

**CEREMONIES OF ATHLETIC VICTORY IN ANCIENT GREECE:  
AN INTERPRETATION  
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«The idea that a custom can be interpreted  
seems to me pointless»  
L.Wittgenstein, *Bemerkungen*

The representations of victors in athletic contests constitute an extensive iconographic group in Attic vase painting of the Archaic and classical period<sup>1</sup>. These scenes are a fraction of the wider group of athletic depictions, but their painters are not concerned with athletics in general, only with the concepts of victory and reward. Depictions of athletes are known already from the Minoan and Mycenaean period, but these always concern the race and do not emphasize the victor. The figure of the victorious competitor emerges from the literature and art of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The Homeric victors belong to the mythical era but Hesiod (*Opera*, 657) refers to his own victory in a musical contest. The earliest Attic inscription is a prize inscription on a humble oinochoe from the Dipylon area in Athens and refers to the victor of a dance competition (ca. 750-725 B.C.)<sup>2</sup>. The earliest victor in vase painting is the dancer PyrFias who appears on a small Corinthian aryballos of 580-575 B.C.<sup>3</sup>. A few years later the “Corinthianising” Painter C draws the first victor in Attic vase painting<sup>4</sup>.

In this paper I will not refer to the contents of victorious ceremonies such as the victory run (*periagermos*), the showering of the victor with leaves, flowers and gifts (*phyllobolia*), the proclamation of his name (*anakeryxis*), the crowning with wreaths of fillets (*stepsis* or *tainiosis*) and the awarding of the prizes (*apodosis epathlon*). I only mention that the events that followed victory in a race are known from written sources, which give abundant but often vague information. The extant sources include texts from various periods, of which the latest are the most extensive<sup>5</sup>.

The sentence of Wittgenstein quoted above renders the following argument quite dubious. It is doubtful whether any generalization can be based on the iconography of a limited number of Attic vases, which reflect the impressions of a specific period experienced, observed and selected for depiction by some vase painters. In order to circumvent this problem, the evidence examined will include not only depictions of victorious scenes, but also ancient iconography in general, as well as written sources and anthropological scholarship, in an attempt to understand the people who depicted their world through the representation of scenes of victory.

While it may appear that the proclamation of the names of victors and the awarding of the prizes are self-evident in meaning, this is certainly not the case with two related events: the showering of the victor with leaves, flowers and gifts (*phyllobolia*) and the crowing with wreaths or fillets (*stepsis* or *tainiosis*). An understanding of the origins of these aspects of the ceremony is not the same as an understanding of their meaning. The reconstruction of the processual stages of a custom does not elucidate the meaning of the practice as exercised in a specific time-period. It is important, therefore, that the questions for the origins of victory celebrations as well as for their

significance to those who participated in them, are borne in mind at all times<sup>6</sup>.

The victorious events are being labeled "ceremonies" and not "rites". The distinction is important. The "ceremony" is a prescriptive and public connection of activities, usually symbolic, which marks the passing or the recollection of an important event. It is different to the "rite" because it is always public in nature, being based upon the collaboration, participation and presence of many people; its religious and magical elements are neither as frequent or as intense as those utilized in the rite. Additionally, while the rite can be exercised in private or be part of a ceremony, the converse is not true<sup>7</sup>.

An attempt will be made to demonstrate that some symbolic actions with religious or magical elements may be discerned in the ritual aspects of victorious ceremonies. The significance of the ritual element, therefore, should be accepted, probably as the focus of the triumphal ceremony.

Our discussion will start with the characteristic fillets, which bound the heads and bodies of the winner, something, which has not been examined from the symbolic perspective until now<sup>8</sup>. The filleting of man, animal, plant or object is, of course, the simplest way for these things to be distinguished, allowing them to appear different. On a second level, however, fillets may act to establish or protect the objects or persons, which they adorn, rendering them untouchable (taboo)<sup>9</sup>. In addition to filleting, there is also the tethering of a man, animal etc., to a second object or organism; in such a case the tying aims towards a restoration of contact<sup>10</sup>.

Binding with fillets is not exclusively practiced on successful athletes. Victors in musical contests<sup>11</sup>, distinguished politicians or military personnel, cadavers in burial practices (the dead<sup>12</sup>, tumuli and grave stele<sup>13</sup>) as well as sacrificial animals<sup>14</sup> are all adorned with fillets. Fillets also appear on columns and pillars<sup>15</sup>, trees<sup>16</sup> and statues of worship<sup>17</sup>. The binding of amulets<sup>18</sup> with strings or threads is evidence of the magical significance of binding. This custom of binding has survived to modern times in Greece. Known as *martis*, it consists of red and white interwoven threads believed to have both protective and apotropaic powers<sup>19</sup>. Although the fillets depicted in Attic iconography are red, it is uncertain whether or not they were indeed red or simply painted as such due to convention, which may have also caused all victors' wreaths to be rendered in red. If we accept the former argument, we must consider the magic properties of the color red as perceived by the ancients; red is associated with blood, life and death<sup>20</sup>.

Wreaths (and branches in general), which will be examined now, were very common in various aspects of every day life of the ancient Greeks, so specific examples of their use are not needed here<sup>21</sup>. Earlier scholarship had asserted that plants were believed to be incarnations of the "spirits of the trees" or the "spirits of vegetation"<sup>22</sup>. The wreath itself, like the branches or flowers of which it was made, brought luck and divine protection: the branch which blossoms was benevolent because its latent power was transferred to whomever touched or held it, thus allowing man to communicate with the divine<sup>23</sup>. The purity and the sanctity of the wreath as bestowed on the wreathed person, therefore, must be emphasized; this conception is considered as infectious magic (Kontaktmagie)<sup>24</sup>.

Although the ancient Greeks retained, of course, the "sacred silence" regarding the sanctity of the plants some scholars have proffered various interesting views with regard to this. D. Sansone, for instance, has argued that the branches and wreaths used by the ancient Greeks can be related back to the camouflage of the Paleolithic hunter<sup>25</sup>. Wittgenstein, however, would have totally rejected the "infectious magic" theory, saying that it reminded him of the mouse in *Alice in Wonderland* who attempts to become dry by reading the driest thing in the world<sup>26</sup>.

Of great importance is that for the ancient Greeks the wreath was pregnant with several significances and symbolic meanings: distinguished those who wore it, protected the head, the most important part of the human body and signified that the wreathed person was sacred, pure and ready to start a specific process. The wreath was a life-carrier, it contained life itself. Some scholars have not distinguished between the wreath and the branch<sup>27</sup>, while others have emphasized that the tying of the wreaths around the head was a very important element in the ceremony. In fact it had a similar effect as the binding of the fillets, as it was perceived to convey certain qualities on the wearer<sup>28</sup>.

It is also of some significance that the wreaths used in the panhellenic and other competitions were weaved with wild, inedible plants. However, it should be borne in mind that many wild plants were easily accessible and could be utilized with ease given the flexible nature of their shoots and the fact that they do not decompose quickly. This meant that wreaths won could be preserved as memoirs for some time after victory; the wreath was not destroyed but preserved<sup>29</sup>. The view that the victorious wreath awarded to athletes derived from the funerary equivalent because the first races formed part of funerary ceremonies has long since been abandoned<sup>30</sup>.

It remains to examine the custom of *phyllobolia*, in which branches, wreaths, fillets and various other gifts were thrown (the expediency of the latter is obvious). It is known from both written sources and iconography that this practice was not exercised only for athletic victors. It was also used to honor: a) the deceased, b) famous politicians, military personnel and city benefactors, and c) brides and grooms during the nuptial procession.

a) Euripides refers to the *phyllobolia* of the dead Polyxene<sup>31</sup>. Dionysius of Halicarnassos (XI.39.5-7) describes the use of the custom of "phylobollia", in honor of a certain Virginia, who was killed by her father in order to preserve her chastity, threatened by the oligarch Appius Claudius. Thus her death (449 B.C.) became a symbol of democracy while Virginia herself became a posthumous public figure<sup>32</sup>. Her body was placed in the Forum and the funeral procession passed through the main streets of Rome: *the matrons and maidens run out of their houses lamenting her fate, some throwing flowers and garlands upon the bier, some their girdles or fillets, others their childhood toys ... and many of the men ... contributed to the funeral pomp by the appropriate gifts.*

The covering or deposition of leaves or branches on the corpse was a widespread burial custom<sup>33</sup>, which had been practiced since Paleolithic times (12000 B.P.). Pollen analysis of a Paleolithic interment in the cave of Shanidar in the Zagros range of northern Iraq<sup>34</sup> indicates its use.

