INTRODUCTION

1 AESCHYLUS

Aeschylus was born, probably at Eleusis, in or about 525/4 BC;[1] his father Euphorion is said to have been a member of Athens' ancient aristocracy, the Eupatridae (A. T 1.2 *TrGF*). He made his debut as a tragic dramatist between 499 and 496 (T 52), but he did not win first prize until 484 (T 54a); in 490 he had taken part in the battle of Marathon (T 1.10; 2.2–3; 11–13; 54; 162.3–4), where his brother Cynegeirus met a heroic end (Hdt. 6.114 = T 16), and a decade later he fought at Salamis and Plataea (T 1.11–12, partly confirmed by his younger contemporary Ion of Chios, *FGrH* 392 F7 = T 14).

From 484 to the end of his career A. won first prize 13 times in all; particularly after the death of his great rival Phrynichus about 473,[2] he must have been victorious almost every time he competed, though he is said to have been defeated by the young Sophocles in 468.[3] Probably in 470[4] he was invited to visit Sicily by Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse; on this visit he restaged *Persians* (T 56) and produced a specially composed play, *Aitnaiai*

[1] This was clearly the preponderant ancient tradition, as evidenced by statements that he put on his first production at the age of 25 (A. T 2.4 *TrGF*) in the 70th Olympiad (500/499–497/6) (T52), that he was 35 when he fought at Marathon in 490 (T 11), and that he died in 456/5 at the age of 69 (T 3) – though some sources (T 1.50, 2.9, 5.3) imply various later birth dates. The date 525/4 may be based on family tradition (A.'s family remained important in the Athenian theatrical world for two centuries) or may have been derived, via a common rule of thumb, by counting back 40 years from an important event in his life, in this case his first victory in 485/4; it cannot in any case be more than a few years out.

[2] The first line of *Persians*, produced in 472, is a near-quotation of the first line of Phrynichus' play on the same subject (Phrynichus fr. 8), and this is generally regarded as an honorific acknowledgement such as would not have been made to a living rival.

[3] T 1.28; Plut. *Cim.* 8.8–9 = T 57. Sophocles did win his first victory in 468 (*FGrH* 239 A 56), but the participation of A. in this contest may be later embroidery of the story (see Scullion 2002: 87–90). A. defeated Sophocles with the production of which *Supp.* was part (see §11).

[4] The date is inferred from the fact that A. wrote *Aitnaiai* for this occasion, combined with the fact that in 470 Hieron entered and won the chariot-race at the Pythian Games (a victory celebrated in Pindar's *First Pythian*) as a citizen of Aetna rather than of Syracuse. A.'s ancient biographer (T 1.33) links the production of *Aitnaiai* with an earlier visit to Sicily in 476/5, the year of the actual foundation of Aetna; but it is unlikely that Hieron would have chosen to invite A. at that time, when Phrynichus was still living and at the height of his fame.

(The Women of Aetna, or perhaps *The Nymphs of Mount Etna*[5]), in honour of the new city of Aetna recently founded by Hieron.[6]

About 80 plays attributed to A. were known to ancient scholars.[7] From almost all of them some textual material (though often very scanty) has survived in the form of ancient quotations, and from several we have fragments of actual ancient copies of the script ('papyri'); but after about AD 300 it appears that only seven of them were still being read, and it is these seven that survived through the Middle Ages and can be read and performed today. In the headnotes (ὑποθέσεις) prefixed to the texts in some ancient and medieval manuscripts, and sometimes in other sources, we are given some information about the original productions. The surviving plays, in their probable chronological order, are as follows:

1 *Persians* (Πέρσαι), which won first prize in 472 as the second play of a production which also included *Phineus, Glaucus of Potniae* and a satyr-drama about Prometheus (T 55); the χορηγός, who financed the production and shared the prestige of its success, was the young Pericles.
2 *Seven against Thebes* (Ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας), which won first prize in 467 as the third play of a production which also included *Laius, Oedipus* and the satyr-drama *Sphinx* (T 58).
3 *Suppliants*: on its date see §11; on the accompanying plays see §3.
4–6 *Agamemnon* (Ἀγαμέμνων), *Choephoroi* (Χοηφόροι, 'Women bringing drink-offerings to a tomb')[8] and *Eumenides* (Εὐμενίδες), which together with the satyr-drama *Proteus* constituted the *Oresteia*[9] and won first prize in 458 (T 62–5); this was probably A.'s last production in Athens.
7 *Prometheus Bound* (Προμηθεὺς Δεσμώτης). No statement about its production survives, and on linguistic, metrical and other grounds this play is thought by many to have been composed and produced after A.'s death and falsely attributed to him.[10] It is generally supposed to have been produced together with *Prometheus Unbound* (Προμηθεὺς Λυόμενος); it has been suggested that both plays were actually the work of A.'s son Euphorion, who is known to have successfully produced a

[5] See Grassi 1956: 209; Poli-Palladini 2001: 304, 308, 311–13; Sommerstein 2010d: 193.
[6] He may also have produced one or more other plays, in particular *Glaucus of Potniae* which seems to have included at least one reference, and perhaps several, to Sicily and adjacent territory; see Sommerstein 2008: 17–10, 2012: 99–105.
[7] Details in Sommerstein 2008: 1 xxii–xxviii.
[8] This title is often rendered into English as *Libation-bearers*.
[9] Already known by that name in 405 (Ar. *Frogs* 1124).
[10] See Griffith 1977; M. L. West 1979, 1990b: 51–72; Sommerstein 2010a: 228–32; Ruffell 2012: 13–19. The authenticity of the play has been defended by (among others) Lloyd-Jones 2003 and Podlecki 2005: 195–200.

number of plays which he said were works of his father's not previously performed (T 71).

Five of these seven plays formed part of productions which – contrary to the usual practice of later tragic dramatists[11] – consisted of a series of three tragedies presenting successive episodes of a single story so as virtually to constitute one drama in three long acts, followed by a satyr-drama presenting another episode of the same or a closely related story. One other such Aeschylean 'tetralogy' is attested, the Λυκούργεια (T 68),[12] and there are so many other plays that can be plausibly grouped into tetralogies or at least 'trilogies' (connected sequences of three tragedies) as to make it likely that A. used this format more often than not.[13] It apparently enabled him, *inter alia*, to convert the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into dramatic form.[14]

A. is credited by Aristotle (*Poet.* 1449a15–18 = T 100) with increasing the number of individual actors in tragedy from one to two (before the end of his career, as in the *Oresteia*, the number had risen to three, an innovation which Aristotle credits to Sophocles); Aristotle also says that A. 'reduced the choral part and gave primacy to speech' (a generalization that does not apply very well to *Supp.*).

Some time after the production of the *Oresteia* A. made another visit to Sicily, and there, at Gela, he died in 456/5 (T 1.35–44; T 3). His epitaph (T 162)[15] made no reference to his art but only to the prowess he had shown on the field of Marathon. Two sons of his, Euphorion and Euaeon, became tragic poets, as did his nephew Philocles and several of Philocles' descendants, one of whom, Astydamas II, was the leading tragic dramatist of the mid fourth century.

[11] Though Euripides did in 415 stage a production in which the three tragedies (*Alexandros, Palamedes, Trojan Women*) presented in chronological order three episodes from the story of the Trojan War, with a key feature of the first play (the preservation of the life of Alexandros/Paris, which proved disastrous for his city) being recalled in the last (*Tro.* 919–22). An inscription of the early fourth century (*IG* ii² 3091) refers to a *Telepheia* by Sophocles, evidently a suite of plays about Telephus.

[12] A contemporary, Polyphrasmon (son of Phrynichus), also produced a Λυκούργεια (T 58).

[13] See Gantz 1979, 1980; Sommerstein 2010a: 32–44. A corrupt and garbled sentence in the *Suda*'s entry for Sophocles (σ815) may confirm this if, as seems to be the case, the writer (or his source) was trying to say that Sophocles was the first tragedian who preferred sets of separate plays to connected tetralogies.

