

Not in the sense of "hatred and denigration," but in the sense of rejection of Judaism-as-rejective-of-the-Jesus-movement. "Antijewish" would be better, but is still too strong. The Christians used, only to the degree necessary, a countervailing negativity. [The question remains: What degree, now, is necessary?]

1. It will take very little of ignorance and/or illwill to read this think-sheet as antisemitic. That can't be helped, for the alternative is to play the Christian verbal game of breast-beating mea culpa, patronizing Jews by carefully sidestepping complexities and ambiguities--the game whites play in patronizing blacks, men play in patronizing women, adults play in patronizing children,....It's so easy to get hung with the accusation that you're saying a good word for the bully, giving aid and comfort to the oppressor, justifying the behavior of the persecutor, toadying to power, knowing which side of the bread the butter's on, salving your conscience,....

2. I'm a WASPM [white Anglo-Saxon Protestant male], and the woods are full of folks trying to intensify my guilt in all those directions. Whenever anybody tries, it makes me feel good, proud. I'm proud of my WASPM ancestors, who triumphed over all their polars. This includes pride in my Protestant ancestors, who triumphed over Jews and Catholics. It's a danger to my soul for anybody to ask me to feel guilty for my ancestors, for my first feeling is always smugness, pride--what sends you straight to hell. [If these folks have illwill, and want to send me straight to hell, their strategy is effective.] My second and always immediate feeling is shame: I'm ashamed of the ways my ancestors suppressed women, hounded Jews and Catholics, derogated the "lesser breeds without the [Anglo-Saxon] law" and language, despised and enslaved folks with more skin pigmentation. My pride has certain ego-satisfying explanations as to why my male ancestors won, why those defeated folks were unable to resist defeat. My shame has a whole other set of explanations. But anybody who expects me to unload the former and yield all the territory to the latter is guilty of both historical and psychosocial absurdity. Yes, absurdity: much of what "liberationists" and antiantisemites ask me to feel is downright nonsense, and would be both sick and sinful if I were to achieve it. As for "guilt," I feel none at all--only shame. For me to feel "guilt" over anything my ancestors did, or any advantages their behavior caused to accrue unto me, would be sick. I speak psychohistorically: both transcendentally and poetically, of course, "guilt" is proper, including my being a daily deicide, "crucifying the Son of God afresh."

3. Human beings seek both fulfilment and justice. For fulfilment, one needs opportunity--so it's healthy for a Jew to thank God he wasn't born a woman and for me to thank God I wasn't born a Jew: male Christians have had more opportunities than women and Jews. Fulfilment opportunities are on the "pride" side of my calculus. As for humanity's search for justice, that is on both sides of my calculus, "pride" and "shame." Then I must add the personal overlay: I have added to the good/evil my ancestors deposited on the earth. My additions call forth from me not so much pride as gratitude, and about an equal mix of shame and guilt. Lord, be praised! And, Lord, have mercy!

4. Is the NT antisemitic? Naturally, sociodynamically. Jewish and Christian writings of the birth period [1-3 centuries AD-XCE] of the two faiths are naturally disjunctive--the Christian literature antijewish, the Jewish literature antichristian--literature serving the mutual distinctiveness-separation of the two common-root communities. It's nonsense to imply that the antisemitism of the NT is a moral defect, psychosociodynamic nonsense; and this moralizing implication-accusation is ethically offensive even when its injustice is unconscious. What's crucial is the power factor: early Jewish antichristian passages are not as dangerous to Christians as are early Christian antijewish passages, for the reason that Jews have lost the power [which they once exercised, <sup>to Jews</sup> devastatingly, as visible in the NT] to persecute Christians. Thank God the NT is antisemitic, or Christianity could not have survived!

["Prophecy or Prediction?"], #473 ["Values: 'Worth' vis-a-vis Dignity"]. The Catholic/Protestant THE COMMON CATHECISM is fairer to Judaism than is most past Christian theology. Leo Baeck's writings, + Ben Zion Bokser's JUDAISM AND THE CHRISTIAN PREDICAMENT. Roy Eckardt's ELDER AND YOUNGER BROTHERS. Rosemary Reuther's FAITH AND FRATRICIDE (1974). Frank Littell's THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE JEWS (1975).

