The Visualization of Hate Speeches in Wartime Propaganda Posters

Nefret Söylemlerinin Savaş Dönemi Propaganda Afişlerindeki Görselleştirmesi

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ABSTRACT

Propaganda posters were extremely influential in maintaining national pride and solidarity during World War I and World War II while also establishing cultural norms for wartime practices. This article explores the visual impact of propaganda posters during World War I and World War II, with a focus on those that included racist elements. Design elements and principles are key components of graphic design that are used to support conveying a message to the viewer, such as color, typography, composition, and hierarchy. By analyzing the visual and textual components of these posters, the article argues that they had a significant impact on shaping society's perception of the enemy and fuelling xenophobic attitudes. The posters served as a powerful tool for governments to convey their messages to the masses, using emotionally charged language and images to elicit strong reactions from viewers. The research also highlights the ways in which these posters perpetuated harmful stereotypes and contributed to the dehumanization of entire groups of people. By examining the historical and cultural contexts in which these posters were created and disseminated, the article underscores the need to be mindful of the power of visual propaganda and its lasting impact on social attitudes and beliefs. In the research process, primary and secondary sources were utilized, and historical method and text analysis method were used.

Keywords: Graphic design, poster, poster design, propaganda posters, racism

ÖZ

Propaganda afişleri, I. ve II. Dünya Savaşı sırasında ulusal gurur ve dayanışmanın korunmasında son derece etkili olurken, aynı zamanda savaş zamanı uygulamaları için kültürel normlar oluşturmuştur. Bu makale, Birinci ve İkinci Dünya Savaşları sırasında propaganda afişlerinin görsel etkisini, ırkçı unsurlar içeren afişlere odaklanarak incelemektedir. Tasarım unsurları ve ilkeleri, izleyiciye bir mesajın iletilmesini desteklemek için kullanılan renk, tipografi, kompozisyon, hiyerarşi gibi grafik tasarımın temel bileşenleridir. Makale, bu afişlerin görsel ve metinsel bileşenlerini analiz ederek, toplumun düşman algısını şekillendirmede ve yabancı düşmanı tutumları körüklemede önemli bir etkiye sahip olduklarını savunmaktadır. Afişler, izleyicilerden güçlü tepkiler almak için duygu yüklü dil ve imgeler kullanarak hükümetlerin mesajlarını kitlelere iletmeleri için güçlü bir araç görevi görmüştür. Araştırma aynı zamanda bu posterlerin zararlı stereotipleri sürdürme ve tüm insan gruplarının insanlıktan çıkarılmasına katkıda bulunma biçimlerini de vurgulamaktadır. Bu posterlerin yaratıldığı ve yayıldığı tarihsel ve kültürel bağlamları inceleyen makale, görsel propagandanın gücü ve toplumsal tutum ve inançlar üzerindeki kalıcı etkisi konusunda dikkatli olunması gerektiğinin altını çizmektedir. Araştırma sürecinde birincil ve ikincil kaynaklardan yararlanılmış, tarihsel yöntem ve metin analizi yöntemi kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Grafik tasarım, afiş, ırkçılık, propaganda afişi, afiş tasarımı

Introduction

Posters are a medium of communication that have been used for centuries to convey a message to a large audience. In the context of graphic design, a poster is a visual representation of a message, idea, or concept that is designed to be displayed in public places. As design theorist, Müller-Brockmann states posters are "barometers of social economic, political, and cultural events, as well as mirrors of intellectual and practical activities" (Müller-Brockmann, 2010, p.12). Posters have been used throughout history to promote political and social causes, to advertise products and events, and as a form of

art. They have the ability to influence public opinion and change social attitudes. In this sense, posters can be seen as a powerful tool for communication and a reflection of the social and political climate of their time. Propaganda posters were an important medium for communication during wartimes as they served as a powerful tool for influencing public opinion and shaping national identity. The posters were used to evoke emotions, promote patriotism, encourage enlistment, and demonize the enemy. According to Martha Banta, these propaganda posters were the "single most important visual means for promoting national values during the war" (Banta, 1987, p. 560). In an era before widespread access to mass media such as television and radio, posters were an effective means of delivering messages to a wide audience (Weitz, 2000, p. 43). The posters were often displayed in public spaces, and their bold graphics, images, and captions were designed to be impactful and memorable. Propaganda posters is a powerful tool to shape the public discourse and opinion during times of war and conflict, yet most of the posters were crude, often demonizing and dehumanizing the enemy.

