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A CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT



## **Abstract**

The wreaths were consistently used throughout the ancient Greek and Roman world, as well as later in Byzantium, in the major events of religious, political and social life. Crowning rewarded someone who successfully completed a difficult task, undertook an office or achieved a major victory. It indicated that the one crowned was purified and ready to transcend the mundane and ascend mentally into a morally and spiritually superior world.

## **Keywords**

wreaths, games, inscriptions.

## **Part I: Wreaths in the ancient world\*.**

### **Introduction.**

Wreaths were used on many occasions in everyday life of the ancient world, in both private and public spheres. Literary and archaeological evidence show that Greeks often used wreaths in the exceptional and important moments of their lives, such as celebrations, sacrifices, weddings and funerals. They honored the eminent with a wreath, crowned athletes with a κότινος, wore wreaths at dinners and adorned their deceased beloveds with a wreath, the value and elaborateness of which reflected their social and financial position. Art provides us with many exemplary instances of men and women, gods and goddesses, priests, seers, those who sought an oracle or indulged in magic and practices concerning various cults where those involved appear crowned.

Some scholars have argued that plants are incarnations of the spirit of vegetation, so the wreaths serve to distinguish those representing the “tree spirit” or “the spirit of vegetation”<sup>1</sup>. People believed that the wreath and flowers from

\* I am grateful to my colleague Nikos Charalabopoulos for his comments on this paper.

<sup>1</sup> E. KEPHALIDOU, *Νικητής. Εικονογραφική μελέτη του αρχαίου Ελληνικού αθλητισμού*, Thessaloniki 1996, p. 72 and n. 104.

which it was woven brought luck and divine protection. The chain of flowers was beneficial, for the power latent inside it was transferred to the person who held it or came in contact with the divine<sup>2</sup>. It was also believed that the purity and the “sanctity” of the wreath, for which the ancients kept a holy silence, imbued the wearer<sup>3</sup>. The wreath stood as a symbol “dressed” in transcendent value and imparted sanctity, prestige and dignity to the wearer. Through the medium of the crown, the guests of honor morally rewarded various people for virtuous actions: winners of athletic contests, victors on the battlefield, judges who successfully resolved the differences between cities. The wreath endowed its wearers with sacred or revered virtues, as with sovereigns, ambassadors or messengers. Anyone convicted of a crime had to be deprived of the crown<sup>4</sup>.

In most cases, recipients of wreaths had reached the end of a process, a strenuous effort or struggle, and the wreath represented the culmination, the enhanced social status signifying their triumph. The athlete attained the zenith of his efforts and was declared victor. A wreath similarly signified the success of an individual in the political or military arena, while the deceased has traveled the long road of life that leads to death<sup>5</sup>.

There are numerous examples of usage, function and meaning of the wreath throughout history, represented in simulations of its natural appearance, or reproduced in precious materials. Such examples cover a long period of time and can be traced back to prehistoric times and through the famous Fayum portraits, to ancient funerary art<sup>6</sup>.

Within the imperial cult, the wreath adorning the head always signified a member of the imperial family, but in official art, when it appears next to another sign or motif, it often has the function of emphasizing meaning.

For the ancient Greeks, the wreath was replete with meanings and symbolism. It marks and distinguishes the one who wore it, and symbolically protects the head, the most important part of the human body. It thus indicates that the one crowned was clean, purified and ready to initiate a ceremony or ritual. Since the wreath is the bearer of life, a wreath of an evergreen plant was placed on the head of the deceased. Because of its shape, it was likened to the victory

<sup>2</sup> J. KLEIN, *Der Kranz bei den alten Griechen. Eine religions-gesch. Studie auf Grund der Denkmäler*, Günzburg 1912, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> M. BLECH, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*, Berlin 1982, pp. 365-367.

<sup>4</sup> Lycurgus, *Against Leocrates*, 122 δν ή βουλή, ὅτι λόγω μόνον ἐινεχείρει· προδιδόναι τὴν πόλιν, περιελομένη τοὺς στεφάνους αὐτοχειρὶ ἀπέκτεινεν.

<sup>5</sup> KEFALIDOU, Νικητής cit., p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> D. ROGIĆ, *Wreath-its use and meaning in ancient visual culture*, «Religion and Tolerance» 18 (2012), p. 353 and nn. 46, 47, 48.

and the destiny bestowed on humans by the gods and it embodied that victory. It was also sacred and endowed the wearer with holiness<sup>7</sup>.

Its circular shape not only symbolized eternity, completeness, perfection, wholeness, but also the cyclical nature of time and the heavens above. In classical Greece wreaths were made of aromatic plants. The association of wreaths with religion and cult results from the significance and powers attributed to the plants they represent<sup>8</sup>. We find wreaths made even from uncommon plants like coriander<sup>9</sup>, of chufa, of spearmint<sup>10</sup> and wreaths of celery<sup>11</sup>. The best-known examples of wreaths recorded in history and the visual arts have been made of laurel, palm, myrtle, oak, olive, ivy and vine leaves<sup>12</sup>.

Crowning a man, animal, plant or object was originally the simplest way of marking it out from its surroundings as singular and remarkable. Then the bonding with the person bestowing the wreath safeguards the crowned object, while at the same time establishing a connection with the bestower. The wreaths often function as a mediator; helping the bearer to draw closer to a specific deity<sup>13</sup>.

Plants wove in wreaths would have been dedicated to different deities: oak to Zeus, laurel to Apollo, herbs to Ceres, vine leaves to Dionysus, and myrtle to Venus. Athletes, poets, soldiers, and winners were rewarded with wreaths, which were also symbols of art, literature and education in Roman society. Priests bore them on the head or around the neck in order to signify important days and celebrate religious festivals<sup>14</sup>. During these events wreaths had a dual role: decorative and practical, they exuded spiritual fragrances, depending on the plants they were made of. They could also cool or relieve from pain; for example, wreaths of roses could relieve a headache while acacia acted as a sedative<sup>15</sup>.

In Athens whoever assumed a public office was required to be crowned, while being deprived of the crown meant being expelled from office<sup>16</sup>. Accord-

<sup>7</sup> R. ONIANS, *The origins of European Thought*, Cambridge 1951, pp. 133, 366-377, 443, 456 n. 1.

<sup>8</sup> E. TSIGARIDA, *A New Gold Myrtle Wreath from Central Macedonia in the Collection of the Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki*, «ABSA» 104 (2010), p. 313.

<sup>9</sup> Pollux, *Onomasticon* VI 107.

<sup>10</sup> Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 15 27.

<sup>11</sup> Pindarus, *Olympionikos* XIII 33.

<sup>12</sup> ROGIĆ, *Wreath-its use and meaning in ancient visual culture* cit., p. 343.

<sup>13</sup> KEFALIDOU, Νυκτής cit., p. 70 n. 93.

<sup>14</sup> N. HUNTER, *The Art of Floral Design*, New York 2000, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> ROGIĆ, *Wreath-its use and meaning in ancient visual culture* cit., p. 342.

<sup>16</sup> R. PARKER, *Polytheism and society at Athens*, Oxford 2005, p. 97.

ing to Aeschines<sup>17</sup> candidates for the nine archonships had to be sexually pure because «these are the crown-wearing offices». Apollodoros<sup>18</sup> adds that the six *thesmoothetai* were crowned with a wreath of myrtle because of its association with the goddess. The archon *basileus*, when performing his judicial duty wore a crown; then he took it off<sup>19</sup>. The only permanent wearers of crowns were priests, while private persons wore them in various circumstances<sup>20</sup>.

### **«Put on your crown»: the beginning.**

The tradition of wreath making was known to ancient Persians, who used to make circular diadems in order to express the idea of the kingdom, status and honor<sup>21</sup>. The Persians seem to have used them widely in similar cases τῇ δ' ὑστεραίᾳ πρὸς Κύρος μὲν ἐστεφανωμένος ἔθνε, παρήγγειλε δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁμοτίμοις ἐστεφανομένοις πρὸς τὰ ιερὰ παρῆναι<sup>22</sup>; Indians also used them ἐστεφανωμένον τε τῷ Ἰνδῶν νόμῳ καὶ ἀδοντα τῇ Ἰνδῶν γλώσσῃ<sup>23</sup> and Romans. When a wreath was worn on heads of the Roman emperors, it signified the triumph of the imperial rank; as such it eventually metamorphosed in to the forms of crowns worn on the heads of medieval kings and queens<sup>24</sup>.

The evidence concerning the origins of crowning are based on the indirect tradition and they express the viewpoint of Athenaeus. Sappho gives a simpler reason for wearing garlands, saying that offerings of flowers please the gods, who hate all those who come before them with uncrowned heads (Ath. 674 e); Sappho with her verses enjoins all who offer sacrifice to wear garlands on their heads, as they are beautiful things, and acceptable to the gods (Ath. 674 f). Another special case is quoted by Aeschylus, in his *Prometheus Unbound*, who specifically says that people wore garlands in honor of Prometheus, a poor rec-

<sup>17</sup> Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*19.

<sup>18</sup> Apollodorus fr. 21 Schol. Aristoph.Ran. 330: Μυρσίνῳ στεφάνῳ ἐστεφανοῦντο οἱ μεμυημένοι, οὐχ, ὡς τινες νομίζουσι, κισσίνῳ. Ό δέ Ἀπολλόδωρος καὶ τοὺς Θεμοθέτας φησὶ διὰ τοῦτο μυρσίνῃ στέφεσθαι, ὅτι οἰκείως ἔχει πρὸς τὸ φυτὸν ἡ θεός, καὶ ὅτι τοῖς χθονίοις ἀφιέρωτο.

<sup>19</sup> Aristoteles, *Athenian Constitution* 57, 4.

<sup>20</sup> PARKER, *Polytheism and society at Athens* cit., p. 97.

<sup>21</sup> ROGIĆ, *Wreath-its use and meaning in ancient visual culture* cit., p. 342.

