

Yet Again about the Failure to Predict the Soviet Union's Demise : A Case Study of Jewish-Christian Relations as a Tribute to Historicity

Yakov Zinberg

本稿は、政治学がソ連崩壊という大きく深刻な現象を予見できなかった経験から、史実性の問題を検討しようとするものである。本稿は、ユダヤ教とキリスト教が、互いに長い軋轢の中にありつつ、終末を含めた歴史の進展を見据える、ふたつの血縁的な宗教体系であることを踏まえて、ユダヤ・キリスト教関係にとっての意義とは何かという観点から、史実性の問題の再検討を行った。本稿はまた、ジークムンド・フロイドの最後の著作『モーセと一神教』の内容の史実性を、批判的に検討している。

Keywords: international politics, research method, Jewish-Christian relations, *Moses and Monotheism*, history

Under the current conditions, my insistence upon resorting to in particular the descriptive-historical method as a major social research tool has been primarily inspired by two interconnected and overlapping factors: recognition of the importance of, as Thomas Smith points out, a “historically-based political inquiry as research moves from the ‘bi-polar’ tasks of the Cold War toward more concrete study of unit-levels particulars and international development and change”¹ and a deep disappointment with the Cold War period theorizing which has failed to foretell collapse of the Cold War system. In the latter regard suffice it to recall that

The failure of the discipline to anticipate the collapse of the Soviet Union was a striking indication of... theoretical paralysis. The field was hardly looking for dramatic change. The winter 1989/1990 issue of *International Security*, under the banner of “New Challenges for Soviet Security Policy”, explained the necessary incrementalism of Soviet foreign relations and Western responses. One piece ventured to ask, “Beyond the Brezhnev Doctrine: A New era in Soviet-East European Relations?” A year earlier the journal had been probing urgent questions like, “Is there a Tank Gap?” and whether or not conventional European security could rest upon the “3:1” rule, which held that an aggressor required three times its opponent’s “power” on the ground in order to

1 Smith, Thomas W. *History and International Relations*. London and NY: Routledge, 1999, p.264.

pierce the adversary's front-line defenses. In retrospect, it all has a surreal quality. As bells toll the Soviet demise, mainstream International Relations proved stone-deaf.²

While a large number of research methods insist on the centrality of hypotheses, it might be just as worthwhile to consistently follow the 'grounded theory' research strategy which emphasizes the need to generate theory on the basis of examining available data and recommends not to formulate any hypotheses ahead of conducting research, concentrating rather upon the ongoing process of data collection, data analysis and theory construction :

In social theory research generating theory goes hand in hand with verifying it... the adequacy of a theory... cannot be divorced from the process by which it is generated... Generating a theory from data means that most hypotheses and concepts not only come from the data, but are systematically worked out in relation to the data during the course of the research, Generating a theory involves a process of research. By contrast, the source of certain ideas, or even 'models', can come from sources other than the data.³

Keith Punch views the 'grounded theory' as a "coordinated, systematic but flexible overall research strategy", an approach whose purpose is "to generate theory from data."⁴

I also find it useful to combine the use of the 'grounded theory' strategy with applying the descriptive-historical approach as a means in particular to avoid selection bias, following the suggestion offered by Detlef Sprintz and Yael Wolinsky-Nahmias who claim that "no one method can address all the challenges of social science research."⁵ Besides, social research might gain positive results by applying as well the case study methodology, namely in particular the 'crucial case study' approach, and a number of methodological components pertaining to the Critical Security Studies school of thought, thus in effect making use of the "multi-method" research strategy. However it is primarily the descriptive-historical method which stands in need of further comments as a widely disputed research strategy.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 257.

3 Blaikie, Norman. *Designing Social Research*. Malden, MA : Polity Press, 2000, p. 238. In ref. to Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, L.L. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Chicago, Ill. : Aldine, pp. 2-6.

4 Punch, Keith F. *Introduction to Social Research : Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. London : Sage Publishers, 1998, pp. 162-173.

5 Sprintz, Detlef F. and Wolinsky-Nahmias, Yael (Eds). *Models, Numbers, and Cases : Methods for Studying International Relations*. Ann Arbor, MI : The University of Michigan Press, 2004, p. 378.

Seeing one of their principal purposes in the identification and assessment of the main research methods which were employed in the field of in particular international relations (IR) scholarship, Detlef Sprintz and Yael Wolinsky–Nahmias, while addressing their findings at large to the fields of international political economy, international environmental politics, and international relations, proceeded to survey all the relevant articles published in six major scholarly journals devoted to examining various IR issues, i.e. the *American Political Science Review*, *International Organization*, *International Security*, *International Studies Quarterly*, the *Journal of Conflict Resolution* and *World Politics*, throughout the period of time between 1975 and 2000. As fairly noted by Calmera Lutmar, appealing for the promotion of a methods–oriented approach Sprintz and Wolinsky–Nahmias emphasized that “theory and methodology are most beneficial when they accompany each other for the advancement of knowledge”, warning that “theoretical arguments have to be augmented with systematic methods of testing”, which implies methodological support.⁶ Similarly, while discussing the relationship between in particular a historian and international relations theory, Marc Trachtenberg warns as follows :

In history as in science, a conceptual framework does not emerge in a purely mechanical way from a simple piecing together of empirical observations. But what that means is that a lot of thought has to go into the research effort—that it has to be question–driven. You therefore need to develop some sense for what the questions are—that is, you need something that can help generate those questions. And it is in this area that some theory—some sense, that is, for how international politics works—is really indispensable.⁷

Restoring the balance, Trachtenberg stresses as well the interdependence of historical evidence and theoretical frameworks, indicating as follows :

Theory can be misused. If you rely on a certain theory, you run the risk of seeing only what that theory says is important or of trying to force the evidence into some preconceived theoretical structure... the important thing here is to realize that theory, in itself, does not provide answers and that its main function is to bring questions into focus.⁸

6 See Lutmar, Carmela. “Models, Numbers, and Cases : Methods for Studying International Relations (Book Review)”. *Journal of Peace Research*. 42 : 2 (March 2005), p. 244.

7 Trachtenberg, Marc. *The Craft of International History : A Guide to Method*. Princeton and Oxford : Princeton University Press, 2006, p. 33.