Purpose of the Study

Posters, which are often seen only as a commercial product or a public notice, often have the power to influence societies or certain groups at the subconscious level in terms of the messages they contain and the discourse they convey. This can be said for most visual communication design products. However, considering the effect of the poster to reach large masses in comparison to other design mediums, the positive/negative influencing power of the messages it contains should not be overlooked. The purpose of the study was to analyze the propaganda posters which specifically included hate speech or racist remarks pointing out the fact that such hateful speech can cause to a person or group of people to have an intense fear or dislike of people from different countries or cultures. Such discriminatory discourse can lead to a variety of behaviors, including hostility, prejudice, discrimination, and even violence against individuals or groups perceived as different or foreign.

Scope and Methodology

The scope of the study is to explain the racist and discriminatory hate speech in the posters prepared for propaganda purposes during World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII) in a visual context, and the examples are limited in this area. In the research process, primary and secondary sources were utilized, and the historical method and text analysis method were used.

Poster as a Statement

One can describe the poster simply as a printed or illustrated piece of paper, usually in a larger format than a standard piece of paper, which is used to communicate a message or promote a product, event, or idea. Posters can be displayed in any place where there is human interaction mostly in public spaces, such as streets, buildings, or public transport, or in private spaces, such as homes, offices, or classrooms. However, posters are fundamentally different than mere public notices. Susan Sontag argues in her article that a public notice serves the purpose of providing information or instructions to the public (Sontag, 1970, p. 196). However, a poster is created to entice, encourage, persuade, educate, convince, and appeal to the audience. Unlike a public notice, which shares information with certain people or target groups, a poster is designed to capture the attention of those who might not have otherwise noticed it. While a public notice is passive and requires the reader to approach it and read it, a poster is meant to be visually assertive and attract attention even from a distance (1970, p. 196).

The main purpose of a poster is to communicate a message or information to a large audience in a visually appealing way. A poster can be used for a variety of purposes, including advertising products, promoting events, and conveying information or can be used as a form of art. They are often used to attract attention and communicate a message in a quick and visually striking way. The design of a poster is an essential aspect of its effectiveness. A well-designed poster should be visually appealing and attention grabbing and communicate the intended message clearly and concisely (Müller-Brockmann, 2010, p.18). Brockmann lists the general principles of poster design as follows:

- The poster should be readable and the message should be understandable.
- It should be innovative and arouse curiosity.
- It should be created by using minimum graphic elements in a large area.
- Remarkable graphic elements should be used.
- It should be able to communicate with the audience about its message or product and be memorable (2010, p. 18).

The purpose of a poster can vary depending on its content and context, but generally, it is to attract attention, convey information, and communicate a message or idea to a target audience. Posters can be used for advertising products or events, promoting political or social causes, providing information or educational materials, or for artistic or decorative purposes.

In this study, posters were classified into three subtypes, such as cultural posters, social posters, and commercial posters.

Cultural Posters
Educational posters. These are mostly used to provide information and education on a particular subject or topic and are often found in educational or public places.

Event posters. These are mostly used to promote events such as concerts, festivals, or exhibitions and are often found in public spaces or online.

Posters as a form of art. These are mostly used for their esthetic value.

Social Posters
Political posters. These are used to promote political campaigns, candidates, or ideas and are often used during elections.

Propaganda posters: These are used to promote a particular political or social cause or idea, often during times of war or political unrest, and are designed to sway public opinion and create social awareness.

