



Archaic Greek Epigram and Dedication: Representation and Reperformance

Joseph W. Day

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Together with sacrifice, prayer, and libation, offering dedications was a basic religious activity among ancient Greeks. By the end of the Archaic period (c. 480 B.C.), sanctuaries were bursting with dedications, including finer ones such as statues bearing epigrams. Scholarly treatments have focused on formal matters and, more recently, the function of dedications as social display. This is the first study to view dedications comprehensively as sites of ritual efficacy and, especially, to recover epigram's reflections of and contributions to that efficacy and restore it to an important place in the panorama of Greek religious practice. To reconstruct the Archaic experience of reading and viewing, the book draws on studies of traditional poetic language as resonant with immanent meaning, early Greek poetry as socially and religiously effective performance, and viewing art as an active response of aesthetic appreciation.

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