Retoryka nowych mediów/nowych wyzwań
Rhetoric of new media/new challenges

VARIA

MAGDALENA ZŁOCKA-DĄBROWSKA
CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYNSKI UNIVERSITY, WARSAW, POLAND
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0136-0764
m.zlocka@uksw.edu.pl

Cratos, Crisis and Cognition in Reference to Generative Anthropology and the Scene of Language/Culture Origin
Kratos, kryzys i poznanie w odniesieniu do Antropologii Generatywnej oraz „sceny źródłowej" języka i kultury

Abstract

This article will interpret Cratos, a mythic character and rhetorical personification present in the works of Hesiod and Aeschylus, as a multilayered and metaphoric figure of cognition, defining him in reference to the hypothesis of the origin of language and culture advanced by Eric Gans's *Generative Anthropology*. Cratos was a violent oppressor of Prometheus, involved in provoking a crisis among both gods and humanity. This faithful and ruthless performer of the will of Zeus is viewed here as representing one of the deeper cognitive layers of mythological transfer, that is, as a representation of deferred, but always and anywhere prevalent intra-specific violence, the fundamental source and testimony of crisis in human societies.

Artykuł stanowi interpretację Kratosa, mitycznej i retorycznej personifikacji obecnej w pracach Hezjoda i Ajschylosa, jako wielowarstwowej i metaforycznej figury poznania, definiowanej w odniesieniu do hipotezy o pochodzeniu języka i kultury, zawartej w *Antropologii Generatywnej* Eryka Gansa. Kratos był brutalnym ciemiężycielem Prometeusza, zaangażowanym w wywołanie kryzysu między bogami i ludzkością. Ten wierny i bezwzględny wykonawca woli Zeusa jest rozumiany przez autorkę jako reprezentacja jednej z głębszych warstw poznawczych przekazu mitologicznego, czyli odroczonej, ale zawsze i wszędzie panującej przemocy, podstawowego źródła i świadectwa obecności kryzysu w ludzkich społecznościach.

MAGDALENA ZŁOCKA-DĄBROWSKA
CARDINAL STEFAN WYSZYNSKI UNIVERSITY, WARSAW, POLAND
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0136-0764
m.zlocka@uksw.edu.pl

Cratos, Crisis and Cognition in Reference to Generative Anthropology and the Scene of Language/Culture Origin

1. Introduction

Classical texts, understood as significant representations of human culture, offer a fascinating collection, a veritable Pleiades of mythological figures, envoys from past ages bearing messages of ongoing and universal relevance. Most of them are moving deeply in human intellect and human imagination, and it would be negligent not to try to connect them with unique, coded allusions. Nor can a visit to an art museum or other shrine of cultural knowledge be fully appreciated without recognizing the prototypes which have been registered in previous centuries and continue to inspire creative thinkers into contemporary times. Many of these figures are present in "writing cultures,"[1] including in the narratives which constitute a form of constant human response to the world, thanks to cognitive structures (Culpeper 2014; Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk 2006), which both build and intrigue human minds. They contain and preserve culture as a "mental life of meanings" (Lynn 2011, 419) operated by human consciousness and offer a privileged path to the discovery anthropological truth. It would be hard to overstate the importance of the results of such cognitive processes, which animate the oldest and most widespread modes of world storytelling, including such diverse forms as classical tragedies, lyric and narrative poetry, all categories of novels, and even daily journals and images, including those received virtually.

2. Cratos and Cognition

Ancient Greek mythology features a number of cultural consciousness-forming figures, which may be called figures of cognition (Fahnestock 1999; Cave 2016). These are semantic constructions that interact persuasively at the intellectual,

---

1. The expression is drawn from *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Clifford, Marcus 1986) and *Writing Culture and the Life of Anthropology* (Starn 2015).

emotional and also aesthetic level, and among them may be included the terrifying Cratos,[2] whose appalling activities have caused him to be enshrined powerfully in the collective memory (Calame 2014) of the ancients as well as that of the present day. His persistence testifies to the permanence of culture, as he stimulates even in the 21st century the imaginations of seekers after intense sensation in his role as a fearsome character in the virtual world of computer games.[3] Like other figures of cognition, Cratos has what Eric Gans calls a "metaphorical nature" (1981, 14) and reveals significant anthropological knowledge about human societies.

Although contemporary images of Cratos[4] can still arouse deep emotions in passive as well as interactive participants, such passions are not at issue here. Rather, Cratos is to be seen as a heuristic, in the sense of Greek *heuriskein* or euriskein or Latin *inventio*,[5] terms referring to a process of search and discovery and to a problem-solving procedure. Of particular interest are this heuristic's informal, intuitive and speculative features, those dealing with the study of laws and rules that govern human thinking, and in the present case also with the effect of such cultural products as mythological transfers and the cognitive structures they produce. The search is for deeper cognitive layers, bundles of consciousness, effects of human reference to the world, and their final purpose: the stabilizing of human existence by postponing or deferring the intra-human violence. The human mind, and its knowledge of the world, is to be thought of as created and reflected in all narratives, including mythical transfers. The oral or character-based texts, the myths discussed here, the systems of representation of the human mind shaped in the process of "acquiring culture," together constitute the result of a nurturing and shaping process based on physical and intellectual experiences, and are the product of the mental capacity to understand the thoughts of others, and to acquire and use their effects. The approach to be taken here will resemble that of Ward Goodenough, for whom culture is a product of "learning the world" and results in "human knowledge" (Złocka-Dąbrowska 2016), which, in the present case, means myths, one of the oldest forms of cultural narrative, which are "telling" and representing the world. Myths are products of the human perceptive capacity, a form of human cognition, including self- and social comprehension, but they are also an expression of particular knowledge about the causal structure of the world.

