Prometheus

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abstract

This article tries to unravel major traits of contemporary mythology, settling upon the myth of Prometheus and the author's impressions during many years of business practice. First, the myth will be introduced, then, the programme resulting out of it, whereby the emphasis lies upon Occidental dualisms of conceiving the world, which have a long tradition. Afterwards, the sum of its consequences shall be looked at, together with a final reflection. According to the point of view adopted here, the myth of Prometheus has to be seen symbolically as part of an encompassing but entire world view which now is prevailing in our cultural sphere, the Occident.

The Myth

Prometheus – isn't this a figure from Greek mythology, located in the remote past of an *illo tempore* we share nothing in common with any more, the object of study of myth researchers or other specialists? What does a figure like this have to do with our present day, 'post-modern' life, a life we perceive as completely de-mystified, soberly organised to the bone and stripped off of any mythic ingredients? Before answering that question, we should look at the myth itself.

Prometheus the Titan was a rebel against the existing cosmic order, and by this rebellion, the liberator of mankind. A mythic hero who took pity on humanity and sought to improve their lot; at a great personal cost, because he was severely punished. He stole fire from the Gods and passed it over to man, thus enabling man to rise into a state of civilisation. This is the common version of the myth, a version known to all of us, more or less. A version with Prometheus as a positive figure. A version we, his followers and heirs of what I want to call a Promethean mythology, are inclined to believe.

All in all, a mythology typically Occidental, intrinsically belonging to our cultural sphere. But in order to better understand the things to come, we should look first at the nature of the mythic and its reality-shaping influence. What is a myth, by its essence? A holy, and therefore true tale. It is not just a story; nor to be set equal with a lie, as we today tend to interpret the mythic. It is a tale which is true because it is holy; sacrosanct, not to be doubted, a tale we believe in with certainty of faith. And it is not just any tale,

but a one about the world as it is, the cosmos we live in – about its nature and meaning, and about how that cosmos came into being.

For the Greeks, a myth encompasses every imagination of reality, which understands reality as a symbolic expression of powers and forces constituting the principal relations of the life of nature and of man (Hoffmeister, 1955: 418). Properties of the mythic are not confined to our ancestral *illo tempore* but are also present today, in both dimensions of cosmology and cosmogony: Every society is held together by a 'system of myths', a mythology; myths are 'sharing images' (Agmo and McWhinney, 1989: 15), images of what "is 'true' about an organization or society. They convey...an understanding of the history in terms of present consciousness. They tell truth out of which an organization operates" (Turner, 1990: 2).

If we understand the notion of an organisation in its broadest terms, namely as the basic living condition of man being a *zoon politikon*, a social animal, then myth is the base of culture. And it has to do with historical causality – with change, cosmogony. In both the ancestral and the present case, myths not only tell about a cosmic order existing and how it evolved, but also about the meaning of this evolution, its *logos*. A myth is a cosmological tale; and it tells about cosmogony, the principles and reasons of how that world had developed. Or, in our Occidental case, has to develop yet on a continuous basis, in a process of a *creatio continua*, the Promethean drive for the still better, the more perfected, the more powerful. When we take one of today's prominent myths, for instance, the one telling us that free market equals democracy (in mythological terms: the liberation of all) and hence, is equal to freedom as such; that truly liberated individuals cannot but live inside the terms of such a system.

The Promethean mythology is one devoted to the deed, to progress forever, to the mythic hope of the individual's enduring, and eternal, liberation from the chains of the world 'as it is'. A mythology of expansion and omnipotence steered by the striving for immortality. Culminating in the myth of modernity: that in everything what can be done has to be done, also, has to be realised; this means a mythological translation has to become part of that world as it is, no matter the costs or consequences, the 'collateral damages' decision makers speak of. To make that world to our world completely. Which is the essence of such a mythology: That the world 'as it is' in its respective primordial shape, from bare nature down to enterprises, has to be encountered by us – reshaped, re-arranged, put in line with our wills and conceptions; that is, in its final mythical as well as practical consequences: transformed. That we are not able to leave this primordiality to stand by its own, inside its own rights and properties, but to re-organise it; to make any 'natural' state we encounter to an 'artificial' one in literal terms, namely to the product of our destined influences. Every myth owns a "narrative core with marginal capabilities for variations" (Blumenberg, 1996: 40), and this is the core of the Promethean myth: to achieve a world as artefact. Made by man, not by itself.

An aspect of peculiar importance is that Promethean mythology, which has a focus on progress, since progress is understood as the continuous destruction of the pre-given, of the cosmic orders already in existence. For such a mythology, a myth of creative destruction applies: the meaning of evolution consists in destruction – of existing cosmic orders. Because the 'old' (from a mythological perspective) is conceived as

insufficient, and first of all, as restraining; it prevents us from growth, hinders our expansion. All in all, and expressed in terms of a mythological abbreviation, any existing cosmic order we meet equals a constraint, a constraint for unlimited expansion; for becoming 'better' through a process of continuous growth, whereby the 'better' can adopt a wide array of meanings, depending on the concrete case: of becoming more liberated (than we are now, inside the existing cosmic order), more efficient, more wealthy, or whatever. Thus, related to the myth of creative destruction, there is a myth of unlimited growth, of progress unlimited: the meaning of evolution consists in creative destruction because the meaning of evolution is to grow *ad infinitum*. Or expressed even shorter: the *logos* of evolution – and hence, of life as such, and of us – is growth, and thus, destruction.

This literal mytho-logical causality might, at first sight, sound strange to some reader, but its presence can be seen in everyday life, from scientific explanations to advertising sequels: Growth is 'natural', we hear, every biological species has the inherent tendency to grow, to expand (unless constrained by some counter-acting forces); there is an 'egoism of the genes' to spread out unrestricted unless impeded by some other 'egoistic' genes; hence, evolution equals a continuous fighting, that famous Darwinian struggle for existence. In a mythological translation: expansion and destruction are quite 'natural', that is, they cannot be avoided – if I want to survive, I have to be expansive at the cost of others, this means, in its final consequence, I have to be destructive. This, mythology tells us, is scientific, that is, an *objective* and 'true' explanation of natural cosmic processes, ranging from biological species to today's globalised enterprises. This holy tale about the *logos* of evolution holds valid for bare nature, the primordial cosmos, as well as for the cultural, man-made one. More and more – a Life Philosophy, a simple advertising sequel tells us. To provide examples from the everyday life of our culture about the meaning of myths, a meaning we all know, even if it represents a knowledge we do not reflect about, an 'un-thought known' (to recur to a term of Bollas); you have just to switch on your TV, and you can see many more of them.

