

Articoli/Articles

*IATROSOPHIA AND AN EIGHTEENTH - CENTURY  
ONEIROKRITĒS IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF GREECE*

STEVEN M. OBERHELMAN  
Texas A&M University, USA

SUMMARY

*Medical dreams were not discussed by Greek popular dream interpreters, but were the domain of physicians like Hippocrates, Galen, and Rufus of Ephesus, or the followers of the healing god Asclepius. An exception is an oneirokritēs (dreambook) in Codex 1350 of the National Library of Greece in Athens. This eighteenth-century text reflects Ottoman Greek iatrosophia. An iatrosophion, widely used in Byzantine and Ottoman Greece, was a physician's notebook of recipes and treatments or was the collective compendium of classical and Byzantine medical and pharmacological texts consulted in hospital settings. Some iatrosophia included medical cures and drugs, but also spells, exorcisms, magic, astrology, and practical advice. The writer of our oneirokritēs used such a magico-medical iatrosophion. After interpreting a dream symbol, he often advises a prophylactic (usually dietary) cure or treatment for restoring or maintaining health, or recommends religious prayers and spells, or apotropaic magic.*

In the National Library of Greece in Athens is a dreambook (*oneirokritēs*) dating to the end of the Ottoman period of Greek history<sup>1</sup>. The treatise is found on folia 86-103 of Codex 1350; the codex is dated to the eighteenth century and contains 117 folia altogether, the other folia consisting of astrological extracts. The dreambook is attributed to a "Blasius of Athens," a name not known elsewhere. Other than a strong Greek Orthodox faith, we can glean no

*Key words:* Dreams - *Iatrosophia* - magic

other biographical data from the text. In the introduction, the author states that the purpose of his dreambook to enable the reader to remain, or to become, free of physical and spiritual pain:

*[fol. 86r] Now then, please, children of God, if you should take from me but a single interpretation, you will be protected greatly against the artifices of the devil, and you will then congratulate me many times over for what I have written here for your benefit. [I have done this] so that you may be far from evil, enjoy goodness, and live for many years without your body suffering any harm—provided that you take into account whatever I tell you and interpret. So, please, give an attentive ear to my words.*

In the conclusion of the treatise, Blasius offers sharp words for critics who have attacked his past efforts in oneirology but who, he claims, offer nothing of substance in return. Moreover, anyone consulting his dreambook should appreciate the extraordinary lengths to which he has gone to offer protection against disease and evildoers:

*[fol. 101<sup>v</sup>] I will now cut short my discussion with sweet and prudent words that one can cling to as he considers each of his dreams. But he must also possess both an open mind and knowledge—he should not be so blind and moronic as to ignore [what I have written here] and say that these [words of mine] are false, foolish, and terrible. O what blind fools you are, you who say that my words are insipid talk! What good thing do you have to offer in return? Where is your success? Where are the benefits to what you say? Why do you even make interpretations of your own? You are not capable of even considering how to put things in good order. And so today, I beg you, show deep regard for everything that I say and do not neglect it, [fol. 102<sup>v</sup>] so that you may live for very many years to come and may not have any evil or harm happen to your body or soul. . . . [fol. 103<sup>v</sup>] If you keep all [of my words], I tell you that you will not incur a debilitating illness, evil people will not be able to harm you, and you will never be in an evil situation<sup>2</sup>.*

A unique aspect to this dreambook is a clear reliance on, and adaptation of, medical material<sup>3</sup>. This material has been extracted from

one or more special types of treatises called *iatrosophia*<sup>4</sup>. The *iatrosophion* may be broadly defined as a book containing medical recipes and treatments drawn from the medical praxis of hospitals, physicians, and folk healers, or as a personal notebook on therapeutics written by a single physician<sup>5</sup>. In the past, *iatrosophia* were dismissed as the products of intellectually inferior and superstitious minds, but now they are recognized as invaluable sources for the history of Byzantine and Ottoman Greek medicine<sup>6</sup>. In fact, *iatrosophia* were fundamental to Greek medicine until modern times<sup>7</sup>.

The origins of the *iatrosophion* lay in the early Byzantine centuries of Greece, when medical writers like Oribasius (4th century), Aëtius (6th century), and Alexander of Tralles (6th century) took the writings of earlier physicians and pharmacologists like Hippocrates, Galen, and Dioscorides and made excerpts of them<sup>8</sup>. Subsequent writers (e.g., Paul of Aegina and Simeon Seth of Antioch) of mid- and late Byzantium continued this practice, by copying those excerpts and then adding to them new recipes and medicines. These compendia of recipes and therapeutics were set down in individual treatises called *iatrosophia*. The text of an *iatrosophion* typically is arranged in a scientific and logical structure<sup>9</sup>: each body part is listed—starting with the head and ending with the toe—and then a series of medicines is listed for the various ailments affecting each part. For every medicine information is provided: its name or the purpose of its application; the source from which it has been taken; instructions for preparing it; instructions on how to administer it; and an explanation of its affect on the patient<sup>10</sup>. What is fascinating about the *iatrosophia* is how these texts were fluid, non-fixed documents, even though they were recopied and reproduced over the centuries. Individual physicians, or groups of physicians working in a hospital, revised their *iatrosophia* to take into account new *materia medica*, new technology, new diseases, and observations from actual clinical praxis.

After the fall of Byzantium, *iatrosophia* continued to be written and published. Evangelia Varella (1999) has noted that from the

Ottoman period of Greece over 700 medical manuscripts and books have survived. Of that number, approximately 45 percent are *iatrosophia*<sup>11</sup>. These texts may be found all over Greece—in monasteries, libraries, and private collections—with the vast majority unstudied and uncatalogued<sup>12</sup>.

