

Prometheus

... First turn to the sun's rising and walk on  
over the fields no plough has broken, then  
you will come to the wandering Scythians  
who live in wicker houses built above  
their well-wheeled wagons; they are an armed people,  
armed with the bow that strikes from far away:  
do not draw near them; rather let your feet  
touch the surf line of the sea where the waves moan,  
and cross their country on your left there live  
the Chalybes who work with iron, these  
you must beware of, for they are not gentle,  
nor people whom a stranger dare approach.  
Then you will come to Insolence, a river  
that well deserves its name, but cross it not –  
It is not a stream that you can easily ford –  
until you come to Caucasus itself,  
the highest mountains, where the river's strength  
gushes from its very temples. Cross these peaks,  
the neighbors of the stars, and take the road  
southward until you reach the Amazons,  
the race of women who hate men, who one day  
shall live around Thermodon in Themiscyra

where Salmydessos, rocky jaw of the sea,  
stands sailor-hating, stepmother of ships.

The Amazons will set you on your way  
and gladly you will reach Cimmeria,  
the isthmus, at the narrow gates of the lake.

Leave this with a good heart and cross the channel,  
the channel of Maeotis and hereafter

for all time men shall talk about your crossing,  
and they shall call the place for you Cow's-ford.

Leave Europe's mainland then, and go to Asia.

(Aeschylus 1959: 336–7)