<sup>22</sup> Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* III 3, 34.

<sup>23</sup> Arrianus, *Anabasis* VII 3, 3.

<sup>24</sup> ROGIĆ, *Wreath-its use and meaning in ancient visual culture* cit., p. 352.

ompense for the sad chains with which his limbs were bound (Ath. 674 c). Aristotle, in his *Symposium* says that people never offer any mutilated gift to the Gods, but only such as are perfect and entire; and what is full is entire, and crowning anything indicates the completeness of the object (Ath. 674 f).

Aristotle mentions a practical reason, saying that the ancients, on account of the headaches induced by their wine-drinking, adopted the practice of wearing garlands made of anything which came to hand, as binding the head tight appeared to relieve them. But men in later times added some ornaments to their temples, which had a kind of reference to their employment in drinking, and so they invented garlands in the present fashion (Ath. 674 c). Andreas also, the doctor of Ptolemies, says that a certain man, having a headache, pressed his head, and thus finding relief, invented a ligature as a remedy for headache. Accordingly, men using these ligatures as an aid to drinking used to bind their heads with whatever came to hand. So, first of all, they took garlands of ivy, which grew everywhere, was pleasant to look upon, shaded the forehead with its green leaves and bunches of berries, and could bear a good deal of tension, without having a strong smell (Ath. 675 d). So the garland of ivy is considered sacred to Bacchus, because he was the inventor of wine and the defender of its inconveniences.

Thence, men overlooked the utility and the comfort of the relief from the effects of drunkenness, and were more influenced by what pleased their eyes and their noses; therefore they adopted crowns of myrtle, which represses any rising of the fumes of wine; and garlands of roses, which to a certain extent relieve headaches, and also impart some degree of coolness; not to mention garlands of bay leaves, which are proper for drinking parties. But they avoided garlands of white lilies, wreaths of amaracus, or of any other flower or herb which has any tendency to produce heaviness or torpid feelings in the head (Ath. 675 e).

In times of mourning, people did exactly the opposite. In their wish to attest their sympathy for the dead, they mutilated themselves by cutting their hair, and by putting aside their garlands (Ath. 675 a). Sophocles appeared without wreath in the *proagona* of 407/6 B.C. in mourning for the death of his fellow-craftsman Euripides; he also presented the Chorus and actors without wreaths<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> R. SCODEL, *Sophocles' Biography*, in K. ORMAND (ed.), *A Companion to Sophocles*, Oxford 2012, pp. 25-37.

### **Floral wreaths.**

People used a variety of plants and flowers to weave crowns, which they wear on their heads but sometimes over their foreheads<sup>26</sup>. Alcman mentions garlands made with the *helichryse* and the holy *cypirus*<sup>27</sup>; Ibycus with *myrtle-berries* mixed with *violets*, *helichryse*, *apple blossoms*, *roses* and tender *daphne*<sup>28</sup> and Cratinus with ground *thyme*, *crocuses*, *hyacinths* and *helichryse*<sup>29</sup>; with λείρια, κρίνα, *cosmosandala*, *violets*, and *fragrant thyme*, *spring anemones*, *ground thyme*, *crocus*, *hyacinths*, *shoots of the vine*, *anthryscum*, *cytisus*, and lovely *hemerocalles*<sup>30</sup>. The author, too, of the Cyprian Poems gives lists of the flowers which are suitable to be made into garlands: they are mentioned *crocus*, *hyacinth*, the *blooming violet*, the *rose* with the sweet petals (Ath. 682 c).

Theophrastus gives, in addition, a longer list of flowers as suitable for garlands. He starts with the *violet*, the flower of Jupiter, the *iphyum*, the *wall-flower*, the *hemerocalles*, or yellow *lily*. He says the earliest blooming flowers are the white *violet* and the wild *wallflower*; the *narcissus* and the *lily*; of the wild flowers, he mentions the mountain anemone and the head of the bulb-plant. Next in order here are in order here are *oenanthe* and the purple *violet*, and of the wild flowers the *helichryse*, the meadow *anemone*, the *gladiolus* and the *hyacinth*. The *rose* is the latest blooming flower of all; the chief summer flowers are the *lychnis*, the flower of Jupiter, the *lily*, the *iphyum*, the Phrygian *amaracus*, and the *pothus*<sup>31</sup>. The white *violet*, λευκόiov, has a most delicious fragrance and is very delightful, but only for a short time; and the purple *violet* is of the same appearance, but it is far more fragrant (Athenaeus 681 d).

### **Metal wreaths.**

Metal wreaths were made of gold, bronze and silver and became richer and more elaborate in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century but were later simplified to

<sup>26</sup> Anacreon, *PMG* 410, 1 ἐπὶ δόφρύσιν σελίνων στεφανίσκους θέμενοι (= D. PAGE, *Poetae Melici Graeci*, Oxford 1962).

<sup>27</sup> Alcman, *PMG* 60, 2-3.

<sup>28</sup> Ibycus, *PMG* 34, 1-2.

<sup>29</sup> Cratinus, *PCG* 98, 4 ἐρπύλλῳ, κρόκοις, ὑακίνθοις, ἐλιχρύσου κλάδοις.

<sup>30</sup> Cratinus, *PCG* 98, 1-6.

<sup>31</sup> Theophrastus, *Historia plantarum* VI 6, 11-VI 8, 3.

become formulaic. Gold wreaths were jewelry used especially by women to enhance their beauty but were also worn by men. Macedonia was the region producing the richest legacy, in terms of number, of metal wreaths, dating from the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. In the Central Macedonian tombs of the late Classical and early Hellenistic period gold and gilded wreaths abounded. Gold wreaths imitated oak, myrtle, olive and ivy were found in burials of men and women; wreaths were worn during life in special occasions at social and religious events and accompanied their owners in death. Their role in burial customs is not clear. They may function as symbols of the social rank and economic influence of the deceased, as symbols of initiations or some other religious role.

In life, metal wreaths were mainly used in religious ceremonies and on social occasions and were worn by members of wealthy families or aristocracy. They were wedding presents, they were worn by the kings at dinners, they part of the cults of the Hellenistic kings and were used to reward benefactors, to adorn statues and sanctuaries in certain religious dedications and as prizes for victors in musical contests<sup>32</sup>.

### **Types of wreaths.**

Athenaeus, describing the dinner of Filoxenos, mentions the variety of flowers used for weaving wreaths and the type of wreath made from each kind of flower in several cases and places.

<sup>32</sup> E. TSIGARIDA, *Late Classical and Early Hellenistic Gold Jewelry from Central Macedonia*, in M. TIVERIOS/P. NIGDELIS/P. ADAM-VELENI (eds), *Threpteria. Studies on Ancient Macedonia* 12, Thessaloniki 2012, pp. 313-4, 331, 337.

Type of wreath	Properties
αἰγίδιον	It is a garland made of divers flowers, tempting and very beautiful (681 d).
ἀκίντιοι	They are some garlands made of the basil thyme ἄκυνθος (680 c).
ἄντινόειος	This is a garland made in Alexandria from the lotus, which grows there; this lotus grows in the marshes in the summer season and it bears flowers of two colors; one looks like the rose, and the garland woven with the flower of this color is called of <i>antinous</i> ; but the other kind is called the lotus garland, being of a dark color (677 d-e).
ἐλικτοί	They are the garlands found among the Alexandrians made up of ivy and narcissus (679 f).
ἐλλωτίς	This is a garland made of myrtle (678 b); myrtle, which was very popular in Greece and was sacred to Aphrodite; myrtle wreaths were worn at weddings, at symposia and also used by Persians in all kinds of celebrations <sup>33</sup> .
ἐλιχρυσον	<i>Helichryse</i> is a garland made of meadow anemone; some, mainly the rustics, made crowns from willow or osier (672 a). As evidenced by Theocritus <sup>34</sup> τοῦς δ' ἦν ξανθοτέρα μὲν ἐλιχρύσοι γενειάς, whoever wears a garland made of the flower of the <i>helichryse</i> sprinkled with ointment, he has a good reputation.
ἐπιθυμίδες	They are garlands of every kind which are worn by women (678 d).
ἴκκυλίστοι	Wreaths, especially those made of roses (678 f).
θυρεατικός	A species of garland used by the Lacedæmonians, later to be called ψίλινος, being made of branches of the palm-tree (678 b).
ἰάκχα	It is a name given to a fragrant garland in the district of Sicyon (678 a).
ἰσθμιακός	<i>Isthmiacum</i> is one type of wreath for which we do not have details (677 c).
κοσμοσάνδαλον	A garland that Lacedæmonians used. Clearchus says that Lacedæmonians, having invented garlands of <i>cosmosandalum</i> , trampled underfoot the most ancient system of polity in the world, and utterly ruined themselves (681 c).
κυλιστός	<i>Kylistos</i> is another kind of garland, which could be made of fig-leaves (678 e).
μελιλώτινοι	They are garlands mentioned by Alexis (678 c).
πόθος	<i>Pothos</i> is a certain kind of garland being made of the flower called πόθος (679d).
πυλέων	It is the name of the garland which the Lacedæmonians place on the head of Juno (678).
στρούθιος	It is a garland made of the flower called στρούθιον, which is a very pretty flower to the eye, but destitute of scent (679 c).
συνθηματιῖοι	They are garlands made and furnished by contract mentioned by Aristophanes <sup>35</sup> .
ὑπογλωττίς	It is also a species of garland (678 d).
ὑποθυμίδες	They are the garlands used by the Aeolians and Ionians, wore around their necks (678 d).
φιλύρινος	This is a garland of leafy linden (679 e).
Χορωνόν	It may be the garland used from the members of the chorus in the theatres, who wore garlands and contended for garlands (680 d).
Χύδαιοι	They are the garlands promiscuously woven (686 b). The obscene connotations of the term may be due to the similarity of the shape of the garland to human <i>genitalia</i> – more probably male than female.

