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Article

Meaning in History—A Comparison Between the Works of Karl Löwith and Erich Auerbach

Matthias Bormuth

International Center for Ethics in Sciences, University of Tübingen, Tübingen, Baden-Württemberg, 72074, Germany; E-Mail: matthias.bormuth@uni-tuebingin.de

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Abstract: Karl Löwith (1897–1973) and Erich Auerbach (1892–1957) were assimilated German Jewish scholars who came to America during and after World War II. In the early 1940s both émigrés wrote their masterpieces *From Hegel to Nietzsche* and *Mimesis* in Japan and Turkey. In these books, the philosopher as well as the philologist, provide a certain philosophy of history forced by the historical crisis of Europe. The differences in their viewpoints can clearly be seen in their decisive judgments on Goethe and the French Revolution. The comparison first looks at the question what impact the reality of being expelled from the German University of Marburg had on the development of their thoughts. The expanding war and the persecution of the European Jews is taken into account as well. The second focus is directed on the experience both made at the American East Coast and how this might have influenced their later writings namely *Meaning in History* and *Philology of World-Literature*. And at last the question is raised which significance the Jewish-Christian background had for Löwith and Auerbach especially for their attitude towards the religious sphere.

Keywords: Auerbach; Löwith; exile; philosophy of history; Mimesis; Hegel; Nietzsche; Goethe

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1. Different Philosophies of History in Exile: *From Hegel to Nietzsche* and *Mimesis*

Karl Löwith (1897–1975) and Erich Auerbach (1992–1957) were assimilated German-Jewish scholars who emigrated to the United States during the 1940s. Their files in the records of the Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars show that the philosopher and the

philologist were highly esteemed in the American academy. Löwith had written two impressive books on Jacob Burckhardt [1] and Nietzsche [2] and Auerbach was widely acknowledged as the author of *Dante—Poet of the Secular World* [3]. This paper will compare their different philosophies of history by focusing mainly on later works written during exile.

Löwith spent several years in Rome before he had a call for a professorship at the University of Sendai in late 1936. From Japan he reached the American East Coast just before Pearl Harbor. He taught mostly at a small Theological Seminary in Hartford and for a short term at the New School in New York. Auerbach survived the Holocaust in Istanbul, directly on the border between Europe and Asia, holding the privileged position as a professor of Romance Philology. The masterly quality of *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* published shortly after the war in Switzerland paved his way to Yale [4]. The book was first conceived in 1942 shortly after Löwith had finished his study *From Hegel to Nietzsche. The Revolutionary Thought in 19th Century* [5] in Japan.

Both books are comparable in their *leitmotifs*. They provide the reader with decisive perspectives on progress and meaning in history. Their authors can be seen as typical representatives of liberal "*Bildungsbürgertum*" without real interest in politics until Hitler came to power. From Löwith we know that he held Thomas Mann´s *Reflections of an Unpolitical Man* [6] in high esteem even during the Weimar years. And it is no wonder that he was fascinated in those years by Heidegger´s contempt for the public world of the "they" [7]. Although Auerbach had sympathies with left-wing liberal thinking since the Weimar years, his own thoughts turned away from the public sphere as can be seen from his enthusiasm for Montaigne´s retreat from the public. The *Essais* appeared to him as a new bible for cosmopolitan intellectuals aspiring to lead a more private life, concentrating on the communication with books and writing [8]. The little university town of Marburg offered both the chance of living in such an ivory tower.

After Hitler came to power, things became different. In the beginning, the fact that Auerbach and Löwith had served as soldiers in the First World War preserved them from the bitter fate of being expelled from academic paradise. The Nuremberg Laws made an end of this in 1935. The philosopher had wisely taken the opportunity offered by a grant of the Rockefeller Foundation to move to Italy, while the philologist—more privileged as a full professor—tried as long as he could to stay in Marburg. In the portrait of Stendhal given later in *Mimesis*, Auerbach's own experience of late disenchantment is mirrored: "From his sketch of his life it should appear that he first reached the point of accounting for himself […] when he was seeking a haven in his `storm-tossed boat´, and discovered that, for his boat, there was no fit and safe haven [9]."

