THE HEGEL'S VORLESUNGEN ÜBER DIE PHILOSOPHIE DER RELIGION *(1821-1831) SOURCES AND CRITICAL EDITIONS FROM MARHEINEKE TO JAESCHKE*

*Diego Giordano**
digiordano@gmail.com

ABSTRACT *In this paper I provide a concise plan about Hegel's* Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion *critical editions, laying stress on the method followed by editors in order to build a coherent text with the sources at their disposal. The Marheineke's edition (1832) is analysed with special attention since it was the edition that caused the division between a Right and a Left, opening the discussion on speculative theism as a consequence of the difficulty to distinguish the systematic part from the historical one in the reasoning carried out by Hegel.*

Keywords Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, G. W. F. Hegel, right and left hegelianism, P. K. Marheineke, B. Bauer, critical editions.*

RESUMO *Neste artigo eu ofereço um plano conciso acerca das edições críticas das* Preleções sobre a Filosofia da Religião *de Hegel enfatizando o método seguido pelos editores com o intuito de construir um texto coerente com as fontes disponíveis para eles. A edição de Marheineke (1832) é analisada com especial atenção dado que ela foi a edição que produziu a divisão entre uma Direita e uma Esquerda, bem como inaugurou a discussão*

* Doutor pela École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris, France. Artigo recebido em 2/02/2010 e aprovado em 6/01/2011.

sobre o teísmo especulativo como consequência da dificuldade de se distinguir a parte sistemática da histórica na argumentação desenvolvida por Hegel.

Palavras-chave Preleções sobre a Filosofia da Religião, *G.W.F. Hegel, direita e esquerda hegelianas, P.K. Marheineke, B.Bauer, edições críticas*

EDITIONS' SCHEMA AND NOTEBOOKS' ABBREVIATIONS

PhdR G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*

CRITICAL EDITIONS (PHDR)

GW G.W.F. Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, hrsg. von der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, in Verbindung mit der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, 22 Bände, Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 1968 ss.

V G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen. Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, in Verbindung mit der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, hrsg. von der Nordrhein-Westfälichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 16 Bände, Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 1983 ss.

[Bände 3-5 in *V*]

J G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, hrsg. von W. Jaeschke, 3 Bände, Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 1983-1985:

Band 3: Teil 1. Der Begriff der Religion, 1983, 1993^2; Band 4 a/b: Teil 2. Die bestimmte Religion. In zwei Bänden, a: Text, b: Anhang. Mit einem Begriffs-, Realien- und Personenverzeichnis zum Gesamtwerk, 1985, 1994^2; Band 5: Teil 3. Die vollendete Religion, 1984, 1995^2

SW G.W.F. Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Ausgabe*, hrsg. von G. Lasson († 1932) und später J. Hoffmeister († 1955), 20 Bände, Meiner Verlag, Leipzig 1911 ss., Hamburg nach 1951

[Bände 15-16 in *SW*]
L G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, hrsg. v. G. Lasson, 2 Bände, Meiner Verlag, Leipzig 1925-1929

W G.W.F. Hegel, *Werke*, Vollständige Ausgabe durch einen Verein von Freunden des Verewigten, hrsg. von Ph. Marheineke, 18 Bände, Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1832-1845

[Bände 11-12 in *W*]

W_1 G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Nebst einer Schrift über die Beweise vom Dasein Gottes, hrsg. von Ph. Marheineke, 2 Bände, Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1832

W_2 G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, zweite verbesserte Auflage, hrsg. von Ph. Marheineke, 2 Bände, Verlag von Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1840

Notebooks (*Nachschriften*) [1]

Ak	Anonymous (Königsberg) (lost; used in *L*)
An	Anonymous (Berlin) (*Reinschrift* 1827)
Bo	Boerner, Ignacy (*Mitschrift* 1827)
Cn	Correvon, Jules (reworking not usable 1824)
De	Deiters, F.P. (*Reinschrift* 1824)
Dr	Droysen, Gustav (lost; used in W_2)
Er	Erdmann, Johann Eduard (lost; used in *L*)
Fo	Foerster, Friedrich (lost; used in W_2)
Ge	Geyer (lost)
Gr	Griesheim, Karl Gustav von (*Reinschrift* 1824; used in W_1, W_2 and *L*)
He	Henning, Leopold von (lost; used in W_2)
Hg	Hegel, Karl (lost; used in W_1 and W_2)
Ho	Hotho, Heinrich Gustav (reworking 1824; used in W_1, W_2 and *L*)
Hu	Hube, Joseph (*Reinschrift* 1827)
Ke	Kehler F.C.H. von (*Reinschrift* incomplete 1824; used in *L*)
Me	Meyer (lost; used in W_1 and W_2)
Mi1	Michelet, Carl Ludwig (1821) (lost)
Mi2	Michelet, Carl Ludwig (1824) (lost; used in W_2)
Pa	Pastenaci, Carl (*Mitschrift* 1824; used in *L*)
Re	Reichenow (lost)
Ru	Rutenberg (lost; used in W_2)
St	Strauss, D.F. (extract from a notebook 1831)

