Chapter Seven

Internal Characteristics of war heroes in India and China

Introduction

In ancient Greece, beings in human shape were distinguished into three categories: god, hero, and ordinary mortal. As there is an impassible gap between god and man in Greece, human heroes are regarded as demigods, i.e. beings between gods and mortals. On the other hand, god and man are not so clearly different in India and China. Thus, it would be difficult to locate heroes in the range between god and man.

In both the East and the West, a man who is endowed with virtues other than bravery is also considered a real hero rather than a mere brave man. Of course, when we speak of the image of hero, what spontaneously comes to mind is not Buddha, Confucius, or Jesus, but Rāma, Yi or Hercules. Maybe, since, from prehistoric times, we retain the memory of a struggle for existence, we tend to accept the physical hero, rather than the internal hero, as a real hero. Hesiod, in his book, the works and days narrates that there were four kinds of human beings before modern human beings. Among them, the fourth humankind is called ‘the tribe of hero’. And it is said that they possess all except wisdom among Plato’s four virtues (moderation, courage, justice, and wisdom). It is circumstantial evidence that originally, in Greece, the ancient hero had no connection with wisdom. In the East also, this image of hero may not be so different. Actually, in myths, most Indian and Chinese heroes are males, and they wandered around with a bow or a club, clad in animal skin. Also they were men of great strength who liked hunting. Rāma, the great archer, loved hunting very much, and he lived in forests for 14 years dressed in bark or deer skin clothes. For Yi, also a famous archer, hunting was the only joy in life. Karen Armstrong points out that the original image of mythic hero is a warrior of the Old Stone Age. According to her, most probably, Hercule is a figure who has been remembered for ages, since the period of hunting and

gathering. Because, he wears animal skin clothes and carries a club, just like a primitive man. Besides, she insists that he was a shaman, famous for managing animals, because he gains immortality after traveling the underworld. If we examine the traditional heroes of the East and the West, we may arrive at the conclusion that most of them were warriors. Maybe the figure of hero per period is the addition of the virtues of the times to the figure of the Paleolithic warrior.

In the present chapter, we will examine the virtues demanded from a hero. And the endemic characteristics of hero of each country will also be discussed.

1. **Heroes who have both externality and internality**

Analytic psychologists say that, though Archetype is inborn, the image of archetype is not so. Therefore, the ideal images of hero are all different according to groups. Roughly, the images of hero can be classified into two categories: external hero and internal hero. One who becomes a hero through external fights is called an external hero. On the other hand, one who becomes a hero through a long training of soul is called an internal hero, i.e. a saint. Marie-Louise Von Franz, one of Jung's disciples, classifies the Animus (masculinity) archetype into four stages. The first stage is the physical Animus (man of mere physical power) in childhood. This is primitive Animus which is the personification of physical power. The second stage is the Animus of action or romance (man of action or romance) in adolescence. The third stage is the Animus of the word in the prime of life, who appears as a professor, a clergyman, or an orator. The highest stage is the Animus of sage in the senescence of life, who appears as a hermit, or a messenger of the gods. These four stages of Franz indicate that the internal hero is regarded more highly than the external hero. This tendency which rates inner virtue more highly than external value is general, not only in Hebraic culture which praises spirituality, but also in Hellenistic culture which praises physical beauty and strength. We can find an example of it in the Odyssey\(^2\); wise Odysseus defeats Telemonian Ajax \(^3\) who is an excellent

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\(^2\) “Hero of Homer's epic poem the *Odyssey* and one of the most frequently portrayed figures in Western literature. According to Homer, Odysseus was king of Ithaca...Homer portrayed Odysseus as a man of outstanding wisdom and shrewdness, eloquence, resourcefulness, courage, and endurance. In the *Iliad*, Odysseus appears as the man best suited to cope with crises in personal relations among the
warrior, and takes possession of keepsakes from Achilles, because he displayed outstanding strategies in the war.

“When Achilles dies, killed by Paris (with help from Apollo), Ajax and Odysseus are the heroes who fight against the Trojans to get the body and bury it with his companion, Patroclus. Ajax, with his great shield and spear, manages to drive off the Trojans, while Odysseus pulls the body to his chariot, and rides away with it to safety. After the burial, each claims Achilles' magical armor for himself as recognition for his heroic efforts. After several days of competition, Odysseus and Ajax are tied for the ownership of the divine armor, which had

Greeks, and he plays a leading part in achieving the reconciliation between Agamemnon and Achilles. His bravery and skill in fighting are demonstrated repeatedly, and his wiliness is shown most notably in the night expedition he undertakes with Diomedes against the Trojans. Odysseus's wanderings and the recovery of his house and kingdom are the central theme of the Odyssey, an epic in 24 books that also relates how he accomplished the capture of Troy by means of the wooden horse.”

Encyclopaedia Britannica, v.s. “Odysseus.”

3 “In Greek legend, son of Telamon, king of Salamis, described in the Iliad as being of great stature and colossal frame, second only to the Greek hero Achilles in strength and bravery. He engaged Hector (the chief Trojan warrior) in single combat and later, with the aid of the goddess Athena, rescued the body of Achilles from the hands of the Trojans. He competed with the Greek hero Odysseus for the armour of Achilles but lost, which so enraged him that it caused his death. According to a later story Ajax' disappointment drove him mad. On coming to his senses he slew himself with the sword that he had received as a present from Hector. The legend has it that from his blood sprang a red flower that bore on its leaves the initial letters of his name, AI, letters that are also expressive of lament. Ajax was the tutelary hero of the island of Salamis, where he had a temple and an image and where a festival called Aianteia was celebrated in his honour.”

Encyclopaedia Britannica, v.s. “Ajax.”

4 “He was the bravest, handsomest, and greatest warrior of the army of Agamemnon in the Trojan War. According to Homer, Achilles was brought up by his mother at Phthia with his cousin and inseparable companion Patroclus. One of the non-Homeric tales of his childhood relates that Thetis dipped Achilles in the waters of the River Styx, by which he became invulnerable, except for the part of his heel by which she held him—the proverbial ‘Achilles' heel.”

Encyclopaedia Britannica, v.s. “Achilles.”
been forged on Mount Olympus by the smith-god Hephaestus. It is then that a
competition is held to determine who deserves the armor. Ajax argues that
because of his strength and the fighting he has done for the Greeks, including
saving the ships from Hector, and driving him off with a massive rock, he
deserves the armor. However, Odysseus proves to be more eloquent, and the
council gives him the armor. Ajax, ‘Unconquered’, and furious, falls upon his
own sword, ‘conquered by his [own] sorrow’. The Belvedere Torso, a marble
torso now in the Vatican Museums, is considered to depict Ajax "in the act of
contemplating his suicide."5

The tendency which rates inner virtue more highly than external value is stronger in India
and China than in Greece. It is quite natural in India, because, generally, the Brāhmaṇa (the
Animus of the word and wisdom) is of higher caste than the Kṣatriya (the Animus of action
or physical power). Also, in China, civil service officials could perform the duties of military
officer, but the opposite case is rare. It clearly shows that, in China too, inner virtue is more
emphasized than physical power.

