How many “bad Germans” are enough to prove that Germany is beyond the cure of repentance? For Victor Gollancz, who had fought a lone publicity battle against European apathy toward Jewish suffering during World War II, this was a nonquestion. “What Buchenwald really means” is precisely that not all Germans are guilty, he argued in April 1945, for many German opponents of Nazism had suffered persecution there as well (see P1):

“Can you read the various stages of the argument I have tried to set out, and still believe that all Germans are ‘guilty’? Surely it is not possible.”

But even then, can one still conclude that since the German resisters were at best an insignificant minority, Germany was still guilty in general? To counter this line of thinking as well, Gollancz employed theological arguments to reject any

pseudo-automatic minority/majority generalization. He argued that it is “utterly impossible for the Judaeo-Christian tradition ever to compromise with fascism,” in the sense that the latter is susceptible to “depersonalisation” and abstractions like “State, Folk or Collective which men have created out of nothing,” whereas the former adheres to “the ultimate reality [that] is the human soul, individual, unique, responsible to God and man.” He cited Abraham’s plea for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as “the first great protest against the old blasphemy [of depersonalization],” and ended his pamphlet with a “salute . . . to these German heroes of Dachau and Buchenwald. . . [against] whom Hitler employed all his malice, but could not prevail. . . . for all will know some of these outcast Germans suffered more and suffered longer” than the Allied soldiers.

Gollancz’s “overestimation” of the few against the many was not at all a common standard among his contemporaries. For example, in June 1945 he received an antisemitic hate-mail from a “home-loving Briton” who accused him of being an “Anglophobe” and “un-British.” Yet at the same time, Gollancz could count support among Holocaust survivors who also subscribed to this disproportional representation of the righteous. A letter writer recounted his own memories of the “good Germans” during his persecution, and then concluded: “Nobody will ever persuade me that all these men and women (and every refugee knows dozens of those cases) are hopelessly wicked and deserve to be punished.” The extension from the few known and concrete individuals to the vague, uncertain many through association—and “exaggeration,” most likely—is obvious, which strives toward the conclusion that the “few” rather than the “many” should carry more weight in the judgment of Germany as a whole, which should not be ruined like Sodom and Gomorrah, for the sake of the few righteous ones.

2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
5. Ibid. (emphasis added).
Gollancz was not the only “Abrahamic advocate” for Germany around this period, but he was often the most obvious example of turners drawing directly from biblical sources of repentance when dealing with the German question. Another contemporary who displayed these Abrahamic tendencies—though not necessarily expressly so—was Joseph Rovan (P3). In a way that was similar to Abraham chiding God for “not being himself,” that is, the just judge of the world, if he were to punish the righteous and the wicked indiscriminately, Rovan, coming straight from the Dachau concentration camp in 1945, reminded his French readers of the self-esteem and self-expectation that the French should have in their dealings with the Germans—righteous and wicked alike—who were now under their might in the French occupation zone. “The universalist vocation, the real vocation of the French spirit, seems to be sleeping. . . . Every Frenchman who is today responsible for a portion of Germany acts, judges, condemns, and governs in the name of France. How is his spirit being prepared for this office, for this responsibility?”

Rovan, who was born in Munich as Joseph Rosenthal to a Jewish family, would later explain that his concern for Germany stemmed from the meaning that Gollancz had given to Buchenwald: “Precisely because we have suffered [in Dachau] . . . many of us shared the conviction that we owed that to our German comrades” who were already there. In other words, for surviving victims like Rovan and the letter writer just quoted, the “minority of the righteous” has taken precedence over the majority of ordinary Germans—as bystanders and perpetrators—in the moral representation of Germany as a whole. It is “out of proportion,” one might say. But it is also a representation that is chosen, not enslaved to given facts and established formulas.

