

THE CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONFLICT BETWEEN JOSEPH GOEBBELS AND ALFRED ROSENBERG TOGETHER WITH GOEBBELS'S PROPAGANDA AGAINST THE GERMAN CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

Paul Joseph Goebbels, (Born on October 29,1897-died May ,1945) Reich Minister for popular Enlightenment and propaganda of Nazi Germany , got into cultural and intellectual disputes with a number of Nazi leaders. However, these disputes were imposed by the nature of political competition and Hitler also enforced these conflicts , disagreements as competitions by taking neutral position just to let them get his satisfaction and consent as well as they could get a recommendation from him .Thus , one of the most important figures that Goebbels had got into dispute with was the theorist , Alfred Rosenberg , in that there was a severe conflict and dispute between them concerning modernism and tradition in the German culture .Thus Goebbels was one of those who supported modernism unlike Rosenberg who was anti-modernistic .This respectiveness was the core of the struggle between them .Besides, Goebbels had got into disputes with the German church and he used his propaganda for the sake of bringing the church down publically.The most important findings the paper has come up with can be summarized as that Hitler has appointed Rosenberg as a tactical dodging to create a kind of balance in the power and Hitler is very aware of Goebbels's capabilities so he chose his rival .Besides, Goebbels's accusations against the Catholic church was not realistic .Rather , they served political and cultural competition since the Nazi leaders felt that the Germans' loyalty is in favour of the church .Thus , they sought to launch immoral charges against the church to bring it down and that it could lose its spiritual standing in the Germans' hearts.

Keyword: Goebbels , Rosenberg , intellectual conflict , cultural conflict , propaganda

INTRODUCTION

Paul Joseph Goebbels, (Born on October 29,1897-died May ,1945) Reich Minister for popular Enlightenment and propaganda of Nazi Germany , got into cultural and intellectual disputes with a number of Nazi leaders. However, these disputes were imposed by the nature of political competition and Hitler also enforced these conflicts , disagreements as competitions by taking neutral position just to let them get his satisfaction and consent as well as they could get a recommendation from him .Thus , one of the most important figure that Goebbels had got into dispute with was the theorist , Alfred Rosenberg , in that there was a

severe conflict and dispute between them concerning modernism and convention in the German culture .Thus Goebbels was one of those who supported modernism unlike Rosenberg who was anti-modernistic .This respectiveness was the core of the struggle between them .Besides, Goebbels had got into disputes with the German church and he used his propaganda for the sake of bringing the church down publically .Accordingly , Goebbels's role and propaganda against Rosenberg and the German church will be discussed in detail.

FIRSTLY , THE CULTURAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONFLICT BETWEEN GOEBBELS AND ROSENBERG

Hitler was aware of Goebbels's schemes through which he sought to be the domineering figure on the cultural life because Hitler's leadership was based basically on non-determination responsibilities inside the party ,therefore the struggle among the party leaders was inevitable since Hitler aimed at arousing conflicts over power among the leaders and thus he reassured his first position in the third Reich¹ .For instance , after appointing Goebbels a minister of propaganda , there were individuals who kept controlling on radio and cinema .For this reason , Goebbels should fight to impose his domination and there was a severe conflict inside the party ²

As a matter of principles , Goebbels got into a cultural and intellectual conflict against the most important Nazi figure including the German theorist Alfred Rosenberg³ who was regarded as one of the most important intellectualists in the

¹Bc. Lucie Suchankova, Die Rolle der Medien im Dritten Reich, Magisterarbeit, Philosophische Fakultät, Masaryk-Universität, 2011, PP.20-22

² Laurence Rees, Laurence Rees, The Holocaust: A New History

Laurence Rees, United Kingdom, 2017, P.53.

