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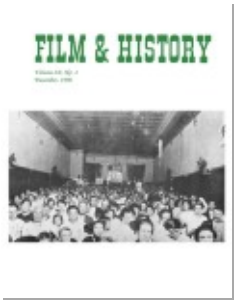

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Edward M. V. Plater

The "Captain of Köpenick" refers to a real person, an unemployed cobbler by the name of Wilhelm Voigt, who lived in Wilhelmine Germany and gained fame as the result of an incident in 1906 that caused a great stir. In desperate straits, Voigt put on an old captain's uniform, commandeered a squadron of soldiers in broad daylight on a street in Berlin, and ordered them to Köpenick, where with their assistance he arrested the mayor and absconded with the town's cash box. The incident epitomized to the amusement of some and the grave concern of others, the excessive respect for uniformed authority that existed in the Germany of Wilhelm II. It has become a part of the German collective consciousness, as is evidenced by the fact that the word "Köpenickiade," referring to a hoax involving impersonation, is a standard entry in German dictionaries today.

The most significant literary treatment of the incident is Carl Zuckmayer's play *The Captain of Köpenick*, which premiered in Berlin on March 5, 1931, a quarter of a century after the sensational incident and just nine years after Voigt's death. The material was particularly well suited to the times, for it addressed directly the new uniform craze that was sweeping the country in the form of the private armies of the National Socialists, who, outfitted in military-styled uniforms, were parading through the streets of the cities and staging mass rallies for the eyes and hearts of the German people. Zuckmayer, writing later in his autobiography *A Part of Myself*, commented on the political intent of his play: "Friend and foe alike understood the play as the political act it was meant to be"[1] and "although the story was more than twenty years old, it was highly pertinent at this very moment, in the year 1930, when the Nazis were entering the Reichstag as the second-largest party and thrusting the nation into a new craze for uniforms. The story was an image, a farcical mirror image, of the evils and dangers that were growing in Germany, but also of the hope that they could be

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overcome as the shoemaker had overcome his difficulties by native wit and humane insight."[2]

Another quarter of a century later, in 1956, Helmut Käutner made a film version of Zuckmayer's play--it was actually a refilming of it, since Richard Oswald had adapted it to the screen in 1931. It is not unreasonable to assume that Käutner's interest in adapting the play to the screen had to do with the message the Köpenick material contained for his contemporaries. In the mid-1950s Germany--at least the major portion of it--was again faced with the spectre of the uniform, as it had been in 1931. The Korean War, the fear that Communist aggression could unleash a similar conflict in divided Germany, and mounting tensions of the Cold War in general had convinced the U.S. and Western European governments of the need for a strong international defense force that would include troops from the rapidly recovering and strategically crucial Federal Republic. The establishment of a West German army, even though it was to be completely subordinated to NATO, was strongly opposed by large segments of the population. The Social Democratic Party, on principle opposed to the policies of the ruling Christian Democrats, was in the forefront of the fight against rearmament. But all the speeches, marches, and demonstrations were to no avail. In May, 1955, the Paris Treaties went into effect, which resulted in the Federal Republic's becoming a member of NATO; and on New Year's Day, 1956, the first West German army recruits reported to camp. In March of the same year, at the very time that Käutner began shooting *The Captain of Köpenick*, the West German parliament was amending the Constitution of the Federal Republic to give legal sanction to rearmament; and in July of the same year, just a month before the premiere of Käutner's film, parliament passed a conscription law which required all able-bodied young men of the Federal Republic to serve in the newly established *Bundeswehr*.

