

Iconography of the Prometheus myth

Any authentic mythology (and here myth is to be understood as the exegesis of symbol) tries not so much to tell of beginnings as to symbolise what imprisons the present in the past. In most cases this dependence has been preserved by giving it a sacred and untouchable nature, installing priestly or shamanic castes whose basic mission was to solidify a conscience of the present's debt to the past, beyond any criticism. In Greece, however, something very different happened. The Greeks not only refused to harbour their myth cycle in orthodoxy, but actually dared to praise the dignity of sacrilege, far beyond what any other culture had dared to think. This does not mean that in Hellenic lands there was no priestly reserve, but that it was neither dogmatic nor predominant.

On the whole, in the Greek world we can establish two different ways of facing the problem of the present's dependence on the past:

The first is based on the Orphic or Demeter traditions, and means to prove that man bears a divine trace in his essence. From this point of view, the greatest labour in life is that dedicated to revitalising the latent divine trace in man's soul, to revive a sleeping ember which is the bearer of an eternal light. Human existence, in this tradition, is no more than a parenthesis to be closed in the most appropriate manner so as to give an opening to the full presence of what preceded, that is, immortality. Thus, this tradition calls for a need to subject the course of life to a determined practice, in accordance with whatever was considered the norm and whose beginning was marked by determined initiatic ritual. The uninitiated is other, strange, foreign, before whom the initiated feel like members of a superior community in which, however, there are several degrees. In the higher degrees the holier members, through the witness of their life and speech, mark a luminous reference. The present's debt to the origins can only be paid by death, but this can only be reached by those who have led a suitable life. For these, death is no more than a meeting with what they were.

While the myth cycles of early tradition point to a more Thracian than strictly Hellenic origin, the myth

cycles of the later tradition are, in my opinion, the more specifically Greek, and we must look towards them to find a singularity which, while it was born in Greece, has ended up beating in Europe's pulse. I refer, as I have already said, to a group of tales which place the origin of culture in an act of sacrilege. Thus said, it could well be thought that there is nothing original in this. In *Genesis*, for example, the origin of culture is also placed in an act of rebellion against divine commandment. But what radically separates Greek myth from all others is that it is not only limited to telling of the sacrilege, but also dares to praise the act of sacrilege. Acting thus, a similar tradition cannot intend to protect its word behind the shield of dogma without betraying itself, because it is in fact saying that any act of rebellion is capable of founding culture. Doubtless the group of myths which best describe the dignity of sacrilege are those which revolve around the Prometheus myth cycle.

Western culture is in debt to both these mythical traditions, so that it would not be strange to propose a history of myth which would collect the successive domination of one over the other, in a see-saw movement which over the centuries has made up what we have become today. In this article we will stop—and only briefly, by necessity—to consider only one of these movements, that narrated by the Prometheus myth cycle; we will try to collect from its iconographic evolution some of the symbols which make up our culture. But before going into this matter, it seems pertinent to stop and point out some of the characteristics of this myth cycle.

The Prometheus myth develops an ethiological point of view of the origin of culture, not of its salvation. It cannot be otherwise: if human culture is chained to its origin, that is to say, it owes a debt to a revolution and is vitalised by remembering this founding act, then humanity is characterised by being subject to origin. It is, in this sense, a radically anti-utopian myth. Even when, especially from Plotinus on, the iconography of Prometheus takes on an eschatological dimension, and has an individual, never collective reference. It is true that Marx speaks of the Titans as the first proletarian martyrs but he cannot but recognise the individual nature of their rebellion.

The myth tells us that there came a time, before all culture, when a pre-political humanity sat at the same table with the gods to eat abundant gifts, picked up effortlessly. In those days previous to the origin, there

was no worry, no work, no pain, no death. There were not even births, as woman had not yet been created. The myth carried out an elegy of paradise in which praise of innocence is confused with nostalgia for an absolute indolence. In paradise there is no language, no technique, no hope, no shame, no justice. The only thing there is, in fact, is the gods' direct guardianship of radically under-age mankind.

