

Title: **On the “good gods” in Palmyra**

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**Abstract:** The essay aims to explain the use of the most popular divine epithet in Aramaic inscriptions from Palmyra. The evidence discussed in the paper is divided into two groups. The first includes inscriptions substituting one of the formulas: “He whose name is blessed forever” (*bryk šmh l'lm'*), “Lord of the Universe/of the Eternity” (*mr 'lm'*) and Merciful (*rh mn'*) for the god's name. The second encompasses texts listing a divine name or title, such as Baalshamin, Arsu, Shamash, Allat, Bel, Yaribol, etc. A review of the epigraphic material from Palmyra indicates the votive context of the use of the epithet “good” (*tb'*). Its function is to glorify a god, who has helped in misfortune, and to indicate to other worshippers the god's kindness and generosity. The paper is an approach to a study of the religious mentality of the Palmyrenes.

**Keywords:** Palmyra, epigraphy, epithet, history of religion, votive dedications, gods, Roman Near East, Aramaic, Greek