Book Notes*

Socrates and Plato

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New monographs: (I) Ryan Balot, Greek Political Thought;1 (II) Marlis Coulloud-Streit, Fünf platonische Mythen im Verhältnis zu ihren Textfeldern;2 (III) Rolf Geiger, Dialektische Tugenden. Untersuchungen zur Gesprächsform in den Platonischen Dialogen;3 (IV) Gabriele Giannantoni, Dialogo Socratico e nascita della dialettica nella filosofia di Platone, Edizione postuma a cura di Bruno Centrone;4 (V) Fabio Massimo Giuliano, Platone e la poesia. Teoria della composizione e prassi della ricezione;5 (VI) Terence Penner and Christopher Rowe, Plato’s Lysis;6 (VII) Daniel Russell, Plato on

*) Book Notes discuss books on ancient philosophy that are sent to the journal for review.
6) Terence Penner and Christopher Rowe, Plato’s Lysis. Cambridge Studies in the
This book is what it promises to be in its preface: an introductory guide to ancient political thought chiefly intended for advanced undergraduate and graduate students of history, classics, philosophy, and political science, that makes no attempt to locate the arguments within current learned debates. Instead, the volume considers Greek political thought from the perspective of what Balot terms ‘virtue politics’ – in analogy to ‘virtue ethics’ – which he presents as an alternative to the two prevailing modern conceptions, liberalism and communitarianism, some of whose main contenders the author includes in his discussion.

As set forth in chapter 1: “How to Do Greek Political Thought”, the goals of this volume are to interpret Greek political texts as reflections of the economic, political, and social conditions in which they originated and also to evaluate these texts normatively, especially by asking what meaning they hold “for citizens of modern, pluralistic, democratic nation-states (9).” In succeeding chapters Balot provides excerpts from texts, together with commentaries, ranging in age from the archaic period through the Hellenistic age. Chapter 2 (Archaic Greece and the Centrality of Justice) begins with the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon, as described in


