

# Eduard Gans' Hegelianism and the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums*: Reconsideration of a constellation regarding Heinrich Heine's relationship to Hegel\*

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**ABSTRACT:** When Heinrich Heine entered the Berlin based *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums* in 1822 this club's aim was to achieve and anticipate a greater merging of Jewish and European culture, both thought of as separated around that time. Thanks to the philosophical input of Eduard Gans, the *Verein's* project was founded on a Hegelian understanding of history and culture. Until today this early Hegelian influence in the *Verein* hasn't been considered, at least not when it comes to the estimation of Heine's relationship to Hegel. Neither were the problems that Heine seemed to have with some of his friend's Hegelian notions. This paper seeks to explore the Hegelian background of the *Verein* in the light of Eduard Gans' philosophical mediation and tries to highlight some aspects that point out towards an ongoing conflict between Hegelianism and Judaism throughout Heine's work.

**KEYWORDS:** Heinrich Heine, G.W.F. Hegel, Eduard Gans, Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums, Assimilation.

## 1. Introduction

The relationship between Hegel and Heine seems nowadays explored to a great extent. Scholars like Eduard Krüger and Jean Pierre Lefebvre have examined closely the relationship between the philosopher and the writer.<sup>1</sup> Thanks to their and others' efforts, a good deal of historical information has come upon us: From early texts onwards, starting in the 1820ies, we can witness Heine's interlocution – and often struggle – with Hegelian philosophy which appears in different disguises. The most obvious passages operate with plain name-dropping: Hegel's name appears, for instance, in the *Buch der Lieder* in a cycle of poems entitled *Die*

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<sup>1</sup> KRÜGER, E. *Heine und Hegel. Dichtung, Philosophie und Politik bei Heinrich Heine*. Kronberg/Taunus: Scriptor, 1977; LEFEBVRE, J. *Der gute Trommler. Heines Beziehung zu Hegel*. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1986.



*Nordsee* and during the 1840ies in Heine's *Neue Gedichte*. In the writings of the 1830ies with the title *De l'Allemagne*, especially *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland*, Hegel becomes a sort of intellectual precursor for Heine's popular history books:<sup>2</sup> As the writer later will claim, he even intended to publish a popular introduction to Hegel's philosophy.<sup>3</sup> When it comes to later texts, namely the foreword for the second edition of the book just mentioned, the after-word of *Romanzero*, the obituary *Ludwig Marcus Gedenkworte* as well as the famous *Geständnisse* – all written between 1848 and 1851 – there is a discernable change of tone when Hegel or Hegelians appear: Heine now seems to frankly reject Hegelian thought.<sup>4</sup>

In the following essay I would like to shed light onto a neglected nuance in the poet's relationship to the philosopher, one that appears in full visibility in the late Heine's close linkage between his return to faith and his clash with Hegelian philosophy. There is a distinguishable disjunction, covertly introduced by the young Heine in certain letters, but with a strong fervor overtly brought to terms by the later; a disjunction that was rarely noted and which Heine is formulating clearly only after 1848: Hegelian philosophy 'or' Jewish faith.

Considering the literature on this topic, I would like to present my argument by avoiding two dangers: The Scylla of presenting Heine as an all-time severe anti-Hegelian, as Dolf Sternberger has tried to do,<sup>5</sup> and the Charybdis of reading Heine as a kind of pre-Marxist Left-Hegelian.<sup>6</sup> I would like instead to choose a path that is not really a "synthesis" of both these extremes: By focusing on texts especially from the very early and very late period of Heine's production the problem of Jewish emancipation shall be highlighted inasmuch as it plays a

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. DHA 1, p. 422 and p. 424; DHA 2, p. 63, also see below.

Heinrich Heine's works will be cited in this paper following the so-called Düsseldorf Heine-Ausgabe (HEINE, H. **Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke**. In Verbindung mit dem Heinrich-Heine-Institut hrsg. von Manfred Windfuhr, Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1973-1997) abbreviated as DHA and followed by the number of volume and page. Heine's letters will be quoted after the *Säkularausgabe* (HEINE, H. **Säkularausgabe. Werke, Briefwechsel, Lebenszeugnisse**. Hrsg. von den Nationalen Forschungs- und Gedenkstätten der klassischen deutschen Literatur in Weimar und dem Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1970) abbreviated as HSA.

Concerning Hegel's importance for Heine's popular histories see KÄFER, K. **Versöhnt ohne Opfer. Zum geschichtstheologischen Rahmen der Schriften Heinrich Heines 1824-1844**. Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hein, 1978, p. 1-22.

<sup>3</sup> DHA 15, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. section V of this article.

<sup>5</sup> Famously stated in STERNBERGER, D. **Heinrich Heine und die Abschaffung der Sünde**. 2nd edition, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1976 [1972], p. 259-283. More recently the same argument can be found in KERSCHBAUMER, S. **Heines moderne Romantik**. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> A position systematically presented in KRÜGER, E. **Heine und Hegel. Dichtung, Philosophie und Politik bei Heinrich Heine**.

major role in Heine's relationship to Hegel. Thus it can be shown how there are reservations in Heine's adherence to Hegel – mainly because of the poet's estimation, in how far Hegel can be of use for the project of emancipation in general and the emancipation of Jews in particular.<sup>7</sup> This is exactly the point where Eduard Gans' position as a mediator of Hegelian thought to Heine becomes important: Regarding Hegel and Heine one has to consider how Heine's first encounter with Hegel took *not* place in his class on the philosophy of history that Heine visited in 1822/23.<sup>8</sup> When the poet arrived in Berlin in 1821, his first address was literally next door to Eduard Gans and Moses Moser, his later fellow members in the Hegelian influenced *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums* (in the following referred to as *Culturverein*).<sup>9</sup> Heine would join this club, founded in 1819, in 1822 and leave it as an active Berlin member in 1823, when he joined the Hamburg section of the *Verein*, one year before it ultimately fell apart.<sup>10</sup> It was Gans who was undoubtedly the major Hegelian source of influence for the *Culturverein*,<sup>11</sup> which has to be described as pro-Hegelian and can be described, how I will argue, in certain regards as pro-assimilationist or at least so it seemed to Heine. Regarding the poet's letters to other *Culturverein*-members, this tendency is likely to have motivated Heine's hesitation to fully adopt Hegel's philosophy as his own. So, to really understand Heine's relationship to Hegel, the question of the emancipation of Jews and Heine's estimation in how far Hegelian philosophy could contribute to their struggle for emancipation have to be put into consideration.

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<sup>7</sup> This whole hypothesis is, as far as I can see, already and only present as a major matter in BRIEGLEB, K. *„Bei den Wassern Babels...“ Heinrich Heine, jüdischer Schriftsteller in der Moderne*. München: dtv, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> LEFEBVRE, J. *Der gute Trommler*, p. 49; KRÜGER, E. *Heine und Hegel*, p. 44: “Resümierend kann festgestellt werden, daß die Hegelianer des «Vereins für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden,» insbesondere Gans, Heine in den Jahren 1821 bis 23 Zugang zu Hegels Rechts- und Geschichtsphilosophie vermittelt haben [...] und daß nach Art der Rezeption Heines Einstellung zu Hegel eher von Anerkennung und Bewunderung als von Ablehnung oder gar Verneinung zeugt.” (“We come to the conclusion that the Hegelians of the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden*, especially Gans, mediated Heine's access to Hegel's philosophy of law and history during the years 1821 until 1823 [...] and that, according to the mode of this reception, Heine's attitude towards Hegel rather indicated recognition and admiration than refusal or even negation.”) We will have to relativize this latter part of Krüger's estimation.

<sup>9</sup> WASZEK, N. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum im Lichte der Freundschaft von Heine und Gans. In: Kruse, J; Witte, B.; Füllner, K. (Eds.). *Aufklärung und Skepsis. Internationaler Heine-Kongreß 1997 zum 200. Geburtstag*. Stuttgart/Weimar: J.B. Metzler 1999, p. 227. It goes without saying that Heine, Gans and Moser therefore must have had a lively and undocumented exchange of ideas, not only in the context of the *Culturverein*. That Hegel was one of the major topics of this exchange still reverberates in letters which will be presented later on. Pinkard renders the name of the club in English as *Association for the Culture and Science of Judaism*, Cf. PINKARD, T. Introduction. In: PINKARD, T. (Ed.). *Heinrich Heine. On the history of religion and philosophy and other writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2007, p. X.

