

# Appendix: Regalia

## 1. The king's costume

The costume of the king was basically the same as the costume of his *philoi*.<sup>1</sup> At first sight it even seems as if the costume of the courtiers was a derivation of the costume of the king. At closer look, reality appears to be more complicated. Examples set by the monarchy had to be followed by those who wished to share in royal power, but those who shared in royal power presumably exercised influence on its forms as well. Moreover, the Macedonian costume worn by king and *philoi* alike was in the first place a traditional costume, as the king's behaviour was controlled by cultural conventions. A strong king could to some degree alter existing conventions, but he could not introduce completely new ones. Not even Alexander ever managed, or wished to do that. As the king's apparel was based on (supposed) tradition it hardly changed during the centuries. The ultimate standards were set in the age of the Diadochs, a time of profound change for the Macedonians. But it was the example set by Alexander that determined the forms. Alexander did so, *not* by introducing new standards for a monarch's outward appearance by his much discussed adoption of Oriental royal symbolism, but rather by his failure to do so.

‘As soon as Alexander was master of Asia,’ Athenaios writes, ‘he started wearing a Persian robe.’<sup>2</sup> This, of course, is an all too simple impression of things. Alexander may have attempted to create a new royal attire by blending Oriental and Macedonian elements—presumably an bot more than attempt to homogenise *public* court ceremonial by ending the ambiguity of having to be dressed an a Macedonian *basileus* before Macedonians and as a Persian Great King before Iranian aristocrats—but he certainly did not ponderously trade in Macedonian customs for Oriental ones, as the ancient anti-Alexander tradition claims.<sup>3</sup> However that may be, Alexander's Macedonian followers saw enough proof of offensive Orien-

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<sup>1</sup> Plut., *Mor.* 178d; Plut., *Demetr.* 41.4-5, cf. Ath. 253d-254b; Plut., *Ant.* 54.5; val. Max. 5.1 ext. 4. For the *philoi*'s costume see pp. 160ff. Sources often express the notion of a specific ‘royal costume’ (*basilikēn esthēta*; *stolē basilikē*, cf. e.g. Diod. 29.32 and 32.15.5). The young man on the fresco from Boscoreale, painted after a Hellenistic original, perhaps from a palace, is dressed as an Hellenistic king, and has for this reason been identified as *i.a.* Alexandros IV (and the woman Roxane) and Antigonos Gonatas. F.G.J. Müller, *The Wall Paintings From the Oecur of the Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor in Boscoreale* (Amsterdam 1994), has argued that what we have got here is mythic rather than an historic scene, namely Achilles mourning over Patroklos, with the woman being Thetis. This makes the painting all the more interesting: an Hellenistic portrait of Achilles dressed as a contemporary king.

<sup>2</sup> Ath. 535f.

<sup>3</sup> Plut., *Alex.* 45; Diod. 17.77.5; Curt. 6.6.4-5. Alexander wearing Persian and Median dress: Diod. 17.77.5; Plut., *Alex.* 45; *Mor.* 329 f-330a; Curt. 6.20; Arr., *Anab.* 4.9.9; 7.6.2; Just. 12.3.8; cf. Arr., *Anab.* 4.7.4.

talism in Alexander's behaviour to make it the central moot point in the Opis Mutiny of 324, which, together with the *proskynesis* debacle at Baktra, some three years earlier, finally forced the king down on this issue.

Alexander's Orientalism is a complex problem. His wearing of Oriental royal dress probably wasn't in the first place meant for a Macedonian audience at all. It was rather aimed at the former court aristocracy of the Achaimenid kings whose sovereign he had become and whose co-operation he needed.<sup>4</sup> However, when he was among his Macedonians companions, Alexander was a Macedonian. He never lead his Companion cavalry into battle wearing stately Persian gowns, nor is it likely that he wore such clothes while addressing the Macedonian infantry or in private conversations with his friends and staff. After all, Alexander wasn't as ignorant of Macedonian sentiments as to adopt the tiara (*kidaris*), the principal sign of royalty of the Persian king.<sup>5</sup> Instead, he started wearing a diadem, a simple cloth headband, which was accepted as the principal emblem of Alexander's new monarchy by Greeks and non-Greek alike because, although *referring* to diverse traditions, it was in its final form a *new* token of kingship (see below). Alexander also used the most expensive form of purple dye, known in the east as 'royal purple, more abundantly than Greeks and Macedonians were accustomed to, again without complaints. 'Royal' purple had no oriental connotations in the eyes of Macedonians and Greeks, who knew it as a dye befitting the gods; the peoples in the east, for their part, were long used to understanding royal purple as a sign of royalty; in their eyes it neither was something alien (see below). Although Alexander may have been more keen than his successors to create a new iconography of power to break with the Macedonian kingship of his forefathers,<sup>6</sup> the symbols he used to demarcate the beginning of a new era were always one way or other encased in Macedonian or Greek culture.<sup>7</sup> Yet we may be confident that Alexander all in all went too far in the eyes of the Macedonian opposition and some of his biographers. Therefore, when the Diadochs became kings in their turn and had to undertake the arduous task of creating an iconography and

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<sup>4</sup> Plut., *Mor.* 329f-330a praises Alexander for reconciling the Iranian nobility. Already Neuffer 1929, 37-8 suggested that Alexander adopted two distinct royal attires after the death of Darius, an Achaimenid and a Macedonian one, which he wore on different occasions. Berve 1938, 148-50, holds that Alexander at first adopted the Achaimenid royal dress but later switched to a mixed Persian-Macedonian dress, whilst Ritter 1965, 41-55, argues that Alexander never wore a Persian royal costume at all but started wearing the supposed mixed costume right away.

<sup>5</sup> Eratosthenes *FGrH* 241 F 30 = Plut., *Mor.* 329f-330a says that Alexander, although he did wear *some* Persian articles of dress, did not adopt the tiara, the long-sleeved upper garment (*kandyn*), nor the trousers (*anaxyridas*), but made himself a costume that was a mixture of Persian and Macedonian elements.' A similar mixed costume is described by Plut., *Alex.* 45. Furthermore, Plut., *Alex.* 45, says that Alexander, although he started to wear *some* Persian articles of dress, he did not adopt the entire Achaimenid royal costume because this was 'altogether barbaric and strange'.

<sup>6</sup> Smith 1988, 58-9.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. E.A. Fredricksmeyer, 'Alexander the Great and the Macedonian *kausia*', *TAPhA* 116 (1986) 215-27, esp. 227: 'the *kausia* was ... demonstratively Macedonian. Thus, Alexander's dress gave symbolic expression to the nature of his new Kingship of Asia. Rather than being a new Oriental monarchy, it was a creation *sui generis*, in which Macedonian and Persian elements were combined, but in which, in the balance, the Macedonian-Greek component prevailed.'

ideology of empire to meet the requirements of the new political constellation, they knew that this was like walking a tightrope, remembering all too well how Alexander had failed: they all knew that they had to prevent being accused of ‘Orientalism’ and ‘despotism’ at all cost. It is therefore no surprise that they had a distinct preference for keeping up Macedonian appearances, aiming at securing the loyalty of the Macedonians, not to mention their probable personal ethnocentric sentiments. During the first Diadoch War, the Macedonian troops favoured Krateros because they remembered that he had openly resisted to Alexander’s Orientalism; years after Alexander’s death, the soldiers still considered Krateros, who conscientiously wore a Macedonian *kausia* to intensify these feelings, a man ‘defending the manners of their country’.<sup>8</sup> The later Antigonid, Seleukid and Ptolemaic kings, dependent as they were on the loyalty of the Macedonian troops who constituted the core of their armies, wore the traditional *krepides*, *kausia*, and *chlamys*.<sup>9</sup> These elements of Macedonian costume cannot be considered regalia in the strict sense of exclusive symbols of royalty—(Macedonian *philoï* wore the same—and the attire presumably was not worn on every occasion.<sup>10</sup> For this reason the *kausia* is almost never shown on official ruler portraits nor on coins, with the exception of some Baktrian kings, who, being physically cut off from the Mediterranean, apparently felt more strongly inclined to express their ethnicity than other monarchs.<sup>11</sup> However, in written sources which were not part of official propaganda but reflections of the author’s sense of reality, *kausiai* often turn up. *Chlamydes*, on the other hand, appear quite often on official Hellenistic ruler statues<sup>12</sup> and portrait coins.<sup>13</sup> Some Hellenistic kings imitated Alexander in his coiffure and his behaviour.<sup>14</sup> The most important example given by Alexander, however, was that he kept his

<sup>8</sup> Plut., *Eum.* 6.1-2.

<sup>9</sup> See e.g. Plut., *Ant.* 54.5; Eusthathios, *ad Od.* 1399; Hdn. 4.8.1-2; Ath. 535f.

<sup>10</sup> In the written sources, kings wearing a *kausia* always wear a diadem as well: Ath. 535f-536a; 537e; Aristoboulos *FGrH* 139 F 55; Eusth., *ad Od.* 1.122; Hdn. 1.3.1-3; Plut., *Ant.* 54.5. Cf. Ritter 1965, 55-62; Berve 1926 I 17; Neuffer 1929, 35.

<sup>11</sup> Baktrian royal *kausiai* are found on coins of Antimachos Theos (Dintsis 1986, 310, no. 295; 2), Demetrios II (Dintsis 1986, 310, no. 296), Apollodotos (P. Bernard, *AccInscrBellLettres, Comptes Rendus* [1974] 307) and Antialkidas (*SNG* 1965, no. 318-9).

<sup>12</sup> See Smith 1988: Macedonia: plate 70 no. 1 (Naples Alexander); Diadochs: cat. no. 4 (Papyri Demetrios), cat. no. 7 (Papyri ‘Krateros’); plate 70 no. 2 (New York ‘Demetrios’); Ptolemies: plate 70 no. 7 (Bonn Ptolemy); Seleukids: plate 71 no. 5-6 (Louvre ‘Balas’); *Attalids*: cat. no. 22 (Papyri Philetairos); Kommagene: cat. no. 97-8 (Nemrud Dağı, Antiochos I); plate 59, no. 1 and no. 2 (Antiochos I); unidentified: cat. no. 27 (Papyri Young Commander); plate 70 no. 5 (Naples Horned Ruler).

<sup>13</sup> Argeads: Smith 1988, plate 74 no. 4 (Alexander). Ptolemies: Smith 1988, plate 75 nos. 1, 2, 4 (Ptolemy I), 3 (Ptolemy II), 9 (Ptolemy III), 10 (Ptolemy IV), 11 (Ptolemy V), 12, 15 (Ptolemy VI), 17 (Ptolemy VIII). Seleukids: *SNG* 8, no. 1067 (Demetrios I); *SNG* 4.8, nos. 5687-92, 5716-7 (Alexandros Balas), 5744, 5746-8 (Antiochos VII), 5762 (Demetrios II). *Attalids*: Smith 1988, plate 74 no. 14 (Eumenes II). Pontos: Smith, plate 77 no. 9 (Mithradates III). Bosphoros: Smith 1988, plate 77 nos. 19 (Rhoimetalkes), 20 (Sauromates II). Armenia: *SNG* 8, no. 1075 (Tigranes II). Baktria: *SNG* 1965, nos. 264, 269, 270 (Eukratides), 284-6 (Heliokles), 315-6, 318-20 (Antialkidas). Apparently, Macedonian costume became such a standard emblem of kingship that it was also adopted by non-Hellenic Hellenistic dynasties.

<sup>14</sup> Coins are best proof of this. See also, for the Diadochs, Plut., *Pyrrh.* 8.1: ‘The other kings, they said, could only imitate Alexander in superficial details, ... the angle at which they held their heads, or the lofty tone of their

beard shaved.<sup>15</sup> This practice was followed by all later Macedonian kings.<sup>16</sup> Apart from stressing that they were the heirs of Alexander, kings may have shaved in order to evoke the eternal youthfulness of heroes and gods, like Apollo and Dionysos, both of whom were normally beardless in Greek iconography of the Hellenistic period.<sup>17</sup> On portraits, kings usually appear as men ageing between twenty and thirty-five years of age.<sup>18</sup> The godlike youthfulness of the kings was enhanced by their beardlessness. Another reason to shave, was that it distanced kings from Asians and Greeks.