[14] See Sommerstein 2010a: 241–53 and (for the Iliadic plays) Michelakis 2002: 22–57.

[15] The epitaph has been suspected of being a later composition (Page 1981: 131–2), but its language points strongly to a fifth-century date (Sommerstein 1996a = 2010c: 195–201; see also 508n.).

2 THE DANAID MYTH

The story of Danaus[16] and his daughters, with its antecedents, goes back to early archaic times;[17] it was already told, at least in part, in the earliest known text to attempt a complete account of the corpus of Greek myth, the *Catalogue of Women* ascribed to Hesiod,[18] and it had an entire epic of 6,500 lines, the *Danais*, devoted to it.[19] Like all Greek myths, this one was told in a variety of versions, but its core was stable, and almost every account known to us[20] is consistent with the following outline.

Zeus was attracted to the Argive maiden Io, who thereby incurred the jealousy of Hera; the outcome was that Io was wholly or partly transformed into a cow, and Hera set the 'all-seeing' Argus to watch over her until he was slain by Hermes.[21] Io was then harassed by a persistent gadfly which drove her through many lands until she reached Egypt, where Zeus restored her to human form and, by the touch (ἐπαφή) of his hand, made her pregnant with a son who was accordingly named Ἔπαφος.

The brothers Danaus and Aegyptus were great-grandsons of Epaphus. Aegyptus had 50 sons, Danaus 50 daughters. As a result of some kind of quarrel or suspicion between the two families, Danaus and his daughters fled from Egypt and made for their ancestral homeland of Argos; the sons of Aegyptus, in some versions accompanied by their father, followed after them, and in the end Danaus either agreed to a demand

[16] In the name Δαναός and all its derivatives, the suffix or ending that follows the stem Δανα- constitutes a separate syllable or syllables; thus Δαναή has three syllables and Δαναΐδες four.

[17] Beriotto 2016 provides a valuable study of the history of the myth, especially in archaic and classical times.

[18] [Hes.] frr. 124–9 M–W = 72–7 Most. Io and the Danaids also figured in the pseudo-Hesiodic poem *Aegimius* (frr. 294, 296–7 M–W = 230–2, 234 Most); and in the pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles* (327) Heracles is addressed as 'descendant of far-famed Lynceus'.

[19] See M. L. West 2003: 34, 266–9. Only one quotation survives (*Danais* fr. 1 West); it speaks of the Danaids arming themselves, apparently for battle, beside the Nile. The Danaids likewise have masculine traits in a dithyramb (?) by A.'s contemporary Melanippides, in which they are described as hunting and driving chariots (*PMG* 757). These may be early evidence of the Greek belief that in Egypt gender roles were inverted (Hdt. 2.35.2–3, Soph. *OC* 337–41). The sources are discussed by Garvie 1969: 163–71, FJW 44–50, Gantz 1993: 199–208 and Beriotto 2016.

[20] One or two are eccentric, such as Σ Eur. *Hec.* 886, which places the quarrel between Danaus and Aegyptus in Argos, with Aegyptus being driven out, settling in Egypt, and later returning to Argos with his sons – an account incompatible with the well-established story of Io's flight to Egypt.

[21] Hermes' epithet Ἀργεϊφόντης was believed in antiquity to be derived from this exploit; see 305n.

for,[22] or himself proposed,[23] a multiple marriage between his daughters and Aegyptus' sons. On the wedding-night all but one of the Danaids murdered their bridegrooms;[24] the one who did not, Hypermestra, and her husband Lynceus became the founders of a famous heroic lineage (their grandson Acrisius was the father of Danae the mother of Perseus, and Perseus' son Electryon was in turn the father of Alcmene the mother of Heracles).

In the latter part of the story[25] this outline leaves a number of questions open, to which different authors supplied different answers.

