# THE CRIMES AND ARTS OF PROMETHEUS

Most recent scholarship on Aeschylus' *Prometheus* has been devoted to the question of Zeus and the plan of the whole trilogy [1]). And that in a way is understandable. Portions of the play are so plainly obscure — the wanderings of Io, for example — that one cannot give an account of them except by appealing to a larger design in which they would have a place. But these attempts to explain τοῖσι ἐμφανέσι τὰ μὴ γινωσκόμενα has led to a neglect of what we have before us, which equally stand in need of explanation. We propose, then, to consider not the unavailable but two passages that are unusually dark and inevitably raise questions about the trilogy as a whole. The first concerns the crimes for which Prometheus was punished, the second the arts which he gave to men. The two are clearly related: the arts are somehow Prometheus' crimes.

As soon as Zeus usurped his father's throne, he distributed among the gods who had sided with him various offices and honors; but he assigned no special role to men and planned to destroy them entirely (ἀϊστώσας γένος τὸ πᾶν) before he produced a new race (228—233). Prometheus does not explain what lay behind the plan of Zeus, but only that he frustrated it. With the help, however, of a fragment of 'Hesiod', we may reconstruct what Zeus had in mind, and how Prometheus' crimes were an answer to it. Fragment 96 (Rzach) lists the heroes who came to woo Helen, and after saying that Menelaus won her and fathered Hermione, it goes on as follows (57—65: other possible restorations do not affect the sense) [2]):

Πάντες δὲ θεοὶ δίχα θυμὸν ἔθεντο
ἐξ ἔριδος· δὴ γὰρ τότε μήδετο θέσκελα ἔργα

1) See Lesky, A., *Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen* (Göttingen, 1956), 77—82; the most extensive treatment of the play is F. Solmsen's *Hesiod and Aeschylus*, 124—177 (it is referred to as 'Solmsen'); see also Lloyd-Jones, H., *JHS* 76 (1956), 56—67; Fitton-Brown, A. D., *JHS* 79 (1959), 52—59; and for the linguistic side, Schmid, W., *Untersuchungen zum Gefesselten Prometheus* (Stuttgart, 1929), 41—77.

2) Cf. Schwartz, J., *Pseudo-Hesiodea* (Leiden, 1960), 418 ss.

Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης, μεῖξαι κατ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν
τυρβασίας, ἤδη δὲ γένος μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
πολλὸν ἀϊστῶσαι, τῶν δὲ πρόφασιν μὲν ὀλέσσαι
ψυχὰς ἡμιθέων, ἵνα μὴ δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν
τέκνα θεῶν μιγέῃ, μόρον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρῶντα,
ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν μάκαρες καὶ ἐς ὕστερον ὡς τὸ πάρος περ
χωρὶς ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων βίοτον καὶ ἤθε' ἔχωσιν

The plan behind the Trojan war was to destroy the race of heroes so that the gods (τέκνα θεῶν) could no longer marry mortals and in their children "see death with their own eyes". If Aeschylus regarded the heroes as the δεύτερος πλοῦς of Zeus, after Prometheus had thwarted his original intentions, then Zeus might have first planned to destroy all mortals so that neither the gods nor his new race would ever see death by mixing with them. This new race would have been a better version of the heroes since they would share in the gods' immortality; they would have been like the *daemones* who came from the golden age (Hes. *OD.* 121—126); but they would have been generated, for Zeus wished to plant or sow (φιτῦσαι, 233) and not make (ποιῆσαι) them (cf. *Suppl.* 310); and hence, before mortals could be wholly destroyed, men and women would have to be selected as their mothers and fathers [3]). Io would be the first victim (cf. 668).

If Zeus wanted the earth exclusively inhabited by a race of demigods, so that they would not see death with their own eyes, then the other crimes of Prometheus were meant to make mortals equal to them even in this respect.

ΠΡ. Θνητούς γ' ἔπαυσα μὴ προδέρκεσθαι μόρον.
ΧΟ. τὸ ποῖον εὑρὼν τῆσδε φάρμακον νόσου;
ΠΡ. τυφλὰς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐλπίδας κατῴκισα.
ΧΟ. μεγ' ὠφέλημα τοῦτ' ἐδωρήσω βροτοῖς.
ΠΡ. πρὸς τοῖσδε μέντοι πῦρ ἐγώ σφιν ὤπασα.
ΧΟ. καὶ νῦν φλογωπὸν πῦρ ἔχουσ' ἐφήμεροι;
ΠΡ. ἀφ' οὗ γε πολλὰς ἐκμαθήσονται τέχνας.