8 *Ibid.*

Returning to the research accomplished by Sprintz and Wolinsky–Nahmias, it is worth pointing out that, according to the editors, while in the late 1990's less than one-third of all the articles surveyed could be assessed as lacking methodology, in the late 1970's half of all the articles surveyed could be viewed as such, which serves to testify to a growing appreciation among contributors to the field of international studies of the overall importance of methodology-based research.⁹ The two editors have also observed that the number of articles based on applying the case study method remained rather stable throughout the period tested, demonstrating the level of 14 per cent in the late 1990's, the number of studies applying formal modeling and game theory increased, reaching the level of about 14 per cent in the late 1990's, while quantitative studies in the late 1990's amounted to as much as about 43 per cent of the total number of tested materials. The number of studies based on the multi-method approach, applying two or more methods, slightly increased throughout the tested period, reaching the level of about 4 per cent in the late 1990's, which is a positive trend standing in need of further growth. However, the editors observed as well a considerable decline in the application of a descriptive–historical approach, which is proven by the fact that while in the late 1970's over 70 per cent of the articles printed in *World Politics* were based on the latter approach, in the late 1990's only less than 30 per cent of articles could be assessed as such,¹⁰ a very alarming figure in particular if seen against the background of the method's highly unique features.

The latter position is represented by a rather rare scholarly investigation which is in need of further elaboration and supporting argumentation. Nevertheless it clearly delineates positive features of the descriptive–historical approach and as such plays an important role of being opposed to the growing trend in favor of either ignoring or diminishing the value of the descriptive–historical approach in IR studies. Unlike Trachtenberg who seems to attach equal importance to theory and historical evidence, Lasha Tchantouridz, who at the time of presentation was affiliated with the Centre for Defence and Security Studies at the University of Manitoba, Canada, argues that historical method deserves primacy in defense and security studies as a whole, asserting as well that “method should guide theory, not the other way around.”¹¹

9 Sprintz, Detlef F. and Wolinsky–Nahmias, Yael (Eds), pp. 7–8.

10 *Ibid.*, pp. 5–8. Noted as well in Moore, Gregory J. “Research Methods for International Relations Studies: Assembling an Effective Toolkit”. Presented at the *48th Annual International Studies Association Conference* in Chicago, Illinois, February 28–March 3, 2007. (Accessed at www.allacademic.com on July 15, 2009)

11 Tchantouridz, Lasha J.. “As Long as They Get Somewhere: Theory and Method in Defence and Security Studies”. Presented at the *48th Annual International Studies Association Conference* in Chicago, Illinois, February 28–March 3, 2007. (Accessed at www.allacademic.com on July 12, 2009), p. 2.

Tchantouridz argues that while the empirical method tends to dominate research in natural sciences, implying conducting research in real time, in the field of IR it has been erroneously accepted as a mainstream approach on the assumption that “the phenomena of natural and social sciences are identical; i.e., they or their effects exist in real time and space.”¹² Reminding that phenomena of natural and social sciences are “not identically accessible” and that only the historical method may be allowed to dominate IR studies because “there is no phenomenon in the IR that can be observed in real time and identified as a relevant factor without a prior knowledge about it”, Tchantouridz concludes that :

... we receive information about social phenomena normally only after they have taken place; they are not observable as such, and their measurement mathematically is almost impossible or useless. Besides, the empirical method only works well in deterministic systems, where clear and definite predictions about future outcomes of observations are possible. No such consistent prediction about future events has ever taken place in social sciences.¹³

Identifying similarities between weather systems and the international system, Tchantouridz also claims that both kinds could arguably be judged as deterministic and behaving stochastically at the same time, which generates unreliable forecasting and in effect rids of any particular sense either various cause-effect forms or any kinds of deterministic analyses in general.¹⁴ While admitting that relying primarily on the historical method might lead to a dead-end since it is hardly possible to judge objectively towards where exactly history is leading, Tchantouridz nevertheless thinks that “it should not deter the scholars, of course, as long as they get somewhere” and insists that applying the historical method should be viewed as a preferential choice in comparison with relying on theories. Tchantouridz refers as well to the fact that since the very nature of IR studies is “humanitarian”, applying theories might result in imposing “frameworks and forms of judgment, thus impeding free thought and imagination.”¹⁵ With the humanitarian essence of IR studies in mind, implying the general purpose of making people’s life better, Tchantouridz goes as far as refuting a practical value of theoretical debates because, as she claims, the “probability of getting decisions right or wrong would be the same whether such decisions are informed by theory or not”.¹⁶

12 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 23–34.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 24.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 6.

In the latter regard Tchantouridz's stance comes close the sphere of interests and conceptions put forward by the so-called Critical Security Studies (CSS) approach that places a particular emphasis upon the humanitarian nature and intended purposes of security studies at large, in effect demanding a value judgment. Typically, while summarizing main arguments of the CSS school of thought, Eli Stamnes singles out three components: inescapable interpretation, conceptions of security and self-reflexivity and responsibility in the study of security, and attaches a particular importance to a normative social posture, indicating as follows:

CSS argues that it is impossible to 'escape the interpretative moment' when theorizing. Theorists cannot avoid focusing on certain aspects and ignoring others. Hence, theorizing reflects and affects common conceptions of what is important and relevant and what is not, and in this way serves certain interests. Research, therefore, should not be seen as detached from society. It should rather be seen as a form of political practice that has the potential to impact on how we all live our lives—it always involves a normative element, however unbiased the theorists seek to be.¹⁷

The humanitarian aspect is put forward as well by Paul Williams who, while referring to unsatisfactory living conditions of all too many residents of Africa, a home "to 35 of the world's 40 most underdeveloped states", declares, ascribing this position to the CSS school of thought, that "the route to true stable security is through the promotion of emancipatory politics" and briefly characterizes the CSS general approach to security as that of "based on people, justice and change."¹⁸ The normative element makes itself clearly heard through a set of urgent inquiries that Williams proceeds to enumerate as follows, while at the same time admitting that "security has no objective meaning":

What is security, and whose security are we talking about? Which 'Africa' should we study? What should the relationships be between regional and global structures and processes? Who or what are the most appropriate referents for security? Who is best placed to deliver it? What principles should security policies promote? And whose answers to these questions should we listen to?¹⁹

17 Stamnes, Eli. "Critical Security Studies and the United Nations Preventive Deployment in Macedonia". *International Peacekeeping*. 11 : 1 (Spring 2004), p. 161.