In the case of cremation, *phyllobolia* was exercised upon the urn<sup>35</sup>. Similarly, the practice was exercised upon tumuli or stele, or they were strewn with branches<sup>36</sup>.

b) *Phyllobolia*, as commonly exercised for those who were beloved, famous or successful in public life, especially subsequent to a glorious action, on return from a victorious battle or campaign and other, similar events<sup>37</sup>. The custom was exercised on Drakon and Polykrita in respect of their special services<sup>38</sup>. Plutarch's description of the *phyllobolia* exercised upon Pericles and Ceasar, evidences the athletic origins of the practice (*Per.*, 28.4): *as he came down from the bema, the rest of the women clasped his hand and fastened wreaths and fillets on his head, as though he were some victorious athlete*. Similarly, in *Ceas.* (30.2): *when Curio laid these proposals in behalf of Caesar, he was loudly applauded, and some actually cast garlands of flowers upon him as if he were a victorious athlete*. Furthermore, the commentator of Euripides (*Hec.*, 573) reports: *Polyxene receives phyllobolia as if she has won an athletic contest*.

There is evidence of the practice of *phyllobolia* on certain politicians and military personnel like the Spartan Aristomenes<sup>39</sup>, the admiral Telestias<sup>40</sup>, the general Timoleon<sup>41</sup>, Alexander the Great<sup>42</sup>, Dioxippus<sup>43</sup>, and, later, Pompeius<sup>44</sup>. The *phyllobolia* of Nero (including sacrifices, perfumes, birds, fillets and desserts) in respect of his athletic victories at the Pythian and Olympic games, is reminiscent of a Roman triumph<sup>45</sup>. The *Suda* Lexicon, s.v. "Periageiromenos", refers to the hero Theseus as the first one to have received the honor of *phyllobolia*, after killing the Minotaur. *Phyllobolia* would have been appropriate for the mythical Agamemnon on his glorious return from Troy, although he was assassinated before he could be so honored. For this reason Electra laments: *your wife did not receive you with fillets and wreaths* (*Eur., El.*, 163-4). In a different context, is the suggestion made to gravediggers that they should exercise *phyllobolia* in honor of a fake doctor, Agis, who was responsible for sending them several clients<sup>46</sup>.

c) The earliest and detailed testimony for the use of *phyllobolia* during nuptials is a passage from Stesichorus (187 PMG) about the wedding of Helen and Menelaus<sup>47</sup>. It refers to people throwing quinces, myrtle leaves, wreaths of roses and garlands of violets.

The meaning of *phyllobolia* is not readily comprehensible. The practice of throwing objects at someone or something has been interpreted as a means of purging aggression; *phyllobolia* has been paralleled with the casting of stones and other, similar practices<sup>48</sup>. Of course, the throwing of objects is a means of participation and intervention, in an event, which takes place at a distance, especially when the focal object of a display is in motion. Some scholars have limited their study to the floral elements of *phyllobolia*, to which magical qualities were attributed (as we have already discussed above). They interpreted the custom as a magic ritual that transfigured the recipient into an incarnation of the spirit of the trees and forests, the king of the year or a God<sup>49</sup>. This view was subjected to the pejorative comments of the positivist E.N. Gardiner<sup>50</sup>, who argued that *phyllobolia* could be seen simply as a gracious offer of gifts, whose origin lies in the fact that the majority of athletic games initially had an agricultural character. While it is true, however, that the custom of *phyllobolia* comprised in parts the bestowing of gifts, this was not the focal point of the act. The cut

branches and leaves were of no value to the recipient of *phyllobolia* and indeed, they were abandoned on the ground.

It is obvious that speculations made regarding the origins and initial meaning of the aforementioned customs often lead nowhere. The sentiments expressed during the ceremonies of victory include elation, joy, honor and pride. These were expressed through symbolic acts, the original meaning of which was probably unknown to the participants and, moreover, of little interest to them<sup>51</sup>.

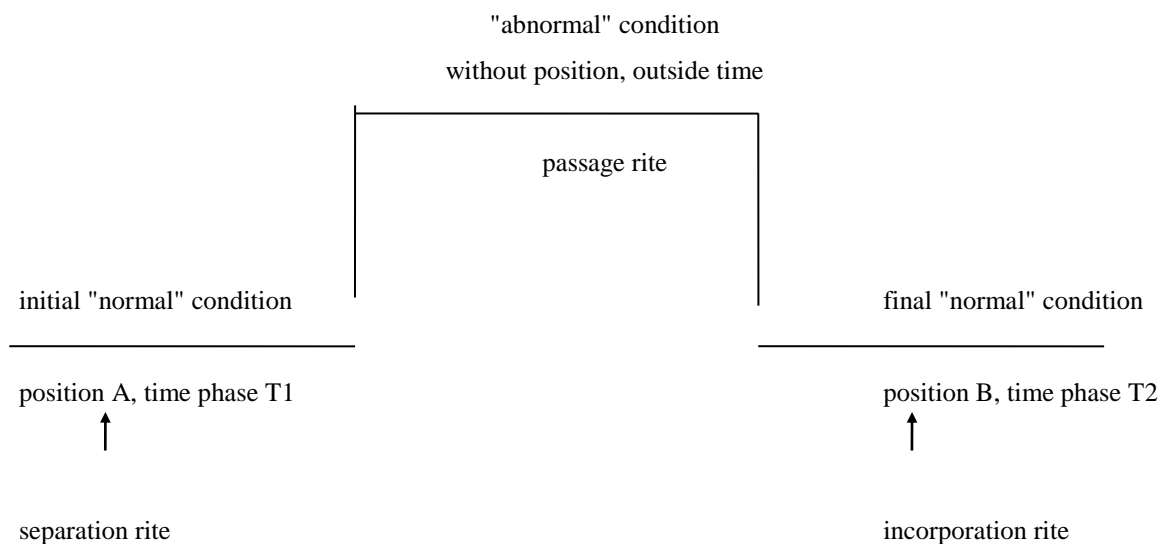
I would now like to focus on the symbolism of some of these practices. To be more explicit, the use of numerous plants, for example, could be simply symbolic, although I deem the fact that they have been connected with specific gods, festivals or significant events. Correspondingly, on one level the fillets could be seen as signifying a particular person, animal or object, although the utilization of different types of fillets, in specific contexts each time<sup>52</sup>, implies that a particular rubric was followed which did not equate with the prime pragmatic aim.

It is difficult to decide whether the symbolic acts, which have been examined, are simply elements of a ceremony or if they have a religious or magic character, so that ritual components need to be identified. It is certainly true that they are common to both secular and religious aspects of life. I believe that one method which will facilitate understanding is the attempt to find connecting elements and analogies between the acts. However, since these acts accompanied the majority of displays in human life, it is necessary to limit our study to those cases in which *phyllobolia*, filleting and crowing were simultaneously practiced. Apart from victorious athletes, these three customs occurred only in relation to famous and honored persons, the newly married and the dead. What, then is the common factor, apart from the ceremonies themselves?

Firstly, it may be observed that all these occasions were public gatherings, at which the participants experienced predominant sentiments of intense joy or sorrow. Furthermore, it may be noted that they all had a bipartite character consisting of a group on the one hand and an individual (or individuals) on the other; the latter accepted the positive sentiments expressed by the former. The most important issue, however, is that these displays were practiced on persons who had recently achieved feats or altered their status in some way, thereby creating the need to reinitiate them into society. Having completed a process, an attempt or a struggle, the individuals accept social ratification into an emotionally charged atmosphere of mutual solidarity. The change of status is obvious in the case of weddings<sup>53</sup>. The athlete reached the pinnacle of his achievements in becoming the victor. The success of politicians and military personnel was similar<sup>54</sup>. The deceased person reached the end of life's struggle<sup>55</sup>: after having successfully completed a life-circle the individual was re-united with society, even if this process involved acceptance of the death. In burial customs the practice of the acts signified both the acceptance of death and the reconstruction of the society after the loss<sup>56</sup>, as well as the resumption of social activities which had been subject to temporary cessation. However, in all the above cases the individual's condition was altered, having attained the position of the elite, of *kreiton* and *aristos*.

Returning to the victorious athlete, it is obvious that his new condition transcended the boundaries of athletics and was novel for society. As a consequence of his victory, several conditions of his life changed rapidly. The victor was marked and separated, he accepted honors and had divine protection. The athlete became a victor consequent to the race and the victory celebrations marked and reinforced this transition. I will make an attempt to demonstrate that both the race and the subsequent symbolic acts (filleting, crowning and *phyllobolia*) have all the characteristics of the "rites of passage"<sup>57</sup> since I believe that the study of this field will elucidate the origin and interpretation of victorious ceremonies.

