PRESENT OR AORIST?

B. JACQUINOD, J. LALLOT, O. MORTIER-WALDSCHMIDT, G. WAKKER (edd.): *Études sur l'aspect chez Platon*. Pp. 381. Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2000. Paper, frs. 180/€27.44. ISBN: 2-86272-193-X.

This publication is the result of a general enquiry undertaken, within the framework of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, by the Centre de Recherche en Syntaxe et Sémantique du Grec ancien based at the University of Saint-Étienne, in which twenty universities, principally in France and Holland, participated; the research group met twice a year over a period of eight years from 1992. The enquiry was occasioned by a re-reading of Plato's *Gorgias* where, notably concerning the present (PR) and aorist (AO), it proved impossible, with current ideas concerning verbal aspect, to account convincingly for all but a few verbal forms.

The group set itself a limited objective: taking the corpus of the works of Plato considered to be authentic (with some flexibility for individual contributors), to investigate specifically the opposition between PR and AO aspectual forms where their distribution seemed to cause the most acute problems, mainly where most probably the opposition PR/AO is not intended to express temporal meaning. Priority is therefore given to studying the expression of *injunctions* (i.e. imperative, subjunctive, or optative) and *wishes* and *regrets* (optative and secondary indicative); and to the 'dynamic infinitive', used as a complement with verbs meaning *desire*, *be able*, *order*, *prohibit*, *be necessary*, *begin*, and *finish.* The Platonic corpus was chosen because it avoids possible distortions caused by metre, it is in Attic, and it displays the personal form of expression of a single individual over a long lifetime.

Following an introduction setting out the general aims and approach, there are the following fourteen papers, each prefaced by a summary in French and English:

Part 1, 'Invitations to Speak'—studies of particular words or forms throughout the works of Plato: 'Essai d'interpretation de l'opposition PR–AO à l'imperatif de ἀποκρίνεσθαι' (J. Lallot); 'Infinitif PR et infinitif AO dependant de πειρᾶσθαι' (C. Joubaud, J. Lallot, G. Wakker); '*Πειρῶ λέγειν/πειρῶ εἰπεῖν*: deux manières de dialoguer' (O. Mortier-Waldschmidt); 'Sur les emplois de λέγε et εἰπέ' (A. Rijksbaron) (*Gorgias*, *Philebus*, and *Menexenus*); 'À propos des valeurs des imperatifs σκόπει (PR)/σκέψαι (AO)' (S. Vassilaki); 'Infinitif PR et infinitif AO: l'opposition ἀποκρίνεσθαι–ἀποκρίνασθαι' (G.Wakker).

Part 2, 'Parameters Correlated to Aspect': 'Correlations aspectuelles PR/AO entre verbes régissants et verbes regis' (L. Basset); 'Aspects contrastés: l'Apologie de Socrate en grec ancien et en grec moderne' (J. Lallot); 'Aspect et coordination dans le Banquet' (F. Lambert); Détermination et indétermination: un paramètre du fonctionnement de l'aspect en grec ancien' (E. Oréal).

Part 3, 'Words and Thoughts—Semantic Studies': '"Peux-tu le dire?" Étude d'une paire minimale PR/AO' (L. Basset); 'Le Cratyle et l'origine des noms. L'aspect dans les verbes de dénomination' (B. Jacquinod); 'Le verbe apprendre (μανθάνειν) chez Platon: effects sémantiques de l'opposition present/aoriste' (O. Mortier-Waldschmidt) (this paper acknowledges J. Lyons, *Structural Semantics, an Analysis of Part of the Vocabulary of Plato* [1962]); 'Platon *Gorgias* 509e et le verbe ὁμολογεῖν' (G. Wakker).

The conclusions of the whole study are summarized by A. Culioli in an appendix to the introduction (pp. 19–26). In general, they associate PR with continuity, and so with the establishment and observance of protocol, with the relationship between the

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speakers when it is one of cooperation, the opening up of new ways to progress, and homogeneity in references back even when these sometimes appear to exhibit discontinuity. AO suggests discontinuity, something closed, distance in the relationship between the speakers.

This provides a systematic description of the procedure of Socratic dialectic which is not, I think, explicit in the existing editions of individual dialogues. For instance, at *Gorgias* 462a–b Lallot (p. 30) gives ἀποκρίνου . . . ἀποκρίναι as a paradigm example of the opposition of PR and AO. Although one could deduce from Dodds's note that ἀποκρίνου is used for a protocol (ἐρώτα ἢ ἀποκρίνου: continuous PRs—'act as questioner or respondent'), neither Dodds nor Lodge has a note on the tense of ἀποκρίναι in Polus' response; perhaps more surprisingly, neither explains the force of ἀποκρίναι at 505d2, where, as Lallot says (p. 58), Socrates humbly (*profil bas*) asks Callicles to continue as interlocutor even though their relationship has broken down.