Commercial Posters
Advertising posters. These are used to promote a product or service and are often found in public spaces or on billboards.

The use of color, typography, imagery, and composition are all important elements in the design of a poster. Posters are a widely preferred medium of visual communication as they can be displayed in public places, making them accessible to a broad range of viewers. Posters can also be easily reproduced and distributed, making them an affordable and effective medium for communication. For instance, during wartimes in local areas where mass media such as radio and television were not yet widespread or

censored, "posters conveyed visual messages at a time when television did not exist and newsreels were censored" in an effective and qualified way (Weitz, 2000, p. 43). Political posters especially are designed to target the interest of the whole public. They are designed both to give confidence in existing voters and to show that they are working and to convince undecided voters (Dumitrescu, 2009, p. 9). In addition to this, posters were used not only as a medium that conveys messages but also as an educational and instructive visual medium, especially in times of war. At times, posters can even carry ideas that cause disagreement in society (Ingrey, 2013, p. 52). According to Sontag, the style of a poster that depicts the conflict or fight itself, showing the heroic character against the figure of a dehumanized or caricatured antagonist, is a variation on the poster that highlights one exemplary persona. The enemy is depicted typically either held down or fleeing. "Compared with posters featuring only exemplary figures, posters with agon imagery usually appeal to cruder feelings, like vindictiveness and resentment and moral complacency. But depending on the actual odds of the struggle and the moral tone of the culture, such imagery can also bypass these emotions and simply make people feel braver" (Sontag, 1970, p. 204).

A poster is a proper design product in many ways. To convey the message, the designer/artist gets help from design elements and principles, in which are key components of graphic design that are used to support conveying a message to the viewer. One can look for hidden subliminal messages in a visual design product such as a poster through color palette, use of imagery, use of typography (in style of both the font and the text), and use of design principles. These elements and principles include the following:

Color. The use of color can convey emotion, mood, and meaning and can be used to draw attention to specific elements or create contrast (Opara and Cantwell, 2013). Color is a powerful tool in design, as it can affect emotions, mood, and perception. Different colors have different meanings and therefore can associate different emotional responses in people. For example, warm colors like red, orange, and yellow can create a feeling of passion, love, energy, vitality, and joy, while cool colors like blue, green, and purple can be associated with senses of tranquility, calmness, and nature. Color is relative and can vary according to the colors around it. This phenomenon is called simultaneous contrast. Green placed next to red will make both colors more dominant, but it will not have as strong an effect among close shades of red as it does with green (Arnston, 2011, p. 136). Color can also be used to create contrast, depth, and hierarchy in design. A well-designed color scheme can guide the viewer's eye to the most important elements of a design and help to convey the message or story being told. Additionally, color can be used to create visual interest and appeal, making a design more memorable and impactful.

Typography. The choice of fonts, typefaces, and text layout can impact the readability and tone of a design. "How a word is used and the font in which it is placed communicates as much as the meaning of the word. Different fonts have different 'personalities' and accordingly carry different meanings" (Ambrose and Harris, 2009, p.108). Typography is a special field that covers the production technologies as well as the artistic and design aspects of all printed texts and punctuation marks. In addition to being the visual form of an idea or thought (Ambrose & Harris, 2011, p. 6), type is a "part of the message rather than just its conveyor" (2011, p. 28). Type and typography often have a distinctive identity and

they have a "say" in the design. "A sense of hierarchy is instilled through type size, position and colour" (2011, p.131).

Imagery. The use of imagery, such as photographs or illustrations, can help convey a message or create a visual connection with the viewer. The more powerful the message of the image, the more people can be influenced by that. Arnston states that "whenever we create or view an image, we bring a load of personal experiences and cultural background that help us make sense of that image. We structure the image as we create it on the screen or on paper. We also structure it in our brain and eye in the process of viewing it. The image depends on the artist and the viewer" (Arnston, 2011, p. 139).