Divers

Co	*Convolut* (remarks on the philosophy of religion)
Ed	remark probably dating back to the editors of *W*
Ms	manuscript of Hegel concerning the Philosophy of Religion
No	supposed note of Hegel on the *Gr*'s *Reinschrift*
So	*Sondergut* (extra)
Va	variant

---

1 The notebooks (*Nachschriften*) are divided into *Mitschriften*, notes taken during the lessons, and *Reinschriften* notes reworked later in a fair copy.

I

The text of the *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion* is a posthumous reworking of the lectures given by Hegel at the University of Berlin in 1821, 1824, 1827 and 1831, in the space of four terms. In them Hegel tries to show: 1) the development of the relation between the Mind and itself [first part: "Der Begriff der Religion"]; 2) the relation, become a concrete reality in the historical religions, between the infinite Mind (God) and the finite one (man) [second part: "Die bestimmte Religion"]; 3) the gradual passage from natural religion forms to the consummate religion form, the Christianity, considered fully equivalent in its reality to the concept of religion [third part: "Die vollendete Religion" – "*oder offenbare*"]. [2] In other words for Hegel the Mind, that is never known immediately for what it is, can realize its own complete and perfect auto-comprehension solely by gradually developing itself over the time. Now also in the field of religion, that is one of the ways in which the Mind knows itself, the conscience, before reaching the complete conceptual comprehension of God (that is before it comes to understand God as a whole of finite and infinite in the figure of man-God Jesus Christ) has to cover an ascending distance formed by the Mind's historical manifestations arranged in a logical sequence of necessity.

Currently we have three critical editions of PhdR: $W_{1 \text{and} 2}$, *L* and *J*. The first reconstruction (W_1) of the lectures on religion was carried out by Marheineke, who published them in a two-volume edition in 1832, in the series of the Hegel's complete works edition (*W*). Marheineke used a manuscript (*Ms*) of Hegel himself, dated 1831, and especially a few student's notebooks, i.e. those of Karl Gustav von Griesheim (*Gr*, 1824), Meyer (*Me*, 1827) and Karl Hegel (*Hg*, 1831), the son of Hegel. It's important to notice that the first two notebooks were given to Hegel, who used them for the following lectures, making notable changes and corrections. Marheineke had also the opportunity of integrating his work with further material concerning religious issues (*Sondergut*), found among Hegel's papers after his death. [3]

2 Hegel clearly parts the "consummate" or "revelatory" religion, the Christianity as appropriate realization of the concept of religion, from the various forms of "determinate religion" as not yet appropriate realizations of the concept of religion.

3 Both W_1 and W_2 comprise the so-called *Sondergut* ("additional material") that, according to to Marheineke's Prefaces to *W*, was formed by Hegel's manuscript legacies (*Co*), Henning's notebook (*He*), and notebooks related to the 1831 class. Concerning the dating of *So*, *J* has concluded that the *So* of W_1 is part of the 1831 class, whereas the *So* handed on for the first time with W_2 is most likely *He* or *Co*.

In 1840 the second edition (W_2) was published. Although it was signed by Marheineke, actually was Bruno Bauer to edit it. Compared with the first, the new version appeared definitely modified and much augmented. Bauer had at his disposal other notebooks, i.e. those of Leopold von Henning (*He*, 1821), Karl Ludwig Michelet (*Mi2*, 1824), Friedrich Foerster (*Fo*, 1824), Gustav Droysen (*Dr*, 1827), Geyer (*Ge*, 1831), and the joint one of Reichenow e Rutenberg (*Re&Ru*, 1831).