<sup>33</sup> TSIGARIDA, *Late Classical and Early Hellenistic Gold Jewelry from Central Macedonia* cit., p. 313.

<sup>34</sup> Theocritus, *Idyllia* 2, 78.

<sup>35</sup> Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 458.

It may be suggested that the names of wreaths are related to the type of flowers of used to make them (*πόθος*, *έλιχρυσον*), the games or the places where they were awarded (*ισθμιακός*), the emotions (*ἐπιθυμίδες*), the way of their construction (*χύδαιοι*), the events in which they used (*χορινόν*) or the way they were worn (*ὑπογλωττίς*, *ὑποθυμίδες*).

## **Wreaths in context.**

### **a. Athletic games.**

In ancient Greece athletic contests fell into two broad categories: the sacred - crown games called *stephanetic*, which only awarded wreaths as prizes, and the local festivals held in cities and sanctuaries, called *chrematic* games, where they awarded prizes in cash or of material worth<sup>36</sup>. On the basis of inscriptions there are evidences, that some sacred crown games added valuable prices to their perishable wreaths, in the form of objects or precious metal<sup>37</sup>. Although the early Panathenaic games were not classified as *stephanic*, it has been suggested that six-century vase painting depicts officials at Panathenaic games crowning the victors with wreaths<sup>38</sup>.

The four Panhellenic games, Olympia, Pythia, Nemea, and Isthmia were crown games and gave prizes in the form of wreaths<sup>39</sup>; the Olympic Games were associated with the *kotinos*, wild olive, the Isthmia Games with pine and perhaps later with celery (rather dry), the Nemea with celery (*chloro*) and the Pythia Games with laurel and apples. The branches from which victors wreaths were made came from a tree in the valley of the Delphic temple<sup>40</sup>. Victors at major Panhellenic Games received wreaths made from sacred plants and ded-

<sup>36</sup> D. KYLE, *Greek Athletic Competitions: The Ancient Olympics and More*, in R. CHRISTESEN-D. KYLE (eds.), *A companion to Sport and Spectacle in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, Oxford 2014, pp. 22-25.

<sup>37</sup> H. PLEKET, *Inscriptions as Evidence for Greek Sport*, in CHRISTESEN-KYLE (eds.), *A companion cit.*, p. 103.

<sup>38</sup> D. KYLE, *Sport, Society, and Politics in Athens*, in CHRISTESEN- KYLE (eds.), *A companion cit.*, p. 172.

<sup>39</sup> They have all been associated with the traditional wreaths awarded to the winners, hence the question of Anacharsis regarding the wreaths awarded to the winners ὥστε μήλων ἔνεκα καὶ σελίνων τοῦτα προπονεῖν καὶ κινδυνεύειν. see Lucianus, *Anacharsis* 9, 12-13.

<sup>40</sup> D. GILMAN ROMANO, *Athletic Festivals in the Northern Peloponnese and Central Greece*, in CHRISTESEN-KYLE (eds.), *A companion cit.*, p. 180.

icated them to the gods after their victory<sup>41</sup>. Wreaths meant for athletes or worthy men were platted with sprigs of those plants that were sacred to their respective locations, for example laurel at Delphi, olive in Athens<sup>42</sup>.

At the end of the games, the winner performed the victory lap and the spectators gave or threw gifts; when he came to pick them up, the spectators crowned him or tie strips (or band) round his head<sup>43</sup>. Attic iconography corroborates the literary sources in the case of the winners' honorary wreaths. The painters usually did not indicate the particular plant from which the winning wreath was knitted. They often depicted wreaths with a red color and small leaves. An exception is Oltos who depicts floral wreaths on the heads of athletes. In several cases wreaths decorate the heads of the victorious horses<sup>44</sup>.

The wreath was a token of victory and a symbolic but inexpensive prize; it has been suggested that giving cash prizes would otherwise have been uneconomic due to the high number of participants and the numbers of games<sup>45</sup>. However, we might say that crowning in the Panhellenic Games was a symbolic act of the highest moral value with which all winners were honored with an outstanding prize, a symbolic, rather than cash prize for the athletes. The crowns were invested with a transcendental value in relation to their objective value, so the crowned nationwide athletes belonged to an outstanding, "holy" category of citizens in which all honored athletes are equal, having been honored with the same symbolic prize of paramount value, and not classified according to cash prizes. The supreme value belonged not just to the athletes but also reflected on their community, their city.

On the other hand, in local races wreaths were usually combined with a valuable prize; so the wreath in the Panathenaic Games was an olive branch<sup>46</sup>, although we meet references mentioning other prizes, for example, Thucydides mentions that Brasidas was crowned with a golden crown<sup>47</sup> and Pausanias says

<sup>41</sup> Pausanias 5 15, 3.

<sup>42</sup> M. Guarducci, *H Ελληνική Επιγραφική. Από τις απαρχές ως την ύστερη ρωμαϊκή αυτοκρατορική περίοδο*, Athens 2008, p. 204. Simonides, fr. I subfr. 1, 2, also says that the crowns of the games were from roses: στεφάνοισι ρόδων ἀνεδήσατο, / νικάσαις ἐν ἀγῶνι περικτίονων.

<sup>43</sup> KEFALIDOU, *Νικητής* cit., p. 54.

<sup>44</sup> KEFALIDOU, *Νικητής* cit., pp. 56, 65.

<sup>45</sup> M. BLECH, *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*, Berlin 1982, pp. 127-138.

<sup>46</sup> KEFALIDOU, *Νικητής* cit., p. 63.

<sup>47</sup> Thucydides IV 121 καὶ τὸν Βρασίδαν τά τ’ ἄλλα καλῶς ἐδέξαντο καὶ δημοσίᾳ μὲν χρυσῷ στεφάνῳ ἀνέδησαν ὡς ἐλευθεροῦντα τὴν Ἑλλάδα, ίδιᾳ δὲ ἐταινίουν τε καὶ προσήρχοντο ὥσπερ ἀθλητῆ.

that victors in the Pythian Games of 586 B.C. received material prizes, probably tripods, while in 582 B.C. the only prizes offered were wreaths of laurel<sup>48</sup>, a plant sacred to Apollo.

### b. Honorary items.

The Athenian *boule* and *ecclesia* (*Assembly*) in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. awarded prizes to Athenian citizens or foreigners, normally issuing honorary degrees. Among the prizes enjoyed by the guests of honor was being crowned with a wreath and the reason for awarding the honor was stated<sup>49</sup>. If the honoree was an archon, the crowning took place after the giving of the account of the exercise of his duty. The wreath, made from fresh sprigs, was usually of olive and only rarely ivy or laurel. Some cities used other plants relevant to specific locations or circumstances, which had a special meaning: in Delos and Delphi the wreaths were from laurel, in Elefsina from myrtle, in acts concerning Dionysus from ivy<sup>50</sup>. In a few cases it was made of gold. The gold wreath was usually worth 500 or 1,000 drachmas. The maximum value of wreaths was set in many places with a special law, which was mentioned in several degrees with the phrase κατὰ τὸν νόμον<sup>51</sup>.

A great number of the politicians and military leaders were honored with wreaths<sup>52</sup>. The Athenian demos after the reinstatement of Alcibiades<sup>53</sup> to Athens in 411 B.C., bestowed on him a golden crown<sup>54</sup> and elected him *strategos* with sole authority by both land and sea, while the Spartans honored Themistocles, the Athenian *strategos*, for his wisdom and the general Euribiades for valor,

<sup>48</sup> Pausanias 10 7, 5.

<sup>49</sup> A. THEMOS, Τιμητικά ψηφίσματα της Αθηναϊκής Δημοκρατίας για πολίτες της και ξένους, in M. LAGOGIANNI-GEORGAKARAKOU-K. BOURAZELIS, (eds.) "Έδοξεν τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῷ δῆμῳ. Η Αθηναϊκή δημοκρατία μιλάει με τις επιγραφές της", Athens 2007, p. 86.

<sup>50</sup> Guarducci, *H Ελληνική Επιγραφική* cit., pp. 153-4.

<sup>51</sup> *Sylloge*<sup>3</sup> 385, 21.

<sup>52</sup> Heralds, and sometimes messengers, were also crowned, see Xenophon, *Hellenica* V 7, 3 οἱ δὲ Ἀργεῖοι ἐπεμψαν, ὥσπερ εἰώθεσαν, ἐστεφανωμένους δύο κήρυκας ὑποφέροντας σπονδάς, also Xenophon, *Hellenica* VI 4, 19 οἱ δὲ Θηβαῖοι εὐθὺς μὲν μετὰ τὴν μάχην ἐπεμψαν εἰς Ἀθήνας ἄγγελον ἐστεφανωμένον. Even the army during a campaign was marching crowned, see Arrianus, *Anabasis* 6 28, 1.

<sup>53</sup> Thucydides VIII 97.

<sup>54</sup> Plutarchus, *Alcibiades* 33, 2 στεφάνοις μὲν ἐστεφανώθη χρυσοῖς, ἡρέθη δῶμα καὶ κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν αὐτοκράτωρ στρατηγός.

crowning them with an olive wreath<sup>55</sup>. In 409 B.C. the Athenians awarded high honors and crowned Thrasyboulos, one of the assassins of Prynichus, with a gold wreath of value 1000 drachmas for his loyalty to the demos<sup>56</sup>. In 282/1 B.C. the Athenians awarded honors and crowned with a golden wreath the Athenian *epeboi*, because they had executed the orders of the city in an exemplary manner<sup>57</sup>.

Arbitrators were another group of officials<sup>58</sup>. The demos of Tanagra<sup>59</sup>, of Mytilene<sup>60</sup> and of Orchomenos<sup>61</sup> crowned with gold crowns the Megarian judges who settled the dispute between their cities. In 280 B.C. the Deme of Samians awarded honors to the judges who came from Miletus, Myndos and Halicarnassos in order to settle the differences concerning disputed loans between citizens. Among the honors was a crowning with a gold wreath<sup>62</sup>. The deme of Miletus also crowned with a gold wreath the judges from Eretria for their fair judgment<sup>63</sup>.

