Thrasea Paetus without meaningful reflection on how Stoic theories of kingship might or might not accommodate the principate. John Henderson's piece on the aesthetics of Flavian political sculpture eluded my comprehension, but relates more successfully to the core concerns of the collection than John Pollini's analysis of a marble *delicatus* in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The editors' decision to offer as many as twenty-four essays was a good one. I have tried to give some sense of how the collection allows one to pursue an argument from one article to another. More simply, one benefits from different approaches: Fredrick parses the buildings of Flavian Rome more creatively than James Packer, but gives considerably less detail on, for example, the physical composition of the monuments. The number of typographical errors in Greek, Latin, and English in so expensive a volume is quite appalling. However, libraries will already have decided, rightly, that they must buy this book. The editors have succeeded in their aim of producing a collection 'valuable both to the undergraduate student . . . and to the specialist scholar' (p. ix).

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SALUTARY IDEOLOGY

J. MORALEE: *'For Salvation's Sake.' Provincial Loyalty, Personal Religion, and Epigraphic Production in the Roman and Late Antique Near East*. Pp. xviii + 244, ills. New York and London: Routledge, 2004. Cased, £45. ISBN: 0-415-96778-3.

The main credit of this short (120 pp. text) but stimulating book, a revised PhD thesis from UCLA, is that it takes apparently stereotypical religious formulaic language seriously. It is built around the extensive corpus of *c.* 400 Greek and Latin inscriptions from the Roman and Late Roman Near East in which the dedicant asks (the) god(s) for σωτηρία or *salus* for himself or for others, hence 'for salvation's sake'—interpreted in nearly all cases according to an 'earthly understanding' as 'bodily salvation', and only seldom, in some monotheistic contexts, with reference to the 'eschatological event of redemption' (p. 17).

The introductory chapter defines the scope of the formula, which was in use in the Levant before the establishment of Roman rule and is still attested for the period in which part of the region had come to be dominated by the followers of Muhammad. It was employed both by adherents to the traditional polytheistic cults and by Jews and Christians, and it was popular in both urban and rural contexts. The dedications are divided into two groups: those set up 'for the salvation of the emperor' and those set up 'for personal salvation'. The second category includes not only inscriptions in which the dedicant asked for salvation for himself, but also for others, to whom he was mostly (but not always) family-related.

The following three chapters deal with what Moralee calls the 'salutary ideology', namely the idea 'promulgated actively by the state as part of Rome's justification for empire' (p. 18) that the emperor's subjects ought to sacrifice and pray for his salvation in order to confirm his position as saviour of the universe. Chapter 2 follows the development of this 'salutary ideology', rooted in the worship of the goddess who personified the salvation of the Roman people, first as Salus Publica, then, when the

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relevance of the emperor to that salvation became more obvious, as Salus Augusta and eventually as Salus Augusti. On the other hand, the emperor's salvation depended also on the loyalty of his subjects, which took shape in (among other things) the dedications which form the focus of this book. The minorities unwilling to adhere to this ideology, whose arguments are best known through the works of the Christian apologists, would have to be forced. The majority, however, voluntarily contributed to it, for reasons discussed in Chapter 3: here, the Near Eastern dedications for the emperor's salvation are analyzed with regard to onomastics and societal functioning of the dedicants, specific motivations given in the formulae, and choice of recipient deity. It is clear that they are fully embedded in all layers of society: 'the power and significance of the salutary ideology lies, therefore, in creating a common means of expressing an intertwined set of values across the linguistic and geographic limits of a vast empire' (p. 57). Chapter 4 deals with the problem of why this habit of setting up inscriptions for the emperor's salvation rapidly declined and then disappeared in the late third and early fourth century. M. argues that the standard arguments based on the christianization of Roman society are 'at best imperfect solutions' (p. 60), and that 'the demise had to do with a shift in the ruling ideology that left the emperor more distanced from his subjects' (p. 62): his saviour qualities were no longer supposed to depend on their dedications for his salvation's sake.