The Lasson critical edition (*L*) was published between 1925 and 1929 with the purpose of recovering, in so far as possible, the "authentic" reading of Hegel, taking as its foundation the 1821's original manuscript philologically analysed. Lost the 1831's notebooks, Lasson could however use other teaching aids, that is to say the notes of Carl Pastenaci (*Pa*, 1824), Heinrich Hotho (*Ho*, 1824), Victor von Kehler (*Ke*, 1824), Johann Eduard Erdmann (*Er*, 1827) and those of an anonymous student (1827), eventually producing a text wider than Bauer's one.

The critical edition of Walter Jaeschke (*J*) was issued in three volumes between 1982 and 1985, with the separation of the texts regarding the various lectures: for the 1821' lectures the *Ms* of Hegel was used as guide-text (*Leittext*), while the relevant notebooks were lost (*He* and *Mi1*); for the 1824's lectures the *Gr*'s *Reinschrift* is used by Jaeschke as *Leittext*, while *De*, *Ke*, and *Pa* are used as check-texts (*Kontrolltexte*), *Ho* and *Cn* are texts so reworked by the authors that them are usable only as additional-texts (*Ergänzungstext*), [4] while *Fo* e *Mi2* were lost. As regards the notebooks related to the 1827 class, Jaeschke used *Bo* (*Mitschrift*), *An* e *Hu* (*Reinschriften*), together with *L* (*Leittext*), while *Ak*, *Dr*, *Er* e *Me* were lost. For the 1831's lectures instead, Jaeschke could use only the *St* extract, while *Hg*, *Ge*, *Re* and *Ru* were lost.

II

The critical edition *J* was published in Germany in 1983 by the Publisher Felix Meiner of Hamburg within *V*, that continues the editorial project started in 1968 with *GW*. This edition is the result of the joint work among Walter Jaeschke (Ruhr-Universität, Bochum, Germany), Ricardo Ferrara (Conicet, Argentina) e Peter C. Hodgson (Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee,

4 Lasson yet noticed the ambivalence of Hotho *Nachschrift* and rightly decided of not using any longer *Ho* for the text construction. *Ho* is a very pretentious reworking of the Hegel's lectures, and overall it can't be considered as a reliable reconstruction of the class. For this reason one has to avoid of integrating *Ho* in the main text, mixing it with other *Nachschriften* or even, how Lasson (only in the first part) and *W* do, preferring it to the other sources (cf. *J* LXVII-LXVIII).

USA). It can be considered midway between a *Studienausgabe* [5] (or rather a mere revision of the preceding editions, especially *L*), and a critic-historical edition. Indeed, even if it has the essential features of a critical edition, since published in the *Gesammelte Werke* by the Academy of Sciences of North Rhineland-Westphalia in association with the Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, [6] it misses an *apparatus criticus*, prerequisite for any critical edition.

The edition *J* tries to make up for the preceding editions' lacks – the 1832's (W_1), edited by K.Ph. Marheineke, that of 1840 (W_2), edited by B. Bauer, and the 1925-29's (*L*), edited by G. Lasson -, presenting the Berlin texts on the philosophy of religion (1821, 1824, 1827 and 1831) separated and distinguished among them. That method – which employs both the Hegel's original manuscript used by him as guide-text for the 1821 class, [7] and the *Nachschriften* (notebooks) drafted by some of his disciples and auditors [8] – not only underlines a complete fiasco of any attempt to "totally integrate all sources into a single conception" (such as did, in a different way but with the same failure, both W_1 and W_2), but also any attempt to "partially integrate various classes, taking as starting point a specific class and putting in it single sections of other classes in form of additions".[9]

5 A *Studiensausgabe* is a serious edition, but not expansive as a deluxe edition. It is also easy to consult and chiefly conceived as an academic work instrument.

