BRILL

MNEMOSYNE 76 (2023) 1000-1025

MNEMOSYNE
A Journal of Classical Studies
brill.com/mnem

Artemidorus, Dream Exegesis, and the Case of the Interpolating Expert Dreamer

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Received August 2021 | Accepted December 2021 |
Published online 23 December 2022

Abstract

This article makes the following case: according to Artemidorus of Daldis' *Oneirocriticon* one main task of the dream interpreter is to identify, through knowledge of the dreamer, which components of a dream are internal in order to assess—as far as possible—the external components of a dream. I argue that very similar hermeneutic issues were being extensively theorised in Artemidorus' period by Jewish and Christian writers who were concerned with the problem of prophetic interpolation: in particular, cases in the Bible in which prophecies do not come true. In making this comparison, I hope to clarify a number of features of Artemidorus' hermeneutic, including the relationship between the origin and structure of dreams and the exegetical practice of the dream-interpreter.

Keywords

Artemidorus – dream divination – exegesis – prophetic interpolation

1 Introduction

A passage in Book 4 of the preface of the second-century dream-manual *On the Interpretation of Dreams* by Artemidorus of Daldis considers cases of dreamers who experience a confusing phenomenon:

> οὐ ταὐτὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐνύπνια καὶ τοῖς δυναμένοις αὐτὰ διακρίνειν· οἱ μὲν γὰρ πολλοί, οἷα βούλονται ἢ οἷα φοβοῦνται, τοιαῦτα καὶ κατὰ τὸν ὕπνον ὁρῶσιν, οἱ δὲ αὖ σοφοὶ περὶ ταῦτα καὶ δεινοί, οἷα βούλονται, τοιαῦτα σημαίνουσιν.[1]
>
> The *enhypnia* seen by most people are not the same as those seen by men capable of dream-interpretation. Most people see whatever they desire or fear presented directly as such in their sleep, but knowledgeable experts in this field see whatever they desire in symbolic form.

According to Artemidorus' schema of dreams, *enhypnia* are those dreams which are a projection of the desires or fears of the dreamer. *Oneiroi*, by contrast, are dreams which predict the future. In the example above, Artemidorus points out a case where it can be hard to tell which is which. He goes on to give three generic examples and one real-life example of cases where a person has had a complex allegorical dream that they believed to be an *oneiros*; however, in each case it turns out that the dream is just an *enhypnion* coded in symbolic form.

Most scholars who discuss this passage have identified it as describing curious edge cases: these problems only happen to 'knowledgeable experts'. Some have also argued that such examples were not 'hermeneutically interesting' to Artemidorus.[2] In this article I argue that this passage holds the key to understanding Artemidorus' hermeneutics of dream interpretation. I make the case that implicit in Artemidorus' text is the idea that all dreams have two components, an external component and an internal component. The external component may come from the gods, although Artemidorus is not dogmatic on this point. The internal component is the combination of various factors concerning the person of the dreamer: the dreamer's geographical place, profession, family, social relation to others, participation in local and personal customs, and—crucially—his or her immersion in symbolism. I read this passage alongside several other statements from Artemidorus about dream hermeneutics to make the following case: one main task of the dream interpreter is to identify, through knowledge of the dreamer, which components of the dream are internal, in order to access—as far as possible—the external component of the dream. I also argue that very similar hermeneutic issues were being extensively theorised in Artemidorus' period by Jewish and Christian writers who were

1 Artemid. 4.praef.8. All translations are from Thonemann and Hammond 2020. Greek text from Pack 1963.

2 Kenaan 2016, 213.

concerned with the problem of prophetic interpolation: in particular, cases in the Bible in which prophecies do not come true. In making this comparison, I hope to clarify a number of features of Artemidorus' hermeneutic, including the relationship between the origin and structure of dreams and the exegetical practice of the dream-interpreter.

2 The Painter from Corinth

Near the beginning of *On the Interpretation of Dreams* Artemidorus distinguishes between two types of dreams: those that are merely a reflection of the dreamer's current desires, worries, or events in his or her life (*enhypnia*) and those that are predictive (*oneiroi*).[3] For most people, most of the dreams that they experience are *enhypnia*: these frequently take the form of the projection of physical or mental needs or sensations (e.g. dreaming of food when hungry or dreaming of having sex with somebody whom you desire). As Price has noted, this type of dream is not of much interest to Artemidorus, in marked contrast to the Freudian school of dream-interpretation in which limning the (repressed) desires and fears of the dreamer is the primary purpose.[4] Artemidorus is instead primarily interested in *oneiroi*, which he further classifies into 'theorematic' dreams—those which are literal representations of events that will happen usually within the next day[5]—and 'allegorical' dreams,

3 See e.g. Thonemann 2020, 33-34. Vítek gives a fivefold classification, but this is not the standard way of reading Artemidorus (Vítek 2017, 128). The same distinction is found in Macrobius in the early fifth century; it seems that Macrobius was not reading Artemidorus, cf. Price 1986, 12. It is possible that there was some intermediate text, although some have posited a common source; for the argument that the distinction was formulated by Posidonius, see Blum 1936. Dodds 1951, 107 gives a threefold classification, adding *chrematismoi* or oracles, which are direct dream-messages from the gods. Although Dodds' classification is clearly present in older texts, Artemidorus gives no such distinction. In fact, *contra* Dodds, Artemidorus' etymological explanation for why *oneiroi* are so called explicitly includes messenger dreams under the category *oneiroi* by making reference to the mythological messenger Iros (Artemid. 1.1.4). The word *enhypnia* is etymologically simpler, meaning only 'in sleep'. For more on the etymology of Greek words for dreaming, see Kessels 1973, 121ff.

4 Price 1986, 3.

5 This distinction is very likely original, cf. Thonemann 2020, 34. On very rare occasions the events happen later than a day after the dream, e.g. Artemid. 4.1.3: 'An example is that of Ruso of Laodicea, who dreamt that he had bought the house of a friend, and did so three years later. This is the only theorematic dream which has come to our knowledge as having a delayed rather than an immediate effect.'

which present symbolic representations of the longer-term future and must be decoded after the dreamer wakes.[6] He defines allegorical dreams as follows:

> ἀλληγορικοὶ δὲ οἱ δι' ἄλλων ἄλλα σημαίνοντες, αἰνισσομένης ἐν αὐτοῖς φυσικῶς τι [καὶ] τῆς ψυχῆς.[7]
>
> Allegorical dreams are those that signify one thing by means of something else: when the soul says something enigmatically by physical means.

We will return to what Artemidorus means by 'the soul says something … by physical means'. From the archaic period onwards, allegorical interpretation of canonical texts—beginning with Homer—was a recognised hermeneutic practice.[8] Artemidorus is one of very few writers in his genre who use the term ἀλληγορία, which is otherwise usually a term employed by grammarians.[9] However, his use is in line with the technical sense of the term: the dreams he identifies as allegorical are in most cases those which he believes require the attention of a specialist trained to recognise symbolism.