προδέρκεσθαι μόρον cannot mean, as it is usually translated, "foresee death", but quite literally it must mean "see death as

3) That Prometheus saved Deucalion and Pyrrha who were of the bronze age, which preceded the heroic in Hesiod's scheme, slightly confirms this (Apollod. I. 7. 2), although there is only one race of men in *PV.*

their lot in front of them" (cf. e. g. προορᾶν Th. VII. 44. 2). If προδέρκεσθαι meant a Cassandralike prophecy (cf. 843), Prometheus would not have been compelled to give them blind hopes; he simply would have taken this faculty away. As Zeus had wanted to make men invisible (ἀϊστώσας, 232) so that death might be invisible to his new race, so Prometheus, by blinding men with hopes, did the same for them without destruction. He made death invisible (Ἅιδης). The pre-Promethean situation of man was the constant awareness of death, and as this made any activity based on future expectations impossible, which is the presumption of any productive art (cf. Xen. Mem. I. i. 6—9), Prometheus had to remove men's oppressive sense of his mortality before the arts could become useful. Mortals are ἐφήμεροι according to the Chorus — Prometheus never says they are (cf. 83, 546, 945) —, they live in the light of day in which they once saw themselves as only mortals[4]). But Prometheus' gift of fire, coupled with blind hopes, means the replacement of this natural light by artificial light, whose purpose is precisely to conceal the original horizon within which men live. The price paid for the arts is blindness. Whether the fundamental condition, which has only been overlaid but not removed — the Chorus hardly regards post-Promethean man as different from what he was before (544—550) —, can be rediscovered on the basis of the arts is an open question. Aeschylus indeed might have thought that this rediscovery was a task of tragic poetry.

The Chorus believes that to see death before one is a disease — the gods hate Hades as much as mortals do (Υ 65) —, and that Prometheus benefited men in settling blind hopes in them. On the other hand, the Chorus asks in wonder whether ἐφήμεροι have fire, but they do not seem to regard it as a great benefit to them; only Io, for whom the arts are of no use, will address Prometheus as though she thought it is (612 ss.). The Chorus is composed of immortals, and it would not be strange if they thought fire was primarily a benefit to the gods. Without fire men could not have sacrificed to Olympian gods (cf. Ar. *Av.* 1515—1524); if they sacrificed at all, they could only have poured libations and offered first fruits[5]). And if

4) Cf. Fraenkel, H., *TAPhA* 77 (1946), 131—145.

5) Cf. Stengel, P., *Opferbräuche der Griechen* (Leipzig, 1910) 26—31, 126—145; v. Fritze, J., *de libatione veterum Graecorum* (Berlin, 1893), 6—10, 32—38.

one thinks of the technical expression ἄπυρα ἱερά, which are sacrifices to the Fates and Furies (Schol. ad *Ag.* 70; cf. Fraenkel, ad loc.), it is fitting that pre-Promethean man, haunted by his own mortality, should appeal to the only gods as far as he knew which controlled his life and death. In any case, such fireless sacrifices would necessarily assign a higher if not exclusive position to the chthonic gods: even the immortal gods would have made men think of death (cf. Eur. fr. 912 N). No wonder, then, that Zeus when he assumed power had no regard for men who could neither please nor displease him (cf. 494).

Prometheus' three crimes — his rescue of men from annihilation, his cure of their despair, and his gift of fire — radically change not only the condition of men itself but also the relation of men to the gods. Prometheus' reflection on this latter change is embodied in his description of the arts; but before we turn to that, we must consider how Prometheus viewed his effect on simply human life [6]). The order in which he has presented the arts is not at first clear; for that number, though ἔξοχον σοφισμάτων (459), is fourth in his list while first (if the fragment is his) in his *Palamedes* (fr. 303 M, adesp. 470 N) shows that here it is not in a self-evident position. Men originally lived in the dark; their caves were sunless and they did not know how to make houses whose windows faced the sun (450—453). Their emergence from caves into the sun naturally leads Prometheus to describe the art of distinguishing the seasons (454—458). The night-sky gave them clear guides for discrimination, but since the rising and setting of stars are sometimes still "hard to discern" (δύσκριτοι), Prometheus gave them numbers, which is the only sure way of marking the seasons (459 ss.); and as numbering is useless unless one remembers accurately, it is joined by the invention of letters. Thus the first four arts form a whole: 1) openness (houses) 2) the seeing of the sky in its differences (astronomy) 3) the precise discrimination of the stars' movements (number) 4) the precise recording of these movements (letters). The fifth and central art is the taming of animals (462—466), which partly is necessary for agriculture and hence dependent on