There comes a time, however, when man decides to carry out the most transcendent exchange in history: the exchange of happiness (and under-age youth) for humanity (and coming of age). The mere expression of this wish sets up a new way of living which only now fully deserves the title of existence. This is the meaning of Prometheus' sacrilege. Prometheus introduced culture where only nature had been or, if we prefer, has made irony emerge from where only cynicism prevailed. The inhabitant of nature is the satyr, eternally innocent because he is totally lacking in any feeling of shame. Culture is man. While the former only has offspring, to be a man one has to make clear the will to opt for an inheritance: that of sacrilege. Man is made man because of culture, which is no more than the ability to receive with emotional acquiescence any gesture whatsoever for crossing a frontier. It is something altogether different to consider whether repeating this gesture is enough to banish the satyr existing inside or, in any case, the nostalgia for the satyr which existed in an irremediably lost time, when letting oneself be carried away by a state of permanent enthusiasm with no dependence on curbs and limits of reflection, like Sile-nus when he had the company of the goddess of intoxication.

The satyr is not sacrilegious, as he believes in nothing. Man, however, is condemned to inherit a culture which, while promising autonomy, prevents finding comfort in heteronomy. If human existence is thus molded, this existence obliges renouncing any world made to its measure. Repetition of Prometheus' gesture, whether it be in the shape of social revolution, of a sophisticated cultural ritual, or an offering on an altar (from Prometheus on, all altars are no more than the presence of an empty table, previously frequented by men and gods united in the common celebration of a banquet) is a bet on keeping up the will of going beyond what is given. That is to say, definitely renouncing all that has been given to fit.

Human culture is thus parallel to a retreating movement of the gods and, at the same time, this re-

treating allows us to ponder on the human condition from the position of autarchy. It only makes sense to question man's power if his work is capable of manifesting autonomy, of creating culture. That is to say, the retreat of the gods does not leave man indigent, but rather the contrary, it is a necessary condition for the appearance of the question of self-care.

This set of features of the Prometheus myth cycle has no intention of exhausting its thought-provoking qualities. It seems obvious that the myth as an exegesis of symbol can only be shown, and is opaque when it is submitted to inevitable corseting when explained in terms of logical-deductive criteria. However, we have possibly conquered a perspective suitable for studying the cultural reception of its iconography and, more specifically, in what refers to fire, martyrdom, and technique.

Fire

The fire Prometheus steals from Olympus is, according to the oldest versions of the myth (especially Hesiod's), only a tiny flame.

The flame, as Gaston Bachelard has splendidly demonstrated, is one of the greatest image-producers among all the objects in the world which invoke the dream. It represents verticality, the process of ascent, the psychic *chiaroscuro*, the loneliness of the dreamer... All this enormous symbolic complexity is found in the origin of the myth. Its later re-elaborations do no more than activate what was in them implicitly.

The flame represents the permanence of fire, despite the fact that whatever it feeds on is condemned to become ashes. In this direction, fire in traditional homes, as Fustel de Coulanges has pointed out, is not only useful for preparing meals, but also becomes the symbol of unity among the several generations who live around it. Even when the older generations have gone, the response to the call of fire renews its memory, allowing the survival of what is antique in what is new. In the same way, the fire kept in the most sacred enclosure of Athena in the Pritaneus, symbolised both the historical continuity of the city and the communion of citizens in one current of history which saved its identity before the erosion of time. We are still debtors to this symbolic link between flame and survival of memory.

Flame and voice are the two oldest technologies in

human co-belonging. Where there is fire, men gather together to tell stories and, conversely, where men gather together, fire will eventually appear as the centre of the meeting. In some way this double gesture reproduces the affective warmth which physically and psychically surrounds the mother-child relation. On the contrary, loneliness such as is presented in most children's stories, for example, is no more than the loss of reference to the call of warmth/fire.

In some versions of the myth which are later than Lucius Acius (born approx. 170 B.C.), Prometheus steals fire directly from Haephestus-Vulcan's forge. We are thus basically speaking of a technical fire, able to soften, mold, and manage nature itself. In this sense it symbolises knowledge which guides technical work or, in Ernst Jünger's terms, titanic forces, those of iron.