18 Williams, Paul D. "Thinking about Security in Africa". *International Affairs*. 83 : 6 (2007), pp. 1021–1022.

Being in agreement with Klaus Larres who, writing in 1998, expressed reasonable doubts regarding the practical value of the CSS school of thought, pointing out that “it will demand a lot of effort and probably an even more persuasive linkage of theoretical and empirical case–studies before the beneficial insights of the relatively new field of ‘critical’ security studies will trickle down to both the policy–makers and their voters”,²⁰ I tend to support a number of theoretical innovations peculiar to the CSS school, including not only the appeal to bring forward normative values but as well the general dissatisfaction, which Larres fairly points out, with the failure of the post–Cold War security studies to reconsider prevailing security concepts and in generate some radically new ones, the failure which arguably dates back to and is deeply rooted in the period preceding the commonly acknowledged “end of the Cold War”:

Except for the congenital “keepers of the threat” (the Cold War warriors and worriers on both sides), attitudes about security had already shifted significantly before 1989. There had already been plenty of signs of discontent about Cold War conceptions of “national” and “international” security by the early 1980s, if not earlier, among proponents of alternative defense, peace research, and the many supporters of global civil society committed to nonviolence, human rights, environmental sustainability, and so on.²¹

As for the issue of sustaining a balanced relationship between historical evidence and the field of international relations at large, it remains unresolved, posing dilemmas and questions that need to be resolved in the near future. Worse still, this fundamental issue seems to have failed to attract sufficient critical attention, with the relevant scholarly research being relatively insignificant. Such being the case, I have chosen to partially quote here a comprehensive list of “historical difficulties” accompanying the as yet unresolved dichotomy between history and politics at large, compiled by an expert:

Selection Bias: the overarching problem in historical usage across the social sciences. Partisan selection bias is almost always accompanied by the sin of omission of studiously avoiding unhelpful history.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 1022. Acknowledging that he was inspired by the relevant ideas of Keith Booth and Peter Vale, including borrowing the questions posed, William refers readers to Krause, Keith and Williams, Michael C. (ed.). *Critical Security Studies*. London: UCL Press, 1997, pp. 329–358.

20 Larres, Klaus. “Critical Security Studies: Concepts & Cases (Book Review)”. *International Affairs*. 74 : 2 (April 1998), p. 422.

21 Krause, Keith and Williams, Michael C. (ed.). *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases*. London: Routledge, 2003, p. 85.

Anecdotalism : More of a didactic tool than a research method. Airily presenting hand-picked events and narratives in order to corroborate conceptual assertions.

Ahistoricism : Failing to recognize the impact of *moment et milieu* on research at every level of analysis. As a result, presenting historically-contingent constructs as timeless laws of international behavior. Also, failing to recognize that even deductive research programs rise or fall based on the quality of their “empirical” historical testing.

Theoretical Filtering : Interpreting history through one’s theoretical lens. This practice is to some degree unavoidable. At the extreme, it introduces a research tautology that undercuts history’s role as an independent source of corroboration or falsification...²²

This list alone might serve to impose the need for a radical solution which, however, tends to escape being recognized. It is not unreasonable to suggest that humans are inclined to theorize, activating the emotional apparatus which otherwise remains passive. Trachtenberg, for instance, seems to directly relate human ability to be surprised to the issue of theory, seeing them as going “hand in hand”, or as Robert Jervis mentioned in a private letter addressed to Trachtenberg : “Without a theory you can’t be surprised by anything—i.e., events are surprising because they do not fit our expectations.”²³ Consequently, specialized literature treating this subject typically tends to solicit some kind of a vague compatibility between history and politics at large as a desirable solution for the dichotomy issue, in effect refraining from resolving the dilemma. Thus, while pretending “to be clear” about the essence of his argumentation, Trachtenberg creates further confusion, saying : “When I say that historians should grapple with basic theoretical issues, I am not implying that they should simply buy onto the worldview of the theorists. Most of them would not be able to do that in any case, for the simple reason that the theorists just do not look at the world the same way the historians do.”²⁴

Similarly, in his illuminating monograph Thomas Smith defends the compatibility option, indicating in particular as follows :

History is a discipline in motion, and is not immune to theory. Historians would be at sea without

²² See, including a full list Smith, Thomas Wright. *The Use and Abuse of History in the Study of International Relations*. Ph.D. Thesis. The University of Virginia, August 1997, pp. 3–4.

²³ Trachtenberg, p. 38.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

models and concepts and narratives that lend coherence to the artifacts and, perhaps, intimate the stories they tell. Similarly, theory often parallels current political problems and historical structures. Rarely are history and theory distinct spheres overlapping, like a Venn diagram, only at the “testing” stage. “Theory” does not refer simply to abstraction, or “history” simply to the canvassing of a body of evidence.²⁵

Similarly again, Nevil Johnson, writing in 1989, asserted that “those who profess the study of politics should remember that ideally there is a unity of the subject to be attained and presented, a unity in which what is practical in actual political experience is fused with the theory achieved in a critical understanding of that. Descriptive and explanatory work in politics is likely to refer chiefly to institutions and must rely extensively on the methods of historical research seeking to establish what is particular and specific rather than to formulate statements of regularity or generalizations claiming to apply universally.”²⁶ The inability to resolve the history vs. politics dichotomy might have contributed its considerable share to a gradual decline of the descriptive–historical method in the IR field of studies as exemplified by an apparent scarcity of specialized critical literature. Thus, a ‘comparative historical approach’, despite its being a powerful analytic tool, continues to evolve as based primarily on the findings of Theda Skocpol summarized in her well-known monograph, a sociological study, issued some three decades ago.²⁷ Yet another proponent of the compatibility approach, Skocpol regarded the “potential distinctive scholarly contribution” as lying “not in revealing new data about particular aspects of the large time periods and diverse places surveyed in the comparative study, but rather in establishing the interest and *prima facie* validity of an overall argument about causal regularities across the various historical cases.”²⁸

There is a need as well to justify a choice of the case study aiming at identifying the role of a historicity factor in the Jewish–Christian dialogue, considering both affiliated religious systems to be highly history-oriented while continuing to remain in the state of a mutual disagreement. Case studies might be viewed as possessing the advantages of being economical, in terms of investing time and efforts for the sake of examining social and political phenomena of a consider-

²⁵ Smith, p. 179.

²⁶ Johnson, Nevil. *The Limits of Political Science*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989, p. 123.

