

THE *GARLANDS* OF MELEAGER AND PHILIP IN DIALOGUE

International Conference on Hellenistic and Early Imperial Greek Book Epigram

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This two-day conference is devoted to Hellenistic and Early Imperial Greek book epigram and, specifically, to the similarities, divergences, points of contact and interactions between the epigrams collected in the *Garlands* of Meleager and Philip.

In the proem to his epigram collection (*AP* IV.2), Philip of Thessalonica explicitly presents his editorial work as a continuation of Meleager's, even if he does so in contrasting terms: he distinguishes between the 'older' and the 'younger' poets. Unlike Meleager, he addresses an explicitly Roman addressee, inviting him "to participate actively in the *Garland*'s creation" (Höuschele 2017, 15). How should we read the two *Garlands* in dialogue? To what extent do these notions of continuity and distinction translate into other forms of interaction between the epigrams, such as intertextual engagement, generic expectations, or the development of metapoetic, globalising or ecocritical perspectives?

Up to now, comparative work on the *Garlands* has mainly focused on editorial technique and structure. Scholars such as Gutzwiller (1998) and Höuschele (2019; 2016; 2010) have analysed the different ways each anthologist shaped his collection into a coherent whole. Kanellou (2025) has recently added a long diachronic perspective through subgenre analysis, while others have compared individual authors with a focus on ascription (e.g. Argentieri 2003) or offered preliminary comparative suggestions (e.g. Zanker 2007). Meanwhile, epigram scholarship has recently gained momentum in a wide variety of approaches, impossible to cite here at length: new editions and commentaries of individual epigrammatists (e.g. Stephens & Acosta-Hughes 2025; Calderón Dorda 2024; Garulli 2022; Ypsilanti 2021), increased attention to the role of the *Syllogae Minores* in the interpretation of epigrams (e.g. Floridi 2024), and thematic studies on topics like materiality and visual culture (e.g. Prioux 2018; 2017), language and style (e.g. Scicolone 2024; Sistakou & Rengakos 2016) or globalisation (e.g. de Jonge 2022; Schmitz 2022; Ambühl 2019). Greek epigram has also been studied through the concept of anchoring innovation, part of the research agenda of OIKOS, the Dutch National Research School in Classical Studies (e.g. Lardinois 2018).

This venue invites interested scholars to build upon this momentum, and to expand this wealth of new knowledge and approaches and apply it to a comparative study of the epigrams in both *Garlands* – textually, generically, and culturally. We welcome not only papers that deepen traditional literary approaches but also papers exploring new perspectives such as ecocriticism and cognitive theory, with the goal of casting new light on the anthologies' common trends and divergent patterns. Participants are invited to consider topics including, but not limited to:

- Intertextuality and generic expectations: are we able to trace developments in specific subgenres? Which differences can be observed, for instance, among the different imitators of Leonidas of Tarentum's anathematic epigrams?
- Ecocriticism: how are relations between human, non-human and more-than-human entities depicted in both *Garlands*? What traces of environmental awareness do we find in the epigram? How do these relate, for instance, to the articulation of power in Alcaeus of Messene and Crinagoras of Mytilene?

- Cognitive turn: do cognitive approaches like the Theory of Mind offer new possibilities to rethink reader responses to epigrams, to their *Sitz im Buch* or to their missing physical contexts (*Ergänzungsspiel*; Bing 1995)? Are sepulchral epigrams collected in the *Garland* of Philip, for instance, more demanding for the reader's imagination?
- Responses to globalisation and multiculturalism: how do Romans react to Greek culture and viceversa? How do the notions of the local and the global interact? Is Antipater of Thessalonica's way of negotiating the Macedonian past through cultural objects, for instance, new?
- Anchoring Innovation: how do the poets in both *Garlands* give meaning to the old and the new, and manage common ground in new contexts? How do poets such as Philip of Thessalonica or Argentiarius frame their 'new' poetics? Do their strategies relate to previous ways of presenting epigrammatic 'novelty' in Nossis of Locris or Asclepiades of Samos?
- Metapoetics: What does the sophisticated structure of the *Garlands* reveal about their literary programs and their intended audiences? Does the articulation of self-reflexivity in epigram change over time?
- Reception: does contemporaneous Latin poetry respond in similar ways to both *Garlands*? Do later contexts in the manuscript tradition elicit new connections between epigrams originally belonging to different collections?

Preference will be given to contributions focusing on the *Garlands* of Meleager and Philip, but other enlightening papers on Greek book epigrams of that period will be considered as well. It will also be aimed at a balanced participation of both senior and early career scholars, including postgraduate researchers.

Scholars wishing to present a paper (25 minutes + discussion) are kindly requested to submit an abstract (max. 300 words) with select bibliography, and a short bio (max. 100 words) by 30 September 2025 to the organisers (see emails below). Notification of acceptance will be sent no later than the beginning of December. The organisers aim to publish an edited volume based on the conference, provided there is sufficient material and interest.

Meals will be provided during the length of the conference, but unfortunately it will not be possible to reimburse travel or accommodation expenses. The organisers will be happy, however, to provide assistance in finding accommodation in Leiden or the Hague if needed.

Questions regarding this call can be addressed to the organisers:

(please copy each with email correspondence)

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