During the late Byzantine and Ottoman periods of Greece, two types of *iatrosophia* emerged. One type contained purely medical recipes and therapeutics and was linked particularly to monasteries; many were written by monks or by the medical staff there<sup>13</sup>. Most of the recipes use herbs, some use minerals, and a few are based on animal drugs, with the purpose being to cure an illness or ameliorate symptoms, although some instructions dealt with prophylactic and dietary measures. Although most recipes are drawn from ancient and Byzantine formal medicine, as well as from Arab-Unani medicine, some are taken from, or influenced by, folk medicine. (See below for such medical pluralism). The following examples of this type of text are from the *Iatrosophion* of the Makhairas monastery (manuscript from 1849) on Cyprus:

*A cure for ulcer in the mouth. Take 50 drams of the leaves of aspalathus and 25 drams of fresh green mint. Boil them together with one ounce of sweet wine, and then place this [mixture] in the mouth. Keep it there for an hour; then spit it out and put in another batch. If you do, this will be greatly beneficial. (p. 26)*

*For swollen gums. Take 5 drams of rosehips and 5 drams of oak gall and 3 drams of dry roses; ground these and then apply the powder to the gums. This will be beneficial. (p. 26)*

*Another remedy for a swollen tongue. Pick unripe black olives, and put them inside the mouth for a period of time, and you will be helped. Likewise, pick green olives [and use them in the same way], for this helps too. (p. 26)*

*[For those with a sore throat and swelling and] the water that they should drink and the diet that they are to follow. Take 50 drams of raisins and*

*50 drams of dried figs, and 30 drams of liquorice. Ground all of these thoroughly and then put in two okas of water. Boil this mixture well. Let the patient drink of this water. He should also abstain from salty foods, wine, raki, vinegar, raw vegetables, walnuts, onions, garlic, cheese, dry mizithra cheese. The centaury, unsalted and mixed with honey, does not do any harm. Likewise, let the patient eat butter, raisins, figs, and pomegranates, and he will be healthy. (p. 30)*

In these examples, we have medicines and dietary regimens drawn from ancient Greek authors like Dioscorides and Galen and from established folk medicine. The text would have fit quite nicely on any practicing ancient or Byzantine Greek physician's shelf. Moreover, even though this text, like other purely medical *iatrosophia*, was connected to a monastery and even penned by a monk, religion hardly appears, usually relegated to a simple *telēma tou theou* (God willing). The second type of *iatrosophion* popular in Byzantine and Ottoman Greek times was predominantly medical, but there is an important difference in some of its contents. Besides medical recipes and treatments drawn from ancient authorities and also from folk practices, we have sections on a variety of nonmedical topics like astrology, magic, religion, exorcisms, advice on agriculture and veterinarian matters, advice on how to guard against ants or to get rid of snakes, avoiding misfortunes, and predicting the sex of an unborn child<sup>14</sup>. Thus, we read in a 19th-century *iatrosophion* the following recipes:

*For headaches. Take the rust of an iron object and pestle it well. Put it in three cups of vinegar and boil well, for however long it takes for the mixture to thicken. Then spread [the concoction] on a cloth to make a plaster. Place this plaster on the person's eyelids. You should do this for three days. Take laurel leaves, rue, leaven—as much as a leaf in size—and a little saffron and rosewater. Fashion all of this into a plaster and then place it on top [of the person's head].*

*Rub the tender part of the head with almond oil.*

*Another.*

*Pestle rue and then put it in oil. Fry this [mixture] and then place it on the tender part of the head.*

*Take a bird's egg, making sure it is fresh, and then remove the white from it. Beat the white in a cup with a little rosewater and saffron. Get a linen cloth and make a plaster. Then place it on the spot [of the pain].*

*Take the hurting person to a water-filled stone trough from which mules or horses drink; let him drink from this too after [the animals have drunk]. If you do this, his head will be without pain, and his teeth too will be pain-free.* *Another.*

*These are the signs of cephalalgia: heavy eyebrows, eyes tearing up, nose blocked up. Take hyssop and the root of origanum; boil these with wine, vinegar, and honey. Have the sick person to drink it; also, rub it on his head.* *Another.*

*[Take] mastic, incense, and aladanon. Grind them up together and then mix this with rosewater. Make a plaster. Put it on the forehead and temples. Combine a goat's gall with oil. Rub this on the head. Boil absinth with weak vinegar. Put this on the head up to seven times, and you will be amazed.<sup>15</sup>*

All these recipes are based on classical Greek medical treatment of headaches and on folk medicine, and so nothing surprising. But then the author proceeds to give as well a magical spell for eliminating pain in the head: “[A spell] for every pain of the head: write a series of letters on the head: π ρ α ρ ε ο θ ω π γ δ ξ χ ο θ ρ β β ζ χ. This has been tested and tried [as a cure]” (Papadogiannakēs, p. 56, 3-5). Or take the cure for snake bites. The author’s recommendation of saw-thistle, which was a common Greek and Roman antidote for snake poison, is medically sound; one should, he writes, “pestle milk thistle in that very hour on a rock while using another rock. Place it upon [the bite], doing this frequently” (p. 81, 7ff). Well enough. But one is immediately told also to make the sign of the cross over the area of the wound and then say the *trisagion*<sup>16</sup> and then a Greek Orthodox hymn that celebrates Moses lifting up a serpent on his staff. The pharmacology, effective in its own right, must be supplemented by prayers and religious acts. Later on, the author expands this to include exorcisms, which should be chanted over the bites to achieve a full cure (p. 198ff.). Prayers and exorcisms, in fact, are so powerful

that they can cure a disease even without using any medical drug or prescriptive measure. For a migraine, the following words can be used alone (Papadogiannakēs, p. 59, 9 - p. 60, 16):

*With the following [words] speak at the final [waning of the moon]: “You Christ, O God, endured so many nails, bowed your immaculate head, and saved the people who believed in you—you saved even the thief who believed in you. Christ, suppress the [pain in the] cranium and the migraine of So-and-So, who is God’s slave. Holy angels, you who control the rivers of paradise—Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates—take control of the head of So-and-So, who is God’s slave. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, may we be well, may we stand with the fear of God.”*

*[A spell]: “Just as Solomon the Wonderful crushed the evil spirits of deception, so too I in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ bind you. [A long list of diseases is then given.] Our Lord Jesus Christ enjoins you, O evil spirits, to go away into the wild mountains where no sounds of birds are heard, to enter where neither sun nor moon shines, and to withdraw from So-and-So, who is God’s slave. On Golgotha the Lord was crucified, on the [wood of the] cypress and pine and cedar trees,<sup>17</sup> so that by His abrogating every action of the devil we may be well off, so that we may stand with the fear of God. Amen.”*

*Make the sign of the cross over [the ill person] with the holy lance three times, and say [the following] each time: “Christ was crucified at the place of the Skull, Christ was buried, Christ was raised from the dead. I adjure you, [pain in the] skull and migraine, by the Lord who was crucified and was buried and raised from the dead, by the Son and the Word of the Living God. O evil one, stop causing pain in the skull. The place of the Skull has become Paradise. You only had to bring forward, O Christ, the wood of your cross and immediately the tree of life sprouted with the smell of overwhelming delight. Glory to you, Christ, our God.”*