²⁷ Skocpol, Theda. *States and Social Revolutions: a Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979. For a recent scholarly work based on Skocpol’s methodology see Quirk, James M. *Peace through Integration: Integrating Former Adversaries into a Cooperative Community in Search of Peace and Stability*. Ph.D.Thesis. The Catholic University of America, 2003.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, preface. Quoted in Quirk, p. 3.

ably wide range, and at the same time allowing pursuing in-depth research, thus compensating for a certain lack of range. In this sense, case studies might be fairly considered being a highly feasible choice of a research method rather than the second best option.

Keith Punch claims that case studies, representing as they are yet another approach in qualitative research as a whole, possess two outstanding features, “aiming to understand the case in depth and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context”, and having “a holistic focus” which is supposed to sustain both the understanding and the preservation of “the wholeness and unity of the case.”²⁹ Praising a uniquely penetrating character of the case study approach, Punch emphasized its strategic character, referring in particular to a definition offered by Goode and Hatt which arguably remains just as applicable nowadays: “The case study then is not a special technique ; it is a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied.”³⁰ Speaking of the types of case studies, it might be reasonable to relate the Kurile Islands case study offered to the second main type of case studies in terms of a classification proposed by Stake, consisting of three options :

- the intrinsic case study, where the study is undertaken because the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case ;
- the instrumental case study, where a particular case is examined to give insight into an issue, or to refine a theory ;
- the collective case study, where the instrumental case study is extended to cover several cases, to learn more about the phenomenon, population or general condition.³¹

In addition, I tend to view the case study offered as a ‘crucial case study’ defined by Harry Eckstein as serving to “invalidate or confirm theories if any cases can be expected to do so.”³² Eckstein furthermore proposed to distinguish between the “most-likely” and “least-likely” sub-

29 Punch, p. 150.

30 *Ibid.* In ref. to Goode, W.J. and Hatt, P.K. ‘The case study’ in W.J. Goode and P.K. Hatt (eds), *Methods of Social Research*. New York : McGraw-Hill, 1952, pp. 330–340.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 152 ; in ref. to Stake, R.E. ‘Case Studies’ in N.K.Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage, pp. 236–247.

32 Eckstein, Harry. “Case Study and Theory in Political Science” in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (eds), *Handbook of Political Science*. Reading, Mass : Addison-Wesley Publishing Company”. 1975, p. 118 ; see as well Eckstein, Harry. “Case Study and Theory in Political Science” in Eckstein, *Regarding Politics : Essays on Political Theory, Stability and Change*. Berkeley : Univ. of California Press, 1992, pp. 117–176.

types of 'crucial cases', implying that the former might invalidate a theory by predicting something that fails to fit the case, while the latter, on the contrary, might testify to the validity of a theory involved if the predictions fit the case.³³

Providing an example of the 'crucial case study' application, one might refer to a recently published article in which the authors resort to "the \$1 billion expansionary open market operation in 1932" as a 'crucial case study' in an attempt to examine whether or not the Federal Reserve could "have reversed the decline in money supply during the Great Depression without causing a loss of confidence in the U. S. commitment to the gold standard."³⁴ Seeing the operation as "a laboratory for examining the effects of the Federal Reserve actions on expectations", the authors in effect found no evidence that the expansion "led investors to believe the United States would devalue."³⁵

In order to be capable of evaluating the contemporary relations between Jews and Christians, it is imperative to understand relations between Jews and Christians in the past. It is in fact interpreting the past which continues to make up the very essence of various grievances aired by Jews and Christians against each other and as such poses a major challenge to any plausible attempts aiming at appraising the state of relations between Jews and Christians virtually at any given time. Causing particular complications are at least two outstanding factors which, both separately and combined, stand in need of an objective evaluation and further relevant treatment.

First of all, because of the historical nature of commonly shared religious texts contained in the Bible, multiple disputes between Jews and Christians have been so far predominantly concerned with issues inherently related to the history of the Jewish people. As the separation deepened and widened in terms of both space and time, varying interpretations of Jewish history, gradually acquiring complex theological connotations in the case of Christians and turning increasingly defensive in the case of Jews, served more and more to distort the very process of recording the historical path of the Jewish people, producing falsified and unfitting historical data.

Secondly, the very nature of the Jewish history as having proceeded for a particularly long

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 117–120.

34 Hsieh, Chang-Tai and Romer, Christina D. "Was the Federal Reserve Constrained by the Gold Standard During the Great Depression? Evidence from the 1932 Open Market Purchase Program". *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (March 2006), p. 140.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 141.

period of time throughout an enormous spatial setting has generated a large number of natural difficulties, such as the need to acquire data compiled by means of applying a multitude of languages the Jews have spoken, read and written in, which precludes us from being capable of efficiently processing relevant materials.

Since the Jewish–Christian dialogue is the most constructive element of Jewish–Christian relationship as a whole, attitudes of its supporters and opponents towards the value of the past might prove being particularly illuminating. In this regard it is worthwhile assessing a position taken by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903–1993) whom a representative of American Jewish Congress, Eugene Korn, called “the undisputed leader of Modern Orthodoxy for more than forty years”³⁶ and who in a statement entitled “Confirmation” which was issued in 1964 wrote as follows :

... we certainly have not been authorized by our history, sanctified by the martyrdom of millions, to even hint to another faith community that we are mentally ready to revise historical attitudes, to trade favors pertaining to fundamental matters of faith, and to reconcile “some” differences. Such a suggestion would be nothing but a betrayal of our great tradition and heritage and would, furthermore, produce no practical benefits.³⁷

It is most remarkable that Rabbi Soloveitchik regarded unresolved historical grievances as constituting one of the major obstacles to conducting a fruitful dialogue between Judaism and Christianity. Realizing at the same time that most Orthodox Jews were not trained to deal adequately with theological issues, Rabbi Soloveitchik intentionally resorted to emotional appeals which were primarily and typically based on argumentation of historical nature, such as follows :

Unfortunately, however, non–Jewish society has confronted us throughout the ages in a mood of defiance, as if we were part of the subhuman objective order separated by an abyss from the human, as if we had no capacity for thinking logically, loving passionately, yearning deeply, aspiring and hoping. Of course, as long as we were exposed to such a soulless, impersonal confrontation on the part of non–Jewish society, it was impossible for us to participate to the fullest extent in the

36 Korn, Eugene. “The Man of Faith and Religious Dialogue: Revisiting ‘Confrontation’” *Modern Judaism*. 25 : 3, pp. 290–315, 2005, p. 290.