The decisive impact the political events had on their lives left its traces in their works. Löwith reflected his growing awareness of the historical world in a letter written while preparing for the great journey to Japan. According to this retrospect his first book *The Individual in the Role of Fellow Man* confined itself to the understanding of the inner world based on the idea of existential dialogue [10]. At the end of the Weimar-period his comparative study *Max Weber and Karl Marx* took a step further by focusing on "modern man as a private person in bourgeois society" [11]. However, it was only after 1933 that the historical world and its political changes became a serious question for Löwith. He tried to develop a philosophical answer writing about life and work of Nietzsche and Jacob Burckhardt in separate books. Burckhardt´s stoic ethics were for him the most sympathetic reaction to revolutionary times, as his later work *From Hegel to Nietzsche* confessed with a self-critical tendency: "[…] a

resignation without profit; for renunciation is easy when it renounces most [12].” The review on Burckhardt´s famous *Reflections on History* written in the early American exile spoke of the historian as a “contemporary” who already saw a hundred years ago what would come to full knowledge only in the twentieth century: “All his amazing prophecies of military totalitarianism are not a mere guess but an exact deduction from his diagnosis of European history since the French Revolution. Hence it is possible for the first time to understand Burckhardt´s vision and comprehension in their full depth and significance and to appreciate what he called his `malism´, i.e. a full look at the worst [13].”

The answer Auerbach was looking for in the tumults of history was more hopeful. Provoked by the question of a German assistant, he wrote in October 1938 how irritated he was by "all the evil that’s happening”: “From my biography, my profession, and my writing it is clear why these heavy claims on my time persistently pursue me and why each moment of my life strengthens them. I know well what the most general rules and direction of the expected renewal must be. I know well enough how to reject all distorted, false and half measures and ideas. Only it is not concrete, not yet. The consequence: I am a teacher who does not concretely know what he should teach [14].” Writing *Mimesis* he made up his mind about possible progress in history and focused on the French Revolution without any hesitation as the positive turning point of human emancipation [15].

This attitude was historically rooted in the nineteenth century when many European Jews—and not only the liberal ones—expressed their deep gratitude to the French Revolution because of its impact on their liberation. An example can be seen in Heinrich Graetz and his *Popular History of the Jews* where one finds a whole chapter “The French Revolution and the Emancipation of the Jews” with the opening sentence: „The French Revolution was a judgment sent to expiate the sins of a thousand years in one day [16].“ For Löwith, whose family had gained a status of upper bourgeois wealth and security early on, this thankful attitude towards the French Revolution never seemed to hold any attraction. On the contrary: It was for him the beginning of the end as will be seen later.

Common to both German Jews was the Hegelian framework of their philosophies of history. Although Löwith had been writing against any idea of progress since his early study *Burckhardt´s Attitude towards Hegel´s Philosophy of History* [17], he kept Hegel´s perspective on a meaningful progress which had first been pronounced in Germany by Kant in his *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784) [18]. Auerbach was also fascinated by this idea tracing it back to Giambattista Vico´s idea of “Divine Providence”. Along with Vico, Auerbach believed that the human standpoint as a provisional one was not able to reveal the deeper truth of the historical process, only changing aspects could be seen [19].

But Auerbach was at least convinced that the revolutionary perspective provided man with a progressive margin of hope. Therefore one finds in *Mimesis* a remark on Karl Marx which states him to be the historically most important eye opener for the “presently visible germs of the concrete future” [20]. *From Hegel to Nietzsche* argues just in the opposite direction, denouncing any value that might emerge from revolutionary activities. In 1939 there is not much left of Löwith´s early interest in Marx´ criticism of economic injustice. It is no wonder that Löwith read Tocqueville against the original intention of *Democracy in America* as someone who wass judging the American Revolution negatively as the beginning of a “democratic despotism” [21].

