

# Circe's Etruscan Pharmaka: reconsidering a fragment of Aeschylean elegy (fr. 2 West)

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## CIRCE'S ETRUSCAN *PHARMAKA*: RECONSIDERING A FRAGMENT OF AESCHYLEAN ELEGY (FR. 2 WEST)\*

### ABSTRACT

This article re-examines the sole surviving fragment of Aeschylean elegy alongside the available contextual evidence in an attempt to enhance our currently very limited understanding of Aeschylus' elegiac output. The first section explores Theophrastus' citation of this fragment in the *Historia Plantarum* to demonstrate what we can learn about the original Aeschylean poem from its use within the later writer's discussion. The second section examines how the Italian focus of the fragment fits into a wider historical and literary discourse of interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in the west. The third and concluding section builds on these findings to examine the possible Sicilian performance context of the original Aeschylean poem to which the fragment belongs. Ultimately the discussion demonstrates that the fragment is an important and hitherto underappreciated early witness of the development of influential cultural concepts regarding interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in the west, and that the possibility that Aeschylus produced a poem relating to the victory of Hieron I of Syracuse over the Etruscans at Cumae in 474 B.C.E. is worth serious consideration.

**Keywords:** Aeschylus; elegy; Circe; Homer; Etruscans; Hieron I of Syracuse; Theophrastus; Pindar

Aeschylus the tragedian is not known for his elegies. But scanty, scattered evidence suggests that they existed. Four extant testimonia remain. The *Suda* contains the briefest mention, declaring that Aeschylus 'wrote both elegies and ninety tragedies' (ἔγραψε δὲ καὶ ἐλεγεία καὶ τραγῳδίας 9', *Suda* αἰ 357 Adler = T2 Radt). This can be fleshed out slightly by a passing reference in Plutarch's *Sympotic Questions* (1.10.3 = fr. 1 West = T12 Radt), when the orator Glaucias turns to an 'elegiac poem of Aeschylus' during a discussion about Aiantis, an Athenian *phylē*:

Γλαυκίας δὲ ὁ ῥήτωρ καὶ τὸ δεξιὸν κέρασ Αἰαντίδαις τῆς ἐν Μαραθῶνι παρατάξεως ἀποδοθῆναι, ταῖς Αἰσχύλου †τὴν μεθορίαν† ἐλεγείαις πιστούμενος, ἡγωνισμένου τὴν μάχην ἐκείνην ἐπιφανῶς.

The orator Glaucias said that the right flank of the line of battle at Marathon was assigned to the men of Aiantis, confirming this with the elegiac verses of Aeschylus †on the border country†, since he had fought with distinction in that battle.<sup>1</sup>

\* I am grateful to *CQ*'s anonymous reader and to the Editor for their helpful comments.

<sup>1</sup> All translations are mine. For fragments of Aeschylean elegy, see M.L. West, *Iambi et elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum cantati. Editio altera. Volumen II* (Oxford, 1992), 28–9. Aeschylean testimonia and tragic fragments come from S. Radt, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta. Vol. 3: Aeschylus* (Göttingen, 1985).

There are two main difficulties in this testimony. The first is whether ταῖς ἐλεγείαις refers to short epigrams or to longer elegies.<sup>2</sup> The second is the issue of whether τὴν μεθορίων is the correct reading and, if so, what Aeschylus' poetry 'on the border country' might have referred to or contained.<sup>3</sup> Both of these problems are seemingly unresolvable with the evidence currently available.

What this testimony *does* tell us is that Aeschylus was known in antiquity as a writer of elegiac poetry, and that at least some of his elegies seem to be related to a martial context.<sup>4</sup> A martial context is also implied in another reference to Aeschylus' elegies (*Vita Aeschyli* 8 = T1 Radt):

ἀπῆρεν δὲ ὡς Ἰέρωνα, κατὰ τινας μὲν ὑπὸ Ἀθηναίων κατασπουδασθεὶς καὶ ἡσηθεὶς νέῳ ὄντι Σοφοκλεῖ, κατὰ δὲ ἐνίου ἐν τῷ εἰς τοὺς Μαραθῶνι τεθνηκότας ἐλεγείῳ ἡσηθεὶς Σιμωνίδῃ· τὸ γὰρ ἐλεγείων πολλὴ τῆς περὶ τὸ συμπαθεῖς λεπτότητος μετέχειν θέλει, ὃ τοῦ Αἰσχύλου, ὡς ἔφαμεν, ἐστὶν ἀλλότριον.

Aeschylus departed for Hieron's court, according to some people because he had been ill-treated by the Athenians and defeated by Sophocles, who was a young man; but according to some it was because he was defeated by Simonides in an elegy for the dead at Marathon. For when it comes to arousing feelings an elegy very much needs subtlety, a quality foreign to Aeschylus, as we have said.

The reliability of the *Vita Aeschyli* as a source of evidence concerning the historical facts connected with Aeschylus' life and career is questionable, and it is not possible to say whether this elegiac encounter between Simonides and Aeschylus actually took place, or to know precisely what form or length the proposed 'elegy for the dead at Marathon' would have taken.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, this anecdote about a potential elegiac contest between two of the most famous early fifth-century poets is useful in as much as it suggests that Aeschylus, like Simonides, was well known in antiquity for writing elegy connected to martial themes, and that his activity in this sphere was notable enough to be mentioned alongside his famous writing of tragedies.

<sup>2</sup> See M.L. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* (Berlin, 1974), 1–21 and E.L. Bowie, 'Early Greek elegy, symposium, and public festival', *JHS* 106 (1986), 13–35, at 25–7 for the differences between the terms ἔλεγχος, ἐλεγείων and ἐλεγεία. For discussion of whether ταῖς ἐλεγείαις means epigrams or elegies in this passage, see K.W. Goettling, *Commentatio de Aeschyli et Simonidis epigrammatis in pugnam Marathoniam* (Jena, 1859), 3–10; F. Jacoby, 'Some Athenian epigrams from the Persian Wars', *Hesperia* 14 (1945), 157–211, at 182 = *Kleine philologische Schriften* (Berlin, 1961), I.XXX, at 486; J.H. Molyneux, *Simonides: A Historical Study* (Wauconda, IL, 1992), 148–52; A. Cameron, *Callimachus and his Critics* (Princeton, 1995), 331.

<sup>3</sup> As Jacoby (n. 2), 182 n. 101 = 486 n. 101 notes, 'the corruption of its title ... seems to be incurable'.

