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## **CREATION OF “NAZI PICTURE OF VIEW” AND ITS CULTURAL SOURCES: DEVELOPMENT OF GENOCIDE STUDIES IN VICTOR KLEMPERER’S BOOK “LANGUAGE OF THE THIRD REICH”**

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*The article analyzes the theory of the German philologist Victor Klemperer regarding the sources of the Nazi and totalitarian view of the world construction through language. The novelty of the paper is due to the introduction of new material in the cultural and philosophical discourse, as well as development genocide studies in Ukrainian Cultural Studies.*

*Key words: genocide, Holocaust, totalitarianism, Nazism, power, victim, violence, propaganda, racism, resistance, heroism*

**В. А. Суковатая**

### **СТВОРЕННЯ «НАЦИСТСЬКОЇ КАРТИНИ СВІТУ» ТА ЙОГО КУЛЬТУРНІ ВИТОКИ: РОЗВИТОК ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ ГЕНОЦИДУ В КНИЗІ ВІКТОРА КЛЕМПЕРЕРА «МОВА ТРЕТЬОГО РЕЙХУ»**

*Стаття присвячена аналізу теорії німецького філолога Віктора Клемперера щодо джерел формування нацистської і тоталітарної картини світу за допомогою мови. Новизна статті зумовлена запровадженням нового матеріалу в культурно-філософський дискурс, а також розвитком студій геноциду в українській культурології.*

*Ключові слова: геноцид, Голокост, тоталітаризм, нацизм, влада, жертва, жорстокість, пропаганда, расизм, опір, героїзм*

**В. А. Суковатая**

### **СОЗДАНИЕ «НАЦИСТСКОЙ КАРТИНЫ МИРА» И ЕГО КУЛЬТУРНЫЕ ИСТОКИ: РАЗВИТИЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЙ ГЕНОЦИДА В КНИГЕ ВИКТОРА КЛЕМПЕРЕРА «ЯЗЫК ТРЕТЬЕГО РЕЙХА»**

*Статья посвящена анализу теории немецкого филолога Виктора Клемперера относительно источников формирования нацистской и тоталитарной картины мира посредством языка. Новизна статьи обусловлена введением нового материала в культурно-философский дискурс, а также развитием студий геноцида в украинской культурологии.*

*Ключевые слова: геноцид, Холокост, тоталитаризм, нацизм, власть, жертва, жестокость, пропаганда, расизм, сопротивление, героизм*

The beginning of Genocide studies is connected with the writings of Raphael Lemkin [1] in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide and Holocaust. The methodological significance had the works by O. Bartov [2], Ch. Browning [3], S. Totten [4], S. Parsons, I.W. Charny, M. Berenbaum [5], R. Gellataly and B. Kiernan [6], and others who tried to comprehend the mechanism of the Nazi aggression and genocidal actions against racial, national and religious groups, the philosophical origin of totalitarianism, and the ideological values of the Third Reich as the explanations of the tragedy which happened in the civilized 20<sup>th</sup> century in the center of Europe. Traditionally German philologist Victor Klemperer was not tied with development of the Genocide studies. The goal of my research is to explain why Klemperer’s book “LTI –

Lingua Tertii Imperii: Notizbuch eines Philologen" [7] (1947) can be considered as a step in the Genocide studies theory.

The book of Klemperer was written during the years of the German Holocaust and was the first scholarly attempt to investigate mechanisms of Nazi ideology and its penetration into the wide masses of German society, the reasons of the successfulness of the Nazi propaganda during many years. The uniqueness of the Klemperer's investigation is that a German Jew and a professor of university Viktor Klemperer was the Holocaust survivor himself, and his observations and analyses were parts of his own fate. Based on the content and the key ideas, Klemperer's writings can be identified with a tradition of philosophical and ethical studies "after the Holocaust" (or "after the Auschwitz") which were established by survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust times, such as famous philosophers and artists Teodor Adorno, Karl Jaspers, Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel, Paul Celan, Nelly Sachs, Bruno Bettelheim, Immanuel Levinas.

