

# A Psychological Study of Dreams in Hellenistic Poetry

Dimitra Karamitsou

## 1. Preliminary Remarks

### 1.1. Literary Dreams

Jung claims that a *dream is a theatre in which the dreamer is himself the scene, the player, the prompter, the author, the public and the critic.*<sup>1</sup> Dream, according to the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, is a series of thoughts, images, and sensations occurring in a person's mind during sleep. According to *Oxford Classical Dictionary* the dream is a train of thoughts, images, of fancies passing through the mind during sleep. In antiquity the dreams are classified into five categories: *enhyponia, phantasmata, oneiroi, horamata, chrematismata, epigraphical* (votives) dreams.<sup>2</sup>

The aim of this paper is to examine the dreams in Hellenistic poetry and to decode them based on the dreamers' internal world, as this is represented by the poet. In Hellenistic poetry we notice that the dreams are not only literary devices, which are called to promote the plot, as in the case of Homer (e.g. *Odyssey* vi 13-40). In the poetry of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries BC the physiological and psychological realism of the dreams is much more intense. For this reason, we must take into consideration their psychological plausibility and interpret them in combination with the dreamer's psychology. But, first of all, what did the Greeks believe about the dreams?

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<sup>1</sup>Jung, C. G. (1916/1948). 'General Aspects of Dream Psychology.' *CW* 8:237-280.

<sup>2</sup> For a definition and description of this dreams' fivefold classification see AHD s.v Dream, OCD<sup>3</sup> s.v. Dream, *Brill's New Pauly* s.v. Dream.

In ancient Greece a dream is usually supposed to be a human figure that appears to someone during sleeping rather than an episode with many successive facts. There are two tendencies about dreams which are never truly reconciled. The first view supports the prophetic meaning of the dreams, their symbolic content and their allegorical form. Due to the belief in the symbolic dream, oneirocriticism became an important part of the Greeks' culture and the professional interpreters were many.<sup>3</sup> The oneirocritic treatises begin to show signs of autonomous literary existence and gradually they are grown into an autonomous literary genre. The most famous oneirocritic treatise is, of course, the one by Artemidorus.<sup>4</sup> The second view about the dreams' origin is supported by Hippocrates, who at the end of 5<sup>th</sup> century attempts to treat the dreams as a result of physical causes. His treatise *Περί Διαίτης* is the first attempt to approach dreams as the object of scientific research and to discover their natural causes. The author of the Hippocratic corpus distinguishes dreams with physiological origin from those with divine and interprets them using scientific theories, with reference to the human physiological state.<sup>5</sup>

A great number of disciplines have been concerned with the approach and interpretation of dreams, such as philosophy, medicine, religion, mantic, magic and finally poetry. Regarding poetry, the two tendencies about the dreams' origin, as stated above, are apparent in poetic texts, where we come across a number of literary dreams. The Homeric epics introduce literary dreams. In Homer dreams are presented as the gods' will and they are a useful

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<sup>3</sup> About the oneiromantic treatises and the professional interpreters, as appeared in ancient Greek society see Del Corno 1982:58.

<sup>4</sup> For Artemidorus' treatise of dreams see Del Corno 1982:60-61.

<sup>5</sup> For the Greek concept of dreaming see Gallop 1991:6-11. For a detailed analysis of dreaming from the Antiquity until our days see Harris 2009:123-278.

instrument for predicting the future. Usually, Homeric dreams are divine messages in the form of *theophanies*, whose intent is to direct the Homeric heroes towards something or to prevent them from something else (e.g. *Iliad* II 5-84, XXIII 62-100, *Odyssey* iv 795-842, vi 13-50).<sup>6</sup> Their appearances are varied, they usually have a specific narrative form and their role for the development of the poetic plot is very important.

Contrary to the Homeric dream's divine origin, the motivation of dreams in Hellenistic poetry seems to be more psychological. The human mind and soul are the key factors in the creation of dreams, whereas the gods and any external and supernatural power do not seem to play an important role. The limits of a dream can be found not only in the outside world but also in the dreamer's internal world, beliefs, intellectual and cultural background and emotions. Based on this relationship between the creation of dreams and the psychic world of the dreamer, dreams are represented as reminders of the day and evidences of the dreamer's psychological state.

Aristotle with his advances in psychology is responsible for this change in the approach of dreams. The key passages are *On Dreams* 458b1-30 and 459a15-20. According to Aristotle, the dreamer is not a passive recipient of a vision coming from outside, but the dream is the product of the human mind (ψυχή) (Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα περὶ ἐνυπνίου ἐπιζητητέον, καὶ πρῶτον τίνι τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς φαίνεται, καὶ πότερον τοῦ νοητικοῦ τὸ πάθος ἐστὶ τοῦτο ἢ τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ, 458b1-3).<sup>7</sup> In effect, studying the way in which a dream can be formed, Aristotle notices that during sleep, the dreamer's soul stops being in connection with the rest of the body and sensory perception and starts to produce its own visions (οὐκ ἄρα γε τῇ αἰσθήσει τὸ ἐνύπνιον

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<sup>6</sup> For examples on Homeric dreams as God's messages see Gallop 1991:7. About the personification of dreams in Homer see Kessels 1978:7-10, 174-185, 199-200.

<sup>7</sup> The text used for Aristotle's *On Dream* is that of Rose, W. D. (*Aristotle. Fragmenta Selecta*. Oxford 1955)

αἰσθανόμεθα, 458b9). The senses are inactive, the mind is free and the soul can freely create images.

Aristotle rejects the divine or supernatural origin of a dream and explains not the entire narrative episode but only the phantom that appears in someone's dreams.<sup>8</sup> *Phantasma* is an appearance in sleep and it is what exactly we call a dream (τὸ γὰρ ἐν ὕπνῳ φάντασμα ἐνύπνιον λέγομεν, εἴθ' ἀπλῶς εἴτε τρόπον τινὰ γινόμενον, 459a19-20). In the dreams the function of imagination (*phantasia*) plays an important role, which is considered to be the repercussion of reception, and operate only after the person's senses disappear.<sup>9</sup> So, a dream is the result of the imaginative part of the soul (φανερὸν ὅτι τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ μὲν ἐστὶ τὸ ἐνυπνιάζειν, τούτου δ' ἢ φανταστικόν, 459a20-21). Imagination is difficult to define, as the imaginative part of the soul is merely the same as the perceptual, because they have the same physical basis.<sup>10</sup>

## 1.2. Literary Emotions

As dreams in Hellenistic poetry are usually in strict relationship with the sleeper's emotions, it is necessary, in the first phase, to search for the basic rules governing the depiction of the psychological state of a literary character. In the case of literary emotions, a poet can simply make a reference, place an emotional 'label' or a vague emotional determination. Sometimes, the poet chooses the detailed description of the hero's emotional state by giving as many details as possible about the condition of his soul as well as the way it is expressed.

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<sup>8</sup> The belief about the dreams' supernatural origin is also rejected by rationalists such as Xenophanes (fr. B2), Heraclitus (DK 22 FR. B 89) and Herodotus (VII.16), see Gallop 1991:8-9.

<sup>9</sup> For the content of Aristotle's treatise about dreams see Levis 2009:18.

<sup>10</sup> About Aristotle's imagination (*phantasia*) see Gallop 1991:21-27, where it is stated that dreams must be thought as work of the imaginative part of the soul, which differs from the perceptual part, despite the fact that they have the same physical basis.