Admittedly, some of the distinctions made in *Études sur l'aspect* seem very fine indeed. In their paper on infinitives dependant on πειρᾶσθαι (p. 75), Joubaud, Lallot, and Wakker argue that πειρᾶσθαι is frequently found with an infinitive meaning 'explain', 'answer', etc. in a 'conversational' usage; when it is found occasionally with an AO infinitive in other contexts, it means not merely 'attempt to do something', but 'attempt to obtain a result', i.e. to accomplish the act mentioned. Considering *Republic* 393a8, Lallot, on p. 105, translates πειρᾶται ἡμᾶς ὅτι μάλιστα ποιῆσαι μὴ Ὅμηρον δοκεῖν εἶναι τὸν λέγοντα ἀλλὰ τὸν ἱερέα as 'il essaie de nous faire croire autant qu'il peut que celui qui parle n'est pas Homère, mais le prêtre', which is remarkably close to Jowett's 'he does all that he can to make us believe that the speaker is not Homer but the aged priest'. Nevertheless, elsewhere there are important implications in Greek which are brought out by this kind of analysis but are lost in translation (and often passed over in commentaries), either because they are not recognized or because of the difficulty of finding equivalent expressions in French or English. Thus Mortier-Waldschmidt, in 'πειρῶ λέγειν/εἰπεῖν chez Platon' (p. 130), notes that when, at *Meno* 73c8, Socrates says πειρῶ εἰπεῖν, which she translates as 'tâche de dire', the AO infinitive marks separation between Socrates and Meno (he, as the unknowing person asking Meno, the knowing person, for his and Gorgias' definition of ἀρετή). At p. 133 she cites *Meno* 74e12, where Socrates says to Meno πειρῶ λέγειν, which she translates as 'tâche de m'expliquer'. Here, Socrates is coaching Meno in giving definitions, and the PR infinitive marks the closeness of the cooperation he hopes to achieve. (Another example of the distinction between πειρῶ λέγειν and πειρῶ εἰπεῖν where the difference is definite but difficult to mark in translation is given on pp. 140–2; at *Meno* 82d8, firing peremptory questions at the slave boy, Socrates says πειρῶ μοι εἰπεῖν, but at 83e1, when asking him leading questions [perhaps almost constructively misleading him, as Sharples notes], Socrates says πειρῶ μοι λέγειν. M-G translates both as 'essaie de me dire'.)

The PR/AO distinction may in many instances have had implications for meaning which were clear to the original audience, but can now only be retrieved by studies of this kind, which sometimes confirm the traditional understanding of a passage but sometimes modify it markedly. The suggestive analyses in *Études sur l'aspect* are likely to be essential for any future commentary on a dialogue of Plato.

The later papers by E. Oreal and L. Basset have wider implications, and clearly the relevance of *Études sur l'aspect* as a whole transcends the limits of Platonic studies. Recent work on aspect in Greek (Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* [1990], and Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament* [1989]) has been concerned with *koiné*. *Études sur l'aspect* marks a new departure, and this is perhaps its

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main importance and justifies the impressive academic resources which have been deployed. The question 'why does a classical author choose AO rather than PR or vice versa' is crucial and should constantly be addressed in the elucidation of texts.

The editors compare their project with putting Proteus in chains, and its difficulty should indeed not be underestimated, but it is only a beginning in the detailed analysis of aspect in classical Greek. The next step might be to extend this investigation to other facets of Plato's personal style; alternatively, an investigation in another part of Attic literature, possibly drama, could be considered. Such a project would admittedly be difficult and likely to require the cooperation of many scholars, but the results could be immensely valuable in terms of understanding both the structure of the language and the meaning of the texts.

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METAPHYSICS ZETA

M. BURNYEAT: *A Map of Metaphysics Zeta*. Pp. x + 176. Pittsburgh: Mathesis Publications, 2001. Paper. ISBN: 0-935225-03-X.

This book is a valuable contribution to the interpretation of what is probably Aristotle's most vexing work. I add as a footnote that it is mistitled: Burnyeat provides a 'map' of both *Z* and *H*, which he regards as parts of essentially the same discussion. Clearly, that is not a cause for complaint. Moreover, nearly half of the work (pp. 87–149) is devoted to two topics which take us outside Books *Z* and *H*. For B. takes space to argue (in Chapter 5) that the works which we characterize as Aristotle's 'logical works' do hang together with one another, and do present a unified approach to their different topics, even if (as he suggests is probable) their composition is not confined to Aristotle's earlier period. He also discusses (in Chapter 6) how *Z* and *H* fit into the general scheme of the *Metaphysics* as a whole, which leads him to say something of each of the other books, including an attractive conjecture about the composition of book *Λ*. But in this brief review I shall ignore these two chapters, in order to concentrate upon the 'map' that the title promises.

After the introductory chapters *Z*1 and *Z*2, *Z*3 begins with a list of four claimants to be the 'substantial being' of things—i.e., as B. adds, of things that are themselves 'substantial beings'. ('Substantial being' is his translation of *οὐσία*.) These claimants are (i) the essence, (ii) the genus, (iii) the universal, and (iv) the subject. B. is orthodox in saying that (iv) is discussed in *Z*3 itself, (i) in *Z*4–11, and (iii), which subsumes (ii), in *Z*13–16. He adds that a fourth discussion, apparently not promised in *Z*3, is to be found in *Z*17. He becomes unorthodox at once. Each of these four discussions, he claims, begins with a 'logical' account of the proposal, but then proceeds to a more appropriate 'metaphysical' account, the main difference being that the first does not introduce the matter/form distinction (and so is accessible to those who know only the 'logical works'), whereas the second relies upon it. As he admits, the only part of the discussion of *Z*3 that counts as 'logical', on this criterion, is the opening sentence at $1028^{b}36$–$1029^{a}2$ explaining what is meant by 'subject'. So his suggestion gets off to a rather weak start in *Z*3. But it is fair to claim, as he does, that all of *Z*4–6 counts as 'logical', by contrast with the remainder of *Z*4–11. (B. argues, as others have done, that *Z*7–9 is a later addition to *Z*4–11. He also discounts *Z*12 as a later addition. I have no quarrel with these proposals.) He similarly claims that all of *Z*13–14 counts as 'logical', in contrast to *Z*15–16. Finally, he sees *Z*17 as breaking into 'logical' and 'metaphysical' parts at $1041^{a}32$. I concede that a case can be made for dividing *Z*17 in

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