<sup>10</sup> WASZEK. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 226-227; REISSNER, H.G. *Eduard Gans: Ein Leben im Vormärz*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1965, p. 81.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59, ff. See also the next section. Heine's relationship to the *Spezialverein* in Hamburg cannot be the matter here. It is explored in BRIEGLEB. *„Bei den Wassern Babels...“*, p. 20-52.

This is an interpretation that Klaus Briegleb has already suggested for this matter and for which I will try to come up with more evidence. The possible reason why the Jewish context hasn't been exhaustively explored here may be the clash of disciplines: Historians, philosophers, literary critics and scholars in Jewish studies have contributed to the exploration of the relationship between Heine, Hegel and – as he became an object of increasingly interest over the last twenty years – Gans.<sup>12</sup> On the following pages I would not only like to bring some rarely noted letters into play in order to shed new light on this constellation; I will also draw heavily from already presented material: Especially the insights accumulated by Klaus Briegleb and Norbert Waszek. Since a lot of information dwells in Heine's letters and published works – in texts that demand preferably the means of textual analysis due to their often esoteric style of writing<sup>13</sup> – I hope to provide a new perspective on the this matter from the point of view of a literary critic familiar with Heine's work and its contexts.

## 2. Heine, Gans and the "Culturverein"

During his trip to Poland in the fall of 1822 Heinrich Heine writes to Ernst Christian August Keller, trying to win him as a contributor for the *Berliner Kritische Zeitschrift für Rechts und Staatswissenschaft*. While advertising for this project that ultimately never was realized and should have followed the Hegel School's *Neue Berliner Monatsschrift für Philosophie, Geschichte, Literatur und Kunst*, that had found an untimely end just the year before,<sup>14</sup> Heine is also describing his first encounter with Eduard Gans, who should have become the editor of the new periodical:

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<sup>12</sup>Just to mention some of the most important publications on Gans from the last 20 years: WASZEK, N. War Eduard Gans (1797-1839) der erste Links- oder Junghegelianer? In: Quante, M./Mohseni, A. (Eds.). **Die linken Hegelianer. Studien zum Verhältnis von Religion und Politik im Vormärz**. Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015, p. 29-52; 1997; WASZEK, N. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 226-241; BIENNENSTOCK, M. Between Hegel and Marx: Eduard Gans on the "Social Question" In: Moggach, D. (Ed.). **Politics, Religion and Art. Hegelian Debates**. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern Univ. Press, 2011, p. 164-178; BERTANI, C. **Eduard Gans (1797-1839) e la cultura del suo tempo. Scienza del diritto, storiografia, pensiero politico in un intellettuale hegeliano**. Napels: Guida, 2004; SCHMIDT AM BUSCH, H. Friedrich Wilhelm Carové, Eduard Gans und die Rezeption des Saint-Simonismus im Horizont der Hegelschen Sozialphilosophie. In: Schmidt am Busch, H.; Siep, L.; Thamer, H.; Waszek, N. (Eds.). **Hegelianismus und Saint-Simonismus**. Paderborn: Mentis, 2007, p. 105-130; PINKARD, T. Eduard Gans, Heinrich Heine und Hegels Philosophie des Geistes. In: *ibid.*, p. 131-158.

<sup>13</sup> BRIEGLEB. "*Bei den Wassern Babels...*", p.9 characterizes Heine's style of writing als "Schreibart des Verschwiegenen" Cf. *ibid.*, p. 106, ff.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. JAESCHKE, W. **Hegel-Handbuch: Leben – Werk – Wirkung**, 3rd Edition, Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2016, p. 265.

Einige Wochen vor meiner Abreise von Berlin lernte ich den Dr Eduard Gans kennen, und fand in ihm einen braven, rüstigen jungen Mann, der in jeder Hinsicht meine unbeschränkte Achtung verdient und der gewiß mehr werth ist als alle jene Herren, die ihn, den *M o s a i s t e n*, aus christlicher Liebe gehörig anfeinden. Seine Tüchtigkeit der Gesinnung setze ich fast höher als die Gelehrsamkeit, wovon er öffentliche Beweise gegeben, und die, so viel ich das Wissen eines Menschen zu beurtheilen vermag, nicht vom gewöhnlichen Schlag ist, da Dr Gans gründliche Kenntnisse besitzt, mit scharfem Selbstdenkerblick in die Wissenschaften eindringt, und überall überraschend neue und gute Ansichten zu Tage fördert.<sup>15</sup>

(Some weeks before I set out from Berlin I made the acquaintance of Dr. Eduard Gans and found in him a brave and vigorous young man who deserves in whatever perspective my unlimited respect, and who certainly is more valorous than all those men who, out of christian love, dispute with him, *the Mosaist*. His aptitude for reflection I judge almost higher than the erudition for which he has given public demonstration, and which, so long as I am capable of judging a man's wisdom, is not from the common type, since Dr. Gans possesses thorough knowledge, with perspicuous self-thoughted insight within the sciences, offering in each and every aspect surprisingly new and good perspectives.)

The relationship between Heinrich Heine and Eduard Gans has been described by Terry Pinkard as a friendship,<sup>16</sup> and, as the letter indubitably shows, Heine was especially struck by Gans as a *braven, rüstigen jungen Mann*, who would deserve his unlimited respect (*unbeschränkte Achtung*). Heine doesn't forget to mention Gans' education, his *Gelehrsamkeit*, and especially stresses his Jewish heritage – *den M o s a i s t e n* is emphasized here.

As Norbert Waszek has shown, when Heine came to Berlin in March 1821 he literally lived next door to Eduard Gans and Moses Moser in the Neue Berliner Friedrichstraße and would join both his friends as a member in the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums*.<sup>17</sup> From now on, Gans would not only become important to Heine as a friend but also as an educator: The scholar was responsible for the Hegelian philosophical background of the *Verein*, how Hans Günther Reissner has shown in the only existing biography of Gans, published in 1965.<sup>18</sup> The impact that Hegel had on the *Culturverein* was also emphasized by Heine-scholar Klaus Briegleb in his important re-consideration of Heine's Judaism.<sup>19</sup> Gans' role as a mediator of Hegelian philosophy embeds this philosophy also in a Jewish context, since the turning to Hegel was of a practical use for German Jews and their desire for

<sup>15</sup> HSA XX. Letter to Ernst Christian August Keller. Sept 1st 1822, p. 58.

<sup>16</sup> PINKARD. Introduction, p. X, ff.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. WASZEK. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 226, ff.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. REISSNER. *Eduard Gans*, p. 59-83.

<sup>19</sup> BRIEGLEB. "*Bei den Wassern Babels...*", p. 33, ff.

emancipation.<sup>20</sup> Gans' role seems to be stressed in a passage in the early poem *Die Nordsee* from Heine's *Buch der Lieder*. Here we witness what can be considered a parody of Hegelian philosophy. Gans' name is mentioned alongside Hegel's. The thinker appears here in the context of the Ratshaus-Keller, a sailor's pub in Bremen, where we encounter a very drunken Weltgeist (*Und um die rote Weltgeist-Nase/Dreht sich die ganze, betrunkene Welt*<sup>21</sup>). The same section IX of the long poem starts with the words: *Alles erblick ich im Glas,/Alte und neue Völkergeschichte,/Türken und Griechen, Hegel und Gans,[...]*<sup>22</sup> The philosophy of history – the only lecture of Hegel that Heine was certified visiting during his studies of law at the Berliner Friedrich Wilhelm University<sup>23</sup> – is here signed with the name of Hegel – but also with Gans'.

