

RACIALIZING JESUS

Race, ideology and the formation of
modern biblical scholarship

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CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 Racialized discourse: modernity, race, and reason	14
<i>Current theories on race</i>	19
<i>Conclusion</i>	31
2 The Hegelian synthesis: early modernity, race, and culture	33
<i>Hegel's narrative of world history</i>	47
<i>Conclusion</i>	62
3 Jesus and the myth of the West: Tübingen and the construction of early Christianity	64
<i>Tübingen, Hegel, and tendency criticism</i>	66
<i>The historical context</i>	68
<i>The world of the New Testament</i>	70
<i>Paul and the Christian principle</i>	75
<i>The emerging consensus</i>	81
<i>Conclusion</i>	87
4 Aesthetic fascism: Heidegger, National Socialism, and the Jews	89
<i>Deconstructing Heidegger</i>	92
<i>Authenticity in Being and Time</i>	96

	<i>Authenticity, the public, and racial anti-Semitism</i>	100
	<i>Authenticity, the Greeks, and völkisch nationalism</i>	111
	<i>Conclusion</i>	125
5	In the shadow of Heidegger: Bultmann, race, and the quest for Christian origins	129
	<i>Heidegger, Bultmann, and liberal theology</i>	131
	<i>Bultmann reading Heidegger</i>	137
	<i>Bultmann and the origins of Christianity</i>	139
	<i>Bultmann, Heidegger, and the Holocaust</i>	154
	<i>Conclusion</i>	160
6	Portrait of the artist as a young messiah: Jesus comes to America	165
	<i>The construction of American biblical scholarship</i>	165
	<i>Funk, Wilder, and the poetry of authenticity</i>	172
	<i>The ideology of parables: Funk, Crossan, and the myth of origins</i>	190
	<i>Conclusion</i>	207
7	Conclusion	211
	<i>Discarded</i>	212
	<i>Redefined</i>	215
	<i>The illusion of a fresh start: deconstruction and escaping racialization</i>	219
	<i>Postcolonialism, race, and literature</i>	222
	<i>Notes</i>	226
	<i>Bibliography</i>	237
	<i>Index</i>	251

PREFACE

Race, racism, and racialized discourse; these are the topics taken up in the pages of this book. I intend to show that the racial values of modern, imperial Europe (and the United States) have found their way into the discipline of modern biblical scholarship. The remainder of the book will be dedicated to making the case for this thesis. It might be helpful, in the preface, to explain how it is that this book came to be written.

This book emerged out of an accident of reading. Early in my teaching I happened to include Elie Wiesel's *Night* and Martin Luther King's speeches in one of my introductory courses. It was my hope that the students would see that biblical themes had consequences beyond the confines of the classroom. While preparing to discuss these books I came to realize that I was unable to answer some rather rudimentary questions that were bound to arise. Why, for example, did so many white, educated Americans object to the civil rights movement? Why did King have to write "The Letter from Birmingham Jail" in the first place? Why did the Nazis think it a good idea to systematically murder the Jews, and how did they get so much support for their genocidal program? As I began to research these topics I discovered quite specific historical links between the two phenomena. The two forms of racism (American antiblack and Nazi anti-Semitic) had remarkably similar intellectual lineages: they had emerged around the same time, had followed many of the same twists and turns, and often revolved around the same ideas and texts. Most especially, both had emerged out of the relatively rarefied world of elite, learned culture and both were part of the modern project of social engineering. I was stunned by this discovery. Rather than growing out of ignorance and political manipulation, racism emerged from the very fabric of high, European culture. As someone who cherished the learned culture of the

West, I was overwhelmed to discover that racism was a product of this same culture. My dismay was heightened by the fact that, as I read about the history of modern racism, I kept coming across the names of biblical scholars (i.e. Bruno Bauer, Ernst Renan) and of philosophers who helped shape the discipline of biblical scholarship (i.e. Herder, Hegel, Heidegger).