(1) Why did Danaus and his daughters flee from Egypt? In *Supp.* the only motive mentioned is the desire to avoid an unwanted, indeed detested, marriage between the Danaids and the sons of Aegyptus.[26] Only one other source gives such prominence to this motive – and significantly, this source is another play of the Aeschylean corpus, *Prometheus Bound* (853–69), in which the role of Danaus is not mentioned at all. Whether or not *Prometheus* is A.'s work, it was at any rate composed within a generation of his death and quite likely by a member of his family,[27] and it is not surprising that it should keep closer than any other source to A.'s version of the Danaid story.[28] Elsewhere, several sources speak of a dynastic conflict between Danaus and Aegyptus;[29] but this could have caused Danaus' flight only if it had led to a war in which he was defeated or threatened with imminent defeat, or if he

[22] [Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.5; Hyginus *Fab.* 168.3; Servius on Virg. *Aen.* 10.497; Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 2.222**.** In some accounts the demand had already been made in Egypt, in others it is made for the first time at Argos.

[23] Σ Eur. *Hec.* 886; Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 6.290–1.

[24] Σ *Il.* 1.42 locates the marriages and the murders in Egypt; afterwards Danaus and his daughters flee to Argos, where Danaus becomes king. 'One or two' of Aegyptus' sons have survived (it is not explained how), but there is no mention of any attempt by them to avenge the death of their brothers.

[25] A.'s treatment of the Io story is considered in §8 below.

[26] *Supp.* 8–10, 328–41, 1006–7 (many other passages testify to the aversion, but these are the ones that specify it as the cause of the flight). The question whether Danaus has other motives, not openly avowed in *Supp.*, will be considered in §3 below.

[27] The likeliest candidate is his son Euphorion, who according to the *Suda* (ε3800) won four victories with previously unperformed plays which he presented as his father's work.

[28] Nothing in the *Prometheus* passage is inconsistent with what is known of the Danaid trilogy, and *Prom.* 857 blatantly echoes the hawk/dove image of *Supp.* 223–4.

[29] [Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.4; Hyginus *Fab.* 168.1 (who says Aegyptus wanted to kill Danaus, and his daughters too, in order to obtain sole power); Σ *Il.* 1.42; Σ *Prom.* 853; Σ Eur. *Hec.* 886 (setting the quarrel in Argos, as noted above); Servius on *Aen.* 10.497.

was in fear for his life. The idea of a war is found in at least one early source, the epic *Danais* (fr. 1 West), which moreover implies that the daughters of Danaus themselves took part in the fighting (it speaks of them 'arming themselves' beside the Nile);[30] but no subsequent source mentions or implies a war in Egypt. Several, on the other hand, speak of Danaus being afraid of the Aegyptiads ([Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.4) or afraid of being killed by them.[31] When a specific reason for this fear is given, it is always the same: a warning given to Danaus by an oracle, which is reported in three forms:

(a) That the sons of Aegyptus, or one of them, would kill him (Σ *Prom.* 853, Σ *Iliad* 1.42, Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 6.290–1; cf. Σ Eur. *Or.* 872).
(b) That he would be killed by his son-in-law (Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 2.222).
(c) That he would be killed by the bedfellow of his daughter (implied by Σ *Il.* 4.171 which says he had told his daughters to kill whoever attempted to take away their virginity).

The question whether such an oracle figured in A.'s version of the story is bound up with the question whether *Supp.* was the first or the second play of its trilogy, and will therefore be discussed in §3 below. We can, however, note immediately that version (a) of the oracle, though reported by the majority of the relevant sources, cannot have been used by A.: an oracle in those terms might well cause Danaus to put as much distance as possible between himself and his brother's family, but it would not explain the more limited decision to reject a *marriage* alliance. Aegyptiads as rejected suitors, other things being equal, might well be even more dangerous than Aegyptiads as sons-in-law. An oracle in the form (b) or (c), on the other hand, would motivate Danaus to keep his daughters permanently unmarried (or, as the case might be, permanently virgin),

[30] This is probably the earliest evidence for the Greek belief that in Egypt the norms of male and female behaviour and activities were wholly or partly inverted (cf. Hdt. 2.35, Soph. *OC* 337–41). The Danaids' masculine temperament is likewise stressed by the lyric poet Melanippides, a contemporary of A., who speaks (*PMG* 757) of their fondness for hunting and chariot-driving. In two later Latin versions of the story of Amymone (see §3 below), which is set at Lerna near Argos, she is hunting (Hyginus *Fab.* 169) or practising with a javelin (Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 2.433) when she attracts the unwanted attentions of a satyr. There is little that can be called masculine, and nothing that is martial, about the Danaids in *Supp.*; on the contrary, they are terrified by the violence of the Aegyptiads and their agents (*Supp.* 734–63, 776–824).