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The representative minority was not only used to convince the victims or victors of the redeemability or not-yet-forsakenness of the enemies, but was also deployed to give hope to the “perpetrator nation.” In the concluding chapter of *SS-Staat*, Eugen Kogon (P6), survivor of the Buchenwald concentration camp, gave a sober assessment of German “individual guilt.” Beginning with the cleric “who did not seek out opportunities to help,” the judge “who did not prevent the condemned from becoming a concentration camp victim,” to the physician, the journalist, the professor, the manager, and the worker, Kogon declared them all guilty of not having done his “true duty . . . for justice and freedom.” In the same breath that Kogon made this sweeping judgment, that every living German bore his own personal guilt, he also pointed to the hope that was made available to this majority by a minority who were no longer there—the German resisters who had attempted a coup on 20 July 1944. “Among the 5,000 men and women of all classes who were at that time arrested, there were the true martyrs for the German future. They were the great example of ethical power and personal courage. This great meaning of their action is not lessened (herabgemindert) by the genuine German lack of that great political good sense. . . . Their example is not lost for the Germans.”

Once again, the idea that the value of the minority is not to be relegated to a secondary status or even disregarded completely as “insignificant,” just because it is the minority was brought forward

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9. It is important to note that Kogon did not simply equate the “5,000 men and women” with “martyrs,” only some among them. In both Judaism and Christianity, the idea of martyrdom is traditionally associated with the tenacious holding on to faith despite death, rather than with armed struggle per se, hence the long-standing tension with the purely nationalistic viewpoint. See the martyrdom of Rabbi Akiva (Ber. 61b) and of Rabbi Haninah (Avodah Zarah 18a), and that of Stephen (Acts 7). Reinhold Mayer, ed., *Der Talmud* (Munich: Orbis, 1999), 431, 437. See also the debates surrounding martyrdom and heroism in Israel in Roni Stauber, *The Holocaust in Israeli Public Debate in the 1950s: Ideology and Memory* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007), 123.

in a collective moral situation where outright condemnation or despair appeared to be the only logical outcome.

These turners who advanced the Abrahamic message of representative minority were also characterized by their self-identification as a guilt-bearer among the guilty. As has already been noted (P6), Kogon did not assume the position of a “pure victim” meting out a definitive judgment on the Germans, but always included himself in the community of Germans in his call for turning (which was certainly not mere rhetoric, considering the substantiation of this identification with his lifelong engagement in transforming post-war Germany as a German citizen). Rovan identified himself as “a Frenchman who was once a German.”11 Although these political and cultural paths of identification were not an option for Gollancz, he nevertheless appropriated the theological possibility of self-inclusion as a sinner among sinners and admonished his British audience to turn away from the prevailing (and condescending) self/other dichotomy:

> What we should be saying. . . [is] we have all sinned, and no one of us can cast stones. We in Britain have had a fortunate history, which has enabled us to win a large measure of freedom and democracy. Your history, on the other hand, has been unfortunate: when you have tried to advance to freedom and democracy circumstances have thwarted you, and the thwarting has weakened you in independence and civic courage—which is not to deny that there has been a magnificent minority that has stood firm against fearful odds.12

These were the occasions on which the turners acted as the “perpetrator-nation’s” advocates in front of a “judging authority,” at times reminding the latter that there is still a higher instance, at other times pleading with it for clemency. While Gollancz and Rovan were typical in their critique of the victors of Britain and France respectively, Kogon’s approach was markedly different, as he faced a very different audience—the Jewish community remaining in Germany as well as Jewish communities around the world.


In July 1949, Kogon spoke in Heidelberg at the first meeting of German Jewry since 1932 to discuss the future relations between Jewish and non-Jewish populations in Germany. According to the speaker himself, representatives of world Jewish organizations were among the audience, who actively took part in the discussions. In his speech, Kogon first reiterated the destruction that the Nazis had brought, and remembered the millions of Jewish victims—among them “four-fifths of Germany’s Jewry”—who were murdered. He then presented a balance sheet of German guilt. As a persecuted resister himself, he first downplayed the significance of the resistance: “Only extremely few members of the German people have rendered active resistance. A larger number of Germans have, under great personal danger, helped and protected individuals of the persecuted. Many who saw the beginning or parts of the massacre were indignant inside. Not a few have approved of it, without fully realizing the extent of the events. The majority were more or less indifferent. Almost all kept silent, whatever the reasons.”

