Staging events and rallies was a key tactic in Nazi propaganda, similar to the use of media, as both served the purpose of instilling a subconscious impression on the minds of the German people. These events were designed to be immersive, rendering audiences unable to think about anything related to the event without reinforcing the intended message. One of the most notable pre-war events was the Nuremberg Rallies, which became a hallmark of Nazi propaganda. The first of these rallies took place from August 27th to 30th, 1933, and they quickly became central to the Nazi propaganda effort (Evans, 2005, p. 229).

The 1934 Nuremberg Rally, in particular, was immortalized in Goebbels' propaganda film *Triumph of the Will*, directed by Leni Riefenstahl. While the film was not released until after the event due to political tensions related to the execution of Ernst Röhm, it became one of the most powerful tools for spreading Nazi ideology through visual propaganda (Longerich, 2015, p. 292). Goebbels, as head of the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, understood the importance of large-scale rallies and events in reinforcing Hitler's cult of personality and

the sense of unity among Germans. These rallies, with their grandiose displays of order and military might, became synonymous with the image of the Nazi regime (Kershaw, 2008, p. 385).

Another major event orchestrated by Goebbels was the celebration of Hitler's return to the Rhineland in 1936, in defiance of the Treaty of Versailles. This event produced more than 30 minutes of high-quality propaganda footage, later released as a newsreel titled *Fire Over Germany*. The film celebrated Germany's violation of the Versailles Treaty as a heroic act of defiance, reinforcing the narrative of Germany's resurgence under Nazi leadership (Herf, 2006, p. 163).

Both Hitler and Goebbels were firm believers in the power of propaganda to influence public opinion. Goebbels, in particular, viewed propaganda as a form of art. His approach to staging events and orchestrating massive rallies was highly strategic, meant to evoke deep emotional responses and reinforce Nazi ideology. As Goebbels once said, "Propaganda is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. If the means achieves the end, then the means is good" (Goebbels, 1934/1972, p. 44). His artistry in propaganda led some to consider him a master of the craft. Parrington (1948) even remarked that "propaganda is an applied art," a sentiment that aligns with Goebbels' meticulous and creative approach to shaping public perception

2. Portrayal of Enemies as Evil and Dangerous

To understand the essence of Nazi propaganda from 1933 to 1945, it is critical to explore the social, political, and historical context of Germany, alongside the motivations behind the creation of its propaganda. Nazi propaganda did not exist in a vacuum; it was tailored to resonate with the fears, prejudices, and desires of various segments of German society. Extensive research must examine how different social groups, including Jews, ethnic Germans ("Reichsdeutsche"), and soldiers, were targeted by Nazi messaging. Jews, in particular, were vilified as dangerous enemies to the nation, blamed for Germany's economic struggles, and portrayed as a corrupting force undermining traditional values and national unity (Koonz, 2003, p. 168). Soldiers, on the other hand, were depicted as protectors of the "fatherland," pitted against these so-called enemies of the state (Longerich, 2015, p. 342).

Furthermore, the Nazis skillfully manipulated traditional German values such as nationalism, family, and loyalty through propaganda and legislation to foster broad support. This manipulation allowed the regime to frame its aggressive policies as morally just, turning propaganda into a tool that weaponized patriotism (Herf, 2006, p. 87). The combination of deeply rooted anti-Semitism, economic despair, and a fractured national identity allowed Nazi propagandists to cast enemies as both evil and dangerous. Through mass media, posters, films, and public speeches, the Nazis presented Jews, communists, and other perceived threats as existential dangers to the German way of life (Rees, 2012, p. 192).

One of the central debates among contemporary scholars concerns whether Nazi propaganda consistently portrayed adversaries as evil and threatening. Many authors, such as Ian Kershaw (2008), argue that this depiction of enemies as dangerous was a hallmark of Nazi propaganda, es-

sential for mobilizing both fear and hate (Kershaw, 2008, p. 303). These representations provided the ideological justification for extreme measures, such as the persecution and eventual extermination of the Jewish population. However, while Nazi propaganda's focus on casting enemies as evil is widely recognized, a comprehensive understanding of its effects requires analyzing other dimensions of enemy portrayal, including how these depictions shifted according to wartime needs and the changing landscape of public opinion. For example, during the later years of World War II, Nazi propaganda intensified its focus on external threats, such as the Allies, portraying them as destroyers of German civilization (Herf, 2006, p. 105).

A full understanding of Nazi propaganda's role during this period requires not only an analysis of the portrayal of enemies but also the ways in which these portrayals intersected with broader cultural and social ideals. By examining how propaganda simultaneously dehumanized adversaries and exalted German values, scholars can better appreciate the complex role this tool played in securing the complicity of a large portion of the German population in the atrocities of the Nazi regime.

— Demonizing Opponents

Joseph Goebbels firmly believed that propaganda was a weapon in total war, with the goal of creating the perception of total defeat after every engagement, regardless of the actual outcome. He aimed to instill the impression that every German military success was a rightful reclamation of territory, while any loss was catastrophic for the enemy (Herf, 2006, p. 201).

Goebbels used propaganda to manipulate both German morale and the enemy's perception of the war. He believed that while it was difficult to directly impact the morale of an enemy population, it could be indirectly influenced by provoking internal revolt against governments that led their people into disastrous situations. As Goebbels famously stated, "We are prepared to commit the total strength of the German nation, and a total victory can only be achieved by the annihilation of an enemy's will to resist" (Goebbels, 1934/1972, p. 88). This quote perfectly encapsulates his definition of total war, and Goebbels considered propaganda an integral component of the war effort.

At the outbreak of the war, Goebbels outlined the importance of controlling the narrative, especially when it came to the perception of victory or defeat. In his speech predicting "The Big Lie," Goebbels explained the nature of the coming conflict and the role propaganda would play. He concluded the speech with the chilling words: "Woe to the defeated; in war, lies—up until now, at least—have always been the victor's only consolation" (Herf, 2006, p. 203). Goebbels understood that an enemy's morale was closely tied to its perception of the outcome. By convincing an opponent that a single battle loss equaled a total defeat, Goebbels sought to affect the overall outcome of the war. Goebbels' demonization strategy extended beyond external enemies and was also used against internal "enemies" of the regime. He used real or fictitious traits of individuals or groups, exaggerated them to grotesque extremes, and presented them to the public as dangerous and vile. The goal was to make these exaggerated traits seem so vile that the public would demand the enemy's destruction at all costs (Longerich,

2015, p. 314). Goebbels' Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda carried this tactic further than any other Nazi propaganda agency, ensuring that the public's hatred for the regime's enemies was amplified to an extreme degree (Evans, 2005, p. 248).

