

ESSAYS IN ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY III

PLATO

edited by

John Anton

and

Anthony Preus

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INTRODUCTION

This third volume of essays presented to the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy represents a new departure in two ways. First, it is a collection of essays all concerned with one ancient philosopher, Plato. It is our intention to put together subsequent volumes on Aristotle, post-Aristotelian philosophy, and pre-Socratic philosophy. We started with Plato because we felt that we had a sufficient collection of papers presented at various meetings of the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy or at meetings which our Society sponsored and held conjointly with other learned societies. Most of the papers printed in this volume have not been published elsewhere.

This volume also represents a new departure in that the papers presented here were given at larger number of meetings in a shorter period of time than were those in the first two volumes. Prior to the production of *Essays II*, the Society for Ancient Greek Philosophy sponsored sessions (for many years) at the annual meeting of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association and at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association. During the period of time covered by this volume, the Society has also been sponsoring sessions at the Western (now Central) and Pacific Divisions of the American Philosophical Association. In addition, the SAGP has been cooperating with the Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy and Science and other organizations in sponsoring a yearly conference on philosophy in antiquity and the middle ages. There have been five such conferences in the years covered by this volume.

Ancient Greek philosophy is one of the areas in which the influence of contemporary European philosophy has been increasing; the study of Plato has benefited especially from cross-fertilization between the analytic and hermeneutic traditions. We can see evidence of that relationship in the present volume—for example, in the essays by Dorter and Cobb-Stevens. While there continues to be a deep interest in the dogmatic structure of Plato's thought, as in Gerson's essay, there is also an increasing tendency to interpret Plato's method and objectives, as in the essays by Turnbull, Zembaty, and West, for example. In addition, Plato's mature political thought has in recent years gotten more attention; in this volume, we may mention the essays by Lee and Griswold.

Research in ancient Greek philosophy has been enriched substantially during the current decade not only as a result of the systematic application of analytical tools and hermeneutic approaches, but also with vigorous philological studies of the extant texts and historical and archaeological findings. One very effective interpretive direction of philosophical work has