2. Controversial Views on Goethe and his Attitude Towards Reality

We do not know whether Auerbach was familiar with Tocqueville and his *Democracy in America*, but *Mimesis* mirrors indirectly the famous insight that the democratic progress is worth a personal tribute: "[Goethe] foresaw a shallowing of intellectual life; he saw nothing to make up for such a loss [22]." Auerbach drew a sketch of the German classical figure as a conservative who knew well that the French Revolution meant a turning point in the development of modern emancipation. Twice he quoted the famous words Goethe spoke after the defeat of the old European forces at Valmy in 1792: "Today a new stage in history has begun and you can say that you were witness to its birth." Auerbach´s first comment in a lecture of 1941 stressed the deep ambivalence which emerged out of the awareness of the objective importance on the one side and the subjective inclination against the "revolutionary movement" on the other: "The statement shows his apprehension. […] At the same time, he was not in favor of the uprising he felt sure would be victorious. Until the end of his life, he shrank from any movement which resembled an uprising of the people [23]."

In *Mimesis* the criticism is developed further and more polemically. The reader is confronted with Goethe´s confession of belonging to the aristocratic world of Weimar and of being alienated from his roots as a "*Bürger*" of Frankfurt [24]. The book describes Goethe´s fear of social emancipation and explains it through his affinity for stable and secure conditions as necessary means for his self-cultivation. The reader has to face an embarrassing quotation of Goethe which confirms the repressive politics of restoration as long as the realm of science is not affected: "State and church may be able to show cause why they should declare themselves dominant; insofar they are dealing with the recalcitrant masses, […] but in the sciences the most absolute freedom is necessary. [25]"

According to Auerbach this deeply conservative and self-absorbed attitude is responsible for the confinement of the horizons of Goethe´s autobiographical writings which were not reflecting society in its actual dynamics as "the germ of developments in process and in the future [26]." Their beginnings are traced back by *Mimesis* to the French Revolution: "For Europe there began that process of temporal concentration, both of historical events themselves and of everyone´s knowledge of them, which has since made tremendous progress and which not only permits us to prophecy a unification of human life throughout the world but has in a certain sense already achieved it. Such a development abrogates or renders powerless the entire social structure of orders and categories previously held valid [27]."

In *From Hegel to Nietzsche* things are turned upside down. Goethe is highly praised for his literary engagement against "democratic leveling and industrialization" and Löwith with great affirmation quotes from a late letter: "I see a time coming when God will no longer have pleasure in it; he will once more have to destroy everything to make room for a renewed creation [28]." The "chasm of the great French Revolution" is seen as the "beginning of a whole `Age of Revolutions´, in which the masses were to win from the upper classes an independent political power [29]." Löwith welcomed the criticism with which Goethe faced the democratic claims of the literary youth and their enthusiasm for the revolutionary emancipation: "There are many excellent young people, but the idiots all want to begin at the beginning, independently, … without help, […] I look upon this course of events since 1789 [30]." He saw Goethe as a bastion against the false ideas which were leading the authors of "Young Germany" [31].

Ludwig Börne and Heinrich Heine are mentioned by Löwith as two of the leading figures of this movement. Both have in common that they decided to be baptized in order to make their way in German society. They knew too well that the time of restoration had withdrawn all the rights the French Revolution and the later Code Napoleon had brought for the Jewish people in Germany. Börne stressed this personal experience of repression as stimulating for the development of his deep sense of liberty: "Yes, since I was born as a slave, I love freedom more than you [32]." And Heinrich Heine pointed out in his very polemical essay on Börne that his criticism on Goethe as an adversary of emancipation was mainly influenced by his origin from the Frankfurter ghetto called "*Judengasse*" [33].

This may be taken as a hint that Auerbach who called Goethe ironically a "burgher´s son in that class-conscious social order" might have been influenced by this motive also [34]. However, one finds in *Mimesis* not one word on Goethe´s negative attitude towards Jewish emancipation [35]. The leitmotif of this history of Western literature is human emancipation as such driven into reality by the French Revolution. Only indirectly one can find in *Mimesis* a trace linking Auerbach´s criticism on Goethe to Jewish history and a Jewish perspective.

