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**Gerard Boter & Jaap-Jan Flinterman, 'Are Petitionary Dreams Non-predictive? Observations on Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica* 1.6 and 4.2', *Mnemosyne* 60 (2007) 589-607**

### **Abstract**

In two passages of the *Oneirocritica*, Artemidorus discusses the practice of asking the gods for a dream containing a prediction or an advice. The prevailing opinion among scholars is that Artemidorus rejects this type of dreams categorically. In this article it is argued that, on the contrary, Artemidorus does accept the validity of petitionary dreams, provided that some rules are taken into account. Further, a couple of proposals for improvement of the text are made for a pivotal passage on petitionary dreams, namely 246.15-8 Pack.

### **Keywords**

dream divination, Artemidorus, petitionary dreams, magical papyri

### **Introduction**

One of the subjects discussed in the introductions to Books 1 and 4 of Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*<sup>1</sup> consists of dreams which may occur when [590] people are worrying about a problem and when they have asked the gods for a dream containing a prediction or an advice.<sup>2</sup> Among students of Artemidorus there is a wide-spread belief that the oneirocritic maintains that such dreams, which are either called *μεριμνηματικοί* ('dealing with concerns') or *αίτηματικοί* ('resulting from a request', 'petitionary'), are devoid of any divinatory significance. Simon Price, for example, in an article on Artemidorus rightly praised as "an excellent modern discussion of the *Oneirocritica*",<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Our references are to the books and chapters (and to the pages and lines) of Pack's 1963 Teubner. The *Oneirocritica* has two introductions in which the principles of dream-theory and dream-interpretation are set out. The first of these (1.1-12 [3.9-21.11]) introduces Books 1-3, which are dedicated to Cassius Maximus, the second (4.1-4 [241.1-248.20]) Books 4-5, which are addressed to Artemidorus' homonymous son. Although there is a considerable overlap between the two, some subjects are discussed at greater length in either Book 1 or Book 4.

<sup>2</sup> Artem. 1.6 (15.19-16.9) and 4.2 (246.2-247.10).

<sup>3</sup> Bowersock 1994, 80 n. 9; cf. Bowersock 2004, 54.

claims that petitionary dreams come under the category of non-predictive dreams.<sup>4</sup> In this article, we will argue that this view is mistaken, and that Artemidorus holds that asking for a dream may well have the result hoped for by the prospective dreamer. In addition, we will advance two proposals for improving the text in the crucial passage in 4.2 (246.15-8 Pack), where Artemidorus gives six instances of the kind of questions one should avoid when approaching the gods with a request for a dream. As a correct understanding of Artemidorus' classification of dreams is essential to our argument, we will start with a succinct presentation of the most important dream-categories distinguished in the *Oneirocritica*.

### 1. Artemidorus' Classification of Dreams<sup>5</sup>

From an oneirocritic's point of view, the distinction between predictive and non-predictive dreams is of course fundamental. Accordingly, it is the first distinction made by Artemidorus in the introduction to Book 1.<sup>6</sup> The word ὄνειρος is reserved for predictive dreams; non-predictive dreams are labelled ἐνύπνια. Ἐνύπνια result from the dreamer's present condition and concerns. Moreover, they literally mirror the conditions and concerns by which they are provoked: those in love will dream about the object of their [591] longing, those in fear about what they are afraid of, those hungry about food, etc.<sup>7</sup> In the preface to Book 4, Artemidorus returns to the distinction between ἐνύπνια and ὄνειροι.<sup>8</sup> He emphasizes its importance, and he discusses a few related issues such as the tension between everyday language and technical jargon.<sup>9</sup> In common usage (κοινῶς, 239.6 [and possibly at 238.23, see Appendix]) ὄνειρος and ἐνύπνιον are interchangeable, but a dream-interpreter's professional discourse (ὅταν δὲ τεχνικῶς λέγη τις, 238.24) requires that each of the two words should be used in its proper sense (κυρίως, 238.24). Admittedly, on a couple of occasions Artemidorus disregards his own call for terminological rigour.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, when confronting the passages about petitionary dreams we should keep in mind that Artemidorus considers it desirable to maintain a clear terminological distinction between the two categories.

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<sup>4</sup> Price 1986, 10, quoted below in n. 24. A slightly revised version of this article has been published in Osborne 2004, 226-59. As the revision does not affect the points discussed here, we refer to the original publication.

<sup>5</sup> For Artemidorus' dream-classification cf. Kessels 1969, 391-6.

<sup>6</sup> Artem. 1.1 (3.9-4.21).

<sup>7</sup> Artem. 1.1 (3.13-24).

<sup>8</sup> Artem. 4.*prooem.* (238.20-240.28).

<sup>9</sup> Artem. 4.*prooem.* (238.23-239.13).

<sup>10</sup> As is pointed out by Kessels (1969, 392 n. 1), referring to Artem. 4.*prooem.* (236.9) and 4.33 (267.3). In both cases, ἐνύπνιον is used for a predictive dream.

As a category, ὄνειροι are divided into two subcategories, ὄνειροι θεωρηματικοί and ὄνειροι ἀλληγορικοί.<sup>11</sup> ὄνειροι θεωρηματικοί have two distinguishing characteristics: what the dreamer ‘sees’, i.e. the content of the dream, corresponds exactly to the predicted event, and there is hardly any lapse of time between the dream and its fulfilment.<sup>12</sup> For obvious reasons, ὄνειροι θεωρηματικοί are not a very promising field for dream-interpreters, and it does not come as a surprise that Artemidorus focuses on ὄνειροι ἀλληγορικοί. The meaning of these dreams is not immediately apparent, since it is hinted at rather than revealed: they ‘signify one thing by means of another’.<sup>13</sup> The hidden message has to be decoded, and to this end professional assistance is needed. Fortunately, the dreamer has the opportunity to consult a dream-interpreter, because ὄνειροι ἀλληγορικοί [592] also differ from ὄνειροι θεωρηματικοί in that the prediction encrypted in the dream is not fulfilled immediately.<sup>14</sup>

