ARTEMIDORUS’ ONEIROCRITICA. DREAM ANALYSIS IN SECOND CENTURY A.D.

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Artemidorus lived in second century A.D.. Oneirocritica is his only surviving work. It consist of five books. The first two books contain theoretical and technical accounts on the interpretation of Dreams. The rest contain a collection of 95 dreams and their interpretations. There are two kinds of dreams: a) enhypnia (continuation of day’s activities) b) oneiroi (dreams foretelling the future) divided into three categories: prophetic, mantic or chrismos and orama. The three methods of the Empirics (personal experience, transmitted experience and analogy) can be found in Artemidorus’ Oneirocritica. It seems that C. Jung and S. Freud had been influenced by Artemidorus’ work. The only real divergence between Freud and Artemidorus was that Artemidorus did the associating on his clients’ dreams, while Freud let his clients do the associating by themselves.

Key words: dreams interpretation, Oneirocritica, Artemidorus of Daldis

"Ονείρος εστί κίνησις ή πλάσις ψυχής πολυσχήμων σημαντική των εσόμενων αγαθών ή κακών" (I, 2). (‘Οneiros is a complex movement or state of the soul that takes many shapes and signifies good or bad events that will occur in the future’.)

Artemidorus’ Oneirocritica are hardly read today. The original text has never been printed in Greece. Furthermore, there is no full translation of the Oneirocritica in modern Greek language.

The only modern edition is the Teubner text by Roger Pack and that is dated 1963 (previous edition by Hercher dated 1864).1

Artemidorus lived in second century A.D., during the age of the Antonines. He was born in Daldis, a town in Lydia. Galen in his commentary on the Hippocrates’ “De victu acutorum”1,15 records that certain Greek augur, while speaking with Arab colleague of his in Gallen’s presence, cited the works of Artemidorus, son of Phocas. The Oneirocritica consist of five books. The first three of them are dedicated to Cassius Maximus, and the other two to his son, Artemidorus. The first two books contain theoretical and technical accounts on the interpretation of dreams. The third and fourth books contain supplementary material designed to meet criticisms of the books already published. The fifth book is a kind of appendix containing a collection of ninety actual dreams interpretations.2

Manuscripts and editions

I. Manuscripts

V Marcianus 268, vellum, saec. XV (it bears the signature of Michael Apostolis: ‘Μιχαήλος Αποστόλης Βυζάντιος μετά την εαυτού πατρίδος άλωσιν πενία συζών και τόδε το βιβλίον έν Κρήτῃ μετά πολλά εξέγραψε’. (Michael Apostolis the Byzantine, after the invasion of his (mother) country (by the enemies), living in poverty, wrote this book (with great effort) in Creta (Island)).

M Marcianus 267, vellum, saec. XV.
L Laurentianus 87, 8 vellum saec. XI.
C Cantabrigiensis paper, saec. XV, XVI, presented by Dr Caius to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, in whose library it is numbered 77.
O Ottobonianus 89, paper, saec. XVI.
B Borbonicus II. D 50, paper, saec. XV.

II. Editions

3. Artemidòròu Ονειροκριτικά Ioannes Gothofredus Reiff, Lipsiae 1805.

III. First translations

Italian, 1542 (‘Di Greco in Volgare tradotto per Pietro
Artemidorus describes two kinds of dreams.

a) enhypnia (dreams which are continuation of day’s activities); they are frequently prompted by bodily needs pr by recent psychologically significant events which are represented directly in the dream. Enhypnia are not prophetic.

b) Oneiroi (dreams foretelling the future); oneiroi are divided in prophetic dreams, mantic answer or "chrismos" and "orama". Dreams called "phantasmata" belong to the enhypnia-category.

According to their meaning dreams are divided in theorematic and allegorical dreams. Theorematic dreams are in accordance with the text of the dream and mean exactly what they say. The allegorical dreams may be discerned: i) "idioi", in which someone other than the sleeper is the object of the dream, ii) "allotioi", in which someone other than the dreamer plays the principal role, iii) "koinoi", in which the action is shared with another person, iv) "demosioi", which deal with public affairs and v) "kosmikoi" or dreams about natural phenomena. The term "esotericon" is referred to the text of the dream, while the "exotericon" is referred to the result of the dream (future event). According to the exoteric (extrinsic) content dreams are divided into two categories: i) "merimnematica" (anxiety dreams) and "aitematica" (sent by gods after sleeper’s request); ii) "theopempta" (dreams occurring to people without any worries and foreshadowing the future both for good and bad).

Merimnematic and aitematic dreams belong to the category of enhypnia.

There are two ways the dreams foreshadow the future.

a) genicos (general) tropos and

b) eidikos (specific) tropos. General dreams are divided into four categories: i) dreams that foreshadow a lot of things by means of a lot of pictures; ii) dreams that foreshadow simple things by means of a small amount of pictures; iii) dreams that foreshadow a lot of things by means of a small amount of pictures; iv) dreams that foreshadow simple things by means of a lot of pictures.

