

GENDERING ANIMALS. FEMININE AND MASCULINE SPECIES IN ARTEMIDORUS'
INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS - PART TWO

In the first part of this study, passages from Artemidorus' treatise were discussed in which the gendered characterization of the animal symbol is either congruent with the sex of the person predicted (*e.g.* ἄρκτος foretells a woman) or reflects its ambiguity (ὑαίνα refers to a masculine woman or a slightly virile man due to the equivocal sexuality of the animal). The case of the lion/lioness pair was then examined, in which the masculine/feminine polarization appears to be developed within the species and receives a complex interpretation (λέων refers to a man, λέαινα to a powerful woman or to a sexually passive man) that combines the overall masculine characterization of the "lion" with the sexual split between male and female individuals within the species.

This second part of the essay will instead focus: 1. on the polarity established between different species treated as gendered "couples" (λύκος vs. ἀλώπηξ, δράκων vs. ἔχιδνα and ἀσπίς, ἀετός vs. ἄρπη or φήνη); 2. on the particularly complex question of the gender of the goose (χήν); and 3. on cases of discrepancy between the gender associated with the zoonym and the sex of the person predicted by the animal symbol (ὄνος and κάπρος corresponding to a woman in the outcome). Finally, the conclusion will provide some general remarks on the grammatical gender of Greek zonyms and its relationship to the gendered characterization of the species, as illustrated by the select cases from the *Oneirocritica* analyzed in the paper. It will be shown that, while influential, grammatical gender does not control the treatment of the animal symbol in a strict manner, as from time to time Artemidorus' oneiric interpretations highlight cultural traits of the referent (animal morphology or *ēthos*) that can be variously referred back to men or women (or to both men and women) regardless of the zoonym's assignment to one gender class or the other.

4. GENDERED OPPOSITION BETWEEN DIFFERENT SPECIES

As mentioned in the first part of this study, in the ancient discourse about animals two different species sometimes form a polarized pair, whereby one of the two appears aligned with the feminine

and the other with the masculine side. In ancient texts, for instance, the dog is sometimes opposed to the wolf, and the pig to the boar, as a “female” is to a “male”¹. In the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomics* this principle is masterfully illustrated by the opposition drawn between the “feminine” πάρδαλις and the “masculine” λέων²:

τούτων οὕτως ἐχόντων φαίνεται τῶν ζῴων ἀπάντων λέων τελεώτατα μετελιηφέναι τῆς τοῦ ἄρρενος ιδέας (...) ἢ δὲ πάρδαλις τῶν ἀνδρείων εἶναι δοκούντων θηλυμορφότερόν ἐστι (...) τὰ δὲ περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν μικρὸν καὶ ἐπίκλοπον καὶ ὄλως εἰπεῖν δολερὸν (...) τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐκπρεπέστερα μετελιηφότα ζῶα τῶν δοκούντων ἀνδρείων εἶναι τῆς τε τοῦ ἄρρενος ιδέας καὶ τῆς τοῦ θήλεος εἴρηται.

Given this state of affairs, the lion seems to be, among all animals, the species that embodies masculinity to the highest degree (...) Among those animals thought to possess virile courage, the leopard is the one that looks most feminine (...) as regards its character, it (scil. the leopard) is petty and sly – in short, deceptive (...) To conclude, among animals thought to possess virile courage, these are the two species that partake, respectively, of the male and the female type to the highest degree.

Some of the animal symbols in Artemidorus’ *Oneirocritica* show this same type of gendered polarization. A first example involves the wolf and the fox³:

Λύκος ἐνιαυτὸν σημαίνει διὰ τὸ ὄνομα (...) καὶ ἐχθρὸν δὲ βίαιόν τινα καὶ ἀρπακτικὸν καὶ πανοῦργον καὶ ἐκ τοῦ φανεροῦ ὁμοσε χωροῦντα. ἀλώπηξ τὰ μὲν αὐτὰ τῷ λύκῳ σημαίνει, διαφέρει δὲ ἐν τῷ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ φανεροῦ ἐπιησομένους σημαίνειν ἀλλὰ λάθρα ἐπιβουλεύοντας. ὡς δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον γυναικας σημαίνει τὰς ἐπιτιθεμένας.

A wolf signifies a year, because of its name (...) [it] also signifies an enemy who is violent, predatory, malicious, and openly aggressive to the dreamer. A fox signifies the same as a wolf, but with the difference that the enemies it signifies will not attack openly but rather lay their plots surreptitiously. And for the most part it indicates that the aggressors will be women.

¹ FRANCO 2006; FRANCO 2010, pp. 168-195; FRANCO 2014, pp. 115-147.

² Ps.-Aristot. *Phgn.* 809 b (transl. my own).

³ Artem. 2.12, p. 124.3-9 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 86).

Both the wolf and the fox predict malicious and aggressive enemies, but the former foretells open assaults, while the latter predicts hidden plots mostly devised by a woman.

The ancient evidence concerning the fox's wiles and tricks is abundant. This animal's behaviour, like that of the dog, had been contrasted with the conduct of the wolf as early as Pindar's second *Pythian*⁴. Besides its unwolfish behaviour, the fox bears a feminine name (ἄλώπηξ) and can therefore be set in sharp contrast to the masculine λύκος, much more so than the dog⁵, which displays a similar behaviour⁶ but bears a name of indefinite gender (κύων) and is consistently employed by Artemidorus as a symbol for both men and women in the outcome⁷. Therefore, despite the long-standing connection between the dog and the female sex in the Greek tradition, in Artemidorus' system it is the fox that plays the role of the cunning, plotting canine, the “feminine” counterpart of the “manly” wolf. Most likely, the she-wolf (λύκαινα)⁸ could not have served the same purpose: as we have seen in the case of the λέων/λέαινα pair, the polarity within a species does not seem to allow for the opposition of two different modes of action⁹. Wild animals are mostly characterized by a single *ēthos* for each species, thus dreaming of a λύκαινα would have meant the same as dreaming of a λύκος, although “to a lesser degree” (as in the case of dreaming of a lioness compared to dreaming of a lion)¹⁰.

⁴ Pind. *Pyth.* 2.143ff. On the animal imagery at the end of this ode see BRILLANTE 2000; STEINER 2011. On the fox's intelligence and cunning nature see DIEZ - BAUER 1973, pp. 170-172; DETIENNE - VERNANT 1978 [1974], pp. 27-54. The fox features among the female types in Semonides (fr. 7.7-11), where the animal gives rise to the woman “who has expertise in everything. Nothing of what is bad escapes her notice, nor even of what is good, since she often calls the latter bad and the former good. Her mood is different at different times”.

⁵ Insofar as it was thought to practice a “feminine” type of hostility, the dog was often described in ancient texts as a degraded wolf (FRANCO 2014, pp. 129-142). Its symbolic connection with the female human dates back to Hesiod's Pandora. The similarity of the fox's behaviour to the dog's conduct is illustrated in Babr. 95 (especially ll. 52-3).

⁶ The general principle behind the representation of the dog as a feminine counterpart to its wild ancestor is the use of gender as a metaphor for a cultural polarization where the open, loyal, autonomous and independent human individual (the “manly” wolf) is opposed to the one who is, on the contrary, hidden, deceptive, weak, subordinate and dependent (the “womanly” dog). See FRANCO 2014, pp. 148-153.

⁷ In perfect congruency with the common gender of the zoonym, Artemidorus interprets the dog in dreams as possibly referring to both men and women in the outcome, even in the case of the οἰκουρός (“house-watching”) dog, otherwise a typical symbol of the loyal spouse (FRANCO 2014, p. 120). In addition, it must be noted that in Artemidorus' treatise the dog occurs in several types – hunting, guard or companion dog – each with a different oneiric meaning (Artem. 2.11, pp. 117-9 Pack); such an articulated picture makes the species unfit for a unified treatment.

⁸ The term's first occurrence seems to be Aristot. *HA* 580a19, where it refers to Leto, who turns herself into a she-wolf to avoid Hera's wrath (λύκαιναν φαινομένην διὰ τὸν τῆς Ἥρας φόβον).

⁹ See Part One, pp. 91-8.

¹⁰ The opposition in the dream under scrutiny contrasts two ways in which hostility will be carried out by an enemy in the outcome. The she-wolf could not have illustrated a conduct as different from that of the wolf as the one exemplified by the fox. Only secondarily is the opposition between the two behaviours marked by a gender difference, since the fox's (covert) attacks are characterized as more likely to be carried out by a woman.

Other cases of a gendered opposition of species are to be found in the *Oneirocritica*, as in the passage where the *ἰχνεύμων* (masculine noun) and the *ἴκτις* (feminine noun) both refer to evil and insidious persons, but the *ichneumon* represents a man, whereas the *mongoose* predicts a woman¹¹. The congruency between the grammatical gender of the symbol and the sex of the person in the outcome is elsewhere presented by Artemidorus as a general principle, extending way beyond the sphere of animals¹². The masculine *πέλεκυς* (“axe”) stands for discord, harm and fighting, whereas the feminine *ἄξινη* and *ἄμη* (“axe-head” and “shovel”) refer to a woman “because of their names”. Similarly, the feminine *ἄλυσις* (“chain”) signifies a woman “due to its name and to the fact that it binds”¹³. Indeed, Artemidorus’ hermeneutics is largely based on the linguistic quality of signs¹⁴. It is often the signifiers which produce the meaning of a dream, as in isopsephic interpretations, anagrams, etymologies and also, as we have seen, in cases of alignment of the sex of the people in the outcome (male/female) with the grammatical gender (masculine/feminine) of the oneiric symbols’ names¹⁵.

As regards specifically animal symbols, however, the content of the encyclopedic entry for the word is far from irrelevant: widespread knowledge, myths and metaphors associated with names are likely to play a considerable role. Dreaming of a *γαλῆ* announces a mischievous woman:

¹¹ Artem. 3.12 p. 209.8-11 Pack.

¹² Other animal symbols are also telling. The *κόραξ* (“raven”) and the *κορώνη* (“blackbird”) do not form a proper pair in the oneiric code, as they have different meanings. However, Artemidorus mentions them one after another as the two most common types of corvids. Dreaming of a *κόραξ* (masculine noun) points to an adulterer (*μοιχός*) or a thief (*κλέπτης*), whereas a *κορώνη* foretells an old woman. See Artem. 2.20.6, p. 37 Pack: *Κόραξ δὲ μοιχῶ καὶ κλέπτῃ προσεικάζεται ἂν καὶ διὰ τὸ χρῶμα καὶ διὰ τὸ πολλάκις ἀλλάσσειν τὴν φωνήν. Κορώνη χρόνον τε πολὺν καὶ παρολκήν τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ γραίαν διὰ τὰ ἔτη «A raven can symbolize an adulterer and a thief, both because of its colour and because it often changes its voice. Because of its longevity, a crow indicates a long period of time, delayed business, or an old woman».* On the other hand, pigeons and doves (both feminine nouns) both signify women: pigeons predict whores, but doves “can sometimes signify decent women who are mistress of their house” (*φάσσαι καὶ περιστεραὶ γυναῖκας σημαίνουσι, φάσσαι μὲν πάντως πορνικάς, περιστεραὶ δὲ ἔσθ’ ὅτε οἰκοδεσποίνας καὶ κοσμίας*).

¹³ Artem. 2.24, p. 142 Pack (*πέλεκυς δὲ στάσεώς ἐστι σημεῖον καὶ βλάβης καὶ μάχης, ἄξινη δὲ καὶ ἄμη γυναικός τε καὶ γυναικεῖας ἐργασίας καὶ γυναικεῖας μὲν ἐργασίας διὰ τὸ τῶ κρατοῦντι προσφέρειν καὶ προσέλκειν, γυναικός δὲ διὰ τὸ ὄνομα*); 3.35, p. 219 Pack (*ἄλυσις γυναῖκα σημαίνει διὰ τὸ ὄνομα καὶ διὰ τὸ καθεκτικόν*). In other passages the same rule is implicitly observed: 1.51, p. 58 Pack (*σπέρματα δὲ καὶ φυτὰ οἱ παῖδες, πυροὶ μὲν υἱοί, κριθαὶ δὲ θυγατέρες*); 1.74, p. 80 Pack (*λυχνία <δὲ> γυναῖκα σημαίνει, λύχνος δὲ τὸν τῆς οἰκίας ἄρχοντα*); 1.77, p. 85 Pack (*υἱὸν μὲν ὁ φοῖνιξ, θυγατέρα δὲ ἡ ἐλαία*); 3.33, p. 218 Pack (*αἱ μὲν ἄκανθαὶ ὑπὸ γυναικῶν τὰς ἀδικίας οἱ δὲ σκόλοπες ὑπ’ ἀνδρῶν προσημαίνουσι*). See HARRIS-MCCOY 2012, p. 481. Consistently, like in the case of the dog (common gender *κύων*), also the common gender noun *χίην* (“goose”) leaves the sex of the person in the outcome undefined (*infra*, p. 54).