After having made the distinction between ὄνειροι θεωρηματικοί and ὄνειροι ἀλληγορικοί, Artemidorus goes more deeply into the latter subcategory, discussing or mentioning in the introductions to both Book 1 and Book 4 a number of fundamental interpretative issues, such as the person(s) or entities to which a prediction encoded in a dream may refer, the difficulties which the interpreter has to overcome in deciding whether a dream is favourable or not, and the assessment of the relevance and scope of the imagery it contains.<sup>15</sup> Then a new distinction is introduced, again both in Book 1 and in Book 4, between dreams which are labelled μεριμνηματικοί or αἰτηματικοί on the one hand, and ὄνειροι θεόπεμπτοι (‘god-sent’) on the other.<sup>16</sup> With regard to the terms used for the dreams belonging to the first of these subdivisions, the dreams ‘dealing with concerns’ or ‘resulting from a request’, we should realize that they both refer to one type of dreams. This is evident from the passage in 4.2 (246.2-7), where Artemidorus explicitly states that the word αἰτηματικοί applies to the same dreams (τοὺς αὐτοὺς, l. 5) as the term μεριμνηματικοί.

The dreams belonging to the second subdivision, the ὄνειροι θεόπεμπτοι, are dreams which occur spontaneously.<sup>17</sup> It is important to notice that Artemidorus’ choice for the word θεόπεμπτος, ‘god-sent’, does not imply a judgment on the origin of such dreams: he simply

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<sup>11</sup> Artem. 1.2 (4.22-3) and 4.1 (241.1-2).

<sup>12</sup> Artem. 1.2 (4.23-5.9 and 5.23-6.13) and 4.1 (241.2-3, 8-9, 15-20 and 241.25-242.1).

<sup>13</sup> Artem. 1.2 (5.9-11): ἀλληγορικοί δὲ οἱ δι’ ἄλλων ἄλλα σημαίνοντες, αἰνισσομένης ἐν αὐτοῖς φυσικῶς τι [καὶ] τῆς ψυχῆς. Cf. 4.1 (241.3-4): ..., ἀλληγορικούς δὲ τοὺς τὰ σημαίνόμενα δι’ αἰνιγμάτων ἐπιδεικνύοντας.

<sup>14</sup> Artem. 1.2 (5.19-20: ὅσα μὲν ἀποβήσεται χρόνου μεταξύ διελθόντος ἢ πολλοῦ ἢ ὀλίγου...) and 4.1 (241.9-10: ὅσα δὲ ἀλληγορικά, πάντως χρόνου διαλείποντος ἢ πολλοῦ ἢ ὀλίγου).

<sup>15</sup> Artem. 1.2-5 (7.1-15.18) and 4.1-2 (242.1-246.2).

<sup>16</sup> Artem. 1.6 (15.19-16.9) and 4.2-3 (246.2-247.12).

<sup>17</sup> Artem. 1.6 (16.1-4) and 4.3 (247.10-1): Θεοπέμπτους δὲ ὄνειρους <ἡγοῦ> τοὺς αἰφνίδιον ἐφισταμένους.

follows common usage, in which unexpected events and phenomena are called θεόπεμπτος.<sup>18</sup> As far as the provenance of predictive dreams is concerned, Artemidorus fairly consistently refuses to commit himself, usually leaving room for two possibilities: either the god(s) or the dreamer's soul.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, [593] his usage suggests that the second alternative is closer to his actual thoughts

on the matter: time and again, predictive dreaming is described as resulting from an action of the soul.<sup>20</sup> This impression is corroborated by his comments on the observation that literary dreams are dreamt only by people who are well-versed in literature and not by the uneducated:<sup>21</sup> 'From this anyone can clearly perceive that dreams are creations of the soul and are not caused by any outside influence.'<sup>22</sup> Still, he mostly maintains a non-committal attitude with regard to the origin of dreams and, confusing though it may be, this is even true of petitionary dreams, which occur when one has asked the gods for a divinatory dream.<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Are Petitionary Dreams by Definition Non-predictive?

Several scholars hold that Artemidorus regards petitionary dreams as equivalent to ἐνύπνια, which are by definition non-predictive.<sup>24</sup> This interpretation seems to be based on an incorrect reading of 1.6, the relevant chapter [594] from the introduction to Book 1. It opens with the statement (15.19-23) that the visions which present themselves to those who are worried about

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<sup>18</sup> Artem. 1.6 (16.4-9) and 4.3 (247.11-2): ... ὡς καὶ πάντα τὰ ἀπροσδόκητα θεόπεμπτα καλοῦμεν.

<sup>19</sup> See e.g. Artem. 4.2 (247.8-10): χρή οὖν εὐχεσθαι μὲν τῷ θεῷ περὶ ὧν τις φροντίζει· ὅπως δὲ χρή προαγορεύειν, ἐπιτρεπτόν αὐτῷ τῷ θεῷ ἢ τῇ ἐαυτοῦ ψυχῇ. Cf. for Artemidorus' views on the provenance of predictive dreams Blum 1936, 62-4; Del Corno 1978, 1611; Price 1986, 16-7; Schwabl 1988, 142-3; Weber 1999, 215 n. 23.

<sup>20</sup> See e.g. Artem. 1.2 (5.21: προαγορεύει ἡ ψυχὴ); 3.22 (213.14: δείκνυσιν ἡ ψυχὴ τῷ ὄρῳντι); 4.27 (261.23-262.3: ἡ ψυχὴ... προαγορεύει... δείκνυσιν); and cf. 1.2 (5.9-11), quoted above, n. 13.

<sup>21</sup> Artem. 4.59 (284.3-5).

<sup>22</sup> Artem. 4.59 (284.6-7): ὅθεν ἂν τις καὶ μάλιστα καταμάθοι ὅτι τῆς ψυχῆς ἔργα εἰσὶν οἱ ὄνειροι καὶ ὅτι οὐχ ὑπὸ τινος ἕξωθεν γίνονται. We have borrowed the translation from Price 1986, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Artem. 4.2 (246.19-22 and 247.9-10); the latter passage is quoted in n. 19 above.

