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Speculation and Praxis

Jahrbücher für speculative Philosophie and the Actualization of Philosophy*

Abstract: The paper addresses the journal *Jahrbücher für speculative Philosophie*, published between 1846 and 1848 in Darmstadt. The paper focuses on the forewords of the journal written by the sole editor Ludwig Noack (1819–1885). In these forewords, Noack elaborates the current situation of philosophy. He outlines his vision for the future philosophy. It would be meaningful not only for professional philosophers but also for the general audience. Moreover, it would be closely associated with other sciences. Noack's vision was inspired by August Cieszkowski's (1814–1894) so-called "Philosophie der Tat" (the philosophy of action), which resonated with the entire generation of German Hegelians from the late 1830s. Noack realized his journal in co-operation with the "Philosophische Gesellschaft zu Berlin", founded by Cieszkowski and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's (1770–1831) former student Carl Ludwig Michelet (1801–1893) in 1843.

Keywords: Ludwig Noack, Philosophie der Tat, Hegelianism, August Cieszkowski, Carl Ludwig Michelet, Arnold Ruge

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Introduction

Early in the year 1846, the first issue of the *Jahrbücher für speculative Philosophie und die philosophische Bearbeitung der empirischen Wissenschaften* (“Annals of speculative philosophy and philosophical cultivation of empirical sciences”) was published in Darmstadt.¹ The 1848 issues were published under the new title *Jahrbücher für Wissenschaft und Leben* (“Annals of science and life”). The last issue appeared in June 1848 in the midst of the Revolutionary wave. Throughout its existence, the journal had just one editor Ludwig Noack (1819–1885), the later professor of philosophy in Giessen.

In this paper, I discuss Noack’s forewords (*Vorwort*), published in the first issue of every volume of the *Jahrbücher*.² In the three forewords, Noack comments on the current situation of philosophy and outlines his vision for the future of philosophy.

Noack took his journal to be a continuation of Arnold Ruge’s (1802–1880) famed left-Hegelian journal *Hallische Jahrbücher*³ (1838–1843) and in the previous literature, it has been associated with left-Hegelianism.⁴ Yet, besides left-Hegelianism, I will argue that the so-called “Philosophie der Tat” (the philosophy of action) of Polish count August Cieszkowski (1814–1894) provided the framework for Noack’s vision for the future of philosophy. Reading Noack’s forewords in the light of Cieszkowski is motivated by the fact that Noack realized his *Jahrbücher* in co-operation with the “Philosophische Gesellschaft zu Berlin” (“Philosophical Society of Berlin”). Cieszkowski was founding member of the society.

¹ Noack signed his forewords in Worms (1846–1847) and in Oppenheim (1848).

² From now on Vw1846–Vw1848. Cf. list of references, Noack 1846 (“Zur Einleitung”) and 1847–1848.

³ Noack pays no attention to Theodor Echtermeyer (1805–1844), another key figure of the *Jahrbücher*. Norbert Oellers, “Die ‘Hallischen Jahrbücher’ und die deutsche Literatur”, in: *Philosophie und Literatur im Vormärz*, ed. Walter Jaeschke (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1995), 142.

⁴ Karl Rosenkranz, *Hegel als deutscher Nationalphilosoph* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1870), 316; Hans Rosenberg, “Arnold Ruge und die ‘Hallischen Jahrbücher’”, *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 20 (1930): 281–308. In this paper, I prefer the term “left-Hegelianism” to the term “young Hegelianism”, often used synonymously.

The *Jahrbücher* and Hegelianism

As the word “speculation” in the title of Noack’s journal suggests, it was closely related to Hegelianism. However, the relation between the *Jahrbücher* and the 1840s Hegelianism is not so straightforward as one could think.

The second half of the 1840s was the time of decline in the history of Hegelianism: the split of the Hegelian school was already fait accompli, when Noack established his journal. It is telling that Noack was encouraged to leave the word “speculation” out of the title of the journal.⁵ His journal represented – first and foremost – a response to the crisis of Hegelianism. It was meant both to offer a discussion forum for Hegelians and to invite non-Hegelians into dialogue with them. There was a need for such forums: the popularity of the *Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik*, founded by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) himself in 1827, had faded and the journal came to an end in 1846.⁶ The last issue of Ruge’s left-Hegelian journal *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* (originally *Hallische Jahrbücher*) appeared in Paris in 1843.⁷

Noack takes his journal to be a continuation of Ruge’s journal. He explains that whereas the era of Ruge’s *Jahrbücher* was fortunate, the circumstances have turned against the Hegelians in the past few years.⁸ Yet, the similarity between Noack’s and Ruge’s *Jahrbücher* should not be exaggerated. Noack is definitely impressed by the style of Ruge’s journal. There are also several similarities between Noack and the left-Hegelians. Like the left-Hegelians, Noack is openly critical of several parts of Hegel’s philosophy (e.g., the psychology⁹) and focuses on the philosophy of religion. Yet, as will be exemplified later, his own standpoint differs from the left-Hegelian mainstream, e.g., in the question about the relationship between religion and philosophy.

