The Dream in Classical Greece: Debates and Practices

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DPhil Greek and/or Roman History, Trinity 2008 [i.e. 2009 - UTS: 12/i/09]



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Abstract

This thesis aims to address the Greek attitude to their dream experience in the classical period, as it was conceived in theories and engaged with in dream practices. The emphasis is on the relationship between these elements and the wider cultural frames which surrounded them, in order both to illustrate the manner in which culture influences the conception of dreams, and also to use dreams themselves as a mirror to reflect parts of Greek culture. As a study it has been heavily shaped by the approaches to dreams developed by anthropologists, outlined in Chapter 2, who have emphasised the importance of studying dreams intra-culturally.

In Chapter 3 I analyse the language that the Greeks used to express their dreaming experience, drawing from it the important way in which language was both determined by, and determined, the Greeks' understanding of the phenomenon. This forms a base for engaging with dream theories in Chapter 4, both the implicit allusions in literature and explicit explanations proposed by philosophers and medical writers. I then explore the theories at work within Greek culture via dreams as we see them active in the lived religion of the polis: I examine in Chapter 5 the dedications set up by individuals on account of spontaneous dreams, and in Chapter 6 the practice of incubation. I then turn to examine specific relationships: in Chapter 7, the association of dreams with status, i.e. the possibility that powerful people would have equally powerful dreams; in Chapter 8, dreams and gender, assessing the possibility that women considered their dreams to be more important than their male counterparts. In Chapter 9, I position dreams within the context of the other divinatory practices of the period, which allows us to see the unique ways in which dream practices functioned in comparison to the other divinatory forms.

For Daniel George Hemingway

Acknowledgements

The initial and most important thanks must go to Prof. Robert Parker, who in my time at Oxford has not only overseen the development of this thesis, but also pushed me consistently to explore the ancient world in greater depth, his own work being an inspirational proof of what wide-reaching investigation can uncover. This thesis bloomed from my MSt dissertation in which I discussed the narrative potential of dreams in Herodotus' *Histories*, and it was Robert who convinced me that the literary aspect is always more interesting when underpinned by a human element, prompting me to switch my focus back to the realities of dreaming in ancient Greece; for this advice I will be ever grateful. I must also thank my examiners, Thomas Harrison and Emily Kearns. Apart from alerting me to a few infelicities of style in the original manuscript, both have given me invaluable recommendations and challenging criticisms which will help guide the path of my research into dreams in the future. Thomas in particular is due special thanks, for it was during my time as an undergraduate at the University of St. Andrews that he imparted me with a sense that studying the ancient world is not only intellectually rewarding, but also fun. Thanks also to others who have contributed at various stages during the gestation of this work, including Simon Price and Rosalind Thomas. The entire process would never have made it beyond the idea stage without the aid of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, who have generously supported me throughout, and without whom the thesis would simply not have been possible.

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Abbreviations

CCCA	*Corpus Cultus Cybelae Attidisque, I, Asia Minor*, M.J. Vermaseren (Leiden, 1987)
CEG	*Carmina Epigraphica Graeca*, ed. P.A. Hansen (Berlin, 1983-9)
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* (1828-77)
Diehl	E. Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca* (3rd edn., 1949-52)
DK	H. Diels and W. Kranz (eds.) *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, 6th edn., 3 vols. (Berlin, 1951-52)
Edelstein	*Asclepius. A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*, 2 vols., Edelstein, E.J. and L. (Baltimore, 1945)
FGH	*Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, F. Jacoby *et al.* (Berlin and Leiden, 1923-)
IEryth	*Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*, Engelmann, H. and Merkelbach, R. (Bonn, 1972-73)
IG	*Inscriptiones Graecae* (Berlin, 1873-)
Inscr. Priene	*Die Inschriften von Priene*, Hiller von Gaertringen, F. (Berlín 1906)
LGPN	*A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, P.M. Fraser & E. Matthews (eds.), (Oxford, 1987-)
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zürich, 1981-)
LSAM	*Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure*, F. Sokolowski (Paris, 1955)
Maehler	H. Maehler (ed.) *Pindari Carmina cum Fragmentis*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1971-75)
ML	R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC*, (revised edn., Oxford, 1988)
OCD	*The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn., S. Hornblower and A.J. Spawforth (eds.) (Oxford, 1996)

Pendrick	Pendrick, G.J. *Antiphon the Sophist. The Fragments* (Cambridge, 2002)
PCG	*Poetae Comici Graeci*, R. Kassel and C. Austin (1983-)
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (1923-)
Syll.^{3}	*Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, 3rd edn. (1915-24)
Wehrli	F. Wehrli, *Die Schule des Aristoteles* 2 (1945)
West	M.L. West, *Iambi et Elegi*, 2nd edn., (Oxford, 1989)

Note: Abbreviations of ancient authors and their works largely follow those used in the *OCD*. Citations of periodicals follow the conventions of the *OCD*, supplemented by *L'Année Philologique*. For Aristotle's *De Somno, De Insomniis* and *De Divinatione per Somnum*, I use the text and translation by D. Gallop, *Aristotle On Sleep and Dreams* (Warminster, 1996); for Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*, I use the Greek text of J.G. Reiff (Leipzig, 1805), and the translation by R.J. White (New Jersey, 1992). Unless otherwise noted, the rest of the translations are my own, although for Homer's *Iliad* I follow the translation by R. Lattimore (Chicago and London, 1951); and for the *Odyssey*, R. Fitzgerald (London, 1986).

1

Introduction

'God works by means of faith. If you have faith that God will do something in His Word, then He will do it. The reason many believers don't have many dreams from the Lord is because they don't have faith in them. Exercise your faith for dreams.'

'... apart from its general irrationality, the idea that it is God who sends dreams, and yet that he sends them not to the best and most intelligent, but to random people, is absurd.'

The first comment was made by Tom Brown, a Texan pastor writing in 2008, while the second comes from Aristotle in the 4th century BC; how far Western enlightenment has brought us![1] The purpose of juxtaposing these two statements is to illustrate how much variety there can be in dream theory intra-culturally, and that pigeonholing certain cultures as rationalist (the modern West) or primitive (the ancient world) is misleading. The intention of this thesis is to engage with the rich variety of perspectives on dreams within ancient Greece – Aristotle's outlook, needless to say, was not shared by all. Dreams are one of the most fascinating components of any study of a cultural system, for they are experienced by people all over the world, and have been since man came into being. It is a function of human physiology that we dream, with approximately twenty percent of our sleeping time devoted to it; it is an experience common to all peoples at all periods.[2] Engaging with this shared experience can bring us closer to other cultures than we might expect; Homer's dream

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[1] Arist. *Div. Som.* 462b21-23: *τό τε γὰρ θεὸν εἶναι τὸν πέμποντα, πρὸς τῇ ἄλλῃ ἀλογία, καὶ τὸ μὴ τοῖς βελτίστοις καὶ φρονιμωτάτοις ἀλλὰ τοῖς τυχοῦσι πέμπειν ἄτοπον.* The quote is taken from Tom Brown's website: www.tbm.org/dreams.htm.

[2] Through the observation of physical signs such as rapid eye movement (REM) and the breakthrough in instrumentation of the EEG, dreaming can be monitored and inked out like never before; indeed, physiological advances are outpacing psychological ones. See Hall & Van de Castle (1966: 25); Dement (1976); Aserinsky & Kleitman (1953). For more, see pp. 34-35, below.

metaphor in the *Iliad*, for example, is reminiscent of one of the most common dreams still had today: 'as in a dream a man is not able to follow one who runs from him, nor can the runner escape, nor the other pursue him...'.[3] Yet such is the nature of dreams that these shared encounters only go so far, for there is no singular all-embracing way in which this experience is understood – for dreams as a primary experience may be a product of biology, but the determination of this experience and the details of the 'how, when, why' of dreams is shaped by the various cultural systems which surround them: 'culture permeates the psychic and the psychic leaves its imprint on culture'.[4] Dreams are as much a product of culture as of biology; indeed, many cultures, even those familiar with Western medicine, eschew the biological all together, understanding their dreams as emanating from spirits, souls, or gods rather than physiological impulses. Dreams provide one of the most fascinating elements of any culture: we can at once recognise in them the familiar, but at the same time the native interpretation and conception of the dream signals the distinctiveness of their cultural understanding. As the historians Daniel Pick and Lyndal Roper have said, 'just because dream phenomena have been recorded across the ages, it does not necessarily mean that one can speak of a universal 'experience' of dreaming'.[5]

The focus of this study is the Greek attitude to their dream experience, as they expressed it in language, understood it in theories, and made use of it in practices as individuals and as communities. The Greek dream experience may be the focus, but it will remain located within the other cultural frames which surround it, for the ultimate aim of this thesis is to illustrate that the conception of dreams in Greece was determined and shaped by the culture which surrounded them, and that through studying dreams we not only learn more

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[3] Hom. *Il.* 22.199*ff*: *ὡς δ' ἐν ὀνείρῳ οὐ δύναται φεύγοντα διώκειν· οὔτ' ἄρ' ὃ τὸν δύναται ὑποφεύγειν οὔθ' ὃ διώκειν.*

[4] Bastide (1966: 200). Dodds (1951: 106) is therefore wrong to assume that Homer in his dream description was referring to the 'common anxiety dream'; this is a Freudian typology, not a Homeric one.

[5] Pick & Roper (2004: 16).

about this important cultural element, but can also obtain an oblique route into a better understanding of other areas of culture, too. The period that I have limited this thesis to, the classical period, with reference to what we know from the archaic age, covers a span from approximately 750 to 330 BC. Keeping strictly to this range allows one to dwell long enough on points of detail to make the conclusions more thorough, and this particular period has itself been understudied in terms of dream research.[6] Ending at 330 BC is natural given the break in the literary evidence, and Aristotle's works provide a fitting conclusion for he represents the pinnacle of 'rationalist' perspectives. Further, in aiming to illustrate the links between dreams and culture, continuing into the Greek world post-Alexander would potentially change a number of these cultural frames, making the extra chronological scope impractical for drawing conclusions. There is already ample variation within the archaic and classical periods to point up changes in dream perception which accompany alterations in these frames.

In analysing the Greek dream experience during this period I will engage with a wide range of evidence, the collective fruits of which far outweigh the difficulties in synthesising such a melange of sources, some of which pose their own individual problems. The bulk of the material comes from the literature, but this includes literary dream episodes in Homeric epic, tragedy and historiography, as well as explicit attempts to theorize on dreams in philosophical and medical treatises. The former present problems in that the literary patternings of such dream 'scenes' distort the presentation of the dream, while the latter reflect the in-depth musings of the intellects of the day – not quite representative of the everyday Greek populace.[7] All such problems, however, can be dealt with. The literary

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[6] For more on the approaches taken by Classical historians, see Chapter 1.

[7] On using literature for evidence of Greek religion in general, see Price (1999: 9); Mikalson (1983: 7-12); Dodds (1973: 144); Van Straten (1995: 6-7); Zaidman & Pantel (1992: 16-23). On the problems in tragedy and comedy in particular, there is Mikalson (1991), with Bowie (1993); Sourvinou-Inwood (1997); Parker (1983:

patterning, once acknowledged, can be circumvented by not taking the presentations over-literally, and indeed in studying the secondary experience of the dream, rather than the primary, one avoids the pitfalls of looking for the 'real' dream within the imaginary and constructed 'scene'. The presentation of dreams in literature reveals much, implicitly, about the Greek perception of their dream experience, and I am firmly of the belief that such episodes had to be built upon underlying conceptions of the dream which would be understood by the relevant audience in order for such dreams to be effective in a literary setting. Even so, I will highlight to the reader where necessary the literary traits which might have coloured a particular dream record, to avoid any potential potholes. In the case of the philosophical and medical writers, we simply cannot know how far their ideas permeated the popular consciousness, and an awareness of their theories in an explicit form was more likely in an urban centre such as Athens than a remote mountain village. Nevertheless, as the only writers to address the subject of dreams directly and at length, they cannot be ignored and their treatises must be analysed. We can, however, even the picture by including the inscriptional evidence, which is an important tangible reminder of the experience of the dream as it was felt by ordinary citizens. Dedications set up on account of dreams, together with the inscriptional records found at the various incubatory sanctuaries, represent some of the most important evidence we have, and judging it in the perspective of the literary sources produces the fullest picture we can hope to paint of the Greek attitude to dreams. I limit myself as far as possible to evidence that is contemporary, both in terms of literature and epigraphy. It is, however, almost unavoidable to use evidence from later periods which refers

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13-16). I follow the lead of people such as Seaford (1994: preface): 'my argument is meant to expose the limitations (though not to denigrate the achievements) of the historically situated but historically unaware formalism that, in its less or more fashionable varieties, continues to dominate our reading of ancient Greek poetry. I have arrived at my historical approach to Homer and Athenian tragedy in the attempt to solve problems ... which cannot be solved in purely philological or purely literary terms.'

back to the archaic and classical age. Authors such as Plutarch and Pausanias contribute to our understanding, and therefore will also be used with the caution that should accompany any testimony written years after the events they are relating. I also make use of Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*, written in the second century AD, for it is an unequalled resource for dream material; again, I will be selective in using those elements which refer back to my period, and any evidence which is specific only to later times will be clearly signalled to the reader.

I should underline again that I will be researching the *Greek* attitude to *their* dream experience – not the attitude that a modern analyst might think they *ought* to have had. I am not interested in re-interpreting ancient records of dreams in the light of modern Freudian psychoanalysis in order to get 'inside the head' of the dreamers.[8] I can see the temptation to pursue such studies – how fascinating it would be to know the subconscious feelings and repressed desires of a culture long dead which we can never consult in person. But such approaches are littered with crippling limitations – not least the fact that for the Greek world personal records of dreams are almost wholly absent, and we rely instead on dream reports written by poets, playwrights and historians, who infuse their dream episodes with literary colouring and conscious distortion to fit narrative ends; these are not genuine records of dream experiences. Further, there is the important fact that by imposing a modern system of interpretation onto a culture which never understood dreams in that way itself, one would produce results that have no relevance in a cultural-historical investigation such as this. In studying dreams we have to abandon all preconceptions we might have based on our own (conscious or subconscious) attitude to dreams, which for most of us means forgetting Freud. As has been said of the study of foreign religions: 'Western scholars who study religion develop some understanding of what is meant by religion in their society long before they

[8] Attempted already by Devereux (1976). For more on the relationship between psychoanalysis and the ancient world, see also Price (2004) who compares Freud and Artemidorus. Cf. Pelling (1997) who finds a growing emphasis on the dreamer's psychology in Latin historiography.

become scholars. This observation is so unremarkable, so obvious and seemingly trite, that I would be embarrassed to voice it were it not important'.[9] I want to discover what the Greeks thought of their dreams, and the only way to do that is to become as close to a participant observer as is possible – by allowing oneself to understand fully the native frames of reference which determined their dreams, and constantly placing them within their indigenous contexts, not by dissecting and then relocating elements of their dream experience into a modern and therefore alien framework.[10] We can never hope fully to recreate dreams as a 'primary' experience for Greek culture – the exact detail of what the dreamers saw or their emotions on seeing dreams – but we can understand it as a 'secondary' experience. This secondary experience is the manner in which dreams are talked about, recorded and reacted to; this is the experience the sources document for us, and the experience that can be uncovered through carefully sifting the data.

Although I have set out to discover a 'Greek' conception, such broad strokes are an idealistic dream themselves. For 'Greek' we are more often talking about Athenian, for the sources constantly push us into this cul-de-sac, skewed as they are towards reflecting this particular polis, the production centre of so much that we consider to be Greek. Yet I did not want to limit myself to Athens from the start, even though I openly acknowledge that many of my conclusions will reflect Atheno-centric material, because by allowing other areas of the Greek world to come into focus when they are present in the sources one can potentially flag some of the idiosyncrasies of dream belief that can occur between the city states, which so often have their own peculiarities of culture within which dreams must find their place.

Much of the stimulation towards the lines of enquiry I have pursued has come from the approaches already made by anthropologists in studying the dreams of various cultures

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[9] Saler (1997: 28). Cf. Trachtenberg (1939: 230) on studying dreams pre-Freud, 'before the mystery of the dream was reduced to all too human terms'.
[10] Cf. the comments by Rudhardt (1981: 16).

around the globe. Anthropologists have the edge over the historians because they have developed their enquiries from within cultures, experiencing them themselves and shaping their studies with real-life cases, something we can never hope to do with ancient Greece. As such their approach represents the sophisticated culmination of years of refined fieldwork and practical experimentation, and I have built my thesis around the primary topics which anthropologists have identified for investigating a dream culture. One of the most important of these, which affects the thesis as a whole, is the necessity to study a dream culture in isolation – i.e. to define it within all its local frames, rather than to take a comparativist approach from the start. That is not to say that comparison is impossible, but that the idiosyncratic way in which cultures can shape the conception of dream phenomena can be so intertwined that to pick out certain elements and hold them up against other cultures becomes reductive, for without its initial frame of reference that part of the dream conception loses its context and therefore its meaning. Consequently, I will not set out to trace the roots of Greek dreams to another culture, or to compare them with, for example, Egyptian dreams, but rather to localise the study as far as possible, keeping emphasis on the specifics of the Greek experience in its native context. Comparison, where it does occur, appears only loosely, or with a narrow objective in mind.

The intention is to establish the various conceptions of the dream, and then to illustrate how these were active in the classical period, and the degree to which the surrounding cultural frames shaped the understanding and the functions of the dream experience.

2
Approaches

The focus of my investigation, as noted in the introduction, has been shaped by the studies in dreams already undertaken not just by classical historians, but also by anthropologists. In fact, it is the developments made in anthropology which have had the most positive impact on the nature of the topics that I have chosen to investigate, and the overall theme of my thesis. Before detailing these in full, I will first of all assess the approaches to the subject taken by classicists.

(i)
Dreams in Classical History

Dreams are apparently 'in fashion',[1] yet comprehensive studies focusing on the subject of dreams in the ancient world have been few in number, with even fewer having a specific focus on the classical period. That is not to say that dreams have not been an area of frequent interest, but that this interest often takes the shape of analysing a specific aspect of dreams in isolation. The most common is to look at the world of incubation, the cult ritual whereby people came to a sanctuary to sleep in order to receive a divine dream, normally in the hope that this dream will provide a cure for some disease. Deubner and Hamilton completed general surveys on incubation, although they had slight biases, towards the Roman material in the case of Deubner, and the Christian era in the case of

[1] Pelling (1999: 15).

Hamilton.[2] The two volume work on the incubatory god Asclepius by the Edelsteins, building on the earlier collection of material by Herzog, still stands as the key reference on the subject, but other contributions by Sarah Aleshire on the Athenian Asclepieion, and a recent double-volume monograph by the German scholar Riethmüller, as well as a work by Milena Melfi, on the Asclepian cults, have added to our picture.[3] The one drawback of such studies is that, by taking one aspect of dream culture and investigating it in isolation, they fail to position their findings in relation to any broader picture; thus they do not really contribute to any theories relative to the wider Greek perspective on dreams. They are predominantly studies in cult history, rather than dream history.

More concerted attempts at elucidating the conception of dreams in ancient Greece have been made. One of the most iconic was in the chapter 'Dream-Pattern and Culture-Pattern', part of Dodds' seminal *The Greeks and the Irrational*.[4] Despite being written over half a century ago, his approach has arguably never been improved upon, even if his single chapter was far too short to have provided the necessary depth for a comprehensive study. His most important methodological approach was to focus on how the Greeks perceived their dream experiences, rather than on the dreams themselves: 'My main concern is not with the dream-experience of the Greeks, but with the Greek attitude to dream experience'.[5] He rightly rejected the idea of analysing the dreams because it would mean imposing a modern, foreign system of interpretation onto the dream content, so that any results would be reliant on making assumptions about the universal relevance of dream-symbols. I would add that such an approach is also limited from a cultural-

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[2] Deubner (1900); Hamilton (1906).
[3] Edelsteins (1945); Herzog (1931); Aleshire (1989); Riethmüller (2005); Melfi (1997). For further bibliography, see Chapter 6.
[4] Dodds (1951: 102-134).
[5] Dodds (1951: 103).

historical perspective because through it one does not learn about the native culture itself, but all the results will be framed by modern attitudes. Dodds was also one of the first to fuse his knowledge of classical history with his familiarity with anthropology, and to attempt to merge the literary evidence with other aspects of dream culture, such as dedications, to produce a coherent overall picture, and through these he ultimately built his 'culture-pattern' model. As he says: 'I mean that in many primitive societies there are types of dream-structure which depend on a socially transmitted pattern of belief, and cease to occur when that belief ceases to be entertained. Not only the choice of this or that symbol, but the nature of the dream itself, seems to conform to a rigid traditional pattern'.[6] Although the idea of 'culture pattern' dreams over-simplifies what was a complex relationship,[7] Dodds must be commended for recognising the central relationship between dreams and their surrounding culture, and throughout his essay he touches on points which have in some way inspired chapters in my thesis, such as his analysis of the language of dreams. Where I disagree most with him, however, is in his rigid acceptance of a dichotomy between the conception of dreams in 'high thinking' and the 'traditional' type of divine dreams that one can find in literature. In Chapter 4, I will illustrate that such differences are often exaggerated by modern writers, and not by the ancients themselves. Nevertheless, Dodds still provides a central point of reference for any modern analysis of dreams in classical Greece.

George Devereux, a professional psychoanalyst, sought to achieve exactly what Dodds had deliberately avoided: a psychoanalytic appraisal of the dreams in Greek

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[6] Dodds (1951: 103-104).

[7] Dodds later adjusted his original view (1965: 39), stating that he was 'less sure' that culture patterns determined the actual dream experiences, but more the pattern of the dreams as they are formed in memory and then recorded.

tragedy.[8] He was not so naïve that he intended to reveal the subconscious of the poets themselves, or indeed their written characters: 'there can be no question of *actually* psycho-analysing a Greek poet long since dead, nor a dramatic personage born from his imagination'. But he still thought that an 'as if' psychoanalysis of the dreams, as though they were real but accepting that they were not, would be useful. As he insisted: 'what can be shown is that the dreams one encounters in Greek tragedy are authentically dream-like: that the dream Aischylos devised for *his* Klytaimestra could have been dreamed by her, had she been a real person, though it could probably *not* have been dreamed by the Sophoclean Klytaimnestra'.[9] His results are something of an intellectual curiosity, which are probably of more interest to students of psychoanalysis than Greek tragedy. Indeed, it is very difficult for someone not schooled in psychoanalytic theory to judge whether his assertions for each dreamer are correct or not. It is easier to state that he adds little to our knowledge of Greek tragedy. The principle failing of such a study is that in taking such a modern technique and applying it to an ancient culture with a different system of beliefs and understanding, the results one obtains by their very nature do not represent the culture itself. One ends up arguing how they should have interpreted their dreams, had they known modern theory, rather than being receptive to their methods of analysis, which were of more relevance to them, and therefore also to cultural historians. Devereux constantly measures the realism of the 'as if' dreamers against modern ideals, as though they were reclining on his couch. He creates an odd juxtaposition, in that he is at once deeply immersed in the literary texts, yet also drawing conclusions which are so far

[8] Devereux (1976).
[9] Devereux (1976: ix-xii).

removed from the original intentions of the authors. It is with such considerations in mind that modern theories on dream analysis are absent from my thesis.[10]

A more historical approach was adopted by R.G.A. van Lieshout, in one of the few studies aimed specifically at the classical period in ancient Greece.[11] He sought to examine the phenomenon of dreaming through an analysis of literature of all types, from poetic to philosophical. He assumed, as in the present study, that dreams had a narrative value, but that nevertheless they still represent how the Greeks themselves viewed the dream experience.[12] In his analysis he sought to answer a number of questions: what kind of information could be received via dreams; was there a typology of the dream experience; how do dreams arise; and how can dreams be tested for relevance and significance? It is not clear why he singled these out as the important questions, however, and at no point does he really attempt to build them together into a coherent picture. His study, which develops more into a repository of information, never places this gathered material into any meaningful context. It is something he essentially admits in his introduction, when he summarise his style: 'after extensive sight-seeing, with no other preoccupation or limitation than the dream-landscape itself, one could choose a standpoint for which the landscape displays its peculiarities in a typical way'.

Unfortunately, his 'landscape' has a number of potholes, largest of which is his deliberate omission of epigraphic material. Part of his explanation is that he was making an effort 'to discover the phenomenon of dreaming in everyday life', and did not consider 'extraordinary' dreams, such as those experienced in incubation, to be a factor in his discussion. Quite apart from the question of how 'everyday' the dream of Agamemnon

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[10] As outlined in my introduction.
[11] Van Lieshout (1980).
[12] See further the discussion on Walde, below.

was versus a dream dedication by an Athenian citizen, such a distinction wholly undermines any attempt to draw a clear picture of the Greek dream-culture; incubation and dream dedications were one of its central components, and one of the most frequently attested examples of dream experience we have. They should not be pigeonholed as extraordinary, presumably (for he does not state why) because they had special cult significance, and ignored, but built into our picture of the Greek perception of dreams. In chapters 5 and 6, I examine dream dedications and incubation, searching for how this aspect of dreams interacted with the surrounding cultural frames, and was built upon theories on dreams that had been developed in the literature. Literature and epigraphy should not be considered as exclusively separate genres, but as capable of mutually enhancing one's understanding of dreams.

The perspective taken by Patricia Cox Miller, although admittedly focusing on dreams in Late Antiquity rather than my period, is of interest because she approached the topic from a new angle.[13] She considered dreams as part of the ancients' 'imaginal world', which had a value as emotional responses to states such as hope, fear and anxiety, and could also give some level of tangibility to abstract concepts. She sees dreams as a discourse, or what she specifies as 'a method that allows for an articulate construction of meaning', in terms of ethical and philosophical ideas. By focusing on Late Antiquity, she opens up a far richer body of writings on dreams than we have for the classical period, which allows her to develop the complexity of arguments that she does. Nevertheless, the expressiveness and meaning inherent in dream imagery is something I discuss in Chapter 3, where I suggest that the words for dream perhaps determined how the dreams were understood. I also note how, from as early as Homer, dreams were considered to be more

[13] Cox Miller (1994).

than just objective realities or divine visitations, but were also capable of expressing some form of emotion or feeling; dreams were more than just one dimensional.

The two most recent monographs on dreams have been by German scholars. Christine Walde took an absolute focus on the literary representations of dreams in antiquity, covering a period from Homer to Lucan.[14] She studied each dream episode in isolation, breaking down its poetic and literary functions in order to illustrate that the dream was a useful motif and narrative tool in ancient literature, which had a 'tropical' aspect which makes them impossible to consider as simply direct recordings of real dream experiences. She is unique in having engaged with some elements of modern scientific research on dreams to try and bring to life how the use of dream images works in a literary setting. This is far more successful than Devereux's approach, working the other way – moving from the literature towards a psychoanalytic analysis. Walde's work benefits from acknowledging the literary complexity of dream accounts, and she is trying to reconstruct the intentions of the ancient authors, rather than any unknown 'as if' subconscious angles.

I agree with Walde that the literary aspect of dream accounts requires detailed analysis, and that dreams have a unique narrative power. Their ability to occur in isolation at night, in the absence of other traditional forms of action, often means they signal a shift in plot, for the waking dreamer is filled with some new piece of knowledge to act upon. Despite all this attention to the literary dimension, she only very briefly attempts to link her findings with any wider picture – searching for how these representations relate to the contemporary understanding of dreams. She ultimately

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[14] Walde (2001).

believes that the literary dreams should be kept separate from other dream accounts, for instance those found in medical or philosophical literature. This is where the restrictive narrative approach really fails. As I outlined in my introduction, I would argue that literary representations of dreams still on some level had to fit how the authors and their audience expected a dream to occur and function. This is not to deny the narrative capacity of dreams – but this often occurs at the level of content, which is tailored by the author to suit specific literary ends. In general, dream representations, in their mode of delivery and the type of information they reveal, still provide evidence of how the ancients understood their dreams, and this cannot be construed by studying the literary dreams in isolation, but by firmly locating them within other cultural frames. I would certainly refer any reader searching for a complex narrative breakdown of dream episodes to Walde's work, yet such literary considerations are not central in my thesis. Instead, while acknowledging the narrative potential, I want to push this issue to the side, and instead try to find similarities (and differences) in the style and presentation of dream experiences through all types of literature, from poetry to Plato, to form a much more comprehensive overall picture, and from which one can develop a clearer sense of the Greek perception of the dream experience; this is detailed in Chapter 4.

This was also the intention of Beat Näf, in the most recent comprehensive study on dreams, *Traum und Traumdeutung im Altertum*.[15] In what is essentially a diachronic survey of evidence, he covers a period from the ancient Near East right through to the modern reception of ancient dream material and psychoanalysis. Näf is commendable for approaching dreams as a historical subject, and undertaking textual analysis with the aim of revealing historical truths rather than simply narrative considerations. His focus on

[15] Näf (2004).

dream interpretation above all other aspects of dream culture also allows him to link thematically the huge chronological span of his work, in which he searches for consistencies in the art of interpretation. Yet covering such a wide time-span also restricts the level of detail he can apportion to each period, which severely dilutes his results. More importantly, it also prevents him from linking his results for each period with its surrounding cultural context. The lessons of modern anthropology have shown that in order to understand the role of dreams within a given culture, they have to be studied within their native context. Although the approaches made by the historians have had their merits, I believe it is in the studies by anthropologists that one can locate the most profitable lines of enquiry for investigating the phenomenon of dreams.

Dreams in Anthropological Study

My study has been shaped enormously by the cultural dream analysis completed by anthropological authors. Anthropologists have an obvious advantage when developing their theories on dream study because they can do so in a live environment as participant observers, something impossible for an historian of ancient Greece. The dream has long held a fascination for anthropologists in their exploration of culture. Over the last hundred and more years they have developed and refined systems of analysis to investigate native dream phenomena, and contextualise them within their surrounding cultural frames. During this development a number of different attitudes, approaches, and techniques have been taken and utilised, each meeting with varying degrees of success

and approval. The results of their work are of obvious interest in order to locate the study of ancient Greek dreams within a wider cultural milieu, but the merits of their analytical methods have illuminated for me some of the key themes of investigation, and have been central in my approach to Greek dream culture. I have focused on those authors who have been more concerned with dreams as a 'secondary' experience, rather than 'primary'. Dreams occur at two levels: the dream as it is experienced, and the dream as it is reported. In the act of reporting, the primary experience itself is often altered in a process termed 'secondary elaboration', which is the subconscious reshaping of the jumbled images in dreams to suit the patterns of dreaming that the dreamer would be most familiar with.[16] For this investigation, I have already stated how difficult it is to identify the primary experience, for it will forever be closed off in the case of ancient Greece, and limited by the secondary elaboration which colours the textual representations, not to mention the literary stylings. We cannot obtain the same level of 'manifest content' that is available to anthropologists researching live cultures; such investigations are still included in my summary, however, for through them one can still gauge some of the limitations and advantages of such studies. But for ancient Greece, it is at the secondary level, the level at which we find dreams discussed in terms of theory or functioning within a culture, that we can pursue our analysis, and it is this analysis as performed by anthropologists which underpins my thesis.

Their methodological influence is such that I will begin with a brief history of the place of the dream in anthropology, a subject which will be unfamiliar to most classicists. I will then identify a number of the principal modes of enquiry employed by

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[16] Kilborne (1981*b*: 295*ff*); D'Andrade (1961: 312*ff*). Cf. Shulman & Stroumsa (1999: 3): dreaming is an 'overdetermined' act.

anthropologists, in order to illustrate why I have chosen the themes of investigation that I have. In short, the lessons learnt by anthropologists and the advances they have made in analysing dreams within cultures point to the iinportance of considering dreams as culture specific events, embedded within a much wider native context which must provide a constant frame of reference.

(ii, a)
A Brief History

The quality of the dream as a universal experience held an obvious attraction for the early anthropologists who wished to analyse and contrast the new cultures they encountered with their own, Western ideal. Indeed in the early nineteenth century there was a preoccupation with the concept of dream and 'reality' – cultural explorers soon identified an inability of the 'primitives' to distinguish between the fantasy of the dream and the reality of waking experience. Dream conception thus became another signal of alterity; the western who could distinguish real from fake, reality from illusion, was civilised and sophisticated, whilst those who attached too much meaning to their dream experiences were considered backwards. According to Lord Avebury, 'Dreams are intimately associated with the lower forms of religion. To the savage they have a reality and an importance which we can scarcely appreciate'.[17] The numinous quality of primitive dream experience also gave supporting evidence to Edward Tylor's theory of animism, expounded in his two volume *Primitive Culture*. Animism, which according to

[17] Lord Avebury in 1870, quoted by Stewart (2004*b*: 77).

Tylor characterised tribes 'very low in the scale of humanity', was the belief that the world and one's present and afterlife were controlled and buffeted by roaming souls and spirits.[18] Primitive dream theory, in which one's soul was detached in sleep, or spirits visited the dreamer to relay communications, added credibility to his theories.

Such chauvinistic attitudes were soon being challenged, in particular by the anthropologist and philosopher Lévy-Bruhl in his *L'expérience Mystique et les Symbols chez les Primitifs*. Most notably, he reinterpreted the notion of reality: primitives did not believe their dream experience to have a reality equal to waking life, but instead considered their dreams to have a different type of reality, one which could be authoritative since it allowed contact and communication with a knowledge inaccessible in waking reality, a knowledge gained through spirits, the divine, or even mythical times.[19] Their dream theory was dependent on specific cultural conceptions of dream phenomena, developed within an individual cultural set of beliefs and symbols. In other words, the dream was becoming culture relative, just as Lévy-Bruhl was laying the foundations for modern cultural relativism.

J.S. Lincoln admitted that he was influenced by the thinking of Lévy-Bruhl when he composed his *The Dream in Primitive Cultures*. Lincoln also criticised Tylor's simple equating of the dream with reality, and he too advocated the notion that dream reality for the primitive was special, perhaps even having a greater force and potential than the waking state.[20] Lincoln's lasting contribution to dream study was made through his criticisms of Carl Jung's theory of the 'collective unconscious'. Jung had proposed that there were 'archetypal' images in dreams and other visions universal to all mankind that

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[18] Tylor (1871 (I): 385).
[19] Lévy-Bruhl (1938); cf. Stewart (2004*b*: 79).
[20] Lincoln (1935: 28).

had been inherited through racial memory, but Lincoln contended that these archetypal images were not actually universal, but specific to individual cultures, and the typology of symbols was thus in turn dependent on a distinct, independent cultural tradition.[21] Although his criticisms of his pompous predecessors and his identification of the culture specificity of the dream experience are admirable, Lincoln has received some criticism for his own sweeping distinction. He identified two types of dream in primitive cultures: the 'culture pattern' versus 'individual' dream. The individual dreams are those which occur unsought and spontaneously in sleep, through the manifest content of which one can gain reflections of the culture in question. The culture-pattern dreams, however, are the 'sought or induced' dreams of 'special tribal significance', or traditional dreams, and which conform to a culture specific stereotyped pattern.[22] He had built on a distinction already made by Malinowski in 1927, who distinguished between 'free dreams' and 'official dreams', the official dreams being deliberately sought.[23] Hence Lincoln observed that in native cultures which were being infiltrated by Western man and Western religion, these culture pattern dream stereotypes were collapsing under the pressures of the changes in traditional culture, whilst they were at their peak amongst indigenous peoples unspoilt by the white man. His distinction was an interesting and influential one, even if it has since suffered its share of disapproval as an overly simple model (note the vagueness of his term 'special tribal significance'), and inapplicable as a universal pattern. Barbara Tedlock, one of the most influential modern writers on dreams in

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[21] Lincoln (1935: 23).
[22] Lincoln (1935: 22).
[23] Malinowski (1927: 93).

anthropology, has illustrated that so-called culture pattern dreams can in fact be unsought.[24]

Lincoln should also be noted for his use and approval of Freudian terminology such as 'manifest content'. Freud had published his seminal *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900, yet anthropologists (as well as large sectors of contemporary society) were slow to accept and incorporate his theory into their own field. It seems that Freud's emphasis on the sexual desires of the human character and wish fulfilment revealed through analysis of the latent content of dream reports ran contrary to the austere mores of his contemporaries. Yet it was soon acknowledged that anthropologists, concerned with the study of man, should not ignore the dirtier elements of the human character, and must be prepared to study it 'without the fig leaf'.[25] Lincoln was amongst a group of anthropologists, that included Seligman and Roheim, who all advocated to some degree the incorporation of psychoanalytic investigation into anthropological research. Lincoln noted how unhelpful the compartmentalisation of the two disciplines was, and that through cooperation the two could find mutual benefit.[26] Seligman mused on how much psychological training a field-working anthropologist might need, and Roheim, who himself had a psychoanalytic background, foresaw a time when the field would be dominated by psychoanalytic anthropology, and anthropologists with clinical training.[27] However, the relationship between the two disciplines soon soured. Malinowski, despite publishing a fine examination of erotic dreams amongst the Trobriands in which the influences and impulses of psychoanalytic investigation can be discerned, was quite clear

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[24] B. Tedlock (1981: 323).
[25] Malinowski (1927: viii).
[26] Lincoln (1935: vii).
[27] Seligman (1932); Roheim in Seligman (1932: 194).

on his dislike for it: 'I have never been in any sense a follower of psycho-analytic practice, or an adherent of psycho-analytic theory', with its 'chaotic arguments and tangled termimology'.[28] Malinowski had argued with psychoanalysts over the umiversality of the Oedipus complex, contending that it was variable and dependent on local cultural systems of understanding, and essentially proposing that psychoanalytic theory went in opposition to the doctrine of cultural relativism.[29] Meanwhile, other anthropologists such as Radcliffe-Brown were suggesting that individual psychology should not be their concern, and instead their focus should be on the group and collective representations.

Consequently, while publications of anthropological inquiries on dreams continued, there was an aversion to studies involving in-depth psychological investigation, or topics that would entail such investigation. Furthermore, dreams became a marginalised zone in anthropology, and although the development of the Culture and Personality School in America from the 1930s, which peaked in the 1950s, did entail some dream studies such as those by Dorothy Eggan, the School itself collapsed soon afterwards.[30] The relationship between anthropology and psychoanalysis was still discussed, but only sporadically, and principally by one man, George Devereux.[31] Some anthropologists instead began to concentrate on the manifest content of dreams alone, and what they could reveal about cultures. Dorothy Eggan, for instance, concentrated on the manifest content of a collection of an individual's dreams in Hopi Indian culture, but it was Hall and Van de Castle who took this approach one step further with a survey of one

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[28] Malinowski (1927: vii).
[29] See Stewart (2004*b*: 79*ff*).
[30] Eggan (1949); (1952). In general see B.Tedlock (1987*a*: 23-24).
[31] See his essay collection (1978), and his earlier monograph (1951).

thousand dreams of North American college students in 1966.[32] The clear advantage they found with analysing the manifest content was that it could provide substantive quantifiable data, as opposed to the qualitative material present in latent dream analysis. They then could subject this data to a content analysis, essentially reducing what had always been enigmatic and personal into a system of letters and numbers. From this they hoped whole collections of dreams could then be reduced into a simple language of symbols ready for easy quantifiable comparison. The value of dreams for cross-cultural comparisons had been suggested back in 1923 by Seligman, who made an open request for certain 'type' dreams, such as the dream of flying, and their distribution and meaning in cultures. Seligman himself was following Freud's suggestion that certain type dreams existed in which the same manifest content reflected the same latent meaning across different cultures.

However, in the same year that Hall and Van de Castle published their content analysis, a collection of essays edited by Von Grunebaum and Caillois was released offering a different perspective. Their aim was to rejuvenate the interdisciplinary approach, drawing together articles by literary historians, anthropologists, doctors, historians and neurophysiologists, in order to illustrate the various angles being taken concomitantly across separate disciplines, and consequently demonstrate the value of collaboration. Although not a complete success, and certainly having an obvious bias (as the editors themselves confess) towards Islamic culture, it could have helped usher in a new appreciation of the value of the dream in cultural studies. However, it was not until 1981 and the publication of a special edition of the journal *Ethos* that the dream began to re-establish itself, the preceding years having produced only a handful of articles, most

[32] Eggan (1949); Hall & Van de Castle (1966).

notably Adam Kuper's breakdown of dream structure using methodology normally reserved for myth analysis, and Benjamin Kilborne's critique of previous approaches and reemphasis on the cultural context of the dream report.[33] The *Ethos* collection itself demonstrated that the dream was still a valuable part of anthropological field analysis, and that anthropologists were willing to engage with psychoanalysis in their research. The older chauvinistic notion of primitive culture, and the simple dichotomy between culture pattern and individual dreams, had been abandoned. The collection itself is open in the variety of its approaches, from Barbara Tedlock's ethnographic examination of native Quiché Mayan dream interpretation, through to Thomas Gregor's content analysis of Mehinaku dreams, following the examples set by Hall and Van de Castle.

A few years later in 1987 Barbara Tedlock released a more focused compilation of essays, which truly signalled the re-emergence of the dream as a viable topic in anthropology. Tedlock and her contributors aimed to analyse the dream not as a single text, and not as a body of simple manifest content ready to be de-structured by the likes of Hall and Van de Castle, but as a 'psychodynamic communicative process'.[34] The dream therefore has to be analysed within specific cultural discourse frames, in relation to other forms of cultural media such as myth, and taking into account the role and status of the dreamer, the interpreter, the modes of interpretation, and the underlying dream theory – the dream as an act of communication analysed within its fullest contexts. Thus the comparativist approach, though not impossible, was not as straightforward as had been assumed, and was dependent on analysing not just the manifest contents, but also the social and cultural discourse which framed the dream experience.

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[33] Kuper (1979); Kilborne (1981*a*).
[34] B.Tedlock (1987*a*: 30).

The theories of Tedlock *et al* still largely underpin the current anthropological approach to dreams, particularly in emphasising the native context of the dream, and trying to understand it within its social and cultural milieu. This has in turn filtered through to dream study in general. In 1999 David Shulman and Guy Stroumsa released a broad collection of essays, predominantly by religious and literary historians but also featuring contributions by scholars such as Barbara and Dennis Tedlock, in which although the overall theme was comparison, this comparison was not direct but implicit.[35] The primary aim was to explore the dream as a cultural act within a given 'cognitive universe'; contrasts and similarities between cultures are an inherent bi-product of the approach itself, for different cultural systems will produce different structures of dreaming. The most recent anthropological compilation, edited by Charles Stewart in 2004, is built on similar foundations: it is case studies of dreaming within specific cultural contexts.[36] It is within this frame that the dream is most valuable to anthropology, and in turn that anthropology is most useful for the study of dreams.

Yet a great amount of variation is still apparent in dream study, a testament to the idiosyncratic nature of the subject. Considering the cultural context is the key foundation, but this still allows a degree of plasticity that enables the topic to remain innovative and fascinating. In Charles Stewart's recent collection, for example, there are case studies examining the practice of the Ongee people of the Andaman Islands, who interpret their daytime smells through dreams, as well as the Amazonian Peru custom of naming children after animals seen in dream, and the use of dreams by the priests of the Cherubim and Seraphim church in Nigeria to legitimate their leadership.

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[35] Shulman & Stroumsa (1999).
[36] Stewart (2004*b*).

It is in the templates set out by Tedlock and continued through the collection by Shulman and Stroumsa that I would locate my thesis. It is an attempt to analyse dreams in classical Greece in their fullest specific cultural contexts, allowing for cross-cultural comparisons only in an implied and indirect fashion, rather than as a concerted attempt at identifying a universal pattern.

(ii, b)
Themes of Investigation

Although the angles taken by anthropologists remain diverse, it is still possible to discern some of the principal themes of inquiry that have surfaced over the years of dream research. Perhaps the key question underlying all examinations since interest first began is why the dream can hold such a valued place in some cultural systems, but be relegated to a peripheral status in others. In broad terms, the rationalised modern West often stands at one end of the spectrum, where dream theories exist yet predominantly at a personal, introspective, psychoanalytic level, and where the dream's importance is limited within the realm of the self and self-understanding. Dream theorists who espouse the external qualities of the dream, who promote its importance outwith the self as a source of extra-personal knowledge, and attach to the dream a relevance above the norm, are branded quacks and kooky. It is within societies outside the modern West that systems of dream classification can reach an elaborate fullness, and where the dream can assume a central place within the culture.[37] For the Maya, the significance of dreams and

[37] Kilborne (1987: 171).

their interpretation relates to everyday life on a scale that seems wholly alien to western thought: it is routine to awaken your sleeping partner(s) during the night to narrate your dream, and mothers question their children on their dreams every morning.[38] For the Yuman tribes of the Gila River in North America, dreaming dominated every facet of life to the extent that nothing could be achieved unless it was dreamed, and dreaming thus was the constant preoccupation of the tribesmen.[39] The act of dreaming itself can reach incredible complexity, and some cultures practice 'lucid dreaming', the ability to dream within a dream.[40] In the Americas there are shamans able to realise that they are dreaming, and then during the episode direct the movement and actions of their dream soul or double (the terminology here becomes dependent on the cultural concept of the dream experience).[41]

Although, as we have seen, the relevance attached to the dream was once used as an indicator of primitiveness, in the current world of cultural relativism such attitudes are outmoded, and have been replaced by a desire to locate this universal phenomenon within distinct cultural contexts, and from the subsequent differentiations glean some cross-cultural comparisons. The question 'why important in some cultures and not others' can only be answered vaguely. One can suggest that we, in the modern West, have rationalised other phenomena such as the supernatural, the afterlife, and religion, and have developed in the areas of medicine and science, to the extent that we no longer have such a need of dreams to answer our anxieties and relay us information, in the way that a

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[38] B.Tedlock (1992: 459).
[39] Kilborne (1981*a*: 175).
[40] B.Tedlock (1999: 94*ff*); cf. Shulman & Stroumsa (1999: 10).
[41] B. Tedlock (1999: 96).

less-advanced tribe might.[42] Yet such broad conclusions ignore the complexity of the situation. The importance of the dream varies not only inter-culturally, but also intra-culturally. In North America, the 'PsiberDreaming Conference 2005' drew together large numbers of westerners to hear lectures on topics such as 'The Art of Dream Healing' and 'Using Lucid Dreams to Seek Future Information', as well as to witness competitions in dream telepathy. North America itself is open to influences from older native cultures, just as Britain is to pre- and non-Christian traditions such as magic and shamanism, which can affect the notion of dream understanding for at least some sectors of society.[43] Equally, one should not assume that a single tribal culture adheres to the same dream mentality. Michele Stephen recognised when working with the Mekeo of Papua New Guinea that although dreams and their interpretation are central within the culture, many of the people still 'simply have no concern whatsoever with dreams'.[44]

It is identifying these variations, and assessing the reasons for them, that remains of interest for anthropologists and social historians. The fact that the functions of the dream are dependent on the collection of cultural representations which frame them means that one can work from the dream backwards to investigate a culture. In other words, having identified a characteristic of the dream experience, from this one can assess the other cultural features which might have shaped it. For instance, when Patricia Crawford examined the dreams of women in early modern England, she discovered that they were more important in their daily lives than for their male counterparts. Consequently she deduced that this was a reflection of their different social situations, and the restrictions imposed on the roles of women, in particular their lack of a public

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[42] As asserted by Grunebaum (1966: 20-21).
[43] Cf. Stewart (2004*b*: 81); Grunebaum (1966: 6).
[44] Stephen (1996: 467).

voice. Through dreams women could become mediums for messages, prophetic voices, and visions. In simple terms, 'dreams were of more *use* to women than they were to men'.[45]

There is no doubt that if treated as a culture specific event, framed and in relation to other belief systems and cultural discourse, dreams provide a valuable tool for culture analysis. Yet there has always remained a desire to find links between cultures, to identify patterns of dream characteristics that might be universal. It was Freud who first suggested the existence of 'type' dreams, where the manifest content reflected the same latent content across different cultures. Seligman took Freud as his lead when he requested his contemporaries to send him certain 'type' reports they had gathered in the field, in order to accumulate a store of data that might prove or disprove Freud's theory.[46] Such studies clearly ignored the relevant dream contexts and native systems of interpretation. It was then the turn of Malinowski and subsequently Lincoln to establish a universal system of dream classification with their distinctions between 'official' or 'culture pattern' and 'free' or 'individual' dreams.[47] They, too, failed to take account of local contexts. By working native dreams into their own systems, they failed to appreciate the importance of the local systems of classification, and the actual conception of the dream within that specific culture. Simply absorbing dreams into a pre-determined structure misrepresents the local significance of the dream information – it only fits them into the anthropologist's own schemata, not the natives'. Furthermore, to suggest that

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[45] Crawford (2004: 101).
[46] Seligman (1923); cf. (1932: 215*ff*).
[47] Malinowski (1927: 93); Lincoln (1935: 22).

certain 'culture patterns' will inevitably produce certain dream stereotypes is undermined by the sheer variability of dream conception within a given culture.[48]

More recently, David Shulman and Guy Stroumsa posed an interesting universal question: whether one could configure a taxonomy of dreams based upon the different systems of religion.[49] As they admit, this does not represent an exact fit between dream and culture, for different religious systems (as for instance in India, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh and Buddhist) can exist concomitantly within a single cultural frame. Nevertheless, it provides a novel way of investigating the universal potential of dream theory. As they suggest, one of the most obvious conclusions might be that in a polytheistic system, where the lines of communication between gods and men are more open and numerous, one might expect a more receptive attitude, and a greater attribution of importance, to dreams. Conversely, in monotheistic religious systems built on revelation, where the doors of communication are narrower and often sealed, one might expect dreams to play a less prominent and more restricted role. In monotheistic systems the source of dreams is limited to either the divine or the devil. Yet ultimately they have to admit that there are too many exceptions to allow religion to be a universal gauge for dream investigation. One could note the importance attributed to dreaming in the polytheistic system of Greece, yet in contrast to the virtual neglect of dreams in Roman religion; or the importance that dreams play in early, monotheistic, Christian discourse. One might also note that in religions centred upon hierarchy and orthodoxy, the potentially subversive nature of the personal revelation through dream can lead to the suppression of dream material, and a reduction in its perceived public importance. They

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[48] See the criticisms of Kilborne (1981*a*); B. Tedlock (1987*a*: 20-21).
[49] Shulman & Stroumsa (1999: 5).

give as an example medieval Europe, where the church authorities deliberately and consistently strove to control the influence of dream divination, while popular dream culture was thriving beneath the surface; as a result our evidence can be slightly skewed.[50] What their question illustrates is that religion alone is not enough of a factor to determine a culture's dream conception, but that it should be one of the modes of discourse considered when analysing dream phenomena – in its configuration of belief and symbolic expression. The relationship between dreams and religion is one which permeates my thesis throughout, but which I have chosen to examine most fully in Chapter 9, in an attempt to locate dream divination within the broader divinatory worldview of the ancient Greeks.

One of the most concerted attempts to establish a universal typology of the dream experience was made in the work of Hall, in particular his exhaustive *The Content Analysis of Dreams* together with Van de Castle.[51] It is worth examining in more depth this system of 'content analysis' as practiced by Hall and Van de Castle. Their goal was to reduce the expressive media of dreams into quantifiable, scientific data, capable of being used for cross-cultural comparison. The essence of this system is to convert principally verbal, but also other symbolic, material into numbers, which can then be scored. Their source was the manifest content of a collection of one thousand dreams gathered from North American college students between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five. They then took a random sample of five dream reports (each having a length of between fifty and three hundred words) from one hundred male, and one hundred female students, giving the overall one thousand dream sample. Their emphasis was on the

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[50] *ibid*

[51] Hall & Van de Castle (1966). Building on the work of pioneers such as Alexander & Wilson (1935).

verbal report of the dream experience, from which they selected 'units' to be measured. These units might be single words, or phrases, or sentences, although Hall and Van de Castle tended to concentrate on single words. By measuring these units one can then calculate 'rates', 'frequency', and 'intensity'. The absolute amount of a certain unit is its frequency, the amount of one unit in relation to another is its rate, and the intensity of something is calculated in relation to its frequency – at a basic level, the more frequently a unit occurs, the more intense it is (although this relationship may not be 1:1, but 3:1 and so on).

The dreams are further broken up into 'classification systems'. These systems can be empirical, derived from the actual verbal material itself: the names and status of characters, or objects, interactions between characters, the emotions of characters, and so on. Or one might use theoretical systems, where one measures an existing theoretical concept, which might be regression or separation anxiety. The systems selected by Hall and Van de Castle were largely empirical (sixteen in total, as opposed to three theoretical ones). Thus within a classification system, suitable units are selected and assigned scoring symbols (numerical or alphabetical), and one can then formulate a score based on a single dream episode.

This is most easily illustrated by an example. Consider a dream report in which the dreamer states: 'I met my father'. Within the system of classification 'character', they calculated the units 'number', 'sex', 'identity', and 'age', having previously assigned certain of the possible results they were searching for a symbol, i.e. for 'identity', father is F, and mother M. They would therefore reduce 'my father' to 1MFA: where 1 is the number, M the sex (male), F the identity, and A the age (adult). Note how the phrase 'I

met' is discarded in this instance; 'I met' is not a character, but a social interaction, and therefore would be calculated according to its own separate system of classification. Once all the relevant data has been collected, it can then be tabulated, and from this the rates, frequency, and intensity can be calculated.

It seems rather strange to reduce the dream to a mathematical equation, but one cannot doubt the ambitious complexity and painstaking thoroughness in reducing a body of one thousand dreams. Indeed their approach has had its supporters. Thomas Gregor offered his own content analysis of 385 Mehinaku dreams, with the explicit aim of extending the base of such data for cross-cultural research, following the lead of Hall and Van de castle.[52] As a group, they aimed to demonstrate that the dream had universal characteristics which varied across cultures dependent on such factors as gender, personality, age and so on. Yet commendable as their efforts were, their results have proved rather inconsequential, and been largely ignored. The problem with concentrating on the manifest content alone is that one considers only the dream itself, and from this one is limited in the conclusions that one can draw; indeed, their book had no conclusion at all. Much as they stressed that they were aware of the problems inherent in their study, and claimed that the 'application of objective quantitative methods to qualitative productions need not misrepresent or distort them as long as the investigator respects the inherent properties of the material with which he is working', they still cannot escape the fact that their approach removes the dreams from their native context.[53] It is not enough simply to know who was dreaming what; as an anthropologist interested in the workings of a culture, one needs to know factors outside the dream – its context and mode of

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[52] Gregor (1981).
[53] Hall & Van de Castle (1966: 26).

communication, the cultural discourse which has framed it. These are recurrent criticisms for virtually all universal theories. I would still suggest that the content analysis approach remains of interest, particularly in the examination of a single culture – if only to point out trends and commonalities. It is with its application as a cross-cultural tool of reference that it really loses its efficacy.

Thus is the universal approach a wholly redundant notion? Before leaving this subject of 'universality', it would be remiss not to mention the advances that have been made in modern neurophysiology and their possible application to dream study.[54] The examination of neuronal activity through machines such as the electroencephalogram or EEG have enabled us to monitor brain activity during sleep, and consequently identify four stages of sleep, and the correlation between periods of rapid eye movement, REM, and dreams. Given that humans across cultures share a common neurophysiology, this can have implications for universal dream study. It is clear from research that everybody dreams every night; therefore suggesting that some cultures dream less or more than others is nonsensical, and a failure to separate the dream experience from the dream as it is reported and communicated. Therefore when Malinowski remarks of the Melanesians of the Trobriand Islands that 'they apparently dream little, have little interest in their dreams', we know that the former half of this statement is wrong; our concentration should be on the latter half, assessing why there exists such apathy towards dream phenomena.[55] Another point of interest is that dreams of visitation, or in which the dreamer believes his 'soul' to be moving or travelling, or in which he believes he is flying, which are all commonly attested dreams throughout many cultures, may have a

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[54] B. Tedlock (1987*a*: 14*ff*) gives an excellent brief summary.
[55] Malinowski (1927: 92).

very real origin within the mechanisms of the brain. According to Tedlock: 'during sleep the pontine brainstem cells, which during the waking state receive impulses from the balance organ, are activated by the same group of cells that normally trigger eye movement'.[56] In effect, this means that during dreams and the REM state, the dreamer can have the same sensations of moving and locomotion as he might in waking life, which could explain the perception of movement of self and others in dream reports.

Despite the interesting potential conclusions of such scientific studies, from a cultural-historical perspective universal dream theories have produced more failure than success, for any attempt at applying broad strokes directly to dream content is bound to disengage such material from the cultural contexts which were so instrumental in shaping it originally. It would be far more productive to narrow one's aims, and keep cross-cultural comparisons within a tight focus, perhaps even limiting it to the comparison of one society with another. The choice of subjects would thus be paramount, and one should not neglect to consider the local cultural variations. Barbara Tedlock undertook her own cross-cultural analysis of dream theory and interpretation between the Quiché Mayan and the Zuni of New Mexico.[57] She first proceeds with a careful break down and comparison of the two cultural frames, focusing on their history, religion, ontology, and psychology. Only then does she turn to an investigation of their respective processes of dream interpretation and sharing. Subsequently she is able to conclude from her observations that the divergences between their systems are related to a combination of ontological and psychological differences. Further careful, controlled analyses would no doubt yield equally informative results.

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[56] B. Tedlock (1987*a*: 14).
[57] B. Tedlock (1987*b*)

In the present thesis, however, the focus is on an individual culture, Greece, and anthropological approaches have shown that instead of analysing the manifest content of the dream, or looking for dream 'types', one should investigate key modes of understanding which occur regularly throughout dream cultures, and then clarify these within their cultural context.[58] Within anthropological dream study there are present a number of recurrent modes of understanding from which one could demarcate a core body of topics which necessitate analysis. The following are central: the dream as progressive (revealing future events) versus regressive (revealing something about the personal character of the dreamer via the past); the dream as an external or an internal experience; the dream as something important or unimportant within the culture, and how this importance is manifested – for example do certain dreams confer some level of status on individuals; and also how the dream experience is framed in linguistic terms, for instance 'I saw' or 'I had' a dream.

Thus one might note the introspective, regressive dream experiences of some people in the modern West or some Buddhist discourse, versus the future-looking progressive dreams among the Mehinaku Indians or the Azande.[59] The dream as an 'internal' experience would also be characteristic of the modern West, but for many other cultures it is 'external' – involving the movement of a body-double or self, or interference from the divine. Dreams are external if they are perceived to occur in an extra-personal world which has a reality of its own outside the subconscious of the dreamer. The relevant importance of the dream will obviously vary greatly within cultures, but one can still delineate whether dreaming is considered a peripheral state, or

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[58] See also the comments of Shulman and Stroumsa (1999: 10*ff*).
[59] Cf. Shulman (1999: 59, 63); Gregor (1981: 354); Evans-Pritchard (1976: 230).

one of the central domains of knowledge and experience. Lastly, the concept of the dream experience itself – whether it is something seen (I saw a dream last night) or had (I had a dream last night) – is often determined by the results of the previous questions. In the West, for instance, dreams are often considered the possession and product of our subconscious, therefore we 'have' them, even though they are visual experiences; in cultures where a soul roams and beholds distant images, or a deity comes before or sends an image to confront the dreamer, it is often something 'seen'. This is merely an initial snapshot of the position of the dream experience within the native linguistic system.

Added to these principal categories are a number of fundamental issues which then need to be accounted for within a given culture. These are: the status of the dreamer (and any subsequent variations in dream interpretation and/or importance); the role (if any) of interpreters;[60] dreams and their relationship with a culture's concepts of reality; and the communicative process of the dream itself (which at a basic level would mean – is it a divine message dream, or a symbolic dream, and so on). Thus we know, for instance, that in Tikopia the interpretation of the same dream varies depending on whether the dreamer is a layman or a chieftain; and that in Mesopotamia certain dreams were privileged to people of a certain social, political and religious standing.[61] The role and significance of interpreters can vary greatly. In Jewish culture, their words were sometimes thought to have magical powers, to the extent that the dream and its consequences actually followed the words of the interpretation – therefore an incorrect deciphering of enigmatic dream images could result (mistakenly) in someone's death.[62]

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[60] Note the special role of Mayan shaman interpreters: B. Tedlock (1981).
[61] Firth (1934: 67); Kilborne (1987: 176-177); cf. B. Tedlock (1999: 89-90).
[62] Hasan-Rokem (1999: 220). Cf. the Mayan shamans, B.Tedlock (1981), and the use of dreambooks in Mediaeval Islam, Sviri (1999: 253*ff*).

The nature of the dream experience itself has strong links with a culture's understanding of its reality, in particular in contrast to that of waking life. In most of the modern West, since the seventeenth century and Descartes and his Cartesian school of thought about the dualism of spirit and matter, a sharp distinction has been drawn between the sleeping and waking states, and dreaming has been relegated to the realm of unreality or fantasy.[63] Yet in other cultures, this distinction is not always so clear. Among the Ashanti, as well as the Papuo-Melanesians, dreams of adultery can actually result in punishment via an adultery fine.[64] In Guajiro in Venezuela, the natives describe dreaming as reality, not only foreshadowing future events, but reflecting the dreamer's physical and spiritual status.[65] Early Chinese writing was also concerned with the respective states of reality in waking and sleeping. The Zhuangzi, a Daoist work from the fourth century BC, contains a number of dreams in which the transitions between waking and sleeping, and the knowledge of either state, is challenged.[66] One passage asks the classic question: if a man dreams he is a butterfly, and is perfectly content and forgets his human self, and then he awakens to find his physical self, how can he know if he was a man dreaming of being a butterfly, or a butterfly dreaming of being a man?

One must also look at the nature of the communication as it is reported by the dreamer – is it a straightforward 'message', given by an encountered divinity or spirit? Or is it a more complex web of symbols and imagery that need to be translated in order to reveal an underlying message? Dreams can be perceived as straightforward, as in the case of an explicit divine message dream, or they might necessitate a careful decoding of the

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[63] Bastide (1966: 201); B. Tedlock (1987*a*: 2).
[64] Lincoln (1935: 29). Cf. Seligman (1932: 216).
[65] B. Tedlock (1987*a*: 5).
[66] Li (1999: 29*ff*)

manifest content to reach the latent meaning (but the nature of the encryption, and the outcome of the translation, are dependent on the local methods of interpretation). One might also ask whether the understanding of the nature of the communication changes dependent on the status of the dreamer. If dreams are considered as an avenue of communication, one must investigate the supposed source of this communication: whether it is perceived to come from the repressed self, or a soul double or free soul, or from external (often divine) spirits, souls and phantoms. Therefore it is the task of the anthropologist and the social historian to analyse the context of this communication, to help explain the language of the dream experience.

The proposed categories are necessarily loose and open to additions, but they still form the central group of simple criteria from which an initial idea of a culture's dream conception can be gauged, and from these one can then search out the cultural traits which might have shaped them. It is these parameters which have framed my investigation into dreams in the classical period in ancient Greece. Each category is explored, and from them I have formed a coherent picture of the place of dreams in this specific culture at this specific time, highlighting both the importance of studying dreams within their cultural context, and the unique perspectives one can glean on a culture through an examination of this enigmatic experience.

(iii)

The Dream and Myth

Before I begin, however, there is one last important subject which needs to be addressed: dreams and myth. At no point in my study will I attempt to link dreams with myth directly, and that is because, while I acknowledge the important part that dreams can play in forming myths, and myths in forming dreams, the subject has been fully explored by anthropologists whose conclusions, that they ultimately form two distinct systems, I support. The nature of the relationship between the modes of dream and myth has long concerned anthropologists. Rivers, in 1932, drew up similarities between the two sets of discourse.[67] He noted the tendency in early mythology to personify natural objects, and attribute to them speech and characters, something which can then be reflected in dream accounts. The transitions between actions in myth and dream narratives can be equally abrupt and unexplained – one minute the subject is walking, the next swimming, with no bridge given between the two stages. Finally, composite characters, in which a single character reflects two or more different personalities in a dream, resemble the composite creatures of early myth.[68] However it should be noted that Rivers' rather basic collection of similarities were rejected as his actual opinion by his compiler, George Elliot, who suggests that Rivers' untimely death prevented him from revising this chapter.[69] For instance, Rivers had long abandoned the basic concept of animism as reflected in the personification of natural objects, and instead would have argued that such personification only occurs when specific cultural circumstances and

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[67] Rivers (1932: 145-147).
[68] Cf. Evans-Pritchard (1976: 234).
[69] G. Elliot, 'Appendix II', in Rivers (1932: 189-192).

systems of belief blur the distinctions between human characters and inanimate objects, for instance the Egyptian equating of the Nile with Osiris.

Yet Rivers was still right to draw attention to the overlap between myth and dream, and mythic features, as one would probably expect, regularly materialize in dream narratives, just as the interpretation of dreams can be framed within a mythological context. Dorothy Eggan analysed the dreams of a single Hopi Indian in which mythical characters often appeared, such as Palulukon, the Water Serpent, and Tuwapongwuhti, the Mother of all Wild Game.[70] Among the Hupdu Maku of Amerindia the dream of a 'smoked-out armadillo' predicts that a kinsman will die, based on the local myth of a man who leads his brother-in-law into an armadillo's hole intending to kill him. Similarly, for the Lacandon Maya of Chiapas in Mexico, a dream of maggots actually means beans, as in their mythological pantheon the Lord of Death eats maggots from dead bodies as his beans.[71] In Amazonian Peru, the Ese Eja children are named after the animals seen in dreams, and animals appear in dream narratives identifying themselves as the person's offspring. This is in line with their belief that during their ancestral times animals and humans remained indistinct, and beings could move between the two forms.[72] For the Kagwahiv, a sexual dream actually portends the slaying of a tapir, for in myth the tapir was the adulterous lover of the character Kagwahivahē[73]. In some cultures, dream and myth even share specific grammatical forms of expression. For instance, the tense suffix 'sqa' is used in Cuzco Quecha to denote dream and myth accounts.[74] There is nothing so explicit in ancient Greece, and indeed the level of overlap in general is difficult to judge.

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[70] Eggan (1955: 449).
[71] B.Tedlock (1999: 91); cf. B.Tedlock (1992: 463).
[72] Stewart (2004*b*: 78-79).
[73] Kracke (1987: 33).
[74] Kracke (1987: 31).

Gods and heroes appear in dreams, just as they feature in myths, but then the gods were present in so many areas of Greek life that one cannot automatically assume a direct link between myth and dreams in this case.