*Iatrosophia* have practical functions as well. For example, a medical healer is told how he or she can predict whether a sick person will live or die. An *iatrosophion* in the Bibliotheque Nationale Codex 1506 (19th century) recommends:

*Calculate the numerical value of the name of a sick person and also the name of the star associated with the day of week when the sick person went*

*to bed ill.<sup>18</sup> If the name of the sick person has a greater numerical value, then he will recover and live; but if the name of the star is greater, he will surely, absolutely, die. (p. 142, 18-21 Delatte)<sup>19</sup>*

Phylacteries are common in *iatrosophia*. For example, if one writes Psalm 142 onto a piece of paper and wears it on his head, he will be rid of pain in the heart or head (p. 137,13-16 Delatte: 18th century). To stop the flow of blood from the nose, one should “take some of the blood running from the person’s nose and write with it on the forehead: Peronux, if the person is male, or Peronixa, if female” (p. 552, 22-25 Delatte: 15th century). If someone suspects certain people of being thieves, he can curse them with this spell from a 15th-century *iatrosophion*: “Write on a barley loaf of bread and give it to those whom you suspect to eat. Write *Atha, Akhg, Nêaakhis, Akhgak, Nkathankh, Akhsakh*” (p. 611, 8-11 Delatte). The use of amulets is recommended in conjunction with spells in most magico-medical *iatrosophia*. For example,

*Concerning deafness and every kind of blood flow from the ears. Take the leaves of an onion or Egyptian cabbage; put them inside the spleen of a male rabbit and heat all of this in a fire. Then put this mixture in the ear of the sick person, and you will heal his pain and deafness. While you are pouring, say these words as well: “Marmarooth, Iakhes, Iar, Iacon, Edes, Idi, I adjure you by Sat and by Elemas the powerful, great, and strong angel, depart and take the disease with you. Help me, spirits, in driving out the disease. Then take a stone from Hierapolis and carve an ear on it. If the person’s right ear is suffering, [carve] a right ear; if the left, a left ear. Next, [engrave] in a circle these [signs]<sup>20</sup>. Then take the plant called by the Chaldeans *alponia* and lock it up inside a piece of iron sheet and have the patient wear it around the part that is suffering, and he will feel no pain whatever. Know that in whatever action you take for curing the ears or any other part of the body, it is beneficial to say the [above] names and thus your action will be granted power...This carving, if worn, helps in the case of every kind of ear problem. Do your engraving on the day of Ares [Tuesday], in the first hour, when the moon is waxing. (p. 484, 24-p. 485, 15 Delatte: 15th century)*



Now, it may seem odd to see medical writers resorting to spells, amulets, exorcisms, apotropaic magic, and the like. But we must remember, first, that such practices have characterized Western medicine since its beginnings; classical Greek medicine certainly was not free of them, and medicine in subsequent periods of Greece continued to incorporate practices and ideas that modern Western science would deem bizarre and magical but that actually formed part of the belief systems of physician and patient alike<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, *iatrosophia* played a predominant role in Byzantine and Ottoman Greek medicine, being used by medical practitioners of all sorts. For example, in early nineteenth-century Thessalonica, as E. Varella (1993) has pointed out, there were two physicians (Greek Orthodox), four pharmacists, and 10 druggists; these people did consult Western pharmacopoeias recently translated into Greek (e.g., the *Pharmacopée générale* of L. Brugnatelli), but they relied much more on their *iatrosophia*<sup>22</sup>. In Epirus, traditional folk medical practitioners and herbal healers used *iatrosophia* in addition to their own knowledge of local plants<sup>23</sup>. Mitropharius, the monk who wrote the *Iatrosophion* for treating the ill at the monastery of Makhairas on Cyprus (see above), took some of his recipes from classical and Byzantine Greek sources, but also cited materials that had been imported from abroad (New World, Levant, Egypt, Syria) or had been shared with him by Cypriot healers and druggists throughout the Ottoman Empire<sup>24</sup>. The point I am trying to make is that there were multiple medical practitioners—root cutters, folk healers, priests, village wise men and women, magicians, old women in a family, besides formally trained doctors and ancient and Byzantine texts—and each of these contributed to the contents of *iatrosophia*<sup>25</sup>. Wise men and women contributed tried-and-true remedies that they knew from a very long tradition of folk medicine handed down from generation to generation or that they had learned from discussions with other wise men and women in the village or in neighboring areas.

Priests used exorcisms, rituals, and prayers, and had access to items like holy water, oil, and sacraments that comprised many cures. Magicians formulated incantations, spells, curses, amulets, and charms. Root cutters and druggists knew what plants and herbs were beneficial, and they helped spread their knowledge by sharing it with consultants. Even in modern Thessalonica, for example, where contemporary practice surely replicates that of Ottoman times, family-owned shops, some of which have been in operation since the fifteenth century, still offer treatments; although the proprietors are not professional healers, they recommend certain drugs or medicines when a person asks them. And in the market areas, professional plant collectors have stalls filled with herbs and proffer treatments on the basis of traditional medicine<sup>26</sup>.

All these sources—magician to wise woman to priest to trained surgeon—were legitimate medical healers in the eyes of Greek culture of the second millennium. Modern historians of medicine too often forget that a medical practitioner is not necessarily one with specialized, formal training but anyone primarily concerned with the treatment of the ill. Thus, a medical practitioner may be a priest, an apothecary, an itinerant healer, a midwife, a wise woman, a magician, as well as a physician or surgeon. David Gentilcore (1998) calls this phenomenon of multiple health care providers, and the consequent overlap of medical, popular/folklorist, and ecclesiastical approaches to healing, *medical pluralism*<sup>27</sup>. Saints and demons, priests and lay exorcists, magicians and “cunning folk” (mostly women), midwives, physicians, hospital staffs, authors of medical recipe books, all contributed to the act of preventing disease and restoring health. Many times these practitioners published their cures and prescriptions and, depending on their background, medical incantations and spells<sup>28</sup>. Each of these practitioners, and their published books or papers, were viewed as good as the other, provided their recommended treatments worked. Of course, a few