The Athenian Deme in 333/2 B.C. honored and crowned with a golden wreath Pytheas, son of Sosidimos, because he showed great diligence as supervisor of fountains in the sanctuary of Amphiaraos in Oropos<sup>64</sup>. Athenians in 302/1 B.C. honored two *metics* for excellent deeds benefitting the city of Athens; among the honors is the public crowning with folding crown<sup>65</sup>. In 299/8 B.C., Athens also honored the Athenian citizen Poseidippos for the services offered to the

<sup>55</sup> Plutarchus, *Themistocles* 17, 1 Λακεδαιμόνιοι δ' εἰς τὴν Σπάρτην αὐτὸν καταγαγόντες, Εὑρυβιάδη μὲν ἀνδρείας, ἐκείνῳ δὲ σοφίας ἀριστεῖον ἔδοσαν θαλλοῦ στέφανον.

<sup>56</sup> R. MEIGGS-D. LEWIS, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*, Oxford 1969, pp. 260-263.

<sup>57</sup> *Sylloge*<sup>3</sup> 385, 20-1.

<sup>58</sup> Arbitration was a widespread institution in ancient times, helping in achieving a treaty between two city states. When two cities were in dispute and unable to resolve their own differences, then they assigned the role of mediator to a third city to resolve the dispute with both disputants undertaking to respect its decision. The city that arbitrated sent a committee of judges to the cities in dispute to collect the data necessary to make a decision. When the verdict was announced, and a treaty achieved, the parties concerned usually honored the judges; one of the common honors was to crown the judges. The crowning confirmed the status of judges in a particular category of civic space and it was a moral reward attributed to judges and to the city.

<sup>59</sup> *IG VII* 20

<sup>60</sup> *IG VII* 19

<sup>61</sup> *IG VII* 21

<sup>62</sup> ΣΤ. ΚΟΥΜΑΝΟΥΔΗΣ-Α. ΜΑΤΘΑΙΟΥ, *Αρχαίες Ελληνικές Επιγραφές*, Αθηνai 1988, pp. 92-93.

<sup>63</sup> D. McCABE, *Miletos Inscriptions. Texts and List*, The Princeton Project on the Inscriptions of Anatolia, Princeton 1984, Ionia, Miletus 24. *SEG* 4, 433.

<sup>64</sup> *IG II/III2* 338, *IG VII* 3499, *Sylloge*<sup>3</sup> 281.

<sup>65</sup> *IG II/III2* 505.

public and crowned him with a wreath of olive<sup>66</sup>. Below the inscription a wreath is engraved. In another honorary degree of 255-250 B.C. Athens crowned Heraclitus, son of Asklepiades, for his activities in the service of the city<sup>67</sup>.

In 165/4 B.C. Athens honored Protagoras<sup>68</sup>, the priest of Asclepius, for the proper performance of his duties and, among the other honors; he was crowned with a wreath of olive sprigs. Below the degree a wreath is an engraving within which the honor and the guest of honor are indicated. The text of the degree awarding civil rights to Telestias<sup>69</sup> from the Athenian demos in 140-139 B.C. is framed by honorary wreaths of olive leaves and ivy; wreaths awarded to Telestias for offices that he had undertaken. Another inscription dated to 186/5 B.C. includes two honorary degrees; the first records honors awarded to Zopyros, father of *kanephoros* Timothea, and the second the praises to the twenty four curators of the Dionysian procession. This marble column bears three embossed wreaths, two of ivy and one olive, within which a part of the degree is written<sup>70</sup>.

Alexander the Great honored with gold wreaths three of his colleagues; Peukestas and Leonnatos, because they distinguished themselves in gallantry and the admiral Nearchus because he circumnavigated India<sup>71</sup>. When the Corinthian fleet was ready to sail with Timoleon to Sicily, Timoleon himself journeyed to Delphi and sacrificed to the god; he received the divine sign, when from the votive offerings suspended there, a fillet which had crowns and figures of Victory embroidered upon it slipped away and fell directly upon the head of Timoleon; as though he were being crowned by the god<sup>72</sup>. In the case of the admiral Telestias, apart from crowning, people threw wreaths in the sea to wish him victory<sup>73</sup>. As Sulla drew near to Chaeroneia, the tribune who had been stationed in the city, with his men in full armor, came to meet him, carrying a wreath of laurel<sup>74</sup>. During his victorious tour of Italy Pompey was received by numerous citizens many of whom were wearing wreaths<sup>75</sup>.

<sup>66</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 641.

<sup>67</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 677.

<sup>68</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 950.

<sup>69</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 971.

<sup>70</sup> IG II<sup>2</sup> 896.

<sup>71</sup> Arrianus, *Anabasis* 7 5, 4-6; Arrianus, *Anabasis* 7 10, 3 στέφανοί τε χρυσοί τοῖς πλείστοις ὑμῶν εἰσὶ μνημεῖα τῆς τε ἀρετῆς τῆς ὑμετέρας καὶ τῆς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τιμῆς ἀθάνατα.

<sup>72</sup> Plutarchus, *Timoleon* 8, 2.

<sup>73</sup> Xenophon, *Hellenica* V 1, 3 οἱ μὲν ἐστεφάνωσεν, οἱ δὲ ἐταινίωσεν, οἱ δ' ὑστερήσαντες δόμως καὶ ἀναγομένου ἔρριπτον εἰς τὴν θάλατταν στεφάνους καὶ ηὔχοντο αὐτῷ πολλὰ καὶ ἀγαθά.

<sup>74</sup> Plutarchus, *Sulla* 17, 5.

<sup>75</sup> Plutarchus, *Pompeius* 57, 2, 4.

### c. Decorative motifs on pieces of art and inscriptions.

A wreath is one of the most frequently used motifs, both in funerary and decorative arts. It appears as a motif in painting, mosaic, sculpture and relief. Wreaths created by braiding flowers, leaves, branches or any other material symbolizes the victory, loyalty, dedication, memory and the transition to eternal life<sup>76</sup>.

The wreath is also a symbol of protection and good fortune for the bearer. In the second day of Anthesteria, called Choes, children in their third year underwent a rite of presentation and blessing and were offered a *chous*, a miniature version of a distinctive type of wine jug which was used by the adults during a drinking contest held that day. In these miniatures, babies and small children often depicted to wear wreaths or amulets, for protection and good luck<sup>77</sup>.

Wreaths occur generally in two classes of monuments<sup>78</sup>. The first comprises those erected by some civil body or religious association which is inscribed with an honorary degree and accompanies the inscription with the representation of the crown awarded. The second class comprises the monuments to persons who had their crowns carved on the monument to record the honors they had received. Although the information could be given in words, the crowns display the honor in material form for the eye. Public crowns bear the giver's name, the office or the title of the honored person and the receiver, while the crowns of the private monuments contain the name of the receiver and the cause of the honor.

In the case of public crowns the material used is more often than not stated in the accompanied degree; in the private ones it must be inferred from the shape of the leaves or the character of the giver. The most popular material is usually gold; often its value is added. Olive or *thallos* stands second in point of frequency. The size of the wreaths varied; the earliest are generally 18-19 cm in diameter, but we meet some as small as 11-14 cm. During the second and first centuries B.C. the wreaths were smaller, not exceeding 11 cm diameter, but in the Roman era they tended to increase in size again.

Crown inscriptions were more uniform, offering no such variations as the crowns to which they refer. The ordinary crowns generally contain three terms: giver, cause, receiver. Sometimes the crown includes one, or two or even the three terms placed in sequence. In the arrangement of crowns on the monu-

<sup>76</sup> N. HUNTER, *The Art of Floral Design*, New York 2000, p. 4.

<sup>77</sup> V. SABETAI, *Women's ritual roles in the circle of life*, in N. KALTSAS-H.A. SAPIRO (eds.), *Worshiping Women Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, Athens 2009, p. 290.

<sup>78</sup> A detailed description of the crowns is found in G.B. HUSSEY, *Greek sculpture crowns and crown inscriptions*, «AJA» 6 (1890), pp. 69-95.

ments, two positions have been found to give special emphasis to the crowns placed on them, either the left-hand extremity or the middle. The wreaths which occupied these positions are usually the most important by reason of the rank of the giver and the value of the service for which they were awarded<sup>79</sup>.

For instance, the Argonauts, on the crater of Talos, dated 400 B.C., who are preparing to embark on Crete after killing the bronze giant guardian Talos from Medea, are depicted crowned. Also the female figures depicted in the *epinetron* of the painter of Eretria, dated in 430-420 B.C., are crowned<sup>80</sup>. An interesting case involving the appearance of a wreath is the Attic stele on which a law against tyranny dated 337/6 B.C. is inscribed. On the relief on the top of the stele the symbolic figure of Democracy appear to crown the Athenians<sup>81</sup>.

Many honorary dedications in the Hellenistic era are enriched and decorated with wreaths. Sometimes the representation of a wreath accompanies the text of a decree. The award of a new wreath often is an opportunity for summing up a rich series of wreaths. Sometimes, however, the recording of wreaths becomes an end in itself. The initiative for the exhibition of such *tabulae honorariae* may belong to friends of the honored or even to the honored himself<sup>82</sup>. Alternately, the guest of honor himself took the initiative for self praise; a 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. inscription, *tabulae honorariae*, in a column from Alexandria of Troad bears depiction of 18 wreaths awarded to the dedicatee by cities and confederations<sup>83</sup>.

From the sanctuary of Apollo in Delos, there comes an honorary dedication, dated between 135 and 130 B.C.; an admirer of the famous Athenian athlete Menodoros is accompanied by 36 wreaths arranged in four rows and annotated with the cases in which each one of them was given. Each wreath has different foliage depending on the places where the athlete had won it<sup>84</sup>.

