

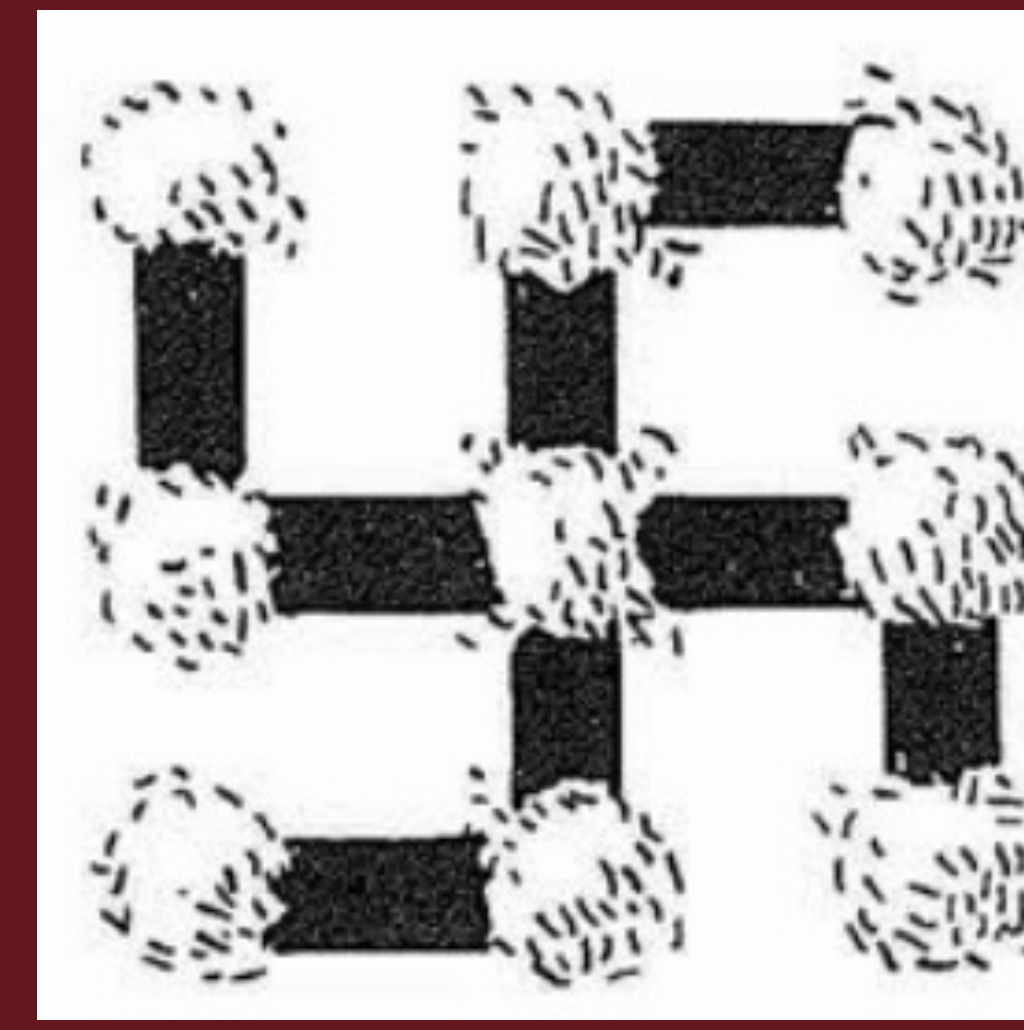
A Cherished Symbol in Asia

Introduction

- Swastika is a symbol that has been used for thousands of years during ancient civilizations
- Nazis took the symbol and appropriated it to support their beliefs of the “Aryan race” and racial purifications
- The Swastika has spread throughout the all over the world due to trade and the symbol can be seen in artwork such as pottery
- The symbol is thought to have first appeared in the Indus Valley around western Asia
- The Swastika has several positive meaning depending on the region and case
- Some examples of these meanings can be fertility, prosperity, energy, different levels of existence, and different directions
- The symbol in Sanskrit is, “Svastika” and it translated into ‘object of good fortune’
- The symbol has been used in religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism

Methods

- Using the FSU online database to search up relevant articles about the Swastika
- Scholarly databases such as Jstor or Google Scholar
- To find a starting point and what specific regions to search for, articles or newspapers gave a general idea of the subject
- For instance, terms that were added along with 'Swastika' were specific regions such as Vietnam or even searching up “wan” to find more information of the Swastika in China
- Learned about semiotics to apply to my research to have a better understanding of the symbols used along with Swastika



Barat Lena drawing, Indian wedding ritual



Road signs in Kamakura, Japan



Swastika in Buddhist footprints, 2nd Century CE, geography: Pakistan



1934, Nazi Stamp



Demotte Shahnameh, Swastika motif is seen on the carpet

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Result

- Adolf Hitler was fond of eugenics and the idea of a pure race
- Nazi Swastika was associated with the party’s view of the mythical Aryan race, that Germans and Indians were descendants of this group
- Specifically, Swastikas have often been paired up with other symbols like in Nazi Germany the eagle has been paired up with it
- This was to symbolize a united, strong country
- Still, it is important to distinguish the Nazi Swastika and what it signified (i.e., hatred) from other Swastikas still used as a symbol of fortune and prosperity in most cultures
- Understanding the difference of Swastikas can prevent defacing of temples such as the Chinese Buddhist temple whose fence was blown up in San Fernando valley, in 1990

Conclusion

- It is important to separate the Nazi Swastika from other forms in order to prevent misinformation and potential violence in the contemporary world.
- Intercultural relationships begin with accepting new ideas; and being open-minded about one's association with Swastika without jumping to conclusions is one step closer to creating a more just and socially equitable global society

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