Critics have generally agreed that the film's position with regard to these developments is much the same as the play's had been with regard to the rise of National Socialism, i.e. that it exposes through satire and comedy the danger of an uncritical acceptance of the military and the military mentality. Wolfgang Ebert, writing in 1956 in *Die Zeit*, called attention to the lesson it contained for Germans of that time: "Here a mirror has been uncovered that reveals the trust in authority, the cockiness of public officials, the idolization of the state, the abstraction of the human element to the point of its destruction, and nationalism without national feeling--a mirror that unmasks but whose image does not hurt the observer or make him recoil *though it does fill him with consternation and make him thoughtful* " (translation mine).[3] The reviewer for *Der Spiegel* stated

that "the director Käutner. . . destroys the magic of the Prussian uniform" (translation mine).[4] *Variety* called it "a heavy attack against Prussian militarism."[5] And *The New York Times* critic spoke of "this joke on a social system" as "the major concern," adding that "Herr Käutner has kept it strongly foremost in his skillful direction of the film."[6] Yet as early as 1958 this view was challenged, in a review by Robert Hughes in *Film Culture*,[7] and in 1986 Russell Berman claimed in an essay entitled "A return to arms: Käutner's *The Captain of Köpenick* (1956)," that certain revisions in the film indicate "an intention to rephrase the basic story."[8] He went on to assert that the film offers a "radical reversal of the traditional Köpenick material, the presentation of an attractive militarism," and concluded that it argued in favor of the rearmament of Germany that was taking place at the time of its release (p. 172ff.).

Although I readily concede, as do most critics, that the condemnation of the military and the military mentality is somewhat tempered by the wistful portrait of Berlin in the days of the Kaiser and by humorous and sentimental moments in the story, I do not agree with Berman's assessment of the film's ideological content. For one thing, it does not square with the strong antiwar message of other films Käutner made around the same time, films such as *Die letzte Brücke* (1953) or *Ein Mädchen aus Flandern* (1956). Above all, however, it is not supported by any evidence from the film itself. A close examination of the changes made in adapting the play to the screen will reveal that the film does, indeed, echo the general ideological tendency of the play, by exposing in a tragicomic manner the danger posed by a society's infatuation with the uniform.

Of course, not all the changes made in the adaptation process need be closely scrutinized, for many are due simply to differences in the nature of the two mediums or to differences in the aesthetic sensibilities of the two artists and have nothing to do with politics or ideology. For example, the scene in which Voigt and Kalle break into the police station in Potsdam and the immediately following scene the next morning in which they are hauled off to prison seem to have been added for the purpose of providing a transition between major segments of the narrative, thereby increasing the film's dramatic continuity. In the play we do not see the break-in; Wormser simply reads about it in the newspaper (at the end of Act I), and in the next scene (at the beginning of Act II) we see Voigt among his fellow inmates in the prison chapel.

The series of brief scenes of Voigt commandeering a passing troop of soldiers, taking them by train to Köpenick, and arriving with them outside the town hall also increases the dramatic continuity. They are a function of the new medium, in which it is easier to make many, quick scene changes than on the

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stage and which by nature is less wordy and more inclined to presenting action and making full use of the visual image. As such they do not concern us here.

The changes we will examine are, rather, those which give some hint, however, uncertain, of being related to the historical period in which the film was made. For example, the scene of the demonstration at the time of Voigt's release from prison, a scene not found in the play, which ends prior to his imprisonment, has a direct bearing on the question raised by Berman's essay, for it put audiences of 1956 in the position of having to sympathize with characters whom they would have associated with the opposite sides of the rearmament question that occupied the public's attention at the time. The warden, who proudly speaks of the privilege that was his to serve his country during the Franco-Prussian War, and whom audiences of 1956 would therefore have associated with the pro-military side of the issue, is nevertheless a thoroughly likable, kind-hearted soul, genuinely concerned about the treatment and the future welfare of the men entrusted to his care. Consequently even the members of audiences in the '50s who opposed rearmament could not have but sympathized with him, especially when he expresses the fear that the people demonstrating outside the prison for Voigt's release, people who he claims were organized by the Leftist press, could cost him his job. Yet this crowd would have been associated in 1956 with the anti-militarist side of the *Bundeswehr* debate, since their organization by the Leftist press places them in that very socio-economic class from which political parties like the SPD, whose newspaper is represented in the scene, recruited their supporters. At the same time, even those in the audience who favored rearmament could not but have agreed with these very demonstrators, since they too sympathize with Voigt and want him released from prison. He is, after all, one of them, and has become a kind of hero to them for having duped both the military and civilian authorities.[9]

