The Hero Pattern and the Life of Confucius

Author(s): Robert G. Henricks and Robert G. Hendricks

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In 1876 Johann Georg von Hahn's *Sagwissenschaftliche Studien* was published, sometime after the author's death, and in that study von Hahn argues that there is a common pattern to be found in the lives of heroes in Indo-European cultures. He postulates a formula with thirteen principal steps (and three miscellaneous elements for a total of sixteen), and shows this to apply in the cases of fifteen different heroes (counting twins as one) from eleven different culture areas (e.g., Hercules in Greece, Romulus and Remus in Rome, Cyrus in Persia, and Karna in India).[1]

Since that time a number of similar studies have appeared. In 1934 Lord Raglan, in a paper entitled "The Hero of Tradition," presented a pattern of his own. This has a total of twenty-two elements, and he shows this to work, with varying degrees of success, in the stories of eighteen different heroes (some the same as von Hahn's, some different).[2] And related to the study of heroes is Vladimir Propp's work on the structure of the fairy tale; he sees the fairy tale to breakdown into thirty-one different functions or elements.[3] In 1949 Joseph Campbell published his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* Here Campbell constructs, based on the lives of a great number of heroes, a hypothetical pattern. This has three primary moves—departure, initiation, and return—which further breakdown into seventeen different events.[4] And finally, in 1959 the Dutch folklorist Jan de Vries, in his book *Heroic Song and Heroic Legend* noted a hero pattern of ten distinct elements.[5]

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1. Von Hahn's conclusions are presented in tabular form. For an English version of his table see John Dunlop, *History of Prose Fiction* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1906), Vol. I. The table folds out at the end.

2. Raglan's article was published in *Folklore*, Vol. 45 (1934), pp. 212–231. It is reprinted in Alan Dundes, *The Study of Folklore* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1965), pp. 142–157. Raglan later wrote a book developing the article, *The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama* (New York: Vintage, 1956).

3. See his *Morphology of the Folktale* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press 1968), translated into English by Lawrence Scott.

4. Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949).

5. Translated into English as Jan de Vries, *Heroic Song and Heroic Legend* (London: Ox-

While the details of these patterns by no means totally agree (and the patterns of von Hahn, Raglan, and de Vries will be noted in detail below), there remains a core story they all are trying to describe. That essentially comes to this. The hero is normally born of high-ranking, if not royal, parents. But his mortal father is not his real father; he is sired by a god. Prophecies of his greatness precede or accompany his birth. But at birth he is perceived to be a threat by his (mortal) father, or a father figure (often a ruler who has usurped the throne), and he is abandoned or exposed, sometimes on water sometimes on land.[6] Found and raised by peasants (shepherds, fishermen, woodcutters, etc.)—and sometimes nurtured by wild animals—he grows up in a foreign land. Reaching manhood, he learns of his true identity, returns to his native land, fights with and often kills the one who had persecuted him at birth—or if not that, the villain in the story—and in general sets all things aright. The remainder of the hero's life seems less consequential; his return and conquest mark the heroic deed.

While the heroes studied with the pattern have for the most part been general culture heroes (warriors, founders of cities, etc.) it seems clear that certain heroes of religion will work with the pattern as well. And Krishna had been included by von Hahn and Moses by Lord Raglan. But the pattern might also explain some of the things we find in the legends of the great Founders. And in that regard it is important to note that Alan Dundes has written a stimulating article entitled "The Hero Pattern and the Life of Jesus,"[7] and Joseph

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ford University Press, 1963). See especially pages 211–216. For further reading on the "hero," see 1) Alan Dundes, *The Study of Folklore*, pp. 142–144; 2) Alan Dundes, "The Hero Pattern and the Life of Jesus," in his book *Interpreting Folklore* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), pp. 223–261, note especially pp. 223–235; 3) Archer Taylor, "The Biographical pattern in Traditional Narrative," *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, Vol. 1 (1964), pp. 114–129; 4) Stuart Blackburn, "The Folk Hero and Class Interests in Tamil Heroic Ballads," *Asian Folklore Studies*, Vol. XXXVII:1 (1978), pp. 131–149; 5) Frank E. Reynolds and Don Caps, ed., *The Biographical Process: Studies in the History and Psychology of Religion* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1976), especially pp. 1–33. We should also note at this time that in 1881 Alfred Nutt applied von Hahn's pattern with a fair degree of success to Celtic materials: see his "The Aryan Expulsion-and-Return-Formula in the Folk and Hero Tales of the Celts," *The Folklore Record*, Vol. 4 (1881), pp. 1–44. And Otto Rank, a disciple of Sigmund Freud, in 1909, did a brilliant and well-known psychoanalytic interpretation of the pattern: for this see Vintage Books, (1964), for the latest edition.

6. The literature on the exposed child motif is copious. For a good study see Donald B. Redford, "The Literary Motif of the Exposed Child," *Numen*, 14:2 (July, 1967), pp. 209–228, and his bibliography in note 9 on p. 211. Some 72 examples from 17 different cultures are noted and analyzed in Brian Lewis, *The Sargon Legend* (Cambridge, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1980). Note especially pp. 149–267.

7. See note 5 above.

Campbell does mention both the Buddha and Muhammad.

To my knowledge no one has thus far looked at the life of Confucius in this light (and I do not mean by the context to imply that Confucius, too, is a Founder of religion). One reason for this might be the general consensus among folklorists that this really is a culture-bound pattern, not something universal. Von Hahn does call this pattern the "*Aryan* (italics added) Expulsion and Return Formula" (*Arische Aussetzungs-und Rückkehr-Formel*). And both Dundes and de Vries continue to speak of this as "Indo-European."[8] Moreover, in the one attempt to see how well Raglan's pattern would do outside the circum-Mediterranean area (examples from Africa, East Asia [but only Japan, not China], Oceania, and North and South America are used), Victor Cook concluded that it does not work well at all, that the pattern is not cross-cultural.[9]

Be that as it may, readers familiar with Chinese literature will recognize at once that there are Chinese examples. In fact, one of the clearest portrayals of the pattern I know is the account given of Hsüsan-tsang's birth and early years in Chapter 9 of Wu Ch'eng-en's (1506-1582) great novel *Hsi-yu chi* (The Record of the Journey to the West).[10] Of course the late date of that novel does little in arguing for the pattern as indigenous to China. On the other hand, an unusual conception and birth—with no mess or pain—followed by exposure on both land and water and adoption by both animals and peasants, all of this is found in the story of Hou Chi (Lord Millet), founder of agriculture in China.[11] And that story is early indeed (from the *Book of Poetry*, written down c. 1100-600 B.C.).