<sup>4</sup> As well as his elegiac production, Aeschylus' interest in the lyric tradition is also demonstrated by the extensive and creative interaction between his tragedies and previous lyric poetry: P.J. Finglass, 'Aeschylus, lyric, and epic', in J.A. Bromberg and P. Burian (edd.), *A Companion to Aeschylus* (Malden, MA and Chichester, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> On the complicated and unresolved question of the origin and date of the *Vita Aeschyli*, see M. Lefkowitz, *The Lives of the Greek Poets* (London, 2012<sup>2</sup>), 70–7; text and translation can be found at [https://livingpoets.dur.ac.uk/w/Life\\_of\\_Aeschylus](https://livingpoets.dur.ac.uk/w/Life_of_Aeschylus). See D. Boedeker, 'Simonides on Plataea: narrative elegy, mythic history', *ZPE* 107 (1995), 217–29, at 218, 223, on the possibility that Aeschylus' elegy on Marathon was a longer elegiac narrative rather than an epigram, and on the not inherently implausible nature of an elegiac poetic contest between Aeschylus and Simonides. On this anecdote and the potential relationship between Simonides' Persian-War elegies and Aeschylus' production of *Persians*, see O. Taplin, 'Aeschylus' *Persai* – the entry of tragedy into the celebration culture of the 470s?', in D. Cairns and V. Liapis (edd.), *Dionysalexandros: Essays on Aeschylus and his Fellow Tragedians in Honour of Alexander F. Garvie* (Swansea, 2006), 1–10, at 5–7.

The fourth testimonium is the earliest extant reference to Aeschylus' elegies and differs from those previously mentioned since it also contains the single remaining fragment of his elegiac verse.<sup>6</sup> This enigmatic fragment (fr. 2 West), consisting of only four words, is found in Theophrastus' *Historia Plantarum* (9.15.1): Τυρσηνὸν γενεάν, φαρμακοποιὸν ἔθνος ('of Tyrrhenian descent, a drug-making nation'). These few words form the pentameter of an elegiac couplet: the contents of the preceding hexameter are unknown, as is the context of the poem as a whole. Furthermore, the reasons why Theophrastus has turned to Aeschylus' words to further his own discussion are not immediately obvious.

The paucity of additional testimonia about Aeschylus' elegies, combined with the brevity of the fragment, have deterred the investigation of several important questions, including why Theophrastus turned to Aeschylus' words in the first place, what this might tell us about the poem from which the cited fragment comes, and how this elegiac poem might fit into Aeschylus' poetic career. This article will examine these questions in an attempt to enhance our currently very limited understanding of Aeschylus' elegiac output. The following discussion falls into three sections. The first explores Theophrastus' use of Aeschylus' pentameter within his wider argument. The second examines how the Italian focus of the Aeschylean fragment, and Theophrastus' discussion of it, fit into a wider historical and literary discourse of interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in the west. The third and concluding section builds on these findings to examine the possible Sicilian performance context of the Aeschylean elegiac poem to which this fragment belongs.

## 1. THEOPHRASTUS' TYRRHENIAN *PHARMAKA*

The sole surviving line of Aeschylean elegy occurs in Theophrastus' lengthy treatment of the properties of various types of medicinal plants in *Historia Plantarum* 9, embedded within a shorter discussion of geographical locations outside Greece which are especially well known for the production of medicinal plants. Theophrastus begins by foregrounding Tyrrhenia, Latium and Egypt as the non-Greek lands most prominent in the production of *pharmaka* (9.15.1):

φαρμακῶδεις δὲ δοκοῦσιν εἶναι τόποι μάλιστα τῶν μὲν ἔξω τῆς Ἑλλάδος οἱ περὶ τὴν Τυρρηνίαν καὶ τὴν Λατίνην, ἐν ἧ καὶ τὴν Κίρκην εἶναι λέγουσιν· καὶ ἔτι μᾶλλον γε, ὡς Ὅμηρός φησι, τὰ περὶ Αἴγυπτον· ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ τὴν Ἑλένην φησὶ λαβεῖν “ἐσθλὰ τὰ οἱ Πολύδαμνα πόρην Θῶνος παράκοιτας | Αἰγυπτίη· τόθι πλεῖστα φύει ζεΐδαρος ἄρουρα | φάρμακα, πολλὰ μὲν ἐσθλὰ τετυγμένα πολλὰ δὲ λυγρά.” ὄν δὴ καὶ τὸ νηπενθὲς ἐκεῖνό φησιν εἶναι καὶ ἄχολον, ὥστε λήθην ποιεῖν καὶ ἀπάθειαν τῶν κακῶν. καὶ σχεδὸν αὐταὶ

<sup>6</sup> T. Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici Graeci. Editionis quartae* (Leipzig, 1882), 2.241–2 includes three other potential instances of Aeschylean elegiac poetry, all of which West (n. 1) rightly neglects to print under Aeschylus' name. Fr. 2 is an epigram attributed to an Aeschylus in the *Palatine Anthology* (7.255), most likely a Hellenistic homonym (D.L. Page, *Further Greek Epigrams* [Cambridge, 1981], 129). Fr. 3 Bergk is an epitaph for Aeschylus ascribed to the poet by Athenaeus (627c) and Pausanias (1.14.5): see Page (this note), 131–2 for reasons to doubt this ascription, and A.H. Sommerstein, 'Aeschylus' epitaph', *MCr* 30–1 (1995–6), 111–17 = *The Tangled Ways of Zeus and Other Studies in and around Greek Tragedy* (Oxford, 2010), 195–201 on the dating of this epigram. Fr. 5 Bergk is probably a genuine Aeschylean fragment, though most likely from a tragedy: F353a Radt.

μὲν εἰκόασιν ὡσπερ ὑπὸ τῶν ποιητῶν ὑποδειχθῆναι. καὶ γὰρ Αἰσχύλος ἐν ταῖς ἐλεγείαις ὡς πολυφάρμακον λέγει τὴν Τυρρηνίαν· “Τυρσηνὸν γενεάν, φαρμακοποιὸν ἔθνος”.

Locations outside Greece which seem to be especially rich in medicines are those places in Tyrrhenia and Latium where they say that Circe lived as well, and even more so those places in Egypt, as Homer says. For he says that from there Helen received ‘good [drugs], which Polydamna, the Egyptian wife of Thon, gave to her; there the grain-giving earth produces the greatest number of drugs, many good ones, and many harmful ones’ [*Od.* 4.228–30]. Among these drugs he says was that one which banishes sorrow and anger and results in forgetfulness and an indifference to troubles.<sup>7</sup> And these lands, roughly, seem to have been pointed out, so to speak, by the poets. For Aeschylus too in his elegies says that Tyrrhenia is rich in drugs: ‘of Tyrrhenian descent, a drug-making nation’.