It is a mythology which poses a severe problem – on mythological grounds: At least in its original, Greek conception, as such, *cosmos* is quite the opposite to the unlimited, the non-confined: cosmos is order, and order is confinement. The Greek *kosmos* denotes not only the general (and natural) world order, but also harmony, and, by that, natural beauty. An order that is systemic in literal terms: the Greek *systema* (our word 'system' derives from this) is the harmonically posed, it has *metron* (measure), it owns confining proportion (Mittelstraß, 1981: 50).

For such an imagology of the world as it is, World as such, if it wants to be 'harmonic', then it has to be confined. Of course, there might be struggle and fight, even forever. But all these quarrels and developments stay inside a pre-given cosmic order, which do not get violated through them. Now imagine what happens – on both mythological and practical grounds – if the idea of an eternal progress through continuous destruction enters into this world. For such a conception of the cosmos as the one depicted here, this would be chaos, the very opposition to order; the amorphous, unlimited, the unrestricted as such. Either there is chaos, the deep abyss, the nothing (amorphous, because non-confined), or there is *kosmos* (world), the very base of our human existence as such. Without going into further details, it is worth realising the difference of such a cosmic

order to our own. For such an understanding of the world 'as it is', it would be hubris to trespass the existing cosmic limits, to proceed (by mythic intention) beyond every confinement, in the attempt to expand 'unlimited'. An attempt reflected in what I want to call a myth of growth: that it is only growth which ensures our very survival, through eternal progress heading towards an infinite 'better' (whatever it might be). With the mythic hope of ever-increasing perfection: this efficiency programme here, it can be made even better, we can get yet more efficient than we are (already) now; we can become still better, harder, tougher, etc. managers than now; or, standing as a symbol for an entire culture, our economy has to grow constantly in order to not collapse; and so on. No wonder that a myth of modernity emerged. Because in becoming increasingly perfect (in order to survive), everything that can be done has to be done, indeed; otherwise (the myth tells) we would die.

To juxtapose these two basic mythological alternatives of how a 'world as it is' could look like: either as cycle (the old, classical conception) or as vector – the modern, Promethean conception. But this isn't the major difference to be considered here; it is another one even more severe; the idea of hubris implies that if I transcend every cosmic barrier, I will fall out of this world, I will get annihilated, destroyed. We all remember the ecological debates about ozone holes, climatic catastrophes and dwindling resources; that is, in mythological translation, the destruction of the natural, 'primordial' cosmos. Accompanied by increased unemployment, social problems, etc. that, in mythological translation too, is a destruction of that cosmos we conceive as genuinely human – the man-made world, our civilisation as the (only) place to live in. All that, we destroy. On the other hand, as long as I follow that Promethean mythology, I will become annihilated if I do not constantly destroy (through progress, etc.). We see the problem, Promethean entanglement, which will not only turn into a mythological and quite practical, but first of all, into a psychological problem. As long as I follow that mythology, I cannot escape the entanglement, I stick to it – so, what to do? To continue, by increased perfection, one day we will succeed in mastering these collateral damages; we will manage resource problems, the black rhino and increasing social disruption. One day, in the future. We will get the masters of such a world as it is. One day to be expected soon: since we continuously progress, with relentless effort and ever-increasing technical capabilities, to solve all this mess one day. Mastering the world as it is – the Promethean answer. It is a myth of domination which finds expression here; to dominate it all, problems and achievements alike, through an infinite vector-movement achieved by permanent creative destruction, the order of the order-less, in the perspective of a classical ('cyclical') mythology.

The Programme

We should stay here for a while, to envisage the magnitude of the problem in its entirety. Because, as earlier mentioned, as long as we follow such a mythology – *we* cannot but destroy. An overall, and hence, ontological situation reflected in a myth of movement, the certainty of faith that movement equals life. Accompanied by another 'mythos' genuinely Occidental, the myth of the paradise lost: that it was only primitives who had an intact cosmos, living in a peaceful (since non-progressive) Arcadia we have

forever lost. That it was us who were the victims of the *Logos* of evolution, that changes towards the irreversible – a myth about the condemnation of Occidental man. Telling us that it is our fate to proceed until infinity; the next horizon, the next state of being to be reached, which (hopefully) will be more perfect than the present one we are addicted to. The whole magnitude not only of the problem, but also of the psychological condition behind it may be revealed from the following statement:

> Our mode of thinking and perceiving is coined by the idea of movement up to its most remote ramifications. Wide domains of our world view we owe to the Greeks. They left to us a magnificent fundament for our mathematics and geometry, for our forms of thought and expression, and yet, at the same time, we removed ourselves away from them. In some points we proceeded, in the most we lost. One of the domains in which we made progresses is the capture of movement. The need to investigate movement, i.e. the ever-changing in its most diverse forms has determined our scientific thinking and finally our expression of feeling in a fundamental way. It has its roots in the world view of the Greeks – and not just in their incapability – that they couldn't grasp the idea of movement and couldn't bring it into a precise form. They lived in a world of eternal ideas, in a world of constants...Aristotle, and with him the ancients, look at the world as something which rests in itself, as something that existed from archaic origin. This was encountered by the religious conception, that the world had been created and was put into movement through an act of will. Only lately, out of this basal idea of a world being in movement...has the consequence been drawn. This happened in the times of the High Gothic...the Scholastics...The question of Thomas Aquinas, how God created the world out of nothing, and which are the principles and causes underlying that activity of God, resulted in the question about the nature of change, and in its further proceeding, about the nature of movement. (Giedion, 1994: 33)

Movement came into the world irreversibly – and with it the threat of non-reliability. So what?, one might ask. This sounds trivial to us today because we got acquainted to the idea of change and 'progress' long since. But it isn't trivial from a mythological perspective, because it deeply affects the relation between myth and reality. The uniqueness of the idea of an ever-changing world (the vectorial model) comes out clearer in comparison with the cyclical one. Those 'traditional' mythologies of 'pre-civilised' or 'primitive' societies (in themselves, scientific terms with a mythic touch) anchor in an *illo tempore* of the world's origin, a place in time where all the relevant rules governing that world have been established, rules to be valid unchanged until today. So, the prime mythic aim consists in re-establishing the conditions of that time, as a necessary precondition to ensure the world's order, to prevent chaos, dissolution, and hence, the death of the 'world as it is' (Eliade, 1988: 40). A cosmic conception that excludes dangerous experiments, and by that, progress; and which leads to a closed cosmos. As a member of one of those primitive societies, I have to be constantly aware to keep the conditions of that *illo tempore* alive, I have to look at my acts very carefully so that they do not violate the cosmic order in existence since then. I have to not change it. Opposed to the Promethean model that has to challenge any order in existence, World is not *man-made* but from the Gods, and inherited from the forefathers. So, as a 'primitive', I have to keep it. As a logical consequence, I have to live in harmony with that world's other inhabitants, all the other animated beings next to man.