¹⁴ SHERWOOD 1996, pp. 26-32.

¹⁵ As illustrated in the first part of this study, almost two-thirds of the animal symbols considered show perfect congruency between the gender of the zoonym and the sex of the person to whom the animal symbol is referred in the outcome. The percentage rises to 83% if we exclude from the calculation those animals that predict neither women nor men in the outcome.

this is undoubtedly congruent with the femininity of the noun and with the isopsephy of γαλῆ and δίκη (“trial”)¹⁶, but the symbolic connection between the animal and a dangerous human female was established well before Artemidorus’ times and was deeply rooted in ancient Greek myth and folklore, as Maurizio Bettini has masterfully illustrated¹⁷. Similarly, the alignment of ἀλώπηξ with the feminine side, confirmed by the gender of the zoonym, was suggested by the proverbial cunning of the fox, given that for the Greeks underhand and “solo” behaviour was characteristic of the hostility of women, in opposition to the open audacity and concerted violence of virile bellicosity.

Moreover, polarizations usually take place within the same animal “family”, as in the aforementioned cases of the wolf and the fox (Canids), and of the ichneumon and the mongoose (Herpestidae). Another example is to be found among raptors. A solid and enduring tradition held the ἀετός or αἰετός (“eagle”, a masculine epicene in Greek) to be the “virile” and royal bird par excellence¹⁸. One famous example is Penelope's dream in the *Odyssey*, where the eagle represents the alter ego of the King of Ithaca¹⁹. In his interpretation of an eagle in dreams Artemidorus does not fail to conform to this traditional characterization of the animal²⁰:

ὀχεῖσθαι δὲ ἀετῶ βασιλεῦσι μὲν καὶ ἀνδράσι πλουσίοις καὶ μεγιστᾶσιν ὄλεθρον μαντεύεται (...) πένεσι δὲ ἀγαθόν· ἀναληφθέντες γὰρ ὑπὸ τινων πλουσίων ὠφελήθησονται οὐ μικρὰ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἀποδημήσαντες. ἀετὸς ἀπειλῶν ἀνδρὸς δυνατοῦ ἀπειλήν προσημαίνει (...) γυνὴ δὲ ἐὰν ὑπολάβῃ ἀετὸν τεκεῖν, υἱὸν γεννήσει, ὅς ἐὰν μὲν ἦ πένης, στρατεύσεται καὶ στρατοπέδου ἄρξει (...) ἐὰν δὲ μέτριος ᾖ, ἀθλήσει καὶ γνώριμος ἔσται· ἐὰν δὲ πλούσιος ἄρξει πολλῶν ἢ καὶ βασιλεύσει.

To dream of riding on the back of an eagle prophesies death for emperors, the rich, and the great and good (...) But the dream is auspicious for poor men: they will be taken in hand by some rich people and given substantial benefits, more often than not after travelling abroad. If the

¹⁶ Artem. 3.28, p. 216 Pack.

¹⁷ BETTINI 2013 [1998]. By the same token, birds such as φάσσα, περιστέρα, χελιδών and ἀηδών were marked as feminine species, as is evident from mythology and rituals: doves were firmly associated with Aphrodite, whereas swallows and nightingales necessarily evoked the famous story of Procne and Philomele. In Artemidorus the swallow and the nightingale both foretell that the dreamer's wife will be faithful and a good housekeeper (Artem. 2.66, p. 191 Pack); pigeons and doves both signify women (Artem. 2.20, p. 37 Pack).

¹⁸ NORMAND 2015, p. 243. The eagle's “masculinity” is also evident in Latin texts, where the word is feminine (*aquila*). Varro regrets that Latin language has no name for the male *aquila*: Varro, *Ling.* 8.7 (with CORBEILL 2015, p. 30).

¹⁹ Hom. *Od.* 19.536-553.

²⁰ Artem. 2.20, pp. 135.18-136.11 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 92). On this passage as the earliest reflection on dreams in Greek literature see GUIDORIZZI 2020.

dreamer is threatened by an eagle, that predicts a threat from some powerful man (...) If a woman imagines that she has given birth to an eagle, she will bear a son who, if poor, will serve in the army and have command in a legion (...) If the son has adequate means, he will be a prize athlete; if he is rich, he will have wide rule or even become emperor himself.

In Artemidorus' hermeneutics the eagle always corresponds to a man, especially a rich and powerful one. When a woman dreams of giving birth to an eagle, this predicts a male child.

It seems relevant that, among the large raptors that appear in dreams, another species occupies the position of the powerful woman, as we read in the following passage, occurring right after the one devoted to the eagle²¹: ἄρπη γυναῖκα σημαίνει βασιλικὴν καὶ πλουσίαν, μέγα δὲ ἐπὶ κάλλει φρονοῦσαν καὶ εὐγνώμονα καὶ τοῖς ἤθεσιν εὖ κεχρημένη (“the harrier signifies a rich woman of royal rank who prides herself on her beauty and is considerate and well mannered”).

While the eagle stands for the powerful and royal man, the ἄρπη (feminine epicene) is the raptor which symbolizes the rich and high-ranking woman. Again, therefore, two species are set in mutual opposition on the basis of the masculine/feminine gender of their names. However, as we have seen, this is not done with just any species. The logic of polarization takes into account, if not a certain biological homogeneity between the animals that form the functional pair²², at least the symbolic effects inherent in the opposition and which stem from the *ēthos* of the species²³. Thus, in order to explain the rationale behind the binary opposition, it is to the ethology of the two birds of prey involved in the polarization that we need to turn now²⁴.

Unfortunately, the zoological identification of the ἄρπη remains problematic. The bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*) has been proposed, a large vulture still widespread in Europe, and this is undoubtedly the animal described in the paraphrase of Dionysus' *Ixeutica*. Aristotle, however, presents the ἄρπη as a sea bird (*Hist. anim.* 609 a 23-4). It seems probable that the zoonym indicated

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 136.18-20 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 93).

²² Like in the case of the the pairs wolf/fox and ichneumon/mongoose.

²³ On the ἦθος of each species as a key to the interpretation of the animal dream symbol, see Artem. 4.56, pp. 278-281 Pack, a section of the *Oneirocritica* where, however, the gender of zoonyms does not receive much attention. Except for crawlers like the δράκων, βασιλίσκος and δρυίνας (masculine zoonyms), which refer to μεγάλους ἄνδρας, and for the ἀσπίς, ἔχιδνα and σήψ, which refer to ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας (the ἀσπίς and ἔχιδνα perhaps being associated with women, the σήψ with men), all other animal symbols go back to “people” (ἄνθρωποι, with no gender marker) of different sorts.

²⁴ On the role played by culture-specific beliefs and stereotypes associated with entities in the achieving of “gender congruency effects”, see BELLER ET AL. 2015.

different species in different texts²⁵. The common denominator of all these birds would be the fact that they are large diurnal raptors very close to the eagle, as Artemidorus suggests in another passage, where the ἄρπη is mentioned together with the ἀετός among the animals that are μεγαλόφρονα καὶ ἐλευθέρια καὶ πραγματικά καὶ φοβερά (“high-minded, free-spirited, enterprising, and formidable”)²⁶.

In the dossier of texts concerning large raptors collected by H el ene Normand, the ἄρπη is sometimes confused with the φήνη, another large diurnal raptor difficult to identify²⁷, and which in a number of texts also plays the role of the eagle's “female partner”. This is the case with the story of the double metamorphosis of Periphas and his wife recounted by Antoninus Liberalis²⁸. Periphas was an autochthon living in Attica before Cecrops. He was a pious and righteous man who especially honoured Apollo. All his subjects admired him, so much so that divine honours began to be paid to him through the use of epithets like Meilichios, Eopsios and Soter. This irritated Zeus, who sought to strike Periphas down, but Apollo begged him not to crush his devotee: the ruler of Olympus therefore decided to turn the man into a bird. Zeus caught Periphas in his home as he was making love to his wife and turned him into an ἀετός. His wife begged Zeus to be transformed into a bird too, so that she could follow Periphas: Zeus then changed her into a φήνη. He bestowed on Periphas the honour of being king of the birds, of guarding his sceptre and of approaching his throne; he instead allowed Periphas’ wife to show herself to humans as a good omen for all their deeds.

The fact that Periphas' wife, who was asking to be reunited with her husband, is not transformed into a female eagle but turned into a φήνη seems to point to the same metaphorical logic illustrated in the previous pages, according to which animal species marked by a clear-cut gender characterization based on the prototypical individual (either the male or the female) are arranged into pairs of homologues and polarized according to the male/female opposition. Therefore, when used as symbols, animals such as the eagle, the wolf, the lion or, as we will see, the *drak on* play the “male” role, while others such as the *ph en e*, the fox (or the dog), the *pardalis* and

²⁵ In the French translation of the “Groupe Art emidore”, the name *orfraie* preserves the ambiguity of the referent. Perhaps ἄρπη, “whose etymology only points to a bird of prey”, had “a broad meaning before referring more particularly to a species” (NORMAND 2015, p. 45 and 27-8, 367-373; but cf. ARNOTT 2007, p. 64).

²⁶ Artem. 4.56, p. 278.20-23 Pack.

²⁷ For the φήνη, the *Gypaetus barbatus* or *Aegyptius monachus* have been proposed (ARNOTT 2007, p. 188). NORMAND 2015 (pp. 369-372) concludes that it is futile to attempt to come up with a zoological identification for birds like the αἰγυπιός, φήνη or ἄρπη: for they are literary constructions more than zoologically identifiable realities. On the fluidity of the nomenclature of raptors in Greek and Roman culture, see also NORMAND 2015, pp. 366-9.

²⁸ Ant.Lib. 6.

the *echidna* (or the *aspis*) form their female counterparts, playing the role of their respective "wives".

The φήνη is likely to have been assigned the role of the “female eagle” on the basis of some ethological characteristics. This large diurnal bird of prey was known to greatly care for its offspring and to mourn with unmistakable groans when deprived of them²⁹. On the other hand, the eagle – judging from some narratives accounting for its rarity – was instead considered to display little benevolence towards its progeny. Despite its naturally poor fertility, with at most three eggs laid, of which only two destined to hatch³⁰, the eagle was believed to get rid of part of the brood (one chick out of two) in the event of shortage of prey and in order to preserve the wildlife stock during breeding season³¹. Aristotle went even further, by positing a fierce rivalry between the parent eagle and its chicks. The ἀετός, according to this view, accepts to feed its eaglets only until they begin to be too voracious and competitive; at that point, *out of envy* (διὰ φθόνον), it tears them apart with its claws (σπᾶ τοῖς ὄνυξιν) or mistreats them and drives them out of their nest (ὁ δ’ ἐκβάλλει καὶ κόπτει αὐτούς). The φήνη then reacts to the desperate cries of the abandoned eaglets, takes them in and raises them as “her” own³². Furthermore, the φήνη was contrasted with the eagle, in that it was thought to be affected by a congenital infirmity of the eyes, a form of leucoma that made it visually impaired³³. Conversely, the ἀετός was endowed with a proverbial sharpness of gaze, to the point of being able to stare at the sun without even experiencing any tears, and some eagles were actually said to impose a sort of ordeal on their offspring, by killing those chicks that proved unable to bear the sunlight³⁴. While the eagle is the perfect raptor, the φήνη represents a “defective” version of it, i.e. an eagle to a lesser degree. Besides being an aquiline

²⁹ E.g. Hom. *Od.* 16.216-9.

³⁰ Aristot. *HA* 563a17-20. Elsewhere Aristotle attributes this infertility to biological reasons related to the fact that, among crook-taloned birds, part of the residue (from which the sperm too is made) is used to produce wings and feathers; the male semen is thus less abundant (Aristot. *GA* 749a34-b25).

³¹ Aristot. *HA* 563a21-6; Plin. *Nat.* 10.13.

³² Aristot. *HA* 619b23-33. Cf. 563a21-7. On the whole question, see NORMAND 2015, pp. 249-253, 369-372.

³³ Aristot. *HA* 620a1.

³⁴ In Aristotle (*HA* 620a1-5) this behaviour seems to concern only the sea eagle (the subject is ἀλιάετος in the α family of manuscripts of the Balme edition, which however chooses the ἀετός reading of β and γ), but in later authors it is extended to the entire species of ἀετοί: NORMAND 2015, pp. 250-3. LENTANO 2013 traces the reception of the theme of the eagle’s ordeal and assumes that it was only in the Roman context that the idea emerged of the sea eagle testing its chicks to find which are the offspring of adulterous mating (and eliminate them). However, this preoccupation with adultery is not foreign to the Aristotelian tradition, nor is the idea of a degeneration of the aquiline family: Ps.-Aristot. *Mir.* 834b35-835a4 (see below, note 40).

bird with a feminine name, “she” may therefore have been identified as the adoptive mother of rejected eaglets also for this reason³⁵.