This is the only time in the film that audiences of 1956 saw characters whom they would have associated with opposite sides of the rearmament issue in direct conflict with each other; and Käutner, instead of seeking to elicit sympathy for one side or the other, put the viewer in the position of having to sympathize with both--a clear indication that for him rearmament was not the central concern of the film. Indeed, given the fact that the Federal Republic had already joined NATO and started training its first recruits when Käutner began shooting his film, it is logical to assume that he had accepted the establishment of the *Bundeswehr* as a *fait accompli* and that his adaptation of Zuckmayer's play was motivated, rather, by the wish to warn his fellow countrymen, as Zuckmayer had tried to warn an earlier generation, of the danger that lurked in the uncritical acceptance of the military. This danger, of course, as Zuckmayer's play points out so

effectively, is that a cult of the uniform could develop, i.e. excessive respect for the military, which could result in a kind of military mentality--one that puts rules and regulations above humane considerations, insisting on the most rigid adherence to the letter of the law.

Moreover, although the warden's speech from the play about the privilege of fighting for the fatherland is retained in the film, that part of it which praises universal conscription as a "beneficial institution" [10] is cut, which suggests, if anything, an anti-military stance on the part of the director. After all, he thereby passed up the opportunity to lend support to the pro-military forces in the West German parliament, who were pushing for the passage of a universal conscription law at the very time that Käutner was working on the film.

Furthermore, the many shots of marching soldiers in smart-looking uniforms that were added in the film version of the play are not, as Berman contends, for the purpose of idealizing the military as part of a strategy to support the idea of the *Bundeswehr* (p. 171). Their purpose is, rather, to make the enthusiastic acceptance of the military by Wilhelmine society convincing to us so that we, in turn, will find the success of Voigt's masquerade convincing. Repeatedly showing the military in a positive light thus serves an indispensable function in the overall strategy of the plot. Zuckmayer's statement regarding the image of the military in his play is equally valid for Käutner's film: "The very fact that here too the 'other side,' above all the military, was not simply castigated but represented with an attempt at justice, lent a special force to the play and its ideas, without the distrust and nasty aftertaste that a one-sided view, or propaganda, always inspires."[11]

Other significant visual details in Käutner's film--details which are not indicated in the stage directions of the play and in part are only possible because of the mobile camera--provide further evidence to refute Berman's claim. For example, in the scene in which Voigt's bid for work in a shoe factory is rejected because his papers are not in order, the personnel manager starts to push him away with a yardstick. At this point the camera cuts to an exaggerated low-angle point-of-view shot, which makes the yardstick appear disproportionately large, extending across the entire frame, and we see the personnel manager bend it as if he were flexing his muscle, as he looks down at Voigt and berates him for his failure to keep his papers in order, which he attributes to his never having served in the military. By viewing this in close-up, from Voigt's point-of-view, we experience the intimidation to which he is subjected as if we were standing there with him, and recoil from the threat embodied in the bent yardstick as if it were

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meant for us. Thus the film heightens our sympathy for Voigt and our resentment of the influence of the military in civilian life.

In the next scene we find Voigt at the police station in Rixdorf, seeking a residency permit. Much of the dialogue is taken over directly from scene two of Zuckmayer's play, which takes place at the police station in Potsdam, and gives vivid expression to the cold-hearted inflexibility with which the Prussian military mentality had infected society at large. The callousness is visually underscored by the shot with which the scene begins, a close-up of a police officer raising a piece of food to his mouth on the tip of a knife as he says: "But come again when you have work. Without work I cannot give you a residency certificate,"[12] whereupon the camera pans left to reveal Voigt, who replies: "No, no. It's a regular coffee mill. Without work I don't get any papers, and without papers I don't get any work."[13] Unlike the play, in which the police officer prepares to leave for lunch at the end of the scene, the film has the officer eating throughout it, thereby suggesting to us visually his ultimate indifference to Voigt's plight. This is also conveyed by the fact that the officer remains seated at his desk throughout the interview while Voigt is forced to stand behind a railing. We are reminded of this inconsiderateness even when only one of them is in the frame by subjective high- and low-angle camera shots that indicate their respective lines of vision.