"Rites of passage" or "transition rites"<sup>58</sup> are intended to provide safe passage during the dangerous transition from one age group or condition to another. Life includes many such passages and rites facilitate the transition from one status to another. Life means separations and reunions, changing of forms and situations, deaths and rebirths, action and calm, ad infinitum. Every new situation demands rites, which finally incorporate a person into a specific group and restore him to the habits of everyday life<sup>59</sup>. The following diagram, taken from E.R. Leach<sup>60</sup>, summarizes the process:



We could suggest by analogy, therefore, that the athlete started from the initial "normal" position, participated in the "abnormal" phase during the race, when everything was unstable, and finished in the final "normal" condition through the act of incorporation, which in our case is the victorious ceremony. As far as rites of passage are concerned, similarities can be discerned between the activities associated with victory and the customs practiced at birth, marriage and death<sup>61</sup>, which certainly had a transitional character. The test of strength and endurance to which an athlete was subjected during a race could have had an initiating quality<sup>62</sup>.

I will not deal here with the magical, initiating and religious character of some rites of passage<sup>63</sup>. I argued above that the race was the common basis for several symbolic acts, which marked the transition from the status of the athlete to the status of the victor. The question of whether the customs studied had a secular or religious character is not independent but it depends

directly on the theory of athletics, which each researcher adopts. The reduction of these symbolic acts to common human behavior models is perhaps the best way of understanding and interpreting their survival; while this reduction is certainly attractive in its simplicity, it is also somewhat risky.

The aim of the above discussion was to examine certain manifestations of athletic victory, which had their roots in athletics but went beyond the boundaries of athleticism due to the alteration of the victor's relationship with society. In conclusion, if we need an evaluation of victorious ceremonies, as they are known to us from iconography and written sources, it is appropriate to paraphrase G. Dumezil<sup>64</sup>: «the victorious ceremony was something different from the ashes of its elements», the "ashes" which are left to us today. Scholars of ancient Greek iconography are usually quite aware of the risk of false generalizations and certain assumptions. Our field of research reminds me sometimes of the Platonic question and answer (*Ion*, 535a): *-And so you act as interpreters of interpreters? -Precisely!*

### Catalogue of athletic victors receiving *phyllobolia*<sup>65</sup>

#### I. Victors in athletic contests

##### a. Victor alone

1. Eye Cup (bilingual). Once at Rome, Torlonia. 530-500 B.C. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 43/71.
2. Eye Cup (fragment). Rome, Antiquarium Forense, no number (hereafter: n.n.). 510-500 B.C. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 47/150.
3. Nicosthenic amphora. Paris, Louvre, no 9891014. 525-520 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 53/2+1622, *PARA* 140+326, *ADD* 163.
4. Eye Cup (bilingual). Altenburg, Staatliches Museum, no 224. 520-515 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 55/17.
5. Cup. Berlin, Staatliche Museen, no F4221. 520-510 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 61/73, *ADD* 165.
6. Cup. Florence, Museo Nazionale, coll. Vagnoville, no 46. 525-520 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 64/97.
7. Cup (fragments). Munich, Antikensammlungen, no 8956/1.29.172. 525-520 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 65/116.
8. Cup. Stockholm, Medelhäusmuseum, no 1964.12. 525-520 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 66/127bis (in *PARA* 328).
9. Cup. Warsaw, National Museum, no 198514. Ca. 520 B.C. Thaleia Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 113/4, *PARA* 332, *ADD* 173.
10. Cup (fragments). Heidelberg, Archäologisches Institut, no Kr25 (A9) and Paris, Louvre, no C11246 and sherds once at Lyon University. 510-500 B.C. Epeleios Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 147/12 +13 +1628, *ADD* 179.

11. Eye Cup (bilingual). Toledo (Ohio), Art Museum, no 63.28. Ca. 520 B.C. Bowdoin Eye Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 166/3bis (1630), *PARA* 337, *ADD* 183.

12. Trefoil jug. Cervetri, Museo Nazionale Cerite, n.n. Ca. 500 B.C. Terpaulos Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 308/2, *PARA* 357, *ADD* 212.

13. Cup (fragments). Paris, Louvre, no G296. Ca. 490 B.C. In the manner of Onesimos; the inside recalls the Antiphon Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 331/15, *ADD* 217.

14. Cup (fragments). Florence, Museo Nazionale, no DB7. 490-480 B.C. Colmar Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 357/73.

15. Cup. Once at London market. 490-480 B.C. Triptolemos Painter. Unpublished.

16. Hydria. Caltagirone, Museo Regionale della Ceramica, n.n. 490-480 B.C. G.Q. GIGLIOLI, *Phyllobolia*, 39. G. LIBERTINI, *Di alcune recenti scoperte nella necropoli di S.Luigi a Caltagirone*, in: *MonAnt* 28, 1922, 118-9, pl. 7.

17. Lekythos. Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, no 487. 480-470 B.C. Bowdoin Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 684/153, *ADD* 279.

18. Lekythos. Once at London Market. 470-460 B.C. Bowdoin Painter. *Christie's Catalogue*, 16.7.1985, 90 no 405.

19. Lekythos. Tel Aviv, Eretz Israel Museum, no MHP 107961. Ca. 460 B.C. Aischines Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 714/164.

20. Cup (fragment). Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, no 08.31g. Ca. 470 B.C. Clinic Painter or near him. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 809/6, *ADD* 291.

21. Cup. Lost (?), once Prince of Canino coll. 490-480 B.C. Tarquinia Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 868/36, *ADD* 299.

22. Cup. Italy, private collection. Ca. 480 B.C. U. SERANI (ed.), *Italia: Arte e Scienza nello Sport*, Rome 1988, 104.

23. Vase of unknown shape. Lost (?), before coll. Campana. Known only from the description of J. JUTHNER, *Siegerkranz und Siegerbinde*, in: *JoI* 1, 1898, 42-48, 43, n. 2.

#### b. Victors with spectators and others

##### *Black figure*

24. Loutrophoros (fragments). Athens, Kerameikos, no 1682. Ca. 540 B.C. Group E. *ABV* 137/66, *PARA* 55.

25. Amphora. Rome, Villa Giulia, no 8340. 540-530 B.C. Near Exekias. *ABV* 149/1.

26. Amphora. Washington, National Museum, no 136415. 540-30 B.C. Painter of Berlin 1686. *ABV* 297/18, *PARA* 129.

27. Lekythos. Lost, before London, coll. Guilford. 510-500 B.C. Recalls the Edinburgh Painter. *ABV* 664, 665, *PARA* 317.

28. Amphora. Orvieto, Museo Claudio Faina, no 2679. 520-510 B.C. Red Line Painter (Leagros Group). *ABV* 604/65. M.R. WOJCIK, *Museo Claudio Faina di Orvieto: Ceramica attica a figure nere*, Perugia 1989, 218-9, no 104.

29. Pseudo-Panathenaic amphora. London, British Museum, no B138. 520-10 B.C. CVA British Museum 1, pl. 4.3a-b [28]. G.Q. GIGLIOLI, *Phyllobolia*, 34. B. NEUTSCH, *Der Sport im Bilde griechischer Kunst*, Heidelberg 1949, pl. 47. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 343-4, pl. 15.

30. Cup. Once at London Market. Ca. 500 B.C. *Christie's Catalogue*, 28.4.93, no V37711.

31. Closed cup. Boston Museum of Fine Arts, no 95.16. Ca. 500 B.C. CVA Boston 2, pl. 107 [941]. L.D. CASKEY – J.D. BEAZLEY, *Attic Vase Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, vol. 1, Oxford 1931, 13, no 9.

#### *Red figure*

32. Hydria. Munich, Antikensammlungen, no 2420. 510-500 B.C. Pezzino Group. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 32/3 and 1621, *ADD* 157.

33. Psykter. Zurich, University, no L250. 510-500 B.C. Pezzino Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 32/3bis (in 1621). C. ISLER-KERENYI, *Dal Ginnasio al Simposio*, in: *NumAntCl*, 16, 1987, 47-85, pl. I-VIII. K. SCHAUBENBURG, *Eine neue Amphora des Andokidesmalers*, in: *JdI* 76, 1961, 53, pl. 8-10. D. VANHOVE (ed.), *Le sport dans la Grece antique*, Brussels 1992, no 76.

34. Psykter. New York, Metropolitan Museum, no 10.210.18. 520-510 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 54/7, *PARA* 326, *ADD* 163.

35. Cup. Rome, before Museo Torlonia no 67, now maybe in Villa Albani. Ca. 525 B.C. Oltos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 59/56, *ADD* 164.

