

## Aeschylus' geographic imagination

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ABSTRACT. After reviewing various scholars' accounts of geographical references in Aeschylus' plays, some seeing exoticism, some serious geographic knowledge reflecting Ionian science, some focused exclusively on the opposition of Greek and barbarian, I argue that regardless of what one might posit as Aeschylus' intentions, the sheer quantity of geographic allusions are best understood as contributing to the formation of an imperialist consciousness by representing the non-Athenian Mediterranean world, some of it already under the control of Athens, as inherently fascinating.

KEYWORDS. Geography; barbarian; orientalism; map; imperialism.

Any reader of Homer's catalogue of the ships is confronted with a particularly Greek love of the poetry of places – evocative names enriched with specifying epithets and occasionally other details to summon up familiar or vividly imagined places. Sam Lee Greenwood's dissertation, while eschewing any overarching principle that could comprehend all the uses of geographical language even in a single dramatist, much less all three tragedians, refers repeatedly to 'geographical ornament'<sup>1</sup>. This is the dominant assumption informing his brief survey (68 pages). I would like to explore what sorts of functions this 'ornament' may play in the Athenian world of Aeschylus after the onslaught of Persia.

More recently Helen Bacon<sup>2</sup> and Edith Hall<sup>3</sup> have examined the three tragedians within the framework of a fundamental differentiation of Greeks and barbarians. In the case of Bacon, the primary focus was on determining the extent and relative accuracy of the poets' knowledge of the non-Greek world. In her analysis of Aeschylus she speaks of the 'quality and extent of his knowledge', and notes:

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<sup>1</sup> SAM LEE GREENWOOD, *Geographical Allusion in Attic Tragedy*, dissertation, U. Chicago, 1938, p. 19 and passim.

<sup>2</sup> HELEN H. BACON, *Barbarians in Greek Tragedy*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1961.

<sup>3</sup> EDITH HALL, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1989.

His geographical information is detailed and enormous. In all he names 100 foreign peoples and places, from the sources of the Nile to the Rhipaeian Mountains; from Ethiopia, where the sun rises, to Spain and Ocean stream, beyond the pillars of Hercules ... He writes like a man with a map in front of him. When he lists places he usually names them in geographical order, as though he were seeing them in front of him on a map.<sup>4</sup>

Griffith<sup>5</sup>, in his commentary on *Prometheus Bound* actually gives us a very suggestive map of the wanderings of Io. Both he and Bacon – as well as more recently Stephanie West<sup>6</sup> are at pains to defend this text, which neither West nor Griffith believe to be Aeschylean – against the accusation of J.O. Thomson, that Aeschylus indulged in ‘delirious poetic geography’<sup>7</sup>. Bacon acknowledges that ‘as he approaches the edges of the world his geography ... grows more fabulous. But’, she continues, ‘he does not abandon his map’<sup>8</sup>. She endorses the conclusion of Havelock<sup>9</sup> that ‘Io’s journey is not the chaotic fantasy it seems to be, but is based on a scientifically thought out geographical system’. It in fact is ‘based on the world map of the Ionian geographers ... a product of the same science of which Prometheus had earlier been the exponent’<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> BACON, p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> MARK GRIFFITH (ed.), *Aeschylus Prometheus Bound*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. vi.

<sup>6</sup> STEPHANIE WEST, *Alternative Arabai: A Note on Prometheus Vincetus 420-4*, *Hermes* 125, 374-9, 1997.

<sup>7</sup> JAMES OLIVER THOMSON, *History of Ancient Geography*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1948, p. 82. (Cf. S. WEST, p. 377, also cited by GRIFFITH, *Aeschylus...*, p. 214.) Thomson’s predecessor E.H. BUNBURY (*A History of Ancient Geography: Among the Greeks and Romans From the Earliest Ages Till the Fall of the Roman Empire*, 2 vols, New York, Dover, <sup>2</sup>1959 [1883], p. 149-50) is more sober but equally dismissive: ‘He [Aeschylus in the *Prometheus Bound*] was dealing with a wholly mythical subject, and by far the greater part of the names that he introduces were of a mythical or fabulous character; hence it probably never occurred to him to consider their geographical position, or arrange them in geographical sequence.’