Käutner interjects his own point of view even more emphatically when he cuts from Voigt, who has been explaining why he has come to Rixdorf of all places, to a close-up of crumbs lying on the police officer's desk. The camera position remains unchanged as the officer carelessly places Voigt's file on top of the crumbs and begins to leaf through it. The close-up represents neither Voigt's nor the officer's point-of-view, but the filmmaker's. It is what he wants us to see, and it clearly tells us where his sympathies lie. The shot ends, then, with a cut to the officer looking up at Voigt as he intones reproachfully: "Fifteen years for falsification of postal documents?!"[14]

After a scene only alluded to in the play,[15] in which Voigt unsuccessfully seeks his birth certificate at the registrar's office in his home town and which ends with the registrar sicking his dog on him, there follows another scene at a police station, in which much of the dialogue is again taken from scene two of Zuckmayer's play and again reveals the heartlessness and inflexibility of civilian authorities. Voigt has come here in his continuing quest of the papers he needs in order to survive and meets with the same intransigence he has encountered everywhere. The film underscores visually the officer's ultimate indifference to Voigt's plight by having him repeatedly get up from his desk and turn his back on Voigt in order to take care of things completely unrelated to Voigt's case. After

a while he walks across the room to cover a bird cage and then announces that it is closing time.

The final shot of the scene is a particularly striking visual summing-up of the situation. The police captain, angered by Voigt's desperate suggestion that he have him sent back to prison if he cannot give him his papers, orders him to leave. Voigt glumly puts on his hat and turns toward the door, on which is visible the eagle of the German Empire. The camera pans right and comes to a stop behind the police captain, peering through the opening between his torso and the crook of his left arm. In this small space we see the figure of Voigt, who dejectedly opens the door, picks up the cardboard box containing his belongings and then looks back at the captain and asks in a scarcely audible voice: "Where shall I go now?"[16] He then leaves, closing the door behind him, whereupon the police captain turns around toward the camera, completely obstructing the view and blocking out the light, thus bringing the scene to a close.

The dark, shadowy silhouette of the police captain, squarely facing his supplicant, his hands resolutely placed upon his hips, his considerable bulk magnified out of proportion by the close proximity of the camera lens, embodies the inscrutable and unassailable state bureaucracy that rigidly adheres to existing regulations even when they fly in the face of reason and human decency. And the image of Voigt, a stooped and forlorn figure, appearing at a distance like a defenseless little dwarf in the armhold of a giant, expresses the helplessness of the little man up against unyielding civilian authorities. The eagle on the door, finally, symbolizes the Prussian state, that has indoctrinated society with its military mentality. It is indeed a striking visual summing-up of the central conflict of the story.

As we see, then, Käutner uses the means of expression at his disposal as a filmmaker--dissolves, striking camera angles, close-ups, blocking, etc.--to heighten our sympathy for the hero and increase our aversion to the Prussian military mentality that thwarts the hero's quest for reinstatement in society. This indication of the film's fidelity to its source in its attitude toward uniformed authority and military values militates against the argument that it favored the establishment of the *Bundeswehr*.

What remains to consider of the relevant material added in the adaptation process are the scenes at the beginning and end of the film. These scenes, which are especially important because of their privileged position in the overall structure of the work, reinforce, as we shall see, in a most emphatic manner what the evidence already examined has indicated.