6 G.W.F. Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, hrsg. von der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Verbindung mit der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft (Hamburg, 1968 ss). So far have been published: voll. 1 (*Frühe Schriften 1*, ed. by F. Nicolin e G. Schüler, 1989), 3 (*Frühe Exzerpte*, ed. by F. Nicolin e G. Schüler, 1991), 4 (*Jenaer kritische Schriften*, ed. by H. Buchner e O. Pöggeler, 1968), 5 (*Schriften und Entwürfe, 1799-1808*, ed. by M. Baum e K.R. Meist, 1998), 6 (*Jenaer Systementwürfe 1*, ed. by K. Düsing e H. Kimmerle, 1975), 7 (*Jenaer Systementwürfe 2*, ed. by P. Horstmann e J.H. Trede, 1971), 8 (*Jenaer Systementwürfe 3*, ed. by P. Horstmann e J.H. Trede, 1976), 9 (*Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. by W. Bonsiepen e R. Heede, 1980), 11 (*Wissenschaft der Logik*, Bd. 1: Die objektive Logik, 1812-13, ed. by F. Hogemann e W. Jaeschke, 1978), 12 (*Wissenschaft der Logik*, Bd. 2: Die subjektive Logik, 1816, ed. by F. Hogemann e W. Jaeschke, 1981), 13 (*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse, 1817*, ed. by W. Bonsiepen, 2000), 15 (*Schriften und Entwürfe, 1817-1825*, ed. by F. Hogemann e Ch. Jamme, 1990), 16 (*Schriften und Entwürfe, 1826-1831*, ed. by F. Hogemann, 2001), 17 (*Vorlesungsmanuskripte I, 1816-1831*, ed. by W. Jaeschke, 1987), 18 (*Vorlesungsmanuskripte II, 1816-1831*, ed. by W. Jaeschke, 1995), 19 (*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse, 1827*, ed. by W. Bonsiepen e H.-Chr. Lucas, 1989), 20 (*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse, 1830*, ed. by W. Bonsiepen e H.-Chr. Lucas, 1992), 21 (*Wissenschaft der Logik*, Teil 1, Die objektive Logik: Bd. 1, Die Lehre vom Sein, 1832, ed. by F. Hogemann e W. Jaeschke, 1985).

7 The manuscript was already published by K.H. Ilting: G.W.F. Hegel, *Religionsphilosophie*, Bd. 1, Die Vorlesung von 1821, hrsg. von K.-H. Ilting (Napoli, 1978). Now it comes also in *GW* 17: *Vorlesungsmanuskripte I (1816-1831)*, (Hamburg, 1987), pp. 5-300.

8 Still nowadays the main problem of a *Lecture on the Philosophy of Religion* edition is in the way in which the sources are compared and utilized.

9 *J* LXI. For these aspects, cf. Also W. Jaeschke, *Der Aufbau und die bisherigen Editionen von Hegels Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, Magister-Arbeit (masch.), (Berlin, 1970-1971); id., 'Hegel's Philosophy of Religion. Part 2. Principles of the Historical-Critical Edition', *The Owl of Minerva,* 11, 4 (1980); id., 'Probleme der Edition der Nachschriften von Hegels Vorlesungen', *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, 5 (1980).

For the first time the *J* edition makes use of the editorial subdivision carried out by Hegel during his lectures, between "concept of religion", "determinate religion", and "consummate religion". Actually, notwithstanding the usual classes' tripartition, the previous editions did choose to publish the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* in a two-volume edition, splitting up the second part for editorial reasons ("determinate religion"), so that the first half came after the first part in the first volume, and the second half came before the third part in the second volume. [10] On the contrary the three volumes of *J* present the three lectures' parts separately, while each volume comprises different drafts of every single part. This allows having an overview of the development of Hegel's philosophic-religious thought in the Berlin period. The four classes of lectures, in *J* separately reproduced, are the reliable looking-glass of the renewed attempts of Hegel of giving a convincing foundation to his speculative philosophy of religion; or rather, we can say that Hegel built and developed his philosophy of religion before his students and listeners during the lectures.

Jaeschke reminds how, in the existing sources, the subdivision of the subject is altogether rudimentary. [11] All this is complicated by the fact that Hegel, during the lectures, evidently modified the original class' structure and table (*Übersicht*), in the try of giving a systematic and overall arrangement to a discipline in *statu nascendi* as was the philosophy of religion during his time.

According to Jaeschke these changes aren't however ascribable to a transformation of the point of view regarding the systematic path conceived by Hegel, but to his inability to developing it in the little time he had. We need to remind that Hegel didn't have at his disposal a manuscript structured but frequently he gave his lectures resting on a set of sheets noted down and recorded by him (that would have formed an important part of the so-called *Convolut*). [12] We have to consider as well that the *J* edition tries to extrapolate from the *Nachschriften* a subdivision answering not so much to the original project as the real working out of the class, since generally Hegel never separated his lectures in parts.

10 Properly speaking the Lasson edition came out at first not in two but in four volumes. Also in this circumstance the second part of the *Lectures* ("the determinate religion") was halved. Afterwards *L* as well took the bipartite form (*J* LIX).

11 In the first part, *Gr* and *Pa* don't insert any title. *De* and *Ho*, on the contrary, present a very detailed subdivision, but it is clearly a result of the reworking made by them (*J* LXIX).