<sup>8</sup> Romm’s epigraph, from a certain William Arthur Heidel, is suggestive in this context: ‘If one is disturbed by the evidence that speculation played so large a role in the beginnings of history and geography ... one may be comforted by the reflection that in all things the factor of greatest importance is the idea; once that is put forward, positive and negative evidence is bound to be discovered, and upon the data thus brought to light a structure can gradually arise that may rightly demand the assent of a schooled intelligence’ (JAMES S. ROMM, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992, p. vii).

<sup>9</sup> HAVELOCK, 1951, p. 59-63.

<sup>10</sup> BACON, p. 49.

While I would not want to take on here the highly vexed question of the authorship of the *Prometheus Bound*,<sup>11</sup> in this connection I think it is worth stressing that those who insist the play is later because of its ‘sophistic’ elements<sup>12</sup> ignore some key continuities between the sophists and the Ionian thinkers of the sixth and early fifth century. Anaxagoras is said to have come to Athens in 480 B.C. ‘probably with Xerxes’ army’ (OCD 1.50),<sup>13</sup> suggesting already a distinctly political role for enterprising intellectuals. If he, along with the sophist Damon, was the teacher and friend of Pericles, who was Choregos for Aeschylus *Persians* in 472, and if Kerferd<sup>14</sup> is right that the sophistic movement was essentially the creation of Pericles, I at least see no problem in assuming that Aeschylus was exposed to not only Ionian ideas about geography, but about the linkages between a proto-anthropology and the democracy,<sup>15</sup> which are so central to the meaning of the *Prometheus Bound*<sup>16</sup>.

Even if we exclude the *Prometheus Bound* as non-Aeschylean, the evidence of the *Persae* and the *Supplices* – and unlike Bacon, I would add the *Oresteia* – display a striking interest in geography. The reason Bacon ignores the *Oresteia* is similar to the reason it is largely ignored by Hall: both scholars are primarily concerned not with geography but with the dichotomy of Greek and barbarian. Yet Clytemnestra’s dazzling speech describing the route of the fire signal from Troy, a speech

<sup>11</sup> RUSH REHM (*The Play of Space: Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy*, Princeton, 2002, p. 358, n. 212) offers the most recent bibliography on the debate of which I am aware. Of attacks on the play’s authenticity I have read, none is more brutal towards his opponents than MARTIN WEST (*Studies in Aeschylus*, Stuttgart, B.G. Teubner, 1990, p. 51-72). His tone is strikingly different from the admirable caution of Griffith, who prefaced his impressive argument with the demur, ‘the discovery tomorrow of a scrap of papyrus, confirming Aeschylus as author, would in no way surprise me’ (MARK GRIFFITH, *The Authenticity of the Prometheus Bound*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. xi), quoted with approval by S. IRELAND (*Aeschylus: Greece and Rome: New Surveys in the Classics*, n. 18, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986, p. 34).

<sup>12</sup> GRIFFITH, *The Authenticity*..., p. 217-21. Cf. contra C.J. HERINGTON, *The Author of the Prometheus Bound*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1970, p. 92-97; SUZANNE SAÏD, *Sophiste et tyran: ou le problème du Prométhée enchaîné*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1985, 9-15 and passim.

<sup>13</sup> The third edition (s.v.) notes that ‘the evidence for his biography, although relatively plentiful, is confused and confusing’. Following MANSFELD (1979) they opt for arrival in Athens 456/5.

<sup>14</sup> KEFERD, 1981, p. 18-22.

<sup>15</sup> It is noteworthy that Havelock begins his account of Greek anthropological thought with Anaximander, Xenophanes, and Anaxagoras (HAVELOCK, 1947, 104-112).

<sup>16</sup> HAVELOCK, 1957, p. 52-66; ANTHONY J. PODLECKI, *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy*, London, Duckworth, 1999, p. 105-22.

the chorus declares it would like to hear a second time (*Ag.* 317-19), attests as well as any in Aeschylus to the imaginative power of geography for his audience. So too the apparently gratuitous declaration by Athena in the *Eumenides* that she has just come from the Scamander (398). I will have more to say on these passages later, but here wish only to expand consideration of geography beyond the dichotomy of Greek and barbarian.