⁵ Vw1846, 6; Vw1847, 15.

⁶ Sibylle Obenaus, “Berliner Allgemeine Literaturzeitung oder ”Hegelblatt“?”, in: *Die ”Jahrbücher für wissenschaftliche Kritik“*, ed. Christoph Jamme (Stuttgart: frommann-holzboog, 1994), 43, 54–56.

⁷ Ruge’s journal, established in 1838, weakened the status of Hegel’s *Jahrbücher*. Vw1847, 12; Obenaus, “Berliner”, 42.

⁸ Vw1846, 13; Vw1847, 4, 9, 11–12.

⁹ Vw1846, 20.

Besides, the orientation of Noack's *Jahrbücher* differs from Ruge's. Ruge's *Jahrbücher* aimed at fostering unity among the left-Hegelians. This unity, in fact, existed largely because of Ruge's journal.¹⁰ In 1846, as the first issue of Noack's journal saw the daylight, the left-Hegelian school had already been fragmented. In his forewords, Noack does not differentiate between the left- and the right-Hegelians. Moreover, he maintains that unlike his journal, neither Ruge's nor Hegel's *Jahrbücher* promote the philosophical involvement with the empirical sciences.¹¹ Among the Hegelian journals, the *Theologische Jahrbücher*, edited by Eduard Zeller (1814–1908), have succeeded in this to some extent. However, its scope is limited to theology.

Soon after its foundation, Noack's *Jahrbücher* began co-operation with the "Philosophical Society of Berlin", founded by some former students of Hegel in 1843. While Noack was the sole publisher (*Herausgeber*) of the journal, several members of the Berlin Society were listed as the collaborators (*Mitarbeiter*) of the journal. Some recaps of the meetings of the Berlin Society were published in the journal as well.

The reasons for the co-operation between the Berlin Society and Noack's journal were various. The Berlin Society had discussed the possibility to establish its own organ. Eventually, it did not come true.¹² Noack heard about the plans of the Berliners first after he had established his journal.¹³ He contacted the Berlin Society; he was impressed by its diversity and openness. In his view, the Berlin Society testified that despite their diversification, the Hegelians still share a common theoretical basis. Unlike many of the pivotal figures of the society (like the chairman between 1846–1847 – Georg Andreas

¹⁰ Nicholas Lobkowitz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967), 214, 225.

¹¹ Vw1847, 12.

¹² Kühne, *Graf*, 142; Carl Ludwig Michelet, *Wahrheit aus meinem Leben* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1884), 190–191, 196; Carl Ludwig Michelet, "Geschichte der Philosophischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin", *Der Gedanke. Philosophische Zeitschrift* 1(1–3) (1860–1861): 66–68, 173; Kühne, *Graf*, 202.

¹³ Ludwig Noack, "Nachtrag zum einleitenden Vorworte des Herausgebers", *Jahrbücher für speculative Philosophie und die philosophische Bearbeitung der empirischen Wissenschaften* 1(1) (1846): 238; Vw1847, 9; Michelet, *Wahrheit*, 196.

Gabler (1786–1853)), Noack, only 27 at the time, had no formal position at the university.¹⁴

The profile of the Berlin Society was cautious and moderate. It did not exclude left-Hegelians from its activities though; for example, David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874) joined the society. Likewise, while Noack argued decidedly against the conservative branches of philosophy and teleology, he distanced himself decidedly from radicalism.¹⁵ Even so, although Noack published his journal outside Prussia, where Ruge's *Jahrbücher* were banned in 1841,¹⁶ it was overshadowed by the destiny of Ruge's journal. He claimed that German philosophers have mistrusted his journal because it was too similar to Ruge's.¹⁷

Besides these political reasons, there were also philosophical reasons for co-operation between Noack and the Berliners. Both Noack's *Jahrbücher* and the Berlin Society aimed at promoting unity among Hegelians.¹⁸ Another goal of Noack's *Jahrbücher* was to put philosophy into practice. The framework for this idea was provided by the founding member of the Berlin Society, August Cieszkowski. His influential "philosophy of action" (*Philosophie der Tat*) is essentially an idea of a philosophy becoming political action.¹⁹