36. Plate. Paris, Louvre, no G7. Ca. 510 B.C. Epiktetos. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 78/97 and 1623, *ADD* 169.

37. Cup. Paris, Louvre, no 9810457 (G36). 510-500 B.C. Painter of Louvre G36. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 114/1, *ADD* 174.

38. Cup (fragments). Florence, Museo Nazionale, coll. Campana, no 82. 520-510 B.C. In the manner of Epeleios Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 104/1 and 150/39ter (in 1629).

39. Amphora of Panathenaic shape. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, no 10.178. Ca. 490 B.C. Kleophrades Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 183/9, *ADD* 186.

40. Pelike. Paris, Louvre, no G235. 500-490 B.C. Kleophrades. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 184/25.

41. Amphora. Basle, Antikenmuseum. 490-480 B.C. Syriskos Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 262/29.

42. Pelike. Once at Swiss market. 470-460 B.C. Geras Painter. *Christie's Catalogue*, 5.5.1979, 24, no 71, pl. 30.71.

43. Stamnos. Paris, Louvre, no G182. Ca. 480 B.C. Troilos Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 296/5. B. PHILLIPAKI, *The Attic Stamnos*, Oxford 1967, 52, no 1, pl. 3.

44. Cup. Once at “Thetis” Foundation coll. 490-480 B.C. Colmar Painter. *Sotheby's Catalogue*, 23.5.1991, 43-4, no 72. J.L. ZIMMERMANN, *Collection de la Fondation Thetis*, Geneva 1987, 58, no 107.
45. Cup (fragments). Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, nos 635, 642, 657, 669, 761, 800. 490-480 B.C. Triptolemos Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 363/36.
46. Cup. Lost, before Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen. 495-490 B.C. Douris. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 430/33, *ADD* 236.
47. Cup (fragments). Bonn, Akademisches Kunstmuseum no 1931, and Leipzig, University no T3366. 495-490 B.C. Douris. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 431/38+39, *ADD* 236.
48. Cup. London, British Museum, no E52. 490-480 B.C. Douris. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 432/59, *ADD* 237. E. SPATHARIS, *The Olympic Spirit*, Athens 1992, 231.
49. Cup (fragments). Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, no 532. 490-480 B.C. Ashby Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 455/10, *ADD* 243.
50. Cup. Paris, Louvre, no G277. 490-480 B.C. Makron. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 464/79.
51. Cup (fragments). New York, Metropolitan Museum, no 79.11.9. 490-480 B.C. Makron. D. von BOTHMER, *Notes on Makron*, in: D. C. KURTZ – B. SPARKES (eds), *The Eye of Greece: Studies in the Art of Athens*, Cambridge 1982, 37, no 138A, pl. 7d, 11e, 13.
52. Cup (fragments). New York, Central Island, private coll. 490-480 B.C. Makron. D. von BOTHMER, *Makron* (op. cit.) 37, no 138B.
53. Nolan amphora. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, no 01.8109. 470-460 B.C. Pan Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 553/40, *ADD* 258.
54. Column crater. Once in Lisbon, coll. Gilbert. Ca. 460 B.C. Pig Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 564/23bis.
55. Cup. Civita Castellana, no 5993. Ca. 460 B.C. Villa Giulia Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 625/102.
56. Cup. Munich, Antikensammlungen, no 2662. Ca. 460 B.C. Painter of Munich 2660. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 784/20, *ADD* 289.
57. Cup. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, no 10.181. Ca. 460 B.C. Euaion Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 792/60, *ADD* 290.
58. Cup. St. Petersburg, Hermitage, no B2638 (V668). Ca. 470 B.C. Clinic Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 810/20. A.A. PEREDOLSKAYA, *Krasnofigurnye atticheskie vazy v Ermitazhe*, St. Petersburg 1967, 81-2, no 81, pl. LIX, 1-4.
59. Pelike. Florence, Museo Nazionale, no 4021. Ca. 460 B.C. Painter of Florence 4021 *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 873/1.
60. Lekythos. Once at Basle market. 440-435 B.C. Phiale Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1022/133, *ADD* 316.
61. Volute crater (fragments). Ferrara, Museo di Spina, no 2865. 430-420 B.C. Peleus Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1039/9, *PARA* 443, *ADD* 319. J. BOARDMAN, *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Classical Period*. London 1989, pl. 143.

62. Bell crater. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no 1022 (SK 226, 156). Ca. 430 B.C. CVA Vienna 3, pl. 116, 5-6 [116].

63. Cup. Orvieto, Museo Claudio Faina. Early 4<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. Sub-Meidian Cup-Group. ARV<sup>2</sup> 1398/4.

*Panathenaic prize amphoras*

64. Panathenaic prize amphora. Bologna, Museo Civico, no 18039. Ca. 440 B.C. Achilles Painter. ABV 409/1, PARA 177, ADD 106.

65. Panathenaic prize amphora. Tergesta, Museo Civico, no 1405. Ca. 420 B.C. Robinson Group. Unpublished.

66. Panathenaic prize amphora. Moscow, Folk Museum of Oriental Art, n.n. Ca. 420 B.C. *I Tesori dei Kurgani del Caucaso settentrionale. Nuove scoperti degli archeologi sovietici nell' Adygeja e nell' Ossezia settentrionale*, Rome 1990, 49, no 101.

67. Panathenaic prize amphora. Herakleion, Crete, Archaeological Museum, no 26554. Early 4<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. Kuban Group. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 327-31, pl. 1-2.

68. Panathenaic prize amphora (fragments). Athens, NAM, no 26847a-e. 380-370 B.C. K. BRAUN – T.E. HAEVERNICK, *Bemalte Keramik und Glas aus dem Kabirenheiligtum bei Theben*, Berlin 1981, no PA19, pl. 29,2. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 348.

69. Panathenaic prize amphora. London, British Museum, no 1866.4-15.250 (B603). 367/6 B.C. Kittos Group. ABV 414/4, ADD 108. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 346, pl.22.

70. Panathenaic prize amphora. Paris, Louvre, no N3116 (MN706). 340/39 B.C. Nikomachos Series. ABV 415/3, ADD 108. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 345f, 351, pl.21 and 24.

71. Panathenaic amphora (fragments). Athens, Kerameikos, no PA156. 340-330 B.C. Painter of Athens 12592 or near him. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 345, pl.20.

c. Victor and Nike

*Red figure*

72. Amphora of Panathenaic shape. Athens, Agora, no P7257. Ca. 470 B.C. Copenhagen Painter. ARV<sup>2</sup> 256/3.

73. Pelike. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no 905. Ca. 470 B.C. Geras Painter. ARV<sup>2</sup> 286/12. LIMC, VI, "Nike", no 316.

74. Nolan amphora. Once at Paris Market. 480-470 B.C. Tithonos Painter. ARV<sup>2</sup> 309/1bis and 1644, PARA 357.

75. Nolan amphora. St. Petersburg, Hermitage, no B5576. 480-470 B.C. Douris. ARV<sup>2</sup> 446/263, PARA 512, ADD 241.

76. Nolan amphora. London, British Museum, no E312. Ca. 460 B.C. Hermonax. ARV<sup>2</sup> 487/65.

77. Skyphos. New York, coll. D. von Bothmer. 470-460 B.C. Unpublished.

78. Pelike. Gela, Museo Civico, no V, Ixvii. 430 B.C. Painter of London E395. ARV<sup>2</sup> 1140/4. C. MICCICHE, *Mesogheia: Archeologia e storia della Sicilia centro-meridionale dal VII al IV secolo a.C.*, Caltanissetta 1989, pl. 25.

79. Cup (fragments). Athens, Agora, no P10538. 430-420 B.C. P.E. CORBETT, *Attic Pottery of the later fifth century*, in: *Hesperia* 18, 1949, 314, no 12, pl. 82.

80. Skyphos. Ferrara, Museo di Spina, no 1681. Early 4<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. Millin Painter. ARV<sup>2</sup> 1401/7 and 1704, ADD 373.

#### d. Victor with Nike and others

##### *Red figure*

81. Calyx crater. Larissa, Archaeological Museum, no 86/101. 440-435 B.C. Painter of Munich 2335. M. TIVERIOS, *Περικλεία Παναθήναια: Ένας κρατήρας του ζωγράφου του Μονάχου 2335*, Thessaloniki 1989, 53 ff., 119 ff., pl. 2-3, 11, 15-16, 20-22.

82. Drawing of a lost vase painting. Late 5<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. G.Q. GIGLIOLI, *Phyllobolia*, 35. W. TISCHBEIN, *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases [...] in the possession of Sir W. Hamilton*, vol. 1, Naples 1791, 52. C. BOTTICHER, *Das Bild der Hippodameia im Hippodrom zu Olympia*, in: *AZ*, 1853, 7-13, pl. 51,2.