1.1. Internality of Indian hero

The boundary between external hero and internal hero is ambiguous in India. For, the
Kṣatriyas who lay stress on physical power discipline their mind like the Brāhmaṇas. The
Kṣatriya caste shows the characteristics of both internality and externality as does the
Brāhmaṇa caste. Since four castes and four Āśramas are stipulated as Dharma for the first
three castes in Hinduism, everybody in high castes should fill their lives with learning and
practice. Because mental culture is essential for both the Brāhmaṇa and the Kṣatriya, the
boundary between Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya is not distinct. Kṣatriya heroes show either
characteristics of internality or those of externality, according to the Āśrama. The heroes of
great epics like Rāma or the Pāṇḍavas live in a forest as ascetics after being exiled from their
own countries. And having regained the throne, the Pāṇḍavas depart again as ascetics. Even
Bhīma and Balarāma who are clearly typical external heroes do not boast of their physical
strength and respectively follow Kṛṣṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira who symbolize Dharma. In the
Kṣatriya caste, there is no way to distinguish between the internal hero and the external hero.

5 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ajax_%28mythology%29
Then, what is the image of hero in India? Generally in Indian myths, it is said that the hero is a Kṣatriya warrior who is as dreaded on the battle field as the great fire at the end of the Kali Yuga. But in daily life, he is just like a sage, because he throws away his desire and obsession. The Dharma of Kṣatriya is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*.

“yo vai kaścidihājātaḥ kṣatriyāḥ kṣatrakarmavit
bhayād vṛttisamīkṣo vā na namediha kasyacit.

The Kshatriya, who is born in this world knowing the duties of a Kshatriya, does not bow to any one from fear or from consideration of livelihood.

udycchedeva na namedudyamo hyeva pauruṣam
apyaparvani bhajyeta na nameteha kasyacit.

He should stand erect and never bend down for energy is manliness. One away break down at his knots (weak points) but he should not bend down.

mātaṅgo matte iva ca parīyāt samahāmanāḥ
brāhmaṇebhyo namennityam dharmāyaiva ca samjaya.

That great-minded man the Kshatriya should move about like an infuriated elephant and he should ever bow down to Brahmanas for virtue. O Sanjaya.

niyacchannitarān varṇān vinighnan sarvadaṅkṛtaḥ
sasahāyo’rahūy o vā yāvajīvaṁ tathā bhavet.

Ruling over all the other orders and slaying all evil doers he should live through out his life, whether he be with support or without it.“

*Mahābhārata* (5. 134.)

In the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Vāmīki asks Nārada about the ideal hero as follows:

"ko nv asmin sāmprataṁ loke guṇavān? kaś ca vīryavān
Dharmajñaś ca kṛtajñaś ca satyaśākaṁ dr̥̄dhavratāḥ?
cāritreṇa ca ko yuktāḥ sarvabhūtesu ko hitāḥ?

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6 Dutt, op. cit., 3:361.
vidvān kah kaḥ samarthaś ca kaś c’āikapriyadarśanaḥ?
ātmavān ko jītakrodho matimān ko'nasūyakah?
kasya bibhyati devāś ca jātaroṣasya sāmyuge?

Is there a man in the world today who is truly virtuous? Who is there who is mighty and yet knows both what is right and how to act upon it? Who always speaks the truth and holds firmly to his vows? Who exemplifies proper conduct and is benevolent to all creatures? Who is learned, capable and a pleasure to behold? Who is self-controlled, having subdued his anger? Who is both judicious and free from envy? Who, when his fury is aroused in battle, is feared even by the gods?"7

Rāmāyaṇa (1. 1. 2 - 4.)

Then Nārada answers by describing Rāma's heroic qualification.

"nity'ātmā mahāvīryo dyutimān dhṛtimān vaśī
buddhimān nītimān vāgmī śrīmān śrunibarhaṇaḥ
vipul'āṃso mahābāhuḥ kambuṅrīvo mahāahanuḥ.
mah”orasko mah”eśvāso gūḍhajatrur arimdamaḥ
ājānubāhuḥ suśirāḥ sulalātaḥ suvikramaḥ.
samāḥ samavibhakt’āṅgah snigdhavārṇah pratāpavān
pīnavakṣā viśāl’ākṣo laṅkāvān śubhākṣṇaḥ.
dharmajñāḥ satyasamāṅdaḥ ca prajānāṁ ca hite rataḥ
yaśāsvī jñānasampannaḥ śucir vaśyāḥ samādhimān.
rakṣitā jīvalokasya dharmasya parirakṣitā
Vedaved’āṅgatattvaiṇo dhanurveda ca niṣṭhitaiḥ.
sarvaśāstr’ārthatattvaiṇaḥ smṛtimān pratibhānavaṇ
sarvalokapriyaiḥ sādhur adīn 'ātmā vicakṣanaḥ.

All men know of him, for he is self-controlled, mighty, radiant, steadfast and

7 Vālmīki, Rāmāyaṇa Book one, 4 - 5.
masterful. He is wise and grounded in proper conduct. Eloquent and majestic, he annihilates his enemies. His shoulders are broad and his arms mighty. His neck is like a conch shell and his jaws are powerful. His chest is vast and, a subduer of his enemies, he wields a huge bow. His collarbone is set deep in muscle, his arms reach down to his knees, and his head is finely made. His brow is noble and his gait full of grace. His proportions are perfect and his limbs well formed and symmetrical. Dark is his complexion and he is valorous. His chest is fully fleshed; he has large eyes. He is splendid and marked with all auspicious signs. He knows the ways of righteousness and is always true to his word. The welfare of his subjects is his constant concern. He is renowned, learned, pure, disciplined and contemplative. He is the protector of all living things and the guardian of righteousness. Versed in the essence of the Veda and their subsidiary sciences, he is equally expert in the science of arms. He is versed in the essence of every science, learned in traditional lore, and highly intelligent. All the people love him, for he is good, cheerful and clever."

*Rāmāyaṇa* (1. 1. 8 - 14.)