6) Cf. Thraede, K., "Erfinder" in *Reallexikon f. Antike u. Christentum*, Bd. 5, 1191 ff.; *RhM*, 105, 1962, 158—186.

the preceding three arts [7]). The mention of horses then suggests, as Stanley remarks, ships, the horses of the sea (δ 708); and Prometheus then reflects on his own situation in which he has no device to release him from his pains; for if Prometheus saved men from the flood sent by Zeus by advising Deucalion to build a ship (cf. Apollod. I. 7. 2), his own helplessness by contrast would now especially come home to him.

The Chorus next interposes and compares Prometheus to a bad physician who cannot cure himself; and as the repetition of the phrase ἐς νόσον πεσεῖν indicates (473, 478), Prometheus is thus provoked into describing medicine (478—483). Medicine deals with symptoms, which are the predictive signs of a disease; and hence Prometheus couples it by a simple τε with prophecy, also an art of interpreting signs that can be either good or bad (484—499) [8]). The phrase τοιαῦτα μὲν δὴ ταῦτ' (500), which closes his account of prophecy, would seem to indicate that metals, the ninth and last invention, are on a completely different plane [9]). The connection seems at first purely verbal: the signs that arise in fire (φλογωπὰ σήματα) were previously ἐπάργεμα (499, cf. *Ag.* 1112ss.), and just as Prometheus gave men eyes (ἐξωμμάτωσα) to see them, so he showed them the benefits hidden (κεκρυμμένα) in the earth. But if one considers that metallurgy is the only art mentioned that essentially needs fire (besides certain kinds of divination), and that φλογωπὰ σήματα could equally well describe the way in which one judges in smelting the state of a molten batch, metals are the fitting climax to the Promethean arts of prophecy. The last four arts, however, are much harder to see in their inner unity than the first four. Taming of animals might have led Prometheus to reflect on mastery in general, and thus the mastery of the sea to the mastery of disease, and that in turn to the mastery of chance through divination (cf. Pl. *Leg.* 709a1-c3). The discovery of metals, then, would be related to the previous three arts somewhat as housebuilding was related to astronomy, number and letters. As housebuilding meant the

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7) The transition, linguistically, is triggered by ἐργάνην (461), which suggests γῆς τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι as Eustathius puts it (*Comment. in Il.* 122, 45); and it suggests as well the phrase βοῦς ἐργάτης Archil. 48 D$^3$ (39 B), Soph. fr. 138 N$^2$ (563 P); note the v. l. here ἐργάτιν.

8) Herodotus II. 83—4 follows his account of Egyptian oracles with Egyptian medicine; cf. III. 132. 2.

9) Cf. for the phrase *Eum.* 480; Soph. *El.* 696, *OC* 62.

coming out into the open of men, which entailed the arts of distinction and accuracy, so metallurgy, as the art of bringing things out in the open which primarily are not in the open, would entail the three preceding arts that make use of hidden characteristics of the sea, the earth (herbs), and fire (sacrifices).

Prometheus first described men as clear-sighted in the face of death, and his own activity as one of blinding; but in the account of the arts he presents men as originally blind and the arts as the means to bring them out into the light. How can we explain this contradiction? The difficulty seems to consist in Prometheus' failure to state what he believes to be the nature of man. Men were previously νήπιοι, he says, and he made them ἔννους and φρενῶν ἐπηβόλους (443ss.). If we take this literally, Prometheus claims that men were originally dumb or unspeaking (in-fantes); but beings without speech and sense can hardly be considered men at all, and Prometheus only says he showed them how to write (460). If, however, νήπιοι means only foolish as it usually does — ῥεχθὲν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω —, the claim to have given men those arts which they are capable of finding for themselves seems unfounded. The art, for example, of astronomy is altogether different from the gift of fire. Men might never be so favored as to find out how to make fire (cf. 367—369), but as long as they can see and reason they can discover the order in the movements of the stars. And again if men can talk and thus make distinctions, they can count, and no Prometheus would be necessary to instruct them. λέγειν, after all, means to count as early as Homer (δ 452) — to say nothing of the later λογίζεσθαι —, and Prometheus himself uses it in almost that sense (973; cf. *Pers.* 343) [10]). What the silence of Prometheus about the nature of man implies is revealed in a remark that at first looks like a merely grammatical curiosity. Among the ways of divination is ornithoscopy (488—490):

