

**Redefining Propaganda:
From Ancient Egypt To Hampden-Sydney College**

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Introduction

What is propaganda? The basic goal of propaganda has remained the same throughout history—to “disseminate or promote particular ideas.”¹ The word ‘propaganda’ itself derives from Latin and means ‘to propagate’ or ‘to sow.’ However, the term ‘propaganda’ has lost its neutrality over time as various organizations and governments have used propaganda to manipulate and control certain groups of people the outcomes of which have been quite bleak and grim. Many modern definitions of the word ‘propaganda’ imply a negative connotation: “Ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one’s cause or to damage an opposing cause” (Merriam-Webster), “Propaganda, dissemination of information—facts, arguments, rumors, half-truths, or lies—to influence public opinion.” (Britannica), “The systematic dissemination of information, esp. in a biased or misleading way, in order to promote a political cause or point of view.” (Oxford English Dictionary) While propaganda has been used by repressive leaders and regimes, it has also been used as a means to a positive end: “Propaganda has a bad name. It is what repressive regimes use to glorify their leaders, motivate their citizens and demonize their enemies...But it is also...about alerting people to the risks of disease, about making sure children know how to cross the road safely and about building a perfectly legitimate sense of common purpose among the citizens of a democracy.”²

This is where one begins to see the breakdown between the various forms of propaganda—white, black, and gray.³ The difference between these three forms of propaganda is the legitimacy of both the source and the information being provided.⁴ In white propaganda the source is always verified, and the information being put out is known to be accurate.⁵ An example of white propaganda would be the information and guidelines that the CDC provides on how one can protect themselves and others from getting infected with COVID-19 such as frequent handwashing, mask-wearing, and proper social distancing. Black propaganda relies on the spreading of lies using a concealed or falsely credited source.⁶ An example of black propaganda would be the so called “fake news” such as the information that appeared on the Bulgarian news a few months ago which supposedly had just appeared on CNN stating that the Bulgarian alcoholic drink *rakia* protects the consumer from a COVID-19 infection. Gray propaganda stands in between white propaganda and black propaganda. Gray propaganda is not necessarily false, or made up of complete lies, but is not entirely reliable either.⁷ An example of grey propaganda would be Stalin’s attempts to convince the Soviet public and the Western world that in the labor camps (the GULAGs) the “enemies of the people”—actual and potential enemies of the Soviet regime—were re-educated through labor and

¹ Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, “What Is Propaganda, and How Does It Differ From Persuasion,” in *Propaganda & Persuasion*, (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2015, pp. 1–54.), 2.

² *Ibid.*, 3.

³ *Ibid.*, 21-35.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 21-35.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 24.

Redefining Propaganda

converted into productive members of the Soviet society entirely dedicated to the State's goals and ideals. At the labor camps the "enemies of the people" were forced daily into back-breaking labor, but the final point of their journey was not re-education and return to the "free" world. Most of them worked until they were shot or died from exhaustion, starvation, or the unbearable freezing temperatures. The few that survived the 8-10 year GULAG sentences were not allowed to return to the mainland.

The difference between propaganda and persuasion needs to be elaborated on. Many believe that these two words can be used interchangeably, but 'propaganda' and 'persuasion' are two distinctly different terms. 'Persuasion' is a strategy used to convince an opponent just enough to move them closer to your side, usually finding a middle ground that suits both parties: "Persuasion is interactive and attempts to satisfy the needs of both the persuader and the persuadee."⁸ Persuasion seeks a voluntary change, recognizing that the audience most likely has access to information concerning the other side's stances: "practitioners of persuasion assume that the audience has access to information about the other side...there is a recognition that any change that occurs within the audience's perception, cognitions, or behaviors will be voluntary change."⁹ What distinguishes 'propaganda' as a form of communication is its use of both informative and persuasive communication: "A model of propaganda depicts how elements of informative and persuasive communication may be incorporated into propagandistic communication."¹⁰ Propagandists do not intend to find a middle ground with the audience or to reach a compromise that satisfies both sides. They intend to provide certain information to the audience (informative communication) in a manner the final goal of which is to fully align the audience's viewpoint with that of the propagandist (persuasive communication.)

While one can't deny the fact that throughout history propaganda has been used to serve the goals and purposes of a number of repressive regimes such as the Soviet Union which is discussed in this paper through the analysis of a number of Socialist Realism texts, I attempted to redefine propaganda by shifting the focus from the negative connotations that the term is often associated with to its more positive aspects and functions such as educating the public, instilling certain norms and values in people, and creating an organized frame for society. In order to do this I analyzed a number of texts from various cultures and time periods—Ptah-hotep's "Precepts" (ancient Egypt), Hammurabi's Code (Mesopotamia), Yuan Cai's *Advice about Women* (China), *Domostroi* (Russia), Thomas H. Shomo's *To Manner Born To Manners Bred* (the United States), and Hampden-Sydney College's mission statement (the United States). While analyzing all of the texts that I worked with I focused specifically on the purpose that each text served in terms of communicating a certain message to the audience and on the approaches that each text used to relate its message to the audience and to convince the audience to "get on board" with that message. The definition of the term 'propaganda'

⁸ Ibid., 1.

⁹ Ibid., 44.

¹⁰ Ibid., 1.