In the iconography of Prometheic Roman sarcophagi later than the third century A.D., Prometheus' flame becomes a torch (prototype of all Olympic torches) and, therefore, the fire he bears is vicariously another, more fundamental, fire. An ancient Arab proverb tells us that no torch can illuminate its own base. In fact, to illuminate the base of a fire we need another fire, and so on. But is there a flame capable of illuminating itself? Hesiod clearly points out that Prometheus' fire is not exactly identical to Zeus', among other things because man's fire needs to be permanently fed. The Hispano-Roman Higinius, Augustus' librarian, added that what characterises man is the need to care for fire, while the gods have a self-sufficient flame. For the Romans as well as for Renaissance and Baroque man, this human fire is a symbol of their own reason. Prometheus, in a tradition stretching back to Apollodorus, molded man from clay. But the figure which left his hands was inert and lifeless. The ability to give life to clay, or, as Calderón de la Barca said in his *Estatua de Prometeo*, to wake the thought sleeping in the clay, is not something within a Titan's reach. This ability is exclusive of a superior being, divinity itself. In Prometheic Roman sarcophagi and in some primitive literary versions of the myth, Prometheus stole the fire of divine thought to give life to the image molded in clay. When he put the flame to the head of the statue, it came to life (that is, human life). But then, both life itself and human thought do not depend on the clay (Nature itself) but on another principle.

The torch lights, orients, gives a meaning to the clay. The first torch-bearer, Prometheus, is a symbol of philanthropy (this word first appears in Greek in Ae-

schylus' *Prometheus Bound*). The light of the flame is like a philanthropic star. In a third-century Prometheic sarcophagus in the Louvre, we see together the clay figure molded by the Titan, the torch, and the star. The reproduction of the act of giving life to man by putting the light from a torch near him is repeated in several varied iconographies. Quite possibly the best representation is Piero di Cosimo's picture *Story of Prometheus*, painted around 1515. In a detail of the picture we can see the Titan sculpting his own body in stone with the stick of the torch he has used to bring fire to Earth.

To the extent that Prometheus' action symbolises the inert figure's realisation of consciousness, this gesture may explain Prometheus' liberation from his chains; he had been eternally condemned by Zeus to remain chained to a rock in the Caucasus. In this direction, the torch, the star and the breaking of his chains are found in the origin of an iconography of liberation which is very close to us. To give several examples, I would send the reader to look at the poster for André Malraux' film *Espoir*; the emblem of Blasco Ibáñez' publishing house Editorial Prometeo; the Statue of Liberty in New York; the gilded image of Prometheus bearing fire on the doors of Rockefeller Centre in New York...

What Prometheus' torch lit was, above all, the dimension of human dissatisfaction; it eggs us on to remember the complexity and irreducibility of our hopes. Remember that, according to Hesiod, one of the consequences of Prometheus' revolt was the creation of Pandora, whose curiosity opened the lid of a box in which all evils were guarded. There was an immediate flight of illness, work, pain, and death, but Pandora had time to shut one into the bottom of the box; since then, hope has lived in men's homes. Hope is evil because it manifests human finiteness. Omnipotent gods have no need of it. But as long as it lives in men's homes it is one of the components of his dwelling. This is a permanent matter present in Camus. In such a significant year as 1946 he published his *Prometheus in Hell*. According to Camus, what Prometheus means to contemporary man is that the hope offered by technology can no longer be divorced from aesthetics. Man requires both opportunity for happiness and beauty at the same time and irrenounceably. He can never be content with one if the other is denied him. Therefore, «if we hunger for bread and for heather, and bread is more of a necessity, let us learn to treasure the memory of heather.»