The professional philologist Klemperer in his Notes analyzed the facts of the everyday life during the Nazi regime and the penetration of the Nazi ideology in the people's consciousness by means of language. The language constructs the world of objects in our mentality and gives the emotional connotations to the events, that is why no language system is neutral, it represents the determined points of view, it can manage the people's emotions and perception and transform their attitude to facts [8]. In his Notes Victor Klemperer described and analysed language methods programming of public consciousness, using of nationalistic mythology in creation of the cult of brutality and public legalization of "racial cruelty" towards Jews, Slavic people and Soviet prisoners of the war in the Nazi totalitarian culture. According to Klemperer, the first new facts which determined the "new Nazi world", were new special Nazi words: "concentration camp" and "emigration", and it was the objective manifestation of the everyday life under Nazi which instilled horror into the majority of Germans.

The second specific feature of the "new Nazi world" was creation of "aliens", the people who are not Aryan race, and the severe supercilious attitude of the Nazi party to such people. This severe supercilious behavior was presented as the "ideal masculine behavior: Klemperer notes the "ideal German masculinity" included wearing "military uniform" or a costume of a race-driver. Also the Nazi propaganda style is very similar to the style of auto races talking. Klemperer accented that not an intellectual or intelligent became the hero of the Nazi consciousness, but a body, a strong, healthy, enduring body which was ready to die for Fuhrer or to fight without doubts. The physical deficiency of a body had to symbolize moral degeneration, and as we know, the disabled people, young and elder German citizens became the first victims of the Holocaust. Hitler-Germany's program of systematic exterminations of the handicapped began on September 1, 1939. The "ideal Nazi citizen" has to have a healthy body to defend the Fuhrer and the "Fatherland".

The professional philologist Klemperer scrupulously analyzed the mechanisms of the Nazi propaganda ("Nazi newspeak") and identified five lexical and symbolical levels in it: the level of sacred and Christian images which was hidden in the Nazi rhetoric: in particular, Hitler was metaphorically correlated with the Savior, and he called his close surrounding "my Apostles"; the expression "the Thousand-years Empire" was referred to the Biblical "Thousand-years God's Kingdom" as well. So, Hitler's authority from the beginning was referred to the image of the "Christian paradise" which existed in the German Christian Unconsciousness.

Other level was connected with emotional excitation which was presented in the "Nazi newspeak" by such words and epithets as speed, wild, passionate, fanatic, enthusiastic, spontaneous, unique. Klemperer accented that the Nazi mentality was absolutely unreceptive to satire and humor, which require the vivacity, activity and playfulness of mind. The mocking and sarcastic mind can note the inconsistency between facts of life and ideological speeches and makes them ridiculous, in other words, unconvincing for wide masses. However fanaticism was

the most desirable quality of the “Fuhrer soldiers” and the popular word in the Goebbelsian propaganda because it does not require any rational explanations and arguments.

The next level is including of sportive terminology in the “Nazi newspeak”. It was addressed to “easy” people, plebs who like sportive competitions, admire the physical strength and supremacy. Klemperer notices that Goebbelsian propaganda uses many sports metaphors and vernacular because of the desire of any propaganda to be “close to folks”. Populism became a principle of Nazi ideology. On the other hand, it presupposed the idea of “all-national” character of the Nazi party and belief that to be “close to party” means to be “close to their own people”.

One more level was the “shameless advertising” of Fuhrer (in Klemperer’s words) and it linguistically was expressed through the huge words in the superlative degree, underlining uniqueness and the importance of Fuhrer’s each action, when his every decision and every event was called “historical”. So, this part of the “newspeak” was aimed at constructing the Nazi “new world” as God’s created world in the beginning, when every day was as “historical” as the First week of creation in the Old Testament. And Fuhrer’s image was referred to the Creator from the Bible.

The level of “revolutionary romanticism” which was connected with the theme of the superman, romantic idealization of “blood and soil”, “Old German ancestor, re-naming and the usage of the Old Scandinavian and Old German mythology. Since this aspect is of special interest for us, we will analyse it in more details. In chapter 13 of his Notes Victor Klemperer described the situation during World War II when the traditional German names were changed to names which were reflected in Old Scandinavian mythos, the Wagnerian operas and German romantic poetry. They were Siegfried, Baldur, Dittmer, Heidrun, Gunnar, Guthruna, others. Moreover, the traditional Christian names, which often had the biblical origin (Absalom, Joshua, Aaron and Sarah) or foreign (American, French) phonation were transformed into Old German (for example, Christa became Krista) or a second name from Old German Mythology was added to them. Sometimes it sounds ridiculous: Klemperer gives a sample when a newborn baby was called Heidrun, it was a name of a lascivious nanny-goat from “Edda” and such name is not good enough for a young girl. Sometimes a poetical or ballad name was added to a traditional German one, and it gave the double names as Irma-Magritte, Utah-Hinge, Walter-Berndt and others.

