Uncanny Reminders: The 'Nazi' in Popular Culture

by

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B.A., University of Victoria, 2008

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

The ubiquity of the 'Nazi' – the fictional *Doppelgänger* of the historical Nazi – in the various media of popular culture is both disturbing and fascinating. There is an important relationship between the 'Nazi' and its audience; related to but separate from the historical Nazi, the creation and reception of the 'Nazi' both enables and exemplifies the continual processing of the past. Using a purpose-built framework (concept and terminology) for the study of the 'Nazi' as a phenomenon in and of itself, in combination with Freud's concept of the uncanny, this thesis examines the dynamics of the relationship between the 'Nazi' and its audience in four examples: television episodes "Deaths-Head Revisited," "He's Alive" (*The Twilight Zone*), and "Patterns of Force" (*Star Trek*); and Serdar Somuncu's performances/readings of *Mein Kampf*. The temporal and geographical context of the episodes (1960s America) seem far removed from Somuncu's performances (1990s/2000s Germany), but analysing the production and effects of the uncanny moments generated in each case reveals a provocative *raison d'être* that spans across the geographical and temporal divide.

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Acknowledgments

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my big sister, Tina.

Chapter 1: The Face without a Soul

1.1 Introduction: The Omnipresent 'Nazi'

Sixty-nine years after the end of WWII, the 'Nazi' – the fictional *Doppelgänger* of the historical Nazi – continues to be a popular tool in cultural memory. The 'Nazi' appears frequently in the various media of popular culture; most often as a symbol of evil, more than occasionally in connection to the occult, and quite popularly in the role of the punished fool. The ubiquity of this character is obvious, featuring in countless comic books, television programs, and films.

Film scholar Eric Rentschler recognizes that not only were the National Socialists fascinated by film, but that they themselves are also fascinating: "If the Nazis were movie mad, then the Third Reich was movie made" (1). In her now iconic work, "Fascinating Fascism," Susan Sontag famously identified the domination and "sexual lure of fascism" (101). So what makes them so fascinating? Clearly, there is something distinctive about the Nazis, something peculiarly intriguing that manifests itself in (or as), the 'Nazis', making it important to explore the complex relationship between the 'Nazi' and popular culture. Equally important is to consider why the 'Nazi' continues to be an enduring (and fascinating) figure.

Understanding the preoccupation with and the function of the 'Nazi' in popular culture is an important topic for Germanic Studies, as mediated and fictionalized history continues to play a role in modern Germany's public image. Yet it also has broader implications which extend beyond Germany; there is a conspicuous preoccupation with the 'Nazi' in North American popular culture.

The depiction of National Socialists and the "Third Reich"[1] in film (and other media) has long been the focus of academic research; especially those films that focus on the Holocaust or Nazi entertainment cinema.[2] Such research is important because it examines and questions how the cultural and historical memory regarding the events of WWII – especially the Holocaust – is presented and remembered.[3] The study of the fascination with fascism is also well-established, and as more films and other products of popular culture emerge, this body of research constantly expands and changes. In addition, recent films such as Dani Levy's *Mein Führer: Die wirklich wahrste Wahrheit über Adolf Hitler* [*Mein Führer: The Truly Truest Truth About Adolf Hitler*] (2007) and Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds* (2009) have further inspired scholars to explore such questions as the reasoning behind and the effects of the (ever-) popular "ritual humiliation of Hitler" (Richardson 279). Albeit with different terminology, such research has already begun to explore certain aspects of the 'Nazi' (or 'Hitler') and forms the foundation for my own ideas, inspiring me to further explore this cultural phenomenon.

I am indebted to the research that has come before mine and I hope that my own contribution will in turn encourage future scholarship. What I believe my research adds to the field is my focus on defining terminology and a framework for the treatment of the

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[1] "Third Reich" appears in quotation marks because this is the National Socialists own term for the period under their control. The term commonly appears without the " ", but I wish to preserve this distinction, despite its common usage. As is explained in Section 1.2, in this thesis ' ' marks the difference between X (real-life) and 'X' (a representation of it); therefore, a *representation* of this period (similar to the term, 'Nazi') would appear in single quotation marks ('Third Reich'). For the reasoning behind choosing ' ' to distinguish between such pairs see Footnote 8. In addition to this specialized usage of ' ', single quotation marks are also used in a more traditional way to mark a word or phrase as a concept or thing, a translated word (not from a quotation), a non-standard usage, a potentially ambiguous word, and/or a colloquialism.

[2] Please see section 1.5 for more information about the research in this area.

[3] I make a distinction between 'Nazis' and the characters that appear in feature films, whose intention is historical accuracy. I term the latter group 'Nazi-as-character'. For my definition of Nazi-as-character, please see Footnote 9 in section 1.2.

'Nazi' as a phenomenon in and of itself. In studying how this phenomenon functions in western popular culture, I offer a specific focus on the interaction between different elements of the 'Nazi': the *creators* (filmmakers, authors, scriptwriters, etc.), the *consumers* (the audience and their collective 'consciousness'), and the *products* of popular culture (the episodes and performances). I consider the effect of the 'Nazi' on contemporary western popular culture; how history is remembered, why 'we' (western popular culture) have chosen this figure, and why and how it is different from its historical antecedent.[4] I also investigate the context in which it was produced and received; including both temporal (historical) significance, and connections to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

This word – most commonly translated as 'overcoming or coming to terms with the past' – usually refers to a post-WWII German context. Yet the concept and process of dealing with the repercussions of WWII has importance both inside and outside Germany because from a North American perspective, cultural history maintains that we (here: the historical Allies) were the so-called good to the Nazis' bad. This morally-based dichotomy appears to manifest itself in a need to define ourselves in opposition to what we consider to be the dark and undesirable (unwanted) elements of humanity: the Nazis.

Over the same time span (sixty-plus years), there have been significantly more instances of the 'Nazi' – evil or otherwise – from outside of Germany than from within.[5] I

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[4] 'We' will continue to refer to western popular culture *unless otherwise noted.* As per Footnote 1, I write 'we' to emphasize my awareness of the potential ambiguity of this pronoun. However, in an effort to offset the unusually high number of single quotation marks generated by the 'Nazi', 'Hitler', etc., words or phrases that appear multiple times in this thesis – such as 'we' (our/ourselves/us) – *while still implied*, will appear without the ' ' after the initial explanation.

[5] In the beginning, this was not always the case. Richardson notes that, interestingly, "up until 1941, Hollywood was generally reluctant to make Hitler and Nazism a subject of even dramatic film, [yet] once the United States entered the war, virtually every aspect of the American culture industry was engaged in the project of lampooning Hitler and the Nazis [. . .]" (277). In the years since, there have been many

believe this difference arises in part from the parameters of each sphere of popular culture; that is, what is acceptable (or possible) in North America may be unacceptable (or impossible) in Germany (or vice versa).

The appearance of the 'Nazis' in popular culture can be historically significant, in the sense that they are often closely connected to the contemporary history of the time during which they appear. There are far too many works depicting the 'Nazi' to be discussed in this thesis; therefore I have chosen a limited number of examples to serve as a model: three examples of 'Nazis' in popular culture from North America (two *Twilight Zone* and one *Star Trek: The Original Series* episodes), and one example from Germany (Serdar Somuncu's reading of *Mein Kampf* – with commentary).[6] I have considered them in terms of their North American and German contexts respectively, while simultaneously contextualizing the era in which they were produced. In the case of the *Twilight Zone* and *Star Trek*, the 'Nazi's' historical significance reflects the temporal and geographical context of the Civil Rights movement in the United States during the 1960s; all three television episodes aired during this time. Somuncu's performances take place in post-unification, multi-cultural Germany; reading from (and providing commentary on) *Mein Kampf* grants Somuncu an audience with modern Germany and more than sixty years' worth of accumulated 'Nazi'-mythology.[7]

The 'Nazi' is both a reflection of the post-war society that produced it, as well as a legacy of the historical Nazi. This thesis seeks to identify the relationship between the

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instances of 'Nazis' and 'Hitler' in (North) American and British popular culture. In contrast, and until recent years, there have been far fewer German-made films with 'Hitler' or the 'Nazis' as their subject, comedic or otherwise.

[6] This was a series of live performances. I will be referencing the recording: *Serdar Somuncu liest aus dem Tagebuch eines Massenmörders* in the Works Cited.

[7] The term 'Nazi'-mythology is defined in Section 1.2.

creator and the created; that is, popular culture and its audience as the former, and the

'Nazi' as the latter, in order to examine how we as a society characterize and interact

with our past.

1.2 Definitions

The 'Nazi', in an abstract sense, is simply a figure of the imagination; an idealized

image created to serve the purposes of those utilizing it. In more concrete terms, the

'Nazi' is a character/caricature based on a very specific historical referent: the National

Socialists. Differences between the two depend on perspective. On one hand – to borrow

a colloquialism – if something looks like a duck and acts like a duck, then logic dictates

that it would *be* a duck, or in this case, a Nazi. At first glance, the logic appears to be

sound: clothed in stiff, ankle-length leather jackets and crisp uniforms, the 'Nazi' *looks*

like a Nazi.[8] Continuing the analogy, the two also appear to share the same goal (if one

will for the moment permit a simplification); that is, domination over those around them.

Furthermore, domination – or more broadly speaking, power – is how the Nazis and the

'Nazis' intersect most intimately. Yet their similarity (and the analogy) ends there. The

term 'Nazi' cannot be used interchangeably with Nazi (no ' ') because 'Nazis' do not

accurately depict their historical referents and – this is the major disclosure – *they are not*

supposed to.

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[8] I went through a variety of names for this fascinating Nazi (e.g. Fasci-Nazi; *Nazi*; nazi); however, ultimately I felt that this small typographical distinction of Nazi/'Nazi' best captured the elusive blurring of reality and fiction. Moreover, because it was not 'Nazi'-specific, it could also be applied to other pairs (e.g. X/'X'). This is simply my way of making a distinction; others, such as Richardson use " " (contrast to ' ') when referring to depictions of the character (e.g. "Hitler") onscreen. I have chosen *not* to use double quotation marks for two reasons: one, to avoid confusion with actual quotations, and two, in this era of so-called finger quotes, I wished to avoid the increasing connotation of sarcasm and triviality that often accompanies them in colloquial usage, although I do recognise that because the 'Nazi' is a figure of popular culture, it *is* in constant contact with less formal, more colloquial usage.

It is possible that a filmmaker (etc.) intends a 'Nazi' to be perceived as a realistic representation of a Nazi, but critical consideration will expose it as a constructed cultural memory. Realistic accuracy is not possible: The very nature of the 'Nazi' – being a product meant to communicate with/through popular culture – precludes this possibility. They cannot be a dynamic incarnation of what we want to see and a static representation of the past at the same time.[9] Accurately depicting history requires 'sticking to the script' – i.e. no moon Nazis.

If there is a distinction between 'Nazi' and Nazi, it follows that there is also a distinction between 'Hitler' and Hitler. Yet there is a difference; while both 'Hitler' and the 'Nazi' are associated with evil, 'Nazis' are generally in the service of evil, while 'Hitler' tends to *be* that evil. Aiming to cement themselves into perpetuity, the Nazis are often regarded as the first to choreograph their own image so extensively through their propaganda; something that becomes problematic when it is repeatedly regurgitated:

> To be sure, a lot of popular culture's circulation of the Third Reich for
>
> entertainment purposes is trivializing; yet when we endeavor to critically distance
>
> ourselves from the Third Reich or its gratuitous recycling, we are often obliged to

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[9] I make a distinction between a 'Nazi' and a *Nazi-as-character*. I consider a Nazi-as-character to be (most commonly) divergent from a 'Nazi' in the following ways: one, there is often little attempt to ignore the Holocaust or downplay Nazi crimes in these representations; two, their use (for the most part) has no other objective other than to try to relate history in an 'accurate' manner (I realize this term is subjective); and three, they have a more well-rounded sense of realism (in terms of being a more faithful representation of historical Nazis) than a 'Nazi', despite the fact that *both* are created things. The Nazi-as-character is to be considered (and perhaps judged) in its entirety; including a serious attempt at accuracy of place, time, and historical Nazi traits.

I juxtapose this with the 'Nazi', which in the terms that I define it, takes the character out of its historical context and ignores in part (the extent of this ignoring fluctuates with each example) the attempts at accuracy I have just mentioned. This is the crux of the division between the 'Nazi' and the Nazi-as-character; the 'Nazi' *and/or* its environment is altered or cultivated in some way away from historical accuracy, in order to fit the specific purposes of the television show, film (etc.) utilizing it. Such purposes could be the moral lessons about the dangers of hatred presented in the *Star Trek* episode "Patterns of Force" or the gory retribution of the film *Inglourious Basterds*. In contrast, the Nazi-as-character is present in a film, television show (etc.) to relate history; it is a character to be taken as is and understood accordingly, even though it remains a constructed representation.

do so using material that was already packaged by the Nazi propaganda apparatus. Hitherto, no other regime had gone to such extremes to produce an idealized image of itself on screen and paper; and no other tried so hard to shape the ways in which it will be remembered. (Winthrop-Young 879)[10]

This is a challenging thought; an appraisal of National Socialist propaganda often requires us to judge the Nazis through *their* eyes, which leaves us in an awkward position. Consider one of the Nazis most infamous projects, a film that would (they hoped) showcase the might of the "Third Reich" as well as, and perhaps more importantly, establish its mythology.

Triumph des Willens [*Triumph of the Will*] (1935), is a piece of meticulously choreographed filmmaking and careful editing. Commissioned to direct this film, Leni Riefenstahl renders Hitler (and the Nazis) as an idealized version of real life, one altered to fit National Socialist propaganda goals. This was a calculated decision; something Winthrop-Young points out when he writes that "Goebbels and Leni Riefenstahl were the first to put him there [on film], precisely because this celebratory mediation was to initiate the cross-over from man into myth" (879). In *Triumph des Willens*, Adolf Hitler was to be reinforced as the face of National Socialism and simultaneously, its mythological messiah. This makes the film an important piece of National Socialist-mythology (hereafter referred to as Nazi-mythology); that is, referring to the mythology the National Socialists themselves created. However, in addition to creating a significant

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[10] Many academics have written about National Socialist propaganda. Eric Rentschler's seminal book *The Ministry of Illusion*, examines some of the films produced by the Ministry of Propaganda. I would consider Rentschler's book to be an example of the study of National Socialist-mythology; that is, the mythology the National Socialists created.

    I would like to acknowledge Dr. Rentschler for taking time to meet with me during his short visit to UVic in 2010. It was an honour to be able to discuss my thesis with someone whose work I greatly admire.

piece of Nazi-mythology, I argue that this film also immortalized Hitler as 'Hitler', thus marking the beginning of 'Hitler'-mythology (broadly, and for the present purposes, 'Nazi'-mythology).[11]

In contrast to Nazi-mythology, 'Nazi'-mythology refers to the lore, elements, and/or traditions of the 'Nazi'. Some elements, like images, symbols, and objects (such as uniforms), may also be regarded in their own right because in addition to being part of the 'Nazi', they also carry their own mythological weight. Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens* contains such images.[12] Despite the fact that the film is a piece of National Socialist propaganda (and Nazi-mythology), because of its unparalleled access to Hitler, it is possible that the film (in part or in whole) could be used as historical footage; that is, images shown for the purpose of relating historical events. In what might be termed neglectful usage, I submit that failing to acknowledge all parts of this film as propaganda would set a precedent for the (unwitting) acceptance of Hitler and the Nazis as 'Hitler' and the 'Nazis'; this is because viewing these excerpts as non-propaganda footage does not consider the careful filming and framing used by Riefenstahl. In this way, without an awareness of its manipulated nature, the film would then function as a piece of 'Nazi'-mythology.

Therefore, because we know that the Nazis put much time and energy into producing and propagating their propaganda/mythology, it becomes of utmost importance to recognize propaganda *as* propaganda. We (everyone) must remain aware that *Triumph*

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[11] This was not the first public appearance of Hitler's image. In fact, his image would have probably been quite common, adorning much public material at the time: books, posters, etc. However, I would suggest that Hitler being immortalized as 'Hitler' in this film is especially true for those who did not experience those other public materials.

[12] Another example is *Mein Kampf*; arguably one of the most (in)famous books ever written. Serdar Somuncu's performances involving the book are discussed briefly in 1.6 and more extensively as the focus of Chapter 3.

des Willens and other National Socialist films, books etc. are part of the self-produced canon of Nazi-mythology, and that the images/messages they portray have been carefully and purposefully edited. Otherwise, to continue with Riefenstahl's film as the example, each time 'Hitler' is reproduced – perhaps most commonly in the form of a *Triumph des Willens* reference, intentional or not – both 'Hitler' and the film are (potentially) exponentially reproduced.[13] The implication of this reproduction is that 'Hitler' may supersede Hitler in the popular consciousness of western society and consequently we, as the producers of popular culture, may eventually accept (and remember) the myth as reality.

1.3 Ethical Considerations, Explorations, and Limitations

Since WWII, the Nazis have held a unique place in western popular culture, arguably different from their contemporaries.[14] Irrevocably linked to the Nazis, is the

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[13] This film (and consequently 'Hitler') has taken on a life of its own, as illustrated by the many inter-textual references and their subsequent effects on contemporary popular culture. Here are some examples of these borrowings: In 1977, George Lucas' *Star Wars: A New Hope* borrows the aesthetics of the troop composition in *Triumph des Willens*. A trailer made to promote Michael Jackson's 1995 album "HIStory" most definitely makes use of the same aesthetic; although I would argue that the imagery in this video is not strictly limited to Fascism. (In this video, I think Jackson makes use of powerful militaristic imagery in general). Rentschler lists these two examples in *The Ministry of Illusion*, amongst several others (6). To his list I would also add the images accompanying the song "Be Prepared" from *The Lion King* (1994), which are undeniably '*Triumph des Willens*-esque'. Suffice it to say that the inter-textual references continue to the point where the original inspiration becomes unclear (and therefore unknown) to the viewer, thus creating a very murky (moral) context for its usage.

[14] Take for example, Stalin. While both Stalin and Hitler's faces share the dubious honour of being the pun-tiful subjects of t-shirt, mugs, and reusable tote bags, I believe it is reasonably safe to say that in general, Stalin and Soviet symbols are less taboo in western popular culture than Hitler and a swastika. (I do recognize that some Soviet references pre-date Stalin, but I would argue that in North American culture, the man is also irrevocably linked to the 'Hammer and Sickle').

I make this point about Stalin because of the existence of such inhumane crimes as the *Holodomor* (lit. "death by hunger"): the Famine of 1932-1933 that claimed the lives of millions of victims. (The Canadian government officially recognizes the *Holodomor* as genocide and declared the fourth Saturday in November as the Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day.) In mentioning the *Holodomor*, I am not implying a comparison between it and the Holocaust; rather I simply wish to point out that in spite of committing grievous acts of brutality, Stalin's crimes have, at least partly, eluded his legacy in western popular culture. Of course, much of this is probably due to the suppression of information/knowledge of the event at the time by both the Soviet government and some western journalists. However, once known – *especially* eighty years later and the number of deaths under Stalin's

systematic, carefully orchestrated, precisely documented execution of millions of people

in the Holocaust. Consequently – because the 'Nazis' are the popular culture legacy of

the Nazis – when one sees 'Nazis', one thinks, Nazis. This transference is important:

although they are just a figment of popular culture's imagination, the 'Nazis' are often

the recipients of the frustration, hatred, and volatile emotions invoked by both the Nazis,

and the devastating history for which they were responsible. Yet the 'Nazis' are not

simply repositories of hatred; curiously, and despite the reality of history, they somehow

manage to attain a distinctive (if shocking) appeal.

Conceptually, it is difficult to accept that something iconic of National Socialism

could be simultaneously intriguing and horrifying, yet because of the transference from

their historical namesakes, that is exactly the kind of reaction the 'Nazi' elicits.[15]

Underlying this tension and/or struggle between appeal and revulsion is the (forced)

intersection between the evocative imagery borrowed from the (historical) National

Socialists (e.g. SS uniforms), and a cognisance of Nazi crimes. Ultimately, it is difficult

to be indifferent. Therefore, I propose that it is this tendency to elicit a reaction,

combined with the tension between the created and the historical truth that gives the

'Nazi' its complicated appeal in popular culture.

However, the 'Nazi' is more than just the sum of its appeal; it is also a flexible

amalgam of carefully chosen characteristics. Every 'Nazi' is therefore unique, in that

each one reflects different associations (references) in different contexts. Adding to this

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entire rule notwithstanding – the millions that starved to death over the course of *one* year should, in my mind, also be forever linked to the memory of the man. From my perspective within western popular culture I do not believe it is, at least not as much as for humanity's sake I believe it should be; yet it may be that none of this matters. The chasm ripped into the fabric of humanity by the Holocaust is remembered (and felt) by millions around the globe, yet 'Hitler' still exists despite and because of it.

[15] I use the words *intriguing* and *appeal* to reflect that the 'Nazis' are obviously a draw in popular culture (especially as villains); I am not implying a necessarily positive connotation or that one has to like them.

complexity is the disconnection between history and what popular culture (and its audience) remembers. In his discussion of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, James E. Young describes the "necessarily mediated experience" of the Holocaust by the children (and children's children) of survivors (699). I would like to broaden this idea if I may to include the mediated experience of WWII in general, because much of what popular culture 'remembers' is filtered through learned history, Nazi-mythology, and 'Nazi'-mythology. In Young's words, "the afterlife of memory, [is] represented in history's afterimages: the impressions retained in the mind's eye of a vivid sensation long after the original, external cause has been removed" (699). The 'Nazi' is one such 'afterimage' of history.

'Afterimage', however, does not mean copy. As I have already pointed out, 'Nazis' are not simply reproductions of Nazis; moreover, there is a fine balance that must be maintained between the two. The 'Nazi' must not be too abstract; that is, barely recognizable as being based on a historical figure. However, because it is a created figure, the 'Nazi' is still subject to a certain amount of artistic licence. This creative freedom is important; in the face of history and the post-Holocaust world, artistic licence functions as a distancing link between the historical horrors of the Nazis and the society that consumes their figurative representations. Moreover, because the image of the 'Nazi' persistently recalls the Nazis, and therefore the Holocaust, distance becomes a necessity.[16]

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[16] Of course, there could be an instance where someone is not familiar with twentieth-century history (especially in a young person born more than six decades after the end of the war) and therefore does not think of the Holocaust when he or she sees a Nazi. However, I maintain that when such a person learns *who the Nazis were*, they almost immediately also learn *what the Nazis did*.

In works of popular culture that contain 'Nazis', the 'Nazi' is most often in the foreground and references to the Holocaust are in the background (minimized, in terms of overt references). This minimization does not decrease its importance, nor imply that the Holocaust was not a catastrophic event; rather, it implies that it *was*. If the event (and the memory) of the Holocaust was anything less than catastrophic – if such an event can be quantified – I believe that the creators of 'Nazi'-containing products of popular culture would be much more likely to include it in a more overt (less minimized) manner.[17] Yet that is not the case; the Holocaust *was* catastrophic. The question then becomes: When making use of 'Nazis' or 'Hitler', how does one approach the reality of the Holocaust without disrespecting the memory of the event, the victims, the survivors, and everyone it has affected? This is a critical, yet not completely answerable question.

