gives her son to the herdsman to be killed, so their relationship cannot be called devoid of a hostile component [Sophocles: *Oedipus Tyrannus* 1173ff.]; (3) when Jocasta senses the truth and rushes off to hang herself, Oedipus attributes her distress to a narcissistic reaction [*Ibid.*, 1077ff.]; (4) Laius was a pederast (some say the first), having once loved and kidnaped Chrysippus, the son of Pelops [Hyginus: *Fabulae* 85; Apollodorus: iii. 5. 5]; and (5) Laius rejected Jocasta because of the oracle and refused her bed, so that she was forced to seduce him when he was drunk [Euripides: *Phoenissae* 21–22; Apollodorus: iii. 5. 7].

Stewart performs an interesting reconstruction of the myth, one which is quite in accord with the ideas advanced in Chapter I.[8] He begins by asking why Oedipus, who commits two outrages, is merely blinded and exiled, while Jocasta must die for having committed only one. Combining some of the facts just cited with nuances from Sophocles' drama, Stewart argues that Laius' homosexuality is the crux of the matter—that it brought down Hera's curse (some say it was Pelops'), and, because he acted upon the prophecy, Jocasta's wrath, Jocasta is "guilty" because she knows and is responsible—she saves Oedipus in full knowledge that it will mean the death of Laius, who has rejected and frustrated her. Stewart cites passages in the drama that suggest Jocasta both knew the truth about the parricide and had immediately recognized Oedipus [Stewart, 1961, pp. 424–27; see also Devereux, 1953; Kerényi, 1959, pp. 89–94; Licht, 1963, pp. 134–35, 458]. Whether Stewart's thesis is altogether defensible or not, it calls attention to certain aspects of the myth which clearly reflect the themes I have been discussing.

[8] I am grateful to Elizabeth Lozoff for calling this paper to my attention.

Philip Slater
The Glory of Hera (1968)

CHAPTER IV

Masculine Antisepsis: Apollo

> The door opened and what entered the room, fat and succulent, its sides voluptuously swelling, footless, pushing itself along on its entire underside, was the green dragon. Formal salutation. I asked him to come right in. He regretted that he could not do that, as he was too long. This meant that the door had to remain open, which was rather awkward. He smiled, half in embarrassment, half cunningly, and began: "Drawn hither by your longing, I come pushing myself along from afar off, and underneath am now scraped quite sore. But I am glad to do it. Gladly do I come, gladly do I offer myself to you" [Kafka, "The Green Dragon"].
>
> Is it her singing that enchants us or is it not rather the solemn stillness enclosing her frail little voice? [Kafka, "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk"].

THE MYTHS SURROUNDING APOLLO attempt simply to divest him of all suggestion of maternal enthrallment. He is the personification of anti-matriarchy, the epitome of the sky-god, a crusader against Earth deities. He is all sunlight, Olympian, manifest, rational. He opposes all that is mysterious, hidden, dark, and irrational. Or so, at least, the poets would have us believe. "Orthodoxy demanded that about Apollo there should be nothing 'earthy' and no deed or dream of darkness" [Harrison, 1962, p. 389].

Apollo's dematrification begins, naturally enough, with the

details of his birth. "He it was who escaped most completely from his earthly origin" [Levy, p. 277]. For, in keeping with the geophobia characteristic of Greek heroes, Apollo was born in a place of Not-Earth, an island in the sea, "a rock narrow, barren, and uninviting" [Grote, p. 71]—as dissociated as possible from fertile Mother Earth. Indeed, so unattractive was the isle of Delos that a mythical rationale was required to explain its selection as a birthplace for the god, and the island itself expresses its feeling of unworthiness: "I greatly fear in heart and spirit that as soon as he sees the light of the sun, he will scorn this island—for truly I have but a hard, rocky soil" [*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 69ff.; cf. also Callimachus: iv. 11–13 and 240–43].

Now of course this is not to say that Delos was selected retroactively as Apollo's birthplace because of its barrenness, but rather that this attribute was particularly stressed in attempting to explain the tradition. It is highly unlikely that Delos is any more rocky than most Greek localities, but this aspect of its humbleness was emphasized because it allegorized Apollo's emancipation from maternal influence. Furthermore, in searching for a place to build his temple, Apollo chooses another earthless site, "rocky Pytho," a place so barren that his chosen priests are concerned how they will subsist [*Ibid.*, 183, 390 and 526–30].

We next find that Apollo, like many other heroes, was not suckled: "Leto did not give Apollo, bearer of the golden blade, her breast, but Themis duly poured nectar and ambrosia with her divine hands" [*Ibid.*, 123–25].[1] Furthermore, once having tasted the divine food, he burst his swaddling garment and began to walk and talk. In four days he called for bow and arrows and achieved manhood. His eagerness to liberate himself from childish dependency and maternal protection is also expressed by his having been a seven-months' child, and by his abrupt and more or less permanent departure from Delos [*Ibid.*, 127ff.; Hyginus: *Fabulae* 140].

[1] Apollodorus uses an etymological argument to maintain that Achilles also was unsuckled [Apollodorus: iii. 13. 6]. Achilles' childhood appropriately alternates between all-male and all-female environments.