12 The *Convolut* ("collection") is a source unfortunately lost – formed by a whole of outlines and notes of Hegel, broadly developed -, whereof Marheineke speaks. It gathered materials dated back to various years, used as starting point for the lectures after the 1821.

As regards the *L* edition, Georg Lasson radically criticizes W_1, but particularly W_2 for the editorial criteria chosen, according to him unsatisfactory. But behind his criticism is hidden the dislike of Lasson for Bauer and his late interpretation of the Hegel's philosophy of religion. In spite of that criticism, *L* shares with W_1 and W_2 the illusion to integrate, starting from *Ms*, all the notebooks in a common text capable of reflecting the progressive development of Hegel's thought.

In any case the *L* edition is less important than the preceding edition published by the "Society of Friends of the Deceased". First of all it hasn't exerted a lasting influence on the history of the reception of Hegel's philosophy of religion. Moreover its value as source is far removed from that of W_1 and W_2, because the significant losses, concerning the sources, date back to years before the *L* edition. It is no accident that, with regard to the sources used in W_1 e W_2, nowadays we have only *Ms*, *Gr*, and *Ho*, whereas the new sources used for the first time by *L* (since before unknown) instead of those lost, are not such as to counterbalance the loss of *Co* and of the notebooks regarding the 1821 and 1831 classes. [13] The advantage *L* has as against W_1 and W_2 is doubtless due to the printing of the *Ms*, but such advantage is scaled down by using the less appropriate sources, making mistakes in the arrangement of the general conception, and modifying the notebooks' arrangement achieved in W_2.

III

During the 1830s the divergent tendencies that had emerged within the Hegelian school a few years before became more obvious and more extreme. But disagreements among Hegelians concerning the relationship between the science of the absolute and the existing political and religious reality produced a division of the school into opposing factions when they evolved into divergent interpretations of the very core of the Hegelian inheritance: the dialectical identity of finite and infinite, thought and being, subject and substance in the self-actualizing, self-comprehending, concrete totality of the absolute Mind. The divergence on what Hegel had actually said was immediately and practically evident when, once Hegel died, was made the decision to publish a *Gesamtausgabe* including texts, such as were the lectures on the *Philosophie der Religion* or those on the *Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, containing the

13 For the 1824 class *L* could use *Ke* and – from the second volume – *Pa*. The 1827 text – for which Lasson had *Er* and *Ak* – is very good, but similar to *W* (*J* LV).

outcome of a reworking and *collàtio* of the notes taken by his disciples during the lessons, and presented as a "well-formed" book.

The edition of 1832 (W_1) was made very quickly. If we take into consideration that, after the death of Hegel (14 November 1831), was necessary to constitute the *Verein von Freunden des Verewigten* ("Society of Friends of the Deceased"), then to make arrangements on the general conception of the complete edition of his works, to establish rules and editors for each volume, and to collect Hegel's manuscripts and disciples' notebooks, it seems amazing that already in 1832 (May the 6th) K. Ph. Marheineke, friend and colleague of Hegel in the Faculty of Theology – in spite of the amount of work to do as *Rektor* of the University of Berlin – could sign the *Vorrede* to the first volume of the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, come out as volumes 11 and 12 of the *Werke*.

The rapidity in which the editorial work was accomplished is explained with the commemorative purposes followed up the printing of the *Werke*. The complete edition of the works of the philosopher just passed away ought to have contributed to consecrate and make everlasting his name. If the influence produced by Hegel's philosophy of religion during the 1820s is almost exclusively referable to the philosophic-religious sections of the works published by himself (in particular the *Phenomenology of Mind* and the *Encyclopaedia*, but also the *Foreword* to Hinrichs' *Philosophy of Religion*), this situation quickly changed when, the year next Hegel's death, appeared the PhdR first edition. Marheineke tried to build an edition of the *Lectures* that had the features of a true book – if possible as Hegel himself would have released – but having at the same time the style of public lessons – as appears by the notebooks kept. This intention drove Marheineke to unify the texts he had (concerning the various classes). Nevertheless, probably due to lack of time, he merged each other the sources of the later classes (1824, 1827 e 1831), but doing that he adopted the method of alternation among them, i.e. he linked long passages taken from the three later classes (*Gr*, *Me* and *Hg*), not trying to integrate them in order to produce a coherent text. Evidently Marheineke hadn't time for a detailed collation.