This should give us a hint of at least one of the sources of Heine's familiarity with Hegelian thought: It was not only the attendance of courses at the Friedrich Wilhelm University, but also the discussions and constellations in the *Culturverein* that are likely to have shaped Heine's picture of Hegel. But that would mean that Hegel is for Heine right from the start embedded in a certain Jewish context and defined by the *Culturverein's* very interpretation, delivered clearly in Gans' speeches. As a point of departure it is important to examine the role that Hegel's philosophy played for the Jews of the *Culturverein*.

### 3. *The dialectics within: Eduard Gans' installation of Hegel as an authority for the Jewish Culturverein*

As Norbert Waszek has shown, Eduard Gans' three speeches before the *Culturverein* are full of constructions that have to be called Hegelian.<sup>24</sup> Even though it remains unclear if Heine really visited every meeting, it can hardly be denied that he was deeply familiar with his fellow members' notions and ideas and dedicated to them. Not only because of his aforementioned close contact with his literal neighbors Gans and Moser: Some of the letters to the latter that

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<sup>20</sup> For instance, the far more conservative school of law as represented by Savigny found a resourceful opponent in Hegelian scholars of law like Gans. Cf. BERTANI. **Eduard Gans (1797-1839) e la cultura del suo tempo**, p. 161-200.

<sup>21</sup> DHA 1, p. 424 ("And around the World-Spirit's red nose/spins the whole, inebriated world").

<sup>22</sup> DHA 1, p. 422 ("I saw everything in the cup,/old and new people's histories,/turks and greeks, Hegel and Gans.").

<sup>23</sup> LEFEBVRE. **Der gute Trommler**, p. 49.

<sup>24</sup> WASZEK. *Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum*, p. 229-232. Cf., REISSNER. **Eduard Gans**, p. 58, ff. and p. 62, ff. Both authors stress the importance of Hegelian motives in Gans' speeches.

have reached us – they will be the matter of concern in the next section – show a severe struggle with some of their ideas and thus Heine's familiarity with them. Moreover, Heine seemed to be among the subscribers to the *Culturverein's* official publication, the *Zeitschrift für die Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums*.<sup>25</sup>

Gans' Hegelianism is clearly expressed in his speeches delivered to the *Culturverein*. In the following I will focus on a different passage than the one that Norbert Waszek has already presented as proof for this point. Especially because the first speech to which I will refer to allows us to focus on a problem that Heine will address in 1823 in letters to Moses Moser. In his speeches, Gans unfolds a point of view that he himself probably wouldn't have called assimilationist: The man that would as lecturer at the Friedrich Wilhelm University later become something like Hegel's right hand was an advocate for the emancipation of Jews.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, his speeches reveal a course concerning the 'Jew question' that seems to bear traces of acculturation and assimilation, at least for the listener unfamiliar with Hegel's philosophy. Misunderstanding may arise especially when it comes to accommodate Judaism – which by that time was oftentimes considered orientalist (a distinction that German Jews took up and forged into an identity of their own<sup>27</sup>) – to Western thought and culture. This culture is for Gans indivisibly linked with Hegelian philosophy.<sup>28</sup> But this nonetheless includes the affirmation of the contemporary Prussian state in which Napoleon's edict of granting Jews equal civil rights was successively withdrawn.

The traces of Hegelianism are obvious in the first speech: The journey of the spirit from East to West is one that goes from the particular to the general – “also ist es die Aufgabe des Menschengeschlechts, daß es von dem Besonderen immer weiter und weiter sich zum Allgemeinen erhebe”<sup>29</sup> – under the sign of the perfection of mankind. While the human race in

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<sup>25</sup> A subscription is mentioned near the end of a letter to Leopold Zunz, dated June 27 1823 (HSA XX, p. 103), which also contains a severe critique of the journal's complicated writing style. In a letter to Moser from January 9 1824 Heine is asking his friend to forward him the fourth issue to Göttingen (HAS XX, p. 133).

<sup>26</sup> WASZEK. Zur Rehabilitierung von Eduard Gans, in: Waszek, N. (ed.), **Eduard Gans (1797-1839): Hegelianer – Jude – Europäer. Texte und Dokumente**. Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris: Peter Lang 1991, p. 23-24.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. WITTLER, K. **Morgenländischer Glanz: Eine deutsche jüdische Literaturgeschichte (1750-1850)**. Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen 2019, p. 59-113.

<sup>28</sup> As its features, Norbert Waszek names the conviction that the contemporary result of the process of history is a product of rationality, the dominant position of European culture and the appreciation of cultural diversity of this culture as founded on the freedom of the individual. WASZEK. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 229.

<sup>29</sup> GANS, EDUARD. Erste Rede vor dem 'Culturverein'. In: Waszek, N. (ed.), **Eduard Gans (1797-1839): Hegelianer – Jude – Europäer. Texte und Dokumente**. Frankfurt am Main/Bern/New York/Paris: Peter Lang 1991, p. 57 (“Therefore it is the task of the human species that it elevate itself more and more, from the particular to the universal”).

the East dwelled “in seiner kindlichen Besonderheit <, > in seiner Knospengestalt mit verschlossenem Kelche,” mankind unfolds itself in the West “die Keime ans Licht bringend allmählig zur größern Blume”<sup>30</sup> (Gans is here taking up Hegel’s organic metaphor for the dialectic movement. Dialectics is in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* oftentimes compared to that of the rose). Besides, this process is, considered as the ongoing realization of freedom, again a typical Hegelian thought. Nevertheless, Gans is well aware in his first speech before the *Culturverein* on October 28 in 1821, that the Prussian State especially for Jews might look like anything but the realization of (their) freedom. Still he is opting for a rather moderate position, that despite all his precautions still could be read as assimilationist:<sup>31</sup>

Und jene, so der Ohnmacht leibeigen sind und dem Siechthum, sie wollten in die Speichen des Weltrades hemmend eingreifen, und das Rasseln und Knarren ertödete sie nicht? Sie wollten das unumstößliche Gesetz, wonach sich Natur und Geschichte entwickeln, umstoßen, und besinnen sich nicht, daß sie kaum Zeit haben es anzuschauen? Meine Herren und Freunde! lassen Sie sich durch die Gespensterscheinungen einer häufig siechen Zeit nicht irre machen. Wir haben ein Vaterland, und dürfen uns dieses Vaterlandes [58] freuen. Wir sind Bürger eines weisen Staates, Unterthanen eines milden Beherrschers, und wir dürfen uns dessen freuen. Wie wir hier versammelt sind, haben wir den Bildungsanstalten und den mannigfachen wohlthätigen Vorkehrungen und Einrichtungen dieses unsers Vaterlandes den Grad von Einsicht zu verdanken, zu dem wir gelangt sind, und diejenigen Kenntnisse, die unser Eigenthum geworden; und so ist die dankbare Treue gegen dieses Vaterland und seinen Beherrscher, die frommste Pflichterfüllung mit nie zu erlöschender Flammenschrift in unsere Herzen geschrieben.<sup>32</sup>

(And those, that are thus servants to impotence and decay, they would like to assault the World-Wheel spokes and stop it, and the rattle and creaking did not put an end to them? They would like to reverse the irreversible law under which nature and history develop, and they do not come to see that they have little time to contemplate such a law? My friends and companions! Do not let yourselves be mistaken by the phantoms of a time in repeated decay. We have a fatherland and we can rejoice over it. We are

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. (“In its infantile particularity, in its bud-like figure with a closed calyx [...], bringing to light step by step the sprouts towards the bigger flower”).