First, I believe that reminding the audience of the Holocaust (and therefore of the inherited character traits of the 'Nazis') does not require a heavy-handed approach. In the post-WWII world, the memory of the Holocaust is *built into* the 'Nazi' and 'Nazi'-mythology; both are signifiers of the Holocaust and Nazi crimes. For example, in the case of an evil 'Nazi', the horrendous nature of the Nazis' crimes is the underlying explanation for his (or her) evil-ness, because it is not a great leap to connect the perpetrators of the Holocaust to sociopathic, (sometimes literally) inhuman monsters.[18]

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[17] I would agree that mainstream filmmakers, television producers, etc. (when not dealing with strictly historical depictions and perhaps even then) generally stay away from attempts at graphic depictions of genocide as a general rule, presumably for the sake of not distressing/offending the audience. This general rule also seems to apply when it concerns the 'Nazi'; however, although the subject of the Holocaust is generally avoided (at least visually), it is not always completely and not usually in the same manner or for the same reasons.

[18] The character Karl Ruprecht Kroenen from the film *Hellboy* (2004; directed by Guillermo del Toro) is a good example of this because he is, for lack of a better description, a mechanical corpse.

Second, not all instances of the 'Nazi' follow the same procedure for the inclusion of a reference to the Holocaust. In a comedic setting, one of the following three scenarios usually applies: one, there is no mention or reference to the Holocaust; two, the reference appears obliquely; or three, the reference is made simplistically.[19] All three scenarios recognize that it is an uncomfortable thing to laugh when the Holocaust is involved, and almost an impossibility when confronted face-to-face with a realistic (or something attempting to be realistic) depiction of it. In his discussion of Hitler parodies, Richardson writes that,

> [. . .] as a general rule, Hitler parodies are conspicuously silent on the topic of the Holocaust or other atrocities [. . .]. Perversely, it is precisely their severing of an overt link between Hitler and the Holocaust that allows them to escape criticism [. . .]. For a modern audience, Hitler cannot be invoked without an immediate recollection of the Holocaust, but its absence as subject matter allows for a convenient momentary forgetting, which in turn allows for the ritual humiliation of Hitler. (279)[20]

Thus, when 'Hitler' appears, the Holocaust is everywhere and nowhere because it is necessary to put it out of mind (or at the very least, to the side), in order to laugh.

Third, it must be recognized that the 'Nazi' is inherently disrespectful, given "the enormity of the atrocities made public after the war's end" (Richardson 278).[21] This applies not only to those whose lives were affected by the Holocaust and other Nazi

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[19] By simplistically, I mean that it is presented with absolutely no doubt as to the large distance between that depiction and reality.

[20] Periods marking ellipses are encased in [square brackets] to distinguish them from the notation of pauses (silence) in transcribed dialogue.

[21] Richardson mentions this in the context of exploring why the production of Hitler parodies and impersonations still take place in light of such knowledge.

crimes through its semi-historical, twisted-to-the-needs-of-popular-culture existence, but also to history itself by creating a secondary (often hard to distinguish) identity for historical events and people in the consciousness of mainstream popular culture. Yet the fact remains that the 'Nazi' exists, despite the disrespect; therefore, I believe it is worth the trouble to study *why*.

I would argue that although the 'Nazi' is inherently disrespectful on one level, sometimes that exact quality enables it to function for good, as it were; for example, when the 'Nazi' appears as part of a moral lesson. Naturally, this is not always the case, which then begs the question: are there limits to the 'Nazi'?[22] Despite the inherent disrespect, I believe the answer is yes.

Both the character of the 'Nazi' and the medium in which it appears conform to certain parameters; visual and aural boundaries of respect which are simply not crossed.[23] To use an analogy, consider the morbid fascination that often accompanies a car accident; people stop to look because they 'cannot help themselves'. However, if it is a particularly gruesome accident, it is often unbearable and people refrain from looking, despite their curiosity. There is a limit to what people can cope with; these are visual, aural, and emotional boundaries. In mainstream popular culture, these boundaries do not extend to carte blanche. So despite the 'Nazi's' general existence being inherently disrespectful, boundaries of respect still exist; the 'Nazi', which implies a reminder of the Holocaust, has limits. These limits apply especially when the expectations of a genre (like comedy) do not necessarily prepare the audience for a potentially intensive, soul-searching

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[22] Limits in the sense of how it is used and constructed (made up).

[23] This does not include any genre of 'Nazis' in extremely sexual or sadistic depictions. I will not be discussing these here.

experience. Other limitations may be based on societal conventions; for example, what is considered appropriate for a graphic novel may be beyond the (current) established boundaries for the mainstream film industry. Similarly, factors such as time (forty years ago as contrasted with the present day), and place (North America contrasted with Germany) also play a role in these limitations.

I do not believe that all the creators (in every sense of the word) of 'Nazis' are simply, to use a colloquial expression, always jumping on the bandwagon of using the 'Nazi' solely for its shock value. There is a deeper issue at stake here, and that is recognizing that there are unresolved issues (or feelings) towards the Nazis present in the sphere of the western collective historical consciousness; issues which manifest themselves in the 'Nazis'. These issues are not static; they have changed and will continue to change over time. On a fundamental level, the 'Nazi' can be regarded as both a barometer and an outlet for these changes. Moreover, popular culture itself has changed and what its consumers needed (or wanted) from the 'Nazi' decades ago – in some cases, arguably escapist entertainment, like the comedy *The Great Dictator* (1940) – does not necessarily reflect the needs (or wants) of the consumers of today. It would seem then, that the 'Nazi' may be what popular culture needs (and perhaps wants) it to be.

I am aware that the idea that popular culture (and we as its consumers) wants the 'Nazi' to be anything is controversial. The 'Nazis' are, or at least feel, taboo. However, I believe it is important to study the 'Nazi', precisely because of the controversy. I *know* that the real Nazis committed terrible crimes; however, I *also* know that the sometimes charming and likeable pop culture 'Nazis' do not make me more sympathetic to the Nazis. They are separate: one is real, the other is not. My aim is to examine and explain

this separation. It is not without its hindrances; as I write this, I find myself drowning in the disclaimers of what my work is *not*, and minutely outlining what my work *is*. I have noticed that some people feel uncomfortable with their curiosity of the 'Nazi', perhaps because there is a sense (fear) that an interest in 'Nazis' will somehow appear as an interest in Nazis (or neo-Nazis). This is not exactly untrue as the two are related, yet I believe curiosity itself is potentially not as problematic as disinterest,[24] because acceptance of the 'Nazi' without any critical awareness invites an opportunity for imagination to grow over history.

I am often asked, 'Why would you *want* to study *that*?' My response is this: I believe that studying how the 'Nazi' functions in the discourse of anyone's popular culture provides an opportunity to explore the concepts of boundaries, awareness, and responsibility. I have no expectations that everyone will approve of what I am attempting to explore in this thesis, nor would I want them to, because I believe that in the course of disagreeing, we are able to learn more.

1.4 Responding to the 'Nazi'

When I started writing this thesis, I often referred to the 'Nazi' as the Other. As I progressed, I questioned this label, finally concluding that the 'Nazi' was not simply an Other, but also a distorted concept of a historical reality; one that explores different boundaries with each incarnation. Aiding this exploration is the ability to custom-make a 'Nazi' for each specific context, a quality that enables it to function as – to borrow filmmaker Sam Dunn's sentiment regarding Heavy Metal music – a safe place to work

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[24] This should not be confused with dislike. When one dislikes/is offended by the 'Nazis', s/he acknowledges that there is more to a 'Nazi' than a superficial image. In contrast, I believe disinterest implies that one does not care to know (or find out) whether there is more than meets the eye.

out concepts and issues, and (similarly to Heavy Metal) to grapple with the idea of evil (which I would argue, ultimately lies at the heart of the matter).[25] In these terms then, the 'Nazi' may be thought of as a means into such a place – a 'Neutral Zone' if you will – for popular culture to experiment and explore.[26] It is a reciprocal action: how the audience processes (explores) the issues informs their response to the 'Nazi', and how the audience responds to the 'Nazi' is part of processing the issues. Moreover, each response is likely to be as unique as the 'Nazi' itself because each 'Nazi' exists within its own specific context; therefore every 'Nazi' carries with it a set of distinctive characteristics by which it may be identified (and the ramifications of which may be judged).

The 'Nazi' often appears as one of two extremes: evil or fool. In Richardson's words:

> Hitler is increasingly replaced by "Hitler," which functions either as a shorthand for evil incarnate or as a cheap gag. This split of "Hitler" into opposing poles, one that re-auraticizes Hitler as a figure of unambiguous evil, the other that presents him as a totally ineffectual and thoroughly humiliated clown, reveals a schizophrenic American consciousness. (288)[27]

Evil 'Nazis' exemplify power – they are dominant and authoritative – whereas the reverse is usually the case in the fool 'Nazi', who for the most part is submissive and

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[25] I was inspired by a comment made by filmmaker Sam Dunn at the South of Heaven: Religion and Heavy Metal Symposium held 8 June 2013 at the University of Victoria, during the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences. During a question and answer period, Dunn suggested that Heavy Metal music may be seen as a safe place to grapple with issues and ideas about Evil. He continued on, pointing out that while evil in Metal music is scary, evil in reality is terrifying. Likewise, while 'Nazis' in popular culture can seem like real evil, nothing can compare to the actual reality of Nazi crimes.

[26] The Star Trek pun/reference is intended. I think of the 'Neutral Zone' as functioning as a kind of 'Third Space', similarly implying issues of perspective as well as the complex neutrality of such a space.

[27] In this quotation, "Hitler" does not correspond directly to my definition of 'Hitler'; however, for the purposes of this quotation, the former can be understood as including the latter.

malleable. Both of these tropes occur at the expense of realism. To laugh at the fool,

history must temporarily evade the Holocaust; conversely, the 'Nazi' as evil incarnate

denies the reality of their human-ness. As time has gone on, some 'Nazis' have moved

away from extremes into more complicated characterisations, such as Col. Landa in

Inglourious Basterds. All of these 'Nazis' require a selective censoring of history, which

creates and increases (or decreases) the displacement between the fictional figures and

the historical ones. However, the extent of this displacement does not necessarily matter

– Nazi, 'Nazi', or Nazi-as-character – they all have the potential to trigger the same

emotions, although perhaps not always to the same degree. This is where positioning

comes into play.

 As an audience, we position ourselves relative to the 'Nazi', because deciding

where to stand can provide a place from which to judge. Sometimes however, certain

things – such as the awareness (and acceptance) of the Nazis not as inhuman monsters,

but rather as inhumane (monstrous) humans – makes positioning ourselves more difficult,

and our feelings towards the 'Nazis' more complex.

 From a simplistic point of view, when popular culture – and by extension its

audience – embraces the idea of an evil 'Nazi', it is likely because the evil serves as an

uncomplicated explanation of how someone could commit such horrific acts of brutality.

In a different way, the fool 'Nazi' enables the audience to experience (and take pleasure

in) a form of punishment; the removal of power allows spectators to bask in the

ineptitude of the 'Nazi'. While these extremes have their purposes, creators must retain a

sense of responsibility, otherwise there is the potential to lead to what Richardson

identifies as "the exploitative nature of [. . .] Hitler representations, where any pretense of

moral investigation or healing are merely excuses for the continued exploitation of Hitler [or the 'Nazi'] as a fictional character" (292, my insertion).[28]

Overall, these representations provide a convenient (and simplistic) point of moral comparison. Moreover, by creating distance between the perpetrator (here represented by the 'Nazi') and its audience through an exaggeration of certain traits, evil or otherwise, the consumers of this representation are able to contain the 'Nazi' (and feelings about the Nazis) in easily defined (and defended) categories. Thus, they are assured of the appropriateness of their moral position, the importance of which should not be understated. How we feel is an important part of processing and responding to the 'Nazi', because as we experience and grapple with issues and feelings – such as anger, confusion, disgust, and pleasure – about 'Nazis', Nazis, the nature of evil, and responsibility (this is not an exhaustive list), we attempt to integrate the emotional with the cerebral: what we feel with what we know.

In western popular culture, there is often a tendency to deal with the extreme cruelty of the Nazis by funneling them into hyper-stylized 'Nazis', because the extent of their viciousness is often unimaginable and incomprehensible. This generally results in 'Nazis' that are easily categorized into defined and recognizable roles. The process can become more complicated as the 'Nazis' become less stylized and more – to apply the meaning loosely – realistic, because the more ambiguous 'Nazis' are often more open to individual interpretation.[29] That is not to say that one is more easily understood than the other; simply that they may provoke different issues.

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[28] While I still believe that not everyone uses the 'Nazi' solely for shock or commercial value, I do not deny that some do.

[29] By realistic, I simply mean 'Nazis' that are not aliens, undead, or possessing otherworldly powers; that is, Col. Landa, not Karl Ruprecht Kroenen.

Engaging these issues is where critical thinking and diverse audience (recipient) knowledge begin to play a much larger role; each 'Nazi' will be interpreted differently by different people. Tied into this is the power struggle waged by the members of post-war society – broadly, popular culture itself – against the cultural memory of the Nazis (i.e. how the Nazis are remembered by the people who do the remembering). This sometimes results in the 'Nazi' occupying roles that act out an imagined revenge or humiliation against the perpetrators. Through popular culture, the audience, which includes creators, may derive pleasure from humiliation and/or punishment, indulging in the desire to see the 'Nazi' as something that will underscore or re-establish our moral compasses.[30] There is no doubt that the availability of the 'Nazi' is seductive; the market for the 'Nazi' is proven by its continued existence in popular culture. This may be a benefit however; with each successive 'Nazi', the processing of these issues continues to evolve.

1.5 Theory and Research

Taken in its entirety, the amount of research devoted to the study of WWII, National Socialism, and the Holocaust is overwhelming; even when one only considers that research that focuses on one popular medium (such as film). The propaganda film industry of the National Socialists is a fascinating and popular topic, studied not least by some of the most well-known scholars in the field.[31] In fact, in an article written in 2001, Scott Spector suggests that "Nazi cinema seems to be a boom field in German Studies departments. Rentschler's and Schulte-Sasse's books are in the company of other

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[30] There may also be a subconscious element, in that the human brain has a biological affinity for symmetry and order. As noted earlier, there have been many references to *Triumph des Willens* in popular culture. I judge this to be because of the impressive visual impact of these scenes, rather than any underlying affinity for National Socialism. In short, they look good.

[31] See especially: Eric Rentschler, Anton Kaes, David Welch, Omer Bartov, Linda Schulte-Sasse, Erwin Leiser, Mary-Elizabeth O'Brien, and Susan Tegel.

substantial work on Nazi entertainment cinema, including a special issue of the flagship

theory journal of German studies, *New German Critique*" (474).[32] Spector's article, while

not meant as an exhaustive review of the literature in this field, offers a substantial

overview of important research. I believe it is safe to say then, that Nazi entertainment

cinema/propaganda is a well-established and researched field.

The 'Nazi' most definitely has propagandistic roots, Axis or otherwise, therefore,

I will take into account some of the research in this area, as it applies to the specific focus

of the present thesis. However, while it is important to have an awareness of how the

Nazis portrayed themselves (in what I consider to be Nazi-mythology), my research will

primarily focus on what I consider to fall under the category of 'Nazi'-mythology.

Keeping my research focused on the 'Nazi' has challenged me in a number of

ways. One is that I have created my own framework and terminology with which to

identify the 'Nazi'; in this sense, research does not exist as such. However, that is not to

say that no one has discussed the 'Nazi' before; on the contrary, for example, there exists

a body of research dealing with different aspects of comedic and parodic

representations.[33] It is my aim to contribute to this field by working on an overarching

framework and terminology. To that end, I have brought together research of what I

consider to be 'Nazi' and 'Nazi'-mythology, from a variety of sources. To fit as a

companion to this research, I carefully considered different theoretical structures and

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[32] *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and its Afterflife* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1996), *Entertaining the Third Reich: Illusions of Wholeness in Nazi Cinema* (Durham: Duke UP, 1996), and No. 74 Spring/Summer 1998, Special Issue on Nazi Cinema, respectively.

[33] For an example, see the chapter entitled "Haha Hitler! Coming to Terms with Dani Levy" by Peter Gölz in *Cinema and Social Change in Germany and Austria* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2012). See also Richardson. Some of this research falls loosely under what is sometimes called Hitler humour. In relation to a broader perspective, Sabine Hake explores, amongst other things, both, what I have termed Nazi-as-character and 'Nazis' in her book, *Screen Nazis: Cinema, History, and Democracy* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 2012). In contrast to my own work, Hake's book focuses exclusively on cinema.

concepts and their potential to expose, examine, deconstruct, and explore how the 'Nazi'

is constructed and utilized, as well as to reflect on how its very existence triggers the

recipient to relive, re-examine, and/or react to the cultural/personal/societal past.

When choosing a theoretical approach, it was also important to me to consider the

qualities of the examples themselves. *Star Trek* and the *Twilight Zone* are hugely

influential mainstays in North American popular culture; Serdar Somuncu, while

admittedly less dominant than those television juggernauts mentioned previously, has

also achieved a cult status in contemporary Germany. Spector astutely observes that:

> In both teaching and research, movies and other popular media have for some
>
> time been seen as barometers of changing social norms and values. More recently,
>
> they themselves have had an active role in representing, but also enforcing or
>
> even constituting, visions of society and of history. (460)

In this thesis, undoubtedly the most important characteristic of these specific products of

popular culture is the role they play in reflecting and/or affecting the audience that

experiences them.

Ultimately, I decided to work with Sigmund Freud's study of *das Unheimliche*

(the 'uncanny') as the foundation upon which to build my analyses of the 'Nazi' and/or

'Nazi'-mythology.[34] This is because I found the uncanny to be especially productive

when combined with the 'Nazi' framework – that is, the terminology ('Nazi'; Nazi-as-

character) and the concept of 'Nazi'-mythology – in my analysis of the specific examples

I have chosen. In and of itself, the 'Nazi' is (can be) a tangible manifestation of the

uncanny – the strange yet familiar – yet there is also a sense of the uncanny that exists in

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[34] As the reader is no doubt aware, and as the translator (Alix Strachey) of the English translation I worked from noted, the English translation of *das Unheimliche* does not reflect the complex linguistic nuances of the German.

the relationship between the 'Nazi' and its audience. Therefore, in studying the 'Nazi', it is helpful to first study the uncanny.

 I cannot (and am not attempting to) exhaustively answer the question of why the 'Nazi' is an important figure in our lives, as it has no concrete end; I may only contribute to the growing research in this area. Moving forward, the 'Nazi' framework may be built upon – terminology further developed; sub-genres expanded (e.g. farcical 'Nazi') – as a platform from which to encourage and stimulate thought about this issue; even (or especially) thought which sometimes, and often most productively, comes in the form of an argument. Ultimately, for me both academically and personally, the motivating factor is to stimulate discussion.

1.6 Where No One Has Gone Before: Test Run

I began this thesis thinking that I would examine films and television shows that featured the 'Nazis', and provide in-depth analyses. Yet as I wrote and read, and re-wrote and re-read, I realized that the examples themselves – the instances of the 'Nazi' – were not the focus of my inner fascination with this subject; rather, it was the fascination itself.

Why is the 'Nazi' so fascinating? The more I read, the more I believe this is less a question and more a starting point for philosophical musings. Despite that however, over the next two chapters, I test out the combination of the uncanny with the 'Nazi' framework by applying them to my chosen examples. Although similar, the test subjects reveal themselves to be varied enough that the uncanny not only plays a different role in all four examples (three in Chapter Two and one in Chapter Three), but also that the uncanny is created in a different way each time.

It is important to stress that this thesis is about 'Nazis', *not* Nazis or Adolf Hitler. In addition, I have elected not to focus on films or television episodes in which historical accuracy is an important part of the representation of Nazis, because in these kinds of examples – films such as *Der Untergang* (2004) or *Schindler's List* (1993) – the Nazi-as-character is (in general) recreated as realistically as possible. I believe I have made the appropriate decision because the aim of my thesis is to investigate how popular culture utilizes a caricature of the Nazi to process the "Third Reich"; therefore, I feel an analysis of the Nazi-as-character falls outside the scope of this thesis.[35]

I believe that for many children, the first introduction to the Nazis is through the 'Nazis'. Yet because the 'Nazi' has been around for at least two generations, everyone has been exposed to different 'Nazis', at different places and points in time. Therefore, as mentioned previously, I have opted to choose four examples from popular culture as the themes of the following chapters: three from America in the 1960s, and one from Germany in the 2000s. Because this thesis focuses on the fascination with the 'Nazi' itself (and not on the examples as such), I have chosen examples that I felt were important pieces of popular culture, ones that have (in and of themselves) inspired noticeable reactions; even though Nazi Germany comes to mind quite clearly with one (Somuncu), but not with the other (*Star Trek* and *Twilight Zone*). In both chapters, I will consider how the particular product of popular culture fits the temporal context and geographical location in which it was made.

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[35] However, I would like to acknowledge the future possibility of contributing to the existing scholarship on what I have termed the Nazi-as-character, especially the effect of humanizing the Nazi. For example, it was the critically acclaimed German-made film *Der Untergang*'s attention to a realistic representation – that is, Swiss actor Bruno Ganz's portrayal of Hitler as a (hu)man, not evil incarnate – that elicited much of the controversy that surrounds the film.

Chapter Two focuses on two *Twilight Zone* episodes ("He's Alive" and "Deaths-Head Revisited") and one *Star Trek: The Original Series* episode ("Patterns of Force"). In the first of the *Twilight Zone* episodes, 'Hitler' *is* Evil; in the second, a 'Nazi' is the recipient of belated retribution. Both *Twilight Zone* episodes are in tune with the convictions Rod Serling, creator of *The Twilight Zone* and one of its primary writers, held in regards to the social issues affecting America at the time. Similarly, *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry's vision comes through in the episode "Patterns of Force," in a message to viewers living amongst the struggles of the Civil Rights movement. Both series are in a sense prototypical of North American popular culture; references of both series abound prominently throughout popular culture from their inception to the present day. Furthermore, both Roddenberry and Serling envisioned their respective shows as vehicles for social commentary; this is important when one considers that all three episodes aired during a volatile period in American history. This historical context is closely connected to the function of the uncanny in all three episodes. Throughout the whole chapter, the combination of the uncanny with each specific example generates a strong viewer response; one that reminds the audience what was, and importantly, what could be. I chose these episodes specifically for a number of reasons, including, but not exhaustively, the following: one, I wanted to explore the impact of displacement on the 'Nazi' (*Star Trek* is set in the future, far beyond the capabilities of the present day; and the *Twilight Zone* is an imaginary place existing beyond, yet sharing a border with, 'this' world); two, I believe all three episodes demonstrate how 'Nazis' may be utilized to comment on social issues; and three (this reason also applies to Chapter Three), I believe

the pressures and social atmosphere of the time contemporary to the production of each cultural product affects and informs its creation and reception.