It is difficult to estimate Cieszkowski's direct influence over Noack though. This is not only because Noack does not mention Cieszkowski in his forewords by name but also because Cieszkowski had had an impact on the entire generation of Hegelians from the late 1830s. He introduced his philosophy of action somewhat prior to the division of the Hegelian school: his work *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie* ("Prolegomena to a Historiosophy") (1838) – a kind of manifesto of the philosophy of action – appeared before Ludwig Feuerbach's (1804–1872) critique of Hegel and the radicalization of Ruge's

¹⁴ Vw1846, 15.

¹⁵ Vw1848, IV.

¹⁶ Michael Kuur Sørensen, *Young Hegelians Before and After 1848. When Theory Meets Reality* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2011), 30.

¹⁷ Vw1847, 4.

¹⁸ Michelet, "Geschichte", 66.

¹⁹ Gedö, "Philosophy", 30; August von Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena zur Historiosophie* (Berlin: Veit, 1838), 129.

Jahrbücher.²⁰ It influenced both the left- and the right-wing Hegelians though the philosophy of action is often associated only with the left.²¹ Cieszkowski belonged to the same generation as the left-Hegelians, but had no close connection with them. He was rather a mediator between the Hegelian camps.²²

Cieszkowski's philosophy of action was based on Eduard Gans' (1798–1839) and Carl Ludwig Michelet's (1801–1893) (both Hegel's personal students) readings of Hegel.²³ Zeller and Hegel's student Friedrich Wilhelm Hinrichs (1794–1861), both later members of the Berlin Society, had presented readings of a similar kind. Noack praises Hinrichs' work on aesthetics and Zeller's work on theology.²⁴

Even if Cieszkowski was the one to propose the foundation of the Berlin Society, he rarely participated in its activities.²⁵ Instead, Cieszkowski's mentor and friend, Michelet, became society's leading figure for decades to come. Thanks to Michelet, the philosophy of action was incorporated into the activities of the Berlin Society, although not without opposition.²⁶ In the mid-1840s, the members of the society were divided on the question of whether the society should have other than scholarly purposes. Yet, even if they disagreed on Cieszkowski's idea of the philosophy of action, they all valued his work on the philosophy of history.²⁷

²⁰ Matthias Moser, *Hegels Schüler C. L. Michelet: Recht und Geschichte jenseits der Schulteilung* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2003), 70–71; Benoit P. Hepner, "History and the Future: The Vision of August Cieszkowski", *The Review of Politics* 15(3) (1953): 340.

²¹ Horst Stuke, *Philosophie der Tat: Studien zur "Verwirklichung der Philosophie" bei den Junghegelianern und den Wahren Sozialisten* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1963), 247; Lobkowicz, *Theory*, 203–205.

²² Massimiliano Tomba, "August von Cieszkowski. Philosophie der Praxis und Theorie der Geschichte", in: *Osteuropa in den Revolutionen von 1848*, ed. Lars Lambrecht (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), 209–210. For a list of the German philosophical works, mentioned in the *Prolegomena*, cf. Kühne, *Graf*, 134–135.

²³ Tomba, "August", 214; Stuke, *Philosophie*, 64–66; Moser, *Hegels*, 71–79.

²⁴ Vw1846, 21; Vw1847, 12.

²⁵ Michelet, *Wahrheit*, 189. Cieszkowski published nothing in the *Jahrbücher*, but some of his comments were included in the recaps of the meetings of the Berlin Society. Kühne (*Graf*, 213–250) has republished the comments.

²⁶ Michelet, *Wahrheit*, 190. Michelet published a favorable review of Cieszkowski's *Prolegomena* (Kühne, *Graf*, 61–63).

²⁷ Kühne, *Graf*, 235.

Philosophy at the present time

Noack's vision for the future of philosophy is structured like the left-Hegelian philosophy of action.²⁸ Noack analyzes the recent history of philosophy and provides a theoretical explanation for the state of affairs. Finally, he explicates, how the unity of philosophy is restored and how philosophy becomes relevant to life.

In the first foreword (1846), written prior to his contact with Michelet, Noack barely mentions Hegel's name, whereas in the second (1847), he addresses both Hegel and the Hegelians. In the first foreword, he discusses what he calls "the prevailing philosophy" (*herrschende Philosophie*).²⁹ He identifies himself with the prevailing philosophy, but does not provide a clear-cut definition of it. As far as I see it, it refers to the various post-Hegelian branches of speculative philosophy. Thus, it is not necessarily strictly Hegelian, but it stems from the Hegelian tradition.