<sup>31</sup> We must bear in mind, when using the term ‘assimilation’ here, that Gans himself thought in terms of Hegelian *Aufhebung*. PINKARD. Introduction, p. XII-XIII gives a comprehension of Gans’ reading of Hegel, whose philosophy should have been used towards a modernization of Judaism. Gans himself was therefore coining the term *Aufgehen ist nicht untergehen* (Cf., *ibid.*, S. XII). This formulation variegates the Hegelian term of *Aufhebung*, aiming for an *Aufhebung* of Judaism in Christianity and modern European culture. It stresses one of the multiple dimensions of the German word of which Hegel was well aware: *aufheben* also means to ‘keep’. So, in Gans’ eyes, Judaism wouldn’t perish despite its *Aufhebung*: „Es geht Gans nicht um Untergang, sondern um Rettung des Judentums im europäischen Geist der Freiheit, der sich seiner selbst bewusst wird.” (“Not ruin is Gans’ concern, but to save Judaism amidst the European spirit of freedom, who becomes aware of itself.”) NICKEL, J. **Revolutionsgedanken. Zur Lektüre der Geschichte in Heinrich Heines *Ludwig Börne. Eine Denkschrift***. Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2007, p. 120. Nevertheless, the divergence between the ideal notion of such a reconciliation and reality has to be put in consideration. As is to be seen, this will be one point of Heine’s unease with Gans’ idealistic conception. WASZEK. *Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum*, p. 234 seems to be sensing Heine’s unease but isn’t really following this trace.

<sup>32</sup> GANS. *Erste Rede*, p. 57-58.



citizens of a wise state, subjects of a mild lord and we can rejoice over it. As we are here united, we owe it to the cultural institutions and the many well-doing arrangements and facilities of this our fatherland the fact that we have acquired this degree of insight and the knowledge which is now our property; and so the thankful loyalty in respect to this fatherland and its lord, the most pious fulfillment of our duty is written in our hearts with the writing by an unceasing flame.)

Gans is here rejecting the more revolutionary actions (“interventions radius arm of the wheel of the world”) in favor for solidarity with the state (“we are citizens of a wise state”) and its *Bildungsanstalten* (educational institutions), putting himself in the tradition of the author of *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*. Making Hegel an authority for the *Culturverein* that would help appreciate the rational course of history and also the existing state as its embodiment contained a contradiction in itself: Becoming aware of the own Jewish roots was from the beginning a project of realizing the Hegelian development of becoming conscious of oneself; on the other hand, the reconstruction of the Jewish sources or *Quellen*, how it was put among the members, should contribute to the Hegelian idea of a supposedly European totality of *Wissenschaft*, in which monotheism – and Jewish religion – could only play minor roles.<sup>33</sup> Therefore the *Culturverein* also fought against Rabbinitism and the dominance of the Talmud as problematic, pre-western remainders in the Jewish heritage.<sup>34</sup> This happened obviously also to

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<sup>33</sup> REISSNER. **Eduard Gans**, p. 62: Reissner reconstructs the Hegelian influence of becoming conscious of oneself as the proclaimed aim of the *Culturverein*. In this project, which had as its end the reconstruction of Jewish culture and history (ibid., p. 64, f.) and their sources (ibid., p. 70), it was also important for the members to fight against Rabbinitic power and to adapt and acculturate the Jews to the European Civilization (ibid., p. 71-73), i.e. to contribute to the very notion of European *Wissenschaftlichkeit* and *Kultur* as Hegel had conceptualized it: “Europas ‘Totalität’ war ein synthetisches Produkt, in das orientalischer Monotheismus, hellenische Kunst und Philosophie, der römische Staatsgedanke, Christentum und Mittelalter als ‘Momente’ eingegangen waren. Indem Gans sich auf diesen “Standpunkt des europäischen Lebens” erhob, durfte er “orientalischen Monotheismus” nur noch als *ein* Moment seines Weltbildes, aber nicht länger als das ausschließliche ansprechen. Auch forderte – und erlangte – das Christentum in diesem Rahmen positive Würdigung.” (“European ‘Totality’ was a synthetic product in which were included as ‘moments’ oriental monotheism, greek art and philosophy, roman state-thinking, christianity and the medieval times. Inasmuch as Gans elevated himself to this “point of view pertaining to european life,” he could speak of “oriental monotheism” still only as *one* moment of his world-picture, but not anymore as the only one. Also Christianity demanded – and acquired – appreciation in this frame”) (ibid., S. 73).

<sup>34</sup> BRIEGLEB. **“Bei den Wassern Babels...”**, p. 33: “Der Verein müsse, planend und prototypisch, die menschlichen Beziehungen gestaltend, Vorreiter dem (preußischen) Staate sein, und, da dieser noch am Judenproblem versage, im Geiste Hegels, der das Besondere im Allgemeinen aufzuheben lehre, an die Arbeit der Reformation gehen: Sturz des *die Nation entstellenden Rabbinitismus* (gemeint: die jüdische Nation), offener Kampf gegen den Talmud, *dessen verderblichen Einfluß für unser Zeitalter zu vernichten, wesentliche Bedingung einer nützlichen Judenreformation ist. [...]*” (“The Association had to be the avant-garde for the (Prussian) State, in planning and as a prototype, configuring the human relations, and, since it still failed in the Jewish question, it had to get down to the business of reformation, according to Hegel, who taught that the particular had to be sublated to the general: Overthrowing *Rabbinitism that defaced the nation* (the Jewish Nation), fighting openly against the Talmud, *devastating its corrupting influence for our age, which is the main precondition for a beneficial Jewish reformation.*”)

authorize the *Culturverein* as an institution of *Wissenschaft* in the Hegelian sense. The process of *Aufhebung* thus already implied a make-over of the own identity and cultural heritage.

In another respect reality didn't play along with Gans' high and maybe too idealistic hopes "that minority identities could in principle sustain themselves if they were willing to identify themselves with the principle of *freedom* at work in the modern European social and political order."<sup>35</sup> Before 1822 Gans had hoped for a position at the University in Berlin and was stressing his right to it, due to Hardenberg's still valid *Judenedikt* (1812), filing a *Denkschrift* (memorandum) to the chancellor and the Prussian ministry of State. Nevertheless, he was denied, as a Jew, to perform any teaching position. Gans' further insistence on the literary reading of the law finally led to a new jurisdiction by Emperor Friedrich Wilhelm III., the so-called *Lex Gans*.<sup>36</sup> Jews now weren't allowed to exercise any teaching job at university or school in Prussia. So in order to avoid falling out of the academic world Gans ultimately underwent baptism in December 1825:<sup>37</sup> Only months after Heine himself did so, who was also affected by the new severe jurisdiction and hoped to find a position at the University.<sup>38</sup> The poet spoke about this Christian ritual as the "Entréebillet to European culture."<sup>39</sup> The price for Jews to take part in European culture was now not only to 'Europeanize' but to even 'Christianize' themselves; this didn't go all too well together with Gans' idealistic notion of *aufgehen*. In the context of the *Culturverein* Heine would already before 1825 act as a constant reminder of this gap between the ideal notion of *Aufhebung* (sublation) and reality.

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<sup>35</sup> PINKARD. Introduction, p. XII.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. REISSNER. **Eduard Gans**, p. 91-93; WASZEK. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 234. BERTANI. **Eduard Gans et la cultura del suo tempo**, p. 161-164; BRAUN, J. Die Lex Gans – ein Kapitel aus der Geschichte der Judenemanzipation in Preußen. In: **Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte/Germanistische Abteilung**, n. 102, 1985, p. 60-98.

<sup>37</sup> WASZEK. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 235. Waszek describes this baptism as a turning point in Heine's and Gans' relationship (Cf. *ibid.*: "Heines bereits inhaltlich erläuterte Bewunderung für und Idealisierung von Gans schlug mit dem Niedergang des 'Culturvereins' und mit der Taufe [...] schroff ins Gegenteil um."; "Heine's already elucidated admiration for and his idealisation of Gans turned harshly upside-down [...] with the fall of the Culturverein' and with baptism"). But taking only baptism as the turning point neglects Heine's reservations against the Hegelian Judaism of the *Culturverein* as apparent in the letters to Moser to which we will turn in the following section.

<sup>38</sup> Lefebvre talks about Berlin (LEFEBVRE, J. **Der gute Trommler**, p. 71), but there was also the consideration to go to Munich (cf. WINDFUHR, M. **Heinrich Heine. Revolution und Reflexion**. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 1969, p.19). Lefebvre and Windfuhr both address in both cases mainly the political reasons for Heine's dismissal than the problem of religious confession that also overshadows academic careers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>39</sup> DHA 10, p. 313: "Der Taufzettel ist das Entre Billet zur Europäischen Kultur" ("The baptism certificate is the admission ticket to European culture.")