It is perhaps this difference of world view compared to our condemnation of progress why we admire those primitives when we watch them on TV, them sitting in their peaceful Arcadia, in performing their cosmos-keeping rituals, and speaking to 'brother bear'. They have humility, and no hubris. Their world moves, but no overall movement.

Which is the point of mythological importance, at this place: the form in which a mythology does affect and shape reality. In both the vectorial ('Promethean') and cyclical ('primitive') case, myths create their concomitant realities, but the form, the pattern differs – in the cyclical case, a reality is created which then is kept constant, it is one reality, one cosmic order in existence; in the vector-model, the created reality has to be constantly re-shaped, with the consequence that there is not one, but many subsequent realities, a series of cosmic orders superseding each other (we recall from above: the myths of progress and destruction). In the latter case, there is no cosmic anchorage. In the primitive case, there exists a constant cosmic order; in the evolved, Promethean case the only constant is change, that is, in mythological terms: disorder. As the tragedian Aischylos who wrote the first known tragedy about Prometheus coined it, man is an *akosmeton genos*: an a-cosmic being. This has consequences. Not only as regards the basic psychological condition of such a-cosmic beings (namely us Occidentals), but also its forming of realities. Since such a being, opposed to the primitive, has to mould its physical world, to actually *re-shape* it. It is a new quality in the relation myth-reality: there are no sacrosanct holy places in the natural world any more, this 'holy' forest here where the dryads and nymphs were housed. Superstitious bullshit, it can be destroyed in favour of an office block, or to deliver the fuel for locomotives. The primordial, 'natural' world, in mythological terms, man's Outside, is not holy any more but became material, bare matter to get formed by our will and conceptions. This new quality in man's relation to his Outside gave birth to the Promethean worlds as we know them; now, myth actually generates the realities suited to it. And through that, as an emergent phenomenon, a new reality emerges *sui generis*, a new kind of reality: what I call the world as artefact; a world we live in, nevertheless.

Expressed in mythic terms: man became *civilised*. Posing an Inside, an artificial cosmos created by himself, against an Outside, a primordial world, he is no longer part of (opposed to the primitive) and which now remains in the outskirts, outside the walls of the Polis, the town-state as a symbol for that new, man-made order; this is the first step of a Promethean emancipation: nature vs. culture. And, in the Occidental case, followed by that second step described above: the Inside acquires domination over the Outside, denying the latter's right to lead an existence in its own right. In mythic terms: there shall no longer be an Outside, everything should become an Inside – everything has to be transformed into man's world; or where this is not possible, has to stay at man's command at least, has to be controlled by him. At the end of such a mythical as well as practical process, the world as it is became a function of man: y = f(x) standing at his disposal. In both its dimensions of Inside and Outside, that is the important point here, in our Occidental case – we can manage our own organisations as well, and as perfectly, as we are able to manage the African elephant or other remnants of a primordial nature. The idea of the function, says Spengler in his *Decline of the Occident*, is indicated in no other culture (Spengler, 1996: 101).

Alongside this, another (non-primitive) idea came into the world, a Promethean promise: universal management. Not just 'management' – which others perform too in their (modest and non-progressive) attempts to manipulate their respective environments – but universal management. To manage it all, from simple work routines to complicated genetic experiments; the mythic idea, and hope, to achieve a world as function. Since this would mean total control, and thus, man's total domination over any

world as it is, from the molecular micro-cosmos up to missions to outer space. But first of all, this would ensure a true *creatio continua* (next to God), the generation of a man-made world on an ongoing basis. Maybe in a vectorial world, only change is reliable, but now, we have it in our own hands again (the etymological root of 'management'), we can master even change. It became change; planned by us, controlled by us, performed by us. And, unlike the primitive, not by some outside nature we are subjected to. In fact, we became our own Gods. There is no need to be anxious any more; a primordial world which had been portrayed by mythologists as a *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, a great vast emptiness threatening human kind, it does not threaten us any longer. Instead, it became the object of study of mythologists or the *topos* of fantasy movies; a fairy tale, nothing more. To pinpoint an entire Occidental mythogenesis in short words.

By its inner logic, a world as function is the prerequisite of the world as artefact; to realise the latter is an expansive and encompassing way, I need a proper instrument to do so – next to a mythology delivering me the justification for doing so at all. Will without power is useless, that is, without the proper means to achieve the wanted. Especially with a look at the starting conditions in Occidental man's *illo tempore*, means are urgently needed. Since then, contrary to the above image of a harmonic Greek cosmos, which was broken apart by 'the religious conception' (our Judaeo-Christian heritage besides the Greek one), it has been conditioned not in favour of man. If we interpret the events narrated in Aischylos' tragedy as the representation of an archetypal cast of mind characterising Occidental mankind, the world depicted at mankind's dawn is not harmonic, not at all. It is a world of fight, a place where the fittest is yet to be found. It is a place populated by three competing major species equipped with *logos* the capability to understand; the Titans, the newly arrived Olympic Gods, and humans. And after his victory over the old endogenous residents – the Titans, the new ruler in power, Zeus, doesn't like human kind. Let them live in the dirt and eat their meal uncooked, he says to his companions; in fact he hopes that all mankind will perish one day. Aischylos brings the theme of the tragedy to its point when stating that for man, it would be better not to exist at all. This is not hopelessness of desperation but objective result of the myth – man is weaker than his competitors because he is just simply less competitive than those mighty Gods. He does not fit into the existing balance of power, a despicable one-day genus struggling for bare survival. An a-cosmic being that has no genuine place in this world.