Because the king's costume was basically the same as that of his *philoï*, rulers also had to find means to single themselves out among their following. They therefore made their dress more sumptuous, as Plutarch's famous description of Demetrios Poliorketes' appearance illustrates:

Not only did he possess elaborate clothing and diadems—*kausiaï* with a double ribbon (δίμιτρος) and dresses of sea-purple interwoven with gold—but even his feet were clad in the richest purple felt embroidered with gold. One of his *chlamydes* had taken months to weave on the looms, a superb piece of work in which the Kosmos with the heavenly bodies were represented. It was still only half finished at the time of his downfall, and none of the later Macedonian kings ever presumed to wear it, although several of them had a taste for pomp and luxury too.<sup>19</sup>

This is reminiscent of a passage from Isokrates' compendium of advice to the Cypriote ruler Nikokles, written probably shortly after Nikokles' accession in 374:

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speech.' Cf. Plut., *Alex.* 4; *Demetr.* 41.3. In general, however, the hairstyles of later kings differed from that of Alexander, with the main exception of Mithradates the Great, who was especially keen on presenting himself as an Alexander look-alike. Likewise, the Persians are said to have been fond of hook-nosed persons, 'because Cyrus, the best loved of their kings, had a nose of that shape' (Plut., *Mor.* 172e, cf. 821e).

<sup>15</sup> As can be seen on all portraits of the king, with literary evidence added by Ath. 565a; Plut., *Mor.* 180b; *Perseus* 13.

<sup>16</sup> With only four exceptions: the Antigonids Philippos V and Perseus, the Seleukid pretender Achaïos and the Seleukid king Demetrios II in his second reign. Smith 1988, 46 n. 2, explains these exceptions thus: 'Philip V is probably evoking his great (bearded) namesake Philip II with whom he was keen to stress a blood relationship (Polyb. 5.10.10). Perseus is no doubt imitating his father. ... Demetrios II's long beard is clearly modelled formally on that of his former Parthian captors. He had lived at the Persian court and did not escape but was released with Parthian blessing to resume his throne. ... We know too little of Achaëus to interpret his beard. He was the uncle of Antiochus III and, as a usurper, may be a special case.'

<sup>17</sup> Smith 1988, 46, points out that the image of Alexander was in a sense an image of eternal youth: 'Alexander not only shaved his beard, he had also died young, leaving no model for ageing kings for his successors (some of whom were extremely old).' Plut., *Mor.* 180b has recorded the anecdote that Alexander ordered his troops to shave off their beards before battle, explaining to a surprised Parmenion, 'that in battles there is nothing handier to grasp than a beard', cf. Plut., *Thes.* 3; Ath. 565a.

<sup>18</sup> Smith 1988, 46-47.

<sup>19</sup> Plut., *Demetr.* 41.4-5; cf. Ath. 535f-536a. The translation of δίμιτρος is ambivalent; *LSJ* gives 'with double mitre', as does the Loeb translation, but it may as well mean 'with double ribbons', in which it probably is a reference to Demetrios' diadem, worn around his *kausia*.

Be sumptuous (τρυφά) in your dress and personal adornment, but simple and severe (καρτερός), as befits a king, in your other habits, that those who see you may judge from your appearance that you are worthy of your rank, and that those who are intimate with you may form the same opinion from your strength of soul.<sup>20</sup>

Isokrates' advice that a king should appear both sumptuous and modest may sound inconsistent, but it was exactly this ambiguity that was characteristic for the Hellenistic dynasties. Especially the expensive purple dye, with its distinct monarchic associations, could turn common clothing into robes of office.

Like the *philoi*, the ruler wore weapons. He wore armour in battle and on other public occasions.<sup>21</sup> By his arms the king expressed his military capabilities and his natural right to rule over the lives of others. Naturally, a king possessed several sets of armour.<sup>22</sup> The king's arms and armour could also be communicative of wealth, as the following passage from Plutarch may illustrate:

He [Alexander] put on his helmet his helmet, but the rest of his armour he had on as he came from his tent, namely a tunic made in Sicily which was belted around his waist, and over this a thickly quilted linen cuirass from the spoils taken at Issos. His helmet was made of iron and gleamed like polished silver, a work of Theophilos, and to this was fitted an iron ornament, set with precious stones. His sword, a marvel of tempering and lightness, was a gift of the king of Kittians. ... He also wore a cloak, which was even

<sup>20</sup> Isoc., *Nicocl.* 32. Cf. Goodenough 1928, 56-7.

<sup>21</sup> Many such weapons and armour were found in the royal tombs at Vergina, all of which are of 'superb quality' (Hammond 1988, 217). The king in Tomb II was buried with a sword in scabbard, a short sword, a shield, a helmet, a cuirass, six spears and pikes of different size and shape, three pairs of greaves, and a *gorytus* with arrows; Tomb III (perhaps of Alexander IV) contained four spears, a cuirass, and a pair of greaves (Andronikos 1984, 202). Most interestingly, Tomb II contained the equipment of both a Companion cavalryman and a phalangite (Hammond 217-8). The first is not surprising, but the second raises questions: did this king actually fight as rank and file infantry, or were the phalangite's weapons mere symbolic? In Macedonian culture, burial gifts were not meant to be used in some afterlife, but symbolised accomplishments during lifetime (Hammond 1989, 218 with n. 6). To my mind, the infantry equipment must have been symbolic of the king's role as leader of the Macedonian army, consisting of both horse and foot, both nobility and free commoners. This, in turn, leads to the conclusion that even if a king really dressed as a phalangite to express his allegiance with the infantry, this does not imply that he actually fought as such in battle, as is also suggested by the fact that the richly decorated infantry shield found in Tomb II probably wasn't suitable to be used in battle, and can only be ceremonial (Andronikos 1984, 140; cf. Hammond 1989, 219); the arrows found in Tomb II add up to this conclusion: as Macedonian kings did not use bow and arrow but spears for hunting, this may be symbolic for the king's leadership of light-armed troops *c.q.* peltasts.

<sup>22</sup> As is quite certain in the case of Alexander, cf. Hammond 1989, 222-3: after Alexander's death, one set of armour went to Alexandria and was buried with the king's corpse; another set remained in the treasury at Susa, was later used by Eumenes, and finally fell into the hands of Antigonos; and yet a third set, Hammond suggests, 'was taken from Babylon by Perdiccas, fell into the hands of Antipater at Triparadisus, and was taken by him to Macedonia in 320.' Hammond rejects the attractive hypothesis that with the finds in Tomb II at Vergina this last set has now been recovered, as was suggested by E.N. Borza, 'The royal Macedonian tombs and the paraphernalia of Alexander the Great', *Phoenix* 41 (1987) 105-21, 118.

more elaborate than the rest of armour; it was a work of Helikon, the ancient, and presented to him as a mark of honour by the city of Rhodes; and this too he was wont to wear in battle.<sup>23</sup>

On the Alexander Mosaic from Pompeii, the king wears a rare and costly cuirass,<sup>24</sup> and on the Alexander Sarcophagus an eloquently forged helmet in the shape of a lion's head. That Alexander's helmet was conspicuous is confirmed by Plutarch, who relates that at the battle of the Granikos 'Many [Persians] rushed upon Alexander, for he was easily recognisable by his buckler and by his helmet, on either side of which was fixed a plume of wonderful size and whiteness'.<sup>25</sup> Pyrrhos, too, wore such an eye-catching helmet in battle in order to single him out as the king. During Pyrrhos' final confrontation with his archenemy Demetrios Poliorketes, the troops of the latter wanted to go over to Pyrrhos but at first could not find him:

By chance he had taken off his helmet. Then he remembered that the soldier's could not recognise him, and so he put it on again and was instantly recognised by its high crest and the goat's horns which he wore at the sides.<sup>26</sup>

Beautifully adorned arms and armour were not merely badges of military command but badges of royalty as well. When Eumenes displayed the royal paraphernalia of Alexander on the king's empty throne, these included 'the armour that he had been wont to use'.<sup>27</sup> In his account of the strife over the succession in 323, Curtius mentions as Alexander's principal regalia a throne, a diadem, a purple robe, a signet-ring and weapons.<sup>28</sup> Especially helmets could be royal insignia. Alexander's helmets

<sup>23</sup> Plut., *Alex.* 32.5-6. Cf. Neuffer 1929, 30, who concludes from the divergent places of origin of parts of Alexander's armour '[dass Alexander] das Kostüm des siegreichen Eroberers zu tragen [scheint], der sich mit den Herrlichkeiten der Welt schmückt, die sich ihm darbietet oder die er zwingt.'

<sup>24</sup> Cf. the cuirass on the Tarsos Medallion, portraying an early Hellenistic ruler: A. de Longperier, *Revue Numismatique* 13 (1868) 313ff. This is perhaps Philippos II or Pyrrhos: M.B. Hatzopoulos and L. Loukopulos eds., *Philip of Macedon* (Athens 1980) 228; A.N. Oikonomides, 'The portrait of Pyrrhos king of Epirus in Hellenistic and Roman art', *AncW* 8 (1983) 67-72. The shoulder flaps of the cuirass are decorated with a Nike carrying Celtic spoils of war. In Tomb II at Vergina a like cuirass was found, made of iron, relieved by gold bands of ornamentation and decorated with gold lions' heads.

<sup>25</sup> Plut., *Alex.* 16.4. A similar early Hellenistic helmet with high plumes on the sides can be seen on the bust of the unidentified Diadoch from the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum (Smith 1988, cat. no. 7). Cf. Hammond 1989, 221. Likewise the Spartan regent Machanidas (c. 212-206 BC) was easily recognisable on the battlefield by his purple clothing and the trappings of his horse (Polyb. 11.18.1).

<sup>26</sup> Plut., *Pyrrh.* 11.5. A goat's horn can also be seen on a picture of a royal helmet on a coin issued by the Seleukid ruler Tryphon (*DAGR* s.v. 'Causia', fig. 1263). On the well-known portrait bust of Pyrrhos from the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum (now in the National Museum at Naples), the king wears a simple but beautiful helmet decorated with an oak wreath, probably a reference to Zeus of Dodona (Smith 1988, cat. no. 5). Compare the helmeted coin portrait of Pyrrhos in Oikonomides 1983, 71.

<sup>27</sup> Diod. 18.61.1.

<sup>28</sup> Curtius 10.6.4.

were commemorated on coins issued by him.<sup>29</sup> Later Hellenistic kings who had themselves portrayed with helmets worn over their diadems include Seleukos I, Ptolemaios X, Eukratides of Baktria, Philippos V and Perseus.<sup>30</sup> These however are all standard type helmets, differing from common Macedonian cavalry helmets only in their exquisite decoration. The king's armour, again, was embedded in tradition, only more richly decorated.

## 2. The diadem

All attributes and articles of dress worn by a king were *qualitate qua* insignia of royalty. 'Regalia' may be defined as articles of dress or other material objects which can be regarded as emblems of monarchy and are monopolised by a monarch, *i.e.* to be distinguished from insignia worn also be used by people only sharing in royal power. Regalia may be understood as symbolic objects symbolising and containing royal power. They have the ability to transform a mortal man or woman into a king or queen, thus becoming the embodiment of kingship. Regalia moreover have the ability to communicate charisma and status and to make ideological concepts visible. To understand the meaning of specific regalia, we should keep in mind that royal symbolism is in the last instance an adoption or adaptation of symbolic forms from normal society. All Hellenistic royal insignia, however exclusive or exceptional they may look, refer to familiar practices and symbols.

