

BOOK REVIEW

Inscriptions: The Dedicatory Monuments (Athenian Agora XVIII). By DANIEL J. GEAGAN. Princeton: The American School of Classical Studies, 2011. Pp. xxx + 425. Hardcover, \$150.00. ISBN 978-0-87661-218-7.

Daniel J. Geagan's posthumous catalogue of dedicatory inscriptions represents a lifetime's work, as well as being the last in a five-volume series containing epigraphic material from the Athenian Agora excavated from 1931 to 1968. While a handful of these dedications date to the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods, most date from the first century BC to the third century AD when Athens was a flourishing city of the Roman Empire. In sum, this catalogue represents an important advance that illustrates the diversity and richness of Athenian life in and around the Agora and will be a welcome addition to professional and graduate libraries.

The Athenian love for the written word—and self-aggrandizement—is well exemplified by the sheer mass of inscribed material that has survived to the present day. Dedications were a common way for individuals and the Athenian state to commemorate events, and honor individuals or gods with a public inscription on a monument, sometimes accompanied by a statue or representation. The collection of 773 inscriptions included in this volume is arranged into five types. The relatively small group of dedications dating to the Archaic period and fifth-century BC make up the first section (A1–A27). The remaining inscriptions date to Hellenistic and Roman periods and are grouped as follows: commemoratives and *νικητήρια* or victory monuments (C28–C248), honorary monuments (H249–H558), votive monuments (V559–V704), grave and miscellaneous (X705–X773). Each entry includes a brief physical description of the stone, bibliography, Greek text and a thorough epigraphic commentary. A number of entries also have a short essay concerning the inscription's significance. At the end, excellent photographs of inscriptions that have not been previously published are included.

The brief space allotted for this review allows only for mention of a few examples of the treasures contained in this volume. Two of the most well known of these inscriptions are also among the oldest. The first is the inscribed marble base of the tyrannicides Harmodios and Aristogeiton (A1) dating to 477/6 BC and

the other a bronze shield (A2) from the Athenian victory at Pylos in 425 BC that once hung in the Stoa Poikile, but was discarded in a well for unknown reasons in the fourth century BC and so preserved. Less famous, but equally important, is the poignant dedication of Lysistrate, a priestess of Demeter and Kore, of a statue of her own mother Stephano (A10) that stood in the forecourt of the Eleusinion. Thus, we find not only dedications commemorating important political and military events, but also the personal monument of a leading female religious leader.

Unfortunately few such early dedications remain; however, a much larger number survive from the Roman period. For example, three statue bases survive honoring Julius Caesar for granting the city clemency for its support of Pompey (H249 and H250), as well as for providing the initial funds for the building of the Roman Agora (H251). While powerful Roman-era politicians and emperors are represented by many of these dedications, other inscriptions reflect the diverse activities of the Agora. A statue base, for example, dating to ca. AD 100 of a personification of Homer's *Iliad* (C29) that probably stood in the Library of Pantainos attests literary and educational activity. Although the inscription survives with little damage, the Greek is obscure and controversial, and so Geagan has included a translation with a defense of his reading (cf. also A10). Though translations seldom occur in the Agora series—or in other epigraphic publications—consistent side-by-side translations would make these important texts more accessible to scholars and students outside the disciplines of epigraphy and philology.

As noted above, this volume was published following the author's death from an extended illness that made this a work so long in coming. Some of the volume's minor defects, such as the once common, but now mostly avoided practice of describing marble by the potentially misleading terms "Pentelic" or "Hymettian," and omissions of more recent bibliography are the unavoidable result of this work's lengthy and difficult gestation. Complaints about such things are relatively unimportant in comparison to the tremendous value of this outstanding work of epigraphic scholarship. In particular, Geagan's colleague, John S. Traill, is to be commended for bringing his longtime friend's work through the arduous process of final editing and for the compiling of the volume's two concordances and five indices (vii). The result is a fine work of epigraphic scholarship that significantly contributes to our understanding of life in the Athenian Agora.

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