— Creating a Sense of Threat

Goebbels also mastered the art of creating a sense of threat, whether real or imagined, to drive public opinion. A sense of immediate danger has historically been a potent motivator for uniting the population behind a government, particularly in times of war. Goebbels believed that the perception of a close threat would stifle criticism and generate maximum support for the regime. He systematically manipulated the public by creating a sense of vulnerability in the government, implying that it was weak and exposed to enemy attack. Goebbels knew that the German populace would infer that an enemy attack was imminent during this period of perceived weakness (Herf, 2006, p. 210).

This strategy of cultivating fear was often enough to trigger public anxiety, but Goebbels could further escalate the situation by showing that the German military was unprepared for a potential attack and that certain geographical areas were indefensible. This created an atmosphere of urgency and terror, which sometimes even led to riots or public outcry against perceived government inaction (Longerich, 2015, p. 356). By creating this

sense of immediate threat, Goebbels was able to push the population into a state of heightened fear, making them more susceptible to the Nazi party's solutions, which often involved aggressive action against the perceived enemy.

— Associating Enemies with Negative Traits

Goebbels' propaganda strategy also involved associating enemies with specific negative traits, ensuring that they were always at a disadvantage in the eyes of the public. Goebbels maintained that any attempt by the enemy to rehabilitate their image or present their cause should be sabotaged. He emphasized the importance of denying the enemy access to forums where they might present their case or sway public opinion. In 1942, for instance, the Nazi propaganda ministry introduced penalties for any journalist who mentioned that General Franco of Spain was considering negotiating a separate peace with Britain. Goebbels believed that portraying Spain too favorably could undermine Germany's efforts (Evans, 2005, p. 293). Similarly, the BBC was banned from broadcasting to Eastern Europe, as Goebbels argued that British media would spread messages of "class warfare and social decay," which could harm German morale.

In occupied nations, local media was either censored or replaced with German-controlled content. This was done through direct force, intimidation, or cooperation with local governments, ensuring that no positive portrayals of enemies were disseminated. For example, when the Romanian government requested that indigenous Saxons working in the Transylvanian German Civil Service be excluded from the March 1943 Waffen SS conscription, this request was

overridden by German influence, promoting the Nazi principle of "Europeans first, Germans always" (Herf, 2006, p. 228).

A key element of this strategy was the creation of emotionally charged phrases and labels to describe enemies. Goebbels and Hitler often referred to their opponents as "Jewish Bolsheviks" or "Internationalists," implying that their motivations were not aligned with national interests but were instead rooted in dangerous, subversive ideologies. Goebbels once noted, "Words have a peculiar power of their own and a quality that affects the soul" (Goebbels, 1934/1972, p. 56). This tactic of framing enemies with such emotionally charged terms weakened their credibility and morale before the first shot was fired. By consistently associating enemies with negative traits, Goebbels ensured that they were isolated and

discredited in the eyes of the public, giving the Nazi regime a psychological advantage (Longerich, 2015, p. 354).

3. psychological and emotional manipulation

In order to steer public opinion away from opposition against the Nazi dictatorship, Goebbels's systematic exploitation of the anxieties of the German people resulted in a generalized sense of uneasiness and relative pessimism. Additionally, it was clear that as Germany's chances of winning the war declined, Goebbels placed more emphasis on this specific kind of propaganda, utilizing it as a means of sustaining German morale in the face of certain military loss, even if this practice persisted throughout his tenure as propaganda minister.

— Exploitation of Fear and Insecurity

Joseph Goebbels manipulation of fear and insecurity among the German populace was one of the most powerful tools in the Nazi propaganda arsenal. His ability to exploit the deepest fears of ordinary citizens contributed to a sense of anxiety that permeated the country, diverting attention from potential dissent and consolidating support for the Nazi regime. Goebbels believed that the exploitation of fear could be a means of psychologically controlling the masses. As he stated, "It is not propaganda's task to be intelligent, its task is to lead to success" (Goebbels, 1934/1972, p. 45). This reflected his belief that propaganda should appeal to emotions, not reason. Throughout his tenure as Minister of Propaganda, Goebbels deployed fear-based messaging to highlight external threats, particularly in relation to Germany's foreign policy. His use of newspapers, leaflets, rallies, and Hitler's speeches reinforced the narrative that Germany was surrounded by hostile enemies ready to strike at any moment of perceived weakness. For example, Goebbels frequently suggested that an invasion was imminent, creating a siege mentality among the German public (Longerich, 2015, p. 387). Goebbels' manipulation of public fear intensified as the fortunes of war turned against Germany, with increasingly desperate efforts to preserve morale through heightened anxiety about external threats.

Goebbels recognized that people who are fearful are more susceptible to manipulation, which is why his strategy hinged on cultivating existing feelings of insecurity. This tactic became

even more pronounced as Germany's military situation deteriorated. In one of his most famous speeches in 1943, the Sportpalast Speech, Goebbels called for "total war," declaring, "Do you want total war? If necessary, do you want a war more total and radical than anything we can even imagine today?" (Goebbels, 1943/2008, p. 270). This appeal to fear—emphasizing the need to rally against a world conspiring to destroy Germany—successfully incited the German populace to support the war effort, despite growing losses.

— Manipulation of National Pride

Goebbels also skillfully manipulated national pride to bolster the Nazi regime's ideological objectives. He understood that fostering a sense of collective pride in the nation would further unite the German people under the banner of National Socialism. One of Goebbels' most notable achievements was his ability to intertwine fear and national pride, creating a dichotomy in which Germans were portrayed as both victims and heroes. Goebbels once remarked, "We do not talk to say something, but to obtain a certain effect" (Goebbels, 1934/1972, p. 44). This principle guided his use of propaganda, which was designed to evoke powerful emotions such as pride in the nation's past, particularly its military history.

A clear example of Goebbels manipulation of national pride was during the 1936 Olympics, held in Berlin. The games were a propaganda spectacle for the Nazi regime, showcasing Germany's resurgence on the world stage. The event fostered a sense of pride and unity, with athletes and spectators alike crying during the national anthems and giving the Nazi salute (Evans, 2005, p. 247).

This emotional display of loyalty to the regime reinforced the idea that Germany had regained its strength and status as a world power, further instilling nationalistic fervor among the German people.

In addition, Goebbels utilized historical symbols and narratives to tie Nazi ideology to Germany's past glories. He redefined ancient Germanic symbols, such as the runes, to evoke pride in the nation's cultural heritage while simultaneously advancing the Nazi racial agenda (Herf, 2006, p. 153). By doing so, Goebbels sought to create a sense of continuity between Germany's historical achievements and the purported triumphs of the Nazi regime.

— Creation of a Siege Mentality

One of Goebbels' most effective propaganda strategies was the creation of a siege mentality, where the German people were made to believe that they were under constant threat from external and internal enemies. This tactic was rooted in the collective memory of the Treaty of Versailles and the humiliation of World War I. Goebbels capitalized on these national traumas by continuously portraying Germany as the victim of international conspiracies aimed at its destruction. He asserted, "The most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly—it must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over" (Goebbels, 1934/1972, p. 43). Repetition was key to instilling

this siege mentality in the German populace.