Redefining Propaganda

that I created based on my research is, “a one-sided multifaceted form of communication in which the propagandist intends to fully align the opinion and/or behavior of a person or a group of people with his/her [the propagandist’s] intended goals.” While working with the texts I outlined a set of propaganda’s five main underlying principles—techniques used by the propagandist to persuade and convince the audience to agree with him/her: logic, feasibility, believability, use of fear, and promise of a reward. In order for propaganda to be effective the tasks that it poses on the audience must be presented as sensical. They must be clearly stated and well-explained, and simple enough to accomplish. The propagandist must also justify his/her authority in the subject matter in a satisfactory way in order to demonstrate to the audience why they should trust him/ her and why “getting on board” with his/ her rules and advice would be the best thing to do. The way fear is used in propaganda varies. Some texts “thunder” over the audience with explicit threats of eternal damnation, physical torture and pain, and death. Other texts use hidden threats that are not explicitly stated in the texts, but circulate among the audience as ‘common knowledge’—the unspoken truth about midnight arrests, unfair interrogations, imprisonment, terrifying labor camps, and merciless mass shootings that await those who decide to not comply with the propagandist’s wishes and desires. Yet other texts do not necessarily insinuate a specific threat, whether explicitly stated or implied. The sense of fear that the audience experiences is based on a potential failure to embody certain cherished and highly praised religious, moral, and ethical values and principles such as being a good Christian, being a good father and husband, or being “a good man and a good citizen.” The promise of a desirable reward is another principle that is used throughout the texts that I worked with. In order to convince the audience to comply with his/her rules and advice the propagandist often guarantees that the outcome from doing so for the audience will be highly beneficial. The types of rewards promised to the audience vary across the texts from material possessions and recognition by the Ruler and/or the government to eternal bliss in heaven and being named a model citizen and/or individual who would serve as a celebrated example and as an inspiration for others.

The Soviet Union

People are often curious how anyone could be lured into a society of oppression and dictatorship. As a nation undergoing rebirth, the Soviet Union desired to control people’s professional and personal lives. High individual productivity, education, and contribution to the state’s ambitious goals in terms of industrial growth were instilled as a number one priority in each Soviet citizen. Personal life and family were not viewed as important by the state as they distracted the citizens from their responsibilities to the Motherland. The party leaders, in an attempt to bring each and every Soviet citizen into the new order, made various attempts to connect with the citizens on a deeper, more personal level: love and sex, labor and work, education, and personal life journeys being a few target subjects.

I. Reconstructing Soviet Literature

As the Soviet Union began to grow at a rapid rate, all forms of art, including literature, were to conform to a single artistic method, aiding the party in the spreading of the new order. Writers of the Soviet era wrote and edited works in favor of the Party's agenda, and were known to alter texts of writers and laborers who opposed the Soviet Union's push for socialist industrialization. The idea of altering texts to fit the Party image became known as "Socialist Realism", a misnomer of such, as it was anything but realistic. As more Soviet writers contributed their works for the benefit of the Party's growth, they became known as "engineers of the human soul", essentially molding the ideal Soviet citizen through literature: "In our country the main heroes of works of literature are the active builders of a new life—" ¹¹ The new wave of literature led Soviet citizens to believe that they were capable of contributing to the success and growth of the Soviet State.

Anyone who could give an account of life in the Soviet Union at the time was expected to partake in autobiographical writing: "Workers, peasants, managers, writers, Party figures—all were exhorted to write their life stories for Party archives, factory archives, and institutional archives." ¹² Autobiographies became an important part of Soviet literature; however, these works did not escape the harsh editing of Soviet leaders. Roughly every ten years an autobiography was to be rewritten "so as to update, delete, or amend anything that was not in line with changing Party ideology." ¹³ Autobiographies had to meet these changing standards so that the Party could develop the ideal socialist worker and eventually the ideal socialist nation. In fact, not everyone had an autobiography that met the standards of the Soviet Union, and therefore these works were not published: "Those from the prerevolutionary middle class could not claim the fortuitous, impoverished conditions that became the hall mark of the Soviet hero as worker." ¹⁴

Much of the literature being developed at the time was not targeted towards the wealthy or well educated, but at the poor semiliterate peasants and industry workers. By targeting peasantry that had just gained basic literacy and by having them read works by authors who emerged from the same impoverished background, the Party wished to expand on the idea that everyone can contribute and participate in the Party's success. Literature had indeed become the model and inspiration for social change. Often times Soviet leaders were writing their own excerpts and articles in hopes of aiding the desired transition from an individualistic to collectivized society.

The movement from traditional literature to Socialist Realism is credited to Vladimir Lenin: "Lenin's text offers not only an ideological platform...; it offers a taste of what would go on to become standard reading for generations of Soviet youth trained in the canons of Soviet political economy." ¹⁵ In Lenin's *Withering Away of the State*, he explains

¹¹ Adele Marie Barker, editor. *The Russia Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. (Duke University Press, 2012), 414.

¹² *Ibid.*, 378.

¹³ *Ibid.* 378.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 378.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 331.

Redefining Propaganda

how the crumbling bourgeois society will vanish completely when society fully understands the socialist formula of working to your ability and need, so that all can support the collective. Lenin focuses on the appealing end goal of his dream to form a utopian communist society. His rhetoric follows his passion for the subject and gives guidance to the reader on how they can help and benefit from this new movement, causing the reader to become engaged, to believe in, and to envision the “pure Utopia” that Lenin was promising.

Similar to Lenin’s use of rhetoric to win the Soviet citizens over, Joseph Stalin began writing articles after he took over the Party. When Stalin took power, he aimed at the total collectivization of farming, something that did not sit well with much of the rural population. He had sent in various groups to “strong-arm” the farmers; however, the men that he sent ended up doing more harm than good, causing a loss of faith in Stalin’s ability to lead. In response to the violent outbursts in the countryside, Stalin wrote the article “Dizzy with Success”. In the article, Stalin spoke about his disapproval of excessive use of force and promised to take a step back on the rapid collectivization which was supposedly something that the peasants did based on their free will and informed choice and not something that they were forced to do by the government. Stalin said that “50 percent of the peasant farms of the U.S.S.R had been collectivized. This means...we had *fulfilled* the estimates of the Five-Year Plan *more than twice over*.”¹⁶ As many writers of the Soviet era, Stalin was using questionable “facts” in the form of numbers and statistics to justify his end-goal—the need for government-run collectivized farms—and to “prove” to the peasants that the plan for the “workers’ utopia” that he was building has worked and will continue to work, but only with the peasants’ unquestionable participation and cooperation.