The main royal insignia in the Hellenistic world from the late fourth century BCE until the first century CE (and far beyond) were purple dye and the diadem. Besides the diadem, Hellenistic kings were equipped with sceptres and signet rings. These regalia had a more or less universal status and can be found in most Mediterranean and Near Eastern monarchies of earlier periods. Furthermore, the archaeological evidence shows a broad variety of divine paraphernalia: radiate crowns, wings, lion scalps, goat horns, bull's horns. The above mentioned regalia will for convenience be discussed separately; they were, however, interrelated and had only meaning when joined together on the body of the king. Purple already had a long tradition as a status symbol in both the Near East and the Aegean world. Purple dye existed in multifarious forms, and only one of these was an exclusive emblem of royalty. Being not an object, purple will be discussed in separately below. The diadem was as exclu-

<sup>29</sup> *SNG V 3* (London 1976) nos. 2604, 3064, and 3609. Compare the helmet-crowns of medieval German emperors, cf. J. Deér, 'Der Ursprung der Kaiserkrone', *Schweizer Beiträge zur allgemeinen Geschichte* 8 (1950) 75: 'Aus dem Helm ist eine juwelenartige Krone, aus der rangbezeichnenden Schutzwaffe ein Insigne der monarchischen Repräsentation geworden.'

<sup>30</sup> Seleukos: silver tetradrachm minted in Susa with bull's horns and ears placed on the temples, from the British Museum, see Green 1990, p. 27 fig. 11. Ptolemaios X wears a helmet on a clay sealing from Edfu, now in the Royal Ontario Museum (Green 1990, 548 fig. 169). Eukratides: *DAGR* s.v. 'Causia', fig. 1264. Philippos V: *Ibid.*, fig. 1262. Perseus: *Ibid.*, fig. 1261, cf. Dintsis 1986, 309, no. 292, who renders Perseus' head-gear a *kausia*.

sive as can be. Apparently it was a new symbol, introduced by Alexander as a personal ornament, and subsequently institutionalised as a generic royal emblem by the Diadochs.

The diadem was a rather simple object given its tremendous symbolic meaning.<sup>31</sup> It was in essence an unassuming band of cloth tied about the head with a knot and two long, loose-hanging ribbons at the back.<sup>32</sup> It was worn about the hair, above the forehead, i.e. different from to the Dionysian fillet worn by the god wore across the forehead. The diadem was white, purple or white with ornamentations made of purple or gold thread stitches. The diadem was a personal emblem, not transmitted from father to son. The bind obtained the quality of a royal diadem only after it had been tied round one's head. It is even possible that kings did not have one diadem only. On portrait coins, the diadem is made to look like an integral part of the body, with sometimes only the ribbons visible, literally fitting the man or woman adorned with it.<sup>33</sup> After the assumption of the diadem by the Diadochs in 306/5, its use became widespread, not only among the great Hellenistic dynasties of Antigonids, Seleukids and Ptolemies, but among any monarchic state of the Near East for many centuries to come.<sup>34</sup> In the course of the Hellenistic centuries the physical shape of the diadem remained more or less the same, although tending to become broader and more conspicuous.<sup>35</sup> The diadem could be worn

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<sup>31</sup> Not counting a continuous discussion about a 'diadem' found at Vergina, there is not much literature about the principal insignia of royalty in the Hellenistic world and beyond. There are two monographs: S. Grenz, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Diadems in den hellenistischen Reichen* (diss. Greifswald 1914), and H.W. Ritter, *Diadem und Königsherrschaft. Untersuchungen zu Zeremonien und Rechtsgrundlagen des Herrschaftsantritts bei den Persern, bei Alexander dem Großen und im Hellenismus* (Munich and Berlin 1965). There is also much about the diadem in R.R.R. Smith, *Hellenistic Royal Portraits* (Oxford 1988) 34-40. A. Alföldi has discussed the origin of the diadem repeatedly in studies of Roman regalia, see esp. 'Insignien und Tracht der römischen Kaiser', *MdAI* 50 (1935); *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche* (Darmstadt 1970); *Caesar in 44 v.Chr. I* (Bonn 1985). Regalia in (European) history: P.E. Schramm, *Herrschaftszeichen und Staatssymbolik* (3 vols; Stuttgart 1954-1956).

<sup>32</sup> The modern English meaning of the word 'diadem' (crown) has more than often led to confusion, particularly in a controversy over a crown found in Tomb II at Vergina, after Ph.W. Lehmann, 'The so-called tomb of Philip II: A different interpretation', *AJA* 84 (1980) 527-31, first suggested this metal item was a diadem. Although some problems regarding the Vergina 'diadem' remain unsolved—it may have been a metal *imitation* of a cloth diadem; it may have been worn *over* a cloth diadem as an ornament—it now seems certain that Lehmann's theory was incorrect since the genuine diadem was made of cloth and was worn as a simple head-band; see esp. the arguments in W.M. Calder, 'Diadem and barrel-vault: A note', *AJA* 85 (1981) 334-5; cf. Ritter 1984, 105-6; Smith 1988, 34-5.

<sup>33</sup> Not unlike the royal mantle in ancient Irish myth, which was always too big for one who was not destined to be High King in Tara, cf. M. Draak, 'Some aspects of kingship in pagan Ireland', in: *La regalità sacra* (Leiden 1959) 651-63, esp. 655.

<sup>34</sup> Including the Attalids, Baktrian and Indo-Greek dynasties, the kings of Kappadokia, Bithynia, Kommagene, Paphlagonia, Iberia, Armenia, Sophene, Pontos, Judea, Numidia, Mauretania, Thrace, and even the Parthian Arsakids. Parthian kings, like kings of Armenia and Kommagene, are often depicted with a diadem wrapped around a tiara. From Constantine the Great onward, Roman emperors, too, wore the diadem (Smith 1988, 38 with n. 59; Schramm 1955, 381). Through its use by Late Roman and Byzantine emperors, the diadem was to become the ancestor of the medieval and later European royal crown (Schramm 1955, 381).

<sup>35</sup> Smith 1988, 55.



in combination with a (purple) *kausia*, as is said explicitly of Alexander.<sup>36</sup> Although the combination of diadem and *kausia* perhaps became less common after Alexander, that does not mean that it was ‘abolished’, since later kings also wore *kausiai* and would never appear in public without a diadem. With the exception of some Baktrian kings, the combination of diadem and *kausia* is not found on portrait coins, probably for reason that the latter was not exclusively a sign of royalty.<sup>37</sup> Evidence for the diadem’s importance is provided by a plethora of literary and archaeological sources (notably coins).<sup>38</sup> In Greek historiography after Alexander, putting on a diadem or binding a diadem around one’s head (sometimes in combination with the assumption of purple garments) is the standard metaphor for the assumption of kingship itself.<sup>39</sup> Conversely, to put *off* a diadems is the standard metaphor for the downfall of kings, often used by ancient authors in the contexts of decisive battles, for instance those of Pydna and Tigranokerta, in which Perseus of Macedonia and Tigranes of Armenia respectively lost everything save their life.<sup>40</sup> When Demetrios Poliorketes died in Asia and his ashes were brought back to Macedonia, the urn containing his remains was decorated with purple cloth and a diadem.<sup>41</sup>

What did the diadem signify? Answering this question requires a closer look at the ongoing controversy over the *origin* of the bind. As I already noted, it was Alexander who introduced the diadem as an exclusive monarchic insignia.<sup>42</sup> The question is: did he also invented it or did he derive it from a pre-existing equivalent with similar royal associations? This question has caused much debate. Apart from suggesting a pre-Hellenistic Macedonian origin, the diadem had been rendered an

<sup>36</sup> Aristoboulos *FGrH* 139 F 55; Arr., *Anab.* 7.22.2-4; Ephippos *FGrH* 126 F 5 = Ath. 537e.

<sup>37</sup> In the recent past, much has been made of the so-called *kausia diadematophoros* (Plut., *Ant.* 54.5); it has been argued that the combination was a regalia in his own right, but used by Alexander only, e.g. by Ritter 1965, 55: ‘Wie die Perserkönige das Diadem um die aufrechte Tiara getragen hatten, so trug Alexander es um die makedonischen Kausia. Seine königliche Kausia war wahrscheinlich purpurn. Aber auch Adlige trugen purpurne Kausien. Da andererseits das Diadem auch von den [Persischen] *suggeneis* ... getragen wurde, jedenfalls zur Xenophons Zeit von ihnen noch getragen war, ergibt sich, daß bei der neuen königlicher Kopfbedeckung Alexanders möglicherweise keiner der beiden Bestandteile für sich den König bezeichnete, sondern nur ihre Verbindung.’ However, the assumption that the *kausia diadematophoros* was exclusively worn by Alexander, serves only to cover up the relative absence of a royal *kausia* in later times, which can more plausibly be explained by accepting that it was *not* a regalia, and discards the evidence that kings after Alexander also sometimes wore *kausiai* and always diadem. Moreover, Ritter’s claim that the diadem was an Achaimenid emblem of royalty taken over by Alexander is debatable.

<sup>38</sup> Collected in Ritter 1965, *passim*.

<sup>39</sup> See e.g. Plut., *Mor.* 184a-b; Diod. 31.15.2; 36.2.4; Jos., *AJ* 196-7; *BJ* 1.671.5.

<sup>40</sup> Pydna: Plut., *Aem.* 23.1; Tigranokerta: Plut., *Luc.* 28.5-6. Other examples in Ritter 1965, 172-3.

<sup>41</sup> Plut., *Demetr.* 53.2.

<sup>42</sup> A view expressed by Grenz 1914, 36-8, but not accepted by Ritter 1965, 31-41. There is no evidence that the diadem existed in Macedonia before the reign of Alexander. For a summary of the discussion about a possible Macedonian origin of the diadem see Ritter 1984, 106-8 and Smith 1988, 35 with n. 35. Evidence for Alexander wearing the diadem e.g. Arr., *Anab.* 7.9.9; Diod. 17.116.4; 18.60.6-61.1; Curt. 10.6.4.

Achaimenid royal insignium, a Greek victory wreath and a symbol of Dionysos.<sup>43</sup> In what follows, these three theories will be briefly outlined.

(1) The word δῖαδῆμα—the noun formed from the verb διαδέω, ‘to bind round’—is first mentioned in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*. Describing Cyrus’ appearance on a ceremonial, public occasion, Xenophon states that the Persian king wore a ‘Median’ dress, including a diadem tied around the Persian tiara (or: *kidaris*).<sup>44</sup> The use of this diadem, however, was not restricted to the king (as it was in the Hellenistic age), but was also worn by members of the court nobility, the king’s *suggeneis*.<sup>45</sup> Thus, it was not regalia in the strict sense of an exclusive symbol of royal. Furthermore, the historicity of Xenophon’s view of Persian court customs is questionable; it is, at any rate, not supported by archaeological evidence from the Achaimenid Empire itself, even though there is abundant archaeological contemporary evidence for Persian regalia. Diodoros and Curtius, both drawing from the same vulgate source, state that Alexander took over his diadem from the Persian king, but here the same objection can be made.<sup>46</sup> The Persian origin of the diadem has been the most popular explanation; its main defender is Ritter, claiming that the combination of diadem and tiara was the genuine head-gear of the Achaimenid kings.<sup>47</sup> But the point is (apart from the meagre and suspect evidence): if the diadem really was an oriental emblem of royalty it is hardly feasible that it became such an extremely successful symbol among the Macedonian and the Greeks. Even if we accept a conscious *Verschmel-*

<sup>43</sup> For an overview see Smith 1988, 35-6, being strongly opposed to a ‘fictitious’ Achaimenid origin. So also E.A. Fredericksmeier, ‘Once more the diadem and barrel-vault at Vergina’, *AJA* 87 (1983) 99-102, but not Ritter 1984, 105-8.

<sup>44</sup> Xen., *Cyr.* 8.3.13; cf. Curt. 3.3.17.