This sense of constant danger was used to justify Nazi aggression, particularly in relation to foreign policy. Goebbels frequently framed Germany's actions as defensive measures against foreign threats, which he characterized as existential. The portrayal of the Allies as brutal and malevolent enemies played a significant role in this narrative, with Goebbels emphasizing the need for Germans to unite and fight against an encroaching enemy. As Germany's military situation worsened, Goebbels increased the intensity of this rhetoric, warning that surrender would lead to Germany's destruction. In one of his wartime speeches, he declared, "The nation must rally behind its Führer and fight until the bitter end, for we are defending not only our land but the very existence of our people" (Goebbels, 1943/2008, p. 271).

By cultivating fear and the belief that Germany was surrounded by enemies, Goebbels was able to suppress opposition to the regime and maintain public support for the war effort, even in the face of devastating losses. The combination of fear, national pride, and a siege mentality allowed Goebbels to manipulate the emotions of the German people and keep them aligned with Nazi goals, despite the increasingly dire circumstances.

4. manipulation of language

In fact, Goebbels felt that propaganda slogans were only successful once they were known and understood by the majority of the populace. He believed that only after reaching this critical mass could slogans effectively influence public opinion. This process required time and patience, as slogans had to be repeated continually in various forms to reach every sector of the community. Once this was achieved, the slogan would resonate with the public, reinforcing the underlying message, making it easier to understand and accept (Longerich, 2015, p. 234). According to Goebbels, an accepted slogan became a new truth in the eyes of the public, thus making it a powerful tool to reshape public opinion (Kershaw, 2008, p. 301).

Goebbels also believed that words had a crucial role to play in molding public opinion. The phrase "guns before butter" encapsulates his belief that language should be used to implant the regime's aims in the minds of the people. By condensing these aims into short,

memorable phrases, there was a greater chance that the masses would understand and accept them (Herf, 2006, p. 102).

— Use of Propaganda Slogans

Once a slogan was accepted, Goebbels argued that it would evolve into its second stage, becoming a shorthand expression of a doctrine. In his diaries, Goebbels noted the Nazi slogan "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer" and commented that it was "the most complete and terse political formula invented in our history"; (Goebbels, 1942/2008, p. 58). Over time, this slogan became so familiar to the masses that it entered into everyday conversations, often used without intention. This, Goebbels believed, was the culmination of successful propaganda, where the slogan effectively became the viewpoint of the masses (Kershaw, 2008,

p. 303).

Goebbels distinguished between the creation of a slogan and its transformation into a unifying, mass phenomenon. In his diaries, he outlined the process of creating a successful slogan, emphasizing that it must consist of only a few words, arranged in the correct order, and used consistently until the end of the campaign (Evans, 2005, p. 145). The slogan should be communicated through various means—on literature, letterheads, and factory walls. Once it permeated the minds of the masses, the slogan could manipulate public opinion in favor of the propagator. Goebbels famously noted, “people will accept this truth if it is only drummed into their ears long enough and loud enough” (Evans, 2005, p. 145).

— Creation of New Terminology

Goebbels referred to the war in the Soviet Union as a struggle between “European and Asiatic Russia”; an attempt to frame the conflict as a battle between Western civilization and the hordes of Genghis Khan. This language influenced public perception of the Eastern Front and created new political terminology designed to justify the war of annihilation in the East (Herf, 2006, p. 108). Similarly, Goebbels criticized the use of the term “worker”; instead of “German worker”; arguing that the failure to differentiate between the two played a role in “destroying our national consciousness” (Longerich, 2015, p. 241). He believed that neutral language was a hindrance to national socialism and that by creating the term “German worker”; the Nazi regime could transform its ideology into something representative of the entire German people.

Goebbels was acutely aware of the link between language and thought. He believed that by controlling language, it was possible to control the way people think. One of the simplest yet most effective methods of controlling language was through the creation of new terminology. Goebbels Germany offers numerous examples of ongoing attempts to create new political language (Longerich, 2015, p. 234).

— Manipulation of Public Discourse

Goebbels also manipulated discourse within different sectors of society to fragment opposing public opinion. He believed that a clear division needed to be made between intellectuals and the general public. He saw intellectuals as less susceptible to propaganda and thus more likely to oppose the regime (Evans, 2005, p. 198). To mitigate this, Goebbels sought to remove intellectuals from active political discourse and discourage political interest in their social circles. Meanwhile, he aimed to instill a narrowly defined interest in politics within the working classes and youth, ensuring that the message reflected government policy (Koonz, 2003, p. 211). An official statement from the Ministry of Enlightenment and Propaganda in 1933 described Goebbels plan for a “two-tier” propaganda system, with simple, emotion-centric propaganda for the wider population and more complex discussions reserved for closed circles of intellectuals. Through the manipulation of language and discourse, the underlying values of a culture can be transformed. Goebbels paid close attention to the terminology used in media, believing that certain words could implant specific ideas in the minds of the public. He

was particularly interested in the terms *socialism*; and *social democracy*; Goebbels believed that foreign and anti-German influences had led to the use of *socialism*; in relation to Social Democrat policy. To counter this, he encouraged the NSDAP to adopt the term *socialism*; in reference to its own policies and to rebrand Social Democrats as *liberals*;—a word with less respected connotations at the time (Longerich, 2015, p. 276). This strategy was implemented in 1933, when Goebbels instructed the German press to cease using the term *Social Democrats*; and instead refer to them as *liberals*; hoping to demean the opposition while aligning NSDAP policies with socialist sentiment.

— Censorship and Suppression of Dissenting Voices

Goebbels believed that the only acceptable form of political practice was propaganda in support of the state and its policies. In his view, any propaganda against the state was a politically criminal act. He defined enemies of the state as those who, in any way, attacked its

distinctiveness and harmed its existence (Longerich, 2015, p. 276). Censorship, therefore, became an essential tool for maintaining internal unity and securing freedom of movement necessary for the Nazi regime's struggles, particularly during World War II. In a world filled with external and internal enemies, the goal of Nazi Germany was to cleanse itself of all alien and disturbing elements, politically, morally, and culturally (Herf, 2006, p. 119). Goebbels' propaganda aimed to mobilize and integrate the public around the leadership, creating a unified, state-controlled public opinion that would not be disturbed by the realities of war.

2.5 influence on modern communication

The propaganda efforts led by Joseph Goebbels had profound and far-reaching consequences, not only for Nazi Germany but for the broader study of communication and media. Goebbels's work demonstrated the terrifying potential of propaganda when wielded by a totalitarian regime. His strategies were not only effective in consolidating Nazi power within Germany but also in galvanizing widespread support for the regime's most heinous policies, including the Holocaust.