Nazi destruction, German guilt, and postwar developments, including help from Jewish organizations abroad for Jews to migrate from Germany, had led to the grave situation that “no more than 20,000 Jews chose to remain behind, mostly old and weak Jewish people; the youths are almost gone.” Up to this point it was still unclear whether Kogon was primarily speaking as a Jewish Holocaust survivor (i.e., one among the audience) or as a German public intellectual (i.e., one among those being spoken about). But then he made a stunning remark:

Allow me to state this with terrible grief, that this decision [of leaving instead of staying], which is so understandable to you, means the final triumph of Hitler. What he wanted to do is now successfully accomplished. He who still is a National Socialist in this country may now rub his guilt-tainted hands.

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14. Ibid.
15. Ibid. See similar use of “victory of Hitler” by Arendt (P1) and Burg (P9). See alternatives in Hans Klee, Wir Juden und die deutsche Schuld (Lausanne: Granchamp, 1945), 13–16; Steven Katz, Shlomo Biderman, and Gershon Greenberg,
Kogon continued with an expressly German resolution that the care for “your remnants (Ihre Zurückgebliebenen)” in Germany should never be neglected by any living German. The self-identification of Kogon became unmistakable from this point on, as he pleaded with his Jewish audience to exercise the “extraordinary sense of right and wrong, which the Jewish character exemplifies,” in tackling the ongoing problem of indiscriminate restitution of Jewish properties giving rise to new prejudices among the less initiated. “You will perhaps find a way . . . ,” he suggested, “to eliminate these causes of disorder, by being superior to your opponents in moral terms, in helping the better principle of individual justice to achieve victory even in the smallest of things.”

Kogon’s speech found approval in Jerusalem, when Martin Buber wrote to the Frankfurter Hefte on 21 September 1949, saying how “directly touched” he had been by Kogon’s speech, more than any other letter or publication he had seen on the same subject matter, and called the speech a “human voice, vox realiter et essentialiter humana.” He further praised Kogon’s efforts as publisher of the Frankfurter Hefte, which “makes it easier for me to think back to the city which has meant much for my life.” For more than a decade before the Nazis came to power, Buber had been active in Frankfurt, where he would return in 1953 to receive the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, as Albert Schweitzer did before him (P2).

In his acceptance speech, Buber asserted that, as a survivor, to listen and to respond to such a “human voice,” “vox humana,” is a duty, for “genuine conversation among the peoples,” rather than the “lonely monologue,” is what is required in the struggle against the “demonic power of the sub-human, the anti-human.”

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18. Ibid.
He explained that the “gratitude” that was being expressed by the surviving Jew was intended as a “solidary confession to the common—also common between Germans and Jews—fight against the anti-human, and also the answer to the fighters’ vow heard.”

In Buber’s re-presentation of German society during the Nazi period, one can gain a glimpse of the inner workings of the representative-minority paradigm, which demonstrates how a certain minority is “magnified” so that it is more “magnificent” than even the majority itself. First he presented the “considerable number of German individuals (deutsche Menschen),” the “thousands” of them, who had participated in the murder of millions of his people. He could neither identify with, have hate feelings for, nor “forgive” this group of Germans. “Who am I to overestimate myself here to ‘forgive’!” Next Buber presented the “German people” (deutsches Volk), many of whom were aware of the atrocities at Auschwitz and Treblinka, but did not protest. “But my heart refuses—because it is aware of the weaknesses of human beings—to condemn my neighbor, just because he couldn’t summon himself to become a martyr.” Lastly, those who had “refused to carry out or pass on orders,” and suffered death because of protest or despair, were presented. “I see these people up close before me (ganz nah vor mir),” said Buber, “and now awe and love for these German individuals reigns in my heart.”