83. Pelike. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, no 769. Late 5<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. Painter of Louvre G539. ARV<sup>2</sup> 1342/1. LIMC, VI, "Nike", no 321.

##### *Panathenaic prize amphoras*

84. Panathenaic prize amphora. Herakleion, Crete, Archaeological Museum, no 26556. 410-400 B.C. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 333-5 et passim, pl. 13-14.

85. Panathenaic prize amphora. Alexandria, Archaeological Museum, no 18239. 371/370 B.C. Asteios Group. ABV 412/2, ADD 107. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 342-3, pl. 17.

## II. Victors in Equestrian events

#### a. Horse race

##### *Black figure*

86. Panathenaic Prize amphora. Nauplion, Archaeological Museum, no 1. 530-520 B.C. Mastos Painter. ABV 260/27, ADD 67. P. VALAVANIS, in: *Το πνεύμα και το σώμα*, Athens 1989, 307-10, no 197.

##### *Red figure*

87. Eye cup (fragments). Bonn, Akademisches Kunstmuseum, no 464.24. 530-520 B.C. Oltos. ARV<sup>2</sup> 46/130 and 56/31.

#### b. Chariot race

##### *Black figure*

88. Amphora. New York, Bastis coll. 540 B.C. Near group E. *ABV* 253 and 715, *PARA* 113, *ADD* 65. *Antiquities from the Collection of Christos G. Bastis*, New York-Mainz, 1987, no 150.

89. Column crater. Paris, Louvre, no C11263, and Bordeaux, University. 530 B.C. Painter of Bologna 48. *PARA* 155. *CVA Louvre* 12, pl. 167,4-6 and 169,1-2 [840, 842].

90. Lekythos. Leiden, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, no GNV 62. 490 B.C. Class of Athens 581. *CVA Leiden* 2, pl. 89,4-6 [183].

91. Pyxis. Vrauron, Archaeological Museum. 540-530 B.C. Exekias. *PARA* 61. H.A. SHAPIRO, *Art and Cult under the Tyrants in Athens*, Mainz 1989, 157, pl. 69.

92. Volute crater. Munich, Antikensammlungen, no 174. 520-510 B.C. K. HITZL, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung des Volutenkraters*, Frankfurt-Bern 1982, 304-5, no 38, pl. 48-49. H.E. SCHLEIFFENBAUM, *Der griechische Volutenkrater*, Frankfurt 1991, no V106.

#### *Red figure*

93. Volute crater. Agrigento, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, n.n. 440 B.C. Circle of Polygnotos Painter. P. GRIFFO, *Il Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Agrigento*, 1987, 277. C. MICCICHE, *Mesogheia* (vd. Cat. no 73), 84, pl. 23. P. ORLANDINI, *Vassallaggi (San Cataldo). Scavi 1961: I, La Necropoli Meridionale*, 1971 (NSc-Suppl.), 19-22, pl. 17-19.

94. Column crater. Ferrara, Museo di Spina, no 10466. 440 B.C. Hephaistos Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1115/22. L. MASSEI, *Gli Askoi a figure rosse nei corredi funerari delle Necropoli di Spina*, Milan 1978, pl. 37,1.

95. Column crater. Civita Castellana, Museo Archeologico, no 5386. 430 B.C. Duomo Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1118/22.

96. Column crater. Upsala, University, no 561. Duomo Painter. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1118/23. A. AKESTROM, *Drei attische Vasen*, in: *Dragma. Festschrift N.P. Nilsson*, Lund 1939, 560-3, no 2, pl. 5-6.

### III. Varia

#### *Black figure*

97. Panathenaic amphora (fragment). Athens, Agora, no P6102. 500 B.C. *ABV* 394/11 (wonders if he is a victor), *ADD* 103.

98. Panathenaic amphora (fragment). Athens, NAM, no 26824. 410-400 B.C. Recalls the Dinos Painter. K. BRAUN – T.E. HAEVERNICK, *Kabirenheiligum* (vd. Cat. no 66), no PA5, pl. 29,1. P. VALAVANIS, *Proclamation*, 348.

#### *Red figure*

99. Cup (fragment). Brunswick, Bowdoin College Museum of Art, no 1913.19. 480-470 B.C. *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 407/12.

NOTES



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10 Σεπτεμβρίου 1998

Αγαπητέ καθηγητά Sinn,

Κοιτάζοντας πάλι τα κείμενά μου διαπίστωσα ότι δεν σας έστειλα την περίληψη των 10 σειρών για το άρθρο μου στον ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟ. Την ετοίμασα τώρα και την στέλνω, συγγνώμη για την καθυστέρηση.

Θα βρίσκομαι στην Αιανή μέχρι τις 20 Σεπτεμβρίου και μετά στη Θεσσαλονίκη (μέχρι το τέλος Νοεμβρίου) όπου το τηλέφωνό μου και το φαξ είναι: 031-902312.

Ευχαριστώ θερμά και καλό χειμώνα.

Ευρυδίκη Κεφαλίδου

***CEREMONIES OF ATHLETIC VICTORY IN ANCIENT GREECE:  
AN INTERPRETATION***  
**Eurydice Kefalidou**

**SUMMARY**

In the following paper I make an attempt to elucidate the origin and interpretation of certain ceremonies of athletic victory. I rely both on ancient written sources and attic vase iconography, in order to demonstrate that symbolic actions with religious or magical elements may be discerned in the acts of *phyllobolia* (the showering the victor with leaves, flowers and gifts) and *stepsis* or *tainiosis* (the crowning with wreaths or fillets). Both the race and the subsequent actions have all the characteristics of the "rites of passage". The athlete reached the pinnacle of his achievements in becoming the victor and therefore his status changed radically and completely. The victorious ceremonies marked and reinforced this transition. It is interesting to notice that apart from victorious athletes, the customs of *phyllobolia* and *stepsis* occurred simultaneously in only three other cases, namely in relation to famous and honored persons, the newly married and the dead. In all those cases the individual's condition was altered, as he had attained the position of the elite, of *kreiton* and *aristos*.

To supplement the above text I add a Catalogue of 99 depictions of *phyllobolia* on attic vases of the archaic and classical period.

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a slightly revised part of a chapter on victorious ceremonies of my dissertation, *Victor: An Iconographical Study of Ancient Greek Athletics* (in Greek with English summary) 69-80. In the above Study I collect and study a group of over two hundred representations of victors in gymnastic and horse races, on Attic vases dating from ca. 570 B.C. until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The iconographical evidence discussed in this article derives mainly from 99 vase paintings listed in the Catalogue at the end of this study.

ABBREVIATIONS: *ABV* = J.D. BEAZLEY, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters*, New York <sup>3</sup>1978 (1956). *ADD* = T.H. CARPENTER, *Beazley Addenda: Additional References to ABV, ARV<sup>2</sup> & Paralipomena*, Oxford 1989. *ARV<sup>2</sup>* = J.D. BEAZLEY, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*, Oxford <sup>2</sup>1963. *AWL* = D.C. KURTZ, *Athenian White Lekythoi*, Oxford 1975. BESANTAKOS N., *Η αρχαία ελληνική μίτρα*. Athens 1987. BLECH M., *Studien zum Kranz bei den Griechen*. Berlin 1982. BURKERT W., *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*. Stuttgart 1977. *CVA* = *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*. DEUBNER L., *Die Bedeutung des Kranzes im klassischen Altertum*, in: *ARW* 30, 1933, 70-104. ELIADE M., *Traite d'histoire des religions*, Paris 1949. FRAZER J.G., *The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion*, abr. ed., London 1990 (1922). GARLAND R., *The Greek Way of Death*, London 1985. GIGLIOLI G.Q., *Phyllobolia*, in: *ArchCl* 2, 1950, 31-45. HARRISON J.E., *Themis: A Study of the Social Origins of Greek Religion*, London 1989 (1912). KEFALIDOU E., *Νικητής: Εικονογραφική μελέτη του αρχαίου ελληνικού αθλητισμού*, Thessaloniki 1996. KLEIN J., *Der Kranz bei den alten Griechen*, Gunzburg 1912. KRUG A., *Binden in der griechischen Kunst*, Diss. Mainz 1968. KURTZ D.C. – BOARDMAN J., *Greek Burial Customs*, London 1971. NAM = National Archaeological Museum, Athens. OAKLEY J.H. - SINOS R.H., *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, University of Wisconsin 1993. ONIANS R.B., *The Origins of European Thought*, Cambridge 1951. *PARA* = J.D. BEAZLEY, *Paralipomena: Additions to Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters and to Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*, Oxford 1971. VALAVANIS P., *La proclamation des vainqueurs aux Panathenees*, in: *BCH* 114, 1990, 325-359. VAN GENNEP A., *The Rites of Passage*, engl. trans., London 1960 (1909).