Finally, while chronologically still an infant, Apollo slew the dragon Python. The jealous Hera had sent Python to prevent the birth of the god, but Poseidon having hidden Leto, the attempt failed, and Python returned to her lair on Parnassus. It is here that Apollo, tricked by the spring-nymph Telphusa, stumbled onto the serpent again and slew her with an arrow. Python lurked by

> a sweet flowing spring, and there with his strong bow the lord, the son of Zeus, killed the bloated, great she-dragon, a fierce monster wont to do great mischief to men upon earth. . . . Whosoever met the dragoness, the day of doom would sweep him away, until the lord Apollo, who deals death from afar, shot a strong arrow at her. Then she, rent with bitter pangs, lay drawing great gasps for breath and rolling about that place. An awful noise swelled up unspeakable as she writhed continually this way and that amid the wood: and so she left her life, breathing it forth in blood [*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 300–4 and 356–62].

On this basis one could almost maintain that Apollo, like Macduff, is "not of woman born." Not only does he emancipate himself from the gentle bonds of the Good Mother, as represented by Leto, Themis, and Earth herself, and by the "golden cords" of the swaddling garment, but he also escapes and ultimately conquers the vindictive hatred of the Bad Mother, represented by his stepmother Hera and her reptilian hatchetwoman, Python. Apollo, like Zeus, initiates his career by mastering the oral-narcissistic dilemma.

Just as in the case of Zeus, however, a closer examination of the material spoils the pretty picture. One finds, first of all, that this radiant Phoebus, this arch-opponent of matriarchy, this lofty god who attempts to minimize the role of the woman in procreation [Aeschylus: *The Eumenides* 658ff.]

and who encourages matricide [Aeschylus: *The Choephori* 270ff.], showed some reluctance to leave his mother's womb: "Leto was racked nine days and nine nights with pangs beyond wont" [*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 91–92]. Furthermore, the misogynist youth is born surrounded by women, for with Leto in her labor were "all the chiefest of the goddesses, Dione and Rhea and Ichnaea and Themis and loud-moaning Amphitrite and the other deathless goddesses save white-armed Hera" [*Ibid.*, 92–95].[2]

This intrauterine hesitation is of course attributed to envious Hera, who keeps Eilithyia, "goddess of sore travail," away from the scene; but this is simply a way of saying that the only safe place to be with a Bad Mother is inside her—that only in this way can one receive love and protection from her and satisfy her narcissistic demand that her child be a mere appendage of herself. Hera's commission to Python at the moment of Apollo's birth expresses the same thought, as does her edict that Leto would never give birth where the sun's rays penetrated. Both of these threats are circumvented by the awkward device of having Poseidon draw the waters of the sea over the island [Hyginus: *Fabulae* 140], so that Apollo is actually born under water (i.e., remains in the womb). This separation from the sun also belies his patri-

[2] This scene bears an interesting resemblance to the "disgruntled fairy" motif so common in European folklore, in which one fairy is not invited to the child's christening and repays the slight with a curse of some sort. The story of the "Sleeping Beauty" is the most well-known. One encounters echoes of it in the prophecies of the Moirai regarding Meleager [Hyginus: *Fabulae* 171], the first two of which are favorable, the third evil; and again in Hera's subversion of Zeus' prophecy concerning Heracles [Homer: *Iliad* xix, 95ff.].

The list of "chief" goddesses serves to remind us how much "choice" there is in mythmaking. Many figures are available for fantasy treatment, but only those who lend themselves to elaboration in terms of important cultural strains will be selected, the others falling into the background. Some choices, to be sure, are determined by the power and prominence of the worshipers (e.g., Hera, Athene), but most cannot be so explained.

archal bias and accords with his being amidst many women. Furthermore, at the moment of birth the rocky nature of Delos is suddenly forgotten by the author of the *Hymn to Apollo*, and he states that Leto "cast her arms about a palm tree and kneeled on the soft meadow while the earth laughed for joy beneath" [*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 117–18].

We are forced to conclude that there is some tension about birth in Greek ideation, a tension also found in the myths of Hephaestus, Dionysus, and Heracles. This tension is in no way peculiar to Greek myth; on the contrary, it is found in the mythologies of all peoples, a point first made by Rank and later confirmed by modern anthropological findings [Rank, 1952; Kluckhohn, 1959, 276–77]. But it is rare to find such an elegant elaboration of the dependency-ambivalence which lies close to its root. The myth of Apollo seems to express an infinite process of doing and undoing, of affirmation and negation of the maternal bond. Our hero is premature yet his birth is delayed; his birthplace is a rock but he is born in soft earth; he is not nursed yet he is surrounded with nurses; he is born hidden from the sun yet he "leaped forth into light" at the moment of birth; he is cleansed of maternal contact yet wrapped in swaddling clothes, from which, however, he escapes, though only after being fed [*Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, 119ff.]. This process continues into his adult life, for while he vanquishes matriarchy he incorporates many of the attributes (such as prophecy) of the chthonic religion [Guthrie, 1955, pp. 199–204].[3] And although he is so loyal to the father that he imagines heredity to be transmitted only through the male [Aeschylus: *The Eumenides*, 657ff.], he and his sister are called Letoides, after their mother [Kerényi, 1960, p. 130]—not to mention his learning divination from

[3] This is a variant of the law that conquering nations typically absorb the cultural characteristics of the peoples they defeat, a pitfall into which crusaders throughout history have unimaginatively plunged. This process has been most carefully studied by Theodore Mills [1964, pp. 98–99].

goddesses behind his father's back [*Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, 55off.], taking the name of another goddess, Phoebe, and using a priestess to utter his prophecies [Harrison, 1957, p. 394].

