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ENGLISH 400

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Journal Entry on “Rhetoric of Hitler’s Battle”

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

Burke states his rationalization for the analysis of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* on page 191 saying that we must analyze the text so “we may know, with greater accuracy, exactly what to guard against, If we are to forestall the concocting of similar medicine in America”. With this, he discusses the need to understand why Hitler believed what he did so we could be better prepared in case something else were to happen like this again.

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

Burke’s overall argument of Hitler’s rhetoric is that “we must make it apparent that Hitler appeals by relying upon a bastardization of fundamentally religious patterns of thought” (page 219). Furthermore, Burke believes that when religion is “misused, [it] does lead to a fascist state” (page 219). To finalize his thoughts on this, he believes that Hitler and people like Hitler are “the corruptors of religion” and “are a major menace to the world today, in giving the profound patterns of religious thought a crude and sinister distortion” (219). Burke believes that

1. 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.

The four important features of the “unification device” are “inborn dignity, projection device, symbolic rebirth, and commercial use” (page 202-203). These four features all have their own unique importance to bringing the unification device together. When discussion the inborn dignity feature, Burke mentions that Hitler uses the power of dignity and creates people to believe that there are “inferior races” (202). The projection device is reasoned as “the individual properly realizes that he is that he is not alone responsible for his condition” (page 203). The symbolic rebirth is one that can be defined by Hitler “[renouncing] this ancestry in a materialistic way by voting himself and the members of his lodge a different blood stream from that of the Jews” (page 203). For the final feature, commercial use was most commonly referred to as “attacking Jew finance instead of finance” (page 204). With going after the finance of Jews, it would leave the “Aryan” finance in control.

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

Burke believes that the readers should unify to an extent, but when unity is “attained on a deceptive basis, by emotional trickeries that shift our criticism from the accurate locus of our trouble, is no unity at all” (page 220). With this, he believes that unity is good to some extent, except for when it is used by a deceiving nature.