Building the text of W_1 Marheineke made almost exclusively use of *Gr*, *Me* and *Hg* notebooks, relating to the 1824, 1827, 1831 classes, as well as of *Ho*, relating to the 1824 class. The choice of using primarily the later sources returns a greater homogeneity of substance to W_1, which is superior if compared to the following editions, and that respects to a bigger extent the original Hegelian reasoning.

If these aspects are certainly a point in favour of W_1, but the decision of Marheineke of employing the later sources, as well as that of fusing together the material at his disposal so as to spare unnecessary repetitions, has brought a considerable impoverishment of content. Lots of considerations and arguments – included some of later classes – were sacrificed by the need to have a text more compact and harmonious as possible.

As opposed to the general orientation of this first edition, it has to be exculpated of any accusation of bias – also not intentional – all the more so because the conflict among the different factions inside the Hegelian school wasn't flared up yet. It is no accident that this is the edition used by Göschel, Strauss, Marx and Stahl. On the contrary was just on the basis of W_1 that was caused the division between a Right and a Left and opened the discussion about the speculative theism, to underline how the ambivalence of the Hegel's philosophy of religion was in first instance the result of his "way" to do philosophy, rather than the editorial criteria used preparing the edition.

In his philosophic-speculative reconstruction of the history of religions Hegel refuses the adoption of stereotypes, don't confining himself to take into consideration merely some religions, even using traditional ternary patterns of classification, [14] but embracing in his analysis several forms of religion (Buddhism, Lamaism, Hinduism, Parsiism, the Syrian and Egyptian religion, in addition to the Greek, Roman, and Jewish religion). This orientation isn't due to reasons of criticism or refusal of the Christian tradition, quite the opposite. In the overall design he emphasizes how only in the Christian religion the concept of religion reaches the full and perfect accomplishment. However the primary aim of Hegel is neither to defend nor to undermine the importance of the Christian religion, but to historically support the assumption on which his philosophy of religion is founded: that all the historical religions, therefore the Christian religion as well, are figures of the absolute Mind that is related with itself, knowing itself, proportionally with its historical development, logically necessary, and answering to the growing rationality of the manifestations in which it is involved. [15]

14 We think to the late antiquity schema that subdivides the religious world in Pagans, Jews and Christians, or to the late medieval one (resumed again by Lessing in *Nathan the Wise*) that distinguished only among Judaism, Christianity and Islamism.

15 The next passage is a clear example of the Hegel's point of view, as well as of the ambivalent and contrasting thoughts that his philosophy of religion can generate: "The history of religions depends on [comprehending] the precise formation-process of the representations of God. No matter how much this history is compiled and elaborated, it mainly lets just the external and apparent side be seen. The higher need is to apprehend what it *means*, its positive true [significance], its connection with what is true – in short, its *rationality*. After all, it is *human beings* who have lighted upon such religions, so there must be *reason* in them – in everything contingent there must be a higher necessity. | [We need] to study the history

Regarding the 1840 edition (W_2) it can be considered the indirect result of the rift occurred in the Hegelian school in consequence of the controversies aroused by D.F. Strauss' *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet* (1835/36). While the conservative Right defended Hegelianism as a philosophy that reflected Christian orthodoxy, the Left came to see it as a humanistic doctrine of the historical emancipation of mankind. However, while this was the first internal breach of Hegelianism, the implications of Hegel's philosophy for the religious belief had been contentious since his rise to prominence in the 1820s. In a widespread suspicion atmosphere is understandable how could arise the misgiving that the ambivalence of the Hegel's philosophy of religion was also the result of the ambiguity of the W_1 edition. Hereby, towards the end of the 1830s, a new PhdR edition was pressing. [16] Afterwards several disputes on who would have edited the new edition, [17] the job was left to Bruno Bauer who was assisted in this task by his younger brother Edgar. Actually, even though was once again Marheineke to sign the foreword, practically Bauer was to shoulder both the editing job and to set out the main criteria for the new edition. Given up the idea of a complete copying of the text made out by Edgar, Bruno Bauer decided to take as text of reference a copy of the first edition making changes as marginalia, as well as to include manuscript sheets – with reference marks to W_1 – suited to replace the deleted parts. But W_2 too, as W_1, doesn't account for the sources utilized. The only certainty is that Bauer utilizes the notebooks not taken into account in the preceding edition, i.e. *Fo* and *Mi* (related to the 1824 class), *Dr* (related to the one of 1827), *Ge*, *Re* and *Ru* (related to the one of 1831). The new material included in W_2 comes most of all from the *He* notebook, related to the 1821 class and up to then not much utilized, as well as from the manuscript texts left by Hegel, namely *Ms* and *Co*. Thanks to the use of these sources, PhdR has attained a significance that is not possible to equal, seeing that a set of sources used by Bauer went lost. By comparison with the general conception of the 1840 edition Bauer has