---

2. An earlier article presents an extensive overview of Cratos' appearances (Złocka-Dąbrowska 2016).

3. See especially the productions of a computer games series, called "God of War," a series of hack and slash console games released on PlayStation, made by the SIE Santa Monica Studio in California, USA, in which the main character is Cratos.

4. See for example: https://www.giantbomb.com/kratos/3005-645/images/, https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/470555861061 505527/, https://pl.pinterest.com/beadovillen/kratos-god-of-war/

5. It is worth mentioning that "invention" constitutes the first of five general categories of the Art of Rhetoric: (1) invention (Greek *heuresis*, Latin *inventio*), (2) arrangement (Greek *taxis*, *oikonomia*, Latin *dispositio*), (3) expression (Greek *hermeneia*, *phrasis*, Latin *elocutio*), (4) memory (Greek *mneme*, Latin *memoria*), (5) delivery (Greek *hupokrisis*, Latin *action*, *pronuntiatio*) (Pernot 2005, 218).

A new use of an old myth is always a reinterpretation which aims to shed new light on its underlying anthropological significance.

Deeper attention, then, should be focused on the alarming Cratos, representing a code and a structure of a long duration, thanks to his constant presence in human cultural-cognitive history, since the very foundations of the ancient Greek literature. Indeed, Cratos appears in the oldest of works, including Hesiod's *Theogony*.[6] This cosmogonic epic depicts the ancient ideas of the *Achaeans* about the creation of the universe, the virtues and faults of gods, heroes and people, the struggle of cosmic forces and the emergence of a new order represented by Zeus and other inhabitants of Olympus. Hesiod, a proponent of the *Golden Age* which he and others viewed as an ideal world devoid of violence (Kotlińska-Toma 2015, 35), is considered a younger contemporary of Homer and the first "mythographer" to concentrate on the genealogy of the gods (Komornicka 1987, 36). He presents himself as an "idyllic" shepherd from *Beoetia*, who suddenly heard the *Muses* call upon him to sing in unearthly fashion about the highest matters of existence. "They addressed him scornfully, gave him a staff of laurel, breathed into him a divine voice with which to celebrate things future and past," (Most 2006, xii), and then taught him what to sing. His first effusion, according to the *Theogony*, narrates the origin of Cratos: "Styx, Ocean's daughter, mingling with Pallas, bore Zelus (Rivalry) and beautiful-ankled Nike (Victory) in her house, and she gave birth to Cratos (Supremacy) and Bia (Force), eminent children [who are all] seated next to deep-thundering Zeus" (*Theogony* 385). According to Hesiod, these grim children of Styx "have no home except with Zeus, and no place to rest nor road to travel except where he leads them" (Griffith 1983, 81).

Glenn W. Most translates the Greek Κράτος as "Supremacy" (*Theogony* 385), which is only one of its possible meanings. In earlier commentaries, Mark Griffith, keeping the Greek spelling Kratos, adds "Power" to the collection of terms used to denote him, and places Bia, his sister, next to Kratos calling her "Violence" (Griffith 1983, 81). She may thus be considered as Kratos' connotation, and also his complement as a "non-speaking extra" (Griffith 1983, 31). It is of particular interest that Bia was presumably, as the commentary says, "dressed as a female warrior or demon, or possibly as a replica of Kratos" (Griffith 1983, 81), which matches the general concept of her brother.

In a later period, Cratos appears in the drama of Aeschylus, who made Athenian tragedy one of the world's great art forms. However, unlike Hesiod, Aeschylus did not gain the fame of the shepherd-poet but rather became a persistent warrior for laurels of dramaturgy, a fighter who competed for the tragic prize at the *City*

---

6. It may be added, however, that *kratos* appeared earlier in Homer and, as Lebow states, became "the physical power to overcome or subdue an adversary as well as what one acquires from such action" (2003, 108).

Dionysia as many as nineteen times and, to use the categories of Aristotle, become a master of "pathetic tragedy" (Sieroń 2007, 19). It is worth noting that Aeschylus was also a real warrior, a participant in the battle of Marathon as well as those of Salamis and Plataea (Sommerstein, 2008, xi). It is reported that he was a general as well as a playwright, writing for an audience full of experienced soldiers (*Greek Drama…,* 655) as would have been the case in the ancient Athenian theater. Moreover, his grave inscription, which he had to set down himself, has no word about his poetic fame, only about the renown gained in the battle on the field of Marathon (Witkowski 2005, 16).[7] And what about Cratos? Cratos in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound,*[8] at least as translated by David Greene, was designated as "Might" (1996, 40).