Chapter Three breaks from episodic television: artist Serdar Somuncu reads from *Mein Kampf* and gives a sharp, insightful commentary that questions the mythology surrounding Hitler's infamous book. Consider this; inasmuch as North American popular culture is seemingly obsessed with utilizing the emblems of National Socialism (the swastika, Nazi uniforms, etc.) in its popular culture, Germany has only to a much lesser extent created products of popular culture – like Somuncu's show – that take the power back from these symbols by directly approaching the myths surrounding them and confronting them on 'their' (Germany's popular culture collective 'consciousness') terms.[36] This is slowly changing; however, in spite of comedic Hitler impersonations in Germany, and even the theatrical staging of the popular "The Producer's" in Berlin, one bastion of Hitler's mythology has remained largely untouched: *Mein Kampf*.

The domestic publication ban and general pariah status of *Mein Kampf* in Germany has resulted in the book being largely unread by the modern populace – a point noted by Somuncu during his performances – and subsequently mythologized, or at the very least, misunderstood on the basis of unfamiliarity with the actual, specific content of the text. Somuncu's performances begin to dismantle/examine this myth. I base my examination on a close reading/listening to a recording of one of his shows, focusing especially on his commentary (as given in the performance), in conjunction with other aspects of the performance, in terms of their cumulative effect on the audience. In this chapter, the path that leads to the uncanny may be the most startling effect of all. In

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[36] Of course one cannot be directly compared to the other, especially when considering examples (like films) that aim to appeal to a mass audience. The public discourse on this topic is very much affected by the history of each country.

contrast to Chapter Two, the uncanny is the last piece of the puzzle to be discussed; however, this should not suggest that its role is unimportant. On the contrary, the uncanny is the key to reminding the audience (once again), what was, and more ominously, what could be. I have chosen Somuncu because, in terms of modern examples, I would argue that his performances are exceptionally productive in being able to traverse certain boundaries. In this medium, Somuncu is able to *directly* address his audience and interact with them in real-time; in other words, he is able to put his finger 'on the pulse' of modern Germany. This intimate connection is an essential element in breaking through the mythology surrounding *Mein Kampf* and what I find most fascinating and provocative about this particular product of German popular culture.

Generally speaking, one of the main purposes of Chapter One is to introduce and explain the 'Nazi' in preparation for specific application: the test run. I embark on this test in the next chapter, where the foundation of the analyses begins with a considered explanation of the uncanny, as it relates and functions within this thesis. The role of the uncanny is pivotal in generating audience response in each case, and in turn, this response is essential to the processing of each specific example.

Chapter 2: 'Nazis' in *Star Trek* and *The Twilight Zone*

2.1 Foundation

Freud begins his investigation of the uncanny (in the essay entitled, "The 'Uncanny'") with the word itself. By means of a detailed etymological analysis, he discovers that *heimlich* eventually leads itself to *unheimlich*. In the three television episodes under discussion, the uncanny is a result of the simultaneous presence of (and the relationship between), the 'Nazi' and the Nazi; more broadly, the 'real' and the real. What was *heimlich* becomes *unheimlich* through the transgressions of the boundaries between the two. The aim of the present analysis is to highlight and then reflect on the viewer's response to the following examples of 'Nazis' by means of a close examination of the circumstances under which the uncanny moments occur in each episode. To begin, let us consider two key passages from "The 'Uncanny'":

> It may be true that the uncanny [*unheimlich*] is something which is secretly
> familiar [*heimlich-heimisch*], which has undergone repression and then returned
> from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfils this condition. But the selection
> of material on this basis does not enable us to solve the problem of the uncanny.
> For our proposition is clearly not convertible. Not everything that fulfils this
> condition – not everything that recalls repressed desires and surmounted modes of
> thinking belonging to the prehistory of the individual and of the race – is on that
> account uncanny. (Freud 146, translator's insertions)

According to Freud, the uncanny can be something secretly familiar, repressed, and returned; but something secretly familiar, repressed, and returned is not necessarily uncanny (is not uncanny solely based on that reason). If then, we consider the premise

that a 'Nazi' – in certain circumstances – could be identified as the return of the repressed, it is not possible to say that every 'Nazi' will be uncanny. Thus, we must then identify the conditions of the circumstances where the 'Nazi' is uncanny, and/or when uncanniness occurs in relation to the 'Nazi'.

In the essay, Freud also draws a distinction between the uncanny in fiction and the uncanny of real life.[37] Near the end of the essay, he swiftly and firmly guides the reader through an understanding of the parameters of the former, beginning with the straightforward, yet crucial point that,

> [a]bove all, it is a much more fertile province than the uncanny in real life, for it contains the whole of the latter and something more besides, something that cannot be found in real life. The contrast between what has been repressed and what has been surmounted cannot be transposed on to the uncanny in fiction without profound modification; for the realm of fantasy depends for its effect on the fact that its content is not submitted to reality-testing. (150)

Fiction permits certain creative liberties not possible in reality; therefore the hypothesis must be adjusted to reflect this. Freud continues: "The somewhat paradoxical result is that *in the first place a great deal that is not uncanny in fiction would be so if it happened in real life; and in the second place that there are many more means of creating uncanny effects in fiction than there are in real life*" (150, italics in original). Thus, something that would be uncanny if it happened in real life is less likely to be uncanny when we accept the parameters of fiction, in this case, a television program. In relation to the premise that

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[37] Freud discusses the uncanny in fiction in terms of literature. I wish to expand this discussion to include other types of media, like television.

the 'Nazi' in certain circumstances could be considered uncanny, those 'certain

circumstances' would have to transgress these parameters of fiction.

Freud notes that the writer (creator) has complete control over the parameters of

the created world – what rules the fiction reality has – and we as the readers of fiction

accept this (150). He underscores this point with an example involving fairy tales:

> In fairy tales, for instance, the world of reality is left behind from the very start
>
> [. . .]. Wish fulfillments, secret powers, omnipotence of thoughts [. . .] all the
>
> elements so common in fairy stories, can exert uncanny influence here; for, as we
>
> have learned, that feeling [uncanniness] cannot arise unless there is a conflict of
>
> judgment as to whether things which have been 'surmounted' and are regarded as
>
> incredible may not, after all, be possible; and this problem is eliminated from the
>
> outset by the postulates of the world of fairy tales. (150)

There cannot be an uncanny feeling because we as consumers of fiction accept that

certain things are possible in fairy tales. To put it more generally, the setting can be

realistic, yet still include fantastic figures, who as "long as they remain within their

setting of poetic reality [. . .] lose any uncanniness which they might possess" (151). The

potential for the uncanny in fiction appears to be based on trust in 'the system'; namely,

as long as the parameters of the created reality are clear, and we as readers (viewers)

accept them, the uncanny is less likely to take root.

However, everything changes "as soon as the writer *pretends* to move in the

world of common reality," which creates a disparity of awareness between the writer and

the reader (Freud 151; my emphasis). This is a key element in the flexibility of the

uncanny in fiction, because the writer (creator) can adopt all the avenues to uncanniness

available to the 'uncanny' of real life, as well as play with the creative freedom of fiction.

Moreover, the writer can take advantage of the trust inherent to an encounter with a

seemingly realistic fiction and, providing nothing has occurred to alert the reader, the

parameters of the fiction can be extended and manipulated at will.

I will expand on precisely how this manipulation occurs as the analysis unfolds;

however, in preparation for the dismantling and contemplation of *The Twilight Zone*

episodes "Deaths-Head Revisited" and "He's Alive," and *Star Trek: The Original Series*

episode "Patterns of Force," I will lay one more piece of the foundation by briefly

considering the past and the present as it relates to how the viewer experiences the 'Nazi'.

There are three important things to bear in mind when considering the viewer's

experience: individuality, the means of presentation, and time.

First, it is a near impossibility for any two individuals to share an identical

knowledge base; moreover, given the variances in experience, learning, location, and age

etc., it is also unlikely that these individuals would remember the exact same collection of

things. In her work on memory, Aleida Assmann moves beyond "the usual dichotomy of

'individual' versus 'collective'" to differentiate between individual, social, political, and

cultural memory (211). In these terms, political and cultural memory affects how much

we know, and/or how much we think we know about the generally agreed upon history of

the human race as defined on a national, cultural, etc., level. In turn, individual and social

memory informs the personal collection of knowledge, experience, and memories (our

own or others), collected by all individuals over the course of their lives. Each person's

knowledge and memory repositories are also subject to the interaction between the two.

All of this can be reduced to *what* we know, but equally important is *how* the viewer

positions the 'Nazi' in relation to how they remember the past (especially the Nazi). For human beings, "[r]emembrance as a vital human activity shapes our links to the past, and the ways we remember define us in the present. As individuals and societies, we need the past to construct and to anchor our identities and to nurture a vision of the future" (Huyssen, "Monument" 249). Thus it is not only what we remember from our unique collection of knowledge that affects our perception of the 'Nazi' and how we experience it, but also the ways we remember. Every person's interpretation of the past, or in this case, experience of a reference to the past, will be affected by their individuality and positionality; therefore, every individual will 'see' the episodes through her or his own eyes (both literally and figuratively).

Second, the viewer's experience is also defined by the means of presentation. Huyssen writes that "[a] society's memory is negotiated in the social body's beliefs and values, rituals and institutions, and in the case of modern societies in particular, it is shaped by such public sites of memory as the museum, the memorial, the monument" (249). I see an opportunity here to adapt this idea; to consider these episodes as a "public site" of processing; where we as viewers integrate what we see and feel, with what we know (249). Moreover, everything, from the choice of storyline to the decisions of physical representation, impacts how it will be received by the audience, because "[w]e do know that the media do not transport public memory innocently. They shape it in their very structure and form" (Huyssen, "Present" 30). Therefore, for the means of presentation to be effective, it must be self-aware in its construction because deliberate choices can help to dissuade the viewer from potential misinterpretation. When one

makes reference to the Holocaust, this becomes even more important. In his discussion of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, Young writes:

> How to show the unshowable may also underpin Spiegelman's use of animals for humans here. When Spiegelman is asked, 'Why mice?' he answers, 'I need to show the events and memory of the Holocaust without showing them. I want to show the masking of these events *in* their representation.' In this way, he can tell the story and not tell it at the same time. [. . .] By using mice masks, the artist also asks us not to believe what we see. They are masks drawing attention to themselves as such, never inviting us to mistake memory of events for events themselves. (687; emphasis in original)

The separation between representation and reality is an integral part of *The Twilight Zone* episode "Deaths-Head Revisited." Serling treads very carefully here; his handling of the past is both clearly pre-meditated and mediated: this 'Dachau' is very determinedly not Dachau.

Third, I must consider the impact time itself has on the viewer's experience. For a contemporary audience, this means studying how the mediated representation of the past intermingles with the (then) present, and in turn, impacts the viewer in the (now) present. Thus, I cannot fully consider the impact of the past on the present without first explaining the circumstances of the atmosphere during which all three episodes were produced; the mid-1960s, the United States of America in the midst of the dynamic Civil Rights movement.

2.2 Background Information: Time and Icons

2.2.1 The 1960s

The Twilight Zone ran for five seasons, from 1959 to 1964; *Star Trek: The Original Series* for three seasons, from 1966 to 1969.[38] For both shows, the social and political atmosphere of the 1960s was an influence that was hard to ignore. In the United States, racial inequality was a hot button topic; segregation was still legal and practiced in certain parts of the country. This was the era of the Kennedy Administration, the Arms Race and the Cuban missile crisis, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights movement, and the continually increasing fallout from the war in Vietnam.[39] Looking back, the decade as a whole is notable for the significant changes that took place within social, political, and cultural spheres, as well as major demonstrations of both peace and hate; however, although much social unrest occurred during the 1960s, the social upheaval also brought with it new opportunities for change.

Both of the television programs under discussion in the next section capitalized on the spirit of change that characterized the decade, in their commitment to responsible, while still entertaining, social criticism.

2.2.2 Popular Culture Icons: *Star Trek* and *The Twilight Zone*

"Five card stud, nothing wild … and the sky's the limit."

- Captain Jean-Luc Picard ("All Good Things…")

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[38] Although the first series was simply named *Star Trek*, it is now commonly referred to as *Star Trek: The Original Series* to differentiate it from the *Star Trek* franchise (movement) as a whole. In contrast, I would refer to the 11th feature film as *Star Trek* (2009).

[39] The Civil Rights movement in particular plays a prominent role in the current analysis. For more information, please see the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum website, especially the special microsite entitled '1963: The Struggle for Civil Rights' <http://civilrights.jfklibrary.org>, which features a fascinating repository of historical documents, audio files, and video relating to the Civil Rights movement.

So ends the final episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, with words that reflect the boundless possibilities of the universe: such is the nature of *Star Trek*. The same could be said of *The Twilight Zone*, although one may argue that the possibilities are decidedly less utopian. Either way, both series should be noted for their commitment to the exploration of human nature and the social issues that plague us. For *Star Trek*, "[p]aradoxically, although this fiction appears to be about looking outside ourselves – attempting to go beyond human boundaries – it is more concerned with looking back at the earth, at ourselves, than it is in going elsewhere. This voyage out is, also, a voyage in" (Barrett and Barrett 1). Similarly, "[i]n the *Zone*, art imitates as well as reflects life, regardless of whether we like the portraits of ourselves that are painted by the show" (Presnell and McGee 7). Gene Roddenberry, the creator of *Star Trek*, and Rod Serling, the mastermind behind *The Twilight Zone*, were both instrumental figures in the formation of these entertaining and thought-provoking television programs.

Gene Roddenberry, as the initiator of arguably one of the most extensive science fiction movements in the world, held a great responsibility for setting the direction the program was to take.[40] From the beginning, *Star Trek* was infused with references to relevant political and social issues: "one of the first qualities noticed and admired in *ST* [*Star Trek*] was its racial and cultural integration" (Wilcox 69). Sometimes these issues were intertwined with the 'Prime Directive'; a policy of non-interference with other cultures. Although set "within the safe, domestic sphere of futuristic television," engagement with current social issues has always been an integral part of *Star Trek*, something that adds to its value as a cultural resource for self-reflection (Ono 158). In its

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[40] Certain passages, primarily some of those that relate to *Star Trek*, have been adapted from my undergraduate Honours paper, 'Dammit Jim, I'm a Doctor, Not a Nazi: Representations of National Socialism in *Star Trek*'; the inspiration for the current thesis.

own way, *Star Trek* advocates for an inspired future; one where humanity has grown

beyond troubling characteristics like greed and racism. In *The Original Series* for

instance, "[t]he *Enterprise* crew was to function simultaneously as a focus for audience

identification and as a utopian alternative to contemporary society" (Jenkins 182).

Producer Robert Justman gets right to the point: "What *Star Trek* is about, what the series

is about, is about morality. And that hasn't changed one bit since the early days back in

1965 and '66 when we first started making the original series" ("The Beginning"). In this

way, *Star Trek* continues to provide the moral compass Gene Roddenberry envisioned to

illustrate both the steps and missteps of humanity.

Before creating *The Twilight Zone*, Rod Serling was "one of the most prolific and

acclaimed writers of live television drama in the 1950s"; despite this however, Serling

left behind his successful career to develop a project that would eventually turn into *The

Twilight Zone* (Presnell and McGee 11). This move was a result of "his growing

dissatisfaction with network sponsors and their imposed forms of censorship"; however,

his new show was not immune to trouble (11). During its tenure on the airways, *The

Twilight Zone* often encountered problems with television executives, censors, and

sponsors; a result perhaps not completely unexpected for Serling, described as "one of the

loudest and most outspoken critics of American society and the television industry"

(Venuti 354). It is no secret then that pandering to the whims of sponsors and executives

– who were concerned more about the bottom line than the final product – did not fall in

line with his motivations, because he was a writer with integrity: "[f]or Serling, writing

should be 'a weapon of truth, an act of conscience, an article of faith' " (Serling qtd. in

Venuti 356). The science fiction format of the show itself proved to be a boon for Serling,

in that it provided him with an opportunity to exercise creative freedom; although "[t]he censors would not allow two senators to engage in current political debate, [. . .] they could not stand in the way of two Martians saying the same thing in allegorical terms" (Presnell and McGee 12). On these terms, Serling was able to continue to comment on the human experience without compromising his own views. As Venuti observes:

> In his writing for *The Twilight Zone* [. . .], Serling did not shrink from the social criticism which had characterized his previous work in television; he rather embodied his examination of American society in fantasy. Of course, his messages were not entirely explicit, and less sophisticated viewers, enthralled by the fantastic plot, might not always perceive its significance [. . .]. Even though television censorship moved Serling to give up his commitment to critical realism, *The Twilight Zone* shows that he did not surrender his conception of the responsible writer's function in society. (361-62)

Thus, each in their own way, both *Star Trek* and *The Twilight Zone* stood tall with the creative spirit that inspired them.

And the spirits live on. Forty-eight years after it was created, *Star Trek* can most definitely be counted as a long-term franchise. It includes: *Star Trek: The Original Series* (*TOS*); *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (*TNG*); *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (*DS9*); *Star Trek: Voyager* (*VOY*); and *Star Trek: Enterprise* (*ENT*), as well as an animated series and twelve feature-length films.[41] This continuity of programming is paralleled by its viewers, who span across generations. Much of the same can be said of *The Twilight Zone*, which has spawned two television revivals, a feature film, and a magazine,

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[41] Not to mention books, comics, games, etc. The series' airdates: 1966-1969 (*TOS*); 1973-1974 (Animated Series); 1987-1994 (*TNG*); 1993-1999 (*DS9*); 1995-2001 (*VOY*); 2001-2005 (*ENT*). The feature films and their release dates are noted in Appendix II.

amongst other things.[42] Both have returned to the spotlight recently (if they ever even truly left); 2002 marked the inception of *The Twilight Zone*® Radio Dramas, and 2009 saw the return of *Star Trek* to the big screen. Having survived television censors, sponsors, executives, and cancellation,[43] I believe it is safe to say that both *Star Trek* and *The Twilight Zone* will continue to stay relevant in popular culture, and continue to stimulate our imaginations.

Understanding the historical background that produced these two television shows is important for understanding the motivations behind the choice of subject matter. Additionally, in at least one case, the specific historical setting is an integral part of creating an uncanny moment. Each episode is unique, both in terms of the 'Nazis' that they contain, as well as the means by which the uncanny moments are produced. Thus, before we can understand how the presence of the following 'Nazis' are part of the catalyst behind the uncanny, we must first consider how the uncanny functions within the specific parameters of each fictional space.

2.3 Uncanny Returns: Fictional Dimension, Fictional Future

2.3.1 The Twilight Zone: Fictional Dimension

The main premise of the television series *The Twilight Zone* is that all the episodes (stories) occur in a place called the Twilight Zone,[44] described by Rod Serling in the show's opening narration: "*You unlock this door with the key of imagination. Beyond*

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[42] The first revival was in the 1980s, the second was in the 2000s. For more information about *The Twilight Zone*, please see Appendix I.

[43] *Star Trek* was almost cancelled in 1967 until a fan letter-writing campaign succeeded in bringing it back for a third season (Geraghty 1). Whether or not the decision was solely based on the fans' reaction is unclear, but it remains part of the *Star Trek* mythos nonetheless.

[44] Throughout this thesis, *The Twilight Zone* (italics) refers to the show, and the Twilight Zone (no italics) refers to the fictional place.

it is another dimension. A dimension of sound. A dimension of sight. A dimension of mind. You're moving into a land of both shadow and substance. Of things and ideas. You've just crossed over into … The Twilight Zone" ("Deaths-Head Revisited").[45] With this declaration, the viewer knowingly enters this other dimension from Serling, where a suspension of disbelief is encoded into each piece of the program's tapestry; this is a suitable backdrop for a 'Nazi'.

The strange realities of the Twilight Zone are the foundation upon which all the stories are built; these are the parameters of reality that we accept for the type of fiction we are experiencing. In most cases, the viewer assumes the role of observer, rather than participant, to what occurs in the Twilight Zone. As the viewing audience, we accept these terms because we are cognisant of how it all works (or at least we think we are).

Thus, when something un-lifelike happens in the show, as when ghosts appear, we think, 'nothing out of the ordinary here, it is the Twilight Zone after all' and we relax our guard knowing that the Twilight Zone is functioning the way it should or as we *expect* it to, because "[w]e adapt our judgment to the imaginary reality imposed on us by the writer, and regard souls, spirits, and ghosts as though their existence had the same validity as our own has in material reality. In this case too we avoid all trace of the uncanny" (Freud 151). With this in mind, it would appear that the Twilight Zone would have a difficult time producing a sense of the uncanny; this however, is misleading. Freud continues,

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[45] The show's opening narration changed slightly from season to season; this one is from Season 4. For more information about both the opening narration and episode monologues, please see Appendix I. This is my transcription; all further transcriptions of dialogue (from all *three* episodes) are also my own. They have been transcribed directly from the DVDs listed in the Works Cited.

[. . .] the writer has one more means which he can use in order to avoid our

recalcitrance and at the same time to improve his chances of success. He can keep

us in the dark for a long time about the precise nature of the presuppositions on

which the world he writes about it based, or he can cunningly and ingeniously

avoid any definite information on the point to the last. (151)

When Serling (literally) tells us in the introduction to *The Twilight Zone* that with

our imagination as the key, we "unlock" a "door" and cross a threshold into another

dimension where the descriptions are vague and the certainty of possible/impossible do

not seem to apply, he places the audience directly onto unidentifiable footing. *The

Twilight Zone* neither keeps us in the dark nor avoids telling us definite information: the

setup is hiding in plain sight, as it were. In this way, the Twilight Zone is a known

unknown; everything and nothing is (im)possible here. Therefore, although we are

expecting the uncanny to occur and we think we know how it will happen, it is precisely

this 'known unknown-ness' that engenders a sense of trust on the part of the viewer that

enables Serling to surprise us.

2.3.2 *Star Trek*: Fictional Future

Star Trek is similar to *The Twilight Zone* in that we as viewers "adapt our

judgment" to the *Star Trek* universe (Freud 151). Aliens, space travel, and evolved

technology set the show firmly in the future; it is fantastical, yet we accept it as is,

making the two shows not all that dissimilar. They do differ, however, in that unexpected

twists (uncanny stories) are not a fundamental part of the premise of *Star Trek*; the

uncanny in *Star Trek* it is perhaps less of an outright intention, like *The Twilight Zone*, and more of an outcome.[46]

Another way the shows are similar is that they are both about the human condition. The Twilight Zone generally looks like home, albeit with a twist, and there are enough humans onboard the *Enterprise* to make the starship feel like a miniature, travelling Earth. In *Star Trek*, quintessentially human traits and/or social issues are often depicted as belonging to non-humans, like the black-white, white-black faces of the aliens in "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield" or the question of android rights in "Measure of a Man."[47] Shrouded like it is in fantasy, the human condition seems light years away; yet the distance disappears as soon as one substitutes half-coloured faces for whole ones or slaves for androids.