<sup>24</sup> Price 1986, 10: "*Enhypnia* include anxiety dreams and petitionary dreams since those just correspond to the dreamer's thoughts (i.6)." *Idem* 1986, 16: "(. . .) but these are petitionary dreams (*enhypnia*, iv.2, p. 246 l. 5; [ . . .])." Martin 1991, 99: "Similarly, [Artemidorus] considered 'petitionary dreams,' which result when people ask the gods for a dream out of some anxious concern, to be non-predictive, 'since those dreams . . . are similar to the dreamer's thoughts' (I 6 [P 15,22-3]). Such dreams were completely *asêmantos* or 'non-significative' (I 2 [P 6,13-4]; IV, *praef.* [P 239,1-2])." Pomeroy 1991, 61: "[The dream-interpreter] should concern himself with ἀλληγορικοί ὄνειροι, dreams which indicate the future by indirect reference, rather than with anxiety (μεριμνηματικοί) or petitioning (αἰτηματικοί) dreams (I 6; IV 2). These are not external phenomena, but are similar to physical ἐνύπνια in arising from concentration directed not, in this case, by the body, but by the mind." See also Del Corno 1975, 302, quoted in n. 27 below.

something and who have asked the gods for a dream are not similar to the worries themselves,<sup>25</sup> because visions which are similar to the dreamer's preoccupations do not predict anything at all and are like *ένύπνια*; here Artemidorus refers to his earlier treatment of *ένύπνια* in the first chapter of Book 1 (3.9-4.9 Pack). The next phrase (15.23-16.1) reads: 'by some people they are called anxiety dreams and petitionary dreams'. Some scholars appear to believe that this phrase refers to the dreams just mentioned in lines 22-3, where Artemidorus states that visions that are similar to the dreamer's worries do not predict anything at all and are equivalent to *ένύπνια* (τά γε ὅμοια ταῖς ἐννοίαις ἀσήμαντά τέ ἐστι καὶ ἐνυπνιώδη).<sup>26</sup> [595] However, the subject of λέγεται in 16.1 is τὰ μὲν τοῖς φροντίζουσι περὶ τινος καὶ αἰτησαμένοις ὄνειρον παρὰ θεῶν ἐπιφαινόμενα in lines 19-20, not τά γε ὅμοια ταῖς ἐννοίαις in line 22. The phrase refers to the petitionary dreams as introduced in lines 19-20: the word μερμηνηματικά refers to τοῖς φροντίζουσι περὶ τινος in line 19, and αἰτηματικά echoes αἰτησαμένοις in line 20.

Others, again, conclude that petitionary dreams are equivalent to *ένύπνια* because they deal with matters the dreamer is concerned about.<sup>27</sup> It is true that in 1.1 (3.9-4.9 Pack)

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<sup>25</sup> Hercher and Pack delete the words σημαίνοντα δέ τι περὶ τῶν προκειμένων in 15.21-2. This deletion is probably based on the assumption that τῶν προκειμένων is equivalent to τῶν ὄντων in 3.14-5, which is contrasted with τῶν μελλόντων: at 3.14-5 it is stated that ὄνειροι give indications about the future (σημαντικῶ τῶν μελλόντων), whereas *ένύπνια* only deal with the present (τῶν ὄντων). But in this passage the words τῶν ὄντων are loosely connected with what precedes, and it is probable that, although formally σημαντικῶ should be supplied from line 14, it does not have its full force in combination with τῶν ὄντων: as Artemidorus goes on to explain, *ένύπνια* are just concerned with the present situation, and do not explain or predict anything at all. The sequel in our passage, τά γε ὅμοια ταῖς ἐννοίαις ἀσήμαντά τέ ἐστι καὶ ἐνυπνιώδη, suggests that the participle σημαίνοντα is used in the pregnant sense of 'indicating something about the future'; and this is the regular meaning of σημαίνειν and its cognates in Artemidorus. See also 2.28 (150.20-1) αἰ δὲ (...) σημαίνουσιν ἀνύσειν τὰ προκείμενα and 2.65 (189.2) τυχεῖν γὰρ σημαίνει τοῦ προκειμένου. Should this be the case, then in our passage the words σημαίνοντα δέ τι περὶ τῶν προκειμένων should be kept, and the negation οὐχ in line 20 should be taken with the complete phrase ὅμοια ταῖς φροντίσι σημαίνοντα δέ τι περὶ τῶν προκειμένων γίνεται, not just with ὅμοια: "the visions which present themselves are not similar to the worries and <at the same time> predictive about the matter at stake". For what it is worth, we note that the words σημαίνοντα δέ τι περὶ τῶν προκειμένων also stood in the Greek text which served as the basis for the Arabic translation, which reads something like 'when it (*i.e.* the thing he sees) points to the thing he is thinking about'. Mr. Omert J. Schrier, to whom we owe all our information about the Arabic translation, remarks that the translator does not render the particle δέ; in fact, δέ is read in **L**, but not in **V**, according to Pack's apparatus.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. the quotations from Price 1986 and Martin 1991 in n. 24 above.

<sup>27</sup> Del Corno 1975, 302 (note 24 on 1.6): "(. . .) il fatto stesso che questi sogni vengano richiesti dimostra che hanno per oggetto qualcosa che preoccupa l'animo del sognante; e in precedenza egli ha formulato uno degli assiomi fondamentali dell'onirocritica, ossia che tali 'visioni oniriche' sono sprovviste di significato mantico". Cf. his note 17 on 4.2 (pp. 335-6): "Nel presente passo Artemidoro, forse piegandosi

Artemidorus has explained that ἐνύπνια reflect matters which are on the dreamer's mind:<sup>28</sup> during sleep, sensations have a habit of surfacing and obtruding themselves upon the soul, thus provoking dream-activity.<sup>29</sup> However, a dream that relates to something one is concerned about is not automatically an ἐνύπνιον. What Artemidorus actually does in 1.6 is to warn the dreamer against misinterpretation. When one has asked the god(s) for a dream, Artemidorus implies, it remains possible that an ἐνύπνιον presents itself to the dreamer, as a direct result of his own preoccupations. This ἐνύπνιον should not be regarded as the ὄνειρος one has prayed for.<sup>30</sup> The way to tell the one from the other, Artemidorus explains, is that the ἐνύπνιον betrays itself by employing the [596] imagery of the matter one is concerned about, whereas the ὄνειρος makes use of symbols.<sup>31</sup>