Theophrastus’ use of a line of Aeschylean elegy at the end of this passage has been seized upon as evidence of the Etruscans’ reputation for expertise in the medical arts, in general, and in pharmacology, in particular, from the Classical period onwards.<sup>8</sup> The paucity of other sources relating to the Etruscans’ pharmacological reputation has rendered Theophrastus’ discussion particularly significant.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the relative abundance of material and textual sources relating to Etruscan skill in other areas relating to health and medicine has caused this evidence of their supposedly concomitant pharmacological expertise to be taken at face value.<sup>10</sup>

But the lack of corroborating textual or archaeological evidence for this claim should make us pause and consider in more detail what is at stake for Theophrastus in this passage. If we examine the use of this Aeschylean fragment more closely within the context of his wider discussion, it becomes clear that we cannot read this line as uncomplicated evidence of the Etruscans’ historical reputation among Hellenes in the realm of pharmacology. As will become apparent, this passage has much more to tell us about ancient conceptions of geographical balance and symmetry, and about Theophrastus’ reading of Homer and his conception of the place of the Poet in the botanical tradition, than about Etruscan pharmacology.

The geographical focus of Theophrastus’ discussion at this moment in the *Historia Plantarum* is significant, since it is specifically regions rich in medicines which lie outside of Greece (ἔξω τῆς Ἑλλάδος) that are of interest here: Tyrrhenia and Latium to the west, and Egypt to the east. Such framing reflects two common concepts of ancient geographical thought. First, lands distant from Greece naturally produce rare, exotic and wondrous goods; second, peculiar environmental features found in one region are echoed or symmetrically repeated in the regions situated towards the opposite

<sup>7</sup> A paraphrase of *Od.* 4.220–1, in which Helen casts a forgetfulness-inducing *pharmakon* into wine.

<sup>8</sup> On the use of Theophrastus’ Aeschylean citation as evidence for Etruscan pharmacological expertise, see M. Tabanelli, *La medicina nel mondo degli Etruschi* (Florence, 1963), 12, 16, 105; L.M.V. Totelin, *Hippocratic Recipes: Oral and Written Transmission of Pharmacological Knowledge in Fifth- and Fourth-Century Greece* (Leiden, 2009), 173; J.M. Turfa and M.J. Becker, ‘Health and medicine in Etruria’, in J.M. Turfa (ed.), *The Etruscan World* (London, 2013), 855–81, at 869; M.J. Becker and J.M. Turfa, *The Etruscans and the History of Dentistry: The Golden Smile through the Ages* (London, 2017), 23–4.

<sup>9</sup> Apart from Plin. *HN* 25.11, which is clearly based on this passage of Theophrastus (see pages 6–8 below), the only other reference to the region’s particular association with medicines appears in *De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, the fifth-century C.E. work of Martianus Capella: *Etruria regio ... remediorum origine ... celebrata* (6.637).

<sup>10</sup> For overviews of Etruscan medicine, see Tabanelli (n. 8); Turfa and Becker (n. 8), 855–81.

cardinal point of the compass.<sup>11</sup> The balanced geographical focus of the discussion is even clearer when we examine the immediately following passage, where Theophrastus maps out the non-Greek regions in the north and south of the known world which are also famous for *pharmaka* (9.15.2):

οἱ δὲ τόποι πάντες πως φαίνονται μετέχειν τῶν φαρμάκων, ἀλλὰ τῷ μᾶλλον καὶ ἦτον διαφέρειν· καὶ γὰρ οἱ πρὸς ἄρκτον καὶ μεσημβρίαν καὶ οἱ πρὸς ἀνατολὰς ἔχουσι θαυμαστάς δυνάμεις. ἐν Αἰθιοπία γὰρ ἡ τοὺς δίστους χρίουσι ρίζα τίς ἐστι θανατηφόρος. ἐν δὲ Σκύθαις αὕτη τε καὶ ἕτεραι πλείους, αἱ μὲν παραχρήμα ἀπαλλάττουσαι τοὺς προσενεγκαμένους, αἱ δ' ἐν χρόνους αἱ μὲν ἐλάττουσιν αἱ δ' ἐν πλείοσιν, ὥστ' ἐνίους καταφθίνειν. ἐν Ἰνδοῖς δὲ καὶ ἕτερα γένη πλείω, περιττότατα δέ, εἴτερ ἀληθῆ λέγουσιν, ἢ τε δυναμένη τὸ αἷμα διαχεῖν καὶ οἶον ὑποφεύγειν, καὶ πάλιν ἢ συνάγουσα καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἐπισπωμένη, ἃ δὴ φασιν εὐρήσθαι πρὸς τὰ τῶν ὀφιδίων τῶν θανατηφόρων δῆγματα.

All regions seem to produce drugs to some degree, though they differ in the extent of their production. For regions towards the north, south and east possess marvellous natural properties. In Ethiopia there is a certain fatal root with which they coat their arrows. In Scythia the same root exists, and others too: certain ones immediately kill those exposed to them, while others kill after a shorter or longer time, with the result that some people waste away. In India too there are other kinds as well, but the strangest, if the reports are indeed true, are these: one which is capable of making the blood disperse and flee, so to speak, and one which in turn collects the blood together and attracts it to itself; they say that these were discovered for the bites of deadly snakes.

Theophrastus then ends his overview (9.15.3) of distant non-Greek regions and their exotic drugs by noting that a plant which affects the blood in similar ways as the Indian *pharmaka* which he has just mentioned also exists in Thrace.

The idea that the regions distant from Greece in every direction are known for exotic *pharmaka*, and that they to some extent mirror each other, thus underpins Theophrastus' thought in this passage. He begins his account by discussing lands to the east and west of Greece because their supposed *pharmaka*-producing capacities can be supported by authoritative textual evidence from the poetic tradition, particularly the Homeric texts, which were often used as evidence of historical and scientific veracity.<sup>12</sup> By the time he reaches India, however, Theophrastus can only appeal to unattributed sources, on which he himself seems to cast an element of doubt (εἴτερ ἀληθῆ λέγουσιν). In the cases of Egypt and Italy, however, textual evidence from the Greek poetic tradition is used not only to support the claim that both of these areas are rich in medicinal plants but also to bolster the reputation of botany as a field of study with roots which go back to Homer. This connection is especially explicit in the case of Egypt, a land which held a special place in the Greek imagination as the home of drugs and medical expertise, partly because of the famous lines in *Odyssey* Book 4 relating to Helen's Egyptian *pharmaka* which Theophrastus cites and paraphrases at length.<sup>13</sup>

In the case of Italy, the situation is more complicated. Theophrastus opens his discussion by mentioning Circe and by noting that it is particularly around the areas in which she is said to have lived that exotic *pharmaka* are to be found (οἱ περὶ τὴν

<sup>11</sup> On these ancient geographical concepts, see J.S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration and Fiction* (Princeton, 1992), 60, 65–6, 129–31.