We cannot follow this question further at this point and have to sum up: Goethe is seen by Auerbach as the exemplary defender of the old world of separated strata, a world which is opposing the development of human emancipation. The accusation is: According to this perspective Goethe did not care for the dynamic process of social change, and all his attention to external reality was limited by the question whether it would provide optimal conditions for his inner development. On the other hand, Auerbach was aware that the dynamic perspective he preferred was not easy to keep on the track of self-cultivation: "He who would account to himself for his real life and his place in human society is obliged to do so upon a far wider practical foundation and in a far larger context than before, and to be continually conscious that the social base upon which he lives is not constant for a moment but is perpetually changing through convulsions of the most various kinds [36]."

Exactly this instability of the modern world was the reason why Löwith was attracted to the conservative attitude of Goethe. In a world of permanent crisis provoked by various ideas of possible progress, he saw the representative of Weimar classics as one of the few who had pointed out at an early stage the dangers of the disastrous dynamics of the ideas of 1789. Therefore, Löwith claimed in the tradition of Goethe that a society should reserve privileged and stable positions for those who were willing to become themselves.

3. Viewpoints in America: *Meaning in History* and *Philology and `Weltliteratur´*

During their American years both scholars partly changed their opinions about the possiblity of progress in history and its impact on their personal lives. Some hints of this will become obvious through a comparison of their decisive texts written around 1950.

One can sense in reading *Meaning in History. Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History* that Löwith must have been in close contact with Protestant thoughts for a long while. His teaching in Hartford provided him with detailed knowledge of the dialectics of eschatological belief. Evidently Löwith´s picture was also influenced by Max Weber´s classical study *The Protestant Ethics and the `Spirit´of Capitalism*. However, he was not interested in deepening Weber's sociological analysis forty years later in new circumstances. Rather he wanted to show the general difficulties faced by any belief

in earthly progress, which was the secularized version of the Protestant belief. Positively stated, he was fascinated by the times of early Christianity where ethics were not developed at all since one hoped to be rescued soon from the idle ways of the world. For Löwith, it was important that this unworldly ethos of the first believers was in its structure similar to the ancient ethos of the stoics: "The human result, though not the motivation, of skepticism and faith in regard to the outcome of history is the same: a definite resignation, the worldly brother of devotion, in the face of the incalculability and unpredictability of historical issues [37]."

No question, Löwith was skeptical about all zeal for progress and meaning in earthly life. He traced back its beginning to the later history of the church when Augustine tried to connect systematically the eschatological hope for the "City of God" with the need to do the best for the "City of Man." All modern—scientific and political—ideas of progress were somehow a secularized offspring of Christian ethics. Especially the Age of Enlightenment, although it demonstrated an anticlerical attitude, was unconsciously bound to this perspective. Löwith was therefore no friend of any theory or practice of human progress; for he took the French Revolution as an example of its contradictions and cruelties.

Löwith's conservative attitude also left him skeptical of American democracy with its claims of equal rights and social justice. It is no wonder that he looked for a possibility to return to Old Europe as a professor for German. In 1952 he took the opportunity offered by his former colleague and friend Hans-Georg Gadamer in Heidelberg. Jürgen Habermas who spent his early years as an academic there described Löwith's attitude as a form of "stoic retreat from historical consciousness" [38]. And Dieter Henrich who once visited Löwith in the Swiss mountains drew a portrait of him as a "*Sceptico Sereno*" exclusively contemplating the eternal blue of nature [39].

Auerbach who remained in America until his sudden death in 1957 avoided all political tendencies in his writings. His essay *Epilogemena to Mimesis* was surely written in awareness of the McCarthy Era, as it defended the book as "far remote" from a "socialist tendency [40]." And in most of his later writings the former interest in social justice was then confined to a solely historical perspective without turning from Augustine´s religious ideas to the modern prospect of emancipation and its revolutionary powers.