Let us now turn to 4.2. The closing part of this lengthy chapter deals once more with petitionary dreams (246.2-247.10). The treatment of the subject is much more extensive than in 1.6. As we have already noticed, the passage starts with an explanation of the two words which may be employed to indicate this type of dreams.<sup>32</sup> At first sight, the characterization of petitionary dreams in 246.3-4 seems to confirm the hypothesis that these dreams are equivalent to ἐνύπνια: περὶ ὧν ἂν μεριμνήσαντες πραγμάτων ἢ ἀλόγῳ τινὶ ὀρμῇ <ἢ> ἐπιθυμία χρώμενοι, 'about things that trouble us or when we are driven by an irrational impulse or desire'. This phrase closely resembles the characterization of the ἐνύπνιον in the preface to Book 4 (239.1-4):

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a una moda preponderante nel suo tempo, appare qualche poco attenuare la sua negazione della validità dei sogni provocati, sia pure accettando questo diffuso costume entro i limiti di una generica preparazione ad accogliere il messaggio onirico".

<sup>28</sup> Cf. above, text at n. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Artem. 1.1 (3.16-7): τὰ ποιά (for which probably τὰ πολλὰ should be read; see Appendix) τῶν παθῶν προσανατρέχειν πέφυκε καὶ προσανατάσσειν ἑαυτὰ τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ τοὺς ὄνειρωγμοὺς ἀποτελεῖν.

<sup>30</sup> This is overlooked by Schwabl (1988, 142-3). He rightly states: "Ähneln in einem solchen Fall das Traumbild dem Gegenstand des Anliegens, so ist die Erscheinung bedeutungslos und gehört in den Bereich der ἐνύπνια". But by continuing: "Gottgesandt können nur Träume heißen, die unerwartet kommen", he implies that is only the θεόπεμπτοι ὄνειροι which have predictive value; he apparently fails to see that Artemidorus leaves room for petitionary dreams displaying imagery which is not similar to the dreamer's concerns.

<sup>31</sup> This is also the interpretation given by Manuwald (1994, 27): "Unsere bisherigen Ausführungen über mantisch relevante Träume bezogen sich auf solche, die sich spontan einstellten und die Artemidor schon deswegen 'gottgesandt' nennt (1,6 p. 16,1-4). Man konnte aber auch Gottheiten um einen Traum bitten; jedoch weist Artemidor auf ein Problem bei ihrer Auslegung hin: Man müsse darauf achten, dass sie inhaltlich nichts mit der Sorge zu tun haben (aus der heraus die Bitte um den Traum entstand), weil es sich sonst um bedeutungslose ἐνύπνια handle." In his note 35 (on the same page) Manuwald refers to Artemidorus 1.6 (15.19-23) "dessen Gedanken hier frei wiedergegeben sind". To the best of our knowledge, Manuwald is the only scholar to state *expressis verbis* that petitionary dreams do have predictive force.

<sup>32</sup> See above, text after n. 16.

καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀσήμαντον καὶ οὐδενὸς προαγορευτικὸν ἀλλ' ἐν μόνῳ τῷ ὕπνῳ τὴν δύναμιν ἔχον, γινόμενον δὲ ἐξ ἐπιθυμίας ἀλόγου ἢ ὑπερβάλλοντος φόβου ἢ πλησμονῆς ἢ ἐνδείας [τροφῆς], ἐνύπνιον χρή καλεῖν, 'and the vision which has no predictive value whatsoever, but which is only active during the sleep, and which arises from irrational desire or overwhelming fear or satiety or need, should be called *enhyphnion*'. The element 'irrational desire' occurs in both passages. But there are important differences, which prevent us from equating the objects of the two characterizations. In the first place Artemidorus uses the term ἐνύπνιον in 2.39.1-4, while in 246.3-5 he twice employs the word ὄνειρος; we already noticed that he attaches great importance to a careful distinction of these two concepts.<sup>33</sup> Further, the resemblance between the ἐνύπνια of 239.1-4 and the petitionary dreams of 246.2-7 is only partial. Some petitionary [597] dreams may arise from irrational desire, but others do not: the participle μερμυήσαντες in line 3 must refer to rational concerns. Thirdly, ἐνύπνια come spontaneously, petitionary dreams when asked for. Finally, ἐνύπνια do not tell anything about the future, whereas petitionary dreams do, as is shown by the sequel. The distinction between rational and irrational concerns hinted at in 246.3-4 can be illustrated as follows: a man may be rationally concerned with the question whether he will do well to buy a piece of land in order to start a farm; on the other hand, he may be concerned irrationally with the question whether he should buy a fashionable, but expensive and unnecessary coat.

Nowhere in the passage on petitionary dreams in 4.2 does Artemidorus pass a negative verdict on this type of dreams as such. In 246.7 he says ὅταν μὲν αἰτῆς ὄνειρους, 'when you ask for dreams', without any condemnation of the practice in itself; in 247.8-9 he even states χρή οὖν εὐχεσθαι μὲν τῷ θεῷ περὶ ὧν τις φροντίζει, 'you should pray to god about the things you are concerned about', apparently for an enlightening dream. And in 246.13-4 he gives the advice to sacrifice to the gods and to thank them when one has received the dream one has asked for. The advice would have been totally meaningless if Artemidorus would not have recognized the possibility that requests for a dream may be followed by a dream containing the prediction or the advice asked for. This is true regardless of his own views on the provenance of predictive dreams:<sup>34</sup> he may have been prepared to go along with his clients in assuming that the dream they had received was an answer to their prayers, but it would have been quite absurd to let them thank the gods for a non-predictive dream.

### 3. What to Avoid in Asking the Gods for Dreams

While the above arguments may justify the provisional conclusion that Artemidorus does not consider petitionary dreams by definition non-predictive, it is true that he thinks that asking the gods for dreams is a tricky business. In order to forestall potential problems, he issues two

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<sup>33</sup> See above, text at nn. 9-10.