37 Soloveitchik, Joseph B. “Confrontation”. *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Thought*. 1964. 6 : 2, pp. 5–29. <http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/cjrelations/resources/articles/soloveitchik/> (Accessed on 10/10/2008)

great universal creative confrontation between man and the cosmic order.³⁸

Testifying to the strength of this particular way of addressing the pitfalls of a Jewish–Christian encounter, the document entitled *Statement Adopted by the Rabbinical Council of America at the Mid–Winter Conference* as of February 3–5, 1964, issued as it was in the aftermath of Rabbi Soloveitchik's appeal, proceeded to place historical arguments at the very center of its own passionate appeal to the Jews :

Any suggestion that the historical and meta–historical worth of a faith community be viewed against the backdrop of another faith, and the mere hint that a revision of basic historic attitudes is anticipated, are incongruous with the fundamentals of religious liberty and freedom of conscience and can only breed discord and suspicion. Such an approach is unacceptable to any self–respecting faith community that is proud of its past, vibrant and active in the present and determined to live on in the future and to continue serving God in its own individual way.³⁹

It is, however, imperative to position the statements quoted above within a properly defined context. Specifically, these statements might be critically viewed and fairly comprehended against the background of a straightforward hostility towards the Jews that was instilled into the minds of Catholic Christians through textbooks adopted by Roman Catholic academic institutions in Europe and the USA throughout 1960's.⁴⁰ In the context of this essay such a reference is of a particular significance because the Roman Catholic establishment is the most active Christian participant in the Jewish–Christian dialogue,

Speaking of Europe, in a monograph entitled *How Catholics Look At Jews*, published in 1974, the author, Claire Huchet Bishop, summarized two major studies of European Catholic teaching materials compiled in a variety of languages, reaching a number of meaningful conclusions.⁴¹ The first project was conducted by the International University of Social Studies, Pro Deo, located in Rome, Italy, an institution placed under papal patronage. It concentrated on evaluating Catholic religious textbooks which were printed in Spanish and Italian schools, from the elementary through the senior or college level, between the years of 1940 and 1964, incorporating as well a

38 *Ibid.*

39 Soloveitchik, "Confrontation".

40 See Fisher, Eugene, Rudin, A. James, Tanenbaum, Mark H. (ed.). *Twenty Years of Jewish–Christian Relations*. New York : Paulist Press, 1986, pp. 126–129.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 126.

supplementary study of the texts issued after Vatican II which has put an end to viewing the Jews as “Christ killers”. The “Pro Deo project” has brought into focus primarily attitudes towards the Jews and Judaism.⁴²

The second project was conducted at Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, as personally endorsed by the Archbishop of Malines and Brussels, Leo Jozef Cardinal Suenens. Consisting of two phases, this project examined textbooks which were used for Catholic religious education in French-speaking countries: France, Belgium, Switzerland and Canada, covering the time span lasting between 1946 and 1964 and concentrating on textbooks published for use in both public and Catholic secondary schools. The second phase of the project focused on compiling an opinion survey about attitudes to Jews and Judaism prevalent among people who had been exposed to the Roman Catholic educational training.⁴³

Combining the results, Bishop concluded that in the 1960's Roman Catholic educational materials taught the young people in Italy, Spain and French-speaking countries as follows:

That the Jews are collectively responsible for the Crucifixion and that they are a” deicide people.

That the Diaspora is the Jews’ punishment for the Crucifixion and for their cry” His blood be upon us and upon our children.

That Jesus predicted the punishment of his people; that the Jews were and remained cursed by him and by God; that Jerusalem, as a city, is particularly guilty.

That the Jewish people as a whole rejected Jesus during his lifetime because of their materialism.

That the Jewish people have put themselves beyond salvation and are consigned to eternal damnation.

That the Jewish people have been unfaithful to their mission and are guilty of apostasy.

That Judaism was once the best religion, but then became ossified and ceased to exist with the coming of Jesus.

That the Jews are no longer the Chosen People, but have been superseded as such by the Christians.⁴⁴

42 *Ibid.*

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*, p. 127.

With theology and history interacting in virtually all of the statements outlined above, there arises a pressing need of an immediate clarification as to what belongs to theology and what belongs to a historically proven reality of the past. Indeed the issuance of *Nostra Aetate* by the Second Vatican Council in 1965 may be fairly seen as an attempt at separating theological doctrines from what might be assessed as a product of a non-biased historical research. Thus, while the document openly refers to the New Testament's John 19 : 6 when it stipulates that "the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ", at the same time it intends to evade the issue of historical authenticity by means of relieving the Jews of any related responsibilities, arbitrarily instructing that "neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his passion".⁴⁵ A similar attempt, not convincing enough as it is, is contained in yet another cause and effect sequence found in *Nostra Aetate* : "It is true that the church is the new people of God, yet the Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or accursed as if this followed from Holy Scripture".⁴⁶

Typically, in a recently published monograph entitled *The Misunderstood Jew : The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* the author, Amy-Jill Levine, a prominent American expert on the New Testament, while praising the educational value of *Nostra Aetate* as "striking", nevertheless points out that "theology and history, teaching and practice do not always march hand in hand", specifying a series of guidelines on how to properly present the issue of Jews and Judaism.⁴⁷

One might argue that it is precisely the tragedy of Holocaust which uniquely serves to prove the utmost importance of historical past in terms of constructing the contemporary relationship between Christians and Jews, with theology and history being distinctly driven apart in a multitude of references to this event. To be sure, "Holocaust theology" continues to attract critical attention of both the Christians and the Jews, but a short distance separating the Holocaust from the contemporary period as well as the sheer enormity of the scale of sufferings involved provide fertile ground for emotional appeals rooted in the authentic historical experience and preclude from resorting to theology.