people preferred the magician to the popular healer or surgeon, or the apothecary to the village wise woman, for a number of reasons; for example, the patient's social background and economic status, the availability of certain types of healers, persecution by social or religious authorities, and the form and severity of one's ailment could influence which person one consulted<sup>29</sup>. But by and large, most people sought out those they felt most at ease with, and given the poor status of a majority of the population, many doubtlessly went to unlicensed practitioners, that is, to local folk healers and practical healers<sup>30</sup>. The important, the overriding, concern, though, was to achieve good health and to maintain it; any means to that goal was legitimate and could be exploited. This obsession with keeping safe from disease and staying in a sound physical condition helps explain the flourishing book trade of do-it-yourself medical recipe books in places like Italy and Greece of the early modern period. And since people liked to diagnose themselves, there arose a high demand for reference texts on medicine, cures, and remedies<sup>31</sup>. The Byzantine and Ottoman Greek *iatrosophia* are to be placed in this context. Let us return to the Blasius dreambook. It is clear that a primary source for his text is an *iatrosophion*. Which one is impossible to recover. Given the current unpublished status of the hundreds of *iatrosophia* in Greek libraries and collections, this may never be known. However, we can reconstruct what it may have looked like, given the Blasius dreambook. First, there was an emphasis on prophylaxis, for what Blasius does is to take a dream symbol and then offer an interpretation based on the *iatrosophion* before him. It is unlikely that the symbol and interpretation were linked originally with the prophylactic measures, for no *iatrosophion* I am aware of deals with dreams. Second, Blasius's source-*iatrosophion* belonged to the magico-medical genre, for his interpretations offer not only prophylactic measures for restoring or maintaining health and therapies for curing ailments, but also spells and exorcisms, magical measures for averting evil or transferring it onto others, and astrology.

Let us look, first, at how Blasius uses a dream to provide medical advice to a dreamer. In the following passage, Blasius draws an analogical association between a donkey, when it appears in a dream, and one of its singular natural characteristics, namely slowness or lethargy. Given this analogy, he then adduces a series of prophylactic steps (dietary and spiritual) that, if followed, will correct a sluggish state of the blood:

*[fol. 88v] If you dream of a donkey, know that this means evil; but beg God to safeguard you from it; also abstain from salty foods and fruits and wine lest they plunge you into illness. The reason is that whenever the blood has become languid, a donkey is portrayed in a dream, as it is written in the dreambooks. But if the blood becomes tranquil, it shakes off the [fol. 89<sup>r</sup>] illness.*

Blasius contends that his sources (“dreambooks”) say that whenever a person dreams of a donkey, it is because his blood has become languid. But it is more likely that Blasius is responsible for the interpretation. First, he makes an analogical association of a donkey with sluggishness, and then he analogizes a sluggish donkey as sluggish (languid) blood<sup>32</sup>. Given this line of interpretation, Blasius would have located in his source-*iatrosophion* an appropriate passage dealing with the treatment of “sluggish” blood, and then combined his interpretation and the extracted passage into a unified whole. It cannot be that the source-*iatrosophion* had the whole passage—as I said, *iatrosophia* do not deal with dreams. But the prophylactic course of treatment is very similar to what we do see in extant *iatrosophia*. For example, let me cite again the Makhairas *iatrosophion* for the treatment of sore throats:

*[The patient] should also abstain from salty foods, wine, raki, vinegar, raw vegetables, walnuts, onions, garlic, cheese, dry mizithra cheese. The centaury, unsalted and mixed with honey, does not do any harm. Likewise, let the patient eat butter, raisins, figs, and pomegranates, and he will be healthy. (p. 26)*

A similar prophylactic regimen is given in an 18th-century *iatrosophion* for a patient who has dreamt that incorporeal spirits have become corporeal:

*Starting with the first day of the new moon, stay away from all sexual intercourse with a woman and from meat and wine and fish; then, after eleven days have transpired, fast for three days, and don't eat anything except bread and water...(p. 18, 7-10 Delatte)*

Later, Blasius offers the following dream, which depicts wingless birds with heads, as having something to do with treating cephalalgia. But then he inexplicably moves on to the treatment of catarrh:

*[fol. 91<sup>r</sup>] If you see in your dream birds that have heads but no wings, know that a headache will befall you. Now, I asked my teacher once why this was so, and he told me: "Well, if you wish to put aside an inflammation of the mucous membrane, enter your bedroom and cover your head with a towel; then place under your feet an incense-burner that has been lit; then place [in it] enough incense to fumigate yourself until you become drenched with sweat where you are sitting; then keep yourself muffled up well for one or two hours. [The ailment] should pass, God willing.*

The actual remedy is good Mediterranean folk medicine, which recommends fumigating the nostrils with materials like incense, thyme, and myrrh to clear out congestion<sup>33</sup>. It is also noteworthy that the phrase "God willing," so reminiscent of Greek *iatrosophia*, appears here in the context of a medical cure. But what does a wingless bird have to do stuffed nasal passages and with a cure of fumigating with incense? In fact, why is this passage even quoted? After all, the dream is supposed to deal with a headache, not with congested sinuses. I only guess that Blasius made an analogical interpretation: this sort of bird cannot move because it lacks wings, and so its head is, as it were, "blocked" from motion. So, too, a person whose sinuses are filled with stagnant mucus has a head that

is “blocked.” Thus, given this analogical association of wingless birds with blocked sinuses, Blasius would have scanned his source-*iatrosophion* until he found a remedy for purging sinus cavities. Occasionally Blasius, or more likely his source-text, seems to follow Galenic theory. For example, he interprets a dream of carrying a woman on one’s shoulders as predicting illness:

*[fol. 93] If you dream that you were carrying a woman on your shoulders, know that a disease will befall you. And to what extent you allowed yourself to be wearied by the [weight of the] woman’s body, is how severe [that disease] will be. But [as a remedy] stay away from women and from foods and drinks; do not eat anything unless it has been boiled so as to keep your blood untroubled.*

This is reminiscent of Galen’s statement that when one’s humors are heavy, one will dream of carrying burdens (p. 104, 37-39 Guidorizzi); but there is probably no direct correlation, as an analogy between weariness caused by carrying a burden and weariness caused by enduring a debilitating illness is straightforward enough and not necessarily medical only<sup>34</sup>. Or, again, Blasius interprets a dream of having sex with a woman as a symbol that indicates an increase of sperm: “[fol. 94] If you dream of having sex with a woman, know that your sperm has increased in amount, and this is why [this dream] has occurred.” Here, we have on the surface an exact correspondence with Galen’s account that men full of sperm will dream of intercourse (p. 104, 36-37 Guidorizzi). But as in the case of the dream of carrying burdens as a sign of impending illness, we should not make much of the agreement here. A dream of sexual intercourse as being caused by a large amount of sperm in the male body was a common *topos* in antiquity and philosophy, and thus the interpretation Blasius offers cannot be viewed as exclusively medical in origin<sup>35</sup>.