Particularly, there are many ways in which a poet can sketch the emotional world of his heroes. Rene Nünlist, seeking in ancient commentaries the basic methods of constructing literary characters, concludes with the following basic point: the personality of a character can arise through his words and actions. In this case, the personality is structured indirectly and contextually. The opposite is the ability of the author-narrator to describe directly the character that interests him or to put another person in the plot to do so.<sup>11</sup>

The literary emotions are poetic constructions, from which we cannot draw conclusions for the psychology in real life.<sup>12</sup> However, the varied modern interdisciplinary discourses contribute to their better comprehension. Particularly remarkable is the case of Freudian theory of dreams, the application of which in literary dreams, as we will see below, contributes substantially to their interpretative approach. Moreover, the veracity of the character is a prerequisite for his/her success,<sup>13</sup> a fact that prompts us to take into account some of the modern theories about emotions in order to better comprehend the psychic world of the literary characters.

Based on modern theories about emotions, we observe firstly that the confusion surrounding the precise distinction of the three basic relative terms, *emotion*, *feeling* and *mood*,

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<sup>11</sup> See also Nünlist 2009:246, where in the first case the character is referred to as 'implicit' and it is he whose inner world is implied contextually, while in the latter case the character is stated as 'explicit' and is one whose personality is stated or is described directly (*Poetics* 1454a17-19).

<sup>12</sup> For an analysis of Feagin's views on the relationship between *art emotions* and *life emotions* see Feagin 1997:50-60.

<sup>13</sup> Nünlist 2009:249-250 points to the need for consistency in the description of the personality of the characters by citing ancient commentaries that identify instances where the behavior or the speech of the heroes is *παρὰ τὸ πρόσωπον, ἀνάρμοστον, οὐκ οἰκεῖον*. He also talks about the need for plausibility of literary characters, pointing out that, when poets create veritable heroes, the identification of the readers with them is more spontaneous and easy to be succeeded, see p. 252.

becomes evident in poetry as well.<sup>14</sup> However, despite the disagreement concerning the terms, there is a consensus on the two basic parameters, which in general constitute the concept of emotion. On the one hand, emotion is understood as a biological process of the brain and the nervous system, as part of human physiology, which, although it begins as a cognitive experience, is then externalized and expressed in a bodily way. On a second level, emotion is an individual experience, internalized and detached from the outside reality, thus directly connected with the personality and temperament of the person experiencing it. Finally, emotion is a cultural construction and therefore varies depending on culture. Although emotion is common and recognizable to all mankind and of course it exists before and independently of any culture, when it is expressed, it is inevitably undergoing cultural crystallization and is embodied in the corresponding cultural norms. There is therefore a difference between the person's primary emotion-experience and what is ultimately expressed by him. This happens, because the emotion as a personal experience and product of human mind, when it is expressed through language, it is filtered through the personal temperament, physical experience, cultural and social values.<sup>15</sup>

### **1.3. A Psychological interpretation of Literary Dreams**

In Hellenistic poetry, as is stated above, dreams stop being exclusively external messages and derive often from the dreamer's inner world. Consequently, the dreamer's emotions are of great importance in our attempt to approach and interpret Hellenistic dreams. When we refer

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<sup>14</sup> About the differences between *emotion*, *feeling* and *mood* see Tarlow 2000:714. Frevert 2016:52 points out the subtle dividing lines sought by scientists between semantically close terms, such as *appetite*, *sensation*, *sentiment*, *affect*, *passion*, which already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century gradually recede and the vocabulary, referring to the feeling, becomes more homogenized. Dixon 2003:4-6 also talks about the vocabulary of emotions and reports the gradual homogenization of the many varied terms and their replacement with the basic term *emotion*.

<sup>15</sup> Tarlow 2000:714-716.

to the dreamer's emotions, we usually mean the emotions by which the character is occupied before sleeping, the emotions that are generated during dreaming and the emotions by which the person is occupied at the time of his awakening. The emotions in combination with the dreams are important and usually indicative of the development of the plot.

Consequently, in the present Hellenistic dreams, the emotions of the dreamer must firstly be described. For this purpose, the basic principles that apply to the sketching of the emotional world of literary characters will be proved useful. It is particularly necessary to identify the words that show the emotions before and after dreaming. The study of these poetic verbal choices will help us draw conclusions on how a particular emotion triggers a particular imaginative narrative episode and leads to the creation of new emotions during this and shapes the new emotions after it. Finally, to what extent are the emotions after dreaming identical to those that existed before and to what extent those new emotions contribute to the development of the plot? From this last observation we can conclude the role that Hellenistic dreams play in the succession of the poetic facts. Therefore, in my paper, on the basis of the Aristotelian views about the connection between dreams and dreamer's emotional state, as stated above, I will study three Hellenistic dreams and I will attempt to show their relationship with the characters' emotions.<sup>16</sup> In particular, I will:

- identify and analyze the dreamers' sensations during dreaming
- identify to what extent sensations experienced in dreams and the dream vision's content are affected by the characters' general psychological state and how they form the characters' emotions after dreaming.

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<sup>16</sup> Except of these dreams, in Hellenistic poetry appear other three dreams: Theocritus *Idyll* 21.39, Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* 4. 662-682, 1732-1752.

- identify if and to what extent the emotions generated by the dream contribute to the development of the poetic plot.

## 2. Dreams

### 2.1. Medea's dream in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*

The first dream that I will study is Medea's dream in *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius.<sup>17</sup>

Medea is without doubt one of the most psychologically complex literary characters in the *Argonautica*. Her role is particularly crucial to the development of the plot. The importance of her poetic role is intensified by the emphasis that the poet gives on her constant emotional conflict.<sup>18</sup> Medea is the protagonist, who experiences an emotional dilemma. The development of the poetic facts depends to a great extent on her final decision. Her emotional conflict is depicted exceptionally vividly through her dream. Her dream, although is constructed in Homeric terms, turns out to be a poetic medium of Medea's inner world's manifestation (3. 616-635).

Nausicaa's dream (*Odyssey* vi 13-40) is a basic poetic model for Medea's dream<sup>19</sup>. Despite the possible similarities between the two dreams, their differences are many and substantial. In particular, both dreamers are unmarried girls who still live with their fathers and want to get married. In the case of Nausicaa there is not a specific man, with whom the maiden is in love, whereas in the case of Medea, the heroine's erotic desire for Jason preexists. Nausicaa's dream is about a divine epiphany. Nausicaa dreams the appearance of Athena disguised to a young

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<sup>17</sup>The text used for the *Argonautica* is that of Fraenkel, H. (*Apollonii Rhodii, Argonautica*, Oxford 1961).

<sup>18</sup>Barkhuizen 1979 maintains that the role that Medea is called to serve is based mainly on her psychological characterization.

<sup>19</sup>The text used for the *Odyssey* is that of Allen, T. W. (*Homeri Opera*, III. Oxford 1917<sup>2</sup>).

girl prompting her to go to the river in order to begin the preparations for her imminent wedding. On the other hand, Medea's dream is an episode with Medea herself and Jason as protagonists. Both dreams are associated with the relationship and the future meeting between the girl and one hero, but in the case of Nausicaa the hero is completely unknown to her.<sup>20</sup> Concerning the way that each dream is created in the heroines' mind, we notice that in the case of Nausicaa, Athena is apparently responsible for the creation of her dream. However, in the case of Medea, we observe that her dream is not clearly sent by a god. Although her erotic desire begins because of the intervention of Hera, her dream is represented as a result of this erotic desire in combination with other emotions that coexist inside her soul.<sup>21</sup>

Based on this important difference between the two dreams, Reddoch expresses his opinion that Medea's dream is in fact a combination of Nausicaa's dream and Penelope's psychological state as it is represented in *Odyssey* xix 509-534. Medea's dream retains the Homeric narrative structure and function of Nausicaa's but at the same time illustrates the respective Penelope's emotional turmoil. Both are experiencing a psychological dilemma and cannot make a final decision. Penelope is torn between waiting for Odysseus and marrying one of the suitors, whereas Medea cannot decide between helping Jason and remaining loyal to her father's orders. Both dilemmas are connected with the same conflicting emotions. Penelope and Medea are tormented by the erotic desire, the fear for the future consequences of their decisions and the shame towards the society and their families.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> About the similarities and differences between Nausicaa's and Medea's dreams see Knight 1995:232-234 and Reddoch 2010:54-55. About the literary models upon which Medea's dream is literarily constructed see Barkhuizen 1979:33; Hunter 1989:163-164; Knight 1995:224-244; Clauss 1997:160. Specifically, about the difference between the *dream figure* and the *dream episode* see Harris 2009:23-90.