How *Star Trek* differs from *The Twilight Zone* is that the show is *literally* about us. This is the history of the future; our past is their past too:

|the past|---------------|us|---------------|future past|---------------|them|
(shared by both)   (now)   (our future/their past)   (their now)

It is an integral feature of *Star Trek*, and a perplexing one; it is our future, but at the same time, it is not, because it is all made-up. Adding to the complexity is the emotional engagement and sincere investment fans make in the show. Levar Burton, the actor who played Lt. Cmdr. Geordi La Forge on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* has an insightful

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[46] I am speaking about the *Star Trek* universe in general, but am writing this with "Patterns of Force" and *Star Trek: The Original Series* in mind. I am aware that the *Star Trek* universe continued (and continues) to evolve after this series ended, therefore I allow for the fact that the *Star Trek* franchise (as a whole) has become more self-aware and perhaps more pre-meditated.

[47] "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield" is an *Original Series* episode (airdate: January 10, 1969; repeated Aug 12, 1969); "Measure of a Man" is from *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (airdate: February 13, 1989). As later series and movies developed, advances in technology and make-up allowed aliens to become more alien-looking, and the problems to be dressed in all sorts of distracting 22-24th century issues; yet underneath it all, the human condition remains.

description on the appeal of *Star Trek*:

> There's a part of our psychological makeup I believe that is really noble, and is really … interested in … growing and developing and in the progression that Roddenberry has taken us. He's really … taken who we are and he said, 'Okay … this is how we've progressed step by step until we are here and this is what our universe looks like.' And we [the audience] relate to that. There's a part of us that likes to believe that that is in fact where we are heading as a species. ("The Beginning")

In a sense then, by investing in *Star Trek*'s future, we are investing in our own. This results in the intermingling of the acceptance of a shared future with the reality of our non-fiction real-life, creating a situation in which identification with the fictional future becomes a point of entry for the uncanny. This happens when the lines between what should be our past and their present converge: if we share a past, then things belonging to our past (relative to our 'now') do not belong in their 'now' (our future). Thus, we (the viewers) are an integral part of the uncanny, because without our investment in (or acceptance of) the *Star Trek* universe, the convolution of time would have no meaning.[48]

Now that we have considered how the uncanny works in the framework of each specific television show, we are ready to examine each episode (and its 'Nazis') in detail. This will allow us to see how the simultaneous presence of the 'Nazis' and the Nazis – that is, the 'real' and the real – produce the uncanny.

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[48] I am referring to both the *Star Trek* fan's (Trekkie) emotional investment (belief, hope) that humanity will go so far, as well as the casual viewer's acceptance of the premise of the show; that is, that it is based on our past.

2.4 "Deaths-Head Revisited"

2.4.1 1961 and the Trial of Adolf Eichmann

"This is not hatred, this is retribution. This is not revenge, this is justice"

- Becker ("Deaths-Head Revisited")

In the first of the series of articles published in *The New Yorker* about the trial of

Adolf Eichmann, Hannah Arendt writes:

> Otto Adolf, son of Karl Adolf Eichmann and Maria née Schefferling, caught in a
>
> suburb of Buenos Aires on the evening of May 11, 1960, flown to Israel nine days
>
> later, brought to trial in the District Court of Jerusalem on April 11, 1961, stood
>
> accused on fifteen counts; 'together with others,' he had committed crimes against
>
> the Jewish people, crimes against humanity, and war crimes during the whole
>
> period of the Nazi regime and especially during the period of the Second World
>
> War. (56-57)

What had begun eight months earlier ended "[o]n December 15, 1961, [when] Eichmann

was found guilty of crimes against the Jewish people. He was hanged at midnight

between May 31 and June 1, 1962; Jewish authorities cremated his remains and scattered

his ashes in the sea beyond Israeli boundary waters" ("Adolf" n. pag.).

"Deaths-Head Revisited" was undoubtedly written with an eye to Adolf

Eichmann's trial: bereft of the safety of South America, an SS officer guilty of mass

murder is put on trial for his crimes. In the episode, SS-Captain Gunther Lutze returns to

'Dachau' to indulge in his memories, to re-live the pleasure he took in the torture and

murder of the inmates imprisoned in the camp.[49] But instead of simply reminiscing, the

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[49] There was a well-known Nazi named Viktor Lutze; he succeeded Ernst Röhm as commander of the SA.

ghosts of the camp put him on trial, eventually finding him guilty of all crimes. This

episode aired on November 10, 1961, just over one month before the guilty verdict was

announced against Eichmann. In finding Lutze guilty of all charges laid against him,

Serling anticipates the outcome of the real trial, with one important distinction; Lutze's

punishment is insanity, not death.

The title of the episode indicates a reconsideration of the *Totenkopf*; a second

chance for justice. In his discussion of the "fugitive Führer," Gavriel Rosenfeld observes

that,

> [a]s Western society became more committed to hunting down Nazi war criminals
>
> and putting them on trial for their crimes, a reawakened concern with justice
>
> began to inform allohistorical portrayals of Hitler's survival. This interest was
>
> most visible in those tales in the 1960s that depicted the fugitive Führer paying for
>
> his misdeeds and meeting with a just end. (212)[50]

The motivation for "a just end" is clear: the fugitive 'Nazi' Gunther Lutze must be made

to answer for his crime, and his punishment is fitting (212). In losing his mind, Lutze's

sentence amounts to an eradication of memory; he can no longer relive his crimes and

indulge his sadism.

Yet this is not simply a tale of the fugitive 'Nazi' brought to trial; this is poetic

justice. When Lutze asks about the trial, Becker tells him that "the trial is over […]. You

have been found guilty. It's time to pronounce sentence." Lutze replies with disdain,

"*You* will pronounce sentence. And then *you* shall execute that sentence. Is that correct?"

before erupting into laughter. In a fit of rage, he smashes the window and addresses the

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[50] Allohistory is also known as 'alternate history' or 'alternative history' (Winthrop-Young 878). Uchronia
shares a similar meaning.

captives of the camp with a furious shout, "YOU WILL ALL ASSEMBLE IN THE SQUARE! YOU WILL PASS SENTENCE ON CAPTAIN LUTZE! YOU WILL CRAWL OUT OF YOUR GRAVES TO SEE THAT JUSTICE IS DONE!" ("Deaths-Head Revisited").[51] With this demand, Lutze does what Eichmann does not: he pronounces *himself* guilty, placing the responsibility for his crimes squarely on his own shoulders.

2.4.2 Beyond 'Dachau'

A man in a suit arrives at an inn, looking for a room. The pleasant woman behind the desk is happy to oblige – until she glimpses his face. She glances at the name he has written in the register: Mr. Schmidt. She is visibly startled; the man is enjoying her discomfort. She ventures to say that he reminds her of someone; he denies this categorically. He asks if there had been a prison there; she says quietly that there was a camp. When he presses her again, she cries out that it was a concentration camp. The man smiles knowingly and lights a cigarette. As he turns and strolls toward the window, he tells the woman he has forgotten the name of the town where he has just arrived. The question is disconcerting; her voice stumbles. He asks her again. This time she answers in a pained voice: "Dachau … DACHAU!" He repeats the name, as if recalling it for the first time. He asks if the group of buildings he sees on the hill is the camp. She answers that it is, but "most of us would like it burned to the ground." With this he turns and glares at her, snuffs out his cigarette, and leaves the inn ("Deaths-Head Revisited").

This is the opening scene of "Deaths-Head Revisited." The opening narration follows:

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[51] Words in CAPS denote shouting.

Mr. Schmidt, recently arrived in a small Bavarian village which lies eight miles northwest of Munich. A picturesque, delightful little spot onetime known for its scenery, but more recently related to other events having to do with some of the less positive pursuits of man: human slaughter, torture, misery, and anguish. Mr. Schmidt, as we will soon perceive, has a vested interest in the ruins of a concentration camp; for once, some seventeen years ago, his name was Gunther Lutze. He held the rank of a captain in the S.S. He was a black-uniformed, strutting animal whose function in life was to give pain, and like his colleagues of the time he shared the one affliction most common amongst that breed known as Nazis: he walked the Earth without a heart. And now former S.S. Captain Lutze will revisit his old haunts, satisfied perhaps that all that is awaiting him in the ruins on the hill is an element of nostalgia. What he does not know, of course, is that a place like Dachau cannot exist only in Bavaria. By its nature, by its very nature, it must be one of the populated areas of the Twilight Zone.

It is part of the premise of *The Twilight Zone* that Rod Serling appears in the beginning of each episode to deliver the prologue. Regarding Serling:

His physical presence in each episode as the omniscient narrator – with an eerie ubiquity that usually finds him standing casually within the story's fictional setting – is a powerful determinant of how one should interpret the tale. Rod's all-knowing grin connotes the sage who comprehends more than the viewer but is willing to impart his wisdom to us if we will only listen and observe. (Worland 104)

What Serling has to say in this episode is more than wisdom; it is an appeal to all

mankind. The journey he is about to take us on is painful and uncomfortable, but it is not accidental.

In the opening scene, Gunther Lutze (Mr. Schmidt) forces memory – forces remembering – on the female innkeeper. She is the first person in the episode to refer to 'Dachau' by name, significant because she represents those, as she said, who "would like it burned to the ground." She does not want to be reminded of the terrible things that took place there; she does not want to remember. 'Dachau' is barred from her mind, and if we may take her words to be representative of her actions, we may assume that she does not go to the place. So Lutze must take the place to her, something he does by forcing her to speak its name. In the next scene, we see him arrive at the camp; a few shabby outbuildings, a gallows, and a watchtower constitute the television stand-in for Dachau.[52] Lutze walks around smiling, as one who has just returned home. For him, 'Dachau' is "his element, his hallowed ground" (Presnell and McGee 108), and it is his literal return to the place that triggers the mixing of the 'real' and the real.

What I refer to as the real are the threads of our (the viewer's) reality that appear within the television program itself; like the picture of Adolf Hitler hanging on the wall in the detention building. These threads surface throughout the episode, wending and weaving around the fictitious elements: the resulting tension between the two becomes the nexus of the uncanny. Thus 'Dachau' may not be Dachau, but there are clear

---

[52] It would have been inappropriate (and impossible) to attempt an exact recreation of Dachau. Beyond the ethical reasons, there are several ways to account for this: the technology may not have existed for more realism; it may have been a deliberate choice by Serling (or the producer etc.); or it may have been as simple as what could be shown on network television at that time. Whatever the reason, it is all moot: disguising the constructed-ness is unnecessary; especially for the purposes of the uncanny. I use 'Dachau' to indicate both the representation of the real place (what the viewer sees), as well as the place referred to by the characters themselves (to them, it is real). Only the real-life place is referred to as Dachau.

indicators that link them; visual and verbal markers of the real that appear in "Deaths-Head Revisited" that are too eerie to ignore.

One: When Lutze imagine-remembers himself in the barracks calling the prisoners to attention, we (the viewers) see the memory-Lutze appear over his shoulder (Figure 1).

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 1 - Lutze in Barracks
Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

His SS-uniform, accurate enough to withstand close scrutiny and comparison with historical photographs, is the first clear visual link to the "Third Reich."[53] Next we see the prisoners in their bunks. This is disconcerting on more than one level: first, the prisoners' uniforms clearly resemble those worn in Dachau; and second, the shot of the inmates

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[53] What they call 'Dachau' is only recognizable as such because the episode tells us it is.

climbing out of the bunks is strongly reminiscent of photos taken of survivors at Dachau

(Figure 2).[54]

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 2 - Prisoners in Bunks
Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

Two: A portrait of Adolf Hitler silently observes the scene from the wall in the

detention building. There are almost no props in this room, making Hitler's visual

presence all the more striking. While Lutze may resemble certain Nazis in history, he

remains a fictitious character; Hitler, however, is all too real. As Lutze stands there under

the watchful gaze of the Führer, he imagine-remembers the torture of an inmate. The

camera produces a hazy effect: simultaneously hidden and exposed, the prisoner's tattoo

is visually distorted, even as Lutze reads it aloud (Figure 3).

---

[54] See especially: 'Survivors look out from their bunks inside a barrack in the Dachau concentration camp'. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Photo Archives #75034. Courtesy of William and Dorothy McLaughlin, Marilyn Spencer. Copyright of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 3 - Prisoner

Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

Later, on Becker's arm, the tattoo literally steps into the light; a clear signifier of the real

making its presence known, because nowhere does reality insert itself more boldly into

our viewing experience than with Becker.

Three: As both the caretaker of 'Dachau' and its guide, Becker functions as a

conduit for the real (Figure 4). His words cut to the quick, carrying with them a truth that

lies beyond the Twilight Zone:

Becker's hollow eyes and wrinkled face are reminders of the misery and torment

that he experienced 17 years ago. The words he speaks are at the same time

painful, eloquent, shocking, and wise. His role is pivotal because he represents not

only one man murdered by Lutze; he stands for the millions of other victims

[. . .]. (Presnell and McGee 108)

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 4 - Becker

Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

As the "Voice of Truth," the words Becker speaks serve not only to disorient Lutze; for

the viewer, they are a jarring reminder of history (Zicree 230):[55]

> Ten million human beings were tortured to death in camps like this. Men …
>
> women ... children … infants ... tired old men. You burned them in furnaces. You
>
> shovelled them into the earth. You tore up their bodies in rage. And now you
>
> come back to your scenes of horror, and you wonder that the misery that you
>
> planted has lived after you? ("Deaths-Head Revisited")

What started as disorienting swiftly devolves into the uncanny for Lutze. With each

---

[55] Marc Scott Zicree is the author of the biography provided on the official *Twilight Zone* DVDs. His book, *The Twilight Zone Companion*, contains detailed episode information and descriptions, as well as background information on both the show and Rod Serling. This book is widely cited, but it should be mentioned that it is known to contain errors. In the preface to their book, Presnell and McGee give a good overview of the literature on *The Twilight Zone*; and although they point out some of the weak points of Zicree's book, they still state that its "importance [. . .] cannot be overstated" (3).

passing second, the explanations for his sensory experiences become less and less likely; the wind sounds too much like howling voices, and Becker's words cut too closely to the truth. Lutze's attempts to resist the truth – his truth – quickly break down, and it becomes increasingly difficult for him to find his footing on the slippery surface of the uncanny.

Visual effects reflect Lutze's unravelling while simultaneously thinning the border between him and the viewer, causing the audience to draw closer and closer to his experience. These "disorienting, surprising, and powerful" shots prepare and lead the way to Lutze's trial (Zicree 230). When he attempts to run past Becker, Lutze's body fills the frame and the scene cuts to the barracks, where he runs into the closing door. He is no longer in control, and neither are we. What happens next is that we literally see through Lutze's eyes (Figure 5).

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 5 - Lutze's View from the Floor
Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

In this brief moment, Lutze and the viewer both bear the weight of the silent gaze of the

dead. It is a powerful moment; especially when we consider that the close connection

between Lutze and Eichmann. For the viewer, this is more than an unexpected moment of

uncanniness; it is deliberately and forcefully uncomfortable. Why? The answer is found

in the closing narration of "Deaths-Head Revisited":

> *"Dachau. Why does it still stand? Why do we keep it standing?"*
>
> - (The doctor who examines him)
>
> *There is an answer to the doctor's question. All the Dachaus must remain*
>
> *standing. The Dachaus, the Belsens, the Buchenwalds, the Auschwitzes - all of*
>
> *them. They must remain standing because they are a monument to a moment in*
>
> *time when some men decided to turn the Earth into a graveyard. Into it they*
>
> *shoveled all of their reason, their logic, their knowledge, but worst of all, their*
>
> *conscience. And the moment we forget this, the moment we cease to be*
>
> *haunted by its remembrance, then we become the gravediggers. Something to*
>
> *dwell on and to remember, not only in the Twilight Zone but wherever men walk*
>
> *God's Earth.* ("Deaths-Head Revisited")

Serling does not hold back in "Deaths-Head Revisited": not with Becker, not with Lutze,

and not with the viewer. The words spoken by Becker in the episode are sharp: "you

didn't bury them deep enough" – "flames not sufficiently hot" – "burned them in

furnaces" – "not enough gas" – "maim and torture" – "criminal medical experiments"

("Deaths-Head Revisited"). All of these words extend beyond 'Dachau', beyond Dachau;

they reach out into History, and to *our* knowledge of the camps, the systematic murder,

and the death toll. And as "one of only ten episodes in which Serling's closing epilogue

does not end with the words 'The Twilight Zone'," he is clearly speaking to the real, reality, and the real-life audience (Presnell and McGee 107). He is addressing everyone, including himself; note his use of the pronoun 'we'. There are no easy answers here: there are only cold, hard facts. In the end, just as Lutze is forced to literally feel his victims' pain, when "[h]is feeling of guilt becomes so intense and deranging that he experiences a hallucinatory identification with his victims," so is the viewer forced to experience Lutze's pain (Venuti 365); if *we* do not, then "the moment we cease to be haunted […] then we become the gravediggers" ("Deaths-Head Revisited").

2.5 "He's Alive"

2.5.1 1963 and the "Fugitive Führer"[56]

"He's Alive" aired on January 24, 1963, at the beginning of what would become an extremely turbulent year in American history.[57] Three months after the Cuban Missile Crisis, the episode was broadcast to an audience well-versed in the consequences and dangers of social inequity, nuclear war, and rampant racism. The passing of a few months would see Birmingham, Alabama become a focal point for injustices against the Civil Rights movement: the arrests of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others, the violence against protesters at the Children's March, and Gov. Wallace's attempt to maintain segregation at the University of Alabama. Yet there were also high points, including the forthright and earnest Civil Rights Address by President Kennedy to the American people, and the March on Washington at which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his

---

[56] This term is from Rosenfeld (212).

[57] Every source I consulted, including the DVD cover, listed January 24, 1963 as the airdate of this episode, *except* the title screen of the episode itself. There the original broadcast date is listed as January 14, 1963. In this thesis, I have referred to the more commonly listed airdate.

memorable "I have a dream" speech. Sadly, the year ended with the tragic deaths of four

young girls killed in a bombing, and President Kennedy's sudden assassination.

In his book, *The World Hitler Never Made: Alternate History and the Memory of*

Nazism, Gavriel D. Rosenfeld discusses "the era's narratives [. . . which], for the first

time, depicted Hitler *evading* justice" (213; emphasis in original). Standing in contrast to

"Deaths-Head Revisited" – in what could conceivably be called the point of *The Twilight*

Zone episode "He's Alive" – is precisely such an evasion. However, this was unlikely to

be a flippant decision on Serling's part, for "[a]s an American Jew who had fought in

World War II, he was understandably sensitive to the history of the Third Reich and

intent on preserving its lessons in memory. He too was likely caught up in the upsurge of

attention towards Germany's Nazi past in the early 1960s" (216). The storyline of "He's

Alive" reflects this attention, as elements from Nazi Germany are displaced from the

surroundings of their historical antecedents into an anti-communist, post-war, American

city. Serling's repurposing of these elements also reflected the fact that he

> [. . .] had broader goals in writing the episode as well. By allowing Hitler to roam
>
> free, Serling utilized him as a symbol of the enduring threat of rightwing [sic]
>
> ideas to American society. Indeed, evidence exists that by setting 'He's Alive!'
>
> [sic] in the United States he was obliquely referring to the persistence of
>
> American racism at the time of the civil rights movement.[58] In a sense, then,
>
> 'He's Alive!' [sic] universalized the significance of Nazism in order to expose the
>
> persistence of contemporary injustice. (216)

---

[58] This is the note in Rosenfeld's book accompanying this statement: See Hal Erickson, "All the Little Hitlers," *The TZ Magazine Articles Archive, Taken from the Pages of the Twilight Zone.* He includes a URL to a website that no longer exists. I was unable to locate a copy of the article.

This is an admirable goal, but not one without its obstacles. By comparison, "Deaths-Head Revisited" was much more of a closed circuit, in the sense that the lesson to be taught (or justice to be meted out) revolved around Captain Lutze; in that episode, the role of the audience (and Serling) is primarily that of observer. In "He's Alive," on the other hand, Serling uses the story of Peter Vollmer "to serve the ethical aim of reminding audiences about the enduring dangers of political extremism" (216). This episode is also special in another way: like "Deaths-Head Revisited," it does not end with words "The Twilight Zone."[59] I believe this is a deliberate omission, perhaps intended by Serling to underscore the show's commentary on the prejudices of the era. Unfortunately, "He's Alive" was seen as less than admirable by many of the viewers. According to Rosenfeld,

> [t]he episode was one of the most controversial in the entire history of *The Twilight Zone*, receiving more than 4,000 letters of complaint. Some letters expressed extreme rightwing [sic] sentiments typical of the anti-civil rights activists, attacking Serling and his staff as 'k[***] lovers' and 'n[*****] lovers.' Most, however, came from conservatives who were irate that Serling had been overly soft on communism. [. . .] Given the intense anxieties caused by the Cuban missile crisis the year before, it was no surprise that many Americans continued to be preoccupied with the present-day threat of communism and preferred to forget about the past horrors of Nazism. This fact notwithstanding, it is clear that while some Americans resented being reminded of the legacy of Nazism – and rejected comparing it to communism – they continued to view it as a symbol of evil. Thus,

---

[59] To give some context, there are over 150 episodes that make up the original series. See Appendix 8 in Presnell and McGee's book for the list.

[. . .] audiences had continued to remember the Nazi era within ethically informed

parameters. (216-17)[60]

While I find such reactions difficult to digest from my perspective fifty years later, I do

take some solace in the fact that most of the negative reactions were a result of the

conflation of Communism, a very present threat, with Nazism, a historical one. Thus,

although (in my opinion) misguided in their criticism, the viewers had not stopped

recognizing the malevolence of Nazism.

2.5.2 'Hitler' vs. Hitler

The *he* of "He's Alive" is 'Hitler'… and Hitler. The strange thing, the thing that

makes this episode uncanny, is the way the 'real' and the real co-exist. There is a tension

and oscillation between the two that is unsettling. This is the opening narration of *The

Twilight Zone* episode,[61] "He's Alive":

> *Portrait of a bush-league Führer named Peter Vollmer. A sparse little man who
> feeds off his self-delusions, and finds himself perpetually hungry for want of
> greatness in his diet. And like some goose-stepping predecessors he searches for
> something to explain his hunger, and to rationalize why a world passes him by
> without saluting. The something he looks for and finds is in a sewer. In his own
> twisted and distorted lexicon he calls it faith, strength, truth. But in just a moment
> Peter Vollmer will ply his trade on another kind of corner, a strange intersection
> in a shadowland called … The Twilight Zone.*

---

[60] In the source material, the starred (*) words are written in their entirety; I have replaced the missing letters with stars due to personal convictions.

[61] Season Four saw a few big changes: the show changed to an hour-long format, *The* was dropped from the title (*Twilight Zone*), and Serling delivered the opening narration from a neutral location (i.e. not as part of the scene). For more on these changes, please see Presnell and McGee 21-24. I have continued to refer to the show as *The Twilight Zone* for the sake of continuity.