Noack credits the Hegelian philosophy for its theoretical achievements. (He makes no difference between Hegel and his followers here). In the Hegelian philosophy, the reason (*Vernunft*) is set as the only truth and reality; it has absolute authority over other modes of knowledge. The reason is absolutely immanent and can grasp not only the present but also the past of humankind. Thus, the truth is present in the life of humankind. The absolute self-consciousness is attainable to the thinking subject. Moreover, the process through which reason and reality become identical, is also identical with the self-revelation of God.

Noack stresses that it is justified to renounce all otherworldliness (*Jenseitigkeit*) on these Hegelian grounds. The insufficiency of the Hegelian philosophy results from the absolute authority of the reason. Because of it, the rational subject becomes absolute too. Due to this subjectivism, it is impossible to attain the true freedom in the practical realm. Therefore, a reform of the Hegelian philosophy is needed.

²⁸ Stuke, *Philosophie*, 38–39.

²⁹ Vw1846, 5–6.

In order to attain the true freedom, the prevailing philosophy insists on progress, or, to use Noack's word, "going beyond" (*Hinausgehen*). The necessity of progress explains how the prevailing philosophy differs from the Hegelian orthodoxy (*Orthodoxie*). The past can teach us about the present and the future. But that is not to say that we should remain stuck in the past. Reflecting the past reveals the freedom of the spirit; the spirit has freely shaped itself over the course of time. Instead of saying that rational is real, Noack maintains that "[...] the rational shall also become real".³⁰ Philosophy should not only be the owl of Minerva, but also a creative and prophetic force; it must be oriented towards the future.

Noack's argumentation is in line with Cieszkowski's reading of Hegel. The latter argues that Hegel regarded the future as unknowable, which yet contradicted with his own principles.³¹ This is because it is possible to define the laws of the history with Hegel's method and these laws apply also to the future. Because philosophers have knowledge of these laws, they can act in the real world instead of just reflecting the past. For Hegel, "[...] philosophy, insofar as it deals with history, has an authority purely retroactive and that it should refrain from anticipations".³² On the contrary, for Cieszkowski, the future is an integral part of the history. His historiosophy is a theory of history, which implies a vision of the future.

Even if Noack emphasizes the creative task of philosophy, he stresses that the reflection on the past is necessary too.³³ Avoiding this reflection is the root of radicalism, whereas philosophers should influence the society in a moderate way. His argumentation is in accordance with Cieszkowski, who argues that philosophy must become reality through progressive development. Even though Cieszkowski inspired, e.g., radicals like Mihail Bakunin (1814–1876), he was no revolutionary.³⁴

³⁰ Vv1846, 11 ("[w]as vernünftig ist, wird auch wirklich werden [...]"), 12. All translations of Noack's texts are mine.

³¹ Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena*, 8–9; Tomba, "August", 213; Lawrence S. Stepelevich, "August von Cieszkowski: From Theory to Praxis", *History and Theory* 13(1) (1974): 46; Lobkowicz, *Theory*, 197; Moser, *Hegels*, 71–73.

³² Hepner, "History", 333.

³³ Vv1846, 10, 12.

³⁴ Hepner, "History", 338; Stuke, *Philosophie*, 86–87; Lobkowicz, *Theory*, 201, 204.

Autonomy of philosophy

Noack's view that the necessity of progress characterizes the contemporary philosophy is typical for the *Zeitgeist*; in the 1840s, both Hegelians and their opponents regarded the present time as a transition period.³⁵ Noack explicates that accomplishing two tasks, the negative-critical one and the positive-constitutive one, are the prerequisites for the future philosophy.³⁶

The first task, or the negative task, is to find a reconciliation between the contradictory tendencies within the prevailing philosophy. Therefore, the first task is internal to philosophy. After Hegel's passing, the speculative philosophy has diversified: some branches of it have maintained a close relation to Hegel, whereas other branches have been inspired by, e.g., Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling's (1775–1854) positive philosophy. The very foundation of Hegel's philosophy has been questioned even within the Hegelian school. Yet, the fragmentation of philosophy is not final. The diversification of the present philosophy results from the deepening of one eternal idea.³⁷ No new philosophy can emerge without a struggle between opposing standpoints. This is why non-speculative philosophers are explicitly invited to contribute to the *Jahrbücher*.