<sup>21</sup> On gods' role in Medea's dreaming see Campbell 1983:37-39; Walde 2001:178-181.

<sup>22</sup> About Reddoch's view see Reddoch 2010:53-58. Concerning Penelope's dream about the eagle devouring the

Consequently, Medea's dream is mainly a manifestation of her emotional disposition.<sup>23</sup> Concerning her already existing emotions before sleeping, the adjective ἀκηχεμένην (618) reveals a girl who is in a situation of deep grief. Sleep initially effects beneficially and relaxing on Medea's psychology (κούρην δ' ἔξ ἀχέων ἀδινὸς κατελώφεεν ὕπνος /λέκτρῳ ἀνακλινθεῖσαν, 616-617). Her grief is provoked due to her will to help the stranger man, with whom she is secretly in love, and her fear of Aietes' anger towards her actions. Erotic desire, fear and shame are her prevailing emotions which draw and determine the poetic facts. Medea is a literary character whose actions and decisions are almost exclusively dependent on her psychology. She is experiencing a continual emotional debate and the emotions that will eventually prevail inside her are going to determine the development of the subsequent facts.

Her psychological dilemma is apparent also by her dream as well, which is characterized explicitly as a nightmare (ὄλοοι ἐρέθεσκον ὄνειροι, 618). Essentially, her dream episode is a repetition of the situation that Medea lives in reality. Medea dreams of Jason coming to Aietes' city in order not to take the Golden Fleece but because he wants to drive Medea to his home as a bride. Medea decides to help Jason with the bull. This results into Aietes' anger towards the stranger. Medea eventually chooses to follow the stranger (620-632). We notice that her dream is a dramatization of the already existing dilemma between helping Jason and obeying her father. Furthermore, from the dream it turns out her real desire to help the stranger and get married with him, whereas Aietes' anger depicts her fear of the consequences that her decisions may have.

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geese, it is considered to be a prediction of Odysseus' attack on suitors and not a product of her emotional state, see Kessels 1978:91-110; Reddoch 2010:54.

<sup>23</sup> There is consensus among the scholars regarding the opinion that Medea's dream is a manifestation of her emotions, desires, wishes and fears, see Natzel 1992:56-58 and Papadopoulou 1997:664-664; Fusillo 2001:132-140; Walde 2001:175-181, who maintain that except for the dream, her monologues can equally be considered a window to her complex emotional state.

Her reactions after her awakening are of particular interest. Medea wakes up screaming and looking anxious around her chamber (τὴν δ' ὕπνος ἅμα κλαγγῆ μεθέηκεν. /παλλομένη δ' ἀνόρουσε φόβῳ, περί τ' ἀμφί τε τοίχους/ πάπτηεν θαλάμοιο, 632-634). Grief and fear continue to exist and become more intense (ἄδειλὴ ἐγών, οἷόν με βαρεῖς ἐφόβησαν ὄνειροι, 636). Medea, after her awakening, is in a situation of despair and great uncertainty, thinking about the possible negative consequences that the strangers may have to her life (δείδια, μὴ μέγα δὴ τι φέρη κακὸν ἦδε κέλευθος/ ἠρώων, 637-638). After rejecting the idea of marrying the stranger, she talks to her sister about her thoughts of helping the Argonauts. She finally collapses on her bed revealing a situation of agony and despair (λέκτροισιν πρηνῆς ἐνικάππεσεν εἰλιχθεῖσα, 655). The main psychological dilemma continues to be apparent. The heroine is torn between love (περί μοι ξείνῳ φρένες ἠερέθονται, 638) and shame (αἰδοῖ ἐεργομένη, 649),<sup>24</sup> desire (θρασὺς ἴμερος ὀτρύνεσκεν, 653) and fear (δείδια, μὴ μέγα δὴ τι φέρη κακὸν ἦδε κέλευθος, 637). We remark that the emotions after awakening are the same with the emotions before her dream. The basic difference is the fact that her emotions become more externalized after her sleep (ἀδινὴν δ' ἀνεναίκατο φωνήν, 635).

Based on this last statement, we can characterize Medea's emotions as a whole a mental process rather than bodily reactions. When we talk about emotions in the case of Medea, we usually mean deep, complicate intellectual processes without specific bodily or linguistic expressions. Medea experiences all her emotions internally and does not dare to express them

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<sup>24</sup> Kristjansson 2001:108, deals with the differentiation between the *shame* associated with the reputation that the person wants to create in the social environment and the *shame* associated with the person's internal evaluation. Following this anthropological distinction, he considers that in the first case the feeling, which is external, is called *shame*, while in the second, the feeling which is internal, is called *guilt*. In the case of Medea *aidos* is expressed as interest for the others' opinion. For a detailed description of the emotion of *aidos* see Cairns 1993.

not even to herself.<sup>25</sup> Her dream is the initial manifestation of all these oppressed emotions. Just after her dream, Medea screams, cries and collapses physically and emotionally. Her dream is a stimulus for her physical revelation and functions as an expressive way of her inner disturbance. Her emotional disposition is responsible for the creation of her dream and only through it her emotions are perceived by her and then are externalized physically.<sup>26</sup>

Regarding the poetic role which the dream is called to serve, there is a disagreement among the modern scholars. The main question which arises is if Medea's dream can be characterized predictive or its role is restricted only to bringing to light the heroine's oppressed emotions. According to the poetic plot, Medea finally helps Jason and abandons her parents. There are, however, ambiguities regarding the predictive nature of the dream, because Medea already wants to help Jason before her dream. So we cannot claim that her dream predicts the poetic future, as nothing happens actually that we have not already known.<sup>27</sup> Thus, regarding the question as to which role Medea's dream is going to serve, we can suppose that her dream is just a literary medium which does not contribute substantially to the development of the plot, but it is used as a medium in order to make Medea's emotional

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<sup>25</sup> Papadopoulou 1997:654 remarks Medea's general attempt to rationalize and understand her emotions just before she finally succumbs to them.

<sup>26</sup> Papadopoulou 1997:655-657 similarly remarks that Medea experiences all her emotions only internally and externalizes almost nothing. Through the first and second monologue Medea tries to communicate her emotions, which remain internal. After the third monologue and mainly through her dream Medea stops having the control over her emotions that start to be carried to the extreme of their externalization. In addition, only after dreaming does Medea start to express her internal conflict with actions. Since then the heroine is restricted to mind actions. After dreaming her internal struggle seems to be over and as a result she is required to resort to acts, see Barkhuizen 1979:36, 45.

<sup>27</sup> About the different opinions regarding the predictive role of Medea's dream see Natzel 1992:57; Papadopoulou 1997:663; Giangrande 2000:111-112.

disposition more comprehensible both to her and to the readers.<sup>28</sup> According to this view and taking into account that Medea finally helps Jason, we can also demonstrate that her dream is a kind of wish-fulfillment. Her dream reveals precisely the manner in which Medea would like the facts to evolve.

## 2.2. Europa's Dream in Moschus' *Europa*

The second dream that I will study is the one we meet in Moschus' epyllion *Europa*.<sup>29</sup> Although, epyllion as a literary term dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there is still a great debate among the scholars regarding whether or not the epyllion can be considered a distinct literary genre. However, the epyllion incorporates all the characteristic Callimachean features such as brevity, mythic content, emphasis on details, intense sentimentality and psychological plausibility.<sup>30</sup> Based on the latest feature, I will study the way in which psychological features can be detected in Europa's dream and how these are connected with the development of the poetic plot.