Apart from the design elements like color and typography; design principles such as composition, contrast, value, hierarchy, and scale are equally important to convey a message. In short, a composition in a poster is the arrangement of design elements within a layout that can create hierarchy, balance, and visual interest. Contrast is the use of contrast in color, typography, and imagery that can help draw attention to specific elements and create visual impact. Scale is the relative size of design elements that can create emphasis and hierarchy within a design. Proximity is the distance between design elements that can create a sense of grouping and organization within a layout.

By using these elements and principles effectively, designers can create compelling and effective designs that effectively communicate a message to the viewer (Samara, 2007). A large part of communication is established visually. The British philosopher and researcher John Locke, while explaining the sources of learning for people, explained that 83% of communication is through observation of the environment (Cited in: Ertan & Sansarcı, 2016, p. 71) which brings us to the point where an environment and its visual surroundings are crucially important influencing viewers at a subconscious level. As a visual communication medium, posters have been used not only as a medium that conveys a message but also as an educational, instructive, and stimulating visual medium, especially considering the war periods. Sometimes posters can even carry ideas that cause disagreement in society (Ingrey, 2013, p. 52). Especially in political posters, readability gains great importance in the use of typography. Experimental typographic elements and decorative typefaces are not preferred for political posters. Generally, plain typefaces with high legibility are preferred. Medium and bold typefaces are used more frequently on the grounds that they can provide legibility from a certain distance (Becer, 1999, p. 60, cited in Eken, 2018). Propaganda posters are used throughout the history to inform, to educate, to unite, and to differentiate even to fuel conflict and discrimination.

Propaganda Posters during World War I and World War II

Propaganda can be defined as the distribution of biased information designed to shape public opinion and human behavior. According to TDK, it means "the work carried out by means of word, writing, etc. in order to introduce, adopt and spread a doctrine, thought or belief to others, propaganda" (TDK). Propaganda is an attempt to affect people's beliefs or point of views by using specifically arranged images and slogans. It provides a controlled information that is biased in its representation. "Propaganda, the tool used to shape opinions and influence behaviour for the purposes of power, was used not only by leaders like Hitler or Stalin,

but democratic countries like the United States and the United Kingdom used propaganda extensively when they felt the need to gain public support for an important cause" (Mahaney, 2002).

A propaganda poster is a type of poster designed to communicate a particular political, social, or cultural message, often with the goal of influencing public opinion or behavior. Propaganda posters are typically produced by governments, political groups, or organizations to promote a particular idea, an ideology, or a belief, often during times of war, political unrest, or other significant events. They often use strong visuals, slogans, and other persuasive elements to evoke emotional responses and sway public opinion. The primary goal of a propaganda poster is to influence and persuade rather than to provide unbiased information. According to Susan Sontag, "the leading theme of the first political posters was patriotism." (1970, p. 201). In France, posters appealed to citizens to subscribe to the various war loans; in England, post- ers exhorted men to join the army (from 1914 until 1916, when conscription was introduced); in Germany, posters were more broadly ideological, arousing love of country by demonizing the enemy. (Sontag, 1970, p. 201).

Especially during WWI and WWII, posters were frequently used as an effective means of mass communication to influence, guide, provide information, or impose a certain idea on society. In a time when television and radio were being used as only an auditory medium, and newspapers were having limited distribution due to factors such as the number of readers/writers or accessibility, posters displayed on the streets became both a visual and literary source of information, news, and announcements. Throughout history, posters have always had the function of informative announcements, but their use as a communication tool or even an artistic expression can be exemplified by the Art Nouveau period in France, with the press freedom movement and the lifting of censorship. During this period, posters transformed from being mere informative written announcements or public notices to a much richer visual storytelling language. During and after WWI, as Sontag stated; "the political poster began to constitute a valuable branch of poster art" (1970, p. 201).