Anthropologists have also looked deeper beyond these simple manifest overlaps and attempted to discern structural similarities between myth and dream narrative. Lincoln drew attention, albeit fleetingly, to their parallels in structure in 1935, but it was Adam Kuper in 1979 who first explored this subject in depth.[75] Instead of using the techniques of psychoanalysis to investigate the origins of myth, as had been the practice of Freud and his followers, he opted to employ the structural analysis of myth, as outlined by Lévi-Strauss, on dreams.[76] Of course, dream narrative and myth narrative do not correlate exactly, but Kuper determined that there were three key assumptions which, if made, enabled one to be mapped on the other. Firstly, they are both acts of communication, and in both cases systematic analysis can be applied to decode the messages that are communicated. Secondly, both provide means of coping with problems encountered in reality, and this process is governed by a set of rules which is systematic. And thirdly one must distinguish between the dream as experience and the dream in its narrative or communicated form; the structural analysis is to be applied to narrative reports. Thus the 'dream' in this form may be shaped more by its cultural context, and subject to Freudian 'secondary elaborations' – the organisation of unintelligible dream images into a coherent account after the fact.[77] According to Foucalt, the disjointed visions within dreams are only linked after our awakening, and the longer the gap

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[75] Lincoln (1935); Kuper (1979).
[76] Freud (1900); Freud & Oppenheim (1958); cf. Devereux (1976) and his analysis of dreams in Greek tragedy. Lévi-Strauss (1963).
[77] Freud (1900: 391).

between dream and narration, the more logical a character they assume.[78] Such 'secondary elaborations' take place within the context of the local cultural systems of language, belief, symbolic expression, and so on. Therefore it remains crucial to structure the dream within its native frames.

With this in mind, Kuper proposed that the dream is a 'mode or argument', in which the initial premise or situation of the dream is developed through a system of transformations to produce a resolution to the initial issue, and that the dream has an internal unity and structure which enables a set of rules to be discerned for these transformations. This is the same set of rules which was found, principally by Lévi-Strauss, to determine transformations within myth.[79] These are given by Kuper as:[80]

Transformation Rule 1. Given a situation in which A acts upon B with a particular consequence, X:

a) replace one actor with a new actor, C; and

b) produce a consequence, not X.

Transformation Rule 2. Given a sequence of events, a, b,c,....,n:

a) produce a sequence –a,-b,-c,....,-n; and/or

b) reverse the sequence

Therefore when he breaks down the dream narratives he picks out sequences of actions and events, and then examines them within these transformation rules. So in a dream governed by Rule 1, a transformation from one sequence to the next would be effected by changing one of the characters (say A) with a new actor (C), and reversing or changing the consequence of the initial encounter (not X). His subsequent application of

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[78] Foucalt (1906), in Bastide (1999: 202).
[79] Kuper (1979: 647-648); Lévi-Strauss (1963: 228).
[80] Kuper (1979: 650).

this analysis to a series of dream narratives is successful, if complex, and he is persuasive in arguing that the dream can be 'read', and has a coherent internal structure constrained by recognisable sets of rules. Yet his focus is narrow, ignoring (self-admittedly) the central topic of comparative symbolic expression between dream and myth, and his results reflect only a sample of the potential possibilities for cross-over.

Kuper succeeded in highlighting the concept of the dream as a text, one with a coherent structure capable of being decoded and analysed. Yet although he is convincing in arguing that dream and myth share a common structure of transformation, does that necessarily mean that their narratives, overall, are parallel? It has since been demonstrated by Waud Kracke that the two progress in different ways. The dream begins as a visual, 'sensory-spatial' experience, which is then moved into a verbal, narrative form during its communication (orally or as text). Yet myths begin within narrative, within a verbal form, and progress from there to create, for the reader/listener, a sensory-spatial environment through verbal descriptions of visual, audile, and tangible imagery.[81] They therefore move in opposite directions. Kracke was not arguing against the equating of myths with dreams, and indeed he himself drew structural comparisons which linked both dream and myth origins to the same process of thought, what Freud rather pejoratively termed 'primary process' thought, but what Kracke prefers to name 'imaginal thought': a form of thought with complex structures capable of the expression of advanced and subtle ideas.[82]

The relationship between dream and myth is subtler than simply a shared body of symbolic images and imagery. Instead of looking for the content of one in the other,

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[81] Kracke (1987: 35-37). Cf. D. Tedlock (1999) who emphasises the auditory aspect.
[82] Kracke (1987: 52).

anthropologists now consider each form to have its own distinct set of signs, which then has a relationship with the other forms of media around it, whilst retaining some idiosyncratic structural features.[83] Thus Mannheim has illustrated the fallacy of automatically equating myth symbols with their interpretations in dream texts. In his examination of Andean dreams, he demonstrated that while the lexicon of signs for symbolic expression in myth remained relatively unchanged since their conception, the structure of dream symbolism is more alive and dependent on contemporary cultural shifts, therefore their catalogue of signs and interpretations has changed over the last four hundred years. In 1631, the signifier 'to cross a bridge' meant separation, but by 1979 it was interpreted as a 'fortunate day', just as a 'trip' meant defeat but now means 'to miss an appointment'.[84] Thus anthropologists try to avoid searching for the myth in dream or vice-versa in a reductive fashion. They treat each as a separate cultural system and, though they are conceived and expressed through narrative forms which bear similarities, they are not merely imitations of each other.

[83] B.Tedlock (1987*a*: 27), (1992: 464-465), (1999: 91); Mannheim (1987: 134).
[84] Mannheim (1987: 149).

3
The Language of Dreams

At the heart of any culture's dream experience is the language used to express it. The words for dreams and dreaming, in their usage and meaning, reflect a culture's understanding of the phenomenon. In the English language, there is one word, dream.[1] This one word absorbs all the multiple experiences of dream – whether you thought you saw your mother, dreamt of your own death, or pictured yourself in a fantasy land, all are equally 'dreams'. This noun is a verb as well – I can 'dream', we can all dream. In other words, the capacity to dream is something we have, an action we can do, the dream is a product of ourselves. The periphrastic expression 'I had a dream' is so commonplace that one barely ever questions why we say it, and what it implies. In the same manner as the verbal use, the phrase is indicative of a certain understanding of the dream phenomenon – it is something we 'have'; we own it and produce it. All of the uses of the word dream in modern English complement each other, and form a part of our own underlying conception of the dream. Whether one is a Freudian or Jungian is not at issue, but the basic perception of the dream as the result of internal, neurological processes is complemented by the phrasing we employ to express dreams. Our language of dream reflects the core principles which underpin much of modern dream theory. If one were to alter this framework, one would imply a different set of beliefs. Note the marked difference in sense between, 'I had a dream last night' and 'A dream visited me in the night'. An extreme example, but one which should illustrate the important link between

[1] There is also 'nightmare', but this denotes a type of dream, thus the core word remains dream.

language and understanding, which is so assumed that one probably never cares to think about it.

The Greeks employed their own dream language, one which from the start appears more complex than ours. They had four words for dream: *ὄνειρος* (masculine), *ὄνειρον* (neuter), *ὄναρ*, and *ἐνύπνιον*.[2] The use of these words in phrases was also more fluid and varied – one could even have a dream without mentioning the word: '*ὄψιν ἰδὼν ἐν ὕπνωι* '. In beginning an examination of Greek dream culture, it is paramount to discern why there was this lexicographical variation, and what it can inform us about their perception of the dream experience. We know that by the 2nd century AD Artemidorus of Daldis, who composed the *Interpretation of Dreams*, the most famous handbook on dream interpretation that is extant, separated *ὄνειρος* and *ἐνύπνιον*. He considered them to be two different types of dream experience: '... in that the first indicates a future state of affairs, while the other indicates a present state of affairs' (*Ταύτη γὰρ ὄνειρος ἐνυπνίου διαφέρει, ἢ συμβέβηκε τῷ μὲν εἶναι σημαντικῷ τῶν μελλόντων, τῷ δὲ τῶν ὄντων*).[3] By the 'present', he means the current mental or bodily condition of the dreamer. His logic is drawn in part from his experiences, but also directly from the words themselves. *Enypnion* (from *en* plus *hypnos*, literally 'in sleep') denotes a dream experience limited to the act of sleep itself: 'the minute sleeping ends, it disappears' (*παυομένων δὲ τῶν ὕπνων ἀφανίζεται*). The *oneiros*, on the other hand, continues after sleep, in that its content prompts the dreamer into action. This is how the word differentiates itself from *enypnion*. He even suggests an etymological link to 'telling' (*εἴρειν*) what is 'real' (*τὸ ὄν*).

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[2] There was also a 'mixed form', which is found commonly in tragedy, particularly in the plural. It probably stems from a combination of *onar* and *oneiros*, and produced *oneiratos*: Kessels (1978: 122).
[3] Artem. *On*. 1.1.

This, however, is the theory of a professional dream interpreter writing centuries later than our period. The present aim is to attempt to discern if there was such a sophisticated and clear-cut distinction made between the words for dreams at this early stage in Greek culture. Therefore I shall begin with an appraisal of each of the dream words, analysing in what contexts they are used, and what meaning(s) they imply – searching for any noticeable variations between the different words. It will become clear that there were some idiosyncratic meanings for each word, but that there also remained a degree of overlap, and that any distinctions which were present were not as uniformly observed as the picture given much later by Artemidorus. Having completed the analysis of words for 'dream', I will then look at how the act of dreaming is expressed, both through the limited occurrences of Greek verbs for 'dreaming', and also via the more common usage of periphrastic expressions. Again, the emphasis is on how the use of the dream language implies a certain understanding of the dream experience. Greek language did not often use verbs for 'dreaming' directly, and instead dreams were commonly something 'seen', *opsin oneirou*, for example. I believe that this form of expressing the dream experience contributed to the Greek understanding of dreams, and maintained a level of conceptual separation between dreamer and dream. Finally, I will conclude with an examination of the use of dream in metaphors, similes and other figurative ways, and the manner in which these uses reflect on the relationship between dreams and 'reality' in classical Greece. A culture's understanding of dream 'reality' is a common feature of anthropological investigation; this final section forms an important complement to the preceding two, for it tempers the possible misinterpretation of the 'objectivity' of Greek dreams. That dreams could be personified, and could be understood as external, as

experiences which were 'seen' and separate from the dreamer himself and his unconscious, does not mean that the Greeks confused dream reality with waking reality. The two were understood as different forms, and had been since the time of Homer.

In studying all three topics, I approach the literary evidence *en masse*, which should allow any variations between genres to shine through. I want to make clear, however, that it is my belief that the differences between genres reflect not just literary concerns and changes in narrative styles, but also implicitly indicate variances in the underlying conceptions of dreams.

(i)

What's in a name? The Words for Dream.

(i, a)

Oneiros / Oneiron

The masculine *oneiros* and neuter *oneiron* are both used from the earliest stages in Greek literature. At the opening of Book II of the *Iliad*, we discover Zeus has decided to send 'evil dream' (*οὐλον ὄνειρον*) to Agamemnon; he cries out to dream, instructing it to deliver a certain message; and dream listens, before descending down to the sleeping king. The image of dream here presented is one of striking objectivity – the dream is able to be summoned and instructed; it listens and reacts. It is essentially a living being. The word used to describe this personification of dream is the masculine *oneiros*. We can also find in Homer the neuter form *oneiron*. In the *Odyssey*, after Penelope has been comforted by the dream figure of Iphthime, fashioned and sent by Athena, she awakens in better spirits, *ὡς οἱ ἐναργές ὄνειρον ἐπέσσυτο νυκτὸς*.[4]

The question which has troubled some commentators is why he needed both forms – were they words descriptive of different processes and experiences, or is there no discernible variation? One of the best attempts to explain this difference, and identify a variation, was made by the Dutch scholar A.H.M. Kessels. He proposed that the masculine form was indicative of the type of personified, visitation dream we have in the case of Agamemnon, above, whilst the neuter form was employed only in reference to the dream 'as a whole', as an experience or as dream content, rather than as directly referring

[4] Hom. *Od.* 4.841.

to the objectified dream figures.[5] His argumentation stems in part from the basic divisions proposed by Chantraine: 'Le neutre désigne en principe la chose par opposition aux êtres animés. Les noms neutres sont donc d'abord des noms des choses'.[6] Therefore Kessels suggests that we would expect to find that the non-neuter forms, 'when used in concurrence with neuter forms, in principle denote animate beings in opposition to things'.[7] This is sound logic, but his theory begins to fail when applied to the texts themselves. One of the most important difficulties in attempting to find any distinction between the two genders is that they overlap in form, which means that unless they occur in the nominative, or with an article or other qualifying word, we are left in the dark over their exact gender. Kessels was forced to employ a system of 'assumption', i.e. if the masculine form is clearly used, and then is followed in quick succession by an 'unclear' form, the latter will be assumed to have been a masculine as well. But the truth is that, particularly when the words occur in isolation, there is often no way of proving whether we have a masculine or a neuter.

Kessels' theory does work on occasion. *Oneiros* is used six times in the Agamemnon dream scene of the *Iliad*; clearly in this case, the hypothesis works.[8] The dream, at all points, is the objective, visitation type experience – the very dream itself is a character. However, the only other clear reference to an *oneiros* in the *Iliad* is not as straightforward. As Diomedes, the great Argive warrior, rampages through the Trojan ranks, Homer names some of those he kills. Amongst them are Polyidos and Abas, who are referred to as the sons of Eurydamas, an aged *oneiropolos* or dream interpreter. The

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[5] Kessels (1978: 121*ff*).
[6] Chantraine (1961: 29).
[7] Kessels (1978: 126).
[8] Hom. *Il.* 2.6, 8, 16, 22, 56, 80.

Greek of this passage is not clear cut, but he either fails to interpret, or makes a mistake in interpreting, or even fails to dream on the behalf of, his sons (*οὐκ ...ἐκρίνατ' ὀνείρους*).[9] Homer gives no details on the content of the dreams, so we cannot know if he expected us to infer from the masculine that these were objective, personified visitation dreams such as those received by Agamemnon. Given that Eurydamas' role was to interpret, one would actually expect a symbolic dream instead, which contained some imagery for him to decipher. However that may be, it is not as clear cut as the Agamemnon instance. There are no definite neuter forms in the *Iliad* (only an unclear *ἐν ὀνείρωι*) with which we might draw a direct comparison between the two forms.

Indeed, the only Homeric neuter occurs in the passage involving Penelope in the *Odyssey*, mentioned above, where the queen felt comforted after she was visited in sleep by the image of Iphthime: *ὣς οἱ ἐναργὲς ὄνειρον ἐπέσσυτο νυκτὸς ἀμολγῷ*.[10] This sole instance of the neuter is enough to contradict Kessels' theory. Kessels admits that the sentence would appear to present the dream with personal traits and imply a personal character, but still attempts to explain the switch to *oneiron* in a rather forced argument. He claims that, although Penelope originally believes her dream phantom to be a real person, this personality is gradually lost. Penelope: 'expresses the hope that Iphthime's visit will deliver her from her present misery, which she proceeds to tell to her sister. When she has stopped complaining, the *eidōlon* (4.824) tells her that it has been sent by Athena. Penelope asks whether it knows anything about Odysseus, but the *eidōlon* refuses to give a clear answer and departs'. It is this indefinite character of the *eidōlon*

[9] Hom. *Il.* 5.150. Cf. pp.275-276, below, for more detail on Eurydamas.
[10] Hom. *Od.* 4.841

from 4.826 onwards which Kessels believes prompts the use of the neuter form *oneiron*.[11] I personally cannot see this 'indefiniteness' as clearly as Kessels does, but even if it is present it surely does not override the other elements of Penelope's sentence which clearly indicate the objective and personified nature of her dream experience. There is the use of *ἐναργὲς*, which is commonly employed elsewhere by Homer to denote a divine apparition.[12] There is also the verb *ἐπέσσυτο*, third person singular aorist of *ἐπισεύω*, which means that the dream 'hastened to' or 'sped to' her. This definitely gives the dream a personified character – the ability to move independently. This use of the neuter does not, to my mind, appear any different to the use of the masculine earlier in the *Iliad*, and my reading of the passage would not change if the masculine had been inserted instead.

One final example from Homer will illustrate further the difficulty of separating the two genders. Later in the *Odyssey*, Penelope has another dream, in which she sees twenty geese being slaughtered by an eagle; within the dream, the eagle then speaks to her, saying, 'All those geese were suitors, and the bird was I. See now, I am no eagle but your lord come back to bring inglorious death upon them all' (*χῆνες μὲν μνηστῆρες, ἐγὼ δέ τοι αἰετὸς ὄρνις ἦα πάρος, νῦν αὖτε τεὸς πόσις εἰλήλουθα, ὃς πᾶσι μνηστῆρσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐφήσω*). When she asks Odysseus (disguised as a swineherd) to interpret this dream for her, she refers to it with the masculine form: *ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τὸν ὄνειρον ὑπόκριναι.*[13] The masculine here would, according to Kessels' theory, be completely unexpected. For one, she is referring to the dream's content, not to the dream as a personification. And further, this dream is one of the first non-visitation dreams in Greek literature, and instead has a strong symbolic element –the vision of the twenty geese being slaughtered.

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[11] Kessels (1978: 128).
[12] Eg. *Il.* 20.131; *Od.* 3.420, 7.201, 16.161.
[13] *Od.* 19.535*ff.*

Arguably, a trace of visitation is still present, because the eagle eventually swoops down to deliver a message and his interpretation of the vision, but this is not as strong as the explicit personifications of, for example, Iphthime earlier. This is another direct contradiction of Kessels' theory, and it makes it very difficult to maintain his clear-cut distinction between the two words.[14]

Overall, although it would be interesting if we could divide the two genders into different classifications of the dream experience, this simply is not possible. In part, this is because we do not have enough clear examples given the overlap between the two forms. But even so, I think it should be clear from the contradictions I have shown that trying to maintain any argument is very difficult, and that the words appear interchangeable from as early as their first usage. Kessels goes on to clarify that he believed a distinction was only felt in the earlier periods, but that as the use of these dream words became less common, so did the essence of their original variations in meaning. One can easily illustrate this with, for example, Herodotus. In his *Histories*, the two words are used frequently in dream scenes, but with no discernible difference in sense. The dream of Croesus, in which he has a vision of what will happen to his son Atys, who will be killed by an iron spearpoint, is presented initially using the masculine, and the dream is given some objective, visitation qualities; the dream 'sets upon' him (*οἱ εὕδοντι ἐπέστη ὄνειρος*).[15] How the content was delivered is not made clear – it could either have been a visitation which told him these things, or a direct vision of what was to come. Later, when Atys speaks about the dream, he uses the neuter instead. He explains his father's mistake in interpreting the dream (*ἀλλὰ λέληθέ σε τὸ ὄνειρον ...φής τοι τὸ*

[14] Kessels offers no explanation for the use of the masculine in this instance.
[15] Hdt. 1.34.1, 2, 3.

ὄνειρον ὑπὸ αἰχμῆς σιδηρέης φάναι).[16] This could arguably have been because Atys was talking about someone else's dream, and not his own, and was only concerned with the content of the dream, and not the dream as an experience. However Astyages refers to his vision dream (of his son usurping the throne) using the masculine: τὸν ὄνειρον. This is therefore an explicit reference to a vision dream, and more to the content of it than to the experience, with a masculine rather than the expected neuter. Further, in Book VII, Artabanus refers to the dream phantom which has been repeatedly haunting Xerxes using the neuter, rather than the masculine that one might expect. When the dream returns to visit Xerxes for the second time it is τὠυτὸ ὄνειρον; Xerxes informs Artabanus about his dream (ὄνειρον); Xerxes sets the test to discover whether this dream (τοῦτο ὄνειρον) really is divine; this same dream then appeared to Artabanus as he slept disguised as the king (τὠυτὸ ὄνειρον τὸ καὶ παρὰ Ξέρξην ἐφοίτα); and finally, as the dream hits its objective apex and goes to stab Artabanus in the eyes, it is still τὸ ὄνειρον.[17]

Kessels' theory and any other attempts to separate the two words cannot be supported. Furthermore, in concentrating on this idiosyncratic nature of the words such theories are in danger of emphasising this singular point instead of a much more important overall point: the use of *oneiros/on* versus the other words for dreams. Instead of attempting to draw such a narrow line of distinction, I intend to illustrate that whenever *oneiros/on* is used to denote the dream experience it implies certain characteristics of the dream. These are one or more of the following: the dream as objective; as personification; as divine; as external; in short, the dream in what I will term a 'traditional' sense, as illustrated, for example, by the Homeric dream scenes. That is not

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[16] Hdt. 1.39.1,2.
[17] Hdt. 7.14; 15.2,3; 17.1; 18.1.

to say that other words for dream could not, in some contexts, encapsulate something of this meaning, but that in its usage *oneiros/on* always carried with it these implications; and it is as a result of these implications that, as we shall see, the words were rarely employed by medical and philosophical writers, and in forensic oratory.

Evidence of *oneiros/on* being used in this 'traditional' manner is not difficult to find. In the *Theogony*, Hesiod gives his genealogy of dreams: *νὺξ δ' ἔτεκεν στυγερόν τε Μόρον καὶ Κῆρα μέλαιναν καὶ Θάνατον, τέκε δ' Ὕπνον, ἔτικτε δὲ φῦλον Ὀνείρων.*[18] *Oneiros* in this context is fully personified and perhaps even deified. We even have depictions of the winged *Oneiros* on a 6th century attic vase.[19] The lyric poet Sappho wrote a ten line poem to the god of dreams: '*ὄνοιρε* ...' (the Aeolic vocative singular of the masculine *oneiros*).[20] One cannot get much more personified than having 'dream' as an individual god.

Pindar also uses *oneiros/on*. When Pelias is explaining the message given to him by the dead Phrixus in a dream, he concludes: *ταῦτά μοι θαυμαστὸς ὄνειρος ἰὼν φωνεῖ.*[21] The dream, the soul of Phrixus, came to him; this is an objectified, visitation dream. Further, when Athena visits Pelias in his sleep, Pindar uses a strange sentence: *ἐξ ὀνείρου δ'αὐτίκα ἦν ὕπαρ.*[22] 'The dream suddenly became a reality', and she spoke, her speech taking place within the dream itself. The dream became a 'reality' because upon awakening Pelias

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[18] Hes. *Theog.* 211-212.
[19] *LIMC* ; dated to 540/535 BC.
[20] Sappho Fr.67 (Diehl). Cf. Alc. Fr.31 (Diehl) = *ἦρα τὸν Φοῖβον ὄνειρον εἶδον.* This fragment has no other context, but seems to refer to a dream of Phoebus.
[21] Pind. *P.* 4.163.
[22] Pind. *Ol.* 13.66.

actually has, in reality, the golden bridle which Athena gave to him in the dream to tame Pegasus. In this case the dream has left a physical apport.

In tragedy, *oneiros/on* continues to be used. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, the restless watchman, waiting for the signal of Greek victory from the beacons, refers to his couch 'which no dreams visit' (*εὐνὴν ὀνείροις οὐκ ἐπισκοπουμένην*).[23] The use of the verb *episkopeō* implies some personification on the part of the dream. When Cassandra perceives the forms of the murdered children of Thyestes, she describes them as like, '*ὀνείρων προσφερείς μορφώμασιν*'.[24] The ghostly form of the chldren is like the forms or shapes of dreams; a literal reference to the fleeting and ephemeral nature of the visiting figures in dreams. In Euripides' *Iphigenia in Tauris*, Iphigenia exclaims, upon discovering that Orestes is not dead: *ψευδεῖς ὄνειροι, χαίρετ': οὐδὲν ἦτ' ἄρα.*[25] In this case she is addressing the dreams themselves, as though they were capable of hearing and obeying. There is a certain physical element implied in her criticisms. This is true too of the use of *oneiros/on* in the *Hecuba*, where the eponymous queen calls out in lament to 'Earth, the mother of black winged dreams' (*ὦ πότνια Χθών, μελανοπτερύγων μῆτερ ὀνείρων*).[26] Here there is a clear physicality given to dreams – they have a genealogy as the children of earth,[27] and a physical form, 'winged'.

However, it is important to note that in tragedy the nature of the dream 'scene', as a literary construct, has changed from the visitation dreams which are so vividly described by Homer. The dreams which take place in tragedy, as visual experiences, are symbolic: the dreamers see a vision of events, and this vision can require some degree of

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[23] Aesch. *Ag*. 13.
[24] Aesch. *Ag*. 1218.
[25] Eur. *IT*. 569.
[26] Eur. *Hec*. 68*f*.
[27] Cf. Eur. *IT*. 1262: 'Earth gave birth to dream phantoms' (*Χθὼν ἐτεκνώσατο φάσματ' ὀνείρων*).

interpretation before they can be sure what it signifies. Unlike in Homeric epic, there is not a direct, spelt out, visitation by a dream *eidōlon* or god, which delivers a specific message to the dreamer. Take, for example, the dream of Clytemnestra, as reported by the Chorus in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*: 'She thought she brought forth a snake ... she laid it to rest in swaddling clothes, as though it were a child ... she herself offered it her breast in the dream ... with the milk it sucked a curd of blood' (*τεκεῖν δράκοντ' ἔδοξεν ... ἐν [ι] παιδὸς ὁρμίσαι δίκην ... αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαζὸν ἐν τὠνείρατι ... ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι.*).[28] The content of these dreams has its narrative potential,[29] but that is not the topic of discussion here. What is important is to recognise in these symbolic dreams that, although they do not have the same level of personification and objectivity as the Homeric ones, there is still little doubt that we are meant to understand them as being divinely sent; they are still external to the dreamer. Thus, for example, we find the Persian Queen being advised to supplicate the gods and offer libations to the Earth and the dead following her disturbing dream visions.[30] And in Sophocles' *Electra* the Chorus are discussing the content of Clytemnestra's dream, and how it must portend something evil for her, and they say: *ἦ τοι μαντεῖαι βροτῶν οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν δεινοῖς ὀνείροις οὐδ' ἐν θεσφάτοις, εἰ μὴ τόδε φάσμα νυκτὸς εὖ κατασχήσει.*[31] Therefore, although the nature of the dream 'scene' is different, *oneiros/on* in the context of tragic dreams still signifies a dream sent by the gods.

The tragedians complicate the picture by regularly using the mixed form of *oneiros/on* plus *onar*, *oneiratos*. It is first found in Homer's *Odyssey*, when Penelope

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[28] Aesch *Cho.* 526-533; trans. H. Lloyd-Jones (1979).
[29] As explored fully by Walde (2001). In this case it provides Orestes with confirmation of Clytemnestra's fate: it is he who is the snake, and who will slay her.
[30] Aesch. *Per.* 215-225.
[31] Soph. *El.* 500-502.

refers to the many dreams (*oneirata*) that her daimon was sending, bearing images of her husband Odysseus.[32] It is not clear why this extra form was needed, but it seems to have begun as an additional way of expressing the plural, and it is in the plural that one usually finds it. Herodotus, for example, twice employs the genitive plural *oneiratōn*, once when the magi are referring to dreams in general during their interpretation of Astyages' dreams, and once when Astyages is explaining to Xerxes that dreams can simply reflect what one has been thinking about during the day.[33] In both cases, one could argue, the word is used in contexts where a dream is not being singled out as an experience, but talked about generally. However, this is a coincidence specific to Herodotus, and we find that in fact the mixed form is still employed with much the same meaning as *oneiros/on*. For example, the Persian Queen uses it when referring to her symbolic dreams, stating how she has been visited incessantly by many dreams: *πολλοῖς μὲν αἰεὶ νυκτέροις ὀνείρασι ξύνειμι'.*[34] Io, too, uses it to express the multiple dream visions she has had, informing her that she will have a union with Zeus: *τοιοῖσδε πάσας εὐφρόνας ὀνείρασι συνειχόμην δύστηνος, ἔστε δὴ πατρὶ ἔτλην γεγωνεῖν νυκτίφοιτ' ὀνείρατα.*[35]

Beyond epic and tragedy, the uses of *oneiros/on* still imply the 'traditional' chracteristics of dreams. We have already seen how Herodotus, for instance, uses it to describe the dream figure visitation to Xerxes, and then Artabanus, which prompts the Persian king's ultimately disastrous decision to invade Greece.[36] In the *Anabasis*, Xenophon offers prayer to the god who sent him his dream that showed him how to cross

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[32] Hom. *Od.* 20.87.
[33] Hdt. 1.120.3; 7.16b.2.
[34] Aesch. *Per.* 176.
[35] Aesch. *PV.* 655-657.
[36] Hdt. VII. 14, 15.2, 15.3, 17.1, 18.1.

a river that hemmed in him and his men: *καὶ εὔχεσθαι τοῖς φήναι θεοῖς τά ... ὀνείρατα.*[37] In a similar vein, in the *Cavalry Commander* he discusses the various ways in which the gods communicate with men: they warn in sacrifices, omens, voices and *ἐν ὀνείρασιν.*[38] Thus in both cases divine dreams are referred to with the mixed form. In another very interesting example, Aristophanes uses *oneiros* during a parody of a Euripidean dream scene. In it, a lowly spinning girl has an ominous dream about her cock, and upon awakening finds it has, catastrophically, been stolen. As Aristophanes mocks the dark mood of Euripides, he remarks that black night sent the dream to the girl: *τίνα μοι δύστανον ὄνειρον πέμπεις ἐξ ἀφανοῦς;* and in order to rid herself of its ill-effects, she tried to wash away the dream (*ὡς ἂν θεῖον ὄνειρον ἀποκλύσω*).[39] This example is noteworthy because elsewhere Aristophanes prefers to use other words, such as *enupnion* and *onar*, to denote the dream experience.[40] His use of *oneiros* in the parody is more than just a coincidence, but a deliberate attempt to employ the language suitable for such a tragic, overtly divine, dream scene. Probably in a similar manner, the only use of *oneiros/on* by Plato occurs in a passage where he is discussing (or more precisely criticising) the foundations of cults and dedications by people on account of dreams, and those in distress or sick: *ἔν τε φάσμασιν ἐγρηγορότας διὰ φόβους καὶ ἐν ὀνείροις.*[41] Again, it is in the context of divine dreams that we find Plato using *oneiros/on*.

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[37] Xen. *Anab.* 4.3.13.
[38] Xen. *Cav.* 9.9.
[39] In this instance the masculine can be inferred from the previous use.
[40] He also uses *oneiros* in the *Wasps* (53), when Sosias and Xanthias are telling each other their symbolic dreams (highly stylised parodies of the symbolic dreams in epic and tragedy), as a result of which Sosias claims that Xanthias' interpretation is worth two obols: *εἶτ' οὐκ ἐγὼ δοὺς δύ' ὀβολὼ μισθώσομαι οὕτως ὑποκρινόμενον σοφῶς ὀνείρατα.*
[41] *Laws* 10.910a. He does also use the mixed form elsewhere: *Stats.* 278e; *Theaet.* 158c, 201d; *Epist.* 3.319b, 8.357c; *Laws* 3.695c, 5.746a, 12.969b; *Rep.* 3.414d.

Added to this evidence is the fact that it is extremely rare to find *oneiros/on* used in works which focus on the non-traditional characteristics of dreams, i.e. by those authors who attempt to provide alternative, non-divine, explanations for the origins of dreams, or link them to the bodily condition. Therefore Aristotle never uses the words in his long discussions of dream origins, and it is very infrequent in the Hippocratic corpus. Further, one of its appearances in the Hippocrtaic writings confirms the traditional aspect. During the *Diseases*, when the author is discussing the pathology of the disease phrenitis, he gives some of the symptoms: 'His diaphragm swells outwards, and is painful when touched. The patient is afraid, and he sees terrible things, frightful dreams, and sometimes the dead' (*καὶ αἱ φρένες οἰδέουσιν ἐκτός, καὶ ἀλγέει ψαυόμενος. καὶ φοβεῖται, καὶ δείματα ὁρᾷ καὶ ὀνείρατα φοβερὰ καὶ τοὺς τεθνηκότας ἐνίοτε*).[42] The dreams which he sees in this case are unusual and terrifying, not the normal dreams that one would expect; the exceptional state that the patient is in even allows him to see the dead. It is this particular condition which alters his perceptions, and prompts the type of dreams which the author classifies as *oneirata*, to clarify the abnormality of his condition, just as it is strange to have visions of the dead.

It is difficult to conclude with Kessels that *oneiros* and *oneiron* indicated two different types of dream experiences. The most one can say is that, in a state of absolute personification, when the dream god Oneiros is being referred to, the masculine singular is appropriate. Otherwise, it is clear that any differences would be so subtle that any change in sense would be lost on the audience. Instead, what we can conclude from the

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[42] Hipp. *De Morbis* 2.72.5. The only other reference comes in a pseudo-hippocratic letter; Hipp. *Epistulae* 15,33.

evidence is that *oneiros/on*, taken together, represent a certain 'traditional' presentation of dreams, and that in using them one almost automatically implies one of a number of dream chracteristics: that it is personified or objectified; that it is divine; that it is external. These echoes of a traditional perspective were loud enough for some theorists, in particular those focusing on the relationship between the dreams and the internal functions of the body, deliberately to avoid using *oneiros/on*, favouring, as we shall see, *enupnion*.

(i, b)

Onar

This alternative, indeclinable word for dream occurs from the beginning alongside *oneiros/on*. In fact, it is the first word used for dream in Greek literature. When the divine plague sent by Apollo was besetting the Achaeans, Achilles asked a gathered counsel if they could inquire to any seer, priest, or even an *oneiropolos*, for, he said, 'the dream also is from Zeus' (*καὶ γάρ τ'ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν*).[43] So, therefore, the divine dreams sent by gods can also be classed as *onar*, and in this respect the word could be used in a similar fashion to *oneiros/on*,[44] although it was never personified to the same extent; we have no evidence of an '*onar*' figure, or a genealogy of '*onar*', for instance. The element which separates *onar* from *oneiros* is that, over time, *onar* became less frequently a signifier of a divine dream episode *per se*, but more often indicative of a certain quality of the dream

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[43] Hom. *Il.* 1.63.

[44] Cf. Sappho Fr. 126 (Diehl); Aesch. *Cho.* 525; *IT.* 55; Soph. *El.* 425; Eur. *Rhe.* 782; Xen. *Anab.* III.1.11, 1.12, 1.13; IV.3.8; VI.1.22; *Cyrop.* VIII.7.2; *Symp.* 4.33: all use *onar* to refer to the dream itself, and the dreams have the same traditional characteristics as *oneiros*. Herodotus does not use *onar*, therefore it may have been limited to the Attic dialect at this stage.

as something unreal or illusory. It was a word used predominantly in a comparative and/or figurative context, rather than in reference to explicit dream episodes. This comparative use is encapsulated by the frequent opposition of *onar* with *hypar*, dream versus (waking) reality. This is an opposition which is often examined through Platonic discourse, but in fact it was already established in Homer and the lyric poets. It is clear that from the earliest writings *onar* had a place as a comparative word, which illustrated not only a certain quality of the dream experience, but also that those writing and reading about dreams were equally aware that the dream, however objectified and real, still remained in a class of reality beneath that of waking normality.

This begins in the *Iliad*, in the rather complex dream episode of Rhesus. As the Thracian king and his men sleep, Achilles and Diomedes work their way through the camp, slaughtering them all. Eventually Diomedes reaches Rhesus himself; according to Homer: *κακὸν γὰρ ὄναρ κεφαλῆσιν ἐπέστη τὴν νύκτ' Οἰνείδαο πάϊς διὰ μῆτιν Ἀθήνης.*[45] A literal translation would read something like: 'a bad dream stood by his head in the night a son of Oineus through the craft of Athena'. It is not clear whether we are to suppose that Rhesus was having a dream of Diomedes at the same time as he approached, or whether Rhesus imagined it was only a dream that was standing before him, when in fact it was truly Diomedes. I would suggest the latter; the *onar* is used because Rhesus' 'dream' of his approaching killer proves, in fact, to be a reality. I think Richard Lattimore gives the best translation to express this: 'a bad dream stood by his head in the night – no dream, but Oineus' son, by device of Athene'.[46]

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[45] Hom. *Il.* 10.496-497.
[46] Lattimore (1951).

This use of *onar* continues in the *Odyssey*, where we first find the *onar/hypar* opposition. After Penelope has seen in dream the vision of the geese being attacked by an eagle, the eagle swoops down and explains to her the meaning of her premonition, still within the dream. It explains that it is Odysseus, and the geese are the suitors, thus it shows that soon he will return to kill them. He reassures her: *οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλ' ὕπαρ ἐσθλόν.*[47] This is not a dream (*onar*) but a good 'reality' – it is a vision which will be fulfilled in the real world. The eagle is using *onar* in a comparative sense, not as a reference to the dream episode. If one remembers from earlier, this dream episode as a whole is referred to by *oneiros/on*, and not *onar*. The *onar* is used specifically as a word implying irreality; it is still dream because the dream itself is something unreal and only a fleeting impression of the actual world. This attitude is supported by another instance in Homer. Penelope mentions that her sleep is troubled by dreams: *αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ καὶ ὀνείρατ' ἐπέσσευεν κακὰ δαίμων*. She continues that last night she saw a vision of her husband: *ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἐφάμην ὄναρ ἔμμεναι, ἀλλ' ὕπαρ ἤδη.* [48] In other words, she thought that this was not a dream, an imagined, false perception, but a reality – she thought her husband was actually with her. It is interesting how we have the dream as the experience, as sent by the *daimon*, classed as *oneirata*, but the dream as a certain quality or state qualified as *onar*.

We continue to find *onar* used in a figurative sense in the lyric poet Mimnermus. In a fragment from his *Nanno* he contrasts youth with a fleeting dream: *ἀλλ' ὀλιγοχρόνιον γίνεται ὥσπερ ὄναρ ἥβη τιμήεσσα.*[49] Youth is a short and precious thing, soon overtaken by old age; the dream too is an ephemeral thing. *Onar* is again used as the word which

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[47] Hom. *Od.* 19.547.
[48] Hom. *Od.* 20.90.
[49] Mimnermus Fr. 5.4 (West).

signifies contrast with reality. A very similar analogy is made by Aeschylus, who comments that old men have a childlike strength, and wander like 'a dream seen by day' (*ὄναρ ἡμερόφαντον ἀλαίνει*).[50] Pindar, too, uses it in this sense when he states that 'man is the dream of a shadow' (*σκιᾶς ὄναρ ἄνθρωπος*); here there is the layering of shadow and dream to signify the fleetingness of man's existence.[51]

The ghost of Clytemnestra calls herself an *onar* when she admonishes the sleeping Erinyes: *ὄναρ γὰρ ὑμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμνήστρα καλῶ.*[52] This is a reference to her state, for she no longer has her real bodily form, but is now instead a phantom. She is using *onar* to explain how she is appearing to them – 'I Clytemnestra, a dream…', or possibly, 'I Clytemnestra, in a dream …' Similar, too, is her accusation that the Erinyes are 'chasing their prey in a dream' (*ὄναρ διώκεις θῆρα*), because she can hear them yelping and barking in their sleep.[53] The hunt is taking place in their dreamworld, not within waking reality.

Plato has a special relationship with *onar*; it is a word which he uses frequently in epistemological discussions. It is used often with the sense not only of a state beneath reality, and in contrast with *hypar*, but also a certain state of knowledge: the dream is an idea or concept which is un-proven. This rests on the pre-existing notion of the dream as a separate state of reality – concepts which still require proof do not yet really exist, but remain outside of true reality, just like a dream. But theories which are *onar* are often richly desired, just like the *onar* which Penelope talks of about her husband; it is this desire factor which often creeps in, thus Plato twice uses the phrase 'a golden dream' of

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[50] Aesch. *Agam.* 82.
[51] Pind. *P.* 8.97.
[52] Aesch. *Eum.* 116.
[53] Aesch. *Eum.* 131.

something which one thought one had, but in actuality is lost. In the *Theaetetus* Socrates says: *ὄναρ δή, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐπλουτήσαμεν οἰηθέντες ἔχειν τὸν ἀληθέστατον ἐπιστήμης λόγον*; the 'perfect definition of knowledge' which they thought they had, was but a golden dream – something which seemed true but had given false hope.[54] The same is true in the *Lysis*, where Socrates cries out: *κινδυνεύομεν ὄναρ πεπλουτηκέναι.*[55] The conclusion which he just reached was in fact not true.

Plato tends, as one would expect, to use *onar* quite playfully. In the *Charmides*, he has Socrates refer to the legendary gates of dream in Homer. "hear my dream (*ἄκουε .. τὸ ἐμὸν ὄναρ*)' he says, 'whether it has come through horn or through ivory (*εἴτε διὰ κεράτων εἴτε δι' ἐλέφαντος*)'.[56] This 'dream' is in fact an expression of something which he desires but does not actually exist, for he goes on to outline an ideal scenario. In the *Theaetetus*, again through Socrates, he states he will be relating 'a dream for a dream' (*ὄναρ ἀντὶ ὀνείρατος*).[57] His 'dream' is an unfounded argument, which he uses to dispute others who have also put forward arguments which are not only unfounded but wrong. Here, presumably, he switches from *onar* to the mixed form *oneiratos* for purposes of variation, and because *anti* governs the genitive (i.e. the indeclinable *onar* might not suffice).

Only once does Plato use *onar* of an actual dream episode; Socrates remembers a philosophical comment he may have heard in a dream: *λόγων ποτέ τινων πάλαι ἀκούσας ὄναρ ἢ καὶ ἐγρηγορὼς νῦν ἐννοῶ*.[58] This single, passing reference is the exceptional occurrence of *onar* as a straightforward dream. Otherwise, throughout, it is in the

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[54] Plato. *Theaet.* 208b.
[55] Plato. *Lysis* 218c.
[56] Plato. *Charm.* 173a.
[57] Plato. *Theaet.* 201d.
[58] Plato. *Phil.* 20b.

figurative sense that Plato employs it. On eleven occasions he draws the distinction between *onar* and *hypar*; the former as a state of irreality, the latter as the actual state.[59] At times, it is used in a similar sense to above: in the *Republic*, he discusses the fulfilment of base desires in reality, when formerly they were only freed in dream.[60] Here, of course, *onar* is in a sense a reference to an actual dream, but the emphasis is on the dream as something separate from reality – these people do now in the real world what previously had been limited to the dreamworld – which is not itself real and has no real effects. In a similar vein, in the *Theaetetus* he comments on the inscrutable character of philosophers: to chase chorus girls does not occur to them 'even in dream' (*οὐδὲ ὄναρ*).[61] Again, *onar* is used of a state separate from reality; it does not occur even in dream, in other words even in this realm where fantasy and desires can be freed.

The same holds true in the Hippocratic Corpus, where *onar* is used only once, in a proverbial expression, and its meaning is not strictly 'dream'. According to the author of the Hippocratic *Law*, inexperience is a cursed treasure which affects those that have it '*καὶ ὄναρ καὶ ὕπαρ*'.[62] The expression is meant to mean, of course, at all times; the implication again is that *onar* and *hypar* are two separate states.

Onar could be used to describe the dream experience, and was from Homer onwards, and in this respect it was very close in meaning to *oneiros/on*. Whilst it never had the same level of personification, for in descriptions of dream genealogy and so on it was *oneiros* which was the preferred term, it was an alternative way of expressing a

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[59] Plato. *Tim.*71e; *Phaed.*277d; *Phil.*36e, 65e; *Rep.* 2.382e, 5.476c, 5.476d, 7.520c, 9.576b; *Stat.*277d; *Theaet.*158b.
[60] Plato. *Rep.* 9.574d.
[61] Plato. *Theaet.* 173d.
[62] Hipp. *Lex* 4.5.

dream which could be used in a traditional context. However, what differentiates it from *oneiros/on* is its frequent use, particularly by the fourth century, as a word which denotes the dream as an illusory state, rather than an experience. Thus we often find the dreamlike characteristics of being ephemeral, fleeting, lacking body, and unreal, put in opposition to the fixed, tangible reality of the waking state. This is important proof that, even in Homeric times, the Greeks did not consider their dreams to be one dimensional objective visitations; instead, the dreaming state was recognised as a state separate from the normality of being awake. It was in dreams that one could be visited by a god, or have a vision that depicted some future yet to come, but it was in the waking state that the reality of this experience, and this knowledge, could be applied. The use of *onar* in this comparative manner adds to our understanding of the Greek dream culture, and the manner in which they thought about and used their dream experiences even from an early stage.

(i, c)

Enupnion

The final word for dream is an intriguing one. Often it is considered the more 'scientific' or 'learned' word for dream – the word which relegates the dream within man himself, and does not allow for divine interference. Much of this is the legacy of Artemidorus, who as we saw at the opening of this chapter classed the *enupnion* as the dream which depicted daily activities and things which occupied the mind: a man who went to bed hungry and dreamt of pork chops had seen an *enupnion*. For Artemidorus,

there was a fixed distinction between *enupnion* and *oneiros*, and in using one word or the other one was making an explicit reference to a certain dream type. In the classical period, it is clear that such a rigid dichotomy was not yet observed, and in particular through tragedy and in Herodotus *enupnion* can be very similar in sense to the other words for dream. However, towards the end of the period we do see a greater emphasis on *enupnion* in the medical writers and philosophers, those authors who were more concerned with the non-traditional aspects of dreams. It is, I believe, through their use of *enupnion* that the word would eventually take on the distinctive meaning which Artemidorus speaks of.

In fact, *enupnion* is first used not to describe an actual dream, but only in an adverbial sense to mean roughly 'in sleep'. It is used twice in Homer, in identical sentences: *θεῖός μοι ἐνύπνιον ἦλθεν ὄνειρος*.[63] One will note that it is used alongside *oneiros* – the *oneiros* is the dream, and the *enupnion* is the sleep. 'A divine dream came to me in my sleep', Agamemnon tells the council, and Odysseus says the same when describing a dream episode to his troops. An *enupnion*, therefore, is not a dream but a state of sleep. The fact we find it used exclusively at this stage in connection with dream perhaps suggests that it was considered a special kind of sleep, maybe a sleeping state in which dreams could appear. This is reminiscent of Artemidorus' literal explanation for the *enupnion* – the things which occur *en hypnōi*, but are limited only to the period of sleep.

Enupnion occurs infrequently at this early stage in literature. It is used once by Pindar, when after Bellerophon has been visited in dream by Athena, he visits the seer of the land to ask his advice, and the seer informs him to do exactly as the dream obeys:

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[63] Hom. *Il.* 2.56; *Od.* 14.495.

ἐνυπνίῳ δ' ᾗ τάχιστα πιθέσθαι κελήσατό μιν.[64] Aeschylus is the only tragic author to employ it more than once. In the *Persae*, Atossa explains her dream(s) (*oneirasi*) to the Chorus; they propose an explanation which is favourable to her; she thanks them as the first to interpret these things: *ὁ πρῶτος τῶνδ' ἐνυπνίων κριτὴς*.[65] Later in the *Persae*, the Queen realises that her dream has been fulfilled, and begins her criticism of those judges with: *ὦ νυκτὸς ὄψις ἐμφανὴς ἐνυπνίων*.[66] The same is true in the *Seven Against Thebes*: Eteocles discusses the truth of his dream (although there is no detail given of the nature of this dream in the play), and says, *ἄγαν δ'ἀληθεῖς ἐνυπνίων φαντασμάτων ὄψεις*.[67]

Herodotus is the first author to use *enupnion* with any regularity. Astyages, after his symbolic dream about his daughter Mandane, refers it to the interpreters: *ὑπερδέμενος δὲ τῶν μάγων τοῖσι ὀνειροπόλοισι τὸ ἐνύπνιον.* (1.107.1). Later, on discovering that their prediction had proved false, he demanded they come before him: *ἐκάλεε .. τῶν μάγων οἳ τὸ ἐνύπνιόν .. ἔκριναν* (1.120.1). In both cases, it is clear that *enupnion* signifies the symbolic dreams of the king, in the same sense that *oneiros/on* would. Within Herodotus, although he uses the different words for dream with some frequency, there is no discernible difference between *enupnion* and *oneiros*. In fact, one of the most Homeric dream scenes in Herodotus is classed as an '*opsin enupniou*', that of Hipparchus. He saw the tall and beautiful figure of a man standing over his bed, who delivered an enigmatic message.[68] Potentially the most intriguing instance comes from the mouth of Artabanus, Xerxes' wise adviser. During Xerxes' protracted dream episode where he is visited repeatedly by a figure in his dreams, Artabanus seeks to reassure him, offering this

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[64] Pind. *O.* 13.79.
[65] Aesch. *Per.* 226.
[66] Aesch. *Per.* 518.
[67] Aesch. *Sept.* 710. See also Eur. *Hec.* 702.
[68] Hdt. 5.56. For more uses of *enupnion*, see: 2.139.3; 3.124.1; 4.184.4; 5.55.1.

counsel: these dreams (*ἐνύπνια*) are not divine; dreams (*ἐνύπνια*) for the most part are the thoughts of the day (*τά τις ἡμέρης φροντίζει*), and Xerxes himself had been preoccupied with the invasion of Hellas.[69] Therefore he proposes a similar theory to Artemidorus – that Xerxes is dreaming about advice related to the conquest of Greece simply because this has been the matter pressing his mind of late, and he refers to these dreams with *enupnion*. However, this must be a coincidence, because Artabanus goes on to explain his own, very objective, vision of the same dream phantom who has been haunting Xerxes using the phrase *τὴν ὄψιν οἱ τοῦ ἐνυπνίου*.[70] This episode simply confirms that at this stage there was not a clear-cut distinction between the two words, and they did not yet signify different types of dream.

This is still apparent in Xenophon, who uses it only once, during his *Symposium*, where Hermogenes discusses how the gods are his friends, and send to him as messengers 'omens of sounds, dreams (*ἐνύπνια*) and birds'.[71] Therefore Xenophon clearly believes that *enupnia* can be divine. Aristophanes uses it twice in the *Wasps* in direct reference to overtly symbolic dreams. Xanthias worries what evil awaits him having had his strange dream of a giant eagle (*ἰδόντι τοιοῦτον ἐνυπνιον*), swooping down into the market place. His companion Sosias responds by saying that he has had an odd dream himself, of sheep in disguise standing on the Pnyx being harangued by a whale, which fails to impress Xanthias: *ὄζει κάκιστον τοὐνύπνιον βύρσης σαπρᾶς*.[72] Plato also seems to use *enupnion* with little change in dream emphasis. Like Hermogenes in Xenophon, Socrates claims that he has received commands from the gods through oracles and dreams (*ἐκ*

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[69] Hdt. 7.16b.2.
[70] Hdt. 7.18.1.
[71] Xen. *Symp.* 4.48.
[72] Ar. *Vesp.* 25, 40.

μαντείων καὶ ἐξ ἐνυπνίων).[73] The dream which Socrates describes of being visited by a woman in white raiments, an objective, visitation type dream, is classed by himself, and by Crito who is conversing with him, as an *enupnion*.[74] Plato even refers to the infamous dream sent by Zeus to Agamemnon as an *enupnion*: *τὴν τοῦ ἐνυπνίου πομπὴν ὑπὸ Διὸς*.[75] Therefore the fact that Plato seems to use all the words almost interchangeably suggests that their meaning was not yet differentiated concretely. Plato also uses *enupnion* during one of his more 'rational' treatments of the dream phenomenon. In the *Republic* he mentions that a man who is healthy and sober, and goes to sleep having aroused the rational part of his soul by ruminating on important subjects, will have dreams (*φαντάζονται τῶν ἐνυπνίων*) which are themselves less lawless.[76] This is a variation on the 'day residue' theory which employs *enupnion* as the word for dream. The other instances of *enupnion* in more traditionally divine contexts, however, prevent one from reading too much into it.

One could add to the literary evidence the inscriptions from the Epidaurian *iamata*, recording the miraculous cures performed by the god Asclepius within the dreams of the incubating visitors to his shrine. We hear of Ambrosia, for instance, who could not believe the accounts of people being restored to health only from seeing a dream (*ἐνύπνιον ἰδόν [τας μό]νον*); a father who discovers the location of his lost son on seeing a dream (*ἐνύπνιον ε[ἶ]δε*); and Andromache, who conceived a son when she saw the god touch her in a dream (*ἐνύπνιον εἶδε*).[77] The dreams in this context are, of course, divine. The use of *enupnion* is not peculiar to Epidaurus; we have a 4th century dedication

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[73] Plato. *Apol.* 33c.
[74] Plato. *Crit.* 44a (twice), 44b
[75] Plato. *Rep.* 2.383a.
[76] Plato. *Rep.* 9.572b.
[77] LiDonnici (1995): *α* 36; *β* 23, 11. Cf. *α* 98,104,120; *β* 2,5,6,28,39,51,61,83,111,117,120,124,129; *γ* 109.

to Artemis from Athens which states: [Ἀ]ρτέμιδι [ἀ]π' ἐνυπνίου; and we have two identical 4th century inscriptions from Boeotia set up by a woman, again to Artemis: ἐνύπνιον ϝιδῶσα.[78] It is clear that, even by the fourth century and the end of the Classical period, there was not yet a systematic distinction drawn between the usage of the two words.

What we do find, however, is that *enupnion* is the preferred word for the medical writers and for Aristotle, those theorists who were attempting to illustrate that the content of dreams could be linked to the body. For the Hippocratic writers, *enupnion* was the only word for dream. It appears in more texts than one might expect, and each time has the clear meaning of dream, as in the actual experience of dream, and this experience is consistently seen as a symptom of one's bodily state. It pertains to the future only in that a correctly diagnosed symptom might allow the doctor to prevent a forthcoming malady. So, for example, in the *Epidemics* dreams (ἐνύπνια) are one of the conditions of the diseased Erasinus, as observed on the fourth day; in the *Humours*, we are informed that a signal of disease may be the dreams (ἐνύπνια) which the patient sees; in the *Prorrheticon*, we are informed that 'the dreams of patients with phrenitis are vivid' (ἐνύπνια τὰ ἐν φρενιτικοῖσιν ἐναργέα); and in the *Internal Affections* a patient with a certain 'thick' disease reports having seen dreams (ἀφηγεῖται τὰ ἐνύπνια) which corresponded to the way he moved his body and spoke with his tongue in sleep.[79] The matter is obviously discussed most fully in the *Regimen IV* treatise, *Περὶ Ἐνυπνίων*. Perhaps most interestingly, we find in *Regimen IV* that *enupnion* is used to cover all types of dreams: there are the dreams which are divine and foretell the future (τῶν ἐνυπνίων θεῖά ἐστι καὶ προσημαίνει); there are

[78] *IG* II², 4660; *Hesperia* 1960, 123.
[79] Hipp. *Epidem.* 1.3.13; *De Hum.* 4.15; *Prorr.* 1.5.1; *De Affect. Int.* 48.23.

those which repeat the days actions (*τῶν ἐνυπνίων τάς ἡμερινὰς πρήξιας* ...); and there are those which are contrary to the day's acts (*τὰς ἡμερινὰς πρήξιας ὑπεναντιῶται τὰ ἐνύπνια*).[80] All are classed as *enupnion*, and the author makes no division in terminology. This is perhaps the finest evidence we have of how undeveloped the Greek terminology still was; even though *enupnion* was the word of choice for the Hippocratic authors, they had not yet explicitly separated it from the divine *oneiros*.

It was certainly the word favoured by Aristotle, who uses it exclusively in his writings on dreams, a total of nearly fifty times. In his *Peri Enupniōn*, in which he offers his own complex theory on the causes of dreams, relating it to the perceptive capacity, and locating the dream appearances within the dreamer, the dream is consistently an *enupnion*. Further, when discussing the topic of divination through dreams, in which he argues that it makes no sense that dreams should be god-sent when they are not sent to the best and most intelligent people but only randomly, and that most supposed divinatory power in dreams is a result of coincidences, it is *enupnion* which is his word for dreams.[81]

It is also used by the forensic orators.[82] Aeschines claims that Demosthenes, when informed through the scouts of Charidemus that Philip was dead, before anyone else had received the news 'made up a dream for himself' (*ἑαυτῷ ἐνύπνιον κατεψεύσατο*) and lied about the gods, pretending that he had learnt this news not from the scouts, but from Zeus and Athena.[83] He also makes accusations in a separate speech that Demosthenes had put forward as some form of evidence a dream of the Sicilian priestess

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[80] Hipp. *Reg.* IV. 87.1, 88.1, 88.11.
[81] Eg. 44. 462b13,15,17,18; 45.462b27; 46.463a4.
[82] Demosthenes used *onar* only in a figurative sense.
[83] Aesch. *Ctes.* 77*ff.* he refers back to this dream later, still using *enupnion* (twice): 219*ff.*

– *καὶ τὸ τῆς ἱερείας ἐνύπνιον τῆς ἐν Σικελίᾳ διηγήσατο*.[84] Therefore in both cases the dream is seen as something divine (at least by Demosthenes). Hyperides makes mention of an unusual dream when he is defending Euxenippus. Apparently Euxenippus had been ordered (along with two other people) to lie down in the temple at Oropus, to settle a dispute over sacred land. He had a dream which pointed in favour of two tribes, though he was soon impeached and accused of accepting bribes which guided his supposed dream content. Throughout, Hyperides again uses *enupnion*, even though this was a procured, divine dream.[85]

Ultimately, from the evidence we have in both the literature and the inscriptions, during the classical period there was not an explicit, fixed difference in meaning between *oneiros* and *enupnion*, in the same manner as that outlined centuries later by Artemidorus. What the literature does illustrate, however, is that *enupnion* was more suited to the 'scientific' style – or perhaps more accurately that *oneiros* (and *onar*) were *less* suited. We have seen from some of its applications within texts that *enupnion* could still denote a divine dream; therefore by using it one was not automatically rejecting the traditional dream conception. Equally, however, it did not carry with it the same inherent dream characteristics as *oneiros*, which was intrinsically bound up with the classic depictions of dreams we have seen from Homer onwards. It would be unsuitable for a medical writer to speak of *oneiroi* not simply because it did not suit his genre of writing, but also because of the implied associations with the character of the dream experience itself. One could have a divine *enupnion*, but one *had* to have a divine *oneiros*. The

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[84] Aesch. *Emb.* 2.10*ff.* Nb. Demosthenes makes no mention of this in his own record of his speech.
[85] Hyp. *Eux.* 4.3, 14, 15.

lasting effect of the stylised, personified and objectified dream images created by Homer was to make *oneiros* a word which automatically created certain traditional dream characteristics. It should be of no surprise that, if we peer just outside our period, we can see that *oneiros* makes a comeback in the work of Apollonius, writing epic in Homeric style, and the bucolic poets Theocritus and Moschus.[86] They are continuing in the traditions created by Homer, and reimforce the argument that *oneiros* was suited not just to a certain genre, but to a certain dream conception. In opposition to it could stand *enupnion*, which did not carry any of the inherent characterstics of *oneiros*; in fact, the only aspect implicit in *enupnion* was sleep, which is why we first find it being used to denote the act of sleeping. The fact that it was the word used most frequently by the medical writers and Aristotle no doubt contributed over time to the explicit theory which was outlined by Artemidorus; *enupnion* was the word for dream appropriate in such contexts, and as such the natural word to denote the internal dream linked to the working of the body and mind. *Oneiros* would remain the dream word that signified the traditional and the divine.

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[86] Apol. *Arg.* 1.290, 2.197, 3.446, 3.617, 3.636, 4.384, 4.685, 4.723, 4.875; mixed forms in 2.305, 3.690, 4.664, 4.1730. Theocritus: *Epig.* 24.91, 24.122; *Idylls* 9.16, 20.5, 21.65; mixed forms in 21.24, 21.31. Moschus: *Eur.* 1, 5, 17, 23, 27; *Meg.* 91, 122.

(ii)

Verbs for Dreaming and Periphrastic Expressions

The analysis of the different words for dream was important because it enabled us to determine how far the actual word for dream could determine how the dream was understood to be experienced – whether it was divine, for instance, or internal. The first word for dream appeared in the *Iliad*, but it is not until the second half of the fifth century that we find evidence of verbs which denote the dream experience as an act. The Greeks instead used periphrastic expressions to say that they had seen a dream: 'I saw in dream a vision of ....', rather than 'I dreamt that ....'. As I outlined in the introduction, there is an extent to which the language used to express the dreaming experience determines how it is understood. In English we 'have' dreams – we play an active part in their creation, and this is reflected in most modern attitudes to dreams themselves, which are a product of our unconscious, or a reflection of our thoughts; we own and produce the dreams that we 'have'. In ancient Greek, it is very rare to find such expressions which inherently link the act of dream within the dreamer.[87] And in fact, the periphrastic expressions often create a certain theoretical distance between dreamer and dream.

Chronologically, the first example of a dream verb we have may well come from Aristophanes' *Knights*, in 424 BC. In this episode, the Sausage-Seller accuses Paphlagon (i.e. the real-life Cleon) of 'making up dreams' or 'using dreams' to deceive the people: 'You know all this, and that's why you deceive him (Demos) and trot out dreams about

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[87] Cf. Björck (1946: 310-314).

yourself (*ἃ σὺ γιγνώσκων τόνδ' ἐξαπατᾷς καὶ ὀνειροπολεῖς περὶ σαὐτοῦ*)'.[88] Aristophanes was probably mocking an actual use of the dream by Cleon in the assembly, the content of which would no doubt have led them to believe that his policies would be successful.[89] There is no need to presume it is only metaphorical, as Kessels does, because dreams were not yet involved at this stage of the play;[90] the text makes perfect sense when interpreted literally. But there is still a sense that it is more than a simple 'dream', but more the element of dream that is desire or hope – a suitable alternative to 'dream' in the case of *oneiropoleis* would be 'fantasise about'. Aristophanes uses it in the *Clouds* (423BC) during an amusing scene: Strepsiades is tossing and turning in bed, worrying about his finances, whilst his son Phidippides is happily asleep and dreaming about horseracing. Strepsiades tells us that his long-haired son 'rides horses and drives curricles and dreams of horses' (*ἱππάζεται ... καὶ ξυνωρικεύεται ὀνειροπολεῖ θ' ἵππους*).[91] A few lines later, he repeats that his son 'dreams about' horsemanship (*ὀνειροπολεῖ γὰρ καὶ καθεύδων ἱππικήν*).[92] There should be no doubt that Strepsiades is being literal here, for we witness Phidippides having these horse dreams as he is talking in his sleep, speaking lines like, 'You are acting unfairly, Philo! Drive on your own course' (*Φίλων ἀδικεῖς· ἔλαυνε τὸν σαυτοῦ δρόμον*). Yet even so, it is the desire and the fantasy of the situation which is expressed through the verb. It is certainly used in the metaphorical sense later by Demosthenes, who, in the *First Philippic*, argues that Philip is 'dreaming' of further triumphs: (*καὶ πολλὰ τοιαῦτ' ὀνειροπολεῖν ἐν τῇ γνώμῃ*).[93] This is clearly a use of dreaming

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[88] Ar. *Eq.*809.
[89] Sommerstein (1981: 187); Parker (1997: 157n.53).
[90] Kessels (1978: 144); a dream is not detailed until Ar. *Eq.* 1090
[91] Ar. *Nub.*14-16.
[92] Ar. *Nub.*27.
[93] Dem. *Phil.*I.49.

in the metaphorical as opposed to literal sense. Plato, too, uses it in this manner, describing someone who has only opinion and no real knowledge as passing his life 'dreaming and slumbering' (*ὀνειροπολοῦντα καὶ ὑπνώττοντα*).[94]

Interestingly, as one would probably expect given the variation in words for dream, there is more than one verb for dreaming too. In the Hippocratic Corpus we first find the verb *ἐνυπνιάζειν / -εσθαι*. Here it is used in reference to the state of dreaming: following a change in diet, the patient will suffer troubled dreams (*ἐνυπνιάζονται*).[95] This verb was favoured particularly by Aristotle, who uses it eleven times in reference to the state of dreaming. During his *Peri Enupniōn* he refers, for instance, to the state which one calls dreaming, *τοῦτο ὃ καλοῦμεν ἐνυπνιάζειν*, and he tells us that dreaming (*τὸ ἐνυπνιάζειν*) belongs to the perceptual part of the brain.[96] A third verb for dream is *ὀνειρώσσειν*, which we also find first used in the Hippocratic Corpus. In *Regimen* I, during a discussion about the intelligence of the soul and the effects of internal fire and water, it is noted that: 'if the water be mastered by the fire, such a soul is too quick, and men of this type inevitably dream (*εἰ δέ τινι πλέον ἐπικρατηθείη τὸ ὕδωρ ὑπὸ τοῦ πυρός, ὀξείη ἡ τοιαύτη ψυχὴ ἄγαν, καὶ τούτους ὀνειρώσσειν ἀνάγκη*)'.[97] Dreaming here is the actual experience, a result of certain bodily conditions.[98] Plato explains this word in his *Republic* as symbolic of a state of misidentification: the state of dreaming (*τὸ ὀνειρώττειν*) is, whether asleep or awake, the mistaking of resemblance for identity.[99] Therefore here it is no longer literal, but

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[94] Plato. *Rep.* 534c; cf. *Tim.* 52b.
[95] Hipp. *Anc.Med.* 10.36. Cf. (possibly) *Reg.IV.* 88.2.
[96] Arist. *De Som.* 459a9, 21.
[97] Hipp. *Reg.I.* 35.127.
[98] Cf. in this same literal sense Arist. *De. Som.* 453b18; *Div.Som.* 463b12; and (though probably spurious) *Prob.* 957a8.
[99] Plato. *Rep.* 476c.

metaphorical. Aristotle uses it at times interchangeably with *ἐνυπνιάζειν*, with no apparent change in meaning, and it retains the literal sense of 'to dream'.[100]

However, although we know that the Greeks did have verbs for dreaming, there are still limitations in their use. The verbs denote the act itself, but there is no verbal expression which automatically implies that the dreamer is the source of the dream; 'I dreamed that' does not exist in the Greek.[101] We do not find anyone using a verb to express his own dream experience. Further, there is the fact that these verbs simply were not very popular, or at least that is the impression given by their infrequent occurrences in the sources.

If one wanted to state 'I dreamed last night that...', in virtually all cases this would be done using a periphrastic expression, such as: *ἐδόκεε Ἀστυάγης ἐν τῷ ὕπνῳ* or *Ξενοφῶν ... ὄναρ εἶδεν*.[102] These common phrases are the way that Greeks announced their dreams, both their own and the content of other people's. By phrasing their dream experiences in such a fashion, they maintained a separation between themselves and the dream. It is true that, as Kessels argued, this places more emphasis 'on the activity of the dreamer', but he was comparing them to the Homeric dream scenes where the ultra-passive dreamer plays no part in dreams which are formed and sent by the gods.[103] In actual fact, by emphasising the vision of a scene or a person, the language creates a sense of externality; that which is seen is not a product of the dreamer, but an independent phenomenon. They did not 'have' dreams as we do, but 'saw' them happen, like acts on a stage. The periphrastic expressions are extremely common in the Epidaurian inscriptions, where the

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[100] See Arist. *De Som.* 453b17*ff.*
[101] Cf. Gallop (1996: 7).
[102] Hdt. I.107; Xen. *Anab.* 4.3.8.
[103] Kessels (1978: 141).

dreamer, though he contributes in having travelled to the sanctuary, could hardly be said to be the predominant source of the dream imagery. Therefore while it is true that the dreamer, in seeing the vision, has regained some active role in the dream scene, the content of it is not necessarily determined by him; the language in which the experience of dreaming is framed reflects the potential external nature of dreams. Even though the Greeks were developing verbs for dreaming, they did not yet commonly employ them and treat 'to dream' as a self-determined act.