It is not my point in this paper to solve the problem, one way or the other, of whether the hero pattern is indigenous to China, though that is something that needs to be studied. I am concerned here only with Confucius. The question for me is—does knowledge of this pat-

8. Jan de Vries (*Heroic Song and Heroic Legend*, p. 219) states that ". . .the same heroic pattern is found among virtually all Indo-European nations." See also Alan Dundes, "The Hero Pattern and the Life of Jesus," p. 234.

9. See Victor Cook, "Lord Raglan's Hero—A Cross Cultural Critique," *Florida Anthropologist*, 18:3(1965), pp. 147-154.

10. See Anthony C. Yu, tr., *The Journey to the West*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 198-213. Also Arthur Waley, tr., *Monkey* (New York: Grove Press, Inc. 1943), pp. 85-95. Hsüan-tsang (596-664) was the founder, in a sense, of the "Consciousness-Only" school of Buddhism in China. Alan Dundes, in personal communication, tells me that this specifically is a Chinese version of the Oedipus tale.

11. For this story see Arthur Waley, tr., *The Book of Songs* (New York: Grove Press, Inc. 1937), pp. 239-243 (Song 238). Also Bernard Karlgren, *The Book of Odes* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1950), pp. 199-202 (Ode 245).

tern help us in any way to understand the story of the life of Confucius? It is my conviction that it does. At least I want to say that when we know the hero pattern we then find in the life of Confucius some interesting things, and this is especially true when we look beyond Ssu-ma Ch'ien's official biography of Confucius to the more popular and less orthodox accounts of his life.[12]

Let us now look, for the sake of later reference and reflection, at the hero patterns proposed by von Hahn, Raglan, and de Vries. I choose to group the patterns together under four major events.

I. The Unusual (Miraculous?) Conception and Birth (+ Abandonment and Adoption)

von Hahn: 1. The Hero is of illegitimate birth. 2. His mother is the princess of the country. 3. His father is a god or a foreigner. 4. There are signs warning of his ascendance. 5. For this reason he is abandoned. 6. He is suckled by animals. 7. He is brought up by a childless shepherd couple.

Raglan: 1. His mother is a royal virgin. 2. His father is a king, and 3. Often a near relative of his mother, but 4. The circumstances of his conception are unusual, and 5. He is also reputed to be the son of a god. 6. At birth an attempt is made, often by his father, to kill him, but 7. He is spirited away, and 8. Reared by foster parents in a far country.

de Vries: I. The begetting of the hero. A. The mother is virgin, who is in some cases overpowered by a god, or has extra-marital relations with the hero's father. B. The father is a God. C. The father is an animal, often the disguise of a god. D. The child is

12. I rely for what follows primarily on four different sources. They are: 1) the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü*, which in its present form appears to date from the third century A.D., but which apparently existed already in an earlier form by the end of the former Han—A.D. 9. (On this see R.P. Kramer's, *K'ung Tzu Chia Yü: The School Sayings of Confucius* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1950), p. 196). I here use the Chinese text found in *Chia-yü teng wu-shih-ch'i chung* (Taipei: World Book Co., 1967). 2) Materials from the Han (Former Han, 206 B.C.—A.D. 9); Later Han A.D. 25–220) apocrypha, especially the text *Ch'un-ch'iu-wei Yen-K'ung t'u*. This can be found in Ma Kuo-han, comp., *Yü-han shang-fang chi-i-shu* (Taipei: Wen-hai, 1974), Vol. 4, pp. 2101–2107. Portions of this are translated into English in Fung Yu-lan (translated by Derk Bodde), *History of Chinese Philosophy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), Vol. II, pp. 129–130. 3) Feng Meng-lung's (1574–1646) account of the birth of Confucius in his *Tung Chou lieh-kuo chih*, Ch. 78 (in the Hong Kong: Chung-hua shu-chü edition, see Vol. 2, pp. 724–725). And 4) the *Sheng-chi t'u*, translated into English by H.P. Lair and L.C. Wang as *An Illustrated Life of Confucius: From Tablets in the Temple at Chufu, Shantung, China* (Taipei: Ch'eng-wen, 1972). The preface on this is dated 1875. This text is also cited and discussed by Henry Dore in his *Researches into Chinese Superstitions*, Vol. XIII (translated from the French by L.F. McGreal). I here use the Taipei (Ch'eng-wen, 1967) edition of that work.

conceived in incest. II. The Youth of the hero is threatened. A. The child is exposed, either by the father who has been warned in a dream that the child will be a danger to him, or by the mother who thus tries to hide her shame. B. The exposed child is fed by animals (doe, she-wolf, she-bear, mare, cow, goat, bitch, jackal, eagle, bird). C. After that the child is found by shepherds or it is taken to them.

II. Youth

von Hahn: 8. He is a high-spirited youth. 9. He seeks service in a foreign country.

Raglan: 9. We are told nothing of his childhood.

de Vries: IV. The way in which the hero is brought up. A. The hero reveals his strength, courage, or other particular features at a very early age. B. On the other hand the child is often very slow in his development; he is dumb or pretends to be mentally deficient. V. The hero often acquires invulnerability.

III. The Return—Conquest and Glory

von Hahn: 10. He returns victorious and goes back to the foreign land. 11. He slays his original persecutors, accedes to rule the country, and sets his mother free.

Raglan: 10. On reaching manood he returns or goes to his future kingdom. 11. After a victory over the king and/or a giant, dragon, or wild beast, 12. He marries a princess, often the daughter of his predecessor, and 13. Becomes King.

de Vries: VI. One of the most common heroic deeds is the fight with a dragon or another monster. VII. The hero wins a maiden, usually after overcoming great dangers. VIII. The hero makes an expedition to the underworld. IX. When the hero is banished in his youth he returns later and is victorious over his enemies. In some cases he has to leave the realm again which he has won with such difficulty.

IV. Later Events and Death

von Hahn: 12. He founds cities. 13. The manner of his death is extraordinary. (miscellaneous) 14. He is reviled because of incest and he dies young. 15. He dies by an act of revenge at the hands of an insulted servant. 16. He murders his younger brother.