Going back to the ἄρπη, the mysterious bird that occupies the place of the “female of the eagle” in Artemidorus’ treatise, this bird shares many aspects with the φήνη, to the point of being sometimes confused with it: both species could be identified with the raptor called *ossifragus* in Latin³⁶. The paraphrase of the *Ixeutica*, moreover, attributes to the ἄρπη too a particularly caring attitude towards her own young, for whom she mourns with wails that are easy to mistake for those of a woman³⁷. In short, it seems that ancient zoology assumed that the eagle too had a tendency to form a functional couple not so much with the female of its own species, but with an individual from a (so to speak) “feminine aquiline” species – either a φήνη or a ἄρπη – according to the same logic at work in the wolf-fox and lion-leopard pairs. An actual mating of the male eagle with a φήνη or a ἄρπη is not attested, but the mirror case of the female eagle mating with the male of the *ιέραξ* in the paraphrase of *Ixeutica*³⁸ seems to confirm that the cross-breeding of different species of raptors was regarded as a possibility. The concern about the legitimacy of the eaglets visible in Aristotle’s *Historia animalium* also points at this possibility. In the passage in question³⁹, diurnal birds of prey are described as a homogeneous yet hierarchical family: at the top is the ἀετός γνήσιος, the only one in the family not to accept hybridization with other birds of prey (and therefore called “legitimate eagle”); then, on an increasing scale of imperfection, follow the other types of ἀετοί that accept hybridization. It cannot therefore be excluded that some individuals of the φήνη or ἄρπη species were thought to interbreed with ἀετοί and generate hybrid (“defective”) eaglets, doomed to be rejected by their harsh “fathers”⁴⁰.

³⁵ In the oneiric code, as we have seen, a graduated and hierarchical similarity could well be represented by the male/female metaphor: the mechanism at work in the construction of the ἀετός (“male”)/φήνη (“female”) couple might not be very different from what makes Artemidorus say, for example, that in a dream Selene indicates the same things as Helios but “to a lesser degree”, because she is “less hot” than him (Artem. 2.36, p. 163.1, see Part One, pp. 96-7).

³⁶ ARNOTT 2007, p. 163; NORMAND 2015, pp. 369-372.

³⁷ Dionys. Av. 1.4 (pp. 4-5 Garzya) φιλοῦσι δὲ τὰ τέκνα ὑπερφυῶς, καὶ εἰ λαθῶν τις ἄγροικος ἄρπης νεοττὸν ὑποκλέψειεν, ὑπερόψεται μὲν θρηνοῦσα τροφῆς (...) καὶ γυναικῶς τις ἂν εἴποι θρηνεῖν, καὶ δακρῶν ἐπιρροῇ τὰς παρειὰς αὐτῆς ἐπικλύσει.

³⁸ *Ibid.* (*supra*, p. 46).

³⁹ Aristot. HA 619a8-11. The “legitimate” eagles (γνήσιοι) are the only species that does not mate with other raptors, whereas all the other types of ἀετός “mix and commit adultery with each other” (μέμικται καὶ μεμοίχεται ὑπ’ ἀλλήλων).

⁴⁰ In Ps.-Aristot. *Mir.* 834b35-835a4, however, the hierarchy among raptors is explained as the consequence of an endemic physiological “degeneration”, whereby each couple of a species generates a specimen of the inferior species: within the offspring of a pair of eagles, one of the two newborn is not an eagle but a “sea eagle”; from two sea eagles,

Regarding crawling animals, Artemidorus seems to classify them too on a scale of gendered representations. Taken all together, serpents generally constitute an explicitly phallic symbol in dreams: a wife holding *any sort of reptile* in her bosom, keeping it hidden and taking pleasure in it, signifies adultery, especially with the dreamer's enemy⁴¹. Within this overall masculine category, however, some species are prototypically "manly", others less so. The most "masculine" of snakes is the δράκων (masculine noun), which foretells powerful men ("a *drakōn* refers to a king, a master of the house, or a magistrate because of its power")⁴². Then comes the ἔχις (masculine noun), representing a disease or an enemy ("an *echis* signifies either disease or an enemy, and the impact of the disease or enemy on the dreamer will correspond to that of the snake in his dream"), while ἔχιδνα and ἀσπίς (both feminine nouns) seem to incline towards the feminine side: besides referring to money "because of their plentiful venom", they go back to "rich women for the same reason"⁴³.

The attribution of different degrees of masculinity to different types of snakes was probably based on their respective size and muscular strength, but it may also have been encouraged, once again, by the gender of the zoonyms. The masculine characterization of δράκων lies at the origin of the old coinage δράκαινα (a female δράκων), first attested in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*⁴⁴. Nonetheless, the ἔχις seems to have been masculine enough to posit a feminine counterpart for it: according to Aelian, the term ἔχιδνα could be perceived as a derived form of ἔχις. In other words, ἔχιδνα was sometimes taken not as a specific zoonym for a kind of snake, but as the word designating the female of the ἔχις⁴⁵: ἔχιν ἐχίδνης οἱ μὲν τῷ γένει διαφέρειν, οὐ μέντοι τῇ φύσει· φασὶ τὸν μὲν γὰρ εἶναι ἄρρενα, τὴν δὲ θήλειαν ("Some maintain that the difference between the *Echis* and the *Echidna* is one of sex and not of kind, the former being the male viper, the latter the female").

It is again Aelian who, in two passages of his treatise on animals, reports that the ἔχις mates with a venomous fish, the μύραινα, as its ideal "bridegroom" (νύμφιος)⁴⁶:

then, a sea eagle and a φήνη are born; from a pair of φήναι come περκνοί and γῦπες (and so on down to the "great γῦπες" which are sterile). On the whole question see NORMAND 2015, pp. 246-8.

⁴¹ Artem. 2.13, pp. 126-7 Pack.

⁴² In Book 4 Artemidorus deals with a woman dreaming to give birth to a δράκων (Artem. 4.67, pp. 289-90 Pack): the outcome of this dream varies according to the social status of the dreamer; however, *in all cases* the δράκων foretells a son (never a daughter).

⁴³ Artem. 2.13, p. 127 Pack.

⁴⁴ H.Ap. 300.

⁴⁵ Ael. NA 10.9 (transl. SCHOLFIELD 1959, p. 295).

⁴⁶ Ael. NA 1.50 and 9.66 (transl. SCHOLFIELD 1959, p. 69 and 285). Cf. Opp. H. 1.554-73. Athenaeus (312b-e) elaborates on this hybridization process, reporting the diverging opinions of previous writers. In Aristot. IA 707b29-708 the μύραινα,

ἡ μύραινα ὅταν ὀρμῆς ἀφροδισίου ὑποπλησθῆ, πρόεισιν ἐς τὴν γῆν, καὶ ὀμιλίαν ποθεῖ νυμφίου καὶ μάλα πονηροῦ· πάρεισι γὰρ εἰς ἔχεως φωλεόν, καὶ ἄμφω συμπλέκονται. ἤδη δέ φασι καὶ ὁ ἔχις οἰστρήσας καὶ ἐκεῖνος ἐς μίξιν ἀφικνεῖται πρὸς τὴν θάλατταν, καὶ οἶον εἰ κωμαστής σὺν τῷ αὐλῶ θυροκοπεῖ, οὕτω τοι καὶ ἐκεῖνος συρίσας τὴν ἐρωμένην παρακαλεῖ, καὶ αὐτὴ πρόεισι, τῆς φύσεως τὰ ἀλλήλων διωκισμένα συναγούσης ἐς ἐπιθυμίαν τὴν ὁμοίαν καὶ κοῖτον τὸν αὐτόν.

Whenever the Moray is filled with amorous impulses it comes out of the sea onto land seeking eagerly for a mate, and a very evil mate. For it goes to a Viper's den and the pair embrace. And they do say that the male Viper also in its frenzied desire for copulation goes down to the sea, and just as a reveller with his flute knocks at the door, so the Viper also with his hissing summons his loved one, and she emerges. Thus does Nature bring those that dwell far apart together in a mutual desire and to a common bed.

ἔχεως μὲν καὶ μυραίνης γάμους καὶ ὅπως ἀλλήλοις ὀμιλοῦσιν, ἢ μὲν προῖοῦσα τῆς θαλάττης, ὁ δὲ ἐξέρπων τοῦ φωλεοῦ, ἐν τοῖς πρόσθεν εἰπὼν οὐκ ἐπιλέλησμαι. ὁ δὲ οὐκ εἶπον νῦν ἂν εἴποιμι. μέλλων ὁ ἔχις ὀμιλεῖν αὐτῇ, ἵνα δόξῃ πρᾶος ὡς πρέπει νυμφίῳ, τὸν ἰὸν ἀπεμεῖ καὶ ἐκβάλλει, καὶ οὕτως ὑποσυρίσας τὴν νύμφην παρακαλεῖ, οἶονεῖ προγάμιόν τινα ὑμέναιον ἀναμέλψας. ὅταν δὲ τὰ τῆς ἀφροδισίου σπουδῆς τελέσωσι μετ' ἀλλήλων ὄργια, ἢ μὲν ἐπὶ τε τὰ κύματα καὶ τὴν θάλατταν ὤρμησεν, ὁ δὲ ἀναρροφήσας τὸν ἰὸν αὐθις ἐς τὰ ἦθη τὰ οἰκεῖα ἐπάνεισιν.

I have not forgotten that I have in a previous passage told of the mating of Viper and Moray and how they couple, the Moray emerging from the sea, the Viper from its den. But what I did not tell, I now will. When the Viper intends to couple with the Moray, in order to appear gentle as befits a bridegroom, he disgorges and throws up his poison, and then with a soft hissing sound, as though raising a kind of pre-nuptial wedding chant, summons his bride. And when they have together completed their amorous revels, the fish makes for the waves and the sea, while the snake gulps down his poison again and goes back to his native haunts.

together with the eel, is among those fish which have a “rather serpentine” form and move in water like snakes on land: Οὕτω δὲ κινῶνται τῶν μὲν χερσαίων οἱ ὄφεις, τῶν δ' ἐνύδρων αἱ ἐγγέλεις καὶ οἱ γόγγροι καὶ αἱ μύραιναι, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα ἔχει τὴν μορφήν ὀφιδεστέραν. πλὴν ἔνια μὲν τῶν ἐνύδρων τῶν τοιούτων οὐδὲν ἔχει πτερύγιον, οἶον αἱ μύραιναι, ἀλλὰ χρῆται τῇ θαλάττῃ ὡσπερ οἱ ὄφεις τῇ γῆ καὶ τῇ θαλάττῃ - νέουσι γὰρ οἱ ὄφεις ὁμοίως καὶ ὅταν κινῶνται ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς (“This is the way that snakes move among land-animals, and eels, conger-eels and morays and all the other snake-like creatures among water-animals. Some water-animals of this kind, however, morays for example, have no fin and use the sea as snakes use both the sea and the land; for snakes swim in just the same manner as when they move on land”).

It seems noteworthy that, in the tradition recorded by Aelian, the ἔχις engenders the same fantasies of interbreeding as the lion in Pliny and Servius, where the “manly” feline *par excellence* mates with the more “feminine” πάρδαλις⁴⁷. Should we suppose that, as the lioness was too masculine herself to be a good mate for the lion, so the ἔχιδνα was too masculine to form a fertile couple with the ἔχις? If so, the serpentine fish μύραινα may be seen to display the degree of femininity required for a perfect match: according to a tradition recorded by Pliny, all *murenae* are females and thus need (male) snakes to produce their offspring⁴⁸.

It is tempting to conclude that the gendered polarization of species gave rise, in some narratives, to an imaginary zoology which established astonishing couplings between different animals. Certain dog breeds were thought to result from the crossing of a bitch (κύων, common gender) with a male tiger (τίγρις, feminine)⁴⁹; the raptor named θεόκρονος (or θεόκορονος) was considered to be the bastard child of the female eagle (ἄετός, masculine noun) and the male falcon (ἰέραξ, masculine noun)⁵⁰. The last two examples show that the grammatical gender of the zoonyms was not necessarily matched with the sex of the animals involved. The primary source of this type of belief, therefore, must not have been the gender of the names, but the cultural characterization of the species. Further research on this type of hybridization may confirm the assumption. Artemidorus never goes so far in his interpretation of animal symbols. Nevertheless, in his polarization of the species, he may have been aware of some of these narratives.

⁴⁷ See Part One, pp. 93-4.