³Alfred Rosenberg (1893-1946) was one of the most influential Nazi intellectuals ,and Baltic German theorist .He was born in Reval ,Estonia .His father was from Latvia and his mother was from Estonia .He obtained engineer's degree from college of Technology in Riga .He was influenced by the German culture where he read since childhood the writings of Goethe , Herder ,Schopenhauer , and Fichte. He started meeting with Hitler since 1919 and after Hitler had become dictator of Germany , serving as chancellor from 1933 to 1945.Rosenberg took charge of the Nazi party's foreign policy office in 1934 he became in charge of enlightening all members of the party .He was appointed in 17 July 1941 Reich Minister of the occupied Eastern territories .Rosenberg was arrested at the end of the war , tried at the Nuremberg international military tribunal .He was hanged on October 16 1946. Documents of T. G. M. W. C. (Trial of German Major War Criminals Sitting at Nuremberg, Germany), London, Published Under the Authority of H.M. Attorney-General By His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1946, Vol. 12, Session 108, April 15, 1946, PP.1-23, 381-388.

Nazi party ⁴ .Given that Goebbels was self-important and sometimes he was described as a “ a man who was built on extraordinary scale”. Goebbels refused to compete with other opponents since he was the only one ⁵.During 1933 , Hitler first preferred Goebbels and appointed him a minister of propaganda to control the cultural field . shortly after Hitler appointed Rosenberg in the position of the Party's top leader and plenipotentiary for supervising the party's ideological training (1934) January⁶. This step was just like the spark which kindled fire of the cultural and political competition between them⁷, especially , Rosenberg's writings had developed the national socialist intellect as to Hitler and Rosenberg's mottos were typical and became more influential on Hitler and so Rosenberg's existence instigate stress to Goebbels ⁸ .There were many conceptual disagreements between them in different topics or subjects .Chief of them , Goebbels supported modernism and contemporary arts and he was so interested in the deluxe and contemporary architecture .Moreover , he always proclaimed that Germany was in dire need for new blood and way of thinking whereas Rosenberg supported the traditional culture through preparing special culture of the Nazi party which was influenced by the past ⁹.Rosenberg was in support of “ the true German Culture” which was not polluted by the modern culture ¹⁰.In fact , Rosenberg built a racial scale for cultural values which was based on extremist

⁴Stefan Stanko, Komparativna Analyza Propagandy Nacizmu, Bakalarskou Praci, Masarykova Univerzita Fakulta Socialnich Studiu, Brno, 2015, P.19.

⁵Konrad Heiden, A History Of National Socialism, Volume 2, New York, 2010,P.100.

⁶Anne-Marie Mreijen, Opportunisme Of Ideologie? Over De Rol Van De Uitgeverswereld In München Bij De Opkomst Van Het Nationaal-Socialisme, Doctoraalscriptie Geschiedenis Politieke Geschiedenis Universiteit Utrecht, 2006, P.48.

⁷ Adela Dedova, Vybrane Prostredky Estetizace Politiky Ve Treti Fsi Bakalrskod Diplomovd Prace, Masarykova Univerzita V Brne Filozoficka Fakulta Seminar Estetiky, Brne, 2008, P.16.

⁸Nazi Ideology Before 1933 A Documentation, Introduced And Translated By Barbara Miller Lane And Leilaj. Rupp, Great Britain, 1978, PP.107,99

⁹ Michal Kmínek, Ustav Hudební Vedy Srovnávad Umenovedna Studia, Diplomova Prace Filozoficka Fakulta Masarykova Univerzita, 2011, P34,48

¹⁰Martina Kessel, Op.Cit ,P.117.

theory¹¹He attempted to reformulate the German spirit to match with the Nazi racial ideology when compared to Goebbels¹² who was pragmatic in his ideology and was interested in drawing up programs in culture which could reach all Germans¹³.Accordingly , Rosenberg's ideas were all "Dictatorship ,crummy and stubborn"¹⁴

The conflict between them reached its climax in the issue of the composer and the chairman of music of the Reich the third ,Richard Straus¹⁵and this dispute and disagreement lasted from August 1934 up to June 1935.Each one tried to undermine the other's position .Rosenberg started writing aggressive letter to Goebbels in 20 August 1934.He warned that Richard Straus's behaviour in cooperation with the Jewish writer Stefan Zweig and the latter was authorized to write the opera (the silent woman) Die Schweigsame Frau , where German theaters banned any cooperation with the Jews .Moreover , Rosenberg accused Goebbels of being sympathetic with Jewish figures¹⁶.He also attacked Goebbels since the latter held Italian Fair in Berlin in 1934 claiming that under the curtain of the Italian Fair , many of

¹¹Lillian Karina and Marion Kant, Hitler's Dancers German Modern Dance and the Third Reich,Translated by Jonathan Steinberg, United States,2003,P.81.