In other passages, however, Blasius, or his source-*iatrosophion*, directly contradicts Galen and the Hippocratic tradition. Blasius writes that a dream of seafood foretells loss of sperm for unmarried people:

*When you see in your dream oysters, mussels, mollusks, or any other sort of such shellfish, I advise you not to have anything to do [with such a dream]. And if you are married, do not go to bed [fol. 92<sup>r</sup>] with your wife for four days, for she will give birth to a mute child who will be unable to move and walk about<sup>36</sup>. If you are single, you will suffer to a proportionate degree the loss of your sperm, but do not lose courage.*

But according to our ancient sources and in modern folklore, these sea creatures actually increase sperm and so Blasius, or his source-text, offers a contrary assessment<sup>37</sup>. Or elsewhere, Blasius interprets snow as indicating a fever, and so the dreamer must follow specific dietary measures and take a purgative:

*[fol. 92<sup>v</sup>] If you see snow in your dream, know that you will have a fever. Thus, avoid eating salty foods and abstain from beverages. Take a purgative to clean yourself out and do not be afraid, whether you are dreading a fever or even pestilence.*

A dream of snow is interpreted much differently by Galen, namely as a signifier of cold phlegm affecting the patient's body (p. 103, 4 Guidorizzi). How to account for the difference between the two interpretations? I would attribute to the oneirocritic methods that each author used. Blasius has interpreted snow as fever according to anti-nomy, which was a very common method among popular dream interpreters; Galen, on the other hand, has decoded snow as excess phlegm in the body through analogy, which was the method preferred by trained Greco-Roman physicians.<sup>38</sup> Although Galen does not attach a regimen or cure to his dream of snow in the *On diagnosis through dreams*, he would have recommended a treatment to restore the proper mixture of the humors, and so he would have told the patient to undergo certain measures like bleeding or eating cool and dry foods like chicken<sup>39</sup>. Folk medicine, doubtlessly culled from the source-*iatrosophion*, appears in the interpretations of other dreams that Blasius records. He writes, for example:

*[fol. 94v] If you see legumes in your dream, take care not to drink water, up to five days, for the first two hours in the morning after you have risen from bed<sup>40</sup>.*

He then associates radishes and cucumbers with the plague:

*[fol. 94v] If you dream of [radishes and cucumbers] in a time of the plague, flee and you will not die [fol. 95<sup>v</sup>]. Do the same thing as well whenever there is a sick person in your house and you have this dream.*

These associations may seem a bit odd; but, interestingly, a publication nearly contemporary with Blasius's dreambook, *A Plague Pamphlet* (1665), asserts that the plague is the result of eating radishes, while cucumbers were banned during the 17th-century plague epidemic<sup>41</sup>. Elsewhere, Blasius associates white vegetables with bile, an association not found in formal ancient and Byzantine medicine:

*[fol. 94v] If you see white vegetables in your dream, know that bile is affecting you in the head and so draw out the bile by the skill of physicians.*

Note that Blasius is willing to refer the reader to trained physicians in this particular instance; similar referrals to medical specialists in dire cases were common among apothecaries and druggists in early modern Europe<sup>42</sup>.

Blasius, though, at times cuts his own path, showing independence even from traditional popular oneirocriticism. Concerning a dream of testicles, he writes:

*[fol. 99r] Dreaming of testicles: know that you will [fol. 99<sup>v</sup>] become weak in many respects. Do not fall into arms of a woman, but eat doughy foods and boiled onions with meat; drink wine early in the morning, followed by two cups at each meal; abstain from raki and stay away from cheese as well.*

Hellenistic Greek dream interpreters like Artemidorus (1.45), and Byzantine Greek interpreters like Achmet (chaps. 95, 97, 98, 99)



and Manuel II Palaeologus (chap. 19), all associated testicles with strength, power, and children. But Blasius offers the opposite meaning: systemic weakness. To restore strength, he offers a treatment that is heavy on carbohydrates and wine (a strengthening agent in Greek medicine). Sex must be avoided, too, in order to preserve one's strength—a commonplace in Greek popular culture<sup>43</sup>. Any Byzantine or Ottoman Greek magico-medical *iatrosophion* would also contain spells and prayers, to be used not only for medical purposes but also for averting evil in general. It is not surprising, therefore, that Blasius records a number of similar prayers:

*[fol. 91v] If you see crabs in your dream, they show that someone will bite you [with their words].<sup>44</sup> And you, when you get up from your bed, look upon the face of Lady Mother of God and say to her, "Lady Mother of God, I beseech you, because of this dream protect me from evil men and do not allow me to be harassed by anyone on this day. And I beg you again, deliver me from the bites of a cruel man and I shall glorify you for ever and ever. Amen." Do this for three days every morning and you will be delivered from judgment. Offer up as well to our Lady Mother of God any other prayers you like, for in this way she will keep you safe from the devil himself.*

*[fol. 93r] "Deliver me from that wrath-filled dream that I saw in my sleep, so that I might not be handed over to any kind of spiritual or physical suffering." You will be delivered from the tongues of evil men if you repeat these words nine times, each time in accordance with each of the nine orders of the angels.*

I would note, however, that Blasius's text does not contain any spells or forms of sorcery that are common in magico-medical *iatrosophia*. Rather, Blasius shows himself to be thoroughly Greek Orthodox Christian in his belief system; he appeals to the Mary Mother of God, saints, and holy men, never to demonic or even natural forces. The religious orders of the church are referred to in favorable terms, and the reader is always exhorted to offer alms, give gifts to the church or a particular saint, and extend mercy to the poor and needy<sup>45</sup>.

Nowhere does Blasius invoke demons or evil power, and he does not advocate cursing enemies or binding them.