Raglan: 14 For a time he reigns uneventfully, and 15. Prescribes

laws, but 16. Later he loses favor with the gods and/or his subject, and 17. Is driven from the throne and city. 18. He meets with a mysterious death, 19. Often at the top of a hill. 20. His children, if any, do not succeed him. 21. His body is not buried, but nevertheless 22. He has one or more holy sepulchers.

de Vries: X. The death of the hero. Heroes often die young. In many cases their death is miraculous.

I will not go through the life of Confucius, point by point, to see if these patterns—or which one—succeed or fail. Rather, I wish to consider only three things: 1) Confucius' ancestry and birth; 2) the killing—or execution—of Shao-cheng Mao; and 3) his exile from Lu and return.

1. *Confucius' Ancestry and Birth*

The account of Confucius' ancestry and birth familiar to most is that found in Ssu-ma Ch'ien's biography of Confucius (written c. 100 B.C.). Let us begin there. I cite the Wilhelm translation:[13]

> Confucius was born in the State of Lu, in the District of Ch'ang P'ing, in the city of Chou. His ancestor was from the State of Sung and was called K'ung Fang-shu. Fang-shu begat Po-hsia. Po-hsia begat Shu-Liang Ho. Late in life, Ho was united in matrimony with the daughter of the man, Yen, and begat Confucius. His mother prayed to the hill, Ni, and conceived Confucius. It was in the twenty-second year of Duke Hsiang of Lu that Confucius was born (551 B.C.). At his birth, he had on his head a bulging of the skull, whence he is said to have received the name "Hill" (Ch'iu). His style or appellation was Chung Ni, his family name K'ung. When he was born, his father, Shu-Liang Ho, died.

It is not at all uncommon for the hero's father to die shortly after, or even before, the birth of his son. This happened with Hui-neng, the founder of Ch'an.[14] And Alfred Nutt notes "posthumous birth" as a standard feature in the hero pattern as found in the tales of the Celts.[15] Moreover, the death of the father jibes well with Rank's psychoanalytic interpretation of the hero pattern where exposure of the

13. See Richard Wilhelm (translated from the German by George H. Danton, and Annina Periam Danton), *Confucius and Confucianism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1931), pp. 3-4. For the original Chinese see *Shih chi* 47 (Vol. 6, pp. 1905-1906 in the Peking: Chung-hua, 1959 edition).

14. See Philip B. Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 79. Specifically, Hui-neng was three when his father died. Confucius was also three when his father died according to the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* and other texts.

15. See Nutt, "The Aryan Expulsion-and-Return-Formula," p. 43.

infant at birth is seen as a reflection of projection—i.e., young boys wish to do away with their fathers so that they can keep their mothers for themselves: hence the father is seen as wishing to do away with the son.[16] In the story of Confucius, the father is eliminated right at the start.

But these reflections aside, there are four points of interest here. 1) To begin with it seems clear that the father of Confucius, Shuliang Ho, had nothing to do with his conception; that was the result of his mother's prayer.[a] So there is, in a sense at least, contact with something divine. 2) Secondly, though the Wilhelm translation obscures it and Chinese commentators wish to deny it, there is a smack of illegitimacy here: where Wilhelm has "united in Matrimony," the Chinese literally says "had a union in the wilds" (*yeh-ho*).[b17] And we note with the pattern of von Hahn that illegitimacy can be a feature.[18] 3) Though it is not something noted in the patterns, accounting for the hero's name, explaining why he is called as he is—i.e., Confucius is Ch'iu because his head was shaped like a mound—is common in stories of heroes. Moses is "Moses" because he was "drawn out of the water;"[19] and Fionn in Celtic lore was so-called because people thought he was "fair,"[20] to mention but two examples.[21] 4) Finally, both Raglan and von Hahn note the connection with royalty in the parents of heroes. Royal ancestry for Confucius is here implied, though not made explicit, in making the origin of his ancestors the state of Sung. For Sung was held at this time by the

16. See Rank, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, pp. 65–72.

17. For the text see *Shih chi* 47, (Vol. 6, p. 1905). Note also the *so-yin* commentary (note 4) on p. 1906 where *yeh-ho* is explained as referring to the disparity in the ages of Confucius' father and mother, i.e., their marriage was not in accord with the rites. Note also James Legge, who in his "Life of Confucius" (see *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. I [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1893], p. 59, note 1), says "Sze-ma Ch'ien seems to make Confucius to have been illegitimate, saying that Heh and Miss Yen cohabited in the wilderness. Chiang Yung says that the phrase has reference simply to the disparity of their ages."

18. One thinks as well of the stories of the birth of Jesus. In the Gospel of Matthew (Matt. 1:18–25), Joseph considers divorcing Mary when he discovers that she is pregnant. And in the apocryphal Protevangelium of James, when Joseph discovers that Mary is "big with child" he calls her to him and says "Who has done this evil thing in my house and defiled the virgin?" and "O thou who hast been cared for by God, why has thou done this, and forgotten the Lord thy God?" (See *Ante-Nicene Christian Library, Vol. XVI: Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Revelations* (Edinburgh: T.T. Clark, 1870, p. 8).

19. See Exodus 2:10. The Hebrew verb "draw out" is *mashah.*

20. See Nutt, "The Aryan Expulsion-and-Return-Formula," p. 12.

21. Note also that the father of Hui-neng, the founder of Ch'an is told by "two mysterious monks" to call Hui-neng "Hui-neng" because " 'Hui' means to bestow beneficence on sentient beings; 'Neng' means the capacity to carry out the affairs of the Buddha." (Translated by Philip Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra*, p. 60)

descendants of the preceding Shang dynasty (traditional dates 1766-1122 B.C.), and the claim is always made that the distant relative of Confucius, Fu-fu Ho, was in line for the throne of Sung but refused in favor of his younger brother. All of this comes to saying that Confucius was of royal blood.[22]

While the claim for royal ancestry is only implied by Ssu-ma Ch'ien, it is made explicit in a second account of Confucius' life, that found in the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* (The School Sayings of Confucius). There, the ancestry of Confucius, which Ssu-ma Ch'ien traces back only to his great-grandfather, is traced all the way back to the next to the last ruler of Shang, Ti I: the ultimate ancestor of Confucius is said to have been Wei Tzu-ch'i, first born of Ti I, but born of a concubine.[23] And, the missing links are all supplied: from Wei Tzu-ch'i to K'ung Fang-shu, we know their names and their stories.