<sup>12</sup> On Homer's status as a botanical authority in antiquity, see G. Hardy and L.M.V. Totelin, *Ancient Botany* (London, 2016), 35, 58–9.

<sup>13</sup> J. Jouanna, *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen: Selected Papers* (Leiden, 2012), 3–20; Totelin (n. 8), 155–6.

Τυρρηνίαν καὶ τὴν Λατίνην, ἐν ἧ καὶ τὴν Κίρκην εἶναι λέγουσιν). This naming of Circe in relation to medicinal drugs brings to mind her role in the *Odyssey*, and it might be expected that Theophrastus is about to mention certain passages of *Odyssey* Book 10 relating to her famous use of *pharmaka* to substantiate his remarks in the same way as he goes on to turn to Helen's drugs in relation to Egypt. However, after discussing Helen, Theophrastus instead brings in Aeschylus' elegiac line about drug-making Etruscans to substantiate his claim about the regions where Circe is said to have lived without mentioning the goddess herself. It is Aeschylus who thus provides Theophrastus with a means of gluing together a rather convoluted chain of thought involving Homer, Circe, Italy, the Etruscans and *pharmaka*. Why Aeschylus describes the Etruscans as a 'drug-making' people in the first place, something not immediately clear from Theophrastus' discussion, can also be explained, as the next section will demonstrate.

## 2. CIRCE AND AESCHYLUS' DRUG-MAKING ETRUSCANS

Theophrastus was not the only ancient writer to link Homer, Circe, *pharmaka*, Italy and Aeschylus together. Pliny the Elder also draws upon all of these elements in his treatment of medicinal plants at *HN* 25.9–15, a discussion which sheds further light on Aeschylus' description of the Etruscans as a 'drug-making' people. In this book, Pliny discusses the history of botany as a field of study from its beginnings, first noting that the study of plants aroused the greatest degree of wonder in ancient times (*neque aliud mirata magis antiquitas reperietur*, 25.9) before outlining an ancient association between medicinal herbs in certain geographical locations and powerful female sorceresses which had existed from Homer onwards, and which continued to exert an influence in his day (25.10–12):

inuenta iam pridem ratio est praenuntians horas, non modo dies ac noctes, solis lunaeque defectuum. durat tamen tradita persuasio in magna parte uulgi ueneficiis et herbis id cogi eamque unam feminarum scientiam praeualere. certe quid non repluerunt fabulis Colchis Medea aliaeque, in primis Itala Circe dis etiam adscripta? unde arbitror natum ut Aeschylus e uetustissimis in poetica refertam Italiam herbarum potentia proderet, multique Circeios, ubi habitauit illa. magno argumento etiam nunc durante in Marsis, a filio eius orta gente, quoniam esse domitores serpentium constat. Homerus quidem primus doctrinarum et antiquitatis parens, multus alias in admiratione Circae, gloriam herbarum Aegypto tribuit, cum etiam tum quae rigatur Aegyptus illa non esset, postea fluminis limo inuecta. herbas certe Aegyptias a regis uxore traditas Helenae suae plurimas narrat ac nobile illud nepenthes obliuionem tristitiae ueniamque adferens et ab Helena utique omnibus mortalibus propinandum.

A long time ago a means of predicting not only the days and nights but even the hours of eclipses of the sun and moon was discovered. None the less, a traditional superstition persists among a great part of the populace that these things are caused by poisons and herbs and that this is the single field of knowledge in which women are pre-eminent. Do stories about Medea of Colchis and other women not abound, especially about Circe of Italy, who is even said to be a goddess? This is why, I think, Aeschylus, one of the most ancient poets, reported that Italy was full of powerful medicinal plants, and many have reported this about Circeii, the place that woman inhabited. Moreover, strong proof of this exists in the fact that the Marsi, a people descended from Circe's son, are tamers of snakes. Indeed Homer, the foremost father of ancient learning, while greatly admiring Circe in other passages, bestows the prize for medicinal plants upon Egypt (although at that time Egypt was not irrigated: this happened later along with the river's alluvial mud). In fact, he says that many Egyptian herbs were given to Helen by the

wife of the king, including that famous *nepenthes* which brought forgetfulness and freedom from sorrows and which was to be given to everyone by Helen especially.

This overview of the history of botany betrays clear traces of the use of Theophrastus' discussion of non-Greek lands and their *pharmaka* in Book 9 of the *Historia Plantarum*, with both Italy and Egypt once again mentioned as the two lands most known for botanical *pharmaka* from Homer onwards.<sup>14</sup> In terms of Egypt, Pliny follows Theophrastus closely by similarly deploying the famous lines from *Odyssey* Book 4 about Helen's Egyptian drugs to confirm that Egypt deserves its reputation as the pre-eminent producer of botanical *pharmaka* outside the Hellenic world. When it comes to Italy, however, Pliny departs from Theophrastus and discusses the issue of Circe, female magic and Italian *pharmaka* at greater length.

He begins by linking Circe to a broader meditation concerning the history of botany by tracing the field back to notions about the effect of *pharmaka* wielded by women on eclipses, reflecting common ancient beliefs about a form of female magic using herbs which allowed the manipulation of the moon's movement—ideas which clearly still held sway in Pliny's own day, despite the fact that the movements of astronomical bodies had already been scientifically observed and broadly understood for several centuries.<sup>15</sup> Medea and her aunt Circe, here located in Italy in the eponymous town of Circeii, are said to be prominent examples of mythological women associated with such magical uses of plants. Pliny then attributes the mythological connection between Italy and Circe as the reason why Aeschylus 'reported that Italy was full of powerful medicinal plants' (*in poetica refertam Italiam herbarum potentia proderet*). Pliny substantiates this claim by noting that the Marsi, an Italic people supposedly able to tame snakes and cure snakebites who were also strongly associated with *pharmaka*, were said to be related to Circe and to have inherited their pharmaceutical skills from her.<sup>16</sup>

Pliny's reference to Aeschylus' report concerning Italy's abundance in medicinal plants seems to allude to the same Aeschylean pentameter cited by Theophrastus. It is possible that Pliny knows and is referring to Aeschylus' original elegiac poem here, though—given his use of Theophrastus' *Historia Plantarum* in botanical sections of the *Natural History*—it is more likely that he is using and commenting upon Book 9 of Theophrastus' work at this point. In any case, Pliny's use of Homer and Aeschylus is slightly different in emphasis from that of Theophrastus. For Theophrastus, Aeschylus' poetry is useful in connecting Circe with Italy to map out a balanced geographical view of the locations of exotic *pharmaka* in both the east and the west, whereas Pliny is more concerned with using ancient textual evidence relating to botany as a means of establishing the antiquity of the field as one which can be traced back to the Homeric poems, through the figures of Helen and Circe in particular.