In Book 1 of *On the Interpretation of Dreams*, where Artemidorus initially sets out this schema for dream-classification, he discusses it in such a way as to imply that it is both conceptually and practically straightforward. Most scholars agree that some of the types of dreams in this schema are indeed straightforward, both as discrete conceptual types, and in their identification by the dreamer. Some kinds of *enhypnia* are hermeneutically uncomplicated: a hungry person who dreams of food can clearly identify why, even without specific training in dream-interpretation.[10] Additionally, as Thonemann and Price (among others) have pointed out, theorematic *oneiroi* are conceptually straightforward and should be easy enough to identify: if the dreamer does

6 Artemid. 1.1.2; see also 4.1.1 for a recapitulation of the definition. In the sections of *On the Interpretation of Dreams* where he outlines this schema, Artemidorus does not set an explicit time frame on allegorical *oneiroi*.

7 Artemid. 1.2.1. Translation from Struck 2004, 183. Hammond *et al.* translate the second clause as 'the mind is characteristically speaking in riddles', which I do not think adequately captures the use of φυσικῶς.

8 Some attribute the invention of the practice to the sixth century writer Theagenes of Rhegium. See Boys-Stones 2001. See also Struck 2004, 26-29.

9 Struck 2004, 182. For more on allegorical practice among grammarians, see Morgan 1998. Philo also applied the term to dream divination (*On Dreams* 2.8).

10 Similarly, a person who has eaten too much may dream of vomiting, and so on. These do not have to be strictly bodily needs: for example, a person who has been frightened by something during the day may have a dream of the thing that has frightened her (Artemid. 1.1.2).

not experience the literal fulfilment of the content of her dream very quickly (within about a day), she can know that her dream was not a theorematic *oneiros*.[11] A particularly neat example of this in practice, analysed in detail by Kenaan, is the action taken by Penelope in *Odyssey* 19 after she dreams about an eagle killing her geese: Penelope's first instinct on waking is to check if her geese really have been killed. They haven't, and Penelope concludes that her dream is not theorematic and must instead be allegorical.[12]

However, some other forms are clearly more complex. Some scholars have argued that Artemidorus did not mean the term 'allegorical' only to apply to *oneiroi*. Foucault argued that Artemidorus also recognised that some *enhypnia* could be allegorical: in particular, in the passage quoted at the start of the article, in which Artemidorus notes that 'knowledgeable experts' (σοφοὶ … καὶ δεινοί) can have *enhypnia* in which they see their desires in symbolic form.[13] What does Artemidorus mean by 'knowledgeable experts'? The terms he uses, σοφοί and δεινοί, do not appear to be being used in a technical sense, and instead provide a fairly loose conception of expertise.[14] If we turn to the passage, we find several further clues:

> οἷον ⟨ὁ⟩ δυνάμενος διακρίνειν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἢ διὰ τὸ βιβλίοις ἐντετυχηκέναι ὀνειροκριτικοῖς ἢ διὰ τὸ ὀνειροκρίταις συναναστρέφεσθαι ἢ διὰ τὸ εὐεπιβόλως ἔχειν πρὸς τὰς κρίσεις.[15]
>
> Let us, for example, assume someone who can interpret symbols in dreams—he may have come across books on dream-interpretation, or be familiar with dream-interpreters, or just have a knack for interpretation.

Artemidorus goes on to outline three general scenarios in which an expert sees allegorical *enhypnia*:

11 Thonemann 2020, 34. See also, Price 1986, 12.

12 Kenaan 2016, 209. Strictly speaking, Penelope should have waited a little longer to be entirely sure that the dream was not theorematic, but the way in which Artemidorus talks about theorematic dreams does imply that the majority of them come true immediately or near-immediately upon waking. He gives the example of a sailor who dreams of being shipwrecked, and whose ship sinks the morning that he wakes (Artemid. 1.1.2).

13 Foucault 1986, 14.

14 σοφοί is used in the philosophical vocabulary to indicate a sage, i.e. a philosophically and ethically highly accomplished person; however, it is also used widely simply to indicate somebody intelligent, wise, or accomplished, and I believe that Artemidorus is using it in this latter, more general sense. See e.g. Brouwer 2014.

15 Artemid. 4.praef.8.

εἰ μὲν τύχοι ἐρῶν γυναικός, οὐ τὴν ἐρωμένην ὄψεται ἀλλ᾽ ἵππον ἢ κάτοπτρον ἢ ναῦν ἢ θάλασσαν ἢ θηρίον θῆλυ ἢ ἐσθῆτα γυναικείαν ἢ ἄλλο τι τῶν σημαινόντων γυναῖκα. εἰ δὲ πρὸς ἀποδημίαν γένοιτο, οὐχὶ ὀχήματα ὄψεται οὐδὲ ναῦς οὐδὲ στρωματοδέσμους οὐδὲ σκεύη συνειλεγμένα ἢ παρασκευὴν ἀποδημίας, ἵπτασθαι δὲ δόξει καὶ σεισμὸν ἢ πόλεμον ἢ κεραυνὸν ὄψεται καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο ἀποδημίας ἔσται σύμβολον. καὶ εἰ φοβοῖτό τινα ἢ φεύγοι, οὐκ αὖ τὸν ἐκεῖνον ὄψεται, ἀλλὰ θηρίον ἐκφεύγειν νομίσει καὶ δεσμὰ διαρρήσσειν καὶ λῃστὰς ἀναιρεῖν καὶ θεοῖς θύειν καὶ ὅσα ἰδόντες οἱ ἄλλοι ἄνθρωποι ἔξω δέους καὶ ταραχῆς γίνονται.[16]

1) If he is in love with a woman, he will not see his beloved in his dreams, but rather a horse, a mirror, a ship, the sea, a female animal, some piece of feminine clothing, or anything else which signifies a woman.
2) And if he is about to travel abroad, he will not see wheeled transport, ships, sleeping bags, piles of luggage, or all the kit required for travel, but will imagine that he is flying, or see in his dreams earthquake, war, thunderbolt, or anything else which will symbolize dislocation.
3) And if he is afraid of someone and trying to escape him, he will not see the man himself in his dreams, but will imagine himself escaping from a wild beast, breaking chains, killing bandits, sacrificing to the gods, or whatever else in other men's dreams has delivered them from fear or troubles of the mind.

Following this set of scenarios, Artemidorus gives a specific real-life example of a painter in Corinth who wanted his master to die:

ὡς καὶ ἐν Κορίνθῳ ὁ ζωγράφος ⟨ὃς⟩ τὸν δεσπότην κατορύττειν πολλάκις ἐδόκει ⟨καὶ⟩ τοῦτο μὲν τὴν ὀροφὴν τοῦ οἰκήματος ἐν ᾧ διέτριβεν ἀπόλλυσθαι, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κεφαλὴν ἀποτετμῆσθαι. καὶ οὐδὲν ἧττον περιῆν αὐτῷ ὁ δεσπότης καὶ ἔτι νῦν περίεστιν. ἀλλ᾽ ἐπειδὴ κριτικῶς εἶχε τῶν τοιούτων, τεχνικώτερον αὐτῷ προσέπαιζεν ἡ ψυχή· αὐτὰ γὰρ ταῦτα ἄλλῳ ἰδόντι τοῦ δεσπότου ὄλεθρον προεμαντεύετο.[17]

16 Artemid. 4.praef.8.

17 Artemid. 4.praef.9. Hammond translates αὐτὰ γὰρ ταῦτα ἄλλῳ as 'for any other', but taken strictly that is too strong a claim—clearly it is not implausible to suggest other situations in which a knowledgeable expert wished their master to die, even if it is a rare scenario; I have therefore translated simply as 'for other dreamers', which I believe is the more general sense Artemidorus is conveying (with thanks to Susanne Bobzien for this point). For discussion of how to translate this passage, see Schwabl 1996, 92-93.