But on the ancestry issue, there is even more to tell. For James Legge and Liu Wu-chi both report that genealogical records of Confucius exist which go even further, tracing his line all the way back to no less than Huang-ti (the Yellow Emperor, traditional reign dates 2697-2597 B.C.).[24] This would seem to parallel the move to trace Jesus back to King—note *King*—David and ultimately to Abraham (in Matthew 1). Moses, too, is traced by Josephus back to Abraham and Isaac,[25] and Muhammad, via Abraham, makes it all the way back to Adam![26] One might hazard the guess that the later the account, the further back the ancestry goes.

A second point of interest in the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* account is that we find much more detail here on the parents of Confucius, and of how they met and wed. The story that is told is that Shu-liang Ho, late in life, having sired no son, finally does so with a concubine, and the boy is named Meng-p'i. But he is a cripple. Mr. Yen has three daughters and he asks them which of them would like to marry Mr. Ho. The youngest of them, Cheng-tsai[c]—and is the name not significant, "fulfillment has arrived" or "the proof is here"?—replies "We

22. On this point, see for example, James Legge, "Life of Confucius," pp. 56–57.

23. See *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* 9:39, "Pen-hsing chieh". In the *Chia-yü teng* text, the pages are 92–93.

24. See James Legge, "Life of Confucius," p. 56, and Liu Wu-chi, *Confucius: His Life and Time* (New York: *Philosophical Library*, 1955), p. 33.

25. See *The Works of Flavius Josephus* (Whiston's Translation revised by A.R. Shilleto (London: George Bell and Sons, 1889), Vol. 1, p. 161.

26. See A. Guillaume, tr., *The Life of Muhammed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 3.

will comply with whatever you decide."[27] So she is married. She fears her husband will not have the strength to produce a son. So, in secret she goes off to Mt. Ni-ch'iu where she prays and thus conceives. (Note how all of Confucius' names are here accounted for: he is called Ch'iu[d] like the mountain and Ni[e] like the mountain; the Chung[f] comes from his being the second son.)

What we do not find in the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* is anything about prophecies predicting the future greatness of the man. Nor are there any of the prodigies in nature that typically accompany the birth of a great figure. Such prophecies and prodigies are found in the books of the Han apocrypha.[28] They are also found in the most elaborate account we have of the birth of Confucius, the account recorded by Feng Meng-lung (1574-1646) in his *Tung Chou lieh-Keo chih* (Record of Illustrious States in the Eastern Chou).[29] Let me cite that in detail.[30]

> Of K'ung Chung-ni, his name was Ch'iu. His father, Shu-liang Ho, was once Grand officer of Tsou. He was that brave knight who with his hands held up the falling gate of Pi-yang. Ho married into the Shih family of Lu, and they had lots of daughters but no sons. His concubine bore him a son named Meng-p'i; he had a bad leg and became crippled. Thus he sought a marriage with the Yens. Mr. Yen had five daughters none of which was as yet betrothed. But Mr. Yen, suspecting Ho to be old in years, said to his daughters: "Which of you is willing to marry the Grand Officer of Tsou?" None of them replied. Then the youngest, called Cheng-tsai, responded, saying: "The obligation of a daughter is in the home to obey her father. What my father orders I will do. What is there to question?" Mr. Yen was struck by her words, and arranged the marriage with Cheng-tsai.
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> After she had gone to Ho, husband and wife were both troubled that they had no sons, and together they prayed in the valley on Mt. Ni. When Cheng-tsai ascended the mountain the leaves on the grasses and trees all raised up, and when she descended, having prayed, they all laid down.
>
> That night, Cheng-tsai dreamt she'd been summoned by the Black Emperor [=God] who instructed her: "You shall have a Sage

27. For all this see *Chia-yü* 9:39, "Pen-hsing chieh," *Chia-yü teng*, p. 93.

28. On this see Ku Chieh-kang, "Ch'un-ch'iu shih ti K'ung-tzu ho Han-tai ti K'ung-tzu" in *Ku-shih pien* (Hong Kong: T'ai-p'ing, 1962), Vol. 2, pp. 130–139. Also, some of the relevant passages are translated into English in Fung Yu-lan's *History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 129.

29. In Chapter 78. See Feng Meng-lung, *Tung Chou lieh-kuo chih* (Hong Kong: Chung-hua, 1965), Vol. 2, pp. 724–725.

30. What follows is my translation. This has also been translated/paraphrased by James Legge. See his "Life of Confucius," p. 59, note 1.

for a son. When you give birth it must be in the middle of a hollow mulberry tree." When she awoke she had conceived.

One day—dimly as though in a dream—she saw five old men standing in her courtyard, They called themselves the essences of the five planets. They brought with them an animal that was similar to a small cow, but had only one horn. It had markings like the scales of a dragon. It approached Cheng-tsai and bowed down and spit from its mouth a slip of jade on which the words were written, "Child who is the essence of water. He will succeed to the declining Chou, but he will be an uncrowned king." Cheng-tsai, in her mind, knew this was odd, so she tied an embroidered ribbon to his horn and left. She told all this to Shu-liang Ho, and Ho said, "That animal must have been the *chi'i-lin*."

When it was time for her to deliver, Cheng-tsai asked, "Is there a place called 'Hollow Mulberry'?" Shu-liang Ho replied, "On Southern Mountain there is a hollow cave. And the cave has a spring but it is dry. It is also popularly called 'Hollow Mulberry.' " Cheng-tsai said, "I'm going to go give birth at that place." Ho asked the reason, and Cheng tsai then related her previous dream. Thereupon she took her bedding to the empty cave.

That night two green dragons descended from the sky and stood guard to the left and right of the mountain. Also, two divine maidens holding incense in their hands appeared in the air and with it cleansed Cheng-tsai. They stayed a long time then left.[31] Cheng-tsai then gave birth to Confucius. Suddenly pure water bubbled forth from the spring, and it was naturally warm and mild. After it had bathed the baby the spring then dried up. Twenty-eight li south of the present Ch'ü-fu county, there is a place the folk call 'Woman's Hill' mountain: that's 'Hollow Mulberry.'

When Confucius was born he had some unique physical features. He had the lips of a cow and paws of a tiger, the shoulders of a mandarin drake, and the spine of a tortoise. He had a wide, open mouth and a long neck, and his forehead was shaped like an inverted roof. His father Ho said: "This child holds the spirit of Ni mountain."

Accordingly they named him Ch'iu [=mound], and gave him the style Chung-ni [=second son Ni].

Shortly after Confucius was born Ho died, and he was raised by Cheng-tsai. When he had grown, he was nine feet six inches tall [Chinese measure], and people called him 'giant'.