<sup>14</sup> On Pliny's use of Theophrastus, see J. Stannard, 'Pliny and Roman botany', *Isis* 56 (1965), 420–5.

<sup>15</sup> On the manipulation of the moon as an example of magic associated with women in antiquity, see R.G. Edmonds III, *Drawing Down the Moon: Magic in the Ancient Greco-Roman World* (Princeton, 2019), 19–30; also K. ní Mheallaigh, *The Moon in the Greek and Roman Imagination: Myth, Literature, Science and Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2020), 37–8.

<sup>16</sup> Pliny also attributes the supposed immunity of the Marsi from the poison of snakes to their descent from a son of Circe (*HN* 7.15). See also *HN* 21.78, 28.19 and 28.30 on the Marsi and snakes, and on the Marsi see further E. Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men: Greek, Roman, and Modern Perceptions of Peoples of the Central Apennines* (Oxford, 1995), 159–66.



Nevertheless, in both authors a similar rhetorical sleight of hand occurs in connection with the use of Aeschylus' pentameter to verify that Italy had long been associated with medicinal plants. This is because, unlike in the case of Egypt and its *pharmaka* in *Odyssey* Book 4, it is not possible to turn to the Homeric poems themselves to confirm with textual evidence of the greatest possible antiquity that Circe and her *pharmaka* are specifically located somewhere in Italy. Of course, in the *Odyssey* itself the story of Odysseus' meeting with Circe constitutes the most botanical episode in Homeric poetry. As Hermes warns Odysseus before he encounters the goddess for the first time, Circe is well known for her use of harmful *pharmaka* mixed in with food and drink (10.290) which both bewitch the mind and transform the body. Such a fate can only be avoided by pre-ingesting a preventative 'good drug' (φάρμακον ἐσθλόν, 10.287, 10.292), a protective plant native to Aeaea and known among the gods as *moly* (10.305) which takes the form of a black root with milk-white flower (10.304). As the home of both Circe's dangerous *pharmaka* and *moly*, the most mysterious and famous botanical product in Homer, Aeaea can match Egypt as a home for exotic medicinal and botanical products.

However, the geographical position of Aeaea and its *pharmaka* cannot be clearly connected to a real-world location on the basis of examining the text of the *Odyssey* alone. The only explicit information about Aeaea's location that can be gleaned from Homer's poem is that it is an island (Αἰαίην δ' ἐξ νήσων ἀφικόμεθ', 10.135). But this deliberately indeterminate geography did not deter later efforts to situate Circe's homeland on a real-world map, as a passage near the end of Hesiod's *Theogony* demonstrates (1011–16):

Κίρκη δ' Ἡελίου θυγάτηρ Ὑπεριονίδαο  
 γείνατ' Ὀδυσσεύος ταλασίφρονος ἐν φιλότῃτι  
 Ἄγριον ἠδὲ Λατίνον ἀμύμονά τε κρατερόν τε·  
 Τηλέγονον δὲ ἔτικτε διὰ χρυσῆν Ἀφροδίτην·  
 οἳ δὴ τοι μάλα τῆλε μυχῶ νήσων ἱεράων  
 πᾶσιν Τυρσηνοῖσιν ἀγακλειτοῖσιν ἀνασσόν.

Circe, the daughter of Helios son of Hyperion, through the love of stout-hearted Odysseus bore Agrius and Latinus, excellent and strong. And because of golden Aphrodite she bore Telegonus. Very far away in the innermost part of holy islands these sons were ruling over the famous Tyrrhenians.

This passage suggests that the indeterminate western location of Aeaea is actually situated somewhere in Italy, since the sons of Circe and Odysseus go on to become the ancestors of the Tyrrhenians.<sup>17</sup> By Theophrastus' time it is clear that the identification of Aeaea as an Italian location and the connection of Circe with the Etruscans and various other Italic peoples were familiar ideas.<sup>18</sup> He chose Aeschylus' pentameter about the

<sup>17</sup> This passage probably dates to the late seventh/early sixth century: for discussion, see M.L. West, *Hesiod: Theogony* (Oxford, 1966), 433–6; A. Debiasi, *Esiodo e l'occidente* (Rome, 2008), 39–75; M. Davies and P.J. Finglass, *Stesichorus: The Poems* (Cambridge, 2014), 400–1. On the tradition of Odysseus' travels in Italy and his Italian progeny, see E.D. Phillips, 'Odysseus in Italy', *JHS* 73 (1953), 53–67; I. Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus: Colonization and Ethnicity* (Oxford, 1998), 178–209. On the possible Italian localization of Aeaea in the *Theogony*, see J.S. Burgess, 'The corpse of Odysseus', *Yearbook of Ancient Greek Epic* 3 (2019), 136–57, at 141–7.

<sup>18</sup> Theophrastus himself mentions this idea once more at *Hist. pl.* 5.8.3, when he notes that Latium is a location renowned for its production of fine timber, particularly in the area of the thickly wooded headland named after Circe and located where she was said to have lived: τὸ δὲ Κίρκαιον

drug-making Etruscans as evidence for the richness of various Italian regions in medicinal plants because the fragment provides the earliest explicit textual link between *pharmaka* and the Italian mainland available to him, while also implicitly linking to the idea that these *pharmaka* are specifically Circe's as a result of the tradition that the goddess was the pharmacological foremother of the Etruscans.

Theophrastus was unable to evoke this nexus of associations by means of the Homeric text itself, since Circe's island home Aeaea is not explicitly mapped onto a real-world geographical location within the poem. The *Theogony* passage is similarly problematic in this regard, as it connects Circe with Italy but fails to mention her *pharmaka* explicitly. Later in the Hellenistic period Eratosthenes of Cyrene mentioned in his *Geography* (fr. 6 Roller, *apud* Strabo 1.2.14) that Hesiod located the wanderings of Odysseus around Italy and Sicily and that Tyrrhenia was explicitly connected to Odysseus' journey in his poetry, but there is no indication in Strabo's account of Eratosthenes' views that Circe's *pharmaka* were explicitly linked to Tyrrhenia in the poet's work.<sup>19</sup> Aeschylus' pentameter, on the other hand, provides the crucial confirmatory textual link between Italy and Circe's *pharmaka* through her descendants, the Etruscans. In fact, after the Hesiodic evidence cited above, Aeschylus' elegiac line is the oldest extant testimonium for the location of Circe's homeland in Italy and the descent of the Etruscans from Circe. As such, it is an important, underappreciated, early witness of the development of influential cultural concepts regarding historical and contemporary interactions between Greeks and the west.