Vāmīki and Nārada mention the capability of a warrior. Vāmīki inquires "Who, when his fury is aroused in battle, is feared even by the gods?" and Nārada narrates the physical virtues of a warrior: broad shoulders, mighty arms, vast chest, powerful jaws, etc. However, according to both sages, the Indian hero should be endowed with the qualifications of sage and scholar also as well as warrior. Physical qualities are regarded as important, as are inner values like self-control, learning, wisdom, etc.

1.2 Internality of Chinese hero

In Chinese culture in which Confucian values had settled down early, the teaching of ‘Cultivate morals and manage your family, then by governing the country make the world peaceful (修身齊家治國平天下)’ has been fixed as a creed. This teaching stresses inner discipline, and maturity in character is a basic qualification of hero. For that reason, there are

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8 Vālmīki, *Rāmāyaṇa Book one*, 4 - 7.
a few trickster heroes in China. Even Sun Wukong, one of the representative tricksters in China, is a respectable character in the original text. There are also a lot of heroes who have various aspects in China, and some heroes do not have any physical qualification as warrior. The Yellow Emperor who wages war against Ch'i Yu is a politician (the Animus of the word) rather than a war hero (the Animus of physical strength). And the Flame Emperor who is defeated by the Yellow Emperor taught farming to human beings which is the action of the Animus of the word. The great archer Yi is a representative physical hero who removed a lot of monsters, but he is also represented as a teacher (the Animus of the word). Yao and Shun are politicians who do not have any qualification as warrior. The brave general Zhan Fei is believed to be reborn as the wise general Yue Fei, because Zhan Fei regretted his lack of intelligence. And Zhan Fei's elder brother Guan Yu is more honored than him, because Guan Yu is endowed with learning as well as valor. Guan Yu is respected as an epitome of loyalty and resource.

“Guan Di [Guan Yu], in whose honour more than 1,600 official temples, to say nothing of countless minor shrines, were dedicated in Manchu times, was originally a kind of Robin Hood figure. He was one of three heroes whose adventures are recounted in the Romance of the Three Kingdoms, a pseudo-

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9 The Trickster hero reflects babyhood, in which one acts to fulfill instinctive desires rather than for accomplishing a purpose. This type of hero takes the form of an animal, which symbolizes the unconscious instinct. In this stage, heroes are childish, violent, and troublesome, but they evoke mirth.

10 大唐三藏法師取經記

11 “Zhang Fei (died 221)… is a military general who served under the warlord Liu Bei in the late Eastern Han dynasty and early Three Kingdoms period. Zhang Fei and Guan Yu, who were among the earliest to join Liu Bei, shared a brotherly relationship with their lord and accompanied him on most of his early exploits.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zhang_Fei

12 “Yue Fei (24 March 1103 – 27 January 1142)… is a Han Chinese military general who lived in the Southern Song dynasty. He is best known for leading Southern Song forces in the wars in the 12th century between Southern Song and the Jurchen-ruled Jin dynasty in northern China before being put to death by the Southern Song government in 1142.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yue_Fei
historical account of events at the end of the Later Han dynasty, written at the beginning of the Ming period. Guan Zhong [Guan Yu] was a native of Shanxi who was forced to flee through the pass to Shanxi after killing an official for an act of sexual tyranny. There he fell in with a butcher, Zhang Fei [Zhan Fei], and a peddler of straw sandals, Liu Bei, who was to be the founder of the Shu Han dynasty of Sichuan. In a peach orchard belonging to Zhang Fei, the three took an oath of loyalty to one another and of service to the state. The story tells of their adventuring and crusading together and the virtues of Guan Zhong until in the end he was captured and executed by one of his opponents, Sun Chuan, in A.D. 219.  

In this way, in China, learning and cultivating noble character are important even for warriors. Therefore, a lot of warriors who belong to the physical Animus train their character also. Thus, sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the external hero and the internal hero.

1.3. Are sages heroes?
As previously stated, in India and China physical heroes also develop themselves mentally; so they show characteristics of the internal hero as well as the external hero. Then what kinds of differences are there between the external hero and the sage? The sage Agastya drinks all the seawater and makes the Vindhya mountain bow down. And Viśvāmitra who was a Kṣatriya king is concerned about the world, and he deals with various weapons. These sages who achieved high mental stage have supernatural power through asceticism. Some sages are not so mentally and physically different from physical heroes. Actually, there is no reason to see them as physical heroes.

1.3.1. Western heroes
Though the physical strength of a hero is more emphasized in the West than in the East, the archetype of sage and that of hero are similar to each other in the West. Be it miraculous birth, special ability which is revealed from childhood, persecution by antagonists, and worship after death, etc., both archetypes show similar patterns. Jacqueline Simpson in her European

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13 Christie, op. cit., 110.
Mythology points out those similar patterns. According to her, a miracle occurs or prophecy is given before the birth of a sage. And the child sage is endowed with wisdom and devotion which are not appropriate for a child, and these qualities correspond to the physical power of a hero. The sage has a special thing for working miracles (stick, bell, etc.) just like the weapon of a hero, and he fights with enemies just like a hero. Sages become a bishop or a pope while heroes win the throne. And finally, the death of both sages and heroes is consecrated as the completion of life. Thus, Lord Raglan's pattern is also seen in the lives of sages like Jesus, Moses, etc.

Considering the similar patterns of hero and sage, it can be guessed that their archetype is common. Otherwise, the archetype of hero which has been remembered since ancient times is accepted by the later hagiology. For example, St. Gregory is a Christian version of Oedipus. He was born of incest between mixed twins, and abandoned in a boat on a river. Then he becomes a knight, and marries his real mother, though he does not kill his real father. Having gotten to know everything, he performs penance on a rock for 17 years. And finally, he is elected Pope. In the same way, the archetype of sages in the Middle Ages of Europe is not so different from that of heroes. Then, how about sages of ancient Greece? Are their archetype similar to that of heroes? The Greek sages Solon, Socrates, Plato, etc. do not show any pattern of heroes, because their lives are quite different from the archetype of heroes. Historical real persons are not influenced by the archetype of heroes, and a mythical character like Teiresias14, also, does not show any pattern of heroes. Whether the archetype of heroes is similar to that of sages or not, since the modern age, heroes are classified into two in the West: the external hero and the internal hero. This trend implies that sages belong to the category of hero in later times. Therefore, Western internal heroes are easily distinguishable from the external heroes. While most Western heroes have either physical power or spiritual force, most Indian and Chinese heroes have both.

1.3.2. Indian sages

Then, do Indian sages show a pattern that is similar to that of Indian heroes? Vasiṣṭha and Viṣvāmitra who appear from the Vedic times to the great epic period are Brāhmaṇa and

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14 “In Greek mythology, Tiresias was a blind prophet of Apollo in Thebes, and for being transformed into a woman for seven years.”
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiresias
Kṣatriya sages. When Viśvāmitra is still a king, he tries to take away Vasiśṭha’s wish-fulfilling cow. Vasiśṭha is angry with him, and so he kills Viśvāmitra’s army and 100 sons.