Equally, Prometheus had no high opinion about the humans. His larceny of fire had political reasons: Prometheus, whose name, like Lucifer, means 'bearer of light', was one of the former rulers; he needed mankind for his plans, probably a *coup d'etat* against the new order of powers imposed by the Olympic Gods. He too was convinced of the humans' objective worthlessness, but he also knew that the larceny of fire could not be revoked by Zeus and demanded back from the mortals once they possessed it. He proceeds like a marketing man, shrewd, clever and convincing: using his *logos* as the persuasive word (one of many meanings of *logos*), he tells man nothing about his true fate – that the very existence of man has no reason at all, that it lacks any meaning. In fact, he does what other Gods in other tragedies also used to do, states Blumenberg (1996). He works with blindness, pretence, the illusionary vision. Consciously, he is to pose an error in the world: Prometheus' form of *ate*, 'the doom' – for tragedians, a

Goddess of fate causing all passionate deeds done in a state of mental blindness – consists in a particular technique: in illusion. Passing down the fire to it, he provides mankind with 'the blind hopes' (Aischylos). Hopes which might prove to be untrue, never to be realised; but nevertheless, developing a causality by their own, in further histories' run. On the other hand but related to it, Prometheus' deed caused an irreversible change: the emergence of what we call culture. By that deed, he raised the former one-day genus into the status of a world power, which even Zeus was not able to make invisible again. This was the Promethean offence against the cosmic order: to have made the best out of a bad thing. In transforming man's objective worthlessness – from a state which comprised nothing more than the bare capability to exist, into one of being worthy of existence. But still worthless in real terms; a marketing trick. The summary:

> By their nature, men are as dumb as animals, not worthy of existence. Zeus wants to demolish them and is confident that they will not endure, in their state. Now it is Prometheus who, first of all, makes humans into human beings...an interpretation of fire as the creative and inventive capability, because it is the premise for the transformation and melioration of all matters of nature. Hence, culture is a way...of raising autonomy. Prometheus is author of mankind through fire; it is their *differentia specifica*, like it will be again in anthropological palaeontology. (Blumenberg, 1996: 338; emphasis in original)

To transform all matters of nature, the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* of the former dirt he lived in, via a divine trick. We should see this symbolically, it is not so much about fire but what it represents in both myth and science – it is about a *logos* of creation, of autonomy, through enabling mankind to erect a reign by its own. *Nomos*, the man-made law ('autonomous' stems from this, the capability to make one's own laws), versus *physis*, 'the ever-growing' nature. Although all this might be an illusion, according to the not very optimistic tale told here.

Nomos vs. *physis*, the first step of a Promethean emancipation. From now on, physis, the natural world of the organically ('naturally') growing, obeying its own causalities of self-organisation and dynamics, becomes opposed to *nomos*, the man-made law, the planned conception imposed upon those 'naturally growing' phenomena, the world of culture, of the civilised man. At the age of Aischylos, the first Occidental city appeared which showed a completely rectangular town-plan, that is, designed entirely by rational criteria (in nature, there are no right angles). *Nomos* vs. *physis*. With this bifurcation, the departure of man from nature had begun; the world of the purposeful, of will and conception, a world of the (intended) control, against the prime ontological state of the unplanned, which remains by itself. It is a kind of secondary autonomy, of culture against the prime autonomy of nature; since nature, too, is autonomous, albeit in other ways than we want it.

We should remain here for a while, to clearly envisage the consequences. The victims of which we are, if we translate this mythical distinction *nomos-physis* into the actual modalities of the today's world as it is. Caused by that Promethean mythology outlined in the foregoing, in particular after that mythology got enriched by 'the religious conception', the monotheist idea of a *Logos* of the One: that there should be One, and not many – the one organisation, the one management, the one right way to live (in either capitalist or socialist version); us, the civilised, vs. the remainder, the pagans. All

in all: that there should be unity instead of diversity, the simplicity of best-laid plans ('culture') vs. the complexity of natural states. Because *physis*, the naturally growing, is not only the Outside – the bare physical forces we try to master with the means of our technique, or the rest of a 'natural' outside world, a residual world of the non-manmade, be it outer space or the Amazon forest. *Physis* is also in the Inside, taking place in the midst of these products we created with Promethean pride and purpose-oriented rationality: the forces of what the planners today coin as system dynamics. The so-called 'informal' organisation of things, a result of our planned conduct. The self-organising dynamics of markets in defiance of any control, for instance, or the phenomena of social disruption we face despite all plans to restrict and to manage them, down to the modern core domain of Promethean man, the individual organisation itself, remaining still complex and unmanageable despite all management efforts to cope with complexity and to trim the ongoing processes 'into line' again. In one word, in the midst of our planned world of culture, we meet the forces of *physis* again.

Hundreds of years after Aischylos, Schelling, the first Occidentalist to investigate the myth on systematically scientific grounds, said "To tear out from the Being is Evil – to try to escape from the cosmic order in existence" (Schelling, cited in Safranski, 1999: 40), no matter whether the latter is of divine (the classical view) or a natural-systemic property (our contemporaneous scientific view). Moreover, it's interesting that the Promethean counterpart of our second cultural root, Lucifer, argues in a very similar way to Prometheus: he seduces man in promising him knowledge, the kind of *logos* which is necessary to erect a reign by own means. To recur to a key property of the mythic: both myths tell the same truth.

This might be just superstition; since today we are more advanced, meaning less timid, since we are less religious than our forefathers were. We know more about nature than any generation before, and we know that lightning is no divine sign but electric energy, which can be of use for man. And as regards our systemic entanglements: more helps more. With increasing knowledge, we'll get rid of such side effects. Nice tales, the old mythic stories. We are no primitives. Even if the problem remains – the burden of freedom.

And we feel it, as an unthought known reflected in the myth of the lost paradise, with the flight into civilisation, the best was already lost. Provided, of course, that Aischylos isn't correct in assuming that human kind has no genuine place in this world. But it may be that neither version, the pessimistic or the optimistic one, is of help for us – we have to stay here, a Promethean king and slave at the same time, in the midst of our self-induced world. *We have to continue*. Since we cannot return; the Promethean world we generated has caught us – systemic entanglement.

Further Developments

In terms of the mythological epistemology developed so far, the Promethean promise gave rise to a myth of *logos*, with all its concomitant consequences – of a peculiar *logos*. But to this later. As said earlier, first it needs a myth to quest something at all, and then,

the accompanying *logos* will happen of its own accord, in both its dimensions of an overall meaning and an instrumental capacity. First, to the myth: it was not just the promise to achieve a world as artefact; this could mean many things, and not all of them are positive, as we meanwhile have realised. Behind the world as artefact lies another promise even more convincing: that it is possible, through creating such a world, to gain unlimited freedom; a freedom from constraints, from the severity of life. And even more, that it is possible to gain that on an individual basis; that it must be possible – through the proper application of a new *logos* – to free the individual, the single being formerly living in the dirt (no matter whether in Aischylos' or today's contexts) from those constraints. It is the myth of Occidental freedom: that the individual is liberated to do what it wants, wherever, and whenever it wants. With its latest (albeit consequent) post-modern outcome: the myth that freedom equals easiness. That the individual has no longer to live in the dirt of its circumstances, that it is free to raise from pain, into a status to lead a fully self-determined life. Be individual. 'Be Yourself', a recent advertising tells us. And that, so the Titanic promise, not only from time to time, but forever – fully self-determined, this is the point, from the Titan over Kant, the Romanticists, Marx, the '68-movement and others down to recent advertising.