If Hall and Bacon are united in their exclusive focus on geography only as it evokes 'barbarians', they are polar opposites in their assessments of the significance of this aspect of Aeschylus. For Bacon concludes:

Aeschylus' handling of foreign material is the reverse of orientalizing ... It is difficult to maintain the Greek-barbarian antithesis when there is no 'barbarian' as such, but instead many different and fascinating varieties of human beings.<sup>17</sup>

Hall, deeply influenced by Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978)<sup>18</sup>, writes of the *Persae*:

This play is the earliest full-fledged testimony to one of the most important of the Greeks' ideological inventions and one of the most influential in western thought, the culturally other, the anti-Greek, the *barbarian*.<sup>19</sup>

Earlier she argues:

The subtle comparison of Greek and barbarian in *Persae* ... places overwhelming emphasis on the respective political ideals of Greek and non-Greek ... The polarization of Greek and non-Greek around the notion of political difference must be seen ... as a legitimization of the Athenian leadership of the Delian league.<sup>20</sup>

Thus where Bacon finds a celebration of diversity in a common humanity Hall sees a carefully crafted ideological project in the service of Athenian democracy and imperialism.

While in many respects I find Hall's book very persuasive, I believe there is far more at work in Aeschylus' geographical flights than this

<sup>17</sup> BACON, p. 62-3.

<sup>18</sup> EDWARD W. SAID, *Orientalism*, New York, Random House, 1978.

<sup>19</sup> HALL, p. 70.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

opposition. I would like to explore, following in the footsteps of Claude Nicolet, ‘the functional association of science, art, and politics’<sup>21</sup> as an element in the construction of imperialist consciousness in Athens. As Nicolet spells out in the Rome of Augustus and supplements with abundant references to later cultures bent upon imperial consolidation, the sheer extensiveness and complexity of the world and its differing peoples become a deeply fascinating focus of inquiry and admiration. Indeed as a recent volume entitled *Geography and Empire* argues, ‘Historically, nothing characterizes geography so tellingly as its close contacts with those either seeking or holding territorial power’<sup>22</sup>. More generally geographer David Harvey argues:

Aesthetic and cultural practices are peculiarly susceptible to the changing experience of of space and time<sup>23</sup> precisely because they entail the construction of spatial representations and artefacts out of the flow of human experience.<sup>24</sup>

Our first explicit reference in Greek literature to the use of a map is precisely an attempt to seduce the ruler of one territorial empire into acquiring a much greater and far richer one. Herodotus attributes Aristagoras’ failure to convince Cleomenes with his display of all the peoples and his catalogue of all the riches of Asia to his foolhardy revelation of a further geographical datum, namely, the distance of Susa from the sea (Herodotus 5.49-50). Earlier in the same book we find Hecataeus using his relatively vast knowledge of geography and of readily available riches to act as adviser to those planning the Ionian rebellion. All too recently one could scarcely turn on one of the alleged news channels without encountering some ‘behind-the-veil’, ‘in-depth’ account of Afganistan, Iraq, Iran or some other target of our enthusiastic and for a brief period even self-styled imperialists.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>21</sup> CLAUDE NICOLET, *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, University of Michigan, 1991, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup> ANNE GODLEWSKA and NEIL SMITH (eds), *Geography and Empire*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1994, p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> I discuss Aeschylus’s sense of time in PETER W. ROSE, *Sons of the Gods, Children of Earth: Ideology and Literary Form in Ancient Greece*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1992, p. 191-4; and PETER W. ROSE, *The Politics of the Trilogy Form: Lucia, The Oresteia, and The Godfather*. *Film Historia* 5.2-3, 93-116, 1995.

<sup>24</sup> DAVID HARVEY, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1989, p. 327.

<sup>25</sup> JOHN BELLAMY FOSTER, *The Rediscovery of Imperialism*, *Monthly Review* 54.6, 1-16, 2002.