<sup>34</sup> On which see above, text at nn. 18-23.

warnings. The first of these is that one should not burn incense, utter secret [598] spells, and – in sum – pressurize the gods with one’s questions (246.7-13). The argument for this warning is very common sense: decent people are not likely to grant requests that amount to threats, and this goes *a fortiori* for the gods. Obviously, Artemidorus thinks of magical procedures for obtaining a dream.<sup>35</sup> The accompanying rituals – the burning of incense, the use of spells – are suspect in themselves, and from the argument he adduces to underpin his objections, it is clear that the practice also meets what, in the Greco-Roman world, was an important criterion for distinguishing magic: the way in which the gods are approached has a coercive dimension.<sup>36</sup> Artemidorus’ phrasing of the warning makes it, incidentally, abundantly clear that he does not think that asking the gods for dreams is *in itself* a magical practice.<sup>37</sup>

Artemidorus’ second warning<sup>38</sup> is that in praying for a dream one should not lay down the law to the gods (νομοθετεῖν). What Artemidorus means by this phrase is illustrated by six short sentences, grouped in three pairs (246.15-8), which in Pack’s edition are read as follows: ‘εἴ μοι πρακτέον τόδε’ καὶ ‘εἴ μοι ἔσται τόδε’ καὶ ‘εἰ νῦν ἴδοιμι Δῆμητρος καρπὸν· εἰ δὲ μή, Διονύσου’ καὶ ‘εἰ μὲν συμφέρει μοι καὶ λυσιτελεῖ, λάβοιμί τι· εἰ δὲ μή, δοίην’. Now there are some textual problems with these illustrations of the kind of prayers one should avoid. All six sentences start with the conjunction εἰ. In the last three sentences εἰ has its usual meaning ‘if’, but in the first two sentences the *protasis* introduced by εἰ is not followed by an *apodosis*; and in the third sentence εἰ is used as a synonym of εἴθε or εἰ γάρ, in order to introduce a wish. This induced Hercher to read the first three sentences as follows: ‘έμοι πρακτέον τόδε’ καὶ ‘έμοι έατέον τόδε’ καὶ ‘νῦν [599] ἴδοιμι Δῆμητρος καρπὸν’; Pack, however, prints the text as found in the manuscripts.<sup>39</sup>

Let us first turn to the final pair of sentences (246.17-8), εἰ μὲν συμφέρει μοι καὶ λυσιτελεῖ, λάβοιμί τι· εἰ δὲ μή, δοίην. The person who utters the prayer seeks information about the advisability of an unspecified course of action. The god(s) addressed is/are kindly invited to send him a dream in which he receives something, if this course of action is profitable and expedient; if it is not, he wants a dream in which he gives something. The alternatives are phrased in a pair of *protaseis* (εἰ μὲν συμφέρει μοι καὶ λυσιτελεῖ ~ εἰ δὲ μή), the requests for the

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<sup>35</sup> Numerous real-life instances of this practice can be found in the *Papyri Graecae Magicae*: 2.1-64; 4.3172-208; 5.370-446; 7.222-49; 7.250-4; 7.255-9; 7.359-69; 7.664-85; 7.703-26; 7.740-55; 7.795-845; 7.1009-16; 8.64-110; 12.144-52; 12.190-2; 22b.27-31; 22b.32-5. The practice is called *όνειραιτησία*; see *PGM* 1.329-30, where *όνειροπομπεία*, *όνειραιτησία*, and *όνειροκριτία* are mentioned as parts of a magician’s expertise; cf. Eitrem 1991, 176-9.

<sup>36</sup> See e.g. Hp. *Morb. sacr.* 4 Jones (Loeb) = 1.9 Jouanna (Budé); Philostr. *VA* 8.7 (304.24-30 Kayser); Iamb. *Myst.* 1.14; cf. Dickie 2001, 26; Graf 1997, 222-9, esp. 227-8.

<sup>37</sup> As has been suggested by some scholars, see e.g. Krauss & Kaiser 1965, 35-6 (note on 1.6), Brackertz 1979, 395 (note 39 to 1.6); cf. Del Corno 1975, 302 (note 24 on 1.6).

<sup>38</sup> The transition from the first to the second point is marked by *έτι δέ* in 246.14.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Pack 1960, 148-9.

corresponding dreams in a pair of *apodoseis* with the optative (λάβοιμί τι ~ δοίην). But the preceding pair of sentences (246.16-7) shows a surprising variation. By analogy with the final pair, we would expect two sentences, consisting of a *protasis*, introduced by εἰ, and followed by an *apodosis* with the optative. Now we do have the negative *protasis* and the corresponding *apodosis* (εἰ δὲ μή, <ἴδοιμι> Διονύσου <καρπόν>); in the phrasing of the positive alternative, however, the *apodosis* has been left out and, as we saw, εἰ is used in order to introduce a wish (εἰ νῦν ἴδοιμι Δήμητρος καρπόν). This syntactic variation is slightly worrying in itself, but it becomes positively alarming when in the sequel the reader observes that the objections raised by Artemidorus against the prayers in the penultimate pair of sentences are precisely the same as those against the prayers in the final pair.

These objections are explained and illustrated in 246.18-247.8. The prayers exemplified in 246.15-8 give rise to πλάνη, ‘misunderstanding’ (246.19), because they include the dream-symbols which the prospective dreamer will accept as a positive or negative answer to his question. In fact, he may well receive a dream containing one of the symbols mentioned in his prayer. It is, however, far from certain that these symbols will have the meaning that the dreamer had assigned to them beforehand; in fact, they may just as well signify the opposite (246.23 εἰ ἐναντία εἶη). In addition to the dream-symbol asked for, the dream may display a telling detail which reverses its meaning; it is also possible that in view of the specific situation of the dreamer, the symbol has a significance which is fundamentally different from its expected meaning. For those who seek social **[600]** advancement, for example, it is more auspicious to dream about giving than about receiving something, ‘for a man who owns much is likely to let others share in his wealth, while a man who owns nothing will probably be on the receiving end’.<sup>40</sup> Artemidorus invites us to imagine the case of a man who has made plans to further his career and who has prayed to the gods for a dream, stipulating, as in the final pair of sentences (246.17-8), that he will take a dream about receiving something as a sign of approval of those plans, a dream about giving something, on the other hand, as an advice to drop them. Obviously, when he receives a dream containing one of the symbols asked for, he will misunderstand its meaning, because he will interpret his dream in accordance with the significance assigned to these symbols in his request.<sup>41</sup> Similarly, for those who want to marry, dreaming about a vine or about wine implies a more favourable prediction than wheat or barley, ‘the vine because of its tendrils, the wine because it is mixed’.<sup>42</sup> Here, Artemidorus suggests that we imagine the case of a man who wants to win a woman’s favour and who has requested a dream, stipulating, as in the penultimate pair of