One of the most significant aspects of Goebbels's propaganda was its role in the Nazi war machine. By controlling the narrative, Goebbels was able to maintain public support for the war effort, even as the situation became increasingly dire for Germany. His propaganda created an image of invincibility around Hitler and the Nazi leadership, fostering a sense of inevitability about their victory. This manipulation of public sentiment was crucial in sustaining the war effort and maintaining order within the Third Reich.

Furthermore, Goebbels's use of propaganda has had a lasting impact on how propaganda is understood and studied today. His methods have been analyzed and documented extensively, serving as a grim reminder of how media can be manipulated to serve destructive ends. The techniques he developed—such as the *Big Lie*; (the idea that a lie, if audacious enough and repeated often, will be accepted as truth), the use of fear and scapegoating, and the control of cultural and artistic expression—are still relevant in discussions about media ethics, political communication, and the role of

propaganda in modern society.

The legacy of Goebbels's propaganda extends beyond historical analysis. His methods have been adapted, intentionally or unintentionally, by various governments and organizations throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. The study of Goebbels's propaganda efforts is therefore not just an examination of a dark chapter in history, but a critical inquiry into the ways in which communication can be used to influence, control, and manipulate populations. Understanding his impact is essential for safeguarding against the abuse of propaganda in the future.

2.5.1 Characteristics of Modern Propaganda

Modern propaganda is defined as mass communication that has a clear purpose and intended audience. It works to manipulate information for psychological gain. To achieve its goals, it utilizes unprecedented accessibility to modern communication technologies and media, such as TV, internet, and social media. Currently, massive and viral modern propaganda tools are more elaborated and programmed by governments or organizations than common people. As a result, some internet-based phenomena could develop into more dangerous propaganda tools. This chapter explores the characteristics of modern propaganda, including psychological manipulation, disinformation, and the novelty of propaganda in social media environments, which also influence the understanding of the work.

Modern mass propaganda in the internet and social media age is investigated, taking current worldwide trending topics, movements, and fears into account. These topics are often disregarded or misinterpreted by those communicating, leading to collective frustration. Various topics are viewed through previously developed image architectures of world understanding and the means of their psychological manipulation. The aim is to avoid simply propagating wrong, oversimplified, or incomplete images and topics that can spread widely and virally. Additionally, the chapter presents and reveals the simple manipulation and misuse of mass propaganda by elaborated and focused mind fixation.

Based on previous works, mass modern propaganda on the internet and social media worldwide is economically and technologically investigated. Deceptive actions that lead to viral success and fan collectivism are taken into account. These actions can develop into more aggressive and funded purposed propaganda, which is often misused for the direct benefit of

politicians or business elites. Phenomena that are generally accepted for entertainment are examined within the frameworks of propagandaism.

The fusion of exaggerating intention fixation and band mental contagion, which is a possible side effect of the technical facilities of the media fully utilized by the propagandists, is also indicated. This misuse is often misinterpreted or disregarded, leading to more widespread misinforming and oversimplifying. The chapter details the novelty of mass modern propaganda in the internet and social media age, in accordance with currently widely shared trends and technologies of propagandaism. It supports the work and characters specifically examined in the further aspects.

The recent phenomena of mass collective frights, global embarrassment, internet trolling, or turntable crises, such as collective witch hunts, blaming, call-outs, globally shared propagate, frustration, panic, or obsolescence, are described and examined. These phenomena characterize more viral modern propaganda

tools intended for collective weltanschauung shaping or distraction.

2.5.2 Use of Social Media Platforms

One prevalent practice employed largely during the contemporary 21st century is the use of social media platforms to disseminate several forms of propaganda. This pattern emerged after the widespread use of social media in the early 21st century and was defined as “a form of communication that attempts to promote a certain political agenda and influence the target audience’s point of view” by (Seo and Ebrahim, 2019).

In their visual propaganda on Facebook : A comparative analysis of Syrian conflict study, they found that actors of the Syrian conflict employed Facebook as a medium to share their propaganda imagery “to portray the other party negatively, promote the own party, or provoke emotional responses from the target audience.” Similarly, (Da San Martino et al., 2020) studied how propaganda campaigns aimed at influencing people’s mindset with the

purpose of advancing a specific agenda exploited the anonymity of the Internet and the microprofiling ability of social networks.

These campaigns utilize automated and coordinated networks of accounts to reach millions of social network users with persuasive messages. Due to the potential implications for society and democracy, this phenomenon has gained increased attention from the perspective of academics, politicians, and social media organizations. While social networks experimented with different solutions to cope with computational propaganda, the academic community has also explored several angles, including the characterization of such malign practices, the analysis of their relevance and effects, and the development of automated methods to detect them.

2.5.3 Propaganda in Modern Communication

The rapid development of the internet and digital communication has dramatically transformed the way propaganda is preserved, analyzed, and utilized. Modern propaganda, influenced heavily by historical techniques pioneered by figures like Joseph Goebbels, has become more personalized, decentralized, and quicker in execution and distribution, making it more challenging to track and regulate (Boardman, 2011, p. 45).

Goebbels’ emphasis on centralized control of media and the repeated delivery of simple, emotionally charged messages remains relevant in this digital age. His notion that the public could be swayed by repetitive, emotionally resonant messages is now amplified by the internet’s speed and reach (Welch, 2015, p. 67). Today’s net-centric propaganda builds upon these foundational principles, altering how social and global actors perceive and engage with information.

A historical understanding of state propaganda mechanisms, particularly those used by Goebbels, allows contemporary scholars to better assess the effectiveness of modern state propaganda. Goebbels’ strategy of controlling narratives through mass media provides a framework for understanding how propaganda adapts to the digital era. Berthon et al. (2017) describe propaganda as an quot ;attempt to shape

or control the mental landscape of those at an informational disadvantage quot ; (p. 267), which resonates with Goebbels' techniques.

The rise of the internet and social media, however, has empowered these disadvantaged groups to create and disseminate counter-narratives. Yet, despite these advancements, traditional propaganda—produced by sovereign states to influence public opinion—still operates today and has been amplified by digital technologies (Berthon et al., 2017, p. 270). The continuous evolution of propaganda techniques suggests that Goebbels core strategies remain deeply embedded in the fabric of modern communication.

The free exchange of information is crucial to global communication systems. However, systemic factors such as markets, national governments, and international institutions can curtail this flow by restricting free speech, similar to how Goebbels suppressed dissenting opinions in Nazi Germany (Seton Hall University, 2016, p. 89). His strategies of controlling the media to manipulate narratives are mirrored in contemporary authoritarian regimes, where propaganda efforts restrict access to free and diverse information. Today, training individuals to strategically engage with communication systems will better equip them to resist modern efforts at narrative manipulation and counteract the propaganda rooted in Goebbels' methodologies.