At the same time, this very analogy, suspect as all such analogies are, immediately raises the question of intentionality. Long ago W.K. Wimsatt<sup>26</sup> warned us against the intentional fallacy in the interpretation of literary texts; and Rush Rehm well quotes the dictum of Raymond Williams about drama, 'the form is inherently multivocal'<sup>27</sup>. But when one speaks of a carefully crafted ideological project along the lines analyzed by Hall, it hard not to infer a rather high degree of intentionality. At the same time, to return to contemporary analogies, it seems quite inappropriate to suggest that whatever the conscious intentions of Cheney, Rumsfeld, Carl Rove and their creatures, all journalists working for CNN or National Geographic are equally committed to imperialist goals. On the contrary, some seem motivated by a desperate desire to educate their audiences to the dangers of imperial adventures against complexly different peoples. Within the same author we can see multiple levels: in Herodotus, for example, we find the explicit and therefore relatively conscious construction of an east-west ideological nexus<sup>28</sup>. There is as well, his sheer awe at the wonders of the world and the sheer variety of different peoples' *nomima*,<sup>29</sup> and finally, as well underlined by Lateiner (1989, p. 132-5) and others, an implicit warning of the dangers of unbridled imperialism. So too in Aeschylus I believe we can distinguish the narrow ideological barbarian-Greek antithesis, secondly, a broader, quasi-scientific fascination with remote places and different sorts of people, and thirdly, signs of anxiety about the dangers of empire for the Greeks. But this last element, if it is there,<sup>30</sup> does not preclude the

<sup>26</sup> W.K. WIMSATT, *The Verbal Icon*, The University of Kentucky Press, 1954, p. 3-18.

<sup>27</sup> REHM, p. 244; RAYMOND WILLIAMS, 'Afterward' in JONATHAN DOLLIMORE and ALAN SINFIELD, *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1985, p. 287.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. IMMERWAHR, p. 148-237.

<sup>29</sup> As Bernard puts it, 'A vrai dire, il s'intéresse à la géographie dans la mesure seulement où elle offre des "merveilles" au voyageur' (ANDRÉ BERNARD, *Leçon de civilisation*, Paris, Fayard, 1994, p. 20).

<sup>30</sup> DAVID ROSENBLUM ('Myth, History, and Hegemony in Aeschylus' in BARBARA GOFF (ed.), *History, Tragedy, theory: Dialogues on Athenian Drama*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 1995) makes an impassioned case for an anti-imperialist Aeschylus, a position ANTHONY J. PODLECKI (p. vi) dubs 'rather implausible'. To be sure, Rosenbloom does not take account, for example, of de Ste. Croix's compelling argument based upon the blatant and repeated endorsement of the Argive alliance in the *Eumenides* that Aeschylus was taking an unambiguous stand against Sparta (G.E.M. DE STE. CROIX, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1972, p. 183-5). De Ste. Croix also argues that the allusion in the *Persae* to the decisive trick of Themistocles suggests sympathy as well for all three major aspects of his policy, one of which was clearly imperialism.

first two strands serving ultimately imperialist ends.

Classicists should not perhaps need Foucault and Edward Said to remind us that knowledge serves power, regardless of the motives of those who gather the information. I will examine briefly three sorts of geographic data in the plays: matter focused in Hall's terms on Persians as 'barbarians' and the anti-Greek other, secondly, matter focused on foreign states over whom some form of future domination may at least be imagined, and thirdly, matter focused on Greek territory clearly under Athenian imperial control.

I need not repeat here Hall's (or Bacon's) compelling analysis of the Persian sounds, names, and clothing, the emphasis on gold, on monarchic arrogance and the concomitant obsequiousness of subject peoples, on the various acts, real and symbolic of hubris that insist throughout the play upon both the otherness of the Persians and their playing out the Solonian pattern of *koros* to *hybris* to *atê*. Pelling<sup>31</sup> has well explored the paradoxes and ambiguities of this duality which on the one hand can lead to *Schadenfreude* to the degree one responds primarily to the otherness and the just desserts suffered by the Persians or, on the other, to a certain anxiety to the degree that Athenians, enjoying their new-found imperial-based prosperity, see a universal pattern from which they are not exempt. Rehm<sup>32</sup> has gone further in challenging the rigidity of a simple self/other dichotomy in the treatment of Greeks and non-Greeks in tragedy and argues specifically that the *Persae* dramatizes the 'general principle ... imperialism linked to territorial expansion offends the gods' and 'Xerxes' fall offered an example not only to the Persians but to Aeschylus' audience as well'.<sup>33</sup> I would underline again, however, that regardless of the poet's moral intentions, the availability in the play of legitimation for viewing the Persians as less than fully human – i.e., fully Greek – and at the same time inordinately rich fosters imperial aims. Pace Thucydides, the Persian wars were not resolved in a couple of sea battles and a couple of land battles (1.23): as his own text – supplemented by Herodotus – makes clear, for the Athenians the wars began in 499 and extended in varying degrees of intensity till at least 450. Pelling<sup>34</sup> even suggests that prepara-

Whether this precludes the expression of anxieties about the limits and dangers of empire is another matter. See below on Pelling's more nuanced treatment.