The emphasis on Europa's psychology is one of Moschus' innovations and indicates the important role that psychology can play in the narration of a dream-episode.<sup>31</sup> Actually, the

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<sup>28</sup> We can better understand the meaning of Medea's dream, if we think about the *Argonautica* in general as the first epic that treats the theme of love, see Pavlock 1990:22; Papadopoulou 1997:654. From the characterization of *Argonautica* as a love epic, stems the importance of the dream in externalizing Medea's erotic emotions. Furthermore, the emphasis that Apollonius gives to Medea's characterization suggests the Apollonius' attempt to create a positive picture for his central heroine, see Papadopoulou 1997:658. The fact that Medea's inner debate is of utmost importance in Apollonius' epic is also remarked by Barkhuizen 1979:33.

<sup>29</sup> The text used for the *Europa* is that of Gow, A.S.F. (*Bucolici Graeci*, Oxford 1952).

<sup>30</sup> About the epyllion as a distinct literary genre see Crump 1931; Fantuzzi 1998:31-33 and the most recent Bär-Baumbach 2012:ix.

<sup>31</sup> In particular, the psychological significance of Europa's dream is something that is indicated by Gutzwiller 1981:66, who is of the opinion that the dream symbolizes the conflicting emotions which are generated by the fight of the two women over Europa and the desire of Europa herself to escape and be free.

psychological significance of Europa's dream is the element that differentiates it from the corresponding Homeric dream of Nausicaa (*Odyssey* vi 13-40), which is evoked by Moschus' narration.<sup>32</sup> Both dreams are sent by a goddess, Athena and Aphrodite respectively, to a young unmarried girl. Although the situations in which the two dreams take place are similar, their purposes are different. The dream is sent by Athena to Nausicaa in order to persuade her to help Odysseus. Although her dream is about her marriage, its purpose is to make Nausicaa go to the shore and visit Odysseus there. On the contrary, Europa's dream is about her and concerns only her own adventure. For this reason, the references to her reactions and feelings as a dreamer are a lot. This fact, however, does not mean that the psychological references are totally absent from Nausicaa's dream. We observe that Athena, although she is interested in helping Odysseus, takes advantage of the psychology of Nausicaa as a young unmarried girl.

In addition, Nausicaa's dream is specific and explicit without any symbolisms. Athena explicitly tells Nausicaa about her imminent marriage and urges her to start the preparations (25-28). Nausicaa, without being confused, feels happy for the positive dream (κεχάριστο δὲ θυμῷ, 23), obeys the goddess' instructions and goes to the river. On the other hand, Europa's dream can only be interpreted symbolically (8-15). In fact, Nausicaa is the passive recipient of a dream, which comes from the outside as a divine message and is called to obey it, without having the opportunity to take a more active role. On the other hand, Europa's dream is symbolic and although it is sent as well by a goddess, Cypris, Europa seems to be more active because she is called to interpret it by herself. She does not obey to it at once, but tries firstly to understand it. During her attempt of interpretation the poetic references to her senses, emotions and emotional reactions are many and analytical.

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<sup>32</sup> Scholars that are of the belief that Nausicaa's dream is recalled by Moschus are Raminella 1951:263; Webster 1964:153 and Gutzwiller 1981:63.

Indeed, according to Schmiel, Moschus' *Europa* is a very sensual poem as senses seem to have a very prominent role.<sup>33</sup> During her dreaming her senses seem to operate regularly, despite Aristotle's opinion that during dreaming, the sleeper is totally incapable of experiencing sensations (*On Dreams* 459b 19-21).<sup>34</sup> However, Europa's dream is full of sensations, which lead to the corresponding emotions after her dream. The references to Europa's sensations are apparent from the beginning of the poem. (ὔπνος ὅτε γλυκίων μέλιτος βλεφάροισιν ἐφίζων / λυσιμελής πεδάα μαλακῶ κατὰ φάεα δεσμῶ, 3-4). Just after the positive effect of sleep on Europa's psychology, a strange vision makes its appearance. We notice, particularly, the sweet timbre that the dream has on the girl, just before the dream vision generates her subsequent emotional turmoil (16-27). During the dream senses of displeasure result from references such as περίσχετο (11), κρατερῆσι βιωμένη παλάμησιν, (13) which coexist with a simultaneous sense of desire, as results from εἴρυσεν οὐκ ἀέκουσαν (14).

Europa's dream is about two mother-figure women, who are in fact continents, and are presented to be fighting over her (8-15). The terms used for her dream is not without meaning. The two figures appear initially as ὄνειρον (5), a vision that is formed in a situation of sleep. Due to its plausibility the ὄνειρον is transformed into ὕπαρ (17), which is a real appearance that is seen in a state of wakefulness, a vision of reality. The φάσμα (21), the appearance and the phenomenon that appears in dream, finally is transformed into an apparition with real dimensions.<sup>35</sup> The undoubted dream's plausibility is responsible for the emotions that follow, when she awakes. Once the dreaming vision has disappeared, Europa finds herself terrified

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<sup>33</sup> About this opinion see Schmiel 1981:270-272.

<sup>34</sup> See Sistakou 2014:149-150 about the senses met in *Europa*, such as vision, touch, smell, taste and the way in which those senses are the stimuli that draw to the formation of her feelings as subjective emotions.

<sup>35</sup> For the definition of the words ὄνειρον, ὕπαρ, φάσμα see LSJ.

(δειμαίνουσα, 16). Her fear is physically expressed as it seems from the reference to her παλλομένη κραδίην (17). The vision of the two women is yet in front of her eyes as an actual sight. Without being able to understand the meaning of her dream, Europa feels confused and nervous (20-24). At the same time, for all these negative emotions, Europa is overwhelmed by a positive emotion, the desire (πόθος) for the one of the two women (ὥς μ' ἔλαβε κραδίην κείνης πόθος, 25), with whom she felt an intimate connection.

Considering all the above, we observe that the symbolic nature of Europa's dream gives the poet the opportunity to portray her emotional state. Her intense emotions are triggered by the dream's enigmatic nature. The strange dream creates emotions of fear and embarrassment. At the same time, these negative emotions coexist with a sweet emotion of desire. Generally, we notice that there is an interplay between senses and emotions. Senses are the physical sensations, whereas emotions are not only bodily sensations but also involve the mental process. The sweet sense of the relaxing sleep at the start of the dream is replaced after her awakening by the fear<sup>36</sup> and embarrassment that accompanied by thoughts and concerns about the meaning of the dream. Emotions, despite the absence of accurate references, start to occupy the girl during her sleep and continue to exist after her awakening.<sup>37</sup> This means that her emotions are not related to reason, as they are triggered in the state of sleep. The

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<sup>36</sup> Concerning the emotion of *fear* in particular, this seems to be exceptionally suitable to a dreaming content, if we take into account Konstan's observation that fear is an instinctive emotion and as a result is opposed to other highly cognitive emotions, such as *shame* and *anger*, see Konstan 2006:129. The same opinion is also stated by Griffiths 1997:8-9. About the non cognitive nature of fear there are at the same time many objections. For the support of cognitive nature of fear see Ben Ze' ev 2001:52. The cognitive nature of fear is also supported by Aristotle, who is of the opinion that fear (*phobos*) presupposes sophisticated judgments by the subject in order to evaluate something as dangerous and feel feared about it, see Konstan 2006:132-133. For the Aristotelian definition of *phobos* see *Rhetoric* 2.5 1382a 21-25.