Aeschylus makes Cratos the first character to speak in the drama; producing "a kind of rhetoric" (Rosenmeyer 1955, 235), he is an active participant in a long, poignant dialogue with Hephaestus about the rebellious Prometheus[9] and the punishment that must be carried out as a retaliation for stealing fire and passing it on to people. Cratos plays an assigned role and participates in this dramatic telling of the story of the Titan who went against Zeus, the new ruler of the cosmos. The play explores the oppressive nature of Zeus' regime, its effects on gods and humans alike, and, more generally, the effects of divine resentment, and that resentment as a reversible mechanism, predicting the ultimate downfall of Zeus. The "Opening Scene" of *Prometheus Bound* heralds the relationship between the distinctive worlds of gods and humans, a relationship based on unchanged and invariable, universal rules, which, from the first lines, reveal the code associated with Cratos, as follows:

> Power:
> We have reached the land at the furthest bounds of earth, the Scythians marches, a wilderness where no mortals live. Hephaestus, you must attend to the instructions the Father has laid upon you, to bind this criminal to the high rocky cliffs in the unbreakable fetters of adamantine bonds; for it was your glory, the gleam of fire that makes all skills attainable, that he stole and gave to mortals. For such an offence he must assuredly pay his penalty to the gods, to teach him that he must accept the autocracy of Zeus and abandon his human-loving ways.

---

7. The epitaph text is as follows: "This memorial stone covers Aeschylus the Athenian, Euphorion's son, who died in wheat-bearing Gela. His famed valor the precinct of Marathon could tell and the long-haired Mede, who knows it well" (Aeschylus 1996, ix).

8. It is believed today that *Prometheus Bound* was part of the trilogy known by the general title *Prometheia*, along with the lost tragedies: *Prometheus Unbound* and *Prometheus the Fire-bearing* (Steffen, Batóg 2000, 80).

9. The first preserved literary source containing the story of Prometheus are *Works and Days* of Hesiod (lines 42–105), where Zeus punishes Prometheus for stealing fire and passing it on to people whom he sends Pandora with a can containing all evil.

Hephaestus:

So far as you two are concerned, Power and Violence,[10] the orders of Zeus have been completely fulfilled, and there is no task still lying before you. But for my part, I can hardly bring myself to take a kindred god and forcibly bind him at this stormy ravine; still, I have no alternative but to endure doing it, for it is dangerous to slight the Fathers' word. [To Prometheus] God of lofty cunning, son of Themis of wise counsel, I, under as much constraint as you, am going to nail you, with metal bonds hard to undo, to this rock, remote from men […] (Aeschylus 2008, 445)

Cratos, then, begins the drama with a rhetoric of predetermined limitations for non-gods and of obediently attending to the instructions of Zeus. Each participant in the dialogue seeks to demonstrate the rationality of his position. The most important point here is that Cratos orders Hephaestus to bind the "criminal" Prometheus to the rock on behalf of the will of god – thus commanding a violent action, which builds his leading cognitive code. As the dialogue continues, Cratos is also heard to speak about the sin of Prometheus and the penalty if divine commands are not heeded. It emerges that to break a ban established by the gods is a sin that must bring particularly harsh punishment to mortal man, in order that mortal man learn how "to endure and like the sovereignty."[11] Although such ruthless words also suggest a certain mockery and irony at the expense of the tyranny of Zeus (Chodkowski 1994, 298), Cratos is also presented here as a supervisor working for Zeus, or a contractor charged with punishing any resentment of the gods, in this case that of Prometheus, whose unyielding rebellion against higher authority has brought on a dangerous crisis. Prometheus transgressed the "unwritten and unshakeable laws of the gods" with his theft of fire. In response, Cratos must irrevocably bring violence to the perpetrator – violence becomes a means for preserving the divine order. In this way, Cratos, initially associated with a mere series of sanctions, is transformed into a figure associated with violence, a transformation which conveys knowledge about how the world works and how it is to be preserved.

According to the sources presented above, Cratos is featured as "Supremacy," "Power," and "Might." He became an intermediary for the execution of the will of the gods, a will rooted in the compulsion to comply with the hierarchical principle of existence. However, Cratos is not the only mythological figure in the *Theogony* involved in such actions. He is surrounded by the siblings listed above, the characters of special importance: Zelus (Rivalry), Nike (Victory), and Bia (Force). This collection of figures constitutes the context for understanding Cratos, as a team of multidimensional meanings, centered around one code. The resource of characters known as contexts provides the perfect vehicle for the

10. Sommerstein comments on the connection of these characters to Zeus: "This pair comes from Hesiod, *Theogony* 385–401, where they are children of Styx who live permanently with Zeus, follow wherever he leads, and embody his absolute power over the universe" (Aeschylus 2008, 445). Moreover, in the translation by Smyth, the first verses of Hephaestus's statements contain the names of the Cratos siblings in the form of "Power" and "Force" (1988, 215).
11. This is an expression of special significance from: "Introduction" (Aeschylus 1996, 40).