Even Apollo's rapid growth to manhood, which seems on the surface to connote rejection of the maternal attachment, has its reverse aspect. This theme of immediate maturation is a frequent one in the stories of gods and heroes in all mythologies and deserves a special word or two. As a son's fantasy it conveys the striving for liberation from dependency on the mother, but it also expresses oedipal feelings—the desire to be big and strong enough to compete with the father and satisfy the libidinal demands of the mother. But what would such a fantasy mean to a mother? Here we may draw upon the observations of Gerald Caplan concerning fantasies of pregnant women about their impending offspring. Caplan finds that the age of the child in the prospective mother's fantasy reveals her emotional orientation toward it, the best relationship being predicted for those women who daydream about the baby as a little baby—about nursing, bathing, dressing, or changing him [Caplan, 1955, p. 83]. In contrast to these women are those who daydream about the child going to college, taking specific courses, or engaging in specific occupations. "This woman, even before the baby has come, is already preparing to use the baby in furtherance of her own ambitions . . . things which she couldn't do in her life, she's going to do via the baby . . . this woman is already preparing . . . to react to the baby primarily in relation to her own needs and not in relation to . . . the baby's needs" [*Ibid.*, pp. 84–85].

McLuhan presents an interesting example of this kind of fantasy in his *Mechanical Bride*—a cod liver oil advertisement featuring a mother's "dream of *looking up* to my son . . . I see him one day as a man of stature . . . *I will help him grow in stature*, by giving him care which will add inches

to his height, help him form straight, sturdy limbs, build a back *as erect as a great tree, and develop a mighty chest.* This dream I will make come true!" [McLuhan, 1951, pp. 76–77. Italics mine]. McLuhan interprets the ad as appealing to maternal dissatisfaction with the father and to the desire to create a superior son-substitute; which suggests that at least some aspects of the Greek family pattern are relevant to our own society.[4]

The theme of precipitous maturation usually appears when a maternal figure wishes for a strong protector and lacks a husband. Callirrhoë prays Zeus to make her sons full-grown in a day, that they might avenge their father's murder [Apollodorus: iii. 7. 6], and Apollo's first acts are the slaying of his mother's enemies, Python and the Giant Tityus [Apollodorus: i. 4. 1; Fontenrose, 1959, pp. 13–27]. Thus the son is to be pressed into immediate service as husband-substitute, savior, and protector.

In some myths, however, the other side of the ambivalence is expressed, and the son-savior is portrayed as immature—an infant in his mother's arms [Euripides: *Iphigenia in Tauris* 1249–1252], or at least an uninitiated youth [Apollonius Rhodius: ii. 701ff.; cf. also Fontenrose, 1959, pp. 16–21]. For the mother who wishes to make a husband of her son cannot, for the same reason, tolerate a mature male, and wishes to keep him childlike and sexless—a possession. Apollo is born to be "mother's helper," and as such the "down of manhood" can never appear on his "girlish cheeks" [Callimachus: ii. 37–38 and 103–4]. Only Leto can stroke his youthful locks, which are never to be shorn in initiation into manhood [Apollonius Rhodius: ii. 701ff.]. In keeping with the fact that boys from mother-dominant homes tend to dislike girls [Hoffman, 1961, p. 99], Apollo is notable for his homosexual

[4] Perhaps this particular one is important in all democratic and achievement-oriented societies [cf. McClelland, 1961, pp. 352–53; Slater and Bennis, 1964].

loves—Licht counts nineteen of them [1963, p. 193]—although his affairs with both sexes are rather unsuccessful. The male lovers are carbon copies of himself, perennially youthful and effeminate. The bulb of the flower which bloomed from the blood of his dead lover Hyacinthus, for example, was believed to be efficacious in delaying a boy's puberty [Kerényi, 1960, p. 140].

required reading to Hus print

Earth and Sun Taboos

One further problem arises regarding Apollo's birth-mythology, one which promises to take us somewhat far afield. The attempt, however ambivalent and ineffectual, to separate Apollo from the Earth-Mother principle, is clearly understandable. The birth on the rocky isle is an analogue of the mistletoe, which, according to Frazer, "owes its mystic character partly to its not growing on the ground" [Frazer, 1959, p. 604]. Similarly, "a rowan that is found growing out of the top of another tree is esteemed 'exceedingly effective against witchcraft: since it does not grow on the ground witches have no power over it; if it is to have its full effect it must be cut on Ascension Day' " [*Ibid.*, p. 605]. Rowan growing on a roof or in a rock-cleft has similar properties, and a man out in the dark should have some of this "flying-rowan" with him to avoid being "bewitched and . . . unable to stir from the spot" [*Ibid.*]. These plants are magic because they represent an assumed independence of maternal nurturance. They defend one against the fear of being (and the desire to be) swallowed up by the bad (poisoning, malevolent) mother, i.e., the witch. The Ascension Day requirement is an obvious device for strengthening the anti-matriarchal power of the plant, since this is the day which commemorates the departure of the Son from the Earth to join his Father in Heaven. The use of the plant to counteract the fear of being immobilized or "rooted" in the darkness shows the importance of the intrauterine fantasy in these beliefs, and the fact

that the plant must be chewed betrays the necessity of counteracting one's own oral-dependent yearnings—the source of all the danger. The nectar and ambrosia fed to Apollo, and by virtue of which he bursts his swaddling garments, is of the same order, while the rocky-isle theme tends to make of Apollo himself a charm against such matriarchal powers as the witch-like Erinyes. The dolmens of megalithic times may also have been constructed on such assumptions [cf. Levy, p. 126]; Frazer notes the belief that witches being led to the stake would become invisible and escape if allowed, like Antaeus, to touch the ground [Frazer, 1959, pp. 580–81].