“Viśvāmitro mahātejāḥ pālayām āsa medinīm
bahuvarṣasahasrāṇi rājā rājyam akārayat.”
Rāmāyaṇa (1.50. 20.)

“Mighty Vishvamitra once ruled the earth, reigning as a king for many thousands of years.”

“kāmadhenuṃ Vasiṣṭho’pi yadā na tyajate munih
tad” āsya Śabalāṃ, Rāma, Viśvāmitro’nvakarṣata.”
Rāmāyaṇa (1.53. 1.)

“Now, when the sage Vasishtha would not give up Shabala, the wish-fulfilling cow, Rama, Vishvamitra had her dragged away from him by force.”

“tais tan niṣūditaṃ sainyaṃ Viśvāmitrasya tatκṣaṇāt
sapadātigajam s’āśvaṃ sarathaṃ, Raghunandana.
dṛṣṭvā niṣūditaṃ sainyaṃ Vasiṣṭhena mah”ātmanā
Viśvāmitrasutānāṃ tu śaṭaṃ nānāvīdh’āyudham.
abhyaḍḍhatu susamkruddham Vasiṣṭhāṃ japatāṃ varam
humkāren’ai lāh sarvān nirdadāha mahān ṛṣiḥ.
te s’āśvarathapādātā Vasiṣṭhena mah”ātmanā
bhasmīkṛtā muhūrtena Viśvāmitrasutās tadā.”
Rāmāyaṇa (1. 54. 4 - 7.)

“Within an instant, delight of the Raghus, Vishvamitra’s entire army was destroyed, with its infantry, elephants, horses and chariots. Then the hundred sons of Vishvamitra, seeing that their army had been destroyed by great Vasishtha, the foremost reciter of the Vedas, took up various weapons and

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15 Vālmīki, Rāmāyaṇa Book one, 246-7
16 Ibid., 256-7.
charged him furiously. But the great seer, merely uttering the syllable ‘hum,’ consumed them all. And so, in a single moment, the sons of Vishvamitra, norses, chariots, infantry and all were reduced to ashes by great Vasishta.”

Having surrendered to Vasiśṭha, Viṣvāmitra does penances to overcome him and finally gets the status of a Brāhmaṇa. Then he urges king Kalmāṣapāda of the Ikṣvāku dynasty who became a Rākṣasa by the curse of Vasiśṭha's eldest son, Śakti, to prey on Vasiśṭha's 100 sons. Having lost all sons, Vasiśṭha tries to commit suicide, but he decides to live because he knew that Śakti had left a posthumous son. And then he makes Kalmāṣapāda free from the curse and gives Kalmāṣapāda’s queen a prince. In later times, Vasiśṭha helps Rāma as a family priest of Ikṣvāku and Viṣvāmitra gives his divine weapons to Rāma. Their lives are not similar to each other, and they do not show Brāhmaṇa or Kṣatriya archetypes. Other sages like Agastya, Vālmīki, Parāśara, etc. also do not show special patterns. Indian sages do not have their own patterns, and also their lives are not similar to those of Kṣatriya heroes. Furthermore, Indian sages have internal characteristics while Indian heroes have both internal and external characteristics. For, a Brāhmaṇa's duty is study and sacrifice, but a Kṣatriya's duty is protecting people as well as learning. Generally, the lives of a Brāhmaṇa and that of a Kṣatriya cannot help being different from each other.

1.3.3. Chinese sages

Chinese heroes can be classified into two groups: religious sages and non-religious sages. Confucianism and Taoism have been the mainstream of Chinese thought, and representative sages like Confucius and Lao-tzu did not have a religious color, though Confucianism and Taoism both came to have religious characteristics in later times. Anyway, non-religious sages in China are totally different from Indian sages. Confucian sages, in particular, seem to be politicians. During the Spring and Autumn period and the Warring States period, archery and chariot riding were essential for intellectuals. And Chinese sages could not help taking part in wars because of the phases of the time. In spite of that, they neither use supernatural power nor exercise physical force. Generally, Chinese sages seem to have internal characteristics only. For example, Yao and Shun who are worshipped as models of sage are not warriors, but

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17 Vālmīki, Rāmāyāṇa Book one, 260-1.
politicians.

"In the Shun myths the first motif of the perfect ruler is expressed in several ways: the ruler's severe testing of his successor (Yao's test of Shun); the ruler's choice of a successor unrelated to himself (Yao's passing over his ten sons in favor of Shun, and Shun's later passing over his nine sons in favor of Yü); the ruler's abdication in favor of a better person; and the enlightened reign of an ideal sage-ruler."^18

Chinese sages are quite different from Chinese physical heroes and they have little in common with Indian sages. They do not have supernatural power, but only have moral influence.

1.3.4. Sages are not simply internal heroes

The archetype of sage is different from that of hero in India and China. And sages’ lives in both countries are quite different from those of heroes. As inner introspection is essential for every sage, the sage cannot but have strong internal characteristics. However, the sage cannot belong to the category of internal hero, because there are sages who did heroic deeds like physical heroes with supernatural power. In addition, Rājaṛṣis are internal heroes, but not sages who abandon all secular affairs. Thus, it can cause confusion to distinguish the sage as the internal hero separately. In the present paper, sages will be examined by the wide category of hero without distinguishing them as internal heroes.

2. Supernatural power of hero

There is no need to distinguish the human hero and the hero-god in India and China, because the gap between god and man is not so deep. Thus, a man can be more excellent than a god. Kṛṣṇa used the Govardhana mountain to protect people from the 7 days of heavy rain poured down by Indra. And Arjuna also burns down the Khāṇḍava forest for Agni ignoring Indra.

^18 Birrell, op. cit., 74.
“tato jiṣṇuḥ sahasrākṣaṃ svam vityāśugaiḥ śaraiḥ
yodhayāmāsa saṃkruddho vañcanāṃ tāmanusmaran.

Then remembering the deception practiced on him, Jishnu (Arjuna) became very much angry and covering the sky with a cloud of arrows, he sought to fight with the god of thousand eyes (Indra).

devarājo’pi taṃ dṛṣṭvā saṃrabdham ssamare’ṛjunam
svamastramasṛjat tīvraṃ chādayitvākhilaṃ nabhaḥ.

Seeing Arjuna in wrath, the king of the celestial also sought to fight with him. He hurled his very fearful weapons and covered whole of the sky.

tato vāyurmahāghoṣaḥ kṣobhayan sarvasāgarān
viyatstho janayan meghānjaladhārāsamākulān.