The Attic votive plaque dedicated to Apollo Hypakraios, dated at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., is decorated with a relief myrtle wreath, encircling the dedicatory inscription<sup>85</sup>. In another Attic votive plaque also dedicated to Apollo Hypakraios, dated to 41-53 A.D., the dedication of Ioulios Metrodoros is inscribed inside a wreath<sup>86</sup>.

<sup>79</sup> HUSSEY, *Greek sculpture crowns and crown inscriptions* cit., pp. 72-73, 75, 81, 88.

<sup>80</sup> G. KOKKOROU-ALEURA, *H Τέχνη της Αρχαίας Ελλάδας*, Σύντομη Ιστορία (1050-50 π.Χ.), Αθήνα 1995, pp. 196, 198 and photos 221, 225.

<sup>81</sup> B. MERITT, *Greek inscriptions*, «*Hesperia*» XXI (1952), pp. 355-359.

<sup>82</sup> GUARDUCCI, *H Ελληνική Επιγραφική* cit., p. 203.

<sup>83</sup> *Sylloge*<sup>3</sup> 653; GUARDUCCI, *H Ελληνική Επιγραφική* cit., pp. 204-206.

<sup>84</sup> *I. Délos* 3-5: document 1957.

<sup>85</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 2894.

<sup>86</sup> *IG II/III2* 3, 1: document 2891.

#### d. Death.

The wreaths were part of the burial customs. Even now in Greece during the funeral procession relatives and friends offer flower wreaths to the deceased. It was a widespread custom in antiquity to place a crown on the head of the deceased. The body of the deceased was prepared for the prosthesis or wake. The body was washed and dressed by the women of the house, then laid on a bier with a mattress, pillow and cover. Sometimes it was strewn with wild marjoram, celery and other herbs in order to keep away the bad spirits. The uncovered head was decorated with garlands of laurel and celery<sup>87</sup>.

The scholiast of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* says that the crowns were given to the dead «for having fought their contest with life», while Rohde's suggestion says that the custom was «a sign of respect for the higher sanctity of the departed». Pottier perhaps provides the most plausible explanation saying that «it allowed a last chance to contemplate the deceased 'under a guise of tranquil and serene beauty'». However, crowns and branches were used at most sacred occasions, as well as at symposia, their purpose being no more than to add dignity and luster to the proceedings. In some fourth-century and Hellenistic Athenian burials wreaths of gold have been found, which were doubtless placed on the head of the dead during the prothesis<sup>88</sup>.

A case in point is to be found in Euripides' *Alcestis*<sup>89</sup>. When the heroine realized that her appointed day had come, she prepared herself (bathed, adorned and prayed with her children), then she went up to all the altars in Admetos' house and adorned them wreaths and prayed<sup>90</sup>. At *perideipnon*, the banquet which was taking place after the burial of the dead, the bereaved wore garlands and delivered eulogies on behalf of the dead<sup>91</sup>. Also in the case of the young Roman Virginia, who in 449 B.C. was killed by her father himself, because he wanted to protect her honor from the oligarch Appius Claudius, women and virgins offered wreaths to the corpse of Virginia during the funeral procession ἐξεπήδων γάρ ἐκ τῶν οἰκιῶν γυναῖκές τε καὶ παρθένοι τὸ πάθος ἀποδυρόμεναι, αἱ μὲν ἄνθη καὶ στεφάνους βάλλουσαι κατὰ τῆς κλίνης<sup>92</sup>.

People awarding prizes to the deceased, crowned not only the body of the deceased but also their tombs. When Alexander arrived in Ilion, he crowned

<sup>87</sup> M. ALEXIOU, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*, Oxford 2002, p. 55.

<sup>88</sup> R. GARLAND, *The Greek way of Death*, London 1985, p. 26.

<sup>89</sup> Euripides, *Alcestis* 170-171.

<sup>90</sup> GARLAND, *The Greek way of Death* cit., p. 14.

<sup>91</sup> GARLAND, *The Greek way of Death* cit., p. 39.

<sup>92</sup> J.P.V.D BALSDON, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits*, London 1962, pp. 28-29.

the tomb of Achilles, while Hephaisteion honored the tomb of Patroclus<sup>93</sup>. Messenians also crowned their eminent deceased οἱ Μεσσήιοι τῶν ἐπιφανῶν τὰς ἐκφορὰς ἐποιοῦντο ἐστεφανωμένων<sup>94</sup>, but even those who simply participated in the funeral of Philopoemen of Megalopolis were crowned<sup>95</sup>. In the case of cremation, they crowned the hydria containing the ashes of the dead, as happened in the funeral of Philopoemen<sup>96</sup>. In Modern Greece, on the morning of Good Friday, women and girls gather in the church to decorate the *Epitaphios*, a wooden construction, in which a gold-embroidered likeness of the dead Christ is laid. They weave garlands of spring flowers, violets, lilies, roses to decorate the *Epitaphios* singing the Virgin's lament<sup>97</sup>. In ancient pieces of art women are depicted visiting the tomb and among the grave offerings carried in a basket were wreaths<sup>98</sup>.

*Kouroi* and *korai* were statues of young people used as grave statues. *Korai* statues were functioned as semata over graves or were votives. The objects held by *korai* are usually wreaths and pomegranates, for example the *kore* from Acropolis Museum (no. 593) holds a wreath and a pomegranate and the youth represented on the stele Boston Museum of fine Arts (08.288) wears a wreath and holds a stem with two pomegranates and an aryballos in its other hand<sup>99</sup>. Women who died unmarried were depicted crowned wearing the bridal crown which they never attained in life<sup>100</sup>.

On the marble pedimental grave stele dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. the gladiator Trypheros is depicted with his son Alexander; behind Trypheros eleven wreaths are engraved which represent respective victories<sup>101</sup>. On East Greek stelae dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. to the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., human representations are often accompanied by symbols briefly conveying the specific qualities of the deceased. The Menoplila relief, dated to the late second or early first century B.C., commemorates an outstanding woman, who had

<sup>93</sup> Arrianus, *Anabasis* 1 12, 1.

<sup>94</sup> Pausanias IV 13, 3.

<sup>95</sup> Plutarchus, *Philopoemen* 21, 4.

<sup>96</sup> Plutarchus, *Philopoemen* 21, 3 αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν ίδριαν ὑπὸ πλήθους ταινιῶν τε καὶ στεφάνων μόλις δρωμένην ἐκόμιζεν ὁ τοῦ στρατηγοῦ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν παῖς Πολύβιος καὶ περὶ αὐτὸν οἱ πρώτοι τῶν Ἀχαιῶν.

<sup>97</sup> ALEXIOU, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* cit., p. 77.

<sup>98</sup> J. OAKLEY, *Women in Athenian ritual and funeral art*, in N. KALTSAS-H.A. SAPIRO (eds.), *Worshiping Women Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, Athens 2009, p. 338.

<sup>99</sup> CH. SOURVINOU-INWOOD, 'Reading' the Greek Death. To the End of the Classical Period, Oxford 1995, pp. 241-243.

<sup>100</sup> OAKLEY, *Women in Athenian ritual and funeral art* cit., p. 339.

<sup>101</sup> SEG 1-41: document 25: 473.

held public office and was recognized for her intellectual achievements<sup>102</sup>. On the relief the draped figure of Menophila stands facing forward, wearing a crown on her head.

### e. Love and marriage.

Wreaths played an important role in the erotic discourse. Crowning is a chain which binds people in love<sup>103</sup>. A wreath becomes a messenger disclosing the lover's unexpressed feelings. The lover often weaves a wreath with his own hands as an offering to his sweetheart expressing his love πλέξω λευκοίον, πλέξω δ' ἀπαλήν ἄμα μύρτοις / νάρκισσον, πλέξω καὶ τὰ γελῶντα κρίνα, πλέξω καὶ κρόκον ἡδύν<sup>104</sup>, or as a reminder of the fleeting nature of physical beauty and changing her attitude ταῦτα στεψαμένη, λῆξον μεγάλαυχος ἐούσα / ἀνθεῖς καὶ λήγεις καὶ σὺ καὶ ὁ στέφανος<sup>105</sup>. Wreaths convey the lover's desire and passion<sup>106</sup>. The wreath hung above the door of the beloved will shed the tears the suitor has shed for love onto the head of his object of desire<sup>107</sup>. They also discuss why, if the garlands of men who had been crowned are pulled to pieces, they are said to be in love. The same perception about the lover who denies being in love, but is betrayed when the wreath falls from his head is expressed in the Hellenistic Epigrams<sup>108</sup>. Their possible explanation is that Love himself, taking the crowns from these men, does not permit anyone to be crowned or to be proclaimed as victor over himself without his consent<sup>109</sup>.

<sup>102</sup> K. GUTZWILLER, *Poetic Garlands, Hellenistic Epigrams in Context*, California 1998, pp. 265-266.

<sup>103</sup> Athenaeus 670 b-d.

<sup>104</sup> AP V 147 1-3.

<sup>105</sup> AP V 74 5-6.

<sup>106</sup> In the private dinner of Filoxenos described by Athenaeus (669e-670e) the dinner guests try to explain why lovers crown the doors of their mistresses.

<sup>107</sup> AP V, 145 Λύτοῦ μοι, στέφανοι, παρὰ δικλίσι ταῖσδε κρεμαστὸι μίμνετε, μὴ προπετῶς φύλλα τινασσόμενοι,  
οὓς δακρύνοις κατέβρεξα· κάτομβρα γάρ ὅμματ' ἐρώντων.  
ἀλλ' ὅταν οἰγομένης αὐτὸν ἔδητε θύρης,  
στάξαθ' ὑπέρ κεφαλῆς ἐμόν ὑετόν, ὡς ἂν ἄμεινον  
ἡ ξανθή γε κόμη τάμα πίη δάκρυα.