But what is one to make of the separation of this celestial god from the sun? Is this simply another contradiction of Apollo's patriarchal "image"? Frazer states that the prohibition against postpartum exposure of women and their offspring to the rays of the sun is found in all parts of the world [Frazer, 1959, p. 583]. At the most general level this seems to express the idea that paternal contact is destructive to the newborn. The prohibition may have some instinctual basis, since, as Briffault notes, "among carnivora the female takes great pains to conceal herself and her brood from the male, and drives him off lest he should eat the cubs" [1931, p. 18]. Again, reminiscent of Leto's wanderings: "the mammalian female is extremely particular, and even capricious, as to the choice of an abode, and is careful to select a well-concealed, dark and protected spot; she constantly changes it both before and after the birth of the young. . . . The male, who is prone to mistake the cubs for articles of food, is usually driven away" [*Ibid.*, p. 22]. Among humans such a separation serves the dual purpose of protecting the child against paternal jealousy and facilitating a withdrawal of cathexis from the father on the part of the mother, thus enabling her to concentrate her libidinal resources on the nurturance of the child. (The postpartum sex taboo is a good example of this kind of mechanism.) In the Delos myth the concentration of libido

is symbolized by the multiplication of goddesses assisting at the birth.

In his discussion of sun taboos Frazer recounts an Acarnanian myth about a prince called Sunless who will die if he sees the sun. He lives in an underground palace, but each night crosses a river and visits his mistress in her castle. Eventually she, in her desire to keep him, tricks him into staying too long by cutting the throats of all the cocks in the neighborhood, and he is slain by the sun's rays on his homeward journey [Frazer, 1959, p. 584]. This is an intrauterine fantasy—the child can survive only by hiding in his mother's womb, and is destroyed by the father upon discovery. Yet the desire for growth and maturity is also dimly visible in this highly condensed myth. The child wishes to possess the mother in an adult, genital manner like the father, but she blocks this by infantilizing and castrating him (keeping him too long).

But there are other facets to the motif of sun-avoidance. Frazer argues that one "reason why divine personages may neither touch the ground nor see the sun, is . . . an apprehension that the divine being, thus drained of his ethereal virtue, might thereby be incapacitated for the future performance of . . . magical functions" [*Ibid.*, p. 587]. Of the two, the earth taboo seems to be considerably more frequent and pronounced, a tendency which is in itself illuminating. I suggested that the magical efficacy attached to earth-free plants arises from the idea of independence from maternal nurturance. Similarly, "magical implements and remedies are believed to lose their virtue by contact with the ground" [*Ibid.*, p. 581]. We might therefore hypothesize that a special magical power is associated with independence of parental sustenance and is lost through exposure to such support. This would explain the greater intensity of the earth taboo: since maternal nurturance is prior to and more complete than paternal nurturance, it is naturally more seductive and compelling. The intrauterine fantasy is simply the most extreme form of this attraction. At the other extreme is the avoidance of all contact with anyone for fear of arousing dependent responses, a fear which accounts for the widespread importance attached to isolated vigils as a means of preparation for exalted status, especially of a magical or religious nature. The same tendency toward generalization appears in the rule that the magical water of Andjra not only "should on no account be allowed to touch the ground," but also "should not be exposed to the sun *nor breathed upon by anybody*" [*Ibid.*, p. 582. Italics mine].

But what, one might ask, is so magical about emotional independence? Is not this emphasis on separateness simply a familiar prophylactic device for preventing magical contagion? Does some kind of *mana* actually inhere in independence, or am I simply misinterpreting, in an over-psychologized manner, methods of controlling the distribution of this force? Frazer merely states that "apparently holiness, magical virtue, taboo, or whatever we may call that mysterious quality which is supposed to pervade sacred or tabooed persons, is conceived by the primitive as a physical substance or fluid which can be drained away by contact with the earth" [*Ibid.*, p. 581]. Here the nature and origin of the "mysterious quality" are not specified, an omission which is characteristic of discussions of *mana* and taboo.

While this quarantine theory accounts adequately for the ideas regarding the *loss* of magical virtue, it does not explain why substances isolated from earth or sun should *obtain* magical qualities. The dependency theory seems to give a more adequate explanation for these phenomena.

Before arriving at a final conclusion, however, let us examine some of Frazer's further ideas on the subject. He states that the "two rules—not to touch the ground and not to see the sun—are observed either separately or conjointly by girls at puberty in many parts of the world" [*Ibid.*, p. 584]. These

prohibitions are invariably accompanied by a prolonged seclusion and some kind of fasting [*Ibid.*, pp. 584–86]. Such customs seem to be designed to achieve, through a kind of rigid ritual exaggeration, a relinquishing, on the part of the young girl, of her childish attachments, and an acceptance of adult status. She is separated, physically and symbolically, from one or both parents, and from most of her other relatives and friends; and she must in addition tolerate considerable oral deprivation. Almost all students of puberty rites have pointed to this function of relaxing the dependency ties of childhood.

The earth and sun taboos, though crude in method, are grounded in a psychological reality. In order for a girl to achieve an adequate motherhood, she must to some degree relinquish her libidinal attachments to her own mother and father,[5] thus enabling her to fully cathect spouse and offspring. The belief that failure to uphold these prohibitions will have a generally adverse impact on fertility is not without its grain of truth.