Peter Vollmer preaches hate and intolerance on shabby street corners, yet he is inept, unable to convince anyone of his beliefs. Help arrives in the form of a shadowy stranger; one who offers advice for no other reason than, "*your* success will be *my* success" ("He's Alive"). With the stranger's help, Vollmer's popularity increases, eventually overfilling the rented hall from which he speaks; people stand in the street, listening. However, Vollmer's conflicted morality limits his success. Over one shoulder is the stranger in the shadows, who encourages Vollmer's dissemination of hatred. Over the other is Ernst, a father figure who attempts to impart a sense of morality to the younger man. Vollmer struggles with the tension between these two guiding forces, barely managing to keep himself from being torn apart until, at the height of Vollmer's popularity, Ernst publicly denounces him in front of his audience; unravelling all the power the younger man had woven together. Afterward, alone in the hall, Vollmer is furious when the stranger reappears; he demands to know the shadow's identity. His wish is granted when the stranger enters the light: it is 'Hitler'. Vollmer runs away screaming, yet returns in the next scene; it is clear who he has chosen to follow. At a command from 'Hitler', Vollmer shoots Ernst before returning to his 'Führer'. A moment later, the police arrive and he is fatally wounded when trying to escape. The shadow appears briefly over the dead body before stalking its way slowly along the wall – according to the closing narration – in search of a new victim.

This episode is infused with visual and verbal symbols of the real National Socialism; including pictures of Hitler and high-ranking Nazi officials, references to Dachau and "twelve million bodies in shallow graves," and the Nazi salute ("He's Alive"). These symbols, including the inspired-by-SA uniforms, resonate in our society;

in their presence we remember what the Nazis did, how many people they murdered, and what history they signify. The symbols of National Socialism are much more ubiquitous today than they were forty or fifty years ago; thus, although they can seem almost commonplace in contemporary popular culture, the context would have been different for the original audience. In 1963, WWII was a much more recent memory; almost twenty years removed, as opposed to over triple that now. However, while a contemporary audience may not be shocked to see Hitler's face, they will still recognize the gravity of the subject.

In "He's Alive," the uncanny is not so much a product of the *return* of the real, as it is a by-product of its constant intermingling with the 'real'. For the most part, they appear in tandem: real and 'real', like Hitler and 'Hitler'. One the most forthright ways that the real inserts itself in "He's Alive" is through words. Ernst makes a very clear reference when he says: "nine years in a place called Dachau. You know who put me there? Peter Vollmer. A lot of Peter Vollmers" ("He's Alive"). While Ernst may only be a character in a television program, within the episode, he is representative of survivors, and his intermixing of Peter Vollmer's name with Dachau creates blurriness between the 'real' and the real. In a similar fashion, when 'Hitler' makes reference to "the old man, the Jew [. . .] we sent them into the ovens, but always there was a handful left to point a finger," there is an eerie combination of something very real coming out of the mouth of something quite obviously fake ("He's Alive").

One of the first instances of a link is in the opening scene; wearing uniforms (that could pass for SA) are two of Vollmer's henchmen, Nick and Frank. The two men, who are clearly meant to bear a physical resemblance to Röhm and Goebbels, insinuate an

echo of the (real) past into the fictional setting. Moreover, like the real Ernst Röhm, who was murdered in order to further the aims of the National Socialist party, Nick's life is sacrificed and he becomes a martyr for the movement.

The swastika has perhaps the most interesting method of appearance. Visible (this might be an overstatement) only once in the entire episode, it appears and disappears in the blink of an eye. After Vollmer lays himself down to sleep, a subliminal force causes him to open his eyes, and for a brief second, a small swastika can be seen in his pupils (Figure 6).[62] It is a calling card of sorts; when Vollmer looks out of his window, he is greeted by the sight of a shadowy figure standing in the street below.

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 6 - Eye Swastika

Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

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[62] In the entry on this episode, Zicree writes that the shot was unused. This may or may not be an error. In the copy of the episode I referred to, the swastika appears, but it is possible that this was re-added to the DVD version later. The swastika is also very hard to see and easy to miss (it took me many tries and a lot of magnification to capture a clear screenshot).

In the beginning, the figure doles out his advice from the shadows; this continues as Vollmer's fledgling movement builds momentum. From the audience's point of view, the identity of the shadowy figure is not a complex puzzle to solve, but for Vollmer, the stranger's identity is not revealed until after Ernst publicly humiliates him in front of his audience. Only then does 'Hitler' step into the light, and Vollmer, wide-eyed with terror, runs away screaming. I found it extremely interesting to learn that

> [. . .] due to time constraints, the original opening scene to act four (just after Hitler's identity is revealed) was cut from the final print. In the scene, Vollmer desperately flees from the meeting hall where he met the revealed Hitler. He races down an alley and sees a building antenna cast a shadow that looks like a giant swastika. At a used bookstore window, Hitler's *Mein Kampf* stands out among a lineup of books, the führer's [sic] face staring out at Vollmer from the jacket. (Presnell and McGee 142)

In this deleted scene it becomes clear to Vollmer that, like the audience, he cannot escape from Hitler. However, as impactful as the missing scene would have been, to my mind, the final cut of "He's Alive" still succeeds in exemplifying the tension created by the intermingling of the 'real' and the real with the next scene. After running away, Vollmer returns to the hall and says "you picked me" ("He's Alive"). At first he is speaking to the picture of Hitler behind the podium; moments later, 'Hitler' strides onto the stage to join his counterpart (Figure 7):

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 7 - 'Hitler' and Hitler

Photo Still from *The Twilight Zone*

For me, seeing 'Hitler' standing in front of Hitler is a powerful juxtaposition, and a useful

one. Some see 'Hitler' in a different light however; for Zicree, "when Curt Conwey

stands in front of an enormous blowup of the *real* Hitler, the illusion that he is the ghost

of Hitler is immediately destroyed. The physical resemblance is practically nil" (321-22;

emphasis in original). Presnell and McGee have a similar opinion: "[a]nother setback in

the realism department is the less than convincing resemblance of the heavily made-up

Curt Conway to the real Hitler" (141-42). While I agree with both statements in terms of

pure physical resemblance, I believe that the clear physical distinction between Hitler and

'Hitler' is productive, rather than destructive. Consider that

> the phenomenon of the 'double' [. . . can be] marked by the fact that the subject
>
> identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in doubt as to which his self is,

or substitutes the extraneous self for his own. In other words, there is a doubling,

dividing, and interchanging of the self. (Freud 135)

If this is regarded from the outside, in the sense that the viewer is the one identifying,

doubting, or substituting, then Freud's thought clearly resonates in "He's Alive." The

doubling of 'Hitler' and Hitler complicates the relationship between fantasy and reality,

and the uncanny returns again.

The remainder of the episode sees the increasing merger of 'Hitler' with Hitler.

After shooting Ernst and returning to the hall, Vollmer's troubled thoughts are interrupted

by a voice booming from the speakers; 'Hitler' is no longer corporeal. This is the climax

of the intermixing of the 'real' and the real: as the voice continues to scream its

indoctrination, both Vollmer and the viewer are hearing 'Hitler' and seeing Hitler. It is a

voice from the grave, and its words are chilling: "MR. VOLLMER … WE *ARE*

IMMORTAL" ("He's Alive"). In the final scene, a shadow appears on the wall and

hovers briefly over Vollmer as he lies dying; as it moves away, the closing narration

begins:

> *Where will he go next, this phantom from another time, this resurrected ghost of a*
>
> *previous nightmare - Chicago; Los Angeles; Miami, Florida; Vincennes, Indiana;*
>
> *Syracuse, New York? Anyplace, everyplace, where there's hate, where there's*
>
> *prejudice, where there's bigotry. He's alive. He's alive so long as these evils*
>
> *exist. Remember that when he comes to your town. Remember it when you hear*
>
> *his voice speaking out through others. Remember it when you hear a name called,*
>
> *a minority attacked, any blind, unreasoning assault on a people or any human*
>
> *being. He's alive because through these things we keep him alive.*

In this episode, the closing narration serves a bigger role than providing final thoughts: it
is here that the shadowy *he* becomes synonymous with the *he* for Hitler and, in that
uncanny unity, live on as a warning against hate, prejudice, and bigotry.

Despite the abundance of direct references to Hitler and National Socialism in
"He's Alive," there were actually even *more* in the original script. According to Presnell
and McGee,

> [n]etwork concerns forced Serling to change several details in his original
> teleplay. The group's logo was originally a swastika, but had to be changed to a
> hand gripping a torch (accompanied by a lightning bolt). The organization could
> not be mentioned by name, and even Pete's last name had to be changed from
> Collier to Vollmer because of the existence of real-life fascists named Collier.
> (142)

The choice of what was censored is puzzling, as the made-up symbol, in combination
with the uniforms, still clearly references National Socialism. The reasons behind the
censor's decision to object to certain things and not to others remain unclear; for instance,
swastika armbands are out, but large portraits of Adolf Hitler and other high-ranking
officials in the Nazi party are in? The fact that they could not refer directly to National
Socialism is even more puzzling, as direct references to Dachau and being sent "to the
ovens" leaves no doubt as to whom Ernst and 'Hitler' are referring. Indeed, barring the
words 'National Socialism' from the episode seems like a moot point: Ernst refers to "a
1963-Führer right off the assembly line," and the words 'a good Nazi' are pinned to the
front of Nick's dead body ("He's Alive"). Ultimately, in being forced to change certain

things, the fake symbols used as replacements acquire a more subversive bent, especially when one is aware of the censoring.

Presnell and McGee note that "[. . .] there were enough hot-button topics in Rod Serling's teleplay to offend almost anyone: neo-Nazism, anti-Semitism, institutional racism, anti-Communism, and so on" (141). Yet everything aside, perhaps the most shocking element is the evasion of justice itself:

> Above all, there is Serling's portrayal of a living, breathing, again Adolf Hitler – fictional story or not – who walks off scot-free at the end and could very well be headed to *your* town next [. . .]. Serling, of course, is simply making the point that Hitler and his ideas will live as long as men allow the evils of hate, prejudice, and bigotry to go unchecked; the message is delivered in a most heavy-handed way, though, and the characters are rather one-dimensional. (141; emphasis in original)

Once again, Serling delivers a personal message to the audience; yet unlike the 'we' of "Deaths-Head Revisited," in the closing narration of "He's Alive," Serling speaks directly to the viewer: "Remember that when he comes to *your* town [. . .] when *you* hear his voice [. . .] when *you* hear a name called [. . .]" (emphasis added). I believe that rather than being a detraction, the ostensible heavy-handedness of the message provides a solid foundation for the interplay of the 'real' and the real that transcends the boundaries of television to reach out to the audience on a personal level.

Perhaps even more important than how the message is delivered, is the message itself. The entire episode is a blunt reminder of what the consequences of such hate were (and could be again). Vollmer's words are particularly relevant for a society struggling to agree on racial equality:

[. . .] because to live in a free, white America seems to be of a minority opinion.

[. . .] Well … if it's a minority opinion … that we *have* to survive … then WE

ARE the minority … and THIS minority will not stop until it is the MAJORITY

... This minority will not give up the fight…this is the promise and this, [gestures

to photos of Hitler etc.] this is the LEGACY! ("He's Alive")

Armed with knowledge of the past, the viewer will make the connection to National

Socialism and will know what Ernst is a survivor of, even though the episode stops short

of referring to the Holocaust by name. The viewer cannot un-see the links to history (no

matter how direct or vicarious they are displayed), nor disassociate herself or himself

from being directly spoken to in the closing narration. Ultimately however, we are not

alone; Serling's final message to the viewer is an inclusive one: "He's alive, because

through these things *we* keep him alive" ("He's Alive"; emphasis added).

2.6 "Patterns of Force"

2.6.1 1968 Amidst Vietnam and Assassinations

"Patterns of Force," a second-season episode of *Star Trek (The Original Series)*,

aired on February 16, 1968, amid "the contemporaneous domestic and international

injustices that dominated the latter part of the decade," one of which was the rising death

toll from the hotly contested American presence in Vietnam (Bernardi 213). Time-wise,

the episode aired between the Tet Offensive in January, and the My Lai Massacre in

March: two major events of the war that "lurked in the background of the serial"

(Franklin 24). Its influence is evident in "Patterns of Force": the introduction of foreign

ideology in a violation of a policy of non-interference is (in my opinion) a not-so-subtle reference to American involvement in Vietnam.[63]

The plot of "Patterns of Force" however, predominantly references Nazi Germany, and it does so quite literally in its recreation of a Nazi state. This is a first for *The Original Series*, as "[. . .] 'Patterns of Force' is the first episode to show the horrors of Nazism, depicting a society in which a certain group is being exterminated" (Barrett and Barrett 73). More generally, the themes of the episode are institutionalised racism and persecution of the Other; as exemplified by the Ekosian's hatred and treatment of the Zeons. Considering all these things together, it is likely safe to presume that this episode was written in response to the civil unrest and continuing tension resulting from both the war and racial inequality.

Retrospectively, the episode functions as a forewarning of events to come, despite the fact that the writers could not possibly have known what would happen following the airing of "Patterns of Force." Just over a month and a half after the episode aired, the dangers of racism were confirmed; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. As a major figure in the Civil Rights movement, King worked against segregation, against hatred, and toward equality between all people. Two months after his death, prominent politician Robert F. Kennedy, another figure in the Civil Rights movement who helped to shape and protect civil rights laws, was shot on June 5, 1968.

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[63] In the *Star Trek* universe, this policy of non-interference is known as the Prime Directive, which amongst other things, "restricts the Federation and its Starfleet officers from interfering in the natural development of another culture" (Boyd 102). Another episode, "A Private Little War" is more direct in its references to Vietnam. For more information on some of the critical research on *Star Trek*, see especially, Geraghty, Lincoln. "Reading on the Frontier: A Star Trek Bibliography" *Extrapolation* 43.3 (2002): 247-313. *Literature Online*. Web. 11 July 2011; Sarantakes, Nicholas Evan. "Cold War Pop Culture and the Image of U.S. Foreign Policy: The Perspective of the Original Star Trek Series." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7.4 (2005): 74-103. *Project Muse*. Web. 12 Mar. 2014; and *Enterprise Zones*. Ed. Taylor Harrison, Sarah Projansky, Kent A. Ono, and Elyce Rae Helford. Boulder: Westview, 1996. Print.

He died the next day. Both men helped to create a message of tolerance; one that was drastically underscored by their assassinations.

On the evening of April 4, 1968, hours after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Senator Robert F. Kennedy delivered a speech emphasizing the importance of understanding and compassion between the peoples of his divided nation. This is a small excerpt:

> We can move in that direction as a country, in greater polarization - black people amongst blacks, and white amongst whites, filled with hatred toward one another. Or we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to understand and to comprehend, and replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand … compassion and love. (Kennedy)[64]

He delivered this message of hope at a crucial point in American history; when the nation, hurting from a great loss in its progress towards equality, had to make a decision as to whether it would continue advancing, or would regress. "Patterns of Force," like the rest of *Star Trek (The Original Series)*, reflected the social and political atmosphere in which it was made, and it provided an "optimistic vision of the future"; one that "was specifically linked to the solution of the sorts of specific social and political troubles that made the late 1960s a time of both great anxiety and great hope" (Booker 51). Ultimately, this episode, although arguably naïve in its approach, was important in communicating a simple, but much needed message.

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[64] This is my transcription.

2.6.2 The 'Real' Performance

The starship *Enterprise* arrives at the planets Zeon and Ekos: the former, a peaceful, technologically advanced people; the latter, "a primitive warlike people in a state of anarchy" ("Patterns of Force"). The *Enterprise* crew is trying to locate historian John Gill; sent to Ekos as a cultural observer. Captain Kirk and Spock transport to the planet, where they witness men in Nazi uniforms chasing and arresting a man they refer to as a "Zeon pig" ("Patterns of Force"). After learning from a broadcast that the capital is to be made "Zeon free" and that Gill is the 'Führer', the two are caught and arrested while attempting to sneak their way into 'Führer Headquarters' ("Patterns of Force"). While in jail they meet the Zeon from earlier, who informs them that the 'Nazism' began after the arrival of Gill.

Kirk decides that violating the Prime Directive is the only way to save the Zeons from annihilation and to repair the damage Gill has created. Joined by members of the resistance movement, they sneak into Headquarters, where they witness the 'Führer's' important announcement. After deducing that the speech is actually a pieced-together recording of Gill's voice, they locate what appears to be a semi-comatose Gill locked in the curtained-off broadcast booth. Dr. McCoy, the ship's doctor, joins them and attempts to revive Gill. In another room, Deputy Führer Melakon (an Ekosian) continues the speech: "despite our best efforts they remain like a cancer, eating away at our state … the eliminations have started … this is the time of destiny," to which the crowd responds with cheers of "hail victory" ("Patterns of Force"). In the broadcast booth, a mind probe reveals that Melakon has been the real *Führer* for the last few years, with Gill being retained as a figurehead. McCoy successfully revives Gill; who addresses the nation and

exposes Melakon as the real 'Führer'. The Ekosian and Zeons decide to set aside their differences and move forward together. Kirk, Spock, and McCoy return to the *Enterprise* and continue their mission.

In the *Star Trek* universe, the viewer sees the history of the future. If this future history is conceptualised in a linear sense, then our past is behind both us and them, and their present is in front of us. If considered in a general sense, it follows that there are parts of the past that both the inhabitants of the *Star Trek* universe, and the viewers watching them, share. One such example is Nazi Germany.

The relationship between the 'real' and the real is at the heart of the uncanny in *The Twilight Zone* episodes; such as the transgression of the boundary between the two, as when we see through Lutze's eyes in "Deaths-Head Revisited," or their constant intermixing in "He's Alive." This relationship is also important in "Patterns of Force"; however, what sets this episode apart from the others is that the 'real' is not the 'real' at all: it is only a *performance* of it.

Shortly after Kirk and Spock transport to the planet, they witness a man running away from someone, or something. After showing them hiding safely around the corner, the shot returns to the man lying on the ground, and a military drumbeat ushers in three pairs of tall, shiny leather boots. The 'boots' are soon revealed to be wearing tan-coloured uniforms and red and white armbands with black swastikas emblazoned on them: 'Nazis'. After the man is dragged away, Kirk and Spock watch a newscast filled with phrases like, "Final Decision," "Long live the Fatherland," and "Long live the Führer": signifiers of 'Nazism' ("Patterns of Force"). They then attempt to infiltrate a building decorated with swastika banners and surrounded by people in what appear to be Nazi uniforms: 'Führer

Headquarters'. On one hand is what seems like the 'real': the people who look, act, and sound like 'Nazis', in the 'Nazi state', which is fueled by 'Nazism'. On the other hand is the real *as it is used by the 'real'*: the Nazi symbols, the "Final Solution," and the "Führer" ("Patterns of Force").

At this stage, the 'real' would already be suspicious, were it not for the fact that the 'Nazism' (etc.) found on Ekos can be explained by the episode's far-fetched, but not completely implausible, storyline: this is where the acceptance of the *Star Trek* universe comes into play. Unlike *The Twilight Zone* episodes, where the 'Nazis' were a logical part of their milieu, in *Star Trek*, the 'Nazis', 'Nazi state', and all the accompanying 'Nazi'-mythology belong in a time-travel episode, not in (from our perspective of the *Star Trek* timeline) our future; that is, unless we accept the explanation that there could indeed be *patterns* of *force*. If we do, then the 'real' is in the clear, and most of what could have felt uncanny becomes part of the strange, but possible components of the *Star Trek* universe: most, but not all.

Even if we accept that strange things – like interfering with another culture may result in the recreation of 'Nazism' – can happen in the *Star Trek* universe, a trace of the uncanny remains. This trace is simply the result of the fact that we see things in the episode that belong to our past, not the future; things, which are closer in time to us than them. For example, the Nazi uniform is recent history (especially in the 1960s but even now) when compared to the *Star Trek: TOS* future; for them, it is two hundred years in the past.[65] This trace is disorienting – is this the future, or the past?

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[65] The system of recording time (stardates) and the *Star Trek* timeline is complex. However, the events of *The Original* Series is generally agreed to have taken place in the 23rd century (2260 or thereabouts).

This is the moment in which the viewer becomes aware that the 'real' is all a *performance* that uses the real as its fodder: uniforms become costumes, words become dialogue, and the pages of history become a script. As of this moment, the 'real' has become an uncanny (per)version of itself, as has the *experience* of watching the performance.
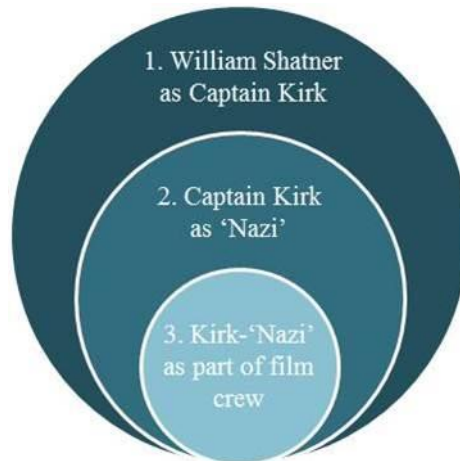

Figure 8 - Captain Kirk Diagram

There are different levels to the performance; thus, for the purposes of explanation, I have chosen Captain Kirk to serve as an example (Figure 8). On the first level is the performance of the actor William Shatner on the television show *Star Trek*. The second level is the in-universe performance of Captain Kirk as a 'Nazi'. This is the performance of 'Nazism' on the stage created by Gill (Ekos), the Enterprise crew (Kirk, Spock, and McCoy), and the aliens (Ekosians and some Zeons). All are performing the role of 'Nazi': the crew and the members of the Underground movement are the good 'Nazis'; the rest of the Ekosians are the bad 'Nazis'. Like tinted glasses that cast the world in a certain light, the awareness of the performance gives an uncanny tinge to everything. For the viewer, it is a strange experience to see the good 'Nazis' as the sheep in wolves' clothing. Even though the crew is masquerading as bad, both they and the

audience know they are the opposite, which makes it difficult to reconcile positive feelings about the characters with negative feelings about the Nazis. On this same level is also the performance of the 'Nazi' state, which uses the same symbols and words as the real thing, but this time the targeted Other has been replaced by an alien one. The reappearance of Nazi symbols and rhetoric produce a sense of uncanny déjà vu: it is like we are watching history happen again, but this time it is a peculiar re-enactment of history. All of this is confusing, not to mention disconcerting.

The third level is the strangest one: this is the performance within the performance: Kirk-'Nazi' as part of a film crew. Not only is he pretending to be a 'Nazi', he is also pretending to be part of the media (Figure 9).