Blasius does follow magico-medical *iatrosophia* in employing astrology and apotropaic magic<sup>46</sup>. His astrological views appear in how dreams may sometimes be interpreted, and in his guidelines on what days are favorable and unfavorable for interpreting dreams:

*[fol. 89<sup>v</sup>] If you dream of a snake, know that somebody will do you harm and so be on your guard for five days until the sign of the zodiac has changed; otherwise, whoever has not taken precautions will suffer greatly.*

*[fol. 103<sup>r</sup>] What's more, when the stars come out [fol. 103<sup>v</sup>] on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, do not interpret a dream, unless you really must do so. [If so,] then slap the mouth of the person telling [the dream]; only then should you go ahead and offer your interpretation.*

Astrology is not wholly out of place in a medical treatise, though. The association of certain days as favorable or nonfavorable goes back to the theory of critical days in the Hippocratic Corpus and was a mainstay of both formal and folklore medicine<sup>47</sup>. And as for the three days that Blasius mentions—Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday—they were associated with three of the four imperial planets prevalent in popular astrological medicine: Mars with Tuesday, Jupiter with Thursday, and Saturn with Saturday<sup>48</sup>.

It is when Blasius recommends certain steps to deflect evil from the dreamer's house, farm, and crops—all concerns of Byzantine and Ottoman Greek *iatrosophia*—that he comes closest to what one today would label as magic. For example, he writes:

*[fol. 94<sup>r</sup>] If you see barley in your dream, know that you have worms or lice. And if you have fruits in your house, this [condition] is affecting them as well. And so take the following course of action. Take a bar of unused soap and wash your head [fol. 94<sup>v</sup>]; then bury the rest of the bar among the fruit to excise the evil that is doggedly pursuing you. But this [evil] will enter your fowl. And so take one of them and slaughter it; dip your finger into its blood and moisten the*

*lips of your children and your own as well. [If you do this,] then you will see that you will make profit in every respect twice over during this year.*

Such transference of evil into other entities is well attested throughout Greek culture; it even has biblical basis (cf. Jesus transferring the demons out of the man of Gedarsene into swine)<sup>49</sup>. A similar method of transference comes in Blasius's section on kissing. Blasius does not interpret kissing as a symbol of affection or reconciliation, as ancient and Byzantine dream interpreters did, but here, through antinomy, a symbol of grief and separation. And so Blasius recommends to the dreamer that if he "takes loaves of bread and distribute the pieces to the poor, God will cause the evil to leave you and enter into the bread" (fol. 99<sup>r</sup>). Water can transfer evil, too, since it has powerful properties. The use of water to avert evil, especially the evil eye, is well attested in popular Greek culture, from ancient to current times<sup>50</sup>. Water as an apotropaic tool explains such passages in Blasius as:

*[fol. 94<sup>r</sup>] If you dream of wheat, know that this is an evil [dream]. [To counter this dream,] in the morning take a basin [filled] with cold water and wash your head, and then the [dream's] outcome will pass you by.*

*[fol. 98<sup>v</sup>] If you dream that you fell off [a precipice], know that you will be taken up to a court of judgment. When you have this [dream], as soon as you get out of bed pour a jug of water outside your door, shut the door for about thirty minutes, and then go off wherever you wish; [if you do this,] the dream will turn away [from you and] onto others.<sup>51</sup>*

Space does not permit a fuller treatment of Blasius's dreambook as it relates to the medical praxis of Ottoman Greece. What I hope to have demonstrated in this paper is that the *iatrosophion*, the medical recipes book, sometimes filled with classical and Byzantine cures and treatments, and often amplified with magic and astrology and powerful words (spells, exorcisms, prayers), were so popular that even a dream interpreter could not ignore it, but could even use it with great profit.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND NOTES

1. The codex dates to the eighteenth century, but the dreambook itself may be older, although how much cannot be recovered. A few material items in the text do place the dreambook in the Ottoman period of Greece. For example, we have references to medjidies and paras (both Turkish coins) and to florins (though these could be of any type, e.g., the Dutch, British, or Italian florin, or the southern German or Austrian gilder).
2. In the prologue, Blasius bases the truthfulness of his words on (a) his baptism, (b) his being made holy through the grace of God, and (c) the church's tradition of accepting dreams as significant of the future.
3. Dreambook writers do not address medicine, but medical writers do. For example, many ancient Greek and Roman physicians acknowledged the importance of dreams in prognosis and diagnosis of disease. I cite here only a few sources: OBERHELMAN S., *Dreams in Graeco-Roman Medicine*. In: HAASE W., *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, 1993, Teilband II, 37, 2, pp. 121–56. HOLOWCHAK A., *Interpreting Dreams for Corrective Regimen: Diagnostic Dreams in Greco-Roman Medicine*. *J Hist Med Allied Sci* 2001, 56: 382-99. VAN DER EIJK PH. J., *Prognosis and Prophylaxis: The Hippocratic Work "On Dreams" (De victu 4) and Its Near Eastern Background*. In: HORSTMANSHOFF H.F.J. and STOL M., *Magic and Rationality in Ancient Near Eastern and Graeco-Roman Medicine*. Leiden, Brill, 2004, pp. 187-214, with excellent up-to-date bibliography.
4. For a general introduction to these books, see, e.g., TOUWAIDE A., *Byzantine Hospitals Manuals (Iatrosophia) as a Source for the Study of Therapeutics*. In: BOWERS B., *The Medieval Hospital and Medical Practice*. Ashgate, Aldershot, 2007, pp. 147-73, with extensive bibliography. LARDOS A., *The Botanical Materia Medica of the Iatrosophion—A Collection of Prescriptions from a Monastery in Cyprus*. *J Ethnopharmacol* 2006, 104: 387-406. STANNARD J., *Aspects of Byzantine Materia Medica*. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 1984, 38: 205-11. CLARK P.A., *Landscape, Memories, and Medicine: Traditional Healing in Amari, Crete*. *J Mod Greek Stud* 2002, 20: 339-65. PAPADOGIANNAKĒS N.E., *Krētika iatrosophion tou 19ou aïōna*. Rethymno, Historikē and Laographikē Hetaireia Rethymnēs, 2001.
5. TOUWAIDE A., BOWERS B., ref. 4, p. 148.
6. TOUWAIDE A., BOWERS B., ref. 4, in full detail; VARELLA E. A., *La thérapeutique byzantine dans le monde grec d'époque ottomane*. *Med Secoli* 1999, 11: 577-84.