This “optical” presentation of German society with one’s own viewpoint anchored in the “up-closeness” of the righteous minority necessarily conjures up images of sizes and weights quite different from those derived from, say, an “objective,” distanced presentation of it, which projects the majority (i.e., Germans as accomplices and criminals) as the “bigger” part to look at and to draw definitive conclusions from. Buber’s re-presentation thus furnished ultimately a possibility of seeing and weighing that would characterize a stream of postwar remembrance efforts centering on the “righteous among the nations” (P13).

20. Ibid.
21. Ibid. See similar positions in P14.
Obviously, as is the case with many other turning acts on the side of the victims or victors, this “out-of-proportion” way of seeing the righteous as “representative” of the whole is both an enabling act of further mutual-turning gestures and a powerful temptation for the perpetrators or bystanders. Will postwar Germans not take it as a point of national pride that, as Rovan put it, German resisters were braver than all the rest? Or as might be inferred from Buber’s re-presentation, only a handful of Nazis were contemptible, while the majority of Germans were “only” all too human in their weaknesses, and the German name deserves respect and honor because of the righteous Germans? There is therefore a need for “repentant disagreement” (P8). To actually “get” a turning message from one side, one often needs to “disagree” with it from the other. Hence it was left to German turners in their turn to respond to this representative-minority paradigm in specific configurations of audiences and contexts.

One of the German turners who took up this task was Martin Niemöller (P2). Through preaching and other public speeches, the former persecuted Nazi-opponent brought home to his German audience a particular way of interpreting and relating to the history of German minority resistance. On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Attentat of 20 July, for instance, Niemöller spoke in Frankfurt about conscience and representation. “The victims of 20 July were representatives (Stellvertreter) for many,” he declared. But immediately he added, “I’m not saying this to somehow reduce our guilt or the guilt of our people, whose members we were and are.”

The “many” that he meant were the “Communists and Jews and Bible researchers,” who had suffered “just as keenly as the dead of 20 July for their conviction and for their faithful demonstration of their co-human solidarity,” an “elite of a special kind” whom his audience should not forget. For Niemöller,

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24. “Bible researchers,” or *Bibelforscher*, was a designation used by the Nazis to label inmates in the concentration camps who were mainly members of Christian groups such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Quakers.
the meaning of 20 July for Germans “today” was precisely in emulating the “representativeness” of this minority:

They have not paid for a guilt/debt (Schuld) for which they alone were indebted (verschulden) and had by themselves amassed; they paid for the others, in order to help us. And what a blessing it could be . . . if we set our minds on what we ourselves could take up as our responsibility and load it upon our conscience on behalf of (stellvertretend) the others.\(^{25}\)

In calling upon the church to take up more guilt than was due it, Niemöller was in fact asking his audience to accomplish two turning acts: first, to persevere in recognizing the guilt of Christianity; second, to counter the tendency of “unloading” one’s own guilt onto the “guilty representatives,” with its exact opposite—the self-offering of vicarious sacrifice.\(^{26}\) To convince his listeners of the first duty, he consistently affirmed the existence of Christian guilt since the Stuttgart Confession of Guilt (P2). According to him, Christianity had—despite its representative minority of resisters—on the whole failed in its prophetic duty to stand up against the Nazis: “The sovereign claim of God . . . was not made in reality and with clarity perceivable by prophetic witness. Attempts were made here and there, but all in all it must be said: Christianity did not come out from its defensive position and was too weak and too timid . . . to proclaim in the authority of its prophetic mission: ‘So says the Lord!’ ”\(^{27}\) For Niemöller, even his Confessing Church, a minority of resisters against the absolute state power, was not without guilt for the lack of heroism; that was why “it was precisely the Confessing Church that in the October of 1945 insisted on the Stuttgart Confession of Guilt, in which we spoke out openly [against ourselves].”\(^{28}\) On top of all this, he accused his minority of committing one fatal error—they thought they needed to “protect” the church, which actually wasn’t in need of that, but their neighbors were:

\(^{26}\) See P6 and P4.
\(^{27}\) Niemöller, *Reden, Predigten, Denkanstöße*, 57 (emphasis added).
\(^{28}\) Ibid., 212.
We the Confessing Church . . . had to realize, though unfortunately too late, that we had let ourselves and our conducts be determined more by the enemies of the church than by the people who needed our help. At the end of the war, we had to state that—to my shame . . . the church does not need our protection, because the Lord, her Lord, sees to it that she remains; but the “neighbor,” the person on our side, he needs us, we are there to do the service that he needs. But we had . . . cared more about the continual existence (Weiterleben) of the church than about the life, the true human life and survival (Überleben) of our fellow human beings. Looking back, I suppose I have to say that for me, as for so many other Christians, here is where the real guilt-consciousness originated.29

If, to follow Niemöller’s appraisal of German Christianity during the Third Reich, even the Confessing Church had so much guilt to reckon with, how much more did the rest? This re-presentation was thus necessary to counter the latent danger of the representative-minority paradigm, namely, to “take shelter” under the righteous minority to avoid turning. In other sermons, Niemöller would expressly argue that personal repentance is the beginning and essence of collective repentance. Making use of the Protestant institution of the Day of Repentance (Buß- und Betteg), he elaborated on the relationship between personal and collective repentance: “We do not have to wait for the world to change, but we have to let ourselves be led by God’s ‘goodness, patience, and generosity’ to repentance, so that God can use us as his salt to change the world. It is not about the repentance of our people, not the repentance of the peoples, not the repentance of the world, but it is about my repentance (Buße) and your repentance, my turning (Umkehr) and your turning.”30

With these words Niemöller called on his Christian audience to repent, but not only for themselves as individuals, as in doing what is “enough” for oneself, but also to accomplish the second task, which is to repent for the world—that is, to be the change itself within a world that needs changing. These words coming from the

29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 153 (emphasis added). See biblical references in Romans 2:4 and Matthew 5:13. For the idea of “assisted turning,” see R3.
community of perpetrators and bystanders could sound hollow or even presumptuous, if not also self-congratulatory. But if we recall one of the central tenets of biblical repentance as “helping others repent” (R7), and the encouragement in this regard that Germans have been receiving from the victims (P7), then Niemöller’s call, himself with every justification to claim victimhood under Nazism, could be appreciated as one of the turning voices in this relational context.31

This assertion again would also seem blatantly self-contradictory if we looked at the turner as a logician: if repentance has no proxy, then what sense does it make to speak about doing repentance for others “representatively” (stellvertretend)? But as has already been demonstrated (P8), a turner is not someone who is concerned about establishing universal principles that are valid for all, but someone concerned primarily about the relational direction of his particular audience in their particular situation: hence it is “valid” to urge postwar German Christians to atone also for the others, who are not willing to shoulder their own guilt, it is “invalid” for them to think in reverse, that is, to be the beneficiary rather than the benefactor, as one is allowed to do under the universal-principle mindset. Niemöller would probably have countered that, having already benefited from the vicarious sacrifice of the men and women of 20 July coup (and ultimately of Christ himself), postwar German Christians should have but one response of grateful self-giving.32 It is no doubt a veritable double standard, but a reverse double standard.