¹²Pragmatism is derived from the Greek pragma “action” or ‘affair’ .Its origin is often attributed to the philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914).The term focused on the connection between theory and application and the theory is extracted through application and denied the saying that the human principles and intellect represent truth .Thus , the key principle of this philosophy is that the meaning of the proposition is based on its practical results (See NadhumAbdulwahed Al –Jassar Encyclopedia of Poilitical , philosophical and international terms.Beruit2002,pp151-152

¹³Roderick Stackelberg, Hitler's Germany: Origins, Interpretations, Legacies, 2 edition, United States of America , 2002,P.138.

¹⁴Peter Longerich Peter Longerich, Joseph Goebbel. Biographie,Germany, 2012, P.340.

¹⁵ Abby E. Anderton, Music Among The Ruins: Classical Music, Propaganda, And The American Cultural Agenda In West Berlin 1945-1949, A Dissertation Submitted In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For The Degree Of Doctor Of Philosophy, University Of Michigan, 2012, P.6.

¹⁶ Alan E. Steinweis, Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers of Music Theater, and the Visual Arts, United States of America,1993.PP.52-53; Saul Friedländer, Das Dritte Reich und die Juden 1933-1939, München, 2010,PP.76-77.

modern artistic scenes had been leaked which were very harmful and damaging to the German culture¹⁷.Unfortunately , the Gestapo forces had found a sent letter from Straus to Zweig which confirmed Rosenberg's accusation to Goebbels .This was considered a cultural scandal which undermined Goebbels's position¹⁸.In return Goebbels considered Rosenberg's letter very impertinent and advised him to be very cautious in future .As to Straus , he defended himself by saying “It is a fabricated play”. Finally , he was obliged to quit and resign¹⁹.We can say that Rosenberg's influence on the German culture life was based on dogmatic grounds²⁰whereas Goebbels had no clear concept for arts , he tried to adopt modernism just to lead the German culture²¹

Hitler started siding with Rosenberg's orientations that supported the traditional arts. For this reason Goebbels was obliged to stop defining modernism in Germany .In compliance with Hitler's desire and he adopted strict trend which was anti- modernism²².He tried boldly to reinforce his position to take over the cultural life in Germany .Thus , he appointed a committee to seize (16000) pieces of modern artistic works out of German museums²³.An exhibition was held by Hitler in Munich on 19 July 1937.It was entitled “ Two thousand years of the German Arts” or “Fairs of degenerate Arts”. Hitler called for true and genuine art²⁴.Adolf Ziegler was a German painter and politician .He was tasked by the Nazi party to oversee the purging of what the Nazi party described as “degenerate art” Ziegler

¹⁷Peter Longerich,Op.Cit,PP.340- 341

¹⁸Saul Friedlander, Op.Cit, P.75.

¹⁹ Abby E. Anderton, Op.Cit, P.6; Peter Longerich,Op.Cit,P41.

²⁰Dogmatism is a Greek word meaning the dogmatic rigidity and rigid intellectual approach as well as blind support of Certain principles .It is the tendency to lay down principles as undeniably true , without consideration of evidence of the opinions of other –the term has its origin from the word “dogma” this term is used to describe the rigid intellectual appearances which contradicted with logic (See Husam Al-Din Jad Al-Rab ‘Glossary of Political ,Diplomatic and Economic Terms ” Cairo.