There are a number of things in this passage requiring explanation. To begin with that the father of Confucius was "that brave knight who. . .held up the falling gate at Pi-yang" alludes to the identification, often made, of Shu-liang Ho, with the Shu Ho men-

31. According to Ku Chieh-kang ("Ch'un-ch'iu shih ti K'ung-tzu," p. 137), the two green dragons and two divine maidens are already found in the Han apocrypha. However, there the maidens cleanse Cheng-tsai with "red mist" (*ch'ih-wu*).

tioned in the *Tso chuan* (Duke Hsiang, year 10, 564 B.C.) who helped his comrades escape a planned ambush by holding up the portcullis that had been dropped.[32]

Secondly, the Black Emperior (Hei-ti) who "summoned" Cheng-tsai—in the Han apocrypha she clearly has intercourse with him[33]—is one of five celestial "emperors"—more like gods—one corresponding to each of the five elements.[34] Bodde suggests that the Black Emperor is chosen as the "father" of Confucius "to convey the idea (widespread in the Han dynasty) that the Chou dynasty had come to an end and a new regime had been inaugurated;"[35] red being the color of the preceding Chou and black to succeed it. That is probably the correct interpretation. However, another scheme popular in the Han was one in which red was to be the color of Han; that would make green the color of the Chou and black the color of Shang. This would serve to reinforce Confucius' connections with the Shang.

The *ch'i-lin* (usually translated "unicorn") is a fantastic animal that only appears at times of great peace with the issue of a wise and virtuous king. The capture of a unicorn in Lu in 481 B.C. is the last event recorded in the *Ch'un-ch'iu* (Spring and Autumn Annals [of Lu])—a book attributed to Confucius. And in all biographical accounts Confucius takes the event to be a sign, normally foretelling his own failure and imminent death.[36] In some accounts of the tale the unicorn captured in 481 still had tied to its horn the embroidered

32. On this point see Legge, "Life of Confucius," p. 58. Also, D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), pp. 163–164.

33. Fung Yu-lan (Bodde) translates from the *Yen-K'ung t'u*: "Confucius' mother, Cheng-tsai, once while taking a walk happened upon the mound of a large tomb, where she fell asleep and dreamed that she received an invitation from a Black Emperor. She went to him and in her dream had intercourse with him." (Fung Yu-lan, *History of Chinese Philosophy,* Vol. II, p. 129.) One is reminded of Zeus' many exploits: the heroes Perseus, Telephus, Amphion and Zethus, and Hercules were all the result of unions in which the mother was ravished by Zeus.

34. The five elements (*wu-hsing*) cosmology gained popularity in the Han and has remained a part of the Chinese world-view ever since. The five elements are wood, fire, earth, metal, and water, and corresponding to these are the directions, East, South, Center, West, and North, respectively, and the colors, Green, Red, Yellow, White, and Black. Cycles in time—the year, dynastic changes—are understood to result from the succession of the elements.

35. See note 1 on p. 129 in Fung Yu-lan's (Bodde) *History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II.

36. See for example Ssu-ma Ch'ien's biography of Confucius. Wilhelm (*Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 62) translates: "When they were hunting in the west and a *ch'i-lin* appeared, Confucius said: 'My career is at an end.' " In *K'ung-tzu chia-yü*, see 4:35, "Pien-wu" (p. 41 in *Chia-yü teng*). The *Sheng-chi t'u* (picture and caption 103), has "The master went to look at it and wept, saying, 'It is a unicorn, which is a gentle beast. It has come out and has been killed, so my doctrine will decline.' "

ribbon placed there by Cheng-tsai.[37]

More germane to our interest in elements of the hero pattern, here we clearly have "signs warning of his ascendency." Cheng-tsai is told by the Black Emperor in a dream[38] that she would "have a Sage for a son." And then the spirits of the five planets come bringing the unicorn, and on the slip of jade it spits out are the words "uncrowned king."

Also of interest are the unusual physical features Confucius is said to have possessed—the lips of a cow and paws of a tiger and shoulders of a mandarin drake, etc. In the *Sheng-chi t'u* these are said to have totalled forty-nine,[39] and Henry Dore lists them all and discusses their significance in terms of physiognomy.[40] It is difficult not to see this as a case of one-up-manship on the Buddha since, as we know, a Buddha's special bodily features come to thirty-two. The forty-nine features, by the way, are only one of the things in the story of Confucius showing the significance of the number seven.[41]

There is one more thing to comment on in Feng Meng-lung's account. Confucius is said to have been born in a place called "Hollow Mulberry" (*k'ung-sang*). And though this appears here as a place name, in the *Yen-K'ung t'u* (Han apocrypha) the meaning seems more literal: the Black Emperor tells Cheng-tsai "Your confinement will take place within a hollow mulberry tree. . ." and she "(later) gave birth to Confucius within a hollow mulberry tree."[42]

This relates Confucius to I Yin, the minister and right-hand man

37. See for example Henry Dore, *Researches into Chinese Superstitions*, Vol. XIII, p. 87.

38. And, of course, dreams and visions are the normal way in which someone finds this out (e.g., the conception of Jesus and the conception of the Buddha). The *Sheng-chi t'u* (picture and caption 11) moves the visit of the five spirits of the planets to a later time, following the birth of Confucius. It is tempting to see this as the result of Christian influence—i.e., to match the visit of the three wisemen. However, Ku Chieh-kang ("Ch'un-ch'iu shih ti K'ung-tzu," p. 137) seems to imply that the tale was told that way already in Han apocryphal sources.

39. See picture and caption 12.

40. Dore, *Researches into Chinese Superstitions*, Vol. XIII, pp. 1–6. Of course they all foretell good things—riches, honor, glory, and fame.

41. He is seven years old when he first begins his studies. It is seven days from the time he predicts his death to the time that he dies. For seven days he and his disciples are without food when surrounded between Ch'en and Ts'ai. And it is after serving for seven days as acting Prime Minister, in many accounts, that he executes Shao-cheng Mao. The number seven is even related to his birth and death dates, for at least one source (see Dore, *Researches*, Vol. XIII, p. 13) reports that he was born on 11/4, and he predicted his death of 4/11 (Doré, *Researches*, Vol. XIII, p. 89).