The same situation happened with many other “foreign” names which had existed in Germany for many years and were components of its history: many years ago a significant part of Germany was inhabited by belligerent Slavic tribes, and this historical fact was reflected in many geographical names of the contemporary Germany. During Hitler’s regime more than 120 Slavic toponyms and urbanonyms were germanized in Pomerania, more than 175 ones in Spreewalde, and more than 2700 ones on the territory of Silesia. Later Klemperer wrote about reasons of such re-calling: 1) sentimental appellation to peasant’s idyllic utopian image of life; 2) opposition to Christian, Biblical, Slavic or any foreign names associated with images of a potential enemy (French and British names), “inferior race” and alien achievements (Slavic names), or Old Testament, and the Jewish origin of Jesus Christ.

In our opinion, except these reasons we can identify several other ideological reasons of re-naming, which have psychoanalytical basis. The first reason which we can identify, is an appellation to a symbolical creation of “new world” because the ontological beginning implies the creation of new subjectivities, which need to receive special names symbolizing the beginning of the “New Era”. Just as the Lord has devoted one of the first days of creation to giving names to people, animals and subjects, the Nazi culture considered re-naming already existing people and objects as an important part of racial utopia modeling. It was like an act of “sacred creation” of “Nazi world” – a new symbolical reality, in which German citizens should exist not in the world of facts, but in the world of symbols.

The “germanization” of personal names are aimed at isolating the German citizens with Jewish origin as “aliens” in contrast to the “real Germans” with “Aryan spirit” and old mythological names. Klemperer wrote about some paradoxical situations, connected with Nazi’s desire to symbolically “delete” any signs of “Jews”: in particular, the Nazi authority at universities recommended that professors at lectures on physics not mention Einstein or Hertz being Jewish surnames. So, “gettoization” of Jews and “annihilation” of Jewish culture took place in the Nazi Germany both on physical and symbolical levels. A contemporary German scholar G. Heinsohn [9] found the explanation to this Nazi intentions to create “a new world” without Jews: he expresses an idea that the target of the Holocaust was not only to physically destroy Jews but also to destroy namely Jewish representatives of such moral values as the “divine law”, the fifth commandment: “Thou shalt not kill.” Jewish race in the Goebbelsian ideology was understood as a “spiritual race” which is the keeper of the traditional humanity which is transmitted through family education, from generation to generation. The civilization of the world did indeed receive its law forbidding murder from Judaism (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17).

Pagan authors of antiquity already reported on the extensive elaboration of this Judaic law. It is the first protection of the newborn, whose killing was allowed in the Greco-Roman cultural complex for considerations of birth control or health. However, the most important passage of the Torah emphasizes the sanctity of life as the core of the law and as a value identical to goodness. So, we can sum up that the destruction of Jews symbolized the “transgression” of the humanist ethics and principles “Do not kill!” in the new Nazis racial utopia constructed “without Jews”. Judeo-Christian commandments limited the aggressive instincts of Hitler’s soldiers, SS and SA, that is why the expulsion of Biblical names can be considered as ejection of the Biblical morality and human values.

Our comment is that if the majority of Biblical names were connected with extolling the Lord (for example, Joshua means “praise the Lord, my soul”), Old German and Scandinavian names had expressed the warlike side of the ancient life. For example: Herald means “able to use spear”; Gustav means “council of war”, Hedwig – “fight, battle”, Rudolf – “noble wolf”, Gertrude – “strong spear” [10], and others. Thus, the Old Nordic names, which have arisen in ancient times of the permanent struggle for territories, should unconsciously incline their owners to fighting, and victory or destruction. We can see, that war and death in fight were installed in the symbolical centre of the Old German ontology of names.

On the contrary to Northern pagans’ names, the Biblical and Christian names were designed around the idea of the “peace and consent”. The Lord in Old Testament and the Christ in the New Testament presented the ontology of ethics, in the centre of which was a commandment “do not kill!” Thus, the replacement of Christian and foreign names was not a casual or little significant fact: changing names, the Nazi authority tried to change people’s consciousness, to establish new values, which cancelled the Christian mercy and love for one’s neighbour.