Martyrdom

Hesiod tells us that as a punishment for stealing fire, Zeus chained Prometheus to a column and had an eagle devour his liver during the day. To make the punishment last, what was devoured during the day grew back at night. One of the oldest representations of this torture appears on a black-figure kylix by the painter Arcesilaus (approx. 560 B.C.) in the Vatican's Etruscan museum. In it, Prometheus is shown beside his brother Atlas, faithfully following Hesiod's description. The Hellenic world has given us other images of this punishment, such as those appearing on a black-figure vase of Cirenean style in the Louvre, but it is not, however, an especially frequent one. Additionally, during the Middle Ages the image of the fallen rebel was to be monopolised by the other light-bearer, Lucifer. This situation continued till Milton, in his *Paradise Lost*, dared to imagine a Lucifer of undeniably Prometheic traits, thus exercising a decisive influence on the recovery of the Titan myth in British literature and painting. On the Continent, the plastic strength of the image of Prometheus' punishment was masterfully recovered by Titian (1549, Prado Museum). During the Renaissance and the Baroque, it was confused with the torment of Ticius (Ribera, 1632, Prado Museum). Evidently, if the interest was to show the drama of the punishment, both suffered a similar one. However, the extraordinarily rich symbolism of the Prometheus myth did not take long to become predominant (Jacob Jordaens, Rubens, etc.).

Let us retain the image of a defenceless person ripped to shreds by a bird of prey. It is not difficult to find its suitability to represent the situation of extreme submission before the capricious cruelty of pitiless power. This is summed up by Goya in *Las Resultas*. In this etching, a half-dead woman which symbolises the people ravaged by the war, is pulled to pieces by the vampires of ill-government. In 1831, Grandville and Forest published a similar image in *La Caricature*. In this, the woman chained to the ground is France. The title given this work could not be more explicit: *France devoured by all sorts of crows*. Goya, like Grandville and Forest, picked on this image which had been widely broadcast on the eve of the French Revolution: that of a people freed from the chains which had tied them to exploitation by the powerful.

In the iconography of the left, these images owe a debt to the *Manifest of the plebeians* published by Ba-

beuf in *Le Tribun du Peuple* on November 30, 1795. These are a few lines from it:

People, awake to hope; put an end to the despair which is burying you [...]. Wake to the vision of a happy future! Friends of kings, lose all hope that the maces you have used to overwhelm the people will forever submit them to the yoke of any one! [...]. Guilty dominators, from the moment you can guiltlessly strike this virtuous people with your iron fist, it will make you feel its superiority, it will be free of your usurpations and your chains, it will recover its early sacred rights.

It cannot surprise us that during Romanticism there was a very wide movement to recover the Prometheus myth, basically in Aeschylus' tragedy version. In this work we find a latent form of the symbolism and even the vocabulary which mobilised both the Illustration and Romanticism. In the Greek tragedy, Prometheus is chained so he will learn to respect the gods and love humans less. He is chained by Haephestus who is pushed on by Power and Force, the vigilants of that pitiless tyrant, Zeus. But in spite of the punishment, the Titan will not repent of his deed. He was fully conscious of his acts and could find no reason to renounce his philanthropy. On the contrary, he was convinced that to the extent that this feeling grows among men, the gods will be progressively cornered within the walls of their spite. Prometheus asks Hermes: «Do you believe that I will lift my arms to beg that odious god to free me? That is something I will not do.»

Goethe and Nietzsche read these words admiringly. After reading the former, the latter announced the death of the gods.

But Prometheus' suffering can also be read in another way: as the concern which accompanies man during his existence. This will be seen by the genius Higinus, and when, during the Renaissance, classical mythology was recovered, two pioneering works in this effort, *Genealogia Deorum* by Boccaccio (1486) and *Mythology* by Natale Conti (1551), were especially attentive to this reading. Goethe recurred to Higinus in Act V, Scene V of the second half of his *Faust*. Through K. Burdach, Heidegger inspects this image with great interest. If Higinus had presented man's being as «care», that is to say, as permanent worry or anxiety, Heidegger defined it as *Sorge*, a translation of the same term, as fundamental existence. In Spanish literature no-one seems to have been more attracted by

this matter than Unamuno, who picked it up with great intensity in two poems. The first is a sonnet titled *To my Vulture*, and the second is a long composition titled *The Vulture of Prometheus*. In a letter to Maragall, he wrote that this latter composition «is one of the most mine.» In it, Unamuno directs these words, among others, to the vulture devouring him, named «Thought»:

How much you love me, my vulture, how much!
 With what voracious love you devour me
 Burning with desire of my bait!
 You are blood of my blood, and your flesh
 Is of my renewed flesh!
 You embrace me and hold me in your claws,
 As in a spasm of supreme fusion;
 My body trembles with pain in them,
 Palpitating chains,
 But my soul ...
 My soul turns to you, my executioner,
 As it owes you its life sap.