dramatic and symbolic grouping of the mythological supporters of Cratos. It may be added that this "collective" picture might be of significance to anthropology, because it exposes the rules of any social order. Such an order is always based on "Supremacy," "Power," "Might," and "Force," and can be achieved thanks to "Rivalry," usually on a way to a final "Victory." It must be emphasized that the process of establishing and then maintaining the social order always carries a danger of violence, a potential source of possible or present destruction. Moreover, in the extracts of dialogue quoted above, Cratos and Hephaestus are directly discussing violence. Cratos also delivers the so-called "messenger speech" which "provides the extended spoken narrative relating [to] the off-stage crisis" (Hall 2010, 34), prompting Zeus's fear of losing power and presaging much new violence. It is also the sign of a destabilization of the order of power, and a crisis of divine domination, involving a threat to the divine rules and a further crisis of access to resources assigned to each level in the hierarchy of power over the world. Generally speaking, this is a matter of social disequilibrium, which leads to the act of representation to be discussed below.

3. Cratos and Deferral

The presence of Cratos in the drama implies that of violence, but also suggests the internal disorder which could only be arrested by an originary event: the imposition by human beings living communally of "a noninstinctive restraint that defers further violence and constitutes thereby the origin of all cultural 'deferrals'," in Eric Gans's formulation (Gans 1981, xi). The issue here is of particular importance to Gans's overall hypothesis of *Generative Anthropology* (henceforth GA) and its understanding of the origins of sign and language-culture in deferral, leading to "intentional acts of signification" (Gans 1981, 76) and then to systems of representation.

GA sees the deferral of violence through the appearance and exchange of signs (also and later in any form of text) as the essence of the human. From that point of view, the ancient Greek myth of Cratos in such sources as Hesiod's and Aeschylus's works also constitutes a system of representation, and can be referred to the core ideas of GA, including its mapping of a conceptual "scene" of language at the origin of culture. These ideas are far from the facile generality of theories of language and cultural origin (Manetti 1993; 2000), or from other existing concepts of both language and communication (Ong 2002; 2009), to which GA provide a unique elucidation. Gans's scene is an incisive hypothesis of how and why human language and culture appear. On it, language, and with it all of "inscribed" culture, is understood as the effect of an act of designation – an act of signing – which is

paradoxically at the same time a non-act, or deferral of action. The consequence of this deferral of action, and in particular of presumptively violent appropriation and internecine proto-human conflict, is precisely the appearance of human culture (Gans 1981, 297–298).

It must be emphasized that Gans proposes a cultural analysis not reducible to "literary" analysis. He is interested in anthropological foundations and a collective ethic which provide the deepest justification and explanation for the existence of language and culture, as the crucial means by which man defends himself against himself, what Austin would call a tool for changing social reality (Habrajska 2005, 93 follows Austin 1993). It is in pursuit of such explanations that Gans proposes "originary analysis" of human behavior, which he relates directly to the emergence of language and therefore culture. On the hypothesized scene of origin all sources of social disequilibrium, violent appetites, rivalries, conflicts and crisis are present – and ever after on the myriad proliferating scenes that emerge from it they remain latent, but potentially operative and contingently capable of being deferred by language and other cultural forms, just as they were by the first sign on the first scene. He argues that the generative moment for language to emerge – the occurrence of the first sign – is a result of the simultaneous presence of three situational components: (1) the central object of desire (e.g. a killed animal, an object to potentially eat or in a broader sense, all objects of human desire), (2) the proto-humans who surround this object having an appetite associated with the object and equipped with the ability to fight violently for the object of interest, and (3) central for Gan's concept, an act of designation, a "pointing,"[12] which results in a sign, the basis of language. This "ostensive" is at first gestural, would later involve sound, then speech and, ultimately, develop into the full range of grammatical moods and with it human culture (Gans 1981, 64, 68, 81). One may suppose on such a scene a human ability to recognize the value of the group existence of community, the possession of an ability to make an act of choice (point to the object or alternatively use violence to fight for it) and finally, the possession of an ability to perform a pointing gesture and to produce a sign. The sign through gesture implies intentionality exercised by a living, striving mind (Searle 1999). So, the original sign occurs only thanks to human cognitive ability, a pre-existing consciousness of the potential result of engaging in violence against the others in community.

---

12. As for the sign gesture (pointing), it is interesting to note that a specific confirmation of Gans's theory and intuition is made by Walter Ong (2002), who speaks about the importance of the finger (from *digitalization*, *digit*, *finger*, *number*, *numeric sign*) in the contemporary process of cultural communication using a computer keyboard.

4. Rhetoric, Violence, Deferral

What is discussed here is a basic form of rhetoric and its function, and one may thus perhaps speak, as the title of Wardy's book has it, of "the birth of rhetoric" (1996, 37). It may be added that rhetoric was and still is one of the most powerful components of human culture, and especially of "high secular culture," as Gans calls the classical Greek antiquity (1985, 179). It is in rhetoric that the creative, processual nature of culture approaches a lingusitic act (Haase 2014). Even if rhetoric is usually thought of as transitory speech, Gans makes the point that its permanence in the human culture implies it is to be understood as a form of *inscription*, the result of "the original cultural act" (Gans 1985, 5), "an indelible event," and at the same time a discourse, then an omnipotent, nonviolent communal presence (Gans 2018, 22), in the form of the chief vehicle of social communication.