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The play begins with the scene in Wormser's tailor shop in which Captain von Schlettow is complaining about the placement of the tail buttons of his new uniform being a fraction of a centimeter off. Voigt appears outside of the shop but is chased away by the owner before the audience learns who he is and what he wants--things we only learn in the next scene. The film, on the other hand, introduces Voigt to us before he appears outside of Wormser's shop. At first we see only the lower half of his body, including the cardboard suitcase, which is held by his left hand, as he tries in vain to keep up and get in step with columns of soldiers marching along the street to the music of a popular Berlin tune, "Denkst du denn, denkst du denn, du Berliner Pflanze. . . ." The camera then tilts up to reveal the rest of him, as a companion, a fellow ex-convict named Kalle, calls out his name and grabs him by the arm to ask him why he is in such a hurry. The shot of Voigt's feet as he tries in vain to get in step with the marching soldiers expresses here, at the outset, in purely visual terms the basic situation of the story. It is the concrete externalization of a desire, the desire of an outcast for reintegration into a society dominated by the military. Voigt's reply to Kalle's question, however, distances him from the other citizens whom we see merrily following the soldiers down the street. He, we learn, was running after the soldiers not because his heart swells with patriotic pride at the sight of them but for a purely practical reason--as a would-be cobbler he wished to get a better look at the boots the soldiers were wearing. Thus, although Voigt strives to get in step with the military, i.e. to become reintegrated into Wilhelmine society, his wish does not necessarily extend to embracing the military aspect of it. That is merely something he must accept if he is to regain a place for himself in his native land.

The same applies to the hero of Zuckmayer's play. Here too Voigt is simply too weighed down by his own predicament to become infected by society's infatuation with the military. And the end of the play gives us no reason to think that his attitude has changed. In the last scene, at police headquarters in Berlin, he requests a mirror in order to have a look at himself for the first time in the captain's uniform in which he had carried out his masquerade. When he sees himself in the mirror, he begins to laugh uncontrollably, finally managing to blurt out the word "Impossible!!" just before the final stage direction "Darkness."[17] He remains resilient and good-natured to the end, concerned solely about his own fate, content with the prospect of another prison term and trusting that, when it is served, he will finally be granted his passport, in accordance with the bargain he struck before turning himself in. Nor is he turned into a bitter revolutionary by his experiences, prepared to fight for sweeping reforms to make things easier for future Wilhelm Voigts.

Unlike the play, the film provides an ending to satisfy the interest the audience has invested in Voigt's struggle to be reinstated in society. This ending tells us that though imprisoned once again, Voigt is pardoned by the Emperor and that, besieged by marriage proposals and requests for autographed pictures of himself, he anticipates making capital out of his newly acquired celebrity. One reason for this difference may be that in 1931, when the play first appeared, the sensational incident on which it is based may still have been sufficiently fresh in people's minds to render an account of the outcome unnecessary, while by 1956 too much time had passed for one to rely on such familiarity. In any case, the quote from "Die Bremer Town Musicians" which appears at the very end of the play, after the final stage direction: "'Come with us,' said the rooster, 'we'll find something better than death wherever we go!'"[18] and which we are already encouraged to apply to Voigt in the second act (scene twelve), provides us with a subtle hint of the outcome, if we but recall the happy change in luck that awaited the town musicians in the fairy tale.

Other possible explanations, such as differences in the personalities or aesthetic sensibilities of the playwright and the filmmaker--perhaps Käutner felt a greater need to tie together loose ends (although one mustn't forget that Zuckmayer collaborated on the film's script)--or differences in their perception of their respective audiences--perhaps Käutner felt film audiences were generally a little less sophisticated than those of the legitimate theater and would expect to have the outcome spelled out more clearly--do not concern us here, since our purpose is to determine to what extent Käutner's film adheres to the underlying ideological message of its source.

Besides the explanation already offered, however, that the film was twice as far removed in time from the actual event and hence needed to supply audiences with information the play had been able to presuppose, there is another explanation, one that does, in fact, reinforce our preliminary conclusion regarding the film's position toward the military. This becomes clear from a close examination of the final scene.