#### 4. Heine's early reservations against Hegel

Gans' attempt to give the study of Judaism's sources a Hegelian foundation did not convince Heine in the 1820ies. Heine does not see Gans' adaptation of Hegelian ideas as a *Versöhnung der Differenz*.<sup>40</sup> It is exactly the other way around. One must be aware of the inner differences in the *Culturverein* around that time to see this matter. In a letter from June 18<sup>th</sup> 1823 to Moses Moser, with whom Heine is constantly discussing the ideas expressed in the *Culturverein*, Heine is criticizing that the Jews are demanded to 'Europeanize' themselves for "some vague cosmopolitan ideas" (with Gans' speech in mind we can read here: Hegelian ideas). Heine is introducing this topic with a reference to the oftentimes brought up *Judenschmerz*, again emphasizing the difference to 'European culture' which according to Gans had to be subject to *Aufhebung*:

Es ist sehr unartig von unserem Herr Gott, daß er mich jetzt mit diesen Schmerzen plagt; ja, es ist sogar unpolitisch von dem alten Herrn, da er weiß daß ich so viel für ihn thun möchte. Oder ist der alte Freyherr von Sinaï und Alleinherrscher Judäas ebenfalls aufgeklärt worden, und hat seine Nazionalität abgelegt, und giebt seine Ansprüche und seine Anhänger auf, zum Besten einiger vagen, kosmopolitischen Ideen? Ich fürchte der alte Herr hat den Kopf verloren, und mit Recht mag ihm le petit juif d'Amsterdam ins Ohr sagen: entre nous, Monsieur, vous n'existez pas. Und wir? wir existiren? Um des Himmels willen, sag nicht noch einmahl daß ich bloß eine Idee sey! Ich ärgere mich toll darüber. Meinthalben könnt Ihr alle zu Ideen werden; nur laßt mich ungeschoren. Weil Du und der alte Friedländer und Gans zu Ideen geworden seyd, wollt Ihr mich jetzt auch verführen und zu einer Idee machen.<sup>41</sup>

(It is very misbehaving of God our Lord that he now bothers me with these pains; indeed, it is even unpolitical of the old Lord, since he knows that I would like to do so much for him. Or was the baron (Freiherr) of Sinai and autocrat of Judea also enlightened and has denied his nationality and quits his demands and his followers for the improvement of a pair of vague, cosmopolitan ideas? I fear the old Lord has lost his mind, and with justice le petit juif d'Amsterdam may tell him in secret: entre nous, Monsieur, vous n'existez pas. And we? Do we exist? For heaven's sake, do not say, not even once, that I am a mere idea! I get very angry at when I hear it. For my sake you all could well turn into ideas; only leave me unscathed. Since you and the old Friedländer and Gans have become ideas, now you want to seduce me and turn me to an idea.).

This critique comes along with a critical assessment of the concept of 'ideas', not only a conception fetishized by Hegel but also oftentimes dropped by Gans in his speeches and among

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<sup>40</sup> WASZEK. Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum, p. 230.

<sup>41</sup> HSA XX, p. 97.

the vocabulary adopted from Hegel.<sup>42</sup> When Heine is here referring to “*le petit juif d’Amsterdam*,” he seems to strangely bring in Spinoza in this context. This shouldn’t confuse us, given Heine’s picture of Spinoza as developed in *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland*: Spinoza is considered to have already formulated in advance the main philosophical positions of Hegel and Schelling (who in the same book are said to articulate quite a similar pantheist notion<sup>43</sup>). Thus, the allusion to Spinoza only stresses the emphasis on Hegel, who is often being called a pantheist by Heine.<sup>44</sup> That Heine is aiming for Hegel here becomes also fully clear thanks to a reference in a letter to Moser, written earlier in the same year. Heine is mentioning a dream in this letter, which is not so much just a biographical reference but also exaggerates it into an allegory that illuminates the relationship between poet and philosopher. Heine reports the dream to Moser on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May 1823 and links the term ‘idea’ in the following clearly to Hegel’s *Logic*.

[...] Du öffnestest mir Deine Freundes Arme, und sprachest mir Trost ein, und sagtest mir ich solle mir nichts zu Gemüthe führen, denn ich sey ja nur eine Idee, und um mir zu beweisen daß ich nur eine Idee sey, griffest Du hastig nach Hegels Logik und zeigtest mir eine konfuse Stelle darinn, und Gans klopfte ans Fenster, – ich aber sprang wüthend im Zimmer herum und schrie: ich bin keine Idee und weiß nichts von einer Idee und hab mein Lebtage keine Idee gehabt [...]<sup>45</sup>

(You opened me your friendly arms and consoled me and told me I should take nothing to heart, for I am indeed only an idea, and to demonstrate me that I be only an idea, you betook yourself readily to Hegel’s logic and showed me therein a confuse moment, and Gans knocked at the window, – but I ran mad within the room and cried: I am no idea and know nothing of an idea and during the day did not have a single idea.)

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<sup>42</sup> WASZEK. *Aufklärung, Hegelianismus und Judentum*, p. 229: “Insbesondere in der zweiten und dritten Rede von Gans fallen zahlreiche Hegelsche Termini sofort auf (z.B. Idee, Totalität, Notwendigkeit des Begriffs, das Absolute, subjektiver Geist).” (“Particularly in the second and third speeches delivered by Gans we immediately find numerous Hegelian terms (e.g. idea, totality, necessity of the concept, the absolute, subjective spirit).”)

<sup>43</sup> DHA 8/1, p. 111-115. If Schelling was according to Heine the philosopher who rediscovered the philosophy of nature, Hegel only seems to be the one who completed this project, which is, again, explicitly addressed as the one of a philosophy of nature. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 115: “Unsere philosophische Revolution is beendet. Hegel hat ihren großen Kreis geschlossen. Wir sehen seitdem nur Entwicklung und Ausbildung der naturphilosophischen Lehre.” (“Our philosophical revolution is finished. Hegel has concluded its great circle. All we see hereafter is the development and unfolding of Philosophy of Nature’s doctrine.”) Cf. *ibid.*, p. 111: “Der Gott des Herrn Schelling ist das Gott-Welt-All des Spinoza.” (“The God of mister Schelling is Spinoza’s God-Cosmos.”)

<sup>44</sup> Not only in *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland*: The late and already critical afterword of *Romanzero* rejects Pantheism and Hegelianism in nearly one and the same breath: DHA 3/1, p. 179.

<sup>45</sup> HSA XX, S. 86, Brief Nr. 59.

An argument that will later be used against the *spinnwebige Berliner Dialektik* (Berliner spiderweb-dialectics) is here already present: Hegelian philosophy has no effect on reality.<sup>46</sup> *Idee*, as it appears in this context, designating Hegelian philosophy, seems to be something without a real-life efficacy: *daß ich 'nur' eine Idee sey* is a phrase not so much of consolation but of reduction of living subjectivity to merely spiritual existence. But not only is Heine here, by certainly misunderstanding Hegel or at least a certain interpretation of Hegel, making a claim against the reduction of living beings to mere *Ideen*. The 'vague cosmopolitan ideas' derived from Hegelianism do not help the real Jews in any way: They have to live in an only so-called 'rational' world. The disappointment that went along with the *Lex Gans* is paradigmatic for this situation: It is likely that Gans' failure to receive a teaching position as a Jew only strengthened Heine's reservations against the Prussian state, whose furious critic the poet should become. But it also strengthened his reservations about a philosophy that would seemingly only wait on a more rational state of affairs in society.

A conflict in Heine's later works is foreshadowed here: Its opposing forces are on the one side Hegel, the thinker of European civilization, identified with the Prussian State, on the other side Jewish faith and heritage. While Gans appears as the advocate for the 'cosmopolitan' option of Hegelianism and Judaism's sublation, Heine senses and emphasizes a discordance: He marks a secret 'violence' of sublation against the particular, in this case Jewish faith.