In this particular regard it is worthwhile noting that discussions pertaining to social and po-

45 *Nostra Aetate : Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*. [http : www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=2552](http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=2552) (Accessed 01/10/2009)

46 *Ibid.*

47 Levine, Amy-Jill. *The Misunderstood Jew : The Church and the Scandal of Jewish Jesus*. New York : HarperCollins Publishers, 2006, p. 101.

litical implications of psychoanalysis can hardly remain unaffected by the impact of Freud's last work, *Moses and Monotheism*, in particular as it applies to the religious sphere. One of the most outstanding features of this work has been fairly pointed out by Dan Mercur who wrote as follows :

Although Freud considered epic and saga as instances of myth, he seems otherwise to have followed folklorists' convention to define myths as tales about gods, but legends as tales about ostensibly historical people. In Freud's usage, the tales of Moses and Jesus were not myths but legends. At points, however, Freud seems to have been unsure whether legends were always based on people who once actually lived, or included tales of people who were merely alleged to have been historical. He sometimes described the tales of Oedipus and Narcissus as myths, but sometimes as legends.⁴⁸

However, while "for the purpose of classical psychoanalysis, it was rarely important whether a story concerns a mythic god or an ostensibly historic human being",⁴⁹ for both Judaism and Christianity, which represent history-oriented religious beliefs, distinguishing between myth and history might be fairly viewed as a matter of profound significance. As Sybil Sheridan noted, in terms of Judaism, "Jewish destiny is seen as a gradual unfolding of God's purpose in the world from the first act of creation to the end of time with the coming of the Messiah. The destiny is marked by the celebration of specific historic events: the Exodus, the destruction of the two Temples, etc., and looks forward to specific future events, the coming of the Messiah, the ingathering of the exiles".⁵⁰ It might be argued that Christianity is even more history-centered than Judaism, with Douglas Davies typically indicating as follows :

... Christians believe God to have been active in or through historical events, and in this sense Christianity is often said to be a 'historic religion'. The very fact that, by what we now call the sixth century of the Christian Era, the history of the world came to be divided into two major periods, representing time before Christ (BC) and then time after Christ (AD; Latin *Anno Domini*, meaning in the year of our Lord), demonstrates this sense of divine activity.⁵¹

48 Merkur, Dan (2005). *Psychoanalytic Approaches to Myth : Freud and the Freudians*. New York and London : Routledge, p. 6.

49 *Ibid.*

50 Holm, Jean, with Bowker, John, ed. (1994). *Myth and History*. London, New York : Pinter Publishers, p. 119.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

Nevertheless historicity per se as seen in relation to the contents of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* seems to have been rarely discussed sufficiently enough. Instead, what seems to attract a wide range of researchers to this unique monograph typically relates to Freud's Jewishness at large and in particular to Anti-Semitism as a major driving force hidden behind. Thus, in his doctoral dissertation Alan Lehman views *Moses and Monotheism* as Freud's attempt at resolving his "Jewish Oedipus Complex" by reconciling two conflicting cultures, namely that of his Mother-culture implying "assimilationist hopes" of identifying himself with Enlightenment Germany and that of his Father-culture implying his ethnic and religious Judaic roots, and eventually suggesting the formation of a new Jewish identity which is "not exclusive and self-limiting but one which is in harmony with a larger, non-denominational identity."⁵² According to Lehman, in *Moses and Monotheism* Freud intentionally challenged a few "fundamental tenets of Biblical mythology" in order "to convince Jews to abandon their observance of the Mosaic religion, for Freud believes that it is Jews' steadfast observance of Moses' religious doctrine that is the root cause of anti-Semitic provocation and the primary factor hindering Jewish assimilation into Gentile culture."⁵³ Referring to a new preface to the new translation into Hebrew of *Totem and Taboo* (initially published in 1913) issued in 1930, Lehman views this text as an earlier attempt at "fashioning this new Jewish identity."⁵⁴ In the new preface Freud suggested a new image of the Jew

who is ignorant of the language of the wholly writ, who is completely estranged from the religion of his fathers... and who cannot take a share in nationalist ideals, but who has yet never repudiated his people, who feels that he is in his essential nature a Jew and who has no desire to alter that nature.⁵⁵

Discussing Freud's last work in a doctoral thesis exclusively devoted to Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*, Eliza Slavet tends to see Freud's somewhat "lured" sense of pertinent historic realities as a highly specific feature rooted in the very nature of a psychoanalytic approach, which had arguably in effect served to transform "his theory of Jewishness into a realm beyond the criteria of scientific evidence and proof which were becoming standard in the 1930s."⁵⁶ Indicating that

52 Lehman, Alan (2002). *The Impact of Trauma on Freud's Discovery and Development of Psychoanalysis*. Ph.D. Thesis. "Union Institute and University Graduate College", p. 266.

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*, p. 267.

55 Quoted in *Ibid.* Ref. to Freud, Sigmund (1930). *Moses and Monotheism*. S.E. Vol.XXIII. [1934–38], p. 113.

56 Slavet, Eliza Farro (2007). *Freud's Moses : Memory Material and Immaterial*. Ph.D. Thesis. University of California, San Diego, p. 288.

Freud chose to resort to a “refiguring” of Jewish genealogy into a “medium which requires no sensory perception”. Slavet, referring to the original text, emphasized the basic similarity between psychoanalysis and Freud’s unique definition of Jewishness, observing as follows :

Psychoanalytic theory was always “a hypothesis, based on an inference and a premise.” Nonetheless, Freud could see—or at least was convinced he could see—that psychoanalysis “subjected” people to its power by presenting hypotheses to its patients rather than by working with physical materials or by fulfilling “material needs.” So too, Freud observed that Jewish tradition is defined first and foremost by the fact that it does not require material “evidence” in order to “subject” the people to its “yoke.” Rather, what “subjects” them is the inference that they have inherited *something*—Jewishness—defined not by “sensory perceptions” but by “abstract ideas”, “memories” and “inferences.”⁵⁷

Typically, both Lehman and Slavet seem to be taking it for granted that driven by considerations of a highly subjective nature Freud feels free to treat historicity per se arbitrarily. Similarly, Betty Fuks asserts that “at the time of the tragic conclusion of the Jews’ emancipation in Europe, Freud, like his ancestors, takes upon himself to rewrite the history of the Jewish people told in the Book of Books. *Moses and Monotheism* follows in its essence the original estranged condition of the elected people. Like a Talmudist who, in a singular process of historicity, sails in the banks of a parchment, searching for new meanings to the Holy Writ, Freud affirms its scandalous interpretation : Moses, the beloved son of the Jews, was an Egyptian. Moses, a foreigner who, being other, calls himself a Jew.”⁵⁸ Stressing the subjective factor as well, Robert Paul, while admitting that Ernst Sellin—a theologian who in 1922 put forward a hypothesis, based on certain traces in the *Book of Hosea*, that Moses had been murdered by the Israelites in the wilderness—must have influenced Freud’s *Moses and Monotheism*, nevertheless indicated as follows :

I believe it is fair to state that the prevailing view in the literature regards Sellin’s influence on Freud as an occasion on which Freud allowed himself to be swayed, for reasons of his own, by a far-fetched idea with little or no support in the scholarly community. Like other such instances—his espousal of ‘Lamarckism’, for example, or of the Oxfordian hypothesis concerning the Shakespearean authorship—this apparent lapse of judgement needs to be understood, so the argument runs, primarily in terms of the unconscious conflicts and fantasies which operated to make Freud

57 *Ibid.*, p. 289. Ref. to Freud, Sigmund (1930). *Moses and Monotheism*. S.E. Vol.XIII. [1934–38], XV.