7. VARELLA, ref. 6, pp. 579-80.
8. See STANNARD J., ref. 4, pp. 201-11; CLARK, ref. 4, p. 341.
9. VARELLA, ref. 6, p. 579.
10. TOUWAIDE A., BOWERS B., ref. 4, p. 149.
11. About 35 percent are ancient or Byzantine authors, e.g., Nemesius bishop of Emesus, Aëtius, Paul of Aegina, Simeon Seth, Michel Psellus, Nicolas Myrepsus, John Aktouarios; the other 20 percent are paraphrases or translations.
12. CLARK, ref. 4 (private book); LARDOS, ref. 4 (monastery); PAPADOGIANNAKĒS, ref. 4 (private collection); cf. TOUWAIDE A., BOWERS B., ref. 4, pp. 155-57.
13. LARDOS, private communication; I owe much of the phrasing of this paragraph to him. I also owe him my thanks of appreciation for sending me pages of his *iatrosophion*, which are quoted below.
14. CLARK, ref. 4; STANNARD, ref. 4, pp. 206-07, 210; STEWART C., *Demons and the Devil: Moral Imagination in Modern Greek Culture*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1991, chap. 9.
15. Taken from PAPADOGIANNAKĒS, ref. 4, p. 51, 3 - p. 53, 7.
16. This is the standard hymn that appears in Greek Orthodox liturgy as well as in numerous prayers. The Greek translation is “Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.”
17. These were the three trees that made up the True Cross according to Greek Orthodox tradition.
18. In Greek, each letter of the alphabet stands for a certain number (alpha = 1, beta = 2, gamma = 3, etc.), and so by substituting numbers for each letter of a word and then adding the numbers, one comes up with a total number. Certain numbers had supernatural power in Byzantine Greek popular thought; the number 99, for example, is the numerical total of each letter of the Greek word “amen” [ $\alpha = 1$ ;  $\mu = 40$ ;  $\eta = 8$ ;  $\nu = 50$ ].
19. “Delatte” refers to volume 1 of DELATTE A., *Anecdota Atheniensia*. Liège and Paris, Édouard Champion, 1927.
20. There are four magical signs drawn in the text of the codex.
21. A starting point on this is EDELSTEIN L., *Greek Medicine in Its Relation to Religion and Magic*. Bull Hist Med 1937, 5: 201-46. See also the essays in HORSTMANSHOFF H.F.J. and STOL M., ref. 3.
22. VARELLA E., *Pharmazeutische Handbücher im Griechenland des frühen 19. Jahrhunderts: Dionysus Pyrrhus und Franz Xaver Landerer*. Geschichte der Pharmazie 1993, 45: 49–54.

23. VOKOUD, et al., *Ethnobotanical Survey of Zagori (Epirus, Greece): A Renowned Centre of Folk Medicine in the Past*. *J Ethnopharmacol* 1993, 39: 187–196.
24. Cf. LARDOS, ref. 4; CLARK, ref. 4; and VOKOU, ref. 23.
25. Excellent studies of this phenomenon in 20th-century rural Greece are two books by RICHARD and EVA BLUM: *Health and Healing in Rural Greece*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1965; and *The Dangerous Hour: The Lore and Culture of Mystery and Crisis in Rural Greece*. London, Chatto and Windus, 1970.
26. VOKOU, ref. 23. Whenever druggists, apothecaries, and plant cutters move into the area of offering medical cures, conflict with the medical establishment is the result. See, e.g., KING L., *The Medical World of the Eighteenth Century*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958, chap. 1; PELLING M. and WEBSTER C., *Medical Practitioners*. In: WEBSTER CH., *Health, Medicine and Mortality in the Sixteenth Century*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 165-235; and especially WALKER T.D., *Doctors, Folk Medicine and the Inquisition: The Repression of Magical Healing in Portugal during the Enlightenment*. Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2005, esp. pp. 36-87 and 180-208.
27. GENTILCORE D., *Healers and Healing in Early Modern Italy*. Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 1998, pp. 2-3, 8, 22-23. Cf. LEBRUN F., *Se soigner autrefois: médecins, saints et sorciers aux 17e et 18e siècle*. Paris, Temps Actuels, 1983, chaps. 2-4. Such a multiple set of healing sources parallels ancient Greece where we have, besides the trained physician, diviner-healers, root cutters, purifiers, exorcists, sorcerers, and subtypes of each of these: GORDON R., *The Healing Event in Graeco-Roman Folk-Medicine*. In: HORSTMANSHOFF H.F.J., VAN DER EIJK P.J.J., SCHRIJVERS P.H., *Ancient Medicine in Its Socio-Cultural Context*. Leyden, 1995, pp. 363-76.
28. See GENTILCORE, ref. 27, chap. 4, for numerous examples from Italy.
29. WALKER, ref. 26, pp. 166-69.
30. See GENTILCORE, ref. 27, pp. 203-06; CLARK's (ref. 4) local physician, who was a practical doctor not a trained one, was such a practitioner trusted and respected by local villagers.
31. See, e.g., GENTILCORE, ref. 27, pp. 6, 10, 178.
32. This is the type of analogy, whereby external objects are applied to the internal workings of the body, which we see practiced by ancient physicians like Hippocrates, Galen, and Rufus of Ephesus. For analogy in medical dreams, see OBERHELMAN, HOLOWCHAK, and VAN DER EIJK, all cited in ref. 3.