##### 5. *The rhetorics of 'absolute subjectivity'*

This conflict takes stage already in the communication between Heine and the members of the *Culturverein* and not only on a purely argumentative level. It is important to take seriously Heine's radical individualism or "absolute subjectivism."<sup>47</sup> The poet is frequently speaking from a position of the individual and his irreducible subjectivity opposing the dominant or general (*allgemeine*) tendency of his time. In doing so he is obviously claiming to

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<sup>46</sup> DHA 8/1, p. 497. The expression and critique occur in the late foreword (1852) to *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland*.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. BRIEGLER. "*Bei den Wassern Babels...*", p. 124: "Große Texte, weltliterarische Texte des jüdischen Hegelschülers neigen zur Versprachlichung absoluter Subjektivität [...]." This 'absolute subjectivity' reappears in the quoted letters as a means of stressing the difference between Hegelian synthesis and the resisting particularity of the individual.

speak from a point of view which in Hegelian terms would have to be considered ‘abstract’, blended together with a genuine Jewish perspective.

Heine’s communication strategy in his letters to Moser, Gans and other *Culturverein*-members around 1823 – and only in correspondences with them – is now to constantly chose the position of the un-taught, the non-intellectual, oftentimes stressing his friends’ scholarly background and, after having humbled himself, insisting on only one and maybe the most particular concept, love, since it aims to express a relation between individuals. Thus, *Culturverein*-member Immanuel Wohlwill is addressed as *Aimablester*.<sup>48</sup> To Moser the poet writes: “*I c h l i e b e D i c h, kann aber dieses Wort nicht paraphrasiren weil die Post ab geht.*”<sup>49</sup> Only one day before that, he ends a letter to Leopold Zunz – one of the *Verein*’s leading heads, nowadays considered to be a founding father of Judaic Studies – after having presented him a very critical assesment of the language used in the third volume of the *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums*: “*Seyn Sie mir des oben gesagten halber nicht böse, lieber Zunz, erstens bin ich ja ein Abonent der Zeitschrift, zweitens liebe ich Sie. Daß dieses letztere keine Phrase ist, dürfen Sie glauben. I c h weiß es.*”<sup>50</sup> There are other examples, especially in the letters to Moser, in which Heine is overemphasizing this personal ‘I’ remarkably. Whenever it comes to issues of discussions in the club (discussions about general topics), Heine humbles his rational understanding while overemphasizing his personal feeling. This is partially taken in account by Reissener in his evaluation of Gans’ role as a Hegelian rationalist leading figure as opposed to Heine’s impulsive sentiment.<sup>51</sup> But Heine’s rhetoric often seems to contribute to an inversion, substituting the general realm of science for a particular person’s feeling. Most significantly we find this inversion in one letter to Moser from September 30<sup>th</sup> 1823. Heine is positioning love against the tendency of *Bildung*, which can be comprehended as the very expression of European science and culture:

Liebe mich weil es Dir nun mahl so einfällt; nicht weil Du mich der Liebe werth hältst.  
Auch ich liebe Dich nicht weil Du ein Tugendmagazin bist, und Adelungisch,  
Spanisch, Syrisch, Hegellianisch, Englisch, Arrabisch und Calcuttisch verstehst, und

<sup>48</sup> Letter to Immanuel Wohlwill, April 1st 1823, Letter nr. 47, HAS XX, p. 71.

<sup>49</sup> Letter to Moses Moser, HSA XX, June 28 1823, p. 104 (“I love you, and cannot paraphrase this saying because the postman is leaving”).

<sup>50</sup> Letter to Leopold Zunz, HSA XX, June 27 1823, p. 103 (“Do not be mad at me in relation to what has just been said, my dear Zunz, in the first place since I am a subscriber, secondly because I love you. That the latter is not a mere saying, you must believe me. I know it.”)

<sup>51</sup> “Der in abstrakten philosophischen Ideen und in statuarischen Reglements befangene Gans hatte es auf der einen Seite mit dem talmudisch argumentativen Kirschbaum und auf der anderen Seite mit dem emotional reagierenden, dichterisch beseelten Heine zu tun.” REISSNER. **Eduard Gans**, p. 84.

mir Deinen Mantel geliehen hast, und Geld geliehen hast und für mich den Kopf zergrübelt hast und drgl. – ich liebe Dich vielleicht nur wegen einiger närrischen Mienen die ich Dir mahl abgelauscht und wegen einiger pudelnärrischer Redensarten, die Dir mahl entfallen, und die mir im Gedächtniß kleben geblieben sind, und mich freundlich umgaulen wenn ich gutgelaunt oder bey Cassa oder sentimental bin.<sup>52</sup>

(Love me, because it suits you; not because you take me as worthy of your love. I also love you not because you are a Journal of Virtues and understand Adelungish, Spanish, Syrian, Hegelian, English, Arabic and Calcutish, and has borrowed me your coat, and borrowed me money, and ruined your brains with ruminations and things of this sort – I love you maybe only in virtue of some foolish facial expressions which I learned from you, and of some droll ways of speaking that sometimes occur to you and which still stick to my memory and enthrall me friendly when I am in a good mood or well-heeled or sentimental.)

The love for another person is even more connected with sheer abstract subjectivity here: Only accidental particularities (the *närrischen Mienen* and *pudelnärrischer Redensarten*) seem to make his friend the object of love. A similar strategy of communication can be found when Heine talks about Gans in the same letter:

Um Gottes willen glaube nicht daß ich dem guten Gans unhold sey, oder seinen Werth verkenne. Es ist wahr, auch ihn liebe ich nicht wegen der dicken Bücher die er schreibt, und wegen der edeln Weise womit er handelt, sondern bloß wegen der spaßhaften Weise womit er mich herumzupfte wenn er was erzählte und wegen der gutmüthig kindlichen Miene die er machte wenn ihm etwas feindseeliges oder böses geschah. Das einzige was ich gegen ihn habe ist daß er durch sein Schwatzen mir manches Unangenehme erregt [...]<sup>53</sup>

(For God's sake, do not believe I am unfaithful to our good Gans, or that I mistake his worth. It's true, I also love him not in virtue of the thick books he writes, and of the noble manners with which he treats with others, but merely in virtue of the agreeable way with which he plucks at me when he tells something, and in virtue of the good-willing infantile expressions he made when something inimical or bad happened. The only thing I have against him is that he stirs in me through his babbling lots of disagreeable feelings.)

In the same way the only existing letter to Gans himself – in its formula of salutation "*Lieber Gans! theurer College!*" – introduces a duality between feeling and thinking:

Das Wort „lieber“ bezieht sich aber auf mein Herz, das Dich noch immer sehr liebt, und recht herzlich liebt – quand même – Vielleicht schriebe ich Dir gar nicht, wenn es kein quand même gäbe. Du verstehst mich nicht, ich will nemlich andeuten daß es mich im Grunde meiner Seele ärgert daß unsere Bücher keine *Q u e l l e n* mehr sind, daß ich Dir und mir selbst deßhalb grolle, und es mir, eben solchen Grolls wegen, zum

<sup>52</sup> Letter to Moses Moser, HSA XX, p. 114.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 114, f.

Bedürfnisse wird Dir zu sagen daß ich Dich dennoch liebe, daß ich Dich liebe quand même.<sup>54</sup>

(The word “dear” relates itself nonetheless to my heart, which still loves you as always and full-heartedly – quand même – maybe I would not have written to you if there were no quand même. You don’t understand me, I want thus to indicate that it irritates me at the bottom of my soul that our books are not anymore s o u r c e s, that I am therefore sore at my self and at you, and it comes to me as a necessity, even for the sake of this looting, to say to you that I love you nonetheless, that I love you quand même.)