<sup>37</sup> According to Gallop 1991:27, because of the fact that the person usually assimilates the dreaming situation to a real situation, he feels during the dreaming the emotions that he would feel in a similar real-life situation. However, when he awakes, he realizes their false nature as illusory appearances and dispels them.

interpretive processes take place once Europa awakes and is liberated from all these incomprehensible emotions, generated by the dream. Consequently, if we want to be more accurate, we would support the view that during her dream Europa experiences only senses, because reason is absent, whereas after her awakening, her senses become emotions, because her mental processes with the form of thoughts and concerns start to function.

What is more, quite interesting is the fact that we are informed Europa's dream not by Europa herself but by the narrator (1). This means that Europa's dreaming experience is given to us as this is understood by the narrator, who tries to describe it. Europa seems completely passive during her sleep, as a receiver of the ἔθνος ὀνειρώων (5), sent by Cypris. The only time that Europa speaks directly is just after her dream, when she awakes and expresses her emotions and concerns (21-27). For this reason, during the dream we can mainly detect the senses that result from the facts that are described by the poet, whereas Europa's emotions, as personal experiences, can be spotted after the dream, as these are expressed by Europa herself. Similarly, in the development of the poetic plot we notice that all the facts and Europa's actions and emotions continue to be narrated by the poet, which means that Europa is just a literary tool that is used by the poet for his poetic purpose. The poetic interest is not concentrated on her psychology, but her psychology serves the poetic aims.

Europa's emotions stop being incomprehensible for her, when she is confronted with the reality. We find connections, regarding the emotions, between the dream and the subsequent poetic events. Indeed the emotions that Europa experiences after her dream are to a great extent similar to the emotions Europa is going to experience during her future meeting with the bull. The fear, the confusion and the desire are going to appear again in her real life. In this way her symbolic dream comes true and her strange emotions generated by the dream cease being without any meaning for the girl. Particularly, Europa's initial desire (τερπώμεθα) to

climb on the back of the curious but attractive bull and play with it (δεῦθ' ἑτάραι φίλια καὶ ὀμήλικες, ὄφρ' ἐπὶ τῷδε / ἐζόμεναι ταύρω τερπόμεθα, 102-103) is immediately replaced by the fear and the trepidation of her sudden departure ('πῆ με φέρεις θεόταυρε; τίς ἔπλεο; πῶς δὲ κέλευθα, 135).<sup>38</sup> Her confusion is reflected in her concerns about the possible divine origin of the bull and her own termination. The abandonment of her father's home creates feelings of sadness (ὥμοι ἐγὼ μέγα δὴ τι δυσάμμορος, ἢ ῥά τε δῶμα/ πατρὸς ἀποπρολιποῦσα, 146-147) that coexist with the certainty of the divine presence in what is happening to her.<sup>39</sup>

Essentially, in the above episode we are watching the transition of Europa from girl to adulthood. The passage from girlhood to womanhood is highlighted by the fact that in the end Europa becomes a mother. This wedding procession is symbolized by her sea voyage and is accompanied by emotions of fear and surprise.<sup>40</sup> Based on the similarities of Europa's episode to the respective Nausicaa's episode, we observe that Nausicaa is occupied with an intense emotion of *aidos* about the way in which she will mention to her father her desire to be married. *Aidos*, on the contrary, is absent in the case of Europa.<sup>41</sup> Her responsibility about what has happened is not clearly referred to and her willingness to follow the bull is indirectly

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<sup>38</sup> The fear seems to be acute and be provoked by a tangible stimulus. About the distinction between *acute fear* and *chronic fear* see Ben Ze' ev 2001:479. About the general characteristics of fear see p.473-489.

<sup>39</sup> The emotion of self-pity in particular can be considered in relationship with the fear as the two emotions, according to Aristotle's description, share a number of common elements (*Rhetoric* 2.8.1385b13-16). Both emotions are described by Aristotle as pains which feel the person when he is in front of something that is considered by him destructive or harmful. About the similarities and differences between these two emotions see Konstan 2006:131. Another evidence about the same nature of these two emotions is the fact that fear and pity are thought to be born almost simultaneously in the souls of the audience of Greek tragedies, see LaCourse -Munteanu 2012.

<sup>40</sup> It is noticeable, as is observed by Fantuzzi -Hunter 2005:219, that Europa does not express any shame for her leave, but rather she feels surprised by the way that a bull can run on water. Also, for the sea-voyage as a wedding procession see Buhler 1960, 163, Gutzwiller 1992:200. Finally, as Sistikou states, Europa's voyage from her homeland to Crete also symbolizes her transition from Asia to Europe, Sistikou 2016:5.

<sup>41</sup> About this difference between the two episodes see Fantuzzi-Hunter 2005:218.

justified.<sup>42</sup> Europa's positive emotional reaction towards the events is reflected by her dream and her recollection of it. Despite the emotions of fear and confusion, the emotion of desire and her willingness are stated explicitly. There is a crucial opposition in the emotions that Europa experiences. Europa must choose between two continents. Although when she awakes at first she feels scared, after that we can clearly see her preference to follow the one of the two women (25). This ambivalence, which can be also detected in the real life, refers to the female's disgrace in the prospect of abandoning her home and her family that coexists with her willingness to pass into her husband's family. In the case of Europa, the young girl has already the desire to be married. This desire draws to the dream, which under these circumstances is motivated by Europa's unconscious and her hidden desire to make a transition from girl to woman.<sup>43</sup>

In sum, Europa's dream differs from its Homeric counterpart, the dream of Nausicaa. The interpretation of the dream by Europa brings about a series of emotional turbulence. Fear, confusion and desire are the emotions that are generated by the dream and replace the respective senses experienced during it. Her emotions generated by the dream are not cut off from the poetic plot, but they advance the facts, that follow, and prepare the reader for Europa's reaction to them. Also, they are not independent of the reality, but are stimulated by Europa's unconscious and real desires as well as concerns about her future. In fact Europa is

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<sup>42</sup> The justification of her willingness to abandon her father is succeeded by her prayer for Poseidon's protection by which it becomes clear that Europa had been chosen by the god to do this watery journey and as a result her initial reluctant behavior on the beach is acknowledged, see Fantuzzi-Hunter 2005:219.

<sup>43</sup> Concerning the Europa's real desire, Sistakou 2016:7 makes reference to the literary space, states that her chamber acquires emotional and psychological dimensions as evidenced by the periphrasis Φοίνικος θυγάτηρ and ἔτι παρθένος (7). Therefore, it is reasonable in such a space the girl and her dreams to be hunted by her desire to find a husband.

transformed into a poetic medium for the development of the plot. Moschus uses Europa's dream in order to prepare the readers for the subsequent mythological events.

### **2.3. Alcmene's Dream in Moschus' *Megara***

Another Hellenistic dream with psychological references is the dream of Alcmene in Moschus' epyllion, entitled *Megara*.<sup>44</sup> *Megara* is differentiated from the *Europa* in the sense that all the poetic composition is about two passionate lamentations, expressed by Heracles' wife and mother respectively. In particular, Heracles' wife, *Megara*, mourns for the dreadful killing of his own sons by their father, whereas Heracles' mother, Alcmene, mourns for the threatening fate, which is awaiting her two sons, Heracles and Iphicles. One of the epyllion's characteristics is the emphasis on a specific point of view. In *Megara* the prevailing emotion of sorrow is expressed through two different points of views, which are referred to at different times. On the one hand, *Megara* expresses her sorrow for the facts that happened in the past and on the other hand Alcmene expresses her sorrow for the facts that are going to happen in the future. Studying these two different points of views, we conclude that the poet intends to give the biggest emphasis on the view that regards the future.<sup>45</sup> The most extensive part of the epyllion concentrates on Alcmene and her concerns about her sons' fate.

The emphasis on future is stressed by the vivid description of Alcmene's dream, which is quite extensive and occupies a big part of the poetic composition.<sup>46</sup> The dream is not sent as a

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<sup>44</sup> The text used for the *Megara* is that of A.S.F Gow (*Bucolici Graeci*, Oxford 1952).

