

There survive numerous inscriptions from the fourth century CE commemorating senators, often men who had been prefects of Rome, in their capacity as patrons. While these texts often tell us frustratingly little about the services patrons provided, they afford considerable insight into the representation of these powerful senators as patrons. This paper considers several issues raised by these inscriptions, including their temporal distribution and the problem of their location and intended audience, and seeks to broaden our understanding of them through comparison with literary sources.

Inscriptions have long been recognized as a valuable source for studying the senatorial class. Chastagnol's work on the urban prefecture in late antiquity (1960) is still fundamental for understanding the relations between the prefecture and the urban *collegia*. His companion study, collecting all the references to urban prefects (1962), was an important precursor to *PLRE*. Neither of Chastagnol's studies, however, was much concerned with the image of these men as patrons. More recently, inscriptions have been used to discuss the self-representation of elites (e.g. Eck (1984), Niquet (2000)), the construction and manipulation of historical memory (Hedrick (2000)), and the intersection between political culture and public space (Machado 2006). This paper draws on these more recent approaches but focuses on epigraphic texts that honored senators explicitly as patrons and were apparently placed in domestic spaces, i.e. the houses of the senators themselves.

These patron-inscriptions are an excellent example of the intersection of the public and private spheres. Most of the dedications can be classified into two groups: those by the urban *collegia*, and those by Italian cities. In the first case, senators who had reached the urban prefecture, e.g. Valerius Proculus (*ILS* 1240-42) and Vitrasius Orfitus (*ILS* 1243), were honored by corporations involved in the state-organized system of food supply (*annona*). An example of the second type is the dedication by the council of Spolegium to Turcius Apronianus (*ILS* 1229), who had previously served as governor of Tuscia et Umbria. All of these dedications come from Rome and are thought to have been placed in the houses of these senators. They show how the status acquired through holding public office could be advertised to the house's several audiences, including the family itself, visiting clients, and senatorial peers, an excellent illustration of how Roman houses promoted the memory of their occupants (Bodel (1997)).

The inscriptions discussed in this paper capture one aspect of an important change taking place in fourth-century Rome. As emperors withdrew from the capital, senators resumed their ancient role as important sources of civic patronage and enjoyed greater opportunities to advertise their status. Rome in the fourth century was becoming a senatorial city once again.