Social Media impact

The influence of social media on communication strategies has grown substantially. Goebbels' manipulation of traditional media channels can be seen as a precursor to how brands and PR professionals now act as mediators of ideology, citizenship, and sociality on digital platforms (Monaci, 2019, p. 130). While Goebbels centralized propaganda to control public perception, modern social media decentralizes content creation, allowing for a wider distribution of both factual and manipulated information. This shift has produced real-world examples of transnational issues, crises, and controversies that frequently emerge in social and mass media, with brands and political actors managing these discussions much like Goebbels managed Nazi narratives during World War II.

Qualitative research has examined the brand-follower relationship and the nature of the socially mediated public sphere, providing insights into the evolving role of propaganda in digital spaces (Billings, 2017, p. 83). Post-structuralist and discourse analysis approaches have been employed to explore the convergence of brands, journalism, and user-generated

content in social media. These studies highlight how the foundational tactics of propaganda, particularly those developed by Goebbels, persist in modern public relations strategies. The convergence of commercial branding and user-generated content mirrors Goebbels strategic use of media to promote nationalistic narratives while suppressing dissent, further illustrating the ongoing relevance of historical propaganda techniques in the digital age.

Political Impact : Erosion of Trust in Institutions

The erosion of trust in political and social institutions has become a growing concern in an era marked by the pervasive influence of modern propaganda. Joseph Goebbels, the infamous propaganda

minister of Nazi Germany, pioneered methods of mass media manipulation and state-controlled narratives, laying the groundwork for modern disinformation tactics. Goebbels believed in the power of repetitive messaging, stating, "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it" (Welch, 2015, p. 45). His techniques of manipulating information and shaping public opinion through mass media have been adapted in today's digital landscape, exacerbating public distrust in institutions as disinformation and conspiracy theories spread rapidly online (Lewandowsky, Ecker, amp ; Cook, 2017, p. 352).

Goebbels' strategy of targeting emotions and fears is reflected in modern political propaganda, which often leverages social media platforms to spread highly polarized, emotionally charged content. The decentralized nature of social media allows propaganda to bypass traditional gatekeepers, such as news organizations and government oversight, similar to how Goebbels circumvented dissenting voices through state-controlled media during the Nazi regime (Tucker et al., 2018, p. 43). The rapid dissemination of misleading or biased content on platforms like Facebook and Twitter can erode the credibility of political leaders, electoral systems, and even democratic governance itself. The resurgence of authoritarian narratives online reflects Goebbels belief in using media as a weapon to destabilize democratic norms and institutions (Welch, 2015, p. 67).

The phenomenon of "echo chambers" and "filter bubbles" on social media, where users are primarily exposed to information that reinforces their preexisting beliefs, also echoes Goebbels emphasis on controlling the flow of information. In modern times, this selective exposure is exacerbated by algorithmic content delivery, reinforcing distrust in institutions

and further polarizing public opinion (Sunstein, 2018, p. 131). This insular media consumption model was an early goal of Goebbels, who worked to create a closed system of information where dissenting viewpoints were systematically excluded (Welch, 2015, p. 85). Today, the result is a similar challenge : increasing divisions in society and diminished trust in democratic institutions. The consequences of this erosion of trust, as seen both historically and in contemporary settings, are far-reaching. Goebbels' use of propaganda contributed to the radicalization of German society and the destruction of democratic institutions in the 1930s. In today's context, public distrust in institutions weakens the social contract between citizens and the state, eroding democratic norms and the rule of law (Norris, 2011, p. 222). When large segments of the population become skeptical of their government's intentions or the legitimacy of electoral processes, political instability and unrest can follow—just as it did in pre-war Germany.

Efforts to combat this erosion of trust include strategies designed to increase transparency in government communication, improve media literacy, and regulate the spread of disinformation on social media platforms (Guess, Nyhan, amp ; Reifler, 2020, p. 29). While the reach and speed of digital propaganda exceed anything Goebbels could have imagined, the lessons of his approach to media manipulation remain relevant today. Combating propaganda's corrosive effects on trust requires vigilance, education, and regulatory efforts that address both its historical foundations and its evolving digital forms.

Effects of Propaganda on Society

One of the most significant effects of propaganda on society is its manipulation of public opinion. Propaganda seeks to control public perceptions and beliefs to achieve political, social, or economic objectives. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda minister, mastered the art of manipulating public opinion during the Nazi regime. His belief in the power of repetition and emotional appeal became central to modern propaganda techniques. Goebbels asserted that “a lie told once remains a lie, but a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth” (Welch, 2015, p. 45). His influence on propaganda is still evident today, as modern disinformation campaigns often utilize these principles to manipulate public opinion.

To understand this manipulation in practice, consider the example of the Soviet Union. In the 20th century, the USSR effectively used propaganda to project an image of a socialist utopia, convincing many intellectuals worldwide that it represented equality and liberty, even though free speech and mass media freedom were nonexistent (Ellul, 1965, p. 112). This ideological manipulation is still evident today. For instance, during the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, Russian media has invoked Soviet-era narratives to justify its actions and blame Western powers for global unrest. According to The Brand Finance Global Nation Brands 100, Russia's global soft power ranking in 2023 dropped to a mere 23/100, highlighting how its propaganda efforts have been unable to maintain international credibility (Brand Finance, 2023, p. 15).

Propaganda is also a powerful tool for creating social division. Goebbels used it to create an “us vs. them” mentality, pitting Aryan Germans against Jews and other minority groups. This tactic, which emphasized exaggerated stereotypes and portrayed Jews as greedy and dangerous, fostered public support for Nazi policies that ultimately led to the Holocaust (Welch, 2015, p. 89). Modern propaganda often follows a similar approach. By exploiting societal divisions, propaganda can foster distrust between different social groups, exacerbating tensions and promoting conflict. This technique has been used in various contexts, such as during the Brexit campaign and the 2016 U.S. Presidential election, where misleading information targeted specific groups to sow discord and distrust (Da San Martino et al., 2020, p. 12).

— Manipulation of Public Opinion

Public perception is central to propaganda's effectiveness. As Goebbels demonstrated, shaping how information reaches the public is a crucial political tool. Propaganda, whether through overt state control or subtle media manipulation, aims to influence the beliefs and attitudes of the masses. According to Da San Martino et al. (2020), propaganda works by systematically disseminating messages that align with the propagandist's goals, often employing various channels such as newspapers, television, cinema, and, more recently, social media (p. 8). Propaganda can be “white,” when its source and objectives are transparent, or “black,” when the leadership behind the propaganda is concealed and its goals are hidden (Da San Martino et al., 2020, p. 11). The rise of social media has made this form of manipulation even more pervasive, as disinformation spreads quickly and widely across platforms, making it difficult for users to differentiate between credible and false information.

Jacques Ellul's work on propaganda in the 1930s provided an early understanding of how modern states use technology to manipulate public opinion. He noted that in societies reliant on technology, propaganda becomes a necessary tool for maintaining social control. Ellul also warned about the deepening social inequalities resulting from information manipulation, particularly in democratic systems where non-privileged groups become increasingly deprived of accurate information (Ellul, 1965, p. 130).