⁴⁸ Plin. *Nat.* 32.5 (14) *Licinius Macer* (more likely *Aemilius Macer*, the poet who composed *Theriaca* and *Alexipharmaca*) *murenas feminini tantum sexus esse tradit et concipere ex serpentibus*. The notion may have stemmed from Aristot. *HA* 543a 28-9, according to which some believed that the fish σμῦρος is not a species of its own, but is instead the male of σμύραινα. Cf. Plin. *Nat.* 9.39 (76), where hybridization with the serpent is recorded as a popular belief: *In sicca litore elapsas* (scil. *murenas*) *vulgus coitu serpentium impleri putat*. It may be noted that the moray figures as an alternative to the ἔχιδνα in Aesch. *Ch.* 994: they are both metaphors for the dangerous nature of Clytemnestra (μύραινά γ'εἴτ' ἔχιδν' ἔφου). The two animals would appear to have been somehow perceived as belonging to the same “family”.

⁴⁹ Aristot. *HA* 607a4-9. On other hybridizations at the origin of dog breeds, see FRANCO 2014, p. 29. The relationship of the dog with the lion or the tiger is based on the fact that these animals all belong to the *carcharodontes* (“with saw-like teeth”); by the same token, the crossing of the moray eel with the *echis* is grounded in the fact that both are serpent-like animals (on which see SCACCUTO, forthcoming). On hybridization in general in Greek and Roman texts, see LI CAUSI 2008.

⁵⁰ Dionys. *Av.* 2.16. The eagle, shamed by her impregnation by the *hierax*, deserts the eggs; but the warmth of the sun allows the formation of the young and the subsequent hatching. On the different spellings in manuscripts and the possible identification of this species (an amphibious raptor?), see ARNOTT 2007, pp. 242-3.

5. THE GOOSE

In a passage from Book 4, Artemidorus advises his readers to always seek, within a dream, “the main determinant” (τῶν ἀποβάσεων τὸ κεφάλαιον), without cherishing too many hopes of being able to explain the occurrence of the attendant circumstances⁵¹. Then, in order to illustrate the principle, he goes on to report a case that must have been quite well-known among dream interpreters, perhaps because of the ambiguities to which the oneiric symbol of the goose could give rise⁵²:

γυνή ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα ἔδοξε χῆνα τετοκέσθαι. ὁ κριτέον, εἰ μὲν ἱερέως εἴη ἢ γυνή, τὸ τεχθὲν ζήσιν· ἱεροὶ γὰρ οἱ χῆνες οἱ ἐν ναοῖς ἀνατρεφόμενοι· εἰ δὲ μή, εἰ μὲν θῆλυ εἴη, ζήσιν μὲν, ἑταιρικῶ δὲ χρήσεσθαι βίῳ διὰ τὸ περικαλλὲς τῶν χηνῶν· εἰ δὲ ἄρρεν, μὴ ζήσιν, ὅτι ἐστὶν ὁ μὲν χῆν στεγανόπους ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος σχιζόπους· τὰ δὲ μὴ ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ γένους ἢ τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἴδους ἐναντία πρὸς ἀνατροφὴν παίδων. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν ἄρρεν τεχθὲν † ἐν ὕδατι τεθνάναι†.

The dream was that of a pregnant woman who imagined that she had given birth to a goose. Now the possible interpretations. If the woman was the wife of a priest, the child born to her would survive: geese kept in temple precincts are sacred. If not, and if the child was female, she would survive, but live the life of a prostitute, as geese are great beauties. If the child was male, he would not survive, because geese are web-footed and men have parted toes, and any element of a different genus or species is inimical to the successful rearing of children. The Cypriot said that the child born was in fact male, and met his death in water⁵³.

Artemidorus' explanation is aimed at refuting the interpretation given by a certain “young man from Cyprus”, who had claimed that the dream of the pregnant woman, who had seen herself as the mother of a goose, had come true because a son was born and then drowned. Artemidorus, however, disagrees. In his opinion the dream did not contain *all the elements* that subsequently came into play in its actualization and in itself could only be taken to announce three main events, to be determined according to the identity of the dreamer and the sex of the child: if the woman was the wife of a priest, her offspring (τὸ τεχθὲν, neuter gender) would grow up well, because sacred geese are successfully bred in many sanctuaries. If, on the other hand, the dreamer was not the wife of a

⁵¹ Artem. 4.83, p. 298.19-21 Pack.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 298.23-299.6 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 212).

⁵³ The text is uncertain at this point, but any corruption does not seem to concern the question of the relationship between the gender of the symbol and the sex of the child (only the circumstances of his death).

priest, a boy child would die soon, because giving birth to a human being endowed with an appearance and a nature so profoundly different does not bode well for the growth of a (male) child; if instead a girl was born, she would become a prostitute “by virtue of the beauty of the geese” (διὰ τὸ περικαλλῆς τῶν χηνῶν). The incidental events that later occurred – that is, that the child was born a boy and died prematurely *in the water* – just happened by coincidence, because geese do not necessarily die in water (on the contrary, they usually live there) and because the name of the animal is a noun of common gender (ὁ / ἡ χήν) and may refer to a male or a female individual (ἔνεστι μὲν γὰρ ἄρρενα εἶναι τὸν χήνα, ἔνεστι δὲ καὶ θήλειαν). Artemidorus’ reasoning is quite plausible, but what is worth understanding is the reason that led the Cypriot interpreter to state that giving birth to a goose in a dream foretells the birth of a *son*. In order to shed light on this assumption, it is necessary to trace the cultural representation of the animal in the available evidence.

Unfortunately, despite the considerable importance of the goose in the ancient Greco-Roman world, this bird is surprisingly little present in ancient sources, thus making it very difficult to establish what traits were most commonly associated with it. The details of the hard work necessary to reconstruct this cultural image have been already presented in a previously published article, the conclusions of which I will briefly sum up in the following lines⁵⁴. First of all, a survey of the available evidence shows that by far the most frequent use of the noun χήν was in its generic masculine form, which is precisely how Artemidorus himself uses the word in the passage just quoted. This was the case in relation to both the singular and the plural (a group of geese was designated as οἱ χήνες, even if it comprised individuals of both sexes). The examples are many dozen and range from Semonides to authors of the fifth and fourth centuries BC (Aristophanes, Aristotle, Eubulus and Theophrastus) and Imperial writers (Aelian, Plutarch, Lucian, Athenaeus, Pausanias and Galen). In some cases, it almost seems as though χήν was perceived as a masculine epicene, rather than as a common gender name: in Aristotle *Hist. anim.* 560 b 11, for example, χήνες in the masculine appears in a list of the different behaviours displayed by *female* birds when they have just been mounted by the male; or again, in a passage by Diogenes Laertius (II 37), the “squawkings” of his wife Xanthippe (feminine) are compared by Socrates to those of geese (χηνῶν βοώντων), in the masculine form.

Also in the legends about interspecific love affairs, well-known in the Imperial age, the goose is undoubtedly characterized as a masculine/male animal. Particularly famous was the goose of Aigion (Achaia), taken with love for a boy named Amphilochos; another χήν had gone mad with

⁵⁴ FRANCO 2019.

love for the citharist Glauke of Chios, who had also made a ram fall in love with her⁵⁵. In these two stories, the goose appears to play the role of a male *erastēs* who falls in love either with a young *erōmenos* or with a girl. But even the goose that was fond of the philosopher Lacydes is characterized, in Aelian's version of the story, as a male being: when the animal died, the Roman writer recounts, Lacydes buried it with affection “as if it were a son or a brother” (ὡσπερ οὖν ἢ υἱὸν ἢ ἀδελφὸν)⁵⁶.

The use of χήν in the feminine form, by contrast, is attested only in very rare cases: some of these are not significant from our point of view, as they refer precisely to female geese. To the best of my knowledge, only eight passages out of more than a hundred testify that the zoonym could be used as a “generic feminine”, that is, a feminine noun referring to the whole species (“a goose” or “certain geese”), regardless of the sex of the referent⁵⁷. Despite the rarity of the feminine, awareness of the fact that the noun was a common gender one was kept alive by the fame of two ancient and authoritative epic passages, in which the zoonym was treated as a feminine noun. The first is found in the *Odyssey* and describes the portent in Menelaus’ palace in Sparta, when an eagle swooped down from the sky to kidnap a white goose, a domestic animal raised in the palace (ἀργήν χήνα ... ἀτιταλλομένην ἐν οἴκῳ)⁵⁸. The second is the mythical episode of Zeus’ intercourse with Nemesis in the form of a goose narrated in the *Cypria*⁵⁹. Both texts constituted adequate counterbalances to preserve the ambiguity of χήν as a term fluctuating between the masculine/male pole and the feminine/female one, thereby counteracting the pressure towards its masculinization determined by mainstream linguistic usage and (as we will see shortly) by the frequent opposition of the goose to the hen (ὄρνις), whose zoonym was instead always treated as feminine.

Artemidorus himself actually attests to this pressure in a passage which shows that, in the polarized goose-hen pair, the χήν assumed the “male” role. To be precise, this passage concerns goose *meat* as opposed to poultry meat. But Artemidorus states elsewhere that when the oneiric symbol concerns “the flesh of” an animal, it is from the semiotic meanings of the species that the

⁵⁵ Plin. *Nat.* 10.51; Ael. *NA* 5.29 (and cf. *ibid.* 1.6); Plut. *Mor.* 972f.

⁵⁶ Ael. *NA* 5.29.

⁵⁷ This is the case with one epigram by Antipater (*AP* 7.425), an anonymous one (*AP* 7.546), a passage by Aratus (*Arat.* 1021), and three passages from Aesopian fables in Chambry's *editio maior* (Aesop. 285 II, 285 III, 354 II Chambry). In Imperial times, χήν in the generic feminine appears, to my knowledge, only in the *Physiognomica* by pseudo-Polemo (78.6, p. 429 Förster). Finally, a Homeric scholium (Schol. in Hom. *Il.* 15.691) speaks of τὰς γεράνους ... καὶ τὰς χήνας.

⁵⁸ Hom. *Od.* 15.160-179.

⁵⁹ Fr. 9-10 Bernabé [7-8 Davies, 10-11 West].

explanation must be drawn⁶⁰. We are therefore authorized to infer that, conversely, the meaning of goose meat in a dream had something to do with the goose itself. Here is the passage in question⁶¹: ὀρνίθεια δὲ καὶ χήνεια κρέα ἐσθίειν πᾶσιν ἀγαθόν· φέρει δὲ τὰ μὲν ὀρνίθεια τὰς ὠφελείας ἀπὸ γυναικῶν ἢ δικῶν (...) τὰ δὲ χήνεια ἀπὸ ἀνδρῶν ἀλαζόνων (“eating the flesh of poultry or geese is auspicious for all. The benefits which poultry-meat brings are from women (...) or from lawsuit (...); and goose-meat brings benefits from men who are loud in their own self-importance”).

Eating goose or poultry meat is a good sign for everyone, because in any case there will be advantages of some kind; but while poultry meat hints that the dreamer will benefit from women, goose meat means that the benefit will come from boastful men⁶². The polarization is clearly expressed in terms of gender, where the hen takes on the role of a female. This comes as no surprise, as we know that the zoonym ὄρνις originally indicated any type of bird (and was used as a common gender name), but had acquired a more restricted value by Artemidorus’ time, specifically designating the female of the *Gallus gallus domesticus*⁶³. Citing a series of passages from the comedians Cratinus, Strattis and Anaxandrides, Athenaeus demonstrates that the names for gallinaceous birds had undergone the following evolution: in the archaic and Classical periods the masculine term ἀλεκτρούων was used as an epicene, to indicate both the rooster and the hen. Over time, however – as was to be expected for a species of such great agricultural interest and characterized by a fairly marked sexual dimorphism – the need was felt to distinguish the female from the male also in lexical terms⁶⁴. The derivative ἀλεκτορίς was proposed⁶⁵ but with no success,

⁶⁰ In the preface to Book Four, Artemidorus teaches how to practice analogical inference. In this context he specifically refers to the interpretation of the animal and its flesh, which must be considered homologous (p. 238.19-20 Pack: χοῖρος καὶ ὄρνιθες ταῖς ἑαυτῶν σαρκὶ τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχουσι λόγον).

⁶¹ Artem. 1.70, p. 77.14-18 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 54).

⁶² FRANCO 2019 again for a more detailed analysis and interpretation of this passage.

⁶³ Ath. 9.15 (373 a-b).

⁶⁴ A memorable joke on ἀλεκτρούων / ἀλεκτρούαινα is made by Socrates and Strepsiades in Aristophanes’ *Clouds* (660-6). It is likely to reflect real contemporary debates inaugurated by Protagoras (see Aristot. *SE* 173 b19) on the relationship between the gender of names and the natural gender and/or cultural characterization of the referent: CORBEILL 2008, p. 80; ALLAN 2009, p. 26.