Then greatly roaring winds, agitating all the oceans, gathered together masses of clouds charged with torrents of rains.

tato’ śanimuco ghorāṃstaḍitstanitaniḥ svanān
tadvighāṭārthamasṛjadarjuno ’pyastramuttamam.

Thereupon those clouds, charged with thunder-rattle, vomited thunder and flashes of lightings; but to dispel them Arjuna hurled and excellent weapon. Named Vayavya (wind weapon) with proper Mantras. In a moment it destroyed the force and the energy of Indra’s thunder and it dried up the water that was in those masses of clouds; it then destroyed the lightings that played amongst them.

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tata utpāṭya pāṇibhyāṃ mandarācchikharaṃ mahat
sadrumaṃ vyasṛjacchakro jighāmsuh pāṇḍunandanam.

Then Shakra Indra, wishing to kill the son of Pandu, tore up with his hands a
large peak from the Mandara mountain with trees and all; he then hurled it against him.

tato’ṛjuno vegavadbhirjvalīgraṣrajihmagaiḥ śarairvidhvamsayāmāsa gireḥ śṛṅgam sahasradhā.
But Arjuna soon cut down that mountain peak into thousand pieces by his swift and fire-mouthed arrows.

girerviśīryamāṇasya tasya rūpam tadā babhau sārkacandrārahasyeva nabhasaḥ pariśīryatah.
Fragments of that mountain peak in falling through the sky, looked as if the sun, the moon and the planets loosened from their positions fell down on earth.

tenābhipatītā dāvaṃ śailena mahatā bhrśam śṛṅgeṇa nihatāstatra prāṇinaḥ khāṇḍavālayāḥ.
The fragments of that huge peak fell down on that forest and they killed numerous creatures, the dwellers of the Khandava.”

Mahābhārata (1. 227.)

In comparison with the adversity of Western heroes, Indian heroes overcome hardships and they defeat the enemy easily. This does not mean that their hardship is minor, but it means that they never defeated by enemies. Rāma falls into despair after having lost Sītā, but he is never afraid of Rāvaṇa. The Pāṇḍavas lose everything by gambling, but they are never afraid of defeat in the war of Kurukṣetra. In other words, Indian heroes never doubt their power and ability. We can find a lot of examples of how they deal with enemies so easily.

“ravaṃ sa bhairavam kṛtvā samudyamyā karābubhau abhyadravad bhīmasenaṃ jighāmsuḥ puruṣādakah.
Uttering a fearful yell, the cannibal rushed on Bhima with two arms raised high and with the intention of killing Bhimasena.

19 Dutt, op. cit., 1:615, 617.
That slayer of hostile heroes, the son of Pandu (Bhima), even then disregarding him and casing on him only a single glance, continued to eat the food of the Rakshasas. Being filled with great displeasure, he (the Rakshasas) struck a heavy blow with both his hands on the back of the son of Kunti, Vrikodara.

Though Bhima was struck in great force with the arms (of the Rakshasas), yet he did not even look at him, but he continued to eat.

Thereupon he (the Rakshasas) became very angry, tore up a tree and ran at the strong Bhima to strike him again.

That best of men, the greatly strong Bhima, leisurely ate up all the food and then washing himself he stood up cheerfully to fight.

O descendant of Bharata, the greatly powerful Bhima smilingly caught in his left hand the tree hurled in anger (by the Rakshasas.)

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Then that mighty Rakshasas tearing up various trees, hurled them at Bhima and that Pandava also (hurled) many on the Rakshasas.

\[ \text{tad vṛkṣayuddhamabhavanmahīruhavināśanam} \]
\[ \text{ghorarūpaṃ mahārāja nararākṣasarājayoḥ.} \]
O great king, the fight between the man and the Rakshasas with trees became devoid of all trees.

\[ \text{nāma viśrāvya ta bakaḥ samabhidrutya pāṇḍavam} \]
\[ \text{bhujābhīyāṃ parijagrāha bhīmasenam mahābalam.} \]
Saying that ‘He is no other than Baka,’ he sprang upon the Pandava and clasped the greatly powerful Bhima by both his arms.

\[ \text{bhīmaseno ‘pi tad rakṣaḥ parirabhya mahābhujαḥ} \]
\[ \text{visphurantaṃ mahābhāhum vicakarṣa balād balī.} \]
Bhimasena also clasped the Rakshasas by his strong arms. The mighty hero began to drag him violently.

\[ \text{sa kṛṣyamāṇo bhīmena karṣamāṇaśca pāṇḍavam} \]
\[ \text{samayuṣyata tīvreṇa klamena puruṣādakaḥ.} \]
Being dragged by Bhima and dragging Bhima also, the cannibal was gradually overcome with great fatigue.

\[ \text{tayorvegena mahatā prthivī samakampata} \]
\[ \text{pādapāṃśca mahākāyāṃścūrṇayāmāsatustadā.} \]
The earth trembled in consequence of their great strength and large trees that stood there were broken to pieces.

\[ \text{hīyamānaṃ tu tad rakṣaḥ samīkṣya puruṣādakam} \]
\[ \text{nispiṣya bhūmau jānubhyāṃ samājaghne vṛkodaraḥ.} \]
Seeing that the cannibal was overcome with fatigue, Vrikodara pressed him down on the earth with his knees and he then began to strike him with great force.
Then placing one knee on the middle of his back, Bhima seized his neck with his right hand and his waist cloth with his left; he then broke him into two with great force. He (the cannibal) then uttered a fearful yell.

O Vishampata, then the Rakshasas, when he was thus fearfully broken by Bhima, vomited blood.\(^{20}\)

Mahābhārata (1.163.)

The weight of fear which the hero carries reflects his human traits, because human characteristics (emotions, etc.) are spontaneously revealed in front of fear. Even Indra is confounded with fear in front of Vṛtra.

The Kaleyas, clad in golden armour and armed with iron mounted in aces rushed towards the celestials like moving mountains on fire.

Being unable to stand the onrush of those impetuous heroes, the celestials broke (their ranks) and fled away from fear.

Dutt, op. cit., 1:464-5.
Seeking them (the celestials) flying in fear and Vritra growing in boldness, the thousand eyed Purandra (Indra) was greatly confounded with fear.

\[kāleyabhayasaṃtrasto\text{ devaḥ sākṣāt puraṃdaraḥ}
\]
\[jagāma \text{ śaraṇam śīghraṃ taṃ tu nārāyaṇaṃ prabhum.}\]

Filled with the fear of the Kalkeyas the deity Purandra (Indra) himself asked protection from the lord Narayana without delay.” \(^{21}\)

*Mahābhārata* (3. 101.)