If care accompanies man's existence, perhaps there is no way to eliminate one to save the other. As the poet says, if life is a wound, its cure would mean death. However, there are different degrees of care. The most extreme are those which, while fleeing from mediocrity cannot put up with good either, as they put all their hope in a permanent search for the best. It was with these in mind that André Gide published his *Prometheus Misbound* in 1899. According to Gide, it is easy to free oneself from the chains because they only bind the outside, but not from the eagle. The eagle feeds on our hope. The eagle is our creature. However, to the extent that it feeds on us, the firmer our belief in a utopic future, the more famished will our present be, because we can only yearn for tomorrow if there is no satisfaction in today. We feed the eagle with precisely that dissatisfaction. The intensity of its growth reflects no more than the degree of our discomfort with what we are. The man who has an eagle does not love men, but rather what devours them. Perhaps he will seem always disposed to do something for them, but only to the extent of his pity for them.

However, Gide's Prometheus is capable of freeing himself from his eagle. For this he has only to claim the present, freeing it from any submission to an uncertain promise of a future. When Prometheus discovers that the present must free itself, he will invite his friends to a great feast. He will kill and roast the bird

which devoured him, which during this time has become enormous. This will be the banquet to which he invites them. The banquet is a reconciliation of the present with itself, the discovery that no hypothesis of the future can compromise the enjoyment of the now.

Technology

In Hesiod, the delivery of Prometheic technology to humans is described with a surprising vocabulary: that of the hidden and deceitful. Aeschylus adds the concept of blindness. In fact, what they mean to say is that human technology is not completely transparent and clear, as they hide, among other things, unforeseen effects which set up our good (or bad) intentions (and even our indifference).

This deceitful nature of human technology can be seen from many different angles. For example: if man is capable of developing techniques, this means he is not an innocent being (that is, he has certain responsibilities for his acts), but if he does not know everything that he moves by his acts, he is not omnipotent and is, thus, not completely responsible. The world of technology is limited, in this way, by two borders with very diffuse outlines.

The plural dimension of technology was to be recovered by Rousseau in his *Discours sur le rétablissement des sciences et des arts*, in 1750. Returning to the Prometheus myth he points out that it was a god who was an enemy of man that invented science. And going back to one of the oldest versions of the myth he adds that when Prometheus stole fire from the gods, a satyr, with admiration and love for its brightness, went to embrace it, but the Titan warned, «Be careful; you will lament the loss of your beard, as fire burns all it touches.»

Herder, Wieland, Goethe, Vincenzo Monti, Hugo von Hofmannstahl... all picked up in different ways on this concern of Rousseau's, but in contemporary popular culture the work which has most stressed the two faces of technology is *Frankenstein or a Modern Prometheus* by Mary W. Shelley. The birth of this work is not lacking in interest. Mary W. Shelley began to write it in 1816, four years before her husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley, composed his epic poem to the Titan, while she was on holiday in Switzerland together with Lord Byron, who, by the way, also wrote a poem to Prometheus.

Mary W. Shelley was the daughter of the theoretic-

cal anarchist W. Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, author of *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, one of feminism's pioneering works. It would thus be well worth taking into account the warning that the author of *Frankenstein* gives us in the prologue: her purpose has not been a mere chain of horrifying deeds. She is moved by the same purpose that guided her husband in his *Prometheus*: the praise of the excellence of universal virtue. It is altogether different to consider whether she achieved her purpose or not. In any case it is obvious that Dr. Frankenstein is moved by an undoubtedly philanthropic will. He seeks knowledge to transmit it generously to future generations, thus favouring the whole of the human race. But paradoxically, it is to be that same philanthropy which leads him to ignore his family and friends to satisfy his hopes: to resolve, definitely and completely, what is naturally lacking in man. If Frankenstein is guilty of something, it is undoubtedly not of his work which is completely innocent, but rather in the measureless enthusiasm he puts into its making. Like Prometheus, Frankenstein wants to mold a man. He continually refers, while telling of the development of his work, to the enthusiasm, the irresistible spur, the passionate ardour, the unbreakable constancy, the irresistible drive, the frenzy, etc. The tragedy lies in the fact that the work he has done in no way corresponds to the expectations he has deposited in it. The novel tells, beginning with the birth of Frankenstein (who, as in Hesiod's pre-Prometheus time, was born motherless), of the constant demand for recognition that the new being directs towards his creator, both disappointed and shy. «Give me happiness, and I shall be virtuous.» This is all he asks for, but the answer he gets from his maker could not be more cruel. «Free my eyes from your horrible sight!» He wanted to create an Adam and produced a fallen angel. Because of this, the Doctor, who had ingenuously believed himself all-powerful, cannot accept the recognition given him by his creation and is, above all, incapable of giving him his.