<sup>45</sup> This sole attestation of a diadem before Alexander is made even more puzzling because of the lack of supporting archaeological evidence, cf. Smith 1988, 36. Given the fact that also the king’s *suggeneis* wore diadems, the diadem may have been a regalia in the sense of a symbol of royal power distributed among the nobility. At any case, it was not an exclusive regalia, reserved to the king. As far as head-dresses are concerned, this exclusive insignia will have been the tiara, a conical mitre that was worn by the king only (Xen., *Cyr.* 8.1.13) and, perhaps, the cylindrical crowns known from rock reliefs. On Achaemenid crowns, see H. von Gall, ‘Die Kopfbedeckung des persischen Ornats bei den Achämeniden’, *AMI* n.F. 7 (1974) 145-61, and W. Henkelman, ‘The royal Achaemenid crown’, *AMI* n.F. 28 (1995/6) 275-93. Also (Neo) Assyrian kings may have worn something similar to a diadem, though the Assyrian main regalia was, like the Persian, the tiara; cf. Smith 1988, 36 with n. 45. However, the (archaeological) evidence for a Near Eastern ‘diadem’ is disputable. Cf. D. Bänder, *Die Siegesstele des Naramsin und ihre Stellung in Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte* (Idstein 1995) 187-8, 191-2; B. Hrouda, *Die Kulturgeschichte des assyrischen Flachbildes* (Bonn 1965) 43-4. On a wall painting from Mari, a king, wearing a tiara, receives from the hands of Ishtar a white sceptre and a red circular band, cf. the illustration in A. Parrot, ‘Les peintures du palais de Mari’, *Syria* (1937) 336; but it might as well be something else. In Plut., *Mor.* 173c Xerxes is given a diadem on his accession, but this probably reflects Hellenistic practice.

<sup>46</sup> Diod. 17.77.6; Curt. 6.6.4.

<sup>47</sup> Ritter 1965, 6-18, 31-62, and 125; cf. Ritter 1987, 290-301. So also Bosworth 1993, 158: ‘Alexander’s regular costume was the white-striped purple tunic of the Persian king ... and the Persian diadem’. Against this view: Alföldi 1985, 105-13 and Smith 1988, 35-6. The latter stresses the notable lack of support for this theory in the other literary sources mentioning the adoption of the diadem by Alexander; in Arrian’s description of the contents of Cyrus’ royal tomb (*Anab.* 6.29.5), based on the eye-witness account of Aristoboulos, a diadem is conspicuously absent.

*zungspolitik* in Alexander's later reign, than certainly the Diadochs and their successors, including the Antigonids in Macedonia (!), would have not chosen as their principal emblem of royalty a symbol that was primarily associated with Persian kingship.

(2) In a posthumously published collection of essays on Caesar's royal pretensions, Alföldi suggested that the diadem was derived from the Greek victory fillet: originally a reward for athletes and poets participating in games, it developed into a more general symbol of exceptional victory and merit, '[ein] Symbol für eine jede Höchstleistung und Überordnung', until 'diese echt griechische Formulierung der höchsten Geltung und sieghaften Führung auf den Staat und auf das eroberungsgierige Heereskönigtum bezogen wurde.'<sup>48</sup> Victory was indeed central to Hellenistic royal ideology and Alföldi's outline of how the Greek's preoccupation with agonistic competition influenced this is imposing. Still, we should be cautious to really identify the diadem completely with a victor's fillet: the victor's fillet is not called a δίαδημα, and diadem and victory fillet are not similar in shape. Moreover, an exclusive Greek origin would not have had much appeal to the non-Greek subjects, and it is hard to understand how a more or less *common* head-band could have become an *exclusive* symbol of royalty.

(3) The association of the diadem with Dionysos stems from two sources: Diodoros and Pliny, who, drawing on the same unidentified Hellenistic author state that the kings took over the diadem from Dionysos, who wore it as a symbol of his Eastern conquests.<sup>49</sup> Again, the element of victory is in accordance with both theory and practice of Hellenistic kingship. We do know that Dionysos, the conquering god, was one of Alexander's favourite deities and later became just as important for the Seleukids and Ptolemies, and that his myth of conquest was elaborated at the Ptolemaic court. On the other hand we can propound to this theory basically the same objection as to the agonistic origin: it simply was a different sort of bind.<sup>50</sup>

None of the proposed origins of the diadem is *in itself* persuasive. However, to find the historical origin of the diadem, as was said above, is only relevant as far as it can help us understand the meaning of the Hellenistic diadem. The objections raised against the respective theories of origin do not preclude that contemporaries *could* understand the diadem as referring to—not necessarily originating from—the agonistic fillet, the Dionysian head-band, and oriental royal insignia, or even something else that we have not yet found. Perhaps the Hellenistic diadem may even have referred to several meanings simultaneously, as is suggested by the divergent efforts of Diodoros, Curtius and Pliny to find an antiquarian background for the diadem. All that Alexander did, was binding a piece of cloth around his head and making this a symbol of his power. Presumably Alexander was well aware of the

<sup>48</sup> Alföldi 1985, 105-32. Against Alföldi's view see H.W. Ritter, 'Die Bedeutung des Diadems', *Historia* 36 (1987) 290-301, defending his own view that the diadem was Achaimenid: 'müßte sie revidiert werden, wäre dies eine Rückkehr zum Stand des 19. Jh.' (p. 290).

<sup>49</sup> Diod. 4.4.4; Plin. *N.H.* 7.191. Cf. Smith 1988, 37-8.

<sup>50</sup> On the differences in shape of the royal diadem and the Dionysian fillet see Smith 1988, 37 with n. 55.

associations it invoked, an effect that was both gratuitous and calculated.<sup>51</sup> Thus the Greeks' association of the diadem with agonistic victory or with the victorious Dionysos were a more than welcome by-effect. The same is true of the possible association of the diadem with nobility and leadership among Alexander's Iranian subjects. Of greatest importance to Alexander, however, was the need to introduce a novel symbol for a new form of kingship, without arousing *any* of his subjects' aversion to change or to foreign culture. Thus, Alexander's diadem was at the same time familiar and new. With the assumption of the diadem, Alexander most of all introduced a token of kingship that was linked to his personal, charismatic and autocratic, rulership.<sup>52</sup> It marked a break with the Macedonian tradition of a limited, hereditary kingship that probably knew no exclusive, distinguishing regalia. The traditional Macedonian kingship was already contested by the absolutist endeavours of Philippos II and perhaps some of his predecessors, but it was Alexander who brought royal monopolisation of power to a peak. Apparently he felt confident enough to do it more openly than any Macedonian king before him had done.

There is, however, a problem: Alexander's diadem is only attested in literary sources; on his portraits he never wears one.<sup>53</sup> This even true of the coins posthumously struck by the Diadochs. The old Macedonian monarchy presumably knew no distinct regalia. Therefore, there was no direct necessity for Alexander to wear one. For good political reason he chose to do otherwise and cautiously introduced a fillet symbolising his self-assurance as autocratic world ruler. However, Alexander's autocracy grew only gradually. He had to reckon with the opposition of the powerful Macedonian nobility as well as negative Hellenic sentiments concerning despots. It is possible therefore that Alexander's diadem was meant to be a transitional emblem, 'a plain and unassuming symbol,' as Smith puts it, which 'could have been worn casually at first and only later, with time, have taken on

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<sup>51</sup> Cf. Schramm 1956, 1068-72, who argues that attempts, inspired by the Romantic movement and the evolution theories of the Nineteenth Century, to find some linear evolution of medieval regalia, are fruitless: 'Bei keinen von ihnen kann die Rede sein von einer "Entwicklung". ... Anstoß zum Wandel gab vielmehr jeweils, daß ein Herrscher mit seiner Umgebung nach einem neuen oder besseren Zeichen für das suchte, was er verkörperte, daß er sich zu diesem Zwecke mit dem "auseinandersetze", was Vergangenheit und Fremde für ihn bereit hielten, daß er das ihm passend Dünkende ... übernahm und in der von ihm geschaffenen Form an seinen Nachfolger weitergab oder daß er – wenn weder Vergangenheit noch Fremde ihm weiterhalfen – mit seinen Beratern etwas Neues ersann, was in den Einzelheiten sich da oder dort anlehnen mochte, als Ganzes aber die "Entwicklung" durchbrach.'

<sup>52</sup> Smith 1988, 36 comes to a similar but more rigid conclusion: 'In "origin" it probably meant precisely nothing. In this lay its real value and success as a symbol. Originally empty of meaning, it could take on whatever significance Alexander gave it.' As I argued above, the diadem probably was *not* empty of meaning, although it was also *new*; cf. J.A. Boon, *Other Tribes, Other Scribes. Symbolic Anthropology in the Comparative Study of Cultures, Histories, Religions, and Texts* (Cambridge etc. 1982) 52-3, who points out that in any culture meanings assigned to symbols can be renegotiated in a dialectic with actual behaviour.

<sup>53</sup> Smith 1988, 37 n. 49, and 58-62. There are two, doubtful, exceptions to this rule: the Kyme and Getty Alexanders (Smith, cat.nos. 15 and 16) *may* have had diadems, a radiant one in case of the former, but a *tainia* is also possible.

significance and been transformed into an official insignia.<sup>54</sup> The institutionalisation of the diadem as the principal symbol of kingship (if that was what Alexander wanted it to become) was far from completed when Alexander died in Babylon in 323. It is unknown if Philippos Arrhidaios used the diadem.<sup>55</sup> It is certain, however, that when in 306/5 the Diadochs proclaimed themselves kings they used the diadem—which everyone knew as something Alexander had worn—as the central symbol of their new monarchies.<sup>56</sup> A shift in the diadem's meaning occurred. To Alexander, the diadem had been *personal*; with the Diadochs, the diadem became a generic symbol of royal power, appealing to *all* their subjects because it was new but based on tradition.<sup>57</sup>

### 3. The royal sceptre

The sceptre as a symbol of power is common in many cultures. In Homer, the sceptre symbolised the authority of gods and kings.<sup>58</sup> In Classical Greece, gods and heroes, are depicted with long sceptres on

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<sup>54</sup> Smith 1988, 36.

<sup>55</sup> The only indication that Arrhidaios wore a diadem is a rather indefinite passage in Curtius (10.8.20), according to which he 'took off the diadem' in offering to abdicate, but this could as well be a matter of speech. Ritter 1965, 62-70, argues in favour of a diadem for both Arrhidaios and Alexandros IV. Of neither of these kings, however, there are contemporary portraits with diadems.

<sup>56</sup> The literary sources are collected and extensively discussed in Ritter 1965, 78-127. The Diadoch's assumption of kingship is followed by a sudden abundance of archaeological evidence, both from ruler portraits and coins. Cf. the plates appendix in Smith 1988, including statues (mostly Roman copies of contemporary originals, namely cat. nos. 4 [Demetrios I], 9-12, 20 [unidentified Diadochs] and 21 [Seleukos]), and coins (pl. 75 nos. 1-2 [Ptolemaios], pl. 76 no. 1-3 [Seleukos], all of them minted during their reigns.

<sup>57</sup> I do not agree with Ritter 1965, 126-7, who distinguishes between the diadem as a symbol of 'Asian' or 'universal' kingship for Alexander and Antigonos, and as a (geographically) limited kingship for the other kings: 'Antigonos übernahm das Diadem als Zeichen der Herrschaft über Asien in der Nachfolge Alexanders des Großen. ... Wenn auch Ptolemaios, Seleukos und Lysimachos sich zu Königen ausrufen ließen und das Diadem annahmten, bedeutete dies anders als bei Antigonos nicht den Anspruch auf Universalherrschaft, sondern sie wollten nur Könige der in ihrem Bereich lebenden Makedonen sein, und das Diadem war für sie nur Zeichen der Herrschaft über einen Teil Asiens' (cf. pp. 83-9; 91-5). Even in Smith 1988, p. 37, the popular but ill-founded distinction between different kinds of imperial pretensions among the Diadochs leads to some confusion: 'Although none of the Successors ever formally renounced the idea of a united empire, the diadem soon no longer symbolised kingship of all Asia, but only parts of it. The diadem, however, still ... meant kingship in Asia in the style of Alexander.