(iii)

The Figurative Uses of Dreams and the Relationship between Dreams and Reality

I want to end the analysis of the Greek dream language with an examination of the use of dreams in figurative contexts. It is important to recognise, and for me to underline, that in highlighting the lack of a concrete division between internal bodily dreams and traditional divine ones, and the external nature of the dream experience as it is presented in language, I do not intend to mislead the reader into presuming that every dream seen in the classical period was thought to be divinely sent. For one thing, the brief references to the use of *enupnion* in the medical and philosophical texts point to different ways of thinking about the dream phenomenon, which will be discussed fully in the next chapter. And further, although the objectivity of dreams was an important part of the Greek dream perception, this must be tempered by the recognition that dreams were not considered to be on the same level of reality as waking consciousness, as illustrated most

vividly in the opposition between *onar* and *hypar*. The Greek dream language simply allowed for the potentiality of external influence, and in certain key words, in particular the use of *oneiros/on*, automatically implied certain characteristics of the dream experience.

Building on this theory, I will now show some of the other ways in which Greeks used dreams in a literary context: as metaphors, similes, and to express emotion. My intention is to make clear that any blinkered one-dimensional view of dreams would misrepresent the richness of the evidence, and also to soften any harshly 'objective' perception of the Greek dream experience.

This expressive nature of dreams begins in the *Iliad*, when Achilles is trying to chase down Hector: 'As in a dream a man is not able to follow one who runs from him, nor can the runner escape, nor the other pursue him, so he could not run him down in his speed, nor the other get clear' (*ὡς δ' ἐν ὀνείρῳ οὐ δύναται φεύγοντα διώκειν· οὔτ' ἄρ' ὃ τὸν δύναται ὑποφεύγειν οὔθ' ὃ διώκειν· ὣς ὃ τὸν οὐ δύνατο μάρψαι ποσίν, οὐδ' ὃς ἀλύξαι*).[104] Dodds referred to this in Freudian terminology as a classic 'anxiety dream', but such modern classifications are unnecessary.[105] What is important is that we see Homer using a dream simile to convey frustration, and working dream content into his imagery. In this case the dream is not a personified being, but symbolic of emotion; the poet understood the feelings associated with dreaming, and the dream makes the emotion 'tangible'.[106]

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[104] Hom. *Il.* 22.199-201. This was rejected as an interpolation by the ancient scholiasts: Dodds (1951: 123n.20). Messer (1918: 22n.67) felt it was too modern in tone to be present in an Homeric epic.
[105] Dodds (1951: 106).
[106] See further Cox Miller (1994: 19) on Achilles' dream of Patroclus.

We have already seen in the opposition of *onar* and *hypar* that dreams were, in contrast to reality, things that were weak, lacking body and ephemeral. This is present in other contexts, too. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, when Cassandra perceives the forms of the murdered children of Thyestes, she describes them as: '*ὀνείρων προσφερείς μορφώμασιν*'.[107] The children in their present form are like dream figures, in that they are without their bodily form, only images of their real selves. A similar image is created in the *Phoenician Women*, where Antigone compares Oedipus' strength to a dream: *τᾷδε τᾷδε βᾶθί μοι, τᾷδε τᾷδε πόδα τιθείς*, she says, 'like a dream in your strength' (*ὥστ' ὄνειρον ἰσχυν*).[108] By this expression she highlights the weakness and infirmity of Oedipus; earlier in the play he had referred to his own state as like a 'winged dream' (*πτανὸν ὄνειρον*).[109] Other examples can be found. There is the chorus of old men in the *Heracles*, who refer to themselves as: *ἐστάλην ἰηλέμων γόων ἀοιδὸς ὥστε πολιὸς ὄρνις, ἔπεα μόνον καὶ δόκημα νυκτερωπὸν ἐννύχων ὀνείρων, τρομερὰ μέν, ἀλλ' ὅμως πρόθυμ'*. [110] In the *Cyclops*, Silenus begins the play by listing a number of his achievements, amongst them killing the giant Enceladus. He questions to himself: 'Do I say this having seen it in a dream? (*τοῦτ' ἰδων ὄναρ λέγω;*)'. The answer is no, because there is real proof in the form of the spoils he presented to Dionysus.[111] In other words, here we have a contrast between the possibility of something having been done in dream, *onar*, i.e. only on an imagined, irreal level, with the actuality of the accomplishment as embodied in the physical spoils. Dreams were not, it should again be underlined, considered reality, but

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[107] Aesch. *Ag.* 1218.
[108] Eur. *Pho.* 1720-22.
[109] Eur. *Pho.* 1545.
[110] Eur. *Her.* 107*f.*
[111] Eur. *Cyc.* 8-9.

only representations of it, images which lacked the vividness and body of the forms they depicted.

Dreams can also be used to express emotions such as desire, longing and wishes.[112] In the *Heracles* Megara remarks, upon seeing her husband approaching: 'what dreams do these anxious eyes behold' (*ποῖ ὄνειρα κηραίνους' ὁρῶ*).[113] Here it is not to physical dreams that she is referring, but instead the dreams are representative of her longing. She is anxious, desperate to see the return of her husband; she can hardly believe that she is now witnessing his approach – so the 'what dreams' is equivalent to 'what false hopes' or 'mirages'. The dream is a signifier of doubt or uncertainty on a matter of hope and desire. She had already referred to this state using dream: she presumes the figure she sees must be Heracles, 'unless some daydream mocks our sight' (*εἰ μή γ' ὄνειρον ἐν φάει τι λεύσσομεν*).[114] Earlier in the same tragedy, we see Megara lamenting at the fate of Heracles' sons, who are about to die, and she calls on the dead Heracles for help. 'Appear,' she cries, for his arrival 'even as a dream' (*κἂν ὄναρ*) would be enough, for the people slaying his sons are but cowards.[115] Thus the dream is again a lower state of reality; she makes it clear that *even as* only a dream, not as his real self but as a phantom, an image of it, he could prove able to save his sons. She longs to see him so much that she would be satisfied even if only in a dream. A very similar use of dream occurs in another Euripidean play, during a conversation between Orestes and Iphigenia. Iphigenia asks her brother, when she still is not aware who he is, if he knows of Troy;

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[112] Cf. Plato's 'golden dream', above.
[113] Eur. *Her.* 518.
[114] Eur. *Her.* 516*f.*
[115] Eur. *Her.* 495*f.*

Orestes replies that he wishes he did not, 'even if in dreams' (*μηδ' ἰδὼν ὄναρ*).[116] Thus Orestes is saying that he would be happy to forget about Troy even if this was only in his dream images, in other words not in reality but on another level; it is his desire to forget, expressed through dreams. Earlier in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, the chorus of young girls who accompany Iphigenia sing of their longing to return home: 'Even in my dreams (*κἀν γὰρ ὀνείροισι*) may I be at home in the house and city of my fathers' (*συνείην δόμοις πόλει ... πατρῴᾳ*).[117] Here we have an example of the dream being used as another, subordinate part of reality, combined with an expression of desire; they want to be singing even if only in their dreams. In Sophocles' *Electra*, as Orestes is about to kill Clytemnestra and Aegisthus, the chorus sings: '[and not so long] still will my dream of my soul hang in suspense (*ὥστ' οὐ μακρὰν ἔτ' ἀμμενεῖ τοὐμὸν φρενῶν ὄνειρον αἰωρούμενον*)'.[118] The dream here cannot be literal, unless they are referring to a dream we have not seen. It is more plausible that the use of *oneiron* here conveys the wish or desire of their soul – the murderers of Agamemnon are about to receive their punishment, releasing their dream from suspense and allowing it to find fulfillment. Demosthenes twice uses *onar*, in both cases not as a direct reference to dream (although we know from elsewhere that he did reveal his own at times), but in a figurative manner to express desire – the dream as something which symbolises a wish. In his *On Organisation*, he speaks of estates which have been bought and cultivated, on a scale more vast 'than they ever dreamed of before' (*οὐδ' ὄναρ ἤλπισαν πώποτε*).[119] In other words, the scale was more than they could have hoped or wished for – it was the stuff of unreal dreams. Something very similar is

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[116] Eur. *IT*. 518.
[117] Eur. *IT*. 452*ff*.
[118] Soph. *El*. 1390.
[119] Dem. *Org*. 30.9.

expressed in the *False Embassy*, where he talks of the Common Peace which robbed the city of its possessions, and earned for the perpetrators 'wealth beyond the dreams of avarice' (*μηδ' ὄναρ ἤλπισαν πώποτε κτησαμένην*).[120] It was wealth even above that which one might see in the realm of dream – truly a spectacular amount.

Not all dreams were *oneiroi*, and the Greeks were aware that their dreams contained images which were not real objectified facts, but hazy representations of possible truths, and hoped for events. This acceptance of the irreal nature of dreaming and the visions they saw meant that dreams could become part of their imaginal landscape, and one way of expressing emotions such as longing and desire. They could dream of huge amounts of money, or of being visited by a lost loved one, just as we might dream of winning the lottery. In recognising this element of the Greek dream culture, one can distance oneself from any notion of the 'primitive', and instead acknowledge the richness and variety of their dream conceptions.

[120] Dem. *Emb.* 275.7.

4
Theories on Dreams

The words for dreams provided the first clues to the Greek understanding of their dream experience, and how the expressions they used could imply that they considered their dreams to have certain qualities. In the present chapter I will delve deeper into the underlying theories which shaped these conceptions of dreams, searching for the supposed causality that the Greeks attributed to the dreams they saw. All too often in such studies modern commentators hastily bracket dream theories into neat groups, which in the case of classical Greece takes the form of an opposition between 'traditional' theories, built on themes found in Homeric *oneiroi*, and 'rationalist' ones proposed by philosophers and medical writers, classed ultimately as their *enupnia*. William Harris argued that there was 'something of a cultural conflict' between those who treated the dream as a significant, predictive event, and those who did not.[1] David Gallop also spoke of Aristotle, in his various writings on dreams, as working in a 'rationalist tradition', as though it were a clearly defined line of opposition building over time against the traditional.[2] Modern writers find it hard to marry the divinely packaged dreams we find most often in literature, with the down to earth theories proposed by the learned thinkers; instead of accepting that different theories on dreaming might suit different types of dreams, they try to set them apart and oppose them. Greek dream culture was not that one dimensional, and I will show that the various theories were often not aimed to counteract

[1] Harris (2003: 23-24).
[2] Gallop (1996: 9).

each other, but rather to offer alternatives, and that across all theories there is a degree of overlap and the essence of 'traditional' theory nearly always remains.

After all, virtually all cultures develop some form of system for differentiating between various dream types, and even amongst the most 'primitive' of tribes it would be rare to find every person understanding every dream experience to be of equal significance.[3] Most exhibit some manner in which they would separate the wheat from the chaff. It is in Homer's *Odyssey*, for example, that we find Penelope trying to ascertain what type of dream she has seen following her vision of the suitors, and she makes her famous statement on the gates of dreams, one of ivory, one of horns:

> *αἱ μὲν γὰρ κεράεσσι τετεύχαται, αἱ δ' ἐλέφαντι·*
> *τῶν οἳ μέν κ' ἔλθωσι διὰ πριστοῦ ἐλέφαντος,*
> *οἵ ῥ' ἐλεφαίρονται, ἔπε' ἀκράαντα φέροντες·*
> *οἳ δὲ διὰ ξεστῶν κεράων ἔλθωσι θύραζε,*
> *οἵ ῥ' ἔτυμα κραίνουσι, βροτῶν ὅτε κέν τις ἴδηται.*[4]

Through the gates of sawn ivory come dreams which are 'dangerous',[5] because they bring messages which will not be fulfilled or are unfinished (ἀκράαντα). Those that issue from the gate of polished horn, however, 'have power in reality' or 'fulfil things that are real' (ἔτυμα κραίνουσι), whenever they are seen by mortals.[6] Penelope is expressing that most simple of dichotomies: on the one hand those dreams that are worth heeding because they contain truths, and on the other those that mean nothing.

Dodds, as ever, is of interest here. In his essay he first argued against any idea of 'progress' in ancient dream theory, in particular rejecting the pattern established by

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[3] First identified by Lévy-Bruhl (1923: 101).
[4] Hom. *Od.* XIX.560-567. Referred to later by Plato: *Char.* 173a; in *Anth. Pal.* VII.42; Horace *Odes* III.27.40-2; Lucian *VH* II.32-33; and of course Vergil *Aen.* VI.893-896.
[5] Rather than 'false': Penelope nowhere says that dreams are 'false' and 'true'; any such translations are related to skewed assumptions stemming from Vergil's version (*Aen.* VI.895-896).
[6] Amory (1966: 24-28) is very good here. Cf. Russo *et al.* (1992: 562-563).

Herbert Rose.[7] Rose had stated that there were three stages of progress: 1) to understand the dream as objective fact; 2) to understand it as a phenomenon seen by a soul(s) in an out of body experience; 3) to interpret it through symbolism.[8] Such a simple schema is not representative of the evidence we have, wherein stage 1 is not abandoned for stage 2 (which itself does not appear universally), but instead continues to exist alongside stages 2 and 3. Dodds instead proposed, much as I do, that : 'the true explanation does not lie in any juxtaposition of "early" and "late" attitudes to dream-experience as such, but rather in a distinction between different types of dream-experience'.[9] For Dodds, the ultimate distinction was that between significant and non-significant, based on the statements of Penelope, above; he then, however, jumped to much later periods to illustrate how writers such as Macrobius and Artemidorus separated the significant category into further types. In the classical period, such structured organising is not that apparent. What Dodds should be commended for is his recognition that different types of dreams could call for different systems of understanding; it is unnecessary to stand one theory against another. As we have seen already with the dream language, things were not as clear-cut as many perceive.

Dodds later in the same chapter seemed to contradict himself, when he argued that the 'traditional' was being replaced: 'by the end of the fifth century the traditional type of "divine dream", no longer nourished by a living faith in the traditional gods, would have declined in frequency and importance .... There are in fact indications that other ways of regarding the dream were becoming more fashionable about this time'.[10] Progress after

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[7] Dodds (1951: 104)
[8] Rose (1925: 151).
[9] Dodds (1951: 106).
[10] Dodds (1951: 118)

all? That new theories were being put forward cannot be denied, but I will show that each new theory was not necessarily intended as a replacement for the last, but instead an alternative explanation which could sit alongside it. Most importantly, they do not (with the possible exception of Aristotle) act as rejections of the 'traditional', and we still find evidence of this dream theory throughout the period, both explicitly in texts and inscriptions, and indirectly through the echoes which resonate even in the most 'rational' of treatises.

I will approach the theories from multiple angles. First, I will outline the key attributes of the 'traditional', the *oneiroi* which we outlined in the last chapter. I will then look at alternative theories which one can find, explicitly and implicitly, in the literary genres where one might not expect them – from Homer through Herodotus. I will follow this with an analysis of the theories of dreams as they are detailed by the philosophers, with particular focus on Heraclitus, Democritus, Plato and Aristotle; Aristotle marks a suitable finish, not just in chronological terms but in strength of 'rationalist' attitude, yet we shall see that even in his texts we can hear those echoes of the traditional. Finally, I shall turn to the medical writers, of most obvious interest being *Regimen IV*, a treatise dedicated to dreams, but also including other references in the Hippocratic corpus. As we shall see, there were even different theories within the corpus itself.

(i)

Traditional Theory

The notion of the traditional dream is, as we saw in the last chapter, intrinsically linked with the presentation of dreams in Homer. The personified objective dreams of his poetry present the most 'old fashioned' view of dreams: they are divinely sent figures, delivering messages to the sleeping recipient; the dreamer is a passive participant, only active in so far as some of them converse with their dream visitants,[11] but in no way active as the source of their dreams. There is, without question, an extent to which literary conventions determined the manner in which these dreams are presented. The Homeric dream 'scene' became a stereotype, copied later by such writers as Herodotus, Xenophon and Plato.[12] In the 'scene', the pattern is this: it is night and people are sleeping; the dream image arrives and stands above the person, usually over his head; the dream speaks – delivering first a reproach (usually of the fact that the person is asleep), and then either an instruction or some information, pertaining usually to the future; the figure leaves; the person reacts; it is then dawn.[13] Added to this motif, there are further difficulties in trying to discern dream theory from literary texts. For one, the theory behind dreams is rarely commented on explicitly, but rather one must infer the reasoning implicitly from the dreams as they are presented within the texts. Also, within literature characters do not experience dreams themselves, but are made to experience them by the author. The choice of timing, content, and reaction or result, are all interconnected with his intentions for the narrative. Yet literary dreams should not be dismissed because of

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[11] Penelope speaks with the form of Iphthime: Hom. *Od.* IV. 795*ff.*
[12] See for example Hdt. V.56.1; Xen. *Cyrop.* 8.7.2; Plato *Crito* 44a-b.
[13] Adapted from Morris (1983: 39). See too Oppenheim (1956: 187*ff*).

their stylised presentations, for after all the dream must be understandable to the audience to be effective even if only in a literary sense. Therefore it must be built on an underlying dream theory which was comprehensible to contemporary society. To quote Cicero: 'even dreams contrived by poets partake of the essence of dreams' (Haec, etiam si ficta sunt a poeta, non absunt tamen a consuetudine somniorum).[14] The traditional theory, therefore, is more than just a literary construct, but a reflection of a genuine understanding of dream phenomena in Greek culture. The evidence in inscriptions set up privately by citizens and in a cult context at incubatory sanctuaries such as Epidaurus confirms this point yet further, for they are set up on account of divine visitations in dreams, 'scenes' that echo the traditional Homeric model.[15]

Since so much stems from Homer, we must begin with him. The presentation of dreams in his *Iliad* reflects a belief that dreams could be objective visitations by divinely sent *eidōla*, dream figures which deliver messages to the sleeper, as in the case of Agamemnon. We also find an appearance by the ghost of Patroclus, which visits Achilles in his sleep. In much the same way as the figure sent by Zeus, Patroclus stands over the head of Achilles, begins his speech with an initial reproach, and delivers instructions for the present and future, as well as presaging that Achilles will die under the Trojan wall.[16] The dream is not explicitly divine in the traditional sense (i.e. sent by a god), but it is still an external visitation, by a figure from outside the human world, which delivers a message. This pattern of an external visitation accompanied by a spoken message continues in the *Odyssey*. First Athena creates an *eidōlon* in the form of Iphthime and

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[14] Cic. *De Div.* 1.42; translation by Devereux (1976: xvii).
[15] See in much fuller detail chapters 5 and 6.
[16] Hom. *Il.* XXIII.81.

sends it to Penelope to ease her concerns over the fate of Telemachus. In the second instance, Athena comes herself in a dream to Nausicaa, disguised as the daughter of Dymas.[17] These scenes share the characteristics of the Iliadic episodes: the dreams come from outside, as divinely sent figures, they open with rebukes, and then deliver a message (in both cases a command related to the future), before leaving. This pattern continues to be found in later authors, too. In Herodotus, for example, the Athenian tyrant Hipparchus, on the night before his murder by Harmodius and Aristogeiton, dreamt that a tall and beautiful figure of a man stood over his bed and uttered the message: 'O lion, endure the unendurable with enduring heart; no man does wrong and shall not pay the penalty' (*τλῆθι λέων ἄτλητα παθὼν τετληότι θυμῷ· οὐδείς ἀνθρώπων ἀδικῶν τίσιν οὐκ ἀποτίσει*).[18] In Plato, we find Socrates arguing with Crito that the ship, upon the arrival of which his death will be sealed, will not come in that day, but the next. His argument is based upon a dream vision: *ἐδόκει τίς μοι γυνὴ προσελθοῦσα καλὴ καὶ εὐειδής, λευκὰ ἱμάτια ἔχουσα, καλέσαι με καὶ εἰπεῖν· ὦ Σώκρατες, ἤματί κεν τριτάτῳ Φθίην ἐρίβωλον ἵκοιο.*[19] The echoes of the traditional dream are loud and clear: the external, objective nature of the apparition; the dream figure is characterised as beautiful, dressed in white, mysterious and unrecognised; there is even a reference to a Homeric text.[20] The dream is qualified by Socrates as *ἐναργές*, clear or vivid, a term often used to denote a divine dream experience.

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[17] Hom. *Od.* IV. 786-841; VI. 3-48. Note that Athena appears in disguise, rather than in person; Lane Fox (1987: 153) has linked this to the absence of any fixed iconography of the gods at the time the poems were composed.
[18] Hdt. V.56.1.
[19] Plato *Crito* 44a-b. He will die on the 'third day', because his death will be the day after the ship comes in.
[20] See Hom. *Il.* IX.363.

This traditional, personified and objective presentation of the dream first seen in Homer had persevered in literature, but we have evidence of it being active not just within the literary genre, but also through inscriptional evidence.[21] Take, for example, this inscription set up by Philios, a Cypriot from Salamis, which records how he was visited in three dream visions by the hero Naulochos and the Thesmophoroi, who gave him an instruction in his dreams to worship Naulochos as guardian deity of the city and told him where to build the shrine:

ὑπνωθεὶς Φίλιος Κύπριος γένος ἐξαλαμῖνος
υἱὸς Ἀρίστωνος Ναόλοχον εἶδεν ὄναρ
Θεσμοφόρους τε ἁγνὰς ποτνίας ἐμ φάρεσι λεοκοῖς·
ὄψεσι δ'ἐν τρισσαῖς ἥρῳα τόνδε σέβειν
ἤγωγον πόλεως φύλακον χῶρον τ' ἀπέδειξαν·
ὧν ἕνεκα ἵδρυσεν τόνδε θεὸν Φίλιος..[22]

The various dedications set up at the incubatory sanctuaries also testify to an ongoing belief in the ability of the gods to visit and deliver messages through dreams, in this case in a cult context. So, for example, we have the story of Ambrosia of Athens, recorded on the *iamata* at Epidaurus; she visited Asclepius' sanctuary, and in her sleep she had a vision: 'It seemed to her that the god stood by her and said that he would cure her' (*ἐδόκει οἱ ὁ θεὸς ἐπιστὰς [εἰπεῖν], ὅτι ὑγιῆ μέν νιν ποιησοί*).[23] The idea of dreams being divine visitations was not limited to literature as a motif, but reflected a real attitude to the dream experience. The ability of the gods to visit directly, or send messages via, dreams was clear, but this was not the only way that dreams could be perceived.

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[21] It was this which prompted Dodds to presume that these were 'culture pattern' dreams: Dodds (1951:108-109).
[22] *Inscr. Priene* 196 = *SEG* 48.1420. For more detail, see p.162, below.
[23] *IG* IV²,1,121.IV = Edelstein T.423.4.

In Homer, we also find a second presentation of the dream experience. Beside the direct message delivered by a dream figure, Penelope also had a dream in which she saw a vision – a collection of symbols which, once decoded, delivered the message; her dream of the geese being attacked by an eagle is the first symbolic dream in Greek literature. Symbolic dreams contain a web of images that need to be deciphered to comprehend the underlying message. As I will show, the dreams, even when symbolic, are still external – they are visions seen by the dreamer, not visions produced by the dreamer. And they are still divine; often in literature this is expressed implicitly through calls to the gods after the dream or the offering of prayers, or one can infer from the content of the dream that it has a divine source. The one way in which symbolic dreams differ from the direct visitation dreams is that they lack the high degree of personification that those dreams have. Nevertheless, that has not prevented people arguing for an idea of 'progress' from the visitation type to the symbolic type, wherein the dream becomes more personal and less divine.[24] This line of argument is governed by attempts to link the content of the dream with the personal concerns of the dreamer. This is only relevant, though, at the narrative level, rather than to the origins of the dreams themselves. Take the dream of Penelope. She sees the vision of the twenty geese being killed by an eagle, at which she (still in the dream) is overcome with sorrow and surrounded by mourning Achaean women. But then the eagle swoops down and explains the dream to her – that it is a premonition of what will happen, for the geese are the suitors, and the eagle is Odysseus, who has returned to bring death to them.[25] It has been tempting to assume too much based on the psychological plausibility of the vision she sees; psychoanalysts would

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[24] Argued by Lévy (1982: 25-39); Messer (1918: 28); Kessels (1971: 103-104).
[25] Hom. *Od.* XIX.535-554.

argue that her mourning at the death of the geese is a manifestation of her repressed desire to be taken by the suitors, and the pleasure she enjoys from their affection and company in the absence of her husband.[26] But there is no sense of this in the text; simply because a dream has viable psychological motivation one cannot assume that the poet was making a connection between the inner-psyche and the dream imagery. To class it as a 'wish fulfilment' is misleading as it applies to it modern terminology which was alien to both the poet and his audience.[27] The externality of this dream is actually made explicit by Penelope, for she follows the dream with her famous description of the two gates of dream, one made of horns, the other ivory. Her dream had 'travelled' to her through one of these gates, though she feared not the gate of 'honest' horn but 'dangerous' ivory.[28] The imagery created by Homer is one of externality, again; her dream is not part of her psyche, a manifestation of her emotional state, but an external visitor which has travelled to her via a gate.[29] It is not a figure, but it is still objectified, and can travel of its own volition. The degree of overlap between the imagery of the visitation dream and the symbolic one is significant, and simply by becoming symbolic the dream does not automatically become internalised or lose its divine resonance.

We can dig deeper into the underlying conceptions which support the presentation of these symbolic dreams in literary texts. We have already noted that there is no doubt that these dreams are external – things seen by the dreamer. As discussed in the last

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[26] As Devereux (1976: xxiv n.11).
[27] As by Dodds (1951: 106).
[28] Hom. *Od.* XIX.560-567, with Amory (1966: 15-31); Russo *et al.* (1992: 562-563).
[29] Homer had already referred to the 'gates of dreams' at *Od.* IV. 809 with no explanation, which suggests the metaphor was probably current at the time, rather than his invention. Attempts have been made to ground these gates in historical reality: Burkert (1985: 65) linked the gate of horns to the cultic use of horn in the archaic period; Highbarger (1940) offers some extremely colourful, if not reliable, arguments linking them to Egypt and Mesopotamia.

chapter, the language of dreams promotes and reflects this understanding: symbolic dreams are 'seen' and not 'had'. It is also apparent from the context of the dreams, and often the reactions to them, that they are considered to be divine in nature. Take, for example, the dream of Croesus in Herodotus. A dream comes which gives the Lydian king a vision of the future: his son Atys will die from a blow by an iron weapon. Croesus tries to avert this future by removing his son from the army, banning weapons from his area of the house, and marrying him off to enjoy domestic peace. However, when a boar begins to rampage around Mt. Olympus, Atys wants to be sent to destroy it, arguing that, since a boar has only tusks, he will not be at risk. During the ensuing hunt, however, a Phrygian whom Croesus had given refuge to threw a spear that missed the boar and struck Atys, killing him and fulfilling the dream.[30] The dream itself is part of the undercurrent of divine causation and fate which runs through the *Histories*;[31] the future it reveals is ultimately inescapable, and this enhances the divine aspect of it.[32] Following the death of Atys, Croesus blames the gods rather than the Phrygian: *εἰς δὲ οὐ σύ μοι τοῦδε τοῦ κακοῦ αἴτιος, εἰ μὴ ὅσον ἀέκων ἐξεργάσαο, ἀλλὰ θεῶν κού τις, ὅς μοι καὶ πάλαι προεσήμαινε τὰ μέλλοντα ἔσεσθαι.*[33]

One can also note the reaction of dreamers in tragedy, which imply that the dreams are working within a divine framework. After the Persian Queen sees her dream of the two yoked women, which also involved a vision of her distant son, Xerxes, and her dead husband Darius, she dipped her hands in spring water, and stood at an altar with

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[30] Hdt. I.34-45.
[31] See in general Harrison (2000).
[32] Cf. Astyages' dreams (I.107, 108); Cambyses' dream (Hdt. III.30-65). These episodes are similar in style to other 'Jerusalem Chamber' type oracles, so-named after Shakespeare's Henry IV, where King Henry, prophesied to die in Jerusalem, dies not in the country but in the chamber of a lodging called 'Jerusalem': Fontenrose (1978: 58*ff*).
[33] Hdt. I.45.2.

materials for a sacrifice in her hand. As she remarks, 'I wanted to prepare sacrifice to the gods who avert disaster, to whom such rites are due' (*ἀποτρόποισι δαίμοσιν / θέλουσα θῦσαι πέλανον, ὧν τέλη τάδε*).[34] The *θῦσαι πέλανον* should not be translated as 'make a libation',[35] but instead the liquid here was probably intended to be burnt off on the altar to prepare it for a sacrifice. We see a similar reaction in the *Choephoroi* of Aeschylus and Sophocles' *Electra* (both recounting the same myth), where Clytemnestra's dream vision prompts her to organise libations to be poured at Agamemnon's tomb. In Aeschylus' version it is the advice of the interpreters to make the libations to appease the earthly spirits, and so the Chorus of libation bearers is sent;[36] in Sophocles, Clytemnestra sends her daughter, Chrysothemis.[37] As the interpreters tell Clytemnestra: *τοὺς γᾶς νέρθεν περιθύμως τοῖς κτανοῦσί τ' ἐγκοτεῖν* (*Cho.* 39-40). Later Orestes, judging the dream (correctly) as favourable to himself, offers a prayer to earth and to his father's tomb (*Cho.* 540).

There is also in tragedy another response: to tell your dream to the air, or to the sun. In Euripides, Iphigenia has been having night visions: 'This night has brought strange visions with it, and I shall tell them to the upper air, if that is indeed any cure for them' (*ἃ καινὰ δ' ἥκει νὺξ φέρουσα φάσματα / λέξω πρὸς αἰθέρ', εἴ τι δὴ τόδ' ἔστ' ἄκος*).[38] In a similar vein, in Sophocles Chrysothemis is explaining to Electra the content of Clytemnestra's dream, which someone overheard when Clytemnestra was declaring it to the Sun-god: *ἡνίχ' Ἡλίῳ / δείκνυσι τοὔναρ*.[39] Presumably again Clytemnestra was doing this to avert, in some way, the consequences of her dream vision. Perhaps there is a

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[34] Aesch. *Per.* 200-204. Note that there is no reason to assume that, as a Persian, her custom would be any different – Aeschylus simply transfers Greek beliefs onto his Persian characters.
[35] As Hall (1996).
[36] Aesch. *Cho.* 32*ff.*
[37] Soph. *El.* 409*ff.*
[38] Eur. *IT.*42-43.
[39] Soph. *El.*424-5, with Jebb (2004).

similar belief underpinning Hecuba's lamentation to the dazzling light of Zeus, *ὦ στεροπὰ Διός*, about her dream visions.[40]

Xenophon, too, gives us indications that he considered his symbolic dreams to be divine. He records how he made a libation to the gods who had sent him the dream vision, *τοῖς φήνασι θεοῖς τά ... ὀνείρατα*, wherein he saw himself bound in fetters which came loose of their own accord, and from which he was inspired with confidence that he and his men would be able to cross a river which hemmed them in.[41] He also refers incidentally to sacrifice as a response in a colourful passage of his *Symposium*. Charmides has just been discussing how less stressful it is to have no money, and how much better his life is now he is poor rather than rich. Callias wryly retorts 'yes, and if you have a good dream, you sacrifice to the apotropaic deities' (*καὶ ἐάν τι ὄναρ ἀγαθὸν ἴδῃς, τοῖς ἀποτροπαίοις θύεις*).[42] Reading between the lines, this would suggest that sacrifice was a natural response to try and ward off the ill-effects of any foreboding dreams.[43] Conversely, one might also expect sacrifices to express thanks in response to any dreams which appeared benevolent.

Symbolic dreams, therefore, did not represent in themselves a jump from divine causation to personal, emotionally linked, dreams. The elements of the divine can still be seen, but in this case instead of the god visiting or sending a dream figure to deliver a message directly, the vision given is enigmatic and requires some form of interpretation by the dreamer. The message they discover is often linked to the future – and this element

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[40] Eur. *Hec.*68.
[41] Xen *Anab.* 4.3.8*ff.*
[42] Xen. *Sym.* 4.31-33.
[43] In Xen. *Cyrop.* 8.7.2 Cyrus makes sacrifices following his dream, but this is because a figure had told him his death was at hand, and so Cyrus wanted to give final sacrifices in thanks to all the gods who had helped his during his life, rather than as a direct response to the dream itself.

of the content itself reinforces the divinity of the dream, for it is the gods who have the power to show what will come to pass, just as one might consult an oracle to gain a glimpse of the gods' predictions.

Taken together, the direct message dreams and divine symbolic dreams represent the 'traditional' perspective on the origins of dreams: they are divine, external, and give messages which often relate to the future. This is frequently seen as specifically the literary representation of dreams, but the evidence in inscriptions attests to a broader pattern of belief, and regardless of that the presentation of dreams in literature must be based on underlying conceptions to be relevant and understandable to an audience.

(ii)

Alternative Theories in Literature

Although the dreams of traditional type are most common in literary sources, that does not mean that there is a complete absence of other ways of regarding the dream experience. As I discussed in the last chapter, there are the frequent uses of dreams in figurative contexts which imply that the objectivity of dreams was not as 'real' as it might appear on the surface. And one can add to these allusions some direct references to other theories on dreams which occur, and which, unlike the traditional presentation which is implicit, are often made explicit by the writer. The first that we know of comes from Pindar. He made a comment which is often regarded as a great 'development' in dream theory. He said: 'Each man's body follows the call of overmastering death; yet still there is left alive an image of life, for this alone is from the gods. It sleeps while the limbs are active; but while the man sleeps it often shows in dreams a decision of joy or

adversity to come' (*σῶμα μὲν πάντων ἔπεται θανάτῳ περισθενεῖ, ζωὸν δ' ἔτι λείπεται αἰῶνος εἴδωλον· τὸ γάρ ἐστι μόνον ἐκ θεῶν· εὕδει δὲ πρασσόντων μελέων, ἀτὰρ εὐδόντεσσιν ἐν πολλοῖς ὀνείροις δείκνυσι τερπνῶν ἐφέρποισαν χαλεπῶν τε κρίσιν*).[44] Dodds used this to illustrate that besides the 'old belief' in the objective divine dream, 'there appears in certain writers of the Classical Age a new belief which connects these experiences [dreams and visions] with an occult power innate in man himself'.[45] For Burkert, this was an early step in a 'revolution', the acknowledgment of an internal, immortal *psychē*, which is independent of the living body, and survives it in death. This was a development from the belief in a 'body' or 'monistic' soul, to a 'free' or 'dualistic' one.[46] In Homer, for instance, the soul was presented as something dependent on the living body, and something which in turn gave the body its life and consciousness – but in this attachment it could not survive in death, but was lost. This is a body or monistic conception of the soul. What Pindar is presenting here is a soul which is independent of the body – there remains in death an 'image of life', *αἰῶνος εἴδωλον*, which is divine in nature, 'from the gods'. Its divinity is what qualifies it as immortal, and able to continue without the body.[47]

It is in sleep that the soul becomes free from the body and active – though Pindar does not disclose why this should be so. It may be that he too held the view that the state of sleep was closest to death, and therefore this allowed the immortal soul to become active because sleep, like death, was a state in which normal waking perception was cut off. He may equally have believed, as we find later first in the Hippocratic treatises, that in waking the soul is intertwined with the workings of the body to the extent that it can

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[44] Fr. 131b (Maehler); translation by Dodds (1951: 135). This fragment has no wider context.
[45] Dodds (1951: 135).
[46] Burkert (1985: 300). Bremmer (2002: Chpt. 1.1) uses 'body' versus 'free'; Wijsenbeek-Wijler (1978: 10) prefers 'monistic' versus 'dualistic'.
[47] Burkert (1985: 301) and Bremmer (2002: 23), both link Pindar's attitude to early Orphic and Pythagorean thought; both schools believed in the 'transmigration' of the soul.

have no independent existence. Regardless of his reasoning, it is clear that the free soul often manifests itself in dream, forecasting the future, both good and bad, for men. The experience remains divine, for the soul is divine, and it is presumably this divinity which permits the powers of prognostication for the dream. Pindar is effectively relocating the divine dream within man himself. It is not presented here as an external *εἴδωλον* sent by a god, but as an internal *εἴδωλον* ever present in man himself. The dream is still divine, for this internal *εἴδωλον* is itself made by the gods; it is still an objectified entity – it rises in sleep and *shows* the dream *to* men. So although the power of the divine dream is 'innate', it has actually not moved that far away from traditional theory. Thus the theory represents something new and a different perspective on the source of dreams, while retaining the divine and predictive elements of the traditional.

Herodotus also gives us, via a speech made by Artabanus, a different assessment of dreams, which is in fact very similar to the presentation of dreams we shall see later in the medical writers. When the Persian king Xerxes has been visited by the dream phantom for two nights running, demanding that he must invade Greece, he turns for advice to his uncle Artabanus. He gives a 'rational' counter to calm the king: 'But dreams do not come from god. I, who am older than you by many years, will tell you what these visions are that float before your eyes in sleep: nearly always these drifting phantoms are the shadows of what we have been thinking about during the day; and during the days before your dream we were, you know, very much occupied with this campaign' (*ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ταῦτά ἐστι, ὦ παῖ, θεῖα· ἐνύπνια γὰρ τὰ ἐς ἀνθρώπους πεπλανημένα τοιαῦτά ἐστι οἷά σε ἐγὼ διδάξω, ἔτεσι σεῦ πολλοῖσι πρεσβύτερος ἐών· πεπλανῆσθαι αὗται μάλιστα ἐώθασι* [*αἱ*] *ὄψιες* [*τῶν*] *ὀνειράτων, τά τις ἡμέρης φροντίζει· ἡμεῖς δὲ τὰς πρὸ τοῦ ἡμέρας ταύτην τὴν*

στρατηλασίην καὶ τὸ κάρτα εἴχομεν μετὰ χεῖρας).[48] Artabanus offers a non-divine theory; the dream images are linked to the subjects which have been filling the dreamer's mind. Xerxes had gone to bed considering the campaign against the Greeks, and had therefore seen visions concerned with this topic. This is, in fact, very similar in tone to the explanation given of *enupnia* by Artemidorus, centuries later – the 'day residue' theory wherein the daytime actions of the dreamer drift over into his sleeping visions. The dream, however, is still not internalised. It is remarkable that even though they are linked with his thoughts, the dream itself remains outside the dreamer's consciousness; they are still things 'seen' outside of his own physical self. The thoughts of the day determine the content of the dream, rather than the origin of the dream. According to Artabanus, this content is not divine, and by his theory that is correct: the gods have no input into dreams which concern daily thoughts. Thus while the dream remains external, it has lost its divine roots.

Too much is often argued from this passage. Particularly misjudged have been statements that this represents Herodotus' 'real' theory about dreams – that he did not himself really believe that the gods sent them.[49] Apart from the difficulties associated with making such presumptions on an author's real thoughts, such arguments fail to point out that Artabanus' theory is ultimately proved wrong. For Xerxes decides that if Artabanus dresses like him, sits in his royal throne, and then sleeps in his bed, and the dream then comes to him with the same message, there will be no doubting its divinity. When it does then visit Artabanus, its divine origins are proved, as Artabanus himself concedes: *ἐπεὶ δὲ δαιμονίη τις γίνεται ὁρμή, καὶ Ἕλληνας, ὡς οἶκε, φθορή τις καταλαμβάνει*

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[48] Hdt. VII. 16*b*,*c*.
[49] Van Lieshout (1980: 6); West (1987: 264).

θεήλατος, ἐγὼ μὲν καὶ αὐτὸς τρέπομαι καὶ τὴν γνώμην μετατίθεμαι... .[50] Artabanus' theory is introduced only subsequently to be dismissed.[51] This dismissal is highly relevant in the context of the *Histories*, where dreams form part of the pattern of divine action and fatalistic framework which binds the narrative together. Therefore it is misjudged to argue that Artabanus' theory is Herodotus' true perspective. It is more likely that Herodotus is illustrating indirectly the alternative theories that were available to explain dream phenomena. In this specific context, in the case of Xerxes, the dream was divine, and that divinity must be emphasised for the purposes of his narrative. In other circumstances, the day residue theory might have been appropriate. They are explanations which suit different types of dreams, rather than theories that are competing against each other; horses for courses, one might say.

Different explanations other than the traditional are present in literature, but there is no doubt that the traditional type dominates the texts. There should be little surprise in this – records of 'day residue' dreams do not constitute the most memorable of feats to record, whereas dreams sent by the gods which indicate a future fate for the dreamer were of far more significance. The alternative theories suggest that not all dreams were considered divine, and that there were numerous theories active for explaining the non-divine dreams. This, too, should be of little surprise; it was only the 'superstitious man' who considered every dream to be divinely significant.[52]

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[50] Hdt. VII.18.3. Shimron (1989: 52) curiously still tries to distance Herodotus form the divine nature of Artabanus' dream. For better analysis see Fornara (1990: 44); Hunter (1982: 207-208); Harrison (2000: 135n.50).
[51] As argued by Harrison (2000: 135).
[52] Theoph. *Char.* XVI.11, with Diggle (2004).

(iii)

Philosophical Perspectives

For philosophers the origin of dreams was a popular topic of discussion, and unlike in the literary sources they often made their conclusions explicit; however, although explicit, they are still not always straightforward to interpret. The case that Dodds and others have made is that the philosophers were attempting to progress dream theory and argue against the traditional, by proposing theories that were intended to contradict the characteristics of the divine dreams. They perceive the philosophers' theories as being in conflict with the traditional. I will illustrate that what the evidence actually reveals is that they were offering alternative (rather than conflicting) ways to interpret the dream experience, and that these alternatives are often still imbued with a sense of the traditional, so that we can see that such characteristics had grown deep roots within Greek culture. Even Aristotle, the one author intending to dismiss the divine dream, retains a sense of the traditional.

Philosophical conceptions of dreams can be seen as early as c.500 BC, in the writings of Heraclitus. Although there are no explicit mentions of dream in Heraclitus, there are a number of implicit allusions through his references to the state of sleep. It should be noted from the outset, however, that these fragmentary allusions do not link together neatly to form a continuous whole or a doctrine, but nevertheless they remain useful indicators of his perspective on the subject, and illustrate at the very least that man's sleeping state was drawing some comment at this early stage.

In Fr1 DK, Heraclitus criticizes the failure of the majority of men to recognise the 'Logos', his concept of a universal constitution common to all.[53] In his criticisms he draws a comparison between man's waking failure to comprehend the truth of this *Logos* and his sleeping state: 'For although all things happen according to this *Logos* men are like people of no experience, even when they experience such words and deeds as I explain, when I distinguish each thing according to its constitution and declare how it is; but the rest of people fail to notice what they do after they wake up just as they forget what they do when asleep,' (*γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε ἀπείροισιν ἐοίκασι, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγεῦμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅκως ἔχει· τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους λανθάνει ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν ὅκωσπερ ὁκόσα εὕδοντες ἐπιλανθάνονται*) (trans. Kirk, 1983).This contrast is slightly ill-fitting, for he compares man's *misperception* of the Logos with his *forgetfulness* during sleep, but still one is drawn to the conclusion that it is the absence of real, true knowledge in each case which is being emphasised.[54] Thus what men 'do' (*ποιοῦσιν*) during sleep, by which we are surely meant to understand dream, is marked as an inferior state of knowledge, and used as a measure of other failures in perception. It could potentially be linked with his emphasis elsewhere on the value of the primary faculties and observation: 'The things of which there is seeing and hearing and perception, these do I prefer' (*ὅσων ὄψις ἀκοὴ μάθησις, ταῦτα ἐγὼ προτιμέω*) (Fr.55 DK; trans. Kirk, 1983). Thus arguably true observation can be obtained only through 'waking' faculties – sight, hearing, perception – and cannot be obtained in their absence, i.e. in sleep.[55] But even here the 'waking'

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[53] Cf. Frs. 2, 50 DK; these act as proof that the 'Logos' in question is not simply the 'word' of Heraclitus, as Burnet (1930: 133n.1). See (in further detail) Kirk (1954: 37*ff*); (1983: 186-188).
[54] Cf. Kirk (1954: 44).
[55] As Wheelwright (1959: 25).

faculties are open to misperception if not properly understood: 'Evil witnesses are eyes and ears for men, if they have souls that do not understand their language' (*κακοὶ μάρτυρες ἀνθρώποισιν ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ὦτα βαρβάρους ψυχὰς ἐχόντων*) (Fr.107 DK; trans Kirk, 1983). The opposition is not a general one between waking and sleeping; sleeping is simply used as a parallel for a part of man's miscomprehension of his own universe. The sentiment was strong enough for it to be repackaged in another fragment: *οὐ δεῖ ὥσπερ καθεύδοντας ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν· καὶ γὰρ καὶ τότε δοκοῦμεν ποιεῖν καὶ λέγειν* (Fr. 73 DK).[56] One should not act or speak as if one is asleep, for this is a state in which the acting and speaking is not 'real', but only seeming, illusory (*δοκοῦμεν*). The central thesis is that in sleep, one's state of knowledge is inferior.

Yet elsewhere, there are indications that for Heraclitus the sleeping state still had some function. Most notably in Fr.75 DK: 'Even those who are asleep I think Heraclitus calls workers and collaborators in what happens in the universe' (*τοὺς καθεύδοντας οἶμαι ὁ Ἡ. ἐργάτας εἶναι λέγει καὶ συνεργοὺς τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ γινομένων*).[57] Thus here the sleeping man still has some, partial share in the ordering of his universe, though what the nature of this is remains unspecified. Perhaps it should be linked with another fragment, Fr. 89 DK: 'the waking share one common world/universe, whereas the sleeping turn aside each into a world/universe of his own' (*ὁ Ἡ. φησι τοῖς ἐγρηγορόσιν ἕνα καὶ κοινὸν κόσμον εἶναι, τῶν δὲ κοιμωμένων ἕκαστον εἰς ἴδιον ἀποστρέφεσθαι*) (trans. Marcovich 2001, emended).[58] This is

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[56] This fragment is often rejected as just a reminiscence of the last line in Fr. 1 DK; so Marcovich (2001); Kirk (1954); T.M.Robinson (1987).

[57] There are doubts over its authenticity: Marcovich (2001: F75 = 1h²) rejects this as another reminiscence of Fr. 1, though I think the sentiment here is slightly different. T.M.Robinson (1987: 129-130) notes that it is reported speech, but the language suggests a different source to Fr.1.

[58] Doubts again over its authenticity; note that the quote is in indirect speech, and Plutarch's more trustworthy quotes from Heraclitus are in direct speech. Diels accepted only the first clause. Cf. Kirk's comments (1954: 63); T.M.Robinson (1987: 138); Marcovich (2001: F89 = 24 DK): all agree that (in essence at least) the fragment fits with Heraclitean theory.

an interesting line, though perhaps not as groundbreaking as might appear. Heraclitus is not here suggesting that dreams are internal or introspective; this 'private world' is not the subconscious. Instead he is again highlighting that in sleep, people lose their perception of the whole, the *Logos* common to all, and though they can still participate (as in Fr. 75 DK) it is only relevant to their private world; unlike the common, each man's private world is different and varied.[59] What exactly this 'private world' is remains unclear – however it seems from what we have seen that it was considered a state of perception inferior to that of waking.[60]

Two further references to sleep in Heraclitus prove more perplexing. Fragment 21 DK is an obscure statement which seems to make little sense: 'what we see when awake is death; what we see when asleep is sleep' (*θάνατος ἐστι ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ὁρέομεν, ὁκόσα δὲ εὕδοντες ὕπνος*). The sense of the first clause is not itself clear, but the second half seems even more unusual. We would, in the first instance, perhaps expect a statement on life to oppose the first clause; instead we have a sentence which appears nonsensical – in sleep we see sleep. Perhaps here we are to understand sleep as the state of sleep, i.e. the inferior state of knowledge, the private world, of the other fragments, but this may be inferring too much. *Ὕπνος* here could be interpreted simply as 'dreams', which would make sense, although one feels if he wanted to make an explicit comparison he would have used one of the more common words for dream.[61] *Ὕπνος* could even be corrupt – although suggestions that it should be *ὕπαρ* are surely misjudged; in sleep Heraclitus would never

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[59] Marcovich (2001: F89 = 24) interpreted this in a similar vein, though more as a simile/metaphor for Heraclitus' conception of the universal *Logos*.
[60] Kirk (1954: 64) stated that Fr. 89 DK added nothing 'materially' to what we already know, and could have been covered by the last line of Fr. 1 DK – this is true at a base epistemological level, but the qualification of a private world does add a fresh nuance.
[61] Wheelwright (1959: F21 = 16 DK) translates as 'dreams'; proposed also by T.M.Robinson (1987: 91).

argue that what we see is a form of waking reality.[62] Perhaps it is Diels who comes closest to the truth, when he interpolates an extra line: 'Death is what we see when awake, sleep what we see when asleep, [and life what we see when dead]'.[63] Thus the state of sleep is presented as a sort of intermediate stage between life and death - something found not only in traditional Greek thought,[64] but also in another fragment of Heraclitus[65]: 'A man in the night kindles a light for himself when his vision is extinguished; living he is in contact with the dead, when asleep, and with the sleeper, when awake' (*ἄνθρωπος ἐν εὐφρονῃ φάους ἅπτεται ἑαυτῷ [ἀποθανὼν] ἀποσβεσθεὶς ὄψεις, ζῶν δὲ ἅπτεται τεθνεῶτος εὕδων, [ἀποσβεσθεὶς ὄψεις], ἐγρηγορὼς ἅπτεται εὕδοντος*) (Fr. 26 DK, trans Kirk, 1983).[66] The most natural interpretation is that the 'light' kindled at night is the dream, the visions we see even though the light of our waking vision (one of the primary organs of perception) is extinguished. Again, this 'light' is 'for himself', i.e. private, not part of the common *Logos*, which fits the Heraclitean theory we have seen. In addition, it is in the state of sleep, in this absence of true perception, that man becomes most like death, and is able to 'contact' or touch it. Sleep is again presented as the state closest to death, the medial stage between life and death.[67] If so, Heraclitus would here be

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[62] Marcovich (2001: F21 = 49 DK) argues for *ὕπαϱ*.
[63] This seems more natural than Kirk's (1954: 341) over-complicated suggestions.
[64] The links between sleep and death were already common: Homer *Il.* 14.231, 16.672,682; Hes. *Theog.* 212, 756*ff.*
[65] Cf. also Fr. 88 DK, where one finds the opposing pairs living and dead, waking and sleeping, young and old.
[66] The translation of this has undergone a number of revisions and interpretations: see the summary in Wheelwright (1959: Appendix B, p.146). Note the play on words using *ἅπτεται*, to 'touch' or 'to kindle for oneself'.
[67] As Kirk (1954: 148); (1983: 205), though he adduces far too much from a suspect fragment (Fr. A 16 DK), in which Sextus has heavily shaped Heraclitus' theory (1983: 206). Marcovich's objections to Kirk (2001: F26 = 48 DK) seem confused, but he is right to highlight this failure. T.M.Robinson (1987) interprets the 'night' as the 'night of death', and so the 'light' belongs to the soul, not dream – Heraclitus is thus arguing for the 'circularity of the soul's progression'. This seems unnecessarily complex.

coming into line with some more traditional aspects of Greek thought, though admittedly within the frame of his own theories.

Dodds was quick to label Heraclitus as 'the first man who explicitly put the dream in its proper place,' because he observed that in dream we each retreat into our private world (Fr.89 DK, above). For Dodds, this not only ruled out the 'objective' dream, but also implied a general rejection of the dream experience since Heraclitus promoted following the common, the *Logos*.[68] Dodds here is ignoring the broader picture.[69] It is clear that Heraclitus did consider the dream state to have some function – sleepers still participate in the universe, but are relegated to an inferior state of knowledge, because they can no longer participate in the *Logos* once their perception is cut off. This is not a rejection of the dream experience, but a qualification of its status, and one that must be seen in the perspective of Heraclitus' overall theory: he uses the sleeping state as a counterweight to help qualify characteristics of the waking state. Elsewhere, he can treat sleep as an intermediate stage, one close to death, in which he is actually conforming with traditional thought. The 'objective' dream is not ruled out, as Dodds suggests, but simply not dealt with – the private world of the dreamer is not something which Heraclitus discusses in detail; what exactly happens there, how the 'light' which is kindled manifests itself, is not his subject of concern. Heraclitus should only be credited as being the first to apply philosophical theory to the sleeping state, and as the first to try and determine the character of the knowledge found there. He was not seeking to overturn traditional theory, but work dreams (and man's condition in sleep) into his own

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[68] Dodds (1951: 117-118).
[69] Cf. Tigner (1970: 204n2): it 'was not so much "putting the dream in its proper place" as it was putting men in theirs'.

epistemological framework. He is ultimately, in terms of dream theory, not as groundbreaking as is often assumed.

Heraclitus is difficult to pin down because he does not discuss dreams explicitly. The first philosopher we have evidence of doing so is Democritus,[70] a native of the Thracian city of Abdera, whose floruit was c.430 BC.[71] He translated the traditional objective dream in terms of atomistic principles. The *εἴδωλα* which come from outside, enter the body, and which create images in the mind, are for Democritus being continuously emitted by objects, animate and inanimate, all over the planet.[72] These *εἴδωλα* travel through the atmosphere, and penetrate the body through the pores (*διὰ τῶν πόρων*); in the waking state they usually go unnoticed, but in sleep they can impose themselves upon the mind, and coming back up again (*ἐπαναφερόμενα*)[73] they cause the visions we see in sleep. The visions result because these *εἴδωλα* are loaded with information, and they carry with them not only the physical likeness of their source object, but also the mental impulses, wishes, morals, and emotions (*ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν κατὰ ψυχὴν κινημάτων καὶ βουλευμάτων ... καὶ ἠθῶν καὶ παθῶν*). They are not then single frame snap-shots which display a static image, but are themselves active and imbued with the characteristics of their source. They act as though they are themselves alive (*ὥσπερ*

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[70] The fragments which refer to dreams and are attached to the Sicilian Epicharmus (FF. 27,28 DK), active in the first quarter of the fifth century, are not included as these are thought now to be forged, as indeed they were in antiquity (cf. Aristoxenus F.45, Wehrli). These false connections explain why later writers refer to Epicharmus in the context of dreams, for example Tert. *De anima* 46.11, 47.3; Cic. *Ac.* II. XVI.51.

[71] Kirk *et al* (1983: 404).

[72] A77 DK = Plut. *QC* 735A : the *εἴδωλα* can come from utensils, clothing and plants, though they are especially suited to animals because of their restlessness and warmth. Cf. Fr. A136 DK = Ps. Plut. *Epitome* V.2.1; Fr. A137 DK = Cic. *De Div.* II.58.120; and Cic. *De Div.* II.67.137.

[73] A77 DK = Plut. *QC* 735A. It is not clear what he meant by this – presumably once inside they then rebound onto a perceptive surface which leads to their appearance in sleep, though which surface (eg. the brain) is never explained by Democritus. See further C.Taylor (1999: 126n.120).

ἔμψυχα), and report (φοράζειν καὶ διαγγέλλειν) these mental states to their recipient.[74] When the εἴδωλα reach men undisturbed, the images are straightforward. However, on their path through the atmosphere they can collide with other εἴδωλα, causing distortions and combining with other images to produce the confused and fantastical dreams which we sometimes receive. Their images are also affected by the speed at which they travel, and even their frequency. Thus we find in Plutarch that dreams were thought to be less reliable and truthful in the autumn, because the air then is uneven and rough - this buffets and slows the εἴδωλα as they travel, disrupting and diluting their clarity. Yet when they are emitted in large numbers at high speed from warm bodies, they are received quickly and they retain the original images of their source.[75] According to Sextus Empiricus, Democritus said that certain images impinge on men, and 'of these some are beneficent, others maleficent (whence also he prayed that he might have 'propitious images'), and these images are great and gigantic, and are hard to destroy though not indestructible, and they signify the future to men beforehand, as they are visible and utter sounds'.[76] Democritus ultimately proposed a naturalistic, almost mechanistic explanation for dreams. The εἴδωλα are floating images, pregnant with important information, emitted by earthly objects, both organic and inorganic.

There is, however, some difficulty in explaining how dreams can foretell the future (προσημαίνειν) if they are just simple εἴδωλα, free from divinity. According to

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[74] Fr. A77 DK = Plut. *QC* 735A-B; 682F-683B: malevolent people emit wicked εἴδωλα, which can disturb the body and mind of those who are prone to malign influence. Note the criticisms made in Cic. *De Div.* II.67.137*ff*. I would agree with Barnes (1999: Chpt. 21c) that the εἴδωλα have the appearance of being alive, though they are not physical beings themselves. C.Taylor (1999: 207*ff*) does not quite convince when he argues for them being themselves alive – the psychological impulses they carry are not their own, but the impressions formed from their source. He is right to rebuff Bicknell (1969: 208n.38) who unnecessarily argues for two different types of εἴδωλον.

[75] Fr. A77 DK = Plut. *QC*. 735B-C.

[76] Fr. B166 DK = Sext. Emp. *math*. 9.19.

Democritus, dreams are formed when image-bearing *εἴδωλα* impinge on the mind, and these images are sometimes based on the appearance of inanimate objects, but can also convey the mental state of living beings. This would suggest that dreams can only be relevant to the past and to the very near present. The *εἴδωλα* emanate from a subject A, and travel to a recipient B. The images and/or feelings of A will be as at the point of emanation, but will only reach B after a period of travel time. This could be a very short interval, if the *εἴδωλα* are moving fast from a warm source (as Plutarch noted), or it could be a very long one. It could perhaps take years for a stray *εἴδωλον* to hit its recipient, allowing for images from the remote past to be present in dreams. What this theory does not accomodate, however, is images of the future, because A cannot send a projected vision of itself to B. The *εἴδωλον* is a representation of the current state of the subject.

The most common way to explain this contradiction stems from a line in Plutarch: the *εἴδωλα* carry the mental impulses and wishes of the subject (*τῶν κατὰ ψυχὴν κινημάτων καὶ βουλευμάτων*). Therefore what happens is that the hopes of the subject are passed on to the recipient, and any fulfilment of these hopes will subsequently give the *impression* of having been preordained. For instance, the recipient will have a vision, say, of a certain man marrying a woman. This image represents a desire formed in the present by the subject for a future action, one which is not definite but only a wish: the man's thoughts were occupied with marrying this woman at the point when the *εἴδωλον* was released. If this wish is subsequently realised, and the subject marries this woman, then the recipient will believe he had foreseen it, when in fact all he had seen was a visual representation of one man's desires. Thus it is a mistaken prophecy, one based on coincidence rather than

actual precognition.[77] This explanation is certainly logical, but there is perhaps an alternative. Democritus could have allowed for some divine dreams, and these could have been the ones which forecast the future. There are hints from our sources that for Democritus, *εἴδωλα* could be emitted from the divine.

Clement of Alexandria stated that the *εἴδωλα* come 'from the divine being' (*ἀπὸ τῆς θείας οὐσίας*); and Cicero noted that in many passages Democritus confirmed his belief in divination (*praesensionem rerum futurarum comprobaret*).[78] Elsewhere, when Democritus is charged with inconsistency by Cicero, it is because at one point he proposes that the universe is filled with images which are divine, though at another that these are 'animate images which have a benefical or harmful influence' (*animantes imagines quae vel prodesse nobis soleant vel nocere*).[79] It seems that in antiquity there was a tradition which linked Democritus with the theory that these *εἴδωλα* could be in some way divine, either by their very nature or perhaps through being emitted by the deities. This would therefore explain why dreams could arrive which told of the future. This is one possibility, but impossible to prove, for it depends on late testimonies rather than coming from the text of Democritus himself.

Democritus' atomistic theory has an obvious overlap with traditional dreams – the dreams are still *eidōla*, penetrating the dreamer from outside.[80] But in this case these

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[77] First put forward by Bicknell (1969: 321*ff*); supported by Van Lieshout (1980: 90); Barnes (1999: 460).
[78] Fr. A79 DK = Clem. *Strom.* V.88 ; Fr. A138 DK = Cic. *De Div.* I.3.5, with I.57.131, where Democritus is said to approve of ancient hepatoscopy. Cf. Fr. B175 DK: 'The Gods grant men all good things, both in the past and now'. Barnes (1999: 461) tried to ignore this as being from one of his 'literary pieces', but is forced to concede that Democritus' religious stance remains a mystery.
[79] Fr. A74 DK = Cic. *Nat. D.* I.43.120; the same charge of inconsistency is leveled at *Nat D* I.12.29.
[80] There are two other Democritean fragments related to dreams, which are probably not genuine. F. B209 DK links dreams and food: 'To one who is self-sufficient in respect of food, the night is never short'. This is out of character with Democritean thought, and is probably derived from later Pythagorean theories (cf.

eidōla are not necessarily divinely sent, but are constantly emitted naturally by objects all over the world. This explains why we can see the images we do, of friends or family, and why these images can sometimes be jumbled and make little sense, because the *eidōla* can be bumped and distorted during their travels. It is plausible that divine beings also emit the *eidōla*, and perhaps that this is the source of future-oriented dreams, the one aspect of Democritean theory which cannot ultimately be explained logically. Whether the gods are involved or not, Democritus seems more concerned with explaining the types of dreams in which familiar things and natural objects appear, and why subjects from the past can suddenly reappear in one's dream visions. He is not attacking the traditional, but offering an alternative explanation, one which itself still has strong echoes of the traditional.

We now come to the richest yet most enigmatic writer on dreams in the classical period, Plato. For him, we have no single all-embracing theory of dream, no continuous line of enquiry or thought which can be singled out. Instead, he takes a myriad of positions, at one turn pushing forward the divine dream, at others relegating it back behind other more scientific theories, and throughout peppering his texts with dream related metaphors and allusions.[81] He provides a mixture of implicit and explicit theory, which makes it impossible to force Plato into conforming to a strict dogma, as one might well misrepresent his own views. Plato as such represents an important example of the

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Diog. Laert. VIII.24). F B212 DK states: 'Sleeping during the day indicates bodily disturbance or distress of mind or idleness or lack of education'. Again, this does not fit with Democritus' other theories, and sounds more like a medical writer. Contra Van Lieshout (1980: 86) who sees it as genuine.

[81] As emphasised by Näf (2004: 56). On Platonic dream metaphors see Gallop (1971); Tigner (1970).

ability for multiple theories to coexist, and for different theories to suit certain dream types.

Traditional-type dream perspectives are not difficult to find in Plato, and are present in a number of his key texts. They begin in the *Apologia*, where Socrates states that his misson was communciated to him by the god: *ἐμοὶ δὲ τοῦτο, ὡς ἐγώ φημι, προστέτακται ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πράττειν καὶ ἐκ μαντείων καὶ ἐξ ἐνυπνίων καὶ παντὶ τρόπῳ ᾧπέρ τίς ποτε καὶ ἄλλη θεία μοῖρα ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ ὁτιοῦν προσέταξε πράττειν* (33c). Thus here the dream is named alongside the oracle as a form of divine command, one of the many routes through which gods can converse with man. Socrates is placing full faith in the divine provenance of his decision. In the *Crito*, a fuller account of a traditional passive dream experience is given, which we saw earlier, when Socrates is arguing with Crito about the arrival of the ship that will confirm his death, and bases his arguments on a dream vision featuring a female figure dressed in white: *ἐδόκει τίς μοι γυνὴ προσελθοῦσα καλὴ καὶ εὐειδής, λευκὰ ἱμάτια ἔχουσα, καλέσαι με καὶ εἰπεῖν: ὦ Σώκρατες, ἤματί κεν τριτάτῳ Φθίην ἐρίβωλον ἵκοιο.*[82] The echoes of the traditional dream are loud and clear.

In the *Phaedo* Socrates relates how he had been visited in his past by a repeated dream which, though it assumed different forms, always gave the same command: 'make music and work at it' (*μουσικὴν ποίει καὶ ἐργάζου*).[83] Socrates took this to be an encouragement for him to continue philosophy, for that was the 'greatest kind of music' he knew. However he was now having doubts about this, and to cover himself, so that he might not die having disobeyed the dream, he created more literal music, first composing

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[82] Plato. *Crito* 44a-b; cf. p. 93, above.
[83] Plato *Phaedo* 60e-61c.

a hymn to Apollo, and then setting the Aesopian tales to verse. This Socrates did as a test, *ἀποπειρώμενος*, a way of ensuring he had not missed the significance of the dream order. The fact that the dream is repeated seems to increase its importance – it is certainly the repetition which prompts Socrates to doubt his initial attempts to fulfil it. It is interesting that he understands the dream as a form of encouragement, akin to a cheering crowd, a much milder way for the gods to intervene in human affairs. It is also of note that Socrates implies there will be some form of penalty for failure to heed the dream command – he was afraid lest he might die having not done what the dream told him. Disregard of the dream command could anger the gods. All of these point to a more classically traditional perspective on the dream experience.[84]

The problem here is how far one takes these to be Plato's own opinions. According to David Gallop, 'these allusions do not imply that Plato subcribed to popular belief in the significance of dreams'; and 'we need not take Plato to be committed to the ideas that underlie these passing allusions'.[85] I think Gallop is unfair to treat these as just 'allusions', for it is clear that some of them form coherent episodes within the text. Nevertheless, it may be that Plato is in some cases playing up the literary and stylistic elements of the dream 'scene', as, for example, in the Homeric echoes of the white robed figure visiting Socrates with ominous news.[86] But still, as stated before, the literary elements are built on the rudiments of belief; therefore through them one can see that traditional perspectives were still present. Gallop wanted to distance Plato from them because elsewhere Plato outlines theories on dreams which are different from the traditional presentation. Again, I would emphasise that a different theory does not

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[84] Cf. also Plato. *Symp.* 203a; *Soph.* 266b-c.
[85] Gallop (1971: 188), (1996: 11).
[86] Cf. Plato *Charm.* 173a, where he alludes to the Homeric gates of dream.

necessarily equal a rejection of the traditional, only an alternative explanation, a different way of understanding dream types.

