

## Toward a Demography of Dreamers in Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica*

Artemidorus regularly punctuates his collection of dream interpretations with examples that apply to specific individuals or social groups. From the latter category he is interested in gender, familial status, class, legal status (slave versus free), and occupation among other qualities. As noted by Foucault, Artemidorus assumes that the dreamer is a relatively wealthy, freeborn male. Yet the interpreter does occasionally take note of the dreams of the non-elite, such as those of women, slaves, the poor, and the sick or handicapped. Some scholars have tended to emphasize Artemidorus male-centered bias (Foucault 1984, MacAlister 1992); others, because of the scarcity of evidence about minority groups in antiquity, view the work as an important source of information about these groups (Harris-McCoy 2012, Pack 1955, Winkler 1990). This study will advance the scholarly discussion about the demography of dreamers in the *Oneirocritica* through a simple quantitative analysis.

Our research team began by dividing Artemidorus' work into four sections, in keeping with the interpreter's own methodology, and each section was assigned to a researcher. The researchers each made a simple count of dreamers in the following categories: female, slave, sick, healthy, married, single, parent, childless, rich, and poor. A count of the total number of dreams and dreamers was tabulated so that percentages of the minority groups could be calculated. No assumption was made about those dreamers who were not specifically identified as belonging to the select group. Thus, in calculating gender, our categories are "Female" and "Not Identified as Female." We omitted a computation of occupations because of the wide range of jobs represented in the *Oneirocritica*.

Most of the dreams in the work are stated hypothetically, as a paradigm or class, with the author often using an infinitive followed by the verb σημαίνω: πῦρ ἐν οὐρανῷ ἰδεῖν λαμπρὸν καὶ...σημαίνει... (2.9), e.g. We counted each class as one dream, and each variation within that class as another distinct dream. For each class of dreams, Artemidorus is accustomed to provide various interpretations dependent upon the social classification of different dreamers. For each interpretation, we counted one dreamer, and therefore the total number of dreams (1409) in our study is far greater than the number of dreamers (2297). Our study thus examines only the dreamers in the *Oneirocritica* itself and may only obliquely be used as an indicator of the social composition of Artemidorus' historical clientele. We cannot determine quantitatively how many dreams or dreamers are represented by a particular class in the work.

We have, however, for the sake of comparison, made special note of instances where the interpreter seems to cite direct knowledge of dreamer and dream. These 70 dreams are nearly all marked by the verbs οἶδα 'I have seen/I know' (1.26, e.g.) or ἐτήρησα 'I observed' (1.16, e.g.). Such dreams fall in the πεῖρα category of evidence of the Empirical school, as noted by Blum (1936) and Price (1986). Dreams stated with an indefinite pronoun ἔδοξε τις..., a third important category of Artemidoran evidence, were generally considered indirect evidence. Although in some instances Artemidorus seems to have personal knowledge of the example, it is likely that many examples of this type are taken from other dream books and thus do not belong in the same category as the οἶδα/ἐτήρησα statements. Book 5 consists entirely of dreams stated with ἔδοξε τις.

Using these methods, we determined that the largest categories were women and the sick. There were 125 examples citing women, or 5.4%, and 120 examples with

dreamers with various illnesses, or 5.2%. The numbers of slaves and poor dreamers turned out to be the same—73, or 3.2%. Yet it is important to note that the number of individuals from all these groups among the personal observations of Artemidorus is very small: there were three women, four slaves, no poor people, and four sick individuals among the οἶδα/ἐτήρησα statements. An important by-product of our calculation relates to the composition of the *Oneirocritica*. Books 4 and 5, which were added later to the author's original composition (4.praef.), show roughly three times the percentage of examples involving woman in Books 1-3, 10.4% versus 3.3% respectively.

### Bibliography

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