Around the same time, I was preparing to defend my dissertation (on Acts 10–11) and was trying to plot the next stage in my career. The last thing I expected to do was to drop my own research and turn to the question of race in biblical scholarship. I was simply unable to stop reading about modern racism. I was simultaneously engrossed by the scholarship I had discovered and appalled at my own ignorance about these important topics. It was also around this time that I became engaged to Myriam Jean-Laurent, a woman from Haiti. Suddenly the question of race and its effects became for me a personal as well as an academic question. My scholarship on Acts could certainly wait a year or so while I educated myself.

As I continued to read, however, it slowly began to dawn on me that what I was reading might well prove relevant to the field of biblical scholarship. As I continued to read on the topic of modern racism, I began to suspect the following: (1) Racism is a modern ideology rather than an irrational hatred that erupts from the depth of the soul. (2) Modern biblical scholarship developed alongside this racial ideology and employed categories culled from this racial ideology. It was, therefore, possible that racism had played a role in the development of modern biblical scholarship. (3) Deconstruction might be able to play a helpful role in recognizing and unmasking the blindspots in modernity, and therefore in modern racism. These three suspicions began to haunt me, and I eventually came to realize that there was no returning to my carefully planned research path. I had an obligation, to myself and to scholarship in general, to produce an argument explaining and defending these three assumptions, or to convince myself that they were misguided.

This book also grows out of an increasing sense of intellectual curiosity. As I began to research this topic I kept coming across brilliant, thoughtful, erudite scholarship on the question of race in scholarly discourse. This scholarship had profoundly shaken a number of academic disciplines: literature, philosophy, art, music, history, law, psychology, anthropology, and even classics. While I remain indebted to all this scholarship, my thinking has been particularly influenced by two areas of inquiry: critical race theory (which gives shape to Chapter 1), and the recent scholarship

exploring the relationship between Martin Heidegger and National Socialism (which gives shape to Chapter 4). Part of what I wanted to do with this book was to bring these vibrant debates to my own field of biblical scholarship.

This project, then, does not grow out of my own personal experiences. I am a white man who has lived with all the privileges that come with that status. I have never experienced the sort of subtle but pervasive racism that continues to exist in today's society. This book has instead been inspired by the fascinating books that I have read. I was riveted by the question of racialized scholarship and by the means by which other disciplines were exploring the issue. It is my hope that other biblical scholars will find the topic to be equally engrossing.

This book has been difficult to write, partly because I have discovered so much that has proven to be personally upsetting. As an undergraduate I toyed with majoring in either classics or philosophy. While I would be unduly flattering myself to pretend to be an expert in either field, I have always had warm feelings for both. I will always treasure my father's Liddell and Scott dictionary that he passed along to me when I was learning Greek. It has not been easy to discover that the fascination with all things Greek, a fascination which I share, emerged as a process of European (i.e. white) self-definition. As an undergraduate and graduate student I was fascinated by phenomenological hermeneutics and I was deeply influenced by, and moved by, the writings of Martin Heidegger. My doctoral dissertation, successfully defended a few weeks before I started thinking about this project, relied heavily on Heideggerian ideas, particularly the hermeneutical circle. It was extremely distressing to discover that Heidegger was an antiSemite, a Nazi, and a Hitler enthusiast. It was even more distressing to discover that these political views, which I detested long before I fully understood, had spilled over into his thought, which I so admired. Had they somehow spilled over into my own as well?

INTRODUCTION

Thus the Semitic race is to be recognized almost entirely by negative characteristics. It has neither mythology, nor epic, nor science, nor philosophy, nor fiction, nor plastic arts, nor civil life; in everything there is a complete absence of complexity, subtlety or feeling, except for unity.