> Another example—that of the painter in Corinth who wanted to see his master buried. He often dreamt of the roof of the house where he lived collapsing, and of his own beheading: but even so his master outlived him and is still alive to the present day. What was happening was that, given the man's ability to interpret this sort of symbolism in dreams, his mind was playing a rather esoteric trick on him: for other dreamers these same visions would prophesy the death of their master.

In the first of these passages, the 'knowledgeable expert' is explicitly identified as somebody who has had experience with dream-interpretation. It might be tempting to see this as a rare edge case, only applicable to professional dream interpreters. However, Artemidorus is clear that he is including people who are 'familiar' with dream-interpreters, who have read books on dream interpretation (which includes us, his readers), or just have a 'knack for interpretation'. The example of the painter from Corinth makes this clear: while Artemidorus doesn't specify whether the painter has training specifically in dream-interpretation, I believe it reasonable to read the passage as implying that the painter's experience in painting, as a visual allegorist, is what puts him over the threshold for being a 'knowledgeable expert'.[18] In these examples, Artemidorus makes it clear that in the case of ordinary people, not accustomed to symbolic encoding, the appearance of an allegory guarantees that the dream is predictive:

> ἤν δε τις τῶν ἀπείρων ἴδῃ, χρὴ πιστεύειν οὐχ ὡς ἐνυπνίοις ἀλλ᾽ ὡς ὀνείροις.[19]
>
> If anyone unversed in interpretation sees such symbolic dreams, we must confidently regard them not as *enhypnia* but as *oneiroi*.

By contrast, when the dreamer is an expert accustomed to the language of allegory, his mind encodes his desire in allegorical terms. Crucially, in this case the expert is misled by this encoding: he believes his allegorical dreams to be true *oneiroi* and therefore (falsely) assumes them to be predictive. Indeed, such

18 This is never explicitly addressed in other scholarly readings of this passage. However, discussions of painters and painting in Greek literature make it clear that they were generally counted, like literary writers, among specialists in techniques such as allegory. Simonides, for example, described painting as 'silent poetry' (Plu. *Mor.* 17f-18a). For an overview of Greek painting techniques see Smith and Plantzos 2012, 171-185. For allegory in painting see Gutzwiller 2009. For the links between philosophy and painting, and the philosophical training of the painter, see Demand 1975.

19 Artemid. 4.praef.8.

scenarios do appear to expose a serious problem: can one have genuinely predictive beliefs about something one has emotional attachment to? It may seem to be Artemidorus' belief that all dreams about current desires and anxieties are necessarily *enhypnia*. However, if a strong distinction is made concerning the symbolism of the dream—whether it is literal or allegorical—then, barring the case of theorematic dreams (which are fulfilled quickly), the dreamer at least has a way to distinguish between *enhypnia* (they are literal) and *oneiroi* (they are allegorical).[20] In a strict sense, it is possible to experience predictive dreams on topics about which one has desires or anxieties, as long as the dreams do not run along the same lines as such desires and anxieties: for example, if you were anxious about your wife dying and had a dream that suggested she would die, it would be highly likely to be an *enhypnion*. However, if you had a dream that she would become pregnant, since there is no connection between her dying and becoming pregnant, there would be no reason not to take it as genuinely predictive.[21]

The passage about experts having allegorical *enhypnia* is often noted in scholarly discussions of Artemidorus. It has been variously described. Peter Thonemann refers to it as an "optical illusion",[22] using it as an example to demonstrate Artemidorus' general lack of interest in *enhypnia* or analyses of the psychological state of the dreamer. Struck notes that it indicates that some dreamers have a "richer symbolic vocabulary" than others, but he does not expand on this point.[23] Winkler makes the slightly surprising claim that "presumably many of Artemidorus' regular clients were of this type" and that the majority of allegorical dreams he decoded turned out to be symbolic representations of the dreamer's current anxieties, casting doubt on the whole schema.[24]

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20 Contrast, for example, with accounts of oracle-consultation, where the most common personal questions asked involve travel, marriage, fertility and children, and work and personal finances. For more, see Eidinow 2007, 72-128.

21 More of a problem with this sort of separation is evident in the case of people who are ill; Artemidorus refers frequently to separate meanings of dreams for healthy and ill people, with a great number of the interpretations for those who are ill predicting that they will die, e.g. a dream of being born: 'for a sick man the dream foretells death' (Artemid. 1.13.3). It seems hard to understand such dreams as anything other than *enhypnia* on Artemidorus' definition, but he nevertheless seems to type them as *oneiroi*. The dreamers of *oneiroi* are sometimes referred to using the language of hopes and fears (e.g. Artemid. 1.21.3; 1.53.1).

22 Thonemann 2020, 35.

23 Struck 2004, 184.

24 Winkler 1990, 33. Artemidorus in fact explicitly says that only few dreamers will come to his son with this type of dream (Artemid. 4.praef.9).

Foucault provides the most explicitly theoretical account of this case. He suggests that, just as the theorematic *vs.* allegorical division operates within the realm of predictive *oneiroi*, a similar distinction is at play in non-predictive *enhypnia*:[25] most *enhypnia* are actually more like theorematic dreams in that they are literal representations. However, unlike theorematic dreams they are non-predictive, presenting the dreamer's desires in a clear manner. However, allegorical *enhypnia* are also possible: in the example of the painter, his desire for his master's death is expressed through the allegory of his own death. While it is perhaps more natural to think of these sorts of allegorical encodings for non-physical desires, they are clearly also possible for physical needs. For example, a dream of waterfalls experienced by a person who needs to urinate would be recognised both in the contemporary and ancient contexts as an allegory.

The symbols given in Artemidorus' examples vary considerably; he suggests five or six different possible symbols for each example dream of the 'knowledgeable expert' in the scenarios given above.[26] However, Vítek has argued that there were very few stable symbols in ancient dream interpretation.[27] The fact that Artemidorus includes the 'whatever else' and 'anything else' clauses in all three of these examples is certainly characteristic of a general tendency in his work to allow a great deal of latitude to the creativeness of the individual interpreter.[28] But in these cases, the problem is exactly that the expert dream-interpreter is generating his own symbols. What does it mean for the dream-interpreter's mind to furnish symbols? To begin to answer these questions, let us turn first to ancient discussions of where dreams come from.