II. Love and Sex

Aleksandra Kollontai, a famed writer during this era, set out to combine political and sexual liberation. Kollontai believed that there was a way to advance socialist reform through what she coined as “love-comrade-ship,” a relationship that is all too familiar with her “bourgeois readership, but one which would be free of the exclusive, “all-consuming,” possessive character that drained social energies away from collective causes.”¹⁷ She hoped to expand the socialist reform by showing the bourgeoisie that even in a collectivized society, love is still possible, even easier. Early on in her move towards sexual liberation she openly says that one day children will be raised by the government and not by their family, and by doing so, the perfect socialist society can be formed. The stance she takes removes sex from the family and redirects it at promoting the greater cause, that of the collective.

During the revolution, it was observed that the working class, the people responsible for the upkeep of society, were focused more on the economizing of material wealth and

¹⁶ Ibid., 420.

¹⁷ Ibid., 351.

Redefining Propaganda

the preservation of the working force than they were on reproduction. If they were not going to focus at all on reproduction, then the society would eventually collapse. Kollontai attempted to counteract this inevitable fate with “love-comrade-ship” saying, “for a nation that is being built on the idea of solidarity and cooperation, depending on emotional and intellectual ties, it is essential that one has the capability of love and warm emotions.”¹⁸ By justifying her beliefs through both the idea of love and through the idea of the collective, she is able to convince people who supported the Soviet Union and those who had yet to back the revolution.

In the ending of *Make way for Winged Eros: A Letter to Working Youth*, she spelled out a short set of guidelines that must be followed “in order to answer the demands formulated by the new proletariat morality.”¹⁹ Her decision to lay out this set of guidelines— “1. Equality in relationships...2. Mutual recognition of the rights of others, of the fact that one does not own the heart and soul of the other...3. Comradely sensitivity, the ability to listen and understand the inner workings of the loved person—”²⁰—in a clear, concise, and convincing way points to one of the main goals of effective propaganda: the reader is simply ‘fed’ the information and needs not to think for themselves, which means that they would have little to no need to question the actions that they are led to take. While outlining her rules for the young workers, Kollontai recognizes that the party leaders are not in total agreement with her sexual liberation. In recognizing that her work will be read by these leaders, Kollontai ended her work by reassuring that her ideas go beyond the individual and are intended for the success of the party: “However great the love between two members of the collective, the ties binding the two persons to the collective will always take precedence, will be firmer, more complex and organic.”²¹

III. Personal Life Journey

The life journey of a hardworking Soviet citizen who came from a humble background, as suggested by the autobiographies being published at the time, became a primary means of influencing the peasant population. Although these autobiographies were being written “firsthand”, they lacked the personal and emotional self, and focused mostly on the ways in which one could contribute to the collective success of the state, such as labor and education. In *Learning to Labor (1932)*, the reader is introduced to Anastasiia Bushueva, a once poor girl from rural Russia who obtained an education and worked her way up the Socialist ladder to become a manager at a manufacturing plant in Moscow. While her story seems awe inspiring, the reader misses everything about her personal life, allowing the Party to mandate what the intended audience is actually exposed to: “There is less about her private life and feelings in Bushueva’s account than about the times in which she lived.”²²

¹⁸ Ibid., 357.

¹⁹ Ibid., 360.

²⁰ Ibid., 361.

²¹ Ibid., 361.

²² Ibid., 378.

Redefining Propaganda

Being an efficient, dedicated, and productive part of the collective and not a self-absorbed and self-centered individual was one of the crucial aspects of the Soviet ideology. This is why the autobiographies published at that time lacked much of the authors' personal identity. It was not important who the author was as an individual, what they felt or thought; it was important how they contributed to the Soviet society in a selfless and thus exemplary way. The description of Anastasiia's personal life in her autobiography, *Learning to Labor*, is focused on her childhood and mostly on her poor father. Pointing out the impoverished backgrounds that model Soviet men and women came from and the hardships that they had to go through was the Party's way of emphasizing that everyone, despite their humble beginnings and the challenges they had to face in life, had the potential to positively impact the nation and to contribute to building of the "workers' paradise" if they firmly believed in the socialist ideals and kept working tirelessly and selflessly every day.

A large section of Bushueva's autobiography describes her experience at the Soviet Party School and the immense impact the Party has had on her life. One of the standard themes in Socialist Realism writings focused on the many ways in which the Soviet Union helped and inspired its citizens to become exemplary members of society. Bushueva praises the Party's education system and credits the Party for improving her literacy. By providing widely-available education, but at the same time strictly controlling the types and genres of readings available to 'students' such as Bushueva, the Party achieved two of its main goals: creating a well-educated class of Soviet citizens who were able to serve the goals of the state much better than an 'army' of illiterate peasants and efficiently spreading the Soviet ideology on a mass scale.

IV. Labor and Work

Stalin's impressive ambitions for the Soviet Union in terms of economic and industrial growth required an "all hands on deck" approach. A large number of the so-called "enemies of the people"—members of the bourgeoisie, White Army officers, foreigners, priests and monks—were arrested daily in order to ensure the integral stability of the Soviet state. These "enemies of the people" were either immediately killed or transported to correctional labor camps known as GULAGs. While the initial purpose of the GULAGs remained vague, around 1925 the Soviet government started seeing the powerful economic asset that all of these prisoners could become for the Soviet Union.²³ The GULAG prisoners became Stalin's army of 'working shadows.' In the beginning the Soviet Union's use of slave labor in many sectors of its economy remained unnoticed. However, at some point a number of Western countries became suspicious as they began to take notice of the Soviet Union's extremely cheap goods. Countries such as the United

²³ Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History*, New York: Anchor Books. 2003.

