CRITICAL NOTES ON PLATO’S POLITEIA, V*)

BY

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450a9 ήν ως ἡδη διεληλυθῶς ἔγαγε ἔχαιρον, ἄγαπών εἰ τις ἕσσοι ταῦτα ἀποδεξάμενος ὡς τότε ἐρρήθη.

έσσοι AD: θεάσσοι F (dittography of E or C): έσσει Sc Par Bessarion (Npc)

Of the commentators, only Schneider expresses dissatisfaction with the future optative. Ast retained the future indicative of a number of secondary MSS and it was said to be the normal construction by C.F. Hermann in his review of Stallbaum’s commentary (Gesammelte Abhandlungen, 179-180, published originally in 1831)—in his edition, Hermann changed his mind and printed the optative.

It is not easy to account for the optative. In Plato, ἄγαπάω is usually construed with εἶν and the subjunctive (e.g. 330b6; 472c1); a number of times with εἰ and the present or aorist optative (e.g. Prt. 327d6, where the verb itself is in the (potential) optative—but it is in the indicative at Lg. 684c7). Parallels for εἰ and the future optative after this verb are absent from Plato, nor have I found any in other fourth-century prose writers. What is found occasionally (Hermann’s “fast ständige Construction” is highly exaggerated) is εἰ plus future indicative: R. 496d9-e1; Lys. 12, 11; Isae. 4, 29; Hyp. Eux. 17. Perhaps the optative here may be accounted for as indicating reported speech, as implicit, one might argue, in ἔχαιρον, or perhaps better in ὦς . . . διεληλυθῶς, but I am none too happy with the explanation. Obviously, the future optative is easier to

*) These notes continue those published Mnemos. 41 (1988), 276-298 (to which the reader is referred for their format and purpose); 42 (1989), 380-397; 43 (1990), 341-363; 49 (1996), 403-425. The first draft of this installment was written during a stay at the Fondation Hardt in Vandoeuvres, Switzerland. I thank the Dutch Research Foundation NWO for making this sojourn possible through a generous grant. The next sentence is on its way to become a topos, but a topos can be a perfect truth: Once again it is my pleasure to thank the members of the Amsterdam Hellenist Club for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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account for when the predicate of a clause governing an εἰ clause is itself a verb of saying (S. Ai. 313 ἔπειτ' ἐμοὶ τὰ δεῖν ἐπηπείλησ' ἔπη, εἰ μὴ φανοῖν πᾶν τὸ συντυχὸν πάθος; cf. Ant. 414 and Kamerbeck’s note; X. An. I 4, 7). The only parallel for the future optative in an εἰ clause depending from a verb (slightly) similar in meaning to ἀγαπάω that I have found is X. Hell. V 4, 20 φοβοῦμενοι εἰ μηδένες ἄλλοι ἢ αὐτοὶ πολεμήσωσιν τοῖς Λακεδαιμονίοις. Cf. Stahl. 327; 381.

Given the wavering between mood terminations that were pronounced identically, found very often in one of the three primary MSS, not infrequently in two, and occasionally in all three (below d1 δοκῆι δοκεῖ ADF; note on 479a2), I think that the future indicative deserves serious consideration. It should be noted, however, that in the first millennium CE -οι and -ει were not yet pronounced identically, and that changes from the indicative to the optative are rarer than the other way round. Hence I print the optative, but without much enthusiasm.

451a7 ἐλπίζω γὰρ οὖν ἔλαττον ἀμάρτημα ἁκούσιός τινὸς φονέα γενέσθαι ἢ ἀπατεῶνα καλῶν τε καὶ ἀγαθῶν καὶ δικαιῶν νομίμων πέρι.

So ADF unanimously. There is only one sensible way of understanding the italicised phrases (as opposed to a number of possible ways of construing them), namely a deceiver ‘about valuable (καλῶν τε καὶ ἀγαθῶν) and just institutions’. That καλός κάγαθός can be used of things in Plato can be seen in Wankel’s indispensable repertory, 101-106. Yet there are enough indications in the context that some of the genitives must be masculine: 450d10-e1 ἐν γὰρ φρονίμοις τε καὶ φίλοις περί τῶν μεγίστων τε καὶ φίλων εἰδότα λέγειν κτέ, and especially 451b4 ἀπατεῶνα ἡμῶν. But which adjectives are masculine and which neuter? To translate ‘of decent and just people about institutions’ (so Apelt, 344; Vretska, 86-89; Wankel, 82 and n. 3), thereby making them all masculine, brings in an irrelevant point and leaves out an essential one: why say that the objects of Socrates’ deceit are just and leave the institutions unqualified? On the other hand, one can sympathise with Wilamowitz’ remark that “δίκαιο, das absolute Richtige, und νόμιμο als das richtig Geltende zweierlei sind, und so zusammengehören wie ἀγαθά und καλά” (381). And above all, Socrates’ point is not that he would rather be guilty of involuntarily killing a man (any man, τινός) than of misleading him