58 Fuks, Betty Bernardo (1999). “Vocation of Exile : Psychoanalysis and Judaism.” *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 8 : 7–12.

susceptible to arguments of questionable value.⁵⁹

Returning to the Jewish–Christian relations, it might be meaningful to recall that during his historic visit to Israel and Palestine in March of the year 2000, Pope John Paul II typically emphasized the emotional component of the Holocaust ordeal, not unlike Rabbi Soloveitchik in his “Confirmation”. While visiting the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial John Paul II stated as follows :

Here, as at Auschwitz and many other places in Europe, we are overcome by the echo of the heart–rending laments of so many. Men, women and children, cry out to us from the depths of the horror that they knew. How can we fail to heed their cry? No one can forget or ignore what happened. No one can diminish its scale.⁶⁰

Speaking of the need for silence “because there are no words strong enough to deplore the terrible tragedy of the Shoah”, Pope John Paul II referred as well to his own personal experience, proceeding to relate it to the very purpose of his visit, which in effect has served to intensify the flow of emotions :

My own personal memories are of all that happened when the Nazis occupied Poland during the war. I remember my Jewish friends and neighbors, some of whom perished, while others survived. I have come to Yad Vashem to pay homage to the millions of Jewish people who, stripped of everything, especially of human dignity, were murdered in the Holocaust. More than half a century has passed, but the memories remain.⁶¹

Avoiding on purpose any particular references to the New Testament, in an attempt to find reconciliation John Paul II has preferred to single out the historical basis of Jewish–Christian relations, unrelated to any of the Biblical motives and suggestions as well as specific events, declaring as follows :

As bishop of Rome and successor of the Apostle Peter, I assure the Jewish people that the Catholic Church, motivated by the Gospel law of truth and love, and by no political considerations, is

59 Paul, Robert A. (1994). “Freud, Sellin and the Death of Moses.” *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 75 : 825–837.

60 The Pope’s speech at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial (23/3/2000) *The Associated Press Newswires (AP)* (Accessed through *Factiva, Inc.* : www.factiva.com on 2/10/2008)

61 *Ibid.*

deeply saddened by the hatred, acts of persecution and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews by Christians at any time and in any place.⁶²

While Rabbi Soloveitchik might be considered to be a formidable “opponent” of the Jewish-Christian relations as a whole and the Jewish-Christian dialogue in particular who resorted to historical reasoning solely in order to justify his views, on the contrary Pope John Paul II might be seen as a supporter of the Jewish-Christian relationship who intentionally referred to historical past as the basis for constructing a fruitful relations between Jews and Christians in the future. Speaking in Yad Vashem, John Paul II expressed his hope that “that our sorrow for the tragedy which the Jewish people suffered in the 20th century will lead to a new relationship between Christians and Jews”, appealing to Jews to “build a new future in which there will be no more anti-Jewish feeling among Christians or anti-Christian feeling among Jews, but rather the mutual respect required of those who adore the one Creator and Lord, and look to Abraham as our common father in faith”.⁶³ In other words, similar references to commonly shared negative historical experiences do not imply that Rabbi Soloveitchik and Pope John Paul II held similar views regarding the character of Jewish-Christian relations as a whole, which at the same time, if we apply a higher level of abstraction, testifies to the overwhelming importance of evaluating historical past for the purpose of estimating the potential for further evolution of the Jewish-Christian relations.

However, since in particular Rabbi Soloveitchik’s position belongs to the period preceding the issuance of *Nostra Aetate* in 1965 and as such might be “outdated” I have also chosen to compare positions of prominent “opponents” and “supporters” of the Jewish-Christian dialogue during the period of time which followed the appearance of *Nostra Aetate* and try to identify the value of a historical factor within the selected polemics. Specifically, my choice has fallen on the polemics between David Novak, an active supporter of the Jewish-Christian dialogue and co-author of a document entitled *Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity* which was issued in September 2000 and initially signed by more than 170 Jewish scholars and Rabbis, and Jon Levenson, an expert on Jewish studies, who was invited to sign *Dabru Emet* but refused to do so.

Polemics between these two scholars is most distinctly summarized in two articles, with one of them authored by Jon Levenson, appearing in December 2001 in a monthly journal issued by

62 *Ibid.*

63 *Ibid.*

the American Jewish Committee, and the other one authored by David Novak, appearing in May 2002 as a response to Levenson's article.⁶⁴ As the polemics evolved around issues pertaining to the content of *Dabru Emet*, the historical factor turned out being one of the major sources of mutual disagreements. Indeed David Novak, who at the time of the article's appearance served as Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto, had to admit that Jon Levenson, who at the time when his article in the *Commentary* appeared served as Professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard Divinity School, opposed the Jewish–Christian dialogue not only because of “a presumed theological impasse between Judaism and Christianity” but also, which deserves a particular degree of attention in the context of my piece of research, because he connected that impasse to the “the history of religiously inspired contempt”, the latter expression being borrowed directly from the text of Levenson's article.⁶⁵ It might be noted as well that, not unlike authors of *Nostra Aetate*, Novak and three other authors of the *Dabru Emet*, namely Tikva Frymer–Kensky, Peter Ochs and Michael Signer, have attempted to delink theological issues from those which might be viewed as history–oriented, while Levenson strove to restore and review that linkage, indicating that *Dabru Emet* “was shaky of history”.⁶⁶

Asserting that “it strains the historical imagination to claim that nearly two millennia of Christian demonization of Judaism and the Jews played no role in laying the groundwork for the Final Solution”, Levenson ponders over the overall effect of Martin Luther's instructions contained in his pamphlet *On the Jews and Their Lies* (1543) :