The modality to achieve this may differ either through individuals in groups – the *polis*, the socialist commune, or other variants of the ideal state – or through real individual individuals, as we know them from the Puritan movement or, more recently, Capitalism. But, in a way, this is not so important; this concerns the question of deviations at a mere operative level. What counts is the promise as such – the myth of freedom.

But how to achieve this, in principle? Such an ideal of the Titan can be gained only if a certain logic finds application. It is a question of the proper *logos* to achieve this new, and overall, meaning. To erect a world as artefact via a world as function we first need a world as object: our surroundings, whether natural or man-made, are no living entities deserving their own right of existence but dead matter; bare material to be formed according to your will. You, the respective individual, are the boss, not the others. Because it needs manipulation on large scale to reach such a Titanic ideal; it has as prerequisite to objectify – consequently this means to objectify everything. Mass and power are twins, it needs large masses to reach the maximum amount of work (in the physical terms of this new *logos*), i.e., the larger the masses over which you are in command, the larger your power. A simple relationship of physics, a basic algorithm of manipulation applicable everywhere, from physical operations to employees. The *logos* of engineers. This has an unprecedented range of application: from natural to social engineering. In order to objectify, you need another algorithm: the one of analysis – in its Greek origin 'analysis' means to dissolve the phenomena of this world, to break the existing entities apart into their fragments. This is the birth of science as we know it, because this is its basic myth: the certainty of faith that everything can be analysed. After that you can synthesise them again – to put the fragments together as you wish. But this will be easier – more 'efficient', in modern language – if these fragments are uniform. The more uniform they are, the easier they can be controlled, which in turn will ease the exercise of your power and, by that, will enhance it. This is the second important relation between mass and power with great practical applicability, from Lenin to Henry Ford. Finally, the Titan closes; if you obey these simple basal rules, you

will be able to reach individual freedom – your final mythic goal. Because now, equipped with this new *logos*, you can start – to erect a reign via *poiesis* and *techne*.

What is *poiesis*? The ability of man to mould reality, to form things in accordance to his purposes (from where our word 'poetry' originates: man's capability for conceptualisation). *Poiesis* relates to *praxis*, man's acting inside his new second nature, the environment of his polis; and to *techne*, the 'technique' as we know it. First, *poiesis* was a genuine capacity of nature from which man had copied it, then: the natural, as a *physei on*, became a technical Being, the *techne on*, that what 'technically' is, what has been erected, the constructed: that what has been made (Mittelstraß, 1981: 40). These are, perhaps, interesting mythological connections which reflect the human's general line of supposed evolutionary development towards a progressive state of civilisation, from the perspective of an Occidental vista. A peculiar world view comes to unfold here, a specific *logos* of ideas, which later on evolved into an entire imagology.

In such respect the conception of *techne* is explicative. It is an instrumental ability, the ability to construct something, in the meaning of a virtually technical, that is, trained, learned ability. Opposed to the *mythos* which can only be 'revealed', in that it requires some deeper way of comprehension – or opposed to a *Logos* in its dimension of an 'overall meaning', which requires this too – *techne* embodies an ability which can be *learned* and, thus, becomes accessible to everybody who meets the minimal requirements. In enabling a consciously guided, deliberate performance, *techne* comprises not only craftsmanship, the capacity to construct something; but, since it belongs to *poiesis*, it is the 'creative art' as such, the art of *creating* something *anew* in an *encompassing* manner (Hoffmeister, 1955: 603; Heidegger, 1990: 16f.). The italics shall indicate those aspects which have – ages after that first formulation of Occidental technical properties by our Greek ancestors – generated today's cosmos; closed like the old one, but in quite other ways – a recent *machina mundi*. Marcuse, in his *One-Dimensional Man*: "When technique becomes the universal form of material production...it defines an entire culture, it projects a historical totality – a world" (Marcuse, 1970: 18).

To better understand this statement, one should notice that *techne* comprises not only the manufacturing of screws, or apparatuses, but every kind of a learned, trained instrumental ability; *techne* encompasses every kind of activity which requires algorithms, fixed and repeatable (individual-invariant) procedures to become successfully performed, whether it concerns the erection of the temple of Zeus, or the application of certain management techniques. In its original Occidental understanding, its essence is creative engineering, no matter what, or who, is engineered. If we understand 'production' in a wider sense, then it equals every appliance of algorithms aimed at the production of fixed results. Well in line with the Titan's promise. Because the nature of technique is nothing technical, Heidegger said that "it depends on the mythology in question over which domains of life, and to what an extent the appliance of technical procedures stretches out" (1990: 9). A simple arrow and bow is 'technique' already – but so too is the performance of genetic experiments, or the use of certain scientific procedures, or the combustion mechanisms used in the KZ. All of this is technique; a weapon of Promethean power. In itself, technique is a mechanical issue, from the Greek *mechane*, a means of help ready for human usage, primarily applied in

the art of warfare (little wonder, in a cosmos conceived as highly competitive), but also in any other domain where some definite results have to be reached. Mechanics is the practical knowledge of how artificially composed entities are working, what their effects are; and a *mechanike techne* is not about the working of natural entities but of artefacts which have been designed to reach exactly that what nature isn't able to deliver; it is the application of unnatural processes (Mittelstraß, 1981: 59).

This is, then, an understanding of mechanics which enabled the so-called scientific revolution in the 17th century and led to our basic conception of the 'natural sciences' as they exist today (Mittelstraß, 1981: 61). The myth of a certain *logos*, as a holy, true tale. Enforced through the Christian element, 'the religious conception' named earlier: The divine Platonic-Christian *demiurge* who had created the world like an architect – a cosmos to be understood entirely by rational means, as a *machina mundi* – became man himself; and reason, *logos* as the capability to understand: not only means-end relations, but, by being all-encompassing, it turned into a *forming* one. Now, it became a constructive reason, and mind – in analogy to God – is first of all a 'poetical' mind, a mind that *does* something. An Occidental mind is active, a basic feature it kept until the present day (Mittelstraß, 1981: 46, 50). Ensuring the realisation of the Platonic-Christian myth of a mind being (first) superior to, and (then) ruling over, matter. To condense a long evolution into a short sketch: an evolution which triggered its peculiar self-dynamics and led to today's results, automatically, so to say. For the Greeks, *automaton* is the blind accidence, triggered by forces beneath it – our 'automate' stems from there, an instance not just technically coining – forces believed not to occur inside a natural cosmos (Knobloch, 1981: 14).