<sup>45</sup> About the specific epyllion's characteristic see Ambühl 2010:164.

<sup>46</sup> The advantage that is given to Alcmene's lamentation is noticed by Marcovich 1980:51, 54, who argues that the poetic purpose is to give greater emphasis on the future, because, as stated by Alcmene herself, she is in a much worse situation, as her concerns refer to facts that may happen in the future and not to the facts that have happened and cannot be changed. Alcmene specifically characterizes *Megara* as φιλοθρήνης (66), an adjective that is suitable to someone who is fond of wailing and usually used in tragedy for facts that have already been

divine message by a god, but it is from Alcmene's heart, as is stated clearly by Alcmene herself (γένοιτο δὲ μάντις ἐκείνω /θυμὸς ἐμός, 124-125). This is also confirmed by the emotions that are expressed by her after sleep, which are similar to her psychological state before the dream. Regarding the emotions that can be detected in the epyllion, we notice that Megara has many similarities to tragedy. Essentially, Megara is a tragic *threnos* and the epyllion as a whole is constructed over two extended lamentations.<sup>47</sup> As a result the most prevailing emotion, which can be inferred from the start of the epyllion, is a deep grief, a sorrow that is provoked by the death, which has already taken place, and by the death, that is very possible to happen in the near future. The only positive emotions which are present in the epyllion are love, empathy and the understanding that Alcmene expresses for her daughter in law. Alcmene is presented as a loving comforter that cares deeply for Megara and tries to make her feel better, expressing emotions of warm humane love.<sup>48</sup>

Regarding Alcmene's emotional state before the dream, we suppose that it is in agreement with the general emotional atmosphere of the epyllion. As it is clearly stated in lines 60-61 (Αλκμήνη: βαρὺ δ' ἤγε καὶ ἐκ θυμοῦ στενάχουσα /μύθοισιν πυκινόισι φίλην νυὸν ὧδε μετηύδα), Alcmene is deeply saddened by the events that preceded and have just been narrated by Megara. Her grief is manifested physically through the tears running on her cheeks (ὥς δ' αὐτως δακρύοισι παρήϊα λευκὰ ἐδαίαιεν, 59). Her sadness main stimulus is the reminder of the past events by Megara. At the same time, her sadness is provoked by her anxiety about the

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lamented in the past, see Ambühl 2010:164. Similarly, commenting on the word δεύτερον (65), Sistakou 2017:426 points out that Alcmene's argument is that the lamentation must be related either to recent misfortunes or to future ones.

<sup>47</sup> About the two lamentations as tragic *threnos* and about the verbal echoes from the tragedy *Hecuba* of Euripides see Ambühl 2010:163-164.

<sup>48</sup> About Alcmene's role as a caring and loving comforter see Marcovich 1980:56.

future that appears to be even worse than the past. Alcmene's concern coexists with her love for Megara and her desire to repress her negative emotions. Her palliative speech is suitable to a lamentation and points out the futility of mourning for events that have already happened and cannot be changed.<sup>49</sup>

Her anxiety about the future outweighs her sorrow for the past. Therefore, the dream manifests itself as the psychosomatic symptom of her emotional state. Her dream is a clear nightmare (παλίγκοτον ὄψιν, 92). Firstly, we spot the sweet feeling of sleep that occupies Alcmene (πρὸς δ' ἔτι μὲν ἐπτοίησε διὰ γλυκὺν αἰνὸς ὄνειρος, 91), shortly before the dream episode begins to unfold. The dream is a nightmare, as is proved by the verb δειμαίνω (92). The protagonist of her dream is Heracles, who appears naked to be in a state of slavery (95-96). Once he has finished his work, there appears an imminent fire, sent by the angered Hephaestus, and begins to chase him, who runs in agony in order to be saved (104-107). Alcmene's terror for Heracles' life is temporarily replaced by the hope that Iphicles may help his brother to be saved. Iphicles, because of his age, is unable to help Heracles and Alcmene suffers from intense terror for the fate of both of her children.<sup>50</sup> We notice that during the dream we can only detect the senses that are provoked by the imaginative visions and are described by Alcmene. We also notice that Alcmene during her recollection of the dream she

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<sup>49</sup> Alcmene's θάρσει is her response to Megara's question (6-7). In this specific context θάρσει seems to be consolatory and as such more suitable to Megara's lamentation. About the consolatory meaning of θάρσει see Giangande 1997:261, where it is stated that in pre-Hellenistic times the verb was usually used with the meaning of 'cheer up' and not essentially in the context of a lamentation. In Hellenistic times the verb acquires consolatory meaning, see also Lattimore 1962:250-254. About the specific imperative and the various suggested solutions see Vaughn 1976:62; Marcovich 1980:51-53.

<sup>50</sup> According to Plastira 1999:133, Alcmene's dream is clearly negative and the fire from above, based on Artemidorus' treatise, may be a warning from Alcmene's heart about the future difficulties to which Heracles will succumb.

remembers the senses and transforms them in the respective emotions, which logically are generated when she awakes.

Her awakening takes place at the most crucial moment of the dream, when her fear and agony are at their peak. Alcmene is crying, externalizing in this way her fear physically (αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ κλαίεσκον ἀμηχανέοντας ὀρῶσα/παῖδας ἐμούς, 119-120). Its externalization is followed by her realization that it is only a dream. However, her realization does not remove her already generated negative emotions, but instead reinforces them by adding anxiety and fear of the possibility that the dream may be verified in the future. The sorrow for the past has been replaced by the fear of the fearful present, which in turn gives way to the concern about the threatening future. We finally observe that Alcmene is not confused about the meaning of her dream, but she is mostly afraid of the possibility that the dream vision may be repeated in real life.

At the end of the epyllion, it is clearly stated by Alcmene herself that her dream is the result of her troubled soul, so it was in direct dependence with her mood before sleeping (τοῖα, φίλη, μοι ὄνειρα διὰ φρένας ἐπτοίησαν/ παννυχίη, 122-123). As a result, her dream is a mental construction created by her thoughts and her already existing concerns. At the same time, the fear prevails in her mind that her soul may become a bad prophet for the future (γένοιτο δὲ μάντις ἐκείνω /θυμὸς ἐμός, 124-125). We notice that poetic emphasis is given on the intellectual aspect of the emotions, whereas their biological aspect is only referred, in order to describe them more vividly.

Alcmene's fear of the dream's future verification is the only reference to the possible dream's future role, as we have no information about the role that the dream eventually plays in the development of the poetic plot. In essence, the epyllion is completed with the description of the dream, whereas we will never be informed whether or not the development

of the events is identified with what Alcmene has dreamed.<sup>51</sup> From the mythical events, however, we know that events actually are developed according to Alcmene's dream, which finally is proved prophetic.<sup>52</sup>

However, in the context of the epyllion, the poet's goal is not to focus on the facts themselves but on the perspective of the two women and their emotions. Dreaming is a poetic construction that serves precisely this poetic purpose. The dream is part of the poetic attempt to describe Alcmene's perspective. Megara represents the lament about the past, while Alcmene is worried about the future. The dream is the result of Alcmene's soul, a medium of her psychic world's manifestation. At the same time, the dream as a construction that is symbolically associated with future events, is rightly used by the poet in order to point out that Alcmene's emotions, unlike those of Megara, do not concern the past or the present, but only the future.

### **3. Synchronizing ... Freudian Interpretation of Dreams in Hellenistic poetry**

I demonstrated that the approach of the dreams of Hellenistic poetry requires different methodological tools than those needed to analyze the dreams of Homeric poetry. To a great

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<sup>51</sup> About the fact that the dream is never repeated during the poetic plot Perrotta 1923:46 argues that this is reason for considering Alcmene's dream not as a real dream 'vero sogno'. On the other hand Breitenstein 1966:67 maintains that ancient Greeks do not believe that the dreams must repeat themselves in reality. Dreams contain symbolisms, which we must interpret in order to predict our future. About the symbolic nature of dreams see also Artemidorus I. 2 (Her.p.4.27). Based on these symbolisms, Plastira 1999:131 remarks that the dream, constructed by Moschus, has many symbolic items, which can be interpreted only with the aid of an ancient oneirocritic treatise. However, despite the fact that Alcmene's dream contains many symbolic items, these never come true in the subsequent poetic plot.