In his *Republic*, Plato puts forward a theory on dream which is closely linked to his thinking on the tripartite divison of the soul. Similar in tone to the theories of Pindar (above) and pseudo-Hippocrates (below), it is a more sophisticated version, hinging on the notion that in sleep certain parts of the soul can be aroused, and it is the nature of this part which affects our dreaming visions. The discussion of dreams forms a brief digression, when Socrates is characterising the tyrannical man in contrast to the democratic one: the tyrant fulfils in his waking state what the democrat would only picture in his dreams.[87] For Plato explains that in every man there is an irrational, savage part of the soul, *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν*, in which are housed one's base and lawless desires. If this is aroused in sleep, while the rational part of the soul, *τὸ λογιστικόν* , sleeps, then it is free to satisfy itself and manifests its desires through our sleeping visions, where we can see anything, eat any food, and lie with any woman or man - our mother or even a god.[88] *Τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν* is aroused when sleep is preceded by under- or overindulgence, whether with wine or food. If, however, one is healthy and sober and lies down to sleep having aroused *τὸ λογιστικόν*, which can be done through clear thinking and entertaining one's mind, whilst *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν* is lulled to sleep through a mild intake of food, then one's dreams become more important: the soul can examine and reach out towards and apprehend some of the things unknown to it, past, present or future. If one has also tamed the third part of the soul, *τὸ θυμοειδές*, the passionate part, and has not gone to sleep

[87] Plato. *Rep*. IX.571c-576b.
[88] Plato. *Rep*. IX.571c-571d.

following an argument, then *τὸ λογιστικόν* is in the ascendancy, and the dreamer is most likely to apprehend truth, and the visions of his dreams are likely to be less lawless.[89]

Plato's vision here has at its core some Freud-like observations, that each man has within him base desires which reveal themselves in sleep. One is immediately reminded of Freud's theory of dreams as wish-fulfillment, but the similarities end there.[90] Plato's theory is that this is just a single portion of the soul, and it is the activities of the various components of the soul in the sleeping state which really determine our dream visions. Thus, one can even have a measure of control over one's dreams – fulfilling one's appetites in moderation will allow the rational part of the soul to rule in sleep, leading to dreams which are truthful, which can cross chronological boundaries. This is similar in thought to later Pythagorean theories that dreams can be shaped through music or diet; Plato is suggesting that gluttony and excess are a determining factor in dreams, while on the other hand clear, rational thinking before sleep will allow for a different type of dream experience. For Plato, every man contains these base desires, democrat and tyrant alike; it is one's ability to observe moderation which will keep them below the surface. This notion is echoed elsewhere. In the *Theaetetus*, philosophers are noted for eschewing the desire of political parties for public offices, and banquets and parties with chorus girls – for these things never occur to them 'even in their dreams' (*οὐδὲ ὄναρ*).[91] This seems to represent a more ethical stance. Plato is highlighting that such pursuits are so unnatural to the philosopher that they are not considered even in sleep. It repeats the idea that it is the internal desires which can shape dreams – only in this case such desires are wholly absent

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[89] Plato *Rep.* IX.571d-572b. Van Lieshout (1980) misreads this passage: it is never stated that *τὸ θυμοειδές* could overthrow the other two soul parts.
[90] As Gallop (1971: 195-196); (1996: 11).
[91] Plato. *Theaet.* 173d.

for the philosopher. One could tentatively add another passage, *Laws* X. 904c-d, in which Plato appears to link nightmares with a negative movement of the soul down towards the 'lower regions' (*εἰς βάθος τά ... κάτω λεγόμενα τῶν τόπων*), with names such as Hades. This could be another indicator of the effect of the ethical status of the soul on dream content, i.e. a soul in the descendant state would produce correspondingly nightmarish images, though it is by no means explcit. It is often tricky to pinpoint the exact meaning in these brief Platonic allusions.[92]

Returning to the original passage, a question remains over what exactly Plato meant when he stated that *τὸ λογιστικόν* could apprehend things which were past, present or future, and understand the 'truth'. It could be that he is offering a soul-based theory to account for prophetic dreams, thus removing their divine element. However, without the divine authority behind it, how exactly this knowledge could be gained is unclear.

Perhaps Plato had theories in mind which were similar to Hippocratic thinking - that we can know more about the future state of our body through the roving *λογιστικόν*.[93] Without any real pointers from Plato, we are left to guess. The same is applicable to his statement that we can grasp 'truth'. Perhaps he is alluding to the fact that dreams which are based on the rational soul are more vivid or realistic, and represent a state which is more suited to one's waking life – whereas dreams inspired by *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν* could be fantastical and vulgar. This seems the most straightforward interpretation; it does not seem apparent that he is here referring to a future 'truth' or anything explcitly prognostic.[94]

An altogether more complex theory is presented in the *Timaeus*, split into two parts. In the first, Plato is explaining his theory of the faculty of sight: a stream of fire,

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[92] Van Lieshout (1980).
[93] Discussed below, pp.135-136.
[94] Van Lieshout (1980) proposes that the 'truth' is linked to his idea of the supreme good and *εἴδη*.

similar to sunlight, issues forth from the eye and combines with the light which surrounds us, and can then contact external objects. It then distributes the motions of every object which it touches throughout the body and soul, bringing on the sensation of sight or seeing.[95] Thus at night we cannot see because of the absence of external light around us.[96] When in sleep we close our eyelids, which the Gods designed to protect our vision, this internal fire has no means of escape, and is reflected back. Thereupon it diffuses the motions, essentially bringing on a state of internal quiet and lulling us to sleep. In such a condition, sleep is virtually dreamless. However, if there are internal motions which are so great that they cannot be diffused, they persist and form residual images in the mind which are remembered by the sleeper upon awakening out of dream. Plato seems to be suggesting that the dream constitutes the residual motions of images already seen; images that are so great that they cannot be slowed by the rebounding fire of the eye. Essentially, the motions which are triggered within the body by the contact of the internal fire with external objects can continue and re-occur in dream. Thus we have a physiological explanation for the phenomenon of the 'residual dream', dreams which repeat in the night one's actions during the day.[97] Dreams, in this context, would be limited in scope to the past, to images which had already been seen. The theory does not allow for fantastical images, unless we are to assume that in their residual state they can be so disjointed as to appear fantastical. It does also exclude prophetic dreams, for one cannot re-visualise what

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[95] Plato. *Tim.* 45b-45d. A.E. Taylor (1928: 282*ff*) explains this in far more detail, and is particularly good on its connections to previous theories.
[96] Plato. *Tim.*45d.
[97] Cf. Hippocrates, below.

one has not yet seen. Dreams are presented as a natural by-product of the faculty of sight, and in no sense are they divine.[98]

Later in the *Timaeus* Plato again raises the subject of dreams, though here he seems to be offering a specific explanation for prophetic dreams. He is discussing how the gods arranged the human body, and notes that the savage, appetitive part of the soul, *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν*, was placed in the stomach – where it could feed, yet would be distanced from the rational parts of the soul (70d-e). Now the gods realised that *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν* would not understand or perceive reason, but instead would be haunted by visions both by day and night, and so they fashioned the liver and placed it in that part of the body. The liver acts as a reflector, a mirror, which translates the rational thoughts into the irrational language and images of dream which *τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν* can understand (71a-b). Therefore the gods rectified this by establishing there the organ of divination. This is proved because man can only achieve true divination in abnormal states, as when his powers of reasoning are restrained in sleep, or in disease or under divine inspiration. One can therefore judge the past, present or future through dream, but only once the rational state has been resumed: *ἀλλὰ συννοῆσαι μὲν ἔμφρονος τά τε ῥηθέντα ἀναμνησθέντα ὄναρ ... ὑπὸ τῆς μαντικῆς* (71e). This is why it has become customary for one to consult a seer to interpret such experiences (71e-72b).

Thus in this instance, Plato has managed to merge the physiological with the divine. It is a part of our god-made biological composition which facilitates the prophetic dream - the liver, an organ constructed to allow communication between the gods and our

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[98] Note also that dreams are not presented here as undesirable, as argued by Van Lieshout (1980), they are just a repercussion; sometimes they appear, sometimes they do not.

irrational part.[99] Through this we can then prognosticate via our dreaming images. This therefore would be an explicit, theoretically grounded explanation and acceptance of divinatory dreams. This has caused some alarm, particularly for the commentator A.E. Taylor. For him, this doctrine 'amounts to little more than a politely ironical refusal to preach a 'rationalistic' crusade against the belief in prophetic dreams'.[100] Taylor is right that Plato is playful and ironic, but I do not think that is reason enough to ignore this passage as evidence of theory. One can add that explicit rebuttals of the divine dream are absent from Plato. In the *Laws*, he is critical of the glut of sanctuaries and private cults which have been set up in part as a result of dream visions.[101] His criticism is not aimed at the phenomenon of dreaming, but simply at the fact that unskilled people have been making the dedications and vowing the sacrifices, when in fact it is an act which requires high understanding and intelligence (*διάνοια*). Thus although it is in a sense correct to assert that Plato here is opposing regulated religion against the 'dark sources' of religion, which would include the irrational divine dream commands,[102] it is not the case that he is presenting a rejection of the divine dream. It is more a criticism of certain dream-related practices, and the people who abuse them to the extreme, who dedicate anything at hand on account of dreams. In a similar vein, he is critical of Homer's view that God sends deceitful dreams to men, and specifically the dream which he had Zeus send to Agamemnon.[103] He is not criticising the fact that it is a god sending the dream, but the idea that the god would be deceitful, for it is not in the nature of the divine to lie. Again, it is not the divine dream which is being rejected.

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[99] As also in the Greek practice of hepatoscopy.
[100] A.E. Taylor (1928).
[101] Plato *Laws* X.909d-910e.
[102] Van Lieshout (1980).
[103] Plato *Rep.* 382e-383a.

Plato is as enigmatic as ever. The traditional is still present implicitly, but in certain contexts, for example Socrates' dreams about his own future. Yet we also have in the *Republic* an explanation for dreams based on his concept of the soul, and this is then supplemented in the *Timaeus* by two theories, one linking dreams with residual images, the other linking divinatory dreams with the god-made biological composition of man himself. Plato, through his variety, is himself an example of the Greek attitude to dream experiences at this time: there were different types of dreams, but there was no fixed system of origins or method of understanding. The various theories were accounting for various dreams – therefore one could see a god delivering a message, and one could have a vision featuring everyday occurrences; both necessitated an explanation.

The final philosopher who wrote in detail on dreams is Aristotle. He composed three works with obvious relevance: *On Sleep and Waking*, *On Dreams*, and *On Divination Through Sleep*.[104] The overlapping subject matter of the texts, which form part of the collection known to us as the *Parva Naturalia*, indicates that they were written together over a short period, probably at a late stage in Aristotle's life, c.335-323BC. Signs of revision in the works suggest that they could have been due some final amendments before Aristotle's death prevented them.[105] Nevertheless, they form a significant and measured attempt to provide an explanation for, and qualification of, the dream experience. Aristotle makes it clear that dreams have no divinatory potential: 'apart from its general irrationality, the idea that it is god who sends dreams, and yet that he sends them not to the best and most intelligent, but to random people, is absurd' (*τό τε*

[104] It would be impossible to write an account of these without leaning heavily on David Gallop's fine text and commentary, Gallop (1996).
[105] Gallop (1996: 1-6).

γὰρ θεὸν εἶναι τὸν πέμποντα, πρὸς τῇ ἄλλῃ ἀλογία, καὶ τὸ μὴ τοῖς βελτίστοις καὶ φρονιμωτάτοις ἀλλὰ τοῖς τυχοῦσι πέμπειν ἄτοπον); 'since some of the other animals dream, dreams could not be sent by god' (*ἐπεὶ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων ὀνειρώττει τινά, θεόπεμπτα μὲν οὐκ ἂν εἴη τὰ ἐνύπνια*).[106] Yet it is not just that they have no divinatory potential, but that they have virtually no role to play at all. As Gallop says: 'Aristotle's theory contains no teleology. It assigns to dreams no purpose, function, or meaning, and its physiological aspect has been deservedly labelled 'an almost mechanical picture''.[107] Aristotle's perspective is extreme.

He had not always held such views, however. At some stage, probably in his youth, he put forward a theory which resembles that proposed in Pindar, which we saw earlier. Commenting on how the the conception of the gods arose in men, he is reported as saying that it resulted from two causes, one of which being the soul because: '*ἀπὸ μὲν τῶν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν συμβαινόντων διὰ τοὺς ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις γινομένους ταύτης ἐνθουσιασμοὺς καὶ τὰς μαντείας*'. He continues that the soul, when it is alone in sleep (*ὅταν ἐν τῷ ὑπνοῦν καθ' ἑαυτὴν γένηται ἡ ψυχή*), becomes free and can take on its own proper nature (*τὴν ἰδίον .. φύσιν*); in this state it can prophesy and predict the future (*προμαντεύεται τε καὶ προαγορεύει τὰ μέλλοντα*). Thus the soul in sleep has a state akin to its condition in death, when it too is freed from the constraints of the body and can prognosticate. This is why, according to Aristotle, men conceived of some god, like (*ἐοικὸς*) the soul and the most intelligent of all things.[108] This notion does not, however, reappear in any of his later treatises, and in fact

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[106] Arist. *De Div.* 462b20-22; 463b12-16.
[107] Gallop (1996: 28). One wonders how Aristotle would have reacted on learning that he himself appeared giving lectures in the dreams of Islamic philosophers: Green (2003: 292, 295).
[108] Arist. *On Philosophy* Fr. 12a in D. Ross, *The Works of Aristotle*, vol. XII (Oxford, 1952).

is ruled out by his own account of sleep in the *De Somno*, in which sleep is specific neither to soul nor body alone, but is linked with the organism as a whole.

It is clear that Aristotle changed his theory on dreams later in life. In the *De Somno*, Aristotle outlines his theory behind sleep. In sleep, one's perception is cut off or fettered, which distinguishes it from the state of awakening, in which perception is released and active (454b26). The fact that all animals sleep is a proof that they have a perceptive faculty (454b24). Sleep is only a state of immobilisation, so that it is impossible to sleep all the time (454b9). This incapacity affects the primary sense organ, the heart,[109] which therefore cuts off all the various modes of perception; this distinguishes sleep from other states of unconsciouness, like fainting, where one sense organ might fail but others can continue (455b2-12). Sleep is a complete collapse of perception, not a temporary loss of awareness. Because sleep affects the perceptive organ, it is specific to neither soul nor body alone, but is common to both, because the organ of perception is governed by both (453b24-454a10). Thus, as we saw above, this eliminates the 'free soul' which he had once suported. Sleep does still have a function – it is intended for the preservation of the animal, i.e. to allow the perceptive organs to rest and recharge (455b22). The onset of sleep is, in biological terms, brought on by the intake of food – this causes hot matter to rise like steam and, when it reaches a certain point, it turns back, and returns in a mass; this, while still, can weigh one down, but upon descending it can obstruct the veins, affecting the primary sense organ, and causing sleep. That is why one is often sleepy after a heavy meal, because of the mass of food causing a

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[109] Arist. *De Som* 455b34*ff.*

large expulsion of heat.[110] Thus sleep is a state of full perceptive incapacitation, brought on by the heat expelled by food; this will prove important shortly.

In the *De Insomniis*, Aristotle explains that the appearances (*τὰ φαντάσματα*) which we see in sleep result from the persistent perception of an object in the sense organs, even once they have stopped perceiving it. In waking, this can be exemplified if one stares at the sun and then shifts to darkness – an image from the previous state continues (459b7-b19). These lingering perceptions can often be ignored during the day, when the senses are still active, but in sleep due to the cessation of the primary sense organ, these perceptive residues are carried inwards by the reversed flow of heat (a result of the onset of sleep) and towards the first point of perception; after the disturbance of this movement has quieted down, they can become apparent (460b28-461a7). Now because of this movement, the appearances are liable to break up and become distorted. According to Aristotle, proof of this is that dreams do not occur after food or in the very young, because of the great movement generated by the heat (461a8-14). Sometimes, the appearances are simply disturbed, and can appear fantastical or grotesque, and the dream loses its coherency (461a18-25). If, however, the blood has subsided and its 'purer elements have separated off' (*διακρινομένου*), the movement of sense impressions which persists from each of these sense organs makes the dreams coherent (461a25-27). Thus there is an appearance, and because one is in a state with no perception, and no judgement, what bears 'a slight resemblance to something appears to be that very thing' (*ὥστε τὸ μικρὰν ἔχον ὁμοιότητα φαίνεται ἐκεῖνο*), (461b10-11). Therefore if anyone gains any perception in sleep, say if someone becomes aware that they are dreaming, then the sense faculties make one aware that the image is not a reality but only an impression;

[110] *De Som.* 456a30-b28; his explanation is not entirely clear: see Gallop's commentary (1996: 130*ff*).

while one is in the blinkered state of sleep then nothing will arise to 'contradict the appearance' (*ἀντιφήσει τῇ φαντασίᾳ*), (461b30-462a8). In sum, the dream is an appearance of a perceptual remnant, and is a by-product of the state of sleep, for it is the absence of perception which prompts the belief that the dream image is a reality.

His theory on dreams stands in slight contradiction to his theory on sleep – for if sleep is a state of sensory incapacitation, how can one still perceive the dream, '*τὸ γὰρ ἐνύπνιόν ἐστιν αἴσθημα τρόπον τινά*'?[111] Aristotle may have noticed this himself, and added the introduction to the *De Insomniis* as a revision – in it, he assigns the dream not to the faculty of perception or judgment, but to the imagination. However even here he is confusing, for the imagination is itself a part of perception: 'dreaming is the work of the perceptual part, but belongs to this part in its imagining capacity' (*φανερὸν ὅτι τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ μέν ἐστι τὸ ἐνυπνιάζειν, τούτου δ' ᾗ φανταστικόν*), (459a21-22). Such inconsistencies need not delay us too much.[112] The key point is that Aristotle is proposing a biological theory of dream, linked to his theories about the sense faculties. Sleep is a determining factor in dreams; dreams occur because of the loss of perception and judgment, which allows the remnants of objects perceived externally to be misinterpreted as the reality of the object itself in sleep; the appearance of the object is taken to be the original. Distorted dreams, dreams which are incoherent, which present figures which cannot have been perceived in external reality, are a result of the breaking up of the residual perceptions through internal movements. An intake of food before sleep will lead to such an exchange of heat that the images will be broken up entirely, and no dream images will appear at all. The dream is not divine, but an incidental by-product of the

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[111] *De Som.* 456a27.
[112] See in further detail Gallop (1996: 21*ff*).

perceptual unawareness in sleep; once we are awake, we recognise that the *phantasmata* which we see are not real, but images.

A further rejection of the traditional objective dream comes in his *On Divination Through Sleep*. In it, he remarks that it is absurd that god should send dreams only to random people, and not the best and most intelligent men, *'τοῖς βελτίστοις καὶ φρονιμωτάτοις'* (462b22); as he notes again, if they truly were divine they would occur during the day, and appear to the clever people, *'τοῖς σοφοῖς'* (464a21-22).[113] For Aristotle, precognitive dreams can predominantly be explained by three factors: they are causes, or signs, of things that will happen, or coincidences (462b26-27). He agrees with the medical experts that dreams can be an important sign of bodily change. He does not link this to the free soul, which would be inapplicable given his theory on sleep, but instead to his own theory on dreams: because there is a lack of perception in sleep, the smaller residues which remain become amplified in importance, when normally they would go unnoticed in the daytime when the perceptive faculty has so many external stimuli. Thus a faint sound is imagined as thunder, and so on. Therefore we might be able to pick up the faint first stages of an imminent infection or disease, which will be more evident in sleep than in the waking state.[114]

Dreams can also be causes of future events, yet only indirectly. The fact that I dreamed X does not mean that X will happen, it simply opens the avenue for that train of thought. Just as the events of the day can leave residues in the mind which correspond to our dream images, so too the dream images can leave remnants in the waking mind which may prompt a course of action (463a21-31). If one dreams of the sea, and wakes with that

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[113] Cf. *Div. Som.* 463b12-13 – since some other animals also dream, they cannot be from god.
[114] *Div. Som.* 463a3-21. Cf. *Regimen IV*, below.

in mind, then one might visit the beach - it may seem like the dream had predicted it, when in fact it had only planted the seed; it is a conscious human effort which will bring about the result.

Aristotle admits, however, that most dreams are just coincidences (*τὰ δὲ πολλὰ συμπτώμασιν ἔοικε*), especially those that are bizarre, or those that concern matters which could have no internal causation, like a naval battle (*ναυμαχίας*) or distant events (*τῶν πόρρω συμβαινόντων*). For something seen or mentioned in dream may come to pass, or it may not; if it does it will not be because it was caused by the dream, but only through chance. That is why there are many dreams which ultimately are unfulfilled: '*τὰ γὰρ συμπτώματα οὔτε ἀεὶ οὔθ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ γίγνεται*'.[115]

For Aristotle, dreams are not divine, but daemonic, '*ἡ γὰρ φύσις δαιμόνια, ἀλλ' οὐ θεία*' (463b15). The exact meaning of the 'daemonic' is not clear. It may well be, as argued persuasively by David Gallop, that the daemonic in this context stands again for the factor of chance: it is the idea that an event seems in all respects to have been ordained by a divine overlord, when in fact it was only a matter of pure coincidence.[116] That is the difference between divine and daemonic: divine would imply that a god was the hidden craftsman, whereas the term daemonic acknowledges the appearance of a god's creation, when it is in fact only a coincidence.

Any precognitive dream which cannot be accounted for in these ways is explained by a rather jumbled theory based on the external impulses which impinge upon the recipient in sleep. It is similar in style to the theory of Democritus above, but Aristotle is clear that his own interpretation is preferable to his, for Democritus attributes his theory

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[115] *Div. Som.* 463a31-463b11.
[116] Gallop (1996: 44*ff*). Gallop draws on other examples of the use of daemonic in the *Physics* and *Poetics*.

to the images and emanations (*εἴδωλα καὶ ἀπορροίας*). Aristotle instead proposes that there are motions, as when something moves an amount of water or air; if this then moves another portion, it can carry with it the impulse of the original, even though it is no longer present. Essentially it is like a ripple effect, with the initial impulse moving on and on, but deteriorating in clarity as it goes. Thus it is possible that some form of perception could move from the originator to the souls of dreaming recipients (*πρὸς τὰς ψυχὰς τὰς ἐνυπνιαζούσας*).[117] In another echo of Democritean theory, he considered this to be more likely at night, when the air is stiller, and the ripples would be less liable to distortion. He then links this back to his own theory on sleep – the absence of normal perception means that the sleepers are more sensitive to such movements (464a12-19). He does also argue that some people are more receptive than others. Those who are vacuous are more likely to allow such emanations to enter, as are the insane, whose own 'movements' cannot block the entrance of foreign impulses (464a23-27). With this theory Aristotle managed to explain why precognitive dreams can occur to anyone, not just the most intelligent, and why they occur at night.

Aristotle believed dreams to be a natural by-product of sleep, and a phenomenon which was determined not by the divine, but by either the residual elements of external perceptions, or perhaps an external ripple or emanation which had entered the mind. He had not just denied the dreams any divinatory element, but any purpose or function of any kind; it was not just the traditional presentation which he attacked. In this manner he would not just be at odds with the other philosophers of the classical period, but also with most modern theorists, including Freud, all of whom seek to uncover the potential in dreams as a source of knowledge. Even so, Aristotle cannot help, it seems, but frame his

[117] *Div. Som.* 463b31-464a12.

thinking within some elements of traditional thought. His theory, after all, is an attempt to explain the images, *τὰ φαντάσματα*, which appear to us in dream: '*τὸ δ' ἐνύπνιον φάντασμά τι φαίνεται εἶναι (τὸ γὰρ ἐν ὕπνῳ φάντασμα ἐνύπνιον λέγομεν, εἴθ' ἁπλῶς εἴτε τρόπον τινὰ γινόμενον*'.[118] Thus the dream is still an internal appearance of an actual external image, be it human or inanimate. The dream is still in a sense objectified, in that it has a form, called *phantasma*, which appears to the dreamer; it is not a subconscious thought or a repressed desire. He expresses no interest in any notion of 'wish-fulfillment'.[119] The closest he comes to any connection between our thoughts and the dream is in a passing acknowledgement of the 'day residue' theory, the idea that dreams can repeat in the night what was preoccupying one's thoughts during the day. Yet this, too, is linked to his own theory on dream: that such appearances, *phantasmata*, have had their path paved for their movement through the fact that one was thinking about them in the daytime – it simply allows quicker movement of these images.[120] Aristotle's aim is only to provide a physiologically grounded explanation for these appearances, not to object to the core understanding of the dream as an entity, an objective 'thing'.[121] Therefore even in such an extremely rational work as Aristotle's one still finds that traditional perspectives can filter through the inquiry.

Aristotle is exceptional amongst the philosophers in rejecting any divine element in dreams, and in denying dreams any real purpose at all. He is the exception that proves the rule: that it was common to accept that the traditional type existed. Aristotle

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[118] Arist. *De Insom.* 459a19-20
[119] In fact, elsewhere he seems to contradict this by arguing that the dreams of good people are better, i.e. there is no sense of repression coming through (*Eth. Nic.* 1102b10-11; cf. Gallop (1996: 12n.23)).
[120] Arist. *De Div.* 463a21-30.
[121] Gallop (1996: 10) believes his focus may have also been narrowed by his attempts to criticise Plato.

inadvertently provides one of the most telling pieces of evidence against any idea of 'progress', or rational ideas becoming more 'fashionable', because he still sees the need to reject the traditional dream even in the 330s BC. As he says: 'As for the divination that takes place during periods of sleep and is said to be based on dreams, it is not easy either to despise it or to believe in it. The fact that all or many people suppose dreams to have some significance inspires belief in it...' (*Περὶ δὲ τῆς μαντικῆς τῆς ἐν τοῖς ὕπνοις γινομένης καὶ λεγομένης συμβαίνειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐνυπνίων, οὔτε καταφρονῆσαι ῥάδιον οὔτε πεισθῆναι. τὸ μὲν γὰρ πάντας ἢ πολλοὺς ὑπολαμβάνειν ἔχειν τι σημειῶδες τὰ ἐνύπνια παρέχεται πίστιν ὡς ἐξ ἐμπειρίας λεγόμενον*).[122] Divinatory dreams, by Aristotle's admission, were still widely believed in. The philosophers do not represent a perspective in conflict with the traditional, but rather illustrate that there were other theories being put forward, and complement the evidence found in literature of other attitudes to the dream experience. For the philosophers, the divine dream was often not the direct subject of discussion; we only find explicit polemic in Aristotle. There is no need to assume that their new theories were intended to replace or contradict divine dreams.

[122] Arist. *De Div.* 462b12-16.

(iv)

The Medical Writers

The final piece in the theory puzzle is the attitude of the medical writers. For the Hippocratic authors, the dream had a function as a tool of diagnosis: the images seen in dreams could provide clues to the internal condition of the body. An entire treatise was dedicated to interpreting dream symbols in a medical context, *Regimen IV*, '*Περὶ Ἐνυπνίων*', composed probably in the late fifth or early 4th century BC.[123] As with the other Hippocratic texts, it is too often assumed that the medical writers were ready to attack and belittle the various religious practices which had preceded them, and which were concurrently competing with them. It has been capably demonstrated by Geoffrey Lloyd that the situation was altogether more complex, and that there was give and take, overlap between theories, and many echoes of traditional thought in the new wave of 'scientific' literature. One should not impose modern, clearly defined categorisations on the ancients; this was not science versus religion, for the two were not yet distinct disciplines, and science itself had no fixed title.[124] The most important element of the theory found in *Regimen IV* is that it is not intended to refute divine explanations, but it is explicitly designed as an alternative explanation for different types of dreams. In introducing his own theory, the author writes: 'Now such dreams as are divine, and foretell to cities or to private persons things evil or things good, have interpreters in those who possess the art of dealing with such things' (*Ὁκόσα μὲν οὖν τῶν ἐνυπνίων θεῖά ἐστι καὶ*

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[123] Cf. Van Lieshout (1980: 188); Holowchak (2002: 129). See further Lloyd (1979: 15). On dating in general, see Thomas (2000: 24*ff*). Needless to say, the author was not Hippocrates, although W.D.Smith (1979: 44*ff*) has tried to argue that it was. However it was probably the same author as the rest of *Regimen*, Lloyd (1987: 34n.108). See further Van Lieshout (1980: 185).

[124] Lloyd (1979). Any overlap is also brought out fully by Jouanna (1999: 181*ff*).

προσημαίνει ἢ πολέσι ἢ ἰδιώτῃσι ἢ κακὰ ἢ ἀγαθὰ μὴ δι' αὐτῶν ἁμαρτίην, εἰσὶ οἳ κρίνουσι περὶ τῶν τοιούτων τέχνην ἔχοντες).[125] The divine dream is not dismissed, nor is he even attempting to contradict it. It is simply that these divine dreams serve no purpose in a diagnostic or medical sense; therefore he has no intention of subjecting them to his own brand of interpretation. What he does subsequently criticise is the attempt by these diviners to judge medical conditions from dreams: to interpret 'the physical symptoms foretold by the soul' (*ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ σώματος παθήματα προσημαίνει*).[126] Even though they may at times be correct, it is more by luck than judgement, and the only advice that they can offer is to take care and pray, but they offer no detailed prescription. This is what he will attempt to do, to give detailed 'cures' in the form of regimen. This is the clearest example yet of the argument I proposed for the philosophical literature: that it is not the case that theories were in 'conflict', but that they suited different contexts.

The theory proposed by the author of *Regimen IV* is linked to his conception of the soul. While awake, the soul is restricted, for it is required in the machinations of various bodily functions, such as hearing, vision, touch and locomotion. This subservience to the body is lifted while it sleeps, because the bodily functions are at rest, and no longer occupy it. Thus the soul becomes free to 'administer its own household' (*διοικεῖ τὸν ἑωυτῆς οἶκον*) – and in this state it sees and feels everything. Normal waking perception is cut off, and replaced by the cognisant soul, which performs all the functions of the body, and is awake to all the bodily conditions: it sees, hears, walks, touches, feels pain, and even ponders. What the soul perceives is then embodied in the dreaming visions one experiences - thus we see symbolic depictions of what the soul has seen or felt, and

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[125] Hipp. *Reg IV*. 87.
[126] *Ibid*.

given that the soul becomes more perceptive in sleep, so too we can perceive more about the bodily condition from dreams. As *Regimen IV* begins: 'Whoever, therefore, knows how to interpret these acts aright knows a great part of wisdom' (*Περὶ δὲ τῶν τεκμηρίων τῶν ἐν τοῖσιν ὕπνοισιν ὅστις ὀρθῶς ἔγνωκε, μεγάλην ἔχοντα δύναμιν εὑρήσει πρὸς ἅπαντα*).[127] This concept of the free perceptive soul therefore becomes highly relevant to the medical condition of the dreamer. The soul, while roaming, ascertains imbalances and disturbances, and produces images in the mind which correspond, via analogy, to one's bodily state. Knowing how to interpret the symbols in sleep enables the doctor to diagnose and prognosticate; dreams in this context are symptoms of disease, not messages from god. They can also account for the 'day residue' theory of dreams – that sometimes they simply repeat in sleep what was been engaging the mind during the day. According to pseudo-Hippocrates such dreams are good, because 'the soul abides by the purposes of the day, and is overpowered neither by surfeit nor by depletion' (88. 2-9). Thus unlike other theorists, he does not consider these to be the result of residual images or motions, but the soul's method of representing health – the normality of the dream vision implies a 'normal' internal balance.[128]

Despite this rational interpretation of the dream, it has been noted that elsewhere in *Regimen IV* there are concessions to traditional modes of thought. Not just in the initial acceptance (but setting aside) of the divine dream, but also in the recommendations of prayer as a help in cures: 'Prayer is a good thing, but one should take on part of the

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[127] *Reg. IV.* 86. Cf. Pindar Fr. 116B, above, for his conception of the soul.

[128] Dodds (1973: 180n.3) is wrong to claim that there was also present a theory that 'most dreams are merely wish-fulfilments', based on *Reg. IV.* 93: 'whenever a man thinks that he beholds familiar objects, it indicates a desire of the soul'. Quite apart from the inappropriate use of Freudian terminology, it is clear from the context that the author still sees this desire in purely a medical sense, rather than as a repressed desire. Note that earlier he had mentioned that for a man to see himself as eating his normal diet, this indicates a depression of the soul – i.e. that his soul is indicating he needs to eat more for his health.

burden oneself and call on the gods only to help' (*καὶ τὸ μὲν εὔχεσθαι ἀγαθόν· δεῖ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν συλλαμβάνοντα τοὺς θεοὺς ἐπικαλεῖσθαι*).[129] For example, when describing in detail visions of the celestial bodies and how their movements correspond to internal disease, apart from prescribing courses of regimen, he also suggests 'prayers to the gods' (*τοῖσι θεοῖσιν εὔχεσθαι*); if the signs are good, one should pray to the Sun, to Zeus of the sky, Zeus of the home, Athena of the home, to Hermes and Apollo, but if bad, then prayers should be directed towards the gods who avert evil, to Earth and to the Heroes.[130] He again recommends prayer if one dreams of seeing the earth as black or scorched: while also prescribing no exercise and boiled barley water, he tells us to 'pray to Earth, Hermes and the Heroes' (*εὔχεσθαι δὲ Γῇ καὶ Ἑρμῇ καὶ ἥρωσιν*).[131]

This inability to expunge the divine from his discourse on dreams has given rise to a theory that he was working from an existing dreambook, and that those divine elements are simply the residue that has escaped his filtration process.[132] However, this hypothesis really only holds any resonance on stylistic grounds. When reading *Regimen IV* one will probably note a shift in tempo from around chapter 90 onwards, where the author seems satisfied with giving only short descriptions, and is slightly less forthcoming about his own treatments and explanations in comparison with the early chapters.[133] This is apparently evidence of the author rushing to finish his work, and copying material from his source rather more hurriedly. Although this stylistic shift is present, it could just as plausibly be accounted for as an attempt by the writer to avoid

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[129] *Reg. IV.* 87. It is very rare for prayer to be offered as a cure in the Hippocratic corpus; incantation is explicitly rejected in *Sacred.* 2.
[130] *Reg. IV.* 89.126ff. Note that he also prescribes various courses of regimen.
[131] *Reg, IV.* 90.63.
[132] See Van Lieshout (1980: 186), supported by Holowchak (2002: 131). Contra see Dodds (1951: 133n.107).
[133] Holowchak (2002: 131n.10).

superfluous repetition – he has already built, albeit implicitly, a model of argumentation based on analogy to explain his dream interpretations, and this model is applicable throughout. We know by now that things which represent peaceful normality are healthy, whereas any vision that contradicts this normality suggests illness; any extra explanation is unnecessary. The two other principal arguments, that he deals with dreams as 'static items' in the style of later dreambooks, and that he seems to have pre-classified dreams as 'good' or 'bad', are rather thin. Surely they are at most evidence that there was a framework within which he was working, with established criteria and modes of classification, but this does not oblige us to presume that he was a copyist.[134] One can work from a model without lifting its material. This theory really hinges on the idea that the religiosity of *Regimen IV* must be the result of some other author- it cannot be from the same pen as our rational Hippocratic interpreter. Yet surely, even if all the above were true, this notion is absurd. Why should anyone using another source, particularly if he were seemingly in a rush and being selective about his inclusions, choose to bother copying information that contradicted his own position? It is easier to gloss over the distasteful than to embrace it. It is unnecessary to presume that, in proposing some traditional elements, he is simply copying another author; it is more important to see his acceptance of the divine in the context of dreams as following the pattern established in other authors, too: that dreams could be divine, but they could also be conceived as something else.

Other Hippocratic authors repeated this medical aspect of dreams. In the *Humours*, a curious scrapbook of notes and jottings on diseases, dreams are presented as

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[134] The earliest Greek dreambook we know of is credited to Antiphon, dated to the 5th – 4th century B.C. See Dodds (1951: 132n.100) and (1973: 178).

something which needs to be observed by the doctor (*σκεπτέα ταῦτα*). 'The dreams the patient sees, what he does in sleep' (*ἐνύπνια οἷα ἂν ὁρῇ, καὶ ἐν τοῖσιν ὕπνοισιν οἷα ἂν ποιῇ*) are signs (*σημεῖα ταῦτα*), no different from, for example, the smell of the skin or the ears.[135] So too in the *Epidemics*, we find wet dreams presented as a by-product of fever, something to be noted by the physician. They occurred repeatedly to a certain Nicippus, and it was predicted that they would end when the fever reached crisis – and so they did.[136] Dreams here are rather mundanely medical – they are experiences which are dependent on a certain state of disease. A more protracted example is given in *Regimen III*.71. The author explains that some people experience sleep related symptoms when exercise is 'overpowered' (*κρατέωνται*) by food: at the start they have long and pleasant sleeps, perhaps even during the day, but when the body is eventually overpowered, it releases an internal secretion which disturbs the soul. This state brings on nightmares – the patient is disturbed and appears to struggle (*ἀνάγκη ταράσσεσθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ δοκεῖν μάχεσθαι*). The theory behind this is exactly the same as presented in *Regimen* IV: 'For as the experiences of the body are, so are the visions of the soul when sight is cut off' (*ὁκοῖα γάρ τινα πάσχει τὸ σῶμα, τοιαῦτα ὁρῇ ἡ ψυχή, κρυπτομένης τῆς ὄψιος*). The soul therefore is disturbed by the state of surfeit, and manifests this disturbance through its dreaming visions. The nightmarish state of struggle is an indicator of an impending disease – the dream again is a symptom, a sign. The free ranging, perceptive soul has observed the bodily condition and translated it into dream imagery.

A slight nuance of the theory is alluded to in the *On Internal Diseases*, though here there is no explicit mention of the part played by the soul. In describing a 'thick'

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[135] Hipp. *On Humours*. IV.
[136] Hipp. *Epidem*. IV.57. The same is true for Critias and his erection dreams.

(*παχύς*) disease, in which bile collects in the liver and also settles in the head, the patient's sufferings are described: his liver swells up and, by it swelling, expands against the diaphragm and causes pain in the head. The longer this disease continues, the greater the pain; perception begins to fail, and as the expansion of the liver goes on the patient suffers derangement and hallucinations. And, whenever he goes to bed (*ὅταν καθεύδῃ*) he 'starts up out of sleep upon seeing frightening dreams' (*ἀναΐσσει ἐκ τοῦ ὕπνου ὅταν ἐνύπνια ἴδῃ φοβερά*).[137] Here again dreams seem to be a symptom, a result of the disease – caused by the excess of bile and swelling liver. The author continues, stating that we know this 'starting up' is due to dreams, because when the patient regains his senses (*ὅταν ἔννοος γένηται*), 'he reports having had dreams that correspond to the way he moved his body and spoke with his tongue [presumably in sleep]' (*ἀφηγεῖται τὰ ἐνύπνια τοιαῦτα ὁρᾶν ὁποῖα καὶ τῷ σώματι ἐποίει καὶ τῇ γλώσσῃ ἔλεγε*). Therefore the dream here is certainly not divine – it is a symptom and result of the disease. The observance and report of the dream episode is presented as a form of evidential proof: the behaviour of the body in sleep is linked to the images that were seen in dream. The bodily functions and dreams then are closely linked.

It is interesting, however, that even within the Hippocratic corpus we find varying explanations for dreams. In an early treatise, *On Breaths*, a more physiological explanation is given for dreams, one in which the soul has no part to play.[138] When discussing the sacred disease, the author briefly digresses on the subject of blood – 'for no constituent of the body in anyone contributes more to intelligence than does blood' (*ἡγεῦμαι δὲ οὐδὲν ἔμπροσθεν οὐδενὶ εἶναι μᾶλλον τῶν ἐν τῷ σώματι συμβαλλόμενον ἐς φρόνησιν*

[137] Hipp. *On Internal Diseases* 48.
[138] Dated between 430 and 400 BC: Thomas (2000: 25-26)

ἢ τὸ αἷμα). In the sleeping state the blood is cooled, because sleep by its nature cools, and when the blood is chilled its passages become slowed. This can be proved by the behaviour of the body, because it grows heavy and sinks, the eyes shut, the intelligence alters, and 'certain other visions linger' (*δόξαι δέ ἕτεραί τινες ἐνδιατρίβουσιν*), 'which are called dreams' (*αἵ δὴ ἐνύπνια καλέονται*).[139] This seems to offer a theory grounded in the author's physiological preconceptions. Dreams are not a result of disease as such, but a natural result of sleep itself, because of the state of cooling which it brings on. Dreams still act as an observed 'proof', because they are a sign that his own theory about the cooling of the blood is correct. Yet even so, his account does not require a free soul, and does present something different from what we have seen, and is related to the author's personal conception of the flow of blood and the chilling state of sleep. The theory hinges on this, so that if other authors were to work from a different biological base it would quickly lose efficacy.

This, in fact, is proved by a separate account of dream. In *On the Sacred Disease*, it is the brain which is presented as the central organ of the human body, and it is the corruption of the brain which leads to diseases and mental states.[140] This 'corruption' can be caused by either phlegm or bile, both of which have different effects – phlegm cools it, but bile heats it. 'Shouts and cries at night' (*ἐκ νυκτῶν δὲ βοᾷ καὶ κέκραγεν*) are the result of a sudden heating of the brain – thus implying perhaps that some nightmares are the result of a certain cerebral condition brought on by a bilious state. However, as he continues, it is clear that nightmares are in fact themselves a cause of heating, thus a direct counter to the theory of *Breaths*: dreams are not the result of cooling but are

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[139] Hipp. *On Breaths* 14.
[140] Hipp. *Sacr.* 17.

themselves triggering heat. He has observed this because in a nightmare a man's face and eyes become flushed with blood, just as they do in a waking state when a man is afraid or contemplating an evil act (*ἡ γνώμη ἐπινοῇ τι κακὸν ἐργάσασθαι*).[141] So here the nightmare appears in a biological context, though there is no theory put forward to account for its arrival.[142] It is still a state which has been analysed and observed, but in this case it is not a by-product of disease, but a cause itself of a bodily condition. It should be underlined that there is no sense that the nightmare is caused by an excess of bile; both are heating agents, and play a similar role. In essence, this does not present a separate theory, but does illustrate how the dream was moulded to fit the individual physiological nuance of the author.

Therefore even within the Hippocratic corpus there are variations in the exact nature of dream origins, even if all are linked in some way to the bodily condition of the dreamer. The most important admission, however, is the explicit acceptance of divine dreams, and the fact that they are ignored only because such dream types have no relevance in a medical context. This is the pattern I have also argued for in the philosophical literature, too, and which represents the attitude to dream experience in Greek culture at this time. Dream theories were not in competition, and there was no notion of developmental progress from one theory to the next, but rather there was a collection of theories accounting for different dreams to different people. Just as in the language chapter where the first signs of a later more rigid distinction between *oneiroi*

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[141] Hipp. *Sacr.* 18.
[142] Van Lieshout (1980: 98-100) misrepresents the passage.

and *enupnia* were being felt, so too in terms of theory we are seeing the first signs of a typology of dreams. Centuries later, Artemidorus again provides our best source for the culmination of such theorising, when he separates not only the *oneiroi* and the *enupnia*, but also the direct message theorematic dreams and the allegorical ones, and comments that some men divide the allegorical dreams further still into five classes.[143] But things in the classical period were not so clarified, and there existed a mixture of theories. Ironically, however, it is the traditional theory, the one which most modern writers seek to find overturned and overtaken, which remains the most consistent and the most clearly defined; it perseveres throughout the period, existing alongside the new notions of the dream raised to account for those dreams that were not divine.

[143] Artem. *On.* I.1-2.

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Spontaneous and Sought Dreams in the Lived Religion of the Classical Polis

We cannot know to what degree the exact nuances of dream theories concerned most Greeks, which was seemingly more likely to have been a subject for the higher thinkers of the day, the philosophers and medical writers that we have seen. As Dodds has warned: 'consider what a fantastic caricature would result if some future historian set out to reconstruct the religion of *the* Englishman from a comparative study of *Paradise Lost*, the philosophy of Berkeley, and the poems of William Blake.'[1] In the present chapter, the focus will shift back towards the perception of dreams closer to the level of lived reality – looking at how people responded to their dreams through dedications, and actively pursued dreams in the ritual of incubation. The spontaneous dreams of the title are those that occur to people at random, whether in the home or having dozed off in a field, and which were not actively sought by the sleeper. The ritual of incubation, on the other hand, provided a means of procuring dreams, in particular divine dreams, by establishing fixed sanctuaries where worshippers could come and sleep with the intent of seeking the help of the gods. Both types testify to the ongoing belief in the traditional type of dream, for both are based on the notion that dreams act as a bridge between human and divine, providing a direct line of communication with the gods.

There are obvious limitations in what we can recreate of these experiences – to enquire into the exact content of the dreams they saw, the imagery, and the degree of

[1] Dodds (1973: 143).

secondary elaboration which conditioned the dreams, would be a wild goose chase that will not be of concern.[2] To borrow from Dodds again, this study is concerned with the 'outward' aspect, not the 'inward'.[3] I will be analysing the spontaneous dreams through the record of votive dedications which have been left to us, votives set up on account of seeing a divine dream, and assessing how these dedications compare with the other votive offerings we find within Greek religion during this period. I will also look at the nature of cult foundations based on dreams, and link these with the concept of validation – the way in which dreams can attach some significance to a new cult, and the manner in which this is determined by culture patterns of dream belief. In the context of sought dreams and incubation, I turn to an examination of the origins of the cult practice, i.e. deliberately striding outside the normally limited field of Asclepius-related incubatory cults. I will show that incubation was happening at a number of sanctuaries from an early stage in the Greek world, and that this is linked not just to culture patterns; through cross-reference to other cultures, it can be connected to the repetition of certain cultural traits across societies, traits which allowed for and even encouraged the phenomenon to develop – ultimately I believe that incubation is not just bound by culture patterns which determine the content of the dreams, but that the ritual itself is supported and promoted by certain cultural conditions.

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[2] Therefore this will not be a study in the content of 'individual' versus 'culture pattern' dreams in the style of Lincoln (1935: 22).

[3] Dodds (1973: 141): 'every religion has two aspects, an outward aspect and an inward one. Its outward aspect is ritual – a series of traditionally prescribed actions and utterances such as prayer, sacrifice, thanksgiving, the recital or re-enactment of sacred stories, or the repetition of sacred formulas … the inner side of Greek religion escapes us; we can study it only in its external, collective aspect, as a social phenomenon.'

(i)

Dedications and Cult foundations in Consequence of Spontaneous Dreams

The most tangible records we have of the Greek reactions to dreams are in the inscriptional evidence. Dedications and cult foundations made '*kat' onar*' are actually quite commonly found, spanning a chronological range from the 5th century BC until late antiquity, and a geographic spread of virtually the entire Greek speaking world.[4] And although, as one might expect, the great healing god Asclepius and his Egyptian counterparts Isis and Serapis, all intrinsically linked with the dream ritual of incubation, do receive a large number of these dedications, there is a surprising variety in the names of the gods who appear in the inscriptions, from Zeus (in various forms) to minor personifications like Horme and Homonoia. The dedications illustrate immediately that even though on the surface it might seem that the dream as a mode of communication was the sole preserve of the incubatory gods, the truth is that it was far more widespread. It also needs mentioning from the start that although such dream dedications are often referred to as *kat' onar* as a group, *kat' onar* is far from the only phrase used to express the experience of dreaming in the inscriptional evidence; in fact, *kat' onar* does not appear once in the classical period. Instead, we find a mix of different expressions, in some of which the reference to dream is made explicit through *enupnion* or *oneiros*, but in others the actual dream element must be inferred, either from the context of the inscription (for example a reference to night or the dedicant having been asleep), or,

[4] The only major survey has been done by Van Straten (1976); the most comprehensive study of votives in general is still Rouse (1902).

where the context provides no clues, by cross-reference to other inscriptions of a similar type. This can prove problematic, particularly when, as in a number of cases, the dedication states that there was a divine command, but only in very general language, for instance *kata keleusin* or *kata prostagma* – in such cases it must be admitted that, without any relevant context, we cannot be certain that the dedication was made on account of a dream. Nevertheless, there remains substantial evidence for the practice of setting up dedications and cults on account of dreams.

The evidence for the classical period is the primary point of interest in the current study, and I have collected together below all the relevant examples. I have not included the numerous dedications left at the Asclepieia, only in part because they have already been so fully documented elsewhere,[5] but principally because they are a different phenomenon, set up as a result of dreams sought through incubation. The aim of this section is to delineate the spontaneous dream as it is recorded by the Greeks themselves, as they saw their dreams at random, in the home, away from cultic centres. The dedication was not part of a formalised cult activity, but an individual reaction to a personal experience, and as such is the closest we can come to witnessing the role of dreams in the day-to-day lived religion of the classical period.

Needless to say, the dreamers did not record their sleeping visions in stone as an exercise in self-discovery, but instead as a process of response or reaction to a supposed visitation: the inscriptions relate, without exception, to gods and heroes. Dream dedications, votive reliefs, statues, and altars offered to the gods in consequence of a dream are an explicit example of a continuing belief, at least by some, in the 'traditional'

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[5] LiDonnici (1995); Aleshire (1989); Edelstein and Edelstein (1945). The Egyptian gods are also well documented: see in particular Vidman (1969).

power of the gods to visit through dreams. The inscriptions therefore provide further evidence about the working assumptions on dreams which were present in the Greek world at this time, and reviewing this evidence in the light of the previous chapter on theory will be of obvious interest. This chapter also builds towards some new topics: what was the aim in setting up the dedication, and in what sense was it demanded by the gods? Dream dedications still worked within the framework of Greek reciprocity, but it is possible that they were perceived in a different light from other dedicatory types. I then turn to the cult foundation inscriptions, and argue that such events were part of accepted culture patterns which gave dreams in this context a role of validation.

(i, a)

The Evidence

For purposes of simplicity, I will set out the inscriptions first, giving as much information as possible on the location where they were originally set up, and their content.[6] It is unfortunately not always possible to be exact on both, or even either.

The earliest possible reference is a votive inscription from Ephesus in Ionia, which potentially dates to the Archaic period. It is an inscription of a few lines, recorded on a small block of white marble, broken on all sides. The inscription, with no stoichedon, reads simply:

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[6] In dating the inscriptions, I have in general followed the most commonly accepted date.

[--] αναα ... [--]
[--] ἐντιθεν [--]
[--] .· οἷς ἂν δοκῇ[ι --]
[--] ἡ θεὸς ἐκέ [λευσεν --][7]

The original location where this inscription was set up cannot be determined exactly. It was found in the remains of the St. John's basilica, the church built by Justinian I in the 6th century AD and now surrounded by the modern Turkish town of Selçuk, but was in all probability originally situated in the Artemisium at the foot of the hill on which the church stands.[8] It is likely that some of the dedications left at the temple of Artemis were thrown into the church of St. John following its destruction. Note that although Artemis is not mentioned by name, the inscription makes clear in line 4 that it was set up on account of the order of a female deity, ἡ θεὸς .

The inclusion of this inscription within the current study obviously hinges on the restoration in Lime 4: ἐκέ [λευσεν --], and it is difficult to find a reason to doubt it is right. The second epsilon is almost certainly correct, with only the bottom bar missing (in other words resembling a capital F), so there are few alternative renderings. It is, however, somewhat unusual to find the will of the gods expressed through such 'commanding' terminology in this early period – such orders are more of a feature in Hellenistic and later inscriptions.[9] Unfortunately it is too fragmentary to tell us much, other than being valuable chronological evidence which potentially testifies to the early appearance of these dedications.

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[7] *SEG* XLI 957 = M. Bujukkolanci & H. Engelmann *ZPE* 86 (1991: 137-144) No.1 (with drawing, but no photograph) = P. Gauthier *BE* (1992) No.409.
[8] See Plommer (1962), with the archaeological survey by Hoermann & Keil (1951). On the temple of Artemis, see Paus. 4.31.8.
[9] See the discussions by Nock (1972: I 47); Bömer (1957-1963: III 207-208).

We have much fuller dedications from the fourth century. A woman, Deinophila,[10] set up two statues to Artemis the Huntress in Boeotia. The two statue bases (the statues themselves are not extant) were found at modern Pyrgos, 20km southwest of Thespiae, within the walls of an as yet unidentified ancient fortification in a remote area on the crest of a ridge on Mount Goulas. The first is a cylindrical statue base of grey limestone, which on its surface has two foot-shaped cuttings, no doubt present to hold a bronze statue of reasonable size: the left foot is 14cm long, the right 16cm. The inscription is written in the expected Boeotian form, and the letter style, with small serifs, suggests a date in the second half of the fourth century. The first inscription reads:

Δεινοφίλα
Τροχινιδάο
Ἀρτάμιδι Ἀγροτέραι
ἐνύπνιον Ϝιδῶσα

The second cylindrical statue base, also of grey limestone, is very similar, if slightly larger. It also has two cuttings on the surface, although they are not cut as clearly as in the first. There is definitely a left foot, around 15cm in length, and there is a second cutting with room for a right foot of 17cm, but it is so roughly cut that it may in fact have held a dowel. The inscription is almost exactly the same, although interestingly the carving is far less sophisticated than in the first one, and it is only the fact that they are set up by the same woman which betrays that they are contemporary. This inscription reads:

[10] The name is not otherwise recorded in the *LGPN*; it occurs only once elsewhere in an unrelated inscription from the late C3rd, though there are other Boeotian inscriptions which feature a similar root: for references see *BE* 1961 no.340.

[Δ]εινοφίλα
Τροχεινιδάο
ἐνύπνιον
Ϝιδῶσα Ἀρτάμιδι
Ἀγροτέραι[11]

The slight dissimilarities between the two bases suggest that they carried two different statues, probably with distinct poses, but nevertheless it is striking that we have two virtually exact dedications set up by the same woman for the same reason: as is made clear, she saw a dream, *ἐνύπνιον Ϝιδῶσα*.

It is difficult to ascertain where the dedications would have stood originally. They are dedicated to Artemis the Huntress, and there are no traces of any sanctuaries dedicated to her at Pyrgos – in fact, she is only recorded at one other site in Boeotia, in an inscription from Thisbe, but it has no mention of who (male or female) set it up.[12] The location where they were found, however, on a remote ridge, would to some extent suit a dedication to the protectress of wild animals, and Artemis' shrines were often located outside the civic centres in borderlands.[13] Perhaps there was once a very small sanctuary to the goddess there which has left no trace. It is unlikely Deinophila set them up in just an open field, and there is also no sign that she was establishing a new shrine. Artemis' role as a huntress is probably the one we are to envisage in this instance, even if the dedication was made by a woman. This fact does seem a little odd - Artemis Agrotera is normally associated with war and fighting; the Spartans, for instance, sacrificed a goat to

[11] The two were originally published by J.R. NcCredie & A. Steinberg in *Hesperia* 29 (1960: 123-125). See also *SEG* XVIII 166-167.
[12] *IG* VII. 3564.
[13] See Cole (1998: 27*ff*).

her before battle.[14] It could be simply that Deinophila happened to live near the shrine. One might have expected instead Artemis Eileithyia, whose role was one of a protectress of women in childbirth. We have, for instance, evidence of statues of children set up by their parents at the sanctuary of Artemis Eileithyia in nearby Thespiai.[15]

It is also impossible to know why she set up two virtually identical dedications. One presumes that, even if the inscriptions are similar, the statues themselves would have had variations. While it is possible that she had a single dream in which she was instructed to set up two statues, the most likely explanation is that she saw two separate dreams, both of which led to dedications. We also have five dedications from the Asklepieion in Athens with identical texts,[16] which support the idea that there were several dreams of similar nature, on account of which separate dedications were made.

There is a further dream dedication to Artemis which was found at Athens, though the inscription is quite fragmentary. It is on a base of pentelic marble, of which the left side is truncated. The inscription reads only:

.... ΛΙΆΣ
[Ἀ]ρτέμιδι
[ἀ]π' ἐνυπνίου [17]

The style of the letters has suggested a date in the late fourth century. It gives no epithet for Artemis, and no clues as to where it was originally set up. The name of the dedicator does not survive in full, but one possible reconstruction is [Φι]λιάς.

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[14] She also had a sanctuary at Megara: Paus. 1.41.3.; and Agrai in Attica, Paus. 1.19.6 with Parker (2005: 56, 461-462). On her iconography, *LIMC* II. 113a, 179, 740, 741a.
[15] Schachter (1981: 105n.2; cf. pp. 98, 101, 103, 104, 106).
[16] *IG* II² 4482, 4483, 4484, 4485, and *E.M.* 9552; cf. Merkel (1947: 75-76).
[17] *IG* II² 4660.

There is another frustratingly short dedication from Athens to Athene, which is an inscription on a stela of pentelic marble with no real indication of what it might have carried, and reads:

Ἀθηνάαι Μένεια ἀνέθηκεν
ὄψιν ἰδοῦσα ἀρετὴν τῆς θεοῦ [18]

'Meneia dedicated this to Athena having seen a vision, the power of the goddess'

The letter forms, together with the use of the form *Ἀθηνάα*,[19] have led to it being dated to the early-to-mid fourth century. The exact provenance of the dedication is not known, but it was discovered during the excavations at the Athenian acropolis in 1888; therefore presumably it was originally set up there, in the principal sanctuary of the goddess at Athens. The translation I have adopted above is to include a comma after the 'vision' – i.e. it was not a vision *of* the power of the goddess, but rather the vision was a power of the goddess herself, a manifestation of her *dunamis*.[20] A more direct translation would be to render it as 'having seen as a vision the power of the goddess', which would suggest that the dream vision was of the goddess herself illustrating her majesty.[21]

We are fortunate to have another detailed dedication, this time from the sanctuary of Apollo at Ptoion, in northeast Boeotia. It was found in the intermediary terrace of the sanctuary, and is a large, roughly square block of grey-blue limestone. The top is cracked,

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[18] *IG* II² 4671 = Syll.³ 1151. First published by Lolling *Δελτ. ἀρχαιολ.* (1888: 206); see also Foucart, *Bull. Hell.* XIII, 168,5; *SEG* 25.217; Longo (1969: I.67); Henrichs (1984: 139n.2).
[19] Cf. *CIG* 173 = use of *Ἀθηνάαι* in an inscription dated to 363/2.
[20] Following Henrichs (1984: 139n.2).
[21] Cf. *IG* IV.950, an inscription to Asclepius at Epidaurus which reads: *τι[μ]ῶν σὴν ἀρετήν.*

but still preserves two feet-shaped cavities indicating it once featured a bronze statue of quite large size. The inscription takes up virtually an entire face, and is a verse dedication with six dactylic hexameters and one pentameter:

Πτώϊε χρυς. ..... ΜΑΝΤΙΙΙΕ.ΟΙΙ.Δ'
Ἄπολλον - Στῆσεν Παστρό.ου υἱός
Ἀρίστιχος εἰκόνα ἑαυτοῦ - Ἀλλά σου
δεξάμενος τὰ μοι ἔννυχος αὐτὸς
ὑπέσχου - Φωνὴν φθεγξάμενος πρὸς
ἐμὴν ὅπα προσγελάσας τε - Ἀψευδῆ
μὲν ἐμοί τε καὶ ἡμετέροις προγόνοισιν
φήμην τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἀντιδίδου τελέαν. [22]

'Ptoios, of golden hair, ... ,
Aristichos, the son of Pastro[t/ph]os, dedicated to you Apollo
an image of himself. Having received it,
in accordance with the promise that you made to me in the night
when you responded to my voice and smiled,
grant in return to me and my descendants
the reliable fulfilment of the good prophecy'

It has been dated to the late 4th century, and potentially the early third. As can be seen, a number of letters are missing or broken in the first line, which means we cannot be sure to whom the dedicant addresses the first invocation, although it would seem most likely to have been Apollo Ptoios. The dedication was found in his sanctuary, and there is no reason to doubt that it was originally set up there. One possible restoration in line 1 is *μαντήϊε*, god of the oracle, which would suit Apollo Ptoios' characteristics.[23] The dedicator, Aristichos son of Pastro[t/ph]os[24] is not otherwise known; Aristichos is not a particularly rare name in Boeotia. It would help if we did know who he was in order to

[22] P. Guillon, 'Les Trépieds du Ptoion', p.109, with photographs Plate XII. Not in *CEG*.
[23] Vottéro (2002: No.36).
[24] Guillon suggests this restoration; both possibilities would fit the meter.

have some context in which to make the translation, which otherwise is not straightforward, in particular the sense of the final 3 lines. I have translated it with the sense that this Aristichos had seen a dream in which Apollo made some promise for the future, and that in return he set up a dedication, as a result of which he hoped to guarantee the fulfilment of this prophecy, both for himself and his family.[25] Thus I translate *προγόνοι* as descendants, rather than ancestors – to translate as ancestors would not make sense, for good prophecy is of little use to the dead. If one wishes to translate it as ancestors, than the *φήμην τὴν ἀγαθὴν* would have to be reinterpreted as 'good reputation', yet in doing this it would be difficult to find a meaning for the qualifying words *τελέαν* and *ἀψευδῆ*, because again it does not make sense to want 'reliable fulfilment' of good reputation.[26] Although it is true that *progonoi* is normally to be translated as ancestors, it can have the sense of descendants.[27] In an inscription from Erythrai of the 4th/3rd century BC, we find the line: *ἀθάνατον μνήμην παισί τε καὶ προγόνοις*.[28] In this instance the only straightforward translation is 'descendant' or 'grandchild'.[29] Therefore I would argue that this is again the sense we should interpret in this passage – that Aristichos intended the dedication to secure the prophecy of the goddess in the future for himself and his descendants.

There is a comparable sentiment in the next inscription, from the Piraeus, in which a mother sets up a dedication on account of a dream 'on behalf of her children',

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[25] Guillon speculated that he was a newly empowered prophet, who had solicited the agreement of the god and received a favourable response (in dream), for which he was now giving thanks; in other words, he is seeking to confirm his own powers of prophecy in the future.
[26] Guillon suggests it is 'not impossible' to suppose he intended it for his ancestors, and translates it so; I would agree it is not impossible, but it is also not probable.
[27] It can also have the meaning 'step-son' or 'child by former marriage', eg. Eur. *Ion* 1329 (and cf. *LSJ*), which could be what was intended here.
[28] *IEryth* 210a.4 = *CEG* 858.
[29] There is also a single instance in literature: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.50, although scholars have wanted to emend this to *ἀπογόνων*.

presumably hoping that they too receive the future benevolence of the gods in return for the dedicatory act. The inscription itself was on a white marble stela which had an attached relief, and was dedicated by Timothea to Agdistis and Attis; it reads:

Ἀνγδίστει
καὶ Ἄττιδι
Τιμοθέα
ὑπὲρ τῶν παίδων
κατὰ πρόσταγμα [30]

To Angdistis
and Attis
from Timothea
on behalf of her children
on account of a dream

It has been dated to the mid-to-late fourth century from the letter forms.[31] The exact provenance of this inscription is not known. In the Piraeus Angdistis was quite widely worshipped (though under her names Cybele or Mater), yet only one of her sanctuaries has been discovered, a small one in the Moschaton quarter. This relief did not come from there, and is likely instead to have been part of a haul made from a much larger sanctuary by French soldiers in 1855 when they were stationed at the Piraeus harbour during the Franco-Russian War.[32] Unfortunately, owing in part to the illicit nature of their discoveries, there is no detailed record of the exact location, or inventory, of their finds. If it was part of this sanctuary, the other discoveries there have revealed that it was a private cult founded by foreigners in the fourth century, and only taken over by the

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[30] *IG* II² 4671 = Vermaseren *CCCA* 2.308 = Güntner B47; with Vermaseren (1966: pl.11); and Roller (1999: photo p.179).
[31] Cf. Roller (1994: 248-249).
[32] Vermaseren (1977: 35)

Athenians in the mid 3rd century. This might explain parts of this inscription: the dedicator, Timothea, addresses Cybele as Angdistis, the personal name of the goddess in Anatolia (Cybele being the Hellenic version, and Mater is found in Paleo-Phrygian inscriptions).[33] Therefore Timothea is likely to have been Phrygian herself.

The inscription is, of course, only the shaft holding the relief. The relief itself depicts two figures: the male (Attis) is seated on the left on an irregular shaped object (most likely a rock), and is wearing oriental dress. In his left hand he is holding a syrinx, while he holds out his right hand towards Angdistis on the left, reaching out to receive from her a small trefoil jug. Angdistis herself is standing, with the jug in her right hand while holding a tympanum in her left.[34] The dedication is intended for them both, and was set up under order (presumably by both gods?), *kata prostagma*, and was intended not just for Timothea herself, but also for her children.

This is the same in the case of another dedicator, Dionysios, a cobbler at Athens who dedicated a verse inscription to the hero Kallistephanos and his children, on behalf of his own family. The dedication was found at the Athenian agora, and is accompanied by a relief, probably representing a scene from inside the cobbler's shop. The full Greek of the dedication has not been published, but the translation reads:

'Dionysios the cobbler, son of ...onos, and his children dedicate this to the hero Kallistephanos
Having seen a divine vision in his sleep, Dionysios adorns the hero and the children of Kallistephanos; do you give in return for these things wealth and happy health?'[35]

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[33] See Haspels (1971: 195-200; 295-301); Roller (1994: 248) and (1999: 180); Güntner (1994:32-33).
[34] Cf. A similar scene on a red figure skyphos in Tübingen, F 2 = Roller (1994: 256). See also Vermaseren (1966: 22).
[35] Athens Agora Mus. I.7396 = *AJA* 77 (1973: 209); Camp *Agora* (1986: 147; illustration n.126). One phrase of the Greek can be found in Kearns (1989: 11).

The inscription is thought to date from the 4th century; Dionysios is not otherwise known. John Camp suggested that the patronymic in the first line could be restored to [Sim]onos, thus making him the descendant of one of Socrates' old friends who had continued the shoemaking trade, but this is speculative. The relief itself is of interest; as mentioned, it is commonly seen as representative of a scene at the shop itself: on the left edge, there is an elderly man (bearded and bald), reaching up towards a beam which runs across the top, from which a number of sandals are hanging; in front of him there is a young boy crouching and cutting leather; to their right, sitting facing the front, is a man working on a sandal; and to his right two figures (their heads missing) are sitting behind a cobbler's bench - a lively pictorial representation of life in the shop. There is, however, an alternative explanation: the two figures on the right are noticeably (if only marginally) larger, and it could be that they are meant to represent Kallistephanos and his family at work – note it is one family dedicating to another in the text. In such an instance we might imagine Kallistephanos, for want of any other information on him, to have held some special place for cobblers, perhaps as a cobbler himself.[36]

So far we have seen only dedications, but we also have inscriptions which testify to the establishment of entire cults and sanctuaries on account of dream visions. One of the earliest examples we have comes from Knidos, on the coast of Caria, and is dated to the mid-4th century BC.[37] It is an inscription on a block of blue marble, and on the surface of the block there is an elliptical hollow. It was discovered in the *temenos* of Demeter and Kore, and is dedicated to the two goddesses. The three-line verse inscription reads:

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[36] See further Parker (2005: 449-450).

[37] G. Kaibel *Epigraph*. No.785, dates it to the 2nd or 1st century, but this is far too late given the letter forms.

Κούρᾳ καὶ Δάματρι οἶκον καὶ ἄγαλμ' ἀνέθηκεν Χρυσογόνη[ς]
μήτηρ, Ἱπποκράτους δὲ ἄλοχος Χρύσινα, ἐννυχίαν ὄψιν
ἰδοῦσα ἱεράν· Ἑρμῆς γάρ νιν ἔφησε θεαῖς Ταθνῇ προπολεύειν. [38]

> Chrysina, wife of Hippocrates and mother of Chrysogone, dedicated this building and statue to Kore and Demeter, having seen a divine vision in the night; for Hermes told her to devote herself to the goddesses in Tathnē.