Noack's argumentation here resembles the left-Hegelian one; the left-Hegelians see the crisis of philosophy as a way to provide a setting for the future of philosophy.³⁸ Noack, who appreciates the theoretical achievements of Hegel and the Hegelians, argues that the means to achieve the unity among the speculative philosophers is the method of speculative philosophy. Loyalty to Hegel's method is common for both Noack and Cieszkowski. Even if the latter departed from Hegel considerably, he never questioned the authority of Hegel's method and his principle of the sublation (*Aufhebung*) in particular.³⁹

³⁵ Gedö, "Philosophie", 1, 14–15; Stuke, *Philosophie*, 76.

³⁶ Vw1846, 7–8; Vw1847, 7.

³⁷ Vw1847, 8–9.

³⁸ Gedö, "Philosophie", 27.

³⁹ Hepner, "History", 333, 347; Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena*, 49, 130–131.

The structure of both Noack's organism of the philosophical idea (see the next chapter) and Cieszkowski's *Prolegomena* is strictly tripartite.⁴⁰

Noack again distances himself from the Hegelian orthodoxy as he stresses that the way to achieve unity among the speculative philosophers is not to establish a new school of philosophy. The future philosophy must begin with the critique of the given (*Gegebene*), renounce all dogmatic tendencies and be independent of all external authority. The fundamental principle of the future philosophy must be the autonomy of the philosophical idea.⁴¹ That is, the idea is to be determined by its own dialectic only.

Philosophy is not just any sophisticated discussion, however. Philosophical thinking must be both concrete and determinate. For example, although the *Jahrbücher* seek to establish a dialogue between philosophers and other scientists (see the next chapter), it is not a forum for any intellectual discussion.⁴² While its subject matter – encompassing philosophical, scientific, social and practical questions – is very wide, it discusses only such works where the philosophical idea finds its expression. Noack describes the ideal form of the concreteness and determinateness of philosophy as “the concrete plastic” (*concrete Plastik*).

On the one hand, Noack values the ability to popularize philosophy; he insists on philosophers not to content themselves with the abstract form, but apply and popularize even the deepest ideas. Ruge's *Jahrbücher* have testified that the popularization of the speculative philosophy does not necessarily lead to distortion or oversimplification. On the other hand, he is by no means antagonistic towards theory. Neither Noack's vision for the future philosophy nor Cieszkowski's philosophy of action is simply practical activism based on Hegel's philosophy.⁴³ Whereas for Hegel, philosophy is a theoretical and contemplative enterprise in the first place, Cieszkowski and Noack do not recognize a gap between theory and practice. For them, as a pure theory, philosophy is essentially incomplete (see the sixth chapter).

⁴⁰ Vw1846, 16–18; Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena*, 7, 23–24; Stepelevich, “August”, 49; Kühne, *Graf*, 26.

⁴¹ Vw1846, 9–11.

⁴² *Ibidem*, 13–14.

⁴³ Stuke, *Philosophie*, 37–38, 49, 252.

Philosophy and other sciences

The second prerequisite for the future philosophy, or the positive task, is to find a reconciliation between philosophy and other sciences. It is Noack's view that the interaction between philosophy and other sciences has been insufficient so far. His *Jahrbücher* are meant to become the central organ (*Centralorgan*) for the dialogue between philosophers and other scientists.⁴⁴

Noack argues that all sciences are dependent on philosophy: "[...] the real sciences as such become possible only through philosophy, which encompasses their principles and foundations".⁴⁵ That is, philosophy defines the principles without which the empirical sciences provide fragmentary information instead of knowledge (*Erkenntnis*). The interaction between philosophy and other sciences makes the true unity of the sciences, or "the systematic organism (*Organismus*) of the philosophical idea", possible.⁴⁶ The subject area of every individual science is deducible from this idea.

It is typical for the Hegelian philosophies of action to consider Hegel's philosophy not as complete but as the most developed point of philosophy.⁴⁷ Thus, the future philosophy begins with a critique of Hegel. Similarly, even if Noack's organism differs significantly from Hegel's system of science, it is yet a reform of it.⁴⁸ For example, Hegel's philosophy of nature is particularly the child of its age and needs to be significantly updated.

As mentioned earlier, Noack takes Hegel's method to be vital for the future philosophy. Surprisingly enough, the logic does not have a focal place in his organism. He explains that because of criticism by the younger generation of Hegelians he has changed the place and the structure of the logic; it belongs to the last subdivision of the second main division (the philosophy of theoretical spirit), called "philosophy in the narrow sense" (*im engern*

⁴⁴ Vw1847, 16.