Redefining Propaganda

States and Great Britain openly questioned the real purpose of the Soviet Unions' labor camps and threatened to boycott Soviet goods being produced by force labor.²⁴

Stalin needed to respond to the threat. The government made “cosmetic changes” and started hiring free workers for minimal pay for the production of export goods. What was once known as *konstlager* (concentration camp) became known as *ispravitelnotrudovye* (corrective labor camps). After being openly questioned about the real purpose of the camps, Stalin decided to “showcase” the success of his approach--re-educating “enemies of the people” through hard labor—by giving them a project where their work could be celebrated not only by the Soviet Union, but by the Western world as well. The largest project to be completed entirely by GULAG labor was a canal known as The *Belomorkanal* (The White Sea Canal).²⁵

In 1931, plans for the massive canal project that would connect the White Sea with the Baltic were developed. This was the first and only project completed entirely by GULAG labor to be fully exposed to the outside world. Stalin had three main reasons for exposing the project to the public eye: justifying the rapid growth of the prison population, explaining the purpose of the camps to the Soviet population and thus putting it at ease, and promoting the value of “shock labor” which was defined as over-achieving one’s daily goals at work. Stalin entrusted Maxim Gorky with introducing the grand project to both the Soviet Union and the Western world.²⁶

Maxim Gorky described the project as a “splendidly successful attempt at the transformation of thousands of former enemies of Soviet society.”²⁷ Statements such as the one made by Gorky were what helped the Party to maintain its positive image and to prove to the world that even if someone was once a misguided “enemy” of the Soviet Union, they could turn their life around with the help of the firm, guiding hand of the State and become a functioning member of the Soviet society. Even though in the article “Mass Attack on the Watershed” Maxim Gorky talked about the hardships faced by the workers at the canal’s construction site, he did not do it as a form of criticism of the Soviet government, but rather emphasized that despite the poor working conditions the “re-educated” prisoners, saved and transformed by the State, were still overfulfilling their daily work quotas: “The first division did 128 percent working on soil. The third division did 130 percent, though it had weak houses and broken picks.”²⁸

Early Forms of Propaganda

The mass dissemination of certain ideologies through texts written by both rulers and scholars has occurred throughout history. Rulers often used codes of law and books of guidance to maintain order in their empires, similar to the way the Soviet Union used writings to convince their citizens to follow the Party’s ideology. As various cultures and empires, such as the Russian Empire and China during the Song Dynasty began enacting

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Adele Marie Barker, op. cit., 453.

²⁸ Ibid., 454.

Redefining Propaganda

drastic political and social reform, rulers and scholars wrote texts the goal of which was to essentially create “good men and good citizens.” These terms were defined in various ways throughout the different cultures and time periods and their overarching value was justified through timeless and unquestionable factors such as religion and justice. Each text was an attempt to develop a ‘perfect’ society by molding its core—the ‘perfect’ citizen. These texts used irrefutable justifications such as the will of the god(s) or society’s need for justice to explain why the citizens were to believe in and act according to certain principles, allowing for rulers to grow and maintain unquestionable support from their subjects.

I. *Domostroi*

Written as a guide for the ideal Russian household during the 16th century, *Domostroi* gave instruction on nearly all aspects of life and regulated moral and civil obligations, family relationships, and the physical needs of the large and diverse Russian household. The rules and guidelines in the text were rooted in the doctrines of the country’s predominant religion—Orthodox Christianity, instilling a sense of fear of God into the readers. *Domostroi* follows a clear and concise format, and leaves no room for interpretation. The sixty-seven sections, or rules, address a large number of questions of various nature. Many of the rules outlined in *Domostroi* address the lives of men and women, wealthy and poor, but the text was written with the elitist men of society—the moving force behind the mighty Russian Empire—as its target audience.

As Russia underwent a drastic change in power, the Russian people needed advice on how to journey through this new form of government that they were not used to. The Romanov family, a family of high-ranking aristocrats that were well respected in Russia, were known to follow these guidelines themselves: “The Romanov house illustrates many of its aspects.”²⁹ The Romanov family set a prominent example of what the ideal Russian household should look like for other powerful families in the empire, “The *Domostroi* thus reflects the life of the fortunate few...The rules of the system determined both the privilege and the obligations by which they lived:”³⁰

Mutual dependency, or the need to benefit off each other in a balanced manner, was an aspect of *Domostroi* that the unknown author incorporated into various rules, such as “Rule 6: How One Should Visit Monasteries, Hospitals, Prisons, and the Unfortunate.”³¹ The fortunate citizens, by any means they could, were to care for those who could not care for themselves: “Help them as much as possible. Do not neglect any unfortunate, troubled, needy, or poor person.”³² The unfortunate and needy citizens were receiving help in the form of food and shelter, while the wealthy, who extended a helping hand to their not so fortunate fellow citizens, were rewarded by receiving ‘absolution’ from God.

²⁹ Carolyn Pouncy, *The Domostroi: Rules for Russian Households in the Time of Ivan the Terrible*. (Cornell University Press, 2006.), 1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

³² *Ibid.*, 70.

Redefining Propaganda

The heads of well-off households used the rules listed in *Domostroi* as a guide to living a well-balanced and holy life. Rule 21, “Instruction to a Husband and Wife, Their Servants and Children, on How They Must Live Well,”³³ states that it is up to the man of the house to lead those who live under his roof. This meant teaching everyone in the family what *Domostroi* clearly stated as a core value that one should strive for: “not [to] steal, live dissolutely, lie, slander, envy, offend, accuse falsely, quarrel with others, condemn, carouse, mock, remember evil, or be angry with anyone.”³⁴ If anyone in the household failed to follow *Domostroi*’s rules, the blame would be placed on the head of the family—the husband and father—and all members of the household would face “eternal torture”³⁵ The powerful fear of such forthcoming eternal damnation that *Domostroi* instilled in the Russian people was a crucial factor that led to people’s willingness to follow *Domostroi* in its entirety.