This scene yields its meaning most readily when one compares it with the opening scene of the film, with which it has significant elements in common. In the scene at the end of the film Voigt is again called by name, though this time not by a former prison buddy but by complete strangers--a group of children who recognize him as "The Captain of Köpenick!" The difference is symptomatic of the general change in his luck from an unknown ex-convict to a celebrated hero. He is again in his civilian clothes, having given away the uniform through which he achieved reintegration. As he approaches a corner of the prison building from

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the right--he had also just been released from prison at the beginning of the film--he encounters soldiers marching, as in the opening scene, to the music of "Denkst du denn..." coming around the building from the left. He steps aside to let them pass and then proceeds around the corner of the building, stopping to pick a flower for his hat before moving jauntily on in step with the music toward the top left of the frame away from the camera. Then, before the final fade-out, the camera pans left to reveal a scarecrow sporting the uniform of the Captain of Köpenick.

Voigt's acceptance of the title bestowed upon him by the children does not imply an acceptance of the military order, as Berman states (p. 169-71). After all, it is by duping the military that he has achieved fame, and his cheerful acknowledgement of the children's epithet is informed by an appreciation of its inherent irony. This is reinforced by Voigt's not attempting to get in step with the soldiers, as at the beginning of the film, but on the contrary proceeding in the opposite direction from that in which they are marching. The visual message thus communicated is that Voigt does not embrace the military mentality that the soldiers, with their uniform attire, correct bearing, and precision movements, represent. The idea that Käutner deliberately sought here to communicate this message gains support from a comparison of the moment with the corresponding moment in the Oswald film, in which, as Robert Hughes states, Voigt, "his feet electrified, marches off in their [the soldiers'] company."[19] Since, according to Herman G. Weinberg, Käutner followed the script of Oswald's film "almost scene for scene and word for word,"[20] his alteration of such a privileged moment in the narrative must have been for a specific purpose, and what other purpose could he have had in mind than to underscore his hero's anti-military stance.

The fact that Voigt steps aside instead of obstructing the forward motion of the soldiers indicates that he is not a rebel seeking sweeping social, political, or legal reforms. He is just a poor, sorely mistreated individual who asks for nothing more than the redress of his own personal grievance.

His stopping to pick a flower for his hat reflects the cheerful mood he is in as a result of his release from prison and the change in his luck that his masquerade has brought about. But it also says--particularly when one contrasts this image with that of the uniformed and regimented columns of soldiers who have just exited the frame--that the hero of the story is a gentle, sensitive, even romantic soul, basically out of step with the military, at odds with the military mentality.

Finally, the very last shot of the film, which shows the uniform covering the limbs of a scarecrow, sums up in a single visual image not only Voigt's attitude

toward the cult of the uniform but the entire film's position as well. Once described, by Wabschke, as "a work of art, a part of man, his better skin, so to speak,"[21] turning von Schlettow as if by magic into a dashing officer who commands authority and respect, the uniform has here suffered a severe blow to its prestige, having been reduced to the lowly task of scaring away crows in an allotment garden. The fact that it does this on its own makes the image a perfect choice to express the very crux of the story, for it says not only that the uniform itself, the mere outward appearance of authority, without the presence of a human being to flesh out its contours, breathe life into it, and provide the mind and heart to direct it from within, is enough to intimidate and frighten away; but also that the proper place for such authority that commands respect by virtue of outward appearance alone is emphatically not in human society but on the limbs of a lifeless scarecrow standing guard over the humble domain of an allotment garden. Thus this final image serves brilliantly to put the cult of the uniform once and for all in its place.[22]