[31] Σ *Il.* 1.42, Σ *Prom.* 853, Hyginus *Fab.* 168.1.

as his great-grandson Acrisius was motivated by a rather similar oracle to imprison Danaë.[32]

(2) Did Aegyptus come to Argos together with his sons? In A. he apparently does not; at any rate the Herald represents himself as the spokesman of the sons, not of their father (*Supp.* 928), and this is effectively confirmed by Σ Eur. *Or.* 872, which says that 'the majority opinion' (ἡ πολλὴ δόξα) is that Aegyptus did not come to Argos (citing [Hes.] fr. 127 M–W = 75 Most and Hecataeus fr. 19 Fowler) even though the text on which the scholiast is commenting, and the two other known tragic references (Phryn. trag. fr. 1, Eur. fr. 846), say he did.[33] A. clearly had a choice in this matter; we cannot tell whether he made the choice he did because he felt the presence of Aegyptus at Argos would be an unnecessary complication, or merely in order to vary from Phrynichus' treatment of the story.

(3) How did it come about that the marriages which Danaus, or his daughters, or both, were so determined to avoid, in the end took place after all? When the initiative for the marriages comes from Danaus (Σ Eur. *Hec.* 886; Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 6.290–1) it is as a ruse to destroy the Aegyptiads. More usually, however, Aegyptus or his sons make the demand, and Danaus accedes to it. In A. this is evidently the result of a war, which is anticipated through much of *Supp.* (first by Pelasgus at 342) and in effect declared by the Egyptian Herald at 950. The nearest approach to this in our other sources is in the account by Hyginus (*Fab.* 168.1–3),[34] according to whom Aegyptus' sons besieged Danaus in Argos and forced him to agree to the marriages, which had originally been proposed by Aegyptus as a ploy to facilitate the murder of Danaus. A similar motivation on the part of Aegyptus or his sons may be implied by some other accounts. In Servius (on *Aen.* 10.497) Aegyptus is afraid that Danaus may acquire new allies by making appropriate marriages for his daughters and so, 'devising a deception' (*fraude concepta*), proposes that they be married to their cousins; in pseudo-Apollodorus (*Bibl.* 2.1.5) the Aegyptiads profess to desire a reconciliation, and Danaus agrees, though 'not believing their promises and bearing a grudge against them because of his exile' (the last phrase is echoed by Hyginus, who speaks of Danaus as *dolorem exilii retinens*). We can thus say that while Danaus' enemies may

[32] He was told that he would be killed by his daughter's *son* (our first surviving source is Pherecydes fr. 10 Fowler).

[33] Eur. fr. 846 even says that this is the 'most widespread' version (ὡς ὁ πλεῖστος ἔσπαρται λόγος).

[34] Cf. Lactantius on Stat. *Theb.* 2.222, who however does not state any motive for Aegyptus' proposal.

try to coerce him (with success) or to deceive him (without success), Danaus' eventual acceptance of the marriages is always insincere (but, in view of the force or fraud being practised on him, excusably so).