<sup>108</sup> AP XII 135 Οἶνος ἔρωτος ἔλεγχος· ἐρᾶν ἀρνεύμενον ἥμīν / ἥτασαν αἱ πολλαὶ Νικαγόρην προπόσεις· / καὶ γάρ ἐδάκρυσεν καὶ ἐνύστασε καὶ τι κατηφὲς / ἔβλεπε,  
χῶ σφιγχθεὶς οὐκ ἔμενε στέφανος.

<sup>109</sup> Athenaeus 670 b.

Wreaths were worn on a variety of ritual occasions and so they used to designate a place as ready for ritual activity. We find them in vase paintings to indicate ritual activity, including a wedding<sup>110</sup>. The bride wears a wreath as an ornament and she keeps it during the ceremony. Most stages of the wedding were accompanied by dance, in which the wreaths played a role. The wreath, held by the leader of the dance, links the dance even more closely to the wedding. The bride keeps the wreath on her head until the moment she prepares herself for the bath<sup>111</sup>.

The wreaths were used in Greece in wedding ceremonies, throughout the centuries, by everybody, regardless of social class or financial status. Even at the beginning of the twenty first century, Greeks are still motivated by traditional perceptions about the role of wreaths in a wedding; Modern Greek wedding crowns remain objects with symbolic content which influence beliefs and behavior in conjunction with principles of Christian ethics, as well as perceptions of symbolic domination and secular power<sup>112</sup>.

Floral wreaths were used on a Pan-Hellenic scale. Greeks preferred plants whose symbolism, they believed, positively affected the union of the intended spouses. The preferred plants included vine leaves symbolizing fruitfulness, fertility, happiness, abundance, lushness; the olive that symbolizes peace, the bay leaf symbolizing victory, glory, honor, triumph and simultaneously preventing treacherous forces, and myrtle which symbolizes love, purity. Since marriage is a liminal experience involving risk, a ‘crossing’ when the person passes from one state to another; from celibacy to married life; wreaths, in popular perception, were regarded as vectors of beneficial forces protecting the body from evil forces. So people endow them with magical properties and believe a magical relationship is formed, sealed by the circular shape of wreaths, since the cycle protects what encompasses, keeping away malicious forces. The garland placed on the human head protects as isolates it from the treacherous actions of environment (Heinz) and simultaneously transmits the seminal force that closes within<sup>113</sup>.

<sup>110</sup> J. OAKLEY-R.H. SINOS, *The wedding in Ancient Athens*, Wisconsin 1993, p.7.

<sup>111</sup> OAKLEY, *Women in Athenian ritual and funeral art* cit., pp. 12, 14-15, 18, 27; Stesichorus, 187 *PMG*, describing the wedding of Helen and Menelaus, says they cast many Cydonian apples at the chariot of the king and many myrtle leaves and crowns of roses and braised garlands of violets. It was a custom, called *phyllobolia*, to pelting the bride and the groom with flowers, like victors athletes, generals returning from battle.

<sup>112</sup> E. ANTZOULATOУ-RETSILA, *Ta στέφανα του γάμου στην Νεώτερη Ελλάδα*, Αθήνα 1990, p. 85.

<sup>113</sup> ANTZOULATOУ-RETSILA, *Ta στέφανα* cit., pp. 86-87.

### **f. Symposia and celebrations.**

Wreaths were often used in private events marking the beginning of a celebration; Athenaeus has preserved large quotes from the dinner of Filoxenos, which was a luxurious private dinner. Numerous dinner guests, who are not mentioned by name, as they washed their hands before dinner, received from a boy a wreath braided by shoots myrtle<sup>114</sup>. Formerly, the appearance of garlands and perfumes in a banqueting room used to herald the arrival of the second course<sup>115</sup>. Also at the luxurious dinner of Karanos<sup>116</sup>, wreaths and perfume were offered to dinner guests as gifts. Generally, at men's dinners, where servants used to give each guest a garland and perfumes<sup>117</sup> the fun was designed to satisfy all the senses: taste with the variety of dishes, hearing with song and music, smell with perfumes and wreaths, vision with the sight of beautiful women and dancers<sup>118</sup>.

Plutarchus presents in details the use of wreaths in the symposia<sup>119</sup>. The use of flower wreaths at drinking parties is the subject of a conversation in a party organized at Athens. The musician Erato, after sacrificing to the Muses, offered the guests wreaths of roses instead of laurel after dinner; something leading some guests to complain that wreaths of flowers were girlish and more suitable for maids and women, not for companies of educated men. These comments may indicate that wreaths of flowers were regularly used by girls and women. In the same party the wreaths of flowers are said to be dedicated to the Muses and Dionysus who was considered a good physician: not only for his discovery of wine but also for teaching his celebrants to wear crowns of ivy so that they might suffer less distress, since ivy, by virtue of its coldness, checks intoxication. The beneficial effect of flowers on the body and mind is also mentioned. The exhalations of flowers protect the head against drunkenness as walls protect a citadel against attack; the warm flowers by their gentle relaxing action open the body's ducts and give the wine a vent, on the other hand, the cool ones check the fumes; as is the case with the wreaths made of violets and roses, the scent of which discourages and alleviates headaches, while the flower of

<sup>114</sup> Athenaeus 685d-f.

<sup>115</sup> Athenaeus 685 d.

<sup>116</sup> Athenaeus 128 a-130 e.

<sup>117</sup> Athenaeus 665 d-669 d.

<sup>118</sup> Plato, *Symposium* 212 e 1-2, also refers to Alcibiades appearing crowned in the symposium ἐστεφανωμένον αὐτὸν κιττοῦ τέ τινι στεφάνῳ δασεῖ καὶ ἵων, καὶ ταινίας ἔχοντα ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς πάνυ πολλάς.

<sup>119</sup> Plutarchus, *Moralia* 645 e, 647 d-e.

henna and the saffron lead drinkers into an untroubled sleep. It is also mentioned that the scent of some flowers clean out the conduits of the organs and by their warmth the brain is warmed, which is cold by nature. This is the reason that men hung wreathes around their necks.

The erotic and sympotic epigrams also feature wreaths quite often. In a epigram of Asclepiades Nikagoras, under the influence of wine, bursts into tears and reveals to his friends that he is in love. In the last line of the epigram the wreath slipping from the bow of the drunken lover provides the mind's eye with a graphic image, finally proving, and finalizing the opening *gnome*<sup>120</sup>. In another epigram the lover's tears are transformed into raindrops and wet the petals of the wreath<sup>121</sup>.

### g. Sacrifices.

The Lacedaemonians at the festival of the Promachia, wore garlands of reeds, of them Sosibius writes thus: «On this festival the natives of the country all wear garlands of reeds, or tiaras, but the boys who have been brought up in the public school follow without any garland at all»<sup>122</sup>. But in the annual festival of Laconia in honor of Hyakinthos and Apollo, which lasted three days, the first part was a period of mourning devoted to Hyakinthos, no garlands, bread or wine were brought to the banquets<sup>123</sup>.

Aristotle distinguishes two types of public sacrifice: those assigned by the convention to priests and those performed by the officials. In Athens, the principal nine magistracies were described as «crown-wearing». The crown was a symbol of sacredness, which assimilated magistrates to priests. In many Hellenic cities the eponymous magistrate came to be known as *Stephaniphoros*, the crown-wearer, and the crown that he wore was apparently sacred to a specific god<sup>124</sup>.

According to Xenophanes people wore wreaths on their heads while sacrificing to the gods πλεκτοὺς δ' ἀμφιτιθεῖ στεφάνους<sup>125</sup>, which is confirmed by Plutarch saying that Archias, who along with Leontidis had installed a tyran-

<sup>120</sup> AP XII 135 4.

<sup>121</sup> AP V 145 3.

<sup>122</sup> Athenaeus 674 b.

<sup>123</sup> ALEXIOU, *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition* cit., p. 58.

<sup>124</sup> R. PARKER, *On Greek Religion*, London 2011, p. 54.

<sup>125</sup> Xenophanes 21 B1, 2DK (= E. Diels-W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* I, Berlin 1960).

nical regime in Thebes in 381 B.C., appeared at the door to greet the unexpected guests wearing a wreath on his head to show that he had supposedly made sacrifices<sup>126</sup>. Xenophon also mentions that during the campaigns, those who carried out sacrifices were crowned τῇ δ' ὑστεραίᾳ τὰ μὲν ἱερεῖα εἰς τὴν παρὰ τὸν βωμὸν καὶ Κοιρατάδας ἐστέφανωμένος ὡς θύσων<sup>127</sup>. Alexander also sacrificed near the wall of Gaza crowned<sup>128</sup>, as well as all Macedonians soldiers who praised the god Dionysus being crowned<sup>129</sup>.

### **Christian Iconography.**

In the pagan world, art gives us many excellent examples of gods and goddesses that appear crowned. In the bell-shaped crater of the painter of Pan, dated to 470 B.C., the goddess Artemis, who shoots Aktaion with her bow, is depicted crowned. While in the crater of Niobids, dated to 455-450 B.C., where the children of Leto are depicted shooting arrows at the children of Niobe, Apollo is depicted crowned<sup>130</sup>.

In 313/2 B.C. in an honorary decree of the demos of Aixone<sup>131</sup> concerning two *choregoi* (sponsors) of theatrical performances, the god Dionysus is depicted crowned and enthroned, holding out his drinking cup to the young satyr for wine. Below the inscription two large wreaths are inscribed. Apollo is also depicted crowned in a red-figure crater of 380 B.C. On feasts in honor of the goddess Artemis, dogs were crowned since it was a celebration dedicated to them<sup>132</sup>.

