

All my life I've been guilty of, been repenting of, and been observing in others the understandable (Niebuhr's "necessary evil") effort to "frame" Scripture. Both senses: to put a frame on, to paradigm for internal and relational sense-making; and to betray (a) by forcing conformity to one's "thing" and (b) by neglecting whatever in Scripture is un-conformable to one's thing. We humans bring our good and evil to our hermeneutic tasks, betimes revealing and distorting the text-context (literary, personal, social, cosmic, historical, interpersonal). The Bible's God of Truth perpetually brings us under judgment on this, in love gently calling us to bring ourselves under this judgment both so as to reduce our pain and so as to increase our dignity as self-destiny-capable creatures. This thinksheet examines the shame side of the glory/shame of human hermeneuts, reality-interpreters: I'll let the particular partisans of these world figures speak of the glory.

KANT, the fundamental shaper of "modern" global philosophical consciousness. The world, even the Third World, is in thrall to his "way of seeing the world" (my definition of a philosophy), though he never traveled beyond the suburbs of Stuttgart and died there the year my Greatgrampa Brenner was born there. As a child exploring what a new toy-tool can do, he isolated reason to examine its potential for polyhermeneutic (i.e., to explain everything). His RELIGION WITHIN THE LIMITS OF REASON (on which cp. Schleiermacher, D. F. Strauss, F.C. Baur with "higher criticism" and "scientific" Biblical scholarship) is the classic of post-Renaissance promethean confidence in reason, the triumphalist mentality "framing" (both senses) the world-thinkers (i.e., world-influential thinkers) below in historical order, all post-Kantian.

DARWIN, violater of the logics of both mind (law of parsimony) and heart (Buber's Thou-ing). God-neglecters and God-haters have always loved the man! He permitted himself to be seduced beyond THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES to the origin of life, and dressed up in fancy language (e.g., "spontaneous generation") his nonsensical answers (in plain language, "It just happened"--a put-down response to the child's question, the child within us all). That my tax money should be used to pervert American children with this nonsense parading as truth--outrage! Currently I'm amused at the fundamentalist mentality of the education establishment in its effort to keep alternative views out of the public schools (chiefly, "scientific creationism," to say nothing of the now 70-year-old "creative evolution" and the 50-year-old "naturalistic theism"). No wonder the public schools are producing pigmy zombies and monster zombies with little in between. Why did we let it happen? Our spiritual heritage "within the limits of" reason and "through the eyes of" Darwin is a wash-out: an hour on Sunday foundered under the rest of the week.

MARX was Kantian-Hegelian (cosmic "in itself")-Darwinian (bio "by itself"), agreeing there's an inevitable process-progress and seeing it not as the Bible's "Kingdom of God" or Adam Smith's capitalist "invisible hand" but as "the revolution of the proletariat" (now, in USSR, being resisted in Poland). Out of proper prophetic "identification with the poor," many have now taken in hand to read the Bible "through the eyes of" Marx (beginning, in 1936, with Louis Finklestein's two-vol. THE PHARISEES). Horse-rabbit stew: one rabbit (the Bible), one horse (Marx). Of course, the whole Bible can be explained in terms of Marx--or Buddha or Jesus or anybody else: the omnicompetence of a purview fails only if the purveyor runs out of imagination and/or rhetoric. Me, I read the Bible through Jesus, have been trying to for a half century. That makes me a dialectical enemy of all those who put forward another person-frame, "bringing every thought into captivity" (to use Paul's phrase) to their holophrastic personage-perspective. In the case of "communism," see (1) on free-market success, the lead ed 14 Apr 81 NYT, on oil-decontrol, and (2) on the often superior humanity of corporations over churches, pp.18-20 of Mel Hartzler's MPS Completion Assignment (IBM's discovery and release of talent, as over against ecclesial institutions' conformity-tyranny--though discovering and releasing the gifts is a function of the Church!).

FREUD's MOSES AND MONOTHEISM is the classic for reading the Bible "through the eyes of" Freud's mechanistic-rationalistic materialism, which he applied inside the skin-bag as Marx had applied it outside....JUNG's perversion is now becoming fashionable and threatening to subvert religious studies and even theological education.