42. Translated by Fung Yu-lan (Bodde) in *History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 129. For the Chinese text see *Yen-K'ung t'u* in Ma Kuo-han, ed., *Yü-han shan-fang chi-i-shu*, Vol. 4, p. 2103, top.

of T'ang the founder of Shang—so once again we see that connection. But it does even more. It brings the abandonment/exposure motif into the story of Confucius. For I Yin had been found by a princess in a hollow mulberry tree. He might even have been floating on water with the mulberry tree as his boat thus reminding us greatly of the story of Moses. Karlgren translates the story as it is told in the *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu* (compiled c. 240 B.C.):[43]

> A daughter of the lord of Yu Shen picked mulberry leaves, and then she found a baby in a *k'ung sang* hollow mulberry tree; she presented him to her lord, the lord let his cook bring him up [again the peasant adoption theme—present author]; when they investigated how things had come about, it was stated that when his mother dwelt on the Yi river, she had become pregnant; she dreamt that a *shen* Spirit (god) told her: when water comes out of the mortar (trough), then go east and do not look back! Next day she saw that water came out of the mortar, she told neighbors and went east for 10 *li*, and then she looked back at her town - it was all (under) water; her body in consequence (sc. of her disobedience) was transformed into a hollow mulberry tree.

2. *The Killing of Shao-cheng Mao*

We move now to the second item on our agency, though not without first taking note that just as we would expect given the hero pattern, we know virtually nothing of the childhood of Confucius (Raglan, "We are told nothing of his childhood"), and what we do know reveals his predilection in life for the rites (de Vries—"The Hero reveals his strength, courage, or other particular features at an early age.") The *Sheng-chi t'u* says:[44]

> When Confucius was five or six years old he used to set out some toy vessels in imitation of *tsu* and *tou* and performed ceremonies in play. He was thoroughly different from other children because he had the ability, a gift from heaven, of doing things without having first learned them.

It is clear that the struggle with and victory over a demon/villain of some sort is a central—perhaps *the* central—event in the hero bi-

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43. Bernard Karlgren, *Legends and Cults in Ancient China* (Stockholm: Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities, 1946), p. 329. For the original Chinese see *Lü-shih ch'un-ch'iu*, "Pen-wei": pp. 318–319 in Taipe: I-wen, 1969 edition. The significance of the "Hollow Mulberry" and the consequent tie between I Yin and Confucius was noted already by Marcel Granet in his *Danses et Legendes de la Chine Ancienne* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959), Vol. 2, pp. 428–434. See also Wolfram Eberhard (translated from the German by Alide Eberhard), *The Local Cultures of South and East China* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), pp. 207§208.

44. *Sheng-chi t'u*, picture and caption 13. See also the *Shih-chi* biography of Confucius translated by Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 4.

ography pattern. Dundes notes, vis-a-vis Raglan's book-length study of the hero, "only one of the twenty-two traits occurred in the biographies of all twenty-one heros: trait 11, the victory over the king, et al." [45] And de Vries comments as well, ". . .the fight with a dragon and the rescue of a maiden. They belong to the central motifs of heroic legend."[46] But Confucius, unlike St. George, never brandishes his sword. Where might this element be found?

I wonder if it is not to be found in the killing, or execution, of Shao-cheng Mao (or to be more precise the *shao-cheng* Mao, "minor official" Mao)?[47] As early as the *Shih chi* we find that around 501 B.C., when he was 50, Confucius, after many years of frustration, finally received official appointment in his home state of Lu, being first made Magistrate of Chung-tu, and then Minister of Works, and finally Minister of Crime.[48] Then in 496 (497?) he was made acting Prime Minister.[49] And shortly thereafter—and the *K'ung tzu chia -yü* and other texts specify seven days—he "executed from the dignitaries of Lu, the trouble-maker, Shao-cheng Mao."[50]

James Legee insists that this event is pure legend, pointing out that it is not mentioned in the *Analects*, the *Tso chuan*, and other works.[51] And Herrlee Creel, in his biography of Confucius, mentions Shao-cheng Mao only in a note, and in his text argues that all later accounts of executions carried out by Confucius are "completely at variance with everything we know about Confucius from earlier more reliable sources."[52] Finally, D.C. Lau agrees that Shao-cheng Mao is "most probably, totally fictitious," and argues that the *Shih*

45. Dundes, "The Hero Pattern and the Life of Jesus," p. 234.

46. De Vries, *Heroic Song and Heroic Legend*, p. 220.

47. For *shao-cheng* as an official title, and Mao as the man's name see Hsü Shen's comment in *Huai-nan-tzu*, Ch. 13 (p. 30 in *Huai-nan-hung-lieh chieh*) (Taipei: Ho-Lo T'u-shu, 1976). See also R.P. Kramers, *K'ung Tzu Chia Yü*, pp. 263-264, note 5al.

48. See *Shih chi* 47, Vol. 6, p. 1915: Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 17. I have a point to make about some directions in the life of Confucius a little later on. But here—given what we know about the importance of the "center" in the lives of legendary and mythic figures, how gods and heroes are often "lords of the four quarters" who reside at and rule from the center—is it perhaps not significant that Confucius begins his official career as magistrate of "center city" (*Chung-tu*)?

49. *Shih chi* 47, Vol. 6, p. 1917; Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 22. But Legge ("Life of Confucius," p. 74, note 1—see also D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects*, pp. 185-187) argues that Confucius was only a *hsiang* "in the sense of an assistant of ceremonies."

50. *K'ung-tzu chia-yü*, 1:2, "Shih-chu", in *Chia-yü teng*, p. 2; R.P. Kramers, *K'ung Tzu Chia Tü*, p. 205. Translated by Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 23: for the original see *Shih chi* 47, Vol. 6, p. 1911.