The base was found in the sanctuary of Demeter, on account of which Newton took it to be the original dedication commemorating the cult foundation, and he considered the base to have carried a cult statue.[39] He was supported by Hirschfeld, though he thought the base would have better suited a relief, perhaps of the two goddesses, rather than a statue.[40] Bean and Cook doubted this, noting that the oval socket on the surface of the block looked more likely to have supported a single statue than a relief. They also questioned whether this could really have been the original inscription of the sanctuary – it would, they felt, have been odd for a state cult to have been founded upon a private dedication as a result of a dream. This was supported in part by Blümel, who thought that the inscription could not refer to the actual, main, temple building, but rather a small neighbouring building, which might have been used for separate purposes.[41] They were right to question the nature of the statue, but it does seem that the use of *agalma* in inscriptions would usually indicate a divine statue, rather than a human one.[42]

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[38] *BrMusInscr.* 813 = *CEG* 2.860 = Newton, *Discov.* P.714 No. 15, with photograph pl. lxxxix = Merkelbach (1998) 1.1.6 = Blümel (1992) I.131.
[39] Newton (1863: 176-177).
[40] Hirschfeld *BMI* 4.813.
[41] Blümel (1992) I.131.
[42] G.E. Bean & J.M. Cook *BSA* 47 (1952) 207. Cf. the bibliography on *agalma* collected by Kron (1996: 152n.61); and see the Indexes to the *Bulletin épigraphique* s.v. *agalma*.

The translation above, and the interpretation which follows (that Chrysina had a dream in which she was visited by Hermes, as a consequence of which she took up a priesthood at the sanctuary and dedicated some form of temple) has been largely repeated ever since it was first suggested by Newton. It does, however, hinge largely on the final line, and indeed on the restoration he gives for the word *Tathne*. He takes it to be a proper noun, referring to an otherwise unheard of place in the vicinity of Knidos, and the location where Hermes instructed her to build the temple.[43] However, the vocational sense of this inscription has recently been thrown into doubt by Kent Rigby, who has re-evaluated this inscription not as Hermes calling her to the priesthood, but as Hermes informing Chrysina as to the fate of her daughter, Chrysogone. Rigsby doubts, as others before him, how likely it is that Chrysina could announce herself as priestess of a public cult on account of a dream. He instead emphasises that Chrysina describes herself primarily as the mother of Chrysogone, and makes her the context of the inscription. The verb *φημί* (line 4) is rarely used in a commanding sense, 'tell' as in 'order', but rather simply as the act of saying. He therefore translates the final line: 'For Hermes said that she is an attendant' – the she here not being Chrysina, but Chrysogone; she is an attendant of the goddesses, in the afterlife. These are comforting words spoken by Hermes in dream, and in consequence of them Chrysina sets up a temple and statue to honour the two goddesses whom her daughter now serves.[44] Rigsby solves the problem of Tathne by assuming it to be the error of a mason, and instead suggesting an emendation which might fit some characteristic of the goddesses, such as *θεᾶι σ<εμ>νῆι*. His solution

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[43] Followed also by Kron (1996: 150). Other reconstructions have been offered, but none widely accepted: Bursian *Berichte der Sächs. Gesellsch. D. Wissensch.* (1860: 205) = *δ]ά[φ]νη*; C.Keil *II. Supplementband der Jahrbb. für Philol.* P.622 = *τὰ θ[ύ]η*; G. Kaibel *Epigraph.* No.785 = *στάθ[μ]η*. See the criticisms of Rigsby (2003: 60).
[44] Rigsby (2003: 60-64).

is certainly clever, and does help to explain some of the confusions in the text; I, however, would not be so quick to exclude the possibility that she could have taken up the priesthood on account of her dream.

Of greater scale is the dedication of a sanctuary found on an altar at Cos. The altar was found in the place called the Noria, now entombed within the wall that surrounds the plane-tree of Loza. The altar is rectangular, made of white marble, and was dedicated to the eponymous king-god of Kaunos, situated opposite Rhodes at the extremity of Caria. The inscription with it, written in well-carved letters which have led to a late 4th century date, reads:

Φιλήρατος Ἀριστείδα βασιλέως Καύνου,
τοῦ θεοῦ προστάξαντος τὸ ἱερὸν ἱδρύσατο. [45]

Phileratos, son of Aristeidas, Dedicated this sanctuary
at the request of king Kaunos the god

In making this translation I am following Bean, [46] who argued that this is a reference to the legendary eponymous founder of the city, Kaunos son of Miletus.[47] Bean linked this to two inscriptions found at Kaunos itself, which refer to *βασιλεὺς ὁ θεός*,[48] and which he considered to have also been dedicated to the legendary king; in the current instance the extra specification of Kaunos is natural given the fact that it has been set up in foreign

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[45] Paton-Hicks 53 = Rayet No.1.
[46] Bean (1954: 96, with n.37a). Paton-Hicks and Rayet prefer: 'Phileratos son of Aristeidas, king of Kaunos, dedicated this sanctuary at the request of the god', and presume the sanctuary to have been to Asclepius, largely because of the renowned ill-health of the area of Kaunos.
[47] On his legends, see Aristocritus = *FGrH* III. 493.1
[48] His nos. 37 and 38. For further evidence of the 'King of Kaunos' god, there is now the trilingual inscription from the Letoon of Xanthos in Lykia (Greek-Lykian-Aramaic): H.Metzger, E.Laroche, A.Dupont-Sommer, M.Mayrhoffer, *La stèle trilingue du Létoon. Fouilles de Xanthos*, Tome VI (Paris 1979); cf. Marek (2000).

territory. The dedicator, therefore, was presumably a foreigner in Cos, and was setting up a sanctuary to the eponymous god of his home city.

There is a comparable inscription from Priene, fifty kilometres north of Knidos on the Ionian coast, dated also to the late 4th century.[49] This inscription was set up by Philios, a Cypriot from Salamis, to record how the hero Naulochos[50] and the Thesmophoroi appeared to him in three dream visions, through which they ordered him to worship Naulochos as guardian deity of the city and instructed him as to the location where he should build the shrine:

ὑπνωθεὶς Φίλιος Κύπριος γένος ἐξαλαμῖνος
υἱὸς Ἀρίστωνος Ναόλοχον εἶδεν ὄναρ
Θεσμοφόρους τε ἁγνὰς ποτνίας ἐμ φάρεσι λεοκοῖς·
ὄψεσι δ'ἐν τρισσαῖς ἥρωα τόνδε σέβειν
ἡγῶγον πόλεως φύλακον χῶρον τ' ἀπέδειξαν·
ὧν ἕνεκα ἵδρυσεν τόνδε θεὸν Φίλιος. [51]

Having fallen asleep Philios, of Kypriot race,
from Salamis, son of Ariston, saw a dream of the august Naulochus
and the revered Thesmophoroi in white robes;
they ordered him in three visions to honour this hero
as guardian of the city and they pointed out the location;
on account of this Philios set up this god.

In this instance, we have some rare detail on the nature of the goddesses as they appeared, dressed in white robes, presumably reflecting what he in fact saw in the dream vision. It

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[49] Hornblower *Mausolus* (1982: 324n.251) argues for a later date than Hiller (*Inscr. Priene* 196), who suggests mid-4th century based on the orthography AO = AY, EO = EY. Hornblower shows that this form was still used in the period of Alexander: cf. Tod 192.
[50] Naulochus was also the name of the major port at Priene; it seems it had become personified and turned into a hero. He is also mentioned in an inscription from Rhodes: Kontorini, V., *Inscriptions inedites relatives a l'histoire et aux cultes de Rhodes au IIe et Ier av. J.C.*, Rhodiaca, I, 1983: 65*ff.*
[51] *Inscr. Priene* 196 = *CEG* 2.854.

is also of note that he required three visions of them, one thinks over multiple nights. Perhaps he too, like Xerxes in Herodotus, had some initial doubts over whether to obey the dream instructions.[52] This type of repetitive dream might, in fact, go some way to explaining the multiple dream dedications, such as the pair we saw from Boeotia earlier.

Philios was clearly a foreigner in Priene, yet that did not prevent him from founding a new cult in the city, even one which was supposed to be its patron and guardian deity. The inscription was located near to the south gate of the city walls on a tower, and an alcove survives at the gate which was probably the shrine of the hero.[53] It is likely that he was worshipped here as a new guardian deity, and there is no reason to suppose that it was only a private cult, or at least that is the impression given, but there is also admittedly nothing in the language of the inscription to suggest that Naulochos was intended to be the sole guardian of the city – he was probably just one of a number of guardians, and as long as he did not interfere with the traditional cults then it is unlikely that anybody would object to his installation.

We have another example of a cult foundation following a dream, this one from Caunos in south-eastern Caria. The inscription records the foundation of a shrine to Zeus Xenios:[54]

Ἱερὸν
Διὸς Ξενίου
ἱδρυταί·
Ἀγαθη....AI.....
ΘΙΑΣΙΤΑ.....Σ.ΑΤΩ.
ΟΙΣΠΟ.ΟΥ.Ι..ΑΘΟΡΑΙΜΑ [55]

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[52] Hdt. VII.12-19; cf. Plato *Phaedo* 60 E, and later Artem. *On.* IV.27, who says that dreams which occur repeatedly at short intervals will have the same meaning, and their repetition means that one should pay more attention to them.
[53] Rumscheid (1998: 42; with a photo of the gate, fig. 31).
[54] He occurs in a Psidian inscription, found at Ormele = *SEG* 31.1285.

It was found south of the ruins at Küçükkale, on the smoothed surface of a wall located in a plain area in the slope of a hill. This smoothed surface was roughly rectangular in shape, and located about 100cm above ground level. The letters are cut in diminishing size, and the inscription itself appears to have been only 6 lines long, even though there was space on the surface for around 20 lines more. The date is not clear, but there are visible serifs, which would suggest a late fourth century date, possibly Hellenistic.
It would seem to record the foundation of a small private shrine to Zeus Xenios. Interestingly, only a few metres to the right of this inscription there is a second one, which records the dedication of a temple to Meter. Unfortunately, this gives no extra details which might relate it to this dedication or dedicator, other than its location.[56]
Zeux Xenios was a relatively uncommon deity in Anatolia, though he did have an oracle at Ormele in Phrygia, and his name occurs in a Rhodian inscription. The name of the dedicator is not preserved. It could be that the first letters of line 4 are the beginning of a name, possibly *Ἀγαθήμερος* or *Ἀγαθήνωρ*.[57] Line 5 seems to indicate *thiasitai*, who were presumably worslippers of the god;[58] they could have set it up, and they could also have been semi-official cult members, but this would not make immediate sense because that would imply that a cult already existed. Perhaps they had come together to participate in the newly founded cult. It could also be that the unknown dedicator was himself a member of the *thiasos*. It does appear that it was as a result of a dream, as one can restore quite safely in line 6 *[κ]αθ' ὄρα{ι}μα*.

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[55] P.Roos, 'Research at Caunos', *Opuscula Atheniensia* 8 (1968: 149-166) No.1 (with photograph Fig.16) = Robert *BE* 1969, 545 = Marek (2006) no.75(a).
[56] Marek (2006) no.75 (b): *ἱερὸν* [*τῆς*] *Μητρὸς* [*ἰδ*]*ρ*[*υ*]*τα*[*ι* ---]... .
[57] As suggested by Roos (1969: 155).
[58] The normal form is *thiasotai*, but there are other instances of *thiasitai* in Asia minor, including one from Caria = *SEG* 13.496.

There is another record of a sanctuary which was potentially set up on account of a dream in a cave at Vari in Attica. The foundation is recorded in an inscription which forms one of a series of dedications set up by Archedamos of Thera. Archedamos was a nympholeptos, one seized or enraptured by the nymphs, and he set up the cave for them, building them a dancing floor and planting a garden. To find nymphs appearing in dreams is not without parallel,[59] but it is also true that they can be seen in person while awake, and indeed to be seen by a nymph often causes one to be 'seized' by them.[60] As nymphs were often thought to live physically in caves, it is possible that in this case Archedamos thought he had seen them there. Without an explicit reference to a dream in the inscription, we cannot be certain whether the request for the sanctuary was given in dream or waking:

Ἀρχέδημος ὁ Θηραῖος ὁ νυμφόληπτος
φραδαῖσι νυμφῶν τἄντρον ἐξηργάξατο[61]

Archedamos of Thera, the nympholeptos, furnished the cave at the request of the nymphs

As mentioned, this is just one of five inscriptions found at the site set up Archedamos. It was carved into the rock surface inside the cave, on a depressed area which was first smoothed. The second half of the inscription is metrical. It is difficult to date the inscriptions as a unit, due to the contradictions in letter forms and Dorisms (which even occur during the same inscription – in our case we have *Ἀρχέδημος and νυμφῶν,* but also *ἐξηργάξατο*). They should all fall within the 5th century, but there could have been some

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[59] On nymphs in dreams, cf. Longus II.23; see also Van Straten (1976: 1-3).
[60] See in general Connor (1998) with pp. 166*ff* on Archedamos' cave.
[61] *IG* I³ 980 = *IG* I² 788 = *SEG* 29.49 = *CEG* 321 = Dillon & Garland (2000: No.12.41).

considerable time between each dedication. This inscription could well be the latest of the five, based on the cutting. Still, the confusions in style could also be a result of the foreign status of the dedicator, and his personal confusions with the language.[62]

(i, b)

A Summary of the Evidence

Even though this sample is hardly overflowing with examples, it is large enough to indicate if there were any patterns in the nature of the dedications and the dedicators. We have the usual array of votive types, which one would find in most sanctuaries: reliefs and statues are the most common, as one would expect given the cost, but we also find the dedication of an altar and a temple, as well as the setting up of a cult and the adornment of a cave. Therefore there is no specific item which was the preferred votive of choice for dedications on account of dreams.[63] This would slightly contradict the pattern found at the Asclepieia where, from the evidence we have, it seems that a large proportion of the dedications were anatomical ex votos.[64] This is certainly a reflection of the different concerns of the dreamers at the Asclepieia and the dreamers in these dedications: whereas those who experienced visions of Asclepius did so almost

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[62] There is one final possible dedication: a small fragment of a votive relief, in which a man is depicted lying under a palm tree. Van Straten (1976: 4-6) compared this to later iconography, and deduced that it must represent an incubating man. The palm tree is representative of Apollo, a god we should not be surprised to see visiting through dream.

[63] Cf. Van Straten (1976: 12).

[64] They are referred to frequently in the inventories at the Athenian sanctuary, along with coins and *typoi*: Aleshire (1989: 40*ff*). There are also a number of terra-cotta ex-votos found at Corinth: de Waele (1933). It is possible that at some of the sites the proportions reflect practical considerations, such as local materials and/or the accidents of preservation: for example, the Corinthian Asclepieion has many terra-cotta body part votives, largely because these were buried in wells and have since been discovered. See further Lidonnici (1995: 41-49); Van Straten (1992). Yet still, the Athenian inventories provide a detailed record.

exclusively in pursuit of healing, for which the dedication of a body part is a natural response, the dreamers in these instances do not, as far as we can tell, have any specific healing in mind, nor even any healing at all. If they do seek something similar to health, then this is of a more generalised type, the overall benevolence and protection of the gods.

There is also no particular iconography which can be identified. Even though most of the reliefs are not actually preserved, those which are extant and date from this period contain no pictorial indications that the subject was dreaming. Van Straten found a handful of instances in later periods where in the relief itself there was a figure which could be seen lying down, which underlined that these were dream dedications.[65] And indeed there was an indentified iconography common at the incubatory shrines in which the dedicant was pictured sleeping and being attended by the god.[66] Perhaps if more of the reliefs survived to us we would find a similar type of iconography active in the context of the spontaneous dreams in this period. It was certainly not compulsory to include a depiction of the act of sleep; the relief set up to Kallistephanos shows only an active scene from the cobblers' shop.

It is also noticeable that there is not always an explicit reference to the dream in the inscription. In the terminology, the most common dream word used is *enupnion*, occurring in three inscriptions (although two of these are identical). With *ἐνύπνιον ϝιδῶσα* the visual element of the dream is highlighted; [*ἀ*]*π' ἐνυπνίου* also occurs, in place of the

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[65] Van Straten (1974: 1-12); he suggests one example which might date from our period: p.4n.42, but there is no attached inscription.
[66] Van Straten (1995: 68-69).

later more commonplace *kat' enupnion*.[67] There is also an occurrence of *εἶδεν ὄναρ*, again highlighting the visual element of the dream, but no single instance of *oneiros*.[68] This again illustrates that there was not yet a clear distinction between *enupnion* as the non-divine dream, and *oneiros* as the predictive dream.

Sometimes the fact that the dedicator was asleep when he received his vision is conveyed through other expressions; in our examples we have: *ἐν ὕπνωι*, *ἔννυχος*, and *ἐννυχίαν ὄψιν ἰδοῦσα ἱεράν*. Yet there are also cases in which there is no reference explicitly either to dreams or sleep. In such cases one often finds instead some phrase expressing that the god(s) have made a request of some kind; thus we had: *ἡ θεὸς ἐκέ* [*λευσεν* --], *κατὰ πρόσταγμα*, *τοῦ θεοῦ προστάξαντος*, and *φραδαῖσι*. And in one instance mention was made of the divine apparition alone: *[κ]αθ' ὅραιμα*. It must be admitted that, in such cases, there is no absolute proof that this order or vision was actually in dream, but cross references to later instances which include the iconography, and cases where this terminology was used for dedications in places where a dream would quite clearly have been the mode of communication, i.e. at incubatory sanctuaries, means that we can assume with relative safety that these are dream dedications.[69] Perhaps in some cases there would have been some indication given in the accompanying relief, but as mentioned most of these are lost to us. It is notable that there was no particularly dominant way of expressing a dream dedication. This could be simply because the current sample is not wide enough to allow any one expression to rise to the top. When Van Straten extended his sample all the way

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[67] *Enupnion* is the favoured word for dream in the Epidaurian *iamata*, LiDonnici (1995: 24*ff*), where *onar* and *oneiros* are not used once.
[68] This would fit the overall pattern of dedications: Van Straten (1976: 13), who completed a survey covering a far wider chronological spectrum, found that *enupnion* was more common from the 4th to 1st century BC, whereas *oneiros* and *onar* are used more later.
[69] Cf. Van Straten (1976: 13-14).

down to the 5th century AD, it became clear that certain words, particularly *onar*, *oneiros* and *epitagē*, occur more than others over time.

There is also a remarkable variety, even within this relatively small sample, in the gods and heroes who are to receive the offerings; making contact through dream was not the sole preserve of Asclepius. Artemis receives four (though two of these are identical dedications from the same woman), Athene two, and the following one alone: Apollo, Angdistis and Attis, the Kaunian King God, Kallistephanos, Demeter and Kore, Naulochos and the Thesmophoroi, Zeus Xenios, and the nymphs. While one must admit that Asclepius would dominate any list of dedicatory inventories from dreams from the various Asclepieia, it should also be made clear that it does not seem that any god, or even minor hero, was exempt from receiving such benefactions, even if the power of communication through dream was not something particularly associated with their cult; from the list above, it is only really Apollo, the god of divination, whose name one might readily expect to appear.

The nature of the dedicators is equally variable. In terms of sex (where we can be sure from the name and the context), the men outnumber the women seven to four, which is roughly 64 percent to 36 percent. There is nothing particularly revealing about this figure, although it is interesting that we do have a number of female dedicators. The split at the Athenian Asclepieion, taken from a far more numerous sample, is slightly in favour of the women, who outnumber the men 51.39 percent to 45.82 percent (with the remaining percents taken up by couples, multiple dedicators, and the demos).[70] However the Epidaurian *iamata* display a markedly higher male proportion, with approximately 73% to 27%. Our sample is so small that a couple of new dedications either way could

[70] Aleshire (1989: 45); cf. Van Straten (2000: 216*ff*).

quickly sway the balance, but it would be fair to suggest that the pattern in it is somewhat comparable to that at the Athenian Asclepieion, and neither sex dominates the list of dedicants. Moving away from gender, there is also a great degree of variety in the capacity to dedicate of the people setting up these votives. We have, of course, women, whose status (i.e. well born, poor and so on) is extremely difficult to determine for want of further evidence. But we also have clearer indications about some of the male dedicators: we have the family cobbler in Attica, a nympholeptos, potentially some (or a) thiasitai, and a number of foreigners.[71]

The overriding pattern which emerges is one of variety – if a pattern of variety is not a contradiction in terms. There was no special votive style, no single god, and no particular type of dedicator, which can be identified as specifically linked to the act of setting up votives as a result of a spontaneous dream. The random spontaneity of dreams is therefore reflected in the unsystematic sample of evidence that has been collected.

(i, c)
Discussion

The dream dedications and cult foundations represent genuine responses to actual dream experiences, dreams in which a deity was thought to have appeared. As already outlined, the exact nature of this visitation is impossible for us to reconstruct. One can infer from the genre of literature what a 5th century Greek might have expected to see – a tall, looming figure of some majesty standing over him – but other than that we cannot be sure how each dreamer experienced his dream, so it would be fruitless attempting to

[71] Cf. The range in status of the dedicators at the Athenian Asclepieion, Aleshire (1989: 54).

guess. Instead, I will focus on reconstructing the relationship between the dreamer and the dedication from the inscriptional evidence: what was the purpose of setting up this memorial recording the vision; and had the dreamer done so in response to a direct command from the gods? Let us begin with one fact we can be sure of: that these dreams resulted in the setting up of a dedication. We also know, from modern neuropsychological studies, that people dream all the time, every night; therefore the volume of dreams far outweighs the volume of our evidence. Thus one can make some presumptions that if: (a) not every dream resulted in a dedication; then (b) that these dreams were therefore special – and must have been special because of the appearance of the deity; and then (c) that either every dream in which a deity appeared to the dreamer resulted in a dedication, or only some people reacted to such dreams with dedications. (c) is not answerable with absolute certainty, but it is highly unlikely that everybody in the ancient Greek world responded in the same way to a dream, just as we would not expect that of most cultures. There would be sceptics like Aristotle on the one hand, and devotees like Aelius Aristides on the other. What one can confirm, based on our inscriptional sample alone, is that there was no particular group or dedicatory type more likely to have set up a dream dedication.[72]

(a) and (b) are of more interest to the questions at hand – not every dream resulted in a dedication, and therefore the appearance of a deity was presumably a special event; what then motivated the dreamer to set up a dedication to record this special event? From the evidence of the inscriptions, there is a similar pattern of basic impulses that one would find with votives of other types.

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[72] But for more on this question see Chapter 7, below.

In the first instance, these dedications are intended as an *agalma*, something pleasing to the gods; in the context of dreams it is a tangible memento of the intimate point of contact between the god and the dreamer, a basic thank-offering for having been visited.[73] There is a certain sense that there was a privilege in being visited by a god in a dream – certainly in literature it is virtually exclusively the well-to-do who receive such contact, and hardly ever a common cobbler. To receive a divine dream was something to take pride in. The inscription of Meneia, for example, is largely a record of the glory, *areté*, of the goddess Athena, and the miracle of her visitation.[74] There was some kudos in having a divine visitation, and a dream was one of the most personal modes through which this could take place. The dream functioned as a path between human and divine, and the dream dedications embody this capacity. Thus the element of display, common to other votives, is also apparent: in recording your own name in the dedication, and sometimes your own image in the statue or relief, you are not just recording the dream, but you are recording yourself – it is a permanent memorial of the dedicator as well as the god.[75] But it is not just simple name display, for the divinity of the dream creates at the same time a personal connection with the god or hero.[76] The dedications were located, as far as we can reconstruct, within the sanctuaries of the deities, along with the other votives. Establishing them within the cult centre of the god created a physical and permanent attachment between the god and his devotee.[77] Therefore the glory of the god

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[73] See Keesling (2003: 10).
[74] Van Straten (1981: 77): 'Whoever had experienced divine *areté* personally, in his own flesh, was thoroughly permeated by the awareness of how small were his own merits'.
[75] Keesling (2003: 22*ff*).Note that this element of exhibition is different from that at the sanctuary of Epidaurus, where the various inscriptions are meant to magnify the glory of Asclepius in part as an act of pre-conditioning for the prospective incubants: Li Donnici (1995: 18n.16).
[76] Burkert (1987: 49); Linders (1987: 118); Van straten (1981: 80); Yunis (1988: 101-111).
[77] Cf. Van Straten (2000: 212).

was magnified, while creating a tangible link between god and dedicator, via a memorial to the original personal contact through dream.

This link established not just a fixed memorial of thanks for a single point of contact, but was intended to secure the benevolence of the god in the future as well. One of the areas where we see this from the evidence above is in the context of work, in the case of Dionysios' dedication to Kallistephanos, in which the relief depicts his own family at work in their cobblers' workshop. Work was one of the principal areas where Greeks sought the support of deities, and thus Dionysios connected his dream vision of the hero with his cobblers' shop and set up his monument in order to procure his help, and 'wealth', for the future success of his business.[78] Another area where votives are frequently set up is in times of danger, or potential danger, whether this is in terms of physical danger through war or in illness, and whether it is linked to a specific immediate danger, or an undefined future one. For example, in the case of Asclepius people travelled to his sanctuary with ailments and left votives which recorded thanks for his aid in curing them of a specific affliction. In our examples, such specific dangers are not recorded, but we do see people setting up the votives in the hope of securing the benevolence of the god and thereby guarding against a future predicament. Dionysius requested not just 'wealth' from Kallistephanos, but health too; not for a specific medical condition, but a general request to keep him and his family well. There is no doubt a similar sentiment in Timothea's dedication to Angdistis and Attis, which she makes not just for herself but on behalf of her children, *ὑπὲρ τῶν παίδων*. By mentioning her children too, she concomitantly brings them under the protection of the divinities, in the hope of

[78] Van Straten (1981: 92-96), with references. See p.92: 'In daily work the need for divine support and protection was felt virtually every day'.

supporting their future well being.[79] The most specific dedication is the one made by Aristichos to Apollo; in the inscription he refers to a prophecy made by the god, and by setting up the statue in his sanctuary Aristichos is hoping in return to have this prophecy fulfilled. The dedication is not just being made in thanks, but is intended as a type of assurance for the future action of the god.

Thus dream dedications, just like other votives, took place within the framework of reciprocal exchange which underpinned much of classical Greek religion.[80] Although this exchange did not have an exact, like-for-like, contractual formality, it was a culturally accepted practice to return favour for favour, and as such was more indicative of the relationship established between the dedicator and the god than it was a guarantee of services. The asymmetry of the exchange – a statue for health, for example – illustrates that it was not an exact market science but a practice built on establishing a connection with the gods through these expressions of thanks and gratitude.[81] Dream dedications are located within this framework.

There is, however, within this frame a potential difference between these votives based on dream epiphanies and the other votive types. In the normal reciprocal cycle, a votive was set up in this manner: a person, the worshipper, makes a promise to the god (probably in prayer, *kat' euchēn*) to set up some offering if a certain favour is received (which could range from good health to successful crops), and once this was outlined if

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[79] Van Straten (1981: 103-104).

[80] Parker (1998: 105): 'Almost the whole of Greek cult practice is in fact founded – not merely by implication, but through explicit statements – on the belief or hope that reciprocity of this kind is a reality ... without this ideal of reciprocity the whole explicit rationale of Greek cult practice disappears'. Cf. Yunis (1988: 50-58).

[81] Parker (1998); Bremer (1998) on asymmetry; Gouldner (1960) and Van Wees (1998: 15*ff*) (with criticisms of Gouldner) on definitions of reciprocity. As a general guide with reference to other cultures, see the essay by Mauss (1954). Reciprocity in Greek religion probably falls somewhere between 'generalised' and 'balanced' in the spectrum outlined by Sahlins (1972: 193-196).

the favour came to pass then the worshipper was bound to fulfil the vow. This commitment could pass from generation to generation, depending on the nature of the initial request, and the ability of the worshipper to return the promised offering; and the new offering could set up a whole new cycle of reciprocity by hoping for more favours in the future. The core, however, is still a three stage process, as outlined by Jan Bergman: 'the votum, bound to the future, is the point of departure; the decisive event, the activity of the god, making the presence in a double sense; and the offering itself, promulgating the intimate connection between the three times and eternalising the interaction between man and god'.[82]

Thus the initial impulse to the offering, stage one, is determined by the worshipper; it is his promise to return X if outcome Y comes to pass. He asks the god for help and in so doing enters into a reciprocal cycle. With the dream dedications, however, the cycle, at least on the surface, is different. The gods visit the worshipper in his sleep and ask him to set up the dedication; the impulse of stage one is provided not by the worshipper but by the god himself. This is implied not just in the nature of the epiphany, which as an unsought spontaneous phenomenon did not necessarily happen at the request of the dreamer, but by the language we find in the inscriptions. In place of *kat' euchēn*, we have seen verbs such as *keleuein* and *prostassein*, and phrases like *kata prostagma*: linguistically, in the strictest translations, this is indicative of commands and orders. This in one respect tallies with the presentation of dreams in literature, where the gods can, through dreams, become directly involved in the lives of individuals, and prompt them onto certain courses of action. The dream figure which appeared to Xerxes, relentlessly

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[82] Bergman (1987: 37); with Keesling (2003: 4-5); Bremer (1998: 130); Baumbach (2004: 1); Linders (1987: 120); Van Straten (1981: 70); Burkert (1976: 174). Cf. Parker (1998: 111) on the cycles of obligations.

forcing him to invade Greece, is an extreme example, but indicative of the trend: the gods come uninvited in sleep and through their messages prompt people to act. In the case of the dedications, it seems the gods can come to ask for a certain offering to be set up.

It is difficult to see such commands being precise, for example, 'I demand you set up a relief for me', because it would be out of place within the frame of reciprocity, which as we have seen was not this distinct or clear-cut. The cases in which an 'order' is referred to are probably indicative of some, unspecific, request for a return favour within the dream. Thus when Timothea set up her relief *kata prostagma*, I do not think we have any reason to doubt that she thought the gods had asked for something in return during the dream; but I also believe that this something would be determined by the means of the dreamer as much as the command of the god. It is also unnecessary to suppose that this order was particularly strong or threatening, i.e. do this 'or else'. One must understand it instead within the reciprocal context of Greek religion wherein it was accepted that favours met favours, and the intention was to continue good relations with the gods, not to return favours in fear of a command.[83] In the cases where there is no order expressed within the inscription, and we are told that a votive was left only 'on account of' a dream, we are left to presume that it was enough that the god had appeared in dream to warrant such a response; to receive such a visitation was a matter of kudos, and representative of a personal connection with the deities; within the framework of reciprocity it was natural to set up something in return. Thus while there is a shift in the beginning of the cycle, from the impetus of the worshipper to the visitation by the god, there is no need to see

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[83] Cf. Hdt. VI.105, with S.Hornblower (2001: 143-145); Versnel (1987: 49*ff*). Pan asked Philippides on Mt. Parthenium why the Athenians were paying him no attention in spite of him being friendly to them in the past, and the fact that he would continue to be so in the future; on hearing this the Athenians built a shrine to him under the Acropolis and set up an annual ceremony in his honour. Pan was not making a threat; he was asking for the normal balance of reciprocity to be redressed.

this as moving dream dedications outside the normal rubric of reciprocity; dream dedications had a nuance but still functioned according to similar patterns of mutual exchange and the establishment of a good relationship in the hope of receiving favours now and in the future. It is even possible that in some cases the divine dream could have been the result of an initial prayer by the dreamer, allowing the worshipper again to provide stage one.[84] From the evidence collected, the one possibility is Aristichos; according to his inscription, Apollo literally 'spoke towards his voice', *Φωνὴν φθεγξάμενος πρὸς ἐμήν*. It is possible that we are to imagine his voice, in this instance, to be a request in the daytime for Apollo to appear and grant him some prophecy about the future, the prophecy which he hopes to have fulfilled in exchange for setting up the statue. If true, it becomes the exception which proves the rule: that dream dedications still took place within the parameters of religious reciprocity, even though at times they operate with a nuance because it is the gods themselves who can set up stage one and inspire the votive.

The foundation of a cult on account of a dream was something slightly different from a dedication. Cults, too, were set up under instruction, *kata prostagma*, and so on, yet in these cases the inscriptions do imply a degree of specificity in the nature of the instruction given in the dreams, which can detail the gods who the shrines should be dedicated to and in some cases where the cult should be set up. Chrysina was told by Hermes to dedicate herself to the goddesses Demeter and Kore; Philios set up the god Naulochos as guardian deity in Priene, and was instructed as to where their shrine should

[84] Cf. Bergman (1987: 38): 'who knows whether the appearance of the commanding god in the dream was not the result of an epiclesis in the evening prayer?'

be located; there is also the foundation of a small shrine to Zeus Xenios in Caria; the temple built to the Kaunian king god in Cos; and the private cave sanctuary set up under the guidance of the nymphs by Archedamos at Thera. We cannot possibly reconstruct the dreams that led to these dedications; all we can do is recognise that the inscriptions imply a degree of specificity in the message given by the gods within these dreams, and that as a consequence certain cults were founded on account of dreams.

We can perhaps go further, and link such foundations to the concept of validation. As we have seen, a divine dream was something which some would be proud of. In the context of cult foundation, it attached a personal significance and divine validity to the new sanctuary. That is not to give the impression that people stopped in awe on seeing that a certain shrine had been founded on account of a dream, and certainly in the case of the small private cults it is difficult to know whether anyone would care either way. There were probably numerous small scale sanctuaries dotted around the ancient landscape, which, so long as they did not intrude upon the sacred space of a major state cult or simply get in the way, most people never thought much about.[85] Susan Alcock in her archaeological research has noted the fluidity and proliferation of rural cults, and the ability of abandoned cults to be reactivated by new owners.[86] A private cult set up on account of a private experience, a dream, would make logical sense; it does not necessarily follow that the dream would act as a validation in the eyes of an audience, if indeed there was any, although one doubts if anyone would set up a cult for no reason at all. What is interesting is in the other two examples, those of Chrysina and Philios, where

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[85] See *ML* 73, lines 47-61: the rider that the sanctuaries in the Pelargikon should be delimited, and the erection of unauthorized altars prevented there. Cf. Plato's criticisms of privately founded shrines: *Leg.* 909D-910A.

[86] Alcock (1994: 247*ff*).

they potentially refer to more public cults.[87] Indeed, the traditional interpretation of the Chrysina inscription has been rejected in part because it seems strange to have had a woman elected to a priesthood on account of a personal vision. Dreams are completely devoid of proofs, other than the word of the dreamer, so it would open up some practical issues if anyone could announce themselves as having been summoned to the priesthood in the night. It is highly unlikely that a public cult could be founded, in the first instance, based on the dream of an ordinary citizen, but I think there is also a danger in taking these foundation inscriptions a little too literally; as noted, there is extreme doubt that one would be elected priestess just from a dream, but that does not mean that, once in office, a memory of a dream could not form part of the accepted pattern of belief which supposedly prompted the original election, just as the foundation of a cult on account of a dream was an accepted occurrence. In such a context, the dreams function as part of a culture pattern of belief – the cultural transmission, not just through literature, but through oral testimony and myth, of a certain pattern of understanding which shapes the way people perceive, in this case, dreams.[88]

The 'foundation/dedication by dream' was part of an accepted 'culture pattern'. The early anthropologists identified two groups of dreams: on the one hand the personal dream, 'free' or 'individual', in which everyday activities and the personality of the dreamer come through; and on the other, those dreams prescribed by tradition, 'official' or 'culture pattern' dreams.[89] Although modern anthropologists have moved beyond these

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[87] In the case of Philios, it seems likely that the cult was public (see the discussion above). Chrysina's case is less clear: we do know that there was an older and more famous sanctuary of Demeter nearby, which could have been the public cult, whereas hers was a smaller private one: Kron (1996: 152n.62).
[88] See Dodds (1951: 102*ff*); cf. Lincoln (1935); Malinowski (1927). Lane Fox (1987: 162-163) accepts the idea of culture patterning, but also explores role of anxiety in causing visions.
[89] Lincoln (1935): 'individual' and 'culture pattern'; Malinowski (1927) 'free' and 'official'.

simple distinctions, it is still widely held that dreams go through a process of cultural conditioning, which begins in childhood with the growing familiarity with the religious system and other systems of belief, and the exposure to legends and other pieces of cultural heritage which can shape the way that the dream, and its content, is perceived. This conditioning affects not just, as one might expect, the manifest content of dreams, but also the way in which the dreamer perceives the meaning of his dream.[90] The anthropologist D. Schneider, who studied aboriginal tribes in Australia, found that dreams portrayed the dreamer's perspective on the world around him, his 'definition of the situation', and that culture, though not always identical with this definition, undoubtedly affects and shapes it.[91] This can be in the dreamer's immediate response, and also in his process of secondary elaboration, the manner in which the dream content is packaged when it is retold, in an instinctive and unconscious manner, by the dreamer in order to fit the cultural model which frames, and which has conditioned, his dream experience. This cultural conditioning affects the logic and meaning that a specific cultural group will attach to a specific type of dream.

For Greeks of the classical period, the degree of this 'conditioning' may have varied from polis to polis, or family to family, so it would be misleading to try and present a unified picture of cultural understanding. What one can say, however, is that there were sources of familiarity with the notion of divine dreams, and the idea of a foundation through dream, which could have affected the way in which people understood their dream content. This notion fitted into wider patterns of belief, too, whereby many cults had attached to them myths of divine origins. As Lane Fox has said:

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[90] D'Andrade (1961: *passim*); Van de Castle (1971: 3-11); Hsu (1959); Bourguigon (1954: 267-268).
[91] Schneider (1941).

'To the Greek mind, cults began naturally from a close encounter; in that way, many of the oldest cults explained their origin and many newer dedications and cults came to exist'.[92] The primary evidence we have is the transmission through literature of stories related to dedications and foundations that resulted from dreams. The earliest possible reference is in the context of Bellerophon's dream vision of Athene, as told by Pindar. Bellerophon is visited by the goddess in dream and she hands him the golden bridle with which to tame Pegasus; she instructs him to sacrifice a white bull, and show it (the bridle) to his ancestor, Poseidon the horse-tamer. She asks for nothing in return. When Bellerophon subsequently visits the seer of the land, it is the seer who instructs him to do as she says, and also to dedicate an altar to her: *θέμεν Ἱππίᾳ βωμὸν εὐθὺς Ἀθάνᾳ.*[93] As in some of the earlier inscriptions, there is not an explicit order to set up the altar within the dream, but following the appearance of the goddess the seer considers it suitable to reply with the dedication. There is another similar instance of this in a story recounted by Plutarch about Themistocles. While in Asia, when Themistocles was heading south through Ionia, he fell asleep and was visited by the Mother of the Gods, who warned him of a plot against him, and asked in return that his daughter, Mnesiptolema, be her handmaid. When he escaped the plot against him, he was so pleased with the epiphany that not only did he honour the goddess's order and make his daughter her priestess, but he also built a temple in Magnesia in honour of her.[94] Plutarch also recounts an episode in which Ptolemy Soter saw in a dream the colossus of Pluto in Sinope, even though he had never seen it before. Upon discovering where it was set up, he despatched two of his

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[92] Lane Fox (1987: 111); note also his line: 'In the Homeric hymns, as in the Odyssey, when the god reveals himself to unsuspecting mortals, they respond at once by offering to set up a cult' (referring again to any epiphany, not just dreams).
[93] Pind. *O.* XIII. 70-82.
[94] Plut. *Them.* 30.

attendants to steal it, and when they brought it back it was decided that the statue was of Sarapis, the Egyptian form of Pluto. Afterwards, Ptolemy Soter established the cult of Sarapis in Egypt, ultimately on account of the dream vision he had originally experienced.[95] Pausanias records that a sanctuary of Thetis in Sparta was installed following a dream.[96] When the Spartans were waging war against the revolting Messenians, king Anaxander invaded Messenia and took a number of women prisoner, including Cleo, priestess of Thetis. Leandris, the wife of Anaxander, asked for Cleo from her husband, and discovering that she had a wooden image of Thetis, she set up with her a temple for the goddess: 'This Leandris did because of a dream vision' (*ἐποίει δὲ ταῦτα ἡ Λεανδρὶς κατὰ ὄψιν ὀνείρατος*). It is not clear what the 'this' refers to – her asking for Cleo, or her setting up the temple, but if it follows the pattern above there is no reason to presume it was not a temple. Pausanias also records how Alexander was ordered by the Nemeseis in a dream to found the city of Smyrna.[97] Finally, there is also the passage in Artemidorus, mentioned above already, in which the famed dream interpreter prescribes the dedication of a cult in consequence of certain dream visions.[98]

It should be clear that the foundation on account of a dream was part of the cultural heritage in ancient Greek literature, and consequently this heritage may have conditioned the inscriptional evidence which we have found. There might be a danger in taking over-literally the dreams which are the basis for these foundations, and trying to reinterpret them out of their relevant cultural context. A good further example of this is a

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[95] Plut. *Os.* 28, with Griffiths (1970: 393*ff*). The story is repeated with slight variations in Tac. *Hist.*4.83. In this example, the motivation for founding the cult is not just the dream but also political policy.
[96] Paus. 3.14.4.
[97] Paus. 7.5.1-2. Cf. Paus. 2.33, where a woman, Aethra, set up a temple to Athena Apaturia after having seen a dream of Athena, and also having had a union with Poseidon while awake. See too Kron (1996: 153).
[98] Artem. *On.* 4.78.

1st century BC cult foundation inscription found at Philadelphia in Lydia. This cult was set up by Dionysius, and was initiated following specific instructions which Zeus had given to him in his sleep, *τα δοθέ[ντα παραγγέλμα]τα Διονυσίωι καθ' ὕπνον*. These included a long list of deities who needed altars set up for them in the temple, such as Zeus Eumenes, Hestia, Eudaimonia, Pluton, Aretes, Hygieia, Agatha Tyche and so on – some twelve in total. In addition to this, Zeus also proscribed all the cult regulations - the purifications (*ἁγνισμοὺς* and *καθαρμοὺς*) and mysteries or secret rites (*μυστήρια*). Dionysius details all of these on the stone, continuing for some fifty lines of text, outlining all the elements.[99] From a practical perspective, it is hard to fathom such a detailed dream, taken down verbatim by the dreamer. Yet it is another case in which the cultural context within which the dedication was made makes the initial foundation by dream acceptable.

To find evidence that a priestess was elected to office from her dream might seem illogical or impractical to some modern analysts, but it was not necessarily so for the contemporary audience.[100]

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[99] *LSAM* 20.

[100] Cf. D'Andrade (1961) on 'unconscious choice' in the use of culture pattern dreams to determine role taking.

6
The Sought Dream in Cult: Incubation

Dreams developed their own ritual form – incubation – which was practiced at a number of sanctuaries. Incubation was the deliberate seeking of a divine dream, achieved through sleeping at a designated shrine or sacred place. The principal components of incubation which must be underlined are: the non-passivity of the dreamer – he/she is actively provoking a dream episode; the location of the procedure at a defined place, i.e. the dream cannot take place anywhere;[1] that these dreams are sought to find an answer to a question or problem, via an appearance in the dream of a god or spirit.[2] In Greece, incubation reached its elaborate fullness in the numerous Asclepian shrines which spread throughout the ancient world from the fourth century onwards. These shrines have been well documented, but they are not of principal interest in the current study.[3] The sheer dominance of Asclepius often directs modern perceptions of ancient incubation. I intend to focus instead on the early roots of incubation in Greece, in an attempt to clarify where and when it was first being practiced. I want to show that, while Asclepius dominates the later sources, incubation was actually occurring at a number of different sanctuaries from an early period, dotted around the ancient landscape.

This is important as it builds towards my primary argument: that incubation in Greece was dependent on a particular group of cultural traits. It would be misleading of

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[1] The fixed place is important, and makes incubation different from, for example, using recipes and formulas to provoke certain dreams at any place, as found in the magical papyri; see Eitrem (1991). Cf. Idel (1999): the practice by some Mediaeval Kabbalists of procuring dreams in private was an 'oneiric technique' – not incubation; for further examples of oneiric techniques, see Hermansen (2001: 75, 82).
[2] For similar definitions, see Patton (2004: 201-202); Jeffers (1996: 136-138).
[3] Most recently there is the exhaustive survey by Reithmüller (2005). See also the Edelsteins (1945); Martin & Metzger (1976: 62-109); Melfi (2007); Holtzmann in *LIMC* 2 (1984: 863-897); with Aleshire (1989), and her particular focus on the Athenian sanctuary; and Li Donnici (1995) on the Epidaurian *iamata*.

me to present ancient Greek incubation as if it were something peculiar to that culture alone. In fact, the practice of incubation appears in cultures throughout the world, from North American Indians, to African tribes, to China and Tibet; and throughout religious systems, from Christianity, to Islam, to Buddhism.[4] That incubation was practiced in ancient Greece should not be considered as a surprise; instead, I would suggest it was to be expected. I intend to demonstrate that the onset of ritual incubation was an event in Greek dream culture which conformed to the patterns of change that we see in other cultures. That is not to say that I want to outline a dogmatic schema for the internal development of dream cultures, but that the cultures which practice incubation exhibit commonalities in their religious systems which allow for the development of incubatory ritual.

Even though I underlined in Chapter 2 the dangers of cross-comparative dream research, it is very important in the present instance to stress the commonalities in the evolution of incubation. After all, while one does not want to compartmentalise religion in a reductive, one-dimensional phenomenological way, one also does not want to be guilty of swinging so far inward that clear cross-cultural comparisons which add value to the specific study at hand are missed.[5] Thus while the specifics of the ritual and the associated imagery of deities varies according to the individual cultural dynamics, the root level at which incubation becomes an accepted practice could be universally

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[4] A good general survey of incubation is yet to be written; Mary Hamilton (1906) was primarily concerned with ancient Greece and a handful of Christian shrines in the Middle Ages and modern Greece and Italy; Deubner (1900) was also interested only in Greco/Latin and Christian incubation. Added to these surveys there are a number of individual studies related to particular cultures: for China there is Laufer (1931); on India see Kakar (1982) with Meier (1967: xiii); on Japan, see Sieffert (1959); on Africa there is the collection by Jedrej and Shaw (1992); in Buddhism, Young (2001); in Hindu culture, Morinis (1982); on Biblical incubation, Husser (1999); Jeffers (1996: 136-138).

[5] Cf. J.Z.Smith (2000) on the 'rectification' of categories: that a category, in order to remain valid, must allow data from outside its origin to continue to shape our usage of that category. See too Bergman (1987: 15) on phenomenology in religious study.

applicable. This in turn becomes important in rejecting a common misconception: ask the average classicist where incubatory ritual came from, and they would doubtless guess 'the East'.

The history of incubation is vital; the practice provides one of the most physical proofs of the power of dreams in Greek culture. Sanctuaries were built and visited for the purpose of exploiting the potential links between dreams and the gods; they were still regarded in such contexts as direct communications with the deities. This ritualisation of dreams was in essence founded upon the divine dream, and another way in which we find the characteristics of dreams that are found in literature brought into the physical world.

(i)

Asclepius and the First Incubatory Sanctuaries

Asclepius and incubation are so synonymous that one scarcely imagines the one without the other. The deliberate seeking of divinatory dreams, with an almost exclusive emphasis on healing, is attested for the Asclepian cult as soon as records begin.[6] The most celebrated sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidaurus was founded probably during the sixth century near the site of a shrine to Apollo Maleatas. The oldest dedication to Asclepius we have comes from Epidaurus, and can be dated to c.500BC, though the cult is presumably older.[7] The temple, *abaton* and other buildings were not constructed until the 4th century, by which time the fame of Asclepius had spread throughout much of

[6] Many reasons have been offered to account for the rapid expansion of his cult, amongst them the individual nature of consultation, the catalytic affect of the Athenian plague, and the canny marketing of the Epidaurian priests: see, for example, Garland (1992: 133-135); Parker (1996: 180, 184).
[7] Athens, Nat. Mus. 10 870; *IG* IV² I, 136.

Greece. Epidaurus was considered his cultic centre, from which his snakes disseminated and populated temples from the acropolis at Athens to the Tiber Island in Rome. However, the first sanctuary may be older still; Strabo mentions in passing during a description of Thessaly that the oldest and most famous (*τὸ ἀρχαιότατον καὶ ἐπιφανέστατον*) temple to Asclepius was located at Tricca, an otherwise unimportant Thessalian town.[8] More famous than Epidaurus it was not, yet Thessaly could make some strong claims as the birthplace and originator of Asclepian cult. In Homer, we meet Asclepius' sons, Podaleirios and Machaon, leading the forces from Tricca and Ithome, as well as Oichalia (in Aetolia).[9] The fifth century Homeric *Hymn to Asclepius* names his birthplace as the Dotian plain, in Thessaly, born of Coronis, daughter of the king Phlegyas.[10] Eventually, although there are some much later sources which still make reference to Tricca as his homeland,[11] these competing claims led to a consultation of the Delphic Oracle in the fourth century, which confirmed Epidaurus as Asclepius' rightful home. According to Pausanias, Apollophanes, an Arcadian, was trying to claim Asclepius as a Messenian, the son of Arsinoe, and inquired at the oracle. The Pythian priestess replied that Asclepius was in fact born in Epidaurus.[12]

One presumes that the oracle at Tricca was incubatory, although it seems the sleep would have taken place in a cave or hollow; Isyllos of Epidaurus suggests that it was underground: *εἰς ἄδυτον καταβὰς Ἀσκληπιοῦ*.[13] Aside from our literary evidence, we have yet to discover through archaeology whether Tricca could actually have been his first

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[8] Strabo IX.5.17. Cf. VIII.4.4. On the competing claims, see in general Reithmüller (2005 Vol. I: 37*ff*, 91*ff*), whose evidence points in favour of Thessaly as the cult home; Edelstein (1945 Vol. II: 17-22; 67-73); Martin & Metzger (1976: 70); *LIMC* 2.1 (1984: 864).
[9] Hom. *Il.* II.729-731.
[10] Hom *Hym.* XVI.1-5; supported by two fragments of Hesiod: T21, 22.
[11] Hyg. *Fab.* XIV.21 = T12; Euseb. *Praep. evang.* III.14.6 = T13; Herod. IV.1.
[12] Paus. 2.26.7.
[13] *IG* IV² 1,128: 1.29-30. Cf. Ustinova (2002: 275).

cultic home, and excavations at the site have failed to unearth anything noteworthy, although the town itself seems to date to at least the fifth century.[14] Most of the buildings that have been found date to the 4th or 3rd century BC, and represent later phases of building work.[15] Even if we do locate anything more substantial, it is unlikely to push back the date of Asclepius' cult much earlier, so we must assume a date of c.500 at the earliest for an active, incubatory cult of Asclepius.

Using this date as a benchmark, we can estimate whether there were other incubatory cults active at this time or earlier. An obvious possibility is Amphiaraus, the legendary seer whose most famous sanctuary was a few miles outside the city of Oropus, on the disputed borderland between Attica and Boeotia. The oracle at Oropus certainly functioned through incubation; Pausanias makes a brief description of the ceremony: *καὶ πρῶτον μὲν καθήρασθαι νομίζουσιν ὅστις ἦλθεν Ἀμφιαράῳ χρησόμενος· ἔστι δὲ καθάρσιον τῷ θεῷ θύειν, θύουσι δὲ καὶ αὐτῷ καὶ πᾶσιν ὅσοις ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τῷ <βωμῷ> τὰ ὀνόματα· προεξειργασμένων δὲ τούτων κριὸν θύσαντες καὶ τὸ δέρμα ὑποστρωσάμενοι καθεύδουσιν ἀναμένοντες δήλωσιν ὀνείρατος*.[16] Yet it is not entirely clear from what date the shrine was active (Pausanias was of course writing in the second century AD). The antiquity of the Oropian sanctuary itself must first of all be questioned: there was, it seems, an initial sanctuary at Knopia near Thebes, which was later abandoned in favour of the site at Oropus.[17] This sanctuary at Thebes may have dated back as far as the mid-6th century. Herodotus reports that Amphiaraus was amongst the oracles consulted and tested by the

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[14] Curnow (2004: 97).
[15] Reithmüller (2005 Vol. I: 91-98).
[16] Paus. 1.34.5. Inscriptional evidence suggests incubation could be done in other ways too: Curnow (2004: 82).
[17] Strabo IX.2.10. Supported by Androutsopoulos (1972: 23); Ogden (2001: 85); Curnow (2004: 70). Schachter (1981-94: 1: 22n.2) gives all older scholarship. Schachter himself prefers the view that there was only ever one sanctuary.

Lydian king Croesus, a test which the oracle passed.[18] Herodotus makes no mention of its location, nor the mode of consultation,[19] but later he notes a further inquiry at the sanctuary, this time by Mys on the orders of Mardonius, in 480/479.[20] Here Herodotus is more informative: the oracle is in Thebes, and Mys pays someone to sleep in the temple to obtain the oracle; it is an incubatory shrine.[21] It seems at some point the oracle at Oropus superseded it. Herodotus mentions that the dedication left by Croesus was, in his day, visible only in the temple of Ismenian Apollo – why was it there and not at the sanctuary in Knopia itself? Perhaps the sanctuary had been sacked, and the valuables removed for safekeeping, or perhaps it was simply falling into disuse.[22] Pierre Sineux has recently argued that the Athenians moved the oracle from Knopia to Oropus deliberately as a tactical step. Oropus was situated on the borders of Attica, and given their disputes with the Thebans[23] (particularly fresh following the Archidamian War) he sees it as a deliberate attempt to send a message to the Thebans of Athenian territorial superiority, installing Amphiaraus there because of his successful battles against the Thebans in legend.[24] Regardless of why it was moved, if Herodotus can be trusted then the oracle was operating through incubation at a time roughly concomitant with Asclepius.

Yet from what we have seen so far, the oracle is purely mantic, and unlike Asclepius not yet *iatro*mantic. The first evidence of healing does not arrive until 414, in

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[18] Hdt. I.46,49.
[19] The most he offers is that they performed the customary rites: *ποιήσασι περὶ τὸ ἱρὸν τὰ νομιζόμενα* (I.49).
[20] Hdt. VIII.134.
[21] Schachter (1981-94: 1: 22-23) is right to note the rather odd sounding story that the Thebans themselves could not consult the god, because following an oracle they had chosen him as a friend in war rather than a prophet. It does not seem enough, however, to support his thesis about the possibility of wars and hostility.
[22] Schachter, *ibid*, supporting his theory that there was only ever one oracle, suggests the Thebans had stolen it away after a raid on Oropus.
[23] See Thuc. IV.99.
[24] Sineux (1997: 92-95).

Aristophanes' lost comedy *Amphiaraos*. Only a handful of fragments survive, but some of them do indicate that it had some form of medical context; for example *PCG* F.20: *νόσωι βιασθεὶς ἢ φίλων ἀχηνίαι.*[25] Of course, just because this is the first evidence, it does not automatically follow that medical consultations could not have taken place previously, but other evidence does point that way. An allusion in Aristophanes' *Wasps* in 422 suggests that the most important healing sanctuary at that time was the Asclepieion in Aegina. Xanthias describes the plight of Bdelycleon's father, who was a *φιληλιαστής*, a compulsive juror: having first tried to bathe and purify him without success, and handed him over to the Corybantes[26] only for him to escape, Bdelycleon transported him to the Asclepian sanctuary at Aegina, where he attempted to force him to spend the night in the *abaton* (although again he escaped before daybreak).[27] Apart from being an amusing episode, it is revealing in that the recourse taken was to transport him, by sea, to Aegina, which presumably in this context implies that this was the most famous or recognisable medical sanctuary at the time; if it was not, then why would one make the sea journey to Aegina if there was already a functioning medical sanctuary a short journey away by land at Oropus? Further it is plausible that the decision by Aristophanes to write the *Amphiaraos* was a reflection of a topical concern, i.e. the new arrival of his cult.[28] If the oracle was moved, then from the evidence we have it is likely to have taken place post-*Wasps*, therefore after 422, and before the production of the *Amphiaraos*, so pre-414. This provides only a very narrow window, but does allow one to

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[25] Cf. *PCG* FF.28,32,35.
[26] Corybantic music and dancing was considered therapeutic: Dodds (1951: 77-80).
[27] Ar. *Vesp.* 122-123.
[28] The archaeological evidence does not help too much: the oldest buildings at the Oropian Amphiaraeion date only o the 4th century BC, and much of this construction was later aggrandisements added to or replacing the original structures, while Knopia itself has so far eluded detection; see Androutsopoulos (1972: 24); Curnow (2004: 83).

link his arrival with the aftermath of the plague that devastated Athens from 430-426 BC.[29] It is plausible that, in consequence of the plague at Athens and the general increase in health concerns, an already established incubatory cult was brought in, and given medical powers following the model of Asclepius (who, although he had probably just arrived in Athens himself, was already famous for his exploits at Epidaurus).[30] It is noticeable that from this time the *iatromantic* nature of the oracle dominates our sources.[31] This would help to explain the movement of his sanctuary and the shift in his perceived powers - remember that Amphiaraus himself, unlike Asclepius, had no connection with medicine while alive, and in all extant legends was active only as a seer; it is not therefore axiomatic that his oracle would be medical.

The cult of Amphiaraus could have been active in the 6th century according to Herodotus, and, if trusted, is therefore one of the earliest examples of an incubatory sanctuary in Greece.[32] Yet it is possible that Amphiaraus adopted the practice of medical incubation from the model of Asclepius, in the search for necessary cures and medical

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[29] Thuc. 2.47-58, 3.87.

[30] According to Strabo IX.2.10 the move was made following an oracle. Schachter (1981-94: 1: 22n.15) arguing that there was always one single oracle, suggests it was simply modified into a medical sanctuary. Sineux (2007: 210) argues that it was the plague which determined the shift from oracular to medical incubation, but the political disputes which determined the location of his cult at Oropus. It is also possible a sanctuary to Amphiaraus was established in Athens itself, though we do not know when: see Gorrini & Melfi (2002: 252n.39).

[31] It is still consulted on non-medical grounds; for example, three men visit it to debate tribal boundaries (Hyp. 3.14). Note that this may be an exceptional case, for the boundaries did affect the sanctuary itself. There is some other minor inscriptional evidence, e.g. *SEG* 15.293, but the medical side clearly dominates: see the compilation by Schachter (1981-94: 1: 23n.7); cf. Sineux (2007: 201-210).

[32] Amphiaraus' son Amphilocus is credited with an incubatory oracle at Mallus in Cilicia: Paus. 1.34.2; Lucian *Alex.* 19,29; Origen *C.Cels.* III.35. There are also two coins from the 2nd/3rd century AD which bear his image: *LIMC* I (1981: *s.v. Amphilochos*, nos. 4-10). However he is likely to have appeared later, as Amphiaraus was adopting the image and power of his medical son to improve his credibility, much like the family retinue of Asclepius: Gorrini & Melfi (2002: 249-250). We know he shared an altar at Oropus, where he was undoubtedly in the shadow of his father: Paus. 1.34.3; cf. two inscriptions in Petrakos (1997) no. 280, pp.184-5, and no.345, p.265. At some point he also had an altar at Athens: Paus. 1.34.3; *IG* II², 7175, with Kearns (1989: 171).

sources following the devastations of the plague, for we only begin to see evidence of his healing powers once the shrine is moved to Oropus.

Another potential early incubation shrine was the subterranean oracle of Trophonius at Lebadeia in Boeotia. It too was apparently consulted by Croesus and later by Mys, and its origins could go back even further to the 8th or 7th century.[33] Yet there are serious doubts over whether it was in fact an incubatory oracle. Our most detailed description of the procedure comes from Pausanias, who visited the shrine himself: the inquirer descends into a chasm, and there shoves his feet through a narrow hole up to his knees, whereupon he is sucked underneath. There he experiences the oracle, not everyone in the same way, but some by hearing, some vision (*ἀλλά που τις καὶ εἶδε καὶ ἄλλος ἤκουσεν*).[34] There is no mention of sleep.[35] This tallies with the impression given by Plutarch, who seems quite clear that the inquirer was not asleep, but in a medial, trance type state between sleep and waking.[36] Yet the idea has persisted for some time that this was an incubation oracle, largely as a result of a very brief comment in Tertullian, who lists Trophonius as the possessor of a dream oracle alongside the likes of Asclepius and Amphiaraus.[37] This might find support in some early fragments which do mention sleep and dreams, though we never find them in a body of material adequate for us to draw a

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[33] Hdt. I. 46. Cf. Bonnechere (2003: 104). The visit of Aristomenes, reported by Paus. 4.16.7, is probably legend. The consultation before the battle of Leuctra, Paus. 4.32.5-6, seems more plausible.
[34] Paus. 9.39.9-13. Only remains dating to the 3rd century AD have been found, although they do feature a narrow circular well, at the bottom of which is a small hole extending out, which echoes the description of Pausanias: see Vallas and Pharaklas (1969), with Schachter (1981-94: 3: 66-89). Ogden (2001: 81) suggests the original oracle may have been destroyed by one of the earthquakes common to the area.
[35] This is unlikely to be because Pausanias considered it common knowledge – he mentions the act of sleeping at the Amphiaraeion, 1.34.5.
[36] Plut. *De gen.* 589F-592E. Cf. Clark (1968: 64*ff*) who addresses the question in a rather circuitous way. See also Bonnechere (2003: 185*ff*) who favours strongly the idea of a medial state.
[37] Tert. *De anim.* 46.11. Support for incubation from: Deubner (1900: 8n.2); Meier (1966: 303); Ogden (2001: 79); Pollard (1965: 131). Against are: Kearns (1989: 16); Bonnechere (2003: 186*ff*).

clear judgement. Cratinus, one of the greatest Old Attic comic poets, wrote a *Trophonius*, of which only five fragments remain extant. One of these is the line: *οὐ σῖτον ἄραισθ', οὐχ ὕπνου λαχεῖν μέρος*. The line seems to suggest some form of ritual related to fasting and abstaining from sleep: 'neither to raise up food, nor to take a portion of sleep'. This might be in reference to the necessary precursors to incubatory ritual, but there is no need to presume it is anything specific to incubation; it could just as well represent the necessary rituals for the (non-incubatory) consultation of Trophonius. In more direct reference to a dream is a fragment of Heraclides Ponticus, the fourth century philosopher; he described an incident in which some Boeotians fled to Trophonius, having been defeated by the Thracians: *Λύσιοι τελεταί αἱ Διονύσου. Βοιωτοὶ γὰρ ἁλόντες ὑπὸ Θρᾳκων καὶ φυγόντες εἰς Τροφωνίου, κατ' ὄναρ ἐκείνου Διόνυσον ἔσεσθαι βοηθὸν φήσαντος, μεθύουσιν ἐπιθέμενοι τοῖς Θραξὶν ἔλυσαν ἀλλήλους, καὶ Διονύσου Λυσίου ἱερὸν ἱδρύσαντο.*[38] The oracular guidance given by Trophonius was clearly in this case delivered via a dream, although the fragment is difficult to trust: it is unclear both how the Boeotians were able to consult Trophonius while in captivity, and what relationship he had with Dionysus.[39] The passage is of dubious quality as evidence. There was an entire work devoted to Trophonius by Dicaearchus, the late fourth century polymath and writer; fragments survive from his works which mention dreams and sleep, but their wider context, and the exact intention behind his mention of them, is never clear. For example Cicero records that he accepted divination by dreams: Dicaearchus Peripateticus cetera divinationis genera sustulit, somniorum et furoris reliquit.[40] Such statements do not add any real insight into what

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[38] Wehrli: fr.155.
[39] The version of this episode at Paus. 9.16.6 makes no mention of Trophonius.
[40] Cic *De Div* I.3.5 = Wehrli, fr.14; cf. frs. 13a,b, 14, 15, 16 (all allegedly from his *Descent into the Trophonion Cave*).

happened at Trophonius' oracle, and could have been taken from an unrelated discussion about the nature of dreams and divination. Overall, this patchy body of evidence does not seem quite enough to overturn probably our most important witness, the venerable hypochondriac Aelius Aristides, who is certainly the man who would know. He draws an explicit distinction between the oracle of Trophonius and the (dream) oracles of Asclepius and Sarapis.[41]

It is likely that the link between Trophonius and incubation has in part been born from the affinities between his cult and those of Asclepius and Amphiaraus: Trophonius (like Amphiaraus only) was swallowed underground; they were consulted directly – the visitor himself was the medium; and they had associations with snakes and offerings of cakes.[42] The cult image of Trophonius with Herkyna was even said to have closely resembled that of Asclepius and Hygieia.[43] Such associations are hardly all embracing – there were other underground seers who operated without dreams, such as Kaineus in Thessaly, and Zalmoxis in Thrace.[44] I think the affinities are important, and the cult of Trophonius could certainly be grouped alongside the likes of Amphiaraus, but the mode of inquiry does seem to have been something different from 'mundane' incubation.[45] Perhaps at times the occupants fell asleep, at others they remained semi-conscious; there is enough confusion to suggest that one did not visit Trophonius with the explicit intention of receiving an incubation oracle, in the same fashion as one would visit Asclepius.

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[41] Ael. Arist. 45.7.
[42] The similarities are brought out well by Schachter (1981-94: 3: 70); Ogden (2001: 84).
[43] Paus. 9.39.3.
[44] See Ustinova (2002: 276-277; 278-281).
[45] Ogden (2001: 82): the evidence 'points mundanely to incubation'.

There are further question marks over the extent of his medical function. There is but one reference that seems to have relevance, when in Euripides' *Ion* Xanthus consults him concerning his barrenness.[46] This is scant evidence, but based on the affinities already stated it is often assumed that Trophonius would have had some healing role.[47] If so, this is likely to have been added to his cult later (the consultations in Herodotus are purely mantic), plausibly following the lead of Asclepius; like Amphiaraus, Trophonius was not an *iatros* while alive, but a master-builder and warrior. I remain slightly cautious about according him too much medical responsibility, not only because of the sheer paucity of attestations in the sources, but also from a practical perspective: if one remembers the description of Pausanias (being sucked violently into a chasm), it would not be my first choice if I had a serious injury. The sheer horror of the experience was well known, and it left some of the visitors unable to laugh, giving rise to the proverbial expression, 'He has consulted the oracle of Trophonius', applied to the sullen and gloomy.[48]

Therefore I would ignore Trophonius as a possible incubatory competitor to Asclepius. His sanctuary seems to have practiced its own unique method of consultation, which has perhaps been confused with, or compared to, incubation as it presents the nearest ritual parallel. The most convincing evidence actually points away from incubation.

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[46] Eur. *Ion*. 304. All other extant consultations have no medical concern: see Bouché-Leclercq (1979-82, vol 3: 329-332). Avalos (1995: 47) assumes without evidence that Trophonius was a healing god.
[47] Kearns (1989: 16); note in particular her reference to the healing power of Herkyna's goose. Cf. Bonnechere (2003: 119). *Contra* Schachter (1981-94: 3: 72).
[48] Cf. Schachter (1981-94: 3: 81); Ogden (2001: 82n.15).