<sup>40</sup> Artem. 4.2 (247.4-8, esp. 7-8): ὁ μὲν γὰρ πολλὰ ἔχων καὶ μεταδοίη ἄν, ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἔχων λάβοι ἄν.

<sup>41</sup> Artem. 4.2 (246.22-4): ὁ δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐπερώτησιν ἐκλαμβάνων τὰ ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις ὀραθέντα, εἰ ἐναντία εἶη, πλανᾶται. The word ἐπερώτησις does not refer to a question pure and simple, but to a question which includes a request for specific dream-symbols and their supposed significance.

<sup>42</sup> Artem. 4.2 (247.2-4): τῷ δὲ γῆμαι (...) θέλοντι ἄμπελος καὶ οἶνος, ἢ μὲν διὰ τοὺς ἔλικας ὁ δὲ διὰ τῆν κρᾶσιν, ἐπιτηδειότερα πυρῶν ἢ κριθῶν.

sentences (246.16-7) that he will interpret a dream about ‘the fruit of Dionysus’ as a warning that his wish will remain unfulfilled, a dream about ‘the fruit of Demeter’, on the other hand, as a prediction that he will get what he desires. Again, when he receives one of the dreams he has asked for, he is certain to misunderstand its meaning. In short, when one asks the gods for a dream in order to settle a question, one should not prescribe to them the contents of the dream they are supposed to send, let alone spell out the significance of the requested dream-symbols: that is the meaning of νομοθετεῖν. Accordingly, Artemidorus concludes the whole passage on petitionary dreams with the advice ‘you may ask the god <for dreams><sup>43</sup> about what is troubling you, [601] but you should leave it to the god himself or to your own soul to choose a way of communicating their message to you’.<sup>44</sup> And it goes without saying that for the interpretation of the dream one has to turn to a competent oneirocritic, preferably a member of the firm Artemidorus and Son.

As has been established in the above paragraph, Artemidorus thinks that the prayers illustrated in the penultimate pair of sentences (246.16-7) result in the same kind of confusion as the prayers exemplified by the final pair (246.17-8). Given this parallelism of content, one would expect a clearer syntactic parallelism. A solution to this textual problem can be found in the magical papyri, which contain a number of prayers for dreams. These prayers display a striking resemblance to the examples adduced by Artemidorus. In fact, they represent the type he objects to, the only grammatical difference being that the magical papyri have the imperative, whereas in Artemidorus’ examples the first person of the optative is used in the *apodosis*. One of the prayers from the magical papyri furnishes the solution to the problem in the first sentence of the second pair (246.16-7: εἰ νῦν ἕδομι Δήμητρος καρπὸν):

ἐὰν ναί, δεῖ[ξόν μ]οι φυτὸν καὶ ὕδωρ, εἰ δὲ μή γε, πῦρ καὶ σίδηρον, ...  
 ‘If yes, show me a plant and water, but if no, fire and iron, ...’<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> That εὔχεσθαι does not just mean ‘pray’, but specifically ‘pray for a dream’ is not only clear from what precedes (cf. 246.6 αἰτεῖν τι παρὰ θεοῦ ἰδεῖν; 246.15 εὐχομένων οὕτως κτέ), but also from the sequel of the sentence, where ὅπως has Focus value, while προαγορεύειν serves as Topic, referring to εὔχεσθαι μὲν τῷ θεῷ περὶ ὧν τις φροντίζει.

<sup>44</sup> Artem. 4.2 (247.8-10): χρή οὔν εὔχεσθαι μὲν τῷ θεῷ περὶ ὧν τις φροντίζει· ὅπως δὲ χρή προαγορεύειν, ἐπιτρεπτέον αὐτῷ τῷ θεῷ ἢ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῇ.

<sup>45</sup> PGM 7.253-4; translation: Betz 1992. See for prayers for divinatory dreams in the magical papyri also PGM 7.258-9 (εἰ συμφέρει μοι τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, δεῖξόν μοι φυτὸν καὶ ὕδωρ, εἰ δὲ μήγε, πῦρ καὶ σίδηρον, ...); PGM 22b.30-1 (εἰ γέινεται πρὸς ἐξαίτησιν καλόν, [δ]εῖξ[όν] μοι ὕδωρ [καὶ] ἰ[δ]αν, ε[ἰ] δὲ ἄλλως, δ[ε]ῖξ[όν] [μ]οι ὕδωρ καὶ πέτραν) and 35 (εἰ δέδοται μοι τόδε τὸ π[ρᾶγ]μα, δεῖξ[ον] ἑταίραν, εἰ δ’ αὖ (sic; possibly, οὐ should be read instead; see Appendix), σ[τ]ρατιώτην.)

Reading in 246.16-7 εἰ ναί, ἴδοιμι Δήμητρος καρπὸν, ‘if yes, let me dream about the fruit of Demeter’, restores the syntactic balance with the second sentence of the penultimate pair, εἰ δὲ μή, Διονύσου, ‘if no, about the fruit of Dionysus’. It also restores the syntactic parallelism between the penultimate and the final pair of sentences.

