

The *I Ching* as a Potential Jungian Application: History and Practice

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Abstract

Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung had a lifelong interest in the *I Ching* after discovering it in 1919. Jung's interest in the *I Ching* is arguably more practical than purely theoretical or intellectual, and references to *I Ching* divination appear frequently in his various publications, seminars, letters and clinical practice records. After a few observations on the history of the study of the *I Ching* in China, the author categorizes Jung's three uses of the *I Ching* as physical use (to preview future potentials of outer reality), psychological use (to reveal one's psychological state), and psychical approach (to engage with the divine through “神”[“shen”, spiritual agencies]). Finally, the author discusses the current Jungian engagement by demonstrating clinical cases in contemporary times. Some Jungian analysts practise *I Ching* divination to obtain insights into the physical and psychological state of therapeutic relationships and for personal development. This paper is a historical and critical engagement of the Jungian practice of *I Ching* divination.

Keywords: Carl Jung, China, divinatory practice, history, the *I Ching*, therapy

Introduction

In the mid-1930s, Carl Jung met the Chinese scholar Hu Shih, who was John Dewey's student and acknowledged as one of the pioneers of modern Chinese philosophy (Dai, 2019; Guo, 2017; Hu, 2003; Jung, 1963/1989, p. 374; Tan, 2004; Zhao, 2019)¹. As recorded in the appendix of Jung's memoir, Jung asked for Hu Shih's opinion about the *I Ching* (Jung, 1963/1989, p. 319). Hu answered: “Oh, that's nothing but an old collection of magic spells, without significance.” (Hu, as cited in Jung, 1963/1989, p. 319). When Jung asked whether he tried to get an *I Ching* oracle and if the oracle offered him a

¹ According to historical research, it is likely that the meeting took place on the 300th anniversary of Harvard University in 1936 (Shen & Gao, 2018, p. 112, note 1).

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sensible answer, Hu reluctantly replied, “Yes.” (Jung, 1963/1989, p. 374). Thirty years later, Jung disappointedly commented on this conversation in a letter:

In China, for instance, a philosopher like Hu Shih is ashamed to know anything of the *I Ching*, the profound significance of Tao has got lost, and instead people worship locomotives and aeroplanes. (Jung, 1976/1990, p. 322)

However, Hu Shih’s attitude towards Chinese culture and the *I Ching* is different from Jung’s judgement. Hu wrote about the *I Ching* systematically many years before meeting Jung. In his doctoral thesis, *A Study of the Development of Logical Method in Ancient China* (supervised by the pragmatist philosopher John Dewey), at Columbia University, he had already written about the *I Ching* within the context of researching Confucius’ logics (Hu, 2003, pp. 1, 33–63; Zhao, 2019). He wrote in the preface of the published version of his thesis in June 1917: “Treatment of the *Book of Change* as a work of logical import furnishes a new point of view which seems to solve more difficulties in that book than any other previous treatment has ever succeeded to do” (Hu, 1922, p. 2).

More importantly, Jung and Hu went on different paths of engaging the *I Ching*. Hu interprets the *I Ching* as a book Confucius used to elucidate his understanding of ancient Chinese logic (Dai, 2019; Hu, 2003, pp. 33–63). By doing so, he put Chinese thought into a western frame and took the first step of modernizing Chinese philosophy by partially ignoring and discrediting some elements of the texts, i.e., the divinatory and practical side (Dai, 2019). Jung, on the contrary, acknowledged Richard Wilhelm’s approach for “insight into its practical application” and admired the practical values of the *I Ching* (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 966). It is ironic that Hu as a Chinese scholar embraced the westernization of Chinese thought while Jung as a European psychologist insisted on the more natural way of Chinese philosophy², and had frequently discussed his understanding of the *I Ching* in various writings since the 1920s (Shen & Gao, 2018, pp. 93–154³).

This paper investigates how Jung and Jungians apply the *I Ching* in their work to reveal how the *I Ching* can be adopted as a potential Jungian application from a historical and practical perspective. I will first provide a review of the *I Ching* in the Chinese historical context to clarify terminological definitions, then explore Jung’s different dimensions of his

² Jung himself believes so, but Jung still potentially misunderstood some parts of the Chinese philosophy (see note 6 in 2.2) (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 975).

³ For reading convenience, direct quotes of Jung’s practical uses of the *I Ching* will not be given here but will be fully discussed in part 3. Shen and Gao (2018, pp. 93–154) already collected all the places where Jung talked about the *I Ching* in various places except for the *Black Books* (Jung, 2020, pp. 144, 247–248).

practical use of the *I Ching*. Finally, I will discuss two approaches in contemporary Jungian clinical research on the *I Ching* in Post-Jungian development.

