

distinction is not improbable or inexplicable. The word ὄψανον seems to occur only once, in the description of Clytaemnestra's dream, that she suckled a snake (Orestes) which drew blood from the teat (*Cho.* 532).

XO. αὐτὴ προσέσχε μαστὸν ἐν τῶνείρατι.

OP. καὶ πῶς ἄτρωτον οὐθαρ ἦν ὑπὸ στύγους;

XO. ὥστ' ἐν γάλακτι θρόμβον αἵματος σπάσαι.

OP. οὗτοι μάταιον ἂν τόδ' ὄψανον πέλοι¹.

XO. ἢ δ' ἐξ ὕπνου κέκλαγγεν ἐπτοημένη.

'She herself gave it the breast'. 'Then the teat must have been wounded?' 'Yes, it even drew blood with the milk'. 'This ὄψανον cannot be insignificant'. 'And she woke with a cry'. It will be noticed here that it is to the ὄψανον that Orestes attaches particular weight. Taking this with Dr Wecklein's proposal here, I would suggest that, according to the true meaning of the passage in the *Choephoroi*, the teat was actually flecked with blood, as the sleeper found upon waking, and that ὄψανον (ὄψεσθαι) properly meant, in the language of divination, a dream *visibly confirmed*, or the *visible confirmation* of a dream. It need hardly be said that those who 'believe in dreams' will vouch for many such proofs of their reality. This interpretation further brings out the force of βριζούσης, which, as distinguished from εὐδούσης, means not 'sleeping' but 'nodding, sleepy'. The ὄψανον, in the sense supposed, would of course be perceived or imagined by a mind not asleep but, as Clytaemnestra contemptuously says, 'half-asleep'. 'I would not accept', she says, 'dream-proof in what they call its strongest form', and therefore *a fortiori* nothing less. Her robust scepticism here offers an effective contrast to her guilty terror in the following play.

The ms. reading is commonly rendered 'I would not accept the fancy of a sleeping mind'. But δόξαν is emphatic by position (Paley), and with this emphasis the sentence implies that she might accept something from a sleeping mind, but not a δόξα: which I do not understand. In fact this explanation also requires the order οὐκ ἂν λάβοιμι δόξαν.

The origin of the ms. reading is easily explained by the rarity of the word and the false division οὐ δόψαν.

¹ I have taken provisionally the conjecture of Martin (ἂν τόδ' for ἀνδρός) given by Wecklein. To discuss it here would

lead us off the subject. The sense of the verse is, for our present purpose, beyond question.