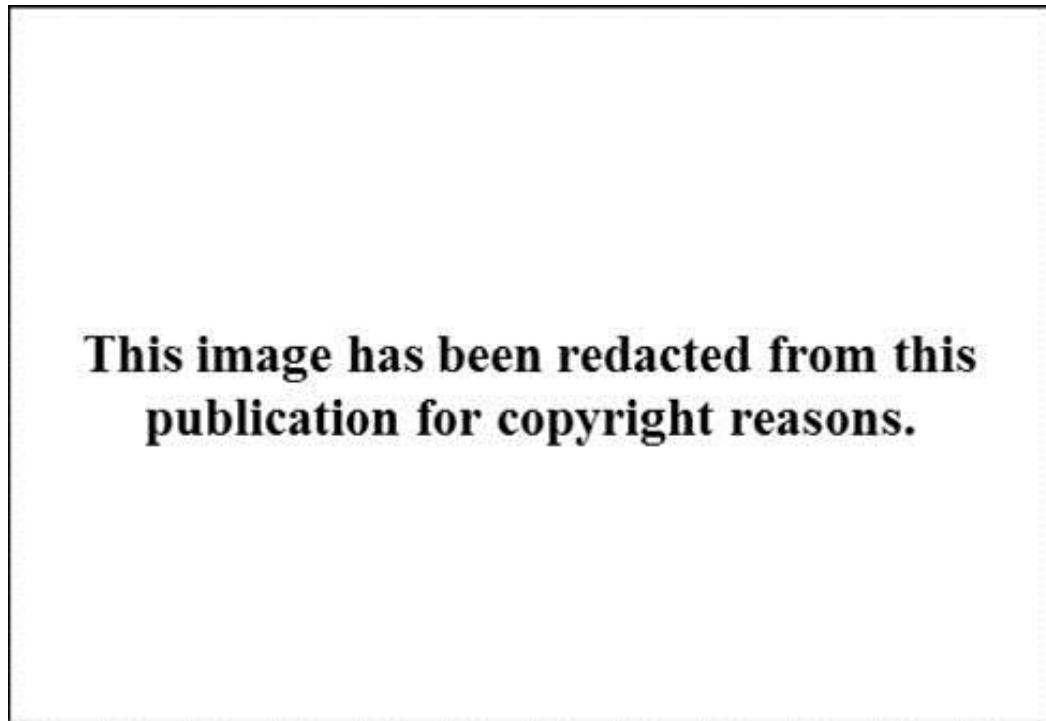This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 9 - The Media
Photo Still from *Star Trek*

"Patterns of Force" utilizes the media spectacle as the foundation of the illusion in the illusion; another example is Gill as the 'Führer'. The 'Führer' is a media construct; when

Gill appears on the viewscreen to make his 'speech', his mouth is obscured by the microphone to camouflage the fact that he is simply a façade (Fig. 10). Kirk and the others sneak into the Headquarters in the guise of a film crew; thus they gain access to Gill's illusion through their own illusion, which is all part of the whole illusion of the performance itself.

This image has been redacted from this publication for copyright reasons.

Figure 10 - The 'Führer'
Photo Still from *Star Trek*

There is, however, one part of the episode that transcends all levels of the performance: this is when the real Adolf Hitler appears in the newscast from 'Führer Headquarters'.[66] In "Patterns of Force," this is the ultimate transgression of the

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[66] Viewers may not recognize that the man riding through the streets in his motorcade is the real Führer, or that the newscast includes images from *Triumph des Willens* and other newsreel sources. They may however, realize that the footage included in the newscast looks different (more realistic) than the rest of the episode. I strongly suspect that most (or all) of the other footage shown in the newscast has been taken from historical newsreels. While I have not been able to find the sources of all the footage, I have confirmed that some of images are from *Triumph des Willens*. Interestingly, one of the images appears as a reversed

boundaries; for if the real is only used in the service of the 'real' – that is, used in-universe as part of the charade – then the real should not appear as an independent element. At this moment however, it does: the footage in the news report said (in-episode) to be from 'Führer Headquarters', amazingly, actually is from (Führer) Nazi Headquarters.[67] There is no indication that the *Enterprise* crew recognizes the footage as a (shared past on the timeline) historical item. This is the peak of uncanniness: in-universe, the footage is of the 'Führer'; to the viewer experiencing all three levels of the performance as well as the transgression of the boundary, it is of the Führer (Hitler), the 'Führer' (Gill), and the Führer being the 'Führer'.

Where Serling's message could be called heavy-handed, in this *Star Trek* episode some things seem to be thrown in for good measure: the *Führerprinzip* is named at the end of the episode as the explanation for the unlikely scenario, and the names of the Zeons are quite obviously derived from Jewish ones.[68] Yet despite its watered down simplicity, the uncanny manages to arise on its own.

Seeing a 'Nazi' can be an uncanny experience in and of itself; not to mention what is happening in "Patterns of Force." There is also a comedic aspect to this episode, which is potentially troubling. "Patterns of Force" takes the relationship we have with the

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(flipped) version of itself. After extended, close examination, I have very little doubt that it is Hitler riding in the car, yet upon first glance, there are some visual discrepancies which would indicate otherwise; namely, the armband is on his right arm, the swastika is turning to the left, and his hair is parted to the right. However, all of these inconsistencies disappear when viewing the image the other way around (mirrored). It is unclear whether this manipulation was on purpose or by accident.

[67] Poetic licence: Technically speaking, Leni Riefenstahl's film did, come from (or through) Nazi Headquarters.

[68] Zeon/Zion; Isak/Isaac; Abrom/Abraham. Also, aside from the biological metaphors of disease and contagion, the episode also recreates the Nazis' use of pseudo-science. Racial profiling by the Nazis, related to Cesar Lombroso's so-called criminal anthropology is also referenced in "Patterns of Force." Melakon, as "an authority on racial purity" examines Spock: "the sinister eyes and the malformed ears … definitely an inferior race … note the low forehead denoting stupidity … the dull look of a trapped animal" ("Patterns of Force").

characters and subverts it: when we laugh at the prospect of Kirk being a "convincing Nazi" or Spock's helmet covering "a multitude of sins," that laughter grates against the solemnity of what we know to be historically true (why we should be serious with Nazis). We watch as history is dissected, and served to us in easily-understood pieces. While this can be unsettling, some of the purported superficiality of the episode comes from the nature of the program: a generally optimistic, mainstream science fiction program from the 1960s. *Star Trek*, even when dealing with serious themes, was still a far cry from the more dramatic heaviness of a program like *The Twilight Zone*.

It should not be lost on us that the characters in the show (the Enterprise crew) are very emblematic of humanity. In terms of the episode, it is important to note that the action occurs on the Earth-like planet, not the *Enterprise*: it may be pseudo-Nazi Germany, but we 'read' it as Earth. Even the aliens look like humans; adding to the sense that we are relating to human history/human problems. This is supposed to be our future; therefore we have a connection (or will have a connection).

So, how can we accept the sometimes swashbuckling manner in which the story is told? It all comes back to the special nature of the show: *Star Trek*'s optimism is not a weakness; it is a strength. As the history of the future, we have a special investment in the *Star Trek* universe, for "it is never really about the future or strange, new worlds where 'no one has gone before.' It is about us and the world in which we live" (Lipschutz 96). The point of "Patterns of Force" is to connect to the viewers, to make them think; not only about inequality, persecution, institutionalized hatred, Nazism, the Civil Rights movement, and war, but also about the way we feel about it, and what we can do to change it.

Star Trek is literally about us. Its optimism goes beyond the characters; it transcends the boundary between the television show and the real world. This is the history of the future, our future, and unlike the past, it is one we can change.

2.7 Test Run: Preliminary Results (Part I)

It is entirely possible that a viewer will watch any or all of these three episodes and walk away afterwards without having experienced any sense of the uncanny, or having felt any sort of noticeable reaction towards seeing a 'Nazi' onscreen. With this, I do not necessarily mean someone devoid of emotional output, but rather someone for whom the connection is, as is often said, neither here nor there. It is also entirely possible that a viewer will watch any or all of these episodes and feel a very strong sense of the uncanny (even if they do not identify it as such) as well as a strong emotional reaction, such as rage or disgust, towards the 'Nazi' onscreen. Naturally, there is also a multitude of varying reactions in-between, with each one speaking to the phenomenon of the 'Nazi' in popular culture, in particular, the parameters of feeling and reaction between the viewer and the 'Nazi'.

All three episodes create the uncanny differently; fundamentally however, they all come back to a bending of the boundaries between the 'real' and the real (the 'Nazi' and the Nazi). In "Deaths-Head Revisited," the mixing of the real with the 'real' reaches its climax in the episode in the shocking moment when the audience sees through Lutze's eyes: the barriers are shattered. In "He's Alive," the co-existence of the 'real' and the real results in a constant oscillation between the two that is unsettling, especially when characters such as 'Hitler' appear in tandem with the very real portrait of Hitler. In the final episode, "Patterns of Force," the uncanny results once again from a transgression of

the boundaries between the 'real' and the real, albeit in a slightly more unorthodox way. In this episode, the disorientation of seeing (what should be in) the past in the future becomes uncanny when the viewer realizes that the 'real' is actually a performance that uses the real as its props. Undoubtedly the uncanniest moment in the episode occurs when Hitler appears in the broadcast from 'Führer Headquarters'.

As we have seen throughout the entire chapter, the uncanny generates a very strong viewer response, regardless of how it comes to pass. More than that, however, is that the uncanny capitalizes on the opportunity provided by each response by reminding the audience of the past in order to make them aware of something they can change in the present. In the three episodes under discussion, this something is a warning against forgetting, a plea to fight against hate and prejudice, and a reminder that the future has not yet been written. Moreover, in generating a response, the uncanny also provides an opportunity for processing and a chance to integrate the emotional with the cerebral. To use Lutze as an example, if the audience can integrate what they feel with what they know, then the feeling of satisfaction that accompanies Lutze's self-prescribed verdict may further the processing of Eichmann's interminable denial of guilt.

In the previous chapter, I put forth the notion that the 'Nazi' could be considered a means into a 'Neutral Zone': a place where popular culture and its audience can experiment and explore as we ruminate over issues and consider notions of evil, history, morality, appropriateness, and anything else brought up by the concept or experience of 'Nazis'. Now I see the boundaries are less distinct – instead of the 'Nazi' being simply the means by which we access such a space, I see that the 'Nazi' does in fact also

embody such a space, and both the experiencing of the 'Nazi' and the 'Nazi' itself make up the exploration.

In a manner of speaking, the 'Nazi' is a representation of the negotiation between what we remember of the past and what we need in the present. As we interact with the broader concept of, and motivation behind, each 'Nazi', we are affected by both the 'Nazi' in its prescribed, custom-made role as well as the connections it makes with us during the experiencing of it. Presnell and McGee write the following sentiment about *The Twilight Zone*, although I believe it could apply to *Star Trek* as well:

> By returning to those 156 episodes, we can always go back again and again to the *Zone*, though in reality we have never left it, since we and our world – from our best to our worst – are ultimately what *The Twilight Zone* is all about. May all of us return wiser, more compassionate, and more mindful of our own humanity after entering *The Twilight Zone*. (8)

By the same token, I believe that why the 'Nazi' is made and how it makes us feel is also ultimately about us, and I hope that experiencing the 'Nazi' is as transformative an experience.

In the next chapter, Serdar Somuncu takes *Mein Kampf* and its mythology head-on, tackling the fear, wariness, and/or assumptions surrounding the book. Whereas in Chapter Two the focus was on the uncanny feelings or moments that resulted from the combination of the 'Nazi' with the Nazi, in Chapter Three the intersection of taboo, laughter, and the *Mein Kampf* mythology pave the way for the uncanny return of something uncomfortably familiar.

Chapter 3: Serdar Somuncu and *Mein Kampf*

3.1 Serdar Somuncu is the Führer

Serdar Somuncu is the Führer (not *the* Führer). At first glance, Serdar Somuncu's readings of *Mein Kampf* appear as a humorous amalgam of Hitler impersonations and witty commentary; however, to see these performances exclusively in this light would be an underestimation. For inasmuch as the vocal characteristics of Adolf Hitler lends an aural authenticity to the text Somuncu reads aloud to his audience, the ultimate goal is not to sound like the Führer; it is to be the Führer … of the performance.[69]

The entire performance is thoughtfully orchestrated to achieve certain effects, not the least of which is to "explain and disarm [*Mein Kampf*] through laughter" (Boran, "Geschichte" 261; my translation). In his performances, the audience members are not simply spectators, they are participants, for it is their own act of subversive laughter that bends or breaks the taboos surrounding *Mein Kampf*. Beyond demystification, this laughter also serves another important purpose: it establishes and demonstrates the parameters – and patterns – of circumstances under which laughter occurs.

Sometimes it is hard not to laugh, despite the taboo. The laughter that arises during Somuncu's performances is often hesitant, permeated with the uncertainty of what we find funny and/or are allowed to find funny. Moreover, this taboo-laced laughter carries with it a combination of enjoyment and disgust, disapprobation and approval. It is also subversive, because we need to laugh in order to transgress taboos, and we need to transgress taboos in order to laugh.

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[69] Somuncu uses the term *Lesungen* ('readings'). I will primarily use the word 'performance' in order to encompass those aspects of the performance not overtly conveyed by the term 'readings'.

There are moments of full-throated laughter that erupt from the audience witnessing Somuncu's performance, swells that rise again and again before dying down to a few half-hearted giggles. There are also moments of uncomfortable silence and uneasy and/or awkward laughter. This uneasiness arises because "[v]öllig ungezwungen kann das Lachen über den Nationalsozialismus folglich nie sein; vielmehr bleibt es dem Publikum immer wieder im Hals stecken und hinterlässt einen irritierenden Nachgeschmack" (Boran, "Geschichte" 263). For the audience, this "confusing aftertaste" is what separates laughter from taboo-laced laughter (263).

The nature of the performance ensures that the audience's experience runs through a variety of emotions and responses, and in his intention to disarm *Mein Kampf* through laughter, Somuncu successfully presents excerpts from the text in a comedic way. For most of the performance, the laughter follows a certain pattern; once established as humorous, the comedic element remains funny. There is a moment, however, when this element comes face to face with the grave nature of what it signifies; previously repressed by the comedic circumstances, the audience is reminded of the taboo and is repulsed by the awareness of having laughed at it. For the audience, the incongruity of this attraction and revulsion is uncanny, and it is an integral part of the journey Somuncu leads them through. Understanding Somuncu's performances of and with *Mein Kampf* is a process; therefore, before we arrive at that uncanny moment, we must begin our journey with the book itself.

3.2 *Mein Kampf*

For almost seven decades, there has been a moratorium on publishing Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in Germany; as holder of the copyright, the State of Bavaria has

been able to legally ban any domestic publication of the book since Hitler's death in 1945

(Waldie).[70] Yet that is not to say that no copies of the book exist. As Serdar Somuncu

notes in "Im Elternhaus," many copies of *Mein Kampf* still remain in Germany; leftovers

from the millions distributed (or sold) in Nazi Germany. The book has also been

published in several foreign language translations; available in libraries, bookstores, and

notoriously easily on the internet. Although all of this makes an outright ban on

possession of the book nearly impossible, German law does make clear that the

production and dissemination of items and practices associated with National Socialism

(written materials, flags, insignia, salutes, etc.) are illegal. Therefore, although *Mein*

Kampf is not legal to buy or sell within Germany, it is legal to own. The status of the

copyright, however, is set to change at the end of next year. As per German law, the

copyright on *Mein Kampf* will expire at the end of 2015, seventy years after the death of

the author.

In 2012, in anticipation of the expiring copyright, representatives from "various

Bavarian ministries, the Jewish Community [Israelitische Kultusgemeinde], the Sinti and

Roma, churches, and scientific and socio-political institutions" met to discuss possible

options for dealing with the future of *Mein Kampf* ("Hitler"; my translation). Eventually,

a plan developed in which the government agreed to support the *Institut für*

Zeitgeschichte (IfZ) to "publish an annotated version to coincide with the expiration of

the copyright" (Waldie). A clear upside to having a widely available, strongly promoted,

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[70] According to an English translation of the German Criminal Code available on the website of the Federal
Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection (*Bundesministerium der Justiz und für Verbraucherschutz*),
Sections 86, 86a, and 130 of the German Criminal Code appear to be especially relevant to understanding
the legal responsibilities and restrictions regarding *Mein Kampf*. Certain exceptions to these laws exist for
research, educational, and scientific purposes. (According to the site, this service is provided in cooperation
with juris GmBH <http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/englisch_stgb/>.)

annotated version is that it may discourage people from buying un-annotated reprints of the original. The plan was not without controversy, however, and in December 2013, despite having invested a significant amount of money, the government withdrew its support from the project, citing the hypocrisy of financially backing the printing of *Mein Kampf* while simultaneously approving a motion to ban (*Verbotsantrag*) far-right extremists like the NPD[71] (Füller). It remains unclear as to whether those who publish *Mein Kampf* after the expiry of the copyright will or can be prosecuted according to German law, as it seems necessary to distinguish the legal status of a critically annotated 'scholarly' version intended for educational purposes from a reprint of the original intended as propaganda. However, despite the withdrawal of governmental support, the team of the IfZ is continuing its work on the annotated version (Füller).

The situation seems to be without a clear solution. On the one hand, the mass availability of *Mein Kampf* (pre-copyright expiry) ensures that the book will continue to exist regardless of post-copyright expiry publications. On the other hand, continuing the publishing moratorium in Germany is not only "an important symbol of Germany's fight against extremism," it is also the expression of an ethical position (Waldie).

Without a doubt, the debate over the 'best' course of action for the future of *Mein Kampf* is ethically, legally, and philosophically complex, "pitting those who never want to see it published because it glorifies the Third Reich against those who say banning it only heightens its perverse attraction" (Waldie). There are also others whose aim is to deconstruct the mythology surrounding the book. According to the website, the IfZ has certain objectives in mind: "Zunächst geht es darum, die Debatte um 'Mein Kampf' zu

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[71] *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* ('National Democratic Party of Germany').

versachlichen, das Buch zu entmystifizieren und aus ihm das zu machen, was es in Wirklichkeit schon längst ist – ein historisches Dokument und nicht mehr" ("Hitler").

Serdar Somuncu recognizes that the question of how Adolf Hitler was able to amass so much power is compelling, yet he also wonders if there is another reason for reading the book: "Hitler ist also ein gesellschaftliches Phänomen. Das Grauen bei dem Thema Hitler ist die Frage, wie er so weit kommen konnte. Und wozu soll ich dann noch dieses Buch lesen?" (*Auf Lesereise* 32). The answer for him is clear: "Ganz einfach. Um den Mythos aufzuheben. Transparenz. Durchsichtigkeit. Die Fragestellung ergibt sich vielleicht von selbst. Dachte ich, denke ich. Ich weiß es nicht. Den Versuch ist es wert" (32).

3.3 Mythology

In Chapter One I defined 'Nazi'-mythology as the lore, elements, and/or traditions of the 'Nazi', some of which, like *Mein Kampf*, carry their own mythological weight. Similar to the term 'Nazi', 'Nazi'-mythology can function as an umbrella term; therefore, in this specific case, the *Mein Kampf* mythology may be thought of as a sub-set of 'Nazi'-mythology. In addition, I will be handling the *Mein Kampf* mythology in much the same way as the 'Nazi'. Earlier I noted that the 'Nazi' is, abstractly, a figure of the imagination and/or an image created to serve the purposes of those utilizing it, and concretely, a character based on a specific historical referent. Here I must extend the vocabulary of my previous definition: the *Mein Kampf* mythology is a concept of the imagination created for a certain purpose and an object based on a specific referent (*Mein Kampf*, the book). However, in this instance the mythology has been inadvertently created over the years by the very suppression meant to disempower the book, instead of being created on purpose,

with a specific goal in mind. The effect may be clearly seen in terms of how *Mein Kampf*

is perceived; for the book has become lost in the mythology that surrounds it.

Indirectly, the *Mein Kampf* mythology has become a way to sustain the

differences between what the book actually 'says' and what we think it 'says'.[72] There is

no doubt that *Mein Kampf* has accumulated a shroud of mystery; it is often treated with

reverential horror, a grimoire to invoke the spirit of National Socialism and seduce those

who read it. This idea is, however, not entirely unfounded.

It is a fact that *Mein Kampf* is a dangerous book in that its contents reflect the

racist, homophobic, extremist, and antisemitic ideology that resulted in the murder,

maiming, imprisonment, and torture of millions of human beings. It is also a fact that this

same ideology is regularly cited by neo-Nazis and other extremists. Furthermore, the

dangerousness of *Mein Kampf* extends to its use as a symbol of what was, National

Socialism under Adolf Hitler, and what is, the far-right extremist groups of today. In

terms of lending support to, or being the foundation of extremist causes, *Mein Kampf* is a

proven danger, especially in the hands of those who seek it out with hateful intent.

However, the fact remains that Hitler's ideology is already clear and known to the

world with or without *Mein Kampf*. Furthermore, those who seek to use the book with the

intent to carry out its teachings will not be stopped by a publication ban, or by social

judgement. Therefore, being dangerous is not mutually exclusive with confronting the

mythology, and to confront the mythology or demystify *Mein Kampf* in the terms

discussed here does not discredit these elements of danger. On the contrary, confronting

the mythology (i.e. to become more familiar with the book itself rather than simply the

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[72] A note on 'we': In this chapter, I am talking about the effect of Somuncu's performance on people in
general. Therefore, 'we' refers to the audience in its more encompassing form (including those who listen
on CD, worldwide audiences, etc.) unless otherwise noted.

idea of the book) may even help those who fight against extremism.[73] Extreme radicals would likely prefer that the aura of mystery stays intact, for the mythology serves them well; *Mein Kampf* arguably holds just as much power as a symbol (the handbook of the Führer) as it does as a neo-Nazi reference book. Thus, it is for precisely this reason that I believe it is important to consider the idea that people who desire the knowledge understand, or at the very least have the means and/or the opportunity to understand, the precise nature of the danger.[74]

Without a doubt, the circumstances in which the book is confronted – in this case, a stage performance – must reflect the responsibility carried by all those who wish to respect the victims of the ideology carried in *Mein Kampf*. I will consider the circumstances of the performance as I go on, but first I will examine the notion of taboo and its relationship to laughter.

3.4 Taboo and Laughter

The reason to be serious is clear: to laugh at anything connected to such grievous events as those atrocities committed under the banner of the ideology in *Mein Kampf* implies a necessity to transgress a taboo. Yet the laughter that arises during Somuncu's performance is aimed at neither these grave events nor the victims; it is aimed at the perpetrators, more specifically, the language of the perpetrators.

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[73] Know thy enemy: an idea from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*.

[74] Because, like the 'Nazi', *Mein Kampf* constantly recalls the horrific legacy of the Nazis, the very thought of someone reading from the book as part of a performance may be an unacceptable idea for some. Yet – and this is not necessarily a mutually exclusive position – is it a definite impossibility that confronting the mythology in this way might be important for others? Without a doubt, this is a complex issue, one with no clear solution. However, I do not believe this issue needs to be resolved – indeed, I do not even think it can be definitively resolved – in order to move onto a closer examination of what is happening when Serdar Somuncu reads from *Mein Kampf*.

Now, it may be that laughing at the perpetrators is problematic simply because *they are the perpetrators*, but let us consider this idea for a moment. I see two potential issues here: one, that laughing at the perpetrators could undermine the gravity of their crimes and two, this is a related point, that it may not be possible to laugh at the perpetrators in a vacuum (i.e. without having their crimes come into play). It is not my intention to controvert these issues; on the contrary, I do not believe they are mutually exclusive to what I am about to argue. To the first, I propose that laughing at the perpetrators is *not the same thing* as laughing at what those perpetrators did. Therefore, laughing at the perpetrators does not necessarily affect the seriousness of the events for which they were responsible. To the second, I put forth that it is not necessary or required to laugh at the perpetrators exclusive of their crimes; moreover, as in the case of Somuncu's performance, it may even be undesired.