<sup>58</sup> E.g. *Il.* II 101; VI 159 (Zeus); I 245; II 186; VII 412 (Agamemnon); II 256; 279 (Odysseus); X 321; 328 (Hector). Hence also the Homeric 'sceptred king' (*skēptouchos basileus*): *Il.* II 86; *Od.* II 231, VIII 41, 47. In Homeric council meetings, kings and chiefs, on rising to speak, were handed a sceptre by a herald: *Il.* I 234; XVIII 505; XXIII 568; *Od.* II 37. A similar use of the sceptre is found in Aesch., *Prom.* 761 (τύραννα σκηπτρόν), cf. 172, *Eum.* 626, and Soph., *OC* 425 (σκήπτρα καὶ θρόνους). On the use of sceptres in historical Archaic and Classical Greece not much is known; it was used by the Androklids of Ephesos (Strabo 14.633) but in general Archaic and Classical sceptres are found in a mythological context.

vase-paintings. Both Egyptian pharaoh's and Near Eastern kings were equipped with sceptres.<sup>59</sup> Royal sceptres belonged to the main regalia of Hellenistic kings too. Literary evidence is scarce but the available archaeological evidence provides some clues regarding the shape of the Hellenistic sceptre, which probably had the form of a spear (or simply *was* a spear), referring to the concept of *doriktētos chōra* and the king's capacity of a warrior protecting his subjects. Some of the remaining portrait statues of Hellenistic rulers originally had sceptres in their hands; the high position of the hand holding it suggest that sceptres were long, man-size or more than man-size in height.<sup>60</sup> On coins sceptres appear with two kinds of embellishments: spherical buttons and once a spearhead.<sup>61</sup> A real (early) Hellenistic sceptre may have been recovered at Vergina; it is two metres long and wrapped in gold.<sup>62</sup>

The verb *σκηπτοφορέω* means 'to rule over'. The sceptre was a badge of command, not symbolising authority as such but the *use* of authority. In an anecdote about Stratonikos, a famous harp-player in the service of Ptolemaios I Soter, Athenaios writes: 'When king Ptolemaios discussed with him the art of harp playing in an all too pedantic way, he said: "O king, a sceptre is one thing, a plectrum is something else."'"<sup>63</sup> Since sceptres are found in many civilisations of the Ancient World, they seem almost universal symbols. It is thus difficult, and not very relevant, to trace some kind of cultural and geographic origin for the Hellenistic sceptre.<sup>64</sup> Of more importance is the meaning the Hellenistic sceptre had for contemporaries, if there perhaps were more associations than the standard notion of 'authority'. It has been suggested that the sceptre was derived from the shepherd's crook and that it symbolised a king's pastoral duties towards his subjects, notably his duty to protect, as pastoral

<sup>59</sup> For an overview see M. Ebert, s.v. 'Stab als Würdezeichen', in: *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte* 12 (1928) 313, and s.v. 'Szepter' in: *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte* 14 (1928) 523.

<sup>60</sup> Particularly the Terme Ruler and the Bern Ruler (Smith 1988, cat. nos. 44 and 45). The Terme Ruler probably is a Seleukid king from the Middle Hellenistic period, perhaps Alexander Balas or Demetrios I; the Bern Ruler, dating to the Middle or Late Hellenistic period, has not been identified (Smith 1988, 164). Other ruler statues with long sceptres are the Getty Late Ptolemy (cat. no. 59), the Louvre Alexander (plate 70, nos. 3-4), the British Museum Ptolemy II and Arsinoë (plate 70, no. 6), the Baltimore Ruler (plate 71, no. 1), and the Louvre 'Balas' (plate 71, nos. 5-6).

<sup>61</sup> Smith 1988, plate 75 no. 16 (Kleopatra I, with round buttons), plate 77 no. 19 (Rhoimetalkes of the Bosporos, with small button), plate 78 no. 8 (Juba I, with round button); *SNG* 1965, no. 330, 331 (Archebios of Baktria); Babelon, *Cat.d.monn.gr.,Rois de Syrie* nos. 1404, 1406 (Cleopatra Thea with Antiochus VIII). Spearhead: Smith 1988, plate 75 no. 11 (Ptolemaios V).

<sup>62</sup> Hammond 1989, 219 with n. 10.

<sup>63</sup> Ath. 350a. In a funerary epigram for an officer called Apollonios mention is made of a 'War of the Sceptres', possibly the Ptolemaic Syrian Campaign of 103-101 BCE, or else referring to dynastic struggles during the reign of Ptolemaic VIII: W. Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften* (Berlin 1955) no. 1151, line 12; *SEG* 39, nr. 1694, cf. *SEG* VIII no. 770 and *SEG* XXXIX no. 1694.

<sup>64</sup> The main objection to the often expressed idea that the Hellenistic sceptre came from the Orient, is not the fact that it lacks evidence, but that it is unnecessary because the sceptre was known in Greece as an insignia of power from at least the age of Homer.

staffs are fundamentally weapons.<sup>65</sup> In the Greek city states, a herald's staff was a token of friendship: sending a herald's staff to another city, meant an offer of peace, while sending a spear was a declaration of war (Polyb. 4.52.3). On the well-known limestone rock relief from Arsameia where Antiochos I of Kommagene shakes hands with Artagnes-Herakles, the king's long sceptre points downwards in a gesture of friendship and peace, its top, a spearhead presumably, hidden behind the god's right foot: The other end of the sceptre is decorated with a round ornament which may be a globus signifying the *oikoumenē* or a counterweight – or both: a globus-shaped counterweight. That this sceptre really is a spear is evident too from the hand grip in the middle of it.<sup>66</sup> On the coins of Menandros of Baktria the king is shown thrusting a spear or lance. The spherical buttons on sceptres seen on coins presumably likewise were spears or lances turned upside down, signifying peace.

Because sceptres were badges of authority they symbolically contained this authority.<sup>67</sup> They were magical or divine attributes. Kings, like gods, were not accountable for their deeds to anyone but themselves and their own laws. In Greek iconography Zeus and Hades carried sceptres symbolising their supreme authority in the divine realms of Heaven and Underworld inhabited respectively by the immortals and the dead. A Hellenistic king's sceptre stood for a similar kind of supreme authority in the world of mortals.

#### 4. Purple

'Therefore, O perverse man, do not attempt to be king before you have attained to wisdom. And in the meantime, it is better not to command others but to live in solitude, clothed in a sheepskin.' Thus spoke Diogenes, the sage, to Alexander, the king. At these bold words, Alexander furiously replied:

<sup>65</sup> In *Il.* II 265-8 Odysseus beats up Thersites with his golden sceptre. Paus. 9.40.6. reports that the citizens of Chaironeia believed that they possessed the sceptre of Agamemnon and referred to this object, which they thought held divine powers, as δόρυ, 'spear'; cf. Just. 43.3, calling the sceptre of Archaic Roman king *hasta*.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, 1988, plate 59 no. 1, cf. p. 104. Antiochos' royal costume is a mixture of Oriental (tiara, robe, leggings, shoes) and Macedonian (diadem, *chlamys*) elements. For the counterweight on (cavalry) lances see P.A. Manti, 'The cavalry sarissa', *AncW* 8.1-2 (1983) 73-80, 79.

<sup>67</sup> In the council of the Greeks beleaguering Troy, Agamemnon's golden sceptre, made by Hephaistos and a gift from Zeus, was elevated above the sceptres of the other kings (*Il.* I 277; IX 38, 99); therefore Odysseus, when attempting to stop routing warriors, uses not his own but Agamemnon's sceptre, which contained authority over *all* the Greeks (*Il.* II 186, 199). In the Achaimenid kingdom, sceptres were used to delegate (military) command: they were given by the king to invest one with authority reflecting the authority of the king; the evidence for this practice, however, is Greek: Hdt. 7.52; Xen., *Cyr.* 7.3.15; 8.1.38; 8.3.15; *Anab.* 1.6.11; cf. *Esther* 5.2. In the Germanic Kingdoms of Late Antiquity, royal sceptres were magical talismans. They were handed down from father to son and symbolised the divine ascendancy of the king's family (*Sippe*). Germanic sceptres were believed to provide protection and to give strength, cf. Schramm 1955, 262-78: 'Der Stab galt gewiß als Zeichen dafür, daß sein Inhaber vom Heil seiner Sippe, seiner Ahnen getragen wurde, daß er ein Mann des Glücks und

‘You, do you bid *me*, Alexander, of the stock of Herakles, to put on a sheepskin? Me, the hegemon of the Greeks, the king of the Macedonians!’ ‘Surely’, answered Diogenes, ‘just as your ancestors did: was not Archelaos a goatherd and did he not enter Macedon driving goats? Now do you think he did this clad in purple rather than in a sheepskin?’<sup>68</sup> Central in this anecdote, related by Dio Chrysostomos 4.70-71, is the opposition of two articles of dress. On the one hand a purple garment, in Dio’s view the pre-eminent garb for one who is really kingly, raising him above the crowd ‘so as to make visible his greater importance and dignity’.<sup>69</sup> On the other hand a sheepskin, here an emblem of marginality.

The wearing of purple garments was held in high esteem, not only by Alexander and his successors but by many cultures around the Mediterranean and in the Near East, from the second half of the First Millennium BCE until the early Middle Ages. The purple pigment, made from live marine snails, was used to dye cloth, especially (unspun) wool, and was a status symbol. In the course of the first half of the First Millennium, Phoenicia, particularly the city of Tyre, became the pre-eminent centre for purple production, although it was also manufactured elsewhere, particularly in the Aegean.<sup>70</sup> The most valuable variant of the purple dye was called Tyrian purple.<sup>71</sup> In the great imperial civilisations of the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians and Romans, Tyrian purple was a token of kingship. Hence the use of ‘royal purple’ as a synonym of Tyrian purple, notably in relation to the Hellenistic monarchies.<sup>72</sup> In the only comprehensive study of purple in the Ancient World, M. Reinhold rigorously disconnected purple from royalty, arguing that the dye had no exclusive royal connotation

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gegen Unheil gefeit war. Der Stab war aber zugleich ... ein besonders hergerichteter zauberkräftiger Stab, mit einem ungewöhnlichen Maß [einer] Kraft begabt’.

<sup>68</sup> Archelaos became king of the Macedonians after he had thrown the treacherous Kisseus, a Macedonian king of dubious historicity, into the pit prepared for himself. Thereafter Archelaos followed an Apollo-sent goat, to the place chosen to found the city of Aigai; see Highness, *Fable* 219.

<sup>69</sup> Dio 2.49, cf. 47.25. It should be noted that in Dio’s Fourth Discourse on Monarchy, from which the above quotation was taken, Diogenes shows little appreciation for kings who rely on outward badges of royalty rather than on the worthiness of their soul, cf. 4.61; 4.71; of course, those who *are* worthy, may be dressed in purple as a token of this. See also 31.163; 34.29-30. Cf. Plut., *Mor.* 180e, an anecdote about Alexander: ‘When some commended the frugality of Antipatros, who, they said, lived a plain and simple life, he remarked: “Outwardly Antimatter is plain white, but within he is all purple”’.

<sup>70</sup> Myth associates the discovery of purple with the Tyrian numen Melkart (Pollux 1.45; cf. Ach. Tat. 2.11.4 ff.). The name ‘Phoenicia’ may be derived from ‘purple’, i.e. the Greek φοίνιξ / φοίνιος, ‘(blood) red’, cf. F.W. Danker, s.v. ‘Purple’, in: *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* vol. 5 (1992) 557-60; Against this view i.a. E. Wunderlich, *Die Bedeutung des roten Farbe im Kult der griechen und Römer* (Giessen 1925) 105-8, with references the Greek origin of this etymology; cf. M.C. Astour ‘The origin of the terms Canaan, Phoenicia, and purple’, *JNES* 24 (1965) 346-50. On the production of purple in Phoenicia consult E. Lipinski, s.v. ‘Pourpre’, in: C. Baurain *et al.* eds., *Dictionnaire de la civilisation phénicienne et punique* (Turnhout 1992) 359-61.

<sup>71</sup> Plin., *NH* 9.127, 137, 140; Strabo 16.2.23.