of religion in this sense, and at the same to be *reconciled* to what is horrifying and tasteless in it; it is not a question of *justifying* (*rechtfertigen*) it, or judging it to be right and true in all its forms – human sacrifice, or the sacrifice of children [for example]; but we need at least to recognize its origin, the source from which it has sprung, as *human*. This [is] the higher reconciliation." [16a], in G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, "Introduction and the Concept of Religion", Vol. I, Peter C. Hodgson (ed.), (Oxford & New York, 2007), pp. 198-9 ("The Concept of Religion in General"); see also: ibid. n. 37. Cf. the German edition: G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, "Einleitung; Der Begriff der Religion", W. Jaeschke (ed.), (2nd, Hamburg, 1993; 1st edn, 1983), pp. 107-8 ("Begriff der Religion überhaupt"); Cf. also the Italian edition: G.W.F. Hegel, *Lezioni di filosofia della religione I*, R. Garaventa e S. Achella (eds), (Napoli, 2003), p. 159 ("Il concetto della religione secondo il manoscritto").

16 Not for accident on the title page we read "zweite, verbesserte Auflage", that is "second revised edition".

17 The names of Hotho and Rosenkranz were made as possible editors.

held fast to Marheineke's purposes: to build a text midway between a printing publication and verbal lessons. But we can say failed his attempt to insert in the architecture of the later classes sources coming from the 1821 class – and for this reason structured and articulated in a different way – and so also the attempt to integrate different texts in a single text. Over the years Hegel expanded his knowledge and, in consequence, a modification of the framework of the lectures is sensible and it has to be held in due esteem in a critical reconstruction. On the contrary, the W_2 text contains insuperable and indefensible tensions that break up the organic unity of the Hegelian argument.

Concerning the question whether W_2 is more congenial to a Right or Left interpretation of Hegel's philosophy of religion, due to a conscious manipulation or due to a background orientation not purposely wished, or if it keep a neutral attitude, we need to say that the editorial method adopted, characterized by the respect of the sources, doesn't allow to think to a deliberate manipulation.

In actual fact the differences between W_1 and W_2 are ascribable to the editorial decisions taken by the two editors: that of Marheineke to almost completely leave out from W_1 the sources *Ms*, *Co* and *He*, [18] and the one of Bauer of making only use of these sources for W_2, [19] since them don't seem influenced by any specific interpretative orientation.

According to Jaeschke we should consider a lucky circumstance the fact that Bauer was charged with PhdR editing work just in the moment in which he, not being anymore an extreme Right Hegelian, wasn't yet converted to atheism. Actually Bauer, far from eliminating the recognized ambivalence of the Hegel's philosophy of religion, resolved to let emerge it as it appears in the text, without bringing about any manipulation. Instead, the main principle applied as editorial criterion by the two editors, Marheineke and Bauer, caused the doubt whereby the ambivalence of Hegel's philosophy of religion was not produced by the Hegelian point of view as such, but it was a consequence of an editorial operation ideologically addressed.

18 According to Jaeschke the decision of Marheineke doesn't have his ultimate ground in the fact that the utilization of *Ms* and *Co* would extended the printing process, since, in this case, he could have used at least *He*. The reason is in the right consideration that was difficult to integrate in a whole the above-mentioned materials: where these sources not are in agreement with the later classes they break up the order and the organic unity of the argument, while where in agreement they lead to reoccurrences and parallels that in the interest of Marheineke were to avoid. Only after the outbreak of the conflict about the interpretation of Hegel's philosophy of religion, Marheineke felt legitimate to use the manuscripts left by Hegel, in order to settle the raised disputes (*J* XLVIII).

19 According to Jaeschke, the decision of Bauer of using the manuscripts left by Hegel is most likely to trace back to the analogous use that in the meantime were making the editors of the other lectures (*J* XIL).