⁶⁵ The earliest datable example seems to be Epicharmus (Epich. fr. 113.23 and 150 K.-A.). Other occurrences in Hippocr. *Int.* 27 (vol. VII p. 238 Littré), *Nat.puer.* 29 (vol. VII p. 530 Littré); Aristot. *HA* 544a32, 559b23, 614b10; Herond. 6.100. According to Phrynicius (*Ecl.* p. 228 Lobeck, cf. *TrGF* adesp. 585), the term was also used by some tragic poets. Actually, Aristotle and a fragment attributed to Epicharmus (fr. 278 K.-A.) seem to suggest that even the term ἀλεκτορίς potentially indicated the entire species, as in expressions such as τὸ θῆλυ γένος (or αἱ θήλειαι) τῶν ἀλεκτορίδων, which would be redundant if the zoonym in itself indicated the female only. The phenomenon is perhaps indicative of the fact that, at least until the beginning of the Hellenistic age, the various zoonyms derived from ἀλεκτορ- were used in a rather loose way. A variant ἀλεκτροονίς is attested in Schol. Ar. *Nub.* 226.

while the completely different lexeme ὄρνις became the standard designation. The name ὄρνις originally referred to a “bird” of any kind, but its meaning gradually narrowed to indicate, precisely, the female of the rooster; the ancient terms ἀλεκτρούων or ἀλεκτοριδεύς were then reserved only for the male of this species⁶⁶.

In Artemidorus’ day, the ὄρνις was undoubtedly treated as feminine, as a passage from Book 3 of his treatise confirms⁶⁷: Αἴλουρος μοιχὸν σημαίνει· κλέπτης γάρ ἐστιν ὀρνίθων· αἱ δὲ ὄρνιθες γυναιξὶν εἰκάζονται, καθὼς ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ βιβλίῳ ἐπεμνήσθην (“A cat signifies an adulterer: cats steal birds (*ornithes*), and birds symbolize women, as I noted in the first book”).

When contrasted with ὄρνις, χήν it is always associated with the masculine pole, as happens precisely in the previously quoted passage from the *Oneirocritica* about eating goose or hen meat. It must be added that the domestic goose and the hen are often mentioned together in medical literature and in dietetics. In Galen, a contemporary of Artemidorus’, comparisons and analogies between the eggs, meat and various other parts or products of the two animals are quite common⁶⁸. After all, in Greece gallinaceous birds supplanted the goose as the most common courtyard bird only starting from the sixth century BC and the two birds remained competing food sources for a long time not only for their meat but also for their eggs⁶⁹.

Going back to the dream of giving birth to a goose, in the light of this cultural background it is unsurprising that the young interpreter from Cyprus unhesitatingly connected the dream with the birth of a male child: despite Artemidorus’ complaints, χήν was culturally, if not linguistically, biased towards the male/masculine⁷⁰.

⁶⁶ The phenomenon can be compared, by analogy, to the transition between the late Latin *auica* and the Romance names for the goose (It. *oca*, Fr. *oie*). The use of ὄρνις for “hen” already appears in Aristotle (*e.g.* HA 560 b 8). In Artemidorus the rooster represents the master of the house, if it is a poor man's house; if the house is that of a rich man, it instead refers to the butler (Artem. 2.42).

⁶⁷ Artem. 3.11, p. 209.5-7 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 142).

⁶⁸ See *e.g.* the following passages: Gal. *De methodo medendi libri xiv*, vol. X p. 866.17 e p. 1017.7 Kühn; *Ad Glauconem de medendi methodo* Vol. XI, p. 122.13 Kühn; *De compositione medicamentorum per genera*, XIII, p. 455.3, p. 619.15 Kühn; *De alimentorum facultatibus libri III*, vol. VI p. 704.2-3, vol. VI p. 704.9-10 Kühn; *De rebus boni malique suci*, vol. VI p. 788.9 Kühn.

⁶⁹ Sometimes the goose and the hen are instead interchangeable, as in Aes. 288 Chambry, which in the most common versions speaks of *The Hen* (ὄρνις, always in the feminine) that *Laid the Golden Eggs*, but in one case regards *The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs*. See also Epich. fr. 150 K.-A. (ὄρεα χανὸς κάλεκτορίδων πετεηνῶν) and cf. DALBY 2003, 83 and 161.

⁷⁰ As already seen in the cases of κύων and χήν, Artemidorus is rather careful to keep the possibility open for common gender names to refer both to men and women in the predicted event: also the zoonym ὁ / ἡ πέρδιξ, although mostly foretelling godless, grumpy women, can nevertheless refer to men as well (Artem. 2.46, p. 180 Pack).

6. DISCREPANCIES

To avoid giving the impression of an oversimplified description of the principle of gender polarization in ancient zoology – which I would define as “systemic” but in no way “systematic” – I would now like to conclude my analysis with some general reflections and a few passages which seem to complicate or even contradict the logic described so far. What I hope to show through a few more illustrations from Artemidorus’ treatise is that gender polarization was a pattern marked by a certain degree of persistence and consistency, but never had a normative force. In addition, it often intersected with other kinds of polarity, such as wild/domestic, free/slave, higher rung/lower rung and the like.

Judging from the literary images known to us, if asked to associate a very “manly” species such as the δράκων or the ἀετός with a human *comparatum*, a person with a Hellenic or Hellenized cultural background was unlikely to think of a woman or another feminine being, unless that being was a monstrosity. As in the case of the lion/lioness already described⁷¹, when the need to express “dragonness” in the feminine was felt, the term δράκαινα was coined, which however represented precisely a perverse, “virile” and aggressive kind of femininity, and which was used most of the time as a pejorative term for deviant women, like Clytemnestra in Aeschylus’ *Oresteia*. Similarly, although lacking a name for her, it was not impossible to think of a female eagle, and in fact a female ἀετός shows up in a story about interspecific mating⁷². Nevertheless it is a rare occurrence. Most of the time, the animal’s identity is conceived in terms of its species, where the gender of the zoonym orients the imagination *for all members of the zoological class* and determines the assumption that, when we speak of an ἀετός, we are speaking of a male (and “manly”) bird.

It is telling that, out of all the animal symbols in the *Oneirocritica*, the only female of the species mentioned in Artemidorus’ treatise is the lioness and the only male is the ram; these two exceptions excluded, male and female individuals are otherwise brought together under the common umbrella of their species-names, and the gendered characterization of the species, when present, involves both categories of individuals⁷³. Of course, it is always possible to make a gendered animal symbol refer to a person of either sex: so, according to Artemidorus, a πάρδαλις – a feminine noun and a species traditionally contrasted with the “manly” lion – can represent a woman or a

⁷¹ Part One, pp. 91-8.

⁷² With a male hawk: Dionys. Av. 2.16 *supra*, n. 50.

⁷³ To human eyes, animal identities are mostly “species identities”, and this is especially true for wild animals: see Part One, p. 97.

man (in either case, someone given over to mischief, an association “due to its spotted coat”)⁷⁴. Nevertheless, we can assume that, if asked about the character of this “πάρδαλις-man”, the interpreter would have assigned a degree of unmanliness to him – as is the case with Paris, who not by chance wears a *pardalis*-skin in *Iliad* 3.17⁷⁵. Similarly, dreaming of a wasp (σφήξ) predicts that the dreamer will run into “mischievous and cruel people” (περιπεσεῖν γὰρ σημαίνουσι πονηροῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ ὤμοις)⁷⁶: given the notorious bellicosity of this insect, we might expect that a “wasp-woman” – should Artemidorus expand on her characterization – would present warlike, masculine traits.

In addition, not all animal species exhibited such strong gender markers as to prevent any metaphorical and symbolic uses of them at odds with their mainstream characterization. This is primarily due to the fact that gender was not the only criterion for the interpretation of animal symbols. Indeed, animals could be associated with heritage (rich/poor), class (aristocratic/popular), status (mortal/immortal, free/slave), age (adult/immature), ethnicity (Greek/not Greek/Metic) and so on. All of these connections could be exploited – separately, alternately or simultaneously – to produce symbolic inferences. A good case in point is Artemidorus’ interpretation of ἀσπίς and ἔχιδνα. Unlike the passage mentioned above, where they appeared both skewed towards the “feminine” side within the overall “masculine” category of serpents⁷⁷, the two snakes elsewhere receive a more nuanced treatment, insofar as they are said to represent “rich men or women”. Nevertheless, they remain in a relation of polarity with the δράκων, a symbol which (together with the βασιλίσκος and the δρυίνας) is exclusively associated with males⁷⁸: καὶ τῶν ἰοβόλων τὰ φοβερὰ καὶ ἰσχυρὰ καὶ δυνατὰ μεγάλους ἄνδρας παρίστησιν, ὡς δράκων βασιλίσκος δρυίνας. Τὰ δὲ πολὺν ἰὸν ἔχοντα πλουσίους ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας, ὡς ἀσπίς ἔχιδνα σήψ. (“Of the venomous creatures, those which are formidable, strong, and potent represent powerful men – for example, the large snakes, the cobras, and the tree-snakes. Those with a great deal of venom, such as the asp, the viper, and the *sēps*, represent rich men and women”).

⁷⁴ Artem. 2.12.7, p. 122 Pack.

⁷⁵ RANSOM 2011, pp. 43-4.

⁷⁶ Artem. 2.22.2, p. 139 Pack.

⁷⁷ *Supra*, p. 50.

⁷⁸ Artem. 4.56, p. 279.4-7 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 197). As already noted, this fact is even more significant if we consider that this is the only case, in the whole section of Book 4 devoted to animal symbols, where the gender of the *comparatum* (male, female) is specified. All other symbolic animals in the section generally refer to “people” (ἄνθρωποι) of a certain type.

In this case, the social criterion of economic status (“a lot of venom” means “a lot of money”) most likely prevails over the gendered characterization, making σήψ (a masculine noun⁷⁹), ἀσπίς and ἔχιδνα (both feminine) suitable for male as well as female actors. However, we can suppose that, in following Artemidorus’ directions, a real interpreter would have taken into account the grammatical gender of the nouns, making ἀσπίς and ἔχιδνα foretell a rich woman, σήψ a wealthy man.

Something very similar happens with regard to the donkey. In its standard characterization, although its name functions as a noun of common gender (ὄ/ῆ ὄνος), this animal shows a marked tendency to be thought of as masculine. Thanks to the remarkable size of his penis and his vehemence in mounting, the male donkey was the prototypical animal of its taxon. This is clear from many texts, but it will suffice here to recall *The Golden Ass*, where the protagonist is transformed into a donkey and has intercourse with lustful women seeking well-endowed males⁸⁰. The iconographical evidence too points to the donkey’s masculinity, as representations of male donkeys in a state of sexual arousal are frequent in Greek art⁸¹. Accordingly, the donkey was sometimes put in a relation of polarity with the mule (ἡμίονος, common gender), which tended to be used in the generic feminine (αἱ ἡμίονοι), and with the horse (ἵππος, common gender), whose association with femininity is well-known and recalled by Artemidorus himself on a couple of occasions⁸². Despite all this, in one passage of the *Oneirocritica* the donkey ends up indicating one’s wife⁸³:

⁷⁹ E.g. Ps. Aristot. *Mir.* 846b11; Paus. 8.4.7. The zoonym had many referents in Greek (see BODSON 2009), but in this passage Artemidorus is certainly referring to a kind of viper.

⁸⁰ See also *P.Oxy.* LXX 4762 and PUGLIA 2013 (with previous bibliography). On the donkey’s exuberant sexuality see MILLS 1978-9. This overall characterization, which appears primarily focused on the male donkey, does not prevent Semonides from including in his notorious poem on feminine types the “donkey-woman” (fr. 7.43-9), described as stubborn, idle and willing to accept “any mate who comes along”.

⁸¹ No example of aroused male horses, on the contrary, is to be found according to GRIFFITH (2006a, p. 224).

⁸² Artem. 1.56, p. 64.11-14 Pack ἵππον κέλητα ἐλαύνειν καλῶς πειθόμενον τῷ ῥυτήρι καὶ αὐτῷ τῷ ἐλαύνοντι ἀγαθὸν ἐπίσης πᾶσιν· ἵππος γὰρ γυναικὶ μὲν καὶ ἐρωμένη τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχει λόγον, ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ κάλλει μέγα φρονεῖ καὶ τὸν ἐλατῆρα βασιτάζει (“To ride a racehorse which responds nicely to the rein and the rider himself is auspicious for all alike, because a horse is analogous to a wife and a (female) lover in that it prides itself on its beauty and supports a mount” transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 45); cf. Artem. 4 *Praef.* p. 240.2-8 Pack. On the association between the horse and the maiden see FRANCO 2008. As GRIFFITH (2006b, pp. 317-333) points out, however, in other contexts the horse can refer to a boy, especially when seen as an object of desire by an adult male lover.

⁸³ Artem. 2.12, pp.120.26-121.2 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 84).