The appearance of the two taboos in the context of puberty customs thus seems to provide additional confirmation of the dependency theory of *mana*. But why should a relationship between psychological independence and magical virtue exist? Infantile dependence is, after all, what primarily distinguishes humans from other mammals. Is this one of the reasons why animals play such an important role in the religious life of primitive peoples?

It was Freud who first pointed out that magical thinking originates in the primary narcissism of the infant [Freud, 1913, 85ff.]. During this period, aided by his inability to discriminate clearly between himself and the world around him, the child lives in a hazy fairyland of omnipotence, with

[5] One must not make the error of assuming that there is a single parent-figure of each sex in these societies. Often there are several "mothering" and "fathering" persons. The relinquishing process, however, is the same.

his simple repertory of needs generally satisfied as they are expressed.[6] But in direct proportion to his becoming less dependent, he becomes more aware of how overwhelming his dependency actually is, and looks back nostalgically to his previous oblivion. Freud refers to the "narcissistic overestimation of subjective mental processes (such as the belief in the omnipotence of thoughts, the magical practices based upon this belief, the carefully proportioned distribution of magical powers or 'mana' among various outside persons and things), as well as . . . all those other figments of the imagination with which man, in the unrestricted narcissism of that stage of development, strove to withstand the inexorable laws of reality." He suggests that each person goes through a similar period of development and experiences a feeling of uncanniness when confronted with anything which reminds him of it [Freud, 1919, pp. 393–94]. Is it not likely that belief in the magical quality of persons and objects is also closely related to their ability to evoke in the beholder this reminiscence?

"We employ the term 'narcissism' in relation to little children, and it is to the excessive 'narcissism' of primitive man that we ascribe his belief in the omnipotence of his thoughts and his consequent attempts to influence the course of events in the outer world by magical practices" [Freud, 1917, p. 350]. In these attempts will he not seek materials which recall to him those feelings of oneness with and control over the world which characterized the period of primary narcissism? And will not those materials which seem to express, in their relationship to their environment, this narcissistic self-sufficiency be most highly valued by him as having a special magical potency and attractiveness?

We are now in a position to modify slightly my previous

[6] Freud also suggests that the child, who is at this stage incapable of motor activity (it will be recalled how important the theme of forced immobility is in oral-narcissistic myths) satisfies its wishes by means of hallucinations [1913, pp. 83–84].

conclusion. It is not the lack of dependence in itself which makes the rowan magical, but the illusion of narcissistic self-sufficiency which this lack of dependence evokes: the image of a mature independence would have no such evocative power. The distinction may seem a trifle abstruse, but it helps to explain such inconsistencies as the fact that the mistletoe, while "independent" of the earth, is in a totally parasitic relation to the tree—a fact which would in this view *heighten*, rather than detract from, its magical virtue; for like the infant in the stage of primary narcissism, all its needs are being satisfied by another, without this dependence being manifest (cf. Bettelheim and Sylvester, 1960, p. 500). Indeed, in some instances, a material may become magical more because it expresses the identity of child and mother than because it symbolizes the illusory self-sufficiency. The virtue of an object lies in its capacity to liberate the vision of primary narcissism; secondary factors will determine which aspect of this ambiguous state is stressed.

This, then, is the origin and meaning of *mana*. *Mana* inheres in an object or person in direct proportion to the ability of that object or person to recapture the illusion of infantile narcissistic omnipotence.

Narcissism and Leadership

This definition has the advantage of illuminating some very obscure and puzzling facets of the relationship between leaders and followers in human groups of all sizes, from the dyad to the large modern society. Observers have often wondered at the strange divinity lavished on kings and queens by their insistent subjects. But from the point of view of the follower, the most important quality a leader must have is protective power, so that he may satisfy the follower's dependency needs. Since leaders are mortal, ways must be sought to exaggerate this power psychologically, and the most common method is to increase his "mana" in the sense used above:

in other words, to create a situation in which the leader approximates as much as possible, in his orientation to the world, the primary narcissism of the tiny infant.

Some individuals approach this orientation in their personality structure, requiring little or no "training" by their followers. Thus Freud describes the "narcissistic type" as follows: "There is no tension between ego and super-ego—indeed, starting from this type one would hardly have arrived at the notion of a super-ego; there is no preponderance of erotic needs; the main interest is focused on self-preservation; the type is independent and not easily overawed. . . . People of this type impress others as being 'personalities'; *it is on them that their fellow-men are specially likely to lean;* they readily assume the role of leader" [Freud, 1931b, p. 249. Italics mine]. The fatal charm of such persons lies in the illusion of independence they maintain—if others help them they perceive themselves not as receiving but as taking, by virtue of their cleverness at manipulating people. They do not in fact "need" specific others, since they are concerned only with their personal survival and self-aggrandizement. Nor does conscience ever make cowards of them, for they have none. This emotional obliviousness to others, this seeming independence and self-love, endows them with considerable *mana* as leaders.[7]

To be sure, there is some element of realism in the demand

[7] Rodrigué points out that autistic children, who are highly narcissistic, exert a similar appeal. They are often beautiful, graceful, and musically gifted (one thinks of Orpheus and the Pied Piper), and appear to be self-sufficient and inaccessible. Their charm is based upon this "blissful" indifference, which Freud suggested was also characteristic of many narcissistic women and members of the cat family [Rodrigué, 1957, pp. 178–79]. It is interesting that the treatment of autism requires the establishment of a normal dependency relationship with adults—a relationship which the autistic child dares not risk. An accurate sense of the conflict involved is perhaps best conveyed by the final scene in Henry James' *Turn of the Screw* [1930, pp. 120–34], in which the breaking down of the child's narcissistic aloofness is fatal.