A Brief History of the *I Ching* and Yi-ology in Ancient China

In this section, I will briefly introduce the historical perspective of the *I Ching* and Yi-ology to shape the understanding of the traditional way of studying and practising the *I Ching*. It helps develop a perspective for understanding Jungian engagement in the *I Ching* through defining basic terms and techniques that may be involved in later sections. Scholars commonly use the term Yi-ology⁴ (易学, studies of changes) for studies of the *I Ching* (the Book of Changes) in the periods of Chinese history after the book *Zhouyi*⁵ (周易).

Archeologists have discovered a site from roughly 5,000 years ago of the ancient legend of a dragon-horse creature who gave Fuxi (the emperor of humans in the pre-history legendary time of China) the He Tu (River Map) (Jung, 1939/1980, para. 642; Shen, 2022, p. 190; Shen & Gao, 2018, pp. 94–95). Ancient Chinese scholars believe that Fuxi created the eight trigrams based on the inspiration of the He Tu (Shen & Gao, 2018, pp. 94–95). The legend also suggests that King Wen in the Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BCE) created the 64 hexagrams by overlapping two trigrams, and Confucius (551–479 BCE) wrote the first commentaries on the *I Ching* titled the *Yizhuan* (Commentaries on the *I Ching*) (Liu, 2007; Shen & Gao, 2018, p. 95). As the Commentaries and King Wen's hexagrams were both created in the Zhou Dynasty, their works were published together titled the *Zhouyi*. This edition is considered the most classic version of the *I Ching*, which appears in the Richard Wilhelm and Cary Baynes translation as well (Wilhelm & Baynes, 1977). In contemporary academia, sometimes the *I Ching* can be used as the synonym for the *Zhouyi* and sometimes the *I Ching* may just indicate the Gu Jing (ancient texts) i.e., “the names of hexagrams and attached statements to them and lines” of the *Zhouyi* (Liu, 2007).

Two schools of Yi-ology dominated in ancient China, the image-number (象, Xiang Shu) school and the philosophical (义理, Yi Li) school. The image-number school emphasizes the images, numbers, and numerological patterns behind the *I Ching* and relates those components with the text, while the philosophical school focuses on implicated connotation in the philosophy of the *I Ching*. Both schools emerged in Western Han Dynasty (202 BCE–8

⁴ Generally, Yi-ology is the term for all types of *I Ching* studies including divination, philosophy, morals etc.

⁵ As Zhou (周) is a multivocal Chinese word, the *Zhouyi* literally means the *Book of Changes in the Zhou Dynasty* or the *Book of Continuous Changes*.

CE) but have different concentrations: the image-number school was interested in *I Ching* divination and interpreting the *I Ching* through the images of trigrams, hexagrams, and Yin-yang. The philosophical school believes the literal meaning of the text is more important and focuses on the literal meaning of the Commentaries i.e., Confucius' Commentaries (Liu, 2007). The image-number school is more extensive in using non-textual divinatory images e.g., the 64 hexagram graphs, while the philosophical school gives very limited credit for this. The two schools of Yi-ology have had their representatives in all dynasties in China since they emerged (Liu, 2007; Zhu, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1995d).

The divinatory techniques and theories derived from the *I Ching* are various and are usually considered Yi-ological. There are important techniques, such as “interlocking trigrams (Hu Ti, 互体)” to use the two nuclear trigrams in a hexagram to make a new hexagram for expanded image-number interpretations (Liu, 2007). The waxing and waning of Yin-yang reveals the potential for the development of the oppositional dynamics in hexagrams (Liu, 2007). Na Jia (纳甲) theory integrates another symbolic system from the ancient calendar called “heavenly stems” and allocates elements, hexagrams, and positions to the heavenly stems⁶ to enlarge explanations (Liu, 2007). Other variant techniques like Yao Chen (爻辰), Gua Qi (卦气), the timeline of the hexagrams, the River Map and Luo chart and the *I Ching Tarot* have been developed on the basis of the *I Ching* as well (Cheung, 2022; Liu, 2007). Nevertheless, it is notable that almost all the practical techniques for using the *I Ching* are image-number oriented, which also points to the different focus between the two schools.