Hence Aeschylus' pentameter about the drug-making reputation of the Etruscan people and Theophrastus' later discussion of Italy's supposed richness in medicinal plants do not provide strong evidence that the historical Etruscans had a particular reputation for pharmaceutical expertise. It rather points to Aeschylus' familiarity with theories that Odysseus' wanderings took place in and around Italy, that Aeaea was located in Italy, and that certain Italic peoples could trace their lineage back to Circe and Odysseus. The question remains why Aeschylus was interested in mentioning the Etruscans' relationship to Circe and her *pharmaka* in one of his elegiac poems in the first place.

### 3. AESCHYLUS IN SICILY: HIERON AND THE ETRUSCANS

Aeschylus' evident interest in the Etruscans is intriguing in the light of the relative paucity of extant references to this people in Greek literary texts before and during his lifetime.<sup>20</sup> Apart from the aforementioned reference at Hes. *Theog.* 1016 to the descendants of the sons of Circe and Odysseus as 'famous Tyrrhenians' (Τυρσηνοῖσιν ἀγακλειτοῖσιν), the mention of the Tyrrhenian pirates (λιηστοὶ ... Τυρσηνοί) who kidnap Dionysus in the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus* (7–8) is the only other extant poetic reference to the Etruscans which can be concretely dated to before Aeschylus' lifetime. In the surviving plays of Aeschylus himself, the Etruscans are

καλούμενον εἶναι μὲν ἄκραν ὑψηλὴν, δασεῖαν δὲ σφόδρα ... λέγειν δὲ τοὺς ἐγγωρίους ὡς ἐνταῦθα ἡ Κίρκη κατέκει.

<sup>19</sup> On Eratosthenes' mention of Hesiod and Odysseus' wanderings, see Davies and Finglass (n. 17), 401.

<sup>20</sup> For an overview of ancient Greek references to the Etruscans, see M. Korenjak, 'The Etruscans in ancient literature', in A. Naso (ed.), *Etruscology* (Boston and Berlin, 2017), 35–52.

alluded to only once when a war-trumpet is specifically described as Tyrrhenian in the *Eumenides* (Τυρσηνική | σάλπιγξ, 567–8).<sup>21</sup> During the tragedian's own lifetime the Etruscans are not frequently mentioned in surviving poetic texts, one prominent exception being in the work of Aeschylus' contemporary Pindar.

The Etruscans' appearance in Pindar's *Pythian* 1 is worth examining further. They are mentioned alongside the Phoenicians (that is, the Carthaginians) in a passage which refers to specific historical circumstances surrounding the ode's production (71–5):

λίσσομαι νεῦσον, Κρονίων, ἥμερον  
ᾄφρα κατ' οἶκον ὁ Φοῖνιξ ὁ Τυρσα-  
νῶν τ' ἀλαλατὸς ἔχη, ναυ-  
σίστονον ὕβριν ἰδὼν τὰν πρὸ Κύμας,

οἷα Συρακοσίων ἀρχῶ δαμασθέντες πάθον,  
ᾠκυπόρων ἀπὸ ναῶν ὃ σφιν ἐν πόν-  
τῳ βάλεθ' ἀλικίαν,  
Ἐλλάδ' ἐξέλκων βαρεῖας δουλίας.

I entreat you, son of Cronus, to grant that the Phoenician and Etruscan war-cry may stay quietly at home, after they have seen their arrogance bring lamentation upon their ships at Cumae: they suffered such things after being conquered by the leader of the Syracusans, who cast their youth into the sea from their swift-moving ships, dragging Greece away from heavy slavery.

The 'leader of the Syracusans' mentioned by Pindar here is Hieron, the ruler of Syracuse from 478–467 and dedicatee of *Pythian* 1. The ostensible purpose of the ode is the commemoration of the Sicilian tyrant's chariot victory in the Pythian games of 470, though Pindar's poem skilfully blends the celebration of this athletic victory with a much broader praise of the political and military victories of Hieron and his family, the Deinomenids, over the course of the 470s.<sup>22</sup> In particular, the significance of Hieron's foundation of Aitna in 476 as an indication of contemporary Sicilian prosperity and power is repeatedly emphasized in the poem, as is the importance of repeated Deinomenid military success on both land and sea. In the passage above, the victories of both Hieron's brother Gelon against the Carthaginians at the battle of Himera in 480 and of Hieron himself against the naval forces of the Etruscans at the battle of Cumae in 474 are alluded to through Pindar's reference to the now vanquished and quiescent 'Phoenician and Etruscan war-cry'. The particular significance of Hieron's success against the Etruscans is made clear by Pindar's presentation of this victory as the deciding factor in saving not only Syracuse from 'heavy slavery', but also the whole of Greece.<sup>23</sup>

By specifically associating the Etruscans with the threat of slavery and by suggesting that Syracusan victory over them has led to freedom for all Greeks, both those in Sicily

<sup>21</sup> The Tyrrhenian war-trumpet is also mentioned in later tragedy: Soph. *Aj.* 17; Eur. *Heracl.* 830–1, *Phoen.* 1377–8; [Eur.] *Rhes.* 988–9.

<sup>22</sup> See K.A. Morgan, *Pindar and the Construction of Syracusan Monarchy in the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 2015), 300–46 for a detailed reading of the combination of all of these elements throughout the ode.