for narcissism in leaders, since it helps ensure that the leader will not in turn continually seek direction from his followers. A comment by Konrad Lorenz illustrates this point: ". . . a swarm of small fish . . . never moves in a concerted way, but rather like an amoeba. If it extends one 'pseudopodium,' the fish in the latter notice that only few others follow them and soon turn back. Von Holst could make these fish behave in a beautifully concerted way *by removing the forebrain of one fish which, thereby, became insensitive to whether the others followed it or not.* It just swam along independently and . . . became the leader" [Schaffner, 1957, pp. 104–5. Italics mine]. The experimenter has created a kind of piscine psychopath, who, experiencing no "need" for the swarm, is crowned by it.[8]

But not all individuals who find themselves in positions of leadership are characterized by a narcissistic personality, and most organized collectivities adopt customs designed to maximize this quality in their leaders. If leadership is an *achieved* status, narcissism can be assumed; but ascribed leaders, such as hereditary monarchs, must be trained from birth to adopt a lifelong attitude of primary narcissism. In the most extreme cases the king is simply kept in an infantile state by constant admiration, flattery, compulsory exhibitionism, and by refusing to permit him to satisfy any of his own needs without help. The phrase "your wish is my command" epitomizes the process of clothing the sovereign's utter personal dependency in the guise of omnipotence. When Freud uses the phrase "His Majesty the Baby" to describe the period of primary narcissism [1914, p. 48] he is ignoring the more interesting

[8] At the human level the relationship between leader and follower is more complicated, as Simmel observed [Wolff, 1950, pp. 181ff.]. To survive, the leader must in fact be aware of the needs of his followers, while maintaining at least the appearance of emotional independence.

The most profound portrayal of the dynamics of the leader-follower relationship is Kafka's "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk" [1961b, pp. 256–77].

aspect of the association, for it is not the sovereignty of babyhood which should surprise us so much as the infantilism of majesty. The king who is not allowed even to dress himself, and can gratify his personal wants only through the single permitted action of crying out to his servants, must be considered to have been placed in a condition of babyhood.[9]

Freud viewed the elaborate measures adopted to increase in this manner the *mana* of the king as expressive of the ambivalence of the people toward him. He called attention to the taboos surrounding sacred kings and priests in primitive societies (drawing largely on Frazer's *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*), the most famous example of which was the West African king who "may not even quit his chair, in which he is obliged to sleep sitting, for if he lay down no wind would arise and navigation would be stopped" [Frazer, 1959, p. 146; Freud, 1913, p. 45]. He pointed out the contradictions, first, in "the same individual being both more free and more restricted," and second, in the fact that the ruler is attributed extraordinary magical powers over nature, yet must be carefully protected against threatening dangers [Freud, *loc. cit.*, p. 48]. These contradictions are rooted in the combination of veneration and hate felt by subjects toward the rulers they have exalted, inasmuch as the taboo not only distinguishes the king and "exalts him above all common mortals," but also makes his life "a torment and an intolerable burden and reduces him to a bondage far worse than that of his subjects" [*Ibid.*, p. 50].

Certainly this ambivalence is an extremely important factor affecting royal and priestly custom and ritual, but the primary motivation is to increase the king's *mana* by placing him in the role of the omnipotent baby. It is, after all, only a short step

[9] American baseball, always a rich source of pristine magic, also exhibits this pattern. Encouragement of the pitcher typically includes such phrases as "You're the babe!"

from saying, "he scarcely has to lift a finger to satisfy his every whim" to saying, "he scarcely has to lift a finger to affect the forces of nature." The unconscious thought, could it be verbalized, would be, "I know I can depend upon this person to protect and guide me, because he is omnipotent; and I know he is omnipotent because he has the same narcissistic orientation to the world that I had in the golden era when *I* was omnipotent."

The nature of the taboos makes this quite clear. Freud notes that "restrictions upon freedom of movement and upon diet" play the principal role [*Ibid.*, pp. 45–46]. These are issues which are primarily relevant to the earliest months of life for the helpless infant, or even to intrauterine life, in which he is almost completely immobilized, and truly "undifferentiated" from his environment, with all his needs "magically" satisfied. The immobility theme refers also to the incapacity of the tiny infant for locomotion.

The contradiction Freud points out between excess of freedom and excess of restriction echoes the paradoxical nature of infancy: the child's needs are satisfied but he is unable to satisfy them himself—he *may* do anything, but he *can* do nothing. The second contradiction—the necessity of guarding and protecting this "omnipotent" being—is also based on an infantile model and betrays the literalness of magical thinking. In order to recapture the sense of omnipotence one must also reconstruct the utter helplessness which is inseparable from it.

This interpretation accounts for the contrast between the degree of petty narcissism tolerated by an individual in his own interpersonal life, and what he not only tolerates but insists upon in relationships between nations. Public diplomatic exchanges between the major powers today are on a level of childlike petulance which would be ludicrous as interactions between adult persons, but are nonetheless accepted and discussed with complete seriousness by perfectly intelligent individuals. Of the same order is Flacelière's observation that

while there are in Homer many relationships of enduring affection among mortals, the loves of the gods are shallow and impermanent, and that "*au lieu de cet 'accord de tous les sentiments entre mari et femme' dont Ulysse parle à Nausicaa, ce ne sont, dans ce ménage du roi et de la reine des dieux, que disputes, chamailleries, brouilles et même voies de fait!*" [Flacelière, 1960, pp. 20–21]. The Greeks demanded of their gods the same degree of narcissistic self-indulgence that men of all ages have demanded of their states [cf. also Jacobson, 1959, pp. 148–53].