²¹Peter Longerich. PP.41-43

²²Joan L. Clinefelter, Artists for the Reich Culture and Race from Weimar to Nazi Germany, New York,2005,P.101

²³ Jonathan Rose, The Holocaust And The Book Destruction And Preservation, United States Of America, 2008,P.25

²⁴David Barnett, Joseph Goebbels: Expressionist Dramatist As Nazi Minister Of Culture Original Citation , University Of Huddersfield Repository, 2001,P.161.

collected paintings and pictures from all round Germany .Goebbels said “ we admitted that we would like to influence our nation”²⁵In this exhibition there were (650) works of (112) pictures accumulated in (9) small rooms as an attempt to make it seem very silly and awkward .Some painting were huge on the walls and the Germans rallied to see them ²⁶.Goebbels then issued his orders to seize about (5000) paintings and (12000) pieces of sculpture ²⁷.This exhibition had toured all around Germany for 4 years ²⁸ and Goebbels and thousands of Germans had visited this exhibition ²⁹.In the same view there was a great transformation in the musical life of the third Reich especially after the conflict between Goebbels and Rosenberg to take over the cultural life in the Reich ³⁰.In 1938 , the Nazi held an exhibition of the degenerate art , but this time for the degenerate music ³¹.Many agreed upon the fact that the modern art during 1920s and 1930s was subversive and destructive ³².Despite the fact that Goebbels had changed his opinions and his decisions became in harmony with the traditional art .Yet, he didn’t proclaim his enmity to modernism because he anticipated danger when Hitler and Rosenberg conciliated towards these concepts , he was obliged to yield to Hitler’s viewpoints ³³. So , Goebbels proceeded in accordance with this orientation and he pointed out that it was necessary to defend the German art by confirming the German personality and all museums

²⁵San Luis Obispo, Art As Propaganda In Nazi Germany,A Senior Project Presented To The Faculty Of The Communication Studies Department California Polytechnic State University, 2011,P.18-23.

²⁶E.L. Konigsburg, The Mysterious Edge Of The Heroic World, New York, 2007,P.109

²⁷Katarina Cabova, FilozofickaFakulta Seminar Estetiky, FilozofickaFakultaBakalarskaDiplomovaprace, FilozofickaFakulta, MasarykovaUniverzita, Brne, 2016,P.34.

²⁸Jonathan Rose, Op.Cit,P.25.

²⁹Eugenio Vezzelli, Op.Cit, P.47.

³⁰Ernst Ludwig Von Gerlach, PolitischesDenken Und HandelnEinesPreussischenAltkonservativen By Hans-Christof Kraus, Review Hermann Beck, The Journal Of Modern History, Vol. 70, No. 1 (March 1998),P.246.

³¹Joachim Dyck, Der Zeitzeuge: Gottfried Benn, 1929-1949, Göttingen,2006, P.227.

³²Sandra SimõesPais, Propaganda - Da Teoria À Prática: Uma Análise Da Propaganda Nazi, Dissertação Para Obtenção Do Grau De MestreEmCiênciaPolítica, Universidade Da Beira Interior,2012,P68.

³³San Luis Obispo,Op,Cit ,P.18.

should be run by ministry of German propaganda ³⁴ . Rosenberg was a severe critic of all Goebbels’s works even in the cinematography ,therefore Goebbels dissatisfied this interference and he was obliged to defend his policy angrily –he said “ once again , Rosenberg criticized our film production in late issued letter , I can answer critically –it seems to me very trivial one can believe that Rosenberg will have other disturbing issues instead of one film ”³⁵

SECONDLY, DISAGREEMENTS AND PROPAGANDA OF JOSEPH GOEBBELS AGAINST THE CHURCH

There was an enmity between the Nazi regime and Catholic church –starting after a convention had been held between the papacy and the Nazi regime on 8 June 1933 , this treaty had restricted the church of tens producers that aimed to weaken its power including stoppage many subsidiary newspapers ³⁶.However , the real change which happened from the church towards the Nazi regime , was after the purging operation of Nazi leaders on July 30 1934, the church started new chapter of intimidation against the church in the late of 1935 when Goebbels accused the church of being corrupted and this resulted in an open protest against the Nazi leaders ³⁷.The church kept resisting remarkably against Goebbels’s propaganda³⁸.The Pope proclaimed that the Nazi regime had violated the convention of 1933.Yet, Goebbels ignored the Pope proclamation and he launched strict procedures against the church including economic sanctions , compulsory procedures such as arrests , confiscation, ban of church publications. He waited for the

³⁴Katherine Lenee Bruhn, Degenerate Art And Nazi Germany,A Thesis Submitted To The Honors College In Partial Fulfillment Of The Bachelor’s Degree, Art History,The University Of Arizona, 2008, P.37.