Jung's Engagement with the *I Ching*

Jung mentioned in a letter written in 1934 that his studies of the *I Ching* started in 1919 (Jung, 1973/1992, p. 155). The *I Ching* was first introduced to Jung on his journey to visit the Scottish psychiatrist Maurice Nicoll (Carl Christian Jung, personal communication, October 14, 2022). The first yin-yang graph (or glyph) painted by Jung came on January 7, 1921 and his “notes of some hexagrams from the *I Ching* in his appointment book” show he started his *I Ching* divination experiment in December 1921, after first meeting Richard Wilhelm in November 1920 (Shamdasani, as cited in Jung, 2020, p. 204, note 148; Shen & Gao, 2018, p. 97). He became interested in the *I Ching* and started his experiment with it using Legge's edition several years before the

⁶ Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches is one of the oldest symbolic systems in China, sequences made of 22 symbols (10 heavenly stems and 12 earthly branches) for calendar purposes and astronomical observation. Similar to Western astrology, each heavenly stem and earthly branch belongs to one of the five elements in Chinese culture (Smith, 2010–2011).

Wilhelm edition in German was published in 1924 (Jung, 1930/1977, para. 77, note 3; Jung, 1963/1989, p. 318). It is likely that his interest in the *I Ching* was inspired and deepened by Wilhelm's ideas and practical knowledge of the *I Ching* because after his first meeting with Wilhelm, Jung soon invited him for a club seminar about *I Ching* divination on December 15, 1921 (Shen & Gao, 2018, p. 97; Stein, 2005). Wilhelm's translation was not yet published, so Jung had to work with the Legge edition from 1921 to 1924 (Jung, 1930/1977, para. 77, note 3). Jung was unsatisfied with Legge's edition and discredited it, for he noted, "we are nowhere told that Legge 'ever bothered to put the method to a practical test'" (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 965, note 2).

Therefore, Jung's engagement with the *I Ching* is very connected with Richard Wilhelm's understanding of ancient Chinese thoughts and divination. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the symbolism in the *I Ching* and being engaged with the practice of using it (Jung, 1950/1975, paras. 965–966). Jung's interest in the *I Ching* is to a certain extent similar to the image-number school in China. More importantly, the way Jung engaged with the *I Ching* inspired Jungians to use the *I Ching* in a clinical and practical frame, as I will elaborate in part four.

Elaboration on Three Dimensions of Jung's Practical Use

Following his investigations into the *I Ching* in the early twenties, Jung started "experimenting" with the oracle in actual analytical sessions and personally consulted it primarily on very special occasions (Aziz, 1990, p. 147).

In this section, I will illustrate Jung's three different dimensions of the practical use of the *I Ching*: to uncover the potential future (physical dimension), to reveal one's psychological situation (psychological dimension), and treating the *I Ching* as an "animated being" to answer questions because mysterious "spiritual agencies" (shen, 神, spirit-like things) give the *I Ching* a living soul (psychical dimension) (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 975). Though most parts of this argument are in accordance with Chinese texts, Jung himself develops the idea of treating the *I Ching* as an animated being. In actual practice there are overlaps between these dimensions.

Physical Dimension

The first dimension (physical) is illustrated by Jung's inquiry about his journey to Africa in 1925 (Aziz, 1990, p. 147). Jung's inquiry about the potential outcome of his journey to Africa was recorded in detail in Barbara Hannah's biography:

When he consulted it about his proposed journey, he threw hexagram No.53 [Gradual Process] with a nine in the third place. This line included the words “the man goes forth and does not return”⁷. (Hannah, 1976, p. 166)

The actual development of the situation matches this line: Jung later recalls that some passengers along with him on this journey were planning to settle in Africa but died in the first few months after they arrived (Hannah, 1976, p. 166).

What actually happened to Jung in Africa is much more starkly described in Wilhelm’s commentary on line 3 of this hexagram. There are two other comments in line 3 which were also prophetic: ‘If we do not let things develop quietly but plunge of our own choice too rashly into a struggle, misfortune results. A man jeopardizes his own life, and his family perishes thereby’ (Wilhelm & Baynes, 1977, p. 207). Jung insisted that their group walk the 100 miles across Uganda to avoid wasting time backtracking. Colonial officials were certain that trying to follow faint trails in the stifling heat would result in death. They had gone too far to turn back after several days and were running low on supplies when, almost miraculously, a truck came by that had been hired by a German naturalist, and Jung bribed the driver to get them to their destination (Bair, 2003, p. 352).

Another case was recorded in the first German edition of Jung’s *Memoir for Richard Wilhelm*, quoted by Aniela Jaffé in her English biography of Jung:

When Wilhelm was staying with me in Zurich, I asked him to work out a hexagram on the state of our Psychological Club. The situation was known to me, but to him not at all. The diagnosis that resulted was startlingly correct, and so was the prognosis, which described an event that occurred later and that I myself had not foreseen. (Jung, as cited in Jaffé, 1989, p. 27)

The two cases show that though not frequently mentioned in literature, Jung did practise the *I Ching* in the physical dimension to preview the future potentials of outer reality based on the insights from the *I Ching*.