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10) Cf. Plato *Epin.* 977c 3—d 4. λόγος occurs some 28 times in *PV*, more than in any other play of Aeschylus (in *Ag.* 19 x). It is curious that it does not occur in Prometheus' account of the arts, whereas μῦθος first occurs there (505) and becomes frequent thereafter (641, 647, 664, 684 are all in a single speech of Io's, 876, 954, 1080, cf. 889, 1063). λέγειν is also unevenly distributed: only five out of twenty occur before 609, and of these the first four imply a reluctance to speak (197, 260, 317, 442), and 445 prefaces the list of arts. Perhaps it is not irrelevant that the play moves from silent Bia to Hermes, *facundus nepos Atlantis.*

γαμψωνύχων τε πτῆσιν οἰωνῶν σκεθρῶς
διώρισ', οἵτινές τε δεξιοὶ φύσιν
εὐωνύμους τε

The accusative of respect φύσιν is puzzling [11]). The relative clause seems to be equivalent to οἵτινες δεξιοί τε εὐώνυμοί τε (εὐώνυμοι is the reading of $F^1$), but one may wonder whether metrical considerations alone made Aeschylus avoid coupling φύσιν and εὐώνυμοι. δεξιός literally means "on the right" and by extension "propitious", but εὐώνυμος literally means "of good name" (the constant usage of Pindar) and only because one recognizes it as a euphemism for "unpropitious", does it mean "on the left". δεξιός and εὐώνυμος are themselves signs that have to be interpreted. The right is right by nature but the left is only sinister by name; but since they are correlative terms, right and left as propitious and unpropitious have suppressed the distinction between nature and name, φύσις and νόμος [12]). As the distinction, then, between nature and convention is not operative for men but replaced by art, so that between speech (λόγος) and language (γλῶσσα) cannot be drawn. Prometheus does not distinguish between number and letters but joins them with a single τε, even though all tribes know how to count while not all tribes know how to write (cf. Her. IV.113.2). The fourth art (letters) and the eighth (divination) equally show that Prometheus in bringing men into the light has not revealed all the distinctions found in the light, and that the ambiguous status of speech and reason in his account is founded on the blindness he first gave to men. For it is impossible to reconcile his giving men blind hopes as well as the art of divination unless their belief that they accurately know this art is in fact the basis of their blind hopes [13]). Men first lived in a chaos and were like the shapes of dreams (448—450), but

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11) Cf. Holwerda, D., *Commentatio de vocis quae est* ΦΥΣΙΣ *vi atque usu* ... (Groningae, 1955), 33 ss.; Lesky, op. cit., 78 n. 1.

12) Cf. Her. II. 36. 4: γράμματα γράφουσι καὶ λογίζονται ψήφοισι Ἕλληνες μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀριστερῶν ἐπὶ τὰ δεξιὰ φέροντες τὴν χεῖρα, Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν δεξιῶν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀριστερά· καὶ ποιεῦντες ταῦτα αὐτοὶ μέν φασι ἐπιδέξια ποιέειν, Ἕλληνας δὲ ἐπαρίστερα; Plato *Leg.* 794 d 5—795 a 7.

13) Cf. Th. V. 103. 2, where the Athenian ambassadors say to the Melians: "Do not imitate the many, οἷς παρὸν ἀνθρωπείως ἔτι σῴζεσθαι, ἐπειδὰν πιεζομένους αὐτοὺς ἐπιλίπωσιν αἱ φανεραὶ ἐλπίδες, ἐπὶ τὰς ἀφανεῖς καθίστανται μαντικήν τε καὶ χρησμοὺς καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα μετ' ἐλπίδων λυμαίνεται."