The king of gods has this kind of human feeling (fear), and it reflects his human characteristics. On the contrary, Rāma, though he is a man does not show any fear whomever he fights. The fearlessness signifies the supernatural characteristic of a hero.

\[āvārya\text{ gaganaṃ megho yathā prāvṛṣi nirgataḥ}
\]
\[tathā māyāṃ vikurvānau rākṣasāv abhyadāvatām.\]

Mārīcaś ca Subāhuś ca tayor anucarās tathā
āgamyā bhīmasaṃkāśā rudhir’āgughān avāṣrjan.
\[tāv āparantau sahasā drṣṭvā rājīvalocanaḥ\]

*Lakṣmaṇaṃ tv abhisampreksya Rāmo vacanam abravīt.

paśya, Lakṣmaṇa, durvṛttān rākṣasān piśit’āsanān
Mānavaṃ param’odāram astraṃ paramabhāsvaram
\[cikṣepa paramakruddho Mārīc’orasi Rāghavaḥ.\]

sa tena param’āstreṇa Mānavena samāhataḥ
samūrṇaṃ yojanaśataṃ kṣiptaḥ sāgarasaṃplave.

Suddenly, like clouds in the rainy season, two rākṣasas, changing their shapes and blotting out the sky, hurled themselves upon them. Thus did Mārīca, and Subāhu and their ghastly followers appear, pouring down torrents of blood.

Seeing them violently rushing on, lotus-eyed Rama turned to Lakshmana and said: ‘Lakshmana, watch as I scatter these evil, flesh-eating rākshaṣas with the

\(^{21}\) Dutt, op. cit., 2:302.
Mānava weapon as the wind scatters clouds.’ Then, in a towering rage, Rāghava fired the noble and radiant Mānava weapon at Mārīca’s breast. Struck by the great Mānava weapon, he was hurled into the ocean’s flood a full hundred leagues away.”

*Rāmāyaṇa* (1. 29. 10 - 5.)

In Chinese literary myths, the fear of heroes is not easily revealed. But we can guess the human characteristics of heroes through circumstantial evidence. For example, the war between the Yellow Emperor and Ch’ih Yu was an intense fight. If the Yellow Emperor has supernatural power, he can easily win the war. Besides, he tries to kill all Miao people to wreak his wrath on Ch’ih Yu. He definitely has human feelings and characteristics, though he is the head of gods.

“Shennong’s son, minister or grandson – the texts are wonderfully confused – was called Chiyu [Ch’ih Yu]. Like Shennong, he was ox-headed, with sharp horns, a bronze forehead and iron skull. His temples were covered with hair which bristled like swords. He was the inventor of war and of weapons, and fought against Huang Di (either the Yellow Emperor or the August Sovereign: the texts are ambiguous and reflect the confusion of innumerable conflations). The struggle between Huang Di and Chiyu is a classic example of the struggle between ruler and rebel (who is often a minister in revolt). Both sides had the aid of celestial creations: the Winged Dragon sided with Huang Di, the Count of the Wind and the Master of Rain with Chiyu. When Chiyu called down thick fog to confuse the fighting, Huang Di invented the compass so as to guide his own forces. The horns upon which his troops blew made the sound of dragons. Ultimately Huang Di summoned from Heaven the goddess Ba, who, in the eyes of some, was his daughter, and bade her drive off the rain and wind. Being drought, she was able to do so. Chiyu was defeated and beheaded, but Ba, the goddess of drought, stayed upon earth for reasons which are not clear, and that is why drought still inflicts itself upon mankind. Despite her previous assistance to him, Huang Di was forced in the end to send her into exile so that humanity

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might survive.”

Though Yi who was a heavenly god becomes a mortal, he destroys monsters very easily. It seems that he still has supernatural power, but he reveals his weakness as a man through his sudden and shocking death. Just like normal mortals, he does not know his death. This point will be examined in the next section.

Heroes of India and China can be categorized according to weakness and ability into three groups: the transcendental being, the demigod, and the mortal.

“The ease with which the adventure is here accomplished signifies that the hero is a superior man, a born king. Such ease distinguishes numerous fairy tales and all legends of the deeds of incarnate gods. Where the usual hero would face a test, the elect encounters no delaying obstacle and makes no mistake.”

This classification is according to difficulty of adventure and it has nothing to do with the original birth of the hero. Transcendental heroes, like Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, win easily, without difficulties, and human heroes, like Indra and Yi, have human weaknesses and feelings. The demigod hero is situated in the middle of two types in every respect. For example, Lakṣmaṇa is also one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu, but he is not stronger than Rāma. He faces death when hit by Rāvaṇa's javelin. His ability is more excellent than that of a human hero, but his weakness is more fatal than that of a transcendental hero. The Pāṇḍavas who belong to the category of demigod also lose all their forces helplessly when faced with the cowardly night attack of the Kauravas.

“nyapatat sā mahāvegā lakṣmaṇasya mahorasi
jihevoragarājasya dīpyamānā mahādyutiḥ
tato rāvaṇavegena sudūramavagādhayā
śaktyā vibhinnahṛdayayaḥ papāta bhuvi lakṣmaṇaḥ.

Flying with great violence and flaming like the tongue of

23 Christie, op. cit., 96.
24 Campbell, The hero with a thousand faces, 148.
Vāsuki (the lord of serpents), the javelin, which was full of extraordinary splendour, descended on the broad chest of Lakṣmaṇa.

Pierced grievously by the javelin, which had penetrated very deep due to the (tremendous) force exerted by Rāvaṇa, Lakṣmaṇa thereupon fell to the ground.”

*Rāmāyaṇa* (6. 100. 35-6)

3. Death of hero

Hero worship in ancient Greece was dedicated to the dead. Why did the Greeks worship the dead alone and exclude the living? Greek heroes should pass the threshold of death to gain immortality. Since they cannot become one of the gods, death is the only way to reach Oceanus, the paradise of heroes. And only a dead hero is regarded as blessed, and he can communicate with the living. Even Hercules who becomes a true god has to burn his body and meet his physical death. Other heroes who could not become gods enjoy their immortal lives on a blessed island of the Oceanus river.

Unlike the case of Greece, there are a lot of cases where a hero becomes a god in India and China. Heroes can be worshipped as gods after death and gods can also become humans. It is necessary to study how the differences in viewpoint on the concept of god brought about differences in the way of hero worship between the West and the East.

3.1. The death of an Indian hero

In India, it is not compulsory to do a heroic act for enjoying bliss in heaven. Conceptually, anyone who observes his given Dharma on earth can go to heaven. Not only a Kṣatriya who died in battle and a Rājaṛṣi who governed his country very well, but also the lowest class of people can attain the city of Indra simply by performing their duties. A lowly hunter's story in the *Mahābhārata* shows that clearly.