(4) Why did Hypermestra spare Lynceus? Prometheus (*Prom.* 865–6) is made to predict that μίαν … παίδων ἵμερος θέλξει τὸ μὴ οὐ | κτεῖναι ξύνευνον. This is formally ambiguous[35] (should παίδων be construed with μίαν or with ἵμερος?), but in view of the use of ἵμερος and θέλγειν in erotic contexts towards the end of *Supp.* (1005, 1040) it is overwhelmingly likely that the meaning is that Hypermestra fell in love with Lynceus[36] and spared him for that reason, and this is how the passage was understood by a scholiast (on *Prom.* 853). Some other late sources agree (Σ Pind. *Pyth.* 9.112 [195], Σ Eur. *Hec.* 886), and the same idea probably underlies Hor. *Carm.* 3.11.50–2, where Hypermestra urges Lynceus to make his escape *dum favet nox et Venus.* Others say that Lynceus was spared because he had respected Hypermestra's virginity (Eur. fr. 228a.1 (?), [Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.5, Σ *Il.* 4.171, Σ Pind. *Nem.* 10.6 [10]).[37] Of these two explanations the first would be much more appropriate for A. to use, since the couple Hypermestra–Lynceus would serve as a living example of the mutual desire on whose importance Aphrodite was made to insist so eloquently in *Danaids* (A. fr. 44.1–2).

(5) Did Danaus attempt to punish Hypermestra for her disobedience, and/or to find and kill Lynceus? (Any such attempts must necessarily in the end have been unsuccessful.) In [Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.5, and in Ovid (*Her.* 14.3–4, 131–2), Hypermestra is imprisoned; according to Pausanias (2.19.6, 2.20.7, 2.21.1), doubtless reporting an Argive tradition, she is prosecuted by Danaus before an Argive court but acquitted. Lynceus has meanwhile fled to Mount Lyrceia, north-west of Argos (Paus. 2.25.4), and apparently remains there until Hypermestra lights a beacon on the Larisa (the acropolis of Argos) to signal to him that she is 'no longer in any danger'. In a fourth-century tragedy (Theodectas' *Lynceus*; see Arist. *Poet.* 1452a27–9, 1455b29–32) Lynceus' escape appears to have remained undetected until Hypermestra gave birth to a son, after which Lynceus was discovered and condemned to death – but in the end, by what Aristotle regards as a classic περιπέτεια, it was Danaus who perished.

[35] At least to a reader; in performance it would be disambiguated by pause and intonation.

[36] See Winnington-Ingram 1983: 65–6.

[37] Ovid in *Heroides* 14 carefully avoids both these explanations, attributing Hypermestra's disobedience to *pietas* (4, 49, 64, 84, 129), which seems to mean that she shrank from incurring the guilt and pollution of murder, particularly the murder of one to whom she had pledged fidelity in the marriage rite (cf. 7–10).

(6) What becomes of Danaus and his other daughters? If Danaus has been told by an oracle that he will perish at the hands of his son-in-law or of a son of Aegyptus, that oracle must somehow have been fulfilled, and Servius (on *Aen.* 10.497) and Lactantius (on Stat. *Theb.* 6.290–1) duly state that Lynceus killed Danaus (cf. also above on Theodectas);[38] Σ Eur. *Hec.* 886 says he killed all Danaus' other daughters too. In Ovid (*Her.* 14.117, 121) the sisters have perished, in some unspecified way, while Hypermestra is still imprisoned and Lynceus a fugitive.[39] There were other accounts, however, in which Danaus and his daughters survived, with the latter being found new husbands, and at least one of these predated A.'s tetralogy. Pindar's ninth Pythian ode, according to its scholiastic headnote, celebrates a victory gained at the 28th Pythian games, which were held in 474 BC. Pindar tells how one of the victor's ancestors had been a suitor for the hand of the daughter of Antaeus of Irasa. Antaeus, he says,

> had heard of Danaus, how once in Argos he found a way to secure a swift marriage, before midday, for forty-eight maidens:[40] he forthwith had the whole band of them stand at the finish of a race-track, and ordered that the choice be made by a contest in fleetness of foot, whichever of them was taken as his own by one of the heroes who had come as their suitors. (*Pyth.* 9.112–16)

This account is followed by [Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.5 and elaborated by Paus. 3.12.2: the winner of the race took whichever of the Danaids he wished, the second to finish had his choice of the remaining 47, and so on.[41] A version of the remarriage story was known to Herodotus (2.98), who speaks of a son-in-law of Danaus named Archandros as if the name would be familiar to his readers.[42] In one account (Hyginus, *Fab.* 170.9–11) the

[38] The death of Danaus at the hands of Lynceus probably featured already in the Hesiodic *Catalogue*: fr. 129 M–W = 77 Most can be restored to speak of Lynceus avenging a 'great outrage' and then becoming the father of Abas (see Beriotto 2016: 20–2).