Further from religious sermons and public speeches, the theme of representative minority could also be found in the arts and the most intimate private sphere. In one of his letters to Hannah Arendt in 1946, Karl Jaspers challenged his former student to see the “Hegelian thinking” in collectives that was purportedly undermining her otherwise “fantastic” reflections on Fascism and

antisemitism. In passing, he confided to her a personal example of breaking through this way of thinking:

In the Nazi period I occasionally said to my wife, “I am Germany” (*Ich bin Deutschland*), in order to preserve our ground for the both of us. Such a statement has meaning only in the situation. The word becomes unbearably demanding (*anspruchsvoll*) when taken out of context or even passed on to the others. . . . Now that Germany is eliminated (*vernichtet*) . . . I feel for the first time uninhibited (*unbefangen*) as a German.\(^3^3\)

The situation that Jaspers was referring to was of course a very intimate one—one that was between him and his Jewish wife, Gertrud Mayer, alone. Because of their marriage and Jaspers’s refusal to annul it, the Heidelberg philosopher was not allowed to teach or publish at the height of Nazi terror, and had to live in constant fear of their being sent to the concentration camps.\(^3^4\) The “inappropriateness” of claiming to be the nation itself, which was by then corrupt to the core, could only make sense under these relational circumstances. Yet in his *Schuldfrage*, which was going to print by the time he was writing Arendt, Jaspers would turn this personal example of representative minority into an argument for doing collective repentance individually as a “demand”:

> We know ourselves not only as individuals, but as Germans. Each is—if he really is—the German people. Who does not know the moment in his life when he says to himself in oppositional despair of his people: I am Germany, or in jubilant unison with them: I, too, am Germany! The German has no other form than these individuals. Therefore the demand (*Anspruch*) of transformation, of rebirth, of purging the ruinous is a duty for the people in the form of a duty for each individual. Since I cannot help feeling collectively in the depth of my soul, being German for me, for everyone, is not an asset (*Bestand*) but a duty.\(^3^5\)

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\(^3^5\) Karl Jaspers, *Die Schuldfrage* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1946), 71 (emphasis added).
With a logic that borders on the mind-boggling, Jaspers breached the collective/individual dichotomy and asserted that repentance for a nation is a personal “demand” for each and every member of that nation, and that claiming to be the nation is no privilege or even arrogance, but the humble acceptance of a collective burden on one’s own shoulders. It is a claim that is indeed “full of demands” (*anspruchsvoll*), though only at the opposite end of the give-and-take relationship. The philosopher himself conceded that reason alone might not be enough to lead one to this insight: “The given fact of being a German, which essentially means life in one’s mother tongue, is of such a lasting effect that I feel—in a way that is no longer rationally comprehensible, or is even rationally refutable—co-responsible for what Germans do and have done.”

What a thinker was at pains to bring out in prose, a writer managed to use alternative means to express. If the idea of a representative minority is too difficult to justify rationally, or even outright offensive to the democratic ethos, then it is perhaps only understandable that fiction is employed to get it across. An example of this would be Rolf Hochhuth’s *Stellvertreter,* a play first published and staged in 1963. Ostensibly, the “representative” or deputy in the title meant only the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Pius XII, *the* representative of Christ on earth (*der Stellvertreter Christi*), who had died only a few years before the play was published, and whose (in)action during the Third Reich has long been a subject of debate. In the historical drama, however, the various paradigms of representation, of representative seeking and being, were brought into contest through the mouths of different characters, some of whom, like Kurt Gerstein, were real historical figures, and others “pure inventions,” according to the author. In one scene, for instance, the otherwise polite and thankful “Jacobson,” a Jew

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36. Ibid., 71–72.
under the protection of Gerstein in Berlin, belted out in a fit of fury, after learning that his parents had been “displaced,” possibly to Auschwitz, that “every German is my enemy. . . . I will never forget the Germans, all Germans, that my parents—good Germans—were murdered here.”39 This reverse representative-minority paradigm is exactly what Gerstein was trying to ward off, as he had said just a few dialogues earlier in the same scene: “The traitors, they alone are the ones saving the honor of Germany now. For Hitler is not Germany, he is only its destroyer—the judgment of history will absolve us [the traitors].”40