<sup>2</sup> H.R. IMMERWAHR, *Attic Script: A Survey*, Oxford 1990, 7, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> C. ROEBUCK, *A prize aryballos*, in: *Hesperia* 24, 1955, 158-163.

<sup>4</sup> *ABV* 51/1, *ADD* 13.

<sup>5</sup> For the contents of these ceremonies and their time-order see E. KEFALIDOU, *Νικητής*, 52-68, with bibliography. The main literary sources are: Polyd., *Onom.*, III,152. Clemens Alex., *Paedagogus*, II.72.1. *Suda*, "Periageiromenos". *Schol. in Eyrip. Hecuba*, 573.

<sup>6</sup> I am not concerned here with the general theory of athletics (origin, types, diffusion, interpretations).

<sup>7</sup> E.R. LEACH, *Ritual*, in: *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 13, 1972, 520-526. J. HUIZINGA, *Homo Ludens*, Ital. trans., Turin 1973, 19, for the rite as "participation" rather than "imitative" act. The biological-physical approach of the rite is slightly differentiated and uses the term ritual, to express the character of acts that aim to the display and communication; they have the element of repetition and excess and are attached to an outline row of the same events. Therefore, many human manifestations (i.e. laughing, crying, clapping) can be taken as ritual acts which have their roots in the early reactions of human beings who aimed to communicate with each other; see W. BURKERT, *Homo necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, Berkeley 1983 (1972), 22 f., and *Structure and History in Greek*

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*Mythology and Ritual*, Berkeley 1979, 35 f.: the rite is a model of behavior that lost its initial significance but maintains into a new function, the communication; therefore, rite is a kind of language.

<sup>8</sup> D.F. JACKSON, *Philostratos and the Pentathlon*, in: JHS 111, 1991, 180 n. 13, states: "Vase paintings of filleted athletes are common, but they seem never to have been studied from an athletic view point". The iconographic-typological study of A. KRUG, *Binden*, is complemented by the research of N. BESANTAKOS, *Mitra*, that shows that *mitra* was a fillet and that there is a plethora of written testimonies about the use of fillets.

<sup>9</sup> J.G. FRAZER, *Golden Bough*, 238 f., refers to knots with magic qualities and to customs related with the "tying" or "untying" of spells, curse of the beloved person etc. The significance of the tying of specific parts of the human body at specific times of someone's life have been studied by R.B. ONIANS, *Origins*, 133 (tying or cover of the head during the wedding ceremony, the sacrifice and death), 153 (especially for wedding), 183f. and 280 (for the significance of the thighs- they contain life, see the birth of Dionysus from Zeus thigh- and their tying with fillets), 407 n. 1 and 446 n. 4 (for the tying of the head); see esp. 324 f., 368 f. and 378 f. (the bonds of the Gods, the fate as a bond that imposed into the people, tying and untying of spells). For the magic qualities of the fillet and its use into the religious ceremonies see also RE, "ταβία", 1.

<sup>10</sup> Characteristic is the story by PLUTARCH, *Sol.*, 12, about the *Cylonion agos*. The conspiracy people were tied with up with a red thread with the statue of Athena in Acropolis and went down to the city for the trial; then the thread broke up and Megacles arrested them with the excuse that the goddess refused to protect them. According to J.E. HARRISON, *Themis*, 137-8, the tying is a contact with the divinity and it is functioning as a sacred bondage.

<sup>11</sup> See the Victories (*Nikes*) that bring a fillet to the winners of musical competitions depictions on the the vases of the Painter of the Yale Oinochoe (ARV<sup>2</sup> 502/8), of the Leningrad Painter (ARV<sup>2</sup> 568/32, 571/72), of Altamura Painter (ARV<sup>2</sup> 589/1, 589/3, 590/9, 591/18, 593/46), of Peleus Painter (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1039/7, 1041/2), of the Group of Polygnotos (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1058/1191, 1062/1), of the Painter of Munich 2335 (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1163/30) and many others.

<sup>12</sup> For the fillet in burial practices see: D.C. KURTZ- J. BOARDMAN, *Burial Customs*, 104-5, 123, 148, 165, 319. During the *prothesis*, fillets are offered and placed on the dead: R. GARLAND, *Death*, 26. N. BESANTAKOS, *Mitra*, 126. For depictions on vases see the Corinthian hydria with Achilles' *prothesis*, were one of the wailing Nereids holds a fillet (D.A. AMYX, *Corinthian Vase-Painting of the Archaic Period*, Berkeley 1988, 264-5, no. 1 and 577, no. 77, Damon Painter); the black-figured pyxis, Athens, NAM no. 3554 (E. BETHE, *Aktaeon*, in: AM 15, 1890, 240-242, pl. 8); the white-ground lekythoi in AWL, pl. 29.1-2; the loutrophoros near Naples Painter (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1102/1, eight fillets are distinguished); the sherd of the Painter of Birth of Athena (ARV<sup>2</sup> 495/11). Similarly, we have philological evidence for the moribund and the dead ones. We also have the evidence from DIOD. SIC., XIX.34.3, about a custom in India that concerns the choice one of the wives of the dead, that will be cremated on her husband's grave. This wife is proud of the preference: *the other, rejoicing in her victory, went off to the pyre crowned with fillets that her servants bound upon her head*; see also N. BESANTAKOS, *Mitra*, 123-4. We also know (HERODOTUS, VII.197) about the custom of human sacrifice at Alon in Achaia, that Xerxes informed of it from his guides, which showed him *how this man is sacrificed with fillets covering him all over and a procession to lead him forth*. See also below the description of Virginia's funeral.

<sup>13</sup> Fillets on tumuli, i.e. in: AWL, pl. 21.4, 27.1-2, 42.2. RF, pl. 266, 267. ARV<sup>2</sup> 1688/8. Also in the

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unpublished white lekythoi in Athens, NAM no. 17317 and Kerameikos Museum no. 1135. It is quite common to have fillets tied up on the grave stele in the iconography of burials. See R. GARLAND, *Death*, 116. For many examples through time see *AWL*, pl. 18-21, 25-26, 28-30, 32-36, 39-41, 43, 45. Also *RF*, pl. 270, 272. See also the fillet tied up on a grave stele depicted on a red-figured pelike, and an Eros brings one more fillet to decorate the stele (Munich no. 2348. *CVA*<sup>2</sup>, pl. 77,4 [273]). Some decorated fillets have survived on painted grave stelae: CHR. SAATSOGLU-PALIADELI, *Ta epitáfia mniméia apó th Meγάλh Tóyma ths Berghnas*, Thessaloniki (Ph.D.) 1984, 191 f. (and examples from other cemeteries), nos. 26-31; probably also nos. 32-34 and 40. See also the fillets on the burial iconography of the south Italian vases, H. LOHMANN, *Grabmaler auf unteritalischen Vasen*, Berlin 1979.

<sup>14</sup> A. KRUG, *Binden*, 37: fillets tied up on the horns of the bulls. For the survival of several similar customs in modern Greece see G.N. AIKATERINIDIS, *Neοελληνικές αιματηρές θυσίες*, Athens 1979.

<sup>15</sup> At places of athletic competitions: a) "Nude races": on a hydria of the Group of Florence 3983, *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1645/1. E. SPATHARIS, *The Olympic Spirit*, Athens 1992, 108. b) Equestrian races: on a black-figured lid, Wurzburg no 297 (see E. LANGLOTZ, *Griechische Vasen in Wurzburg*, Munich 1932, no 297, pl. 85). On the columns symbolizing Apollo Agyieus: J.E. HARRISON, *Themis*, 406 f., and H.-V. HERMANN, *Omphalos*, Munster 1959, 31 f., esp. 36 f. On columns of temples: *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 35/1 and *AWL*, pl. 6.1 (lekythos depicting a sacrificial procession); B. GRAEF - E. LANGLOTZ, *Die antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athen*, vol. I, Berlin 1925, no 2298, pl. 96 (sherds of a lekythos with a sacrificial scene). And of relative context: fillets on two columns with an architrave, on the pyxis *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1222/1.

For the sacred significance of trees and pillars see the early article by A.J. EVANS, *Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult and its Mediterranean Relations*, in: *JHS* 21, 1901, 99-204. N. YALOURIS, *Problems relating at the temple of Apollo Epikourios at Bassai*, in: *Greece and Italy in the Classical World. Acta of the Int. Congr. of Class. Arch.*, London 1978, 100 f.