3 The Origin of Dreams

Greek explanations of the origin of dreams tend along two axes of analysis. One axis runs from the claim that dreams are wholly externally generated and enter the human being from outside, to the claim that dreams come entirely from within the human being. The other axis runs from the claim that dreams

25 Foucault 1986, 11.

26 Artemid. 4.praef.9.

27 Vítek 2017, 139-143.

28 It is also indicative of a general wider tension on display in his work between encyclopaedism and theory: while he avows in *On the Interpretation of Dreams* that he doesn't intend to provide a comprehensive list of dream elements and their interpretations, his evident pride in his ordered and macrocosmic exposition of human experience tells another story. For analysis of Artemidorus as an 'encyclopaedic' writer, see Harris-McCoy 2013.

come exclusively from the gods, to the claim that dreams have no connection to the divine. A range of positions are taken along these axes, although most writers—whether explicitly or implicitly—pose models in the centre of both axes. That is to say, the majority of ancient dream theorists suggest that dreams come from the gods and the dreamer in some mixture, and also from outside and inside in some mixture.[29] In cases where people believe that dreams can at least sometimes come from the gods (and are therefore external), that belief tends (implicitly) to ground the belief that they are predictive. However, it is rarely stated in absolute terms, and it would be possible to hold that external predictive dreams from the gods *and* internal predictive dreams from the self are both possible and/or do actually occur. In cases where people believe that dreams come from some external source that is not the gods, accounts vary concerning predictions—e.g. Epicurean models posited that dreams come from atomic films which flow off solid objects and enter the dreamer, but that they are not predictive.[30] It is also possible to believe that dreams are internal and predictive—either in a probabilistic sort of way or because an internal part is taken to have general epistemic access to the future without the involvement of a specific external agent.[31]

In many literary texts, divinely sent dreams form a key part of narrative structure. Characters experience dreams which are sent by the gods which tend to drive action: for example, in the *Iliad*, Agamemnon has a dream from Zeus which makes him decide to renew the attack on Troy.[32] Dreams from the gods can therefore act straightforwardly as a vehicle for sending messages; in these instances, characters are usually aware that their dreams have come from the gods and take them as such, rarely mistaking them for their own psychological inventions.[33] Among philosophers, some accounts of dreaming were also explicitly theological. Plutarch was very interested in the overlap between dreams and oracles, both of which he understood as a productive interface between humanity and divinity.[34] Similarly, in the Jewish context, Philo of Alexandria theorised god-sent dreams in his *On Dreams*.[35] For both of these writers, if a dream came from the gods, its divine origin could ground the

29 Cf. e.g. Gallop 1996, 8-19. Many other affects are considered to have the same structure—for example, eros, which is often portrayed as a mix of external (sent by Aphrodite or others) and internal.

30 Tsouna 2018. See also Clay 1980.

31 This latter model is adopted by Philostratus in his *Life of Apollonius*, cf. e.g. 1.38.

32 Hom. *Il.* 2.5-40. For a psychoanalytic reading of this dream, see Reid 1973.

33 See Kenaan 2016, 206. See also Kessels 1973, 3.

34 King 2013.

35 See e.g. Reddoch 2010.

belief that it could predict the future—the gods' foreknowledge was conveyed straightforwardly through the medium of a dream.[36]

In some other philosophical accounts, the role of the divine is decentred and a greater emphasis is placed on the soul or the self. Earlier, I quoted a passage in which Artemidorus says an allegorical dream is one in which the 'soul says something enigmatically by physical means'. What does this mean? Different philosophical accounts attributed different cognitive functions to different parts of the human person. Words used include νοῦς, φρένες, and ψυχή, all of which can be variously translated as 'mind', 'brain', 'soul' but which all generally carry the connotation that they are the seat of the rational part of the human being.[37] However, some accounts of dreaming also place importance on non-rational organs of the body, including the liver (ἦπαρ). For Plato, the liver plays an important role in dreaming. In *Timaeus*, Plato discusses the role of the body in prophecy at length, arguing that the liver is the organ most connected to prophecy, and that the human ability to prophesy in sleep is a result of the liver having a break from its normal functions, and the ability to pass its time 'sensibly', occupied with 'divination' (μαντείᾳ).[38] The role of the liver is also the distinction between receivers of prophecy and prophetic interpreters: the liver 'has no share' in 'reason or intelligence' and is thus fit only to receive and experience prophecy, whereas the rational mind is needed to interpret the prophecies after waking.[39] The most extreme version of the dreams-as-internal position is held by Aristotle, who opposes the notion of god-sent dreams wholesale.[40] He provides a number of arguments against the idea that dreams come from the gods,[41] arguing instead that they come

36 Note that within this theory of dreaming it is nevertheless possible for a dream to be misleading if the gods design it as such; indeed, Agamemnon's dream in *Iliad* 2 is of this type, as Zeus knows that the vision he sends to Agamemnon is not a true representation of the future. Nevertheless, it produces a similar effect to other divine-message dreams: Agamemnon makes a decision about the next stage of the campaign against Troy based on the dream (Hom. *Il.* 2.5-40). For a detailed discussion of this dream, see Kenaan 2016, 206. Kenaan points out that this dream does not fit into Artemidorus' schema, as it is neither an *enhypnion* nor a theorematic allegorical dream (since it does not come true). See also Neil, Costache, and Wagner 2016, 6.

37 See Annas 1992.

38 Pl. *Ti.* 71d.

39 *Ibid.*

40 Arist. *Insomn.* 463b14. See Gallop 1996, 9.

41 Among them are the following: he believes the whole idea of a god sending dreams lacks rational explanation (426b20-21); he points out that animals also dream, and it would be absurd for the gods to send dreams to animals (463b12); he objects to the fact that dreams are not sent to the best people but scattered across the population (various versions of this argument appear: at 462b21-22 in general terms; at 464a19-22 that dreams

from within the dreamer. The Epicureans also posited that dreams are entirely materialistic (i.e. they have no divine connection) and non-prophetic.[42] The Stoics accepted that some dreams could be prophetic, but some Stoics cautioned against taking them as authoritative. Medical writings are more likely to treat dreams as fully internal.[43]

Christian and Jewish texts also theorised the origin of dreams. In the treatise *Berakhot* in the Babylonian Talmud, a series of aphorisms theorise the role of dreams: in one, dreams are claimed to have a twofold origin, from God and from the dreamer.[44] It is also explicitly claimed in *Berakhot* that dreams can have different—but true—meanings depending on their interpretation: the truth of a dream is only constructed through its interpretation, a point to which I return later in this article.[45]

Artemidorus seems to believe that dreams have multiple origins, although he does not show a great deal of interest in the question: he declares that he is 'not concerned to join Aristotle in the debate whether the cause of dreaming is something outside us, originating from god, or [if] there is some internal causation' (οὐχ ὁμοίως δὲ νῦν ἐγὼ ὡς Ἀριστοτέλης διαπορῶ πότερον ἔξωθεν ἡμῖν ἐστι τοῦ ὀνειρώσσειν ἡ αἰτία ὑπὸ θεοῦ γινομένη ἢ ἔνδον αἴτιον τι).[46] Although Artemidorus does not give an overtly theological account of the origin of dreams, he clearly believes that the gods are involved, sometimes referring to dreams as 'god-sent'.[47] He also clearly believes in the possibility of petitionary dreams

come at night to ordinary people and not during the day to the best people; at 463b15-18 that dreams come to people with certain psychological types, not just to the most virtuous people). For a more detailed summary of these reasons, see Radovic 2016, 384.