33. Fumigation in medicine can be traced back to the earliest recorded medical treatises; see, e.g., LEFEBVRE G., *Essai sur la médecine égyptienne de l'époque pharaonique*. Paris, 1956. STOL M., *Epilepsy in Babylonia*. Groningen, 1993, chap. 6. GELLER M.J., *West Meets East: Early Greek and Babylonian Diagnosis*. In: HORSTMANSHOFF and STOL, ref. 3, p. 24.
34. References to Galen's treatise on dreams are taken from GUIDORIZZI G., *L'opuscolo di Galeno 'De dignotione ex insomniis.'* Bollettino del comitato per la preparazione dell'edizione nazionale dei classici greci e latini 1973, 21: 81-105. Translation in: OBERHELMAN S., *Galen, On Diagnosis from Dreams*. J Hist Med Allied Sci 1983, 38: 36-47.
35. OBERHELMAN S., ref. 3, p. 143; OBERHELMAN S., ref. 34, p. 46 with note.
36. The interpretation is made by analogy: the shellfish's lack of movement is analogical to the child's inability to move about, while the shell and lack of hearing are analogical to the child's muteness.
37. See the literature cited in DALBY A., *Food in the Ancient World from A to Z*. London and New York, Routledge, 2003, pp. 145-46.
38. The interpretative methods of popular interpreters are discussed in OBERHELMAN S., *Dreams in Byzantium: Six Oneirocritica in Translation, with Commentary and Introduction*. Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008, pp. 24-38. As noted above, physicians relied on a microcosm-macrocosm method of analogy when interpreting medical dreams for diagnosis and prognosis. Physicians preferred this method, since it had the greatest similitude to scientific procedure and was the least connected to popular lay methods like antinomy and puns. Furthermore, physicians could claim that they alone possessed the specific training to use this method; for if success of the microcosm-macrocosm analogy depended on thorough knowledge of the internal processes and anatomy of the body, and if cures could be effected only through countering imbalances and disturbances in the body's conditions, then no one but a well-trained physician could interpret the medical dream for proper diagnosis and treatment of disease. Also, Greek physicians were trained in philosophy, and the microcosm-macrocosm understanding of the universe was founded on the philosophical notion of *sympatheia*, or the affinity of all creation.
39. Blasius does not mention bloodletting, an avoidance doubtlessly a reflection of his source-*iatrosophion*. One reason for the popularity of the folk healer was her or his avoidance of the bloodletting that pervaded formal medicine. Cf. WALKER, ref. 26, pp. 75-76: "[F]olk healers maintained their popularity with commoners precisely because they did not resort to the lancet, draining the blood of patients to restore the balance of their 'humors' (as was the practice



among most trained physicians, surgeons and phlebotomists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries)...Methods *curandeiros* [folk healers] employed were rarely painful to their clients—unsavory, time-consuming and complex, perhaps, but not pain-inducing. Hence, when given a choice between receiving treatment from an illicit popular healer whose cosmology, which included recourse to the supernatural, was essentially the same as that of his peasant clients, or from a trained, licensed medical practitioner whose distant, incomprehensible ‘scientific’ treatment made little reference to traditional healing and, furthermore, coupled both physical pain with high cost, the decision to see a *curandeiro* was, for most rural Portuguese subjects, a simple one.”

40. This advice is contrary to Galen’s recommendation to eat these vegetables in order to generate semen. See SHAW T.M., *Creation, Virginity and Diet in Fourth-Century Christianity: Basil of Ancyra’s On the True Purity of Virginity*. *Gender & History* 1997, 9: 579–596, p. 585.
41. Radishes: KIPLE F. et al., *The Cambridge World History of Food*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 294. Cucumbers: MOOTE L., *The Great Plague: The Story of London’s Most Deadly Year*. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, p. 21.
42. Cf. WEBSTER, ref. 26, pp. 8-9.
43. For Greek and anthropological parallels, see STEWART C., *Dreams and Desires in Ancient and Early Christian Thought*.” In: PICK D. and ROPER L., *Dreams and History*. New York, Routledge, 2003, p. 50.
44. A straightforward analogy between the bites of a crab and the biting words that one may speak.
45. For example, Blasius offers this as a way to avert death by in effect bribing God to kill someone else in your stead: “[fol. 92r] If you dream that a boat was traveling on dry land, this signifies [your own] death. But this very day give alms and fast so that God Himself may be gracious to you and you may possibly see that someone else has died instead, causing this hour of bitterness to pass.”
46. There is an important difference in folk medicine between “magic” and sorcery. See, e.g., the studies of the BLUMS, ref. 25; WALKER, ref. 26, esp. pp. 14-35; GENTILCORE, ref. 27, chaps. 1, 4, 6.
47. For the Hippocratic corpus, see PRIORESCHI P., *Supernatural Elements in Hippocratic medicine*. *J Hist Med Allied Sci* 1992, 47: 389-404. Astrological medicine goes back to ancient Babylon and has continued down to very recent times. Hippocrates’ emphasis on critical days led to the development of medical astrology, which remained popular all the way down to c. 1700, although the belief in the heavens influencing health and disease continued for another



*Iatrosophia and an Eighteenth-Century Oneirokritēs*

- 150 years or more. See the discussion in CURTH L.H., *English Almanacs, Astrology and Popular Medicine, 1550-1700*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007. For astrology in folk medicine like Syriac medicine, for example, see BUDGE E., *The Syriac Book of Medicines*. St. Helier, Armoriga Book Co., 1976, vol. 2, pp. 520-655. Medical astrology is nearly universal, appearing in such disparate cultures as Tibetan and Native American.
48. The fourth imperial planet was the moon; see KASSELL L., *Medicine and Magic in Elizabethan London: Simon Forman: Astrologer, Alchemist, and Physician*. Oxford, Clarendon, 2005, p. 113. Why would the three days Blasius mentions be considered unfortunate? For the Greeks, Tuesday is the most unlucky of days, since Constantinople fell to the Turks on Tuesday (May 29, 1453). Thursday may be unlucky because of its association with Maundy Thursday (in Germany, I would note, Thursday is the most unlucky), while Saturday is considered a horrible day in alchemy (since the day is associated with the metal lead and so anyone born on that day will be evil).
49. See in general the classic work of FRAZIER J.G., *The Golden Bough*. New York, Macmillan, 1922, chap. 56. For transference in medical healing, see, e.g., the two articles by HAND W.D.: *The Magical Transference of Disease*. *Folklore* 1965, 13: 83-109; and *Measuring and Plugging: The Magical Containment and Transfer of Disease*. *Bull Hist Med* 1974, 48: 221-33.
50. The reason for its apotropaic power is its association with the rite of baptism, which symbolically washes away sin and evil; see STEWART, ref. 14, pp. 209-10, 240-45. For the use of water to deflect evil in early modern Greek culture, see LAWSON J.C., *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion*. New York, University Books, 1964, pp. 304, 331, 520-21.
51. The pouring of water to avert evil is well attested in ancient cultures like Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, India, and China, and even in the New World (Central and South America). The analogy comes from the act of washing and purifying. A parallel is the Islamic *ghusl*, which is the ritual washing required after phenomena like discharge of sperm (including wet dreams), sexual intercourse, menstruation, and postpartum bleeding.

Correspondence should be addressed to:

Oberhelman S., European and Classical Languages, Texas A&M University,  
College Station, TX 77843-4215, U.S.A.