<sup>72</sup> According to Reinhold, *op cit.* below, p. 8 n. 2, ‘royal purple’ was first used by Cicero in *Pro Scauro* 45, written in 54 BCE (*purpura regalis*), cf. *Pro Sestio* 57 (*purpura et sceptro et illis insignibus regiis*). It may be doubted that Cicero invented or even first used purple in this way; we encounter the use of ‘purple’ in the broader sense as ‘token of kingship’ already in Diod. 36.2.4 and 36.2.4, and in Polyb. 10.26.1. Moreover, the



in the Ancient Near East and could be worn as a status symbol by anyone rich enough to afford it.<sup>73</sup> Here it will be argued that Tyrian purple did have a distinct royal connotation in the Ancient Near East, the principal argument being that there were various different sorts of purple dye: most of these were worn by non-royals but the most expensive, probably blood red, variant was a symbol of royalty (or, in Greece and Rome, of divinity). After briefly discussing the production of purple and the variant purple dyes existing in Antiquity, we will have a closer look at the history of the meaning of purple in the Near East and Greece until the age of Alexander.

Because the knowledge of making purple was lost in Late Antiquity, purple has fascinated modern scholars since the nineteenth century. Most modern literature is concerned with technical aspects like the chemical structure of the pigment, the biology of the shell-fish used for its production and the archaeology of the purple industry. With the exception of Reinhold's study of 1970 and Heinke Stulz' study of purple in early Greece (1990), modern literature rarely deals with the social and political aspects of the dye.<sup>74</sup>

Unlike the modern English usage, the Greek word 'purple', mostly πορφύρεα, is not a colour but a dye, a purple-dyed cloth, or the purple-fish from which the dye is made. The purple pigment was produced in several shades, varying from yellowish green to violet-blue and from pale pink to dark red, the modern conception of the colour purple being only one of many possibilities.<sup>75</sup> Neither the

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many attestations after Cicero often reflect older, Hellenistic practice, for example App., *Mith.* 1.5, cited by Reinhold, and Plut., *Aem.* 23.2, where purple is one of the signs of king Perseus' royal status.

<sup>73</sup> M. Reinhold, *History of Purple as a Status Symbol in Antiquity* (Brussels 1970). Cf. e.g. p. 71: 'The use of the color purple was never ... interdicted to private persons. It was used widely as a sacerdotal and cultic color and by private individuals as a form of luxury display. The determining factor in its use was economic ability to purchase this extremely expensive marine dye.' Reinhold's conclusions have also been contested in a review by F. Kolb in *Gnomon* 45 (1973) 50-8.

<sup>74</sup> H. Stulz, *Die Farbe Purpur im frühen Griechentum. Beobachtet in der Literatur und in der bildenden Kunst* (Stuttgart 1990). References to nineteenth century studies can be found in H. Blümner, *Technologie und Terminologie der Gewerbe bei den Griechen und Römern* I (2nd edn; Leipzig and Berlin 1912) 233. A good general account of the technical aspects of purple production is L.B. Jensen, 'Royal Purple of Tyre', *JNES* 22 (1963) 104-18. For an overview of publications on ancient purple and purple making until 1970 one may consult the footnotes in Reinhold 1970, 7 ff.

<sup>75</sup> Diocletian's Price Edict of 301 CE distinguishes no less than eight different qualities of purple-dyed cloth, with prices varying from 300 to 150.000 *denarii* per pound (24.1-12); cf. S. Lauffer, *Diokletians Preisedikt* (Berlin 1971) 167-8. The colours of purple are known from modern reconstruction and ancient sources; Vitr. 7.13.1-3, distinguishes varying shades of purple in accordance with geographical location, stating that red purple comes from 'regions which are nearest to the sun' and leaden blue and black purple from more northern regions; cf. Diod. 2.53.2, saying that in warm climates more bright and varied colours can be seen due to the influence of the sun, for example the purple-coloured coats worn in Syria. To my great benefit the Dutch language reserves the word 'paars' for violet-blue, using 'purper' in much the same way as the Greek. The reconstruction of the costume of Alexander and his Companions in N. Sekunda, *The Army of Alexander the Great* (London 1984), rendering ancient purple as purple in the modern English sense (with less support from the Alexander Sarcophagus and Mosaic than the accompanying text suggests). On colour in Greek and Hellenistic painting, esp. the use of valuable paints made from purple shell fish, see E. Berger, *Die Maltechnik des Altertums nach den Quellen, Funden, chemischen Analysen und eigenen Versuchen* (1904; 2nd edn. 1986) 258; H. Blümner, *Tech-*

Greek nor the Latin has different words for different shades of purple, using *porphura* and *purpura* respectively only to indicate the dye, not the colour. In rare cases it is possible to make out from contextual information what kind of colour exactly is meant, distinguishing a crimson and violet/blue variant.<sup>76</sup> In Semitic languages different words are used to distinguish between red and violet purple, for instance in *Exodus* and *Numbers* where 'argâmân and tekêlet often appear together, translated in *Lxx* as *porphura* and *huakinthos* / *huakinthinos*.<sup>77</sup> Another reason for wearing purple, was that it expressed wealth. According to Athenaios 526c, purple dye was worth its weight in silver. It was the difficult (and in case of Tyrian purple perhaps secret) production process that made purple dye so valuable.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, purple dye was colourfast, permitting washing on a regular basis.<sup>79</sup> The dye was obtained from marine snails of the *gastropoda* class, a species of particularly aggressive carnivorous shell-fish feeding on molluscs, in particular mussels. *Gastropoda* is commonly found in the waters of the entire Mediterranean. Most used for purple production were the genera *murex* (esp. *m. trunculus* and *m. brandaris*) and *purpura* (esp. *p. haemastoma* and *p. lapillus*).<sup>80</sup> The snails were caught in the

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*nologie und Terminologie der Gewerbe und Künste bei den Griechen und Römern* IV (Leipzig and Berlin 1912) 497-8; E. Pfuhl, s.v. 'Purpur', in: *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen* III (Munich 1923) 940-2; I. Scheibler, *Griechische Malerei der Antike* (Munich 1994) 100-6.

<sup>76</sup> The sources often compare the colour of the most expensive variant of purple with (clotted) blood, for instance Plin. 9.126, who furthermore say that this kind of purple was the colour of a shimmering dark rose (*nigrantis rosae colore sublucens*). I.I. Zideman, 'Seashells and Ancient Purple-dyeing', *Biblical Archaeologist* 53 (1990) 98-101, who reconstructed the production process in a laboratory, concludes that the dark red variant should be identified with Tyrian or 'royal' purple.

<sup>77</sup> Zideman 1990, 101.

<sup>78</sup> Purple dye was like gold: similar colours could be produced from other sources than marine snails, in particular from plants, but not looking quite as brilliant; Danker 1992, 557, names e.g. henna, alkanet, archil, woad, and indigo, cf. Plin., *HN* 24.4; Strabo. 13.4.14 (630); 12.8.16 (578); Vitruv. 7.14.1-2; Dioscorides 4.46; *Od.* 6.53; Diod. 3.69.1; 17.70.3. Among other alchemistic dyeing-recipes, *Papyrus Holmiensis* gives recipes for imitating purple: 'keep this recipe a secret', the author says, 'because the [imitation] purple has a unusual beautiful colour'; cf. O. Lagercrantz, *Papyrus Holmiensis. Rezepte für Silber, Steine und Purpur* (Uppsala 1913); H. Diels, 'Antike Chemie', in: *idem, Antike Technik. Sieben Vorträge* (Leipzig and Berlin 1920) 121-54, esp. 139.

<sup>79</sup> Danker 1990, 557, citing Cic., *Flac.* 29, who remarks that Denarius could look the peak of fashion with but one set of garments at his proposal; cf. Xen., *Oec.* 10.3.7 and Plut., *Alex.* 36. Several Greek and Roman sources describe the production of authentic purple as a monstrously intensive process. The *locus classicus* is Plin., *NH* 9.125-141; other important sources include Arist., *HA* 547a and Vitruv. 7.13.1-3; see Blümner 1912, 233-47, for a comprehensive overview, cf. Jensen 1963, 108.

<sup>80</sup> Plin., *HN* 9.128-130, gives an extensive account of the biology of several varieties of purple fish. It is possible that the exact recipe was a secret and that Pliny does not have all the details right. J. Doumet, *Étude sur la pourpre ancienne et tentative de reproduction du procédé de teinture de la ville de Tyr décrit par Pline l'Ancien* (Beirut 1980), initially failed to make purple when using the snails and procedure from Pliny's account; only after experimenting with small portions of purple substance obtained from other snails from the Levantine coast but not mentioned by Pliny the results became satisfactory, i.e. in accordance with the colour described by Pliny. Surviving mounds of shell waste, especially numerous and impressive around Sidon and Tyre, contain each a specific type of shell (Danker 1992, 558). The use of purple dye is not restricted to ancient Mediterranean civilisations: some prehistoric cultures of Britain and Norway coloured cloth (and perhaps also their bodies) with pigment extracted from yet another species, *thais lapillus*; Pre-Columbian Indians of Meso-America and Peru

early springtime when they gather in coastal waters for reproduction; they were caught before they started laying their eggs because some of the purple pigment passes into the egg capsules and disappears from the snail.<sup>81</sup> The snails were gathered by divers, sometimes using complicated fishing devices such as wicker basket traps containing mussels, frogs, or animal flesh as bait. After crushing the shells, the part that produces the dye substances was removed from the living snails, salted for three days, and then cooked in stone pots or a leaden cauldrons. The cooking could go on for many days. Only after all the dross of flesh still attached to the purple substance had come boiling to the surface and had subsequently been skimmed off, the purple dye was ready for use.<sup>82</sup> On average, of the total weight of raw material put into the cooking pot, only about six to seven percent remained after boiling.<sup>83</sup> It goes without saying that all this produced a nasty smell, making Strabo remark that although purple had made Sidon and Tyre rich, it had also made them unpleasant to live in.<sup>84</sup> Over the last two centuries attempts have been made to reconstruct the original Tyrian purple-dye. Friedländer first determined the chemical structure of the dyeing agent in *murex brandaris*.<sup>85</sup> Interestingly, Friedländer needed no less than 12,000 shell fish to isolate only 1.4 gram of purple pigment. From

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used shell-fish of the *purpura patula* species for making dyes; and Indian people living along the coast of Eastern Mexico still use *purpura* shell-fish for dyeing their fabrics, see M. Seefelder, *Indigo* (Cologne 1982) 73-6.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Jensen 1963, 108: 'The mature egg capsules also contain a great deal of the ... dye which may have been a secret source utilised by the Phoenicians. These eggs are avoided by all fish and marine life and thus have great survival value.'

<sup>82</sup> Seefelder, *op.cit.* above, describes how Indian tribes living along the Pacific coast of Mexico use a variant of the *purpura* shell-fish for dyeing their fabrics by a less complicated method. Instead of cooking the snails they more or less 'milk' them: immediately after being caught, the living animals are spread out over woollen cloth soaked in salt water; the snails are then besprinkled with lemon juice, to which they react by voluntarily secreting the purple pigment. The wool colours within a few minutes. After this, the purple-fish are thrown back into the sea still alive. A comparable similar practice was witnessed by Jensen 1973, 104, in modern Lebanon: at Sidon, on a spring afternoon in the 1950's, Jensen watched playing children who caught *murex* shell-fish for dyeing rags, also using lemon juice in the process. This was noticed earlier by L. Lortet, *La Syrie d'aujourd'hui* (Paris 1884) 127, cited by Jensen. Jensen suggests that given the complexity of the methods described by Pliny and his apparent ignorance of some aspects of purple processing (see above), this uncomplicated procedure may have been excluded by Pliny—who is concerned with biology, not industry—either because he did not know about it or because this kind of purple was a common one, inferior to the purple dyes more difficult to manufacture.

<sup>83</sup> Jensen 1963, 108.

<sup>84</sup> Strabo 16.2.23.