<sup>23</sup> Pindar had also linked Hieron's victory over the Etruscans to the Sicilians' present state of prosperity and to the foundation of Aitna, when both Cumae and Sicily are presented as pressing down on Typhon, a symbol of monstrous and barbarian disorder, earlier on in the ode at *Pyth.* 1.17–19: νῦν γε μάν | ταῖ θ' ὑπὲρ Κύμας ἀλιερκέες ὄχθαι Σικελία τ' αὐτοῦ πιέζει | στέρνα λαχνάεντα.

and in Hellas itself, Pindar here links Hieron's success against a barbarian enemy with Greek success against Persian tyranny in the Persian Wars, magnifying the Syracusan's achievement and aligning his own ode with contemporary poetic commemorations of the Persian Wars.<sup>24</sup> Pindar makes this connection explicit in the lines which follow his praise of Hieron as a protector of Greek freedom (75–80):

ἀρέομαι  
 πᾶρ μὲν Σαλαμῖνος Ἀθηναίων χάριν  
 μισθόν, ἐν Σπάρτᾳ δ' <ἀπό> τᾶν πρὸ Κιθαιρῶ-  
 νος μαχᾶν,  
 ταῖσι Μῆδειοι κάμον ἀγκυλότοξοι,  
 παρὰ δὲ τᾶν εὐύδρον ἄκταν  
 Ἴμέρα παίδεσσιν ὕμνον Δεινομένεος τελέσαις,  
 τὸν ἐδέξαντ' ἄμφ' ἀρετᾶ, πολεμίων ἀνδρῶν καμώντων.

I shall gain from Salamis the gratitude of the Athenians as my wage, and gratitude in Sparta from the battle before Kithairon, in which the Medes with curved bows were crushed, and from the well-watered bank of Himera, when I pay tribute to the sons of Deinomenes with a song of praise, which they received for their excellence after their enemies were crushed.

As Pindar makes explicit here, *Pythian* 1 itself is a poetic tribute to Hieron matching those created for the Athenians' naval victory over the Persians at Salamis in 480 B.C.E., or those for the Spartans composed after the battle of Plataea in 479, while simultaneously creating the impression that the tyrant has both contributed to and ultimately surpassed his brother Gelon's military achievements against the Carthaginians at Himera. Over the ode as a whole Hieron's engagement with the Etruscans at Cumae—the only military success to which he could single-handedly lay claim as a commander—is thus cast by Pindar as a triumph on a par with, and completing a momentous sequence of, previous Hellenic victories over barbarian threats.

As Morgan has discussed, the specific connections drawn here between the actions of Greeks in the Persian Wars and contemporary or later Deinomenid military success are an important part of Syracusan self-fashioning during Hieron's reign.<sup>25</sup> Recent work on Sicilian culture in the early fifth century has also emphasized the significance of Hieron's sustained and targeted patronage of music and poetry as a means of projecting Sicilian power and cultural prestige, particularly in the aftermath of the foundation of Aitna in 476 B.C.E.<sup>26</sup> Pindar was not the only poet to have played an important role at the Syracusan court in this period: Aeschylus also visited Sicily, either two or three times, and is said to have contributed to Hieron's new cultural programme.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Morgan (n. 22), 25, 85, 309, 338. See also A. Fries, 'Pindar, Hieron and the Persian Wars: history and poetic competition in *Pythian* 1', *WS* 130 (2017), 59–72 on the potential relationship between *Pyth.* 1.71–80, Aeschylus' *Persians* and Simonides' 'Plataea elegy' (fr. 11 + 13 *IEG*<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>25</sup> Morgan (n. 22), 25–86, 133–62.

<sup>26</sup> On the manifold and prolific musical and poetic 'marketing campaign' which surrounded Hieron's foundation, see P. Wilson, 'Dancing for free: Pindar's Kastor song for Hieron', *ClAnt* 38 (2019), 298–363, at 300–5; also K.A. Morgan, 'A prolegomenon to performance in the west', in K. Boshier (ed.), *Theater outside Athens: Drama in Greek Sicily and South Italy* (Cambridge, 2012), 35–55, at 48–54; Morgan (n. 22), 89–132 on poets, poetry and performance culture at Hieron's Syracusan court; and K. Boshier, *Greek Theater in Ancient Sicily* (Cambridge, 2021), 85–6 on the political purposes of Deinomenid patronage.

<sup>27</sup> See C.J. Herington, 'Aeschylus in Sicily', *JHS* 87 (1967), 74–85; Morgan (n. 22), 96–105; A.A. Lamari, 'Aeschylus and the beginning of tragic reperformances', *TC* 7 (2015), 189–206, at 202–4; A. Duncan, 'Political re-performances of tragedy in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.', *TC* 7 (2015), 297–315, at 298–300; A.A. Lamari, *Reperforming Greek Tragedy* (Berlin and Boston,

Moreover, there is evidence that, just as in *Pythian* 1, both the foundation of Aitna and the potential connections between Greek victories in the Persian Wars and Syracusan victories in the west were elements of particular interest in relation to Aeschylus' poetic activities in Sicily. According to the *Vita Aeschyli* (9), a play entitled *Women of Aitna* was produced by Aeschylus in Sicily for Hieron when the settlement was being founded, to augur a good life for the city's new inhabitants (ἐλθῶν τοῖνυν εἰς Σικελίαν, Ἰέρωνος τότε τὴν Αἴτην κτίζοντος ἐπεδείξατο τὰς Αἴτνας οἰωνιζόμενος βίον ἀγαθὸν τοῖς συνοικίζουσι τὴν πόλιν). Several testimonia relating to the work survive: it seems to have been set in various Sicilian locations and most probably told the story of Thaleia, a Sicilian nymph, and her children, the Palici, gods worshipped in Sicily.<sup>28</sup> Hieron's apparent interest in cultural products related to the Persian Wars is also supported by the suggestion that Aeschylus reproduced his *Persians* in Sicily for the tyrant, something again recorded in the *Vita* (φασὶν ὑπὸ Ἰέρωνος ἀξιοθῆντα ἀναδιδάξαι τοὺς Πέρσας ἐν Σικελίᾳ καὶ λίαν εὐδοκιμεῖν, 18) and also mentioned in a scholium to Aristophanes on the authority of Eratosthenes of Cyrene (δοκοῦσι δὲ οὗτοι οἱ Πέρσαι ὑπὸ τοῦ Αἰσχύλου δεδιδάχθαι ἐν Συρακούσαις, σπουδάσαντος Ἰέρωνος ὡς φησιν Ἐρατοσθένης ἐν γ' περὶ κομφοδιῶν, Σ Ar. *Ran.* 1028 Chantry).<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the sense that Aeschylus was strongly associated with Hieron and Sicily is strengthened by the tradition that he died and was buried in Gela, a city strongly associated with the Deinomenids.<sup>30</sup>

In light of the relative paucity of poetic references to the Etruscans before and during Aeschylus' lifetime, the significance of the victory over this people at Cumae in terms of Hieron's own self-fashioning, Aeschylus' association with Hieron's court, and his apparent production of plays which supported the Sicilian tyrant's projection of cultural power and prestige, it is worth considering whether the single remaining fragment of Aeschylean elegy might come from a poem touching upon Hieron's relationship with the Etruscans.<sup>31</sup> This suggestion takes account of much more of the available contextual evidence than West's proposition that Τυρσηνὸν γενεάν, φαρμακοπιῶν ἔθνος may be

2017), 23–5; Boshier (n. 26 [2021]), 86 for extensive discussion of the evidence for Aeschylus' visits to Sicily. Simonides may also have visited Hieron's court: Molyneux (n. 2), 224–33; Morgan (n. 22), 93–6; D. Sider, *Simonides Epigrams & Elegies* (Oxford, 2020), 3–4, 6 n. 23, 9.