51. Legge, "Life of Confucius," p. 75, note 4.

52. See Herrlee Creel, *Confucius and the Chinese Way* (New York: Harper and Row, 1949), p. 37, also note 16 on p. 300.

chi account is Legalist in provenance and told to illustrate the point that Confucius too held to a strong system of punishments and rewards.[53]

My own argument—that the *shao-cheng* Mao becomes in the story of Confucius the evil demon our hero conquers—consists of evidence of two kinds. To begin with, while the *Shih chi* says next to nothing about the crimes committed by Mao ("he was one who threw the government into chaos"—*luan-cheng che*), the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü*—and other texts—is very explicit about his faults. And he turns out to be the very epitome of evil, a veritable Chinese Satan, embodying everything bad in Chinese society, just the kind of demon a Chinese hero should conquer. I quote Kramers' translation:[54]

> Thereupon, after having held court for seven days, he punished the *shao-cheng* Mao, a great-officer who threw the government into confusion: he had him executed at the foot of the Twin Watchtowers; and had his body exposed in court for three days.
>
> Tau-kung came forward and said: "The *shao-cheng* Mao was a well-known man in Lu, and now in performing your office, Master, you start with punishing him. Could this possibly be a mistake?"
>
> Confucius said: "Sit down, I will tell you the reason for this. In this world there are five great evils [in man], not including theft and robbery. The first is called a heart which is dangerous in its rebellious [tendencies], the second a conduct which is persistent in its depravity, the third a speech which is eloquent in its falsehood, the fourth a comprehensive memory for wicked matters, the fifth an obedience to wrong [principles] extending its influence. When of these five there is one in a man, then [already] he cannot escape punishment by a noble man, but the *shao-cheng* Mao had them all combined.
>
> His [standing] in private life was sufficient to gather followers and constitute a faction. His speeches and talk were sufficient to dissimulate his depravity and deceive the masses. His strength and obstinacy were sufficient to go against the right and stand alone. This man, in short, was the leader of the seditious among men, and he could not but be eliminated."

With the conquest of the villain in the hero biography pattern rightful order is restored to the state. It is perhaps not without reason that the *Shih chi* follows up its account of Mao's execution with the following words:[55]

> After Confucius had conducted the government of the state for

53. See D.C. Lau, *Confucius: The Analects*, pp. 187–194.

54. R.P. Kramers, *K'ung Tzu Chia Yü*, p. 205. For the original see *Chia-yü teng*, pp. 2–3.

55. See *Shih chi* 47, Vol. 6, p. 1917. Translation here is by Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 23.

> three months, the sellers of lambs and of suckling pigs no longer falsified their prices, and men and women walked on different sides of the road. Lost objects were not picked up on the streets. Strangers who came from all sides did not need to turn to the officials when they entered the city, for all were received as if they were returning to their own homes.

The second piece of evidence I would note concerns the name Mao[f] itself (and Hsü Shen specifies that this is his name, *ming*,[g] not his surname). To my knowledge this is neither a common name nor a common surname. And when we consider what the character means, suspicions begin to rise. For when the character is not used to indicate a calendar day—its primary function—it means to be "rash" or "reckless" or "false," all things Confucius would want to overcome. Moreover, as a sign for a day, *mao* has bad associations, for Chieh, the last ruler of the Hsia (traditional dates 2205-1766 B.C.), that paragon of evil put to death by T'ang the founder of the Shang, was killed on a *tzu-mao*[h] day. Is it too much to believe that the founding of one dynasty—the Shang at that—that occurred with a killing *on* a *mao*, is being followed with the founding (or potential founding at least) of a new reign of peace with the killing *of* a Mao?[56]

3. *Exile from Lu and Return*

The *Shih chi* biography of Confucius relates that Confucius served in his home state of Lu for only a few years. And then, offended by the behavior of his lord, he resigned his commission and left.[57] Thus

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56. Let me not leave this point without noting that in the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* Confucius follows his explanation of the execution of Mao with the justification that before him other worthies had also put men to death. He begins, "Now T'ang of Yin[=Shang, present author] punished Yin-hsieh, Keng Wen punished Fan-cheng, the Duke of Chou punished Kuan and Ts'ai. . ." (tr. by R.P. Kramers, *K'ung Tzu Chia Yü*, p. 205). On the point that "Mao" might be used for its meaning, it is relevant to note that the names Yin-hsieh and Fan-cheng , the two men executed by T'ang and Wen respectively, men who remain otherwise unidentified (see Kramers, *K'ung Tzu Chia Yü*, p. 265, notes 2 and 3), are homophones with *yin-hsieh* ("depravity and corruption") and *fan-cheng* ("opposition to the upright").

Also, before I leave this section of the paper, many of my readers will know of another "killing" attributed to Confucius—that of the boy Hsiang T'o, who repeatedly defeated Confucius in a riddle contest. (For a translation of the story see Arthus Waley, *Ballads and Stories from Tun-huang* [London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1960, 89–96). Heroes—in contrast to Confucius here—are normally good at solving riddles (see Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, pp. 60–62). Be that as it may, on this account I would also note that killing of a companion out of spite or just for fun is something encountered elsewhere in hero stories. Jesus eliminates his boyhood companions with relish in the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew (see the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, Vol. XVI, pp. 39–43). Note also Fionn's drowning of one of his friends in the tales of the Celts (Nutt, "The Aryan Expulsion-and-Return-Formula," p. 12).

57. *Shih chi* 47, Vol 6, p. 1918. Specifically, Confucius was offended that his lord ac-

began a period of self-imposed exile and wandering: the dates normally assigned to this are 497-484.

A period of exile from one's native state followed by a return with conquest and glory is part and parcel of the hero biography pattern. But Confucius would seem to have had his moment of glory before he left Lu: he did, after all, great things (or so the story goes) as Minister of Crime and acting Prime Minister. And most accounts record nothing special in his life after he returned. But we must discuss this later at greater length.

The suggestion has been made by de Vries—though not well developed—that the explanation for the hero pattern lies in rites of initiation: that is the model that is being, unconsciously no doubt, followed.[58] There is much in favor of this. For in rites of initiation in primitive tribes we normally find young men being taken from their biological parents, abandoned as it were for a time; they leave their villages, civilization as it is known, and go into the wilds; and after a period of instruction and education during which time they learn their true identities, they return to their native homes, heroically, now true men. Moreover, rites of initiation are often highlighted by a struggle, symbolically or real, with figures which represent chaos or evil. The young men must prove themselves by victory in battle.

Also, in rites of initiation, the period of exile spent in the wilds, is a period of testing and trial. Much the same could be said for Confucius' sojourn away from Lu. As he travelled from state to state seeking a prince who would enact his plans, no less than four times he was presented with obstacles to overcome and his life was seriously threatened. On his way from Wei to Ch'en he was arrested by the people of K'uang, mistaken for the Lu rebel Yang Hu; returning to Wei he again set out for Ch'en, this time going via Sung to the East, and in Sung, one Huan T'ui wishing to kill Confucius, cut down a tree that barely missed; having reached Ch'en, he decided to return to Wei but was stopped now by the people of P'u and escaped only by lying and promising he would not go on to Wei (which he did); and finally, toward the end of his trip, wishing to go to Ch'u, he was surrounded by the troops of Ch'en and Ts'ai, and he and his disciples

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cepted a gift of dancing girls from Ch'i and for three days paid no attention to court affairs. For the translation see Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, p. 25.