⁴⁵ Vw1846, 9 ("[...] die realen Wissenschaften als solche überhaupt erst durch die Philosophie möglich werden, die ihre Prinzipien und Fundamente in sich schliesst").

⁴⁶ Vw1846, 8–9; Vw1847, 16.

⁴⁷ Stuke, *Philosophie*, 67.

⁴⁸ Vw1846, 16–19.

Sinne).⁴⁹ However, as far as I see it, he does not consider Hegel's logic as erroneous; rather, he thinks that its form (*Gestalt*) needs to be revised in order to clarify the subject matter.

Furthermore, Noack maintains that Hegel provided just the basis of the philosophy of history.⁵⁰ Contrary to Hegel's example, the speculative treatment of history should end up in determining the outline of the future. This idea resembles Cieszkowski's *Prolegomena*, which not only restructures Hegel's philosophy of history but also supplements it with the definitions of future and praxis. Instead of the philosophy of history, Noack focuses on the philosophy of religion. It is his view that Hegel merely founded the speculative science of religion, but did not bring it into the conclusion. Noack provides this conclusion and defines his concept of the praxis as a part of it. He elaborates this topic not only in his forewords but also in a separate article, published in the first issue of the *Jahrbücher* after the foreword.⁵¹ It will be discussed next.

Philosophy, religion and praxis

The second prerequisite for the future philosophy is not just a scientific task. The interaction between philosophy and other sciences enriches both, and a similar kind of process must also take place between science and life, or between theory and praxis. This is essentially a task for philosophers, because they are responsible for the unity of science. Other realms of humanity must be brought into this unity too.

For Noack, the subject matter of philosophy is no less than the whole human, or "[...] all the energy of the will, all the strength and depth of the hu-

⁴⁹ Ibidem, 21–22. Apparently, Noack uses the term “philosophy” in two different senses. As he contrasts religion with philosophy (see the next chapter), he refers to philosophy in a narrow sense. As he discusses, e.g., the unity of science, he occasionally identifies philosophy with the system of science.

⁵⁰ Vw1846, 23–24.

⁵¹ Ludwig Noack, “Die Idee der speculativen Religionswissenschaft”, *Jahrbücher für speculative Philosophie und die philosophische Bearbeitung der empirischen Wissenschaften* 1(1) (1846): 29–67.

man mind [...]”.⁵² The contributors of the *Jahrbücher* are invited not only to discuss non-scientific topics but also to influence the real life.⁵³ This is an ambitious goal for a philosophical journal, to say the least. Ruge’s *Jahrbücher* “[...] actually had some impact even outside philosophical circles”, but they were published six times (!) a week.⁵⁴ It is not surprising – as Noack mentions – that doubts have been raised about the practical purpose of the *Jahrbücher*. Yet, as the time went by, the practical dimension became more important. In the 1846–1847 volumes, the mediation between philosophy and other sciences took the precedence over the practical dimension, whereas in 1848, Noack declared that the journal orients now towards the practical problems of the present time and thus reaches the non-academic audience.⁵⁵ In order to emphasize this, he even altered the title of the journal.

As argued before, both Noack and Cieszkowski consider theory and praxis as inseparable. Noack even claims that the needs of science cohere with the needs of life; theory is the prerequisite for praxis. In its true form, speculative philosophy is by no means abstract but concrete thinking and thus already practical thinking.⁵⁶ Noack subscribes to the philosophy of action, as he insists on an action (*Tat*), which results at the true (*wahrhafte*) freedom.⁵⁷ This action stems from the will, which is fulfilled by the idea. On the contrary, the praxis of the present day, exemplified by the political and religious liberalism, lacks the idea.

Noack wonders at the passivity of the men of the action (*Männer der Tat*) of the present. Yet, apparently, he does not identify himself with them. Just like Cieszkowski,⁵⁸ Noack refrains from making any concrete political suggestions. Ruge is the opposite of not only Noack and Cieszkowski but also many left-Hegelians: he was the first left-Hegelian to reflect on Hegel’s political doctrine. Yet, even in his case, the actualization of philosophy remains just

⁵² Vw1846, 10 (“[...] die ganze Energie des Willens, alle Kraft und Tiefe des Gemüths [...]).”)

⁵³ Vw1846, 12; Vw1847, 4.

⁵⁴ Lobkowitz, *Theory*, 225.

⁵⁵ Vw1848, III–IV.