Ernst Renan

This quotation, unearthed by Martin Bernal (Bernal 346) and found in the scholarly writings of an eminent biblical scholar, is simultaneously disturbing and revealing. These sentiments are not what one would expect to find in a serious, scholarly work. The ideas expressed here seem to reflect the opinions of a crank rather than the reasoned arguments of a scholar. Renan, of course, was no crank. While this quote seems to represent the antithesis of modern, Enlightened rationality, it actually represented the pinnacle of the learned opinion of the early modern period. Renan was hardly the only great modern figure enchanted by the noble goals of modernity who also expressed rank racial prejudices. While modernity's noble ideals have permeated popular consciousness, the casual racism which coincides with these noble ideals has received far less attention.

A growing number of recent scholars (Appiah, Bauman, Bernal, Fredrickson, Gates, Gilman, Gilroy, Goldberg, Gould, Stepan, Said, West, R. Young) have examined the racial views of the pillars of modernity and have shown that Renan is hardly alone in his ability to maintain simultaneously the noble ideals of Enlightenment rationality and the less than noble ideals of white, European superiority and triumphalism. The aforementioned scholars have identified the following disturbing pronouncements, all from lofty sources.

- I am apt to suspect the negroes, and in general all the other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. Hume (quoted in Gates 1985: 10)
- Americans (i.e. Indians) and Blacks are lower in their mental capacities than all other races. Kant (quoted in Gilman 1982: 32)
- This fellow was quite black from head to foot, a clear proof that what he said was stupid. Kant (quoted in Gates 1985: 11)
- I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to whites both in body and mind. Thomas Jefferson (quoted in Fredrickson 1987: 1)
- The natives are idolaters, superstitious, and live most filthily; they are lazy, drunken rascals, without thought for the future, insensitive to any happening, happy or sad, which gives pleasure to or afflicts them; they have no sense of modesty or restraint in the pleasures of love, each sex plunging on the other like a brute from the earliest age. The *Encyclopédie* (quoted in Appiah 22)
- Every Idea thrown into the mind of the Negro is caught up and realized with the whole energy of his will; but this realization involves a wholesale destruction . . . it is manifest that want of self-control distinguishes the character of the Negroes. This condition is capable of no development or Culture, and as we see them at this day, such they have always been. The only essential connection between the Negroes and the Europeans is slavery . . . We may conclude slavery to have been the occasion of the increase in human feeling among the Negroes. Hegel (quoted in Gilroy 41)
- We face a choice between sustaining our *German* intellectual life through a renewed infusion of genuine native teachers and educators, or abandoning it once and for all to the growing Jewish influence – in both the wider and narrower sense. Heidegger (quoted in Ott 378)

These sentiments are not unknown among biblical scholars, as the following quotes from Bruno Bauer reveal.

- Instead of praising the tenacity of the Jewish national spirit and regarding it as an advantage, one should ask what its basis is and where it comes from. Its base is lack of ability to develop with history, it is the reason of the quite unhistorical character of that nation, and this again is due to its oriental nature. Such stationary nations exist in the Orient, because there human liberty and the possibility of progress are still limited. Bruno Bauer (Bauer 12)
- In the Orient, man does not yet know that he is free and gifted with reason. He does not recognize freedom and reason as his real nature. He sees his highest task in the performance of mindless, baseless ceremonies. The oriental man likewise, has as yet, no history, if only that which is a development of general human liberty deserves to be called history. To sit under his vine and his fig tree, is for the oriental the highest boon man can achieve. Bruno Bauer (Bauer 13)

I argue throughout the course of this book that racism is neither accidental nor peripheral to modern thought, that it permeates the perception and reasoning of many seminal modern thinkers and modern institutions. For most modern Europeans, racism was *a morally and empirically justifiable way of thinking*. This was true for thinkers in most academic disciplines, including biblical scholarship, for most of modern history. Repulsion in the face of overt racism is a relatively recent phenomenon.

If this assessment is true, it raises a number of interesting and disturbing questions. How is it possible for racism to appear reasonable, coherent, and rational to the most careful and rigorous thinkers of the modern age? How can racism be reconciled with the modern embrace of autonomy, individuality, and freedom? Why were so many audacious and critical thinkers willing to elevate dubious racial prejudice to the status of certain knowledge? Why was racial thinking accepted by so many readers and thinkers and challenged by so few? What was it about modernity that made this sort of nonchalant racism respectable and intellectually legitimate?