“*upāhāranāharanto devatānāṃ yathā dvijāḥ kurvanti tadvadēbhhyāṃ karomyahamatandritaḥ.*

As the Brahmanas try to procure offerings for their gods, so do I, I with
diligence for these two (my aged parents).

\[ \text{etau me paramaṇaṃ brahman pitā mātā ca daivatam} \]
\[ \text{etau puspaiḥ phalai ratnaistoṣayāmi sadā dvija.} \]

O Brahmana, these my father and mother are my supreme gods. O twice-born
one, I always try to gratify them with the offering of fruits, flowers and gems.

\[ \text{etāvevāgniyo mahyaṃ yān vadanti maniśīnaḥ} \]
\[ \text{yajnā vedāśca catvārah sarvametau mama dvija.} \]

To me they are like the three sacred fires mentioned by the learned. O
Brahmana, they are to me as the sacrifices in the four Vedas.

\[ \text{etadarthaṃ mama prāṇā bhāryā putraḥ suhrjjanaḥ} \]
\[ \text{saputradārāḥ suśrūṣāṃ nityameva karomyaham.} \]

My five vital airs, my wife, children and friends are all for them. With my
wife and my children, I always serve them.”26

Mahābhārata (3. 215.)

\[ \text{“śūdrayonyāṃ vartamāno dharmajño hi bhaviṣyasi} \]
\[ \text{mātāpitrośca śuśrūṣāṃ kariṣyasi na saṃśayaḥ.} \]

Even taking your birth as a Shudra, you will be virtuous, you shall certainly
serve and wait upon your parents.

\[ \text{tayā śuśrūṣayā siddhiṃ mahattvaṃ samavāpsyasi} \]
\[ \text{jātismaraśca bhavitā svargaṃ caiva gamisyasi.} \]

By (thus) serving them, you will acquire great success. You shall also
remember the events of your past life and shall go to heaven.”27

Mahābhārata (3. 216.)

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26 Dutt, op. cit., 2:626-7.
27 Dutt, op. cit., 2:630.
When a hero goes to heaven for enjoying eternity, he should pass the threshold of death just like ordinary people. It is very rare to ascend into heaven in a bodily form.

Even a god who takes a human body has to die to go back to heaven. At that time, in general, his death is noticed or prophesied in advance. Or he can bring about his death on purpose. Rāma's death is foretold by an ascetic.

“kālastūpasarūpeṇa rājadvāramupājamat.
Death in the form of an ascetic appeared at the royal gate.”28
Rāmāyaṇa (7. 103. 1.)

“śṛṇu rājan mahāsattva yadarthamahamāgataḥ
pitāmahena devena preṣito ’smi mahābala.
Hear O king, of great, prowess, the purpose for which I have come,
O powerful one, I have been sent by the god Brahmā.”29
Rāmāyaṇa (7. 104. 1.)

Kṛṣṇa prepares for his death by accepting the curse of Gāndhārī, the Kauravas' mother. He is mistaken for a deer and shot in the foot by a hunter. Bhīṣma also decides his death by divulging the way of killing him to the Pāṇḍavas.

“devavratatvam vijñāpya prthivīṃ sarvarājasu
naiva hanyāṃ striyaṃ jātu na strīpūrvaṃ kadācana.
Having proclaimed my religious vows among all the kings in the earth, ‘I shall never slay a woman or one that has been woman.’

sa hi strīpūrvako rājan sikhaṇḍī yadi te śrutaḥ
kanyā bhūtvā pumān jāto na yotsye tena bhārata.
That Shikhandin, O king has formerly been a woman, perhaps you have heard of it; being originally a female he afterwards became a male and I shall not fight with him, O Bharata.”

28 Vālmīki, Śrīmad Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, 2:928.
29 Ibid., 2:928.
Mahābhārata (5. 172.)

“nirviṣṇo’smi bhṛśaṃ tāta dehenānena bhārata
ghnataśca me gataḥ kālaḥ subahūn prāṇino raṇe.

O Bhratata, O sire, I am disgusted with this body of mine. I have passed my
days in slaying numerous creatures in battle.

tasmāt pārthaṃ purodhāya pañcālān srjayāṃstathā
madvadhe kriyātāṃ yatno mama cedicchasi priyam.

So if you desire to do me a good turn, strive your best for slaying me, placing
the Panchalas and Srinjayas with Partha, before yourself.”

Mahābhārata (6. 116.)

The second way to ascend to heaven with body is very rare and difficult. This ascension is
done by the power of a sage (for example, Triśaṅku), or by passing a difficult test (for
example, Yudhiṣṭhira).

“sv’ārjitaṃ kim cid apy asti mayā hi tapasah phalam,
rājaṃs, tvam tejasā tasya saśarīro divam vraja.
uktavākye munau tasmin saśarīro nar’eśvaraḥ
divam jagāma, Kākutstha, munīnāṃ paśyatām tadā.
devalokagataṃ drṣṭvā Triśaṅkuṃ Pākaśāsanaḥ
saha sarvaiḥ suraganair idāṃvacanamabravīt:
Triśaṅko, gaccha bhūyas tvam. n’āsi svargakṛt’ālayah.
guruśāpahato, mūḍha, pata bhūmim avākśirāḥ!
evam ukto mah’ Endreṇa Triśaṅkur apatat punah
vikroṣamānas tāḥ iti Viśvāmitram tapodhanam.
tac chrutvā vacanam tasya kroṣamānasya Kuśikaḥ
roṣam āhārayat trīvram tisṭha! tisṭh’!eti c’ābravit.
ṛṣimadhye sa tejasvī Prajāpatir iv’āparaḥ
srjān daksināmārgasthān sapta rsin aparān punah.

nakṣatramālām aparām asrjāt krodhamūrchitaḥ
‘For I have garnered for myself some small fruit of my austerity, and through the power of that, your majesty, you shall rise bodily to heaven.’

No sooner had the sage spoken these words, Kākutstha, than the lord of men ascended bodily to heaven before the very eyes of the sages. Now, when Indra, the chastiser of Paka, saw that Tri-shanku had arrived in the world of the gods, he and all the hosts of gods said this: ‘Go back, Tri-shanku. There is no place for you in heaven. Fool, you have been ruined by the curse of your guru. Fall head first back to earth!’ Addressed in this fashion by the great lord Indra, Tri-shanku fell back again, crying out to the ascetic Vishvamitra, ‘Save me!’ Kaushika heard him crying out. Displaying his fierce anger, he called again out, ‘Stop! Stop!’