First, their synagogues ... should be set on fire, and whatever does not burn up should be covered or spread over with dirt so that no one may ever be able to see a cinder or stone of it. And this ought to be done for the honor of God and of Christianity... Secondly, their homes should likewise be broken down and destroyed. For they perpetrate the same things there that they do in their synagogue. For this reason they ought to be put under one roof as in a stable, like gypsies.⁶⁷

64 Novak, David. “Instinctive Repugnance” *First Things : A Journal of Religion, Culture and Public Life*. May 2002. [http : www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=2018 & var_recherche=Levenson](http://www.firstthings.com/article.php3?id_article=2018&var_recherche=Levenson) (Accessed on 02/10/2008)

Levenson, Jon. “How Not to Conduct Jewish–Christian Dialogue”. *Commentary*, Dec. 2001. (Accessed through *EBSCOHOST Databases* 05/10/2008)

65 Novak, David (2002).

66 Levenson, Jon (2001).

67 *Ibid.*

Concluding that “whereas traditional Christian theology inspired the Protestant reformer, the Nazis were motivated by modern racism: they sought not the conversion of the Jews but their unqualified annihilation, and to this end the beliefs of the intended victims were irrelevant”⁶⁸ and attempting to recover and clarify the linkage between theology and history, Levenson proceeds to harshly criticize in particular one of the eight major sections of *Dabru Emet* which its authors chose to designate as *Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon* and which runs as follows:

Without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could not have taken hold nor could it have been carried out. Too many Christians participated in, or were sympathetic to, Nazi atrocities against Jews. Other Christians did not protest sufficiently against these atrocities. But Nazism itself was not an inevitable outcome of Christianity. If the Nazi extermination of the Jews had been fully successful, it would have turned its murderous rage more directly to Christians.⁶⁹

This excerpt alone sufficiently illustrates what Levenson qualifies as succumbing to a temptation “to avoid any candid discussion of fundamental beliefs and to adopt instead the model of conflict resolution”, an attitude which he accounts for by referring to “the history of religiously inspired contempt and animosity” as its cause.⁷⁰ Drawing critical attention to a detachment from historical realities, Levenson in particular claims that “suggesting that Christians, too, were intended victims of the Holocaust, the authors of *Dabru Emet* falsely put them in the same boat with Jews -- or, to be more precise, on the same train to Auschwitz. To say the least, this is taking the interests of interfaith solidarity too far”.⁷¹

One might argue as well that no less striking, being rid of any decent historical consciousness, is the *Dabru Emet's* section entitled *Christians can respect the claim of the Jewish people upon the land of Israel* which in particular stipulates that “as members of a biblically based religion, Christians appreciate that Israel was promised—and given—to Jews as the physical center of the covenant between them and God. Many Christians support the State of Israel for reasons far more profound than mere politics. As Jews, we applaud this support”.⁷² Lacking legitimacy in

68 *Ibid.*

69 Schlossberg, Herbert. “Dabru Emet: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity”. *First Things: A Journal of Religion, Culture and Public Life*. Nov. 2000. http://www.firstthings.com/article.php?id_article=2018&var_recherche=Levenson (accessed on 02/10/2008)

70 Levenson, Jon.

71 *Ibid.*

72 Schlossberg, Herbert.

terms of international law, this peculiar approach, inwardly defensive and apologetic, is yet another futile effort aimed at delinking history from theology while abstaining from facing the authentic historical record. Overall at this point I believe it is possible to indicate that Novak vs. Levenson polemics amply testifies to the fact that the *post-Nostra Aetate* period is characterized by the presence of a similar strength accorded to the factor of historical consciousness within the framework of Jewish-Christian relations as a whole, which anticipates further elaboration of issues involved.

Contemplating a wider frame of reference, I suggest combining ideas about the relationship between history and memory put forward by R.G. Collingwood with Karl Lowith's critique of the Biblical view of history as a most appropriate basis for elaborating the theme of this attachment.

Collingwood relates that historical knowledge may not distinguish between past, present and future, indeed suggesting that they are intrinsically interdependent, indicating:

In thus re-thinking my past thought I am not merely remembering it. I am constructing the history of a certain phase of my life: and the difference between memory and history is that whereas in memory the past is a mere spectacle, in history it is re-enacted in present thought. So far as this thought is mere thought, the past is merely re-enacted... But memory as such is only the present thought of past experience as such, be that experience what it may; historical knowledge is that special case of memory where the object of present thought is past thought, the gap between present and past being bridged not only by the power of present thought to think of the past, but also by the power of past thought to reawaken itself in the present.⁷³

Moreover, according to Collingwood, accessing the past can only be accomplished through an empirical process of a historian's choice, with memory making up a disorganized milieu:

And as history does not depend on authority, so it does not depend upon memory. The historian can rediscover what has been completely forgotten, in the sense that no statement of it has reached him by an unbroken tradition from eyewitnesses. He can even discover what, until he discovered it, no one ever knew to have happened at all. This he does partly by the critical treatment of statements contained in his sources, partly by the use of what are called unwritten sources, which are increasingly employed as history becomes increasingly sure of its own proper

73 Collingwood, R.G. *The Idea of History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946, pp. 293–294.

methods and its own proper criterion.⁷⁴

What Collingwood seems to imply is that history remains forever “modern” in a sense that it is primarily the historian’s own interpretation of the present that determines his views as well as selections of the past realities.

While Collingwood ponders over the general issues of time and space which any historian has to face and resolve, Karl Lowith raises a powerful protest against the “Christian claim that the whole and only meaning of history before and after Christ rests on the historical appearance of Jesus Christ”, calling this claim “strange, stupendous and radical”.⁷⁵ According to Lowith, the “Christian civilization” tends to articulate “all historical time into past, present and future” in terms of reflecting “the temporal structure of the history of salvation”.⁷⁶

Applying in Lowith’s ideas to the realm of Jewish–Christian relations, limited as they are primarily to the analysis of Christian theology and as such requiring to incorporate the issue of Judaism, one might nevertheless convincingly argue that delineating and maintaining distinct divisions between theology and authentic history stands out as a major task, providing a stimulating model for the realm of social research in general and political inquiry in particular.

74 *Ibid.*, p. 238.

75 Lowith, Karl. *Meaning in History*. Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1948, p. 184.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 185.