42 For an overview of Epicurean views of dreams, see Tsouna 2018.

43 Clay 1980, 342.

44 See e.g. the saying of Rabbi Jonathan, quoted at *Bavli Berakhot* 55a: 'The man is shown in the dream what he thinks in his heart while awake'. For an extensive analysis of this text, see Alexander 1995. For its relationship to other theories of dreaming, see Neil 2021, 118-128.

45 For example, at *Bavli Berakhot* 55b, there is a discussion of the case of a man who goes to 24 different dream interpreters and receives 24 different interpretations, all of which come true.

46 Artemid. 1.6. Price 1986, 16 believes he is "quite undecided". Artemidorus also cautions dream-interpreters against taking their own interpretations too seriously when thinking about causes: 'You must not let yourself be misled into thinking that the causes you assign do actually determine the outcomes … Outcomes are arrived at on the basis of practical experience, but explanations of their causes are simply the best that each of us can come up with from his own resources' (Artemid. 4.20.1).

47 E.g. Artemid. 4.3.1: θεοπέμπτους δὲ ὀνείρους ⟨ἡγοῦ⟩ τοὺς αἰφνίδιον ἐφισταμένους, ὡς καὶ πάντα τὰ ἀπροσδόκητα θεόπεμπτα καλοῦμεν ('dreams which occur out of the blue should be regarded as 'god-sent' dreams, in the same way that we use the term "god-sent" for all unexpected events'). It may be the case that this is simply a standard turn of phrase and

from the gods[48] and divine epiphanies in dreams.[49] However, he is careful not to come down clearly on either side as regards divine *vs.* human origin, saying that people should not seek prophetic dreams but leave the prediction 'to the god himself or [the dreamer's own] prophetic mind' (ἐπιτρεπτέον αὐτῷ τῷ θεῷ ἢ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῇ).[50] He also indicates that the soul or mind (ψυχή) is an important factor in generating dreams, referring to the *oneiros* as a 'complex moulding in the mind'.[51]

4 The Structure of Dreams

The structure of dreams in Artemidorus' thought has not been discussed in any great detail, primarily because Artemidorus himself does not make any very explicit statements on the matter. However, I believe that examples like the symbolic expert point towards a theoretical consistency in Artemidorus' conception of dreams. I propose the following reading: dreams in Artemidorus are best understood to comprise an external part (which I will call X) and an internal part (which I will call Y). Let us call the dream as it is actually seen Z, which is a composite made up of X + Y. We may understand X to be from the gods in a strict sense or in a much looser sense: in either case it is external to the dreamer and presented to her as a vision. The internal part, Y, may be the construct of the mind (ψυχή) or some other internal part—again, Artemidorus is not particularly specific.

I believe that for Artemidorus, X is what means the dream can predict the future.[52] This cannot be taken for granted—as Radovic has shown, for Aristotle

implies either no particular theological position, or, implicitly, that dreams do not in fact come from the gods.

48 See Boter and Flinterman 2007.

49 E.g. Artemid. 4.69-71; 2.69.

50 Artemid. 4.2.12.

51 Not only in the case of the painter from Corinth, but also elsewhere. Indeed, at Artemid. 4.59 in discussing a similar example he states that people with a literary education sometimes see dreams which have literary elements—and that this is evidence that dreams are 'products of the mind and do not come from any external source'. This is, of course, in contradiction to his statements about the gods, but I don't think it causes any great problems: this statement is clearly emphasising that it is not just the particular circumstances of a person that alter the internal component of dreaming, but also the structure of their thinking and their cast of mind.

52 This is, I believe, clear from the fact that he talks about 'god-sent' dreams which are not specifically claimed to be divine, but are 'unexpected' and 'visit people', clearly showing that they come from outside. While there might be some cases—including cases of illness—where the mind when asleep is able to perceive something about the body that

the origin of dreams is a separate question from whether dreams can be predictive of the future. In fact, Aristotle believes that dreams that come from the self can indicate the future, but he assigns a much weaker epistemic status to such dreams than many other ancient thinkers do.[53] However, Artemidorus is clear that dreams which contain no X and only Y are *enhypnia*: they are solely internal. The reason that the symbol expert's allegorical *enhypnion* works as an example is grounded in this assumption. The expert, on waking and remembering the allegorical content of the dream, believes it to be an *oneiros*; however, in fact, the dream is a totally internally-produced allegory. For Artemidorus, this makes it an *enhypnion*—i.e. it is devoid of predictive power.

In any given instance of interpretation, the dream-interpreter only has access to Z, the dream. Therefore I believe that Artemidorus' understanding of the hermeneutics of dream interpretation are as follows: the dream-interpreter must use her knowledge of the dreamer to attempt to delimit Y, the internal elements of the dream. Having delimited Y, she can then theoretically make an estimation of X, the external elements of the dream—which include its predictive content, the motivating purpose of the enquiry. Such a hermeneutic scheme makes sense of Artemidorus' insistence that the dream-interpreter must know about the dreamer's profession, social status and relationships, health, and local and personal customs. It also makes sense of why Artemidorus regularly assigns different meanings to dreamers who have different circumstances. Using the X + Y schema, let us take a hypothetical example:

> Dreamer A brings a dream Z. Artemidorus speaks to A and finds out that A is a goldsmith, a free married man, has two daughters, and lives in a town in which it is frowned upon for men to wear rings on their fingers.
>
> Dreamer B also brings a dream Z, which is extremely similar to Dreamer A's dream Z. Artemidorus speaks to B and finds out that B is an unmarried enslaved woman, has no children, and lives in a town in which it is normal for women to wear rings on their fingers.

Let's suppose Z involves the dreamer wearing gold rings at the wedding of the dreamer's daughter. When considering Y for dreamer A, Artemidorus would take into account the fact that he is a goldsmith, that he has daughters, and that men do not wear rings in his town—all of these factors are plausibly Y factors and should be ruled out as explanatory of the dream's content before a

it cannot usually, I do not believe this covers most of the cases of foreknowledge that Artemidorus outlines.

53 Radovic 2016.

conjecture at X can be given. Artemidorus might come to the conclusion that the dream is an *oneiros* and predicts, for example, that A's daughter is going to marry a man of whom A disapproves on the basis of the presence of the rings on A's fingers (which goes against custom). When interpreting for B, on the other hand, the presence of the rings can be discounted as part of Y as they are unremarkable given A's normal custom. But the fact that B doesn't have a daughter can be taken as significant and may mean that the dream of a daughter is part of X. Artemidorus may come to the conclusion that the dream is an *oneiros* which predicts that B will be emancipated—her daughter may, for example, stand for her new life as a free person. These examples show how the same dream can lead to radically different interpretations depending on which elements are understood to be X and which to be Y.[54]

In the example of the painter from Corinth what has happened is as follows: the painter believes the dream he has had is mostly X with not much Y. In fact, if the painter had been a better exegetical practitioner, he would have realised that his own propensity to see things in symbols means that much (or all) of the dream was in fact Y (and therefore possibly of limited or no predictive power or meaning). I return in a later section to what it means for the dream interpreter to be a better exegetical practitioner. Next, however, I turn to a parallel. Many of the same questions that Artemidorus raises—particularly questions about the origin of foreknowledge and the role of the individual's mind—were heavily theorised in Artemidorus' period in Jewish and Christian writings. It is to this comparison I now turn.