[602] With the conjecture suggested above we now have two well-balanced pairs of sentences, each consisting of a conditional *protasis* followed by an *apodosis*. But the first two sentences remain problematic: ‘εἴ μοι πρακτέον τόδε’ καὶ ‘εἴ μοι ἔσται τόδε’. There are two ways of interpreting them. The first way is to regard them as conditional *protaseis*, just like the others; but this leaves us without an *apodosis*, which is very awkward, not to say impossible.<sup>46</sup> The second way is to take the sentences as *direct* questions: ‘is this to be done by me?’ and ‘is this to occur to me?’.<sup>47</sup> Although this interpretation is syntactically possible, it is strange that the structure of the first two sentences still deviates from that of the other four; moreover, it remains awkward that in the first two sentences εἰ serves to introduce a direct question, while in the other four sentences it has its normal function of conditional conjunction.

But apart from these formal objections, there are much weightier problems with respect to content. For a start, the two questions cannot possibly be regarded as prayers (cf. 246.15 τῶν εὐχομένων οὕτως); a prayer should have the form ‘Show me a dream whether I have to do this’. Further, those scholars who take the two sentences as direct questions, try to save this interpretation by pointing out that the form of the question, which allows only of ‘yes’ or ‘no’ for an answer (a so-called Satzfrage) is too peremptory.<sup>48</sup> But a so-called ‘open question’ (Wortfrage) is in itself just as peremp-[603]tory as a Satzfrage; and the problem of putting the gods under pressure falls under the first of the warnings Artemidorus voices with regard to dreams on demand

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<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, White (1975) translates the sentences in this way: ‘If this is what I must do to get my wish’ and ‘If this will occur to me’.

<sup>47</sup> The use of εἰ to introduce direct questions is well attested in later Greek, as was pointed out by Pack (1960, 149); Kühner-Gerth 2.534, Anm. 14; DGE s.v. εἰ D II. Instances of this type of questions are attested in the *Sortes Astrampsychi* (*Ecdosis altera, Quaestiones ιβ-κα* [9.12-21 Stewart]): ιβ’ εἰ πλεύσω ἀκινδύως; ιγ’ εἰ ἔστιν ὥρα τοῦ ἐπιβαλέσθαι τῷ χρησμῷ; ιδ’ εἰ στρατεύσομαι; ιε’ εἰ κοινωνῶ τῷ πράγματι; ις’ εἰ προκόπτω ἐν τιμῇ; ιζ’ εἰ ἀποδημῶ; ιη’ εἰ συναλλάξει συμφέρει μοι; ιθ’ εἰ εὐτυχῆς εἶμι; κ’ εἰ ἀγοράζω τὸ προκείμενον; κα’ εἰ γαμῶ καὶ συμφέρει μοι.—Most translators and interpreters take the first pair of sentences in our passage as direct questions: “«Dois-je faire ceci ?» ou «Me sera-t-il donné ceci ?»” (Festugière 1975); “«Devo fare così?» e «Mi succederà questa cosa?»” (Del Corno 1975); “«Soll ich das tun?» und «Werde ich das bekommen?»” (Brackertz 1979); “«Moet ik dit doen?» of ‘Zal ik dat krijgen?’” (Mooij-Valk 2003).

<sup>48</sup> Krauss & Kaiser (1965) in their note on 4.2 (p. 273): “Der Fragende will den Gott zwingen mit Ja oder Nein zu antworten bzw. ein eindeutiges Zeichen zu geben, das Ja oder Nein bedeutet”. Festugière in his note on 4.2 (p. 223): “Les deux premiers exemples qui suivent indiquent que les dieux doivent répondre par «oui» ou «non» à la question posée, de même que les lois disent «fais ceci» ou «ne fais pas cela». Dès lors, interroger les dieux de cette manière, c’est comme leur «dicter des lois» (nomothétin).”

(246.7-13),<sup>49</sup> a section which is rounded off with εὐχαρίσται in line 14, the transition to a new issue being marked by ἔτι δέ. What is more, when Artemidorus goes on to explain what is wrong with the prayers under discussion, he does not say a word about the questions in themselves, but he only points out that the inclusion in the prayers of dream-symbols to which a meaning has been assigned by the prospective dreamer is likely to result in confusion. If the gods would have taken offence at the question as such, they would not have sent any dream at all. The mistaken view that the first two sentences are direct questions appears to have contributed to the equally mistaken view that Artemidorus categorically rejects petitionary dreams.

The solution we propose is very simple indeed. In order to heal the corrupted third sentence, we had to change νῦν into ναί; in order to remedy the first two sentences we need not change one single letter, but we only have to put commas before the two τόδε's. Read 'εἴ μοι πρακτέον, τόδε' καὶ 'εἴ μοι ἔσται, τόδε', "If I have to do it, this" and "If it will occur to me, this".<sup>50</sup> In this way we have an *apodosis* consisting of the pronoun τόδε alone. Given the context this is a short way of saying 'show me such-and-such a dream'. In the *protaseis* of the two sentences the two kinds of subjects about which one may consult the gods are mentioned: the first [604] question deals with things which one can influence ('must I act or not?'), the second with things outside one's control ('shall this happen to me or not?'). In the *apodoseis* τόδε stands for a dream which is prescribed by the petitioner: in these introducing instances it is not the *content* of the dream that is specified, but the bare fact *that* a specific dream is asked for. In the following four sentences the specific dreams are exemplified by concrete instances of dreams some people ask for. For the use of τόδε as 'such-and-such', cf. Epictetus 4.10.7 μὴ ἀπαντήσῃ τόδε ἢ τόδε; for τόδε as the unspecified element of a conditional *protasis* followed by an *apodosis* ('if A, then B'), cf. Chrysippus fr. 223 von Arnim (*SVF* 2.74.8-9 = *S.E. M.* 8.276) καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸ τὸ σημεῖόν ἐστι τοιοῦτον 'εἴ τόδε, τόδε'.

One might possibly object that now there is no subject to ποιητέον and ἔσται. That is true, but this is only an additional argument in favour of our interpretation, because the following

<sup>49</sup> See above, text at nn. 35-7.