5. Note the subtitle of this thinksheet: I'm concerned toward authentic rhetoric in Jewish/Christian dialog, and to unburden that dialog of obfuscating, dangerous "rhetoric" [bad sense: sophistic, self-seducing, absolutizing verbalism]. By "rhetoric" [good sense], I mean what Jews and Christians say privately & publicly [as "rhetors," orators] against each other. [The sentimental notion that we need say nothing against each other is another piece of nonsense: the discreteness, separateness, of our communities, is sustainable, audioloy, only on the basic of what we say against each other. If we choose to say much more about our commonalty, our common root and hope, as I pray will be increasingly so, that does not at all detract from the psychosocial necessity of a sound barrier between the two faith-communities. Jewish propaganda that Christians should stop badmouthing Judaism is self-canceling; meant to defuse antisemitism, it has the opposite effect: it makes me mad at such Jews, who are either stupid or [according to my ancestors' stereotypic Jew] shrewd.

6. Thank God the Holocaust was not as successful as the Turkish holocaust against the Armenians! Without the presence of Jews and Judaism, Christianity degenerates into gnosticism, floats away from history and the here-and-now. Ambiguity: Jewish existence is, to Christianity, both an embarrassment and a necessity. As for the Holocaust, of course many will make the most of it: e.g., Elie Wiesel's bathos and Frank Littell's call for Christian reconstructionism [parallel Mordecai Kaplan's Jewish reconstructionism]--the latter, in his "CCI [Christians Concerned for Israel] notebook" periodical [CCI, Box 3428, Phila PA 19122]. And then there was Richard Rubenstein's death-of-God use, a second-hand rage from the first post-Holocaust generation. The Holocaust was a technologically escalated pogrom worse than pre-Christian antisemitism and "Christian" pre-Holocaust antisemitism--but how worse? Technopsychically, yes: masscom to gaschamber. But worse only in degree, in quantity, because of heightened technopsychic quality? I think so. Yet much of the "Holocaust+ theology," Jewish and now increasingly Christian, implies or even states a qualitative factor of transcendent ["demonic"] evil. This is of course excellent for rhetoric, but such rhetoric is authentic only to the extent that its ground is true. And if the Holocaust is a fresh enormity of vomit from hell, how fair is it to says "Christians" did it--instead of human beings with an uncriticized pre-Christian inheritance of antisemitism? [In much of such rhetoric, antisemitism, "hatred and denigration of the Jewish people," is treated as though Christians started it! (The definition is from p.189 of Geo. A. F. Knight's 1965 Westminster book, on whose National Council of Churches preparation committee I was, JEWS AND CHRISTIANS: PREPARATION FOR DIALOGUE.)]

7. I adduce certain facts involving me: (1) My religious commitment is to a particular Jewish opening on the non-Jewish world, viz. "Christianity" [Paul, Ro.11]; (2) My city has in it more Jews than any other city in the world; (3) My occupation, viz. intellectual, has in it a disproportionate number of Jews, the world's most bookish folk; (4) My school, NY Theol. Seminary, provides me with some Jewish students, chiefly rabbis; (5) By ethnic stock, I'm probably 1/16th Jewish, just enough for Hitler to kill me. Ergo, I care, deeply, about Jewish/Christian relations. As a theologian, I see many possibilities of hitherto undeveloped creative action between Judaism and Christianity, siblings set over against all the other religious heritages and forces of the globe. Surely we have overdone the differences, telling our children dirty stories! Surely our resources for mutual opening are underexploited! Surely we are called to celebrate together "the Lord our God, King of the Universe"!

8. Of my thinksheets, these are especially pertinent to the burden of this one: #458 ["Jewish/Christian Dialog, the Holocaust as a Component of"], #567 ["Which of the two is the right/true religion?"], #737 ["Antisemitism, root of"], #617