— Social Division

Propaganda also has a profound impact on social cohesion, often by fostering divisions among different social groups. Goebbels' use of stereotypes to vilify Jews is one of history's most extreme examples of how propaganda can lead to social fragmentation and violence. By emphasizing exaggerated characteristics, Nazi propaganda portrayed Jews as subhuman, which led to widespread acceptance of anti-Semitic policies and eventually genocide (Welch, 2015, p. 93). This approach is still used in modern times, where propaganda often capitalizes on existing societal divisions to isolate and demonize specific groups.

For instance, during the Syrian civil war, propaganda was used by both the Assad regime and opposition forces to dehumanize the other side and gain support for their causes (Da San Martino et al., 2020, p. 14). The creation of an "us vs. them" mindset often leads to heightened tensions and, in extreme cases, can escalate into violence. As a result, propaganda remains a potent tool for influencing social structures, creating divisions, and even inciting hatred.

Propaganda's effects on society are far-reaching and deeply embedded in modern communication strategies. By manipulating public opinion and creating social divisions, propaganda plays a significant role in shaping political and social realities. The techniques refined by Joseph Goebbels during the Nazi regime still resonate today, particularly in the digital age where misinformation spreads faster and more efficiently than ever before. Understanding the mechanisms behind propaganda is crucial for mitigating its impact on democratic societies and fostering a more informed public.

2.6 Goebbels's Propaganda and Modern Media Manipulation

In contemporary society, media manipulation and control continue to shape public opinion, influence behaviors, and dictate information flows. To better understand these dynamics, studying the propaganda techniques of Joseph Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda under Adolf Hitler, can provide crucial insights. Goebbels's mastery in constructing narratives to serve the Nazi Party's agenda—by manipulating truth and emotion—serves as a powerful historical case study. This paper explores how Goebbels's strategies inform our understanding of modern media control, focusing on three primary areas : mass manipulation techniques, information control, and the use of polarization to maintain power.

— Techniques of Mass Manipulation : Repetition, Emotion, and Fear

Goebbels famously emphasized the power of repetition in propaganda, stating, "If you tell a

lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it" (Goebbels, as cited in Welch, 2002, p. 93). This principle remains prevalent in modern media, where repetitive messaging is used in political campaigns, advertising, and news cycles to reinforce specific narratives. For example, during the 2020 U.S. presidential election, false claims of election fraud were repeated consistently across various media outlets and social media platforms, despite being debunked by courts and officials. This repetition convinced a significant portion of the population, with a 2021 poll showing that 60% believed the election was "stolen" (Bump, 2021). This shows how the constant repetition of a narrative, regardless of its validity, can shape public perception and political behavior, exemplified by the events leading up to the January 6, 2021, Capitol riot.

Emotional manipulation is another key component of modern propaganda. The "Leave" campaign during the 2016 Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom heavily relied on emotional appeals to nationalism and fear of immigration. By encouraging voters to "take back control" of their borders, the campaign tapped into deep-seated anxieties, thereby pushing people towards voting in favor of leaving the European Union (Kellner, 2016, p. 120). This emotional approach bypassed rational debates on economic or political consequences, favoring instead a fear-driven and identity-based response.

— Control of Information : Media Ownership and Censorship

During Goebbels's tenure, the Nazi regime exercised tight control over all media, from radio to print, ensuring that no counter-narratives could challenge the official propaganda. This central control over information flow allowed the regime to shape every aspect of public opinion. In today's media landscape, issues of media consolidation raise similar concerns. A prominent example is Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, which owns significant outlets like Fox News, The Wall Street Journal, and The Sun. As McChesney (2015) argues, Murdoch's media empire has significant influence over political and cultural discourse, often shaping public opinion by limiting the diversity of viewpoints and presenting a particular ideological narrative (p. 57). The dominance of a few powerful media corporations can skew information flow and limit the range of perspectives available to the public.

Censorship also plays a role in controlling information. For instance, in China, the government utilizes the "Great Firewall" to restrict access to foreign websites and censor sensitive topics such as the Tiananmen Square massacre or pro-democracy movements. This control over information mirrors Goebbels's strategy of ensuring that only the regime's perspective was visible. King, Pan, and Roberts (2013) note that the Chinese government allows criticism of certain policies but systematically censors any content that might lead to collective action or social unrest (p. 326). This form of state censorship manipulates the public's access to information and keeps dissenting views marginalized.

— Creating Scapegoats and Polarization

Goebbels's use of scapegoating to unite the German population under the Nazi banner has clear parallels in modern media. In the United States, former President Donald Trump often used

inflammatory rhetoric against immigrants, particularly Mexicans, calling them "rapists" and criminals in campaign speeches. This created a common enemy and fostered division among the American populace, consolidating his political base by exploiting fears about immigration (Green & Issenberg, 2016, p. 87). Such divisive language reinforces the "us versus them" mentality, deepening societal divisions and making the public more susceptible to further manipulation.

Moreover, social media platforms exacerbate polarization through algorithms designed to promote content that aligns with users preexisting beliefs. According to Sunstein (2018), these algorithms create echo chambers where individuals are primarily exposed to content that reinforces their own views, which deepens ideological divides and fosters polarization (p. 123). A prime example of this was seen during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, where misinformation and extreme viewpoints were amplified on social media, contributing to political polarization.

By studying Goebbels's propaganda methods, we gain valuable insights into modern media manipulation. The techniques of repetition, emotional appeals, and fear remain prevalent in shaping public discourse. Furthermore, the control of information by powerful entities, combined with the intentional creation of societal divisions, reveals a direct link between historical and contemporary media practices. A critical examination of these parallels is essential in today's digital age, where media literacy and ethical standards in communication are more important than ever.

2.7 Ethical Considerations in Propaganda

The ethical dimensions of propaganda have been widely debated, particularly in the context of modern conflicts and political movements. Propaganda, by its nature, involves the intentional manipulation of information to influence public opinion and behavior. This manipulation raises significant ethical questions, especially when it distorts facts, undermines democratic processes, or contributes to social harm. Historically, propaganda has been employed to serve political, social, or economic agendas, often at the expense of truth and individual autonomy. These ethical concerns have only intensified with the rise of digital media, where the spread of propaganda is faster, more pervasive, and harder to regulate (Seo & Ebrahim, 2019, p. 58).

A core ethical issue in propaganda is the tension between persuasion and manipulation. While persuasion is considered an acceptable form of communication in democratic societies, manipulation—particularly when it involves deception—is seen as ethically questionable. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi propaganda minister, epitomized the unethical use of propaganda, crafting campaigns that distorted reality and manipulated public sentiment to serve the totalitarian regime. Goebbels methods involved the strategic use of half-truths, emotional appeals, and repetition to shape public perception and mobilize support for Nazi policies (Welch, 2015, p. 67). His legacy underscores the ethical risks associated with state-driven propaganda, particularly when it is used to justify violence, war, or oppression.