Behind these questions lurks another question specifically directed to biblical scholarship: if racism is embedded deeply within the culture and political practice of modern European countries (as slavery, imperial conquests, and the Shoah imply), and if it is also embedded in the thought of the great intellectuals of the modern era (as I hope to show), is it not reasonable to assume that racist thought has also found its way into the discipline of biblical

scholarship? After all, modern biblical scholarship did not emerge in a vacuum. While philosophers, theologians, and scholars have interpreted the Bible since antiquity, the critical study of the Bible took its current shape in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most especially in Germany. It was within this environment that biblical scholarship's central categories were formed and that the contours of the discipline shaped. These formative years, which saw the formation and institutionalization of biblical studies, coincides with the development of a complex racial ideology which infused most aspects of political and intellectual life. Were these disciplinary movements in any way indebted to the racial ideology that was reigning in so much of modern European society? If so, how did this reigning ideology find its way into the discipline of biblical scholarship? How can contemporary critics recognize and come to terms with the traces of racist thought that might remain buried in the discipline? And, finally, how can a critique of racism be performed? On what grounds do I stand as I undertake such a critique? These are the questions which have given rise to this book.

My thesis is that modern biblical scholarship has been influenced by the category of race. The influence of race has been sometimes subtle and sometimes far from subtle.

In the first chapter I grapple with the theoretical problems posed by race. I will begin by distinguishing between the seemingly universal human problems of stereotyping and heterophobia and the specifically modern problem of racism. These terminological distinctions will allow us to begin the difficult process of thinking critically and rigorously about the topic of race. With the help of the category "discourse" I will argue that the permeable category "race" penetrates the major intellectual movements of the modern world and, in the process, gains its legitimacy by being infused into these authoritative movements. In other words, the category of race becomes widespread and legitimized because it becomes so thoroughly intertwined in widely accepted intellectual movements. This argument leads me to one of the central claims of this study. It is my contention that the major (philosophical, aesthetic, historiographical, philological) intellectual movements of the modern world have become 'racialized' (i.e. have become infused with the category of race). Modern biblical scholars carried out their work by engaging the major intellectual movements of their day. By taking up these widely accepted intellectual movements, they imported the category of race into the study of the Bible.

The remainder of the study will trace the process by which

biblical scholarship became racialized. I will focus upon the ways that modern philosophy became racialized and will trace the infusion of (racialized) philosophical ideas into the discipline of biblical scholarship. I will pay attention to three major and influential philosophical movements (Hegelianism, Heideggerianism, and Romanticism) and will explore the ways that these movements became racialized. I will then trace the ways that these philosophical ideas and systems traveled into the discipline of biblical scholarship, paying particular attention to the Tübingen school (which was deeply Hegelian), Bultmann and his students (who were explicitly Heideggerian), and the parable scholarship of Funk and Crossan (who combined Heideggerianism with Romanticism). My argument is that biblical scholarship became, and in important ways remains, racialized because it appropriates and participates in a series of racialized discourses. This has happened *irrespective of, and sometimes in opposition to, the intention* of the biblical scholar in question. I wish to be clear here. Rather than accusing individual philosophers and scholars (especially twentieth-century scholars) of being racists or antiSemites, I am arguing that modern biblical scholarship is trapped by the racialized discourse that it employs. It is this racialized discourse that has led and continues to lead the discipline into unfortunate directions. The problem, for the most part, is one of intellectual resources that permeate the discipline rather than flawed intentions of individual biblical scholars.

In the early nineteenth century, that racialized thinking began to spread throughout European culture and began to fuel the political and intellectual life of imperial Europe. The nineteenth century saw ferocious debates about racial slavery, massive imperial conquests of the Orient and Africa, and the rise of racial anti-Semitism. It also saw, within the continent of Europe, the rise of a form of nationalism that took a particularly racialized turn. Chapter 2 examines the ways that these racialized political realities influenced Hegel's philosophy. I explore the way that racialized thinking took hold of his philosophy, particularly his historiography and aesthetics (i.e. his view of art, language, and myth).