Then, standing among the seers, beside himself with rage, the renowned and mighty sage created a whole new set of constellations in the south like a second Brahma, lord of creatures, creating another ‘Seven seers’ in the southern portion of the sky.”

Rāmāyaṇa (1. 59. 14-21.)

Most Indian heroes gain immortality through death. And they enjoy eternity in the world of gods while Greek heroes do so on the island of the Oceanos river (the paradise only for heroes).

“dadarśa sa purīṃ ramyāṃ siddhacāransēvitāṁ
sarvartukusumaiḥ puṇyaiḥ pādapairupaśobhitām.
He saw the beautiful city resorted to by Siddhas and Charanas, filled with flowers of all seasons and adorned with sacred trees.

tatra saugandhikānāṃ ca puspāṇāṃ puṇyagandhināṃ
udvījyamāno miśreṇa vāyunā puṇyagadhinā
nandanaṃ ca vanaṃ divyamapsarogāṇasevitām
dadarśa divyakusumairāhvayadbhiriva drumaiḥ.

30 Vālmīki, Rāmāyaṇa Book one, 282 - 3.
Here as if fanned by the fragrant breezes charged with the fragrance of sweet scented flowers and invited by the celestials followers and trees he saw the celestials garden Nandana resorted to by the Apsaras.

\[n\text{ātaptatapasā sākyo draśṭum nānāhitāgninā}\]
\[sa lokāḥ punyakartrāṁ nāpi yuddhe parādāmukhaiḥ.\]

None but those who have gone through devout penances and poured libations on fire, could behold it; that region was for the performers of pious deeds and not for them who had turned their back on the field of battle.

\[n\text{āyajvabhīrṇāvratikairna vedaśrutivarjitaiḥ}\]
\[nānāplutāṅgaiśtīrtheṣu yajñadānabahiṣktaiḥ.\]

(It was not to be seen) by them who had not celebrated sacrifices or observed rigid penances or who had been divorced from the Vedas and Shrutis or who had not bathed in sacred waters or who had not been distinguished for sacrifices and gifts.

\[nāpi yajñahanaiḥ kṣudrairdraśṭum sākyaiḥ kathamcaṇa\]
\[pānapairgurutalpaiśca māṃsādairvā durātmabhiḥ.\]

Those, who had put obstacles in the performance of sacrifices, who were mean, who were addicted to drinking, who had violated the preceptor’s bed, who had taken meant and who were wicked-minded, were not capable of seeing it.

\[sa tad divyaiṁ vanaiṁ paśyan divyagītānāditarva\]
\[praviveṣa mahābāhuḥ śakrasya dayiṁ purīṁ.\]

Beholding that celestial garden resounding with celestial music that mighty-armed hero entered the beloved city of Shakra.”

Mahābhārata (3. 43.)

3.2. The death of a Chinese hero

Paradise is not located in heaven only, and immortality is not given to gods only in China.

31 Vyāsa, op.cit., 2:130.
A cloistered place in a deep mountain or an island in the ocean is known as a paradise which is free from the passage of time even on earth. And it is believed that invincible people who gained immortality by eating the amaranthine fruit and drinking spring water live far away in the South. However, it is very difficult for Chinese heroes to overcome death. For, they do not attain heaven after death. The only hero, Yi, who had the chance of eternal youth and immortality like Gilgamesh, dies at the hands of his disciple, because his wife betrayed him.

“Now Xi Wang Mu [the Queen mother of the West], who is served by birds which are sometimes three-legged, was the one from whom Yi successfully begged the elixir of immortality before it was stolen from him by his wife, Heng-O. She was also associated with the west and fled to the moon where she became a toad.”

At that time, the only way to attain immortality was the elixir of life which ‘the Queen mother of the West’ had. The Taoist idea Xian developed in later times. The way to the Queen Mother in the West was very dangerous, and so it is said that only Yi could reach there.

The ancient Chinese believed that only the soul could go to the land of the dead after death. That land is separated from this world, and so it is impossible for the living to visit it. The land of the dead is not so different from this world, and the departed souls also drink and eat just as they did when alive. As heroes are no exceptions, they ought to completely disappear.

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32 “the best known of all ancient Mesopotamian heroes. Numerous tales in the Akkadian language have been told about Gilgamesh, and the whole collection has been described as an odyssey—the odyssey of a king who did not want to die. … He finally reached Utnapishtim, who told him the story of the Flood and showed him where to find a plant that would renew youth (Tablet XI). But after Gilgamesh obtained the plant, it was seized by a serpent, and Gilgamesh unhappily returned to Uruk.” Encyclopaedia Britannia, v.s. “Gilgamesh.”
33 Christie, op. cit., 64 - 6.
34 “Xian (神仙) is a Chinese word for an enlightened person. Xian semantically developed from meaning spiritual ‘immortality; enlightenment’, to physical ‘immortality; longevity’ involving methods such as alchemy, breath meditation.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xian_%C2%88Taoism%C2%89
after death in this world. The only way to leave a trace on this world is to be worshipped as a god. For example, Yi loved by people, because he got rid of monsters, is worshipped as the god Tsung Pu after his pitiful death. And it is said that the two wives of Shun who are daughters of Yao followed their husband to death, and so people worship them as goddesses of a river.

“They say that when Shun the Great made a royal tour of his territories, his two queens followed the expedition. They drowned in the Hsiang River and their spirits wandered over the deeps of Lake Tung-t’ing and appeared on the banks where the Hsiao and Hsiang Rivers meet.

The local speckled bamboo area is very beautiful, and in the Wu area the speckled bamboo is called the Hsiang queens’ bamboo. The speckles on it are like tear stains.”

It is possible to say that, in China, the immortality (memory) of a hero depends on those who perform rituals of worship at shrines. Heroes can remain in people's memories as gods by doing beneficial things like Yi, or by becoming a role model like the two wise and modest wives of Shun, or by being honored because of a noble character and valor like Guan Yu.

**Conclusion**

Unlike Greek heroes, Indian and Chinese heroes are not beings in between god and man, and their ability is not distinguishable from that of gods. Compared to Greek heroes, they seem to have more supernatural power, and so they can become one of the gods or go to the world of gods after death. But the sharpest difference lies in the internal characteristics of physical heroes. Not to speak of Indian heroes, but also Chinese heroes have to be endowed with a noble character and virtues. Unlike India, even politicians who do not have any qualification of warrior are worshipped as heroes in China. The physical aspect of hero is regarded as important, but social duties which are expressed as Dharma and Tao are also important. The concept of Dharma and Tao, of course, is different according to the time and

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35 Birrell, op. cit., 209
place.