Rhetoric has just been referred to as a powerful component of culture, but this understanding should be expanded to note rhetoric's fundamental connection to persuasion (Korolko 1990, 15), as basic to its definition since antiquity (Cf. *Gorgias*, 453a–455a). Put in cognitive terms, persuasion is a result of the above-mentioned intentionality. According to the intentional theory of consciousness, intentionality implies the ability to relate thoughts to something outside of consciousness (Searle 1999, 145) – an object (e.g. the goal of influencing someone's thinking, exerting an influence on other people), a crucial example of which underlies the collective scene of origin in GA described above (Gans 1981, 72). Hence, there is a cause-and-effect chain, where the collective cognition of the intersubjective relationship between participants on the scene is formalized in the model, in which rhetoric can be included. Being itself a linguistic form, and an intentional act whose objective is persuasion (to influence other participants to respect the sacred center and defer their acts of appropriation), rhetoric presupposes the threat of intra-human violence (Hunter 2000, 2), but emerges as well as a craft and a way of managing and substituting for violence. Therefore, rhetoric, in every verbal or written intentional act, recreates the scene, aiming at its very root for the deferral of violence,[13] at least for the period and in the context of its own expression. Even a rhetoric inciting violence mandates a peaceful hearing amongst its auditors.

It might be asked at this point what establishes the *telos* of Gans's scene of origin. Aristotle in Book One of *Rhetoric* claims that speech consists of three elements: the speaker, the subject of speech, and the addressee (1358b). These three components of the "rhetorical situation" interestingly correspond to the components that build the GA scene. Gans's hypothesis reaches deeply back to the

---

13. Although the concept of violence is ubiquitous in Gans's discourse, fear and pity, so characteristic of ancient drama (Munteanu 2012) are not the subject of his special reflection. Instead, he deals with Aristotelian "pity and terror" in defining the sublimation mechanism (Gans 1985, 229).

essence of all cultural forms, starting with the sign and language, but not excluding rhetoric, which could be defined here as an advanced narrative, i.e. a developed form of what Gans has called ostensive utterances (Gans 1981, 68–98; 1985, 109), indeed their transformed, highly advanced version, "an art of the spoken word," which in combination with his conception of esthetics (Gans 1985, 227–295) produces "a prodigious intellectual construct" (Pernot 2005, 215). Moreover, the mimetic crisis (Gans 1997, 9) is initially solved by an ostensive rhetoric (Gans 1981, 68), which, using Gans's thought, may be defined as an intentional act of signification that calls attention to the presence of its referent (Gans 1981, 76), just as it happens in rhetoric more generally, which, as noted, expresses desire by persuasion. It is therefore a question of the potential violence inherent in all personal interactions, including dialogue.

These concepts taken together explain the existence of systems of representation, including all textual narratives, to which one may add mythical transfers and their rhetorical dialogues. Passages of *Prometheus Bound* quoted above – specifically the dialogue of Cratos and Hephaestus – can be read in the light of the GA hypothesis, not only because of the wide range of associations between Cratos and violence, but also through an understanding of the function of the dialogue between the two figures. Gans assumes that the strength of any idea is tested in the intersubjective situation of dialogue (Gillespie, Cornish 2010), which itself is a primary human mechanism. He also says that fundamental human problems are associated with other people and they are tested through the dialogue of past experience more thoroughly than any others (Gans 1990, 67).

In the dialogue with Hephaestus, Cratos, an extension of Zeus, demonstrates a superior truth that manifests itself in the form of a superior rhetoric (Gans 1990, 67), which supports rules established in society. Gans also claims that within the comprehension of human relations "the rhetorical is in the final analysis unsurmountable" (Gans 1990, 67). It may be suggested that the rhetorical nature of the "truths" contained in the Greek tragedy is a consequence of the urgency of human's need to create order and limit conflict, a need that is the very foundation for human as opposed to animal existence. It is a matter of survival to make urgent ethical decisions in concrete situations. Gans (1985, 229) notes that in the Greek tragedy ethical arguments are determined not by deductive logic, but by an intuition of rightness expressed in rhetoric. It could be added that this argumentation involves the cognitive process, the effect of which, in this case, is the figure of Cratos, presented here as a metaphor, i.e. as a rhetorical figure of cognition which represents a crucial aspect of human nature.

Since systems of representation are being considered here and much is already known about Cratos, it could be added that the drama spoken of constitutes a "double

act of representation." This drama consists firstly of an act of representation, as GA hypothesizes it, a form of advanced sign development, postponing potential conflict. But there is also the metaphoric meaning of Cratos as a warning message, an expression of human knowledge about the danger of intra-human violence. According to GA's abovementioned principles, the appearance of any linguistic form (starting from the simplest characters and ranging through to expanded texts) indicates a new need to postpone violence: signs substitute for potentially violent realities which continually evolve. The drama in which Cratos participates provides not only an imaginary model indicating a subject of human desire (i.e. god's fire) and an active response to this desire (the rebellious act of Prometheus), but is also a prototypical example of the surrogate fulfillment of the expectations of human consciousness, thanks to which the birth, duration and development of culture are possible. Such substitutions derive from the cognitive properties of the human brain, which respond to the ultimate goals of man.