ὄνοι φέροντες μὲν τι ἄχθος καὶ πειθόμενοι τῷ ἐλαύνοντι καὶ ἐρρωμένοι καὶ ταχέως βαδίζοντες ἀγαθοὶ πρὸς γάμον καὶ κοινωνίαν· πρὸς γὰρ τῷ μὴ εἶναι πολυτελεῖ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὸν κοινωνὸν καὶ προθύμως ὑπακούσασθαι σημαίνουσι καὶ εὐνοήσειν.

Donkeys, if they are carrying a load, obeying their driver, in good health, and moving quickly, are auspicious for marriages and partnerships: they signify that the wife or partner, as well as incurring no great expense, will gladly follow instructions and show loyalty.

In this case the interpretation is not based on the donkey's renowned "virility", but on its availability to form a couple with its human driver. In this symbolic couple, the animal either plays the role of a business partner or – if the pair is thought of as a "marriage" – symbolizes the feminine pole of the wife, given that the standard dreamer in Artemidorus' treatise is a man⁸⁴.

Still, the comparison is surprising. The donkey was the quintessential beast of burden, intended for heavy labor. In the equine hierarchy, the donkey represented the subordinate condition, as Justina Gregory has shown in her fine study⁸⁵, and as Artemidorus himself confirms elsewhere: "Animals that can work and endure hard labour, such as donkeys and working oxen, represent workers and subordinates"⁸⁶. If we consider things from this angle, the donkey may be seen to embody not so much a figure with whom one cooperates (a partner or a wife), but rather a slave. Indeed, the donkey was subjected to the same "charges" as servants, since it was especially accused of laziness and indolence: "For travel abroad they foretell complete safety, but bring about delays because they are so stubbornly slow"⁸⁷. One wonders, then, why Artemidorus does not assign the role of the good wife in dreams to the mule instead, which is also a subordinate equid but is much more appreciated as a "hard-working" animal, and which had generally been characterized as "feminine" in Greek culture since Hesiod⁸⁸. The reason is offered by Artemidorus himself⁸⁹: "Mules are favourable for everything because of their endurance of hard work, and especially favourable for the working of farmland (...) Their only negative implication is for marriage and the procreation of children, as the animal is sterile" (ἡμίονες δὲ πρὸς πάντα ἐπιτήδειοι διὰ τὸν ὑπομονητικὸν τῶν ἔργων, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς γεωργίαν ... μόνον ἀντιβαίνουσι γάμῳ καὶ παιδοποιίᾳ

⁸⁴ On the problematic aspects of marriage in the *Oneirocritica* see SHEERWOOD 1996, pp. 51-2.

⁸⁵ GREGORY 2007.

⁸⁶ Artem. 4.56, p. 279.21-23 Pack (τὰ δὲ ἐργατικά καὶ ταλαίπωρα ἐργάτας καὶ ὑποτεταγμένους, ὡς ὄνοι καὶ βόες ἐργάται).

⁸⁷ Artem. 2.12, p. 121.7-9 Pack (Πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἀποδημίας πολλὴν προαγορεύουσι ἀσφάλειαν, παρολκὰς δὲ καὶ βραδύτητας ἐργάζονται διὰ τὸ νωθὲς τοῦ βαδίσματος). See GREGORY 2007, pp. 194-95.

⁸⁸ Hes. *Op.* 776-79 and 794-801. On mules and women in these Hesiodic passages see GRIFFITH 2006b, pp. 339-340.

⁸⁹ Artem. 2.12, p. 121.10-14 Pack.

διὰ τὸ ἄσπερμον εἶναι τὸ ζῶον). Dreaming of mules cannot foretell a good marriage because of the animal's infertility. Dreaming of donkeys, on the contrary, can refer to a prosperous union – provided that they appear to be obedient, healthy and quick (“carrying a load, obeying their driver, in good health, and moving quickly”)⁹⁰.

Of course, in order to have a donkey represent a good wife, the traditional association between the animal and “virile” sexual exuberance needs to remain dormant. Actually in his interpretations Artemidorus seems to carefully assess all possible traditional meanings of the animal symbol before selecting and emphasizing, for each context, one or two traits at the expense of all others. As he himself states elsewhere, “you must keep in mind that all animals which can at one and the same time be interpreted in many ways, must be interpreted in each of those aspects”⁹¹. Even in a passage on the horse, right after mentioning its equivalence with the woman and the female lover by virtue of its “femininity”⁹², Artemidorus stresses other equivalences, based on the activation of different traits: the horse is said to be “like a ship”, because its function is, on land, the same as that of a ship at sea; it can also refer to “the master of a slave, an employer, a friend who looks after one, and anyone who provides support”⁹³. While the horse-woman is such by virtue of her beauty, her conceited character, and her submission to a “rider”, the horse-ship, the horse-master and the horse-friend are such thanks to their functions as “vehicles” and “supports”. In these cases the traditional association between the ἵππος and a charming, beautiful woman can be set aside, in order to have the horse represent a (male) friend, an employer, a master or a slave. After considering all the possible meanings, the interpreter must in each case choose the one that best fits the particular setting of the dream: among other factors, the dreamer's sex, status, health condition, job and social class may all come into play, along with some of his/her present circumstances and several other variables.

One last case which I would like to consider is that of the wild swine (ὄς or σῦς ἄγριος, σύαγρος). As other wild counterparts of domestic species (*e.g.* the wolf and the wild goat), this animal tends to fall on the male side of the spectrum in ancient Greek texts, particularly when it enters into a relation of polarity with the domestic pig⁹⁴. The σῦς ἄγριος / σύαγρος could even be called an “intact male pig”, that is κάπρος (or σῦς κάπριος), in a way similar to the English usage of

⁹⁰ The animal may also be associated with business success here, as the feminine principle (the wife) in Artemidorus seems to have the power to mediate between the dreamer's private and public spheres: MACALISTER 1992 (p. 151 on this particular dream).

⁹¹ Artem. 4.56.5, p. 280 Pack (μὲμνησο δὲ ὅτι ὅποσα τῶν ζῴων ταῦτά εἰς πολλὰ δύνανται κρῖνεσθαι, ταῦτα κριτέον).

⁹² See above, note 82.

⁹³ Artem. 1.56, p. 64.15-20 Pack.

⁹⁴ Evidence and argumentation in FRANCO 2006.

the term “boar”, which can refer to an (uncastrated) male pig as well as to the wild swine as a species⁹⁵. What happens with the boar in Artemidorus’ interpretation is therefore really surprising⁹⁶:

Σύαγρος χειμῶνα σημαίνει βίαιον τοῖς ὀδεύουσιν ἢ πλέουσιν, καὶ τοῖς δικαζομένοις ἐχθρὸν δυνατὸν ἅμα καὶ ἀγνώμονα καὶ βίαιον φωνῆ μιανῶ πολλάκις κεχηρημένον, γεωργοῖς δὲ ἀφορίαν διὰ τὸ λυμαίνεσθαι τὰ φυτὰ, καὶ τῷ γαμοῦντι οὔτε εὖνουν οὔτε ἐπιεικῆ τὴν γυναῖκα παρίστησιν. Οὐδὲν δὲ θαυμαστὸν εἰ καὶ σύαγρος γυναῖκα σημαίνει. Καὶ γὰρ εἰ κακὸς ζῆλον, ἀλλ’ οὖν γε εἰρήσεται εἰς ἐπίδειξιν ὧν πολλάκις ἐτήρησα. Κάπρος καλεῖται τὸ ζῶον καὶ εἰκότως γυναῖκα σημαίνει· οὕτω γὰρ λέγονται αἱ καταφερεῖς καὶ τὸ ‘καπρᾶς, κακόδαιμον’ Μένανδρός φησι.

A wild boar signifies a violent storm for those travelling by land or sea; for those involved in a lawsuit a powerful, relentless, and vehement adversary who will often use foul language; and for farmers a poor yield because of the damage done to their crops. For someone getting married a boar represents a wife who is neither loyal nor modest. There is nothing surprising in a wild boar actually signifying a woman. It may be in bad taste, but even so I shall mention the link explaining what I have frequently observed. The word for the wild boar is *kapros* and the reason that it refers to a woman is that loose women are called so and Menander has ‘You’re like a sow in heat, damn you!’

Whereas in the first part of this interpretation the *σύαγρος* receives meanings in keeping with its traditional connection with fierceness and devastation (a storm, a wild adversary, damages to crops), in the second part Artemidorus tackles the difficult issue of interpreting the animal symbol in a setting where the dreamer is a man who is getting married. In this case, the interpreter bases his interpretation – purportedly gained through his experience of the regular outcomes of dreams of this sort – on a linguistic element, namely the verb *καπρᾶν*, as if this were related to the *σύαγρος*. The verb in question, however, has nothing to do with the wild boar: on the contrary, it indicates the heat of a sow, she “who wants the boar (*κάπρος* in the sense of intact male)” or, perhaps, “who acts as a male boar”, *i.e.* pursues her potential mate, playing an active role usually reserved for the

⁹⁵ In ancient Greek the intact male pig is ὁ κάπρος, whereas the group of young, female and neutered individuals tends to be referred to using the gender-neutral (or generic) feminine (ἡ σῦς, αἱ σῦες), as mentioned in the first part of this paper: see Part One, p. 76. Piglets are called χοῖροι.

⁹⁶ Artem. 2.12, p. 125.6-15 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 87).

male in courtship⁹⁷. The same verb could be applied, metaphorically, to a lustful woman, as confirmed by the quote from Menander⁹⁸. Nevertheless, Artemidorus takes the reference to κάπρος inherent in the verb to be a reference to the *wild swine*, in order to explain the symbolic link he claims to have witnessed (πολλάκις ἐτήρησα) between dreaming of a boar and marrying a difficult and ill-disposed woman. However, Artemidorus knows very well that this connection between the wild boar and a woman sounds paradoxical to the reader: given the “virility” of the wild swine in Greek culture, the symbolic equivalence has a disconcerting effect and he feels obliged to explain it. The solution he finds – the assonance between καπρῶσα (“sow in heat”, “lustful woman”) and κάπρος, regarded as synonym for σύαγρος – is somewhat far-fetched. But from the perspective of our topic the validity of Artemidorus’ argument does not matter. What matters is that he appears perfectly aware of the “oddity” of associating the boar with a female *comparatum* in the outcome, to the point that he struggles to produce a plausible justification for this strange relation and resorts to the literary authority of an author like Menander to confirm his inference.

By affirming, in the name of empirical evidence, the existence of a symbolic link between the boar and the wife, the interpreter of dreams chooses to take the path of totally unforeseen inferences, in open contradiction with the standard definition of σύαγρος, an animal which is so “manly” as to be called κάπρος, and with the traditional polarity opposing it to “females” (αἱ σῦες). Patricia Cox Miller has indeed underlined that Artemidorus’ metaphorical system is based on a process of continuous semiosis whereby the combination of two terms (παράθεσις) can produce effects in terms of similarity or difference, agreement or conflict, proximity or distance⁹⁹. Perhaps the prestige and fame of a dream interpreter also hinged on his ability to uncover astonishing inferences and highlight unexpected traits¹⁰⁰, by drawing new associations intended to amaze a

⁹⁷ We may compare this to the behaviour of cows in heat, when they ταυρῶσιν: according to Aristot. *HA* 572 b3 they become frantic and “mount the bulls, and follow them about the whole time, and stand beside them” (ZUCKER 2005, p. 34).

⁹⁸ Similarly, the κάπραινα is not the female of the wild boar, but the sow “who wants the boar” (καπρῶσα): FRANCO 2006, pp. 26-7. This noun was probably invented by comic poets as a pejorative term for a lustful woman.

⁹⁹ As COX MILLER 1994, p. 90 points out, “[t]he interpretive method of *parathesis* places or positions two elements next to each other (...) but it gives no guarantee whether that placement will result in similitude or difference, or in agreement or conflict, in nearness or distance”.

¹⁰⁰ The use of an unexpected animal symbol, a *paradoxon* apparently contradicting established notions, is not unusual even in other types of text. A comparable example is found in a couple of epitaphs by Antipater of Sidon (*AP* 7.424 and 425), in which the deceased woman explains to the amazed passer-by the meaning of the presence of a rooster and a goose (traditionally masculine species) on her tomb: the former is explained by referring to the woman’s habit – as long as she was alive – to wake up at dawn to get to work; the latter by referring to the role of the deceased as the “guardian” of the house. On *paradoxa* in this kind of epigrams see BENEDETTO 2004.

cultured and demanding clientele, quick to admire the hermeneutical virtuosity of the *ὄνειροκρίτης* rather than the coherence of his system.