<sup>28</sup> Fr. 6–11 Radt. On *Women of Aitna*, see C. Dougherty, 'Linguistic colonialism in Aeschylus' *Aetnaeae*', *GRBS* 22 (1991), 119–32; L. Poli-Palladini, 'Some reflections on Aeschylus' *Aetnae(ae)*', *RhM* 144 (2001), 287–325; A.H. Sommerstein, *Aeschylus: Fragments* (Cambridge, MA, 2008), 6–9; Morgan (n. 22), 98–105; M. Thatcher, 'Aeschylus' *Aetnaeans*, the Palici and cultural politics in Deinomenid Sicily', *JHS* 139 (2019), 67–182; Boshier (n. 26 [2021]), 88–90.

<sup>29</sup> On the re-performance of *Persians* in Sicily, see Taplin (n. 5), 1–10, Lamari (n. 27 [2015]), 203, Duncan (n. 27), 298–9, Lamari (n. 27 [2017]), 31–5; for the possibility that the play was first performed in Syracuse, see K. Boshier, 'Hieron's Aeschylus', in K. Boshier (ed.), *Theater outside Athens: Drama in Greek Sicily and South Italy* (Cambridge, 2012), 97–111; also Morgan (n. 22), 96–7 on how Hieron's wish to see the *Persians* performed in Sicily demonstrates his desire to associate himself with mainland Greek victories over non-Greeks.

<sup>30</sup> On the tradition of Aeschylus' death in Sicily, see *Vita Aeschyli* 10–11; *Marm. Par.* Ep. 59; *Plut. Vit. Cim.* 8.8, *De exil.* 604F; Diodorus, *Anth. Pal.* 7.40 = A.S.F. Gow and D.L. Page (edd.), *The Greek Anthology. The Garland of Philip and Some Contemporary Epigrams*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1968), 2166–9; *Suda* α 357 Adler.

<sup>31</sup> See also M. Reinfelder, 'New readings and conjectures on Aeschylean papyrus fragments', in L. Austa (ed.), *Frammenti sulla scena. Studi sul dramma antico frammentario. Volume 1* (Alessandria, 2017), 39–58, at 44–5 for the suggestion that this fragment is potentially connected to Aeschylus' Dike-play (fr. 281a–b), which is in turn connected to Hieron's victory over the Etruscans. I am grateful to the anonymous reader for drawing my attention to the fact that Aeschylus' interest in both Circe and the west can also potentially be discerned in his production

a line from an epitaph, the only real proposal concerning the fragment's original performance context suggested to date.<sup>32</sup> While the suggestion of an epitaph makes grammatical sense of the singular masculine subject which must be contained within the missing hexameter of the elegiac couplet, it is not the only available explanation, especially since there are no comparable surviving examples of Greek epitaphs for Etruscans. One further reason why the poem from which this fragment derives is unlikely to be an epitaph for an Etruscan man is the strikingly ambivalent tone created by the use of the adjective *φαρμακοποιός*. As discussed above, this word brings to mind the Etruscans' supposed descent from Circe and points to the idea that the goddess's home in the *Odyssey* was located in Etruria. Moreover, the specific association with Circe and her drugs created through the use of this adjective potentially evokes a sense of the danger which the Etruscans might pose to their enemies owing to the baneful effects of the goddess' *pharmaka* in the poetic tradition. This is especially the case in the *Odyssey*, where Circe's 'evil' and 'harmful' drugs (κακὰ φάρμακ', 10.213; φάρμακα λύγρ', 10.236) transform men into tame and powerless wild beasts which wag their tails and fawn like dogs greeting their master (10.215–17). In this respect associating the Etruscans with Circe's *pharmaka* may hint at their power to subjugate and enslave their enemies, a threat which Pindar associates with the Etruscans in *Pythian* 1 (βαρείας δουλίας, 75), and which Hieron is said to have defended against in that poem.

While certainty is unattainable, a close contextual examination of mentions of Aeschylus' elegies and the one surviving fragment make it worth seriously considering the hypothesis that he produced a poem relating to Hieron's victory over the Etruscans. These factors include Aeschylus' association with the production of elegiac poetry relating to the Persian Wars in the remaining testimonia which mention his elegies, Hieron's apparent interest in such poetry relating to the Persian Wars and the desire to commission works which present his own martial success in similar terms, and the ambivalent tone created by the association of the Etruscans with Circe's *pharmaka*, especially in a period in which the potential Etruscan subjugation of Sicily and Southern Italy was a concern. If this hypothesis that Aeschylus produced a poem relating to the victory of Hieron I of Syracuse over the Etruscans at Cumae in 474 is correct, his one surviving elegiac fragment would stand as an even more significant witness of the complex interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks in the west during this period.

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of four plays related to the *Odyssey*: *Psychagogoi*, *Penelope* and *Ostologoi*, and the satyr-play *Circe*. These four may have formed an Odyssean tetralogy: T. Gantz, 'The Aeschylean tetralogy: attested and conjectured groups', *AJPh* 101 (1980), 133–64, at 151–3; P. Grossardt, 'The title of Aeschylus' *Ostologoi*', *HSPH* 101 (2003), 155–8. It is also possible that the action of the *Psychagogoi* was set at Lake Avernus, near Cumae: J.S. Rusten, 'The Aeschylean Avernus: notes on P. Köln 3.125', *ZPE* 45 (1982), 33–8; K. Mikellidou, 'Aeschylus reading Homer: the case of the *Psychagogoi*', in A. Efsthathiou and I. Karamanou (edd.), *Homeric Receptions Across Generic and Cultural Contexts* (Boston and Berlin, 2016), 331–41. On this possible Odyssean tetralogy and its implications for the relationship between Aeschylean tragedy, the epic tradition and Stesichorus, see Finglass (n. 4). If this potential Odyssean tetralogy included Circe and a Cumaean setting, then this would provide another potential Aeschylean link between Circe, the Etruscans and an Italian location significant for Hieron's self-fashioning.

<sup>32</sup> See West (n. 2), 3, 20 and West (n. 1), 28 for this suggestion.