5 Prophetic Interpolation

A concept occasionally employed in the discussion of prophecy and foreknowledge is prophetic interpolation. Broadly conceived, this is the notion that sometimes a prophet, diviner, or predictor adds information to her prophecy or prediction which is either: a) false, or b) comes from the prophet herself rather than from (the) god(s) or another external source assumed to be the source of the prophecy. Models of prophecy, unlike dreams, necessarily

54 Such examples exist, in a more straightforward form, in *On the Interpretation of Dreams* itself. For example, at 4.67.1-7, Artemidorus gives a set of cases in which seven different pregnant women each dream of giving birth to a snake. Artemidorus lists the different meanings for each woman's child based on Y factors about the women: for example, an enslaved woman had an enslaved son who ran away because 'snakes do not move in a straight line'; by contrast, the wife of a priest had a son who became a hierophant since snakes are associated with the Mysteries.

rule out the idea that genuine prophecy can come solely from the prophet herself. Instead, prophecy is usually conceived of as having a wholly external and divine origin, or a mixed divine-human external-internal origin (e.g. in the case that the prophet is seen as some sort of filter through which divine messages pass).

Although interpolation exercised thinkers from various different religious traditions in Greco-Roman antiquity,[55] it was most heavily theorised in Jewish and Christian texts. Much commentary by Jewish and Christian writers on prophetic interpolation is exegetical and focuses on particular examples of prophets whose words are suspected to be somehow of their own devising rather than truly messages from God. However, some thinkers theorised prophetic interpolation more broadly; in more theoretical Jewish and Christian texts the problem had links to other exegetical and hermeneutical problems, particularly concerning correct exegesis of scripture.

Prophetic interpolation can take a number of forms, and can be viewed from a number of perspectives. On the more cynical end, we might consider cases where somebody who claims to be a prophet deliberately invents statements with the intention that their audience believes that those statements come not just from the prophet but from (the) god(s): this is perhaps more naturally thought of as 'false prophecy' and features in a number of Judaeo-Christian and pagan texts from around the same time as Artemidorus. For example, in the first-century *Didache*, members of a Christian community are given a set of guidelines to guard against exploitation from those who claim to speak prophetically but who are—according to the author of the *Didache*—in fact 'trading on Christ' (χριστέμπορος).[56] In the particular example given in the *Didache*, a prophet who claims to be in a state of prophetic inspiration makes a request for food. According to the *Didache*, this is indicative that the prophet is only pretending to be inspired; the presence of such a request can be relied on as a diagnostic criterion for false prophecy. Similarly, Lucian of Samosata's satirical text *Alexander the False Prophet* describes the titular character's practice of displaying a pet snake fitted with a false human head which contained a speaking tube through which another person could hiss made-up oracles.[57]

The question of prophetic authority was, of course, the subject of intense rhetorical conflict, with practitioners staking competing claims not only to 'true' prophecy but also to the authority to declare as false or fraudulent the

55 E.g. Plu. *Alex*. 14.6-7, in which the Pythia at Delphi makes a remark in her own voice which is taken by Alexander the Great to be prophetic.

56 *Didache* 12.4-13.1.

57 Lucianus, *Alex.* 13. See Aune 1983, 13.

practices and utterances of others.[58] However, what troubled many Jewish and Christian writers more than cases of false prophecy were cases where a prophet was indeed deemed to be a genuine, divinely-inspired prophet but some problem arose in their prophecy—particularly, when a prophecy has been made and patently not fulfilled.

Origen of Alexandria (c. 180-250) wrote on the problem of prophetic interpolation with respect to Gad and Jonah in particular, although he also considered other more problematic figures such as Balaam and Caiaphas.[59] In *Homilies on Numbers*, he considers a prophecy made by Balaam, which includes the following:

> God is not a human being, that he should lie,
> Or a mortal, that he should change his mind.
> Has he promised, and will he not do it?
> Has he spoken, and will he not fulfil it?
> See, I received a command to bless;
> He has blessed, and I cannot revoke it.[60]

This passage unambiguously states that a prophet who has received a specific message or command from God cannot revoke that command. However, as Origen goes on to argue, this does not obviate cases where prophets may add their own material to the message or command from God, sometimes in a way that substantially changes the meaning. He argues that such a thing happened in the case of the prophecy by Jonah of the destruction of Nineveh.[61] More strikingly, he also claims that well-meaning prophetic interpolation can happen in any instance:

> aliqua quidam Dominus locutus est et non propheta, alia vero propheta et non Dominus.[62]
>
> The Lord, and not the prophet, has spoken some things, to be sure, but other things the prophet has spoken and not the Lord.

58 For an extensive discussion of this rhetorical landscape, see Nasrallah 2003.

59 For discussion of what demarcates 'true' and 'false' prophecy and what makes somebody a prophet in Origen's thought, see Hall 2021, 96-146.

60 Numbers 23:19-21 (NRSV).

61 Jonah 3:1-5,10. Origen argues this at *Homilies on Numbers* 16.4.2.

62 *Homilies on Numbers* 16.4.5.

This applies, according to Origen, even in prophecies from those considered the most trustworthy and exalted figures of the Old and New Testaments respectively, Moses and Paul.[63] In the cases of figures such as Moses and Paul, Origen and other Christian writers explicitly rule out any suggestion that they might be fraudulent or false prophets;[64] it is clear that Origen believes prophetic interpolation can happen accidentally in the midst of a divinely-inspired prophecy. He elsewhere suggests that communication from God to human beings can be hampered by the large gap in understanding:[65] interpolation under this reasoning is primarily a hermeneutic problem in which human beings, even the most exemplary ones, accidentally read interpretations into God's messages which are not present. For Origen, the obvious corollary is biblical exegesis, hence his intensive focus on training himself and other Christians in correct exegetical practice, which he believes to be the only defence against error.

This second type, sincere prophetic interpolation, is of most relevance to Artemidorus' allegorising expert. A central problem of both inspired prophecy and dreaming is the internality of the mode and the lack of external verification. Compare, for example, an 'inductive' mode of divination, haruspicy, in which an interpreter 'reads' the 'text' of an animal's liver: the liver is a fixed physical object, and while there may be different possible interpretations—even radically different interpretations—more than one haruspex could practise interpretation on the same liver. In the case of a dream or a prophecy, there is no repeatability and often no or only partial falsifiability.