In the Christian world, capitalizing on the heritage from Antiquity, the crown signifies the glory of the elect and the incorruptible life that someone has won<sup>133</sup>. The Apostle Paul explains the meaning of the crown for Christians, saying that the athletes exercise self-control in all things in order to receive a

<sup>126</sup> Plutarchus, *Moralia* 594f αὐτὸς δ' ἀπαντήσας ἔχων στέφανον ὡς τεθυκὼς καὶ πίνων, ἐπινθάνετο τῶν ὑπηρετῶν ὃ τι βούλοιντο.

<sup>127</sup> Xenophon, *Anabasis* VII 1, 40.

<sup>128</sup> Arrianus, *Anabasis* 2 26, 4.

<sup>129</sup> Arrianus, *Anabasis* 5 2, 7.

<sup>130</sup> KOKKOROU-ALEURA, H. Τέχνη τῆς Αρχαίας Ελλάδας cit., pp. 178-179 and photos 184 and 185.

<sup>131</sup> «Athenische Mitteilungen» 66 (1941), pp. 218-219.

<sup>132</sup> Arrianus, *Cynegeticus* 34 3, 4.

<sup>133</sup> F. LANZI-G. LANZI, *Saints and their Symbols: Recognizing Saints in Art and in Popular Images*, Minnesota 2004, p. 25.

perishable wreath, but Christians to win an imperishable one<sup>134</sup>. Wreath represents the resurrection of Christ and thus eternal life, apropos the victory of life over death. With this meaning, it has been a popular motif in art, especially in funerary context<sup>135</sup>.

The wreath is the visual reward of the sanctity of the person depicted and regularly appears in Byzantine art as a motif. Martyrs who wear the crown on their heads have received it from angels or divine personages themselves. At times, Christ himself bestows the crown and with this meaningful gesture confirms it as a sign and acknowledgement of participation in divine life and the fulfilment of the duty assigned to the martyr; for example, Christ crowns St Catherine<sup>136</sup>, who is illustrated by many artists in the eastern and western iconography wearing the imperial crown and gown of a Byzantine empress<sup>137</sup>. On a sarcophagus located in the Cathedral-Duomo of Ravenna, Christ is depicted enthroned, with the two Apostles, Peter and Paul, offering him wreaths. The wreath constitutes an acknowledgement of spiritual victory by a human being, and rewards the immensity of their efforts to achieve this as expressed by the Apostle Paul<sup>138</sup>.

In ancient Greek literature crown is the symbol of martyrdom which is connected with the concepts of *passio* and *corona*, concepts that are interdependent and coexist. The martyr offers to God a martyric end, as a nice wreath, and gets from God the crown of immortality<sup>139</sup>. The metal crown, depending on the value of its metal and decoration, recalls the fullness of power and the sovereignty; finally the crown became the symbol of sovereigns. In addition to the crown, the *nimbus*, the «little cloud» surrounding the head of the divine persons and saints is of Eastern origin and represents the sun; the royal crown appeared previously in images of the Olympian Gods. The images of kings showed the *nimbus* as an early symbol of sovereignty while the circular form

<sup>134</sup> Paul, 1 Cor 9, 24-27 πᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται, ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὖν ἵνα φθαρτὸν στέφανον λάβωσιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄφθαρτον.

<sup>135</sup> ROGIC, *Wreath-its use and meaning in ancient visual culture* cit., p. 352.

<sup>136</sup> A. ORPHANOS, Αυτοκεφαλοφόροι Ἅγιοι·Μάρτυρες και κεφαλοφόροι Αγίων·Μαρτύρων στην Ορθόδοξη Τέχνη, Αθήνα 2013, p. 280-photo 145.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263-photo 112 and p. 280-photo 145.

<sup>138</sup> Paul, 2 Timothy 4,7-8 τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν καλὸν ἡγώνισμαι, τὸν δρόμον τετέλεκα, τὴν πίστιν τετήρηκα λοιπὸν ἀπόκειται μοι ὁ τῆς δικαιοσύνης στέφανος, ὃν ἀποδώσει μοι ὁ Κύριος ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, ὁ δίκαιος κριτής, οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐμοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἡγαπηκόσι τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν αὐτοῦ.

<sup>139</sup> K. CHARALABIDES, *Ο αποκεφαλισμός των μαρτύρων εις τα ιστορικοφιλολογικά πηγάς και την Βυζαντινήν Τέχνην*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1983, p. 239.

was a reference to the completeness of their dominion, and also appears in images of Roman emperors<sup>140</sup>.

## **Part II: Wreaths in Egypt - Evidence from the papyri.**

### **The term στέφανος in papyri.**

The terms στέφανος, στέφανος χρυσός, στεφανικόν, στεφανικόν χρήμα, πράκτωρ στεφανικῶν are frequently found in papyri, as a rule associated with the crown tax<sup>141</sup>. In Egypt the crown tax, *aurum coronarium*, was, during the first three centuries, a tax connected with the royal crowns. The στεφανικός had its origin in the Ptolemaic period, although it was not confined to Egypt. It was a pre-Roman custom to offer golden crowns to the Ptolemies on accession. Like other monarchs, the Ptolemies received on their accession gold crowns, which were ostensibly the voluntary offering of their royal subjects<sup>142</sup>. After the Roman occupation the offerings lost their voluntary character and became a source of regular revenue<sup>143</sup>. The occasions for levying the crown tax and the methods of assessment varied. As time went by, cash offerings became more acceptable to the rulers than crowns. Roman emperors accepted such gifts and the *aurum coronarium*, levied as a tax, became an important source of imperial revenue. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century and early 2<sup>nd</sup>, wreaths were offered to the emperor on different occasions, triumphs, anniversaries and similar festivals, which may have been a good excuse for assessing the *aurum coronarium* in Egypt. In a few cases true gold was given to the Emperor. Towards the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the principle behind the crown tax was forgotten and the στεφανικός became just another tax imposed on an annual basis. Therefore some emperors, such as Caracalla and Elagabalus, apart from the crown tax, demanded additionally the *aurum coronarium*. The crown tax was very often collected in monthly installments, but often in irregular installments; in some cases the levy was calculated in accordance with the land, and even to a specific tariff per aroura. Special collectors were appointed to assess and collect the crown tax. The large amounts collected indicate that the στεφανικός was a heavy burden for Egyptians<sup>144</sup>.

<sup>140</sup> LANZI-LANZI, *Saints and their Symbols: Recognizing Saints in Art and in Popular Images* cit., p. 26.

<sup>141</sup> A. BOWMAN, *The crown tax in Roman Egypt*, «BASP» 4 (1967), p. 60.

<sup>142</sup> SH. WALLACE, *Taxation in Egypt from Augustus to Diocletian*, Princeton 1938, p. 281.

<sup>143</sup> BOWMAN, *The crown tax in Roman Egypt* cit., p. 59.

<sup>144</sup> WALLACE, *Taxation in Egypt from Augustus to Diocletian* cit., pp. 281-3.

Apart from the references to στέφανος connected with the crown tax, there are others concerning the use of wreaths in political and social life. These limited and fragmentary references regarding those professionals, *garland sellers* and *garland weavers* show that crowns were used on a regular basis in people's social life. The references to wreaths in the accounts maybe refer to a class that could pay the cost of weaving to professionals; poor people possible made them by themselves, as most Greeks nowadays on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, weave a wreath of flowers to hang on the front door of their house. In extraordinary cases some people order elaborate wreaths from professionals.

Wreaths were commercial products and were sold as all daily commodities. In the market place, which was a central feature of each town, citizens could buy, among other products, wreaths. At the Serapeum market in Oxyrhynchos one could find fine bread, coarse bread, butchers' meat, fruit, olives, pottery, shoes and garlands. Oxyrhynchos maintained a good a population of specialist tradesmen. Among a wide variety of tradesmen were the garland-weavers. Those who sold at the market were subject to dues; among them the garland weavers paid a charge each month «per workplace»<sup>145</sup>.

Due to the fragmentary and limited references it is not possible to know the cost of a wreath, including the material and the labor, apart from the case recorded in POxy XII 1413 26-37.

### Wreaths in Egypt.

In Pharaonic Egypt, wreaths used at funerals were associated with the crown which the deceased received after passing the test of the weighing of the heart in the Hall of Judgment; it represented the victory over death in the afterlife in emulation of Osiris, the god of resurrection. It was made of various materials including laurel, palm, feathers, papyrus, roses, or precious metals<sup>146</sup>. Concerning evergreen garlands in Egypt, Helanicus, in his History of Egypt, writes that in the city called Tindium, where many gods are assembled, there is a sacred temple of great size made of marble, and the doors are marble. Within the temple grow white and black thorns, on which garlands were placed made of the flower of the acanthus, and also of the blossoms of the pomegranate, and of vine leaves<sup>147</sup>.

<sup>145</sup> P. PARSONS, *City of the sharp-nosed fish. Greek Lives in Roman Egypt*, London 2007, pp. 48, 102-104.

<sup>146</sup> L.H. CORCORAN-M. SVOBODA, *Herakleides: A Portrait Mummy from Roman Egypt*, L. Angeles 2010, pp. 32-33.

<sup>147</sup> Hellanicus, *FGrHist* 4F 54, 1-9 (= F. JACOBY, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* 1a, Leiden 1995); Athenaeus 680 a.

In Egypt, as in Greece, wreaths were quite popular despite the limited references in the papyri. They were used by ordinary people in celebrations; no party was complete without garlands, bought from the garland-makers, and scented with oil<sup>148</sup>. They were offered as presents to guests or visitors or to people who celebrate an important moment of their life. Theopompus quotes that, when Agesilaus the Lacedaemonian arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians sent him many presents, and among them the papyrus, which is used for making garlands<sup>149</sup>. Hellanicus also mentions that Amasis, who was originally a private individual and a common man, became king of Egypt thanks to a beautiful crown sent to king of Egypt, Patarmis, when he was celebrating the festival of his birthday<sup>150</sup>.