The link with dedications for personal salvation, i.e. 'for all individuals exclusive of the emperor' (p. 69), is explored in Chapter 5. M. suggests that there is more than affirmation of the 'salutary ideology' going on in the requests to the divine world for the emperor's salvation: dedications were, simultaneously, 'tapping the deeply rooted tradition of making dedications for personal salvation' (p. 19). This has an effect on how the later Christian dedications for personal salvation ought to be interpreted, and M. sees them as standing in this Near Eastern tradition, rather than having grown out of the dedications on behalf of the emperor. It is true for both pagans and Christians, and even for Jews, that the use of this and similar religious formulae also served to construct and maintain social frameworks, but the author fortunately stresses that 'at the root of the habit lies religious devotion' (p. 93), a point sometimes forgotten by other scholars. Finally, in Chapter 6 the various themes of the preceding chapters are brought together and further explored in three case studies—Baalbek, Dura-Europos, and Gerasa—followed by a separate concluding chapter.

To make the large amount of data more accessible, M. provides seventeen tables within the main body of the text and sixty pages of appendix at the end. Strangely enough, the author himself does not give a single cross-reference to the appendix, whose usefulness is further limited by the fact that the body of material is introduced by broad categorization only (the individual inscriptions are not presented in full, neither in Greek or Latin nor in translation) and arranged in such a manner as to defy its purpose.

M. is no doubt right not to look for a direct influence of older Semitic formulae on the classical expressions: 'votive offerings to gods for salvation's sake must have developed independently in the Near East and the Greek world' (p. 3). However, especially considering the fact that he acknowledges that 'the Greek idiom . . . found fertile ground in the cultures of the Near East' (p. 3), some comparative analysis of similar terminology, that does not include the words σωτηρία or *salus*, would have been welcome: different words, with their own etymological basis, could have transmitted different notions. The book by K. Dijkstra on the Aramaic formula '*l ḥyy*, 'for the life of' (*Life and Loyalty* [Leiden, 1995], with a chapter on its Greek and Latin equivalents), should have been used more than is clear from the endnotes.

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M. has interpreted often-ignored material in an original manner, and he discusses the documentary evidence carefully and sensitively. That a book which deals with a specific formula has its limitations is, of course, inevitable, but these should serve as an incentive to scholars not to take other conventional religious expressions for granted either.

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PUBLIC FEASTS

J. F. DONAHUE: *The Roman Community at Table during the Principate*. Pp. xiv + 333, ills. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004. Cased, US$70, £44. ISBN: 0-472-11389-5.

This careful reconstruction of the social context of banqueting depends on a collection of 316 inscriptions from the first through fourth centuries A.D. that record communal feasts in Italy and the Roman West (meticulously edited on pp. 163–239). The author analyzes in particular the social status of benefactors and beneficiaries to reconstruct how these feasts replicate and thereby reinforce social hierarchies. Presentation and approach resemble Garrett Fagan's fine *Bathing in Public in the Roman World* (1999), which similarly aims to dispel the notion that baths served as great social levelers. The book also complements K. Dunbabin's recent study of visual representations of public dining in *The Roman Banquet* (2003; too recent for D. to consult).

An introduction clearly defines the public feast as 'any gathering to which the *populus* at large or representative groups from within the community were invited in order to share a meal' (p. 3) and briefly discusses the apparent distinctions prevailing among the terms encountered in extant inscriptions (*epulum*, *cena*, etc.). The following three chapters use primarily literary evidence to provide a context for analyzing the epigraphical material in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 1 ('The Roman Feast: An Overview') is neatly organized around Statius' description of a public banquet given by Domitian (*Silvae* 1.6). Statius depicts an occasion open to all classes, including women and children, and implies that all dine on equal fare. In his vivid reconstruction, D. attempts to show that, despite Statius' encomiastic phrasings, this banquet—like those analyzed in the epigraphic chapters—in fact segregated attendees and parceled out food according to social status (his conjecture becomes fact by p. 70). The analysis, however, assumes that Statius' description of the senators' fare as *lautiores* conveys a true comparative sense (contra the evidence of Paul. Fest. 48M, cited by D. in a different context), while ignoring the far more relevant reference to hierarchical arrangement at l. 35 ('orbem qua melior severiorque est'). Furthermore, any parallels cited for such social stratification must confront the fact that Domitian's feast celebrates the Saturnalia, when one *expects* subverted expectations. The chapter closes with interesting speculation (for both Rome and her municipalities) on the mechanics and manpower necessary for such lavish spectacles. D. observes that the nonexistence of professional caterers means that these events must have been orchestrated principally through the private resources of the *familia*.

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