³⁵David Welch, Propaganda and the German Cinema 1933-1945, , New York,2001,P.36.

³⁶Zara Steiner, The Triumph Of The Dark: European International History 1933-1939, United Kingdom, 2011,P.984.

³⁷Jean-Thomas Nicole, La PolitiqueÉtrangère Du Saint-Siège Face À L’allemandeNationale-Socialiste : Rapport D’une Passion Ambivalente (1933-1938), Dans Le Cadre Du Programme De DoctoratD’histoire Pour L’obtention Du Grade De Philosophiae Doctor (PhD(DépartementD’histoireFaculté Des Lettres , Université Laval,2008,P.102;

³⁸Bc. Lucie Suchankova, Op.Cit,P.36.

suitable moment to get rid of them³⁹ and he tried to put pressure on them and he excluded the Catholic priests from any political activity⁴⁰

Goebbels had the guts on 28 May 1937 to describe the Catholic church as “ a cancer in the healthy national body”⁴¹ and began to attack them and put hundreds of Catholic priests in jail⁴² and churches had been exposed to many attacks from the Nazi regime⁴³ Goebbels accused the Catholic clergies and priests of homosexuality and proclaimed in the radio “ monasteries became brothers and places of fortune augmentation and children abuse⁴⁴. Accordingly , Goebbels and Rosenberg felt that the Christian church had competed with the Nazi leaders to obtain the Germans’ loyalty so they tried to replace the traditional Christianity with new civil religion⁴⁵ .

Goebbels tried harder to eliminate the church power but in vain due to the fact that Germans’ loyalty to the church was deep-rooted⁴⁶.

For this reason ,the Nazi regime had accused the Catholic clergies and priests of different charges including criminal and monetary and Goebbels had full authorization to use his power in press, radio and newspapers so there were many

³⁹Peter Longerich, Op.Cit, PP.322,365.

⁴⁰Eugenia Vezzelli, Op.Cit ,P.24

⁴¹Carsten Dams, Michael Stolle, Die Gestapo: Herrschaft Und Terror ImDritten Reich, München, 2008,P.114.

⁴² During the second world war Geobbles refused using violence against the church and against some of the clergies stances since it led to break out struggles and open opposition against the State .G

⁴³Ian Kershaw, Ian Kershaw, Hitler 1936-1945: Nemesis , New York, 2001,PP.96-97.eobbles said “ the regime cannotunder the struggle of teeth and Nazi. For this reason Geobbles convinced Brown and Himels to stop aggressive procedures against the church .

⁴⁴Katarzyny Remin , ZbrodnieNazistow Na OsobachHomoseksualnych W KontekscieEdukag'IAntydyskryminacyjnej,Warszawa, 2012,P.31.

⁴⁵Kathryn Steinhaus, Valkyrie: Gender, Class, European Relations, And Unity Mitford's Passion For Fascism, A Thesis Submitted To The Department Of History In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements Of The Degree Of Doctor Of Philosophy, Department Of History McGill University, Montreal ,2011,P.141.

⁴⁶Toby Thacker, Joseph Goebbels .Life And Death, London,2009, P.203.

caricatures showed the nuns and monks hid money in their pockets and conspired with the Jews and this propaganda was used to cancel the licenses of schools and restricted Catholic charity foundations and then these associations had been replaced by other charity associations run by Goebbels⁴⁷.

CONCLUSION

It seems that Hitler’s appointed of Rosenberg in that position in which he took part theoretically and practically in the tasks of the position of ministry of Reich of propaganda and popular enlightenment was a tactic maneuver and dodging to make a kind of balance in the authority and because Hitler realized that Goebbels had great capabilities so Hitler chose his rival to make balance and Hitler did not interfere in this conflict and his position was ambiguous whether he was with modernism or tradition and later on he clarified his view points. It was noted that Goebbels’s propaganda and his accusations of the Catholic church radio was not realistic one .Yet, it is for political and cultural competitionwhere the Nazi leaders felt that the Germans loyalty appealed to the church .Thus, they attempted to distort the church reputation by many ways including immoral , social , political grounds where Hitler and Goebbels were brought up in very fanatic Catholic environment .

⁴⁷Ibd,PP.203-204.