Results

On these grounds, a myth of *logos* could develop. A myth I experienced in my business practice as the desire to subdue *all* phenomena in this world under the aegis of a functional rationality. All, that's the point; that (by mythic intention) nothing is left outside the latter's reach, is allowed to stay as it is; that, like a king Midas, everything we touch shall become *functional*. Or, formulated in general terms, a certainty of faith that it must be possible (a) to understand *all* phenomena in this world by rational means (analysis), to dissolve them into definite cause-effect chains without remainder; and (b) to make them then functional, to arrange them according to our purposes (synthesis). To fulfil the narrative core of that myth, the Promethean prophecy: that every thing of relevance for our purposes should become functional. Functional rationality as magic ruse to dominate the world.

To put it in a broader historical context: through this kind of development 'nature' lost its meaning to embody the nature of things, their essence; (natural) things became appearances, exchangeable 'objects' to be manipulated. In a mythological interpretation adapted to the aspects looked at here: a bare, mouldable matter of an omnipotent Ego. Or, where this remains impossible or is not of interest, mere appearances of an outer world, a large, extended 'outside me'; the galaxies around us which are so many that we can't even name them – they can only be addressed as catalogue numbers; the people in

the street around me are of no interest at all as long as they don't serve my purposes, an anonymous crowd of other liberated individuals; and so forth. This, then, is a myth of movement that causes today's loss of orientation, not to speak of the Freudian 'disgust in culture' these individuals meanwhile have; the world as a new *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, evoked by our Promethean deeds. A loss based upon a conception of nature as *thing*, and leading to a future and philosophy which a contemporaneous coins as follows: they

> solely rest upon the brain, and no longer upon 'natural relations'';...the...recourse on an 'order of nature'...has lost its original functions of orientation and legitimisation... The science of the (physical) nature does no longer understand itself as *knowledge of orientation* but establishes itself as *knowledge of disposal*; a development which became possible in the 17th and 18th century, as regards to its theoretical preconditions, but then became real in the course of industrialisation in the 19th century. (Mittelstraß, 1981: 37)

The end point of an evolution which started with such promise; with *logos*, man's capability to understand, standing at the disposal – in all its consequences, a betrayal of Promethean dimensions. The magic ruse to ban Being, to subdue everything of relevance under the same mythical causality seemed to have turned into its curse. Leading to the post-modern *mysterium tremendum* we are confronted with: the society of disappearing, as one author characterised our present state of existence, a world unordered but full of orderly planned details which is in a process to dissolve itself, and with it, us altogether. We read:

> Even the most advanced theories of society...refuse to realise one thing: that in the same degree in which technical civilisation is keeping itself alive, it does destroy the conditions of its existence. We went beyond the risk for long – the disappearance of our society will not be stopped. (Breuer, 1999, from the back flap of his work *The Society of Disappearing*)

Now, in line with that Promethean promise, we are free – free from everything. Why should there, asks his brother in mind, Mephisto, be anything instead of nothing? I want to have the primordial state again, the old chaos. And he goes to seduce Faust, the mythic hero of an entire epoch and imagology. And Faust is not saved through becoming wiser, or more modest; or at least more *reluctant* to follow the myth of modernity. He ends up as an *irrigation engineer* (Faust II, the end) – to master the symbolical prime matter of anything, the forces of the unformed, water. Domination as mythical quest, as 'challenge', in post-modern management language, culminating in the hope expressed by Raymond Kurzweil, a contemporary Faust concerned with artificial intelligence, in a recent TV interview: it must be possible to create machines which produce machines by themselves, in a 'natural' process, so to say; the inherent 'unnaturalness' of a *mechanike techne* will turn into a natural state, as a prolongation of Occidental man's *creatio continua* onto itself. The R2D2 from the Star Wars-movie, with its (still) human master, Luke Skywalker; them roaming through the universe as if nothing happened, or would ever happen, in their quest for future Promethean worlds. Nothing *seriously* threatening, because we'll manage it. One has to imagine this. Hubris? Ate? What is it? A new product blend we still don't know? No idea, man! Let's continue.

But despite their dense mythological content, let's leave such everyday emanations of our mythology and go back to the general principle: the reign of technology in a literal sense, of a technical *Logos* manifesting itself. What is taking place here?

Like Dostojewski's gambler, we needed to continue, because we realised that we can't get out of the game, that a retreat isn't possible any more. First of all, the very simple reason is that we cannot destroy the world we erected, the one we live in. So, we have to proceed in its further construction, enhanced through the fact of growth – we need growth to survive at all; of economy, of additional technological gains. All our systems were designed for that, and now, their very viability depends on it. Thereby triggering the above dynamics: the more we proceed, the more we destroy. A collateral damage to be accepted, even if it might grow into an exponential scale. Second, like that gambler, we have been playing for too long. If we would account for our gains and losses, it is only logical to continue, otherwise all the input would be lost. Third, related to the gambler's logic, there is still hope that, by further trials, we will succeed one day, that we will get the jackpot: the fulfilment of the myth of a paradise to be regained by our efforts; that a world as artefact will turn out to be as what was promised to us: a place of freedom where man has succeeded in liberating himself. No matter the variant – either as eschatological paradise, like in the case of Socialism, or as an uninterrupted chain of progressive paradises at our immediate disposal ever more perfected: the instant paradises of contemporary Capitalism. Taken together, these three factors were the ones I heard throughout my business career as to why we should continue. Prometheus is gambling.

This led to a reign of the technical comprising a new quality in the myth-reality relationship – that what system theorists call 'self-reference': probably for the first time in human history a mythology does not only generate (not just 'create', since we have to consider the 'unwanted' side-effects) its concomitant reality in an all-encompassing manner, in a 1:1 mode, so to say, but now reality also reverberates back on the myth in that it constantly enhances it. The world the myth dreams of is not only generated in real terms: myth → reality (quite opposed to other mythologies which only suppose this link), but reality also re-generates the myth on a constant basis and thus reinforces it: reality → myth. Through such a double-sided process a new *kind* of overall reality, a new cosmos, developed, a 'meta-reality', in today's diction: the one of myth ↔ reality. As a whole, the system is completely self-referential and therefore operationally closed; that is, it generates the elements which constitute it as system with the help of those elements it is composed of in both its dimensions (Varela, 1984: 25): the mythic (metaphysics, in Greek terms) and the real (*physis*). As a whole, it is a closed cosmos driven by a vectorial mythology, a closed cosmos expanding. This is unique in human history, leading to so-called 'self-behaviours' of the most diverse kind, as one can easily imagine: once the closure of such a system is reached, i.e., when it exhibits a coherent behaviour emerging from the mutually dependent components, then it automatically takes care of its internal regularities (Varela, 1984: 26) (we remember: the *automaton*). Such a system became literal auto-poietical, it 'makes' itself in a completely self-organised way and by that, became autonomous; which means in formal terms that it produces order in an intra-systemic manner as an emergent product of the system's activities (Probst, 1987: 11, 76). Even if this kind of order might lead to chaos again,

through its uninterrupted sequence of moves ever-more progressive, and ever-more 'perfect', as a whole, the system is autonomous.