II. *Hammurabi’s Code*

Hammurabi (also Hammurapi) was a Mesopotamian ruler who rose to power after defeating the Elamite state and conquering his once allies to gain control over almost all of Mesopotamia. As he began his reign over such a large empire, he needed to develop a set of laws in order to help govern his subjects: “To facilitate the rule of such a large state, Hammurabi issued one of the earliest known codes of law.”³⁶ Hammurabi and the people he ruled over believed that he was chosen by the gods to rule over the empire and that he could cleanse his kingdom of evil, malice, and injustice: “... cause justice to prevail in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, to go forth like the Sun over the Black Head Race, to enlighten the land and to further the welfare of the people.”³⁷ The Code consisting of 282 laws that Hammurabi developed was used to guide his subjects in the matters of justice and proper punishments in the cases when the rules were broken and a crime was committed.

Hammurabi’s laws were presented to his subject in a simple, straight-forward, and easy to understand format following the principle “eye for an eye.” Some of the laws were grouped together based on the fact that they dealt with the same or similar subjects outlining different nuances of those subjects and introducing the various outcomes—either rewards or punishments—based on the course of action that the citizen decided to take.

15. If anyone take a male or female slave of the court, or a male or female slave of a freed man, outside the city gates, he shall be put to death.

³³ Ibid., 103.

³⁴ Ibid., 103.

³⁵ Ibid., 103.

³⁶ Ibid., 90.

³⁷ Ibid., 91.

Redefining Propaganda

16. If anyone receive into his house a runaway male or female slave of the court, or of a freedman, and does not bring it out at the public proclamation of the major domus, the master of the house shall be put to death.

17. If anyone find runaway male or female slaves in the open country and bring them to their masters, the master of the slaves shall pay him two shekels of silver.

18. If the slave will not give the name of the master, the finder shall bring him to the palace; a further investigation must follow, and the slave shall be returned to his master.

19. If he hold the slaves in his house, and they are caught there, he shall be put to death.

20. If the slave that he caught run away from him, then shall he swear to the owners of the slave, and he is free of all blame.³⁸

III. Yuan Cai, *Advice about Women*

During the 12th century, China's Song Dynasty rose to power, seeking major change in the social structure of Chinese society, particularly the role of women. Although there had already been several texts written on household management and similar topics, Yuan Cai's *Advice about Women* was the most popular, influential, and widely available because of advances in printing and an increase in literacy rates across China during the Song Dynasty. *Advice about Women* was written to give members of the scholarly-gentry class an idea of how to manage their family matters. Successful people were drawn to the book as they found themselves "occupying roles that they had not had the opportunity to observe their parents in."³⁹ Many of the passages deal specifically with women's roles; however, "the presumed reader is a male household head."⁴⁰ More recent research suggests that women may have gained in some aspect of life, but lost significantly in others, such as the ability to engage in affairs outside of the house.

According to scholars, the choices available to women during the Song Dynasty, specifically elite women, had significantly narrowed: "in the Tang Dynasty a young female aristocrat might be out horseback riding when her suitor came to call: by the Song Dynasty she would not have learned to ride a horse...gone out on her own...seen her suitor prior to marriage."⁴¹ Simply put, elite women were not to partake in 'extra-familial' affairs because it was expected that their husbands and sons would take care of everything for them: "Women do not take part in extrafamilial affairs. The reason is that worthy husbands and sons take care of everything for them, while unworthy ones can always find ways to hide their deeds from the women."⁴² Although women were not allowed to make

³⁸ "The Code of Hammurabi." Translated by L. W. King, *The Avalon Project: Code of Hammurabi*, (avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp.)

³⁹ Elizabeth Pollard and Clifford D. Rosenberg, *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart: a Companion Reader*. Third ed., vol. 1, (W.W. Norton & Company, 2019.), 291

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 291.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 291.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 292.

Redefining Propaganda

many of their own decisions, the area in which they ‘gained’ was the ability to live a comfortable life.

Yuan Cai stated in the guidelines that “Women’s Sympathies Should be Indulged,” as a woman would want to help her family as best as she could and that both parties should value and understand this: “Her parents and husband should be sympathetic towards her feeling and indulge some of her wishes.”⁴³ If a woman married into a wealthier family than that of her own, it was customary for her husband to assist his wife’s family in any way possible. If a woman married into a less fortunate family, it was up to her father to ensure that she was still able to lead a comfortable life with her new husband: “If her parents’ family is wealthy...she wants to take her parents’ wealth to help her husband...If her husband’s family is wealthy.. she wants to take from her husband...to enable her parents to prosper.”⁴⁴

IV. Ptah-hotep, *Precepts*

An Egyptian official during the fifth Dynasty, Ptah-hotep, who served as the first minister to Pharaoh Djedkare Isesi, is credited for writing a book of precepts to guide young Egyptians. It has been noted that the document reads as more of a letter to a son from his father, but that it was done purposefully: “Although the document reads council from a father to a son, this format is most likely a rhetorical strategy rather than a specific letter of instruction.”⁴⁵ By writing the rules in the style of a letter from a caring father to his young son, Ptah-hotep created a personal connection with the reader. Copies of the maxims from as late as the 12th dynasty were discovered, proving the long-lasting effects of Ptah-Hotep’s rules and guidelines.

The prefect, the feudal lord Ptah-hotep, says: *** Who will cause me to have authority to speak, that I may declare to him the words of those who have heard the counsel of the former days? And the counsel heard of the gods, who will give me authority to declare them? Cause that it be so, and that evil be removed from those that are enlightened.⁴⁶

Ptah-hotep asked the question about his authority’s justification before the reader had to. After asking who gave him the authority to provide such guidance, Ptah-hotep immediately provided the answer that comforted the reader and eased their doubts—Ptah-hotep received the same counsel from the gods. Justifying one’s rules and guidance through the will of an unquestionable divine presence easily convinces the reader of the legitimacy and the necessity for such rules and suppresses any urge to question, doubt, or disagree with the rules since no citizen would dare to oppose the gods’ will, fearing eternal damnation and torture.