As Christian monarchies began to decline in prestige, the social world of Europe needed to be placed on a new foundation, and many nineteenth-century thinkers turned to race and, in the process, racialized the way that they thought of the nation and "the people" (*das Volk*). Each people, defined linguistically, was to live on its own land and have its own unique culture. The development of a healthy people required a double move: the nurturing of an authentic, pure,

uncontaminated culture; and the expulsion of that which was alien, foreign, and corrupting. This ideology emerged alongside the development of modern racism and took an explicitly racial form. It was the racially alien (i.e. the Jew, the Oriental, the African, the non-European) who was to be expelled, if an authentic people was to be created. Hegel took over the notion of the people, arguing that art, culture, and myth were ultimately reflections of the spirit of the particular people that produced them.

This idea of a racialized and nationalized people became an essential part of Hegel's narrative of world history. Hegel argued that Spirit (*Geist*) was an active force that shapes and drives history by the force of its own inner logic. Hegel's Spirit develops progressively, moving from lower to higher levels of consciousness. It also develops geographically and racially, as the levels of consciousness are assigned to particular races and particular peoples. For Hegel, Africans have no real consciousness and no culture; Orientals have lower levels of consciousness and a real, albeit backwards and despotic, culture; while Europeans, particularly the Germanic rather than Latinic peoples, are capable of the highest level of consciousness. It is the Germanic Europeans who possess the potential for authentic culture and for real freedom. At the very moment that Europeans are enslaving Africans, slaughtering natives, conquering Orientals, and demonizing the Jews, Hegel develops a narrative of world history which denies humanity to Africans and denies the consciousness of freedom to Jews and Orientals.

Chapter 3 explores the migration of Hegel's racialized views of art and of history into biblical scholarship. This occurs most especially under the influence of F.C. Baur (founder of the Tübingen school), who employs Hegel's views in his own highly influential history of emerging Christianity. While Hegel's narrative of world history culminates in triumphant modern Europe, it also devotes considerable space to the ancient world. In Hegel's narrative, the conflict between a conquering West and a conquered East is projected back upon antiquity. This is particularly visible in the way that Hegel and his contemporaries began to think about the ancient Greeks. For Hegel, and for most nineteenth-century thinkers (particularly within Germany), the Greeks represented something fundamentally new in the history of the world. With the Greeks we have the birth of the West and the triumph of Western individualism and freedom over Oriental despotism and servility. The Greeks come to symbolize freedom, individualism, and intellectual vibrancy, while the Orientals come to symbolize despotism, collectivity,

and intellectual ossification. Baur takes over this fundamental antithesis between the Western (free) Greeks and the nonWestern (servile) Orientals and interjects it into the very heart of his analysis of emerging Christianity.

Baur took over Hegel's general narrative of world history, with the Jews standing in for the Orientals. In this way he combined the antiJudaism of Christian theology (where the Jew, the repudiator of Jesus, comes to symbolize the antithesis to all that is good and honorable) with the racialized Orientalism of his day. He interjected this narrative into early Christianity by arguing that the fundamental divide within early Christianity was between the (despotic, fleshly, backwards, Eastern) Jewish Christians and the (free, spiritual, dynamic, Western) Hellenistic Christians. Early Christianity, for Baur, is fueled by a conflict between Hebrew and Hellenist, which means between a slave and a free consciousness. The conflict of earliest Christianity eventually gives way to compromise, as the Western spirit of freedom makes its peace with the despotic spirit of the East and transforms itself into 'early Catholicism'. It becomes the task of radical biblical scholars to strip away the Eastern and Catholic debris that impedes access to the authentic Western core of the New Testament. The chapter concludes by showing how Baur's views quickly become the consensus position, even among those who came to reject the Hegelianism of the Tübingen school.