However, in his late writings there is one great exception. It is the essay *Philology and Weltliteratur* which Edward Said greatly admired and translated in 1969. Written in honor of a Swiss scholar who worked extensively on Goethe´s idea of world-literature [41], Auerbach took the opportunity of returning to his dear enemy. But this time his criticism of Goethe and his privileged position was rather restrained. One finds him writing with an ironic tone: "[Goethe] gladly avoided thoughts about what later history has made inevitable. He occasionally acknowledged the depressing tendencies of our world, yet no one could then suspect how radically, how unexpectedly an unpleasant potential could be realized [42]."

This particular shift was part of a greater change in Auerbach´s view on the historical process. While in *Mimesis* he had judged the standardization mostly as a temporary "crisis of adjustment" ["*Anpassungskrise*"], he later seemed to have lost his hope for a better future. The conclusion in *Philology and Weltliteratur* reads almost like the one Löwith had given more than a decade earlier in *From Hegel to Nietzsche*: "The process of leveling proceeds with a greater rapidity than ever before. Standardization, in short, dominates everything. All human activity is being concentrated either into European-American or into Russian-Bolshevist patterns [43]." Since the year Auerbach spent at

Princeton´s Institute for Advanced Studies in 1948 which provided him with contacts with great humanist scholars like Erwin Panofsky, in Yalehe later became more and more part of the privileged class of distinguished scholars without political interests.

This academic career and the public interest which some chapters of *Mimesis* had gained in *Partisan Review* were formative for Auerbach´s new view on Goethe. He expressed skepticism about whether private circles of cultivated men could still have the radiating power Goethe had in the classical period: "Certain distinguished individuals, small groups of highly cultivated men always have enjoyed […] an organized cultural exchange: they will continue to do so. Yes this sort of activity has little effect on culture or on the reconciliation of peoples: it cannot withstand the storm of opposed vested interests [44]." Therefore he claimed a different way of embedding the "conception of *Weltliteratur*" in modern times when science had become the only "myth". Only a synthetic form of cultural history could preserve the perspective of "*Weltliteratur*" and self-orientation; however, only if written by scholars whose talent was rooted both in arts and science: "In this manner, the full range of the spiritual movements of the last thousand years will not atrophy within [the cultures]." Auerbach drew a hopeful prospect: "And only this much can be said, that for an age of transition such as ours the effect could be very significant. It may well be that this effect might also help to make us accept our fate with more equanimity [45]."

On first view, it is astonishing that Auerbach does not mention *Mimesis* as an example for a synthetic way of writing cultural history. From the first chapter on Homer and the Bible drawing the famous polarization between literary perspectives of fore- and background to the great finale on the contradictions of modern individualism seen in the works of Proust, Joyce and Woolf, *Mimesis* is a synthetic and secular history of human "self-expression" written—as the late essay says—"as if according to plan [46]." However, Auerbach decided to illustrate his argumentation by a rather ambiguous example writing about his rival Ernst Robert Curtius and his masterwork *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* [47]: "In its best parts this book is not a mere agglomeration of many items, but a radiation outwards from a few items [48]."

One thing *Mimesis* had in common with Curtius´ book was the strong focus on the Christian-Catholic thinking from Augustine to the Middle Ages, although both were fashioning outlooks on modern times. In regard to Auerbach, this is illustrated by the legendary story told by him personally that a monastic library in Istanbul became decisive for the book since it provided him with a complete edition of the Church Fathers. In his last book *Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages* this perspective gained an exclusive importance [49]. The Jewish tradition which stood in the beginning of *Mimesis* had vanished totally. Instead, Auerbach proclaimed Paul to be the key-figure who replaced the Biblical thought of the Jewish claim on God, with the idea of a world-religion. Augustine then provided this dimension with philosophical arguments and a suggestive prose during the decline of the Roman Empire.