If the Christian point of view and the humanist values of the European Enlightenment were the basic moral systems which determined the superior value of “mercy” above the physical or moral, individual or collective cruelty. But the main Nazi doctrine was based on the spiritual superiority of the German “master race” and the cult of the physical superiority and general cruelty towards “inferior” peoples. The symbolic Nazi unconsciousness makes the atrocious replacement and the “cruelty” transformed in the status of “heroism” and the “mercy” be marked as a “weakness”.

Klemperer writes that the Nazi propaganda glorifies only military heroism, male heroism on fields of battles. And this “heroism” has more similarities with cruelty than with the real courage in the meaning of the traditional (Christian) morality. The sense of “heroism” in the Nazi meaning was connected with the transgression of the prohibition “Should Not kill!” and

Christian mercy and the legitimization of the “hierarchic” racial morality which allows the representatives of the “master race” to humiliate and to demolish the representatives of “inferior” races.

Viktor Klemperer was a baptized Jew with the strong German cultural identification and European liberal values: he has considered “nationality” in the contemporary sense as a “citizenship” in contrary to German Nazis which considered citizenship in ethnocentric tradition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Klemperer’s notion of the citizenship was grounded on the Christian thesis about the equality among the inhabitants of the same country without any differences in their ethnic or religious origin (“no Hellene and no Israelite”). That is why Nazis understood “heroism” relevant to a person’s hierarchical place, but Klemperer understood heroism in the Christian and humanistic sense, heroism as patient and suffering for true, as belief and love to a beloved person in any conditions.

Klemperer compared the “public” military or sport heroism which is glorified in the Nazi mass-media, pro-Nazi poetry and the mythological images of old times with the “everyday heroism” of survival and helping of the people who were given the status of “Others” in the Nazi social hierarchy. The concrete example of such everyday heroism was Klemperer’s wife, a German, a Christian, who managed to resist Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda and saved her Jewish husband during Holocaust years both on physical and moral levels. So we can read Klemperer’s book now especially owing to the courage of his wife who saved Klemperer’s manuscript although it was fraught with arrest and a concentration camp.

In a wider meaning Klemperer wrote about the “non-public” people’s heroism in the Nazi concentration camps and underground Resistance who risk own life for rescuing other people and the victory over Nazis. Also Klemperer was delighted with courage of many ordinary Germans who did not reject their Jewish friends, teachers and colleagues in the difficult times of the anti-Semitic state; the courage of his students attending his lectures in spite of the fact that he was a Jew; who tried to support the neighbors-Jews in the hungry times, or simply expressed sympathy in the street by looks or by encouraging words; the courage of the German Slavs from the remote villages, who hid the escaping Jews, listened to the English radio and wished victory of the Red Army over Nazis with all their heart, and it was their form of resistance to the Nazi ideology and the anti-Semitic rules. Klemperer accented that the 12 years of the Nazi propaganda were not able to turn up all Germans in the obedient and passive “mass”, in the “timid crowd”. However, the propaganda was strong and it put down root very deep in German society. And the usage of North mythological names has played the important role in the constructions of the Nazi propaganda and its penetration in the mass-consciousness.

The usage of the Old German and Scandinavian symbols played a special role in rationalization of the “new Nazi morality”. The legitimization of the “new Nazi morality” has come through its derivation from old Nordic history, Old German and Scandinavian mythology. The Old German mythology played an essential role in formation of the Nazi identity, designing new culture and morality. Infatuation with Old Scandinavian, German and Teutonic myths appealing to romantic, idealistic and patriotic sentiments, thus creating the impression that Hitler’s “folk state” was firmly rooted in the tradition of the Nordic Germanic ancestors. Nordic German folklore and peasant tradition in general were used to strengthen national unity and the positive “covering” of the new Nazi values. The symbol of the Nordic Germanic ancestor representing the “blood-and-soil” idea of racial strength as much as the spiritual determination of a Nordic warrior. As Philip V. Bohlman wrote [11], Nazis used famous epic cycles (as “Nibelungen”) to confirm the Old Scandinavian origin of the modern German nation. However, in the reality, so-called “German epos” “Nibelungen” was constituted as the ideological mix of German folklore and artificial ideas of the different authors, from anti-Philistine conception of F. Nietzsche and nationalism of R. Wagner, and to romantic ballads of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the revanchist ideas of the post World War I period [12]. The German and Austrian fascists used the