In contemporary contexts, the ethical implications of propaganda have become even more complex due to the integration of digital platforms. Social media, in particular, has become a breeding ground

for propaganda, often disseminated in the form of memes, videos, and other visual content. The Syrian conflict offers a stark example of how propaganda on platforms like Facebook can shape narratives, often with devastating consequences. Seo and Ebrahim (2019) conducted a comparative analysis of visual propaganda during the Syrian conflict and found that both sides used emotionally charged images to manipulate perceptions of the war, deepening divisions and exacerbating violence (p. 59). This raises serious ethical concerns about the role of technology in amplifying harmful messages and the responsibility of platform providers to mitigate such content.

Another critical ethical consideration is the use of computational propaganda—automated efforts to manipulate public opinion through algorithms and bots. As Da San Martino et al. (2020) explain, computational propaganda has become a sophisticated tool for spreading disinformation, targeting specific demographics, and amplifying biased or false narratives (p. 15). The ethical issues here are twofold : first, the use of technology to deceive individuals into believing false information, and second, the erosion of trust in public institutions and media. When bots are used to create the illusion of widespread support for a particular viewpoint, they manipulate public discourse, skewing democratic processes and undermining informed decision-making.

The ethical challenge of regulating propaganda is further complicated by questions of free speech and censorship. In democratic societies, the right to free speech is fundamental, but this right is not absolute. Propaganda that incites violence, promotes hate, or spreads disinformation poses ethical dilemmas about the balance between protecting free expression and preventing harm. Governments, media organizations, and social media platforms must navigate these tensions, considering the potential consequences of both allowing and restricting certain forms of speech. This dilemma becomes particularly urgent when propaganda contributes to real-world violence, such as during the Arab Spring or the spread of extremist ideologies like white nationalism (Seo amp ; Ebrahim, 2019, p. 61).

Efforts to address the ethical implications of propaganda require a multifaceted approach. Media literacy programs are essential in helping individuals critically evaluate the information they encounter and recognize the signs of manipulation. Transparency in media ownership and the regulation of political advertising, particularly on social media, are also crucial steps toward mitigating the harmful effects of propaganda. As Da San Martino et al. (2020) suggest, the development of computational tools to detect and combat propaganda is a promising avenue for addressing these ethical challenges (p. 20). However, these tools must be implemented with care, ensuring they do not infringe on individual rights or lead to unintended forms of censorship.

The ethical considerations surrounding propaganda are complex and multifaceted, particularly in the digital age. From the legacy of Goebbels' manipulation of public opinion to the modern challenges posed by computational propaganda and social media, the ethical implications of propaganda continue to evolve. Addressing these issues requires a balance between protecting free speech and preventing harm, alongside efforts to enhance media literacy and develop tools for detecting and mitigating disinformation. Ultimately, the ethical challenge of propaganda lies in the tension between persuasion and manipulation, and the impact that this tension has on democratic values, individual autonomy, and social cohesion.

2.8 Comparative Analysis with Contemporary Propaganda

The analysis of propaganda during the Weimar Republic and its comparison to modern examples presents a nuanced challenge. By examining democratic uses of propaganda, there is a risk of overstressing superficial similarities, leading to a misunderstanding of National Socialist propaganda. As Martínez Ceballos (2016) explains, the fundamental objectives of democratic and totalitarian propaganda are diametrically opposed. Democratic propaganda emphasizes openness, transparency, and public debate, where the audience's understanding and participation are central to creating informed responses. In democratic societies, propaganda is often used as a tool for public enlightenment and debate, aiming to enhance collective knowledge rather than suppress it (Martínez Ceballos, 2016, p. 34).

Conversely, totalitarian regimes, exemplified by National Socialist Germany, employ propaganda to suppress open discourse and manipulate public opinion through psychological techniques. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, famously stated, "A lie told

once remains a lie, but a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth" (Goebbels, 1934, p. 132). This belief highlights the regime's reliance on repetition and emotional manipulation rather than logical reasoning. Totalitarian propaganda installs patterns of thought and behavior through classical conditioning, using fear and hatred to evoke automatic, unthinking responses (Gannuscio, 2019, p. 56). In Nazi Germany, the goal was not to create an informed public but rather a population that reacted instinctively to stimuli, eliminating the potential for critical discussion and dissent.

2.8.1 Case Study : Goebbels' Propaganda in Nazi Germany and the Use of Social Darwinism

Goebbels' propaganda campaigns during the Nazi era were strategically designed to manipulate public psychology and reinforce Nazi ideology. The integration of pseudo- scientific theories, particularly Social Darwinism, played a crucial role in justifying Nazi racial policies. Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection was distorted by the Nazis to create a framework for the supposed superiority of the Aryan race. This misinterpretation of "survival of the fittest" became a central theme in Nazi propaganda, framing Jews, Slavs, and other ethnic groups as biologically inferior and a threat to the purity of the German Volk (Weikart, 2016, p. 54).

One of Goebbels' most significant efforts in this regard was his use of film and education to spread these Darwinist ideas. Films like *Der Ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew, 1940) portrayed Jews as parasitic and degenerate, a danger to the health of the Aryan race. Goebbels saw film as a particularly powerful medium for influencing public opinion : "It is not enough for the people to be convinced of our ideas ; they must be emotionally moved by them" (Goebbels, 1941, p. 312). By framing the Jewish people as biologically and culturally incompatible with German society, Goebbels dehumanized them, paving the way for the acceptance of anti-Semitic laws and ultimately the Holocaust.

Furthermore, the Nazis expanded on this propaganda through educational materials. Darwinist principles were integrated into school curricula, where children were taught about the supposed scientific basis of racial superiority. Eugenics, the practice of improving the genetic quality of the Aryan race through

selective breeding, was promoted in textbooks and lectures (Weikart, 2016, p. 102). This form of propaganda used pseudo-science to justify inhumane policies such as forced sterilization and euthanasia of those deemed

quot ;unfitquot ;—mentally ill, disabled, or otherwise undesirable by the regime's standards (Longerich, 2015, p. 245).

Goebbels' propaganda machine took these Darwinist ideas further by manipulating public sentiment through emotional appeals to fear and survival. He framed the Nazi struggle as a life-or-death battle for the survival of the fittest race, echoing Darwinist competition, where the Aryan race must triumph to avoid extinction (Weikart, 2016, p. 55). This dehumanization of other groups was key to justifying Nazi expansionist policies and genocidal practices, including the Holocaust.