Having thus established the film's underlying ideological position as being decidedly anti-militaristic, we can now also consider Berman's interpretation of what he refers to as "auxiliary thematic devices" (p. 172), which, he asserts, play an indispensable role in the film's presentation of an "attractive militarism" (p. 172). Of the several he discusses, including even homosexual eroticism (p. 174) and transvestism (p. 174), we will look at only those which in our view warrant consideration. There is, first of all, his claim that the sentimental portrait of Berlin promoted the idea of rearmament in the Federal Republic. True, the film's depiction of Berlin, including the addition of such songs as "Heimweh nach Berlin" and "Berlin, ich kann dir nicht vergessen," with their undeniable appeal to a sentimental nationalism, did give expression to a deep-seated longing on the part of the West Germans for their former capital. This longing was, in fact, officially endorsed at the time by, for example, the *Bundestag*'s sponsorship of a competition entitled "Capital Berlin," the purpose of which was to prepare for the restoration of Berlin as the capital of a reunited Germany.[23] But to suggest that its sentimental depiction promoted the idea of rearmament as the way to accomplish this is unconvincing. After all, even when Berlin is once again the capital of a united Germany, films will still present nostalgic portraits of the city in the days of the Kaisers, when, to post-World War audiences, life was much simpler and more innocent. Furthermore, Käutner seems to poke fun at his portrait of Berlin even as he creates it, especially in the cameo roles in which he and his wife Erica Balqué appear as street musicians singing outlandishly sentimental songs about the city. As authentic as such characters may be, their

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exaggerated Berlin accent, their unexpressive style of delivery, and the hilarious appearance, particularly of Käutner himself, keeping time by striking the drum mounted on his back with drumsticks attached to his elbows, can only have the effect of dispelling through laughter any chauvinistic feelings that the portrait of the city may otherwise encourage.

Let us next consider the elimination of references to Jews in Käutner's film. There are several such references in the play. The stage directions identify Krakauer, the second-hand clothing dealer from whom Voigt buys his captain's uniform, as a Jew, and there is the humiliating experience he relates of being refused admittance to the palace at Potsdam on a Sunday outing because his presence would have disturbed the officers who happened to be inside.[24] There is also Dr. Jellinek's insulting allusion "Not so fat as usual among Jews, eh?" when von Schlettow asks the waiter at the Cafe National for ham that is "cooked, but not so fat,"[25] and the police officer's words, vaguely offensive in tone, when he asks Voigt: "Why didn't you stay with your Jew then?"[26] Finally, the play refers in the stage directions not only to Krakauer but also to Wormser and his son Willy as Jews. All of these references to Jews were purged in Käutner's adaptation. Berman explains their elimination as a reflection of the desire to repress the crimes of the Third Reich in order to promote the resurrection of the German military in the form of the *Bundeswehr* (p. 173). Such an interpretation, however, ignores the obvious fact that Käutner sought to retain the humor of the play in his screen adaptation and for that reason had to eliminate the references to Jews. The stereotypes and jokes that may still have been somehow acceptable in 1931 were no longer so after the Second World War and the exposure of the extent of Nazi atrocities committed against the Jews and would therefore obviously have undermined Käutner's wish to entertain audiences, as Zuckmayer had done, with an amusing comedy.

Finally, the choice of a Sudeten-German to replace the Jewish second-hand clothing dealer does not "suggest a potential function for the new military forces, the reconquest of the old *Heimat*," as Berman maintains (p. 173). There is, first of all, nothing in the dialogue to suggest that this was Käutner's intention. Krakauer's identity as a Sudeten-German is merely used to advance the plot. The wily businessman seizes upon the fact that Voigt is familiar with the area he is from as an excuse to offer him a discount on the uniform and thus increase his chances of making a sale. If the large number of displaced Germans in the Federal Republic from the Czech border area influenced Käutner's choice, then surely only by virtue of their presence in the public mind in the post-war years. Reading a militant nationalism into Krakauer's new ethnic identity runs counter

to the conclusive evidence we have adduced of the film's underlying ideological position. When Käutner's choice is viewed, as it must be, within the context of this position, then Berman's claim falls apart. It is far more reasonable to assume that the idea of transforming Krakauer into a Bohemian was suggested by the passages in the play in which Voigt tells of having been in Bohemia[27] and speaks at length of the "Bohemian Sudeten Mountains."[28]

One could go on with other examples, but the conclusion would remain the same. Far from reversing, either intentionally, as Berman implies (p. 166), or unintentionally, the traditional Köpenick material and championing the idea of German rearmament and the restoration of lost territory, Käutner consistently adhered to the spirit of his source, recreating on the screen for a new generation faced with the spectre of the uniform the cautionary tale that Zuckmayer had presented to theater audiences in the waning years of the Weimar Republic.