Both for Artemidorus and for Judaeo-Christian writers foreknowledge is clearly and unproblematically possible. The difficulty for both is that some things which seem like expressions of foreknowledge turn out not to be. This can be discovered either by their non-eventuation (the painter's dream; Jonah's prophecy of the destruction of Nineveh) or because some external diagnostic criterion suggests that they are corrupted (the *Didache* meal-ordering false prophet; the expert dream-interpreter in love). In some cases, it only becomes apparent at a later date that a particular diagnostic criterion is relevant: a very clear example of this, examined by Simon Price, is a case where Artemidorus understands two men's sexual dreams to be *oneiroi* but, on finding out further information about their waking-life sexual practices, recategorizes them as

63 *Homilies on Numbers* 16.4.4.

64 This was a topic of intense polemic in the earliest Christian period. However, Moses was widely accepted as a sage among non-Jewish communities, see Gager 1972.

65 *Homilies on Jeremiah* 18.6: 'Just as we, if we are talking to a two-year-old child, baby-talk because of the child … something like this seems to me the case with God whenever he manages the race of men.'

enhypnia[66]—is a clear example of something thought to be X being reclassified as Y.

In the case of the interpolating prophet, we can also think in terms of a combination of X + Y which produces the spoken or written prophecy Z. As with the allegorising expert, the role of the interpreter or exegete is to determine what Y is in order to be able to work out what properly belongs to X. However, the scenario described by Artemidorus differs in a few ways from descriptions of the experience of prophesying examined by Judaeo-Christian writers. In the case of the prophets, exegetes know for certain that X is present in prophecies already judged to be true or valid: in the case of scriptural or other agreed-upon true prophecy, the existence of Z guarantees X. In contrast, for dream interpreters, there may be minimal or even no X present, making the exegetical endeavour fruitless (and throwing into question the epistemic validity of the method).

To further get to grips with the hermeneutic angle of this problem, I turn now to a second passage from Artemidorus, not often analysed. This passage appears in what seems like a throwaway comment, made in Book 1 when Artemidorus is laying down some general principles for the aspiring dream-interpreter.

6 The Bad Dream-Interpreter

In Book 1 of *On the Interpretation of Dreams*, Artemidorus briefly discusses the ways in which a dream-interpreter can be deficient. He issues some warnings about ways in which a person can be a bad dream-interpreter:

> ὅθεν φημὶ δεῖν οἴκοθεν παρεσκευάσθαι καὶ οἰκείᾳ συνέσει χρῆσθαι τὸν ὀνειροκρίτην καὶ μὴ μόνον τοῖς βιβλίοις ἐπανέχειν, ἐπεὶ ὅστις γε τέχνῃ οἴεται ἄνευ

66 Artemid. 4.59. One man dreams about his wife performing oral sex on him; the other dreams about performing oral sex on his wife. According to Artemidorus' schema, these are dreams about sexual activities that are 'contrary to custom' (i.e. most people do not practice oral sex) and so they should be *oneiroi* predicting negative outcomes for the dreamers; however, when Artemidorus finds out that both men do in fact regularly practise oral sex with their wives, he realises that the dreams are simply *enhypnia*. This is, if anything, a very clear example of a point Artemidorus makes earlier in the text (Artemid. 1.9.1), that a dream-interpreter must have an extensive knowledge of individual and local practices and customs in order to provide the best interpretations (compare a similar declaration by Ptolemy on the context of astrological predictions, cf. *Tetrabiblos* 2.1). For more on the oral sex dreams, see Price 1986, 14. See also Thonemann 2020, 34-35. For more on sexual practices more generally in Artemidorus' work, see Thonemann 2020, 71-85.

> φύσεως ἐντελὴς ἔσεσθαι, ἀτελὴς καὶ ἀπέραντος, τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον ὅσῳ πλείονα ἕξιν ἔχει, διατελέσει· καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς πεπλανῆσθαι ἐπὶ πλέον τὴν πλάνην παρέχει.[67]
>
> The dream-interpreter must have his own resources and apply his own intelligence, and not simply rely on textbooks. Anyone who thinks that theory alone without natural talent will make him fully competent will continue incompetent and ineffectual, the more so the longer he keeps to this habit. Once set on the wrong track, he will go more and more astray.

In this case, Artemidorus seems to be identifying a problem of the empirical methodology that he champions throughout *On Dream Interpretation*.[68] A good dream-interpreter is able to refine and supplement with her own experience the theoretical discussions of the craft that she reads.[69] Elsewhere, Artemidorus makes clear that the dream interpreter should be ready to jettison the wisdom of older dream textbooks where it is clear that old interpretations have become obsolete for reasons of cultural change: for example, he explains that older interpretations of dreams of baths carried a different cultural resonance in a Roman world where public baths were not widely used; in Artemidorus' own time, when baths are ubiquitous, the dream-interpreter understands from experience that dreams about baths are common and not to be interpreted with antiquated principles.[70]

It is straightforward enough to understand why Artemidorus claims that the bad dream-interpreter who is too reliant on theory will fail to account for such changes, and will give poor readings as a result. What is less clear is why he says the readings will become worse 'the longer he keeps to this habit' and the dream-interpreter will go 'more and more astray'.[71] Two options present themselves:

a) Artemidorus may believe that the rate of cultural change is fast enough that even within a dream-interpreter's professional lifetime, a significant number of textbook readings might become out

67 Artemid. 1.12.1. The Aristotelian overtones of this description are clear—see e.g. *EN* 2.1.

68 E.g. Artemid. 4.20.1.

69 This is a standard position in theories of expertise in antiquity. For example, in discussing expertise in rhetoric, Isocrates maintains that a student must have natural talent, good teaching, and must practise regularly (*Antidosis* 187). See e.g. Johnson 1959.

70 For analysis of this example, see Böhme 2008, 20-21.

71 Artemid. 1.12.1.

of date (e.g. the baths). The dream-interpreter who fails to recognise such a fact will give increasingly antiquated dream-interpretations.

b) Artemidorus is implying that the dream-interpreter who does not have a talent at interpretation will make her own (poor) interpretations beyond the textbooks, but in doing so she will falsely believe that she has given good interpretations. She will then add these poor interpretations to her own store of examples, meaning that any interpretations which rely on them in the future will also be poor. This way, iteratively, she becomes worse at dream-interpretation as her stock of examples takes her further from the best interpretations.

The first reading clearly has some merit: it is plausible to suggest that there might be a number of examples of significant cultural change in a dream-interpreter's lifetime; it is not fanciful to suggest that a second-century dream-interpreter who did not keep in step with social change might seem quite significantly out-of-date at the end of a long career. The second reading suggests that Artemidorus is raising a stronger and more problematic point than failure to keep up with fashion: he seems to be talking about something more akin to confirmation bias. This second reading supposes several subclaims. First, the idea that the poor dream interpreter is making her own interpretations. Second, the idea that the poor interpretations in a dream-interpreter's portfolio can be used in the creation of further poor interpretations. This is not simply a problem of individual bad interpretations, but a serious hermeneutic issue.