⁵⁶ Vw1847, 16.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 5–6.

⁵⁸ In his *Prolegomena* Cieszkowski mentions in passing though that philosophy “[...] has to be brought down to the level of the masses [...]”. Lobkowitz, *Theory*, 203.

a principle.⁵⁹ The same applies to Noack, who claims his *Jahrbücher* to have an impact on the society, but does not explain how to overcome the split between the idea and the reality. Even Cieszkowski is more explicit about this question. In his *Prolegomena*, he separates between pre- and post-Hegelian practice: the latter is the activity, which is the highest possible synthesis of spirit and being.⁶⁰ Yet, to reach this reconciliation, a double movement is required: a movement from reason to reality and a movement from reality to reason.⁶¹

Even if Noack does not provide a thorough exposition of the actualization of philosophy, he specifies that religion is necessary for the movement from theory to praxis.⁶² The highest determination of the will is presented in the philosophy of religion, which elaborates the will, whose content is the absolute. He does not share Hegel's definition of the rational will as the unity of intelligence and will.⁶³ Likewise, Cieszkowski refutes in his *Prolegomena* Hegel's definition of the will.⁶⁴ Hegel conceives will merely as a mode of thought; for Cieszkowski, a human being is fundamentally "a volitional being" (*Willenswesen*), not "a thinking being" (*Gedankenwesen*).⁶⁵ Cieszkowski is ready to restrict the scope of reason for the benefit of the action; according to Gedö, he in fact renounces Hegel's concept of reason.⁶⁶

In Noack's organism of the philosophical idea, the philosophy of theoretical spirit culminates in philosophy and the philosophy of practical spirit in religion. Noack explains that Hegel fails to recognize the essence of religion.⁶⁷ He is right to deny all otherworldliness, but in doing so, he ends up in subjectivism. As a consequence, religion is subordinate to philosophy. On the contrary, religion must be independent of philosophy.

⁵⁹ Ibidem, 216, 227.

⁶⁰ Ibidem, 201.

⁶¹ Stuke, *Philosophie*, 122.

⁶² Noack, "Die Idee", 43–44.

⁶³ Vw1846, 20.

⁶⁴ Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena*, 114, 120; Stepelevich, "August", 47.

⁶⁵ Kühne, *Graf*, 43.

⁶⁶ Gedö, "Philosophie", 30–31.

⁶⁷ Noack, "Die Idee", 34, 38.

As argued before, the future of philosophy stems from the reflection with the past. Likewise, the content for the future religious life results from the critique of the past forms of religion.⁶⁸ The past forms of Christianity and other religions must be treated equally. That is, the science of religion cannot begin with the content of any positive religion. Like the starting point of philosophy, the starting point of the science of religion must be as abstract as possible, or the common denominator of all religions.

Among the left-Hegelians the significance of religion was the big bone of contention. All left-Hegelians criticized the traditional forms of Christianity and questioned the status of the church. Still, they disagreed whether the form of religion is still relevant. For example, Ruge envisioned that a new religion would make it possible to overcome the gap between praxis and theory. Religion should become “[...] a vehicle of philosophy [...]”, since “[r]eligion was the only way the masses could comprehend philosophical principles.”⁶⁹

On the one hand, Noack’s science of religion comes close to Ruge’s position and left-Hegelianism in general.⁷⁰ Noack is highly discontent with the traditional theology and its current status at the university. On the other hand, his standpoint differs from the left-Hegelian mainstream. He agrees with Feuerbach’s reading of Hegel, according to which Hegel, who erroneously thought that philosophy could grasp the absolute as such, eventually ends up in forsaking religion. He mentions that the recent history of Hegelianism testifies to Feuerbach’s claim: “[...] the expression of the science of religion within the Hegelian school does not at all correspond to the idea of this science as truly speculative [...]”⁷¹ He does not refer to the left-Hegelians, but – as far as I see it – he has the radicalization of the left-Hegelian critique of religion in mind. But whereas the left-Hegelians agree that philosophy is superior to religion, Noack stresses that it is not. In fact, as a positive and constitutive force, phi-

⁶⁸ Ibidem, 40–41.

⁶⁹ Sørensen, *Young*, 87 [quote], 88.

⁷⁰ Noack, “Die Idee”, 32–33, 67.

⁷¹ Noack, “Die Idee”, 32 (“[...] der Ausdruck, welchen die Religionswissenschaft innerhalb der Hegel’schen Schule erhalten hat, entspricht keineswegs der Idee dieser Wissenschaft als einer wahrhaft speculativen [...]).

losophy is profoundly religious.⁷² Thus, Noack definitely disagrees with the claim that religion should become a vehicle of philosophy.