⁴³ Ibid., 292.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 292.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 44.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 45.

Redefining Propaganda

Even though Ptah-hotep states in his Precepts, “let no one inspire men with fear; this is the will of [Ptah]. Let one provide sustenance for them in the lap of peace; it will then be that they will freely give what has been torn from them by terror.”⁴⁷, instilling fear of a punishment that is presented as the logical and just outcome of one’s wrong actions and decisions is a strategy commonly found in propaganda from various cultures and time periods such as Hammurabi’ Code, Yuan Cai’s *Advice about Women*, *Domostroi*, and Soviet propaganda. Whether the propagandist convinces the audience to follow a certain set of rules using their fear of god(s)’ wrath and eternal damnation, physical torture and death, confiscation of property, or being named a dysfunctional and unacceptable member of society depends on the values and the norms of the particular culture and time period. Promising a cherished reward that transcends the realm of the everyday and the mundane as the inevitable outcome of one’s right actions and decisions is another common strategy that propaganda has used over time and can be seen in all of the above listed texts. Whether the propagandist convinces the audience to follow a certain set of rules using their desire for eternal bliss in Heaven, recognition from their Ruler/ government, material rewards, keeping their right to remain alive, or being named an exemplary member of society and a model citizen depends on the values and the norms of the particular culture and time period. One’s natural human desire to be rewarded for being a “good man” and a “good citizen,” and to avoid a dreadful punishment for going against society’s values and norms has motivated people throughout history to comply with different sets of rules imposed to them by a number of sources that provided various definitions of what would be considered “right” and what would be considered “wrong.”

Hampden-Sydney College

For almost 250 years Hampden-Sydney College has stayed true to her founders’ mission “to form good men and good citizens”. The very first page of “The Key”, the college’s student handbook says, “For more than two centuries Hampden-Sydney College has held true to the ideals of her founders, educating leader after leader for country and Commonwealth, all good men and good citizens formed in an atmosphere of sound learning.”⁴⁸ Hampden-Sydney is a college of tradition and brotherhood that has survived the tests of time. Through personal testimony of professors, administration, and students—present and past—and various texts such as *To Manner Born To Manners Bred*, the school has kept its mission alive and strives to continue this tradition well into the future.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 45.

⁴⁸ Hampden-Sydney College. *The Key: The Hampden-Sydney College Student Handbook*. Vol. 124, The Office of Student Affairs, 2019.

I. What is a Good Man and a Good Citizen?

While the mission of forming good men and good citizens has remained the cornerstone of Hampden-Sydney, the idea of what exactly it means to be a good man, or a good citizen is still up for debate. Much of the administration agrees that in order to be a good man and a good citizen one must be selfless and treat others with respect. However, there are employees who believe that at an institution that prides itself on developing our country's next great leaders, it will take more than being selfless and respectful. While there is a divide on what it means to be a good man and a good citizen between administration who attended Hampden-Sydney College and those who have only worked for the institution, the disagreement is not on what the mission actually means, but on how the school upholds its mission. Simply put, some administrators believe that Hampden-Sydney does not hold their mission to the highest of standards and leans towards "puffed up mediocrity".

The men who once walked the halls of Hampden-Sydney as students explained the terms a "good man" and a "good citizen" in similar ways: "Selfless", "Pay it forward", "Someone who does the right thing even when no one is around"⁴⁹. On the other hand, the responses received from other administrators offered more specific guidance on how to be a good man and a good citizen: "you must know the difference between differing opinions and debating someone's humanity," "you must accept and not just tolerate those who are different from you," "understanding that you are a forever student and can always be taught."⁵⁰ Walking out of the gates of Hampden-Sydney as "a good man and a good citizen"—an individual who can adapt to and succeed in every environment, selflessly serves the community and helps others, and develops life-long loving and trusting relationships—is the valuable reward that the school promises its students if they follow the institution's rules and abide by its norms and standards. This approach is very similar to the approaches taken by other texts already discussed in this paper—Hammurabi's Code, Ptah-hotep's Precepts, Yuan Cai's *Advice about Women, Domostroi*, and Soviet texts addressing the citizens' personal and professional lives. As already stated each one of these texts offers a reward to the reader in the case that they follows the set of rules outlined by the text—eternal life in Heaven, recognition by the Ruler/ government, material possessions, proper and agreeable social relationships, or becoming an exemplary member of society who perfectly embodies certain principles and values and thus inspires others to follow into their footsteps. However, as already stated earlier in this paper, these texts convince the reader to strictly abide by the rules they describe not only by promising desirable rewards, but also by describing frightening punishments in the case that the reader breaks the rules. Hampden-Sydney utilizes this strategy as well. Even though the institution doesn't "thunder" over the students and invoke terror in them in the way that Hammurabi and *Domostroi* did by threatening the reader with eternal torture and physical mutilation, Hampden-Sydney still clearly describes what would

⁴⁹ Anonymous Hampden-Sydney employee's response

⁵⁰ Anonymous Hampden-Sydney employee's response

Redefining Propaganda

happen to the students who don't respect the rules and fall off the paved path. Students who break the rules of the Honor Code—one of the most cherished traditions and binding principles at Hampden-Sydney—go to trial and based on the decision of the Honor Court can face a number of punishments with expulsion from the school being the most severe one. Just like Ptah-hotep welcomes in his gentle, fatherly embrace the ones that are willing to accept his rules and to be guided by him and scorns the ones that deviate from the right path, Hampden-Sydney nurtures the ones that are willing to abide by its rules and to accept its norms, but closes its gates for the ones that are not worthy of standing amongst its “good men and good citizens.”