Chapter 4 makes the transition to the twentieth century by taking up the philosopher who has most profoundly influenced the discipline of biblical scholarship: Martin Heidegger. It is my contention that Heidegger's deeply racialized thought can best be understood in light of his enthusiasm for Hitler and for National Socialism. There has been an explosion of careful and thoughtful scholarship on the nature and significance of Heidegger's political commitments and on the significance of these commitments for his thought. Heideggerian scholarship of the late 1980s establishes that, contrary to his postwar testimony, Heidegger was deeply involved in the National Socialist movement. It also shows that he remained loyal to the regime long after his 1934 resignation from the political post of University Rector. Heideggerian scholarship of the 1990s returns to Heidegger's philosophical texts as it explores the ways that Heidegger's Nazism interjects itself into his philosophy. This recent scholarship is deeply influenced by Jacques Derrida, who is often mistakenly accused of being a pro-Heidegger apologist seeking to whitewash Heidegger's political transgressions and intellectual failings. Derrida argues that Heidegger's thought is deeply divided and

contradictory, with metaphysical and authoritarian strains competing with post-metaphysical and liberatory strains. I have become convinced that Derrida's analysis is particularly helpful in identifying those moments when Heidegger's thought turns itself towards racist and fascist ideologies.

I identify four moments where Heidegger's thought opens itself up to racialization. These moments reveal his commitment to his own rather idiosyncratic version of the racialized and aestheticized ideology of organicity; the same ideology which brought racialization and aestheticized nationalism into the thought of Herder, Hegel, and Baur. Taken together, these problematic moments lead me to ask if Heidegger can continue to offer intellectual nourishment to a discipline that seeks to flourish in the multicultural world of the twenty-first century.

The first moment involves his early definition of authenticity, which occurs in his lectures on religion. This initial definition of authenticity takes over and secularizes central tenets of Christian theology and Christian antiJudaism. The second moment involves the definition of authenticity in *Being and Time*, revealed especially in his analysis of "falling" (*das Verfallen*) into "the They" (*das Man*). Here he aestheticizes and universalizes a series of oppositions that he inherits from *völkisch* nationalism (i.e. the pure, German, primordial, rooted, organic world of the peasant versus the impure, Jewified, racially mixed, rootless, inorganic world of the city). These oppositions are central to his analysis of temporality: authentic temporality reflects the values of the rooted peasants and inauthentic temporality reflects the values of the Jewified city. My analysis is buttressed by comparing and contrasting Heidegger's views with those of the father of postwar German fascism: Oswald Spengler.

The third moment involves the place of the German people in his thought. In *Being and Time* Heidegger argues that he is able to provide a proper philosophical foundation to the community (*der Gemeinschaft*) of the German people (*des Volkes*). Following Johannes Fritsche, I argue that Heidegger's argument here directly borrows from, and tries to make the philosophical case for, the emerging National Socialist movement, which sought to provide a biological ground to the community of the German people (*Volksgemeinschaft*). Heidegger does become dissatisfied with the direction of the regime, although this should not be mistaken for opposition or rebellion. After this occurs, Heidegger begins to rethink the ground of this German community. It is this reflection, which seeks to deepen rather than reject National Socialism, that leads to his analysis of

poetry and to his radical engagement with antiquity (particularly with the Greeks, who, for him, are racial forefathers to the Germans). His highly influential and deeply racialized linguistic turn is part of his ongoing attempt to elevate fascism beyond the vulgar regime created by Hitler and his cohorts. This leads Derrida to ask if Heidegger's spiritual racism is less disturbing than the vulgar racism of the Hitler regime.

The fourth moment involves the question of his postwar views on the genocide. He is mostly silent on the question of the genocide, which suggests that his thinking is unable to confront some of the most disturbing questions of the age. His few, recently discovered public statements about the genocide only make matters worse. They are so shockingly insensitive to lead the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas to wonder if they do not imply a form of consent to genocide.