Herbert George Wells (willingly or not) continued Mary Shelley's work. H.G. Wells (1866-1946) was a pupil of T.H. Huxley, an intimate friend of Darwin's, and the first English graduate in science. It is no exaggeration to assert that his work, together with Huxley's means the end of optimism in humanity's scientific progress as it had been set forth by Bacon and Marlowe. If we read *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), *The Invisible Man* (1897), *The*

War of the Worlds (1898), *The First Man in the Moon* (1901), *Anticipations* (1901), or *A Modern Utopia* (1905), there will be no difficulty in discovering in all of them scientists led by feelings similar to Dr. Frankenstein's, that is to say, by an unlimited optimism, a blind ambition, and a beatific philanthropy, but absolutely incapable of foreseeing the effects of their good intentions.

In Spanish literature, we must remember, in this matter, Ramón Pérez de Ayala. In 1924 he published his *Prometheus*, in which he tells of a young man perfect from any point of view, who marries a young woman as perfect as himself, in order to give birth to a super man, the new Prometheus. However, from this perfect union a scrawny baby is born, who, after an unhappy and sickly childhood, is only capable of offering as a gift to his fellow-beings the spectacle of his hanging.

The Prometheus myth and psychoanalysis

A myth with a symbolic charge as extraordinarily rich as that of Prometheus could not be ignored by psychoanalysis. Freud took it on in a short text titled *On the Conquest of Fire*. His beginning hypothesis is that the previous condition for the conquest of fire was renouncing the pleasure of putting it out by urinating on it, which he considers intensely homosexual. Freud believes he can legitimate this reading by the presence of three elements of the story: the way Prometheus transports the fire, the nature of the act he carries out, and the meaning of the punishment he receives. Altogether, what the myth makes clear is humanity's instinctive resentment against the civilising hero, who imposes, along with culture, a renunciation to the free expression of instincts. The heat of the fire awakes the same feeling, according to Freud, which goes with sexual excitement, while the flame, in form and movement, reminds us of the phallus. We still speak of the fire of passion or flames which «lick» or «tongue».

Jung also dealt with this myth in his *Psychological Types*, and Bachelard in his *Psychoanalysis of Fire*. For the latter, the Prometheus complex is the Oedipus complex of intellectual life. In regard to the symbolic charge of the flame, Bachelard develops this matter masterfully in *The Candle's Flame*. But perhaps the best and most faithful development of the Freudian hypothesis is that of Paul Diel in *Le symbolisme dans*

la mythologie grecque. Prometheus created man from clay, symbol of what is material, but to give him life he needs to steal fire. This fire is not the light of the spirit in its purity, but rather its utilitarian form. But even in this form it must be stolen. It thus represents reduced intellect. Zeus' punishment is not a consequence of the jealousy of the gods, but rather to their opposition to the trivialisation of the light of the intellect. Man's flame is not pure. But his culture depends on its impurity. This flame can be technological, mystical, or orgiastic. Prometheus becomes the symbol of humanity because his story symbolises man's essential history: the path which begins in animal innocence (unconscious) which, through intellect (conscious), and the danger of its implications (subconscious), launches himself toward the conquest of super-conscious life (Olympus). The same path is symbolised in the Judaeo-Christian myths. In these, the unconscious is symbolised by Paradise, the conscious by earthly life, the subconscious by Hell, and the super-conscious by Heaven.