For Gans, "appetitive interest precedes the scene of representation, and this interest creates the potential conflict around the appetitive object" (1985, 74). If the scene of origin would not result in the production of a sign-culture, as Gans suggests, it would inevitably create intra-human conflict, a general crisis, a huge fight for food (or possibly other objects) to satisfy the appetites of all the participants on the scene. It is worth mentioning that this scene of language-culture origins contains a component that is defined by Gans as desire and also as an appetite (Gans 1985, 75). Rivalrous or mimetic appetites create the scene, fully human "desire" is one of its results. Desire, as GA understands it, is appetite mimetically mediated through the sign. Desire, properly speaking, is an attribute of the fully human, a product of the scene. Gans agrees, however, that mythical narratives explain human reality, "often including the cosmic backdrop of human experience in terms of conflicting desires" (Gans 1985, 204). Prometheus involves a mythical narrative based on desire, the conflictual desire which violated the rights of the gods. Moreover, on Gans's hypothetical scene, the so-called central object of desire (or appetite, as agreed above) is likely a food source, an animal carcass, initially and thereafter in variously displaced versions a victim,[14] around which human thoughts revolve. In this context, it is interesting to note that the convergence on the central object, that appears in the story of Prometheus and a huge ox, is also to be found much earlier in Hesiod's *Theogony* (*Theogony* 530–560). Of note here is the account of Prometheus trying to deceive Zeus when distributing the fat-covered beef: giving bones to the gods and leaving people the nutritious remainder. In this story can be found, as Gans says, "appetitive

---

14. The subject of the victim will not be considered in this text. See Gans (1985, 285) on the idea of the victim in Aeschylus' works.

interests" (1985, 74) which cause the conflict with Zeus, who looks through the trick and punishes people by taking fire from them, which, however, Titan steals and gives back again.

5. Crisis and Generative Anthropology

Prometheus's act in this mythical story would be explained by Gans as "the abandonment of order in a mad rush to satisfy appetites," which is "a true breakdown of culture" (Gans 1985, 75). At this point can be sought the sources of any social crisis – social disequilibrium, understood as the failure of social rules in the face of satisfying the desire to possess a central object, which however evokes the god's resentment. In this case the resentment is directed towards Prometheus who, like other tragic heroes, brought violence, became a victim, and in the end was raised up (Gans 1985, 280). The social crisis is resolved through "the passage of resentment from excess to equilibrium through the suffering of one or more individuals" (Gans 1985, 288). It is important to note that Gans's view of the crisis and the scene of origin with its act of representation are related and inseparable. He argues that together they shape the pattern of social disequilibrium, which "leads to the act of representation that, in turn, brings about increased appetitive satisfaction. In a second moment of crisis, however instigated, Gans continues, the reproduction of the situation that obtained in the originary event makes of this reproduced event, with the scene of representation at its center, a "means of eliminating potential social conflict" (Gans 1985, 129). Further analysis of the entire process leads Gans to conclude that "the fundamental cause of such conflict lies not in any particular object but in the potential of protohuman appetites to exceed the capacity of animal (that is, nonrepresentational) conflict-prevention mechanisms. In the eyes of the members of the group the central object is an essential source of conflict" (Gans 1985, 129). In other words, Gans suggests that the act of representation constitutes the means for deferring conflict, and what is crucial, he emphasizes, is that it has acquired "an absolute, eternal value," evidently "ending social disequilibrium [or crisis] once and for all" (Gans 1985, 129).

Another context may be added. Prometheus had stolen fire from the gods and had bestowed this great gift on mortals. The implications of this act go far beyond the mere fact of theft. Fire, a *pantechnon*, is understood as "source of all arts" (*Prometheus Bound*, 7) which means a vast collection of intellectual as well as technological inventions transferred to people in a word, art and culture simultaneously. Also, the "pair of speeches" that appear in Prometheus's narration (*Prometheus Bound*, 436–471; 476–506) may be designated as "Culture Speech" (Herington 1986, 159). The Titan, subjected to punishment, i.e. the violence

of higher beings, defers such violence noticeably through his speech. It can be assumed that the emergence of culture, through Prometheus, is not accidental and testifies to the connection between the Promethean motif and Gans's scene of origin.

Moreover, Gans claims that "myth is retrospectively associated with the performance of the activity whose origin it describes" (Gans 1985, 165). In the above considerations it has been mentioned that Aeschylus, in whose works Cratos is prominently displayed, was himself a warrior and according to Aristophanes, the purpose of his rhetoric was to make the Athenians better soldiers. He further claims that Aeschylus was inspired by the soldier Lamachus, whom he calls "warmonger," and certain others who were, in turn, inspired by Homer. Aristophanes adds that it is not Aeschylus, but "his mind" which is at work and this mind "looks to the Homeric poems" (Grene 1983, 3), which means above all, to his visions of the conflicts and wars he made famous, that is, where the presence of violence cannot be questioned. Walter Ong observes that "the mind interacts with the […] world around it more profoundly and creatively than has hitherto been thought" (2002, 168) and this seems particularly apt in the case of the mind of Aeschylus, as it is reflected in the cognition of Cratos, an effect of interaction with Aeschylus's reality which, however, isn't limited only to Aeschylus's mind, but also demonstrates "the mind of the human world" that is still being lived in. In this context, Cratos as a metaphor creates an imaginary model of reasoning and controlling human desires through the use of violence, a model of the human mind.