II. The Perception of the Mission

When asked how often prospective or current students and their families question the mission of Hampden-Sydney College, the college administration agrees that very few people have asked for clarification on the mission or on what exactly the mission means to the school. One administrator said, “I'm not sure I've ever had any prospective students, or their families ask me to explain or further elaborate... I've spoken and debated with our current students about these ideas.”⁵¹ Hampden-Sydney has become so successful at marketing the school's mission statement that often the exact meaning of the mission does not come into question and does not get ‘dissected’ under the scrutinizing microscope of students and parents who prefer to focus on more specific and easy to address questions related to academics, athletics, financial aid, housing, or social life on campus. Often Hampden-Sydney employees who deal directly with student engagement, especially that of future students, take the time to explain what Hampden-Sydney believes a good man and a good citizen is even if the question has not been asked. This strategy of answering a question before it was even asked and justifying one's authority and legitimacy before it was even questioned was already discussed in this paper in relation to Ptah-hotep's Precepts.

The institution focuses most of its outward marketing on the idea of forming good men and good citizens, attracting especially parents who want their sons to be successful both at school and in the ‘real world.’ Hampden-Sydney markets these ideas and messages in several ways mostly through the school's website and students' first-hand testimonies. A number of the employees explained in their responses that there is no better way to understand the mission of Hampden-Sydney than to hear from someone who has experienced it, or to simply experience it yourself. Personal testimonies allow students and their families to step into the shoes of a real alumnus or current student, and to understand how attending Hampden-Sydney has been a life-shaping and life-changing experience for these outstanding and highly successful individuals. Hampden-Sydney's website (hsc.edu) includes a page titled “Meet the Men of Hampden-Sydney.” This is a page dedicated to the success stories of outstanding students at the school whose brief biographies shed light on the question, who would be viewed by Hampden-Sydney as a

⁵¹ Anonymous Hampden-Sydney employee's response

Redefining Propaganda

good man and a good citizen? The students chosen to represent the school in this public manner are individuals that have made significant contributions to both the institution and the community through their groundbreaking undergraduate research, selfless volunteer work, multiple talents and successes, and much more. Utilizing various popular online platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to market the school's mission and to present the outstanding results that it produces—exemplary members of our society—allows a large number of prospective students to access this information from any place at any time. This strategy of using personal testimonies and autobiographies in order to 'showcase' a member of a certain society who is perceived as a 'model' citizen and/ or individual based on their exemplary actions, decisions, and choices in order to inspire others to follow in their footsteps and 'walk along the same path' was already discussed in this paper in relation to successful Soviet workers' personal testimonies and autobiographies which became a popular genre of Socialist Realism literature and aimed at inspiring Soviet citizens of humble beginnings to surrender their fates to the Party's guiding hand and to work hard and selflessly for the advancement of the State.

III. Thomas H. Shomo, *To Manner Born, To Manners Bred*

Written by Thomas H. Shomo, an alumnus of Hampden-Sydney College, *To Manner Born, To Manners Bred* is coined as "a hip-pocket guide to etiquette for the Hampden-Sydney Man"⁵². The "hip-pocket guide" has had a total of nine editions, the first being published in 1978 and the most recent being published in 2016. Although several editions have been published, Shomo himself says, "The text has changed over the decades, but far less than one might expect."⁵³ The fact that the core of the book has not changed over nine editions is a testimony and a powerful message to the audience that it teaches timeless values and virtues. In the foreword Shomo points out that *To Manner Born To Manners Bred* has been "imitated and copied and written about in the national media."⁵⁴ The book has become known as the "unofficial manual of the Hampden-Sydney man's way of life"⁵⁵ and has become a "fabric of life"⁵⁶ at the school. Shomo says that his "hip-pocket guide" has survived because the students chose it: "It has survived because Hampden-Sydney Men have found it valuable, as students, as job seekers, and as new employees."⁵⁷

The foreword of *To Manner Born, To Manners Bred* attempts to create a strong emotional bond of trust with the reader which reminds of the emotional bond of trust that Ptah-hotep was trying to build with his audience by choosing the rhetoric of a loving

⁵² Thomas H. Shomo, *To Manner Born, To Manners Bred: a Hip-Pocket Guide to Etiquette for the Hampden-Sydney Man*. Ninth ed., (Hampden-Sydney College, 2016.), 1

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵⁵ Hampden-Sydney College. *The Key: The Hampden-Sydney College Student Handbook*, op. cit., 1.

⁵⁶ Thomas H. Shomo, op. cit., 4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 4.

Redefining Propaganda

father's advice to his young and inexperienced son. Shomo's foreword speaks of the challenging times that the United States was going through when he was first faced with the task of writing such a guide: "In the preceding one and a half decades, the nation had gone through a tumultuous time. The Civil Rights Movement, the anti-Vietnam War Movement, the bitter presidential elections of 1968 and 1972..."⁵⁸ These challenging events in the country's history which brought hardships of various nature upon every citizen become the thread that connects Shomo and his reader as many men and women that are still alive today have witnessed these times and continue to relate their experiences to their children and grandchildren. An additional layer of bonding occurs between Shomo and his readers—the current Hampden-Sydney students—based on the fact that Shomo himself lived the Hampden-Sydney experience and walked the same grounds as today's students. This generational continuity reminds of Ptah-hotep's claim to have received in the past the same guidance from the gods that he now offers to the reader.