In several Roman sarcophagi with Prometheic iconography, the figure molded by the Titan was completed by Athena when she put a butterfly chrysalis into its head. In this way man is a being made of mud who dreams of having wings. But he cannot reach this dream while he lives. In any case it is a hope which remains open after death. To stress this, on those sarcophagi the soul is represented by butterfly wings. We can add that Creuzer has collected some Greco-Roman images in which a man is seen reading a book next to a quarry over which a butterfly flutters capriciously. Let us leave this symbol open. We will not force it with an explanation, so as to leave the reader free on the adventure of its interpretation.

Annex. Notes for a history of the Prometheus myth

The classical sources of the Prometheus myth are the following:

- Aescholius in *The Iliad* I, 126.
- Hesiod: *Theogony* 50b s; 571 s. *Works and Days*, 50 s.
- Aeschylus: *The Prometheus tetralogy*.
- Plato: *Protagoras* 321
- Aristophanes: *The Birds*.
- Pausanias: I, 24, 7; IX, 25, 6; X, 4, 4.
- Higinius: *Fables* 142, 114, 144.
- Apollodorus: *Bibliotheca* I, 2, 2 s.
- Apolonius of Rhodes: *Argonauticae*, III, 845.
- Diodorus Siculus: V, 67.
- Lucian: *Dialogues of the Gods*.
- Servius: *Commentary on Virgil: The Aeneid* I, 741; *Eglogues*, VI, 42.
- Valerius Flaccus: *Argonauticae*, VII, 355.
- Aestobaeus: *Anthology*, II, 27.
- Ovid: *The Metamorphoses*, I, 82.
- Juvenal: *Satires*, XIV, 35.
- Tzetzes: *Commentary on Lycophon* 123; 132; 219.

In regard to the Pandora iconography:

1. On a white-background Attic vase (c. 460 B.C., London, British Museum) she is seen between Haephestus and Athena, who adjusts her dress.
2. On a cratera attributed to the painter of the Niobides (c. 460 B.C., British Museum) she is seen standing in the midst of an assembly of the gods.
3. Pausanias tells us that Pandora's birth appeared on the base of Phidias' Parthenon Athena, in the Parthenon.
4. Beginning in the Renaissance, Pandora's iconography changes, under Erasmus' influence, due to a confusion with the legend of Psyche.
5. Roso (1530-1540) draws her opening the box of all evils (Paris, *École des Beaux-Arts*).
6. Jean Cousin paints her titled *Eva Prima Pandora* (1549, Paris, Louvre).
7. El Greco sculpts her next to Epimetus (Prado Museum).
8. The Neo-classics, especially the English, turn their attention to her. J. Barry pictures her dressed up, in an assembly of the gods, ready to accept her future (1791, Manchester, City Art Gallery). H. Howard, influenced by the illustrations in Flaxman's Hesiod (etchings by W. Blake, published 1817), returns to the main episodes of Hesiod's tale: «Pandora receiving the gifts of the gods», «Pandora led before Epimethus by Mercury», and «Epimetus opening Pandora's box» (1834, London, Sir John Soame's Museum).
9. Rosetti again took up the misogynynous theme in Pandora's box (1871, localisation unknown).
10. Paul Klee (1920, private collection) made of «Pandora's box in still life» a theme with obvious sexual connotations.

In regard to Prometheus, representations of him are much more abundant, according to his mythic protagonism:

1. The oldest known representation is that of a Tyrean amphora (c. 550 B.C., Florence, Archaeology Museum), where his liberation by Hercules is shown. Hercules brings down with an arrow the eagle flying toward the Titan, who is sitting on the ground, tied to a stake.

2. The creation of man myth, already known in the 4th century B.C., is not represented till a later era:

2.1. On an etched stone (end of the 3rd century B.C., London, British Museum), we see Prometheus collecting skeleton bones.