Wagnerian opera cycle “The Ring of Nibelungen” as an folk text and created the Nazi theory of the “heroic past” of Germans. The Goebbelsian “newspeak” used the Old Nordic names as a symbol of the “spiritual” and “energetic” connection between the powerful Nordic gods and the Nazis’ “right to transgress” the traditional Christian and Biblical ethics. Goebbels’ “newspeak” compares the Nazi soldiers and SS officers with the characters of the Scandinavian myths, and the usage of the Old Scandinavian names in the German everyday life helped Nazis to form the symbolic polarities between “ours” and “aliens”, “aggressors” and their “victims” on the basis of the personal names. According to Sigmund Freud’s theory [13] about status of “others” in any personal mentality, an individual loves those with who they share the sense of belonging to something, who is similar to the subject. If somebody is a stranger to a person it would be very hard to love (or understand) them. So, the main goal of the Nazi propaganda and the newspeak was symbolically to alienate to the maximal distance the potential victims (depicting them as “aliens” and “enemies”) and the potential “perpetrators” (depicting them as “heroes”, “liberators” or “defenders”).

One more symbolic “profit” of the Old Nordic names usage was the transformation of “cruelty” as the “Evil” in the ordinary mentality in a “norm”. As genocide scholar Roy Baumeister [14; p.72 – 78] wrote, the modern European culture created an image of “Pure Evil” which does not have any justification. For moral legitimating of the Nazi authority in the society, the state propaganda needs to approve its own status of “goodness” and to assign the image of “Evil” to potential victims. So, the main goal of the Nazi racial propaganda was to take away the status of victim’s “innocence” and construct the images of Jews, communists and racial aliens as symbols of “corruption” and “hypocrisy”, and in that way to present the true-life victims as “aggressors”.

Usage of the mythological names and symbols helped the Nazis to transform the status of cruelty in the public consciousness, to oust “cruelty” to the periphery of the cultural consciousness, to make distance between the subject (“German hero”, soldier or officer) and moral qualification of his actions, violence, cruelty. As this cruelty was dressed in the mythological symbolism, it was “sacred cruelty” similar to God’s actions. Every soldier with a new Teutonic name could (and should) refer his own deeds to the image of a chosen Nordic God or a hero, and it was as though the moral responsibility for murder was removed (because it was “symbolical”, almost “sacred” act), within the framework of a certain mythological structure, which from a “game” has turned into a dominated form of social morality. In my opinion, using the Old Scandinavian names and symbols in the Nazi “newspeak” played the important role: 1) “justification” of the Nazi cruelty; 2) symbolical legitimization of the cruelty; 3) symbolical identification of the German / Aryan national superiority.

In conclusion we can say that the analysis of the language of the Third Reich demonstrates the specific functions of the language in the totalitarian state: the language became a tool not for stopping the violence but the way to legalize or to mask the violence. The language helps to make a distance between a victim and perpetrator and in such a way to realize the acts of cruelty. If Christian discourse of cruelty focused on a victim as a central figure of the narrative, Nazist discourse referred to the pagan (Old Nordic and Scandinavian) discourses where cruelty meant strength, authority and “heroism”, and a figure of a victim is marginalized in the narrator’s consciousness.

The Nazi propaganda searched for the reasons which could convince the German pre-Nazi society that all previous humanistic values and Biblical morality had lost sense, and these reasons were found not in the real facts of life, but in mythological “transformation” of reality, in the creation of “newspeak” which should mask the true relations in society and create the “mythological” ties of the schizophrenic consciousness where the truth and lies were to trade places. Especially, using the Old Nordic and Old Scandinavian mythology played in it one of the key roles. In modern societies the knowledge of the Holocaust is one of the key concepts of the

post-war democracy, because it symbolizes the necessity to accept any “otherness” and multiculturalism, distinction of races, languages and religions. The Holocaust is not only the memorial of the past war, but a test of our moral, political, and cultural choices in present, that is why the study of this subject is necessary in Ukrainian schools and universities, and should be one of the cornerstones for building democracy in Ukraine. Our attitudes to the Holocaust issue can operate as a “litmus paper” for democracy as they show insofar our liberal values are really liberal.

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