In the final two chapters of the book I will ask the following question: To what extent are biblical Heideggerians influenced by the values imbedded in Heidegger's thought? At this point it might be helpful to reiterate the distinction between racist individuals and racialized discourse. The former is a matter of intention while the latter can assert itself irrespective of the individual's intention. I will argue that these Heideggerian values exert a negative influence upon the work of all who take up his perspective without submitting it to rigorous ideological and deconstructive critique. This negative influence occurs in the case of those who do not share Heidegger's fondness for fascism, Germanic superiority and racialization. It even occurs in the case of those who might be repulsed by Heidegger's political and ethical values.

Chapter 5 takes up the most influential biblical scholar of the twentieth century and the figure who did the most to ensure that Heidegger's thought would find its way into biblical scholarship: Rudolf Bultmann. After discussing the relationship between the two men and the general contours of Bultmann's idiosyncratic reading of Heidegger, I turn to the ways in which Heidegger's racialized thinking finds its way into Bultmann's thought. My analysis of Heidegger identified four problematic moments that left his thought open to racialization. My analysis of Bultmann explores the ways that these four moments do and do not find their way into Bultmann's thought. I argue that many of the ideas that Bultmann appropriates from Heidegger are thoroughly racialized. This is especially the case for authenticity, temporality, and "the They"; three of Bultmann's ideas that are deeply Heideggerianized and deeply racialized.

Authenticity is the linchpin of Bultmann's Heideggerianized and racialized thought. Bultmann translates Heideggerian authenticity to the New Testament by means of what I will come to call an "existential morality tale". In this narrative of authentic existence, life consists of three crucial moments: habitual inauthenticity, existential encounter, slothful fall back to inauthenticity. When this tale is historicized, early Christianity comes to have three phases: late Judaism (of the Second Temple period, especially the Pharisees), Hellenistic Christianity (especially of Paul), early Catholicism (especially of Luke–Acts). These three moments are defined with the help of traditional antiJudaism, Heideggerian racialization, and Tübingen's racialized narratives of world history and of early Christianity. Late Judaism is Eastern, despotic, servile, inauthentic, and legalistic. It seeks security and boasts of its relationship to God, even if its experience of God is in the past rather than in the present. Pauline Christianity is Western, free, authentic, and open to radical insecurity. In it God is experienced authentically, in the present. Early Catholicism, especially in Luke–Acts, trades in the radical insecurity of eschatological urgency for the security of salvation history. As a result it turns Jesus into a figure from the past, obscuring the power of the gospel. It is the task of the radical critic to see through the debris of centuries of misreading and to restore the primordial, Hellenistic core of the gospel. It is this critical reading of the gospel which will make possible true freedom in the modern age.

If Bultmann takes over Heidegger's thinking, he parts ways with him on the question of National Socialism. Heidegger enthusiastically joined the Nazi party and did all he could to see to it that their ideas took hold throughout the universities and the nation. Bultmann, who joined the Confessing Church, was one of the rare German intellectuals who did not publicly support the regime. At the same time, his critique of Nazism was shaped by his racialized and Heideggerianized intellectual resources, which saw the elimination of the alien as an essential act in bringing about freedom. The question becomes: can Bultmann articulate a critique of Nazism that is free from the racialized framework of his intellectual resources? Does his discourse, which is deeply indebted to racialization, stand in the way of his honorable intentions to criticize Hitler's radically racist regime?

Chapter 6 takes up American parable scholarship of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly as carried out by Robert Funk and J.D. Crossan. This scholarship seeks to show that American scholars can

intervene in the debates that were then raging inside Germany. The particular debate that was taken up involved the work of Bultmann's students (the "New Hermeneutic"). The New Hermeneutic sought to improve upon Bultmann's demythologizing program by appropriating the later Heidegger's views on language and poetry. In the process, American parable scholarship became deeply intertwined with the very views that are most closely linked with Heidegger's National Socialism. The question that I pose is this: What happens when Heidegger's particularly Germanic ideas (i.e. his *völkisch* nationalism, aestheticized racialization, Greco-Germanic identification, and racial anti-Semitism) get translated to the American context?