2.2. The theme is much more elaborated in Roman art, especially on sarcophagi.

3. The extraordinary symbolic richness of the Prometheus myth was to be revitalised in the Renaissance by Boccaccio and Conti, whose influence was taken on by Calderón de la Barca in his *Estatua de Prometeo* and, in plastic arts, by:

3.1. Piero di Cosimo (c. 1510), who dedicated two panels to the myth. In one of them (Munich, Alte Pinakothek), there is the dispute between Epimetheus and Prometheus, the statue of the just-created man, and Prometheus flying towards the sky led by Minerva. In the other (Strasbourg, Musée des Beaux-Arts), Prometheus steals fire from the chariot of the Sun, gives life to man, and is then tied to a tree by Mercury.

3.2. Rubens (1577-1640) dedicated two paintings to him: *Prometheus Bound* (Oldenburg Museum), and *Prometheus with Fire* (Prado Museum).

3.3. Other representations are those of Salvator Rosa (1665, Rome, Galleria Nazionale); *Prometheus Bound* by Jakob Jordaens (1593-1678 Cologne Wallraf-Richartz Museum); Jan Cossiers; Titian *Prometheus* (1549, Prado Museum); Ribera; Il Domenichino carried out two frescoes on the theme, *Prometheus and Minerva* and *Prometheus freed by Hercules* (1602, Rome, Palazzo Farnesio); Luca Giordano drew the creation of man in his *Allegory of human life* (c. 1680, Florence, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi).

3.4. Romanticism was to be extraordinarily sensitive to the Prometheus symbols, which seem to be perfectly suited for the representation of a new sensibility.

N. S. Adams dedicated a sculpture to him (1762, Paris, Louvre); G. Moreau, for whom Prometheus symbolised «the great sacrifice which dies for humanity», confers on his *Prometheus blasted* the aspect of a pagan Christ (c. 1689, Gustave Moreau Museum, Paris); A. Böcklin shows us, at an angle, the Titan chained to a rock. His profile is mixed up with the rocks and clouds (1882, Florence, private collection).

Under the Titan's aegis, Hobbes, Rousseau, Goethe, Shelley, Herder, Vincenzo Monti, Carl Spitteler, Marx picked up their pens, and they were followed by Nietzsche, Kafka, Michelet, A. Gide, Freud, Eugeni d'Ors, Bachelard, Jünger...

In the musical field, it is worth paying special attention to Beethoven's *The Creatures of Prometheus*, a ballet, opus 43, composed in 1880 at the Italian choreographer Salvatore Vigano's request. Although the text of the ballet is unknown to us, we know from diverse sources that it praised Prometheus as a benefactor of humanity to which he had given conscience and the arts. The plot put two statues on stage, which were slowly animated by the power of the harmonies and became participants in all human passions. At the end, there appears for the first time the heroic theme on which he built the glorious finale of the Third Symphony (*Heroica*). Beethoven's *Prometheus* was one of his first successes and had more than twenty shows in Vienna between 1801 and 1802. In a handbill from that time we can read the following:

This allegorical ballet is based on the myth of Prometheus. The Greek philosophers, who knew the myth, told the story in the following way: they represented Prometheus as a high spirit who, finding human beings of his time in a state of ignorance, polished them thanks to art and knowledge, giving them rules of good conduct. According to these sources, the ballet presents two animated statues which, under the influence of harmony, are capable of reaching all the passions of human existence. Prometheus leads them to Parnassus to receive instruction from Apollo, god of the arts...

On the presence of the statues, it may not be altogether foolish to suppose an influence from Calderón's comedy *Estatua de Prometeo*. Salvatore Vigano (born 1769) came to Spain when he was twenty years old, and married the dancer María Medina. It was Vigano who gave Beethoven the script for the ballet. By the

way, he later (in 1813) produced another Prometheus, mixing Beethoven's music with Haydn's *Creation*, and achieving a great success in Milan.

Other musical compositions dedicated to this theme are those of Gavriel Fauré (his opera *Prometheus* premiered in 1900); Jacques-Élie Halévy (1799-1862) wrote scene music for Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* (1849); Franz Liszt (1811-1886) composed, between 1850 and 1855, a symphonic poem titled *Prometheus*; the *Cantata for soloists, choir and orchestra* by Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) titled *The wedding of Prometheus* (1867); Alexander Nikolaievich Scriabin premiered *Prometheus*, Fifth Symphony in 1910; Carl Orff *Prometheus*, opera premiered in 1968...