<sup>50</sup> The text of the *Oneirocritica* is preserved in two primary MSS., Laurentianus 87.8 (siglum **L**; 11th century) and Marcianus 268 (coll. 726; siglum **V**; 15th century). Dr.ssa I. Giovanna Rao (Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence) has inspected Laur. 87.8 for us, and kindly sent us a photograph of the passage under discussion: in this MS. there is a very thin high point before the first τόδε; no punctuation sign is added before the second τόδε; the whole phrase is written as εἴ μοι πρακταῖον ·τόδε καὶ εἰμοιεσται τώδε. καὶ κτέ. – Dr.ssa Susy Marcon (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Venice) has kindly inspected Marcianus 268 (coll. 726) on our behalf, and sent us a photograph of the folium where our passage stands; she reports that this MS. does not have any punctuation sign before the two τόδε's; the whole phrase is written as εἴ μοι πρακτέον τόδε· καὶ εἴ μοι ἔσται τόδε· καὶ κτέ. But of course the presence or absence of punctuation signs in the manuscripts does not tell us anything at all: Artemidorus did not punctuate his text anyway.

*protaseis* do not have a subject either. And this is only to be expected, since at this stage Artemidorus is not yet concerned with the dreamers' problems, but with the procedure of asking the gods for a dream while stipulating the dream-symbols they are to send as well as their meaning. It is only in the sequel (246.24-247.8), dealing with the confusion that is likely to arise as a result of this procedure, that the dreamers' concerns such as upward social mobility and marriage enter the picture.

## Conclusions

When we summarize the results of our analysis of 1.6 and 4.2, the following picture emerges. Artemidorus does recognize the legitimacy of praying for dreams and the divinatory value of petitionary dreams, provided that one takes into account three proviso's:

- if, after having prayed for a dream, you have a dream whose imagery reflects your problem, do not mistake it for the dream you asked for: it is no more than an *ένύπνιον*, without any predictive value;
- when you ask the gods for a dream, address them politely and do not put them under any pressure: this will only be counter-effective;
- when you pray for a dream, leave it to the gods – or to your own soul – how to encode the advice or prediction you are asking for: otherwise you are likely to misinterpret the message you receive.

[605] As for the passage 246.15-8, it should be read as follows: (...) λέγω δὲ τῶν εὐχομένων οὕτως· 'εἴ μοι πρακτέον, τόδε' καὶ 'εἴ μοι ἔσται, τόδε' καὶ 'εἴ ναί, ἴδοιμι Δῆμητρος καρπὸν· εἰ δὲ μή, Διονύσου' καὶ 'εἰ μὲν συμφέρει μοι καὶ λυσιτελεῖ, λάβοιμί τι· εἰ δὲ μή, δοίην.'

## Appendix: Three Conjectures on Other Passages

3.16 τὰ ποιὰ. Here the MSS. have τὰ ποιὰ τῶν παθῶν προσανατρέχειν πέφυκε καὶ προσανατάσσειν ἑαυτὰ τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ τοὺς ὄνειρωγμοὺς ἀποτελεῖν; **V** omits τὰ. Translators interpret the words τὰ ποιὰ as an equivalent of τινά.<sup>51</sup> But enclitic ποιός means 'of a certain nature, kind or quality' (LSJ), and the phrase τὰ ποιὰ is especially found in philosophical authors, where it means 'the class of things with a certain quality'.<sup>52</sup> Therefore the phrase cannot possibly be correct in our passage, where it would yield the meaning 'those emotions which have a certain character', which would imply that there are also emotions which do not have any character at all. Accordingly, we suggest that τὰ ποιὰ is corrupt; instead we propose reading τὰ πολλὰ τῶν παθῶν, 'the majority of emotions', which suits the context perfectly. The Arabic translator must

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<sup>51</sup> "Alcune passioni" (Del Corno), "Einige Gemütsaffekte" (Krauss & Kaiser), "certain experiences" (White), "Bepaalde gewaarwordingen" (Mooij-Valk), "certains de nos affects" (Festugière), "gewisse Affekte" (Brackertz).

<sup>52</sup> See for instance Arist. *Cat.* 11a14 οὐ πάντα οὖν τὰ ποιὰ ἐπιδέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ τὸ ἥττον, 'not all things with a certain quality admit of more or less'.

have read ΤΑΠΟΙΑ, but he interpreted this as τὰ ποῖα (ayyun; information supplied by Mr Omert J. Schrier).

238.23 καλῶς. In 238.20-3 Artemidorus states that ἐνύπνιον and ὄνειρος are two different phenomena. In **V** and in the editions the next sentence starts with the observation ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν ὄνειρον ἐνύπνιον καλῶς εἶποι τις ἄν, ‘One might well call the oneiros an enhyrpnion as well’ (**L** has λέγων instead of καλῶς). This phrase is rather surprising, because Artemidorus tries to explain that the two are different. Accordingly we suppose that the word καλῶς is a corruption of an original κοινῶς, ‘colloquially’: with this reading the phrase forms an antithesis with what follows immediately, ὅταν δὲ τεχνικῶς λέγη τις, ‘When one speaks technically’. The **[606]** word κοινῶς also occurs in the immediate sequel (239.6), when Artemidorus illustrates that Homer, who does not use technical language, uses the two words ἐνύπνιον and ὄνειρος as synonyms.

PGM 22b.35 εἰ δ’ αὖ. This combination is used to introduce an alternative to what has been stated before, but it is never used elliptically, that is, εἰ δ’ αὖ always introduces a conditional clause. In this passage, however, what is needed is something equivalent to ‘but if not’; this is normally expressed by εἰ δὲ μή, but in later Greek εἰ δ’ οὐ is not uncommon.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, we propose to change εἰ δ’ αὖ into εἰ δ’ οὐ; εἰ δ’ αὖ must be a slip of the pen.

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<sup>53</sup> See for instance Gal. 15.829.3 Kühn ἢ γὰρ <λιμοκτονία> τὰ μάλιστα μὲν ἀσιτίαν παντελεῖ σημαίνει, εἰ δ’ οὐ, ἀλλὰ τήν γ’ ἐπὶ τοῖς πόμασι μόνοις διαίταν. D.L. 2.36.6 εἰ μὲν γὰρ τι τῶν προσόντων λέξειαν, διορθώσονται· εἰ δ’ οὐ, οὐδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς.

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