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ADRIAAN TH. PEPPERZAK
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ADRIAAN TH. PEPERZAK

PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICS

*A COMMENTARY ON THE PREFACE
TO HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF RIGHT*

1987 **MARTINUS NIJHOFF PUBLISHERS**
a member of the KLUWER ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS GROUP
DORDRECHT / BOSTON / LANCASTER



Distributors

for the United States and Canada: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 101 Philip Drive, Assinippi Park, Norwell, MA 02061, USA

for the UK and Ireland: Kluwer Academic Publishers, MTP Press Limited, Falcon House, Queen Square, Lancaster LA1 1RN, UK

for all other countries: Kluwer Academic Publishers Group, Distribution Center, P.O. Box 322, 3300 AH Dordrecht, The Netherlands

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Peperzak, Adriaan Theodoor, 1929-
Philosophy and politics.

(Archives internationales d'histoire des idées =
International archives of the history of ideas ; 113)

Bibliography: p.

1. Law--Philosophy. 2. Hegel, Georg Wilhelm
Friedrich, 1770-1831. I. Title. II. Series: Archives
internationales d'histoire des idées ; 113.

K230.H432P47 1986 340'.1 86-8725

ISBN-13: 978-90-247-3338-5 e-ISBN-13: 978-94-010-9624-9

DOI: 10.1007/978-94-010-9624-9

ISBN-13: 978-90-247-3338-5

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Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1987

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Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, P.O. Box 163, 3300 AD Dordrecht,
The Netherlands.

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PREFACE

There is a didactical as well as a philosophical importance to providing a commentary on the *Preface* to Hegel's handbook on the philosophy of right. Considering the fact that the text brings us the thought of a great and difficult philosopher in a non-rigorous, "exoteric" way, it is well suited to the task of introducing students to the world of thinking. It is, however, too difficult to do this without being supplemented by some explanation. Analysis and hints for further study are necessitated here by both the interweaving of political and philosophical viewpoints and the philosophical presuppositions with which this *Preface* is full.

The philosophical importance of a commentary on Hegel's text can be found partially in the incessant quotation of the *Preface* in the literature on Hegel's philosophy to justify very different and contradictory interpretations. As long as the specialists do not agree about the meaning of the *Preface* to the *Philosophy of Right*, anyone trying to explain it cannot avoid the task of making his or her own contribution to the philosophical debate concerning the nature and content of Hegel's work.

This does not mean that any commentary can ever have the last word. For besides the historical, political, social and biographical backgrounds of the work there are other relations connecting it to logical, anthropological, theological and other scientific elements in Hegel's own works and in the work of others, relations which it would be impossible to clarify exhaustively. The introduction and the notes added to the commentary presented here offer an initial expansion of the text, but they themselves could be the starting point for new annotations — and so on into "infinity". For the author as well as the reader, then, this book remains a fragment.

I want to express my profound gratitude towards Mary Ellen Petrisko, Ph.D., for her translation of my Dutch manuscript and many quotations from Hegel's German texts. I would also like to thank the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (ZWO) for its financial support of the translation and the Oxford University Press for its permission to reprint the text of Knox's translation of the *Preface* with some modifications. Ans Diepgrond and Rita Reijnen know that I am very grateful for their careful typing of this and other manuscripts.

LIST OF SIGLA

In this book the following sigla are used (see also p. 141):

- An G.W.F. Hegel, *Philosophie des Rechts. Die Vorlesung von 1819/20 in einer Nachschrift*, ed. by D. Henrich, Frankfurt 1983.
- Briefe I–IV* J. Hoffmeister (ed.), *Briefe von und an Hegel*, 4 volumes, Hamburg 1961².
- Dokumente* J. Hoffmeister (ed.), *Dokumente zu Hegels Entwicklung*, Stuttgart 1974².
- Enc. or Enc.C* G.W.F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), ed. by F. Nicolin and O. Pöggeler, Hamburg 1959.
- Enc. A* G.W.F. Hegel, *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse und andere Schriften aus der Heidelberger Zeit*, vol. 6 of the *Sämtliche Werke* (Jubiläumsausgabe ed. by H. Glockner), Stuttgart 1956³.
- Enc. B* G.W.F. Hegel, *Encyclopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*, Zum Gebrauch seiner Vorlesungen, Heidelberg 1827².
- Enc. § 539 A* After a paragraph number A indicates the Remark (*Anmerkung*) on that paragraph.
- Enc. § 6 Z* *Zusatz* (addition) to § 6.
- Glockner *Sämtliche Werke* I–XX, Stuttgart 1927–1930.
- Grl.* G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, ed. by J. Hoffmeister, Hamburg 1955⁴.
- G.W. G.W.F. Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke*, herausgegeben im Auftrag der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft, Hamburg 1968 ff.
- Ilting G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über Rechtsphilosophie 1818–1831*, 4 volumes, ed. by K.H. Ilting, Stuttgart 1973–1974.
- Lasson G.W.F. Hegel, *Sämtliche Werke*, herausgegeben von Georg Lasson, Leipzig 1911 ff.
- Wa G.W.F. Hegel, *Vorlesungen über Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft*, Heidelberg 1817/18 mit Nach-

- trägen aus der Vorlesung 1818/19. Nachgeschrieben von P. Wannenmann, hrsg. von C. Becker e.a., Hamburg 1983.
- Werke *G.W.F. Hegels Werke*, Vollständige Ausgabe durch einen Verein von Freunden des Verewigten, 19 volumes, Berlin 1832–1887.
- WH G.W.F. Hegel, *Die Philosophie des Rechts*. Die Mitschriften Wannenmann (Heidelberg 1817/18) und Homeyer (Berlin 1818/19), ed. by K.N. Iltig, Stuttgart 1983.