<sup>31</sup> CHRISTOPHER PELLING, 'Aeschylus' *Persae* and History' in \_\_\_\_\_ (ed.), *Greek Tragedy and the Historian*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 1-20.

<sup>32</sup> REHM, p. 239-51.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>34</sup> PELLING, p. 12.

tions for the enormously successful campaign that culminated in the battle of Eurymedon may well have been underway in 472 and affected the responses of Aeschylus' audience.

Hall may be right in essentially lumping together Aeschylus' representation of Egyptians with other elements of the barbarian 'stereotype'<sup>35</sup>. The *Supplices*, probably to be dated in 463, i.e., shortly *before* Athens' heavy military commitment to the Egyptian rebels against Persia, does show similar echoes of language difference (118), clothing difference (136), anti-democratic sentiments, and excessive emotionalism. Hall argues for some differentiation in a specifically Egyptian stereotype through the emphasis on Danaus' cunning (123), the dark skins of the Egyptians (173-4), and the sheer ferocity of their herald (125).<sup>36</sup> Hall acknowledges, almost in passing, that the issue of the Danaids' genealogical link to Io complicates and blurs the issue of strict Greek identity;<sup>37</sup> but Claude Calame<sup>38</sup>, Zeitlin<sup>39</sup> and others have rightly stressed that, given the death of Pelasgos and the intervention of Aphrodite, Hypermetra and her husband Lynceus must represent the foundation of a new royal line. The emphasis on the fertility motif in the surviving play seems to anticipate this climactic marriage as a symbolic refounding of the city of Argos. If so, representing the barbarian seems far less central than legitimating a Greek-Egyptian connection.<sup>40</sup> In view of the long-standing lucrative trade between Greece and Egypt and Athens' aspirations to dominate the eastern Mediterranean, the dramatization of knowledge about Egypt may again serve imperial ends – indeed Vasunia<sup>41</sup> has argued that fifth-

<sup>35</sup> HALL, p. 136.

<sup>36</sup> BERNAND (p. 29-31) offers a somewhat different account of the Egyptian stereotype in the *Supplices*.

<sup>37</sup> HALL, p. 172-4.

<sup>38</sup> CLAUDE CALAME, 'Parcours généalogique et constructions spatiales: Eschyle et les représentations du monde habité' in *Généalogies mythiques: Actes du VIIe Colloque du Centre de recherches mythologiques de l'Université de Paris X*, 1995, p. 283-97.

<sup>39</sup> FROMA ZEITLIN, 'The Politics of Eros in the Danaid Trilogy of Aeschylus' in RALPH HEXTER and DANIEL SELDEN (eds.), *Innovations of Antiquity*, New York, Routledge, 1992.

<sup>40</sup> I cannot resist pointing out that a similar argument might be made about Io's genealogy in the *Prometheus Bound*. REHM (p. 158) emphasizes, 'she does not travel as a colonizer, moving out to the margins in order to expropriate the territory of others'. Nonetheless, her passage through Ionia and her role as ancestress of both the Egyptian royal line and the most Greek of Greek heroes, Heracles, the liberator of Prometheus, does establish a mythic 'charter' (BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI, *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, Westport (Conn.), Negro University Press, 1926) for potential territorial appropriations.

<sup>41</sup> PHIROZE VASUNIA, *The Gift of the Nile: Hellenizing Egypt from Aeschylus to Alexander*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2001, p. 265.

century texts on Egypt collectively created the rationale for Alexander's fourth-century invasion.

When Orestes prays to Athena's image in the *Eumenides*, he speculates as to her whereabouts, either in Libya helping friends or the Phlegraian plain surveying it like a bold commander (292-6). She appears with the following explanation of her absence:

πρόσωθεν ἐξήκουσα κληδόνος βοῆν  
 ἀπὸ Σκαμάνδρου, γῆν καταφθατουμένην,  
 ἣν δῆτ' Ἀχαιῶν ἄκτορές τε καὶ πρόμοι,  
 τῶν αἰχμαλώτων χρημάτων λάχος μέγα,  
 ἔνειμαν αὐτόπρεμνον ἐς τὸ πᾶν ἐμοί,  
 ἐξάριετον δῶρημα Θησέως τόκοις.