We have details on another incubation oracle in Greece, but this one differs from those above in that it only ever had a local significance. The temple of (Ino-) Pasiphaë at Thalamae in Laconia was frequented by the ephors, who dreamt to get information from the goddess. The nature of the consultation was certainly incubatory, although exactly why they consulted her is difficult to ascertain. If it was specific to the ephors, then one presumes that the consultation was quasi-official; this is certainly the impression given by Cicero, who lists the oracle alongside Delphi, Dodona, and Jupiter Hamınon as one which is consulted by the rulers on state matters.[49] Plutarch twice refers to the oracle in an official context. In the *Life of Cleomenes* an ephor falls asleep in the temple and experiences a dream vision and hears a voice; the vision is of the ephors' chairs – where once stood five only one remains, and the voice tells him that this will be good for Sparta (at the time Cleomenes was plotting to disband the ephorate). The oracle which Plutarch presents certainly plays a serious part in the politics of the Spartan state.[50] In his *Agis*, he mentions the oracle during his description of Agis and Lycurgus' attempts to push through laws to restore equality within the Spartan state, which had been lost following Epitadeus' reform that allowed estates to be bequeathed to anyone. As the ephor Lycurgus is urging the assembly to follow him, he appeals to them to heed the recent oracles delivered by Pasiphaë, which apparently ordained that all the Spartans should live equally as according to the original law. Clearly her oracles in this case too have a political focus. In a brief digression, Plutarch mentions some of her genealogical legends.[51] According to some, she was the mother of Ammon by Zeus; others claimed that Cassandra, the daughter of Priam, had died at Thalamae, and she was now called

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[49] Cic. *De div.* 1.43.
[50] Plut. *Agis* 9; *Cleo.* 7.
[51] Plut. *Agis* 9.

Pasiphaë because she declared her oracles to all (*τὸ πᾶσι φαίνειν*); and finally others thought that she was Daphne, who having fled the advances of Apollo was turned into a tree, and then granted prophetic powers by the god. It is noteworthy that none of these legends give any reason for us to presume that her shrine should have been medical in any respect; it seems far more likely that she was consulted on political matters. Although Pausanias makes no mention of the ephors, and notes only that she reveals 'whatever they [anyone consulting her] wish to learn' (*ὁπόσα δ'ἂν πυθέσθαι δεηθῶσιν*),[52] the inscriptions which have been found confirm not only the location and existence of the sanctuary, but also suggest again that it was consulted by the ephors. A statue was erected by a certain Nicosthenidas, an ephor, upon the order of the goddess (though there is no explicit mention of this being through dream).[53] The oracle of Pasiphaë, if it is directly related to the ephors, could be nearly as old as the office itself, thus certainly sixth century; it could well predate Asclepius. As to the function of the incubation in this context, all the consultations we see are official in nature, and it is the ephors alone who make enquiries to her about matters which may affect the state.

Across the Aegean at Castabus in Caria was another incubatory sanctuary which, unlike the Asclepian cults, is virtually anonymous outside its local environs. Our only literary source is Diodorus, who devotes an unusually long digression to describing Hemithea, the 'half-goddess', and her sanctuary.[54] According to him, when the Persians, under Xerxes, were plundering all the temples in Greece, the only shrine which they left

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[52] Paus. 3.26.1. Nb. Pausanias seems to have confused Pasiphaë with Ino: he states that there was a sanctuary and oracle of Ino which was incubatory, but of Pasiphaë he notes only that she had a cult statue in the precinct.
[53] *IG* V, 1.1317, with Prakken (1953: 340*ff*).
[54] She takes up over half his description of the entire Chersonese.

untouched was the precinct of Hemithea. The reason she escaped was because of her general benevolence to all mankind, for she appears in dream to those who are suffering and cures them of otherwise incurable ailments, and in particular she relieves the pains of women in childbirth.[55] If we are to believe his story that the shrine was left untouched by Xerxes, then it must have already been active in the late 5th century. It appears clear, from the complete absence of other references, that she only had a local significance, although she was seemingly famous enough for Xerxes to be familiar with her. Archaeological excavations have confirmed the presence of her temple, along with a theatre, dating to the 4th century BC, so she enjoyed enough clientele to finance some building works.[56] These remains are laid over the original shrine, which from excavations appears to have been very small, with a shallow room with the dais at the back, and then a porch between antae at the front. This though, based on its stone joints and dressing, appears unlikely to have been built any earlier than the classical period.[57] The small size of the early building (the internal room was c.3.1 metres wide by 2 metres deep) would prevent it from having been a large-scale incubatory sanctuary. It might have begun as a very personal shrine visited by one individual at a time; in the second building phase during the 4th century some extra buildings were constructed to the east of the shrine, which may have served as mass sleeping halls. Diodorus' story about it escaping the devastation of Xerxes is probably based on the official cult legend; it may well be true, but not for the reasons Diodorus gives: according to the archaeological finds, at the time of his invasion the

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[55] Diod. V.63.1. Cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.26: Xerxes, on advice of the magi, set fire to Greek temples because they enclosed the gods, who should be free, within walls. It is not clear if and when Xerxes could have been in Caria; according to Herodotus, when marching towards Greece he avoided Caria, instead travelling north through Lydia: Hdt. VII.31.
[56] Curnow (2004: 127); Cook & Ploomer (1966).
[57] Cook & Ploomer (1966: 40-43).

shrine would have been so small that it would have escaped largely because of its insignificance and remoteness. Even after the expansion of her shrine in the fourth century, her fame did not spread that far; as Cook dryly notes: 'Hemithea was world famous, but only in Rhodes'.[58]

This shrine, together with that of (Ino-) Pasiphaë in Laconia, demonstrates that incubatory ritual was still developing outside of the major sanctuaries, and away from the influence of Asclepius. These cults sprang up independently, and their adoption of incubation as the mode of consultation must be seen as an independent event, not something diffused from ritual techniques elsewhere. Although Asclepius and Amphiaraus dominate the sources, they were not the only shrines practicing incubation from an early stage in Greek culture. One can add to this list a number of other incubatory shrines scattered around the ancient world which the Greek authors were aware of outside of Greece, yet they often devote little detail to them. Strabo describes two temples on Mount Drium in Daunia: one, located on the summit, is to Calchas, and has an oracle which is consulted by first sacrificing a black ram and then sleeping within its hide[59] (so presumably through incubation – it does echo the practice at the Oropian Amphiaraeion).[60] The second temple located at the foot of the hill, to Podalirios, does not seem to have had an oracle attached to it, or at least one is not mentioned. Strabo does, however, tell us that from the temple a stream flowed which had healing powers for all diseased animals. Thus we know that the first oracle was incubatory, but have no idea why people consulted it, while the second temple had curative properties, but it seems

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[58] Cook & Ploomer (1966: 164, with 162-173).
[59] On the significance of the ram hide, see Hamilton (1906: 84); Sineux (2007: 150-177).
[60] Strabo VI.3.9; Lycoph. 1050*ff*. On all these see Bouché-Leclercq (1879-82) *s.v.* Trophonius, Amphiaraus, Hemithea, etc. Bouché-Leclercq is far quicker than I am to jump to the conclusion of 'incubation' for most of these oracles.

that this was through its water (and indeed for animals) rather than via dreams. At Amphikaea or Amphikleia in Phocis there was a sanctuary of Dionysus; here the god healed people through their dreams, and also gave out oracles, although the oracles proper were delivered through an inspired priest.[61] In Asia Minor at Acharaca, Hierapolis, and the Aornum near Magnesia there were so-called 'Charonias', incubatory oracles in caves where the diseased went to find cures. Apparently the visitors lived in a village nearby amongst the specialist priests, who would actually sleep in the caves on their behalf and then prescribe cures through dreams. There were times when they would order the patients to stay in the caves for days, and others when the ill would actually take note of their own dreams, but they still required the priests to counsel them. It seems the priests had full control of the operation, for Strabo records that the place was forbidden and deadly to all other visitors.[62] An oracle of Autolycus at Sinope in Paphlagonia is reported by Strabo, and is sometimes considered as incubatory. However there is no actual mention of dreams in Strabo, who in fact calls it simply *μαντεῖον*; further, no remains of it have yet been found (although cult statues of Autolycus in Sinope do suggest it existed at one time).[63] In Troezen Pan *λυτήριος* showed the magistrates dreams which supplied the cure for a local epidemic; however it is not clear whether this was following an incubation, and it is also presented as a one off exceptional event (to prevent a plague), rather than as a regular ritual process.[64] The late 3rd/early 2nd century BC Delian antiquarian Semos recorded that there was at Delos a goddess Brizo, who was

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[61] Paus. 10.33.9-11.
[62] Strabo XIV.1.44; cf. XII.8.17, where they are mentioned only in passing.
[63] Strabo XII.3.11. Cf. Curnow (2004: 147); D.M.Robinson (1906: 265-266).
[64] Paus. II.32.6. The sanctuary itself has not yet been located.

offered sacrifice as a sender of dreams and a protectress, in particular of ships.[65] We are wholly reliant on the literary evidence, for no remains of her sanctuary have been found, and it is not clear whether she sent dreams following incubation or just spontaneously.[66] Even less clear is the oracle of Tiresias at Orchomenos: according to Plutarch *De def. Or.* 44 during an epidemic the oracle failed. Whether this implies it was expected to have healing powers, or simply failed to predict it, or even just lost its powers of prophecy, is unclear. Tertullian finally lists two further shrines which he certainly thinks are incubatory, one of Hermione in Macedonia and the other of Sarpedon in the Troad.[67] However he makes no further elaboration on this point, and the two cults have yet to be located archaeologically.

The geographical spread of these sanctuaries testifies itself to the widespread appeal of incubation. Without any firmer chronological evidence, it is difficult to argue whether they preceded Asclepius or not.

One could also question how the other medical heroes performed their healing: whether there is the possibility that they were functioning through medical incubation before the onset of Asclepius. Little is known of most of these early heroes, and the best evidence for their activity comes from Athens. With a most obvious medical function were the various heroes named as *ἥρως ἰατρός*, 'doctor hero'.[68] In Attica they have been found in four different locations: at Athens itself, he remained rather anonymously the 'hero doctor in the city', until he was apparently conflated with Amphilochus, the son of

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[65] Semos: Ath. 8.335a-b = *FGrH* 396 F4; he is the source for our other references too: Eustath. *Ad Hom. Od.* 1720; Hesychius *s.v.* Brizo.
[66] Cf. Bruneau (1970: 447-448); de Santerre (1958: 157-158).
[67] Tert. *De anim.* 46.11.
[68] Forsén (1996: 56, 114, 116, 146; with his collection no.44).

Amphiaraus;[69] at both Marathon and Rhamnus he was known as Aristomachus;[70] and at Eleusis his name was Oresinios.[71] An unspecified *ἥρως ἰατρός* is attested by inscriptions dating from the first half of the 5th century at Eleusis, which gives valuable attestation that these local healing heroes pre-dated the arrival of Asclepius.[72] At Rhamnus as well two heads have been identified as bearing the image of the hero Aristomachus; these have been dated to c.480, so we can suppose that these cults could have been operating since the 6th century.[73] To these doctor heroes can be added the healer-hero Amynos, whose shrine on the south slopes of the Areopagus certainly dates back to the 6th century.[74] A number of private votives have been discovered there, although none of them are pre-4th century, which include a pair of ears, male genitals and two fingers.[75] His cult was in the hands of a prosperous group of *orgeones*, and it seems that even though Asclepius entered his precinct his name was not completely forgotten, and it is still mentioned separately to Asclepius' in a late inscription.[76] Sophocles had apparently held the priesthood of Halon, another hero apparently linked with healing who had been taught by the centaur Chiron along with Asclepius.[77] Of him we know nothing, other than that if the association with Sophocles is to be trusted, his cult was functioning in the 5th century.[78]

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[69] Dem. 19.249; *IG* II².839-40. Cf. Kearns (1989: 171); Parker (1996: 176n.80); Van Straten (1981: 114). Identified as Amphilochus: *IG* II².7175.
[70] Marathon: *Bekk. Anecd.* I.262.16; schol. Dem. 19.249. Rhamnus: *SEG* XXXIII 200. On both see Kearns (1989: 172); Parker *ibid.*
[71] Named in *Bekk. Anecd.* I.263.11; probably referred to in: *IG* I³.393.3, 395.3.
[72] *IG* I³ 393, 395. Cf. Verbanck-Piérard (2000: 299).
[73] Gorrini & Melfi (2002: 252-253).
[74] Travlos (1971: 76).
[75] Van Straten (1981: 113-114). Cf. Kearns (1989: 147); Forsén (1996: 54-56, 146; with his collection nos. 40-43).
[76] *Orgeones*: *IG* II². 1252, 1253, 1259. Named separately: *IG* II².4457.
[77] *Vita Soph.* 11. The reading of the passage has been doubted; some replace him with Amynos, Alkon or Halirrhothios. See Verbanck-Piérard (2000: 297).
[78] Kearns (1989: 20) perhaps infers too much.

The problem with all these heroes is that we have no idea how they were expected to effect a cure.[79] A feature of these early medical sanctuaries, and indeed the Asklepieia too, is that they are located close to a source of water.[80] At the sanctuary of Amynos there was a very deep well, dug it seems at an early stage in the old *temenos*, and it had a canal linked to a Pisistratean aqueduct. The Amphiaraeia at Oropus and Rhamnus were both near sources of water; the temple of Heracles-Pankrates was on the Ilissos; on the south side of the Acropolis, where Asclepius was installed, there were two springs venerated since the 6th century. [81] It is likely that this water was considered to have a healing power, no doubt linked with notions of purification and cleansing, 'washing away' a disease.[82] In the ritual of incubation, water and bathing are important as a preliminary to the act itself, but actually take no role in the healing process; all the healing is done by the god, in dream.[83] As such, these other medical heroes are probably best understood as functioning through healing springs, rather than incubation. Unless an archaeological find discovers a sleeping room dedicated to such a hero, it will remain difficult to prove that incubation was practiced at their shrines.

A final potential early source for incubation requires clarification: the oracle of Earth at Delphi. According to a tradition which has been preserved by several ancient

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[79] Halliday (1913: 128-129) assumes presumptively that 'all hero-oracles cure disease and their instrument is incubation'.
[80] As explored fully by Ginouvés (1962: 327*ff*), and, far briefer, (1994). Nb. Verbanck-Piérard (2000: 298) has suggested that at some time these ancient springs may have been worshipped as entrances to the underworld.
[81] Verbanck-Piérard (2000: 297); Gorrini & Melfi (2002: 254-255).
[82] For other examples of healing springs, see for example Paus. 5.5.11, 4.31.4; *Mir. Ausc.* 127. Further references in Halliday (1913: 134); Parker (1983: 212); Ginouvés (1962: 362-363); (1994: 237-238).
[83] Cf. Ar. *Plut.* 656-658; Xen *Mem.* 3.13.3. A role for water for the actual healing is attested only at the cult of Podalirios, Lycoph. *Alex.* 1050*ff.* Ginouvés (1994: 239*ff*) is correct that some Asclepieia developed into modern 'spas', but this did not happen until the late Hellenistic period.

writers, albeit in moulded and altered forms, there was at Delphi a pre-existing chthonic oracle which was usurped and superseded by Apollo. Aeschylus records a prayer of the Pythia, in which the highest honor is given to Earth: *πρῶτον μὲν εὐχῇ τῇδε πρεσβεύω θεῶν τὴν πρωτόμαντιν Γαῖαν· ἐκ δὲ τῆς Θέμιν, ἣ δὴ τὸ μητρὸς δευτέρα τόδ' ἕζετο μαντεῖον, ὡς λόγος τις· ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ λάχει, θελούσης, οὐδὲ πρὸς βίαν τινός, Τιτανὶς ἄλλη παῖς Χθονὸς καθέζετο, Φοίβη· δίδωσι δ' ἣ γενέθλιον δόσιν Φοίβῳ· τὸ Φοίβης δ' ὄνομ' ἔχει παρώνυμον.*[84] Aeschylus underlines that the transition from Earth down to Apollo was a peaceful one, but the fuller account given by Euripides is more violent: Apollo killed the python, seizing the seat of the oracle from Themis. In vengeance her mother, Earth, sent prophetic dreams to men, denying Apollo the power of prophecy. Thus Apollo ran to Zeus and appealed to him, and he answered his entreaties by removing the prophetic property of dreams and restoring it to the seat of Apollo at Delphi.[85] Thus Euripides also suggests the link between the ancient oracle and Earth, though he specifies the oniromantic element. This element is not elaborated elsewhere, and in most other traditions it is simply the superiority of the Earth oracle that is noted. Pausanias, for instance, mentions that, *τὰ ἀρχαιότατα Γῆς εἶναι τὸ χρηστήριον, καὶ Δαφνίδα ἐπ' αὐτῷ τετάχθαι πρόμαντιν ὑπὸ τῆς Γῆς.*[86] Yet how far Pausanias trusts this story is not clear; he follows it with a series of other traditions, including one recorded in the poem Eumolpia, attributed to Musaeus, in which Poseidon and Earth are co-holders of the oracle.

It is worth noting that it was a feature of tragedy in general that the dreams were often chthonic in origin, emanating either from the dead or from Earth. Euripides elsewhere refers to Earth as 'the mother of black-winged dreams' (*μελανοπτερύγων μῆτερ*

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[84] Aesch. *Eum.* 1-8.
[85] Eur. *IT.* 1244-1283.
[86] Paus. 10.5.5-8.

ὀνείρων); Achilles is visited by the ghost of Patroclus in the *Iliad*; in Pindar it is the ghost of Phrixus which appears to Pelias, and urges him to bring back his soul by taking the golden fleece; and the ghost of Clytemnestra appears to her own Erinyes during a dream in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*.[87] The relationship of Earth to dream was one which had spread roots, and one which could give some explanation behind Euripides' description of this myth, and the direct link he draws between Earth and the sending of prophetic dreams.[88]

The fact is, however, that the earliest account of the mythology behind the Delphic oracle has Apollo as the first in office.[89] Further, from a historical perspective, the veracity of the claims to possession by Earth is in serious doubt.[90] Archaeological finds have unearthed little of serious consequence. We know there was a sanctuary of Earth at Delphi, confirmation of what Plutarch had already told us, but this was constructed only in the first half of the fifth century, and therefore presumably in reaction to the myth itself.[91] Importance has sometimes been attached to the discovery of Mycenean objects, but these tell us very little apart from that the site seems to have had some cultic importance. The fact is that we do not know the significance of the Mycenean finds.[92] The natural elements of the early Delphic oracle – the chasm which emitted the

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[87] Eur. *Hec.*70; Hom. *Il.* 23.65-91; Pind. *P.* 4.156-163; Aesch. *Eum.* 94-139. Cf. Soph *El.* 459-460; Aesch. *Per.* 220 with Hall (1996). Ghosts appear rarely in Artemidorus: see, for example, *On.* 1.5, 2.2, 2.69, with Ogden (2001: 80). Note also Hom. *Il.* 16.235, in which the poet remarks on the Selloi, seers in Dodona who sleep on the ground with unwashed feet, and Hdt. 4.172, who records that the Libyan Nasamones practiced divination on the tombs of their ancestors. In both cases, however, such practice is associated with other cultures, not Greek. For examples from later literature, see Ogden (2001: 76n.5).

[88] The relationship between the dead and incubation is explored fully by Ogden (2001: 75-92), who proposes a ritual similarity between incubatory practice and oracles of the dead, although he infers too much from the use of ram-skins: in incubatory iconography it is very rare to find an animal skin under the patient, Van Straten (1995: 73). Cf. Patton (2004: 205-206), who concludes that though a tomb might seem a natural place for incubation, it is still most commonly found at a fixed sanctuary. L.M. Johnston (1948) sees a clearer connection than most. On rituals of the dead in general, see S.I. Johnston (1999: 36-81).

[89] *Hom. Hymn.* III.300*ff*; cf. Alcaeus *Hymn to Apollo*.

[90] L.R.Farnell (1907 Vol. III: 8-11) and Dempsey (1918: 3*ff*) are too trusting in the literary evidence.

[91] Sourvinou-Inwood (1987: 221*ff*); Martin and Metzger (1976: 30-33).

[92] As Amandry (1950: 206, 214). See the speculation by Parke and Wormell (1956: 5).

intoxicating vapours, the spring of Castalia, and the use of laurel - have been highlighted as possible explanations for the attribution of the oracle to Earth and Themis, but they do not represent proofs.[93] Diodorus made such presumptions himself, supposing that it was as a result of the inspiring power of the chasm gas that it came to be considered as a shrine of Earth.[94] In effect, the only evidence we have comes from the literary sources. However the myth which they repeat is one designed to articulate certain characteristics of Apollo and Delphi, rather than being an echo of early historical truths.[95] It could even have been a retrospective invention of the priests, who wanted the oracle to appear older than it actually was.[96] Therefore it is hard to include what is likely to have been only a mythological dream oracle in discussions about the origins of incubation.

What is clear, however, is that Asclepius was not the only god associated with incubatory cult even as early as the 6th century. From the evidence, it is more than likely that incubatory oracles of Amphiaraus and Pasiphaë were either contemporary with, or pre-dated, Asclepius. It is equally possible (though far harder to judge) that a number of local sanctuaries operated through incubation themselves. What has also been revealed is that Asclepius was probably the first of the major sanctuaries to combine medical healing with incubation, creating what would prove to be a very popular therapeutic method. Although Amphiaraus and Pasiphaë might pre-date him, their powers are limited to political oracular consultations. It is revealing that we see a switch in Amphiaraus' skills from oracular to medical incubation when his sanctuary is moved to Oropus; as I argued

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[93] Particularly by Martin and Metzger (1976: 25*ff*).
[94] Diod. XVI.26.
[95] See Parke and Wormell (1956: 5); Sourvinou-Inwood (1987: *passim*).
[96] As argued by Amandry (1950: 211-212).

earlier, this *was* probably in reaction to Asclepius, together with the current needs of the populace – the devastations of the Athenian plague meant that people were searching for new curative approaches, and Amphiaraus, an established incubatory god, was brought in to provide healing on the model of Asclepius.[97] Therefore Asclepius remains important and influential, but not as dominant as one might think at this early period. The sheer geographical spread of the shrines we have noted, from the Peloponnese, to Thessaly, to Attica, to Asia Minor and Macedonia, together with the often localised and remote nature of these cults, support the notion that they are unlikely to have borrowed traits from Asclepius. Instead they represent the growth of incubation as a ritual process within cultures where the divine could communicate through dream, where the deities could be sought out at sanctuaries, and where the gods could be called upon.

(ii)

Incubation: A Dream Ritual Dependent on its Cultural Context

The evidence for early incubation in Greece has highlighted that incubatory cults were active concomitantly across a wide geographical spread, largely independent of each other. Incubation did not begin with Asclepius and then spread to other sanctuaries, but was a ritual phenomenon determinant on the existing cultural systems of belief. It is important in the present instance, despite the importance of acknowledging the cultural specificity of dream phenomena as I outlined in Chapter 2, to peer outside the Greek world and recognise commonalities in the practice which provide direct evidence for the

[97] Cf. the development of Sarapis into an incubatory healing cult by Ptolemy I, in a desire to unite the Greeks in Egypt and the locals through a god whose cult would be familiar to both: *LIMC* 7.1 (1994: 666). It could also have been founded by Alexander, though this seems apocryphal.

probable origins and growth of incubation in ancient Greece. The ritual of incubation functions with nuances across cultures, but in its basic form exhibits striking similarities throughout. An example from South Asia, found in a 9th or 8th century BC Upaniṣad, describes a ritual which lasts for a fortnight, and on the last night, having drunk a special mix of herbs, honey and curd, the incubant lies down on a skin or the bare ground next to the fire; if in the resultant dream he sees a woman, he knows the rite has been successful.[98] Among the Native American Objiwa, young boys go out into the wilderness and fast until they receive a dream; a member of their spirit world appears and tells the boy his particular gifts and abilities, and informs him how to use 'supernatural aids' which might come to him in the future.[99] At the West Bengali pilgrimage centre of Tarakeswar, visitors regularly perform incubation, or *dharnā* in Bengali, in which they seek answers from the god Bābā Tāraknātha, most often in relation to medical problems.[100] In modern Japanese Shintoism, devotees still practice incubation in a sacred precinct on the island of Hsuku-shima, just as incubation still exists in Asia Minor in the churches of St Michael and St George in Lebanon.[101]

Indeed incubation has been, and continues to be, practiced all over the world in numerous different cultures and religious systems, and while the specifics can vary inter-culturally, all of these systems consider the central dynamics of the ritual to be relevant; these are (i) the belief that dreams allow contact and communication with the gods; (ii) the focalisation of divinities within a specific topography – whether the gods can be found at temples or in the 'wilderness', etc.; (iii) the belief that the gods can be called

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[98] *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 5.2.8-9, with Young (2001: 12).
[99] Reed (1977: 158-159).
[100] Morinis (1982) found that 74.3% of incubants came for medical problems.
[101] On Japan: Patton (2004: 212); Blacker (1990); with Sieffert (1959). On Asia Minor: De Becker (1968: 147).

upon to solve problems or answer questions. When any of these elements ceases to be viable, then the practice of incubation alters, and in some contexts can disappear. Take, for instance, the suppression of incubation in Christian writings post-Deuteronomy, when it essentially became a pagan ritual; for, in contradiction of (iii) above, man no longer had the right to call upon god for action.[102]

In ancient Greece, all three were present. The 'traditional' dreams, which we have seen were still alive in the Greek consciousness throughout the period, allowed the potential for the gods to communicate in sleep. The gods themselves had spiritual homes on earth, sanctuaries where the gods' power and position was magnified, not just in the context of dreams, but the place where one would go to offer sacrifice or set up a dedication. And the reciprocal relationship which the Greeks had with their gods meant that calling upon them for help and advice was a normal process, seen working elsewhere in the shape of, for instance, oracular consultations. Given the conception of the dream which already existed, and the surrounding religious and cultural dynamics which framed this conception, it is natural that incubation developed.

Looking even closer at the evidence for Greece, one can see the 'ritual logic' of incubation in practice, which might help to give a clearer picture of how this shift from 'spontaneous' to 'sought' dreams could and did occur.[103] A story told by Pindar records that Bellerophon slept on the altar of Athena, and while sleeping he was visited in dream by Athena who handed to him the golden bridle with which he tamed Pegasus.[104] This sleep had been deliberate. He informs the seer of the land how 'at his order' he had gone

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[102] Jeffers (1996: 139); Patton (2004: 216-220). In general see Husser (1999: 88-178).
[103] Cf. Young (2001: 12): 'the progression from spontaneous dream to sought dreams is a reasonable development'.
[104] Pind. *O.* XIII.66*ff.*

to spend the night on Athena's altar. It seems the seer had expected Athena to send a dream. It is a clear example of the logic behind the early roots of incubation. The altar to Athena is by no means specifically designed for incubation, and Athena herself is not a goddess who is renowned for appearing in dreams, but still the underlying idea is that by sleeping at her altar one is increasing the potential to be visited by her through dream. In this case, it was the topographical aspect which was paramount, for it was at her altar that he could seek contact with the goddess. As argued convincingly by the theologian Patton, the original spark for the incubatory practice of sleeping at a shrine is as likely to derive from the sanctity of the place itself as from the ability to communicate with deities through dreams; 'the starting point in a given incubation tradition could be the belief that the place "does" many things of metaphysical value, including sponsor iconic dreams for those who sleep there'.[105]

We find a similar example recorded by Herodotus during his examination of Egypt in Book II. Sethos, an unpopular king whose warriors were refusing to fight, was faced with an invasion by Sennacherib, the king of Arabia and Assyria. In despair he visited the shrine of Hephaestus to complain about his plight, and during his lamentations fell asleep; during this sleep the god visited him and told him to take heart, for he himself would send help. In the event, a huge swarm of mice descended on the opposing army, devouring all their quivers, bows and leather, and forcing them to flee their positions.[106] This is an example of 'accidental incubation', where a person simply falls asleep near a sacred place and is then visited by a god in dream – the dream was neither sought nor expected, but a natural consequence of having slept near the shrine of a god. Herodotus in

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[105] Patton (2004: 194).
[106] Hdt. II.141. On this episode, see West (1987).

this case is clearly repeating an Egyptian legend, and the earliest dream episode we have is similar in nature. At the foot of the Great Sphinx is a stela (dated to the 15th century BC) that tells of a dream by the young prince who was to become Tuthmose IV: he was out hunting, became tired and went to sleep near the partly-buried Sphinx. Whilst sleeping he dreamt that the Sphinx spoke to him, and declared that if he cleared away the sand burying it, he would become pharaoh.[107] Thus the very first extant dream episode is itself an example of accidental incubation. These literary episodes demonstrate the simple ritual logic behind incubation, and it is easy to see how such accidental incubation could become formalised into the practice of seeking dreams at an official sanctuary. The onset of incubation in Greece should be considered as a normal step within the dream culture.

I introduced some Egyptian evidence in the last argument – not in the hope of insinuating that Egyptian practice was diffused into the Hellenic world, but as an illustration of how the growth of incubation takes place in a comparable way in similar cultures, yet the topic of diffusion is still one that needs clarification. It is likely that, if asked, the average classicist would assume that Greek incubation was something inherited from the East, but this is simply not the case. It is possible chronologically – there is no doubt that some incubation is attested in the Eastern sources before Asclepius in 500 BC, for example. In Hittite culture, the legend of Naram-Sin records how the king was told by Ishtar to purify himself, and to sleep upon a pure bed to receive divine advice. There is also king Murshili II who (at the end of the 14th century BC) referred to incubation in his plague prayers, where he asked the Hattian Storm God if he could inform him how to end a plague, either by informing himself through dream, or via

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[107] Brier (1981: 215); Oppenheim (1956: 187); Szpakowska (2003: 50-52).

priests sleeping upon pure beds (i.e. incubation).[108] The Chaldean king Nabonidus (6th C BC) had a dream in which he saw an unidentified young man, who reassured the king that he need not be afraid; after this, the scene changed, and (in the very same dream) he saw king Nebukadnezzar II standing on a chariot and accompanied by an attendant. The apparent meaning is that Nebukadnezzar is confirming his role as king, but unconvinced of this Nabonidus resorted to incubation to gain assurances from the gods, in one of the few unequivocally described incubation-dreams in cuneiform literature. Although there is a break in which we miss the preparation for incubation, he does set up some images or emblems of stars as 'witnesses', and then falls asleep and sees the goddess Bau, who gives a gesture of pardon corroborating his earlier dream.[109] In one of the oldest and most famous of the Mesopotamian texts, the epic of Gilgamesh, the hero and his friend Enkidu build a *bīt zaqīqi* (the translation is not clear, but it was probably a shallow hut) in which he is to receive a dream for divine guidance.[110]

Yet just because these are earlier instances, we do not have to assume that incubation was borrowed from them. Indeed, in most of these cases incubation does not appear to be a ritual process available to all, as it was in Greece.[111] Even if our evidence is skewed, because all the texts centre on kings, there is no indication of official incubatory cults.[112] In fact, we know that in Egypt explicit incubation is not mentioned in any pre-Ptolemaic texts.[113] Although it was heavily popularised later,[114] this was

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[108] Butler (1998: 219); Contenau (1940: 174).
[109] Oppenheim (1956: 188-190; 203-205).
[110] Gilgamesh lines 79-100; cf. Butler (1998: 223-225); Bottero (1992: 112); Husser (1999: 46-50).
[111] Incubation was certainly not as common as the prognostic dream: Butler (1998: 218).
[112] Butler (1998: 236) notes that it is possible this element was 'understood' by the authors/audience.
[113] Oppenheim (1956: 188); Szpakowska (2003: 142*ff*); Butler (1998: 218); Ray (1976: 130).
[114] For example, the temple of Dendera, which seems to have had two types of treatment: 1) the use of magical water to bring about a cure; 2) Incubation – the patients slept in small crypts that were totally dark at night, and special lamps were used to bring about the desired dreams. Under the reign of Ptolemy II the

probably actually a reaction to the spread of Asclepius, rather than the other way around.[115] I would argue that these other Eastern examples testify further to the notion that incubation was a step taken within cultures without outside influence, and moulded within the parameters of the individual culture. Therefore in the early Eastern examples, we find it exercised by the kings; the spread to more formal mass incubation was probably a result of the powerful priests attempting to take control of this very personal experience, and forcing it to be channelled only through their temples.[116] Therefore in the Near East, the course of incubation was driven by indigenous cultural conditions, while the process itself was a normal step within the dream culture; incubation was a phenomenon intrinsically linked to other cultural traits.

The common occurrence of incubation has tempted some theorists to link the content of incubatory dreams, the nature of the visions seen by the devotees, to Jung's concept of dream 'archetypes', universal basic elements of the 'collective unconscious', images which cultures have shared over centuries: 'this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal ... it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere in all individuals'.[117] The exact content, part of the 'primary' dream experience, is something I have already argued is fruitless trying to recreate for an ancient culture whose dream records are so difficult to pinpoint. That did not stop Dodds from arguing for incubation being a part of a 'culture pattern' of belief, a perspective

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upper level of the temple of Queen Hatshepsut was dedicated to Imhotep and Amenhotep (both physicians), where medical healing (partly through incubation) could take place. See Brier (1981: 56-59; 217); Sauneron (1959: 46*ff*).

[115] Hamilton (1906: 100) suggested it could have been introduced to the Egyptians by the Greeks. Cf. Sauneron (1959: 40-41). Husser (1999: 70) sees the situation as more complex.

[116] Szpakowska (2003: 147); Ray (1976: 130) gives an alternative, unfounded explanation based on changes in Egyptian thought.

[117] Jung (1968: 3-4). His theory was also outlined in his essay 'Von Wesen der Träume' in 1945, now in translation as Jung (1974).

which counters Jung's arguments. Indeed, Jung goes against the perspective of most anthropologists for whom, ever since J.S. Lincoln's identification of such dreams as 'culture patterns', the dreams produced in the context of an incubatory ritual have been seen as heavily shaped by culturally determined secondary revision – actually a Freud infused concept.[118] Therefore, at a basic level, anthropologists would argue that a Greek would go to an Asclepian sanctuary and dream of Asclepius, because the culture in which he existed had pre-determined for him the product of the dream vision as he interpreted it upon waking and incorporating his dream into his own (culturally determined) system of understanding. He would not awake and think he had seen a vision of Buddha. I would largely agree with Dodds that in a broad sense we can see culture shaping the way in which the dream is perceived even within the ritual of incubation.

Some modern research has combined the culture pattern element, which determines the imagistic specifics of incubatory dreams, with the possibility that all such dreams originate from a deeper commonality peculiar to all cultures or peoples. The modern dream-psychologist Hunt, who informs his writings with much anthropological material, has said that: 'In their haste to stress the social and culturally patterned nature of all experience, many anthropologists ... have missed the possibility that the potential for altered states or numinous experience ..., while surely culturally shaped, might nonetheless rest on an autonomous imagistic faculty that ... [has] its own line of growth and abstraction'.[119] Such lines of enquiry go beyond the scope of this study, but provide stimulating evidence of the potentiality to find in the ancient Greek practice of incubation such a deep rooted similarity with other incubatory cultures. Some have linked the

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[118] Lincoln (1935), building on Tylor (1871). See more recently B.Tedlock (1987a); D'Andrade (1961).
[119] Hunt (1989: 149), criticising the reductionist tendency to apply psychoanalysis to anthropological dream study, as for instance by Kracke (1987).

practice of incubation to something inherent in all people – a desire to find a source of recourse in the absence of any alternative solution. 'Anyone who examines the universality of these phenomena will realise that it was not Aesculapius, or Bes [or any other incubatory god] ... who appeared to the invalids, but the personification of one of the soul's deepest desires, the desire to find the omnipotent force capable of hearing and curing. This desire merely borrowed from current beliefs the particular face of the saints or gods of the period'.[120] Thus again we have a deep-rooted commonality, shaped at a higher level by cultural context. Yet the most we can offer for the nature of the dream content is the suggestion that there was a degree of culture patterning, which could be based on some form of common experience; the difficulty of recreating the 'primary' aspect of dreams is such that it is more profitable to focus on the ritual itself, rather than the content of the dreams.

Indeed, in a fascinating study the fundamental parameters of (i) through (iii), above, have even been recreated for a contemporary audience, most notably in the experiments by the dream researcher H. Reed. Noting the most common motifs of the sacred venue and the expectancy of help from a revered deity or spirit, he attempted to recreate the same atmosphere for groups of dreamers who he gathered together in a special tent in a North American town. For his contemporary dreamers, he advised them to select their own symbolic schema in which to have their incubatory experience; for instance, in focalising the sacred 'place', while the sanctuaries of today might be churches, they might also be holiday retreats or personal spaces, and while the divine beings might still be a god, they could just as easily be doctors or gurus. In the resultant dreams, the dreamers did experience visions which addressed the problems that had

[120] De Becker (1968: 150).

concerned them. He concluded that it helped give some 'concreteness' to, amongst other things, anthropological concepts about 'religion as a tangible support mechanism'.[121] Thus again incubation is culturally determined in the specifics of the ritual, but through it there is a commonality in seeking to find divine support and solutions to problems which, at the surface, seem insoluble; incubation provided the Greeks, as well as other cultures which had similar cultural conditions, with a ritual means of seeking the divine at a personal level. It is perhaps logical, therefore, to see why it was the cult of Asclepius which grew so rapidly and spread so far, for surely there is no personal human condition which so occupies the mind, and often proves so difficult to solve, as illness.

Thus while Freud and much anthropology, influenced by his psychoanalytic theories, stress the importance of cultural patterning and the secondary revision which determines the content of incubatory dreams, Jung proposed something far deeper, a universal internal image archetype which all cultures possess. The theory of a deeper commonality as we have seen has been broadly followed and developed by some modern theorists, producing fascinating results which suggest that there could in fact be some innate universality in the incubatory dream experience. Such conclusions based on the primary experience are, however, very difficult to prove, and provide points of interest rather than tangible fact. It is more important to recognise, with the anthropologists, the cultural idiosyncrasies which shape the practice of the ritual as it occurs specifically within a given religious system. Incubation as a dream ritual is dependent on a specific

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[121] Reed (1977: 159*ff*). Reed was working from an assumption that while the surface symbols and imagery of incubation vary inter-culturally, at their heart they reflect a natural inner process of self-regulation or healing; thus he too sought to combine culture-patterns with a deeper commonality, in this case the common desire to find solutions to seemingly impossible problems. There have also been recent experiments by Barrett (1993), with Dement (1974: 98-102), where she too challenged groups of dreamers to solve problems in their dreams using incubation, with some degree of success. Cf. Packer (2002: 93).

cultural context, namely (i) the belief that dreams bridge the gap between human and divine; (ii) the location of divinities within a specific topography; and (iii) the belief that the gods can be called upon to act. Within these conditions, incubation is a natural step supported by a ritual logic. The Greek practice of incubation in this light becomes a reflection of the culture that surrounded it, one in which the traditional dream was still relevant.

7
Dreams and Status

In many cultures there is a tendency to restrict certain types of dreams to specific people or groups, normally dependent on their social standing. These conceptions create a link between dreams and status, in that only individuals who have attained the requisite position are privileged to receive these dreams. As one would expect, the elements which determine the exact nature of this status, and if status is a notable factor at all, vary according to the surrounding cultural system. For example, in cultures where there is some centralization of power, certain significant dreams are likely to be received only by those who hold the powerful positions within the existing hierarchy. In the monarchies of the ancient Near East, the direct message dreams sent by the gods were normally seen only by the Kings, the 'privileged dreamers' who, because of their special position within society, alone had the honour of receiving such divine visions.[1] In cultural systems where power is not concentrated in the hands of a few but spread among the people, such links between dreams and status are likely to disappear. In, for example, the case of the True Church of God, an evangelical Christian religious group based in western Africa, no-one is excluded from receiving all types of divine dreams on account of their social position, and this is a reflection of the egalitarian nature of the church itself which does not focus all religious power into the hands of priests. The one factor determining the ability to receive dreams in their case is not a status position as such, but one's devoutness – people who attend church the most and follow the bible closely are more likely to be blessed by receiving a dream from God.[2]

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[1] On 'privileged dreamers', see Dodds (1951: 109); cf. Oppenheim (1956: 185-188); Kilborne (1981*a*: 168).
[2] Curley (1983: 20-25).

The situation in classical Greece is difficult to decipher, with the changing systems of rule from the archaic ages through the classical period, as well as the often idiosyncratic nature of rule at each polis, making it impossible to present a uniform picture which could frame the dream perception. Instead of searching for a single, one-dimensional link, I will look at a number of ways in which we find a relationship between dreams and status in the Greek world, and indeed the places where such a relationship is far from straightforward. I begin with an assessment of the presentation of dreams in literature, where there is undoubtedly a bias towards the dreams of powerful individuals which, on the surface, gives the impression of a link comparable with that found in the Near East, and may reflect an attitude relevant to the archaic period, but which ultimately becomes more of a literary motif in the classical age. I then discuss the implicit logic within the relationship, suggesting that in this period certain dreams were not limited to certain dreamers, but rather that it was the dreamers themselves, who were already in status positions, which gave the dreams greater power. I finally look at how dreams could be used within a democracy like that at Athens, in particular the difficulty in using dreams to support and legitimate a position in an arena where people were freer to question your policies.

Beginning with the literature, there is certainly an impression commencing in epic poetry, and continuing through tragedy and historiography, that dreams come to important and powerful people – kings, members of royal households, and generals. One of the key statements in relation to this topic occurs at the opening of Book 2 of the *Iliad*, when Zeus sends the infamous dream figure to Agamemnon which instructs him that now is the time to arm his men and take the city of Troy. Following his dream message Agamemnon gathered his council and informed them exactly what had happened – the fact that he had seen a dream and what it said. In reply, Nestor makes an important statement to the council; he says: 'Had

it been any other Achaean who told of this dream we should have called it a lie and we might rather have ignored it. But as it is he who claims to be the best of the Achaeans has seen it...' (*εἰ μέν τις τὸν ὄνειρον Ἀχαιῶν ἄλλος ἔνισπε ψεῦδός κεν φαῖμεν καὶ νοσφιζοίμεθα μᾶλλον· νῦν δ' ἴδεν ὃς μέγ' ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν εὔχεται εἶναι· ἀλλ' ἄγετ' αἴ κέν πως θωρήξομεν υἷας Ἀχαιῶν*).[3] The rest of the council agree and they leave to arm the men and prepare the expedition. Nestor's statement is important in that he highlights the status of Agamemnon above all else – he is the best of the Achaeans, therefore they can trust what his dream says; any other dreamer would have been ignored. There is a clear indication that the position of Agamemnon, as king, effected the reception of the dream.

Agamemnon is not the last king to initiate a course of action on account of a dream; Pindar records the story of king Pelias, who was visited in dream by the soul of Phrixus, who asked him to bring his soul home, his soul which was linked to the fleece of the ram which he had slain; Pelias used this dream to convince Jason that he must sail to return it.[4] In Herodotus, there is one of the most memorable protracted dream scenes in Greek literature: the Persian king Xerxes is visited repeatedly by a mysterious dream phantom which orders him to invade Greece;[5] Xerxes himself tries to resist the message of the dream, consulting his adviser Artabanus who assures him that it is inconsequential. In this case, Xerxes attempts to persuade Artabanus by having him receive the dream himself – but in order for Artabanus to see the dream messenger he must first dress as the king and sleep in his bed – in other words he has to pretend to be in the position of authority. Dressed as the Persian king, he then does receive the vision, although the dream figure is all too aware of the facade, and threatens to burn out Artabanus' eyes for attempting to turn Xerxes away from the course of events which

[3] Hom *Il.* II.80-82. Cf. Struck (2003: 179), who notes that in turning out to be false, the dream actually undermines his claim to be the 'best' of the Greeks.
[4] Pind. *Pyth.* 4.159-165. In this case, Pelias also claimed to have consulted the oracle at Castalia about his dream: on the relationship between dreams and other divinatory forms, see Chapter 9.
[5] Hdt. VII.12-18. Cf. the dreams of Croesus (I.34); Astyages (I.107, 108); Cyrus (I.209); Sabacos (II.139); Sethos (II.141); Cambyses (III.30); Hippias (IV.107); Hipparchus (V.56): all are kings or tyrants.

has been set. Nonetheless it is still the king, the man in authority, who has the dream which is acted upon.[6]

In later periods it is the great generals and politicians who receive the divine dream visions. There is a story reported by Plutarch that, during the building of the Propylaea of the Acropolis, one of the chief architects lost his footing and fell from a great height; as a consequence Pericles was visited by Athena in a dream, and she prescribed a course of treatment for him to use, and the man soon recovered.[7] Plutarch also records how the Cappadocian satrap Eumenes had seen a dream before a battle against Craterus in 321BC: he thought he saw two Alexanders ready to engage, each commanding his separate phalanx, the one assisted by Athena, the other by Demeter; and that after a hot dispute, he on whose side Athena was, was beaten, and Demeter, gathering ears of corn, wove them into a crown for the victor. Eumenes interpreted this as in his favour for he was fighting for a fruitful country, which was at that very time covered with the young ears of corn; he also realised that his enemy's password was Athena and Alexander.[8] According to Diodorus, Thrasybulus, the general in charge of the Athenians, had an ominous dream the night before he engaged with the Spartan fleet under Callicratidas off the Arginusae islands late in the 5th century BC: he dreamt he was in Athens in the theatre, and he and six of the other generals were playing the *Phoenician Women* of Euripides, while their opponents were playing the *Suppliants*; it resulted in a 'Cadmean victory' for them, and they all died, just like those who had fought against Thebes.[9]

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[6] One should note that in the case of Herodotus, and other historiographers, there is the question of his sources. In dream episodes the characters are largely foreign kings, and it is possible that the stories reflect the conventions of his (eastern) sources, rather than his Hellenic perspective. See De Jong (2006 : 11), on Cambyses' dream; she instead argues that it comes purely from the imagination of Herodotus, and is not dependent on any eastern source material.

[7] Plut. *Per.* 13.8, with Stadter (1989).

[8] Plut. *Eum.* 6; on Plutarch's use of sources in his *Eumenes*, see J.Hornblower (1981: 61*ff*).

[9] Diod. 13.97.6.

These are but a sample of the various dreamers we find in literature, but they are representative of the general pattern – the dreamers are kings, or at least members of the royal household, and people of political or military significance.[10]

Part of the explanation for this lies in the concerns of the narrative; it is natural that we predominantly find only kings and members of the royal household and influential people dreaming, because these are the people who feature in the texts anyway. Homer, Herodotus, and the tragedians are not concerned with common people, but with the major characters of legend and history. Minor characters do not experience dream episodes, because the consequences of their dreams would add little to the overall narrative. There is an extent to which these dreams within the literature are a motif – the significant divine dream which can appear to a powerful individual and guide them towards a course of action. This stylistic presentation of the dream experience was so entrenched that it is parodied by Aristophanes in his *Frogs*. A lowly spinning girl has an ominous dream (the details of which are not given); following her dream she attempts to wash it off, but she is then distraught to find that her dream has been fulfilled, because Glyce, the slave, has run off with her rooster.[11] The source of the comedy to the audience is in the status of the dreamer: here we have a lowly spinning girl bemoaning her overtly ominous dream about a stolen rooster – it is the histrionic way in which the, in truth, pointless dream is presented.

There is also evidence of people including themselves in this pattern that literature had established: if it is the great kings of the past whose lives have been shaped by gods visiting in dreams, then one can implicitly associate oneself with them by having dreams

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[10] Possible exceptions could be the dream vision of Polycrates' daughter, which predicts his death, and of Pericles' mother Agariste, of giving birth to a lion, both in Herodotus (3.124 and 6.131.2); but both are linked to powerful households, and one could argue that the content of the dreams is relevant more to the status of the important male figures than the women themselves.

[11] Ar. *Ran.* 1329*ff*. He is parodying in particular Euripidean tragic monodies, and Euripides' claim to have put ordinary people on the stage; cf. *ibid* 948-961, with Dover (1993: 358).

oneself. Xenophon, in his autobiographical *Anabasis*, includes his own divine guidance. When he was undecided over whether to take on the leadership of the Greek troops, he saw a dream in which there was thunder, and from the thunder a bolt of lightning struck his ancestral home and set it on fire. In some respects he thought the dream was auspicious, because in his current state of confusion he had seen a light from Zeus, but in other respects it seemed inauspicious because the dream seemed to be sent from Zeus Basileus, the King, and with the fire in the dream blazing all around him he thought it could signal that he would not be able to escape the land of the kings, i.e. Persia. Ultimately, though, he took the dream as favourable, and as a consequence of it assumed the leadership of the Greek forces.[12] In doing so, and in being guided by this dream, Xenophon was also including himself within a literary genre.

The same is probably true of a dedication set up to Athene at Delphi, part of a series of nine statues dedicated by Daochus of Pharsalus, an *hieromnemon* and archon, celebrating the illustrious achievements of his family:

οὐκ ἔψευσέ σε Παλλὰς ἐν ὕπνωι, Δαόχου υἱὲ
Σίσυφε, ἃ δ'εἶπε σαφῆ θῆκεν ὑποσχεσίαν·
ἐξ οὗ γὰρ τὸ πρῶτον ἔδυς πέρι τεύχεα χρωτί,
οὔτ' ἔφυγες δήιους οὔτε τι τραῦμ' ἔλαβες. [13]

'Pallas did not trick you in a dream, Sisyphus
son of Daochus, but made what she said into a dependable promise;
for ever since you first put armour around your flesh,
neither did you flee from the enemy nor receive a wound'

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[12] Xen. *Anab.* 3.1.11*ff.* Cf. Xenophon's recording of Cyrus' dream, which predicted that the king's death was imminent: *Cyrop.* 8.7.2.

[13] *Syll.*[3] 274, 7 = *CEG* (2) 795. This series of inscriptions has been much studied: see in particular Homolle *BCH* 21 (1897: 592-598) and *BCH* 23 (1899: 421-485); G.Colin *Fouilles de Delphes III.*4.460; Longo (1969) No. 68; W.E. Sweet (1999) 21.4-5; Jacquemin (1999: 51-52); C.Löhr *Familienweihungen* (2000) no.139. For photographs: Pouilloux (1960: pl. 33-38). For further bibliography: *CEG* (2) 795; Jacquemin (1999: 52).

This dedication was made on a grey limestone base, which would have supported a large statue above of Sisyphus himself, although only fragments of most of the statues in the series remain. It is number six in a row of eight inscriptions (this one carved over two blocks), set up by Daochus II probably during his time on the amphictionic council, circa 337/336 to 333/2. Daochus, as noted, had set these statues up as a memorial to the achievements of his family, starting from his ancestor Acnonios, Thessalian tetrarch of c.500BC, through the victories at the Panhellenic games by Agias, Telemachos, and Agelaos, the archonship of Daochus I, the bravery and military strength of Sisyphus, his own time as hieromnemon, and brief mention of his son, Sisyphus II. Sisyphus, son of Daochus I, was probably born in c.440, and active from the 5th century (Daochus I, according to the inscription, held his archonship at Thessaly for 27 years, thus approximately 440-413). There is no mention of him having held any political office, and his principal achievement seems to have been his prowess in military combat, supported by a promise made by Athena. Daochus II set up his monument at the sanctuary of Apollo, in what was probably the treasury house of the Thessalians; the exact nature of the large building is not known, and it is not even clear that it had a roof, but the presence of other Thessalian objects in the vicinity suggest it was a general enclosure for their dedications.[14] That should not, however, take away from the scale of this particular dedication, surely the most splendid made at Delphi by any Thessalian.[15] It was of such scale that it would have filled the entire back end of the large room. It is undoubtedly little coincidence that this building is located a short distance West from the sanctuary of Neoptolemus, the Thessalian hero; it seems clear that Daochus was magnifying the glory of his family through locating his monument in the context of the legendary traditions of the Thessalians, yet it was also an exhibition of familial accomplishments and

[14] For detailed analysis, see Pouilloux (1960: 67-80; with plans 11 and 12, and pl. 33-38).
[15] They were potentially modelled on a group of statues carved by the famous sculptor Lysippus, found at Pharsalus itself (=Jacquemin (1999) no. 611).

glory, part of which was the receiving of a dream: 'Pallas did not trick you in a dream, Sisyphus son of Daochus, but made what she said into a dependable promise'. Of course, the main thrust of his praise is Sisyphus' prowess in combat, something which was promised to him in the dream by Athena. But it is still a matter of importance that this strength was divinely sanctioned. There was some kudos in having a divine visitation, and a dream was one of the most personal modes through which this could take place. By including mention of the dream within the inscription, Daochus is placing Sisyphus in line along the other heroes and generals who had been guided by dream visions in the past.

Therefore the explanation for the apparent prevalence of privileged dreamers in Greek literature is in part the narratives themselves and their focus on powerful characters, and the development from this of the motif of the significant divine dream appearing to kings and generals at important moments. In such contexts one had to be privileged to see these dreams, and as we have seen people could locate themselves within this tradition to magnify implicitly their own personal relationship with the gods.

Keeping this literary angle in mind, it is now necessary to dig deeper and to try to uncover whether there were any underlying conceptions upon which these presentations were based. The interesting thing is that we know, from the inscriptional evidence of dedications that we explored in Chapter 5, that ordinary people could also receive divine dreams, dreams in which instructions were given as messages. One could add Aristotle's criticism that dreams cannot be divine, because they occur to random subjects, and not to the most intelligent.[16] Therefore in this sense the normal Greek was not debarred from the world of divine dreams, and there was no perception that, as in the East, such dream types were only relevant for the privileged kings and priests. Therefore the privileged dream in the sense that Dodds

[16] Arist. *Div. Somn.* 464a20-22.

understood it was not present in Greece. However, there are indications that even if the dreams themselves were not limited to certain individuals, the reception and credibility of such dreams did vary according to status. Dreams were understood to follow a logical pattern whereby it was, for example, generals who saw dreams which concerned military decisions, because generals were always active within the military sphere anyway; a person unrelated to such matters would not be accepted as having seen a dream with such consequences.

This attitude is implicit in Aristophanes' *Wasps*, where two slaves, Sosias and Xanthias, compare the dreams they have just had. One of them, Sosias, believes his bizarre dream is of importance to the entire state: *ἔδοξέ μοι περὶ πρῶτον ὕπνον ἐν τῇ πυκνὶ ἐκκλησιάζειν πρόβατα συγκαθήμενα, βακτηρίας ἔχοντα καὶ τριβώνια· κἄπειτα τούτοις τοῖς προβάτοισι μοὐδόκει δημηγορεῖν φάλαινα πανδοκεύτρια, ἔχουσα φωνὴν ἐμπεπρησμένης ὑός* (31-36). This whale was also holding a pair of scales, in which it was weighing beef fat;[17] and next to the whale was sitting Theorus (one of Cleon's lackeys), who had the head of a crow. Alcibiades, in the dream, said to Sosias: 'Look, do you see? Theorus has the head of a crow' (*ὁλᾷς; Θέωλος τὴν κεφαλὴν κόλακος ἔχει*). Sosias thought it was ominous to see Theorus with the head of a crow, but Xanthias explained that it was a good sign, for it implied that he was going to leave and 'go to the crows'.[18] Therefore in this instance a humble slave had a dream in which he foresaw the exit of a politician. A dream of this kind can be used in comedy for comic effect, but in reality a slave who had such a dream could not expect anyone except his fellow slave to pay any attention to it. It is out of his scope of normal action to dream of political manoeuvres, and for such dreams to have any real consequence.

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[17] A pun on dividing the people: the passage is one of many by Aristophanes intended to attack Cleon, an enemy of his who had tried to prosecute him: see Sommerstein (1983).

[18] Ar. *Vesp.* 14-54; trans. by Sommerstein (1983). Note that Sommerstein changes the Greek from 'crow' to 'toad', in order to fit his joke. Artemidorus *On.* 1.37 noted much later that a dream of 'seeing oneself with a bird's head' signified that you would not 'remain in your own country'.

This underlying theory was made explicit in the second century AD by Artemidorus. In making direct reference himself to the above mentioned quote about Agamemnon as the 'best of the Achaeans', he explains: 'if any common Achaean soldier had mentioned the dream, we would have thought, not that the speaker was a liar, but rather that the dream itself was a lie and would not come true for us' (*Εἰ μέν τις τὸν ὄνειρον Ἀχαιῶν ἰδιώτης ἔλεγεν· οὐχὶ ψεύδεσθαι ἂν τὸν λέγοντα ἡγούμεθα, ἀλλὰ ψευδῆ εἶναι τὸν ὄνειρον αὐτόν, καὶ ἡμῖν οὐκ ἀποβησόμενον*). Therefore it is not that common people cannot dream of important events, just that these dreams are false, because the common man could not truly comprehend such matters. His logic is a simple one: only important people have important dreams because it is only they whose minds are concerned with such things in reality. Artemidorus comments that, 'it is impossible for an unimportant man to receive a vision of great affairs beyond his capacity ... For these men [kings, magistrates, and the nobility] have reflected about public affairs and are able to receive a vision about them, not as private citizens to whom only small matters have been entrusted' (*Τὸ ... παρὰ δύναμιν ἀναδέξασθαι μικρὸν ὄντα μεγάλων πραγμάτων θέαν, ἀδύνατον ... Τούτοις γὰρ καὶ πεφρόντισται τὰ κοινά, καὶ τὴν ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ὄψιν ἀναδέξασθαι δύνανται, οὐχ' ὡς ἰδιῶται μικρὰ πεπιστευμένοι*). The only person who can see a dream which has relevance for the entire state is, 'one of the generals or a man who held some other office, or a priest, or a prophet of the city' (*τις εἴη τῶν στρατηγῶν ἢ ἄλλην ἀρχὴν ἐχόντων, ἢ ἱερεύς, ἢ μάντις τῆς πόλεως*).[19] He argued that although it is possible for an unimportant man to see a vision of great affairs, such visions will never come to pass; these are false dreams, not to be believed by others. The consequences of such dreams are beyond his capacity because of his unimportant role in normal life; kings and magistrates have reflected about public affairs and are therefore able to receive true visions about them, and others likewise should pay attention to such dreams for they have consequences.

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[19] Artem. *On.* I.2. This theory was also picked up by Ovid *Met.* 11.644-645, and Macrobius *In Somn.* 1.3.15.

One of the principal reasons that authority matters is because people in positions of power and influence have the potential to have dreams which are equally powerful and influential. Xerxes could have dreams relevant to an invasion of Greece, but a cobbler like Dionysius was only perceived as having the ability to see reliable dreams within the limited scope of his family and business – it is unlikely that anyone would listen if he came forward with dreams relevant to Athenian politics. The reception of the dream was determinant on its content relative to the status of the dreamer.

There is also a definite sense in which the supposed status of the dream was predicated on the positions of trust which the dreamer already had. Dreams are devoid of any proofs beyond the word of the dreamer; therefore it seems natural that those people who already had a level of responsibility would also have dreams which seem of more consequence to others. At a basic level, it is the difference between listening to the dream of the average man in the street, and listening to the dream of your general – if you trust the advice and orders of the general already, then the dreams he announces would logically seem of more significance. In the same way that Artemidorus explains how the content of dreams is related to the role the dreamer plays in waking life, there is clearly a sense that the status of the dreamer affects the reception of his dream if reported upon awakening. Therefore in the East, where the power for decision making is already concentrated in the hands of a few, the kings and the powerful priests, it is more understandable that their dreams would seem of consequence, for it is they who take responsibility for all decision making, and the people follow their instructions as a matter of course. Within their cultural system, where they are expected to obey without question, a course of action determined by a divine dream is a logical extension of their existing power. Since divine dreams are already considered significant within the culture, and as these dreams are privileged to the ruling elite who already have the power to act, then it becomes automatic that their dreams would be valid in

making decisions relative to the country and the people. The populace was expected to obey the king regardless, therefore his dreams are of more consequence to them.

In the archaic age, when it was the kings who ruled the Greek states, a similar logic probably also applied; hence Agamemnon, the 'best' of the Greeks who had a position of authority anyway, had a significant dream which the council listened to and ultimately followed. And in similar cultural systems, one would expect a similar understanding. We can see this being manipulated by the tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse, who was the figure of supreme authority within a system of one-man rulership. Apparently the tyrant needed to collect some money, so he called together an assembly and declared that Demeter had appeared to him and bade him to bring the ornaments of the women to her temple. He claimed that he had already done so with the jewellery of the women of his own household, and he demanded that everyone else should do the same. Of course, once the items had all been deposited at the temple, he then appropriated them for himself.[20] The story is not designed to bring out the best in Dionysius, but nevertheless the logic behind it follows the same straightforward pattern: a person already in a position of authority has a dream, and therefore the consequences of this dream are automatically of more importance because of his pre-existing power.

However, as we move from epic and the tales of legendary kings and warring royal families towards the reality of the classical age, and the age of democracy, the relationship between the dream and status gains a different focus; for in democracy, the word of one man is not final, therefore the personal dream loses something of its power. It is not natural within a democratic culture to announce your dream and expect people to listen and follow, for in all other aspects of policy people are taught to debate and ask questions; therefore we no longer

[20] Ps. Arist. *Oik.* 1349a 14*ff.*

find the same direct relationship between dreams and status that is characteristic of cultures with one-man rule.

That does not prevent evidence appearing of dreams being used in public contexts by politicians. Demosthenes apparently brought up a dream of a priestess in Sicily to the assembly, for Aeschines accused Demosthenes in his *On the Embassy* of having made a speech in which he compared him to Dionysius, the tyrant of Sicily we have just seen, and also related a dream of the priestess in Sicily to the audience.[21] No word on the content of this dream is given, and it should be noted that Demosthenes makes no mention of this (nor indeed his comparison of Aeschines and Dionysius) in his own record of his speech. The implication of this is that Aeschines was raising the matter to deride Demosthenes, while Demosthenes himself has chosen to pass over the episode in his own account to avoid a similar reception from other people. In this case, it is perhaps significant that Demosthenes is using the dream of a priestess; although references to the dreams of religious professionals are not common, it is likely that their dreams were also thought to be more trustworthy because they already had an established connection with the gods.[22] Their status derived from this special relationship.

Yet is also seems that Demosthenes brought up his own dreams during his speeches, for Aeschines makes further accusations against him. He claimed that Demosthenes, when informed through scouts of Charidemus that Philip was dead, before anyone else had received the news, 'made up a dream for himself and lied about the gods' (*τῶν μὲν θεῶν συμπλάσας ἑαυτῷ ἐνύπνιον κατεψεύσατο*), pretending that he had received the news, not from Charidemus, but from Zeus and Athena, 'the gods who talk to him during the night, so he

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[21] Aeschin. *On the Emb*. 2.10.

[22] See for example Plut. *Tim*. 8, repeated in Diod. 16.66.4. As we saw in Chapter 5 on dedications, we sometimes see women being elected to a priesthood on account of a dream. We do not see in Greece the same special relationship between priests and dreams that is found in some other cultures, for example in Africa where priests often use their dreams to legitimize their message: Curley (1983: 21).

says, and tell him of the future' (*νύκτωρ φησὶν ἑαυτῷ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα ἔσεσθαι προλέγειν*).[23] But it should be underlined that Aeschines raises Demosthenes' dreams for the sole purpose of discrediting and embarrassing him, while again Demosthenes makes no record of these dreams himself. That should tell us that, although dreams could be used in the political arena, they did not always assume the same gravitas as arguments based on logic or evidence.

Aristophanes during the *Knights* may well parody another use of the dream in the assembly, this time by Cleon: the Sausage-seller accuses Paphlagon, i.e. Cleon, of making up dreams to deceive the people – 'you know all this', he says, 'and that's why you deceive him (Demos), and trot out dreams about him' (*ἃ σὺ γιγνώσκων τόνδ' ἐξαπατᾷς καὶ ὀνειροπολεῖς περὶ σαυτοῦ*).[24] Cleon may well have proposed a dream in the assembly, the content of which was designed to lead them to believe that his policies would be successful. Such an appeal to dreams is probably referred to later in the *Knights*, when Paphlagon announces to Demos that he has seen a dream: 'I saw our Goddess herself pouring health-and-wealth over the Demos with a bath-man's handle' (*καί μοὐδόκει ἡ θεὸς αὐτὴ τοῦ δήμου καταχεῖν ἁρυταίνῃ πλουθυγίειαν*). In reply, the Sausage-Seller says he has seen a dream too, only he saw: 'our Goddess herself come out of the Acropolis, an owl perched on her helmet; then with a decanter she poured over your [Demos'] head a libation of ambrosia, and over his [Paphlagon's] one of garlic-brine' (*μοὐδόκει ἡ θεὸς αὐτὴ ἐκ πόλεως ἐλθεῖν καὶ γλαῦξ αὐτῇ 'πικαθῆσθαι· εἶτα κατασπένδειν κατὰ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἁρυβάλλῳ ἀμβροσίαν κατὰ σοῦ, κατὰ τούτου δὲ σκοροδάλμην*).[25] And thus he undermines Paphlagon's attempts to sway the people through announcing his auspicious dream. The implication again is that dreams do not have the same

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[23] Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 77*ff*; cf. 219 *ff*, when he again brings up the dream, although this time he mentions the gods Athena and Hera.
[24] Ar. *Eq.* 809, with Sommerstein (1981).
[25] Ar. *Eq.* 1090-1095, with Sommerstein (1981).

direct significance within a democratic system as they can do within a monarchical or tyrannical one; they are only a marginally viable persuasive device. That did not prevent politicians who felt they had sufficient standing from publicising their dreams in the expectancy that their supporters would listen, yet Demosthenes' silence surely illustrates that away from the crowds it seemed questionable to use your own dreams in argumentation.

It is worth confirming that the dreams discussed so far are spontaneous, unsought dreams. There perhaps remained a place for dreams in the political workings of the state when there was a consultation of one of the fixed and traditional dream oracles.

Regular dream consultations did take place, for instance, at the temple of (Ino-) Pasiphaë at Thalamae in Laconia, by the ephors, who dreamt to get information from the goddess.[26] It does seem that the shrine was specific to the ephors, and therefore one presumes that the consultation was quasi-official; this is certainly the impression given by Cicero, who lists the oracle alongside Delphi, Dodona, and Jupiter Hammon as one which is consulted by the rulers on state matters.[27] In an episode recorded in Plutarch's *Life of Cleomenes*, shaped as it is by the literary concerns of the author, he does note that at the time when Cleomenes was plotting to disband the ephorate and restore old-fashioned Spartan equality through a division of land, an ephor fell asleep in the temple and experienced a dream vision and heard a voice; the vision was of the ephors' chairs – where once stood five only one remains, and the voice told him that this would be good for Sparta. This information was relayed to Cleomenes, who initially distrusted the dream report, thinking that the ephor suspected what he was planning, but it eventually encouraged him in his action. Therefore in this case even in

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[26] See too pp.196-197, above.
[27] Cic. *De div.* 1.43. Cf. *IG* V, 1, 1317, with Prakken (1953); Chrimes (1949: 140-141): evidence of an ephor setting up a dedication on account of a dream instruction from Pasiphaë; thus it is further evidence of consultation by the ephors, but without a political context in this instance.

an official context we can see the problems associated with dreams in political matters - the fact that Cleomenes doubts it because he has only the ephor's word on the matter; and also note that Cleomenes does not use this dream himself in any of his argumentation for the change in policy and the removal of the office.[28] That is not the case during Agis and Lycurgus' attempts to push through laws to restore equality within the Spartan state, which had been lost following Epitadeus' reform that allowed estates to be bequeathed to anyone. As the ephor, Lycurgus, is urging the assembly to follow him, he actually appeals to them to heed the recent oracles delivered by Pasiphaë, which apparently ordained that all the Spartans should live equally as according to the original law. Therefore in this instance we see the ephors appealing to the pronouncements of Pasiphaë directly on a matter of state policy. But such appeals were of relevance because of the close relationship between the ephors and the oracle which would already have been familiar to the assembly; and, of course, because the ephors already held status positions within the Spartan political system.[29] Therefore the dreams in this context can have more relevance in the politics of the state, but this is perhaps a special case because of the status of the consulters, and the political system in which the oracle was functioning.[30]

The limitations of dreams, which were a medium without any proofs and which relied solely on the word of the dreamer for their impact, could still cause problems within democratic systems even when official dream oracles were consulted. These limitations are highlighted by the unfortunate case of Euxenippus, who was mandated to dream on a matter of the state. In the 4th century the great Attic orator Hyperides made a speech in defence of

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[28] Dream in Plut. *Cleo.* 7; in chapter 10 Cleomenes makes his speech to the people in which he does not appeal to the ephor's dream for support.