### **Material of wreaths in papyri.**

We find in papyri wreaths made from metals, of gold<sup>151</sup>, silver<sup>152</sup>, copper<sup>153</sup> or wreaths made of flowers<sup>154</sup> and wild pomegranate tree blossoms<sup>155</sup>. Roses and narcissi were favored for weddings as it is proved form POxy XLVI 3313 (A.D. II) where the senders of the letter had supplied the recipient for his son's wedding with 1,000 roses and 4,000 narcissi.

### **Political and religious life.**

The POxy XLIII 3121 (316-18 A.D.), an account of expenditure, gives us important testimony regarding the offering of crowns to the rulers; the expenses recorded in this document were made in connection with a gold crown delivered to Licinius on the occasion of the birthday of his son, Licinius junior. In spite of the continuing levies of *aurum coronation*, it is clear from the language

<sup>148</sup> Parsons, *City of the sharp-nosed fish* cit., p. 113.

<sup>149</sup> Theopompus, *FGrHist* 115 F- 106b, 507 (= F. JACOBY, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* 2b, Leiden 1995).

<sup>150</sup> Hellanicus, *FGrHist* 55, 1-8; Athenaeus 680 c.

<sup>151</sup> BCU V 1185, 5; POxy XII 1413, 25; POxy XVI 2002, 3; PRyl II 213, 352.

<sup>152</sup> BGU XIII 2217, 14 στεφ(άνια) ἀργ(υρᾶ) 2 ἔχοντα φύλλα.

<sup>153</sup> PGrenf I 41, 3 ὑπάρξει σοι εἰς στέφανον χαλκοῦ τάλαντα δεκάπεντε.

<sup>154</sup> POxy XXXVI 2797, 13-4 στέφανοι ἄνθινοι; PRossGeorg II 41, 14 στεφανίων ῥοδί(νων) or BGU VI 1484, 5 στέφανοι μύρου.

<sup>155</sup> PSI V 333, 8 στεφάνους βαλανστίνων.

of the document that a real gold crown was made for his special celebration. The POxy XII 1413 26-37, records the proceedings in the town council concerning a gold crown and a statue of Victor being made for Aurelian. It gives us important and possibly unique evidence regarding the cost of a gold crown. The price for the gold crown is 288 talents per pound. The whole crown was to weight 426 grams, and the fee for working on the crown is 592 denarii, out of the total cost of 1,776 denarii.

Wreaths also played a role in sacrifices and celebrations; eight flower wreaths, στέφανοι ἀνθινοι, are mentioned in a list of articles for sacrifice<sup>156</sup>. Sixteen wreaths are recorded in a short list of objects, which had been supplied to a *strategus* for the celebration of a sacrifice to the Nile<sup>157</sup>. Undertaking an office was a significant moment in the life of a man. Such a special moment must be accompanied by the crowning as a price indication; even if the crown is used with the sense of ‘office’<sup>158</sup>, it is indicative that taking a political position was usually accompanied by a crown. The winner of the games held during the Triumphal Entry was honored with the crown<sup>159</sup>.

### Honors in persons and Gods.

The honorary crown is known as an insignia of persons holding honorary posts in the municipality and priests. An honorary crown had been awarded to the petitioner, who wished to be released from liturgies for reasons of age and physical condition<sup>160</sup>. The crowning also attributes prizes to an athlete or an artist, in POxy XXXI 2611 (192/3 A.D.) a document that recounts episodes in the career of a successful athlete or Dionysian artist. Wreaths value two *oboloi* are also recorded together with food, stuff and other items which were to be a shrine to the goddess Isis and Aphrodites<sup>161</sup>. Unfortunately in many cases the role and purpose of the use of crowns are not specified<sup>162</sup>.

<sup>156</sup> POxy XXXVI 2797 (A.D. III/IV).

<sup>157</sup> POxy IX 1211 (A.D. II).

<sup>158</sup> Possibly in PRyl II 77 2, 36 εἰ μὲν οὖν ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς βούλεται στεφανωθῆναι ἐξηγητεῖαν.

<sup>159</sup> SB 18 13751 [ὑπὲρ δίψωντων μον[υ] ὅν ἐνίκησα καὶ ἐστεφανώθην [ίερῶν] [εἰσελαστικῶν ἀγάθων c ?].

<sup>160</sup> PWisc I 3, 2 (57-9 A.D.).

<sup>161</sup> PBrook 22 (A.D. II).

<sup>162</sup> In POxy VI 936, 11-12 (A.D. III) Pausanias in the letter to his father, among various goods, mentions three honey sweet garlands, μελιτινοι στέφανοι. Also in PTebt II 550 (A.D.

There are some sporadic references to the professionals garland makers and garland sellers, some of them are known by their name<sup>163</sup>. A garland seller, στεφανοπώλης<sup>164</sup>, is reported in a private account of the 1<sup>st</sup> A.D.; a garland maker, στεφανοπλόκος, was paid 100 drachmas, but we do not know for how many garlands<sup>165</sup>; another garland maker, Didymus, gives orders to an employee<sup>166</sup>.

### **Magic papyri.**

Wreaths, as essential part of ancient festivities, ceremonies and sacrifices, were used in the magical rituals. The magical papyri present some quite interesting references of wreaths used during these rituals. The participants wore wreaths either on their heads or their hands which were made of chains of trees, plants and flowers, such as *laurel*<sup>167</sup>, *marjoram*<sup>168</sup>, *black ivy*<sup>169</sup>, *artemisia*<sup>170</sup>, *olive branch*<sup>171</sup>. Sometimes they tied a white ribbon around their head, often decorated with red wool<sup>172</sup>; in another case two names are engraved on a wreath made of an olive branch<sup>173</sup>; but the most impressive crown is the one made of a cattail<sup>174</sup>. Also, gods are crowned with wreaths and chapels are decorated with them; even nowadays in Greece churches and icons of saints are decorated with ribbons and wreaths during festivities. Gods appear were crowned with flaming wreaths<sup>175</sup> or gold<sup>176</sup> and chapels with olive wreaths or garlands<sup>177</sup>.

II.) an account of payments for various purposes among the recorded items wreaths are mentioned, as well as in PMilvogl III 188, col.1, 19 (127/8 A.D.) an account of expenses.

<sup>163</sup> A few names of garland makers are preserved in PMil V 224 r 38 Δημᾶς Φανομγέως Καστρῆσις, in POxy XXIV 2412 5,138 Κολλούθης Σεμθοίμαέντ], in POxy XXIV 2421 1, 5 Ὄντης, in PPanop 14 1, 19 Ὡρου στεφανηπλόκ(ου) καὶ Πετήσιος στεφανηπλόκ(ου) and in BGU XIII 2280, 8 Ἡρᾶς.

<sup>164</sup> PRyl II 224, 9.

<sup>165</sup> BGU VII 1528.

<sup>166</sup> POxy XXXI 2614 (A.D. III).

<sup>167</sup> PGM II 27

<sup>168</sup> PGM VII 728 ἐν οἴκῳ ἐπιπέδῳ χωρὶς φωτὸς στεφανωσάμενος σαμψουχίνῳ στεφάνῳ.

<sup>169</sup> PGM IV 172 σὺ δὲ αὐτὸς στεψάμενος κισσῷ μέλαινι ... κατακλίθητι ἄνω βλέπων.

<sup>170</sup> PGM IV 914 χρὴ δὲ στεφανῶσαι αὐτὸν στεφάνῳ ἀρτεμισίᾳς χλωρικῆς.

<sup>171</sup> PGM IV 934, 3198.

<sup>172</sup> PGM XIII 1006 ποίει σεαυτῷ στέφανον, περιπλέξεις αὐτῷ στέφοις, ὅ ἐστιν λευκόν ἔριον, ἐκ διαστημάτων δεδεμένον φουνικῷ ἔριῳ.

<sup>173</sup> PGM II 70.

<sup>174</sup> PGM VII 847 ἐστεμμένος οὐρὰν αἰλουρου ἐπὶ ὕρας ἐώ.

<sup>175</sup> PGM IV 637 ἐν χιτῶνι λευκῷ καὶ χλαμύδι κοκκίνῃ ἔχοντα πύριον στέφανον.

<sup>176</sup> PGM IV 698 ἐν χιτῶνι λευκῷ καὶ χρυσῷ στεφάνῳ.

<sup>177</sup> PGM I 22 στεφανώσας αὐτὸν τὸν ναόν, PGM IV 3153 στεφανοῦ δὲ τὸ ναϊσκάριον ἐλαίνῳ.

**Conclusion.**

Crowns were widely and consistently used throughout the ancient Greek and Roman world, as well as later in Byzantium, in the major events of religious, political and social life. Their use is classless: rulers and ordinary people, famous and obscure dead, winners in games, worshipers and soldiers, lovers and symposiasts, generals and dancers, priestesses and gods, ambassadors and messengers, all appeared crowned, either with metal or floral wreaths.

Metal wreaths of gold, bronze and silver, in the course of time, were simplified to become formulaic, while the gold wreaths became jewelry used especially by women to enhance their beauty. Floral wreaths, which were composed of a variety of flowers and riots of colors, pleased the senses and created joyous mood, while in other cases medicinal properties were attributed to them; the scent of flowers relieved the bearer from a headache.

Crowning rewarded someone who successfully completed a difficult task, overcame an obstacle or achieved a major victory in sports, politics or performed a military feat. The assumption of an office, participation in sacred ceremonies, the union of a couple with bonds of marriage were all sealed with a crowning, no mere formality, but an act endowed with particular symbolism. For the ancient Greeks, the wreath was replete with meanings and symbolism. The wreath imbued its wearers with sacred or revered virtues, it marked and distinguished the bearer, and symbolically protected his head, the most important part of the human body. It indicated that the one crowned was clean, purified and ready to initiate a ceremony or ritual, to transcend the mundane and ascend mentally into a morally and spiritually superior world.

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