<sup>85</sup> P. Friedländer, 'Zur Kenntnis des Farbstoffs des antiken Purpurs aus Murex Brandaris', *Monatschrift für Chemie* 1820 (1907) 991-6; *id.*, 'Über den farbstoff des antiken Purpurs aus Murex Brandaris', *Berichte der Deutschen Chemischen Gesellschaft* 42 (1909) 765-70. Earlier attempts were made by H. Lucaze-Duthiers, 'Mémoire sur la pourpre', *Annales des sciences naturelles* 4.12 (1859) 5-84, and by A. Dedekind, 'La pourpre verte' & 'Recherches sur la pourpre oxyblatta chez les Assyriens et les Égyptiens', both in: *Arch.de zool.expériment.* 3.4 (1896) 467f. and 481f. resp; cf. *id.*, *Ein Beitrag zur Purpurkunde* (Berlin 1898). For later chemists investigating ancient purple see Jensen 1963, 109; for further references and a summary of results consult D.L. Fox, *Animal Biochromes and Structural Colors* (Cambridge 1953) 218-21. A somewhat more recent attempt is described by Doumet 1980, with useful colour plates illustrating the results.

these researches, it has become clear that different varieties of purple stems mainly from the different kinds of snails, in some cases mixed with one another, used in the process of dye making.

The history of purple production dates back to the early Second Millennium. It is now assumed that it was first processed by Minoan Cretans and Minoanised islanders on Kythera and Keos.<sup>86</sup> The Minoans exported the dye or dyed fabrics throughout the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean, where dye industries were subsequently set up.<sup>87</sup> Finds at Troy VI and Cyprus suggest the existence of an purple production industry in the first half of the Second Millennium.<sup>88</sup> From the early Aegean comes the first mention of ‘royal purple’, encountered on a thirteenth century linear B tablet from Knossos.<sup>89</sup> The first evidence for a purple dye industry in the Levant dates to c. 1500 BCE.<sup>90</sup> Almost all written sources from the early period of purple production in the Near East associate purple with royal courts. Already in the Fourteenth Century, the Hittite kings demanded, or at least accepted, purple as tribute from their vassals, in particular Ugarit, the most important centre for purple production in the Late Bronze Age.<sup>91</sup> An inventory of gifts sent by king Niqmad of Ugarit to his overlord’s court at Hattushash lists several purple garments, meant not only for the Hittite king Shuppiluliuma I (c. 1357-1323) himself but also for his queen, crown prince and court officials.<sup>92</sup> On Ugaritic tablets, we furthermore read about purple wool, a token of the wealth of the Ugaritic king, sent to Hattushash for a thanks-offering.<sup>93</sup> Indeed, in this period the word for ‘purple dye’, similar in Hittite and several eastern

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<sup>86</sup> A Cretan origin of purple production was first suggested by G. Glotz, *The Aegean Civilisation* (London 1925) 177-8, on account of the mounds of shell waste found at Palaikastro; these mounds are dated to c. 1700-1600 BCE and include, among other species, *m. trunculus*, *m. brandaris*, and *p. haemastoma*; cf. D. Reese, ‘Palaikastro shells and Bronze Age purple-dye production in the Mediterranean basin’, *ABSA* 82 (1987) 201-6. Later, mounds with remains of *m. trunculus* and *m. brandaris* were excavated near Knossos, as well as at Kouphonisi and Mallia, cf. R.W. Hutchinson, *Prehistoric Crete* (Baltimore 1962) 239. This does not entirely prove the existence of a dye industry, as purple fish are also edible (*m. brandaris* reputedly tasting best), and the snails may also have been used as fish-bait. There is however some Linear B evidence for a dye industry, cf. R.R. Stieglitz, ‘The Minoan origin of Tyrian purple’, *Biblical Archeologist* 57 (1994) 46-54, dating the earliest evidence for a purple industry to c. 1750 BCE, as well as providing also a sketchy but useful summary of the study of Minoan purple in since Glotz.

<sup>87</sup> Reinhold 1970, 12-14; Danker 1992, 558.

<sup>88</sup> Reese 1987, 205.

<sup>89</sup> J. Chadwick and M.G.F. Ventris, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Cambridge 1956) 321, 405; cf. Reese 1987, 204.

<sup>90</sup> Reinhold 1970, 9 n. 4.

<sup>91</sup> The Archaeological remains of purple dye installations found at the harbour quarter of Ugarit have been dated to the 15th-14th centuries: C.F.A. Schaeffer, ‘Une industrie d’Ugarit – la pourpre’, *Annales Archéologiques de Syrie* 1 (1951) 188-92; F. Thureau-Dangin, ‘Un comptoir de laine pourpre à Ugarit’, *Syria* 15 (1934) 137-46. Other Levantine Bronze Age sites where purple industries were found include Sarepta, Tell Akko, and Tell Keisan, all in Phoenicia: N. Karmon and E. Spanier, ‘Remains of a purple dye industry found at Tel Shiqmona’, *IEJ* 38 (1988) 184-6.

<sup>92</sup> Reinhold 1970, 10 n. 1.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

Semitic languages,<sup>94</sup> had a second meaning of ‘tribute’ in Ugaritic and Hittite.<sup>95</sup> Reinhold finds that this evidence does not warrant the conclusion that purple was a royal prerogative in the Late Bronze Age.<sup>96</sup> Kolb, however, observed that the double meaning of ‘purple’ / ‘tribute’ speaks in favour of this conclusion rather than against it.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, in the same period an even greater prestige value of purple is attested for the kings of Mitanni. A diplomatic document from the Amarna archives lists gifts sent by king Tušratta of Mitanni to Amenophis III (c. 1417-1379), including ‘one pair of shoes of blue purple wool’ (ii 29-32), ‘one garment of blue purple wool’ (ii 36), ‘one pair of sashes of red wool’ (ii 37-8), ‘one robe and one cap of blue purple wool’ (ii 41-2).<sup>98</sup> Unlike the before-mentioned Ugaritic purple sent to Hattushash, the purple attire from Mitanni was not dispatched to the pharaoh for customary diplomatic reasons but on the special occasion of a royal wedding, the marriage of Amenophis’ son to a daughter of Tušratta.<sup>99</sup> The list is long but amidst the abundance of gold, silver and ivory, the rare purple articles in this inventory, none of them mentioned more than once, stand out and were the contrary of ‘insignificant trifles in the vast number of varied presents’, as Reinhold calls them.<sup>100</sup> The status of purple in Mesopotamia during the Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age is poorly documented; we do know, however, that purple dye was exported from the Levant to Mesopotamia centuries before the emergence of the New Assyrian kingdom, when purple is mentioned more often in the sources.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Ugaritic: *’argmn*; Hittite: *arkamman*; Hebrew: *’argâmân*; Akkadian: *argamannu*. The word probably indicated the red-coloured variant of sea purple, whilst blue or violet purple can be identified with Hebrew *tekélet*, Akkadian *takiltu* and Phoenician *tklt*: Lipinski 1992, 360; R. Gradwohl, *Die Farben im Alten Testament* (Berlin 1963) 66; Danker 1992, 557; A.A. Häussling and E. Hofhansl, s.v. ‘Farben / Farbensymbolik’, in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* vol. 11 (Berlin and New York 1983) 25-9, 26.

<sup>95</sup> As it is uncertain which meaning came first, it is usually assumed that the word acquired the meaning of ‘tribute’ only in the second instance, cf. Reinhold 1970, 11 n. 1; the opposite is suggested by W.F. Albright, ‘More light on the Canaanite epic of Aleyân Baal and Mô’t’, *BASO* 50 (1933) 13-20, esp. 15, arguing that the word is of Anatolian (Luyyan) descent and originally had the meant ‘tribute’, only becoming the name of a dye after being exported to Syria and Phoenicia where ‘murex shells were the principal material for tribute in the maritime towns’. Cf. Gradwohl, *op.cit.* above, p. 68: ‘Auch *argamannu* und *takiltu* sind im Akkadischen, ebenso wenig wie *’argâmân* und *tekêlât* im Hebräischen, von jeher heimisch gewesen, sondern sind als Lehnwörter zusammen mit dem Produkt übernommen worden.’

<sup>96</sup> Reinhold 1970, 11.

<sup>97</sup> F. Kolb, review of Reinhold 1970, *Gnomon* 45 (1973) 50-8, esp. 51.

<sup>98</sup> EA 22. Publications: H. Winckler and L. Abel, ‘Der Throntafel von El Amarna’, *Mitteilungen aus den Orientalischen Sammlungen der Königl. Museen zu Berlin* 1-3 (1889/90) 26; O. Schroeder, *Vorderasiatischen Schriftdenkmäler der Königl. Museen zu Berlin* 11-12 (Berlin 1915) 199. Translation: W.L. Moron ed., *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore and London 1992) 51-61; cf. S.A.B. Mercer ed., *The Tell el-Amarna Tablets* 1 (Toronto 1939) 85 nr. 21.

<sup>99</sup> For the political background see K.A. Kitchen, *Suppiliuma and the Amarna Pharaoh. A Study in Relative Chronology* (Liverpool 1962).

<sup>100</sup> Reinhold 1970, 12.

<sup>101</sup> Caravans transporting purple from the Levantine coast to Mesopotamia, *i.e.* to the city of Nuzi (Yorgan Tepe) in eastern Mesopotamia, are attested as early as 1500 BCE (Reinhold 1970, 9 n. 4). The purple gifts Tušratta sent to Amenophis III were probably obtained from Ugarit, cf. C. Virolleaud in *Syria* 19 (1938) 132 n. 2. The Akkadian language distinguishes, apart from ‘red purple’ (*argamannu*) and violet-blue ‘dark purple’ (*takiltu*),

From the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (c. 883-859) until the reign of Ashurbanipal (c. 668-627) royal documents mention purple as tribute or booty.<sup>102</sup> The spoils were certainly not kept behind closed doors: apart from the necessary offerings to the gods and the use of luxury goods in the construction of temples and palaces, royal tribute and booty was normally distributed among the king's relatives and higher palace officials.<sup>103</sup> A letter from the crown prince Sennacherib to his father, Sargon II (c. 721-705), documents such a distribution: the largest quantity of gifts was given to the king's nearest family, *sc.* the crown prince and the queen; their names are followed by those of the imperial *grandes*, listed in a strict sequence of a decreasing quantity and value of gifts received. The gifts are varied but always include, beside a quantity of silver, a garment – several persons at the bottom of the list receiving only that.<sup>104</sup> If these dresses were dyed with purple is unknown. Representations of kings and courtiers on bas-reliefs offer no clues: although it is certain that Assyrian sculptures originally were coloured, next to nothing has remained of the paints.<sup>105</sup> Garments received from the king as a gift of honour indicated status at the Assyrian court, similar to the better known practice of the Persian kings, who used to present those whom they wished to honour with valuable purple robes. A clue to the colour of the dresses of Assyrian kings and courtiers is given in *Ezekiel* 23.5-6 (cf. 27.24), a near contemporary source.<sup>106</sup> *Ezekiel* does not only mention the purple garments of Assyrian 'high officials' (or: 'courtiers'),<sup>107</sup> but—more interestingly—uses the expression 'clothed in purple' as a synonym for

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several variants of purple coloured cloth, incl. 'blue purple wool', 'blue purple woollen cloth', and 'light blue purple cloth': H. Lutz, *Textiles and Costumes Among the Peoples of the Ancient Near East* (Leipzig 1923) 86.

<sup>102</sup> Reinhold 1970, 14-5. Apart from these inventories, we read in the Annals of Ashurnasirpal III (col. I 53 ii 1.15): 'I coloured the mountain with blood, like wool': if red purple is meant here, it is applied in one of those typical formulas with which the Assyrians used to express their notion of ideal kingship. See also the letter in L. Waterman ed., *Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire* (Ann Arbor 1930/36) nr. 347, in which an official informs his king on the processing of purple cloth in his palace, and by the 'Weavers of Ishtar of Arbela'.