It is Funk's classic study of the parables (*Language, Hermeneutic and Word of God*) that renders accessible the theoretical reflections of the New Hermeneutic. It is a work which is very much in dialogue with the demythologizing program of Bultmann, and it goes a long way towards infusing Bultmann's ideas into the fabric of American biblical scholarship. Funk takes over, without modification, many of Bultmann's racialized ideas: his existential anthropology, as well as his views on authenticity, temporality, and "the They". Funk also modifies Bultmann's position by raising, with the help of the later Heidegger, the question of language. For Funk, it is objectified and degraded language (rather than objectifying wordviews) that brings about inauthenticity, as the parables become the primary example of authentic religious language. It is this Heideggerianized (and Bultmannized) theoretical framework which provides the seminal parable scholarship of Funk and Crossan with its fundamental, and fundamentally racialized, presuppositions and interpretive framework.

Crossan takes over Funk's framework and makes two major additions, both of which are relevant to the question of the racialization of biblical scholarship. First, he analyzes poetic experience, poetic writing, and poetic reception with the help of a thoroughly Romantic aesthetic. While the development of an aesthetic does fill in a void in Funk's position, Crossan's Romanticism further chains biblical scholarship to the aestheticized and racialized ideology of organicity. We should remember that this is the very ideology, and the very set of aesthetic values, which permeate the thought of Herder, Hegel, and Heidegger. Second, Crossan categorizes the parables around Heidegger's (racialized) temporal care structure. For Crossan there are three modes of the Kingdom's temporality, and they match the threefold movement of Heidegger's temporality and Bultmann's

existential morality tale. The Advent parables offer an existential encounter that shatters the inauthentic world of conventionality; the Reversal parables call us out of that world, revealing the radical insecurity of existence; and the Action parables make possible the decision to live authentically, without the security of ethics and programs.

Taken together, Funk and Crossan translate the existential core of the New Testament from Bultmann's Pauline kerygma to the authentic word of the parables. In so doing, they also ensure that Jesus' teachings will be understood through the eyes of Heidegger's racialized thinking. American parable scholarship will take over wholesale Heidegger's racialized narrative of origin and fall, as well as his racialized categories (i.e. "authenticity", "the They", "temporality"). Even as Crossan challenges the religious and racial chauvinism of New Testament scholarship, the intellectual resources that permeate his parable scholarship remain deeply indebted to the category of race.

In the Conclusion, I ask about the possibility of escaping from the problem of racialization. Throughout the book I argue that the problem is one of discourse rather than intention. My central argument is that the biblical scholars discussed throughout the book (especially the twentieth-century ones) are trapped by their intellectual resources. Part of the task of the Conclusion, then, will be to identify those aspects of mainstream biblical scholarship that are most problematic. I do so by distinguishing that which can be discarded (i.e. those arguments and perspectives that the discipline should learn to do without) from that which can be profitably reconfigured (i.e. those topics that are essential to the study of the Bible, but which have been defined in a problematic manner).

This gesture (i.e. discarding, redefining) will go a long way towards addressing the problem of racialization within the discipline. It is my contention that racialized resources have prevented many biblical scholars from creating the sort of liberatory critical practice that they explicitly endorse. If the problem is one of resources, then the solution comes in finding a new ground for future biblical scholarship. Much current biblical scholarship offers a promising start towards developing a new, nonracialized ground for New Testament studies. The last two decades have witnessed a variety of new methodologies, new historical perspectives, and new forms of ideological critique. This new scholarship has gone a long way towards challenging the theoretical and exegetical framework of traditional scholarship. My argument implicitly poses the following

INTRODUCTION

question to these new methodologies and movements: Are these innovations sufficient to make it possible for biblical scholarship to free itself from racialization? I wrap up the book by reflecting upon this question.