2.8.2 Case Study : Contemporary Propaganda and the Subtle Use of Darwinist Narratives

While modern propaganda rarely employs Social Darwinism as overtly as the Nazis did, certain narratives in contemporary propaganda reflect similar Darwinist themes, especially in far-right movements and nationalist ideologies. For example, some white supremacist and far-right groups in the U.S. and Europe propagate the idea of racial hierarchies, claiming that certain races or ethnicities are inherently superior. These groups advocate for policies that preserve what they call quot ;racial purity,quot ; a modern echo of the Darwinist logic used by Nazi propagandists. Although not explicitly labeled as Social Darwinism, this rhetoric aligns with the same principles of racial competition and survival (Weikart, 2016, p. 112).

Steve Bannon, a prominent figure in the Alt-Right movement, has indirectly incorporated Darwinist ideas by fostering a narrative of cultural and civilizational conflict. Bannon has warned that Western (white, Christian) civilization is under siege from immigrants, Muslims, and globalists—a narrative that implicitly promotes a form of Social Darwinism by suggesting that only the strongest cultures or races will survive in this struggle (Green, 2017, p. 180). While framed as cultural, rather than biological survival, this notion of competition between races and cultures is Darwinian in its emphasis on survival through dominance. Additionally, in anti-immigration rhetoric, particularly in the U.S. and parts of Europe, immigrants are often portrayed as threats to the economic and cultural survival of the native population. The zero-sum dynamic created by this narrative suggests that the influx of immigrants endangers the prosperity and survival of the host nation, framing the situation in Darwinist terms of competition for resources (Green, 2017, p. 172). This rhetoric, although not explicitly biological, mirrors Social Darwinist ideas by presenting society as divided into competing groups where only the quot ;fittestquot ; will thrive.

Another manifestation of this Darwinist logic can be seen in eco-fascism, an emerging ideology that combines environmental concerns with extreme nationalism. Eco-fascists argue that overpopulation, particularly in non-Western countries, is driving environmental degradation, and that only strict population control and the preservation of quot ;strong quot ; races or nations can save the planet. This view invokes Darwinist ideas of competition for scarce resources, suggesting that some groups must prevail over others

to ensure the survival of humanity and the environment (Gannuscio, 2019, p. 60). The Christchurch shooter in New Zealand in 2019, for instance, invoked eco-fascist rhetoric, justifying his attack with references to the need to protect Western civilization from "invaders"; reflecting Darwinist competition themes in a modern, violent context.

2.8.3 Comparative Analysis : Democratic vs. Totalitarian Propaganda

In both historical and modern examples, the key difference between democratic and totalitarian propaganda lies in the intent and outcome. Democratic propaganda typically seeks to inform and mobilize the public around shared goals, with space for dissent and debate. For instance, public health campaigns encouraging vaccination often use persuasive tactics but still rely on factual information and allow for public discourse. In contrast, totalitarian propaganda, as seen in both Nazi Germany and modern authoritarian regimes, aims to suppress opposition and eradicate reason. The focus is on controlling public behavior through fear and emotional manipulation, leaving no room for debate or alternative perspectives (Martínez Ceballos, 2016, p. 45). In Nazi Germany, Goebbels emphasized the importance of maintaining control over the media and culture to shape a unified worldview. As he declared, "The essence of propaganda consists in winning people over to an idea so sincerely, so vitally, that in the end they succumb to it utterly and can never escape it" (Goebbels, 1934, p. 212). This approach was designed to eradicate critical thinking, ensuring that the populace adhered to Nazi ideology without question. Similarly, modern authoritarian regimes and propagandists use digital platforms to manipulate public opinion, often blurring the line between fact and fiction (Gannuscio, 2019, p. 61).

Both historical and modern examples of totalitarian propaganda reveal the dangers of psychological manipulation and the erosion of public discourse. While democratic propaganda aims to engage and inform, totalitarian systems use propaganda to eliminate reason and foster blind obedience. Goebbels' speeches and tactics, which integrated Social Darwinism to justify racial superiority, as well as contemporary propagandists like Steve Bannon, illustrate the enduring power of propaganda to shape public opinion and behavior. As Martínez Ceballos (2016) warns, it is crucial to recognize these distinctions and guard against the misuse of propaganda in both historical and modern contexts.

2.9 conclusion

Joseph Goebbels's early experiences and influences greatly influenced his worldview and led to his ardent devotion to the Nazi party and its propaganda apparatus. Goebbels's difficult upbringing, exposure to anti-Semitic ideologies, and encounters with prejudice and rejection all contributed significantly to his growth into one of the most infamous individuals of the Third Reich. These early years offer important insight into the elements that shaped Goebbels' ideas and his crucial function in the fabrication and propagation of propaganda in the Nazi period. Furthermore, the deliberate use of education by the Nazi dictatorship for propaganda and indoctrination highlights the pervasiveness of ideology in the shaping of people's beliefs and behaviors.

The systematic attempts to instill Nazi ideology in young people's brains are exemplified by

the school system's emphasis on physical fitness, obedience, and the distortion of historical narratives. Comprehending the convergence of individual experiences and institutional effects is crucial for appreciating the intricate interplay of variables that facilitated the ascent of personalities such as Joseph Goebbels and the dissemination of Nazi propaganda.

General Conclusion

In this research, we explored the profound impact of propaganda on modern communication, with a particular emphasis on the techniques employed by Joseph Goebbels during the Nazi regime. Goebbels' ability to manipulate public perception through the strategic use of media—such as radio, film, and public rallies—was instrumental in mobilizing support for Nazi ideologies, despite the horrific atrocities committed by the regime. His propaganda machine functioned by controlling the flow of information, silencing dissenting voices, and presenting a biased narrative that shaped the beliefs and actions of millions.

The study further revealed that Goebbels' propaganda techniques have had a lasting influence on modern communication strategies. Many of the principles he employed, such as emotional manipulation, repetition, and the strategic use of media, continue to be used today, particularly in political messaging, media manipulation, and public relations. The parallels between historical propaganda and contemporary communication practices underscore the enduring relevance of Goebbels' methods in shaping public opinion.

The research also highlighted the significant ethical concerns associated with the use of propaganda techniques in today's media landscape. In the digital age, the spread of misinformation and manipulation of public perception have become even more prevalent, with social media providing an unregulated platform for biased or false information to proliferate. This raises critical questions about the responsibilities of communicators and the need for stronger media literacy among the public to combat the subtle forms of propaganda that continue to influence contemporary society.

The hypothesis of this study, which suggested that Goebbels' propaganda techniques have had a significant and lasting impact on modern communication, was supported by the findings. His methods not only shaped the media landscape of his time but also laid the foundation for many of the communication strategies still used today. However, the ethical implications of applying these techniques in modern contexts cannot be overlooked, as they raise concerns about truth, manipulation, and the integrity of public discourse.

In conclusion, this research demonstrates the enduring influence of Goebbels' propaganda techniques on modern communication, while also emphasizing the ethical challenges they present. As the media landscape continues to evolve, it is essential to foster critical thinking and media literacy to mitigate the risks posed by misinformation and manipulation in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

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