7. CONCLUSION

In the Platonic dialogue entitled *The Statesman*, the Stranger argues that, in order to correctly distinguish between different classes, one must proceed by dividing things into parts that are as equal as possible. If you wish to establish subcategories within the taxon *ἄνθρωποι*, for example, it is wrong to divide it into Greeks and barbarians, because this means separating a small part (the Greeks) while putting all the rest (the whole non-Hellenic world population) into a class mistakenly constructed as homogeneous. Instead, it is necessary to do as with numbers, which are sorted into the two homogeneous parts of “even” and “odd”; by the same token, humans must be divided into the two halves of “males” and “females”¹⁰¹: *κάλλιον δέ που καὶ μᾶλλον κατ’ εἶδη καὶ δίχα διαιροῖτ’ ἄν, εἰ τὸν μὲν ἀριθμὸν ἀρτίῳ καὶ περιττῷ τις τέμνει, τὸ δὲ αὖ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένος ἄρρενι καὶ θήλει ...* (“A better division, more truly classified and more equal, would be made by dividing number into odd and even, and the human race into male and female ...”).

There is little doubt that many of Plato’s contemporaries would have agreed that the male/female distinction is one of the great and indisputable dichotomies of biological reality, one of those distinctions that follow natural articulations (*διαφυσαί*) and which, therefore, are correctly posed when defining and classifying the world in a way that conforms to the reality of things¹⁰². Rooted in the perceptual salience of the dimorphism of many sexually reproducing animals, starting from the human species, the male/female distinction must have constituted a self-evident fact. This distinction had been indeed assumed by Hellenic culture as one of the polarities capable of guiding symbolic-religious thought, as well as the rational “scientific” thought, far beyond its early days¹⁰³. The male/female opposition, moreover, had long been inscribed in language thanks to the grammatical masculine/feminine polarity, arguably first introduced (in late Proto-Indo-

¹⁰¹ Plat. *Pol.* 262e (transl. FOWLER 1925, p. 25).

¹⁰² On Plato’s *diairesis* as a method “designed to produce a synoptic view of a whole as it is divided into its natural parts” see BROWN 2010.

¹⁰³ On the pervasive presence of arguments and explanations based on polar opposites (right/left, light/darkness, upper/lower, male/female) in the Greek culture and science see LLOYD 1992, pp. 15-85. The male/female pair is present in the most ancient Greek Table of Oppositions, the one elaborated by Pythagoreans and reported by Aristotle (*Metaph.* A5, 986 a23-7). Aristotle himself considered sexual dimorphism as a positive quality, particularly evident in what he considered the most perfect of animal species, i.e. *ἄνθρωπος* (Aristot. *GA* 763 b20 and cf. 775 a4-30). See also SAID 1983; ZUCKER 2005, pp. 30-2.

European) by splitting the ancient “animate” gender in two, in order to distinguish the sex of the female human referent¹⁰⁴.

Whatever the disputed origin of the Indo-European grammatical gender, the innovation gradually spread to the lexical system, including zoonyms. For the Greek language, in historical times, the situation can be described as follows. Some animals (mostly domestic ones) are common gender zoonyms, in which the trait of sexual difference can always be activated by means of agreement (e.g. ὁ/ἡ ἵππος, ὁ/ἡ ὄνος, ὁ/ἡ ἡμίονος, ὁ/ἡ κύων, ὁ/ἡ χήν). In the vast majority of cases, however, the names of the species are instead epicenes, that is nouns endowed with a specific grammatical gender (e.g. ὁ δελφίς, ἡ πάρδαλις, ὁ κόραξ, ἡ περιστέρα) which, however, shows no relation to the sex of the referent. In order to be specified, the latter requires determinations such as θήλυς/ἄρρην, just as in Italian a male butterfly (feminine noun “farfalla”) is called “una farfalla maschio” or a female rhinoceros (masculine noun “rinoceronte”) can be referred to as “un rinoceronte femmina”¹⁰⁵. The use of the neuter appears limited, with few exceptions¹⁰⁶, to categories far more generic than the species, such as the name φαλάγγιον for any kind of venomous spider, ὄρνειον for any kind of bird, or terms like μῆλα “small (cattle)”, βοσκήματα “that which is fed / fattened”, πρόβατα “that which walks forward / movable property” and ὑποζύγια “yoke animals”, all describing livestock as a commodity and source of labour in the agricultural-pastoral economy¹⁰⁷. Only occasionally do we find processes of distinction of the sex of the referent

¹⁰⁴ The most ancient term for “neuter” would appear to have been σκεύη (“thing” or “inanimate object”): Aristot. *Rh.* 3.5, 1407b, quoting Protagoras (see MENEGHEL 2014, p. 599), but more recent definitions (such as τὸ μεταξύ used by Aristotle in *Po.* 1458a, or οὐδέτερον in Dionysos Thrax) show that in historical times the masculine/feminine polarity prevailed over the animate/inanimate one. According to LLOYD (1992, p. 36), comparative evidence shows that not all cultures in which polar thinking is present regard the male/female opposition as relevant to their classifications, but this was definitely the case with the ancient Greeks, who extensively applied this opposition in their language (masculine/feminine gender). Gender is counted by linguists among the “mature elements of language” (AUDRING 2016, p. 21), and the split into male and female is the most common semantic basis of gender systems according to CORBETT 2013. An overview of theories on the origins of the Indo-European masculine/feminine/neuter gender system is to be found in LURAGHI 2011; see also CORBETT 1991, pp. 308-310. For a study of the possible stages in the development of the IE gender system, see MATASOVIĆ 2004.

¹⁰⁵ As already mentioned, according to Dionysius Thrax [12 (14b), pp. 24-5 Uhlig] some grammarians considered “common gender” and “epicene” as categories different from the masculine/feminine/neuter triad, thus adding two more genders to the system (γέννη μὲν οὖν εἰσι τρία· ἀρσενικόν, θηλυκόν, οὐδέτερον. ἔνιοι δὲ προστιθέασιν τούτοις ἄλλα δύο, κοινόν τε καὶ ἐπίκοινον, κοινὸν μὲν οἶον ἵππος κύων, ἐπίκοινον δὲ οἶον χελιδῶν ἀετός). The crucial role played by zoonyms in ancient grammarians’ reflections about gender is proved by the scholia to Dionysius’ passage (pp. 218-9, 525-6 Hilgard).

¹⁰⁶ E.g. σφήκειον, μυρμήκειον, τετραγνάθον and other kinds of poisonous spiders (φαλάγγια). See BEAVIS 1988, pp. 44-56; KITCHELL 2014, pp. 149-50, 175.

¹⁰⁷ These taxa would be defined by specific cultural functions and/or specific modes of interaction with people, as illustrated by LEACH 1964 (see also ZUBIN-KÖRKE 1986, pp. 152-6), although in the case of βοσκήματα morphology may

implemented with the aid of morphology: for example, when the feminine of a masculine name is created by means of a suffix (masc. λέων vs. fem. λέαινα, masc. λύκος vs. fem. λύκαινα, masc. δράκων vs. fem. δράκαινα). Most often, as suggested above, lexicalization of the trait of procreative virility gave rise to masculine names for the male (*e.g.* ταῦρος, κάπρος, κριός), leaving the generic name of the species (the common gender βοῦς, σῶς, ὄϊς) with the task of designating the remaining members of the category (*i.e.* castrated males and females)¹⁰⁸; in this last case, the common gender zoonyms tended to become semantically feminine, as is shown by their grammatical agreement with feminine adjectives and pronouns¹⁰⁹. In this respect, we can apply to the ancient Greek zoonyms the remark that Giorgos Spathas and Yasutada Sudo have recently made regarding modern Greek animal names: “What is special about animal nouns (...) is that they fall in between two extremes – human nouns, which describe entities whose genders are cognitively prominent, on the one hand, and inanimate nouns, which describe entities for which genders do not exist, on the other – and the grammatical system of encoding natural gender only kicks in, when the root entails that gender is relevant at all”¹¹⁰.

In addition to complicating the system of agreement for the names of animate referents, the linguistic device of masculine/feminine gender, once extended to many nouns also with inanimate and abstract referents, made it possible to create whole series of opposites: in many Indo-European

also play a role. In all these cases the neutral gender seems to convey the idea of an indistinct mass, according to one of its original meanings (MENEGHEL 2014, p. 604 “a questa categoria, infatti, sono inerenti anche i tratti della [-individualità] e [-numerabilità], che ben si adattano al valore di collettivo riconosciuto al neutro indoeuropeo (...), anche se la natura della categoria ancora rimane materia di discussione”). On πρόβατα and other neutral collective designations of animals, see BENVENISTE 1969, vol. I, pp. 38-9. The ancient Greek zoological lexicon, however, needs to be tested against modern theories, such as that of the possible correlation between gender marking and taxonomic rank proposed by ZUBIN-KÖPKE 1986, according to whom terms like πρόβατον, βοσκήματον, ὑποζύγιον and ζῶον may have been assigned to the neuter gender due to their being superordinate and more general terms compared to basic ones such as δελφίς, πάρδαλις, κόραξ and περιστέρα. However, I suspect that a noun like ὄρνειον, as well as common gender zoonyms (κύων, ὄς, βοῦς, χήν, ἵππος, ὄνος, ἔλαφος), would complicate the picture.

¹⁰⁸ Conversely, in the couple ἀλεκτρούων/ὄρνις (rooster/hen) it is the name of the species (ἀλεκτρούων) which takes on a masculine marker, whereas the feminine trait is expressed by a different word (the hypernym ὄρνις): *supra*, p. 56-57.

¹⁰⁹ See Part One, pp. 75-8. On farm animal names see also EKROTH 2014, 155 and note 40 p. 156. Castration also leaves the male animals with “little of the empty scrotum visible between the legs” (EKROTH 2014, 154), thus blurring the difference between neutered male, female and juvenile individuals. In ancient times castration was thought of as a process of feminization of the males: *e.g.* Columella (6.26.3) advises the farmer to leave a little part of the testicles on the bull so that he does not become too “feminine” (*Nam hoc modo nec eruptione sanguinis periclitatur iuventus, nec in totum effeminatur adempta omni virilitate; formamque servat maris cum generandi vim deposuit; quam tamen ipsam non protinus amittit*).

¹¹⁰ SPATHAS-SUDO 2020, p. 17; MICHARD 2002, p. 15. Claire Michard also stresses the importance of considering nouns of common gender in the analysis of gender, as for them at least agreement is not a mere formal phenomenon (“Sans aborder les effet stylistiques et métaphoriques, dans le cas de noms de genre commun (...) l'accord a une signification” MICHARD 2002, p. 99).

languages gender became a powerful principle of polarization¹¹¹, which could be used to organize the world into pairs of complementary opposites, such as the moon and the sun (where one has a feminine name and the other is treated as masculine: *e.g.* Gr. masc. ἥλιος fem. σελήνη, Lat. masc. *sol* fem. *luna*, but German masc. *Mund* fem. *Sonne*), paving the way for the flourishing of metaphorical and symbolic interpretations¹¹². In my opinion, to this type of polarizing dynamic we must also ascribe the evident tendency in Greek popular zoology to organize animal species into complementary pairs, such as αετός and ἄρπη (or φήνη), λύκος and κύων (or ἀλώπηξ), λέων and πάρδαλις, δράκων and ἔχιδνα (or ἄσπις) – a tendency that we have seen to be partly reflected in the animal symbolism of dream interpretation. This phenomenon, it is worth repeating, was not systematic and never produced rigid classifications, but rather took the form of a great range of possibilities for metaphorical and hermeneutic operations that the poet/writer or the interpreter could choose to exploit or not, depending on the context¹¹³.

As I hope to have shown, Artemidorus applies the principle of gender congruency and gender polarization in his interpretations of dreams. In the vast majority of cases, he follows the rule that a masculine noun must predict a man, and a feminine noun a woman, as with ἄρκτος and especially with the pairs αετός/ἄρπη, λύκος/ἀλώπηξ, δράκων/ἔχιδνα (and ἄσπις) and ἰκνεύμων/ἴκτις. It has been argued that many gendered animal characters and polarized pairs were already well-established in Greek culture and were thus part of Artemidorus' background. Compared to other types of evidence, however, Artemidorus' hermeneutics appears particularly sensitive to the normative force of the linguistic system. He holds that common gender nouns (such as κύων, ἵππος, ὄνος and ἔλαφος) can predict either men or women, and rejects those interpretations which overlook this rule by making the conceptual gender prevail over the grammatical one, as exemplified by the “young man from Cyprus” according to whom dreaming of a goose (χήν) undoubtedly referred to a male person in the outcome. The case of ἔλαφος is also interesting, insofar as Artemidorus, following widespread usage, employs the zoonym in the generic

¹¹¹ LAZZERONI 1993; FRANCO 2014, pp. 148-153.