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[1]Translation of the original *Als wär's ein Stück von mir* by Richard & Clara Winston (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), p. 315.

[2]Ibid., p. 312.

[3]The German text reads: "Hier hat man einen Spiegel, der Obrigkeitsgläubigkeit, Übermut der Ämter, Staatsvergötzung, Abstraktion des Humanen bis zu seiner Vernichtung und Nationalismus ohne Nationalgefühl offenbart, enthüllt--einen Spiegel, der entlarvt, dessen Bild aber den Betrachter nicht zurückschrecken läßt, nicht verletzt, *wohl aber betroffen und nachdenklich macht,*" *Die Zeit*, 6 Sept., 1956.

[4]"der Regisseur Käutner. . . vernichtet. . . den Zauber der preußischen Uniform," *Der Spiegel*, 5 Sept., 1956, p. 38.

[5]*Variety*, 12 Sept., 1956.

[6]*The New York Times*, 26 July, 1958.

[7]*New York*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 27-28.

[8]In *German Film and Literature: Adaptations and Transformations*, ed. Eric Rentschler, New York: Menthuen, 1986, pp. 166. Subsequent references to Berman's essay will be indicated by page number in the body of the text itself.

[9]Berman assumes that the crowd is opposed to Voigt's release because he has made his peace with representatives of the established order (the Warden, the Chief of Police, and the Kaiser) and concludes, based on this erroneous assumption, that the scene is an indication of the film's support of rearmament, arguing that "if the Communists [the demonstrators] oppose such a splendid order and its glorious military, then . . . the rearmament of West Germany can hardly be wrong" (p. 172).

[10]Translation of "segensreiche Einrichtung," from *Der Hauptmann von Köpenick*, as it appears in Carl Zuckmayer, *Stücke meines Lebens* (Frankfurt/Main: Büchergilde Gutenberg, 1971), p. 281. For the reader's convenience I have translated all quotations from the play in the text and provided the original German from the Büchergilde Gutenberg edition in the notes."

[11]*A Part of Myself*, p. 315.
[12]"Aber kommen Sie wieder, wenn Sie Arbeit haben. Ohne Arbeit kann ich Ihnen keinen Einwohnerschein geben." The translation is mine, as are all subsequent translations from the film.
[13]"Nee, nee, ist ja eine Kaffeemühle. Ohne Arbeit krieg'ich keine Papiere, und ohne Papiere krieg'ich keine Arbeit."
[14]"Fuffzehn Jahre wegen Posturkundenfälschung?!"
[15]Scene 2, p. 246.
[16]"Wo soll ich nun hin?"
[17]"'Unmöglich!!' *Dunkel*," p. 350.
[18]"'Kommt mit,' sagte der Hahn, 'etwas Besseres als den Tod werden wir überall finden!'" p. 350.
[19]In *Film Culture*, vol. 4, no. 1, April, 1958, p. 28.
[20]In *Film Quarterly*, 1958, vol. XII, no. 1, p. 53
[21]"ein Kunstwerk, ein Stück vom Menschen, sozusagen die bessere Haut."
[22]Berman's statement that "the uniform set up as a scarecrow, stands guard over the fields of West Germany and the free world" (p. 175) is hard to reconcile with the fact that Berlin in the 1950s lay over one hundred miles inside the GDR.
[23]"Wie soll die Hauptstadt aussehen?" *Die Zeit*, 4 April, 1957, p. 25.
[24]Scene 15, p. 317.
[25]"Nich so fett wie sonst bei Juden, was?" and "gekocht, aber nich so fett," scene 3, p. 251.
[26]"Warum sinse dann nicht bei Ihrem Juden geblieben?" scene 2, p. 244.
[27]Scene 2, p. 244.
[28]The "böhmische Riesenjebirje [sic]," scene 12, p. 300.