I heard from afar the call of your invocation,  
 From Skamander, as I was taking possession of the land,  
 Which unquestionably the chiefs and first men of the Achaians  
 Assigned to *me* root and all forever,  
 A great portion of the spear-won booty,  
 An exquisite gift for the sons of Theseus. (397-402)

The build-up of emphases here is striking: the particle δῆτ', the rare word αὐτόπρεμνον, the absoluteness of ἐς τὸ πᾶν, the final position and emphatic form of ἐμοί. While many scholars are inclined to see a contemporary reference to Athenian intervention in Egypt in the first geographic allusion<sup>42</sup>, there has been more hesitation to verify any political relevance of the second of the two references (see Sommerstein's long note *ad loc.*). I find it hard to believe there was *not* such relevance – even if it is unrecoverable today. But the real point may be the complimentary assumption of the sheer range of Athena's influence. Insofar as she represents Athens, she recapitulates the city's role of acquiring power by helping friends, keeping a military eye on her allies, and winning what Athenians hoped was permanent possession of territory by conquest. In any case the geography here cannot be reduced to a simple dichotomy of Greek and barbarian.

The third type of politically significant geographical allusion is exemplified by Clytemnestra's famous account of the fire-signals by which she learned of the victory at Troy that very night. Fraenkel cites with approval Wilamowitz' judgment that this passage as a whole 'reveals exact

<sup>42</sup> E.g. SOMMERSTEIN 1989 *ad loc.*

knowledge of the localities'<sup>43</sup> – whatever problems *we* might have figuring them out. Fraenkel himself adds:

There is sufficient evidence to show that the transmission of a fire signal over the islands was for Aeschylus and his audience something perfectly real of which they would think in geographical terms.<sup>44</sup>

Here surely we are dealing with more than the poetic allure of place-names: just as Clytemnestra's triumphant tone reflects her sense of power over all the places that make such a system feasible, so too the Athenian audience hear a dazzling confirmation of their own domination of so many places.

To sum up: geographical knowledge displayed by Aeschylus legitimates a negative dichotomy of Greek and barbarian in terms that foster imperial conquest. It further draws positive links with potentially friendly foreigners like the Egyptians and Sicilians with whom the Athenians had commercial ties and perhaps aspirations of more truly imperial relations. Finally, it celebrates already established territorial domination.

More broadly we may surmise that the sheer quantity of geographic and ethnographic data embedded in Aeschylus' texts – regardless of its scientific accuracy or the poet's conscious intentions – serves to foster in the consciousness of the Athenian audience a thirst for distant places, a touristic longing for travel that transforms the burdens of naval service into a thrilling adventure (cf. Thucydides 6.13.1 and 24.3). I can't help remembering the ironic anti-war t-shirt slogan: 'Join the army, travel to exotic, distant lands, meet exciting, unusual people and kill them'. Precisely the poetic exoticism catalogued by Greenwood and the vividness of Aeschylus' evocation of these places and people repeatedly praised by Bacon, when viewed in the context of an aggressively expansionist state policy, is neither neutral nor innocent.

<sup>43</sup> EDUARD FRAENKEL, *Aeschylus Agamemnon*, edited with a commentary, 3 vols, 1950, vol. 2, p. 164.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

TÍTULO. *A imaginação geográfica de Ésquilo.*

RESUMO. Depois de reexaminar diferentes interpretações de especialistas acerca das referências geográficas nas peças de Ésquilo – algumas vendo ali exotismo, outras um sério conhecimento geográfico que refletia a ciência jônica, outras ainda realçando exclusivamente a oposição entre gregos e bárbaros –, procuro demonstrar que, independentemente do que se poderia postular serem as intenções do autor, a grande quantidade de alusões geográficas ali presentes é melhor entendida como um contributo para a formação de uma consciência imperialista, que representa como inerentemente fascinante o mundo mediterrâneo não ateniense, uma parte do qual já sob o controle de Atenas.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE. Geografia; bárbaro; orientalismo; mapa; imperialismo.