Of course I recognize that none of this is absolute and that some laughter could potentially challenge the gravity of the situation; however, it is also equally true that some laughter may not. Yet this is exactly my point; this is not about absolutes, it is to recognize that there is a spectrum of circumstances in which taboo-laced laughter occurs, and that such laughter should be assessed based on those specific, individual circumstances.

In a panel discussion on the German television program "Anne Will," the host asked: "In diesen Vorstellungen, Herr Somuncu, bei welchem Lachen, also bei welcher Art von Lachen haben Sie gedacht, so ... das ist der Effekt, den ich wollte?" ("Hitlers").[75] This is the first part of Somuncu's answer:

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[75] All the transcriptions from this television program are my own. They have been reviewed by a native speaker. Many thanks to Dr. Ulf Schuetze for his assistance.

Na, es sind zwei Effekte. Das eine ist, dass das Lachen ... wichtig ist um zu

öffnen, um Zugang zu finden um sprachlichen Zugang besonders zu jungen

Leuten. Es hat also Comedy-Ebenen. Das mag befremdlich wirken für

Aussenstehende, weil man in einer Vorstellung sitzt, die [einen] sehr ernsten

Anspruch hat und es wird gelacht, aber wir lachen nicht über die Opfer, wir

lachen über die Formulierung der Täter. Das ist ein ganz wichtiger Unterschied.

Und *Mein Kampf* ist voll von solchen Formulierungen, also es ist ein ... sehr

kabarettreifes Buch. ("Hitlers")

As Somuncu says, laughter is important because it generates a means of access to his

audience, even though, given the subject matter, it may seem like a strange way to go

about it. Moreover, in this "very *Kabarett*-ripe book," it is important to know at precisely

whom we are laughing ("Hitlers"). Yet, the reason for our laughter may be beyond our

control to a certain extent. At the beginning of his performance, Somuncu asks if one is

allowed to laugh:

Die erste Frage ist, darf man über dieses Buch, Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*,

lachen? ... Und die Antwort ist ganz einfach, NEIN. ... Aber, man kann gar nicht

anders, und deswegen wird zwischendurch nichts anderes übrig bleiben als zu

lachen, das Zwerchfell wird sich von alleine in Bewegung setzen bei Sätzen, die

unendlich lang sind mit und so weiter Punkt Bindestrich abgekürzt werden, bei

Tierbeispielen die so nicht richtig sind und bei Bayrischen Füllwörtern

beispielsweise wie ALLEIN und JA, ... die zu Haufen in diesem Text

vorkommen. ("Drei Fragen")[76]

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[76] "Drei Fragen" (0:00-0:34). All transcriptions from Somuncu's performance are my own and have been
reviewed by a native speaker.

This is a noteworthy observation: one is not allowed to laugh, yet one may not have much

of a choice because the text of *Mein Kampf* appears at times to set *itself* up for ridicule.

Throughout his performance, Somuncu draws attention to the easy-to-laugh-at parts of

the book (like the *Tierbeispiele*), which serve as the basis for many jokes. Of course,

much of the credit for eliciting laughter must be given to the theatrical expertise of

Somuncu himself, because Hitler's writing style – however ripe it may be for *Kabarett* –

takes on its comedic edge through Somuncu's delivery.

3.5 Somuncu is a Trained Professional

As a performer, Serdar Somuncu possesses an exceptional blend of theatrical

expertise, a sharp wit, and an instinct for audience connection. He formally trained in

"music, theater, and directing in Maastricht und Wuppertal," and over the course of his

career has applied his talents to a number of diverse performances (Bower 198).[77] It was

his readings of *Mein Kampf* however, which brought him squarely into the mainstream.

Starting in 1996, Somuncu toured with *Mein Kampf* both in and outside Germany

until 2001, for well over a thousand audiences (Bower 198). The success of his

performances indicates not only a willingness on the part of the public to be the audience

of Somuncu's endeavours, but also an interest and/or curiosity in what he was doing.

Moreover, it suggests that Somuncu engenders a sense of trust from the audience, part of

which may come as a result of how he is perceived:

Unabhängig davon, welcher Künstler mit Texten wie Adolf Hitlers *Mein Kampf*

[. . .] auf deutsche Bühnen tritt, er muss zunächst einmal den Tabubruch

---

[77] Somuncu provides selections from his professional accomplishments (e.g. solo theatre pieces, *Lesungen*, (audio)books, etc.) on his website: <www.somuncu.de>.

verantworten und sich des Verdachtes erwehren, dass nationalsozialistische

Propaganda im Spiel sein könnte. Daneben macht es jedoch auch einen

Unterschied, wer diese Texte präsentiert. [. . .] Obwohl Somuncu akzentlos

Deutsch spricht und neben der türkischen auch die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit

besitzt, ist er doch wegen seines Names und seines Aussehens [. . .] markiert.

(Boran, "Geschichte" 259-60)[78]

From the start of his performance, Somuncu makes it quite clear that his intentions are

not to praise Hitler and *Mein Kampf*, but rather the opposite. In "Drei Fragen," he

suggests that those who wish to clap because they like the text may be better off showing

their enthusiasm to the appropriate right wing party ("Drei Fragen"). As one might

expect, Somuncu is aware of how he is perceived from the 'outside'; however, by playing

with that stereotype, he makes that perception of him work for him, instead of against

him (Boran, "Geschichte" 261). One way Somuncu subverts this labelling is through

wordplay: "Ja, in der Zeitung steht das immer, 'TÜRKE LIEST AUS *MEIN KAMPF*!' [. .

.] In der *Ostsee-Zeitung* da stand drin: 'TÜRKE FÜHRT HITLER VOR!' [. . .] ich

wusste, da fehlten zwei Wörter, ich kann ja ein bisschen Deutsch. Da fehlte 'DER

TÜRKE FÜHRT UNSEREN HITLER VOR!' [. . .]" ("Volk und Rasse"). In this

example, Somuncu changes the statement to put the spotlight on Hitler (*jmd. vorführen*),

as well as associating the dictator with Germany by identifying him as theirs ('our

Hitler').[79] In the next bit of dialogue, Somuncu plays the part of the stereotypical Turkish

German *Gastarbeiter*: "Aber ich ... ich arbeit hier viele Jahre, komme, schneiden Döner,

---

[78] According to Bower (2012), Somuncu has since given up his Turkish passport (203).

[79] "Volk und Rasse" (2:40-3:15). In colloquial language, *jemanden vorführen* can take on the meaning of 'to make someone look like a fool'.

nix gutes sprechen Deutsch, aber ich will bisscen [sic] erzählen von [. . .] Warum

verboten?" ("Volk und Rasse").[80] In this second example, Somuncu redirects the

attention from his 'ethnic identity' by very unambiguously *performing* the character of a

Turkish German immigrant, thereby enhancing the audience's awareness of the

performance as a performance. Moreover, his self-aware deconstruction of the 'Turk' not

only helps to guard against audience presumptions, it also discourages the audience from

getting too distracted from the material.

Somuncu's conscious play with stereotypes is an important and timely

contribution to the ongoing discussion of issues of racism and prejudice; moreover, in

Germany, it is especially relevant to the always current topic of integration.[81] In terms of

the demystification and disempowerment of *Mein Kampf*, this shrewd deconstruction of

his perceived outsider-ness assists in breaking down the barriers between 'him' and

'them'. This also helps to put the focus onto the greater underlying issue of working

through the legacy of the Nazi past, something that Somuncu sees as shared

responsibility:

Auch wenn wir Türken keinen Großvater haben, der in der NSDAP war, auch

wenn wir niemanden in der Verwandtschaft haben, der eine braune Vergangenheit

hat, so sind wir doch mitverantwortlich für die Aufarbeitung der deutschen

Thematik, weil wir keine gemeinsame Gegenwart und Zukunft verlangen dürfen,

---

[80] "Volk und Rasse" (3:17-3:29). In his work, Boran hyphenates Turkish-German. I am following Bower's conscious decision not to hyphenate, which to her, "[. . .] suggests a synthesis or even a hierarchy, where 'Turkish' is subordinate to 'German'" (211).

[81] Somuncu's conscious and subversive play with (perceived) ethnic identity and/or stereotypes, as well as his impact on German theatre and *Kabarett* traditions, is a matter given much consideration by Boran and Bower, amongst others.

ohne auch einen Besitzanspruch auf die Bewältigung der deutschen

Vergangenheit zu stellen. (Somuncu, *Auf Lesereise* 247)

Somuncu recognizes that the "Aufarbeitung der deutschen Thematik" goes beyond ethnic

and political boundaries (247). In regards to the stewardship of *Mein Kampf* in particular,

this sharing of responsibility extends beyond similar boundaries, as the book (and its

mythology) is not limited to Germany, nor is the global issue of right-wing extremism.

In the popular sphere of reporting, Somuncu may never rid himself completely of

the novelty of being identified as the 'Turk who reads *Mein Kamp*f.' However over time,

he has "succeeded in getting audiences to recognize his talents as a performer and to

focus on his approach to the material, rather than on questions of ethnic difference"

(Bower 200). Thus, while his 'Turkishness' remains a note of interest for some, many

others are more curious about what he has to say; of course, how he goes about the whole

process (his approach) is made possible by the stage on which he performs.

3.6 *Die Bühne*

There is a photo of Somuncu in *Auf Lesereise mit Adolf* in which he appears to be

wiping (the word smearing comes to mind) one hand across his face.[82] He is wearing

jeans and a plain white t-shirt and he is standing in front of a humble-looking table and

chair. The table is not so much covered as dotted with a microphone, a bottle of water, a

pen, a book, and some papers. There are a number of heads visible in the dark

foreground, and there is a spotlight trained on Somuncu, casting his shadow onto the

curtains in the background. These things, along with the angle of the camera and the

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[82] The photo pages are unnumbered.

white bar visible running across the bottom of the picture separating Somuncu from the dark heads, allude to his standing on some sort of stage.

The transient nature of the props suggests that it is not the physical stage that is important, but rather the atmosphere or performance space it suggests. It is generally acknowledged that because of the complex nature of Somuncu's performances, it is difficult to place them into only one genre (Boran, "Geschichte" 268). Elements of *Kabarett*, theatre, stand-up comedy, and as Somuncu says, *Lesungen*, may all be found within his performances. Thus it is not as important to distinguish between these genres, as it is to consider how these different elements create a performance atmosphere that enables the audience to trust Somuncu and go where he leads.

The following passage, seen from the perspective of the theatre, describes one of the most important elements, which is that

> [a]udiences view theatre performances within a frame of reference that brackets
> all that happens on stage as a subset of reality which, although it mimics reality, is
> nevertheless distinguishable from it. The boundaries of that frame are established
> by a series of theatrical conventions that clearly define, through physical
> arrangements and procedural rituals, the separateness of the performance from the
> real world. (Matte and McFadyen 162)

Therefore, when Somuncu stands on a stage such as the one described previously, he is defining a space from which he is performing to the audience seated in front of him. This frame of reference is also made clear to the audience by the procedure/set-up whereby audience members watch and listen to Somuncu, while he stands (or sits) in front of them and speaks to them. This frame of reference also demarcates a space in which the

performer is permitted to bend, subvert, or break rules, which would otherwise apply in real-life (Matte and McFadyen 162). In other words, it is this frame of reference that allows for leeway of perception on the part of the audience members, which they in turn pass on to Somuncu (and their reception of Somuncu). However, this latitude is not given freely; an important consideration for his performance, which due to its subject matter, is unavoidably political.[83]

The nature of Somuncu's performances aligns itself comfortably within the satirical and political tradition that characterizes the genre of *Kabarett* after World War Two (Boran, "Faces" 173). As it is in *Kabarett*, neither the subject matter, nor Somuncu's treatment of it is flippant or frivolous. This is because one of Somuncu's aims is to find an answer to the following:

> Hitler ist immer und überall, in allen Köpfen, der Mann wird verehrt, er
>
> funktioniert ... Er erschreckt, wenn man hier auf dem Heumarkt ‚Heil Hitler' ruft,
>
> dann rennen die Leute genauso weg wie anderswo und die Frage ist, wie kann
>
> man das wegmachen? Wie kann man das so machen, dass der Effekt, dieses in
>
> gläsernen Sarkophag liegenden Monsters ein für alle Mal wirkungslos ist? ("Der
>
> Arier als Kulturbegründer")[84]

As I stated in the previous section, Somuncu makes it clear right from the beginning of the performance that his goal is to demystify *Mein Kampf*, not to celebrate it. This is important because the freedom granted to the performer in the theatre (generally, as well

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[83] The subject matter is unavoidably political because of its controversial nature – controversial because of what Hitler and *Mein Kampf* represent to modern-day history. I would not oppose a description of Somuncu's work as anti-fascistic; however, I believe that such a description should also make clear that Somuncu's methods are more in line with illumination, rather than proselytization; that is, I believe his intention is to help the audience help themselves.

[84] "Der Arier als Kulturbegründer" (7:58-8:21).

as in the *Kabarett* specifically) is "granted conditionally" and "[. . .] there is an

expectation that the performers will not be exercising their freedoms gratuitously and will

justify any offence or transgression" (Matte and McFadyen 162). Making his intentions

known to the audience provides such a justification.

There is no doubt that Somuncu's work draws from the *Kabarett* tradition and

from theatre in general. The term *Lesungen* also applies in the sense that, as suggested by

the table (perhaps better identified in this case as a desk) and chair, Somuncu also reads

"passages of the text out and pauses thereby temporarily also in a sitting position"

(Boran, "Geschichte" 266; my translation).[85] Finally, the similarity of certain moments of

the performance to "the studied spontaneity characteristic of stand-up comedy" should

not be underestimated (Bower 198). In fact, many of these similar moments result from

Somuncu's knack for deploying certain comedic techniques.

3.7 "Muss man aber nicht so lesen [. . .] Ja … muss man aber nicht so schreiben"[86]

Throughout his performance, Somuncu employs a variety of techniques to induce,

increase, and enhance the laughter the text elicits from the audience. One of these

techniques is the 'callback'. Dan O'Shannon describes the callback in his book, *What Are*

You Laughing at?: A Comprehensive Guide to the Comedic Event, like this:

Another way to increase the bang we get from our comedy buck is to do the

callback. A punchline or reference is established early in the monologue or the

narrative, or the evening's conversation, and then it continues to pop up

---

[85] The actual act of reading from *Mein Kampf* is subject to restrictions or guidelines. Boran paraphases Somuncu: "Aus legaler Sicht sei es gestattet, aus *Mein Kampf* zu lesen, solange man keine reinen Lesungen veranstalte, sondern der Text durch eigene kritische Bemerkungen unterbrochen wird (das heißt, eine reflektierend-pädagogische Ebene besitzt)" ("Geschichte" 261).

[86] "Volk und Rasse."

unexpectedly throughout the piece. [. . .] With the callback, the idea is to let the

original joke or referent fade in the receiver's mind before a slightly altered set of

circumstances yanks it back into focus. (O'Shannon 219)

The callback is a comedy workhorse. In Somuncu's performances, one of the most

obvious examples is "und so weiter Punkt Bindestrich"; hereafter notated as *usw.-* ("Volk

und Rasse").[87] Somuncu first mentions *usw.-* in "Drei Fragen"; however, the real set-up,

that is the first telling of the joke, occurs in "Wiener Lehr- und Leidensjahre": "jedenfalls

... ... ich kürz das mal ab. Am Ende des Satzes nach zweiundhalb Seiten ... ... da steht ...

... und so weiter Punkt Bindestrich" ("Wiener Lehr- und Leidensjahre").[88] After the initial

laugh from the first *usw.-*, Somuncu continues on with the performance, venturing further

into the *Mein Kampf* text. With the delivery of each subsequent excerpt, new

opportunities for laughter present themselves in the form of whatever jokes (likely

unintentional by Hitler) they contain. However, in addition to the unique content of each

piece of text, some of these passages also share a familiar refrain: the callback (a good

example of this occurs in "Volk und Rasse").[89] The audience, upon recognizing the *usw.-*

joke, breaks out into laughter, turning the callback into the comedy version of a trail of

bread crumbs. This is because each subsequent *usw.-* leads the audience to something

familiar, or perhaps more importantly, to something already established as laughable.

Another technique Somuncu utilizes to enhance laughter is his play with voices.

On one level, these different voices are important in establishing precisely who is

speaking: Hitler's voice as captured in *Mein Kampf*, the unintelligent neo-Nazi, the

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[87] "[. . .] und so weiter Punkt Bindestrich" ("Drei Fragen").

[88] "Wiener Lehr- und Leidensjahre" (5:51-6:01).

[89] "Volk und Rasse" (4:19.-5:08). The dialogue of this joke appears in the next section.

"Turk" (who speaks broken German), or the on-stage performer, Somuncu. This is especially important in terms of Somuncu's mode of delivery, as there are no costumes to disambiguate the speakers. These voices can and do induce laughter purely in and of themselves; take for example Somuncu's drooling, snarling neo-Nazis laughing at his performance:

> … da kamen also noch viel mehr Tierbeispiele die waren viel zu undeutlich und zu schnell gesprochen und dann musst der Dicke lachen ... aber so ... *HRHA HAHRHA HRHAHA ... … HA HA HA HAAAaaa HAHAAaA HAAAAHHHAA* … und kann nicht mehr kann nicht mehr *HAHAHAHAHA HA HA* ... und der Blonde *KHHNNRRGGGHH* [. . .]. ("Volk und Rasse")[90]

Judging from the physical exertion one can hear in the recording, Somuncu's facial expressions likely also add to the comedic value of this segment. In re-presenting the trio of neo-Nazis in this manner, Somuncu mocks them; bestowing ridicule on them in every subsequent performance they 'appear' in.

One further technique that Somuncu frequently employs in his performances is his play with the rhythm and flow of his words. Used to tremendous effect in the reading of the excerpts themselves (as opposed to his commentary), Somuncu induces laughter simply by speeding things up, or slowing them down: "... ... Schöpferisch ... ... tätige Völker … … ... ... sind von jeher … ... ... und von Grund aus … ... ... schöpferisch veranlagt ... ... auch wenn dies den Augen oberflächlicher Betrachter nicht erkenntlich sein sollte" ("Der Arier als Külturbegründer").[91] By inserting pregnant pauses

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[90] "Volk und Rasse" (5:12-5:31). In the transcriptions of Somuncu's jokes, *italics* indicate sounds, as opposed to recognizable words.

[91] "Der Arier als Külturbegründer" (0:07-0:45).

into a particularly long sentence (although perhaps not long for *Mein Kampf*), Somuncu

increases the comedic element of the text by heightening the anticipation of the

seemingly never arriving end of the sentence, thus turning it into a built-in punchline.

In a similar way to the decelerated sentences, accelerated sentences benefit

equally well from a change in speed. Passages read out in increasing speed soon

degenerate into nonsense words, but by retaining Hitler's rhythm and tone, Somuncu

cleverly subverts the text by reducing it to a series of authentic-sounding squawks and

pomp: "Jedenfalls war das, was ich da vernahm, geeignet, mich aufs äusserste

aufzureizen. ManlehntedaallesabdieNationalseineaPptaaalistischrrrussich*gnnrArk KhKrr*

zssvaterland alsirphrrtbrblebsber arfszschaft rbbrerbebrble [. . .] *aAbBhh sschHoOi* [. . .]

abhhrFdhr ... dieser Satz geht weiter ... *aahrrfddhrngihrbddproletgbfrraffghrrffnr* ..."

("Volk und Rasse").[92] Of course, some of the comedic potential of Hitler-speak is aided

by the following: "Hitlers genau einstudierte und übertrieben vorgetragene Gestik, seine

raue, abgehackte Spache – all diese Eigentümlichkeiten, die im damaligen Kontext der

Unterdrückung bedrohlich wirkten, verlieren aus zeitlicher Distanz an Grauen und

nehmen zunehmend lächerliche Aspekte an" (Boran, "Geschichte" 266). The relatively

recent context of Somuncu's performance, therefore, allows these authentic-sounding

nonsense words to highlight how practiced and choreographed Hitler's speech actually

was. Such is the 'magic' of Hitler-speak. Yet as Boran notes, "[t]atsächlich musste sich

Somuncu, [. . .] schauspielerisch eher noch bremsen, um seinen Hitler nicht völlig

überzeichnet erscheinen zu lassen" (266). Thus, although it may seem like Somuncu is

---

[92] "Wiener und Lehr- Leidensjahre" (5:12-5:36). I have transcribed these noises as best I can, but due to the high speed at which Somuncu makes the (words and) sounds, I believe there is a certain margin of individual sound interpretation inherent to the transcription of this particular passage. With that in mind, however, I believe that Somuncu intends this bit of dialogue (series of noises) to be more about how he sounds, rather than what he says.

constantly exaggerating when he reads from *Mein Kampf*, a quick scan of some footage

from *Triumph des Willens* shows how often "his Hitler" is actually underplayed in

comparison to Hitler's real oratorical voice (266).[93]

When Somuncu uses voices and gestures (like Hitler-speak) to connect to

audience members, they understand that he is not Hitler; and of course, they are not

supposed to think he is. However, that does not mean that the audience cannot get caught

up in everything; i.e. be mesmerized by Somuncu's portrayal of these characters:

> Tatsächlich verschmilzt Somuncu auch in seinen szenischen Lesungen mit den
>
> Figuren, die er verkörpert; jedoch geschieht dies stets nur sporadisch und vor
>
> allem temporär: Bevor das Publikum sich der Illusion hingeben kann,
>
> durchbricht Somuncu sie sogleich wieder und hebt die Show auf eine andere
>
> Ebene, indem er über seine Rolle und den Gegenstand seiner Darstellung
>
> reflektiert, das Publikum direkt anspricht und Reaktionen einfordert. (Boran,
>
> "Geschichte" 265)

Somuncu is aware of the potential for the audience to become unconcerned; to be content

with just listening to what he is saying, to go along for the ride as it were. It would be a

sad irony for such a thing to happen in a performance related to Adolf Hitler; thus

Somuncu counteracts this tendency towards complacency because he does not want the

audience to follow him blindly and without question. Throughout the performance,

Somuncu's commentary and insights fulfill an important role in the fight against

complacency; a fight aided by laughter.

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[93] Somuncu notes this under-exaggeration in "Wiener Lehr- und Leidensjahre" before demonstrating the difference by giving a short approximation of what Hitler sounded like in 1923 (3:10-3:31).

Over the course of Somuncu's performances, laughter erupts when he relates a humorous anecdote or after he reads a particularly ridiculous-sounding sentence. However, it is the laughter that results from repetition, such as *usw.-* (or as we shall see in the next section, the *Tierbeispiele*) that establishes a discernable pattern with each reiteration. In this way, Somuncu has been preparing the audience for one particular moment in the performance, because the pattern has to be established before it can be broken.