Prometheus showed them how to tell which dreams were fated to turn out true (κἄκριναπρῶτος ἐξ ὀνειράτων ἃ χρὴ ὕπαρ γενέσθαι, 485) [14]). Men do not altogether awaken under Prometheus' guidance but still live in a twilight — think of Io's dreams (645—662). They now believe they can tell apart ὕπαρ from ὄναρ, but it is only the ὕπαρ of dreams. "I opened the eyes of mortals" (ἐξωμμάτωσα), Prometheus says again, but only so that they could see the signs concealed in fire and not the light of the sun (488 ss.), for Prometheus makes no distinction between the δύσκριτοι risings and settings of the stars and the δύσκριτοι cries of birds (458, 486 (consider 447 ss.), cf. 662, *Ag.* 981). But men as surely lack the complete art of divination as Prometheus possesses it [15]). The arts which illuminate the human world are embedded in all-encompassing darkness (cf. *Se.* 3, 25).

Once one sees that the chiaroscuro art of divination is the model, as it were, for all the Promethean arts, the only outright falsehood in his speech begins to make sense. Prometheus, who cannot cure himself, showed men the mixing of drugs, "by which they ward off *all* diseases" (483; contrast Soph. *Ant.* 360—364). We must not palliate this claim and assume Prometheus means less than he says. Man's first illness was the awareness of death, for which Prometheus found a remedy in blind hopes. If they cured man of this numbing fear, it may not be too fanciful to suggest that the ultimate hope was that of immortality; for if Heracles dominated the succeeding play or plays, as the fragments suggest, no one could be found more fitting as the embodiment of this hope (cf. Thomson, 29—32) [16]). I should not wish to insist upon this admittedly unprovable conjecture, but it does explain why divination and medicine are put side by side. In any case, a medicine that cures every disease entails a way to avoid death, even if it only means a shadowy existence in Hades, for Hades is not death simply and, according to Hesiod, is no older than Zeus (*Th.* 453—457). Prometheus even there found riches, hidden in the earth, where before men had

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14) χρή almost entirely replaces δεῖ in *PV*, χρή and χρεών some 19 times, δεῖ only once (9) with acc. and inf., for in a play that only has divine characters every "must" is a "fate" (cf. *Ch.* 297).

15) Note the allusion to blind hope in the Chorus' words to Prometheus: τίς ἐλπίς; οὐχ ὁρᾷς κτλ. (259, cf. 536—538).

16) See Her. IV. 93—94 (the Getae) for the consequences of such a hope.

only put their unburnt dead [17]). Hades is Pluto (cf. 805 ss.; Pearson ad Soph. fr. 273).

The list of arts begins with man's emergence into the open and ends with the bringing to light of metals. Within this framework of light, the central art is something of an anomaly. The verbs Prometheus uses to describe his way of giving each art are those of showing, distinguishing, and discovering: ἔδειξα (458, 482), (ἐξ)ευρεῖν (460, 468, 469, 503), ἐμησάμην (477), ἐστοίχισα (484), ἔκρινα (485), ἐγνώρισα (487), διώρισα (489), ὤδωσα (498), ἐξωμμάτωσα (499); but in the case of taming the verbs are surprisingly direct: ἔζευξα and ἤγαγον (462, 465). Taming apparently is not an art that can be taught in speech; Prometheus has to show it in deed. And what holds for the tamer holds for the tamed: it must learn through suffering. Prometheus thus alludes to the need for force and compulsion in taming (ἱππόδαμος), which distinguishes it from all the rest of his arts; for even in his medicine there are only "gentle remedies" (482; cf. Her. III.130.3). The taming of Prometheus himself, which is constantly described in terms of subduing a horse, is sufficient proof that persuasion does not suffice [18]). Prometheus, who pities even the fate of the monstrous Typho (352), is inclined to discount and reject compulsion (cf. 212 ss.) — he calls horses here "lovers of the reins" (φιλήνιοι, 465) [19]) —, but his tacit admission that it is necessary raises the question whether the same relation which holds between men and beasts should not also obtain between gods and men. The gods, as beings of a different order, may have to rule by force. It is the "bit of Zeus" that compelled Inachus to eject "by force" his daughter from house and country (671 ss.). That the gods need to use force would be perhaps the major concession Prometheus will later make in being reconciled with Zeus [20]), for the very condi-

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17) ἔνερθε δὲ χθονὸς κεκρυμμένα (500) reminds one inevitably of the common phrases καλύπτειν and γῇ κρύπτειν for burial, as well as of *Eum.* 274 ss. μέγας γὰρ Ἅιδης ἐστὶν εὔθυνος βροτῶν ἔνερθε χθονός; *Pers.* 229 τοῖς τ' ἔνερθε γῆς φίλοις, etc.; indeed, this is the only Aeschylean passage where ἔνερθε, νέρθεν does not refer to Hades (nine times).