¹¹² Whatever the linguistic nature of gender (a classification system for concepts, a classification system for nouns, or a system of agreement classes: AUDRING 2016, p. 12), polarization can simply be considered a possibility offered by the system. Besides feminine vs. masculine, as mentioned, polarization can also take the form of the opposition animate-individuated (gender-marked nouns) vs. inanimate-collective (neuter). On the pre-verbal asymmetry of gendered polarization in language and its potential for sexual symbolism, see VIOLI 1986, pp. 57-78.

¹¹³ The fanciful notions of hybridization between different species mentioned above (with one species playing the “male” and the other the “female”, as in the case of the ἔχις and the μύραινα, or the λέων and the πάρδαλις) are also part of this range of possibilities offered by the projection of sexual difference on the level of language (in the form of grammatical gender) and on that of widespread stereotypes (cultural or “conceptual” gender).

(unmarked) feminine¹¹⁴, while at the same time offering an interpretation in which the human beings involved are discussed using the generic masculine¹¹⁵: δείξει δὲ τοῦτο ὅπως ἂν ἔχη διαθέσεως ἢ ἔλαφος. ἐν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖς τοὺς ἀποδιδράσκοντας καὶ τοὺς ἐν δίκαις φεύγοντας καὶ τοὺς κατὰ λείποντας τὰς συμβιώσεις εὐγνώμονας μὲν δειλοὺς δὲ καὶ ἀτόλμους παρίστησιν (“An ἔλαφος signifies this (*i.e.* smooth or hard-going travel), depending on the demeanour of the animal. In other cases, for those who are fugitives, those who are being legally persecuted and those who are leaving their partners, the deer makes reasonable people cowards and faint-hearted”).

However, in other contexts Artemidorus is willing to accept the received gendered connotation of a zoonym of common gender, as in the aforementioned passage in which he opposes goose meat (predicting benefits from men) to poultry meat (predicting benefits from women) or, as we will see in the following example, when he lists ἵππος among the symbols of a desired woman.

This happens in a passage of the proem to Book 4, where the author is committed to arguing that dreams devoid of predictive value (ἐνύπνια) occur in different ways in a dreamer inexperienced in oneirocriticism and in one who is an expert on the matter. While in a dream the former will see the object of his desires and fears as it appears to him in everyday reality, the latter will see it in a symbolic form. For example, while an ordinary man who desires his beloved will see her with the same appearance as in real life, an expert in oneirocriticism will instead dream of his desired woman in the form of one of the symbols that, in dreams, represents a γυνή¹¹⁶:

οἷον <ό> δυνάμενος διακρίνειν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἢ διὰ τὸ βιβλίους ἐντετυχηκέναι ὄνειροκριτικοῖς ἢ διὰ τὸ ὄνειροκρίταις συναστρέφασθαι ἢ διὰ τὸ εὐεπιβόλως ἔχειν πρὸς τὰς κρίσεις εἰ μὲν τύχοι ἐρῶν γυναικός, οὐ τὴν ἐρωμένην ὄψεται ἀλλ’ ἵππον ἢ κάτοπτρον ἢ ναῦν ἢ θάλασσαν ἢ θηρίον θῆλυ ἢ ἐσθητά γυναικείαν ἢ ἄλλο τι τῶν σημαινόντων γυναιῖκα.

Let us, for example, assume someone who can interpret symbols in dreams – he may have come across books on dream-interpretation, or be familiar with dream-interpreters, or just have a knack for interpretation: if he is in love with a woman, he will not see his beloved in his dreams, but rather a horse, a mirror, a ship, the sea, a female animal, some piece of feminine clothing, or anything else which signifies a woman.

¹¹⁴ Like other zoonyms of common gender, ἔλαφος is treated as a “generic feminine” noun as early as the Homeric poems and in many literary genres (cf. Part One, p. 75). Aristotle uses ἔλαφος in the feminine form even when speaking of the deer’s antler cycle (female deer have no antlers): Aristot. *HA* 611a27.

¹¹⁵ Artem. 2.12.16, p. 125 Pack (transl. my own).

¹¹⁶ Artem. 4 *Praef.*, p. 240.2-8 Pack (transl. HAMMOND 2020, p. 167).

In the list of symbols that can represent a γυνή some are grammatically feminine – the ship (ναῦς), the sea (θάλασσα) and even ἐσθής (which, moreover, is qualified by the adjective γυναικεία “womanly”) – but ἵππος is of common gender¹¹⁷, while κάτοπτρον is neuter. At least in the case of the horse and the mirror, therefore, the femininity that makes them suitable for representing a woman, and particularly an erotically desirable woman, is obviously not grammatical, but cultural. This confirms what we have observed in the analysis of the other occurrences: the linguistic datum orients the assignment, but is not always decisive, as is shown by cases such as ἀσπίς, ἔχιδνα, πάρδαλις, λέαινα (also referable to men *under certain circumstances*) and ὕαινα (referable to unmanly men and masculine women).

Within this list of “womanly” symbols, how should we understand the expression θηρίον θῆλυ? Does Artemidorus intend to refer to a female individual of any species (for example a she-wolf, a she-elephant)? The pair of adjectives θῆλυς/ἄρσην can indicate the biological sex of the referent and it may be that this is what Artemidorus intended. However, θῆλυς/ἄρσην can also refer to the grammatical gender¹¹⁸. Moreover, in the *Oneirocritica* animal symbols are not divided into the male and the female of the species. With the remarkable exception of the lion/lioness pair¹¹⁹, Artemidorus never exploits the lexicalization of sexual difference within the species to distinguish the sex of the people involved in the outcome of the dream, as would instead be the case, for instance, if in dreams a ταῦρος referred to a man and a βοῦς to a woman, or a κάπρος to a man and a ὄς to a woman¹²⁰. The male/female correlates of an animal symbol are instead always determined on the basis of the characterization of the entire species, evoked by a single zoonym that encompasses all individuals belonging to it: thus, for example, the λύκος – that is, any wolf seen in a dream without any distinction between male and female – refers to a “man”, whereas the ἀλώπηξ – that is, any fox without any distinction between male and female – mostly refers to “women”. Furthermore, as we have seen, in the passage in which he advocates a double reference for the goose in dreams, Artemidorus employs θῆλυς/ἄρσην in a way that seems to refer to the agreements allowed by the zoonym (*i.e.* its grammatical gender), rather than to the sex of the animal in the dream. A woman had seen herself give birth to a χίην: a boy or a girl could be born,

¹¹⁷ In Artem. 1.56.7 the horse is equated to the ship.

¹¹⁸ Among grammarians the gender of nouns is usually referred to as the ἀρσενικόν/θηλυκόν (γένος); but Aristotle (*Rh.* 1407b 6-8) records that Protagoras distinguished words into ἄρρενα καὶ θήλεα καὶ σκεύη. For the use of θῆλυς/ἄρσην as ambiguously referring at the same time to sex and grammatical gender, see Ar. *Nub.* 659-91.

¹¹⁹ See also Part One of the present study.

¹²⁰ In Artem. 2.12 the ram is distinguished from the flock as it represents “a master of the house, a magistrate, a king”, but the flock of sheep is expressed through the neutral collective πρόβατα and in no way foretells women.

because the animal symbol can be either ἄρρην or θήλυς¹²¹. This can hardly mean that a goose in a dream can *be seen* to be male or female, as you cannot usually tell a female goose from a male one. What Artemidorus probably means is that the referent of χήν can be either a female or a male goose, *as the noun itself can be treated as masculine or feminine* (ὁ χήν, ἡ χήν).

Similarly, one may assume that θηρίον θήλυ in the passage under scrutiny refers to a “female animal” in a sense wider than “animal referent belonging to the female sex”. The expression may indicate those species for which the feminine is the unmarked gender, i.e. species dubbed with a feminine zoonym that points to the female of the species as the prototypical individual, as was the case with ἄρκτος, ἀλώπηξ, ἄρπη, ἴκτις, περιστέρα, φᾶσσα, κορώνη and others¹²². This would bring Artemidorus’ concept closer to what some scholars call “notional gender”, that is a linguistic category in which the biological sex (male/female) of the referent *and* concepts and ideas about biological sex (masculinity/femininity) are conflated into a single notion¹²³. If so, the reason why ἵππος is listed separately becomes clear: bearing a name of common gender, it is potentially referable to both sexes, like χήν and ὄνος. Therefore, whereas in the case of λέαινα, ἄρπη, ἀλώπηξ, ἄρκτος, ἴκτις, περιστέρα, φᾶσσα, κορώνη and the like the grammatical gender of the noun matches the cultural characterization of the species, in the case of ἵππος it does *not*¹²⁴. Nevertheless, the long and solid tradition that made the horse an image of seductive beauty and feminine desirability compelled the dreamer expert in symbols to regard it as an excellent avatar of his beloved γυνή.

Exceptions to the rule of congruency are to be found in Artemidorus’ treatise, but they are far from arbitrary, as we have seen¹²⁵. In the case of the hyena (fem. ὕαινα), the symbol can predict a woman or a man insofar as the referent’s morphology – the fact that the female hyaena’s clitoris

¹²¹ Artem. 4.83, p. 298.19-21 Pack (ἔνεστι μὲν γὰρ ἄρρενα εἶναι τὸν χήνα, ἔνεστι δὲ καὶ θήλειαν).

¹²² Artemidorus never uses the adjectives ἀνδρεῖος/γυναικεῖος in regard to animals’ “masculinity” or “femininity”: in the *Oneirocritica* they almost exclusively refer to women and men’s clothes, ornaments and activities.

¹²³ Cf. Artem. 1.50, p. 56.11 Pack (θηλύτεραι γὰρ γυναικῆς ἀνδρῶν). See MCCONNELL-GINET 2014. Regarding the gendered opposition lion/leopard, Ps.-Arist. *Phgn.* 809 b speaks of animals that “partake of ... the idea” of the (respectively) male and the female type (μετεπιληφῶτα ζῶα ... τῆς τε τοῦ ἄρρενος ἰδέας καὶ τῆς τοῦ θήλεος).

¹²⁴ We find ἵππος symbolically associated with men in other dreams and contexts (*supra*, p. 62). As the argument about the goose shows (see above, p. 54), Artemidorus appears very sensitive to the “double gender” of animals with common gender zonyms. Out of 11 animal names of common gender in his treatise, five receive an interpretation in which the people in the outcome are both men and women (κύων, χήν, ἵππος, ὄνος, πέρδιξ); two (ἔλαφος, γέρανος) predict male actors; and four show no sign of relation to either sex (ἄξι, ἡμίονος, βοῦς, ὄρνυξ). As already mentioned (Part One, p. 79 note 28), the prevalence of male people in the fulfilment is to be carefully assessed by taking into account the overwhelming prevalence of male actors in the whole treatise, in which *man* is the human subject by default.

¹²⁵ Violations of the congruency rule between the grammatical gender of the word-symbol and the sex of the person predicted are also to be found with symbols other than animals: see, for example, the cases of φρέαρ (neuter) and of χιτών (masculine), symbols of the dreamer's wife: Artem. 2.27, 5.64. For examples of the mismatching of the grammatical and the natural gender in ancient Greek, see now JANSE 2020.

resembles a penis – creates a degree of sexual ambiguity. As for the lioness (fem. λέαινα), the prominent masculinity attributed to the whole species makes her a suitable symbol to predict either a powerful woman or a man, who will however be accused of being κίναιδος (sexually passive). Moreover, in both cases gender connotations were already part of the received representation of these animals¹²⁶. The only puzzling case is that of the wild boar (masc. σύαγρος). Here Artemidorus' interpretation, based on his purported experience of the actual outcomes of such dreams, runs counter both to the grammatical gender of the zoonym and to the cultural characterization of the animal; it must be noted, however, that even in this case the interpreter, well aware of the conundrum, does not renounce to anchor his hermeneutics in his cultural background, by devising a far-fetched explanation that combines linguistic usage (κάπρος as the name indicating both “wild swine” and “male boar”) with the authority of a literary passage from Menander. In other words, Artemidorus' way of exploiting for his own purposes the system of gender polarization embedded in his language and cultural background is quite consistent with his attention to the linguistic aspect of oneiric symbols, yet not impervious to the received lore about animals, even when he challenges it with unheard of and unexpected interpretations.

All in all, in my view the evidence examined shows that, when it comes to the treatment of gender, cultural notions are bound to play a role and to interact with grammar in many ways. To borrow Sally McConnell-Ginet's words, “even for languages with conventionalized grammatical gender, ideas about sex and sexuality can interact in somewhat surprising ways with the gender system. Indeed, I suspect that most grammatical gender systems in which sex plays some role have at least an attenuated ‘notional’ (or ‘natural’) gender system as a part”¹²⁷.

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¹²⁶ The interpretation of fem. δρῦς predicting a rich man (see Part One, pp. 82-3) may also be a case in point.

¹²⁷ MCCONNELL-GINET 2014, p. 6.

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