When Heine is referring to *Quellen* (sources), it has to be seen that the study of the traditional Jewish literature was among the main goals of the *Culturverein*.<sup>55</sup> Heine is positioning himself strongly on the side of this *Quellen*, what can only be read as taking sides in a conflict. When the poet’s anger over the forgetting of the *Quellen*, the Jewish documents, is aching *im Grunde meiner Seele*, the individual’s sentiment is aligned with the belittlement of the particular religion’s holy sources.<sup>56</sup> Both, again, is opposing a thinking of Hegelian *Aufhebung* and a cosmopolitanism of the universal. Heine’s particularism, the expression of an individual’s sentiment towards others, functions here as a strategy of communication. More is communicated than only linguistic semantics: Heine’s insistence is articulating a particular position could be identified with the *Meinen* as Hegel dismisses it as clinging to a mere individual’s perception and truth in his reflections on *Sinnliche Gewissheit* in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.<sup>57</sup>

Only to stress once more that Heine is well aware, what he’s doing here: In a letter, dated April 7<sup>th</sup> 1823, the poet reports to Wohlwill about his visit to the Hamburg section of the

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<sup>54</sup> Letter to Gans, May 1826, HSA XX, p. 248. Hanns G. Reissner has analyzed this letter thoroughly. Nevertheless, he fails to see the overall strategy of Heine’s rhetoric that becomes apparent only in regarding together the letters to the *Culturverein*-members. Cf. REISSNER, H.G. Heinrich Heine an Eduard Gans: “Quand Mème...”. In: *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, n. 10, 1958, p. 44-50.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. REISSNER. *Eduard Gans*, S. 69, ff.

<sup>56</sup> We should bear in mind that Heine himself, after the ‘Culturverein’ already fell apart, is recommending his narrative *Der Rabbi von Bacharach* in a short letter to Zunz as one of these *Quellen*: “Der größte Theil dieses Buches ist Q u e l l e und ist daher nicht entbehrlich für die Geschichte unserer Juden.” (“The greatest part of this book is s o u r c e and is therefore quintessential for the history of our Jews.”) Letter to Leopold Zunz, End of May 1826, HSA XX, p. 249. Furthermore, the whole section *Hebrew Melodies* in *Romanzero* can be understood as a late return to these sources. Cf. Scherübl, F. Heinrich Heine und Michael Sachs. Das Verhältnis von Hagada und Halacha in “Jehuda ben Halevy” vor dem Hintergrund von Heines Quelle “Die religiöse Poesie der Juden in Spanien”. In: *Heine-Jahrbuch*, n. 55, 2016, p.16-27.

<sup>57</sup> The problem of *Sinnliche Gewissheit* is, of course, more sophisticated as it takes part in a complex dialogue with the philosophies of Kant, Jacobi and the late Fichte (Cf. BOWMAN, B. *Sinnliche Gewißheit. Zur systematischen Vorgeschichte eines Problems des deutschen Idealismus*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003). Furthermore Hegel refutes immediacy in favor for establishing the identity of knowledge and object as a necessary precondition for the possibility of truth (Cf. *ibid.*, p. 96). Nevertheless, we are not trying to give an interpretation of Hegel here, but point out a possible point of departure in Hegel’s thought that Heine choose for his rhetoric when addressing the Hegelians from the *Culturverein*.



*Culturverein*: His philosophical education, using unmistakably Hegelian terms, is presented as the proper means to understand history. At the same time, he refers to his inability to maintain a purely objective perception because of his lack of calm and reason:

mein i n n e r e s Leben war ein brütendes Versinken in den düstern, nur von phantastischen Lichtern durchblitzten Schacht der Traumwelt; mein ä u ß e r e s Leben war toll, wüst, cynisch, abstoßend, mit einem Worte, ich machte es zum schneidenden Gegensatz meines innern Lebens, damit mich dieses nicht durch sein Uebergewicht zerstöre. Ja, amice, es war ein großes Glück für mich daß ich just aus dem Philosophie-auditorium kam als ich in den Cirkus des Welttreibens trat, mein eignes Leben philosophisch konstruiren konnte, und objektiv anschauen, – wenn mir auch jene höhere Ruhe u Besonnenheit fehlte, die zur klaren Anschauung eines großen Lebensschauplatzes nöthig ist.<sup>58</sup>

(my i n t e r i o r life was a brooding submersion in the gloomy, through phantastical flashes barely illuminated shaft of the dreamworld; my e x t e r i o r life was terrific, wild, cynical, repulsive, with one word, I turned it into the poignant opposition of my interior life, so that the latter did not destroy me in virtue of its preponderance. Nay, amice, it was a great joy for me that I came out of the Philosophy-Auditorium just as I entered the circus of the real world, that I was able to construct my life philosophically and contemplate it objectively, – when I lacked the higher calm and reflectiveness, which are needed for a clear contemplation of a great scenery of life.)

The particular inner life in the *Schacht der Traumwelt* here seems to stand in a lively contradiction with the outside-world: With history, the universal (*dem Allgemeinen*), the ‘objective’ world.

It is this conflict between the particular (Judaism, but also the sensualist individual) and the universal (Hegelianism as a philosophical system, its *Aufhebung* of Judaism in Christianity and Occidental Science) which becomes strikingly visible in Heine’s rhetoric and lifts his thought to a critical Hegelianism, but also a critique of Hegelianism: One that may be based on a very modest reading of Hegel but then again arises out of the subjective position of being part of a minority and a sensitive individual. Exactly here lies the fault-line where Heine wouldn’t any longer follow Gans, Moser and the rest of the *Culturverein*, the addressees of his rhetoric.<sup>59</sup> Still remaining inside the logic of Hegelian thought, we witnessed Heine’s first step in reversing the Hegelian logic of the universal by opting for a radical ‘absolute subjectivity’.

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<sup>58</sup> HSA XX, p. 73.

<sup>59</sup> Klaus Briegleb has insisted on this opposition in Heine’s texts. His essay is rather programmatic and, unfortunately, devoid of too many examples (devoid of any or filled with too many?). BRIEGLER, K. Abgesang auf die Geschichte? Heines jüdisch-poetische Hegel-Rezeption, in: HÖHN, G. (ed). **Heinrich Heine. Ästhetisch-politische Profile**, Suhrkamp: Frankfurt am Main 1991, p. 26-29. See also BRIEGLER. “*Bei den Wassern Babels...*”, p. p 44 for the differences between Heine and the other members of the *Culturverein* (and the Heine philology’s negligence in making them explicit).

## 6. *Anti-hegelian Judaism? Heine and Hegel after 1848*

When Hegelian philosophy, as I have tried to point out so far, was already by its introduction to Heine linked with the question of Jewish emancipation, there are reasons to believe that the blending together of both has quite a persistency in Heine's oeuvre.

Heine is not always but repeatedly returning to Hegel in the context of Judaism and vice versa. I will only quote the beginning of *Friederike* here, a poem to which generally not much attention is attributed, but which on a closer look seems to re-unfold Heine's problem in the *Culturverein* in the first strophe: On the one hand it's addressed to the Jewish community (Friedrike Robert is Rahel Varnhagen's sister-in-law);<sup>60</sup> on the other hand it brings in Hegel, starting also with a farewell from Berlin:

Verlaß' Berlin mit seinem dicken Sande,  
Und dünnen Thee und überwitz'gen Leuten,  
Die Gott und Welt, und was sie selbst bedeuten,  
Begriffen längst mit Hegelschem Verstande.<sup>61</sup>

(Leave Berlin with its thick sand  
and thin tea and overwitted folk  
which have long through Hegelian understanding  
conceptualized God and World and who they are themselves.)

The 'overwitted folk' is addressed here as an association of Hegelians: They have perceived their own value only thanks to *Hegelschem Verstande*. And it is not unlikely, that Heine is here aiming at the *Culturverein*. Even more so, when we take in consideration, that the rest of the poem is a reversal of the course of history as Gans' speech, mentioned above, had put it: The trajectory is reversed; the lyrical speaker begs his addressee to follow him to the East.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. LEFEBVRE. *Der gute Trommler*, p. 117. This community understood what Heine was saying, since the use of Hegelian terminology in their letters wasn't uncommon. To Friedrike's husband, Ludwig Robert, Heine sent with his letter from November 27<sup>th</sup> 1823 a short commentary on his poem *Donna Clara*: The story of an antisemitist *Minne-Dame* who is freed by a Jewish knight. And Heine comments the poem in his letter to Ludwig in a clearly Hegelian vocabulary: "Etwas, das ein individuel Geschehenes und zugleich ein Allgemeines, ein Weltgeschichtliches ist, und das sich klar in mir abspiegelte, wollte ich einfach, absichtlich und episch-partheylos zurückgeben im Gedichte; [...]" (HSA XX, p. 124). (Something that is at the same time an individual event and an universal, world-historic one, which was as such reflected clearly in me, this was what I wanted to reproduce in the poem, simply, with no purpose, epically and impartially.)