The most striking model of representation, however, was put into the mouth of a fictional character, “Fr. Riccardo Fontana,” an Italian Jesuit priest who had visited Germany and was troubled by his own conscience. In the second scene of the third act, which was set in the office of the superior-general of the Salvatorians, a religious order in Italy, who were engaged in saving persecuted individuals, including Communists and Jews, “Riccardo” argued vehemently with the abbot concerning the (mis)conduct of Pope Pius XII and what they could do, as mere priests, to rectify it. Counting on God’s promise to Abraham that Sodom would not be destroyed for the sake of the ten righteous, the highly agitated, almost delusional Jesuit turned the representative-minority paradigm around into a principle of action:

The silence of the pope, which is favorable to the murderers, saddles the church with a guilt (Schuld), which we have to atone (sühnen) for. And since the pope, who is but a human being after all, can represent even God on earth, so will I . . . so will a poor priest be able to, when push comes to shove, represent the pope—there, where he ought to be standing today.41

Hence in the words of “Riccardo,” who acted as the plaintiff’s voice against the pope’s silence in the play, we have a reformulated representative-minority paradigm, one that does not exculpate its

39. Hochhuth, Der Stellvertreter, 73 (emphasis in the original).
40. Ibid., 65 (emphasis in the original).
41. Ibid., 124 (emphasis in the original).
bearer, but obligates him: from letting the righteous minority represent oneself or one’s “group” to becoming the righteous minority that represents. Hochhuth himself certainly understood well the problem and limits of this kind of representation, which touches not only the past but also the present, as he, a young German Protestant then, hesitated in the beginning to write about and to criticize in no sparing language a Catholic pope: “As a Protestant I’m certainly a poor advocate for the Catholic Church. It is in any case an aesthetic imperfection (Schönheitsfehler) that I’m not a Catholic. Pius XII can in fact only be rightly judged from the viewpoint of the Catholic Church.”

Yet it did not prevent him from assuming this Christian duty, when no Catholic was in sight to take that up in such a way that would so engage the Catholic German public. Though he was roundly criticized by some of his contemporaries for “shaming” a deceased pope, he was thanked by other Catholics for once again reminding them of their guilt. Indeed, if “Riccardo’s” claim of representing the pope is anywhere near the truth, then Hochhuth’s play is as much anti-representative (with Pope Pius XII as the antagonist) as it is pro-representative (with “Riccardo” the protagonist, who ended up voluntarily wearing the Judenstern and died at Auschwitz). The real representatives of the Catholic Church upheld by Hochhuth were after all Fr. Maximilian Kolbe and Fr. Bernhard Lichtenberg—the real-life Riccardos—to whom Hochhuth dedicated his drama.

There has been, no doubt, also an inner-Catholic discussion in Germany regarding this subject, which can be traced back to the immediate postwar years. Both Walter Dirks and Eugen Kogon, for example, counseled fellow Catholics to engage in personal repentance instead of merely expecting reformation “from above” in the church hierarchy. This initial emphasis, however, created

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perhaps inadvertently, or even inevitably, a gap in postwar German Catholic reflection, namely, the critical assessment of papal failures during the Nazi period, which was filled, successfully or not, by Hochhuth’s *Stellvertreter*. For if everyone should *only* mind his own guilt and own turning, then speaking of the guilt of a pope, a veritable “other” vis-à-vis the self, could only be seen as a suspicious diversion from tackling one’s own guilt. If a German Catholic should delve deeper into the guilt of Pius XII, who was not even German, he was further to be exposed to the criticism of attempting to downplay “German” guilt.45 In short, the hope for a “pitfall-proof” path of repentance seems to be in vain; every step forward has to be made in a moral minefield—whether real or only misperceived.

This shows once again that when deep motivations remain hidden from human view, the presence or absence of the corresponding repentant disagreements (R8)—whether within the German-Jewish, the Catholic-Protestant, or the lay-cleric relationships—can make or break a mutual-turning effort. For acts of turning are always risky for both the victims and the perpetrators: such acts run the risk of nonresponse, the risk of further damage, and the risk of abuse.

45. See in this respect the importance of contemporary Jewish appreciation of Hochhuth’s intervention in Raddatz, *Durfte der Papst schweigen?* 151.