When considering WWI and WWII, the first weapons that come to mind are probably guns, ammunition, bombs, tanks, and warplanes. On the other hand, psychological pressure and guidance can also be considered one of the most effective weapons. In a time when mass communication tools were limited, it was possible to gain the power of psychological effect through images to inform the public about a subject, lead them to a belief, influence them, intimidate them when necessary, or strengthen national feelings to make them feel protective of their country. Therefore, posters may have experienced their most symbolic and conceptually rich period in these propaganda periods. Countries were able to disseminate their ideologies, beliefs, and the side they supported through posters, which were a strong communication tool. During WWI, posters were used as a propaganda and visual influence tool, "misusing the feelings and responsibilities of the public by all participating countries, in order to support the formation of armies and one of the bloodiest wars in human history" (Bektaş, 1997, p.54).

Stalin appreciated the power of the image in a country where such a large proportion of the population was illiterate. Although he rejected the traditional, often religious subject matter of folk art, he understood that the visual arts were a ready means of communication. Posters became a direct means of educating peasants in almost every aspect of daily life in the Soviet Union, from the benefits of bathing to driving tractors to warnings against laziness, drunkenness, and waste (Heller and Chwast, 1988, p. 177). The United States Bureau of War Information employed a large staff of book and magazine designers to design stimulus and patriotic posters, survival guides, news magazines for overseas distribution, and hundreds of other wartime propaganda during WWII (Heller and Chwast, 1988, p. 192). In France, during German occupation, poster texts provide "graphic examples of the oppressive, menacing climate that soon developed" (Weitz, 2000, p. 44–45).

During WWI and WWII, both sides used propaganda posters to mobilize their citizens, promote national values (Price, 2018), appeal to emotions, and demonize their enemies (Sontag, 1970; Knutson, 1997; Weitz, 2000). These posters often included racist elements, depicting the enemy as inferior or subhuman. For example, during WWI, German propaganda posters portrayed the British as "barbaric" and "uncivilized" and depicted them as apes or monsters. Similarly, British propaganda posters depicted the Germans as "Huns" or "barbarians." During WWII, racist elements in propaganda were even more prevalent, with posters depicting Jewish people as subhuman and responsible for the war. Nazi propaganda posters depicted Jewish people as rats, and the US propaganda portrayed the Japanese as "Japs" or "yellow peril."

In the context of propaganda posters during WWI and WWII, color played a significant role in shaping public perception and attitudes. Propaganda posters were designed to appeal to people's emotions and generate support for the war effort, and color was used strategically to convey messages of patriotism, heroism, and sacrifice. For example, red, white, and blue were commonly used in American propaganda posters to evoke a sense of national pride and unity, while black and white imagery was used in Nazi propaganda to create a sense of fear and oppression.

The use of color in propaganda posters helped to shape public opinion and mobilize support for the war effort. As Arnston stated, "Red is a dramatic, highly visible hue. It is associated with sexuality and aggression, with passion and violence. It is also an official hue found in most national colours" (2011, p. 137). While Americans used the color red to evoke patriotic feelings, Germans on the other hand used the same color to depict violence and aggression. "The famous `Red Poster,'" "Des Libérateurs?" asking if these are really liberators, was produced by the Germans to accompany the January 1944 trial of a group of foreign, largely Jewish opponents of the Reich, the Main d'oeuvre immigrée. The photos were chosen to incite xenophobia and anti-Semitism: red dominates, the color of the Red Army, of blood. In Nazi logic, `every foreigner was Jewish'" (Weitz, 2000, p. 49) (see Figure 1).