<sup>61</sup> DHA 2, p. 63.

<sup>62</sup> The question, where this course leads to, is here not of primary interest. It is certainly not Jerusalem, but the East in general, and in this poem especially India. While the address to Friedrike Robert is obviously a hint to the

Nevertheless, it is not until the late period of Heine's writing, commonly dated from 1848 to the poet's death, that the question of Hegelianism in his thought shows its link to Judaism again. It is not so much that Hegel would be reconsidered as a philosopher that could contribute to Jewish emancipation. It's the other way around: Jewish faith now seems to appear as a philosophical alternative to Hegel. Here the disjunction which we talked about at the beginning and which must have emerged for Heine in the early days of the *Culturverein* is resurfacing and will be verbalized poignantly in some para-texts around 1850.

Before that, it is Heine himself who is stressing the aforementioned disjunction (Hegelianism 'or' Judaism) in a letter to Heinrich Laube, written while finishing *Romanzero*. Here Heine is contextualizing his return to Jewish faith as an alternative to 'Hegelian synthesis', substituting this philosophy for a religious belief. An act that should let us pay attention to the fact how closely both are linked in Heine's thinking.

[...] ich habe nämlich, um Dir die Sache mit einem Worte zu verdeutlichen, den hegelschen Gott oder vielmehr die Hegelsche Gottlosigkeit aufgegeben und an dessen Stelle das Dogma von einem wirklichen, persönlichen Gotte, der außerhalb der Natur und des Menschen Gemüthes ist, wieder hervorgezogen. Dieses Dogma, das sich ebensogut durchführen läßt, wie unsere Hegelsche Synthese, haben am tiefsinnigsten, laut den Zeugnissen der Neoplatonischen Fragmente, schon die alten Magier dargestellt, und später in den Mosaischen Urkunden tritt es mit einer Wahrheitsbegeisterung und einer Beredsamkeit hervor, welche wahrlich nicht bei unsere neuern Dialektikern zu finden ist. Hegel ist bei mir sehr heruntergekommen, und der alte Moses steht in floribus.<sup>63</sup>

(In order to make the situation clear to you with one word, I have quitted the Hegelian God, or else the Hegelian Godlessness, and on its place recast the dogma of an effective, personal God, exterior to nature and to the human heart. This dogma, which can be understood just as our Hegelian synthesis, was already presented in the most profound manner, according to the testimonies of the neoplatonic fragments, by the old magicians, and later in the Mosaic original documents it comes to scene again with a true enthusiasm and eloquence which is in fact nowhere to be found in our new dialecticians. Hegel, in this respect, has to me quite lost his high position, and the old Moses stays in floribus.)

Heine's words would deserve a more rigid and thorough interpretation than I can provide here. Especially the formula *in floribus* (as a trope for *in Blüte stehen*/to be in full bloom) could arouse our attention. Klaus Briegleb for instance has insisted on Heine's poetics of *Naturlaute*

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Jewish community, in the rest of the poem Heine is evocating a rather romantic context: India has been the prior interest of romantics, namely Friedrich Schlegel's, whose book in the subject was familiar to Heine and is mentioned in *Die romantische Schule*. DHA 8, p. 167.

<sup>63</sup> Brief an Heinrich Laube vom 25. Januar 1850 (HSA XXIII, p. 24).

(natural sounds), a term to which Heine himself only occasionally refers. Briegleb links Heine's problematic relationship to Hegel, the philosopher of the universal, to the poet's emphasis in his poetics of the subject's inner and inarticulate nature which as such withstands the *Aufhebung* into a language of concepts, at least into one which is not poetic. Poetic language, on the other hand, functions for Heine as a language that is apt to articulate individual sorrow and suffering and therefore always maintains an esoteric rest: a remembrance of the particular and individual existence that withstands the work of history.<sup>64</sup>

We have already seen how the consequences of the *Aufhebung*, as seemingly understood by Heine as usurpation of the particular by the universal, are similarly being opposed in the letters to Gans, Moser and Wohlwill: The poetic individualist assures his correspondents of 'this particular subject's' love and, in doing so, avoids the intellectual discussion, the realm of *Bildung* and of universal concepts. He avoids the *Aufhebung* of his particular concerns on the higher plane of thought and *Begriff*. In the letter to Laube, the Hegelian synthesis itself is opposed to the particular: The Jewish religion, which according to Gans' speeches had to merge with European culture. It seems to be exactly in this respect that Heine and Gans disagree: While Gans after his baptism remains a severe Hegelian, advocating a change of society from within,<sup>65</sup> Heine's poetic project constantly questions the emancipatory potential of Hegelianism due to the poet's dissatisfaction with European Culture's (Prussian State's) legislation concerning the Jewish minority.

## 7. Outlook

We have hoped to show that the mediation of Eduard Gans had a bigger impact on Heine's view on Hegel as the major studies dedicated to this topic would indicate. Gans and the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft des Judentums* obviously played a bigger role here than expected.

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<sup>64</sup> BRIEGLEB, K. *Opfer Heine? Versuch über Schriftzüge der Revolution*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986, p.38: It is Heine's own conception of his poetic idiom "daß die Verbindung des glücklichen Außenseiters aus seiner Innenwelt nach draußen ein "Naturzustand" der Sprache sei". ("that the connection of the joyful outsider from his interior world outwards be a „state of nature" of language.") Poetic subjectivity depends therefore on "Naturlaute" due to which it necessarily leads to a more or less esoteric writing-style as practiced by Heine, opposing the general as – not only but also – a form of "Abrichtung, Zurichtung, soziale Benennungsgewalt" ("training, adjustment, social designative violence") (ibid, p. 39).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Norbert Waszek's research on Gans proto-"young Hegelian" writings that even seem to prefigure categories later established by Marx and Engels: WASZEK. Zur Rehabilitierung von Eduard Gans, p. 37-41.

Heine's Hegelianism, even when he starts to reject it later, always seems to stay linked with the question of the emancipation of Jews. This link was only made possible by the early merging of Hegelian philosophy and the hope for Jewish emancipation in the *Culturverein*. However critical Heine should become concerning Hegel and the *Culturverein's* aims: Judaism and Hegelianism, even when constructed as opposites, remain linked for him; a result of personal experience and the introduction of Hegelian thought in the *Culturverein* by Eduard Gans.

Keeping Heine's disagreement with his notion of 'Europeanization' and the late disjunction between Hegelianism and Judaism in mind, Heine's late criticism of Hegel would deserve a closer re-examination: It remains to be shown if and where there may be links to the *Culturverein* or in which way the perception of Hegel as procured by the organisation resurfaces in Heine's critique. I'd like to end by mentioning just some considerable works and contexts for such a project. *Geständnisse*, published in 1854, contains the famous rendering of a conversation with Hegel<sup>66</sup> that should not again be read as simply an autobiographical allusion; the after-word to *Romanzero* as well as the new foreword to *Zur Geschichte der Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland* also mention Hegel;<sup>67</sup> their contribution to the understanding of Heine's perception of Hegel has thus been seen, but have not yet been explored in the very regard that is opened by the letter to Laube cited above.

With the same methodological regard as proposed at the beginning and applied in this paper it remains to be seen how the complex relation unfolded here takes its toe in the late Heine's texts and their attitude towards Hegel. This remains to further examination.

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<sup>66</sup> DHA 15, p. 33-36.

<sup>67</sup> DHA 3/1, p. 179; DHA 8/1 p. 497-499.

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