No wonder that *Philology and Weltliteratur* closed with a prospect which reminds one of the romantics who also looked back to the Middle Ages as a time of a inspiring faith and wholeness of thought. Auerbach claimed in this sense the renaissance of the spirit of this past: "We must return, in admittedly altered circumstances, to the knowledge that prenational medieval culture already possessed: the knowledge that the spirit [Geist] is not national." His interpretation of this "spirit" recalled two conditions as necessary for cultivating the supranational dimension: "*paupertas*" and

"*terra aliena*." In other words: Poverty and alienation from the world were attitudes of the early Church Fathers, the Desert Fathers, and the medieval monastic reformers who made it vivid again during the Middle Ages. All of those believers took the world as something provisional while their love belonged to the eternal home. Auerbach quoted Hugh of St. Victor, a medieval monk in the tradition of Augustine and Plato. His praise for the higher world is illustrated by a climax devided in three steps: "*Delicatus ille est adhuc cui patria dulcis est, fortis autem cui omne solum patria est, perfectus vero cui mundus totus exilium est*…" In other words: "The patriotic attitude is fine, but the cosmopolitan one more worthwhile; and perfection lies in the ethos of the man for whom the whole world seems to be a place of exile". Auerbach´s reading is secular and underlines the importance of the quote for a modern man without a religious belief who has become disenchanted with faith in earthly progress and meaning: "Hugo intended these lines for one whose aim is to free himself from a love of the world. But it is a good way also for one who wishes to earn a proper love for the world [50]."

One can sum up: After his years in Istanbul, Auerbach withdrew more and more from the social hope that had inspired *Mimesis.* Instead his last essay ended with the ironic turn that the leveling power of standardization may fulfill the dream of equal rights on the lowest possible level. He only kept the idea that books like *Mimesis* written between art and science could give guidance for the spiritual self-orientation for those who were still individually driven by the questions of the Western tradition. In their search for meaning, the Christian attitude of the Middle Ages could be helpful in reducing the expectation of worldly progress.

Without doubt by taking this position the late Auerbach moved closer towards Löwith. The only meaning history still had, was to demonstrate how right those were who saw the world as a place of exile. All one could do was to develop an ethos of "equanimity" facing history as a provisional realm without believing in a higher world of redemption.

4. Epilogue

Since this journal issue is organized in the framework of "Jewish Studies," it is useful to close with short remarks about the role Jewish thought played for the scholars. Without doubt: Erich Auerbach wrote his works—except for the first chapter of *Mimesis*—mostly from the perspective of the Catholic and partly Protestant traditions. The *Confidential Information* Auerbach gave to the American Rescue Committee in fall of 1935 underlined his deep inclination to the Christian world: "I belong to the religious community of Jewish belief, but I am indebted by my works to Christian-theological circles, mostly of Catholic provenience [51]." In a private letter of 1941 recently published one finds an astonishingly harsh criticism of the Jewish religion as a dead body of dogmatic thoughts [52]. Only in the form of the secularized idea of socialism was Auerbach able to keep the piety towards the Jewish traces of this movement. But he focused strongly on the Christian ways of secularization. And in the *Epilegomena to Mimesis* he even spoke about cutting off the provocative Jewish beginnings of his book where he had been stressing the anthropological deepness and earnestness of the biblical story of Abraham against the shallow and easy narrative Greek epos on Odysseus: "I considered for a moment letting the Homer chapter fall entirely by the wayside. For my purposes it would have sufficed to begin with the time around the birth of Christ [53]". In this respect his last methodological essay, only published after Auerbach´s death, totally neglects the importance his famous book had given to the

Jewish heritage for the enrollment of Western thought and literature: "In Mimesis […] I was able, however inadequately, to disclose something of the influence of Christianity on the development of literary expression, and even to throw light on an aspect of the development of European culture since antiquity [54]."

