

Crowns and such

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 22 Jul 1999

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Matthew Malthouse — 22 Jul 1999, 10:53

Last week a line about crown, diadems and mitres was quoted - alas I forget by whom as I don't have the mail any more, neither do I have the books to hand so cannot quote directly.

A comment was made about mitres indicating bishops. Yet this need not be so. The OED gives

1. a. Antiq. As rendering of Gr. <mu><tau><rho><alpha>, L.
mitra: A headband or fillet worn by ancient Greek women; also, a kind of head-dress common among Asiatics, the wearing of which by men was regarded by the Romans as a mark of effeminacy.

which itself is less than it might be for the Greeks have the word from the Persians where is was the "Crown" equivalent, a cap which was part of the symbolic regalia of the Median and Persian kings.

(The transmogrification of cap to headband or fillet may be Alexandrine as the equivalent Macedonian symbol was a purple fillet)

So the three references to symbolic headgear may all be royal indicators with no episcopal reference intended at all (or, being Wolfe, a dual reference and intentional confusion).

Does the interpretation of the passage change at all if a religious connotation is excluded?

Matthew