[29] The ephorate was one of the main decision making bodies of Sparta, alongside the gerousia and the Kings. For more on ephors in the Spartan constitution, see Cartledge (2001: 57-61, with bibliography); MacDowell (1986: 123*ff*) on their judicial functions; and in general Lipka (2002).

[30] See also possibly Paus. II.32.6, where Pan λυτήριος showed the magistrates dreams which supplied the cure for a local epidemic in Troezen; however this seems to have been a one off exceptional event (to prevent a plague), rather than a regular process.

Euxenippus; this Euxenippus, a wealthy Athenian, probably a mine-owner, was sent with two other men to sleep in the temple at Oropus, to settle a land dispute; a mountain had been allotted to two tribes – the Hippothontis and the Acamantis – but suspicion had arisen that this mountain was in fact sacred to Amphiaraus. Having slept in the temple, he reported that he had seen a dream which pointed in favour of the two tribes; they could keep their mountain. Unfortunately for Euxenippus, he was subsequently impeached, facing accusations that he had been bribed by the two tribes to report in their favour, and made up his dream.[31]

Dreams were therefore linked with status, but not in such a direct way as in the ancient Near East, where privileged dreamers had special access to the gods through their dreams. In the literature it is predominantly powerful people in positions of authority, those linked to royal households or generals, who see divine dreams, but part of this can be explained by the bias of literature towards the more significant characters, and the conventions of presentation which created a motif whereby the divine dream came to guide such figures at important moments. Looking deeper beneath the literary frames of these episodes, they are based on an accepted logic, one which we also find clarified later by Artemidorus: people in power could have the important dreams because they were already in this position of authority, and therefore capable of making decisions on policy or whether to invade and so on. They had an audience ready to listen. The inscriptions illustrate that divine dreams were not limited to certain types of people; therefore there were not privileged dreamers, but rather the content of dreams was determined by the status of the dreamer. The reception of a Greek's dream was determined by their position in waking reality, and the content of the dream relative to this position. The situation is further complicated in Greece

[31] Hyp. *Eux.* 4.3-15. It is interesting that Hyperides, arguing in his defence, states that if there had been any doubt about his report they should first have sent to Delphi: we see the authority of Delphi taking precedence over that of a dream.

by the different political systems, in particular the spread of democracy in the fifth century. Democracy took power out of the hands of individuals, and created an arena of debate in which the audience was not as willing to listen and obey unquestioningly as in a single-ruler system. Within this political frame, dreams no longer had such efficacy, for the personal nature of their appearance prevented them from being open to verification. Dreams might still have had a role for people who had some influence, for we have evidence that figures such as Demosthenes and Cleon had announced their dreams in public – they would not have done so had they expected to be universally derided. But nevertheless, the fact that we find no record of Demosthenes recording his own public uses of dreams, and the intention of Aeschines to mock him, along with the Aristophanic parodies of Cleon, suggest that within a democratic system such as Athens dreams could only ever have had a marginal effect in political debates. Even in the more official consultations of dream oracles, there was still some suspicion that the content of dreams could be manipulated for personal ends.

8
Dreams and Gender

ἱερὰ καὶ θεοὺς οὐ ῥᾴδιον ἱδρύεσθαι, μεγάλης δὲ διανοίας τινὸς ὀρθῶς δρᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον, ἔθος τε γυναιξί τε δὴ διαφερόντως πάσαις καὶ τοῖς ἀσθενοῦσι πάντῃ καὶ κινδυνεύουσι καὶ ἀποροῦσιν, ὅπῃ τις ἂν ἀπορῇ, καὶ τοὐναντίον ὅταν εὐπορίας τινὸς λάβωνται, καθιεροῦν τε τὸ παρὸν ἀεὶ καὶ θυσίας εὔχεσθαι καὶ ἱδρύσεις ὑπισχνεῖσθαι θεοῖς καὶ δαίμοσιν καὶ παισὶν θεῶν, ἔν τε φάσμασιν ἐγρηγορότας διὰ φόβους καὶ ἐν ὀνείροις ... βωμοὺς καὶ ἱερὰ πάσας μὲν οἰκίας

'It is customary for all women especially, and for sick folk everywhere, and those in peril or in distress (whatever the nature of the distress) ... to dedicate whatever happens to be at hand at the moment, and to vow sacrifices and promise the founding of shrines to gods and demi-gods and children of gods; and through terrors caused by waking visions or by dreams ... they are wont to found altars and shrines...'.[1]

We know that two thirds of Plato's statement is true: those in sickness and in danger or distress are frequent dedicators at the various incubatory sanctuaries, and the topic of health was one of the concerns noted during the discussion of dedications from spontaneous dreams. Yet it is the third part, the 'women', who form the focus of this chapter. Plato's comment raises an interesting topic: did women have a special relationship with dreams, and were they thought more likely to take them seriously than men?[2] The evidence for a special connection is found principally in the literature,

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[1] Plato *Laws* 909e-910a. Trans. Bury (Loeb, 1967-8).

[2] It should be underlined from the start that women were not considered biologically more likely to see dreams – there is never any mention in the ancient texts on dream theories that women's minds might have been more susceptible. The nearest parallels might be a belief that, because of their anatomy, women were more prone to types of hysteria (see Hipp. *Diseases of Women* II.123, 126); or in general that women were associated with the irrational and madness: Zeitlin (1990); McClure (1999: 262); cf. Versnel (1990: 121n.101), on women as morally weaker and therefore more susceptible to possession and temptation. Contrast with the situation in nineteenth century England, where links were made between female physiological weakness and menstruation and their dreams, which at the time were associated with mental or physical disturbance: Perkins (2004: 129*ff*).

and in particular it has frequently been noted that there is a shift from male dreamers in the *Iliad*, to female dreamers in the *Odyssey* and tragedy. This is a fact which, from the evidence we have, cannot be argued against: women dominate the dream scenes in the *Odyssey* and in tragedy, whereas in all other genres it is either the male dreamers who are more frequent, or at least of equal number. It would seem on the surface, therefore, to be a simple matter of genre – that the women's dreams served a specific literary purpose within these works that was not present elsewhere. This, to a certain extent, must be true, and I will address the potentialities for the female dream scene. Yet I do not think that this is just a straightforward question of genre; the female roles in tragedy were written by men, played on the stage by men, and performed before a predominantly male audience.[3] It is possible that men in Greece thought that women were likely to take their dreams more seriously than themselves. The literary evidence is too often judged in isolation, and it is remiss not to include an examination of the inscriptional evidence; Plato's comment, after all, was focused on dedications rather than texts. I will illustrate that the frequency of inscriptions set up by women on account of dreams is higher than one would expect in comparison with other dedicatory types, and that it is possible that Plato's comments reflected a general sentiment in contemporary society – that it was women who were more likely to act on their dreams. The arguments for genre can be fused with the inscriptional evidence to form a cohesive picture of the conception of women's dreams. The reason, ultimately, that we find so many female dreamers in tragedy is because of the relocation of the sphere of action to the household and to familial relationships,

[3] Whether or not women were in the tragic audience is a matter of some debate; if they were there, they cannot have been so in great numbers. The recent trend is to accept at least some female presence: Winkler (1990*b*: 39n.58); Henderson (1991) and (1996: 16); Foley (2001: 3n.1); Syropoulos (2003: 7). But important counter-arguments come from Goldhill (1994), with general discussions in Podlecki (1990); whatever the number of women, I think it is right to assume that it was still performed before a 'notional audience of men' (Henderson: 1991); McClure (1999: 5n.10).

whereas most other genres of literature, from historiography to biography, are concerned with war, politics, and central male characters. But this presentation in tragedy still reveals an implicit truth: that women in reality could have taken their dreams more seriously for the very reason that their sphere of action was so limited to within the household, because dreams could provide them with a voice, a stimulus to action or an interaction, which was of more importance to them given their otherwise very restricted role in contemporary society.

It is worth reiterating from the start the difficulties of using the genre of tragedy for drawing conclusions about the lives of women existing in reality in Greek society. The women represented on the stage are of high birth and noble families, and some are even foreign, while of course the tragic authors themselves were more concerned with Athenian values than with Greek; thus any conclusions will be narrow and shaped by these constraints.[4]

The first evidence to examine is the frequency of women dreamers in literature, which really begins with a shift in the sex of the dreamers from the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*, from an absence of women dreamers in the former to their predominance in the latter. The switch itself is certainly undeniable. In the *Iliad*, dreams come to Agamemnon, Eurydamas, Achilles, and possibly Rhesus.[5] In the *Odyssey*, our dreamers are Penelope (three times) and Nausicaa. There is also the 'dream' of Odysseus, as described by himself in a fiction told to Eumaios. This arguably does not

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[4] Pomeroy (1975: x, 112): she argues that Sophocles and Aeschylus were more unrealistic than Euripides. Cf. McClure (1999: 5); Foley (6n.12, 7).

[5] But definitely not Priam at *Il.* XXIV.677-690. The Rhesus episode, *Il.* X.495-497, is usually interpreted as a dream, eg. Lévy (1982: 25); Messer (1918: 9); Devereux (1976: 172n.3). However the passage is ambiguous, and it could simply be a dream metaphor: see Hainsworth's commentary (1993: 201-202). Nonetheless, the episode itself is still centred upon a male character.

count, because it is not 'real' (at least not relative to the other dreams as reported), and it also seems to be a deliberate echo of the false dream to Agamemnon.[6] Thus it is true that we have a direct opposition between male and female dreamers, albeit with a far from overwhelming body of evidence. The more important question is whether this is a mere coincidence of context, or whether this shift to female dreamers marks a definite change in conception.

The argument for coincidence is as follows: male characters dominate the *Iliad* – it is an account of wars fought by Kings, heroes, and men. Mortal women are given often only fleeting mention, as wives, mothers, daughters, mistresses; rarely as independent characters in their own right. For us not to hear of a woman's dream is natural, for we barely hear from women at all. In the *Odyssey* the situation alters because the nature of the narrative has shifted, and the demands of the poem allow women to feature in prominent roles as they would never have done in the *Iliad*. That Penelope dreams three times is not strange, for she is one of the central characters. The coincidence is purely one that reflects a general difference between the two poems.[7]

Yet it is not that straightforward. While it must be conceded that women do not feature greatly in the *Iliad*, it is certainly not true that men are absent from the *Odyssey*. Odysseus and Telemachus could hardly be considered as peripheral players. Perhaps, it might be contested, they do not dream because the narrative never demands it, and a situation simply never arises wherein a dream scene would be warranted for them. Interestingly, this is quite wrong. There are clear moments in the narrative where a dream would be suitable, and the scenario actually mimics many of

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[6] Hom. *Od.* XIV.495 = *Il.* II.56.
[7] As argued by Kessels (1978: 113).

the traditional 'dream scene' features. When Athena visits Odysseus as he is lying on the ground unable to sleep in turmoil over whether to kill the suitors, she assumes the form of a young woman, comes and stands over his head, and then delivers her message with an initial reproach, this time for being awake rather than the usual reproach for sleeping.[8] Compare also the visit paid by Athena to Telemachus in Lacedaemon while he is lying under the portico of Menelaus with Nestor's son (who is asleep). Again, Athena comes and stands near him before delivering her message.[9] These two scenes could quite easily have been dream scenes, but the men remain definitely awake.[10] There are some possible explanations for this: it could reflect a desire for variation - perhaps there are enough dream scenes already (but then there are plenty of waking visions too). Alternatively it might be that the characteristics of the dream scene have become so stereotyped that the poet feels free to play with them a little, adding touches of them to these night vision scenes just to create a similar atmosphere to the dream episodes. Both theories are plausible, but we cannot be certain; it has been argued that the poet was deliberately preventing his male characters from dreaming. Lévy states: 'l'auteur s'est refusé à laisser rêver Ulysse ou Télémaque'.[11] This is strong language; he suggests that there is a conscious refusal by the poet to allow either of these two male characters to dream. To propose such a rigorous design is, however, too severe. After all, in the *Iliad* Priam is visited during the night by Hermes in a scene that bears all the hallmarks of a dream: Priam is lying down, Hermes stands over his head, and then delivers his message with an initial

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[8] Hom. *Od.* XX.32-34.
[9] Hom. *Od.* XV.1-9.
[10] Morris (1983: 39n.1) includes both in his analysis of Homeric 'dream scenes'. Cf. Dawe (1993: 559) on the Telemachus episode: 'Athene could equally well have discharged her task by appearing to Telemachos in a dream'.
[11] Lévy (1982: 24).

rebuke.[12] Yet here too Priam is awake. The 'non-dream' scene is therefore not specific to the *Odyssey*, and one should be careful about according it too much importance in the overall argument, which still holds true: that we find male dreamers in the *Iliad*, female in the *Odyssey*.

If there is more to this switch than coincidence, then one must look to supporting evidence from elsewhere, and this evidence comes from tragedy. It has long been noticed that in Greek tragedy dreams occur principally to women.[13] This is an observation which cannot really be disputed based on the evidence we have. There are protracted dream scenes for the Persian Queen (Atossa), Io, Clytemnestra, the Erinyes, Iphigenia and Hecuba. Male dreamers, on the other hand, are few and far between. The only male character to have an explicit dream episode is a charioteer in Euripides' *Rhesus* (which is the tragedy where one might expect an exception, given that it is often thought not to have been written by Euripides at all). The charioteer explains how his comrades were slain, when they fell asleep too easily, without having set up a watch. He remarks that as he slept, he saw a dream in which the horses he used to drive had wolves on their backs, and these wolves were lashing the horses with their tails and driving them on, breathing with fury and striving to unseat their riders. When he jumped up awake in terror, he found the men around him were dead.[14] This could well be accounted for by the reference to a (possible) dream of Rhesus in the *Iliad*: as Rhesus is approached by Diomedes and Odysseus in the night, Homer tells us, 'But when the son of Tydeus came to the king, and this was the thirteenth man, he stripped the sweetness of life from him as he lay heavily breathing

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[12] Hom. *Il.* XXIV.677-688. This scene is so dreamlike it may actually be a dream, although lines 689-691 seem to imply he was awake. Kessels (1978: 39-40) remained undecided on the matter; against it being a dream see Messer (1918: 22); Richardson (1993: 347).
[13] Messer (1918: 65, 84, 93); Mikalson (1991: 103n.12); Hall (1996: 123).
[14] Eur. *Rhe.* 780*ff.*

– since a bad dream stood by his head in the night – no dream, but Oineus' son, by device of Athene' (*ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ βασιλῆα κιχήσατο Τυδέος υἱός, τὸν τρισκαιδέκατον μελιηδέα θυμὸν ἀπηύρα ἀσθμαίνοντα· κακὸν γὰρ ὄναρ κεφαλῆφιν ἐπέστη τὴν νύκτ' Οἰνεΐδαο πάϊς διὰ μῆτιν Ἀθήνης*).[15] Thus it could be argued that a dream has become attached to the Rhesus myth, and would be expected by the audience. Otherwise, our examples of male dreamers come only via brief allusions; yet still, these seem enough to discount any theories that men in tragedy could not dream at all. In the *Seven Against Thebes*, Eteocles is speaking, at a stage when he is in lament having realised that he will have to face his brother, Polynices, at the seventh gate, and therefore fulfil the prophecy of his father: 'All too true the phantoms of my nightly dreams, portending division of our father's heritage' (*ἄγαν δ'ἀληθεῖς ἐνυπνίων φαντασμάτων ὄψεις, πατρῴων χρημάτων δατήριοι*).[16] Although no detail is given of the dreams' contents, it seems clear that his impression is that these were foreboding dreams, in no way dissimilar to the types of dreams we find women in tragedy experiencing. There is, I think, no need to argue, as Kessels does, that this would have referred to an episode which was detailed in the lost *Oedipus* of Aeschylus.[17] There is no need to make claims from evidence we do not have, for this episode is itself sufficient to illustrate that male dreamers were not wholly absent. Further allusions appear in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*: first, the watchman, looking out for the beacon which will signal the Greek victory over Troy, remarks that he cannot sleep on his couch in his state of fear; note in particular his line: *εὐνὴν ὀνείροις οὐκ ἐπισκοπουμένην* (13). It seems clear that, though he is male, dreams were something to be expected. Later, when the Chorus are singing about Menelaus, they mention the dream visions which

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[15] Hom. *Il.* X.493-497. On the Rhesus episode, see n.5, above.
[16] Aesch. *Sept.* 710-711, with Hutchinson (1985: xxvii).
[17] Kessels (1973: 114).

have been visiting him during the night, bearing images of his beloved wife Helen (420-426). A similar scenario is envisaged by Admetus in Euripides' *Alcestis*. Pining after his dead wife, he hopes: 'and perhaps you will cheer me by visiting me in dreams' (*ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἄν*).[18]

What these allusions illustrate is that men were not considered to be debarred from the world of dreaming – the dream was certainly not an activity specific to women. There should be no thoughts that in tragedy it was only women who could dream; it would also be absurd to argue that women might be seen as more susceptible to dreams or prone to them than men. This is certainly not an idea we find anywhere else, and none of the philosophical theorists suggest that the female mind might be more receptive.[19] What these allusions do not explain, however, is why it is only women who experience the *protracted* dream scenes.[20] It is noticeable that this discrepancy between male and female dreamers is not apparent in any other genres of literature. In Pindar, for instance, we find the dreams of Bellerophon and Pelias – two male dreamers; in Herodotus and Greek comedy there is a mix of male and female dreamers; and writers such as Xenophon and Plato include male dream episodes in their texts. It should be clear that this distinction between male and female dreamers, if it did exist, was one specific to the genre of tragedy, and to the *Odyssey*.[21]

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[18] Eur. *Alc.* 354.
[19] See n. 2, above.
[20] It is unlikely to be just a coincidence of the extant texts, i.e. that a different selection of surviving plays would reveal a different pattern, as suggested by Kessels (1978: 115). We have enough bulk of material to draw conclusions from.
[21] It is unlikely to just be a simple question of tragedy following the template of the *Odyssey*, for the tragedians abandoned the Homeric message dreams and replaced them with symbolic ones; therefore they did not follow the Homeric 'scene' rigidly. There is, however, an extent to which they were restricted by the myths they were retelling: for example a dream had become a feature of Clytemnestra's story from Stesichorus, F.219, and it would continue to be so through the tragic authors.

One of the principal reasons for this genre distinction is the movement of the sphere of action to the household: tragedy and the *Odyssey* are concerned as much with the actions of the women within the household as they are with the actions of the men outside the household. There is a recurring plot in tragedy where the male head of house or husband is presented as away from the home, leaving the focus of the action with the women who remain in the household, and allowing them to be seen and speak.[22] It is not just that women's dreams are more frequent in tragedy, but women in general are far more visible. There is in fact only one extant tragedy which includes no female characters, Sophocles' *Philoctetes*. Even the ancient authors themselves were aware of the preponderance of women on the tragic stage, with Lucian the first to note how many more female parts there were than male.[23] Gomme could rightly state that there is 'no literature, no art of any country, in which women are more prominent ... than in the tragedy, sculpture and painting of fifth-century Athens'.[24]

This is certainly one part of the explanation. The dreams in tragedy are predominantly concerned with inter-familial relationships, rather than about political decisions, such as whether to go to war, or about individual destiny. This is probably best illustrated by the content of two of the rare instances of male dreams in tragedy. In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, we find the chorus singing about Menelaus' dreams, in which he longs for Helen: *ὀνειρόφαντοι δὲ πενθήμονες πάρεισι δόξαι φέρουσαι χάριν ματαίαν. μάταν γάρ, εὖτ' ἂν ἐσθλά τις δοκῶν ὁρᾷ, παραλλάξασα διὰ χερῶν βέβακεν ὄψις οὐ μεθύστερον πτεροῖς ὀπαδοῦς' ὕπνου κελεύθοις.*[25] Not for Menelaus the concerns of state and of war, as Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, but rather his personal

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[22] Cf. McClure (1999: 7).
[23] Lucian *De Salt.* 28; cf. Achilles Tatius *Leucippe and Clitophon* 1.8.
[24] Gomme (1925: 4). Cf. Syropoulos (2003: 2); Foley (2001: 6); McClure (1999: 6).
[25] Aesch. *Ag.* 420-426.

desires and longing for his lost love. The same is true of Admetus, the king of Pherae, in Euripides' *Alcestis*, who hopes to see his dead wife in his dreams: *ἐν δ' ὀνείρασιν φοιτῶσά μ' εὐφραίνοις ἄν· ἡδὺ γὰρ φίλους κἀν νυκτὶ λεύσσειν, ὅντιν' ἂν παρῇ χρόνον.*[26] The plots of tragedy were more concerned with the emotional aspects of relationships than with political decisions and war, and this played a part in determining the content of the dreams, and probably explains to some extent the number of female dreamers. Yet it still does not quite explain their dominance, and it would be wrong to accept this very simple explanation alone.

It is today readily accepted that tragic characters were present to do more than just entertain: the tragedians also used their plays as vessels through which to pose questions, to play with societal conceptions, to teach, and to reinforce ideals of behaviour. The representations of women, so far removed from their realities in daily life, were one way in which the tragedians toyed with traditional concepts, and indeed the field of gender studies in tragedy has already produced a rich bibliography.[27] Women's dreams were one part of this presentation of women, although oddly their dreams have never formed a particular point of interest in gender studies. Some of the themes developed in these studies should help to explain further the reasons for the number of female dreams in tragedy, beyond it being a simple reflection of the location of the action within the household.

One of these might be the notion of 'role-reversal', the inversion of traditional traits on the stage, which is why we have so many independent, dominant women, roles normally exclusive to men in reality. The exact meaning behind each form of reversal is still a matter of some debate, but I would agree with Blundell that it is not

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[26] Eur. *Alc.* 354-355.
[27] See the summary by Foley (2001: 6-12); Syropoulos (2003: 1-8); McClure (1999: 4-6).

as simple as arguing that this breaking of the traditional constraints was a lesson in how not to behave, or as she states: 'that women who invade masculine areas of activity wreak terrible havoc in their families and communities'.[28] There are a number of different female characters in tragedy, who are presented with varying degrees of approval and disapproval – Alcestis, for one, could hardly be accused of 'bringing havoc', for she acts selflessly to sacrifice herself so that her husband, Admetus, will be saved. The role reversals in tragedy can work on several levels. In the context of dreams, the role reversal is slightly skewed because the women, although they are the dreamers, do not have what one might term 'powerful male dreams', dreams akin to Xerxes's in Herodotus – as already mentioned, their dreams are focused on familial relationships and the household. Io dreams of her union with Zeus in Aeschylus; in Euripides Iphigenia has a dream which she misinterprets as meaning that Orestes is dead, when it actually means that he is alive; and Hecuba dreams of her dead children.[29] The women who have the most masculine dreams are, not coincidentally, the women who are presented as most masculine: Clytemnestra, who has a dream which concerns her own destiny and predicts her death, and Atossa, the Persian Queen, whose dream is concerned with her family but on a political stage, in war, and as a consequence of which she herself takes action to try to avert the consequences of her dream (in contrast to, for example, Io, who immediately runs to her father, and it is he who makes all the decisions on what to do in consequence of her dreams). It is these strong independent women, already characterised as masculine, who have the dreams which most closely resemble the typical male dreams in other genres of literature, and the dreams here might be considered to be a part of their 'role reversal'.

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[28] Blundell (1995: 176).
[29] Aesch. *PV.* 645*ff*; Eur. *IT.* 42*ff*; Eur. *Hec.* 68*ff*.

It is also worth noting that this 'reversal' and transgression of normal behavioural boundaries is normally considered as something dangerous, which could bring disaster. This is true of some of the dreams in tragedy, but no more so than in other genres; Clytemnestra's visions proved no more hazardous than Astyages' in Herodotus: they were simply a foreboding indication of what would come to pass. I think it would be difficult to link directly the number of female dreamers in tragedy with the negative role of the dream and the negative perception of women who are active, because each situation, each dreamer and dream, is so different in content and within its context. It is not as simple as saying that 'the dreams of tragedy are all what we would call nightmares', and that, taken together with the generally disruptive nature of the female characters, the dream becomes one facet of the negative depiction of women in tragedy.[30] This can be true in cases, and the combination is neatly illustrated in Euripides' *Orestes*, where first the Chorus leader states that: 'women by nature always meddle in the affairs of men, with unfortunate results' (*αἰεὶ γυναῖκες ἐμποδὼν ταῖς συμφοραῖς ἔφυσαν ἀνδρῶν πρὸς τὸ δυστυχέστερον*); Tyndareus then criticises Electra directly, for stirring up hate by announcing dreams from Agamemnon and Aegisthus.[31] Yet there are exceptions which prevent this from being the dominant explanation. The dream of Iphigenia, for one, may appear on the surface to forebode ill, but actually turns out to be positive when interpreted correctly. She dreamt that she was in Argos, and as she slept the earth began to shake; she fled the house and as she stood outside she saw the cornice of the palace topple and all the house, from its column tops down, cast in ruins to the ground; only one column of her ancestral home remained, and from its top sprouted a head of blond hair and it seemed

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[30] Quote in Mikalson (1991: 103); on tragic women as disruptive: Goldhill (1996: 107*ff*); Pomeroy (1975: 106).
[31] Eur. *Or*. 605-621.

to adopt human speech; she sprinkled it with water and consigned it to death. At first she interpreted it as meaning that Orestes was dead, for the columns of the house represented the ancestral children and she had sentenced it/him to death. She is wrong – the one remaining column signifies that Orestes is still alive, and the dream is a future vision of what will come to pass, when she almost mistakenly sacrifices him.[32]

I would argue that, although the previous two themes, of role reversal and disruption, contribute in part to the presentation of female dreamers, they are subordinated to the dominant theme which is the reinforcing of traditional ideals of female behaviour. The woman's role was within the household, and her priorities were as a mother and wife, to her family; Helene Foley states that the symbolic legacy of ancient Greece was between 'female, "nature", domestic/private, emotion/ the irrational, and passivity and male, culture, public, rational/ the self-controlled, and activity'.[33] Women belonged within the household according to (Athenian)[34] men: Xenophon makes it clear in his *Oeconomicus* that a woman's nature was suited to indoor works and indoor concerns.[35] Thucydides, through the mouth of Pericles, probably summarised the contemporary viewpoint: 'the greatest glory of a woman is to be least talked about by men, whether they are praising you or criticizing you' (... *ἧς ἂν ἐπ' ἐλάχιστον ἀρετῆς πέρι ἢ ψόγου ἐν τοῖς ἄρσεσι κλέος ᾖ*).[36] Tragedy in many ways worked to reinforce this traditional viewpoint, and although it toyed with notions of female power and dominance, these ultimately worked to highlight the superiority of the ideals which men held about women. Powerful, independent women are criticized, directly and indirectly, whilst traditional, ideal women, those who

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[32] Eur. *IT.* 42*ff*; cf. Mikalson (1991: 107-110).
[33] Foley (2001: 333).
[34] The independence of Spartan women was a source of criticism; see, for example, Aristotle's comments, *Ath. Pol.* 2.1269b.
[35] Xen. *Oec.* 7-10.
[36] Thuc. 2.46.2. On women's silence, see Winkler (1990*a*: 5-6); McClure (1999).

sacrifice their own interests for the sake of their families, are, directly and indirectly, praised.[37]

Dreams, directly and indirectly, also help to reinforce these ideals. As has already been stated, there is a direct, obvious difference between the presentation of powerful, independent dreamers like Clytemnestra and Atossa, and the more placid characters like Io. The independent dreamers act counter to societal ideals: they react to and act upon their dreams, by ordering sacrifices and libations; their dreams' content reveals masculine concerns: personal destiny and the foreshadowing of death, the outcome in battle. Io, on the other hand, has a dream of a union, a relationship, and although it is she who sees the dream, she seeks out her father, her male guardian, who takes on the active response to the dream; she remains passive. As Winkler expressed it, women should be 'dependents' not 'agents'; Io's role in the play is highlighted by her dream, and she becomes the centre of our focus, but she remains dependent on her father for guidance and action.[38] Clytemnestra and Atossa act as examples of behaviour through reversing the ideals, and indeed Clytemnestra's treatment of her dream highlights her own masculinity, while Io's reactions illustrate through revealing the proper female response.

Dreams also work to keep women within the household, while allowing them to participate within the plot of the play. Dreams come from outside to inside, and are experienced within the home, within the bed of the female dreamer. The symbolic messages which are conveyed, and which can prompt them on courses of action either directly or indirectly, and which provide glimpses of their futures, are delivered within the home. The women do not venture outside to consult oracles, but remain

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[37] In much fuller detail, see Syropoulos (2003); McClure (1999); with Pomeroy (1975: 93-119); Foley (2001: 333-338).
[38] Winkler (1990*a*: 8).

inside and receive this guidance passively. The dreams indirectly highlight the limitations of woman's influence and their range of actions, by locating the point of contact within the household, their idealised domain. The dream therefore is another part of the dominant theme in tragedy, where the female roles, designed by men, ultimately reinforce the traditional roles of women in society.

This argument stands alone in relevance to tragedy, but I cannot help but feel that there may be something more to the frequency of women dreamers, beyond just the formation of literary ideals, and that it may also have reflected a real notion that men considered women to take their dreams more seriously. Indeed, even within tragedy Clytemnestra is the one female character we find criticising this dream knowledge, and this could be seen as actually confirming that men perceived women to attach more relevance to their dreams, for she is characterised as having a more masculine mind.[39] In Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* she informs the Chorus that she knows the city of Troy has been taken, and they ask her if she is following a dream, to which she retorts: 'I would not accept the fancy of a slumbering mind' (*οὐ δόξαν ἄν λάβοιμι βριζούσης φρενός*).[40]

With the results from the literature still in mind, it is now worth examining other evidence which speaks against this being purely a peculiarity of genre. I must return to Plato's comment in his *Laws*: that it was 'women especially' who were setting up cults and shrines on account of dreams.[41] Clearly, the dreams are different in type, for tragic dreams are symbolic and predictive, whereas Plato is concerned with dreams in which a command is given, but nevertheless Plato is the only writer to

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[39] Cf. Aesch. *Ag.* 10, 351, 1401; with Lloyd-Jones (1982: xx), Pomeroy (1975: 98-99).
[40] Aesch. *Ag.* 275.
[41] Plato *Laws* 909D-910A.

address the subject of women and dreams directly so his comment must be considered. We already examined the evidence for cult foundations, as well as dedications, in Chapter 5, and it is worth repeating some of the findings now to ascertain whether Plato was accurate or not, or perhaps if it should be understood as a playful comment, not meant to be taken over-literally.

From a purely quantitative examination of the inscriptional evidence for the archaic and classical period that I gathered in Chapter 5, above, it is clear that women do not outnumber the men. We have four female dedicators: Deinophila, Meneia, Timothea and Chrysina, to seven male; taken as a percentage this becomes roughly 36 percent to 64 percent. However, the sample is so small that a couple of new dedications either way would tip the balance. There are more female than male dedicators to be found in the far more numerous body of evidence at the Athenian Asclepieion, where the women outnumber the men 51.39 percent to 45.82 percent (with the remaining percents taken up by couples, multiple dedicators, and the demos).[42] Yet this is not representative of all Asclepieia, for the Epidaurian *iamata* display a markedly higher male proportion, with approximately 73% to 27%. Van Straten, who has undertaken the only broad survey of dream dedications in the Greek world, covering a chronological range from the archaic period to the 4th century AD, found that only fifteen percent of the dedicants (where he could be sure of the sex from the name) were women.[43] There is one caveat to this pool of information: according to Matthew Dillon, of the near nine hundred dedications from the Greek world collected by Lazzarini, from the archaic period to the fifth century, only ten per

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[42] Aleshire (1989: 45); cf. Van Straten (2000: 216*ff*).
[43] Van Straten (1976: 17). He adds: 'This does not mean that women saw less dream apparitions, but only that they had less opportunity to dedicate a votive offering that was durable enough to last'.

cent were dedicated by women.[44] Therefore the figure of 36 percent for the dream dedications relative to our period is actually higher than one would expect – in other words, even though it is not a dominant figure, women were still making a relatively large proportion of dedications and cult foundations on the basis of dreams which could have been cause for Plato to make comment. So it does seem possible that the dream dedications by women were notably frequent.

I would argue that this inscriptional evidence can be married with the perspective we have found in the literature, and that although tragedy undoubtedly exaggerates and plays with the idea of women's dreams, it reveals a truth that men thought that women took their dreams more seriously, while the inscriptions prove that women did act on their dreams; both stem from the limitations of the woman's role in contemporary society. The dreams in tragedy reinforce the norms of womanly behaviour for a male audience, whilst in reality dreams could have provided women with an extra voice in an otherwise largely silent existence, which is why they could have taken them more seriously. Thus both the presentation on the tragic stage and the situation in reality were determined by socio-cultural factors specific to Greece (or more specifically in this case Athens), whereby the masculine idealised view of the woman determined the male reaction to women's dreams, whilst the women themselves found in their dreams some form of extra participation in a world in which such participation was restricted.

Remember that women were excluded from all political and military life, and could not attend assemblies or serve on juries.[45] As perpetual legal minors, they were

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[44] Dillon (2002: 9); Lazzarini (1976).
[45] Foley (2001: 7-8).

not considered to have autonomous decision making power, and constantly had to work through a guardian, and certainly could not speak themselves in the courts.[46] They were citizens in a certain sense (even if, unlike their male counterparts, they were not registered at birth in the city's *phratries*), but their citizenship was only important as a mother (to ensure the birth of citizen men) and in a religious context.[47] Yet even in religion, so often trumpeted as the one area where women could exercise something approaching independence or influence,[48] their roles were narrow and controlled and moulded to fit male ideals.[49] The woman's place was, both in the eyes of men and in reality, within the household; her life consequently had few avenues of opportunity. As Ischomachus says to Socrates in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*: 'It is a finer thing for the woman to stay indoors than to spend time in the open' (*τῇ ... γὰρ γυναικὶ κάλλιον ἔνδον μένειν ἢ θυραυλεῖν*).[50]

Women were, by and large, confined within the household, limited in their scope of activity in comparison to men. The dream, for them, was one of the few means of playing a role outside the household; for men, who had many avenues of opportunity, the dream was perhaps not so useful. A similar conclusion, though drawn from a different angle, was reached by Patricia Crawford, when she analysed the dreams recorded by women in early modern England. She noted how women's dreams were important not because they were considered as more susceptible,[51] but because their restricted and blinkered role in a male dominated society meant that the dream gave them an avenue through which to play a significant role as a medium for a

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[46] See in particular Just (1989: 26-39); Hunter (1994: 9-42); Syropoulos (2003: 3-4). Cf. Eur. *Supp.* 40-41: 'It is seemly for women, whoever are wise, to do everything through men'.
[47] Osborne (1993) and (1997*a*).
[48] See for example Blundell (1995: 163); Mossé (1983: 153); Cartledge (1990); Kron (1996).
[49] See in particular Syropoulos (2003: 9-25).
[50] Xen. *Oec.* 10.
[51] It was not until the nineteenth century that such theories came forward.

message or a prophetic voice, something denied to them in normal public life. As she states, 'Dreams were of more *use* to women than they were to men'.[52] Take, for example, the case of Aemilia Lanyer, who was one of a number of women who used their dream to 'justify ... a course of action she knew that her contemporaries would think questionable', because women, as in classical Greece, were ideally silent. In 1611 she published a work in which she discussed the passion of Christ, and justified its writing on account of her dream: 'it [the title] was delivered unto me in sleepe many yeares before I had any intent to write in this maner'.[53] A man writing at this time would need no such justification for it was accepted for a man to speak out and have opinions, but uncommon to find the ideally silent women doing so.

One could argue that in Greece we can discern something similar: that women could find in their dreams an access point to a more public persona, when throughout their lives they were normally kept private, hidden by their male counterparts. They therefore accorded their dreams more importance, and the literature (written by men) reflects this notion, supported by the evidence of the dedications set up by women.

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[52] Crawford (2004 *passim*; quote from p.101). Women were also the principal buyers and readers of dreambooks: Perkins (2004: 127-129).
[53] Crawford (2004: 99). In Greece, such divine inspiration via dreams became a feature of some (male) historiography: Marincola (1997: 43-51).

9
Dreams in the Context of Greek Divination

In the course of this study I have examined dreams in relative isolation; the casual reader might be misled into believing that dreams were the principle means of communication with the gods available to the Greeks. This, in reality, was far from the case, and dreams were in fact part of a rich and varied body of divinatory practices employed with varying degrees of frequency by Greeks as individuals and communities in the archaic and classical periods. I should outline here that, by divination, I mean the attempts to decode and interpret certain signs which were thought to represent the opinions or intentions of a god or gods. Divination, though it is most often associated with forecasting the future, is just as important for decisions made in the present, and for the events of the past; in all three areas, the human consultant hopes to reveal something hidden or unknown through it. Divination is at the core of Greek religion.[1] The intention of this section is to locate where dreams fit within the divinatory scheme.

The most straightforward initial classification of divination can be borrowed from the ancient writers themselves. Plato linked the Greek seer, *mantis*, with *mania* (madness), and argued that in their original form the seers practiced the *manic* art, the extra 't' being added later to create the *mantic*. It is this original 'madness' which he links to the art of 'inspired divination' (*mantikē entheos*), performed most famously by the Pythia at Delphi, where the seer is out of her/his mind and the god speaks through them; he contrasts this with non-inspired divination, performed by people still very much in their right mind, who practice divination by observing signs, for example the flight paths of birds, and interpret them while

[1] See Parker (2000); Bonnechere (2007); Flacelière (1965). The general guides by Bouché-Leclercq (1879-82) and Halliday (1913) have their faults but remain essential reading.

fully conscious.[2] This rudimentary classification was repeated by Cicero; Quintus states in the *De Divinatione* that there are two kinds of divination, of which the first is dependent on art, the other on nature (*quorum alterum artis est, alterum naturae*).[3] The ones derived from art are those dependent on some skill that can be learnt and developed through experience, including bird omens and the reading of sacrificial entrails; the ones derived from nature are those that result from inspiration, that cannot be taught, namely ecstasy and dreams.[4] These ancient classifications have been adopted by modern scholars too. The broadest survey on Greek divination yet written, Bouché-Leclercq's 19th century opus, is constructed on these exact lines, separating the technical divinatory types from the prophetic inspired ones.[5] More recently, Pierre Bonnechere in his far briefer essay distinguished between 'inductive' and 'inspired' divination; in the former stand the observation of prodigies and animals, as well as ornithomancy, cledonomancy, cleromancy, hieroscopy, empyromancy, and so on; the latter is represented only by dreams (oniromancy), and inspired prophecy.[6] Inductive divination could take place wherever it was needed, in particular on the battlefield, whilst inspired divination was more often associated with specific sanctuaries.

Such classifications suggest a strict typology which, in truth, probably over-simplifies the situation in reality. Dreams, for example, though they result from direct communication between the god and the recipient, still can require some form of interpretation afterwards, and this interpretation did become a skill that could be learnt, just as oracles from Delphi could demand subsequent analysis. Inductive divination itself often involves a closer relationship with the will of the gods than is often assumed; when throwing the dice, even if

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[2] Plato *Phaed.* 244, with Burkert (1985:112). See now the criticisms of Plato's theory by Casevitz (1992), followed by Bremmer (1996: 98). Note also the questions asked of Plato's intentions by Flower (2008: 85-86)
[3] Cic. *De Div.* I.VI.12.
[4] Cic. *De Div.* II. XLVIII. 100.
[5] Bouché-Leclercq (1879-82).
[6] Bonnechere (2007).

the interpreter was using his skill to judge the result, it was the dice themselves that were possessed and guided by the gods.[7] Nonetheless, this typology is a useful starting point for any study on Greek divination, and the basic division does represent how the Greeks themselves were most likely to distinguish their different divinatory methods. Within this system, the superiority of inspired over inductive divination was often assumed,[8] in large part because of its connection with the major sanctuaries and also the directness of the divine sign (the judgement of the intermediary seer is often a source of criticism in inductive divination). And then within each category there was a difference between besought and self-offering signs, where 'the authority of the former was increased by the decision to seek them'.[9] The act of deciding to consult an oracle, for example, is dependent on acknowledging in advance the importance of the divine response, just as one did not visit Epidaurus by chance, but with intent.

I propose to use the basic schema outlined to locate the place of dreams within Greek divination, because it allows for enough simplicity to draw conclusions, without being so simple as to dilute their meaning. Therefore I will compare the dream oracles against the other 'inspired' oracles, which include Delphi and Dodona and so on. With divination through dreams, however, one also needs to separate the dream oracles, for example at Epidaurus and Oropus, where the dream occurs in a dedicated sanctuary, from the spontaneous dreams which could occur anywhere, and the independent dream interpreters who could have played a role in deciphering them.[10] Therefore I propose to deal with the former first, and then the latter in a separate discussion – it would be fruitless trying to

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[7] Cf. Johnston (2005: 11-13).
[8] Cf. Karp (1998: 27-28).
[9] Parker (2000: 76).
[10] As Burkert (2005: 43) who distinguishes between the 'migrating charismatics' and the 'local sanctuaries with special ritual institutions'.

contrast the activities of an itinerant dream interpreter with the Pythia; instead I will compare them with the other independent seers we find active in Greece at this period.

The problem which one immediately faces in such a study is how exactly to compare the importance or place of divinatory forms. There is always the risk of mis-representing the ancient data and fitting it into a modern conception which would not have been acknowledged by the ancients themselves. Within each divinatory type there are countless forms – comparing Delphi with Dodona could be twice as lengthy as this thesis – so one must be careful not to attempt a line of enquiry which leaves so many caveats that they deflate all arguments. The ancients tended only occasionally to compare their divinatory forms, the most explicit cases being in Plato and Cicero as mentioned; otherwise we occasionally find oracles pitted against each other, most famously in Herodotus' account of Croesus' testing of the Greek oracle centres, in which Delphi and Amphiaraus were triumphant – their triumph was thanks to the veracity of their answers.[11] In a recent examination of the importance of *oionomanteia* by Dillon, he judges its role through the frequency of attestations in the sources, and by the extent to which its practice affected important decisions.[12]

I intend to narrow my focus and work towards an explicit thesis, by comparing the powers of the different oracles. I aim to illustrate that the traditional oracle centres had a greater range of power and a greater potential to affect polis or political decisions, whereas dream oracles were more limited in scope, and largely concerned with the sphere of the individual, particularly in a medical capacity. I will then demonstrate that this key difference was linked to the mode of consultation itself, within its wider cultural context at a given period. It is my opinion that the dream oracle, because of the independent, dreamer specific, nature of its delivery, was never suited to the public sphere, but ultimately it was this very

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[11] Hdt. I. 46-49.
[12] Dillon (1996).

independence which allowed it to prosper over the more traditional oracles as they fell into decline.

I will then turn to the subject of dreams unattached to sanctuaries – the spontaneous dreams we often find in literature, and the role of the dream interpreters in Greek society. This will largely be an examination of the dream interpreters, a subject not fully treated before in this period, but at the same time I will be contrasting what I find with what has already been discovered in the more plentiful evidence about the other seers who were active in Greece at this time. In particular, I want to focus on their use of dreambooks, and the manner in which their authority stemmed from them. Finally, I will ascertain on what topics they were consulted, and how exclusive the field of dream interpretation was – if it was a specific skill learnt only by a few, or if it was often practiced by general *manteis* who had a range of powers.

It is my hope that this examination of both the oracle centres and the independent dream interpreters will locate the place of dreams within the divinatory world of the Greeks, and prove once again the importance of analysing dreams within their cultural frames.

Before I begin, it would be prudent to make a brief note on the nature of the evidence I will use. For the period I am examining, we are dependent largely on literary evidence, but there are a number of inscriptions which are important. With the literature it must be underlined from the start that the oracle was one of the favourite narratological devices of the ancient authors, and sorting the 'real' oracular consultations from the literary fabrications is a task in itself, particularly when even the supposedly real ones often still serve narrative ends. Nevertheless, I am strongly of the opinion that, even when only legendary, the records in the literature present key evidence for how the Greeks perceived divination, and the colourful

extensions of their roles must still be based on rudiments that were understood and accepted by a contemporary audience.[13]

(i)
Dream Oracles

Before studying the dream oracles, I will first outline the principal functions of the other oracles in the Greek world which were consulted through inspired divination, and which provide the context for those which were accessed through incubation. These include some of the most famous sanctuaries in the ancient world, which need little general introduction because they have been documented so copiously already: Delphi, where Apollo spoke through the Pythian priestess,[14] or Dodona in Epirus, where there is evidence for a number of methods of divine communication from the archaic period onwards, from the rustling of the leaves of the sacred oak, to the three priestesses who spoke oracles of Zeus in a trance state.[15] Such oracles of course had variations between them, and I do not want to suggest that they all adhered to a strict template, but there were some key functional areas in which these oracles were consulted, and I will summarise them briefly.[16] One of the primary subjects of inquiry was warfare; for example Cleomenes was told by Delphi that he would capture Argos; the Thebans asked Delphi how they could settle their score with Athens; Croesus inquired as to whether he should seek an alliance.[17] The most famous example is

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[13] I therefore stand in an opposite corner to Fontenrose (1978) who focussed only on the epigraphic evidence for Delphi, ignoring the literature as fiction. He has since been criticised as too dismissive by Pritchett (1979: 301-302); Struck (2003: 171-172). On the literary evidence, see too Burkert (2005: 30-31); Flower (2008: 92n.39).
[14] Parke and Wormell (1956); Amandry (1975); Fontenrose (1978).
[15] The exact manner in which Dodona produced oracles is still uncertain. See in general Parke (1967); Dakaris (1986).
[16] For a fuller survey, see Parker (2000), with Garland (1984: 80-81) and (1990: 87-91).
[17] Hdt. 6.76.1; Hdt. 5.79.1; Hdt. I.53.3.

probably the two Delphic oracles which indicated to the Athenians how best to defend their city against the invading Persians, including the advice to hold behind the 'wooden walls', interpreted correctly by Themistocles as their fleet.[18] Consultations on a range of military matters appear to have been relatively frequent, and these were consultations made both on general matters of policy, such as whether to go to war or not, as well as specific questions on how to triumph in individual battles; the consultations were often made on behalf of the entire polis, and if not at the request of the king or a general. States could also ask about their relationships with other states on non-military matters, including a consultation of Delphi recorded by Thucydides in which the Epidamnians asked if they should switch their allegiance from Corcyra, their current mother-city, to Corinth, the mother-city of Corcyra.[19] They appear to have received the straightforward response to ally themselves with the Corinthians. Another political function of the oracles was on matters of colonisation; we find, for instance, Herodotus noting that it was unusual for Dorieus, in a fit of anger at Cleomenes' appointment as king, not to consult Delphi when he set off to found a new colony in Libya, while the Spartans on the other hand did seek a confirmation from Delphi before founding a settlement at Heraclea in 426.[20] States also enquired about their relationships not just with other states, but with the gods themselves, in particular questions relating to which gods needed to be sacrificed to and appeased in order for the city to prosper. They also consulted about matters of cult: which gods to build temples to, which shrines to establish, and so on.[21] They would also make enquiries related to the health of the state, asking how they might rid themselves of some evil, such as crop-failures, plagues, low childbirth rates, dying animals, and so on. These were not questions on individual medical conditions, but afflictions relevant

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[18] Hdt. 7.140-143.
[19] Thuc. 1.28.1.
[20] Hdt. 5.42; Thuc. 3.92. Parker (2000: 85-86) notes that any interventions by Delphi will have been limited.
[21] This too could have a political spin: Parker (2000: 84).

to the entire state, and the oracle responses were often linked to the cult consultations above, advising which gods needed to be appeased and sacrificed to. Indeed, the one area at a state level where oracular consultation is relatively silent is in 'the internal politics, legislation (except occasionally religious legislation) and jurisdiction of the state'.[22]

Overall, it appears the Greek states could, and did, consult these oracles on matters of state concern, be it military, political, or related to cult. This must come with a caveat – that the sources do only report these cases because, in a historical context, they are the most worthy of recording. There may well have been more frequent individual consultations of oracles that we hear little about, but these will have been restricted by the expense involved in making the enquiry (limiting it largely to the rich),[23] and by simple geography – those who lived within walking distance of a major oracle sanctuary might be more likely to go to it on trivial matters than those who had to travel across reaches of land or sea (which again also increases the expense).[24] However, for the purposes of this study the most important factor is the range of important state matters which could be brought before the oracles, whether seeking an explicit answer to an explicit question, or searching for some guidance, or even a ratification of a decision which had already been made. The oracles were consulted by states on public matters.

Dream oracles functioned through the process of incubation and were most famously associated with medical healing. The dream oracles in question are, of course, largely the Asclepian sanctuaries, and within them principally the major shrine at Epidaurus, and the oracle of Amphiaraus at Oropus. In Chapter 6, above, I discussed other incubatory shrines potentially active in the Greek world, and as was clear in that case the evidence on such

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[22] Parker (2000: 90); he notes that the oracles may have had an influence earlier in the making of kings.
[23] An inscription dated to 420BC records the tariff for the Phaselians to consult Delphi: on matters of state, 7 drachmas and 2 obols, and for private enquiries 4 obols: Morrison (1981: 100).
[24] The local Dodoneans could make quite mundane enquiries: Parker (2000: 94).

shrines is extremely limited. Therefore the focus of this enquiry will be by necessity the larger dream oracles, but I do not think this means the results will be too narrow, for they are surely representative of the general pattern at incubatory cults.

There should be very little doubt in any historian's mind that the dream oracles were predominantly, if not virtually exclusively, consulted by individuals on personal, physiological, matters; they had a medical function which was relevant to the individual enquirer. Listing all instances attested for the Asclepian sanctuaries would fill an entire book (and indeed has),[25] and a couple of examples will illustrate the pattern. Sometimes the visitor arrived with his ailment, and received the cure then and there, spontaneously, during the dream. For example, a blind man came to Epidaurus: 'He was so blind that of one of his eyes he had only the eyelids left – within them was nothing, but they were entirely empty' (*Ἀνὴρ ἀφίκετο ποὶ τὸν θεὸν ἱκέτας ἀτερόπτιλλος οὕτως, ὥστε τὰ βλέφαρα μόνον ἔχειν, ἐνεῖμεν δ' ἐν αὐτοῖς μηθέν, ἀλλὰ κενεὰ ε[ἶ]μεν ὅλως*). As he slept he saw a vision in which it appeared that the god prepared some drug, before pouring it into the empty sockets. When he awoke his eyesight had been restored.[26] On other occasions, the enquirer receives not an instant cure, but a prescriptive oracular response, in which he is told what he must do, or which drugs he must take, in order to be cured. For instance there is an inscription found on a rock at Epidaurus, from the 3rd century BC, and set up by Hermodicus of Lampsacus: he was stricken by an illness, with an abscess in his chest and paralysed in his hands, and he thanks the god, for 'by ordering me to lift up this rock [you] made me live free from disease' (*σὺ ... πεῖσάς με ἄρασθαι τόνδε, ἄνοσον διάγειν*).[27]

The same is true for Amphiaraus at his sanctuary. There are a number of inscriptions which refer directly to his medical function, and medical implements have been found during

[25] Edelstein and Edelstein (1945); Vol. I. T.337-481 concentrates on his medical capacity.
[26] Edelstein T.423.9 = *IG* IV², 1, 121, IX.
[27] Edelstein T.431 = *IG* IV², 1, 125.

excavations at the site.[28] There is also a famous votive found at the sanctuary at Oropus, dedicated by Archinos to Amphiaraus, and dated to the first half of the fifth century. The youth himself is depicted three times: on the left he is standing as Amphiaraus treats his shoulder; on the far right he is standing, probably initially approaching the god; and in the middle we actually see him asleep on a couch, in the process of incubation, as a snake licks his shoulder.[29] In the literature, direct references are harder to find, but this is partly down to the fortunes of preservation, for from the few fragments that survive of Aristophanes' lost *Amphiaraus* it is clear that the god was thought to have a medical capacity. There are two lines which suggest someone was suffering from dysentery, in particular: 'where is orris-root for me to plug my breech' (*πόθεν ἂν λάβοιμι βύσημα τῶι πρωκτῶι φλέων;*).[30] There is also a reference to Iaso as 'daughter', Iaso being derived from *iasis*, healing, and more often associated with Asclepius than Amphiaraus. Added to these are other more indirect references in literature, in particular to the healing powers of the spring at the Amphiareion; for instance, Xenophon mentions it in comparison to the water at Epidaurus.[31] The medical function is also clear in the other smaller incubatory oracles. An example is Hemithea at Kastabos in southern Caria, who cured supposedly incurable ailments, and was a particular help to women in pain in childbirth.[32]

That dream oracles had a medical function is often taken for granted, and so it should be; there are numerous examples in both the literary and epigraphic records. Yet I will now seek to ascertain how far these oracles could have a public, political, non-medical function,

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[28] Inscriptions listed in Schachter (1981: 23n.7); medical implements in Petrakos (1968: 126.39, 127.46).
[29] Athens NM 3369 = Kaltsas (2002: 209 no. 425). Kaltsas's interpretation – that the figure on the left is Asclepius and that on the far right Amphiaraus – is surely wrong. The figure of the youth looks similar in all three cases, and is noticeably smaller than the single figure on the far left, which must represent Amphiaraus: it is he who is mentioned in the inscription, not Asclepius. For a similar iconography of Amphiaraus (as bearded, and with a cane) see *LIMC* I.2 *s.v.* Amphiaraos, nos. 61,64,65,66.
[30] *PCG* F.24; cf. F.29, with FF 20, 28.
[31] Xen. *Mem.* 3.13.3. Cf. Aratos, *Anth. Palat.* 12.129, Athenaeus 2.46d; with Schachter (1981: 23n.7).
[32] See Chapter 6 for greater detail.

on a level similar to the more traditional oracles already discussed. For the Asclepian sanctuaries, instances are extremely rare. On the official Epidaurian *iamata*, there are two cases where the consultant sought a non-medical answer. There was a porter who was approaching the temple carrying his master's preferred drinking goblet, who fell and broke it. As he tried to repair it by hand at the roadside a passer-by remarked: 'Foolish man, why do you put the goblet together in vain? For this one not even Asclepius of Epidaurus could put to rights again' (*τί, ὦ ἄθλιε ... συντίθησι τὸγ κώθωνα [μά]ταν; τοῦτον γὰρ οὐδέ κα ὁ ἐν Ἐπιδαύρωι Ἀσκλαπιὸς ὑγιῆ ποῆσαι δύναιτο*). The boy therefore put the pieces back into a bag and entered the temple with it; when he then removed the contents the goblet was whole again.[33] The story is therefore remarkable in that it was not even necessary for the suppliant to dream – it seems the goblet simply mended upon his entry to the temple. This entry is also quite plainly didactic: like a number of other instances in the *iamata*, the 'cure' is preceded by some form of doubt expressed in the god's power, 'not even Asclepius could mend it', doubt which is subsequently proved unfounded. Further, while it is true that this is not a strictly medical consultation, it still involves the god's ability to repair or make right, in the same way that he can restore the human body to health. He has approached the god with an individual problem, not on a subject relevant to the state. This is true also of the second case at Epidaurus: Aristocritus, a boy from Halieis, had gone swimming in the sea but when he left to get dry in some rocks he could not find his way out. Therefore his father, who also could not find him, came to Asclepius and slept in the sanctuary: 'It seemed to him that the god led him to a certain place and showed him that there was his son. When he came out of the *abaton* and quarried through the cliffs he found his son after seven days' (*ἐδοκει αὐτὸν ὁ θ[εὸς] ἄγειν εἴς τινα χώραν καὶ δεῖξαί οἱ, δ[ι]ότι τουτ[ε]ῖ ἐστι ὁ υἱὸς αὐτοῦ. ἐξε[λθὼ]ν δ' ἐκ τοῦ ἀβάτου καὶ*

[33] Edelstein T.423.10.

λατομήσας τὰ[ν] πέτραν ἀ[ν]ηῦρε τὸμ παῖδα ἑβδεμα[ῖο]ν).[34] Again, though this is not a strictly medical enquiry it is again concerned with repairing, in this case reuniting a father with his lost son. It is also clearly a personal problem which Asclepius solves, the consequences of which have no public relevance.

It is clear that, in the classical period, Asclepius' powers were concentrated on medical healing and helping individuals with their private enquiries.[35]

The dream oracle of Amphiaraus, however, is more mixed. In the first reference to the oracle, it is actually performing the same function as Delphi. When Croesus tests the oracles of Greece and Zeus Ammon in Libya, only two of them produce the correct answer: Delphi and Amphiaraus. He then re-consulted both of these oracles, asking whether he should march against Persia and whether he should seek an alliance. Both oracles, it seems, gave the same response: that if he invaded he would destroy a great empire (ultimately his own), and to ally himself with the strongest Greek state. Following these responses Croesus sent thanks to the oracle at Delphi (but not Amphiaraus), and then consulted it for a third time (but apparently not Amphiaraus) asking if his reign would be a long one.[36] The episode is interesting, for throughout it the oracle at Amphiaraus is clearly involved, yet also subordinated to Delphi: the response given by Delphi when Croesus first consulted it is recorded in full by Herodotus, but there is according to Herodotus no record of what Amphiaraus said; when he attempted to win the favour of the two oracles, Croesus sent an enormous number of offerings to Delphi, including the slaughtering of three thousand of every animal, one hundred and seventeen gold ingots, a five hundred and seventy pound golden lion, and huge gold and silver mixing bowls;

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[34] Edelstein T.423.24.

[35] There are some very late indications that Asclepius might have had a non-medical mantic function, but these occur in Christian writers who might have been working towards a separate agenda: Origen, *C. Cels.* III.3, III.24 = Edelstein T.292-293; Euseb. *In Is. Comm.* XVIII.65 = Edelstein T.294. Lucian *Deorum Concilium*, 16 = Edelstein T.291, writing in the 2nd century AD, was closer to the truth: 'be it further resolved that each ply his own trade; that Athena shall not heal the sick or Asclepius give oracles'.

[36] Hdt. I.46-55.

to Amphiaraus, he sent only a shield and spear of solid gold, which was apparently still visible to Herodotus at Thebes. There is no doubt which shrine found the most favour with Croesus, and one does wonder whether the inclusion of Amphiaraus was resultant more upon the hospitality Herodotus received from his Theban hosts than anything else. The historicity of this entire passage could be questioned at length, but more important here is to note that the dream oracle of Amphiaraus is performing the same function as Delphi, answering questions which pertain to war and political allegiances.

The same is true in another instance in Herodotus, when Mardonius, commander in charge of the Persian forces in Greece following defeat at Salamis, sent Mys to consult the oracles around Thessaly.[37] Mys consequently paid someone to sleep in the temple at Amphiaraus and received the oracle. In an interesting short digression, Herodotus notes that no Theban was allowed to sleep in the temple, because Amphiaraus had through an oracle asked them whether they would prefer to have him as their prophet or as their warrior, and they chose the latter; again, this implies a non-medical oracular function for the god. In the case of Mardonius, Herodotus does not tell us on what subject he was consulting the god, although given his situation, wintering in Thessaly with three hundred thousand men awaiting the spring to invade the Peloponnese, it was more likely to have been a military question than because he had gout. According to Plutarch, the oracle had in fact predicted Mardonius' death, smashed on the head with a stone, after the person sent there had seen a dream in which he himself had been smitten on the head by the god, after repeatedly refusing to leave his temple.[38] Therefore in both cases in Herodotus, our earliest source on the oracle, Amphiaraus is performing a traditional, oracular role, which has no link to a medical function.

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[37] Hdt. VIII.133-134.
[38] Plut. *De def. or.* 5; cf. Plut. *Arist.* 19.1, where the Spartan Arimnestus is credited with wielding the stone.

The only other clear cut instance of the god being consulted on a political matter in literature comes in the second half of the 4th century BC, in the speech made by Hyperides in defence of Euxenippus. If one remembers, this Euxenippus had been sent with two other men to the shrine to obtain a dream oracle to help settle a dispute over land.[39] A mountain had been allotted to the Hippothoontis and Acamantis tribes, but it was argued that the mountain was in fact sacred to Amphiaraus, and should be returned to the god along with the cost of the produce the tribes had sold from it. Euxenippus had announced a dream in favour of the two tribes, and subsequently been accused of accepting bribes and forging his dream.[40] In this case, a dispute over supposedly sacred land had been referred to the dream oracle, but surely this is an exceptional case given that the land at stake was supposed to belong to Amphiaraus himself. The evidence would be far more impressive if he was being consulted over land in, say, Messenia. In fact, in this instance the most compelling information comes from Hyperides: he points out that if the content of the dream had been questioned, they should have referred the matter to Delphi – implying that this is the oracle with real jurisdiction in such affairs.[41] The exceptional nature of this consultation proves the rule: that Amphiaraus' real function was in medical questions, and not in the more public political domain of traditional oracles such as Delphi. There was an assumed hierarchy in such matters.

All other remarks on the oracular capacity of Amphiaraus are late and vague. Thus Cicero mentions that he had such a reputation as a seer in real life that he was honoured as a god, 'and oracular responses were sought in the place where he was buried' (Amphiaraum autem sic honoravit fama Graecia, deus ut haberetur, atque ut ab eius solo, in quo est humatus, oracla peterentur). Pausanias mentions only that the consultants went to sleep at his

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[39] Cf. pp.233-234, above.
[40] Hyp. *Eux.* 3-15.
[41] Hyp. *Eux.* 15. Cf. Sineux (2007: 192-194). There are other cases of oracle responses being 'triangulated': Bonnechere (2007: 149).

shrine and awaited enlightenment in their dreams.[42] These sources may not make explicit reference to his medical powers, but it is probable that by their time of writing such a function was so assumed that it was superfluous to mention it. Nevertheless, they do inadvertently raise an important point – that when alive Amphiaraus' repute was as a warrior-seer,[43] and in no way as a doctor like Asclepius was. Therefore it is natural that his cult, in its earliest form as reported by Herodotus, would have reflected this. When we next hear of Amphiaraus in literature post-Herodotus it is in Aristophanes' lost comedy, already mentioned above, where the medical function is focused on, and indeed from that point on it is this *iatromantic* role of the shrine which dominates the sources. It is worth repeating here the arguments made earlier in Chapter 6 on incubation, where I noted that it is likely that Amphiaraus was invested with medical powers by the Athenians, on the model of the already active Asclepian cult, after the devastations of the plague.

This point is worth bearing in mind, but there is a supplemental explanation for the switching of the oracle's functional priorities in the fifth century. The early consultations at Amphiaraus were by a powerful king (Croesus) and a Persian general (Mardonius). The only other clear-cut instance of someone enquiring at the Amphiareion on what might be termed a political level is in the late 4th century, and this is an exceptional case because the political matter in hand involved the cult land of the god himself. The switch is also a product of other cultural parameters, in particular the nature of rulership. Dreams were, as I discussed in Chapter 7 on privileged dreamers, a very personal experience based on a direct relationship with the god, and the repercussions of the dream are linked to the status of the dreamer. There was no intermediary figure between god and enquirer, such as the Pythia at Delphi, through which the god spoke, but he communicated directly with the visitor. This was one of the most

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[42] Cic. *De Div.* 1.88; Paus. 1.34.5; cf. Livy 45.27.
[43] See Aesch. *Sept.* 569*ff.*

appealing aspects of incubation, for it allowed the visitors a psychological closeness with the gods, and was one of the key reasons why, in a medical setting, incubatory cults flourished. The lack of an intermediary also meant that there was a great trust and bond between dreamer and god, and there is no doubt, as can be seen from the number of dedications left at sanctuaries, that most visitors fully believed their own dream visions.[44]

However, in a political context the absence of an official intermediary was actually a negative thing. The Pythias, for example, had some cult parameters which determined their selection, and strict obedience to these rules actually conferred on them some level of authority – they were better equipped to transmit the messages of the gods than other citizens. Further, when they spoke, in the act of making the oracle orally they also made it public from the beginning, and the act of writing down the oracle (although we cannot be sure how common this was) again gave the oracle a level of authority. More importantly, once written, oracles could become a subject of public debate, even in the assembly, as for instance with the different interpretations proposed for the 'wooden walls' prophecies of Delphi. Dream oracles, on the other hand, were always, by their very nature, closed off – received internally and personally within sleep. Incubation was performed by an individual and is a record of a personal experience. It could be done by anyone, and unlike the Pythia there were no particular cult rules regulating the reception of the oracle. It is worth recalling that in the case raised by Hyperides in defence of Euxenippus, he notes that this Euxenippus was one of *three* people sent to dream at the Amphiareion. Presumably the reason for sending three is that the three different oracles could be contrasted against each other when they reported to judge better which answer was correct. Euxenippus, though he was a wealthy man and mine-owner, had no more authority in consulting the god than any other citizen; it was, in the end, down to

[44] Cf. Dillery (2005: 217): 'It seems as though the fewer intermediary stages there were between a divine communication and its reception and interpretation, the less room there was for controversy'.

his word alone, and it was this element which allowed him to be called immediately into doubt. In contrast, when the earlier kings and generals consulted the oracle, they were already in autonomous positions, and acting within a monarchical regime where the decision-making power rested with the individual, and where they were free from the constraints of public debate; their uniquely solitary position allowed them to use dreams as an effective policy device, even if on occasion they had to trust the intermediaries who slept on their behalf.[45] But the personal nature of incubation, the inwardness of the revelation, made it impractical in a democratic, public setting.

It has been argued that the decline in the importance of traditional oracles in a political context in democracies such as Athens was in part because of the nature of democracy itself; to subject oneself to the will of the god through consultation of an oracle was akin to sacrificing one's right to choose.[46] I would firmly agree, and add that while democracy diluted the importance of traditional oracles, it did not affect the personal level at which incubation oracles were consulted. Indeed, the very openness of incubation oracles made them almost the oracles of the people. The *iamata* at Epidaurus, for instance, often stress that reciprocal offerings, while expected, should always be within one's means: Euphanes, a boy from Epidaurus who suffered from stones slept in the temple, and in his dream the god asked: 'What will you give me if I cure you?' The boy replied, 'Ten dice' (*δέκ' ἀστραγάλους*). The god laughed and said he would cure him.[47] One did not need to arrive dragging a golden lion like Croesus.[48] By remaining insular the dream oracles prospered, for the self-determination of a citizen brought up in a democratic culture was not lost, since it

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[45] Cf. Sineux (2007: 194-197).
[46] Parker (2000: 103-104); Price (1999: 74-75); Osborne (1997*b*: 352). Against this theory, see now Bowden (2005); Harrison (2006: 139-140).
[47] Edelstein T. 423.8 = *IG* IV² 1.121.VIII.
[48] Although Aleshire (1992) has shown that at the Athenian Asklepieion dedications were not made predominantly by the lower classes, as is often presumed.

was his or her choice to consult the god on a subject specific to their own lives. The traditional oracles lost their importance within such democratic cultures. When kingship returned in the post-classical age, their authority was again usurped, this time by the kings themselves.[49] By then, the link between healing and incubation was so entrenched that we do not find further consultations via incubation on political matters.