<sup>103</sup> J. Bär, *Der assyrische tribut und seine Darstellung. Eine Untersuchung zur imperialer Ideologie im neuassyrischen Reich* (Neukirchen 1996) 19-26.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* 23-5. On palace reliefs, figures representing courtiers usually follow the king's example in their dress and further outward appearance: R.D. Barnett and M. Falkner, *The Sculptures of Assur-nasir-apli II (883-859 B.C.), Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.), Esarhaddon (681-669 B.C.) from the Central and South-West Palaces at Nimrud* (London 1962) 36.

<sup>105</sup> R.D. Barnett, *Assyrian Palace reliefs in the British Museum* (London, 2nd ed. 1974) 11; S.M. Paley, *King of the World. Ashur-nasir-pal II of Assyria 883-859 B.C.* (New York 1976) 10-1. Traces of white, black, and red coloured paint have been found; one relief depicting Ashurnasirpal II and a courtier, now in the British Museum (Nimrud Gallery, BM 124569), still shows that the shoes were once painted red (purple?).

<sup>106</sup> Chapters 1-24 of *Ezekiel* were conceived in Babylon during the reign of the Nebuchadnezzar II, between 593 and 586 BCE: Th.C. Vriezen and A.S. Van der Woude, *Literatuur van Oud Israël* (Katwijk, 8th edn. 1984) 236-7; for a full discussion of the date and historicity of *Ezekiel* see B. Lang, *Ezechiel. Der Prophet und das Buch* (Darmstadt 1981) 1-17, 32-56, and T. Krüger, 'Geschichtskonzepte im Ezechielbuch', *BZAW* 180 (1989) 139-98. I would like to thank Dirk Zwieter for translating this passage from the Hebrew.

<sup>107</sup> *Qerobim*, lit. '[those] who were near [the king]' or 'the near ones', *i.e.* courtiers having access to the king. I would like to thank Dirk Zwieter for translating this passage from the Hebrew. *Qerobim* is related to the Akkadian *qur(ru)bûti*, which has a similar meaning: W. Zimmerli, *Ezechiel 1-24* (Neukirchen 1979) 530-1. The

(royal) officials, not unlike the use of the word *purpuratus* for an (Hellenistic) courtier in Latin sources. In the same passage, these officials are specified as ‘commanders and governors’.<sup>108</sup> These may have bought their robes at their own expense, of course, but as the distribution of garments by the king was normal at the Assyrian court it is more likely that purple garments were emblems of delegated royal power. By the time that the Assyrian Empire collapsed, purple dye is also found in Babylonia, Phrygia and Lydia.<sup>109</sup> Although we do not know much about purple in the Neo Babylonian empire, its kings presumably followed the example of their Assyrian predecessors.<sup>110</sup> The practice of distributing purple robes was subsequently adopted by the Achaimenids.<sup>111</sup> In the Persian empire the use of (Tyrian / ‘royal’) purple as a status symbol started with the king who wore purple himself and

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word is sometimes read as ‘warriors’, e.g. by J.W. Wevers, *Ezekiel* (London etc. 1969) 180, and L.C. Allen, *The World Biblical Commentary: Ezekiel 20-48* (Dallas 1990) 43, who mistranslates ‘soldiers in purple uniforms’.

<sup>108</sup> The first word, *pahoth*, is used in the Old Testament for Assyrian and Babylonian military commanders, and, more frequently, for the satraps of the Persian kings: G.A. Cooke, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel* (Edinburgh 1936) 250; the second word, *segānīm*, is a rather vague term, used for Assyrian, Babylonian and even Israelite officials, translated *στρατῶγοι* in *Λξξ*, cf. W. Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament* (Leiden, 3rd rev. ed. 1967-83) 872b. The Hebrew Bible in general mentions purple often, but among the Israelites purple-dyed cloth was used principally for cultic purposes, being mentioned in the context tabernacle and altar furnishings in e.g. *Ex.* 25.4; 26-27 and *Num.* 4.6, cf. *Jos. AJ* 3.113.2; 3.124.4, and the prescribed clothing of the priests in *Ex.* 28. From the nineteenth century onward orthodox rabbi’s (by that time unaware of secular researches on purple) became interested in the issue of finding the real *tekēlet*, at first producing a blue dye from squids (a small squid-based *tekēlet* industry still flourishes in Israel today). The Jerusalem-based *Association for the Promotion and Distribution of Tekhelet* now claims to have reconstructed the biblical dye from *murex trunculus* – ‘true blue’ as they call it – and have produced and distributed thousands of purple praying *tsitsit* in an attempt to replace the white tassels which have been in use for about 1300 years, cf. B. Sterman, ‘Tekhelet’, on the Association’s homepage on the internet, *info@tekhelet.co.il*. (1996). A doctoral thesis by one of the most revered pioneers in this field, has, after nearly eighty years, recently been published: I. Herzog, *The Royal Purple and the Biblical Blue, argaman and tekhelet* (Jerusalem 1987), cf. the review by P.E. McGovern in *Isis* 81 (1990) 563-5. The Hebrew Bible says next to nothing, however, about the use of purple as a symbol of monarchy, not counting the purple decoration of Solomon’s Temple made by Tyrian craftsmen (2 *Chron.* 2.7; 2.14; 3.14), although Judges 8.26 mentions a Midianite king in northern Palestine wearing purple garbs. In the War Scroll purple appears in the battle dress of the priests (1 QM 7.11).

<sup>109</sup> Reinhold 1970, 16-7.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. *Dan.* 5.7, where Belshazzar promises a golden necklace and a purple dress to the one who could understand the reading on the wall; dressed in purple, this person, the king announces, would become ‘third man in the kingdom’, this being perhaps not merely an honorific title but a real office, cf. E. Haag, *Daniel* (Würzburg 1993) 48-9. *Jos. AJ* 10.235 has incorporated the story, adding that the Chaldean (i.e. New Babylonian) kings were dressed in purple. Admittedly, one would rather expect this passage to reflect an Hellenistic, particularly Seleukid practice, but because giving golden necklaces is attested only for Median and Persian kings (*Esdr.* 3.6; *Hdt.* 3.20; *Xen., Cyr.* 1.3.2, 2.4.6, 8.2.8, *Anab.* 1.5.8, 1.2.27), and not found in relation to the Seleukid court, J.J. Collins, *Daniel* (Minneapolis 1993) 247, suggests that this passage reflects an oriental practice.

<sup>111</sup> For the continuity of Mesopotamian royal symbolism and iconography in the Persian Empire see M. Cool Root, *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art. Essays on the Creation of an Iconography of Empire* (Leiden 1979); A. Kuhrt, ‘The Achaemenid Concept of Kingship’, *Iran* 22 (1984) 156-60; C. Nylander, ‘Achaemenid Imperial Art’, in M.T. Larsen ed., *Power and Propaganda. A Symposium on Ancient Empires* (Copenhagen 1979) 345-59; esp. on the adoption of purple: Reinhold 1970, 15.

distributed the privilege to do likewise as a favour among his nobles.<sup>112</sup> As far the Achaimenids are concerned, there can be no doubt that purple had definitely become a really royal dye.<sup>113</sup> Aristoboulos, charged by Alexander with the inspection of Cyrus' violated tomb at Pasargadai in 324 BCE, wrote an eye-witness report of the burial goods he found inside, including red-purple 'Median' trousers, violet-purple robes and other articles of dress, 'some of purple, some of this colour, some of that'.<sup>114</sup> All regalia accompanying Cyrus the Great into his grave—also a sword and precious stones are mentioned—were exposed on a couch covered up with 'Babylonian' carpets and purple rugs. A parallel between this picture and Xenophon's famous description of king Cyrus' outward appearance on a public ceremonial occasion: the king wore the upright tiara, a sleeved violet-purple upper garment, red-purple 'Median' trousers, and a purple tunic (the colour is not specified) with white stripes, the *chiton mesoleukos*.<sup>115</sup> Xenophon makes it especially clear that, like the tiara, only the king was allowed to be clothed in the *chiton mesoleukos*: 'no one but the king may wear such a one'. Cyrus the Great, Xenophon says was the first to adopt this dress, although the *Cyropaedia* 6.4.1 reports a like outfit covering the body of another Iranian dynast, Cyrus' confederate Abradates, king of Susa.

After the Battle of Issos, one of Alexander's Companions said, 'the conqueror takes over the possessions of the conquered and they should be called his'.<sup>116</sup> Because it symbolised Achaimenid power, purple was among the most highly prized booty Alexander wanted the Persians to yield. In Susa alone no less than 5,000 talents worth of purple was captured.<sup>117</sup> During the sack of Persepolis in January 330, one month later, 'much silver was carried off and no little gold, and many rich dresses gay with sea-purple or with gold embroidery became the prize of the victors.'<sup>118</sup> However, purple as a symbol of royal power was neither new nor alien for the Macedonians and Greeks. There was an established tradition in both Greece and Macedon to attribute to the dye a similar meaning as found in Near Eastern civilisations, although in the *poleis* these qualities were less flagrantly monarchic than in the Near eastern kingdoms. In the eyes of the Greeks, the wearing of purple garbs was associated with oriental despotism and decadence, because they associated it with religious cult.<sup>119</sup> A Spartan law even

<sup>112</sup> Hdt. 3.84; Xen., *Cyr.* 8.2.8, 8.3.3; *Es.* 6.8; Jos., *AJ* 11.256-7.

<sup>113</sup> Reinhold 1970, 18-9.

<sup>114</sup> Aristoboulos = Arr., *Anab.* 6.29.5-6. Cf. Curt. 3.3.17-19, 4.1.23.

<sup>115</sup> Xen., *Cyr.* 8.3.13, observing that the magnificence of Cyrus' appearance was 'one of the arts that he devised to make his government command respect'. Because of the tendentious design of the *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon's description of Cyrus' royal costume must be treated with some caution (as Reinhold 1970, 18 n. 3, cautions), but as this account is so comparable to Aristoboulos', Xenophon may have been describing a real Persian practice, although not necessarily from Cyrus' times.

<sup>116</sup> Plut., *Alex.* 20.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.* 36. The total amount of coined money found in Susa was 40,000 talents.

<sup>118</sup> Diod. 17.70.3.

<sup>119</sup> Purple as oriental e.g. Ath. 12.528e. Cf. A. Alföldi, 'Gewaltherrscher und Theaterkönig, in: *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend jr.* (Princeton 1955) 15-55, 24-5; Reinhold 1970, 22-4, and 15: 'it is not accidental that purple wool and purple garments figure prominently in the myth of



forbade the wearing purple-dyed wool by mortals.<sup>120</sup> In the Fifth Century the Lakedaimonian king Pausanias and the Athenian Alkibiades started to wear purple robes as tokens of power. Pausanias—who also in other respects behaved like an autocratic despot when he was staying with his army in Byzantium—alienated himself from his fellow countrymen and was summoned back to Sparta, where he was condemned for high treason.<sup>121</sup> Alkibiades, on the other hand, was admired when he appeared in the theatre wearing his purple robe.<sup>122</sup> The difference probably was, that Alkibiades wore purple Greek clothes while Pausanias allegedly dressed as in a Median *stolē*. In both cases, however, purple dyed clothing made its wearer appear *exceptional*. In the Hellenistic Age purple became a symbol of royal power, drawing, again, on both Hellenic and eastern traditions. In the east purple had denoted kingship for centuries (although also other could wear it). In the Greek tradition purple was associated with the gods *and* had the ability to present a person as exceptional. Furthermore, it was an extremely costly material and therefore—like beautifully decorated weapons, or like the jewellery worn by queens—communicative of wealth, which, in itself, was a symbol of greatness. The Hellenistic kings later did not make the mistake Pausanias was said to have made: they used purple to dye, and thereby make royal, their traditional Macedonian garb.

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Sardanapalos, the best known oriental figure among the Greeks and Romans, who is depicted as spinning wool together with his women folk.’

<sup>120</sup> See Reinhold 1970, 24 n. 3, for references.

<sup>121</sup> Ath. 535e; cf. Thuc. 1.10.

<sup>122</sup> Ath. 535c.