3.8 "Der Witz ist die Falle"[94]

In terms of repetition, Somuncu's voice characters and rhythm play may also be considered callbacks, in the sense that they function (albeit more broadly), as a "punchline or reference" that returns (O'Shannon 219). Moreover, like (the specific callback) *usw.-*, laughing at these returning jokes encourages a sense of trust between the two parties (Somuncu and the audience), because to laugh at each subsequent return is to laugh at something already established as funny.

Near the end of the performance, Somuncu finally tells the audience about the *Tierbeispiele* he referenced at the very beginning: "Meise … … geht … … … zu Meise [. . .], Fink zu Fink ... [. . .] Storch zu Störchen ... [. . .] ... ... Feldmaus zu Feldmaus" ("Volk und Rasse").[95] Naturally, having become accustomed to Somuncu's excellent comedic timing, the audience laughs. Next, Somuncu describes a trio of neo-Nazis who had attended one of his previous performances. Differentiated by their appearance, bearing, and laughter, the three are identified by Somuncu as the 'blond one', the 'normal one',

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[94] Somuncu, *Auf Lesereise* 30-31.

[95] "Volk und Rasse" (1:16-1:47).

and the 'fat one'. Somuncu recounts how – as he watched them watch him – he eagerly

awaited the arrival of the *Tierbeispiele*:

> Ich wusste aber, wann dieses Kapitel kommt ... der Dicke, der war schon die
>
> ganze Zeit ... hat er schon so mit Arschbacken Nüsse geknackt ja ... ... ich wusste,
>
> wenn das Kapitel kommt, dann muss er lachen! ... Das einzige, was der nämlich
>
> versteht nach einundhalb Stunden sind die Tierbeispiele ... ... Feldmaus zu
>
> Feldmaus ... ... Hausmaus zu Hausmaus ... ... und dann der Blonde
>
> *nnrrgh* ... ... und der Dicke *harhhrghharharhar* ... ... der Wolf zur Wölfin
>
> und so weiter Punkt Bindestrich [. . .]. ("Volk und Rasse")[96]

Unsurprisingly, the audience roars with laughter throughout this entire segment. In less

than two minutes, the reappearance of the *Tierbeispiele,* accompanied by long pauses,

voice play, (and of course, *usw.-*) enables Somuncu to firmly reassure the comedic value

of the repetitions. The laughter in the performance continues to build after this, climaxing

after a sentence that Somuncu says "ist legendär" ("Volk und Rasse").[97] The reaction to

this legendary sentence buttresses the *Tierbeispiele*, leaving the audience 'high' on

laughter. Yet in a single moment, the atmosphere will change from one of intoxication to

sober awareness: *this is that moment*.

After the laughter dies down, Somuncu's voice takes on a distinctly different

quality. This is not the same (regular) speaking voice from earlier; this is much softer,

serious, and reflective. This passage is presented without adornment, leaving the focus on

the words Somuncu speaks:

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[96] "Volk und Rasse" (4:19.-5:08).

[97] For the full sentence, please see "Volk und Rasse" (8:45-9:35).

Deutschland hat eine jährige Bevölkerungszunahme von nahezu

neunhunderttausend Seelen ... Die Ernährung dieser Armee von neuen

Staatsbürgern muß einmal bei einer Katastrophe enden, falls eben nicht noch

Mittel und Wege gefunden werden vorzu...beugen. Entweder man lässt die Natur

wieder entscheiden oder ... man stellt die Vermehrung des Menschlichen

Geschlechtes ein oder ... oder durch Selbsthilfe ... ... das heisst nichts Anderes

als KZ … ... Natürlich ... wenn Meise zu Meise geht, wenn Fink zu Fink geht und

Storch zu Störchen, dann wäre laut Darwin ... Mensch zu Mensch die logische

Fortführung [. . .]. („Volk und Rasse")[98]

The *Tierbeispiele* have returned once again, yet not as expected; they are no longer

merely the amusing, unassuming joke they once were. Freed from the repression of the

comedic callback, the grave nature behind the joke can emerge. To the audience however,

it is only a reminder of something they have known all along.[99] Freud writes, "[. . .] the

uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and

long familiar" (121). For the *Tierbeispiele*, the "long familiar" is the disturbing

knowledge of the *KZ*; something which has been repressed and/or forgotten by the

audience in order to laugh (121). In this revelatory, uncomfortable, and uncanny moment,

the audience becomes aware of the incongruity between their attraction to the

Tierbeispiele joke and their revulsion of having laughed at it, simultaneously revealing

the audience's vulnerability and signaling Somuncu's greatest push against complacency.

Admittedly, it is a short step from funny to gruesome, but a necessary one:

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[98] "Volk und Rasse" (10:02-10:44).

[99] There are other difficult moments in the performance when Somuncu mentions subjects connected to concentration camps (e.g. Zyklon B); however, in these moments, the items are presented directly, and are never concealed. Thus it is the repression and subsequent return of the familiar that makes the *Tierbeispiele* unique, and this moment, uncanny.

Der Witz ist die Falle. Und tappt der Zuschauer einmal in diese Falle, dann bleibt

ihm gar nichts anderes mehr übrig, als sich zu ergeben.

Erst nachher setzt seine Reflexion ein, und er versucht, die Schuld für sein

Lachen dem Witzemacher in die Schuhe zu schieben, aber dann ist es schon zu

spät. Dann hat er nämlich schon gelacht, und der Denkprozess, der dadurch

angestoßen wurde, ist unumkehrbar geworden. (Somuncu, *Auf Lesereise* 30-31).

The entire performance is based on pushing boundaries and confronting taboos, yet it is

not enough to simply bring the audience to taboo-breaking laughter. In order to stress the

dangers of complacency – or worse, apathy – Somuncu must bring the audience one step

further; and nowhere is the laughter more "unumkehrbar" than after the uncanny moment

with the *Tierbeispiele* (31).

3.9 Test Run: Preliminary Results (Part II)

Serdar Somuncu is a guide. His guidance is not always gentle, yet nor should it

be, for Somuncu knows that the situation with *Mein Kampf* cannot be solved with a ban.

If it were that simple, the mythology would not have developed, and the book would have

been long since relegated to the dusty bookshelves of history.[100] The audience's

experience in Somuncu's performances, from the beginnings of taboo laughter to the

dramatic reveal of the *Tierbeispiele*, is all part of the process of deconstructing the *Mein

Kampf* mythology. Following this path of deconstruction is important in and of itself; yet

it is also more than that. The journey Somuncu leads them (and us) on is also an integral

part of the preparation for one pivotal, uncanny moment that leaves the audience

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[100] Surprisingly (or perhaps unsurprisingly), *Mein Kampf* has been selling well in ebook format (Flood). One of the more popular reasons suggested by various news organizations is that people may feel that the electronic version is a more covert way of satisfying their curiosity than the traditional (harder to hide) print version.

unguarded, exposed, and on edge. Creating an opportunity for such a potent audience response is a calculated move by Somuncu because he knows that sometimes people hear things without really listening.

In his performance, Somuncu relates how he kept coming across the same stereotypical sentences as he toured through Germany; ones like, "ich kann das alles nicht mehr hören" and, "wir sind das doch nicht schuld" ("Volk und Rasse"). Because he recognizes that some people feel that the "Auseinandersetzung" with *Mein Kampf* is a burden, Somuncu wonders how to make them understand that it can also be rewarding ("Volk und Rasse").[101] In response to these repeated refrains, Somuncu observes that even though (or because) he encountered *Mein Kampf* every day, he himself can hear it very well; moreover, he notes that the audience can too, even if some of them resist it ("Volk und Rasse"). In order to keep the discussion about *Mein Kampf* (and related issues in general) alive, Somuncu recognizes the importantance of challenging this resistance because he understands "[. . .] dass diese Ambivalenz aufrecht zu erhalten wichtig ist, um Bewegung zu erzeugen und diese Bewegung wiederum wichtig ist ... um nicht zu spät zu sein" ("Volk und Rasse"). The burden of responsibility is difficult and uncomfortable, yet it is also a necessity. Whether one turns away from engaging in the discussion because of fear, overload, or even a sense that the 'work is done', the consequences of late or complete inaction would mean not being there when it counts: when people are beaten or when houses are burning ("Volk und Rasse"). Ultimately, what Somuncu is trying to convey to the audience is that it is beneficial for everyone, "das Maul aufzumachen," even, and especially, when it is dangerous ("Volk und Rasse").

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[101] "*Auseinandersetzung*" is the word Somuncu uses throughout the performance.

It is perhaps not unsurprising that in the face of complex and uncomfortable issues, there is a tendency to desire simple solutions and to remain in established comfort zones; yet it is precisely because of this tendency that banning the publication of the book in German is not enough. This is because a ban may open the door to certain dangerous possibilities, such as the acceptance of the ban as a sufficient and simple solution to a very complex and difficult problem. This is why the uncanny moment is so important: it creates a profound response in the audience, one that is necessary to push them out of their comfort zone. Moreover, because the issues that underlie the *Mein Kampf* ban are about more than the book, the uncanny moment also serves as a reminder of the grave consequences of not doing enough.

This push towards action is part of the processing of the complicated issues of the Nazi legacy. Although *Mein Kampf* is only a small part of the larger, global issue of far-right extremism fueled by the National Socialist past, the burden of responsibility to combat this past rests heavily in Germany. It is unsurprising then that Somuncu's performances and his intentions to disempower *Mein Kampf* by empowering his audience resonate clearly in modern Germany, as they may have the most to lose and the most to gain. What the German public could gain is an opportunity to combat the mythologizing of *Mein Kampf* and to fight against the ideas it contains; what the German public could lose is that same opportunity.

In his book, *Auf Lesereise mit Adolf*, Somuncu describes a notable experience: after receiving a serious threat against both himself and his audience for a performance scheduled for January 30, 2001, Somuncu took to the stage in a bullet-proof vest (343).[102]

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[102] Reading from (and commenting on) *Mein Kampf* is controversial in and of itself, as is intentionally performing on the anniversary of the day Hitler was named Chancellor of Germany; consequently, a group

Since that performance he notes, many things have changed; however, in his strong opinion, perhaps not enough:

> Der Kern des Übels allerdings bleibt davon weiter unberührt. Nach wie vor können wir nicht gegen oder für etwas sein, wenn wir nicht wissen, wogegen oder wofür wir sind – so wie wir auch nicht durch ein Verbot von *Mein Kampf* die Nazis heutiger Tage läutern. So sehr der Nationalsozialismus vergangener Tage von Symbolen lebt, so wenig lassen sich diese Symbole durch Verbote zerstören. Einzig die inhaltliche Auseinandersetzung bleibt die wirksamste Entkräftung und beugt einer Anfälligkeit vor. (Somuncu, *Auf Lesereise* 344)

As Somuncu demonstrates in and with his performances, knowledge is the only real weapon we have against *Mein Kampf*, and the only truly effective means of waging the war of disempowerment against it. Banning Hitler's book without a serious commitment to this "Entkräftung" is folly (344), for as Somuncu wonders, "[w]ie können wir in der Gegenwart gewappnet sein wenn wir die Erkenntnisse der Vergangenheit noch nicht mal erkennen. Was sollen wir damit in der Zukunft erst anfangen?" ("Volk und Rasse").

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of neo-Nazis wanted to make a point. The right-wing extremist group *Nationale Bewegung* sent a letter threatening deadly action if the performance was not cancelled (Boran, "Geschichte" 269). After the decision was made to go ahead with the performance, in addition to the bulletproof vest, there was also heavy police protection (269). However, after it became clear that the threat was not going to be acted upon, Somuncu removed the vest (269). This was not the only threat Somuncu received over the years he toured with *Mein Kampf*; thankfully, he emerged unscathed.

Where One Has Gone Before: Test Results

In her book *Hundreds and Thousands*, artist Emily Carr writes, "You will have to experiment and try things out for yourself, and you will not be sure of what you are doing. That's all right; you are feeling your way into the thing" (111). This was written in the context of making art; however, I find it is also relevant to the present situation, in that I believe this is precisely what we (the audience) are doing when we encounter a 'Nazi', either in thought or with our senses. We are *feeling* our way into the thing; the 'thing' being our reaction or response to a 'Nazi'.

For this inaugural test run of the 'Nazi' framework, I elected to work with the uncanny because of its exceptional capacity for generating a strong viewer response in each of the chosen examples. In Chapter Two, the three television episodes create the uncanny – each in slightly different ways – by playing with the boundaries between the 'real' and the real. In "Deaths-Head Revisited," the steady intermingling between the 'real' and the real comes to a head when the camera abruptly switches to a first person (Lutze's) perspective, thereby removing any trace of a barrier between the two. In "He's Alive," the perpetual oscillation between the 'real' and the real is a result of their nearly constant co-existence; at one point, 'Hitler' and Hitler (his portrait) appear together on the stage. In "Patterns of Force," the confusion of seeing the past in the future becomes uncanny for the audience upon realizing that the 'real' is actually a performance that uses the real as its props. An alert audience will note one special moment in particular: when Hitler appears in the broadcast from 'Führer Headquarters' it transcends all levels of the performance. In Chapter Three, the analysis of Somuncu's performances (readings) of *Mein Kampf* demonstrates how subverting taboos through laughter serves as preparation

for one pivotal, uncanny moment. Somuncu lays the specific groundwork for this uncanny moment through the repetition of simple jokes. These jokes encourage the audience to settle into a rhythm of laughter, which in turn encourages them to let down their guard; this comfortable rhythm is especially important for the *Tierbeispiele*. After introducing and repeating the *Tierbeispiele* joke to great comedic effect, Somuncu brings it back one more time; however this time, it is not as expected. Confronted with the reality of what the *Tierbeispiele* really represent – the *KZ* – the audience faces the inharmonious link between the pleasure formerly taken in the joke and the revulsion of having laughed at it.

If we consider the conclusions drawn in the 'Preliminary Results' (Parts I and II), it becomes clear that even though all four examples approach the creation of the uncanny in different ways, in each case the uncanny draws out a similar, potent response from the audience. Each of these responses generates an opportunity whereby the uncanny serves to remind the audience of the past in order to make them aware of the power they hold over their present. The reasons for these reminders are closely connected to the temporal and geographical context of each example. For the three television episodes, the turbulent social and political atmosphere of 1960s America – especially in regards to racial tensions – speaks to the motivation behind the warning not forget the extreme consequences of intolerance ("Deaths-Head Revisited"), the reminder that hate and prejudice only thrive if we let it ("He's Alive"), and the knowledge that the future can still be changed for the better ("Patterns of Force"). In modern Germany, Somuncu's performances address the complicated task of moving forward, without doing so at the expense of forgetting, ignoring, or becoming complacent about working through the past.

For the audience, this reminder not only speaks to the processing of the country's Nazi past, but also to the working through of contemporary issues of intolerance and discrimination. In all four cases, the uncanny works as a wake-up call, pushing the audience out of their comfort zone, for the purposes of both a call to action and a warning to fight against complacency. Having carefully considered these specific conclusions, where do we go from here? How do these test results fit into the 'bigger picture'?

Let me begin by sharing a personal experience. At times during the preparation of this thesis – especially when I immersed myself in watching the example episodes – I became accustomed to seeing certain objects, the swastika for instance. It is not that I had forgotten what it symbolized; rather, much like a word repeated over and over, through its frequent presence, the signifier became disconnected from the raw power of the signified. For a time, I did not notice that I had become used to it; eventually, however, something woke me up. Like Somuncu's audience, in a moment, I became acutely (re)aware of what the swastika truly signifies: how it drips with the blood of millions of murdered people. I have gone through this cycle of disconnection and enlightenment numerous times, and each time I think that it will never happen again until, inevitably, it does. I know I am not alone in my experience, which is why I believe that this cycle is an important part of processing the 'Nazi'. Surrounded as we are in popular culture by 'Nazis' (as well as 'Nazi'/'Hitler' memes) of all descriptions, this cycle serves to remind us why we must guard against becoming desensitized to the 'Nazi'; the consequences of which are a slippery slope at best.

The driving force behind this entire thesis has been to consider the connection – that is, the nature of the interaction – between the 'Nazi' and the recipient (viewer,

audience, etc.) in order to examine how we characterize and interact with our past. This interaction is a circular, continuous process: how we feel about the past influences how we respond to the 'Nazi', and how we respond to the 'Nazi' is part of working through how we feel about the past. Thus, it is important to take an in-depth look at specific examples that demonstrated the reciprocal relationship (interaction) between the audience and the 'Nazi', in order to illuminate the dynamics of such a relationship. In the big picture, the impact of this is that the mindful consideration of these test examples brings a sense of awareness and cognisance of our own relationships/connections/interactions with the 'Nazi' ('Nazi'-mythology, etc.). Not only does this present an opportunity to affect our own individual or collective processing of these issues, it is also important because to truly look at the 'Nazi' is to critically think about what is being presented to us.

It is my aim to contribute to this field of research by creating and cultivating the 'Nazi' framework; that is, the terminology and concept of the 'Nazi', Nazi-as-character, and 'Nazi'-mythology. Therefore, I submit my findings as well as the 'Nazi' framework in the hope that others are able to utilize this framework and build upon it, because I see great potential for its use as a tool in centralizing the study of the 'Nazi' as a phenomenon in and of itself. The 'Nazi' is, without a doubt, a prominent and prevalent figure in the works of popular culture; moreover, it is one that continues to endure.[103]

Presnell and McGee write, "[f]irst, at the most basic aesthetic level, *The Twilight Zone* can best be described as the ultimate Rorschach: No matter how many people have seen the series, they all see something different" (6). I believe the same can be said about

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[103] As a character in mainstream feature films, the 'Nazi' shows little signs of slowing down. The latest (and perhaps most unusual) example that has come to my attention is an upcoming film called "Kung Fury"; wherein, according to the trailer, Adolf Hitler is known as the "Kung Führer."

the 'Nazi'; everyone sees "something different" based on their own individual

relationship to the past (6). Earlier I wrote that the 'Nazi' represents the negotiation

between what we remember of the past and what we need in the present. How we as

individuals respond to the 'Nazi' is the crux of this negotiation and a starting point for

what a 'Nazi' ultimately becomes. There are no hard and fast answers to the 'Nazi'. The

'Nazi' is what it is to each individual; we are all unique and are therefore not required, or

able, to respond in the same way. These responses are part of a dynamic process, a

constant negotiation that will continuously make adjustments as we continue to gather the

knowledge and experiences of life. Society is both the stimulus behind and the recipient

of popular culture and as the relationship with this figure continues to evolve, so will we

continue to process our feelings towards the Nazi by examining our feelings and

responses to the 'Nazi'.

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Appendix I – *The Twilight Zone*

Title Sequence: The Twilight Zone (Season 3)

You're travelling through another dimension. A dimension not only of sight and sound, but of mind. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination. Your next stop, The Twilight Zone.

Deaths-Head Revisited: Opening Monologue

Mr. Schmidt, recently arrived in a small Bavarian village which lies eight miles northwest of Munich. A picturesque, delightful little spot onetime known for its scenery, but more recently related to other events having to do with some of the less positive pursuits of man: human slaughter, torture, misery, and anguish. Mr. Schmidt, as we will soon perceive, has a vested interest in the ruins of a concentration camp; for once, some seventeen years ago, his name was Gunther Lutze. He held the rank of a captain in the S.S. He was a black-uniformed, strutting animal whose function in life was to give pain, and like his colleagues of the time he shared the one affliction most common amongst that breed known as Nazis: he walked the Earth without a heart. And now former S.S. Captain Lutze will revisit his old haunts, satisfied perhaps that all that is awaiting him in the ruins on the hill is an element of nostalgia. What he does not know, of course, is that a place like Dachau cannot exist only in Bavaria. By its nature, by its very nature, it must be one of the populated areas of the Twilight Zone.

Deaths-Head Revisited: Closing Monologue

"Dachau. Why does it still stand? Why do we keep it standing?"
<div align="right">- (The doctor who examines him)</div>

There is an answer to the doctor's question. All the Dachaus must remain standing. The Dachaus, the Belsens, the Buchenwalds, the Auschwitzes - all of them. They must remain standing because they are a monument to a moment in time when some men decided to turn the Earth into a graveyard. Into it they shoveled all of their reason, their logic, their knowledge, but worst of all, their conscience. And the moment we forget this, the moment we cease to be haunted by its remembrance, then we become the gravediggers. Something to dwell on and to remember, not only in the Twilight Zone but wherever men walk God's Earth.

Title Sequence: Twilight Zone (Season 4)[104]

You unlock this door with the key of imagination. Beyond it is another dimension. A dimension of sound. A dimension of sight. A dimension of mind. You're moving into a land of both shadow and substance. Of things and ideas. You've just crossed over into ... The Twilight Zone.

He's Alive: Opening Monologue

Portrait of a bush-league Führer named Peter Vollmer. A sparse little man who feeds off his self-delusions, and finds himself perpetually hungry for want of greatness in his diet. And like some goose-stepping predecessors he searches for something to explain his hunger, and to rationalize why a world passes him by without saluting. The something he looks for and finds is in a sewer. In his own twisted and distorted lexicon he calls it faith, strength, truth. But in just a moment Peter Vollmer will ply his trade on another kind of corner, a strange intersection in a shadowland called ... The Twilight Zone.

He's Alive: Closing Monologue:

Where will he go next, this phantom from another time, this resurrected ghost of a previous nightmare - Chicago; Los Angeles; Miami, Florida; Vincennes, Indiana; Syracuse, New York? Anyplace, everyplace, where there's hate, where there's prejudice, where there's bigotry. He's alive. He's alive so long as these evils exist. Remember that when he comes to your town. Remember it when you hear his voice speaking out through others. Remember it when you hear a name called, a minority attacked, any blind, unreasoning assault on a people or any human being. He's alive because through these things we keep him alive.

The Twilight Zone* Franchise
Original Series: Oct 2, 1959 – June 19, 1964 (5 seasons)
2nd Run: Sept. 27, 1985 – Apr. 15, 1989 (3 seasons)
3rd Run: Sept. 18, 2002 – May 21, 2003 (1 season)
Feature Film: 1983
Magazine: 1981 –June 1989
*Pinball machine*s
Radio Dramas: 2002 – present (time of writing)[105]

* This is not an exhaustive list

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[104] No 'the' as per the name change.

[105] For more information , please visit *The Twilight Zone*® Radio Dramas' website:
  <http://www.twilightzoneradio.com/>

Appendix II – *Star Trek*

Star Trek: The Original Series **Opening Narration:**

Space … the final frontier. These are the voyages of the starship Enterprise. Its five year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before.

This narration changed slightly over time; the most notable change being the replacement of 'man' with 'one' at the end of *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* (1991). The opening sequence of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, which started in 1987, always used 'one'.

Star Trek **– Feature Films**

Star Trek: The Motion Picture (1979)
Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan (1982)
Star Trek III: The Search for Spock (1984)
Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home (1986)
Star Trek V: The Final Frontier (1989)
Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country (1991)
Star Trek Generations (1994)
Star Trek: First Contact (1996)
Star Trek: Insurrection (1998)
Star Trek: Nemesis (2002)
Star Trek (2009)*
Star Trek Into Darkness (2013)*

*Reboot films