So far the formal terms of recent systems theory applied to our present state of being. But in the actual terms of concrete overall realities generated, this too means that the system in question – the world we live in – became resistant to critique in a high degree: A Marcuse, for instance, may write whatever he wants, as long as the system as a whole keeps operating; that is, he might be right with his critique – one can consider it – as long as our BMWs are running, as long as our refrigerators are filled and the TV is working; as long as our present 'consumer society' is kept alive. Or expressed in the general terms of systems theory, and with a look at our concrete human belongings: so-called 'external' constraints, which the system has to fulfil in order to remain viable, had a considerable impact until the 19th century – that is, in mythological as well as practical terms, until quite recently. But with rapid technological progress, these 'constraints' had been increasingly diminished and, today, are no longer of any serious concern; for example, we do not die because of small pox, nor have to struggle with the dangers of a high infant mortality or unhealthy living conditions. In Promethean terms: we freed ourselves from the chains of *physis*, from the physical confinements of immediate threats; for us, freedom became more and more identical with easiness, ease from the forces of an immediate *physis*. In this respect – and only in this one – the Promethean promise turned into truth; into real truth, that's the decisive point here. So, why criticise 'the system'? First of all, serious critique would prevent the system from working properly; in systemic terms, critique becomes a perturbation of the running operations to ensure our way of life. Providing that critique would not seriously affect those operations in real practical terms, it is allowed: may a Marcuse and others say whatever they want. Through that, critique became the matter of professional critics – people located outside the directly productive parts of the system accountable for our material achievements, sitting in their study rooms or working as journalists, for example: people commenting on the system and by that trying to make it ineffective. It plays no role, a politician explained to me, if some intellectuals criticise the system, as long as it keeps on working; or for the imagology outlined here: critique is allowed as long as the gambling process for a better and more manageable world can continue (in fulfilment of the mythos). A faint of critique caused by the system itself, in its pursuit of a mythos of *logos*, through an ever-ongoing fragmentation of reality into narrow, specialised compartments one of which is the caste of professional critics and commentators.

But this is a faint not only present in the domain of critique. It became one of more general value; a touch *sui generis* of contemporaneous man. Two critics comment on this:

> Promethean proudness [of man]...consists in owning everything, even himself, exclusively to himself alone. Remnants of this attitude...are alive still today...but they are not characteristic any more. Apparently, attitudes and feelings of other kinds occupied their position; attitudes resulting out of the peculiar fate of Prometheism: the latter experienced a true dialectic turn. (Anders, 1987: Vol.I, 24)

> Prometheus won...too triumphantly, so triumphantly that he now, in being confronted with his own work, abandons his pride and replaces it by a feeling of inferiority and misery... He lacks the will to be his own Gestalt and conduct of life and create an environment which is suited to him

> perfectly or even solely. Rather, he adopts...the forms of life imposed on him by rational planning and normed machine-products in the, by and large, secure feeling that this is correct. Neither does he feel the desire to live out of his own initiative; rather, he inserts himself into the organisation which is the form of the masses, and obeys the program. (Guardini, 1995: 53)

Another relation between mass and power, in addition to the ones described above, which were aimed at a domination of everything existing. Now, in decisive contrast to the original mythic intention, the existing seems to dominate us, and not vice versa. An ever-increasing gap between us and our products characterised as 'Promethean incline' (Anders, 1987: Vol.I, 16). As mentioned, this is not confined to conscious critics; I also experienced it in case of those in charge of the directly productive parts of the system, those managers and employees at different hierarchical levels of 'the organisation' who were responsible for keeping the machinery running. They are in pursuit of what Max Weber called a "technical rationality of rightness" constituting the programme (Weber, 1992: 105) – at least in the latter's official facets; not to speak of those generated by that programme's self-dynamics – an incline so widespread that an extra term was coined for it: 'system-rationality', which is the rationality of systems following their own rules, and not of the men who had triggered them; a rationality of the autopoietical apparatus with its *mechanike techne* that developed its own laws of conduct, not the rationality of a human kind. The *logos* of the machine. And the prime aim of those people 'in charge' consisted in finding what was called the *compromise line* – the compromise to make 'self-destined' decisions in such a way that the system-rationality is not violated, that the machine can go on operating. Promethean worlds cast in tragic irony. Man as antiquated appendix of his own machinery. A *logos* the impact of which may be revealed when looking at today's most prominent technical systems.

Let's tell this holy tale with a glance at its narrative core: since man got civilized, he's condemned to doom, successively overthrown by the logic of his technical weaponry. He, the victim of his own technique's products, is a Promethean slave. A tale adopting the form of a prejudice in literal terms, a judgement *ex ante* underlying our deeds ('praxis') and perceptions ('theory') alike: the myth of a subjugating technique; it is normally unthought but commonly known that, in the end, it is our technique which accounts for all the misery we have to experience in our state of being civilized. The Goddess of technique entirely determined our way of life, which thus became 'technical' through and through: that's the final reason for our 'disgust in culture'. Since we are technical, we are condemned to faint. The myth tells. A myth I heard very often in my business practice; it is widely spread – throughout nearly all social strata (that is, it is not confined to certain social groupings), from critical intellectuals to common businessmen down to the proverbial 'ordinary' man in the street. It is also not confined to peculiar 'local cultures', in the terminology of modern social anthropology; I met that myth nearly everywhere, from Western managers to former Socialist officials. Which means, in terms of its spread, the myth is ordinary, not the men. It became a firm component inside the system of a culture's 'body of knowledge' – insofar the culture in question is a technical one. A myth that led to a peculiar mode of a technical rationality of rightness, embodying a 'rightness' of its own class: Since we are technical, and hence condemned to faint, we have to obey the programme. Completely. A programme imposed on us by a kind of progress – together with all its concomitant systemic entanglements – we are the victims of. Technique and power, from a mythic perspective. It doesn't even need a physical apparatus of force; the only force it needs

are our beliefs in it, and the systemic realities (virtual or other) generated out of them. Our perceived basic mode of existence: Promethean worlds out of control. Although each single component of their parts had been created by will and conception, the spontaneous orders of mechanized worlds generated and kept running by mechanized individuals; obeying the powers of their own techniques. What happened to the myth of freedom, Occidental man's original dream to become truly autonomous – with the help of his 'technical' *logos*? Following the lines of his self-assessment, the intended universal application of technique led to technocracy*,* the unintended but universal reign of the technical; resulting in those one-dimensional worlds contemporary man is now encountered with. Technocracy, a new apparatus of force as its own dimension, emerged in man's evolution, brought about by himself alone.