Specific dreams are divided into four categories as well: i) both the dream and its outcome are good; ii) both are bad; iii) the text of the dream is good, but its outcome is bad; iv) the text of the dream is sinister, but its outcome is happy. Artemidorus stresses the necessity of studying the customs of the land in which the dreamer lives as well as of knowing the dreamer’s identity, occupation, date of birth, financial status, age and state of health. The interpreter must also be certain that no detail has been added to or omitted from the dream. But if he has to deal with a dream that has been mutilated he must show some degree of independent skill in judging it by transposing or changing the letters of the names of the dream objects, by adding letters or syllables to them or by inventing other names of equal numerical value. The dream interpreter must use his common sense rather than simply rely upon dream handbooks. He also is aware of the time and kind of food the dreamer had the day before the dream; at down the soul is closer to god and has been purified from the influence of food and wine.

Artemidorus devoted much time and effort to personal investigation. The most outstanding characteristic of the Oneirocritica is their rational and practical approach. The three methods of the Empirics-peira, historia, he tou homoiou metabasis (personal experience, transmitted experience and analogy)- can be found in his writings. Various influences of Epicurians, Stoics and Sceptics are met sporadically in Artemidorus’ dream theory, but the most obvious ones are those of the empirical medical school (e. g. the assertion of Artemidorus that dream interpretation "is nothing else but the juxtaposition of similarities").

Thereafter, we can conclude that Artemidorus is an eclectic writer and that his Oneirocritica are doubtlessly a scientific manual on interpretation of dreams if we are to judge it on the basis of historical criteria. Some of Artemidorus’ thoughts are in accordance with Homer, Hippocrates, Aristotle, Galen, Melampus, Poseidonius, Petronius, Synesius, Germanos, Ahmet and Astrampsychos.

It seems that C. Jung had been influenced by Artemidorus since he believed in the quality of dreams to “tend to the future”, in mantic dreams and in universal customs of humanity. He also gave examples of dreams in his writings, including their outcome, like Artemidorus.

S. Freud in his book “On the Interpretation of Dreams” mentions Artemidorus eight times. Artemidorus invokes the principle of opposites in his interpretations. Freud refers to the rule, according which “every element in a dream can... stand for its opposite... as easily as for itself”. Moreover, the symbolism of dreams plays a significant role in the theories of both Freud and Artemidorus. Freud convicts the conscious part of our mind of punning in dreams. The same phenomenon was observed by Artemidorus who quotes the celebrated interpretation of Aristander (during the siege of Tyre Alexander the Great dreamt that he saw a satyr dancing on his shield; Aristander analyzed the dream as foretelling the capture of Tyre by interpreting "satyros" as "sa Tyros" - "Tyre is yours"). Freud also finds it convenient to treat the unconscious as
ready reckoner; an analogous method of interpretation is used by Artemidorus with his “isopsepha” (words of equal numerical value). Artemidorus states that complex dreams must be interpreted by taking each element of the dream separately and then analyzing it; this is exactly the Freud’ rule of breaking up the dream fragments. It may be possible that Artemidorus was the one who gave to Freud the idea of the Oedipal complex concept since he describes something very close to it: (I, 79) “The case of one’s mother is both complex and manifold and admits of many different interpretations...If anyone possesses his mother through face-to-face intercourse...if she is still alive and his father is in good health, it means that he and his father will become enemies because of the jealousy...but if his father is sick, he will die, since the dreamer will take care of his mother both as a son and as a husband”.

The only real divergence between Freud and Artemidorus was that Artemidorus did the associating on his clients’ dreams; while Freud let his clients do the associating by themselves. Artemidorus’ anticipations of Freud’s notions include the equivalent of Freud’s latent and manifest dream content, the necessity to know the client’s history and personality and use of the analogy method.

The oneirocritic tradition from Artemidorus’ time until today has remained untouched in places like Crete, Epirus, Pontos, Elide, Elide, Mane and Cappadocia. Artemidorus is still alive in the dreams of Greeks, thus proving the continuation of Greek culture through the ages.

Abstract

ONEIROKRITIKA ARTEMIDWROΣ. ANALYSHE ONEWRN STON DEUTEPO AIONA M.X.

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O Artermidwros exhse ton 2o M.X. aiwna. To Oneirokritika einai to monadiko ergo ton pout swthke. Apoteleita apo pentte biblia. Ta proiata duo biblia periechoun theorietika kai technika stoichia pou efporon tis Ermheutetikis twn Oneirwn. Ta upodoxia periechoun sellogia apo 95 onera mazi me ta ekbasi tou. Ta Oneira anikoun se duo kategories: a) Evntia (upoleimata tis hmeras) b) Onia (oneira me proforikis simeiasia), pou diapirentai se tries kategories: i) proforikai ii) mantikai kai khrismoi iii) oramata. Oi tries methodi twn Eptemirikon (proswptiki emetria, metaqdimenem emetria, analagia) xaraktirizein ton Artermidwro. Fainete oti oi C. Jung kai S. Freud epixeasthkan simeantika apo ton Artermidwro. H kurupteri diapora tous etan o Artermidwros ekane tis syneurikis analysis twn onerwn stous pelastes tou, eno o Freud anevite to ergo auton stous idious.

Lefes kleidias: ermeineia oneirwn, oneirokritikai, Artermidwros Daldisanov

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