The turn to the oldest Greek sources presented above, in which Cratos, understood as supremacy, power and might, appears in the form of a figure of cognition, thus conveys the powerful message of the dramatic contemplation of the overwhelming and timeless problem of violence. This analysis was inspired by the ideas of GA, which return to the emergence of language and culture, an event inseparable from the consciousness of the danger of potential intra-human conflict, the preventing of which is constantly re-enacted through the recreation in evolving forms of the scene of human origin. Gans's hypothesis tries to convert thinking in humanities into a new understanding of language and culture, noting the causality of the phenomena inside which humanity constantly persists. The image of Cratos, as developed in the reflections above, strongly supports possible cognitive substantiation of the reproduction of the originary event defined by GA, signaled in the works of Hesiod, and later elaborated in the dramas of Aeschylus and his counterparts. One may suppose that parallel contexts could also appear in other masterpieces of ancient literature. The public and metaphorical presence of mythical narratives in which the figure or rhetorical personification of Cratos occurs constitutes an instrument for establishing a universal, cognitive consciousness

about the place of violence in human existence, which is also an expression of the perennial crisis. This message may be strengthened by adding that wherever there is violence, one is dealing with a crisis taking various forms.

In such a situation, Cratos is not only a testimony to the threat of violence, but also to the presence of a crisis in those intra-human relationships in which violence comes to the fore. Cratos and crisis are inseparable. The central message about how to defer both of them is legible in the scene of origin, with Cratos in the center, but also in other transfers which reproduce the originary hypothesis and maintain their narrative cohesion in the form of a scene of origin. It can therefore be assumed that the presence of Cratos in the drama is not accidental. It results from the metaphorically coded consciousness of the danger of violence and its consequences – in short, the crisis – which can be postponed only through the recreation, reproduction or continuation of the scene. Violence is metaphorically represented in the form of Cratos, which the GA hypothesis describes and explains. The mythical narratives of heroes arranged as figures of cognition are therefore not primarily about the fame and glory of the characters they feature but are aimed at the deferral of violence (and crisis) through representation. However, this goal is not immediately apparent. The GA hypothesis with its scene of origin of language and culture, and thus the system of representation, helps read these narratives, allowing humanity to reflect on how it will fill its existence. Upon such a decision ultimately depends the future existence of humanity, even as testified to by Hesiod and Aeschylus. One may guess that, especially the latter, a warrior, might have known something about this….

Bibliography

Aeschylus. 1983. *Prometheus Bound*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Aeschylus. 1988. *Suppliant Maidens, Persians, Prometheus Bound, Seven Against Thebes*, trans. Herbert Weir Smyth. Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press.

Aeschylus. 1996. *Prometheus Bound*, trans. David Grene. In *Great Books of the Western World. Aeschylus. Sophocles. Euripides. Aristophanes.*, Vol. 4, ed. Mortimer J. Adler, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Aeschylus. 2008. *Persians. Seven Against Thebes, Suppliants, Prometheus Bound*, ed. and trans. Alan H. Sommerstein, Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press.

Austin, John L. 1993. *Mówienie i poznawanie. Rozprawy i wykłady filozoficzne*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Calame, Claude. 2014. "From Cultural Memory to Poetic Memory: Ancient Greek Practices of History Beyond the Great Divide." *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 7: 639–652.

Cave, Terence. 2016. *Thinking with Literature: Towards a Cognitive Criticism*. Oxford Scholarship Online, https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198749417.001.0001

Chodkowski, Robert. 1994. *Ajschylos i jego tragedie*. Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego.

Clifford, James, and **George E. Marcus,** eds. 1986. *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Culpeper, Jonathan. 2014. *Language and Characterization: People in Plays and Other Texts.* London and New York: Routledge.

Fahnestock, Jeanne. 1999. *Rhetorical Figures in Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gans, Eric.1981. *The Origin of Language*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Gans, Eric. 1985. *The End of Culture*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Gans, Eric. 1990. *Science and Faith. The Anthropology of Revelation*. Savage: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Gans, Eric. 1997. *Signs of Pradox. Irony, Resentment and Other Mimetic Structures*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Gans, Eric. 2018. "In the Beginning was the Word: Generative Anthropology (GA) as a Religious Anthropology." In *Generative Anthropology and Transdisciplinary Inquiry: Religion, Science, Language and Culture*, ed. Magdalena Złocka-Dąbrowska and Beata Gaj, 21–35. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UKSW.

Gillespie, Alex, and **Flora Cornish.** 2010. "Intersubjectivity: Toward a Dialogical Analysis." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 40: 19–46.

Great Books of the Western World. Aeschylus. Sophocles. Euripides. Aristophanes. 1996. Vol. 4, ed. Mortimer J. Adler, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Greek Drama in the Americas, 2015. ed. Kathryn Bosher, Fiona Macintosh, Justine Mc Connell, and Patrice Rankine. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grene, David. 1983. "Aeschylus: Myth, Religion, and Poetry." *History of Religions Journal*, 23 (1): 1–17.