Final Reflections

The discussion of his *logos* became a discussion about man's technocracy; the mythic roots of that *logos* (and hence, of 'technocracy') getting out of sight. In literal terms, it became a matter of technique, and its reign, respectively: The conceived 'super-structure' of Arnold Gehlen and others, an embracing overall matrix of man's world as it is where all science, technique, industry and society are irrevocably webbed together. Man's artificial 'second nature' technically produced; an image of our civilization – and at the same time, of an entire culture's morality – ranging from Francis Bacon to Ellul's 'technical state' of man's being. A state of ontological character following its morality of the purpose – that everything what can be done has to be done with a knowledge of disposal, to functionalize everything. 'Technique' thus turned into the collective term for the structure of the modern world *per se*, Rapp denotes, and one can imagine that both this perception of reality and its discussion gave birth to a peculiar kind of logic – a logic of man being the fainted prisoner of his self-created autopoietical circuits. To quote a few but coining examples: In his *One-Dimensional Man*, Marcuse states that in the medium of technique, everything – culture, politics, and economy – has melted together into an omnipresent system, one all-powerful conglomerate which incorporates or repels all (possible) alternatives. "The productivity and growth potential of this system stabilize society and keep technological progress inside the frame of existing power structures. Technological rationality thus became political rationality" (1970: 21). A rather resigned statement. No matter what we undertake, 'the system' does engulf it all; or spits it out, if alien to its chemistry. Schelsky, one of the first main protagonists in investigating the role of man in scientific civilization, says that every technical problem and success will inevitably, and instantaneously, turn into a social and, at the same time, a psychological problem. That is, man is confronted with a regularity of facts he himself generated which now return to him as a social and/or psychological claim; the proverbial boomerang-effect. But it is one that doesn't stop: these claims, he continues, allow for no other solutions than those which are technical again; in the end they are

> planned and constructed by man, since this is the nature of the issue that has to be coped with. Man frees himself from natural force in order to subjugate himself again under his own force of production. (Schelsky, 1961: 443)

This shows a Promethean autopoiesis in perfect mode of self-reference; it is man's 'second nature' occupying him completely. And interpreted in terms of the mythic, they also show the tragic irony of a history which, obviously, seems to run in a version adverse to the Promethean promise: in his efforts to free himself, man became nothing but a slave. We can take the above two quotations as symbolic, standing for a cosmos of its own, a closed one. An entire imagology of what we believe 'the world as it is' really to be, plus our attitude against it: We have been all but left in the hands of a technical world.

A cultural reality and its imagology resembling the idea of the world as machine – a tale of mind, power, and reality, culminated into a 'technological' end point. And at the same time, into a myth of technocracy; or better, since more embracing, a myth that technique is everything. To formulate it in the quite broad but (quite imaginative) practical terms of a mythology that got realized inside a whole cultural sphere; in both 'East' and 'West' alike, to cite the two basic Occidental alternatives of how to gain liberation, (former) Socialism and Capitalism, not at all restricted to our contemporaneous 'Western consumer culture', according to the experiences I could gather from both alternatives.

It is a myth which embodies more than simple subjugation. This is only one outcome, just one of the 'exits' it can take; so to say, one of its 'sub-myths' only. As it is the case with any machine, it can have 'bad' and 'good' outcomes alike, and, in the end, it solely depends on the mythological perspective in question what is considered as 'good' or 'bad', respectively. In particular, for a myth of freedom so important for our imagology, the one of a technique encompassing is quite Janus-headed – the 'bad' aspects we had met already; to bring them to their point, coming down to their mythic core: If we unrestrictedly follow the mythic principle of a 'what can be done has to be done', then the application of this maxim leads to nothing but a loss of freedom; together with diverse other kinds of unwanted 'spontaneous orders'. The original myth of freedom changed into its very opposite, leading to the kind of dialectics we envisaged in the above – freedom vs. technique; or in the more general terms of the *logos* characteristic of the latter, freedom vs. the consequent (and spreading) application of that *logos*. A one-sided dialectics with one side gaining preponderance in this fight which is so characteristic for our cultural sphere. To interpret this kind of dialectical antagonism in its proper terms means to encounter the mythological.

On the other hand, less critical, less reflective with regard to the consequences, there is still belief in what we summarize under the notion of 'technique', standing as an epitome for the total of our yet unbroken mythic hopes. There is still a common ground for this imagology, despite all individual differences: the myth that, despite its cumulating 'negative side-effects' (in management language), technique is still supposed to lead to freedom. To pinpoint this belief, naming its narrative core, its inherent dialectic circle of enhancement: the more we apply this kind of *logos* in terms of both spreading diversity and intensity, that is, the more 'free' we get, the more the circle of freedom becomes restricted. It is a myth paving the way for yet an additional dialectics, the one of its own kind of progress: the myth that progress as such equals technological progress; thus, progress becomes the sole matter of applying a certain 'technology'. It is a myth taken literally and, first of all, for granted.

This, then, portrays our mythic beliefs in 'technique', the believed genuine product of our *logos* and Occidental man's freedom. They are pinned down in a schematic manner, in all their contradictory dynamics. It is a dynamics which again led, as an emergent phenomenon, to the genesis of still another dialectics taking place on the 'meta-level' (in modern diction) – namely the antagonism between these two circles. Comprising an entirely new quality of antagonism that remains unsolvable: On one hand, we believe that technique leads to progressive freedom and is a guarantee for progress as such; on the other, we know that there has been a basket full of side-effects, of 'collateral damages'; that we haven't been liberated at all. We know that the world as machine is not necessarily a world of freedom, but for sure a world of machines. Or, to express it in the terms of understanding our other cultural root: Occidental mind succeeded to create the realities of its matters.

All in all, a world of the Promethean double bind. And it is instructive to see how far, and how encompassing, this world has spread out and continues to spread out into Occidental man's 'post'-modern age, which faces such heavy contradictions, settling upon a mythology of deed, and of greed altogether (which formerly was, as a product of Ate, one of the seven deadly sins humans could do). Luke Skywalker performing his Star Wars as a mythic hero of our times can be looked at everywhere, from India to New York. An ideal of Occidental man that has become global; a profane Prometheus promising us the very same things as his forefather did: that there are no limits to the total and all-encompassing liberation of man.

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