58. See de Vries, *Heroic Song and Heroic Legend*, pp. 219-226. For a good discussion of rites of initiation one can do no better than Mircea Eliade's *Rites and Symbols of Initiation: The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958). Wolfram Eberhard (*The Local Cultures of South and East China*, p. 326) notes that with certain local tribes in China killing someone from an enemy tribe was part of the initiation.

were without provisions for a total of seven days.[59]

In all of these affairs the disciples of Confucius panicked but the Master remained unmoved; he read, and played his lute, and made pronouncements about all of this being up to fate.[60] One is struck by the parallel with Israel in the wilderness: there too the Israelites were attacked by hostile tribes and ran out of food and water, but while the people grumbled and complained, Moses knew that Yahweh would provide.[61]

Confucius' exile from Lu is comparable in many ways to the years spent away from home by heroes in general. But the problem still remains that while heroes return from exile to conquer a demon and rule, Confucius did both those things *before* his period of exile, not after his return. And his *Shih chi* biography specifies that though he continued to teach and did some editing of texts after his return, he was offered no position in government and did not seek any either.

But the *Shih chi* account represents only one opinion in the Han; there was another. In the Han apocryphal texts and in the writings of the great Han Confucian Tung Chung-shu (179?-104?B.C.), we find another tradition. And that tradition was that when Confucius returned to Lu from Wei he did not simply edit texts and wait around to die, he set himself up as an "uncrowned king" (*su-wang*). And the *Ch'un-ch'iu* (Spring and Autumn Annals [of Lu]) that he wrote at this time contains the regulations appropriate to such a reign. Let me cite three relevant remarks:

1. "Those who discuss this believe that when Confucius returned to Lu from Wei he compiled the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and set himself up as uncrowned king with [Tso] Ch'iu-ming as his unofficial minister."[62]
2. "When the unicorn appeared the Chou was at an end. Therefore [Confucius] set up the *Spring and Autumn Annals* [to establish] the regulations of the uncrowned king."[63]

59. For these events see *Shih chi* 47, Vol. 6, pp. 1919–1935; Wilhelm, *Confucius and Confucianism*, pp. 23–53.

60. When they were stuck between Ch'en and Ts'ai, Confucius according to the *K'ung-tzu chia-yü* account (5:20, "Tsai wei"; *Chia-yü teng*, p. 50), had to bring in each of his disciples one by one and calm them down.

61. Exodus 15:22–17:16.

62. From Tu Yü's (A.D. 222–284) preface to the *Tso chuan* (in which he refutes this claim). See *Tso chuan hui-chien* (Taipei: Kuang-wen, 1969). This includes Tu Yü's *chi-chieh* as well as the sub-commentary of Takezoe Mitsukō. See Vol. I, p. 7. See also Kramers' discussion of Tu Yü's remarks; *K'ung Tzu Chia Yü*, pp. 193-198. Also note the words of Tung Chung-shu, Chia K'uei and Lu Ch'in, cited by Takezoe Mitsukō in his sub-commentary to *Tso chuan hui-chien*, Vol. I, p. 7.

63. From the *Yen-K'ung t'u, Yü-han shan-fang chi-i-shu*, Vol. 4, p. 2105, top.

and

3. "There are things that cannot be brought to pass through (human) effort, yet happen of themselves. Such was the hunt in the west which captured the *lin*—an omen of (Confucius') receiving of (Heaven's) Mandate. He then made use of the *Ch'un Ch'iu* to correct what was incorrect and reveal the meaning of the changing of (a dynasty's) institutions."[64]

So there was indeed a tradition in which the life of Confucius at this point follows the hero pattern (especially that of Raglan) quite well: he returns, becomes king, and even, in a sense, "prescribes laws."

There is one more observation to make about the exile of Confucius which might be germane to the case we are trying to make but which has nothing to do with the hero pattern at all. Let me raise this as an aside. There is something curious about the directions in which Confucius travels. His initial move is from East (Lu) to West (Wei), and he returns in the reverse (West [Wei] to East [Lu]). In between he moves primarily from North to South and South to North but finds his way blocked at every turn. He first wants to go from Wei to Ch'en (directly South) but is arrested and stopped in K'uang. Returning to Wei, again he sets out for Ch'en—indirectly this time, going first to the East (Sung)—and is this time nearly killed in Sung. Making it at last to Ch'en, he wants to return to Wei (directly North) but is surrounded on the way in P'u. And finally, again back in Ch'en, and wishing to go further south, all the way to Ch'u, he is again stopped, surrounded by the troops of Ch'en and Ts'ai.

With all that Levi-Strauss and other structuralists have shown us about the significance of directions in myth and legend,[65] one cannot but find this odd. This all the more because the North-South axis in China is, after all, the imperial way. Could it be that this represents, graphically, Confucius' struggle to be king? And is it of significance that his journey ends when he finally moves not only to Ch'en but to Ch'u (all the way south) and then goes back to Wei and Lu in the North? Also in a structuralist vein, there is in this way a mediation of oppositions: Lu in the North standing for morality, the rites, and official service, while Ch'u in the South stands for mysticism, self-

64. The words of Tung Chung-shu cited and translated by Fung Yu-lan (English translation by Bodde), *History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 71. Note also other remarks made by Tung Chung-shu cited on the pages that follow.

65. See for example Levi-Strauss' article "The Story of Asdiwal," in Edmund Leach, ed., *The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism* (Longdon: Tavistock Publications, Ltd. [A.S.P. Monogrpahs, 1967]), p. 1–47.

expression, and the life of the recluse. Does this mean that when the man from Lu can journey to Ch'u he can become the true king?

4. *Conclusions*

The comments made above in no way show—nor do I wish to argue—that the life of Confucius clearly *follows* the hero biography pattern. But neither for that matter does the life of Jesus clearly follow the hero pattern. The point is rather that enough of the elements of that pattern are found in the story, in one way or another, and elements that seem to be critical to the pattern, to convince us that the hero pattern consciously or unconsciously was *one* of the things that shaped the various traditions about Jesus.

I would say no more for the case of Confucius. It seems to me plausible from what we have seen above, that the hero pattern was also a force in the shaping of legends in China, and that from early on. The alternative would be to see all the connections we have made as no more than coincidence. The choice between these two options awaits further research on the hero pattern in Asia in general.

Robert G. Henricks
Dartmouth College