<sup>52</sup> Plastira 1999:19 is of the opinion that in fact Alcmene's dream is only a Moschus' artifice in order to prepare his reader that Heracles will eventually die. So, the emphasis must be given to the dream as a preparation means for the mythic future and not as a way of externalizing Alcmene's inner world. Similarly, Sistakou 2017:431 refers that the god-fire anticipates the pyre on Mount Oeta of Trachis, where Heracles dies (Sophocles *Trachiniae* 1191-1199).

extent dreams of Hellenistic poetic characters seem to be in a direct connection with their pre sleeping emotional disposition. As a result the interpretation of their dreams should be combined with the approach of their previous emotional state. The already existing sleeper's psychology shapes the dream's content and effects the sensations experienced during dreaming. Finally, after awakening the character usually experiences emotions which are results of the senses are experienced during the sleep.

In this context a precious tool of interpretation is the relationship between literature and psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is an innovative method of approach that enhances the traditional ones. In effect, mythology was the first cultural field that was explored by the modern psychoanalysis. The many similarities between mythology and psychoanalysis, concerning the scientific item and the methods, justify the cooperation between these two fields. In the same context modern psychoanalytical theories can be proved very useful to the interpretation of literary dreams.<sup>53</sup>

One of the most important modern theories for literary critics is Freud's dream theory as it is described in his work entitled *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). In this work Mythology was used by Freud in order their theories to be more vividly illustrated. Most of the times myths were used as examples for the various Freudian psychoanalytical theories. As a result, given that literature is part of the Freudian scientific theories, there is no doubt that Freud's theory about dreams can be proved a useful theoretical tool in the approach of literary dreams.<sup>54</sup> In the case of Hellenistic dreams the above interpretation proves sufficiently, I think, the extent

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<sup>53</sup> About the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature, and especially mythology, see Arthur 1977:56; Merkur 2005; Sels 2011:56. Regarding the similarities between these two fields, both of these deal with the irrational, which try to interpret using metaphorical language, see Sels 2011:57. For most modern bibliography on this theme see Rabaté 2014 and Amir 2015.

<sup>54</sup> About the application of Freud's theories in literature see Arthur 1977:57; Sels 2011:57.

to which we can apply the modern Freudian theories of dreams to the theoretical approach of Hellenistic dreams.

Before I apply the Freudian theories, it would be useful to give beforehand a short exposition of Freud's dream theory. The Freudian dream theory can be summed up in two basic theoretical principles. Firstly, a dream is created by the impressions, thoughts and concerns of the day that proceed before sleeping. On falling asleep, due to the slackening of our arbitrary, emerge all our repressed ideas of the day. The ideas emerge in the form of visual and auditory images, which are the dreams. Consequently, dreams result from two different mental processes. The one process refers to the human unconsciousness that generates the desire, which is expressed through the dream. The second process includes the censorship with which the desire is distorted. As a result, a dream has a manifest and a latent content. The manifest content is about the 'narrative story' that the person remembers, when they awake, whereas the latent content refers to the underlying meaning of the dream. Also, Freud, based on the connection between dreams and ideas of the previous day, claims that, in order to interpret the content of a dream, we have to approach it in conjunction with either the most recent human experiences of the day or the more distant.

According to the second Freudian principle about dreams, it is stated that dreams are the result of certain psychic activities and are shaped in the sleeper's mind in the form of wish-fulfillments. Dreams are released from social commitments and as such reflect the deep desires of a person, which come from human unconsciousness. Contrary to the neurotic system where one repressed idea is released only as a physic symptom and not as a fulfillment, during the dream one desire can be released freely as fulfillment without concealment.<sup>55</sup> This wish is usually expressed in a peculiar manner due to the transformations that have preceded on the

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<sup>55</sup> Bowlby 2007:104.

thoughts from which the dream vision is created.<sup>56</sup> To sum up, according to Freud, human dreams are just feelings, desires and instincts, which are not present while a person is conscious. The mental activities from which the dream shapes itself are dependent on the respective intellectual activities of the previous day. Finally, due to the absence of censorship during dreaming the various desires of the day are released as being fulfilled. Our oppressed impulses and desires during dreaming are substituted by symbolic visions, which usually need interpretation, in order to become comprehensible.

Coming to the Hellenistic dreams that are analyzed above, we notice that their connection with the sleeper's psychology favors the application of the Freudian dream theory to them. In particular, starting with Medea's dream in Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, the fact that Freud does not make any reference to it so as to illustrate his theory is really surprising.<sup>57</sup> Many modern scholars agree that Medea's dream in *Argonautica* is an excellent case for the application of the Freudian theory. Indeed, Medea's dream depicts her psychological turmoil. Her agitated emotional state already exists before her sleeping due to the psychological dilemma that excruciates her.<sup>58</sup> Her dilemma refers to her erotic desire and will to help Jason that conflict with her shame towards society and her fear for her family's reactions. Exactly the same psychological dilemma is revealed during her dream with the form of a dream episode. The protagonists of this dream episode are Jason and Medea. The absence of any social restraints during sleeping permits Medea to visualize what exactly she wants to see happen in

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<sup>56</sup> For an analytical exposition of Freud's theory about dreams see Freud, S. 1900. *The Interpretation of Dreams*, where Freud, beginning with a contraction between the ancient Greek perception of the dreams as supernatural messages and later Aristotelian views about dreams as psychic products, considers the dreams as symptoms of our thoughts and, based on this statement, interprets a number of dreams.

<sup>57</sup> The same note was also made by Reddoch 2010:52n9.

<sup>58</sup> For the Freudian notion that daily life is crucial for the content of a dream see Bowlby 2007:105.

reality. For this reason we see that her wish to help Jason and leave with him is fulfilled.<sup>59</sup> Simultaneously, her already existing fear provokes the creation of an adding vision where strife between her father and the stranger is inevitable.<sup>60</sup>

Europa's dream in Moschus' *Europa*, although it is sent by a goddess and it is not clearly presented as a result of Europa's psychological disposition, its content is in connection with Europa's real concern and thoughts. In particular, Europa is an unmarried girl that lives with her father. Her desire to be married exists and coexists with the shame towards her father and the grief that at some point she must abandon him. These already existing Europa's emotions provoke the dream vision. Actually, Europa dreams about leaving her family and going away. Her emotions about this leaving are the desire to dare this change in her life and fear and grief for the future consequences. Despite the possible negative consequences, Europa in dream leaves her home, a fact that comes as a fulfillment of her real desire to leave her family and follow her husband to his home. After her awakening Europa is calm and happy with the perspective that her wish may come true. Finally, the symbolic content of Europa's dream is in accordance with the Freudian view that our dreams usually reveal our deepest desire in a peculiar manner,<sup>61</sup> which needs interpretation.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Freud seems to make a distinction between *wishes* and *desires*, claiming that only wishes as mental creatures can be considered responsible for the creation of a dream (Freud 1900:567) and there is always a wish in human mind which is enough to provoke a dream vision (Freud 1900:269). About the Freudian distinction between *wish* and *desire* see Gardner 1993:123-124 who demonstrates that, according to Freud, only wishes can be fulfilled by phantasy, Brakel 2009:139 and Pataki 2014:5

<sup>60</sup> For the application of Freudian dream theory in case of Medea's dream see Fusillo 2001:133; Reddoch 2010:52.