What did Löwith think of Jewish tradition? He was born into a socially accepted family of assimilated Jews, being baptized in a Protestant church in Munich. Later he married the daughter of the director of a Protestant Gymnasium in Berlin. The Christian world was also decisive for his later intellectual orientation; especially since his days as a student of Heidegger when he was taking part in the circle of Protestant theologians in Marburg. But already around 1920 he recognized his own Jewish roots as a social reality since a close friend of his youth cut off all ties with him after having become a disciple of a still widely unknown anti-Semite called Adolf Hitler. After 1933 Löwith quoted Franz Rosenzweig who can be seen as a Hegelian philosopher with a Jewish belief to point out "`that the liberal German-Jewish standpoint on which nearly all of German Jewry had a place for close to a hundred years ´had become so isolated today [55]." But this experience did not change his affinity to the "*Lebenswelt*" of cultural Protestantism in which he had been raised. Writing in 1942 on *Martin Heidegger and Franz Rosenzweig* he took the opportunity of describing himself as someone who was "only a Christian in the way one is German or French" and not "a believing Jew or a pious gentile" [56].

Nevertheless as a secular philosopher raised up in the tradition of German Protestant culture, in the years of emigration and the tyranny of Hitler Löwith took a great interest in Biblical writings which were concerned with the sufferings of man. And therefore it is no wonder that Löwith closed the epilogue of his autobiographical sketch of 1939 with a classic quote from the Old Testament. The words of Job could and can be read in the stoic perspective of insightful resignation: "Man born of woman is short-lived and full of disquiet. He blossoms like a flower and then withers; he slips away like a shadow and does not stay. (Job 14: 1–2, *New English Bible*) [57]."

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11. K. Löwith. *Sämtliche Schriften*. Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1994, Vol. 5, 324–407. The article was published first in 1932 in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft*.
12. K. Löwith. *From Hegel to Nietzsche. The Revolution in the Nineteenth-Century Thought*. New York: Columbia University Press 1991, XVII.
13. Löwith wrote a review on the English translation of Burckhardt´s famous lecture "Weltgeschichtliche Betrachtungen" which was edited by James Hastings Nichols and published in 1943 with the title *Force and Freedom. Reflections on History*: Cf. K. Löwith, *Sämtliche Schriften*. Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1984, Vol. 7, 372–374, 373.
14. E. Auerbach. *Scholarship in Times of Extremes: Letters of Erich Auerbach (1933–1946), on the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Death*. Introduction and Translation by Martin Elsky, Martin Vialon and Robert Stein. *PMLA* 122 (2007), 142–162.
15. For the history of the term in regard to the French Revolution, see: Reinhard Rürup, "Jewish Emancipation and the Vision of Civil Society in Germany," *Yearbook of the Leo Baeck Institute* 51 (2006), 43–50.
16. H. Graetz. *Popular History of the Jews*. New York: Hebrew Publishing Company, 1919, 373, 387.
17. K. Löwith. *Sämtliche Schriften*. Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1984, Vol. 7, 9–38. The German title of his lecture held in 1928 was: "Burckhardts Stellung zu Hegels Geschichtsphilosophie".
18. Kant claims precociously: "Es ist hier keine Auskunft für den Philosophen, als daß, da er bei Menschen und ihrem Spiele im großen gar keine vernünftige eigene Absicht voraussetzen kann, er versuche, ob er nicht eine Naturabsicht in diesem widersinnigen Gange menschlicher Dinge entdecken könne; aus welcher, von Geschöpfen, die ohne eigenen Plan verfahren, dennoch eine Geschichte nach einem bestimmten Plane der Natur möglich sei." Cf. I. Kant, *Werke in sechs Bänden*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956, Vol. 4, 31–50, 34.
19. E. Auerbach. *Literary Language and its Publicum in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1965, 16: "One aspect or another of the Platonic *verum* is actualized in every stage of history; no historical period embodies the whole of it. It is fully contained only in the plan of Providence or in the total course of history; […]."
20. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 445.
21. K. Löwith. *From Hegel to Nietzsche. The Revolution in the Nineteenth-Century Thought*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, 253. Löwith used the German translation of an anthology of Tocqueville´s writings and letters which concentrated on *Democracy in America* and was edited by Albert Salomon, also a German émigré and later professor at the New School. Cf. A. Tocqueville, *Autorität und Freiheit*. Zürich: Rascher, CH, 1935.
22. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 451.
23. E. Auerbach. Literature and War. An Istanbul-Lecture 1941/42. In *East West Mimesis: Auerbach in Turkey*. K. Konuk. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010, 194–204, 200f.

