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Burke Rhetorical Analysis

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1. What is Burke's rationale behind analyzing Hitler's Mein Kampf? Page 1

Burkes rationale behind analyzing Hitler’s Mein Kampf is to guard against similar events in the future especially in America. He feels that we are beyond being saved in certain areas of our country based on virtues. As we are unable to unite on the base of prejudice.

2. What is Burke's overall argument about Hitler's rhetoric?

Burke states that Hitler’s cult of war was developed on hate not humility, love, or peace (Burke Rhetorical Analysis, pg. 199). Hitler had a love of Aryans and held them highly above all other races. Jews and “Negroes” were especially inferior and in fact Jews were the cause of all bad things especially in economics (Burke Rhetorical Analysis, pg. 202). Jews thus became a scapegoat to Hitler’s followers as it is easier to blame someone or something else then yourself. They also wanted unity and with Hitler’s words of reputation they were willing to meet halfway. Burke goes further to state that Hitler’s cards were in fact on the table all along. So, we should study and examine this book so an event like this doesn’t occur in America. Hitler’s followers followed religious beliefs that were distorted. And therefore, it is our job to notice these distortions.

3. How does Burke explain Hitler's "unification device"? What are the four important features of this device? Explain specifically how Burke describes each one of these features.

A hatred of Jews becomes the unification device as Hitler proclaimed that race is one of the biggest factors in Germany’s failure in World War 1. As they were being punished for having tainted blood (Burkes Rhetorical Analysis pg. 202-204).

The four important features of the device are

1.) Inborn dignity is an attribute of all men. They have both religious and humanistic patterns of thought that are of right thinking and living meaning all Jews are inferior to other races.

2.) Projection device is being able to dissociate yourself from Jews even if they were once your friends’ “ills”. This would create purification as there would no longer be a fight against your inner self.

3.) Symbolic rebirth is a positive view of life with inborn racial superiority. As they are moving forward and moving towards a goal purification.

4.) Commercial use as Hitler was selling his beliefs onto the people.

4. What are Burke's action items in the conclusion of his analysis? What does he think the readers should do?

According to Burke readers should find “all available ways of making the Hitlerite distortions of religion apparent. in order that politicians of his kind in America be unable to perform a similar swindle” (Burke Rhetorical Analysis, Pg. 219). Also, that unity is admirable but should not be based on hatred.