18) φάλια (54), μασχαλιστῆρας (71), κίρκωσον (74), see Blomfield's Glossarium on these words; cf. 323, 563, 1009 ss., Schmid, op. cit., 59.

19) See Fraenkel, *Ag.* 1067 for the harshness of Greek bits, and contrast the way Oceanus manages his bird γνώμῃ στομίων ἄτερ εὐθύνων (287).

20) In light of such phrases as *Ag.* 182 ss. δαιμόνων δέ που χάρις βιαίως σέλμα σεμνὸν ἡμένων and *Suppl.* 1069 εὐμενῆ βίαν, it seems to me

tion of his release — the continuation of the reign of Zeus — means that he can no longer simply please Io or by implication the rest of mankind (cf. 758 ss.) [21]). Bia is there as a silent actor because Prometheus does not yet understand it [22]). Prometheus now, however, does not regard men but the new gods as savage; and the gods are shown as at best indifferent: Oceanus never mentions men. The tyranny of Zeus must be moderated if human life is to become tolerable; and Prometheus offers a way to make the other gods as philanthropic as himself. Sacrifices are a way to tame the gods (cf. 494), for they give the gods a reason for taking an interest in men (526—535). "How could I forget divine Odysseus", Zeus once said to Athena,

> ὃς περὶ μὲν νόον ἐστὶ βροτῶν, περὶ δ' ἱρὰ θεοῖσιν
> ἀθανάτοισιν ἔδωκε, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσιν;

The first effect which sacrifices had, one can imagine, was to persuade Zeus to abandon his plan of destroying the race of men and generating an immortal race of heroes; for though Prometheus saved it once from a flood, he surely could not have saved it from an onslaught of thunderbolts. Fire, as we learn from the battle between Hephaestus and Scamander, is more powerful than water.

If we have partly uncovered some of the implications behind Prometheus' list of the arts, we have not yet explained its dramatic function. Why does it occur between the Oceanus-

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that Kratos' words ὡς ἂν διδαχθῇ τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδα στέργειν (10) should be taken literally: Prometheus will learn to *love* the tyranny of Zeus.

21) Between Prometheus' saying his release will not come πρὶν ἂν Ζεὺς ἐκπέσῃ τυραννίδος (756) and his saying that Zeus cannot but be overthrown πλὴν ἔγωγ' ἂν ἐκ δεσμῶν λυθείς (770), a change occurs: the first would satisfy Io's desire for vengeance, the second would not, since by itself it implies that he will tell Zeus the secret; but Prometheus, by bringing in Heracles, makes it appear that he will be released ἄκοντος Διός, contrary to the testimony of Philodemus (fr. 321a M); hence Pauw's conjecture ἄρχοντος. Io thought, however, that the answer to τίς οὖν ὁ λύσων ἐστὶν ἄκοντος Διός; would be οὐδείς (cf. Hephaestus' ὁ λωφήσων γὰρ οὐ πέφυκέ πω, 27; cf. Soph. *Ant.* 261); and Prometheus does not see fit to tell her that his release requires the perpetuation of Zeus' tyranny (875 ss.).

22) His omission of weapons in the list of arts, even though the unapproachable Scythians are armed with bows (711), stands together with his failure to mention political life (cf. Solmsen, 140 n. 79, 142 n. 88, 143 n. 91): πόλις and πόλισμα each occurs once (421, 846). This failure is all the more striking because we see in the very first scene that Hephaestus has an art inferior to the art of ruling, and that his art is morally neutral (45—47; cf. Soph. *Ant.* 365—369).