Artemidorus' set-up of the poor dream-interpreter scenario seems at first glance to be geared away from the idea that the dream-interpreter makes her own interpretations: we are told that the poor dream-interpreter 'rel[ies] on textbooks' and applies 'theory alone without natural talent'.[72] Examined more closely, though, neither statement excludes the idea that the poor dream-interpreter makes her own interpretations. This suggests that Artemidorus has in mind some sort of analogical method for interpretation: if the poor dream-interpreter wrongly interprets a set of dreams about (for example) radishes but believes her interpretations to be accurate, she is likely to then go on to use those interpretations if she encounters a dream about other vegetables. This is in line with some of the ways Artemidorus himself talks about interpretation of similar objects. For example, in Book 1 he advocates the use of analogical reading for dreams about fruits:

72 Artemid. 1.12.1.

> δεῖ δὲ τὰ ὑποδείγματα ἔχοντας ἀπὸ τῶν εἰρημένων περὶ τῶν ἀγράφων τεκμαίρεσθαι κατὰ τὸ ὅμοιον μετάγοντας τὸν λόγον.[73]
>
> Dreams about fruits not treated here should be interpreted by applying the principle of analogy on the pattern of examples given above.

For Artemidorus, the only guarantor of correct interpretation is direct experience (*peira*). While analogical explanations can be offered to clients, in reality the dream-interpreter can only know that there are links between dream-symbols and outcomes, not what the details of those links are nor the system of cause and effect that governs them: as Thonemann puts it, analogies have 'no explanatory or predictive force' in Artemidorus' system.[74]

Some scholars have noted that Artemidorus' actual methods—including examples such as the fruits above—conflict at times with this epistemological positioning. This seems to me only to pose a minor problem: frequently in other fields of technical expertise (including medicine) practitioners will display different levels of precision and different claims to knowledge depending on both the audience and the context of the discussion.[75] I conjecture that among clients and laypeople Artemidorus may overstate the theoretical foundations of the art of dream-interpretation to include the extension of the practice to other subjects via analogy. In private, among other dream-interpreters, admitting its limitations might be a great deal easier.

73 Artemid. 1.73.5.

74 Thonemann 2020, 37. In other places, Artemidorus mixes analogical reasoning and a disavowal of analogical reasoning. For example, at Artemid. 2.32.4, Artemidorus, having analogically listed a set of dreams about different types of gladiators, adds a hasty caveat that his interpretations come from experience. For discussion of this and other examples, see Thonemann 2020, 39-40.

75 While in this case those passages which advocate analogical reasoning and those which disavow it come from the same text, other passages in *On the Interpretation of Dreams* show that Artemidorus is clearly aware of his different audiences: for example, in the preface to Book 4 he addresses his son, also a practising dream-interpreter, and explains the importance of keeping some information concealed from other practitioners and clients. Compare e.g. the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Supplementary Problems*, which treats a wide range of medical questions which vary a great deal in how technical the audience's understanding is assumed to be. For more, see Oikonomopoulou 2020.

7 Exegetical Error

Both the passage about the bad dream-interpreter and the passage about the expert's allegorical *enhypnion* involve exegetical difficulties or errors. In the case of the bad dream-interpreter, there is a compounding effect which has hermeneutic implications: her stock of wrong exegeses leads her further and further astray. A complete methodological overhaul is required in order for her to be able to establish correct practice.

In the case of the expert's allegorical *enhypnion*, the problem is more complex. Artemidorus includes this example to explain to his readers that those familiar with allegory can experience this sort of interpolation; since we, his readers, are, by reading his book, becoming familiar with allegory, he intends to give us a warning about our own dreams. In that sense, he is establishing a principle or a rule that is no different from other rules or principles in the work: when interpreting your own dreams or those of another person familiar with allegory, check first whether it is possible that the dream is an *enhypnion*.

There are a couple of hints in *On the Interpretation of Dreams* about extraordinary individuals who do not experience *enhypnia*.[76] Such individuals also tend not to experience allegorical *oneiroi* but only theorematic ones. Artemidorus does not provide an explanation, but it is highly likely that he is drawing on the trope that the gods communicate most clearly with virtuous individuals.[77] For example, in Plato's *Republic* the philosopher is presented as an ideal dreamer because of his lack of 'somatic and psychological issues':[78] his clear mind allows the unhindered flow of prophetic dream elements. The language of clarity also appears in texts closer to Artemidorus' own time; a particularly pertinent example is the philosopher-sage Apollonius of Tyana as portrayed in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* (early third century AD). Apollonius describes his ascetic practices as 'preventing any kind of cloudiness' in his mind, allowing him to see the future 'like a reflection in a mirror'.[79]

Most scholars take the references to the absence of *enhypnia* in virtuous people to imply that *enhypnia* and *oneiroi* constitute 'two widely opposed domains and meanings'.[80] Kenaan and Pelling both contest this, arguing that the categories of *enhypnia* and *oneiroi* break down under close examination,

76 E.g. Artemid. 4.praef.6.

77 Foucault 1986, 13. See above for Aristotle's argument that only the most virtuous people should receive prophetic dreams. The same assumption was made in the Judaeo-Christian context, especially concerning Moses.

78 Kenaan 2016, 198. See Pl. *R.* 572a-b.

79 Philostr. *VA* 8.7.

80 Foucault 1986, 10-11. See also Thonemann, find other examples too.

particularly in stylised literary texts in which dreams that provide psychological insights into characters can nevertheless simultaneously function as prophetic dreams.[81] Kenaan in particular is clear that Artemidorus' instructions for distinguishing between *oneiroi* and *enhypnia* "cannot be followed": it is not possible to 'detach' allegorical dreams from the individual concerns of the dreamer, and it is also not possible to clearly distinguish between *enhypnia* and theorematic dreams.[82]

I think this is basically correct. But instead of reading the solution as being about the *oneiros* unfolding dynamically over time, as Kenaan does, I believe the problem is primarily rooted in exegetical practice. Concerning the prophets, Jewish and Christian thinkers had to think seriously about what to make of cases where a divinely-inspired prophetic statement turned out to be false. As regards Jonah, Jewish and Christian writers claimed that prophetic interpolation of some kind had happened. For them, the task of the exegete included the ability to deal with instances like this. In the same way, by alerting his son and his readers to the problem in Book 4, Artemidorus is not pointing out a tension in his system so much as giving his readers the tools to improve their exegetical practice.

8 Conclusion

The example of the symbolic expert who has an allegorical *enhypnion* is at first glance a serious challenge to Artemidorus' classification of dreams. In this article I have made the case that if we read the passage in dialogue with the passage about the bad dream-interpreter and alongside examples of prophetic interpolation in Jewish and Christian texts, it becomes apparent that the symbolic expert in fact points to a hermeneutic sophistication in Artemidorus' scheme that has not previously been fully recognised. In addition, by classifying dreams as containing an external part X and an internal part Y, I link Artemidorus' exegetical practice to his understanding of the dual origin and structure of dreams as both divine and human. Kenaan's assessment that the case of the symbolic expert is not 'hermeneutically interesting' to Artemidorus is correct: Artemidorus is indeed interested only in *oneiroi*. However it should be of great interest to us as a methodological point, containing as it does the key to understanding the conceptual sophistication of Artemidorus' oneiromantic methodology.

81 Kenaan 2016; Pelling 1997.
82 Kenaan 2016, 215.

9 Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Liam Shaw, Katherine Backler, Susanne Bobzien, and Simon Goldhill for helpful comments on a draft version, and to the anonymous reviewer.

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