" 'Twixt Heaven and Earth"

The narcissistic training of leaders seeks to increase their *mana* by attempting to imitate the desired condition of infantile omnipotence. The sun and earth taboos, to which we now return, seek to recapture this state of primary narcissism through symbolic representation. Just as this state antedates an awareness of both separation from and dependence upon the parent for nurturance, so primitive peoples endeavor to preserve intact the illusion of their rulers' narcissistic independence by preventing contact with either earth-mother or sun-father.

Such insulation also implies a denial of procreation—the covered and suspended monarch need not feel he owes his existence to beings with whom he has no contact. This is perhaps the basis of the association, appearing in several examples cited by Frazer, between immortality and the insulation from sun and earth. Thus the "wizened remains of the deathless Sibyl are said to have been preserved in a jar or urn which hung in a temple of Apollo at Cumae" [Frazer, 1959, p. 588]. Later aspirants for immortality received a similar fate, being enclosed, alive but shrunken, in bottles, jars, pillars, or baskets, and suspended inside churches, thus insulated from both sun and earth. For he who has not been born can never die.

Normally the dead are returned to one "parent" or another, usually the Mother Earth. Cremation is a more sophisticated conception, involving a division of the spoils between parents, an idea which is made quite explicit in the myth of Heracles' apotheosis. If one wishes never to die, one must therefore be insulated against the seductive appeal of parental protection, since it is by virtue of this appeal that one abandons the state of primary narcissism—that one comes into the world (psychologically speaking) and, consequently, goes out of it. In other words, human dependency is associated, quite rightly, with change and modifiability, and its absence with permanence and fixedness. The association captures the distinction between instinct and learning, translated by Freud, in his beautiful analogy of the Pompeian ruins, into that between the immutability of unconscious and the mutability of conscious ideas.

The king who is poised, then, like Frazer's golden bough,[10] between heaven and earth, possesses a maximum of *mana*, inasmuch as he is seen as in a condition of narcissistic independence. He is beyond the influence of humans: immortal, immutable, omnipotent. The sun-and-earth-avoidance themes surrounding the birth of Apollo (who we have, appropriately, left dangling like the king during this discussion) are simply another example of such insulation, probably arising from his role as a protector against malignant chthonic influence.

The Maternal Monster

It will be recalled that when Zeus was menaced by the maternal serpent he copulated with it. Apollo's bloody massacre

[10] Or like the infant Zeus, when hidden from Cronus by Hera and Amalthaea [Hyginus: *Fabulae* 139]. One is reminded of an identical suspension in the popular lullaby, "Rock-a-bye baby, on the tree-top," in which the period of primary narcissism comes to an abrupt end. That the mother should gloat over this rude awakening in the process of singing the child to sleep need not surprise us. Hostile lullabies are universal, reflecting the ambivalent nature of the request to sleep ("be rested and comforted" versus "be immobile, be dead").

of Python seems, in comparison, a rather compulsive and inelegant psychological resolution. It is by far the most common one in mythology, however, from Marduk to the Blackfoot Kut-o-yis [cf. Campbell, 1956, pp. 338–40; Fontenrose, 1959]. It expresses the unconscious feeling that the oral impulses represented by the monster are so powerful that they cannot be controlled and must be totally uprooted and destroyed. The rape of Rhea by Zeus is thus a highly sophisticated conception.

Python is very old, born from the mud of the flood—an indication both of her primitive, excrescent nature and her parthenogenetic origin [cf. Typhaon]. The oral context is announced by the description of the dragon as "fat" or "well-fed," and by the "beautifully flowing spring" which seduces the unwary into the neighborhood where the monster lurks. Apollo kills her with an arrow, and after she expires (with much commotion), he also punishes the spring-nymph, Telphusa, which seems a little excessive. Far from being "Apollonian," Apollo resembles the Puritan or anti-Communist in his anxious rooting out of maternal symbols.

Henry Alden Bunker argues, however, that the killing of mothers, mother figures, or maternal monsters in myths is simply a disguised form of incestuous intercourse, and that these myths are therefore nothing more than variants of the Oedipus myth [Bunker, 1944, 198ff.]. Since Apollo's destruction of Python would seem to fall under this jurisdiction, some appraisal of Bunker's position is in order.

Bunker, like Fromm, operates from a doctrinaire position which asserts that the myth is altogether different from what it seems to be, and requires us to disregard its most central aspect. But whereas Fromm demands that we pay no attention to the incest in *Oedipus Rex* [Fromm, 1951, pp. 201–2], Bunker demands that we ignore the lethal element in "mother-murder." But there are many perfectly straightforward oedipal myths which do not have this hostile admixture, and even if one accepts the necessity of disguise, we are still

obligated to explain why it should take this particular form.