The color yellow can be seen in posters to grab the attention or to achieve contrast in the composition, but in the propaganda posters, yellow was often used to depict the weak and ill-health, "has been associated with cowardliness and weakness" (Arnston, 2011, p. 139) and even as a racist remark "yellow peril" as a color metaphor. US propaganda posters used the color yellow depicting Japanese people's skin. "This is the Enemy" poster both shows the purpose to influence American perceptions of the Japanese and psychologically alters their social perceptions (Miles, 2017, p. 2) (see Figure 2). From the images, it can be seen that the Japanese were portrayed as animals or even monstrous beasts in extreme dehumanization (Knutson, 1997, p. 60). According to Renteln, "this propaganda may have helped convince the American public that inhumane treatment was acceptable. (Renteln, 1995, cited in

Figure 1.
Distributed by Vichy France, "Red Poster," "Des Libérateurs?" Anti-Semitic Propaganda Poster, 1944 (Arsene Tchakarian).

Miles, 2017, p. 8). Similarly, Navarro (2010, as cited in Miles, 2017, p. 8) observed that "ones own nation was always the civilized one while the enemy was depicted as barbaric, sub-human, and in some cases, demonic."

Firstly, the title of the poster "This is the Enemy" is a clear statement that immediately sets the tone and message of the poster. The use of the word "enemy" implies that there is someone or something that is being opposed or fought against or someone who is the "other." The Japanese is depicted as aggressive or menacing way, located at the center of the poster that grabs the attention in a second, implies that the enemy is a threat and someone to be fearful of. The color and composition of the poster also indicated that the Japanese soldier is to blame for all the destruction and rampage (see Figure 2, left). The Japanese soldier depicted violating, kidnapping, and assaulting a white American girl, which is an indication that the war against them is just and they are right at their cause. These posters also have the influence to affect the public idea about the Japanese, showing them as rapists and violent beasts that they are dangerous and therefore have to be dealt with meaning these propaganda posters, "helped catalyse rampant anti-Japanese sentiment across the country" (Yam, 2017).

The context and message of the propaganda posters during WWI and WWII were mostly to mobilize citizens to support the war effort, create a sense of national unity, encourage enlistment in the military, purchase war bonds, conserve resources, and/or to demonize the enemy. These posters were used to boost morale and to create a sense of urgency and purpose among the citizens. The impact of these posters on society at the time can be seen in the way that they helped to fuel anti-Semitism and racism (see Figure 3) and to justify the persecution and extermination of certain groups of people. For instance in France, "graphic anti-Semitic art linked Jews (depicted as international capitalists or terrorists)" (Weitz, 2000, p.44). The posters also often depicted the enemy as barbaric, uncivilized, and inferior, in order to dehumanize them and therefore justify the war. "Most posters done during World War I were crude graphically. Their emotional range moved between the pompous, like Leete's poster of Lord Kitchener and his accusatory finger with the quotation 'Your country needs YOU' (1914), and the hysterical, like Bernhard's nightmare anti-Bolshevik poster (same year)" (Sontag, 1970, p. 201).

Figure 2.
Left Image: Anonymous, USA/Japan: "This is the Enemy." WWII US Army Anti-Japanese Propaganda Poster, 1941–1945. Right Image: Anonymous "This is the Enemy," WWII US Army Anti-Japanese Propaganda Poster, 1942.

Figure 3.
Left Image: Bruno Hanich, "Behind the Enemy Powers: the Jew." Anti-semitic Poster, 1943 (Google Arts & Culture). Right Image: "Mjölnir" Hans Schweitzer, "Guilty for the War" anti-semitic Poster, 1943 (Limited).

