

theoroi were citizens from Delphi, the organisation of the *theorodokoi*-network depended on the city, the only one in a position to give *theorodokia*.

Let us hope that the publication of this stimulating book, which raises a lot of questions about the honours in Delphi, will accelerate the completion of *CID* 6, making the work of researchers easier, just as *CID* 5 has recently boosted studies about slavery and manumission with new approaches.

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RELIGIOUS INSCRIPTIONS FROM PALMYRA

KUBIAK-SCHNEIDER (A.) *Des dédicaces sans théonyme de Palmyre. Béni (soit) son nom pour l'éternité.* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 197.) Pp. x+404. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021. Cased, €165, US\$199. ISBN: 978-90-04-46529-9.

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This French monograph published in the renowned RGRW series by Brill is a slightly reworked version of K.-S.'s doctoral dissertation of 2016. It is a substantial piece of scholarship on some crucial aspects of Palmyrene religion, which opens the field of Palmyrene religious inscriptions to a much broader field of religious studies, underlining the profound philology, history of religion and knowledge of Palmyra in general as well as the analytical skills of the author. The three main phrases around which the work evolves are those alluding to the divinities mentioned as: 'The Merciful', 'Master of the Universe' and 'Blessed (be) his name forever'. K.-S. re-evaluates and interprets, within a new and solid analytical framework, earlier attempts at ascribing these phrases to specific deities. The analysis is undertaken through a careful and comprehensive analysis of other groups of evidence reaching far beyond Palmyra's religious sphere, drawing on evidence from other regions and sites, such as Edessa, Hatra and Mesopotamia in general. For the first time, the religious contexts of these phrases, as found in the Palmyrene epigraphic record, are set within the framework of a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the inscriptions in a broader religious context – but with a point of departure in the Palmyrene religious sphere. This framework helps K.-S. to come to entirely new conclusions about the three enigmatic phrases in question. Through a tight and detailed analysis, the basic conclusion is that the two phrases 'the Merciful' and 'Master of the Universe', respectively, can be connected to Bel (the Merciful) as well as Bel and Baalshamin (Master of the Universe). Furthermore, the third phrase 'Blessed (be) his name forever' is more generally connected with all (male) divinities who listen and respond to those (Palmyrenes) who give prayers/dedicants (p. 217). While at first sight these might seem like quite basic conclusions, these are not easy to arrive at, and K.-S. convincingly takes readers through the vast span of evidence and backs up her arguments solidly on all fronts, showing the quality of the research that has gone into this book.

The monograph consists of two major parts, a text part comprising 227 pages and a well-organised catalogue part comprising 150 pages with a total of 202 entries. The work, according to the back cover, revolves around 203 Palmyrene Aramaic votive

inscriptions on altars, stemming from the second and the third centuries CE, which hold the formulaic content alluding to divinities. However, this reviewer could not track down the 203rd inscription in the main text of the book. The main text falls into three chapters. The first chapter is a substantial chapter on dedications to the gods in Palmyra, which concerns the altars, the inscriptions and their vocabularies, the dating of the objects and their inscriptions and the significance of these dates – both in terms of absolute/relative dating of the dedications and also of the festivals and/or religious events connected to the dedications as well as the dedicants. The second chapter concerns the iconography on the altars (pp. 101–10), and in the rest of the chapter denominations for deities in Palmyra are considered in detail as far as they are relevant for the three main phrases of the work. A final, and much shorter, chapter concerns the identification of the formulaic phrases with specific Palmyrene deities. This summing up of the evidence put forward in Chapters 1 and 2 provides convincing arguments for the ascriptions of the phrases to the deities mentioned in the review's first section. The ten-page conclusion sums up the main results of the work and points to the potential that it holds for future research. It underlines the necessity of a deep study of the material within its local religious setting followed by a broad and profound comparative study drawing on an immense amount of material from the Near East; only that way can we begin to understand, on the one hand, the particularities of the Palmyrene religious world and, on the other hand, its being embedded in a much broader koine of religious traditions with which the Palmyrene elite was well acquainted.

