

“Former Nazi In Hiding”

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Historical Memory, Guilt, and the Problem of Forgiveness

Dear “Former Nazi in hiding,”

It has been several decades since Holocaust and the brutal Nazi regime. The world has changed and become a better, more peaceful and comparatively tolerant place where diversity is now accepted. The world is changing for the good and for the betterment of humanity. Nazi regime has met its fate and is no longer a threat to the world. However, we must remember that in the times of Hitler and the Nazi regime, the Jews were almost wiped out. “Did any of them reflect that there were still Jews and as long as they were there, as long as the Nazis were still busy with the Jews, they would leave the citizens alone?” (Wiesenthal 13-14). I believe the answer would have been a clear no! Therefore, I believe that forgiving a former, hiding Nazi cannot be a justified decision; however, if you have the courage to accept your crimes and face the trials, then you can have conditional forgiveness.

Accountability, Testimony, and Moral Responsibility

However, forgiving a former Nazi is not an easy task because the damage has already been done. In *The Sunflower*, Wiesenthal commented, “Moreover, when the killing has stopped, how can people make peace with one another who moments before were their mortal enemies? What are the limits of forgiveness, and is repentance -religious or secular – enough? Is it possible to forgive and not forget? How can victims come to peace with their past and hold on to their humanity and morals in the process?” (XII). Under such conditions, how can a Nazi be forgiven unless he is guilty and ready to face the trials? You may refer to the guilt and humiliation that the dying Nazi soldier felt when he stated that I am resigned to dying soon, but before that, I want to talk about an experience which is torturing me. Otherwise, I cannot die in peace” (27). I believe this is a lesson to learn for you: if you want to die in peace and live a guilty, less life, you must face the truth and come forward.

You must understand that the world has progressed and become more tolerant. However, we have not forgotten that Hitler is still one of the most widely known negative personalities all around the world. He is known for the mass murder of the Jewish community in Germany. He had complete command of his army and the important political figures that would constitute such political policies that allowed him to do so. He is responsible for the killing of hundreds and thousands of Jews and

later made the towers out of their skulls as a sign of victory. The reasons, in this case, are both personal as well as political. It is Personal in the sense that his mind was more inclined towards the negative pleasures, and the sight of blood and gore would please him. Hitler has been symbolized and portrayed as a devilish leader with an extremely evil mentality and psychology.

Cultural Representations and Interpretations of Hitler

I believe that if you want forgiveness, then you have to act as a witness to the crimes committed by Hitler and have to accept the cruelties that were done in that era. Because our generation needs to know the truth as a first-hand account of a Nazi, it is important because “The schools would fail through their silence, the Church through its forgiveness, and the home through the denial and silence of the parents. The new generation has to hear what the older generation refuses to tell it” (Wiesenthal). Identifying the right witness and hearing the right incidents and events from him is an important perspective, as “Discovering witnesses is just as important as catching criminals” (Wiesenthal). If you could accept your crimes and show that you are guilty, then there are high chances that you will be forgiven.

Hellboy, or Hitler as you call him, successfully negotiated the movement to the movie screen, becoming one of the recent members of a demonic-Nazi genre whose most famous representative is probably Raiders of the Lost Ark which Nazis try to steal the Ark of the Covenant. Hitler’s satanic followers have also shown up in video games, notably in the well-known Castle Wolfenstein series, where the player is ordered to shut down a whole series of hellish Nazi activities. It gives the number of deaths Hitler and the Nazi movement were responsible for. Nevertheless, it does not merely have the function of condemning. It also explains, on a subconscious level, our uneasiness with not just the extent of the damage Hitler did but the fact of his existence.

The Holocaust and the Scale of Nazi Atrocity

However, in recent times, there are some historians who wanted to understand the actions, decisions, and cruelties of Hitler by reasoning and different perspectives. I am sure that if you still believe in Hitler, you will also have an explanation for his actions and decisions as well. However, the aftermath of the impact of his decisions and actions is evident, and he does not need a justification or clearance.

It must be understood that the Holocaust is considered a standout amongst the most horrific times confronted by the Jewish community in Europe and the world on the loose. German dictator Adolf Hitler is reprimanded for having launched the Holocaust, which saw more than ten million individuals murdered, including something like six million Jews. Hitler was known to be an extremely anti-Semitic character, as reflected in his Mein Kampf. Despite the fact that a significant part of the fault for the Holocaust has been put on Hitler, he is not exclusively to be faulted as different reasons might be

recognized to have started the holocaust.

The Holocaust is viewed as a systematic state-supported oppression and murder that was guided towards the Jewish community in Europe simply before the Second World War. It is guaranteed that nearly six million Jews were murdered by the Nazi administration together with their accomplices. The Holocaust did focus on the Jewish community as well as different gatherings that were seen to be substandard, including the Roma, the debilitated, and individuals of the Slavic source.

The Demonic Hitler and the Search for Explanation

The Holocaust is known as the most devastating, or maybe even the most devastating, episode in mankind's history. The mass executions, the horrible conditions, the heartlessness, and the latency of the lion's share of witnesses to the traumatic occasions all would appear that a giant, curved story smothered to the extent of alarming kids. In a period of edginess, when a nation was on its knees to whatever was left of the world, small-time united Germans against a substitute, as well as controlled them into committing practically unspeakable unlawful acts against their 'enemies.' The atrocities included ghettos where occupants were pushed together into excessively little living spaces to the concentration camps themselves, where medical experiments, starvation, constrained work, gassings, beatings, and mass shootings happened. Apparently, common individuals were fit for appalling deeds.

Why do we need an explanation for Hitler so badly? The answer lies in the way we tend to see the world. Most people operate with a set of assumptions about society that has been summed up as the Just World fallacy. It is socially necessary for people to believe that their success depends on their efforts and that their efforts will be rewarded – that the world will repay their diligence in a fair manner. The less fortunate flip side of this is that those who do not succeed are assumed to be undeserving when they may merely be unlucky. A few people have always reacted that way to the Holocaust and mass murder of civilians in Eastern Europe, but to the moral sense of the average citizen, the idea that twelve or fourteen million people somehow “deserved it” is repulsive. Then how can we have our belief in the overall justice of the world? One way is to postulate an outside thing that worked through actors such as Hitler to defy justice and distort the usual pattern of just rewards and punishments. For it, vague demonic forces are ideal, even though there are not many who would care to openly proclaim belief in their efficacy nowadays.

Some, however, would go further are the people who explain Hitler's rise not by the force of some shapeless Spirit of Evil but by the Fuhrer's active courting of the powers of Hell. There is a certain amount of evidence that might be interpreted this way, as we shall see, though as far as Hitler himself is concerned, the claim is tenuous.

The “demonic” Hitler has proven too useful to let go easily conversely (Maiolo 178). Apart from his utility in explaining why the moral balance had been so grossly disturbed, comparing Hitler with devils has also served another purpose: to excuse those who followed him in his campaigns of violence and

terror. The most prominent Nazi to save his skin by using this excuse was none other than Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and Minister of Armaments. Speer crafted his entire story after the war, from Nuremberg to his self-exculpatory memoirs, on the master narrative of him as Faust and Hitler as Mephistopheles. This made his uncritical acceptance of the Nazi Party more sympathetic and human since it made it appear that he had been set upon by an inhuman force and swept off his feet.

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