<sup>61</sup> According to Freud, a dream can be described as the 'insanity of the night'. A dream has two contents. The latent content is its real meaning and the manifest content is its more acceptable form in which the dreamer is aware only in the situation of wakefulness. About the differences between latent and manifest content see Eysenk 2004:128 and Michael 2015:7.

<sup>62</sup> The interpretation of a dream can be both cognitive and performative. The interpretation of a dream depends

Concluding with Alcmene's dream in Moschus' *Megara*, we observe that the content of her dream is in connection to her already existing fears and concerns about her son's fate. The facts that are described by Megara are responsible for Alcmene's general psychological disposition. As is stated by Alcmene herself, her emotional turmoil draws to this fearful nightmare which intensifies her anguish and anxiety for the future. In addition, Alcmene dreams that Iphicles may be Heracles's savior. This dream vision can be considered as the fulfillment of her wish that Heracles, despite all the difficulties, will manage to save himself. However, the relief caused by this positive possibility in the end is replaced by the fear of the fate of both of her sons. The content of the dream is symbolic and not totally comprehensible mainly for Alcmene, who does not know the future. On the contrary, we know that the dream will be proved prophetic.<sup>63</sup>

During the effort to apply the Freudian dream theory to the Hellenistic dreams arises the question if this attempt may be anachronistic. Many scholars believe that we should eschew imposing modern Freudian theories on Hellenistic dreams.<sup>64</sup> However, the application of modern psychoanalytical theory is a really useful theoretical tool in our interpretation. The view that the main difference between Homeric and Hellenistic dreams is identified in the connection between dream vision and psychology of Hellenistic characters is something that has been already detected in Aristotelian theories. Deepest desires, wishes, fears, thoughts and concerns are the main factors that provoke the creation of a Hellenistic dream episode. The sleeper is not just a passive recipient of the dream that comes externally, but he is responsible

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on its use by the dreamer-interpreter, see Frieden 1990:137.

<sup>63</sup> In fact Freud does not reject the prophetic meaning of the dreams, because human wishes are related with the future. Wishes, desires, promises aims toward future and provokes future changes, see Frieden 1990:136.

<sup>64</sup> Kessels 1978:12-14, referring to Homeric dreams in particular, remarks that we must avoid applying Freudian theories to ancient Greek literary dreams.

to a great extent for its creation. Based on this Aristotelian statement, Freudian theories give us the opportunity to approach the Hellenistic dreams through a modern perspective giving an additional clarity to our attempt to understand and interpret them.

#### **4. Concluding Remarks**

The aim of this paper was the analysis of three dreams of Hellenistic poetry in order to prove that Hellenistic dreams, as psychic products and results of characters' emotional state, are characterized by psychological plausibility. In the introduction I discuss the role of dreams in ancient Greek society. I then compare the Homeric with the Hellenistic dreams and I claim that in the Homeric epics the sleeper is usually represented as the passive recipient of a dream vision that usually comes from outside as a divine message or warning. On the contrary, in Hellenistic poetry the sleeper is more energetic in the creation of the dream, because his mind and his soul are the main factors for the content of the dream. Aristotle can be considered responsible for this change in the way that the literary dreams are perceived. According to the philosopher, a dream cannot be independent of the dreamer. Instead, a dream is always in strict connection with the dreamer's thoughts, concerns and emotions. Based on these preliminary remarks, I have studied three Hellenistic dreams. The conclusions from my study are as follows:

Regarding the heroines' feelings during their sleep, I notice that in all three cases the sleep at first has a positive effect on the dreamer's psychology. They feel a sweet timber, which relaxes them and creates a sense of happiness. This first positive sensation is eliminated as soon as the dream vision makes its appearance. After that positive feeling, negative senses of fear, anxiety and grief mainly conquer the three dreamers. In the case of Europa's dream specifically, Europa experiences a positive sense of desire during her dream, which, however, is less intensive than her fearful feelings. Also, in the case of Alcmene's dream the sensation of

relief appears for a little while, when Iphicles is present, but disappears at once. Consequently, based on these negative feelings, I conclude that all of the three dreams can be characterized as nightmares.

Regarding the general psychological disposition of the sleepers' pre dreaming, I observe that emotions before dreaming to a great extent are relative to the sensations during the dream and also affect the shape of the dream vision. In particular, Medea's preexisting psychological dilemma motivates the emotions of erotic desire, fear and shame, which are detected during her dream episode. Europa's desire to get married and the coexisting emotions of shame toward her father and grief for abandoning her family are identical to the senses that Europa is experiencing in her dream. Finally, Alcmene's grief for the dreadful facts of the past and her anxiety for Heracles' future are similar to the feelings by which Alcmene is occupied with in her dream vision.

Regarding the emotions after the dream, I remark that they are merely identical in all three cases. Medea, Europa and Alcmene, after their awakening, feel anxiety and confusion for the meaning of their dreams. Medea and Alcmene are much more nervous than Europa, when they wake up, and are conquered by emotions of despair and anguish for the possibility that their dreams may come true in real life. Instead, Europa awakes calmer, feeling only confused about the meaning of her dream.

Focusing specifically on the emotions of the three heroines, I have shown that they are represented more as mental activities rather than as bodily reactions. In particular, during the dream we can talk only about senses as the reason in this situation is absent. Only after awakening all the mental activities take place and the already experienced physical senses are transformed into emotions. In the cases of Medea and Alcmene it is stated explicitly that their dreams are products of their θυμός, whereas only in the case of Europa the dream comes

externally, from Cypris. However, in all of the three cases the emotions, generated by the dream, are intellectual activities, products of mental processes, which take place mainly in the situation of wakefulness. Although their emotions are sometimes externalized physically, their nature remains intellectual.

Consequently, from the above study of the Hellenistic dreams it is evident that some Hellenistic poets (especially Apollonius Rhodius) have accepted the notion that the dreams are products of the human mind. On the other hand, some others (Moschus) have retained in some cases the supernatural origin of the dreams (*Europa*), taking however a step towards their correlation with the psychic world of the dreamer (*Megara*). So, taking into account the advances that Aristotle made concerning the relationship between dreams and human psychology, arises the question if the poets of the Hellenistic period had affected by these Aristotelian theories.

Regarding the role that the dreams are called to serve in the development of the poetic plot, I notice that there are some differences between the three cases. Medea's dream is used as a poetic medium for the manifestation of her complex psychology. *Argonautica* as an erotic epos with Medea as a protagonist gives a great emphasis on the heroine's emotions. These emotions are inner and rarely externalized by her, so her dream functions as an adding literary tool for her better psychological characterization. Europa's dream is the most symbolic of the three. Its content has no clear meaning for Europa, but it is used by Moschus so as to prepare the reader for the facts that will follow. Specifically, Europa's dream is used as literary predictive tool, concerning mainly Europa's emotions, as Europa's future emotions seem to be a repetition of her emotions generated by the dream. Finally, Alcmene's dream is part of her lamentation, which comes just after Megara's lamentation. Her dream is used in order to emphasize that her dream refers to the future, contrary to Megara's lamentation that refers to

the past. However, knowing the mythic facts, which are absent from the poetic plot, we know that her dream, despite its symbolic nature, will be proved prophetic.

In the last part of my paper I detect some points in the analyzed literary dreams, which could be approached through the perspective of the modern psychoanalysis. In particular, Freud in his treatise *The Interpretation of Dreams* actually expresses some important views about the nature of the dreams. In the cases of the Hellenistic dreams two Freudian principles about dreams can be applied. The first refers to the connection of dreams with the reminders of the previous day and the already existing dreamer's desires and fears. The second presents the dream as the dreamer's wishes that are fulfilled during dreaming freely and without any restraints. In all three cases I point out that the heroines' dreams are products of their previous emotional disposition, their desires and fears. At the same time, the three dreams turned out to be, to a greater or lesser extent, wishes that come true.

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