On page five of the foreword Shomo writes, "It is instead a guidebook which tells you of the age-old sights which people will expect you to have seen and to know." Shomo then continues by stating, "If occasionally you want to take the path less traveled, that is up to you and, probably, good for you, but I think you will find that in time you will return to the established itinerary."⁵⁹ Shomo skillfully guides his audience to the "right" decisions, the "right" choices, and the "right" actions that a true gentleman would never deviate from and assures that even if the young man steps away from the well-known and approved path to explore a "path less traveled" they would quickly return to the timeless values and virtues that not only the guidebook, but their alma mater, Hampden-Sydney, have instilled in them. Shomo, like Ptah-hotep, does not attempt to convince the audience to follow the guidelines in his book by threatening them and instilling fear in them. His gentle approach gives the audience a certain degree of freedom of choice and does not "thunder" over the audience with "eye for an eye" threats of punishments, death penalties, eternal damnation, and dreadful torture. Even though Shomo's strategy for convincing his audience differs from that of Hammurabi and *Domostroi* and is more similar to that of Ptah-hotep and Yuan Cai, the content of his work is quite similar to the content of *Domostroi*, Hammurabi's Code, the Precepts, and *Advice about Women*. Shomo's intended audience is the same as the intended audience of all of the texts listed above—the male reader. Just like all of the above listed texts present detailed rules and regulations that intend to govern multiple aspects of one's personal, social, and professional life, Shomo describes in detail every aspect of being a gentleman such as proper greetings, proper dress for various occasions, and even how to properly hold a knife and fork, in a clear, organized, and well-defined manner. Shomo, similarly to Ptah-hotep, Hammurabi, Yuan Cai, and the author of *Domostroi*, keeps his guidelines simple and easy to understand and does not leave much room for questions, doubts, or incorrect and subjective interpretations. The rules in *To Manner Born, To Manners Bred* just like

⁵⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 5.

Redefining Propaganda

the rules outlined in *Domostroi*, Hammurabi's Code, the Precepts, and *Advice about Women* aim at creating a model individual and an exemplary citizen—the perfect gentleman—who serves as the core of a well-organized, smoothly-functioning society governed by a set of rules that instill timeless and unquestionable values and virtues such as goodness, honesty, kindness, and selflessness.

One would ask how does Shomo's approach to molding the perfect gentleman compare to the Party's approach to molding the perfect Soviet citizen. While the two approaches share certain similarities, there is one major difference that sets them apart. Shomo guides the reader through the various aspects of being a perfect gentleman such as dress, manners, and rhetoric in a calm, gentle, and inspiring manner. He informs the reader by outlining the rules and persuades the reader to follow them by pointing out the beneficial outcome of doing so—one would turn into a well-respected, well-mannered, successful man that would serve as an inspirational example for everyone else. Soviet Socialist Realism pieces such as workers' personal testimonies and autobiographies, Party leaders' speeches and addresses, and texts praising the completion of grand projects such as the White Sea Canal and the Moscow Metro, similarly to Shomo's work, gently guide the reader through the values that the Party wanted to instill into every Soviet citizen. Like Shomo's text, these texts outline the desired norms of behavior such as selfless dedication to the State and to the Party, hard work, and education, and persuade the reader to adopt them by pointing out the beneficial outcome of doing so—one would turn into a model Soviet citizen—the men and women of the bright future—that would make the Motherland proud and would serve as an inspirational example for all other citizens. This is the message that one would see on the surface when reading the Soviet Socialist Realism texts. What one would not immediately see and what sets the Soviet texts apart from Shomo's text is the “hidden threat” lingering between the lines that became another powerful way to convince the reader to adopt the Party's norms and values. The term “enemy of the people” was adopted by the Party freely applied to anyone that the Party would see as a potential threat to the Soviet regime—foreigners or people with foreign affiliations, intellectuals, supporters of the previous regime, peasants who opposed collectivization, etc. Lenin declared war on the “enemies of the people” and was determined to remove them from society before they could “pollute” others with their dangerous anti-Soviet views and opinions. This marked the birth of the GULAG labor camp system in the Soviet Union. Stalin continued the merciless fight against the “enemies of the people” and sent thousands of people daily from every region of the Soviet Union to their death. Chaos, confusion, and fear marked people's everyday lives. Family members, friends, neighbors, and colleagues would suddenly disappear in the middle of the night never to be seen again. People were arrested for any and every reason—for a joke they made, for an article they wrote, for knowing someone who had already been convicted, or simply for being at the wrong place at the wrong time—and their final destination, the labor camp, promised nothing but slow and painful death. People's only hope to avoid the horrifying fate of the ones that had already disappeared was to follow the guidelines that texts such as personal autobiographies and testimonies and Party leaders' addresses and speeches provided because a model Soviet citizen would not be

Redefining Propaganda

labeled an “enemy of the people” and would not be sent to a labor camp. The Socialist Realism texts do not mention labor camps, back-breaking physical labor, starvation, mind-numbing cold, and mass shootings, and do not “thunder” over the reader pouring terrifying threats over them like Domostroi and Hammurabi. However, the terrifying threat, even though unspoken, was very real and present in people’s lives as their mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, brothers, and sisters kept disappearing without a trace. Shomo’s text relies on no such “unspoken threat” that dominates people’s lives. Throughout his work Shomo remains a gentle and kind guide who leads young men along the path of becoming the best versions of themselves.

Conclusion

In this paper I elaborated on the definition of the term ‘propaganda’ that I created based on the research that I have done—“a one-sided multifaceted form of communication in which the propagandist intends to fully align the opinion and/or behavior of a person or a group of people with his/her [the propagandist’s] intended goals.” Using various texts from different cultures and time periods I demonstrated the five main underlying principles of propaganda that the propagandist utilizes in order to influence the audience’s beliefs and/or behaviors that I have identified: logic, feasibility, believability, use of fear, and promise of a reward. While the ways in which repressive regimes such as the Soviet Union have used propaganda have led to grim outcomes, the same underlying principles of convincing people to think or act in a certain way have been used by institutions such as Hampden-Sydney College in order to “form good men and good citizens” and to instill timeless moral and ethical values and virtues into exemplary individuals and citizens.

Redefining Propaganda

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