At the same time we need not ignore what Bunker can add to our understanding of the myth. Can we find, in the slaying of Python, sexual elements comparable to those Bunker detects in the myths of Bellerophon, Beowulf, and Bata? Certainly lacking are the elements of self-castration and paternal prohibition which form the principal basis for Bunker's equation of Orestes and Oedipus; and while one might argue that arrow-wounding has always had copulatory overtones, from Eros to Santa Teresa, it is difficult to see why an archer-god should be expected to consummate his deadly deed in any other manner. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the death throes of Python (see above) are even more suggestive of orgasm than the example given by Bunker [1944, p. 203]. We are thus left in a position where it is difficult either to accept or to ignore the relevance to the Python legend of Bunker's interpretation, and rather than simply let the matter drop we might briefly consider the possible implications of a sexualized "mother-murder."

In Chapter I it was pointed out that the mother's implicit sexual demands upon the child threatened him as much as did her hostile resentment. The "appropriate" fantasy response to such a double threat is an act of sexual violence, a sadistic oedipal rape.[11] On the one hand, it takes revenge upon the mother for her hostility and her impossible demands, and on the other it fulfills, with grim irony, the sexual needs she has displaced from husband to child. In addition, it salves the narcissistic wound created by the child's actual inability to satisfy these needs, his sense of weakness and inadequacy, his feeling of worthlessness when faced with his mother's moments of frustrated contempt and bitter resentment toward men. Kenneth Elton's seduction of little girls is a translation of

[11] Compare the primordial rape suggested by Zilboorg in opposition to Freud's primal-horde theory [Zilboorg, 1944, p. 282]. He finds in it the origin of the establishment of patriarchy throughout the world, and the basis of much mythology, but this is simply an unanalyzed root myth, like its Freudian predecessor.

this fantasy into reality.[12] From the helpless, confused, impotent, and scorned child he becomes the aggressive, potent, bullying ravisher.

Thus one should not be particularly surprised to find a sexual element in the slaughter of the maternal monster. In the case of Zeus and Rhea this sexual element predominates, with the hostile aspect muted. In the case of Apollo and Python it is the other way around, with sexuality playing at best a minor role.

There is one further instance in which the slaughter of maternal monsters, although not actually carried out, is at least discussed by Apollo. In *The Eumenides*, the Erinyes, roused to renewed fury by Clytemnestra's ghost, discover that Orestes has escaped them, and complain of Apollo's defiance of their ancient right. At this point Apollo enters, saying:

> Haste, tarry not! Out from the mystic shrine,
> Lest thy lot be to take into thy breast
> The winged bright dart that from my golden string
> Speeds hissing as a snake,—lest, pierced and thrilled
> With agony, thou shouldst spew forth again
> Black frothy heart's-blood, drawn from mortal men,
> Belching the gory clots sucked forth from wounds
> [Aeschylus: *The Eumenides* 180–84. Morshead trans.]

Even in this ensanguined outburst a sexual element may be observed, although it is certainly not in the least erotic. The speech fairly bristles with phallic boastfulness and sexual contempt, barely concealing the most profound dread of women. A short time earlier he refers to the Erinyes in an awestruck manner as:

> . . . these beldames old,
> Unto whose grim and wizened maidenhood
> Nor god nor man nor beast can e'er draw near
> [*Ibid.*, 68–70. Morshead trans.]

[12] In combination with other factors in his development, such as an intense rivalry with a little girl for his mother's affection.

His speech of expulsion attempts to dispel this feeling of awe by a swaggering display of virility, but his fear breaks through once more as he describes the consequences of his threatened aggression, and again as he consigns his opponents to "where there are sentences to beheading, gouging out of eyes, and cutting of throats; where *by destruction of the seed, the manhood of youth is ruined;* where men are mutilated, stoned to death, and where, *impaled beneath their spine,* they make moaning long and piteous" [Aeschylus: *The Eumenides* 185–90. Smyth trans. Italics mine]. It would be difficult to find anywhere a more complete compendium of techniques of real and symbolic emasculation compressed into so small a space.

Apollo's attacks on chthonic monsters thus incorporate the brittle narcissism of the Greek male, in constant struggle against inundation by oral-dependent longings and the dread of woman. It is this struggle, never distant in Greek fantasy, which underlies the several outbursts of vicious sadism attributed to Apollo. In commenting upon these (the flaying of Marsyas is the best example), Gertrude Levy observes that "his cruelties were always the result of wounded pride" [Levy, p. 278]. The Greeks could not envision a god so "Apollonian" that he would not fly into a tantrum at the slightest narcissistic nicking. Apollo's priggish and Draconian opposition to matriarchy in all its forms also betrays this weakness and self-doubt.

CHAPTER V

Matricide: Orestes

To mortal men peace giveth these good things:
Wealth, and the flowers of honey-throated song;
The flame that springs
On carven altars from fat sheep and kine,
Slain to the gods in heaven; and, all day long,
Games for glad youths, and flutes, and wreaths,
and circling wine.

[Bacchylides: ii. 7. Symonds trans.]

And as our vineyards, fallows, meads, and hedges,
Defective in their natures, grow to wildness,
Even so our houses and ourselves and children
Have lost, or do not learn for want of time,
The sciences that should become our country;
But grow like savages, as soldiers will
That nothing do but meditate on blood,
To swearing and stern looks, diffused attire
And every thing that seems unnatural.

[Shakespeare, *Henry V*, Act V, scene 2]

Erxias, where is all this useless army gathering to go?

[Archilochus of Paros.]

APOLLO'S CHARACTERISTICS display themselves most vividly in his support of his matricidal protégés, Orestes and Alcmaeon. It is Apollo who suggests the deed in both cases, and it is he who encourages and supports them in carrying