[39] Yet earlier in the same poem (15) Hypermestra expresses the hope that 'Danaus and my cruel sisters' may repent of their crime.

[40] That is, all except Hypermestra and Amymone (on the latter, see §3 below).

[41] In contrast with Pindar, however, Pausanias says that there were not enough contenders to take all the Danaids, so that 'those left over had to wait for another concourse of suitors and another race'!

[42] Cf. Paus. 7.1.6 who gives Archandros a brother Architeles, also a successful suitor, and says they came from Achaea Phthiotis and became powerful at Argos. There has probably been some confusion with the story of the expulsion of Peleus from Phthia (many generations later, at the time of the Trojan War), which in some accounts was perpetrated by Archandros and Architeles, sons of Acastus (Σ Eur. *Tro.* 1128), but the Herodotean reference still shows that an Archandros, son-in-law of Danaus, was known of in the fifth century BC.

remarriages (to Argives) follow Danaus' death, which is *not* caused by Lynceus and seems to have taken place long after the murder of Lynceus' brothers (for the news of the death is brought to Lynceus by his son Abas).

The most famous story about the ultimate fate of the Danaids (largely because of its adoption by Roman poets)[43] is that they were condemned to eternal punishment in the underworld by endlessly and futilely carrying water in leaky vessels. In classical times this was said to be the fate of the uninitiated (ἀμύητοι) (Polygnotus' painting in the Cnidian Lesche at Delphi, Paus. 10.31.8 and 11; Pl. *Gorg.* 493a–c) or of 'the impious and unjust' (Pl. *Rep.* 2.363d); it is first associated with the Danaids in the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus* (371e), a work of the Hellenistic period.[44] Even if the story is actually of earlier origin (which cannot be disproved, though there is no positive evidence in its favour), it is virtually incompatible with any version of the myth except those in which the Danaids die unmarried and unrepentant.[45]

We can thus see that there is wide variation in several crucial features of the myth. In the next section we shall consider, among other things, what evidence we have of how it was handled by A., particularly in the lost parts of his trilogy.

3 THE DANAID TETRALOGY

Suppliants dramatizes one short episode in the Danaid story: the arrival of Danaus and his daughters at Argos, their successful appeal to the Argive king and people for protection, and the unsuccessful attempt made by representatives of the Aegyptiads (a herald and a band of Egyptians) to seize them. It ends under the shadow of impending war between Argos and Egypt. Unusually, though not uniquely (consider *Eumenides*), the chorus (the Danaids) have a highly active and indeed leading role in the drama; unusually also (and in this case there is no known tragic parallel) there appear to be *two* subsidiary choruses, one of Egyptians and the other probably of Argive soldiers (825–910, 1034–51nn.); this high degree of

[43] Lucr. 3.1008–10; Hor. *Carm.* 3.11.25–32; Ov. *Met.* 4.462–3.

[44] Unless the young women who, in several South Italian vase-paintings datable to the mid/late fourth century (notably Policoro 38462 = *LIMC* Danaides 7) are seen pouring water into a large jar, are to be identified as Danaids *and* located in the underworld; in most recent discussions this is for various reasons regarded as unlikely (see e.g. Gantz 1993: 207; Papadopoulou 2011: 33–4; Beriotto 2016: 107–9).

[45] Unless, as was suggested by Keuls 1974: 56–7, 72–4 (cf. Papadopoulou 2011: 30–4), the task was imposed on them for a limited time as a purification rite (for the purification of the Danaids, preceding their remarriage, cf. [Apoll.] *Bibl.* 2.1.5).