However the transition from an implicit divergence to an explicit conflict within the school was a gradual process accompanied by the proliferation of individual positions. In 1840 Karl Rosenkranz presented the dissolution of Hegel's school after his death in a comic drama in which, through a gentle satire and humorous caricature, is drawn the difficulty of finding a legitimate heir to Hegel's throne. The problem of "succession" leads the school in anarchical disarray, rather than divide it into two clearly defined groupings. [20] Attempts by Hegelians themselves to define the membership of various factions and the philosophical content of their opposition were confusing and often contradictory. The categories used to delineate differences were not always the same and conceptions of who belonged in the different groupings differed from writer to writer, from year to year. [21]

To sum up, we state that the crucial tension between Left e Right Hegelians was caused by the inability to distinguish the systematic argument from the historical one in the Hegel's philosophy of religion. But this is exactly the peculiarity of the Hegel's philosophical procedure. While officially declaring that philosophy and religion had the same content, "God", Hegel claimed that the conceptual form of philosophy dealt with this concept in a more developed way than that which was achievable in the representational form of religion. In these terms is legitimate to be mistrustful that the concept of "God" was emptied of its proper meaning in the process of Hegel's philosophical translations. The source of the corrosive effects of Hegel's philosophy on religion is in the fact that the content of the religious belief, like everything else, lies on rational considerations rather than on revelation.

It is easy to see how such a conception of history might engender ambiguities that sit uneasily with Hegel's more systematic thought. Already in Lessing's *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts* (1780) there is a difference between the more "enlightenment" conception of history as a design in which *Bildung* and *Humanität* are progressively realized – a conception of history inherited by Hegel – and a more relativistic one in which history presents a panorama of distinct and incommensurable forms of human life and mentality, vetted by the historiographic analysis.

20 See J.E. Toews, *Hegelianism: The Path Toward Dialectical Humanism, 1805-1841*, (London & New York, 1980), p. 203; see also: K.M. Higgins and R.C. Solomon (eds), *History of Philosophy*, vol. VI: *The Age of German Idealism*, (London & New York, 1993), p. 293.

21 See, for example, D.F. Strauss, *Streitschriften*, III, 95 ff.; C.L. Michelet, *Geschichte der letzten Systeme*, II, 654-9; and K.T. Bayrhoffer, *Die Idee und Geschichte der Philosophie* (Marburg, 1838), pp. 490-2. Reactions against the tendency toward party labeling can be found in Rosenkranz, *Kritische Erläuterungen*, pp. VI-XXXVI; and in H.W.F. Hinrichs, 'Die Fragen der Gegenwart und Prof. Michelet's Geschichte der letzten Systeme', *Hallische Jahrbücher* (1839), pp. 457 ff.

Such relativistic reflection can easily lead to the idea that one's own defining culture and religion is, at best, just another perspective realization of some eternal truth to which all rival cultures and religions give equal expression, and it can extend to the idea that religion is merely an historical product illegitimately claiming universal status. Hegel argued that such a reduction of religion to finite historical events was itself a result of reducing reason to the finite understanding. He was confident that his logic provided a framework within which such disparate elements could be ultimately reconciled. However, if he succeeded in reconciling these distinct attitudes to history, it is clear that his followers did not.

Hegel had apparently been interested in the history of religions from his schooldays, and his first writings after leaving the Tübingen *Stift* were concerned with the contrast between the naturalness of the folk religions of ancient Greece and the "positivity" of the succeeding Christianity in which an "external" doctrinal form was imposed upon the religious community. [22] While containing elements of Hegel's distinctive approach, such juvenile works belong to the pre-history of Hegel's mature philosophy commencing with the *Phenomenology of Mind*, completed in Jena in 1807, in which the basic structure of Hegel's characteristic thought emerge.

Perhaps while he was alive, the possibility that religion and philosophy, faith and reason, could coexist might have seemed to have been exemplified in the person himself.

It is said that reading her husband's posthumously published lectures on the philosophy of religion had caused the devout and pious widow, Marie Hegel, considerable distress. [23] How could the man she knew to have been a good Lutheran express the heretical views that were to be found there? This anecdote captures well the apparent ambiguity that marked the attitude to religion of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, an ambiguity that was at the heart of the undoing of the "Hegelianism" of his followers in the years after his death. [24]

22 These writings remained unpublished during his lifetime: see Hegels *Theologische Jugendschriften. Nach den Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek in Berlin* (hrsg. von Hermann Nohl, Tübingen, 1907); ed. en.: Hegel's *Early Theological Writings*, trans. T.M. Knox (Chicago, 1948).

23 Cf. T. Pinkard, *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 577.

24 See also P. Redding, *Hegel's Philosophy of Religion*, in G. Oppy and N. Trakakis (eds), *History of Western Philosophy of Religion*, Vol. IV: *Nineteenth-Century Philosophy & Religion* (Chesham, 2007).