The idea of the Jewish as an enemy, who hides in the background and causes destruction, portrays Jews as corrupt bankers and enemies of the people who promote division, corruption, and war (see Figure 3, left side). By blaming Jews for world problems and "othering" them, viewers are convinced that Jews are responsible for anything that goes wrong. This propaganda perpetuates the idea of an international Jewish conspiracy (Herf, 2008). The Jew depicted in the poster is behind UK, US, and Soviet Union's flags, which is an indicator that those countries are funded by the wealthy Jews. The man in the poster depicted clearly as a rich man, possibly a banker, with an accessory of the Star of David which is a symbol of Judaism and Jewish identity, hanging from his suit. The poster has the inscription "Hinter den Feindmächten: der Jude" ("Behind the Enemy Forces: The Jew") that stands out. The fact that the word "Jew" is larger than the other words and is used in a contrasting yellow color indicates that this word was intended to be emphasized. With the placement of the figure behind the flags of three allied countries and the use of the main slogan, it is clearly seen that the poster actually aims to give the message "Behind the enemy forces, it is the Jews who support them." In addition, an important contrast was achieved in the use of color with the figure appearing in black behind the other colored flags, trying to support the idea that the figure is an evil individual. This use of color supports anti-semitism, which was the main policy of Hitler and Nazi Germany during WWII, and shows Jewish people as if they were evil. He is depicted with a distorted and "ugly" face, stern and non-smiling, with a cunning sideways gaze, indicating that these sort of people are the ones to avoid. Similar to that, the poster with the title "Der ist schuld am Kriege!" ("He's to blame for the war") (see Figure 3 right side) depicts the same looking man with a Star of David indicator that he is a Jew, but this time he looks defeated and dodging an accusatory pointing finger of a white person. He is blamed for the war and for all that it brings.

Most propaganda posters relied on a strong appeal to both positive and negative emotions to grab and hold the viewer's attention. According to Mahaney, there are four different types of propaganda posters. The first type is posters with the patriotic message that can make men and women appear proud and powerful to show they were fighting for a just and right cause. The second type is the emotional posters that spoke to the heart of the people of the country. The third type of poster used humor to convey its message. A caricature of a German or Japanese civilian could be included in an image to make the enemy appear silly and the fourth poster type was more negative and outspoken. It could show images of soldiers fighting and dying, warnings about the dire consequences of defeat, and images of the horrors of the Fascist takeover (2002, p. 41–42).

It seems that Mahaney treated the posters with demeaning and dehumanizing elements under the third type of propaganda posters which are of humor and that the Japanese or German citizens in question are merely described as "silly." On the other hand, the "humorous" cartoons mentioned in Mahaney's study often take a racist approach and contain insults. The caricature depictions of different nations and races may seem silly; however; distributing and publishing images without fully understanding the message and its harmful implications can cause a strong dislike or animosity toward a particular group. America produced more posters than anywhere else in the world, and these posters were realized either by famous artists or by art academies (Bektaş, 1997, p. 56). Although Bektaş analyzes wartime propaganda posters in her book "Çağdaş Grafik Tasarımın Gelişimi," she too does not include comments on posters containing racist discourses.

A gorilla in German military helmet with bloody hands attacking and violating the world centered from Europe is designed by Norman Lindsay "to maintain public anger about German atrocities and idealise Australian soldiers" (Fuse) (see Figure 4, left) with a monstrous ape-like figure with bloody hands in a distinctive German helmet reaching to the America on the globe (see Figure 4, right), a club at its hand and a white, fair, half naked American girl depicted in its arms indicates beastly, barbaric, unhuman traits of a monster. It can be concluded that the discrimination

and persecution experienced by German-Americans both during and after the war was largely fuelled by anti-German propaganda themes, such as the examples discussed above, and directed the public.

Carrying a certain message by using graphic visuals and being able to give this message to the other party effectively is still one of the main reasons for the existence of the poster today. In doing so, visual appreciation is always taken into consideration, but the most crucial part is its effectiveness. "Most political posters, like commercial posters, rely on the image rather than the word. As the aim of an effective advertising poster is the stimulation (and simplification) of tastes and appetites, the aim of an effective political poster is rarely more than the stimulation (and simplification) of moral sentiments. The classic means of stimulating and simplifying is through a visual metaphor. Most commonly, a thing or an idea is attached to the emblematic image of a person" (Sontag, 1970, s. 203).