<sup>16</sup> Attic iconography depicts some trees as markers of graves and others that are inside sanctuaries: white-ground lekythos at Athens, NAM no. 19338, *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1688/11 (a tree as a marker of a grave or of a cemetery; on its branches hung seven white, red and brown fillets). See also E. BOHR, *Der Schaukelmaler*, Mainz 1982, no 32, pl. 34 (the sacred palm tree with clothes or fillets on its branches).

The research of sacred trees and of tree-worship started by C. BOETTICHER, *Der Baumkultus der Griechen*, Berlin 1856, esp. 26 f., 39 f., 107 f. See also A. APOSTOLAKIS, *Διόνυσος Δενδρίτης*, in: *Ephemeris Archeologiki*, 1942-44, 73-91, also for modern Greek revivals of older superstitions about hounded trees, the protective and apotropaic trees etc. J.G. FRAZER, *Golden Bough*, 109 f., stated that the trees are houses for the spirits or spirits themselves; he also studies the modern survivals of tree-worship in the ceremony of May the First etc. J.E. HARRISON, *Themis*, 165 f., thinks that all the trees are sacred or they are conquered by invisible spirits, the fruit-bearing ones, mostly; cf. the classification of M. ELIADE, *Traite*, 232-234. For more recent approaches see: M. BLECH, *Kranz*, 376 f. (a concise report with the earlier bibliography). W. BURKERT, *Griechische Religion*, 144-145. H.J. KIENAST, *Zum heiligen Baum der Hera auf Samos*, in: *AM* 106, 1991, 71-80.

<sup>17</sup> PAUSANIAS, VIII.31.8, IX.39.8, X.35.10.

<sup>18</sup> P. WOLTERS, *Faden und Knoten als Amulet*, in: *ARW* 8, 1905, Beiheft, 1-22; W. BISSING, *Von Agyptische Knotenamulette*, in: *ARW* 8, 1905, Beiheft 23-26. R. HAMILTON, *Choes and Anthesteria: Athenian Iconography and Ritual*, Ann Arbor 1992, pl. p. 89. G. VAN HOORN, *Choes and Anthesteria*,

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Leiden 1951, 19-20. R.B. ONIANS, *Origins*, 366 f. Regarding the attic vase painting the fillets on the thigh are frequently depicted by the Washing Painter (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1131/155-158, 160, 161; see also *RF*, pl. 209, 164) and by Polygnotos Painter and his Group (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1032/61, 1051/18, and J.BOARDMAN, *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Classical Period*, London 1989, pl. 138 and 156 respectively).

<sup>19</sup> *Martis* (March) is tied on the hand, the leg or around the neck; also on the trees or even around Easter lamb. G.A. MEGAS, *Ελληνικές γιορτές και έθιμα της λαϊκής λατρείας*, Athens 1988 (1956), 138-139. Painter WOLTERS, *Faden* (vd. n. 18) 15 f.

<sup>20</sup> See F. VON DUNN, *Rot und Tot*, in: ARW 9, 1906, 1-24: the color purple was used as a means of showing off the economic high status, of the economic status, of the hierarchy (political or priesthood), but was never used just from the nobles and the kings. See also M. REINHOLD, *History of Purple as a Status Symbol in Antiquity*, in: Collection Latomus 116, 1970, 1-73. D.C. KURTZ- J. BOARDMAN, *Burial Customs*, 217. G. VAN HOORN, *Choes* (vd. n. 18) 21, who relates it with the custom of the red Easter eggs. For the red and white fillets see also G.Q. GIGLIOLI, *Phyllobolia*, 43.

<sup>21</sup> See the written sources in *RE*, "Kranz". M. BLECH, *Kranz*, distinguishes and explains the cases concerning the use of wreaths: symposium and *komos*, wedding, death, athletic victory, attribution of honour; also in the worship of several male and female divinities. We have also similar classifications in the earlier studies of J. KLEIN, *Kranz*, and L. DEUBNER, *Die Bedeutung des Kranzes*.

<sup>22</sup> J.G. FRAZER, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, vol. II, London 1935, 79-87, and *Golden Bough*, 127 f.

<sup>23</sup> J. KLEIN, *Kranz*, 6 f. M. ELIADE, *Traite*, 263-264.

<sup>24</sup> M. BLECH, *Kranz*, 365 f.; underlines that the limits between magic, pharmacology (plants-herbs) and the religious ceremonies are quite vague, therefore, indeterminable. The concept of the plant as a remedy has been survived in the modern Greek customs: G.A. MEGAS, *Ελληνικές γιορτές* (vd. n. 19) 52. The magic qualities of some plants accepts even the positivist E.N. GARDINER, *The Alleged Kingship of the Olympic Victor*, in: BSA 22, 1916-18, 85-106, 90.

<sup>25</sup> D. SANSONE, *Greek Athletics and the Genesis of Sport*, Berkeley 1988, 84-5.

<sup>26</sup> L. WITTGENSTEIN, *Bemerkungen uber Frazers 'The Golden Bough'*, ed. by R. Rhess in: *Synthese* 17, 1967, 233-253.

<sup>27</sup> J.G. FRAZER, *Magic Art* (vd. n. 22) 79 f. W. BURKERT, *Structure* (vd. n. 7) 43-44.

<sup>28</sup> R.B. ONIANS, *Origins*, 133 n. 1, 367, 376-7, 443 f., 456 f., does not separate the wreath from the fillet, but notes that both are tied and form a circle around the head or another object; wreath contains life, that is probably why they put wreaths from evergreen plants on the head of the dead; he also analyses the significance of the circle: victory, as fate too, is "tied" to the man from the gods; so the wreath does not just symbolizes victory but incarnates it; the wreath is sacred and whoever wears it becomes ipso facto sacred too. For wreaths with the significance of "bonds" see M. BLECH, *Kranze*, 373 f. J. KLEIN, *Kranz*, 9 f. L. DEUBNER, *Die Bedeutung des Kranzes*, 100 f.

<sup>29</sup> *RE*, "Kranz", 1602. Also, the idealistic view of J. KLEIN, *Kranz*, 78-9, that these "useless" plants symbolize the fact that the victor should not look for any other profit apart the glory he gained.

<sup>30</sup> See the criticism by L. DEUBNER, *Die Bedeutung des Kranzes*, 79 f.

<sup>31</sup> EURIPIDES, *Hec.*, 573-4: *some of them strewed the dead woman with leaves, while others built up a pyre.*

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<sup>32</sup> See J.P.V.D. BALSDON, *Roman Women: Their History and Habits*, Westport, Conn. 1975, 28-29.

<sup>33</sup> PLUTARCH informs us for this Spartan use, believing that it was set up by Lycurgus: *he permitted nothing to be buried with the dead; they simply covered the body with a scarlet robe and olive leaves when they laid it away* (Lyc., 27.1). Antigone put the dead body of Polynekes on freshly-cut branches (SOPHOCLES, *Ant.*, 1201-2).

<sup>34</sup> The dead body was covered with flowers before they put the stones up: A. LEROI-GOURHAN, *Θρησκείες της Προϊστορίας*, Greek trans., Athens 1990 (1964), 100.

<sup>35</sup> Characteristic is the description of the funeral of Philopoemen by PLUTARCH, *Phil.*, 21.2: *They burned his body, collected his ashes in an urn, and set out for home, not in loose or promiscuous order, but with a blending of triumphal procession and funeral rites. For their heads were full of tears and they led their foes along with them in chains. The urn itself, almost hidden from sight by a multitude of fillets and wreaths, was borne by his son.*

<sup>36</sup> See i.e the white-ground lekythoi in AWL, pl. 19.2 and 27.2, perhaps also pl. 23. Also, the lekythos ARV<sup>2</sup> 1688/8 and a large white lekythos of Bosanquet Painter in J. BOARDMAN, *Red Figure* (vd. n. 18) pl. 269. Also, R. GARLAND, *Death*, 26, 116.

<sup>37</sup> M. BLECH, *Kranz*, 113 and no 20.

<sup>38</sup> *Suda*, s.v. "Drakon". Parthenius, *Narr. amat.*, 9.8.

<sup>39</sup> PAUSANIAS, IV.16.6: *the women crowned him with fillets and the most beautiful flowers.*

<sup>40</sup> XENOPHON., *HG*, V.1.3: *For when he was going down to the sea as he set out for home, there was no one among the soldiers who did not grasp his hand, and one decked him with a garland, another with a fillet, and others who came too late, nevertheless, even though he was now under way, threw garlands into the sea and prayed for many blessings upon him.*

<sup>41</sup> The sudden fall of the fillet and wreath on his head and on his hands is an obvious implication of *phyllobolia* (PLUTARCH, *Tim.*, 8.2 and 26).