The catalogue holds datings, references, locations and good short descriptions of the altars as well as a commentary. K.-S. has (re)translated all the inscriptions and in some cases re-edited them on the basis of estampages (squeezes) and photos and, where possible, has read them directly from the objects (altars) in the collections and museums where they are held today. As a result, the catalogue is up to date on references to each object and its inscriptions. Inevitably, K.-S. was not able to see all the objects, since many of them are lost today, and at least since 2011 it has not been possible to travel to Palmyra and work in the museum or the storages there. One fault of the book is the complete lack of images. Apart from the cover image, there is not a single illustration. While acknowledging that this is first and foremost a philological piece of scholarship – and a substantial one –, the inscriptions cannot be wholly appreciated without the material upon which they were originally carved. Materiality does matter. It would have been helpful to provide at least images of the altars and other monuments, which are scattered around museums and collections. To have had these illustrated in this comprehensive work would have made it even more useful for researchers in the future and would have allowed, for example, for further discussions about readability and audience. Of course, images can be tracked down through the references in the catalogue.

As the 202 inscriptions show, the Palmyrene evidence is plentiful, and this, on the one hand, presents researchers with immense possibilities of conducting in-depth analysis of a variety of aspects of religious life, but also presents challenges, since the material often – held up against other locations – stands out for its local flair, its enigmatic nature or its overwhelming plentifulness. In the case of the three phrases under scrutiny in the book, K.-S. shows that even enigmatic phrases that have puzzled scholars for about a century can be deciphered by means of a strict analytical approach (for another such attempt based on iconographic symbolism see T. Kaizer and R. Raja, *Syria* 95 [2018]) and that no phrase would have been enigmatic to contemporary readers/audiences in a Palmyrene context. The brilliance of this monograph reflects K.-S.'s knowledge of the material and the broader contextualisation of it. There is no doubt that this work is a substantial

contribution both to scholarship on Palmyrene religion and society as well as to the broader understanding of the religious life of the Near East in the first centuries CE.

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COGNITION AND THE FUTURE

POPKIN (M. L.), NG (D. Y.) (edd.) *Future Thinking in Roman Culture. New Approaches to History, Memory, and Cognition*. Pp. xii + 193, ills. London and New York: Routledge, 2022. Cased, £120, US\$160. ISBN: 978-0-367-68780-9.

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Drawing on philosophy of mind, cognitive studies and recent scholarship in Classics and cognitive theory, Popkin and Ng ground the present volume in 4E (embodied, embedded, enactive and extended) distributed cognition. The volume's contributors thus participate in a much larger conversation taking place in both the sciences and the humanities about brain and mind and on how the latter emerges from the former in various physical, environmental, cultural, social and literary contexts. The editors richly detail key concepts and situate the volume with other works of classical scholarship taking a particular interest in cognition and cognitive theory. While 'cognitive Classics' is a relatively new field, this volume and others that have a narrow theoretical focus should be situated not only among similar theory-based scholarship, but also within established inter- and intradisciplinary studies. The volume's interest in 'future thinking' calls for it to be situated not only with scholarship interested in cognition in ancient contexts, but also with intra- and interdisciplinary scholarship taking an interest in time and temporality (e.g. G. Forsythe, *Time in Roman Religion* [2012]; R.M. Rosen, *Time and Temporality in the Ancient World* [2004]).

Applying a particular methodological approach on wide-ranging material, Popkin and Ng have done a noteworthy service to readers by curating a dialogue between the chapters, which are unified by an interest in prospective memory, that is, the future-oriented nature of memory, as the primary function of memory is to aid its possessor in more successfully predicting and navigating their physical and social environment. The editors present the volume as a response to B.D. Shaw's 2019 definition of 'a complex future' that is autonomous, supplied with valuable resources, broadly accepted as a notional thing and towards which present behaviour is oriented (*JRS* 109 [2019], 22). Not taking issue with the definition, but rather with Shaw's selection of evidence, the editors' primary concern is the class-inclusiveness necessitated by the term 'broad acceptance', and the volume is attentive to muted voices.

The chapters dealing with literary texts face a particular challenge. Straightforward philological methods can be used to interrogate texts about the role of future thinking at the level of both character and author. The onus is thus on the scholars to demonstrate the unique ability of cognitive theory to illuminate texts. Their attempts are more successful than not, making interesting claims that add to existing discussions of intertextuality and narrative framing. J. Latham puts forward the idea that the description