

WARNING: Biblically, the demons are standing ready and eager to enter into divination endeavors: you're in danger when you use the I Ching, beyond self-understanding, to divine the future. The book-and-film "The Exorcist" is, I believe, accurate here: Captain Howdy (read, the Devil) enters Rag's heart through the Oija board.

As an instrument of self-examination and divination, the "Changes Book" (Ching/I) is an immemorial Sinic device or tool--just now, I think, more used in the USA than anywhere else, but soon due a revival in China (as it opens up to the present world and also to its past) and other Sinic lands. This thinksheet is a commentary on Barbara Gordon's 14 Oct 78 "I Ching" personal experience sheet submitted to the '78-'79 Midlife Exploration group.

1. Barbara's pickup of this Sinic classic was through her studies in Jung--reminding us that much of "the East" is coming available to the West not through Eastern evangelism but through this master explorer of the East's resources for understanding the human psyche (meaning "inner life," not just the imaginal life, the dream world, the fantasy dimension, as I use the term technically). As a committed Christian, she is sophisticated in interpreting both the Sinic mentality and Jung; her thinksheet is a mature Christian reflection, and as such a model of "doing theology" on a nonbiblical base with biblical commitment. While of course I don't agree with all her conclusions, I am saying a hearty YES to her endeavor and her general conclusions. In the rest of this thinksheet, I don't distinguish agreements/disagreements: it's not important.

2. Yin/Yang is a modality for dealing with permanence/change, law/chance, as well as female/male. Currently, Sun Moon is "pitching" the headiest mix thereof. The biblical way of seeing this polarity is relational: "the eternal" and unchanging is faithfulness to the biblical God, and "the evanescent" is the way of wandering unfaithfulness. This does not lock the biblical God into the static Greek notion of permanence in opposition to chance (=a metaphysical notion), but rather into God's nature as *chesedh* (see thinksheet #775), leal-loyal-love.

3. Barbara rightly says that E/W perceive cause/effect, chance/law differently. I must add that the West's philosophical tradition on "cause" is complex, and includes a strong school of noncausality. Of course biblically, there is no "chance": under monotheism, everything's under control not by Tao or the collective unconscious or the abstract Supreme or Nomos or Logos but by the personal-transpersonal YHWH-Jesus: reality is to be perceived, in the first place and ultimately, as relational. Consequently, no impersonal process such as I Ching divination is tolerable to the biblical way of seeing and living in the world. But we who have entered the global world of unitive consciousness must listen--indeed, I say, called by God to listen! --to messages from other cosmic paradigms insofar as conformable to the biblical paradigm. In this connection, I am deeply involved in transculture, and finishing the introduction to a book of that title.

4. The hypothesis that "something more than just chance" (Barbara, correctly representing the Sinic and Jungian consciousness) is in action is, I believe, solid: "chance" as control leads to pessimism, anarchism, negative narcissism, despair, anomie, accidie, apathy, death.

Chance/Law is a Dist. of Symbols: I CHING
Circle

These notes on the Chinese Book of Changes are a composite of C.G. Jung's Introduction to Richard Wilhelm's volume and my own experience in using it over the last six or seven years.

The I Ching is considered by some people to be a living means for exploring one's unconscious and the meaning of the moment in one's life. Access to the meaning is not easy because in the West our science of living is based on causality, as the governing principle.

The Chinese mind as revealed through the I Ching seems to be exclusively preoccupied with the chance aspect of events. Our Western mind carefully sifts, weighs, measures, selects, classifies, isolates in the process of trying to understand our world. If we truly observe nature we can see a different picture: every process is partially or totally interfered with by chance, so much so that under natural circumstances a course of events absolutely conforming to specific laws is almost an exception.

The Chinese mind encompasses every minute detail, even seeming nonsensical ones because they believe all of the ingredients in life make up the observed moment in time. The West chooses what it will consider and the East considers all things in trying to read the ultimate meaning for that moment.

Jung wrote at great length on the principle of synchronicity wherein all events in space and time are assumed to have meaning that is something more than just chance; a peculiar interdependence of objective events among themselves as well as with the psychic subjective states of the observer.

We may not see it or understand the meaningful connection but if we care to invest the time in meditation it is possible that something of value may become clear to us. The Chinese think of this process as an supreme expression of spiritual authority and also as an philosophical enigma.

When Jung was asked to write the forward to Wilhelm's book he asked of the 64 Hexagrams its judgments about presenting it to the Western mind. The I Ching said of itself, "I contain spiritual nourishment and am unused....", and then expressed the hope that it is about to regain recognition.

The I Ching has not only been ignored by the West but by all the Chinese who have taken over the Western mind set. Presently, renewed interest has arisen among many people as we have opened ourselves to each others cultures.

For me the key to the I Ching has been one aspect of my increasing self-knowledge which I see as a life-long process of exciting proportions. It is only one path I use. Every path demands of an attitude of humility and prayerfulness.

This book is one long admonition to careful scrutiny of one's character, attitude, and motives. Philosophers of all ages have counseled this and generally we have not listened. It is so easy to get caught up in minutia and routine, that I have found the I Ching to be a mind stretcher offering new thoughts, new images, and new insights that I would not necessarily come to by myself. Jung repeatedly cautioned that one should not lightly adapt cultural patterns alien to one's life and I think his four types of individuals can use insight differently. I think of Willis's Jewish Rabbi who has a Chinese soul...and maybe so do I!