scene and the arrival of Io? Just prior to Oceanus' coming Prometheus told the Chorus to stop bewailing his present troubles and hear the future that awaited him (271—273); and yet Oceanus' entrance not only delays this revelation for the moment but puts it off until Io comes. Oceanus, then, somehow has made Prometheus meditate on the past and reconsider the arts he gave to mortals. Oceanus tells him almost at once, "Know thyself, Prometheus" (309, cf. 335), and this injunction, I believe, compels Prometheus, while the Chorus sings, to think over his crimes. "Do not think", he begs, "that I am silent out of wilful pride and disdain, but I devour my heart in deep reflection (συννοίᾳ) to behold myself thus outraged" (436—438). Prometheus' thoughts are on the arts, and if not of remorse they are almost of despair. To the Chorus' confident belief that once released he will be as strong as Zeus (508—510), he replies that he is not thus fated to lose his chains, "for art is far weaker than compulsion (necessity)" (511—514). This looks at first as if it only meant, "My art is weaker than the compulsion of Zeus" (cf. 107), and hence the list of arts would be Prometheus' way of acknowledging his own weakness (cf. 469—471); but were this its primary sense, it never would have led the Chorus to ask, "Who then is the helmsman of necessity?" The general force of Prometheus' assertion makes it applicable to Zeus as well: "His art too (these chains) is weaker than necessity" (cf. 87). The Chorus phrases its question personally; it does not ask, "What then (τί οὖν) is master of (stronger than) necessity?" It senses at once that art no more than necessity is a purely abstract noun. The Fates and Furies are necessity, and as Zeus is weaker than they (517 ss.), the conclusion seems plain: not Prometheus but Zeus essentially is art [23]). If Zeus as the highest god is art in the most general sense, one can see another reason why Prometheus' description of the arts is his response to Oceanus' command to know himself. The arts indicate his relationship to Zeus, and why he apparently has the edge over Zeus. The ordering of human life parallels the ordering of the world that he accomplished on Zeus' accession to the throne

23) Fraenkel, in his *Ag.*, vol. III, 729, in his discussion of this passage not only assimilates the Fates and Furies to a "moral law" (Wilamowitz' phrase) and thereby makes them almost unintelligible, but he claims (n. 2) that 514 is a polemic against 'Musaios', fr. 4 Diels, *Vorsoker.*, ὡς αἰεὶ τέχνη μέγ' ἀμείνων ἰσχύος ἐστίν. But "better" is not the same as "stronger", and art (Zeus) may equally well be both weaker and better than necessity.

(439—441, cf. 228—231). The empire of Zeus would also be surrounded by darkness. This empire, in which each god has a specific task, is presented in the first scene, where Zeus is shown to control both the art of metal-working (Hephaestus) and the art of taming (Kratos and Bia). But Zeus who has assigned a share (μοῖρα) to every god turns out to have a share as well (cf. 49 ss.). There is something for which he has no art. The three Shares (Μοῖραι) and their executive arm the Furies have no part in the art of Zeus. We later learn that Zeus' defectiveness consists in his ignorance of generation. He does not know that if he marries Thetis, she will have a son that will overthrow him [24]). Zeus, then, lacks the art of the Fates or generation. Their art is that of weaving: ἔνθα δ' ἔπειτα | πείσεται ἄσσα οἱ αἶσα κατὰ Κλῶθές τε βαρεῖαι | γεινομένῳ νήσαντο λίνῳ (η 196—198, cf. *Eum.* 334 ss.) [25]). It does not seem accidental therefore that of the three human needs — food, clothing, and shelter —, Prometheus mentions arts that satisfy the first and third but not the art of weaving, although he thrice employs words that necessarily remind us of its absence [26]). As the only female art does not appear among the arts of mortals, so it is not counted in the technocracy of Zeus (τὰν Διὸς ἁρμονίαν, 551; cf. *Suppl.* 592—594; Her. II. 53.2).

We must now try to discover the sense behind this somewhat enigmatic result. Zeus is a god who was generated, and as a generated being nothing in his ancestry warrants any other presumption than that he like his father and father's father before him will be overthrown (956—959; cf. *Ag.* 168—173). In the play itself the Chorus of Oceanids is silently there to threaten him with his overthrow, for Thetis, granddaughter of Oceanus on her mother's side, surely lurks in their shadow (cf. 894—906). Oceanus also, as θεῶν γένεσις (Ξ 201), at least partly appears to remind us of generation. He fathered the mother of Kratos and Bia (Hes. *Th.* 383—385), the wife of

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24) It also seems implied that he does not know that Heracles, in the thirteenth generation from Io (774), will release Prometheus ἄκοντος Διός; and hence it is fitting that Io should enter just after this (but see n. 21). τύχη occurs in the play 13 times, as it does in Soph. *OT* (cf. 1080—1085).

