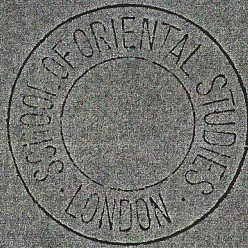


CONFUCIUS:
MAN OR MONSTER?

BY
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CONFUCIUS: MAN OR MONSTER?*

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THE distinction drawn by the author of this book between "Master Kung" and "Confucius" is a little puzzling, seeing that "Kung" (which, as the word is aspirated, should be written K'ung) is simply the Chinese original of the first three letters of the word "Confucius," and "Master" is merely the English for *Tzŭ* or *Fu-Tzŭ*, which is the Chinese original of the remainder of the same latinized word. Thus there is no difference between the designations "Master K'ung" and "Confucius," although our author apparently wishes to persuade us that the former is applicable to the "sincere, lovable, entirely human scholar and gentleman who was born in the sixth century before Christ," while "Confucius" stands for "the creation of generations of later scholars who deified the man . . . and so created an intellectual Frankenstein monster, a fleshless creature conceived and born between the covers of a textbook." It will not be necessary to remind readers of this Journal that the word "Confucius" is merely a convenient latinization, adopted by the early Catholic missionaries in China who first translated the Confucian classics into Latin, of the Chinese phrase K'ung Fu-Tzŭ, which means K'ung the Master or the Philosopher. In fulfilment of his desire to draw a distinction between K'ung the Sage (or, as he will have it, the deified man or monster) and K'ung the Man, Mr. Crow might have done better to make use of Confucius's personal name and call him K'ung Ch'iu.

It is surprising to be told by our author that his main sources of information for the life of "Master Kung" consist of the well-known biography of Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien (whom he calls Sze Ma Chien, evidently overlooking the fact that Ssŭ-ma is a double surname), and the "Chinese Classics" as translated by Dr. Legge—to whom, by the way, he pays the undeserved compliment of being the scholar who gave Christian countries "their first authentic information regarding Chinese literature and culture." The curious point about this statement is that the two "main sources" of Mr. Crow's account of "Master Kung" are precisely the sources from which all biographers of the Confucius whom Mr. Crow describes as "an intellectual Frankenstein monster," and all those traditionalists of the Confucian School who according to

* *Master Kung: The Story of Confucius*. By Carl Crow. London: Hamish Hamilton. 1937.