Discussion and Conclusion

Visual communication design and graphic design are powerful mediums to persuade viewers and convey messages. Through the use of images, typography, color, and layout, designers have the ability to influence and guide the viewer's perception and understanding of a message. Designers use various techniques to persuade viewers, such as the use of visual hierarchy, contrast, and color psychology. Visual hierarchy helps guide the viewer's eye to specific elements in the design and contrast is used to create emphasis and can draw the viewer's attention to important elements in the design. Color psychology can be used to evoke certain emotions or associations, such as using red to signify danger, urgency, or violence.

Posters are often used to promote a product, event, idea, or cause and to attract attention. They serve as a way to convey information, raise awareness, and influence people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The specific purpose of a poster may vary depending on the context and audience, but generally, the aim is to grab attention and effectively convey the intended message. As one of the many types of posters, propaganda and political posters are probably one of the most message-oriented and symbol-embellished examples. In short, almost all propaganda posters revolve around the same ideas: that the fight was just and the sacrifices made were for the greater good of the people they address. The main aim was to maintain a sense of patriotism and to unite the people in their efforts to support the war. The posters employed different tactics, such as fear, name-calling, and glittering generalizations, to appeal to people's emotions.

In most of the historical sources of war propaganda posters examined, it is seen that the analysis of hate speech and visual depiction of discrimination is often omitted. Most of the sources state that propaganda posters were intended to influence societies by containing warning and informative, positive, or negative visual images. On the other hand, most sources do not mention that they denigrate, humiliate, dishonor, and immoralize another nation with which they are at war. Apart from academic sources, internet sources are also weak in this regard. The number of sources dealing with racism in propaganda posters is quite low in contrast research about propaganda art in general.

What usually comes to mind as war weapons is bullets, grenades, bombs, machine guns, tanks, or war planes. However, information and visual representation of the situation can be as powerful as a weapon for people's hearts and minds. It can be argued that one of the most influential tools to educate or influence a group of people is through visual communication irrespective of whether it is to sell a product, to inform, or to promote an idea or an ideology. It has the power to influence viewer's beliefs and point of views. It can educate people, but it can also create biased perceptions. In that sense, a propaganda poster should be crafted and designed very carefully and with care.

Nazi posters, for instance, depicted Jewish people as sub-human and responsible for the war, portraying them as vermin, parasites, and criminals. The posters also depicted the "enemy" as monsters and tried to create a sense of fear and panic among the citizens.

Figure 4.
Image 4. Left Image: Lindsay Norman, ? (the Question Mark), Anti-german Propaganda Poster, 1918 (Imperial War Museum). Right Image: Harry Hopps, "Destroy this Mad Brute", Anti-German Propaganda Posters, 1917 (Hopps).

The US propaganda portrayed the Japanese as "Japs" or "yellow peril" which was a racist term, which aimed to dehumanize the Japanese and to justify the war. It is important to note that these posters were not only targeting the general population but also the soldiers; the posters were used to boost their morale and to create a sense of heroism and sacrifice, justifying the violence act. It is also worth noting that these posters were not just used to convey the message to the people of that specific country but also to the enemy spreading fear and defeatism among the enemy population.

Many countries used visual communication through propaganda posters during the world wars to manipulate public opinion. A visual propaganda can be used as a means of establishing power and biased perceptions. A poster is a powerful tool to convey an idea but as all powerful tools it can be used both as positive and negative. It is a convincing visual way to draw bridges between nations and races and causes discrimination, bigotry, and hate.

While it is difficult to fully gauge the response of the citizens to the extensive efforts to influence them during the war, the prevalence of propaganda posters during this time is particularly noteworthy. These posters were difficult to ignore, as they were pervasive in public spaces. The impact of these posters on young people, for example, could be significant, especially in cases where negative depictions of specific ethnic groups were displayed prominently. Often accepted as it is, this kind of offensive language can establish harmful stereotypes that would be damaging on the receiving part. Visual designers should also be careful when choosing the wording of a slogan or deciding on a color palette or using the imagery as this can persuade and influence people's beliefs. As a powerful visual communication media, posters should be used to raise awareness about issues that would create an accepting and tolerant society.

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