25) Cf. Dietrich, B. C., *Phoenix* 16 : 2 (1962), 86—101.

26) πλινθυφεῖς (450), λινόπτερα (468), and ἐργάνην (461), which is Athena's epithet in Attica and elsewhere as the goddess of weaving (Soph. fr. 844, 2 P).

Prometheus (557—560), and the father of Io (636). Oceanus is the complete opposite of Prometheus and art [27]). He alone remained apart when Zeus called an assembly of the gods (Υ 4—9). As the embodiment of generation he represents the missing element in the rule of Zeus, for Zeus does not know how to control it. If the new gods are to be proof against generation, they must find a way of becoming asexual: once he is castrated Uranus no longer generates and becomes a neutral οὐρανός (*Hes. Th.* 175—205). Does Zeus, then, have such a way? If the trilogy unfolded it, the *Oresteia* would be its fitting counterpart; for there the human cycle of crime and counter-crime is stopped by law, and here the divine cycle of usurpation and expulsion which are grounded in sexuality would be stopped by art. The art needed, as we have allegorically said, is the art of weaving, and the goddess of weaving is Athena. The virgin Athena, in one account, was born from the head of Zeus by the art of Hephaestus (Pind. *Ol.* VII. 35—37, cf. Hes. *Th.* 924—926); and in another, she would have had if born from Craft (Μῆτις) the sovereignty among the gods (Hes. *Th.* 886—900; cf. Solmsen, 67ss.). She is any case the perfect product of art, who can solve the problem of generation among the gods just as she once partly solved it among men; for by virtue of her being motherless, she tipped the scale in favor of Orestes (*Eum.* 657—666, 736—738) [28]). Our final conclusion,

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27) Consider Prometheus' contemptuous contrast between the unmade cave of Oceanus and Scythia the mother of iron: πῶς ἐτόλμησας λιπὼν ... πετρηρεφῆ αὐτόκτιτ' ἄντρα τὴν σιδηρομήτορα ἐλθεῖν ἐς αἶαν (299—302); cf. Thucyd. IV. 3. 2, 4. 3: Pylos is φύσει καρτερόν and αὐτὸ καρτερόν. Note that love frustrates art in the so-called deception of Zeus, where Hera had clearly planned to entice Zeus into her chambers so that once inside he could not leave since Hephaestus had fitted the door "with a hidden bolt that no other god could open" (Ξ 168). Hera makes herself too attractive for the scheme to work (Ξ 215—223, 293—351); and the first indication that it will fail is Sleep's rejection of a throne made by Hephaestus "forever imperishable", but his acceptance of one of the Graces (Ξ 238—276).

28) The much-abused line *Sept.* 197 ἀνὴρ γυνή τε χῶτι τῶν μεταίχμιον is not so foolish if one realizes that neuter citizens would solve the problem of the trilogy: the crimes and curse of Oedipus could not have occurred. Consider the τοῦτο of Soph. *Ant.* 334 (the hymn to art) in light of the hymn to Eros (781—800). One may note that Soph. *Ant.* 332—352 presents nine human activities and characteristics that seem to be a reply to Prometheus' list: 1) ships, 2) farming, 3) hunting, 4) taming, 5) speech, 6) thought, 7) ἀστυνόμοι ὀργαί, 8) shelter, 9) medicine. Speech rather than taming is central, and speech rather than letters is decisive. Hunting and

then, that Athena might have played an important part in the last play of the trilogy (whether it be Πυρφόρος or Λυόμενος) is not altogether surprising [29]); but as it is safer to leave the unknowable alone, we would rather appeal at the end to our analysis of Prometheus' arts and crimes.

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ἀστυνόμοι ὀργαί reveal the absence in Prometheus' list of force and the city; while the absence here of astronomy and prophecy reveals the Chorus' omission of τὰ οὐράνια as a human limit (cf. 418). Their list presents man as an offensive (1—4) and defensive being (7—9), with thought as somewhat anomalous; cf. Pl. *Plt.* 279 c 7—9.

29) Cf. Thomson, 34 ss.; Schmid, op. cit., 107 ss.; contra, Solmsen, 153 n. 127.