(ii)

Dream Interpreters

The dream interpreters belong to the inductive aspect of divination by dreams; they were not connected to any specific sanctuary, and did not interpret while inspired,[50] but instead decoded the messages embedded within the dreams of others. The dream interpreters belong in the same group as the other itinerant diviners of the ancient world, the seers or *manteis*, and oracular specialists the *chresmologues*. Although the *manteis* were most famous for reading the signs in sacrificial entrails and for interpreting the flight paths of birds, they had a broad range of skills, and often subsumed within their capacity other specialist areas such as the interpretation of omens, functioning as *teratoskopoi*.[51] The *chresmologues*, often derided as oracle-mongers, were in fact diviners who claimed a special knowledge of oracles, either as speakers of oracles, collectors of oracles, interpreters of oracles, or indeed all three.[52] It is, in fact, not always clear that the *manteis* and *chresmologues* should be seen as two distinct groups,[53] and one should always allow room for overlap, but nonetheless they represent the central backdrop against which to measure the dream interpreters, and will

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[49] Parker (2000: 102-103).
[50] With the possible exception of Homer's *oneiropolos* – see below.
[51] Flower (2008); Burkert (2005: 43); Lévy (1997: 349-350).
[52] Bowden (2003: 256*ff*).
[53] Full bibliography in Bowden (2003: 257n.5).

provide a key reference frame in the following investigation. I will first of all outline what we know of the dream interpreters in the Greek world – who they were and when they were active. I will then analyse how they practiced interpretation, in particular their possible reliance on dreambooks and whether they derived their authority from them. Having established this background, I will then look at the areas in which they functioned in the public and/or private sphere, and the extent to which their skill was unique to them or also adopted by general *manteis*.

The earliest reference we have to a dream interpreter appears in the *Iliad*. On the tenth day of the divine plague sent by Apollo to punish the Achaeans for the impious behaviour of Agamemnon towards the priest Chryses, Achilles addressed a gathered counsel as to the best course of action, saying:

> *ἀλλ' ἄγε δή τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν ἢ ἱερῆα,*
> *ἢ καὶ ὀνειροπόλον, καὶ γάρ τ'ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν,*
> *ὅς κ' εἴποι ὅ τι τόσσον ἐχώσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,*[54]
>
> But come let us ask some seer or priest,
> Or even an ὀνειροπόλος, for also the dream is from Zeus,
> Who can tell why Phoebus Apollo conceived anger of such a kind.

The *oneiropolos* referred to here by Homer is some form of dream specialist. In this first instance it is not, however, automatic that he must be a dream interpreter, for in the present context to translate it as such would not quite make sense.[55] An interpreter would

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[54] Hom. *Il.* I.62-64.

[55] Which is presumably why Zenodotus rejected the line. Kirk (1985) suggests it was 'because dream interpreters, not otherwise mentioned in the *Iliad*, belong to a different category from prophets and priests'. In a rare oversight he has forgotten Eurydamus at *Il.* V.149. Aristarchus (cf. Kirk *ibid.*) in order to make sense of it shifted the comma from after ἱερῆα to after ἐρείομεν, implying that it referred to a subcategory of the seer in general, either one who interprets from sacrifices or one from dreams. Such a shift seems unnecessary considering that Eurydamas is clearly classed as an *oneiropolos* alone. It also removes the 'afterthought effect' of line 63: see Kirk *ibid.* Most Homeric lexicographers translate *oneiropolos* simply as dream-interpreter:

need dreams to work with, to take his information from, just as the seer might need to go and inspect the sacrificial entrails. Yet whose dreams must we assume here that he is judging? If Achilles is suggesting that they ask some 'dream interpreter' what he thinks, then that presupposes that they have given him a dream to work with, which would presumably need to be the dream of someone important, Achilles himself, Menelaos, Agamemnon and so on. Otherwise, they would have to go now and dream themselves, and then come back to him to ask his judgement.

It would make more sense in the current context if we understood the *oneiropolos* as not an interpreter of others' dreams, but a specialist dreamer himself.[56] They would summon him either to go and sleep in order to receive divine guidance through dream, or equally they might have expected him to have already received such pertinent information. This not only fits the sense of the passage, but might also have linguistic support. Although Chantraine and Frisk state that the *oneiropolos* is, respectively, an '*interprète des songes*' and a '*Traumdeuter*', their conclusions are based (presumably – for they give no explanation) on the Eurydamas episode (which I will discuss shortly) and the later uses of the word in Herodotus *et al.* Yet there is other linguistic evidence which might contradict them in this case. First, the verb *ὀνειροπολέω*, as used by Aristophanes and Plato, means simply 'the act of dreaming'.[57] Therefore if in the verbal form *ὀνειροπολέω* means 'to dream', then it seems logical that the noun *ὀνειροπόλος* would be 'dreamer'.[58]

Autenrieth (1984); Ebeling (1885). Cunliffe (1963) is slightly looser: 'one busied with dreams, one skilled in the interpretation of dreams'.

[56] As argued by Messer (1918: 6); Kessels (1978: 18). It was also an explanation favoured by the ancient scholiasts, eg. Aristarchus as cited by Kirk (1990: 73). Dodds (1951: 123n.22) admits only the possibility. Others remain undecided: Van Lieshout (1980: 165); Lévy (1982: 38-39).

[57] See pp.77*ff*, above.

[58] The etymologists follow a more circuitous route: *πολος* is derived from the verb πέλομαι, thus ultimately from the verb πολέω (so the two words, *ὀνειροπόλος* and *ὀνειροπολέω*, are directly linked etymologically).

In the only other occurrence of the word in Homer, it is clearer that the sense is of 'dream interpreter'. As Diomedes, the great Argive warrior, rampages through the Trojan ranks, Homer names some of those he kills. Amongst them are Polyidos and Abas, who are referred to as the sons of Eurydamas:[59]

> *ὁ δ'Ἄβαντα μετώχετο καὶ Πολύιδον,*
> *υἷεας Εὐρυδάμαντος, ὀνειροπόλοιο γέροντος·*
> *τοῖς οὐκ ἐρχομένοις ὁ γέρων ἐκρίνατ' ὀνείρους,*
> *ἀλλά σφεας κρατερὸς Διομήδης ἐξενάριξε·* [60]

Thus they are the sons of on an aged *oneiropolos*, Eurydamas. Once again there is some dispute over the exact meaning of this passage, which ultimately boils down to whether one translates *ἐρχομένοις* in the penultimate line as 'coming' or 'going'. One could translate it either as 'the old man interpreted[61] no dreams for them coming [back home]', in other words they never returned for him to do any more interpreting. Or, 'the old man interpreted no dream for them when they were coming/going [to Troy]', in other words he did not foresee their fate.[62] In the present context, it is not so important whether they were coming or going (though I would follow Kirk *et al* in preferring 'going'), but whose dreams were being interpreted. The most obvious answer is that it was his sons': 'he failed to interpret his sons' dreams when they were going [to Troy].'[63] On such a reading of the passage in question, it would be undeniable that here the *oneiropolos* reads the dreams of others (in this case, his

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[59] Dodds (1951: 22).
[60] Hom. *Il.* V.148-151.
[61] Such a translation of κρίνω has been challenged: Kessels (1978: 18) preferred 'separated', stating that Homer generally uses *μαντεύομαι* for the interpretation of omens. But cf. *Od.* 19.536, when Penelope clearly uses *ὑποκρίνομαι* with dream to mean 'interpret'. Kessels is also working towards his thesis that the *oneiropolos* was just a separator of dreams – he distinguished which were important and which not; this does not, to my mind, make sense in either context in the *Iliad*. Van Lieshout (1980: 166) prefers 'sorting out', seemingly following the line of Kessels. Again, such translation seems unwarranted.
[62] Kirk (1990) prefers the second explanation, based on Leaf's arguments (1900): 1) that it seems odd to think the old man thought 'a specimen of his peculiar skill would be the best welcome for his returning sons'; 2) that *ἔρχομαι* is used in the same manner as the second sense at V.198, whereas the verb regularly used for returning home is *νίσσεσθαι* or *νοστεῖν*. Leaf adds a third possibility, suggested by *Schol. A.*, that 'the old man prophesised to them that they would not come back'. He rightly rejects this, because we would surely expect a future tense rather than present.
[63] As Dodds (1951: 22).

sons). One could argue at a stretch that, as the case is dative, one possible translation is: 'the old man did not interpret dreams *for them*'.[64] It is not necessarily their dreams that he did not interpret, but could equally be a failure to interpret his own (correctly) on their behalf.[65] But by far the more straightforward translation is that it was his sons' dreams which he failed to interpret correctly. Therefore, in this instance, the term *oneiropolos* is being used of a dream interpreter, rather than a specialist dreamer. The fact that two different senses are found in Homer suggests that at this early stage the *oneiropolos* probably had a dual role.

Herodotus also employs the term *oneiropolos*, and in his usage it does clearly denote a dream interpreter. When Astyages dreamt that his daughter Mandane urinated in such quantities that it filled his city and swamped the whole of Asia, he referred it to the *oneiropoloi*. Their initial interpretation (not detailed by Herodotus) alarmed him so much that he married her off to the Persian Cambyses. After they had been married for a year, he had another dream, where he thought he saw a vine growing from her private parts and spreading over Asia. Once again he turns to the *oneiropoloi* for an interpretation; this time we learn that they had told the king that the dream meant that his daughter's son would usurp the throne.[66] In a similar manner, when Hipparchus had his dream before the Panathenaic festival in which a man stood over his bed and spoke some riddling words, he referred this to the *oneiropoloi*. Again, the details of their response are not given by Herodotus.[67] It is interesting that, after Herodotus, the term *oneiropolos* dies out, and is replaced by the Hellenistic period with *oneirokritēs*. Perhaps this was to avoid the possible confusions inherent in Homer's usage – there could be no doubt that the *oneirokritēs*, with the *krinō* element, was an interpreter, and not a specialist dreamer.

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[64] Cf. the translation of Kirk (1990: 73).
[65] Van Lieshout (1980: 166) notes it might be significant that κρίνω is in the middle voice, but surely this does not indicate anything: it was also in his own interests to interpret his sons' dreams.
[66] Hdt. I. 107-108.
[67] Hdt. V. 55-56.

Other early references to dream interpreters in literature are rare. There are traditions which refer to the Homeric age (although when these traditions began is impossible to calculate) which do refer to the activities of interpreters. The mythographer Apollodorus records an old legend about Hecuba who, when pregnant with Paris, dreamed she gave birth to a firebrand and that the fire spread over all of Troy and burned it down.[68] In order to interpret this dream, Priam sent for his son Aesacus, a dream interpreter.[69] According to Apollodorus, Aesacus was a third generation dream interpreter, having been taught by his maternal grandfather Merops. So we have a tradition, purporting to go a long way back into the archaic age, that dream interpreters were actively interpreting the dreams of others, but how late had this tradition taken shape? The earliest reference to it comes from a fragment of Pindar, which records a slightly different version that Hecuba dreamed she gave birth to a Hundred-Hander. It seems she again referred this to a man, although frustratingly the fragment breaks off before we can know exactly who he was.[70] The question still remains how late the dream interpreter could have become part of the tale – it might simply be a subsequent addition once consultation of a dream interpreter became more common. But still, if it is present in Pindar then that suggests it was at the latest by the early 5th century.[71]

This sparse collection of evidence in the early literature can be complemented by the more concrete evidence we have related to actual dream interpreters active in the 5th century,

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[68] Apoll. III.12.5.
[69] 'ὀνειροκρίτης', reflecting the later usage of the word.
[70] Pind. *Paian* 8a. Rutherford (2001: 236) proposed that it was Aesacus, based on the legends recorded at Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.12.5; Lyc. 224*ff*. Gantz (1993: 562) suggested only that the man was a mantis. Robert (1914: 318) suggests instead Helenus.
[71] See too a brief fragment of Magnes' lost comedy *Ludoi*, dated to the early fifth century: ὀνειρομάντεσιν ἀναλυταις = *PCG* 5.630 = Poll. VII.188. It seems to link dream interpreters with the delivery from a spell, as suggested by Van Lieshout (1980: 168); he also proposes 'delivery from magic spell (as performed by) dream interpreters'. See also Dodds (1951: 205n.99): an 'undoer' of spells; Edmonds (1957) 'interpreter of dreams, loosers of spells'. However it occurs in Pollux within a collection of different types of mantis, and it is plausible that the ὀνειρομάντεσιν and ἀναλυταις could have been separate originally.

and who are linked to the authorship of dreambooks. One of the earliest dream-book authors was Antiphon (late 5th C). He is named as a diviner and dreambook writer in six ancient *testimonia*, and the ancient sources reveal to us seven fragments of his dreambook, although unfortunately no part of the book has survived to us in its original form.[72] He is even mentioned once by Artemidorus, if only fleetingly: 'Soft fish are advantageous for criminals alone, for they escape notice by changing their colours and becoming like whatever places they are in ... The last one alone benefits as well those who are trying to escape, because of its ink, which it often uses to run away. Antiphon of Athens also mentions this dream' (*Οἱ δὲ μαλακοὶ τῶν ἰχθύων μόνοις τοῖς πανουργεῖν τι ἐπιχειροῦσι συμφέρουσι. Καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ μεταβάλλοντες τὰ χρώματα καὶ ὁμοιούμενοι τοῖς τόποις, ἐν οἷς ἂν γένωνται, λανθάνουσι ... Αὕτη δὲ μόνη καὶ τοὺς ἀποδράναι βουλομένους ὠφελεῖ διὰ τὸν θολόν, ᾧ χρωμένη πολλάκις φεύγει. Μέμνηται τοῦ ὀνείρου τούτου καὶ Ἀντιφῶν ὁ Ἀθηναῖος*), (F78 Pendrick = Artem. *On.* 2.14).

Antiphon, however, was not a rare name in classical Athens, and there is considerable disagreement over who exactly the dreambook author was. From a number of possibilities he is usually identified as one (or more) of three figures: Antiphon 'the sophist', who we find disputing with Socrates in Xenophon, author of works including *On Concord* and *On Truth*; Antiphon the Rhamnusian, the Attic orator, involved in the oligarchic coup of 411, and the author of three courtroom speeches and three *Tetralogies*; and Antiphon the tragedian, killed by Dionysius at Syracuse.[73] From this group, we can, with relative confidence, separate the tragedian from the orator on chronological grounds. The former was, according to all sources, flogged to death on the order of Dionysius in Syracuse,[74] whilst we know that the latter was

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[72] Collected in Pendrick (2002). See T2(a) = Hermog. *De id.*2.11; T3 = *Suda* s.v. Antiphon; T5 = Diog. Laer. 2.46; T7 = Lucian *VH* 2.33; T11(a) = Ps.-Callis. *HAM* 11.1-4; T11(b) = Schol. on Herm. *De Id.*400.3; T12 = Tert. *De Anima* 46.10. See also fragments 78-81b.

[73] Sophist: Xen. *Mem.* 1.6.1-15; Rhamnusian: Thuc. 8.68; Tragedian: Arist. *Rh.* 2.6. To these three was added Antiphon 'Son of Lysonides' in Pseudo-Plutarch's *Life*; he has found support from Edwards (1998), but on dubious grounds: see Pendrick (2002: 1n.4).

[74] Arist. *Rh.* 2.6.27; Plut. *De Stoic.* 1051c-d.

tried and executed at Athens following the coup in 411.[75] Whilst some might still argue that all three are the same man, the principle point of contention which remains is whether there should be a distinction made between the sophist and the Rhamnusian.[76] The arguments between the 'separatists' and 'unitarians' boil down to three issues: the ancient sources – who themselves are rarely in agreement; linguistic and/or stylistic differences and/or similarities in the various works attributed to the Antiphons; and whether there are affinities or variations in the ideas which are raised in these texts.[77] This is disappointing, because in the current context it would be very interesting to know whether the dreambook was written by a sophist, or by a renowned orator, the receiver of much Thucydidean praise. If one is a 'separatist', then the obvious choice as the author of the dreambook is the sophist. According to Hermogenes, it was the 'other' Antiphon (i.e. not the Rhamnusian) who was a diviner and dream interpreter (*ὁ καὶ τερατοσκόπος καὶ ὀνειροκρίτης*).[78] This position has been challenged, and is far from certain;[79] note that the dreambook itself is not actually included in the list made by Hermogenes of Antiphon the sophist's works, though this could be explained: it may well not have formed part of the traditional *corpus Antiphonteum*, but circulated separately, probably with other dreambooks. Nevertheless, the overall issue is important because it would reveal something about the authority of dreambooks – if written by a famous orator and politician, they could not be considered the preserve of an isolated few diviners. Indeed, it would be extremely strange to find Thucydides offering such high praise to the author of a dreambook, regardless of what else he had accomplished. It should perhaps

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[75] Thuc. 8.68.
[76] The support for full unification can be found in: Ps-Plut, *Life of Ant.*; Joël (1893-1901: 2.649, n.2).
[77] This argument has been summarized most recently by Pendrick (2002: chpt.1); Gagarin (2002); Woodruff (2004).
[78] Herm. *De Id.* 2.11 = T2(a) (Pendrick); cf. the *Suda* s.v. Antiphon = T3 (Pendrick), which seems to separate the sophist from the dream-interpreter.
[79] See in particular Wilamowitz (1959: 1.61n.1); Nestle (1942: 388-389); Dodds (1951: 119n.100); with the counter-arguments of Pendrick (2002: 24-26). Näf (2004: 47) remains undecided.

be noted that nowhere in the ancient sources themselves do we find the Rhamnusian alone cited as the author of the dreambook (as we do the sophist); he is only considered the author when conflated with the sophist.[80] This is, I think, a key piece of evidence, and strongly suggests that the dreambook should be linked with the sophist.

An important caveat, though, is that just because we know he wrote a book on dreams, we need not necessarily assume that he was a professional dream interpreter.[81] It is not clear whether he intended his work to be used as a genuine aid in dream interpretation, or as an example of his own skill in argumentation. It was this skill which gave him his renown: according to Philostratus, Antiphon was nicknamed 'Nestor', because of his persuasive capacity when speaking on any subject.[82] It is certainly true that persuasiveness was a necessary skill for both a sophist and a rhetor, and one which is equally at home in a work on dream interpretation.

In terms of his dreambook, it seems he set out a number of dreams, and then offered explanations, rather than actually setting out his own system for interpretation.[83] In Cicero, he is noted as the model for Chrysippus (active in the 3rd century BC): both collected dreams and showed those which 'display the interpreter's cleverness' (quae Antiphontis interpretatione declarant illa quidem acumen interpretis).[84] An example is the runner setting out for the Olympic games, who dreamt he was riding in a four-horse chariot: he went to a dream-interpreter, who said that he would win, because the horses signify speed and power;

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[80] For example, in T2(a), the rhetor is separated from the 'other' Antiphon who wrote the dreambook and philosophy; in T3, all three (the rhetor, tragedian, and dreambook writer) are kept separate; in T2(b), the rhetor and tragedian are conflated, and the dreambook is not mentioned.
[81] Aristotle wrote an *On Divination in Dreams*, and he most certainly was not a professional diviner.
[82] Phil. *Vit. Soph.* 1.15 = T6(d) (Pendrick). This quote is in reference to Antiphon's 'grief clinic', which may well be a comic fantasy (Pendrick (2002: 240-242)).
[83] I see no need to follow the overly complex arguments of Luria (1926: passim), followed up in (1927), (1928), in which he discerns in Artemidorus a system of interpretation derived from Antiphon. He has since been soundly rejected by Latte (1929), (1968: 218-24). See in detail n.107, below.
[84] Cic. *De Div.* 1.39 = F79 (Pendrick).

Antiphon argued, however, that he would certainly lose, for four ran in front of him.[85] It may well be that Antiphon in his book set out the dream and an interpretation, before offering his own, correct, interpretation.[86] It has even been proposed that he was setting up opposing arguments in the style of sophistic *antilogia*, but this has rightly been rejected because the arguments have no balance, but rather are tipped firmly in Antiphon's favour.[87] The question remains whether this was a book written to display his own cleverness and the nature of divinatory signs to have multiple potential outcomes, or as a genuine aid to dream-interpretation. There are a few other fragments which might display a more pragmatic approach to dream interpretation. In a fragment preserved by the 3rd century BC author Melampus in his *On Divination by Palpitation*, he comments: 'if the right eye twitches, you will have your enemies under control, according to Phemonoe and Egyptians and Antiphon; ... If the upper lid of the right eye twitches, it signifies gain generally, and according to Antiphon success and health' (*ὀφθαλμὸς δεξιὸς ἐὰν ἅλληται, κατὰ Φημονόην καὶ Αἰγυπτίους καὶ Ἀντιφῶντα ἐχθροὺς ὑποχειρίους ἕξει· ... ὀφθαλμοῦ δεξιοῦ τὸ ἄνω βλέφαρον ἐὰν ἅλληται, ἐπίκτησιν πάντως δηλοῖ, κατὰ δὲ Ἀντιφῶντα πρᾶξιν καὶ ὑγείαν*).[88] He is also named by Fulgentius, in the late 5th century AD, alongside a number of later interpreters as one who promised in his book that if you lay laurel beside the sleeper's head, they will see true dreams.[89] In both of these cases, Antiphon would appear to be suggesting more practical applications. However, both of these sources are late, and it is likely that Antiphon's name has become attached to these lists purely as decoration, and not based on the transmission of information from his dreambook.[90]

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[85] Cic. De Div. 2.144 = F80(a) (Pendrick); cf. F80(b) Pendrick.
[86] Del Corno (1962: 349-352); Van Lieshout (1980: 223), in reference to Clem. *Strom.* 7.4.24.4 = T8 (Pendrick); and Pendrick (2002: 52-53).
[87] Proposed by Aly (1929: 100-101) and Del Corno (1962: 349-352); rejected by Pendrick (2002: 52).
[88] Mel. *Peri Pal.* 18-19 = F81(a) (Pendrick).
[89] Fulg. *Mitol.* 1.14.
[90] See Pendrick's commentary (2002: 429-430).

Question marks remain over the intention of his work, and whether he was a professional or not.

Besides Antiphon, we also have Panyassis the younger from Halicarnassus. According to the Suda: *Πανύασις: Ἁλικαρνασσεύς, νεώτερος, <τερατοσκόπος καὶ> φιλόσοφος. Περὶ ὀνείρων βιβλία δύο.*[91] Little is known of this 'younger' Panyassis – younger in comparison to Panyassis the epic poet, relative of Herodotus and author of a fourteen book work on Heracles who was active in the early 5th century.[92] Therefore it is possible that Panyassis the younger was active in the mid-late fifth century, if not the fourth.[93]

We can be sure that he wrote the two-book work on dreams, because it is referred to on three occasions by Artemidorus. From what we can glean Panyassis certainly sought to explain his interpretations, rather than having an exclusive emphasis on 'cleverness'. For instance, Artemidorus states that all swimming dreams are inauspicious, and the reasons for this have been carefully explained by Panyassis. Similarly, when discussing visions of deities, he comments that if the god moves to the west or is not wearing proper attire, this is inauspicious: 'for, as Panyassis states, it prophesies that the affairs of the dreamer will be unsuccessful and ineffectual' (*ὡς γὰρ φησὶν ὁ Πανύασις, ἀπτόλεμα καὶ ἀσθενῆ ἔσεσθαι τὰ πράγματα τοῦ ἰδόντος προαγορεύει*).[94] He even discussed the phenomenon of mass dreams – the concept that matters of importance to the state as a whole could be seen by a number of dreamers, and not just one.[95]

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[91] T1b (Matthews). Cf. Stoessl (1949: 922-3); Del Corno (1969: 34-36; 121-22); Matthews (1974: 9); Van Lieshout (1980: 190-192); Näf (2004: 47).

[92] His *Heracleia* received some praise in antiquity: Dion. Hal. *De imit.* Fr.6,2,4; Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.54. The *Suda* reports two traditions relevant to the date of this 'older' Panyassis: *ὁ δε Πανύασις γέγονε κατὰ τὴν οη΄ὀλυμπίαδα κατὰ δέ τινας πολλῷ πρεσβύτερος. καὶ γὰρ ἦν ἐπὶ τῶν Περσικῶν. ἀνῃρέθη δὲ ὑπὸ Λυγδάμιδος, τοῦ τρίτου τυραννήσαντος Ἁλικαρνασσοῦ* = T1a (Matthews). The question of dates is dealt with fully by Matthews (1974: 8-19; p.15 in particular on Panyassis the younger).

[93] As argued in the 19th century by Tzschirner (1842).

[94] Artem. I.64 p.70; II.35, p.159.

[95] Artem. I.2. p.39.

In addition to Panyassis the younger, there is also a tradition which attaches a dreambook to Aristander of Telmessus, the famous seer who accompanied Alexander on his expeditions.[96] The problem here is deciding whether Aristander actually wrote the book himself, or if owing to his fame it has become retrospectively attributed to him. He was certainly thought to have interpreted some dreams. According to Plutarch, when Philip dreamt that he was placing a seal with the figure of a lion on his wife's tomb, Aristander judged correctly that Olympias was pregnant with a son: no seal is put upon something empty, and the lion symbolises the lion-like nature of the child.[97] Artemidorus also records how he interpreted the dream of Alexander at the siege of Tyre: Alexander dreamt he saw a satyr dancing on his shield, and felt dispirited, but Aristander divided the word satyr into *sa* and *tyros*, Tyre is yours, which reinvigorated Alexander and helped him conquer the city.[98] These legendary stories may well have led to a dreambook becoming attached to him. There is no doubt that one existed, for Artemidorus quotes from it, and even states that Aristander was the best of the interpreters. He credits him as one of the early writers who defined anagrammatical transposition in the context of dream interpretation, whereby syllables or letters are shifted to provide an explanation. He adds a criticism that, though these authors may have defined it, they never actually employed it – clearly he did not consider the Alexander episode to be one of 'transposition', for no syllables or letters were actually rearranged.[99] He also claims that Aristander gave the greatest number of valid explanations for dreams involving teeth.[100] There was even a tradition that the Telmessians as a people

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[96] Bouché-Leclercq (1879-82: II.96*ff*, with I.135n.1, 296, 297, 313, 328; II.96*ff*); Berve (1926: 90-92).
[97] Plut. *Alex.* 2. Birth and pregnancy dreams appear elsewhere, eg. Hdt. III.161; Aesch. *Cho.* 523-554. The lion element is also something of a convention: see Harvey (1966: 254-5); Thomas (1989: 270-272); Munson (2001: 246); Harrison (2000: 140 with n.64).
[98] Artem. 4.24; cf. Plut. *Alex.* 24, where Plutarch tells a very similar story but credits the interpretation to non-specific seers.
[99] Artem. 4.23.
[100] Artem. 1.31.

were skilled in dream interpretation, though this could simply reflect the influence of Aristander.[101] When dealing with such a famous seer as Aristander, it is difficult to determine which traditions are genuine, and which have been skewed over time.

Added to these dreambook authors, we also have brief references to other dream interpreters who were active using a different onirocritic tool, the dream *pinax*. Plutarch refers to a grandson of Aristides, Lysimachus, who made his living by means of 'some sort of dream-interpreting tablet' (*ἐκ πινακίου τινὸς ὀνειροκριτικοῦ*), his seat being near the Iaccheium.[102] Plutarch names his source as Demetrius of Phaleron's *Socrates*; Demetrius was a philosopher and statesman active in the late 4th century. Alciphron has probably repeated this same source, when he too mentions a man who offered his πινακια near the Iaccheium, and promised to interpret your dreams.[103] If he was a grandson of Aristides, then he could have been active from the mid-to-late 5th century. It is not clear what exactly the pinax was, but in its other uses it denotes a wooden tablet upon which dedications, catalogues or judgements were written.[104] Presumably in this case inscribed on the *pinax* were items relevant to the interpretation; the small size (relative to a dreambook) would restrict how much could fit on them, so perhaps it was a template or a record of successful interpretations.

Further evidence of these *pinakia* may be present at Xenophon *Anabasis* 7.8.1. Xenophon describes how, upon sailing to Lampsacus, he was met by Euclides of Phlius, the son of Cleagoras. According to the one version of the manuscripts: *ὁ Κλεαγόρου υἱὸς τοῦ τὰ*

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[101] Clem. *Strom.* 1.16; Tert. *De Anima* 46.3. Note however Harvey (1991), on whether this is the Carian or Lycian Telmessos. Cf. the separate tradition that the inhabitants of Hybla Gereatis and Greater Hybla, in Sicily, were noted dream interpreters, Paus. 5.23.6. Cf. Hom *Il.* 16.234-235: Homer mentions in the *Iliad* the Selloi in Dodona, interpreters (ὑποφῆται) who sleep on the ground (χαμαιεῦναι). However, Homer draws no link between the sleeping and the interpreting, so we should be wary of attaching too much significance to them; Dodds (1951: 126n.47). Van Lieshout (1980: 14) presumes too much.

[102] Plut. *Arist.* 27.3.

[103] Alciph. *Epist.* III.23.1.

[104] Dedication: for example Plut. *Them.* 5; Simonides *Anth. Pal.* 6.213; Paus. 1.2.6; catalogues: Diog. Laer. 8.86; Ath. 6.244a; Plut. *Sulla* 26; judgements: Plato *Crit.* 120c. Cf. also Hom. *Il.* 6.169; Aesch. *Suppl.* 946; Ar. *Thesm.* 778, Demos. 44.35. Cf. Turner (1952: 12): a *pinax* was a framed board filled with wax, whose main purpose was for writing down memoranda.

ἐνύπνια ἐν Λυκείῳ γεγραφότος.[105] The translation, that he 'wrote up/displayed/set up/inscribed the dreams', presumably means that Kleagoras was a dream interpreter who wrote down certain dreams and/or interpretations on a tablet (s), and then kept these or set them up in the Lyceum. It is difficult to know exactly what Kleagoras was trying to achieve; the fact that he set up the record of dreams specifically in the Lyceum suggests that there was some connection between the dreams and the place. If he was doing this at a temple, then the obvious connection would be that he was trying to magnify the glory of a god by setting up records of dreams in which he (or others) was visited - a small-scale version of the *iamata* at Epidaurus, praising and recording the works of Asclepius, or the dream epiphanies (amongst other acts) performed by Athena which were engraved at Lindos in Rhodes.[106] Yet because this is the Lyceum, the gymnasium/academy, it is hard to believe that Kleagoras was attempting something similar to the Epidaurian priests. Wilamowitz supposes that he was in fact displaying a *pinax*, as advertising for his dream-interpretation. This makes sense: the Lyceum would see its fair share of passers-by; it provides a locus from which to conduct business; one could even consider it a safe store for his *pinax*. It is interesting that Kleagoras is the father of the soothsayer, Euclides of Phlius. One could argue that the reason Xenophon mentions the two together is to suggest implicitly a link between the father's skills and the son's: (the seer) Euclides, son of (the famous seer) Kleagoras. This would support the suggestion that Kleagoras was a dream interpreter.

Overall, the evidence for active dream interpreters in this period is not abundant, and we have noticeably fewer mentions of interpreters than we do of dreams. But still, the fact

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[105] From the Codices Deteriores. The *OCT*, based on the collection of Codices known as CBAE reads: Κλεαγόρου υἱὸς τοῦ τὰ ἐντοίχια ἐν Λυκείῳ γεγραφότος. Bornemann, as cited by Von Wilamowitz (1919: 65), first suggested this emendation; however *entoichia* is a conjecture whereas *enupnia* is in some manuscripts. It is now generally agreed that the Codices Deteriores are not always wrong; thus if a Codices Deteriores reading makes sense there is no reason to reject it in favour of a conjecture. See too Von Wilamowitz (1919: 65*f*); followed by Masquery (1931); Dodds (1951: 132n.99); Van Lieshout (1980); Lane Fox (2001: 8).
[106] On Epidaurus: Aleshire (1989). On Lindos: Higbie (2003: 43*ff*, with comms. 280-282).

that they are referred to explicitly by Homer attests to their presence in Greek society from an early stage, and the few names we have from the fifth century and on into the fourth illustrate their continued activity.

The tools of interpretation, the dreambooks and *pinakia*, can also be recreated to a degree, even though there are limitations in the evidence which is patchy and mostly late, stemming from references in Artemidorus. Antiphon, as has already been discussed, probably represents an exception, for he composed his book as a vehicle for displaying his intelligence, and the instability of interpretation – the possibility of associating a single 'signifier' with multiple 'signifieds'.[107] His art was in illustrating how a single divine sign could be interpreted to give numerous meanings. It was therefore not strictly a tool for oneirocritics *per se*, though one could argue that this very intelligence in shaping the dream imagery to fit a certain outcome was an important feature of all *oneirocriticism*. He did not, however, set out his interpretations as a coherent theory (so far as we can tell), but instead as a series of individual set-pieces. From the examples, on the other hand, found in Panyassis and 'Aristander' (pseudo-dreambook author), they seem to explain dreams in a typological manner, i.e. without using sophisticated analogy to interpret just an individual case, but instead setting out a system which would apply to all dreams of a certain type. Thus, for example, in Panyassis we find that he gave consideration to the idea of dreams relevant to the entire state: they could either be seen by a number of normal people at the same time, or on an individual basis by people who were generals or prophets.[108] He is further mentioned as

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[107] I think it is unfeasible, given how few fragments we have, to attempt anything as detailed as Luria (1926), followed up in (1927), (1928); he sought to find in Artemidorus a sophistic system of dream interpretation adopted from Antiphon, based on the Stoic distinction between 'natural' and 'artificial' divination, ultimately arguing there were two schools of dream interpretation in classical Greece – one religious, and one 'scientific' founded by Antiphon. His arguments are dense and difficult to follow in places, but they have been followed by some scholars, most notably Dietrich (1927); Untersteiner (1962). Dodds (1951: 132n.99) admits he is difficult to follow, but still suggests he is 'perhaps right'. His thesis has been convincingly criticized by Latte (1929: 218*ff*); cf.Blum (1936: 72-80). Pendrick (2002: 50-52) provides an excellent brief survey of the arguments.
[108] Artem. *On.* 1.2.

having 'carefully explained' the reasons why swimming dreams are inauspicious for everybody, because they signify danger and disease.[109] And concerning dreams of deities, as we have seen Panyassis stated that dreams in which the god moves to the west, or is not wearing proper attire, are inauspicious, because they prophecy that the affairs of the dreamer will be unsuccessful and ineffectual.[110] The emphasis in this case seems to be establishing categories of dreams and providing interpretations and explanations, rather than isolated solutions to dream episodes. The same is true in some of the traditions about 'Aristander': he is praised as having given the greatest number of valid explanations for tooth dreams, which he goes through in all their intricate variations.[111] At a base level, the mouth is interpreted as a house, and the teeth the inhabitants, where the upper teeth represent the more important members of the dreamer's household, and the lower those less important. Teeth dreams and their relevance are all ultimately linked back to this; thus if all your teeth fall out at once, and you yourself are healthy and free, your house will be deserted by everyone alike. Artemidorus also names him as one of the early writers who talked about and defined anagrammatical transposition.[112] The desire to categorise and explain dreams as types is common to dreambooks throughout most cultures. In the ancient Near East, most books constituted a very basic list of dreams and corresponding outcomes; some English dreambooks have followed a more organized A to Z guide to meanings; while in Russia there was both the alphabetical type, as well as books that categorised dreams into distinct groups based on content, such as 'birds and insects' or 'the moon'.[113] From the evidence we have, it seems that the Greek dreambook authors were adhering to comparable patterns.

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[109] Artem. *On.* I.64.
[110] Artem. *On.* II.35.
[111] Artem. *On.* 1.31.
[112] Artem. *On.* 4.23.
[113] Near East: Oppenheim (1956); England: Perkins (2004); Russia: Wigzell (2004).

There should be no doubt that all interpreters would pride themselves on being clever - it is this capacity of the art which most often finds its way into our literary sources, for it makes for the most interesting stories: the famous legend about Aristander's interpretation of Alexander's dream at the siege of Tyre is as clever as anything we find in Antiphon.[114] But looking at the evidence collectively, it would seem that Antiphon sought only to display innovative solutions to individual dreams, and within his book set out a number of episodes which illustrated his point. Panyassis and 'Aristander', on the other hand, did actually engage with dreams at a broader level, setting out elements of systematic theory which could apply to dreams collectively, rather than just proposing single case studies. These have a more practical application for the practice of dream interpretation.

In the case of the *pinax*, the size obviously limits how much information could go on there. The likelihood is that the *pinax* had a brief outline or guide which he could use for interpreting – a mini dreambook. This is based on a potential parallel reported by Pausanias, who describes a small sanctuary of Heracles Buraicus at Bura, where divination is done by means of a tablet (*pinax*) and dice. Apparently the inquirer offers a prayer in front of the god's image, and after the prayer he takes four dice and throws them upon the table; for every figure made by the dice there is an explanation expressly written on the tablet.[115] Considering the size, the dream interpretations would have to be very brief: 'to see gods auspicious; to see the dead inauspicious', for example.[116] It was further suggested by Wilamowitz that it was a form of advertising for the interpreter's knowledge – i.e. on it would be recorded a few examples of dreams, his interpretations, and the successful outcomes.[117] When a client

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[114] Artem. *On.* 4.24; cf. Plut. *Alex.* 24.8-9.
[115] Paus. 7.25.10, with in general Nolle (2007).
[116] Dodds (1951: 119): 'a table of correspondences', and (1973: 179): 'a vast body of 'case law''.
[117] Wilamowitz (1919: 66).

approached him, he could produce his *pinax* as a kind of proof of his achievements. This might help explain the problem that, from the evidence we have of dream interpretation, it requires a lot of detail to be successful, which could not have fitted on the *pinax*. 'Seeing the gods' is not enough – one has to know their clothing, demeanour, the direction of their movement, their actions, and so on. Thus the dream *pinax* probably provided a loose base for judgment, as well as a point of advertising for his knowledge. In this manner it is related to the more elaborate dreambooks – whereas a *pinax* could provide a few dreams, and a few interpretations, the dreambooks developed the skill in all of its intricacies.[118]

Having analysed the content of the dreambooks and *pinakes*, we can now investigate how the interpreters actually used these onirocritic tools. One of the problems we face is that one never actually sees them at work in the ancient sources; in the early cases reported in literature, both in Homer and Herodotus, there is no reference to the consultation of books. The diviners seem to judge in much the same way as other *manteis*, by using a combination of analogy and past experience to formulate logical solutions to the riddles posed by the dream content. In reality, when the books were used by the interpreters they must have had some practical application, i.e. as aides-mémoires to interpretations. But it is also plausible that they had a secondary function – as a tangible representation of the interpreter's authority. Possession of dreambooks was a claim to knowledge.

That dreambooks must have had a practical use as a source of reference for the interpreter is surely the main reason for their existence. Interpretation was based on experience and cross-references to other instances, and the manuals provided a number of

[118] Dodds (1951: 119) understood the *pinakes* as predecessors to the dreambooks, but there is no chronological evidence which could support this.

cases which the interpreter could refer to that he would not have to commit to memory. That is why dreambooks have developed in other cultures, too, to serve explicitly as guides to the interpretation of dreams: if you see X, it means Y, because it happened in this way before. Artemidorus' work, for example, is in two parts; the first is dedicated to Cassius Maximus, and was intended for a general readership: using his guide the readers too would be able to decipher the meanings of dreams, just as Artemidorus himself admits to having collected numerous dreambooks over the years to expand his knowledge of examples and case studies. There must have been copies of Artemidrous' first part circulating, for he notes that after releasing the first two books (part one had three books), readers had approached him to complain that certain elements were absent, and so he collected these together in the third book.[119] Artemidorus intended his books to be used to interpret dreams, and they had a practical purpose. It does, however, seem unlikely that an interpreter would use his book for every interpretation – for one thing the very idiosyncratic nature of dreams means that they are so different, so individual, that it would take a dreambook on the scale of Artemidorus' to come even close to covering all eventualities (and Artemidorus is clear that his work is the most extensive). If a 20th century dreamer wanted to consult Freud about his dreams, he would not do so expecting Freud to recite from his book, but in the knowledge that Freud had written a thesis which set out a (in his view) sound system of dream interpretation; the book was a signifier of his knowledge and authority. This is surely the intention also with the ancient dreambooks; they conveyed some form of authority to back their judgements. Dreambooks provided an explanation for their decisions, as well as a collection of examples to support them, and were a physical representation of this experience which provided a base for their knowledge and skill. The authority of the interpreter becomes underpinned by his

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[119] Artem. *On.* 4.1.

use of dreambooks, or in the shorter form *pinakia*. Remember that, unlike seers, dream interpreters do not appear to have appealed to their genealogy as a means of authority.[120] Both would have relied on their successes to gain repute, but the dream interpreter might also have used his dreambook as a basis for his authority.

That they had this secondary purpose is again implied by Artemidorus. Unlike the first part, the second part of his work is intended only for his son, also called Artemidorus. The book was intended, so long as he kept its contents to himself, to make him 'a more excellent interpreter of dreams than anyone and the inferior of no man' (*Τὰ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα γραφησόμενα μένοντα ... παρὰ σοὶ, πάντων ὑπέρτερον, ἢ οὐδενός γε λειπόμενον ὀνειροκριτικόν* σε *ποιήσει*).[121] The information collected in this second part is for him alone, so that he knows more than anyone else (hence the practical aspect), yet surely also so that he has claims to a greater base of knowledge than anyone else, and is thus in a more authoritative position to judge dreams. Remember that in classical Greece it is extremely unlikely that many people would have had copies of the dreambooks; Artemidorus can aim his first part towards a more general readership, but he was writing in the 2nd century AD when the book market was more developed.[122] The rarity of the dreambooks in our period would have conferred on their possessors an extra degree of authority, for they had access to a special collection of knowledge; if everyone owned them then this effect would be diluted.[123]

The concept of authority in religious matters and written texts is not, however, a straightforward one. It is clear that sacred writings and *hieroi logoi* were associated with

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[120] Burkert (2005: 44); Dillery (2005: 173-174).
[121] Artem. *On.* 4.1.
[122] Harris (1989: 84-87) notes: 'in default of any evidence to the contrary ... we must suppose that the circulation of written literary works remained very small, even in Athens, throughout [the Classical] period, and miniscule in Greece as a whole'. Cf. Thomas (1992: 8,13); Turner (1952). In general, see Davison (1962); Kenyon (1951). Knox (1985) is willing to see a greater number of books in circulation than most.
[123] Cf. the amusing situation in Russia, where dreambooks in the 18th century were the preserve of the 'urban gentry', as a result of the high price of books and high illiteracy levels; as this changed in the 19th century and dreambooks gained a general rural readership, this same 'gentry' began to ridicule them: Wigzell (2004: 184-185).

marginal groups or esoteric cults in Greek religion, so we should not expect the dream interpreters to have been part of the mainstream.[124] Nevertheless, Henrichs noted that the phenomenon of 'ritual expertise based on the consultation of written texts' does emerge in the fifth century, and in the case of the writing down of oracles there was an authority which was conveyed by the act of writing, deriving in part from the permanency of the act.[125] Henrichs is talking in this case about more official oracular consultations, yet we also have evidence of authority in the writing of the less-official *chresmologoi*. In an amusing scene in Aristophanes' *Birds*, Pisthetaerus, attempting to perform the foundation sacrifice for his city, is interrupted by a *chresmologos*, an oracle-singer/collector. The *chresmologos* offers to him the proper sacrifice as purportedly recorded and written down by the Boeotian seer Bacis, and in a series of exchanges the oracle-monger repeatedly appeals to his *biblion*, a papyrus sheet or roll,[126] for authority: 'Does it really say sandals there?' (*ἔνεστι καὶ τὰ πέδιλα;)* asks Pisetharus; 'Take the book' (*λαβὲ τὸ βιβλίον*) replies the *chresmologos*.[127] The appeals to 'take the book/sheet' suggest that the fact that it has been written down is somehow a proof of its veracity. The comic framing of this scene indicates that oracle-singers shared their portion of derision, and indeed we should expect that given the marginal nature of religious writing. Plato is critical of the priests who peddle their 'hubbub' of books supposedly written by Orpheus and Musaeus.[128]

However such criticism and mockery does not equate to outright rejection of their importance; as has been noted, 'the society that abuses diviners is the society that consults

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[124] Henrichs (2002: 215); (2003: 52-53); Parker (1996: 55); Harris (1989: 83). There were exceptions, eg. the re-inscribing of the Solonian Laws in Athens in the late 5th century: Henrichs (2003: 54-55).
[125] Henrichs (2003: 41).
[126] The use of *biblion* rather than *biblos* suggests that what he had was a sheet rather than a whole book: cf. Harris (1989: 83); Henrichs (2002: 221).
[127] Ar. *Birds* 980-989; cf. Ar. *Knights* 997-1099, and the competing claims of Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller over their collections of oracles. Cf. Henrichs (2002: 216*ff*), who recognizes that the ultimate authority still lies with which divinity supposedly gave the original oracle.
[128] Plut. Rep. 364e. Cf. Henrichs (2002: 212n.12); Parker (1996: 55). Cf. Eur. *Hipp.* 952-5.

them'.[129] In the case of written oracles, the problems posed are obviously slightly different to those of dream interpretation manuals, because part of the problem is the gap in time between the oracle and the interpretation, and the fact that they are assigned to a number of ancient seers, with dubious levels of authenticity. As Dillery suggested, the gap between the writing of an oracle and its interpretation, both in the case of the *chresmologoi* and on the occasions when the pronouncements of a sanctuary such as Delphi were written down, introduced an 'intermediary stage' which gave human intervention a point of access, and subsequently led to a greater risk that the original oracle had been altered in some way. Yet having a written text was still a claim to authority, as the *chresmologos'* repeated calls to 'take the book' in *Birds* show. Even Henrichs is happy to concede that the emphasis on written copies illustrates that writing itself was a 'status symbol', which enhanced authority.[130]

Thus the dreambooks were intended to be an accurate record of a specific *technē*, from which the reader could himself learn the art of dream interpretation, and this is indicated by Artemidorus as the purpose for the first part of his work. Yet through the collected examples they provided not only a template for interpretation, but an authority for the prediction: 'I think this is what your dream means – look at this example'. The experience collected in the books is a base of knowledge. The sheer variety in types of dreams would have meant that a more comprehensive collection would have made you a more competent interpreter. Artemidorus makes it clear in his proem that his work is the most extensive yet written. His predecessors, he claims, had essentially copied each other's works, adding to earlier observations a number of modern ones which are false. Artemidorus had procured every book on dream interpretation, and also consulted with the market place diviners and

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[129] Parker (2000: 80-81); cf. Flower (2008: 132*ff*).
[130] Henrichs (2003: 54); cf. (2002: 220-221). Harris (1989: 124) is less sure: 'to what extent the written word was held to have authority or power in the realm of religion is, for the classical period, debatable'. Thomas (1992: 148-149) suggests a link between writing and 'proof' based on its use in trade contracts and loans.

listened to all the dreams he could, in order to produce the most comprehensive collection of dreams and their interpretations. Dreambooks provided physical proof of the number of examples at your disposal, and as such provided authority for interpretations.

Dreambooks therefore provided the interpreters with an authority, which stemmed from the status derived from the act of writing itself, the skill that could be derived from the books (and from previous owners of the books), and also as a collection of examples which provided the interpreter with the experiential knowledge necessary to support his interpretations. We can see this dual function at work in the case of Thrasyllus, a man mentioned by Isocrates. He had become a close guest-friend of a soothsayer, Polemaenetus, so close in fact that when Polemaenetus died he left him his books on divination: *τάς ... βίβλους τὰς περὶ τῆς μαντικῆς.*[131] Using these, Thrasyllus went on to practice the art (*τῇ τέχνῃ*) of divination, and successfully it seems, for by the time he returned to his native land of Siphnos he was the richest man there, able to marry into a prominent family. In his case the books were the basis of his skill in divination, and perhaps more importantly again a source of authority. By having inherited the books he was not only in a position to practice divination, but he had in a sense assumed the knowledge of his predecessor, Polemaenetus. If a seer could not make any direct genealogical links to a famous seer, then perhaps obtaining his books was the next best thing.

The final element of dream interpreters to examine is the areas of Greek life in which they functioned. The Greek *manteis*, for instance, played an important role in the military campaigns of city states. In particular, their reading of signs prior to battle, whether through birds, an inspection of sacrificial entrails, or other omens, might have a direct bearing on

[131] Isoc. 19.5-9. A dreambook could have been amongst these books, but it is not clear: Pendrick (2002: 49n.91) thinks so; Dickie (2001: 68-72) thinks instead that they were books of oracles. Garland (1990: 83) notes the foreign origins of these mantic texts.

whether war was engaged at all, and on other occasions could provide valuable psychological support for the fighting troops (if the omens were positive, that is).[132] Herodotus mentions that Deiphonus was the seer for the Greek fleet at Mycale, and they waited for his omens to portend success before setting sail.[133] Thucydides notes before the Athenians engaged the Syracusans in 415 that 'the seers brought forward the customary victims for sacrifice' (*μάντεις ... σφάγια προύφερον τὰ νομιζόμενα*) in the same matter of fact way that the trumpeters sounded the charge.[134] According to Xenophon, a *mantis* was a key requirement for any army.[135] Therefore we see the *manteis* active in a military capacity, and having an influence at a public level – i.e. above just private consultation which impacted on an individual. In the same manner, we also find the *chresmologoi* active on a public stage. Although they are often the butt of jibes,[136] we still find them involved in important decision making. According to Thucydides, it was partly the influence of the *manteis* and *chresmologoi* that drove the Athenian decision to invade Sicily, and it is likely that the oracles put forward by the *chresmologoi* were discussed in public, possibly at the assembly.[137] It was also the *chresmologoi* who were at hand to interpret the 'wooden wall' oracles from Delphi, and it was they who were ultimately defeated by Themistocles.[138] In both these cases, although their presentation is hardly positive, it does still highlight them playing a public role.

Dream interpreters are rarely found in such public positions; the most notable occurrence is when they are first mentioned in the *Iliad* by Achilles in line alongside the seers

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[132] Flower (2008: 153-187); Dillon (1996: 118); Dillery (2005: 200ff); Lévy (1997: 347); Garland (1990: 82-85); Jameson (1991). In general, Garland (1984: 81-83, 113-116). Pritchett (1971: 10) notes that they were often consulted when war was unavoidable anyway.
[133] Hdt. 9.92, 95, 96
[134] Thuc. 6.69.
[135] Xen. *Anab.* VII.1.35.
[136] Ar. *Av.* 961-990; Thuc. 2.8.2, 2.21.3; Pl. *Rep.* 364b-c.
[137] Bowden (2003: 271).
[138] Hdt. 7.139-143.

and priests to decide a matter of supreme urgency for the state – the reason for the plague which has been afflicting the country.[139] Interestingly, though they are mentioned in the same context, they are not quite equal partners: the Greek reads *ἢ καὶ ὀνειροπόλον*. The extra *καὶ* is revealing: 'any seer or priest or *even* an *oneiropolos*.' It does sound as if the dream interpreter was the last resort, and does not rank equally alongside the other two.[140] It still remains impressive that it was named with the other offices as at least a possible source of consultation, and being third in line to the priest and seer is not altogether unflattering. Nevertheless, this is the last time we see a dream interpreter being referred to during what could be called a public debate. Elsewhere in literature, they can be found at the side of powerful men – Astyages and Hipparchus in Herodotus, for example. In this respect they are much like seers, who are often associated with tyrants.[141] But in the case of dreams interpreters, this common association with individuals rather than the public stage surely stems from the same logic behind the difference between dream oracles and traditional oracles: that the dream itself, in its personal nature of delivery, was always suited to the private concerns of an individual rather than to be subjected to public debate. This is why, in the case of the Homeric reference above, it is so tricky to work out how the *oneiropolos* might work in deciding a public matter: dreams cannot be just performed anywhere at any time (like a sacrifice might), but are reliant on sleep; further, for a dream to become public it must be had first by an individual, but deciding who that individual is becomes an extra complication. This is simpler to solve in a tyrannical structure, where the dream of the ruler will automatically assume that function, but in a democracy this becomes much harder to clarify. The dreambook authors seemed to aim their interpretations at anyone, and sought through them to solve the personal dilemmas of individuals. They do not seem to have had

[139] Hom. *Il.* I.62-64.
[140] Messer (1918: 6) was convinced they were equals.
[141] Dillery (2005: 185*ff*).

any relevance on the public stage, or in a particular area like the military; instead their focus was divining dreams at a personal level. Theophrastus mocks the Superstitious Man for running off to the dream interpreter too often.[142] In this case part of the mockery is that he runs off not only to the dream interpreter, but also to completely unrelated and irrelevant specialists, like bird diviners; yet still it illustrates that, even if he was excessive, he was still consulting at a private level.

Unlike the sanctuaries, however, it does not seem that they necessarily had to specialise in medical dreams. From the testimonia on the ancient dreambooks, they were focused on the present and future. In the case of Panyassis the Younger, he seems to have designated whether the dreams were auspicious or inauspicious in relevance to some future action, for example all swimming dreams are inauspicious. Aristander interpreted Alexander's dream with focus on the present – 'Tyre is yours'. Within Artemidorus, this personal focus of the dream is linked again to status, so that exact interpretations of similar dreams vary based on the circumstances of the individual. For example, fish dreams: catching a large number of fish is auspicious and signifies profit for all except those who ply a sedentary trade and sophists; fish that slough off their old shells are a good sign for those who are sick, for prisoners, for poor men, and for all those who are in a difficult situation; soft fish signify benefits for criminals only, and so on.[143] It is this very idiosyncratic nature of dream interpretation, combined with the personal mode of delivery, which made dream interpreters impractical on a public stage, but important to individuals.

There is also the extent to which their role could be covered by a *mantis* – so that if there was already, for example, a *mantis* accompanying an expedition, or another renowned

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[142] Theophr. *Char*. 16.11, with Diggle (2004).
[143] Artem. *On*. II.14.

seer within a city, it would be this *mantis* that was consulted if there were any dreams of note rather than a specialist dream expert. In the literature, there are a number of examples of dreams being referred to people who are not specifically skilled in dream interpretation, the most obvious of whom being Aristander of Telmessus. He accompanied Alexander on his campaigns as a general seer, but was still consulted by the king on his dreams. In Pindar, when Bellerophon has a dream in which Athena appears to him, he refers this to the seer of the land, *ἐπιχώριον μάντιν*.[144] In Aeschylus, after Atossa has been troubled by disturbing dreams involving her son Darius, she tells the chorus about them, and they offer her advice: supplicate the gods with prayers, and pour out libations to Earth and the dead.[145] The Queen then thanks them as 'the first interpreters' (*ὁ πρῶτος τῶνδ' ἐνυπνίων κριτὴς*) of these dreams (*Per.*226). Similarly, in Euripides' *Hecuba*, Hecuba herself complains that she is being visited by apparitions in her sleep, and laments, longing to see Helenus and Cassandra, 'so they may judge my dreams for me' (*ὥς μοι κρίνωσιν ὀνείρους*).[146] Hecuba is here calling upon some rather legendary seers,[147] one of whom, at least according to Homeric genealogy, is her son.[148] Neither of them are, though, specialist dream interpreters – they have general mantic powers and subsume the skill of dream divination within their scope. In Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* it is the *κριταί τῶνδ' ὀνειράτων* (32) who assess the nightmare of Clytemnestra, and warn her that those beneath the earth (certainly Agamemnon, but possibly also Cassandra) were crying out in reproach at their murderers. It is possible that the interpreters mentioned in the *Choephoroi* had some specialist role, but it is more plausible that these too were general prophets, probably the domestic prophets (*δόμων προφῆται*) mentioned at Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 409. When Xenophon performs libations following his dream in the

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[144] Pind. *O.* XIII.74.
[145] Aesch. *Per.* 215-225.
[146] Eur. *Hec.* 85-89.
[147] Helenus: Hom. *Il.*6.76ff; at *Il.* 13.576 he is just a warrior. Cassandra: Pind. *P.*11.33; Aesch. *Ag.* 1072*ff.*
[148] Which would contradict her bemoaning that Polydorus is the only 'anchor of my house' left (*Hec.* 80).

Anabasis, it is not clear if he has done this after advice from anyone, but given that there are no dream interpreters mentioned elsewhere it is likely to have been either upon the advice of the seer accompanying the army, or even Xenophon himself.[149] As Matthew Dillon has said of *oionomanteia*, although an expert professional mantis might be considered the best interpreter, the rudimentary principles of these skills would have probably been known to many.[150] That a *mantis* would be expected to be able to interpret dreams can be seen as a natural extension of their broad range of skills, and the term *mantis* itself does not specify a particular type of divination, even if it is most commonly associated with the reading of entrails.[151]

Thus dream interpreters were active from the archaic period onwards, and some of these specialists relied on the specific tools, the dreambooks and *pinakes*, both as practical aids to their *technē*, and as signifiers of their authority in judging the dreams of others. Despite the existence of these specialists, it was still possible for general seers to assume some of their skills, and we have seen that a good mantis should be prepared to interpret dreams when required. Ultimately, the role of the dream interpreter, as with the dream oracles, was restricted by the nature of dreams themselves – the private and individual nature of them limited their importance on state matters, and the interpreters were instead consulted on personal concerns. It was only when an interpreter was attached to a person already in a unique position of power that his decisions could be of more significance.

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[149] Xen. *Anab*. 4.3.8.
[150] Dillon (1996: 109).
[151] Bouché-Leclercq (1879-82: I.291) felt on the contrary that dream interpreters must be the most skilled because one could dream of birds and sacrifices, therefore they needed to be aware of all forms of divination.

10
Epilogue

Walter Burkert stated that: '... when dealing with foreign or extinct religions, an outsider finds himself confronted, as it were, with a strange and unknown language: to understand it, he must translate it.'[1] The anthropological approaches that have guided my investigation have enabled us to decipher the Greek dream experience. The Greek attitude to their dreams, an attitude that was rich and varied, was determined by the local cultural frames, which shaped their perception and reception. Dreams should not be isolated and treated as a separate component of Greek culture, but rather located within their relevant contexts, for it is only when in their native surroundings that dreams can be fully understood. In the course of this investigation, these frames have included the effects of different political systems, the role of gender, reciprocity, status, and religion and divination. Throughout, it has been clear that variations in these frames can lead to changes in the way in which dreams are perceived, and it is this relationship which highlights the importance of studying dreams intra-culturally; for without the local frames of reference, the specific conception of dreams can become lost.

This has important implications for the study of dreams, which are frequently neglected in accounts of cultural history. People often seem deterred by the literary potential of dreams, choosing to treat them as purely textual scenes, designed with narratological biases in mind. But we have seen that beneath the literary presentation dreams can be studied; not as records of 'manifest content', but as experiences –

[1] Burkert (1983: xxi).

experiences that were embedded within the lives of the Greeks, which they tried to understand, which they reacted to, and which they employed in practices.

It is in this period that we see the beginnings of a typological understanding of dreams – the denoting of specific dream types by different dream words: *onar*, *enupnion*, and *oneiros*. Although in truth the situation in the archaic and classical age was never rigid, the one consistency is in the use of *oneiros* which, from its first use in Homer's *Iliad*, becomes representative of the 'traditional' type of dream experience, the type of divine visitation dream we find reported in literature. This externality of dreams was reflected not just by *oneiroi*, but was at the heart of the Greek understanding; dreams were 'seen' and not 'had', as revealed through various periphrastic expressions. The Greeks never really adopted verbs for dreams which could locate the roots of the experience within the dreamer, enabling him to 'have' a dream, and this absence of a claim to ownership maintained a theoretical separation between the dreamer and the dream; dreams were kept outside the dreamer by the language used to express the experience. That does not automatically mean that Greeks thought every dream to be an objective reality, for we find in their colourful use of dream metaphors a realisation that dreams could be jumbled images, unreal reflections of the truth, and the fantasy of hopes and desires. Yet the outside aspect of dreams dominates the language, and it is at the root of the Greek dream conception.

This was reflected in the various theories developed to explain the dream experience. At the heart of all theories, whether it was the implicit allusions in literature to the traditional type, or the idea of a roaming soul that we saw in Pindar, Plato and the

medical writers, or even the idiosyncratic philosophical ideas such as the impinging of dream *eidōla*, residual motions of external images, or the lingering of daylight perceptions, is the notion that dreams come from outside to inside. The theories reflect the language of dreams, maintaining this separation between dreamer and dream. The numerous theories themselves, just as the multiple words for dream, testify to the variety of Greek dream culture; there was no single way of explaining dream phenomena. In the archaic and classical periods we again see the first steps towards a form of typology, but there is not yet a structured way in which dreams are uniformly separated. Instead we have a number of theories active side by side, some to account for the divine dreams, others to account for the more mundane everyday dreams. It is extremely unlikely that any Greek believed every dream to be divinely significant, but it is equally unlikely that many Greeks would have ruled out divine dreams altogether. It is only Aristotle who denies their validity, while all other writers either allow for them, or do not tackle them directly. The traditional dream continues to be relevant throughout the period, and there is no need to see a competition between rational and irrational.

The traditional dream, after all, is also evident in a number of the dream practices. The setting up of dream dedications and the foundation of cults '*kat' onar*' is the most tangible record we have of the divine dream, and clear proof that it was not just a product of literature but an understanding of dreams common to people in reality. These dedications worked loosely within the context of Greek reciprocity, except that in the case of dreams the reciprocal relationship reflects the nature of dreams themselves, which come from outside to inside, produced not by the dreamer himself but by the divinity;

thus the impetus to the dedication begins with the god, not the dedicant. Gods could ask for things in dreams, and it was the duty of the dreamer, if he wanted to continue this relationship in the hope of securing future benefits, to answer these demands. Cults, too, could be requested, and their installation, and their recognition by others besides the dreamer, depended on the cultural context in which they were set up – wherein the culture patterns of belief which we see active also in literature allowed for the idea of 'foundation by dream'. It might seem unusual for us, looking back with a modern mentality, to believe that people could have visited a shrine set up via someone's dream, but within the context of ancient Greece it could be a viable occurrence.

Incubation was equally reliant on its context, and indeed, as I argued, without the necessary cultural elements incubation would not develop. Within ancient Greece, the existence of these key frames, namely the belief that dreams provide links to the gods, the location of these gods within a specific topography, and the notion that action can be demanded from the gods, made incubation a natural ritual occurrence. Sought dreams were an extension of the belief in traditional dreams, representative of the desire to find through dreams a source of communication with the gods, and in turn to gain from the gods solutions to problems which seemed insoluble; the medical nature of incubation was driven not just by Asclepian cult, but by the human desire to find cures.

Incubation was open to everyone, rich and poor alike; yet Greek culture also determined that certain dreams could only be seen by people of sufficient status. A cobbler could see a dream of wars, but this dream would be false; only a general or a king

could have a true dream with such content, for they would be concerned with such matters in everyday life, too. If a cobbler wanted his dreams to be accepted by others, he should stick to dreams about cobbling or his family. This reflected not just an understanding of dreams, but Greek culture itself; for it was within a monarchical or single-ruler political system that this relationship between dreams and status could be most clearly seen, since the people in positions of power had the authority to make autonomous decisions anyway. The dream, as a very personal source of extra-personal knowledge, was always devoid of proofs; in a cultural context where the people were accustomed to obey the words of their ruler on most matters, it was natural for them to follow the instructions of his dreams, too. However, when this cultural system shifted, for example in the democracy of classical Athens, such a relationship between dreams and status becomes more difficult to establish. Politicians could try using them in front of an audience which they expected to be receptive, but such use of dreams as evidence in argumentation would always leave you open to derision from your opponents; as the dual between Aeschines and Demosthenes illustrates, announcing your dreams in public as a persuasive device carried with it risks, and Demosthenes did not consider these risks worth taking when he committed his own speech to written form.

Women, meanwhile, could have had more use for dreams than their male counterparts. Although their heavy over-representation in tragedy, together with Homer's *Odyssey*, is in part a reflection of the concerns of those genres, it is also possible that these genres were reflecting societal truths; that for women, in their restricted lives which contained so few opportunities for involvement in life outside the household, dreams

could give them a point of access to an external role. Dreams, in coming from outside to inside, both reveal the limitations of female movement, and highlight the unique potential of dreams, which could come to women inside their beds. Women could use their dreams to make dedications and found shrines, as we saw in the inscriptional evidence, and they therefore provided them with a voice and a route for action; in the absence of most other opportunities, dreams could therefore have been more important to women.

In the context of divination, we again see how dreams worked within Greek culture. The personal nature of the consultations meant that the dream oracles never became popular for political or military decisions, for which the Greek states turned to other established sanctuaries such as Delphi; rather, they were frequently limited to individual problems, in particular medical ailments. This, however, allowed the dream oracles to flourish even within democracies, for the personal nature of the consultation did not compromise the citizen's right to choose in the same way that the other official oracles did, and it was these political oracular consultations which began to decline in the fifth century.

In the same way, the role of dream interpreters changed when they were unattached to powerful individuals, and working within a democratic polis, where we never find them active in military affairs or judging political decisions in the same manner that we find other diviners. The limitations of the dream in this context, the fact that such divination cannot be performed anywhere at any time, for example pre-battle, but relies on an act of sleep, and again the personal nature of the dream, made them unsuited to such policy decisions. Nevertheless, the evidence for their activity begins in

the archaic period, and we see in the classical period the first writing of dreambooks, guides to divination which provided not just practical help but a source of authority for the interpreter. It may have been the 'superstitious man' who ran to consult a dream interpreter after every dream, but that does not mean that they did not have their share of business on matters of personal concern, or that they failed to play a role alongside the other itinerant seers within the ancient polis.

Perhaps the one consistency in Greek dream culture is the divine dream, which had the potential to permeate all levels of society, and was at the heart of most dream practices, only ever suffering polemic at the hands of Aristotle, who in his efforts to disprove it surely testifies to its ongoing importance even at the end of the classical period. But the Greek dream experience was far from one dimensional, and there were other theories for understanding dream types, too, and different ways of using dreams in practices; further, the relevant importance of these varied depending on other cultural factors: the political system, the status of the dreamer, gender. The conception of dreams was constantly shaped by the cultural frames around it. Dreams provided impetuses to action, points of contact with the gods, resolutions to problems; they were a significant part of Greek culture, both reflecting it and determined by it. Hopefully the reader has left appreciating in full a fascinating phenomenon which so often fails to be detailed in broader cultural studies.

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