For Noack, the outcome of the left-Hegelian criticism of religion is merely the starting point for the science of religion.⁷³ Feuerbach's critique testifies to the claim that religion is identical with the essence of human being. Hence, the history of religion is parallel to the history of humankind, or the world history. Moreover, Noack's philosophy of religion is no less future oriented than Cieszkowski's historiosophy: Noack conceives the world history essentially as an ethical process and argues that the future exists already in the present.

As argued before, Noack considers Hegel's philosophy as subjectivism, which prevents the attainment of the genuine freedom. Likewise, Cieszkowski maintains the opinion that Hegel's definition of freedom is fraught with necessity.⁷⁴ In his view, the free action is free from this necessity, but yet under the guidance of God's providence.⁷⁵ This exemplifies that Cieszkowski's definition of the future of humankind is deeply religious.⁷⁶ Noack argues similarly that the ethical purpose of humankind necessitates religion.

Concluding remarks

In this paper, I pointed out several parallels between Noack's vision for the future philosophy and Cieszkowski's philosophy of action. I indicated as well that Noack's standpoint differs from the left-Hegelian mainstream. With his *Jahrbücher*, he aimed at providing a moderate alternative to the left-Hegelianism of the first half of the 1840s, which radicalized after the coronation of Frederick William IV. Noack definitely did not share the revolutionary mind-

⁷² Vw1847, 6.

⁷³ Noack, "Die Idee", 47–48, 52.

⁷⁴ Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena*, 95.

⁷⁵ Gedö, "Philosophy", 31; Kühne, *Graf*, 29.

⁷⁶ Cieszkowski, *Prolegomena*, 69–70; Hepner, "History", 339–340. Cieszkowski elaborated the religious aspect of the future in his *Ojczyzna Nasza*, published in 1848. It had thus no influence on the Vormärz time. He had defended Christianity against the left-Hegelians already earlier though (Lobkowitz, *Theory*, 195).

set of the left-Hegelians. This brought him close to Cieszkowski's reform of Hegel's philosophy of history, based on the work of Hegel's close students, Gans and Michelet. Like Cieszkowski, Noack subscribes to the evolutionary development of Hegelianism, not revolutionary development.

A serious flaw in Noack's vision lies in its lack of concreteness. Whereas Cieszkowski's insistence on action always remained abstract, Ruge was an exception among the left-Hegelians, who were marked by an ivory-tower-culture:⁷⁷ he aimed to bring the philosophy to the masses. Given that Noack established his *Jahrbücher* approximately 8 years after Cieszkowski's *Prolegomena* and Ruge's *Jahrbücher*, he should have provided a more concrete definition of the actualization of philosophy.

Noack himself probably understood this. In the last foreword (June 1848), he highlights the practical aspect of his journal. Even though the journal has encountered more problems than he had expected, its publication will continue.⁷⁸ But this did not happen. After the revolution of 1848, the "decade of reaction" (1849–1858) began.⁷⁹ The unity of the left-Hegelians had always been rather fragile, and at the latest, after the revolution, left-Hegelianism came to an end. Ruge not only left Germany but also changed his views.⁸⁰

The activities of the Berlin Society quietened in the years of the revolution and were ceased between 1850 and 1854.⁸¹ Instead of reviving the *Jahrbücher*, the Berlin Society established its own journal, *Der Gedanke*, in 1860. Noack was an external member of the society until his death. He was uninvolved in the activities of the society, even though there are conspicuous similarities between his vision for the future of philosophy and the new programme of the society, published in the journal *Der Gedanke* in 1860.⁸² These similarities must be discussed, however, in another study.

⁷⁷ Sørensen, *Young*, 39.

⁷⁸ Vw1848, III.

⁷⁹ Sørensen, *Young*, 182–184.

⁸⁰ Rosenberg, "Arnold", 289–290.

⁸¹ Kühne, *Graf*, 247, 321.

⁸² Philosophische Gesellschaft zu Berlin, "Unser Programm", *Der Gedanke. Philosophische Zeitschrift* 1(1) (1860): 1–2. Instead of the philosophy of action, the new interest in Kant in Germany from the late 1850s became the main issue of discussion in the society. For example,

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Michelet criticized Zeller's Kantianism in the pages of *Der Gedanke*. The dispute between Michelet and Zeller influenced the formation of the concept "neo-Kantianism".

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