24. M Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 450.
25. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 448. Auerbach quotes from *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*, book 3, chapter 14.
26. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 451.
27. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 459.
28. K. Löwith. *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, 27. Löwith quotes from Goethe´s letter to Eckermann, September 23 1828.
29. K. Löwith. *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, 26.
30. K. Löwith. *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, 231. Löwith quotes from Goethe´s letter to Zelter, January 2 1792.
31. K. Löwith. *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, 402.
32. P. Arnsberg. *Die Geschichte der Frankfurter Juden seit der Französischen Revolution*. Der Gang der Ereignisse, Eduard Roether Verlag, Darmstadt, 1983, Vol. 1, 136.
33. H. Heine. "Ludwig Börne. Eine Streitschrift" *Sämtliche Schriften*. München: Hanser Verlag, 1975, Vol. 4, 7–143, 17–23.
34. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 450.
35. This topic has been discussed by: Berghahn Klaus L., and Hermand J., Eds. *Goethe in German-Jewish Culture*. Rochester: Camden House, 2001.
36. M. Bormuth. *Mimesis*, 459.
37. K. Löwith. *Meaning in History. The Theological Implications of the Philosophy of History.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949, 199.
38. J. Habermas. "Karl Löwith: Stoic Retreat from Historical Consiousness" *Philosophical-Political Profiles*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1983, 79–98.
39. D. Henrich. "Sceptico Sereno" In *Natur und Geschichte.* Edited by H. Braun. *Karl Löwith zum 70.* Stuttgart: Geburtstag, Kohlhammer, 1967.
40. E. Auerbach. "Epilogemena to Mimesis." *Mimesis* (1953): 559–574, 570.
41. F. Strich, *Goethe und die Weltliteratur* (Francke, Bern, 1946).
42. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur.*" *Centennial Review* 13 (1969): 3.
43. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur*", 2f.
44. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur*", 6.
45. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur*", 7.
46. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur*", 5.
47. The translation of the German edition of 1948 was published in 1953: E. R. Curtius. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1953.
48. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur*", 13.
49. E. Auerbach. *Literary Language and its Public in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1965. The German edition was published shortly after Auerbach´s death in 1958.
50. E. Auerbach. "Philology and *Weltliteratur*", 17.
51. File "Auerbach, Erich" In "Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced Foreign Scholars", Box 38, Folder 55, Manuscript and Archives Division, New York Public Library.

52. Auerbach wrote in December 1941 in a letter to his German friend Alexander Rüstow who also taught at Istanbul University. I give just a short quote out of a longer passage cited by Martin Vialon: "Die Juden sind seit ihrem ersten Exil dauernd unvermeidbare Minorität – […] überall potentieller Gegenstand des Hasses und der Verfolgung. […] Ihr eigenes geistiges Leben, das eigentlich Jüdische im Geistigen ist längs erstart und wirkt gespenstisch." Cf. M. Vialon, *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Akademie für Sprache und Dichtung* 58, (2011): 1–40, 38.
53. E. Auerbach. "Epilogemena to Mimesis." *Mimesis*, (1953): 559–574, 560.
54. E. Auerbach. *Literary Language and its Publicum in Late Latin Antiquity and in the Middle Ages*, 20.
55. K. Löwith. *My Life in Germany before and after 1933. A Report*. Athlone Press, London, 1994, 138f.
56. K. Löwith. M. Heidegger, and F. Rosenzweig. "Ein Nachtrag zu Sein und Zeit." In *Sämtliche Schriften*. Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1984, Vol. 8, 72–101.
57. K. Löwith. "My Life in Germany." 147.