<sup>42</sup> When he recovered from his illness, the army greeted him with joy because they believed that he was dead: *They got near to him on this side and that touching his hands, knees or clothing ... some showered wreaths upon him or the flowers the country of India produced at that season* (ARRIAN, *An.*, 6.13.3).

<sup>43</sup> DIOD. SIC., XVII.101.2.

<sup>44</sup> He was welcomed with *phyllobolia* during his victorious campaign in Italy: *Many with garlands on their heads and lighted torches in their hands welcomed and escorted him on his way, pelting him with flowers, so that his progress and return (to Rome) was a most beautiful and splendid sight* (PLUTARCH, *Pomp.*, 57).

<sup>45</sup> SÜETONIUS, *Nero*, 25.2: *All along the route victims were slain, the streets were sprinkled from time to time with perfume, while birds, ribbons and sweetmeats were showered upon him.*

<sup>46</sup> *Anthol. Graeca*, XI.123 (HEDYLUS): *Ye coffin-makers, throw chaplets and garlands on Agis.*

<sup>47</sup> More about this custom in J.H. OAKLEY - R.H. SINOS, *Wedding*, 27, where is also noted the survival of the custom in Modern Greek orthodox wedding ceremony.

<sup>48</sup> W. BURKERT, *Homo Necans* (vd. n. 7) 5 and n. 18, and *Griechische Religion*, 102 (for similar custom in sacrifices); cf. J.H. OAKLEY - R.H. SINOS, *Wedding*, 27, n. 29.

<sup>49</sup> A.B. COOK, *Zeus, Jupiter and the Oak*, in: *CIRev* 17, 1903, 174-186, 268-78. F.M. CORNFORD, *The Origin of the Olympic Games*, in: J.E. HARRISON, *Themis*, 221.

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<sup>50</sup> E.N. GARDINER, *Kingship* (vd. n. 24) 92-93.

<sup>51</sup> As it is true that we, who are not social anthropologists, never wonder why we are wearing wreaths in May the First, why we give flowers to our beloved persons, why we cover our dead with flowers etc. (the catalogue of our "meaningless" acts can be continued).

<sup>52</sup> A. KRUG, *Binden*, distinguished thirteen types of fillets (and numerous variations), and explained the context of each one.

<sup>53</sup> J.H. OAKLEY - R.H. SINOS, *Wedding*, 3 f.

<sup>54</sup> M. BLECH, *Kranz*, 153 f., mentions that the honorary wreaths are the "urban" version of the athletic victorious ceremonies. For the honorary wreaths see the early article by G.B. HUSSEY, *Greek sculptured crowns and crown inscriptions*, in: *AJA* 6, 1890, 69-95, and the more recent work by A.S. HENRY, *Honors and Privileges in Athenian Decrees*, Hildesheim 1983, 22. See, also, the honorary nouns that addressed with a similar way to the dead warriors and athletes: A. STECHER, *Inschriftliche Grabgedichte auf Krieger und Athleten: Eine Studie zu griechischen Wertprädikationen*, Innsbruck 1981.

<sup>55</sup> See the comparison of the good sprinter: *like an all but victorious runner, at the very goal of his life* (PLUTARCH, *Phil.*, 18.2). Cf. also R. GARLAND, *Death*, 1 f.; C. KARUZOS, *Απιστόδικος*, Athens 1982 (1961), 33-34; J. KLEIN, *Kranz*, 48. The symbolic figure of Nike that is depicted often in "death contexts" has a similar meaning; see the white lekythoi in *AWL*, pl., 16.3, 21.3, 58.1, 60.3-4. Also, *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 686/199, 691/24, 756/58-61, etc.

<sup>56</sup> This is also the meaning of the rest burial practices, like the common funeral feasts: M. ANDRONIKOS, *Totenkult*, Göttingen 1968 (*Archaeologia Homerica* III), 15 f., 106-107. R. GARLAND, *Death*, 39. D.C. KURTZ - J. BOARDMAN, *Burial Customs*, 214 (they are reluctant about the "passage character" of the custom).

<sup>57</sup> See K. GROTTY, *Song and Action: The Victory Odes of Pindar*, Baltimore 1982, 108 f., 112 f., 120 f., about the way that Pindar is dealing with the condition of the victor and the return to his hometown, with the perception that he (like an initiate) will re-unite to society, under his new status.

<sup>58</sup> Modern research separated the passage rites from the other (calendar and crisis) rites, because the first concern the person and not the group and they are unprecedented but expected, while the others concern the group (calendar) or both (crisis) and they can be repetitive and predictable (calendar) or neither (crisis): see J. PENTIKAINEN, *Transition rites*, in: U. BIANCHI (ed.), *I Riti di passaggio. Atti del seminario all'Università di Roma*, Rome 1986, 1-24, 2 n. 4. U. BIANCHI, *Some Observations on the Typology of Passage*, in: U. BIANCHI (ed.), *op. cit.*, 45-59, states his objections about the strict separations and typologies of the rites and underlines the similarities between them.

<sup>59</sup> Of a great importance is the early structuralistic study of A. VAN GENNEP, *The Rites of Passage*, where he makes a first attempt towards a classification of passage rites and he suggests a model which is supposed to apply to all societies, to all rites and to all periods of time. See, also, B. BARTEL, *Historical review of ethnological and archaeological analysis of mortuary practices*, in: *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 1, 1982, 32-58. A. MOREAU (ed.), *L'initiation, les rites d'adolescence et les mystères*, Montpellier 1991. I. MORRIS, *Burial and Ancient Society: The Rise of the Greek City-state*, Cambridge 1987, 29. J. PENTIKAINEN, *Transition rites* (vd. n. 58). J. RIES (ed.), *Les rites d'initiation*, Louvain-la-neuve 1986, 13f., 285f. H.S. VERNSEL, *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual*, Leiden 1993. K. GROTTY, *Pindar* (vd. n. 57) 114.

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For the use of fillets and wreaths in rites of initiation see R.B. ONIANS, *Origins*, 453, where the significance of the tying is underlined (445 f.), because the "rite" (*teleti*), the verb "perform" (*telo*), and the "end" (*telos*) have a common root, etymologically; therefore, rite is marking someone's stage of life.

<sup>60</sup> E.R. LEACH, *Culture and communication*, Cambridge 1976, pl. 7. The tripartite scheme of the evolution has been suggested already from A. VAN GENNEP, *The Rites of Passage*, 11.

<sup>61</sup> W. BURKERT, *Griechische Religion*, 293 (death). J.H. OAKLEY - R.H. SINOS, *Wedding*. A. VAN GENNEP, *The Rites of Passage*, 50 f. (birth), 116 f. (wedding), 146 f. (death).

<sup>62</sup> W. BURKERT, *Griechische Religion*, 173-174.

<sup>63</sup> According to some views, no human act is completely free from the element of "sacred", therefore every change in human life involves acts and reactions between sacred and profane: see A. VAN GENNEP, *The Rites of Passage*, 1-2. M. ELIADE, *Traite*, 15-18. Concerning the conceptions of magic and religion we must mention the strong criticism by Wittgenstein on the *Golden Bough* of Frazer, who interprets the magical and religious beliefs as scientific human errors. L. WITTGENSTEIN, *Bemerkungen* (vd. n. 26) rightly states that «it is unbelievable, someone to support, that people do all these just by pure stupidity».

<sup>64</sup> In the preface of M. ELIADE, *Traite*, 5.

<sup>65</sup> Most victors are usually depicted with the official wreath or a ribbon on their head. Therefore, this Catalogue includes only those scenes which suggest the act of *phyllobolia*: ribbons tied on victor's body (usually his arms and legs); wreaths, branches, flowers or gifts thrown at him and finally victors holding a palm branch. From the later category I omit the numerous representations of victors with palms found on miniature amphorae of the Bulas Group (first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. B.C. See ARV<sup>2</sup> 661-663, PARA 316, ADD 147).

The victorious iconography of equestrian events usually consists of *Nike* offering a fillet or a wreath to the rider or the charioteer. Therefore in the catalogue I listed only those scenes where: a) the victors are being received with branches and wreaths, b) branches have fallen on the ground under the horses' feet, c) ribbons and wreaths are offered to the horse, and d) ribbons are tied to the victors arms.

The bibliographical references are restricted to Beazley's catalogue numbers except for the cases where the vase is not included in Beazley's works or there is a recent publication with important information on the vase. For a full description, comments and bibliography on the vases listed in the catalogue and more vases with victorious athletic iconography see the annotated catalogue in: E. KEFALIDOU, *Νικητής*, 171-245.