Griffith, Mark. 1983. "Commentary." In *Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Haase, Fee-Alexandra. 2014. "The Concept of 'Rhetoric' in a Linguistic Perspective: Historical, Systematic, and Theoretical Aspects of Rhetoric as Formal Language Usage." *Res Rhetorica* 1 (1): 27–45.

Habrajska, Grażyna. 2005. "Nakłanianie, perswazja, manipulacja językowa." *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis, Folia Litteraria Polonica* 7 (2): 91–126.

Hall, Edith. 2010. *Greek Tragedy. Suffering Under the Sun*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Herington, John. 1986. *Aeschylus. New Haven*, London: Yale University Press.

Hesiod. 2006. *Theogony. Works and Days Testimonia*, ed. and trans. Glenn W. Most. Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press.

Hunter, Lynette. 2000. "Considering Issue of Rhetoric and Violence." *parallax* 6 (2): 2–8. https://doi.org/10.1080/13534640050083756

Komornicka, Anna M. 1987. *Poezja starożytnej Grecji. Wybrane gatunki literackie*. Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego.

Korolko, Mirosław. 1990. *Sztuka retoryki. Przewodnik encyklopedyczny*. Warszawa: Wiedza Powszechna.

Kotlińska-Toma, Agnieszka. 2015. *Hellenistic Tragedy: Texts, Translations and a Critical Survey*. London: Bloomsbury.

Lebow, Richard N. 2003. *The Tragic Vision of Politics: Ethics, Interests and Orders*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk, Barbara. 2006. „Konstruowanie znaczeń i teoria stapiania." In *Kognitywizm w poetyce i stylistyce*, ed. Grażyna Habrajska, and Joanna Ślósarska, 7–35. Kraków: Universitas.

Lynn, Thomas. 2011. "Sociality in Cognitive and Sociocultural Anthropologies: The Relationships Aren't Just Additive." In *A Companion to Cognitive Anthropology*, ed. David Kronenfeld, Giovanni Bernardo, Victor C. de Munck, and Michael D. Fischer, 413–429. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Manetti, Giovanni. 1993. *Theories of the Sign in Classical Antiquity*, trans. Christine Richardson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Manetti, Giovanni. 2000. "Theories of the Origin of Language in Classical Antiquity." In *Semiotics of Language, Literature and Cinema*, ed. Harish Narang, 26–40. New Delhi: Books Plus.

Most, Glenn W. 2006. "Introduction." In *Hesiod, Theogony. Works and Days Testimonia*, ed. and trans. Glenn W. Most, xi–1xxv. Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press.

Munteanu, Dana L. 2012. *Tragic Pathos: Pity and Fear in Greek Philosophy and Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ong, Walter J. 2002. *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word*. London, New York: Routledge,

Ong, Walter. 2009. *Osoba, świadomość, komunikacja*, ed. and trans. Józef Japola. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.

Pernot, Laurent. 2005. *Rhetoric in Antiquity*, trans. William E. Higgins. Washington: The Catholic University of America Press..

Rosenmeyer, Thomas G. 1955. "Gorgias, Aeschylus, and Apate." *The American Journal of Philology* 76 (3): 225–260.

Searle, John R. 1999. *Umysł, język, społeczeństwo. Filozofia i rzeczywistość*, trans. Dominika Cieśla. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Cis/W.A.B.

Sieroń, Józef. 2007. *Problem cierpienia w literaturze i filozofii starożytnej Grecji. Zagadnienia wybrane*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

Smyth, Herbert W. 1988. "Introduction." In *Aeschylus, Suppliant Maidens, Persians, Prometheus Bound, Seven Against Thebes*, vii–xxxviii. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, London: Heinemann.

Sommerstein, Allan H. 2008. "Introduction." In *Aeschylus, Persians. Seven Against Thebes, Suppliants, Prometheus Bound*, ed. and trans. Alan H. Sommerstein, ix–xxxv. Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press.

Starn, Orin, ed. 2015. *Writing Culture and the Life of Anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Steffen, Wiktor, and **Tadeusz Batóg.** 2000. *Ajschylos. Twórca tragedii greckiej*. Warszawa-Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN.

Wardy, Robert. 1996. *The Birth of Rhetoric. Gorgias, Plato and their Successors*. New York: Routledge.

Witkowski, Stanisław. 2005. "Wstęp." In *Ajschylos, Prometeusz skowany. Persowie*, trans. Jan Kasprowicz, 7–81. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich.

Złocka-Dąbrowska, Magdalena. 2016. "Cratos as Cognition, Gans and Dumezil in Dialog on Language and Violence." *Anthropoetics: The Journal of Generative Anthropology* 22 (1), http://anthropoetics.ucla.edu/ap2201/2201mzd/

Złocka-Dąbrowska Magdalena. 2018. "Generative Anthropology and Cognitive Identity in Mythical Transfers." In *Generative Anthropology in Transdisciplinary Inquiry: Religion, Science, Language, Culture*, ed. Magdalena Złocka-Dąbrowska, and Beata Gaj, 189–199. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UKSW.