Psychological Dimension

The psychological dimension of *I Ching* divination appears in Jung’s preface of the English edition of the *I Ching* (the *Book of Changes*) (Jung, 1950/1975,

⁷ The line in Chinese is “夫征不归” (Shen & Gao, 2018, pp. 101–102).

paras. 1002–1014; Shen & Gao, 2018, pp. 115–117). I will discuss some of Jung’s examples in this section. Jung believed the psychological dimension of using the *I Ching* was considerable, as he wrote:

This continuity of events is also at the basis of the Chinese concept of nature, according to which everything happening at a given moment is happening exactly as it has to. You will find this idea in the Book of Changes, the *I Ching*. When I throw a handful of peas, they will roll in all directions. Try to interpret this, and you will understand the importance of the moment. If you practise such a method to some extent, you will see how remarkably well the meaning of the *I Ching* matches the psychological situation. (Jung, 1987/2008, p. 205)

Jung notices that the hexagram reveals (or corresponds in a synchronistic way to) one’s psychological situation (Jung, 1987/2008, p. 205). For example, the trigram K’an (K’an, 坎) usually “turned up with patients who were too much under the sway of the unconscious (water) and hence threatened with the possible occurrence of psychotic phenomena” (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 1005).

Jung also analyzed how the hexagrams reflected his situation when he wrote the preface for the English edition of the *I Ching* (Jung, 1950/1975, paras. 1002–1014). He first got hexagram K’an (doubling of the trigram K’an), which reveals that:

The problems of the *I Ching* do represent “abyss on abyss,” and unavoidably one must “pause at first and wait” in the midst of the dangers of limitless and uncritical speculation; otherwise, one really will lose one’s way in the darkness.... I cannot but admit that this line represents very appropriately the feelings with which I wrote the foregoing passages. (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 1003)

Psychical Dimension

The psychical dimension appears in Jung’s preface for the 1950 English translation of the *I Ching* as well (Jung, 1950/1975, paras. 975–982). From Jung’s view:

It is “spiritual agencies,” acting in a mysterious way, that make the yarrow-stalks give a meaningful answer. These powers form, as it were, the living soul of the book. As the latter is thus a sort of animated being, the tradition assumes that one can put questions to the *I Ching* and expect to receive intelligent answers. (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 975)

In the footnote of this paragraph, Jung quoted James Legge’s understanding of the ancient Chinese concept of *shen* as “spirit-like things” (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 975, note 5). Jung then discussed hexagram 50, the Cauldron

(ding, 鼎), the answer he got when he asked the *I Ching* what it thought about introducing it to the English-speaking world with the English translation for which he was writing an introduction (Jung, 1950/1975, paras. 976–982). He suggests the Cauldron hints that the *I Ching* contains “(spiritual) nourishment” (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 980) and the *I Ching* “looks upon itself as a vessel in which sacrificial offerings are brought to the gods, ritual food for their nourishment” (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 982). Jung raises the experience of *I Ching* divination to the level of religious numinosity:

It conceives of itself as a cult utensil serving to provide spiritual nourishment for the unconscious elements or forces (“spiritual agencies”) that have been projected as gods—in other words, to give these forces the attention they need in order to play their part in the life of the individual. Indeed, this is the original meaning of the word *religio*—a careful observation and taking account of (from *relegere*) the numinous. (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 982)

By connecting the ancient Chinese concept of *shen* with the meaning of the hexagram Cauldron and numinous experience, Jung promoted the idea of *I Ching* divination as a way to communicate the divine or *shen*, hence *I Ching* divination is a kind of religious experience in a psychical dimension, though it conflates Jung’s original understanding of relevant Chinese materials with his psychology.

Using *I Ching* Divination in a Jungian Clinical Context

In this part, the focus will be on the contemporary clinical approach to the *I Ching* in post-Jungian contexts. I will elaborate on the clinical use of *I Ching* divination by discussing Jungian analyst Jean Kirsch’s case (Kirsch, 2013), Chinese Jungian and Kleinian psychiatrist Mengchao Li’s method (Li, 2019) and Dennis Merritt’s approach (Merritt, 2001). I will reflect on these three kinds of approaches afterwards.

Jean Kirsch’s Approach

In a conference presentation “The *I Ching* as an Aid to Understanding the Countertransference” delivered in Qingdao in October 2013, Jean Kirsch gave an overview of her disciplined method of practising the *I Ching* in a clinical context based on her experience of engaging with the *I Ching* for over 45 years (Kirsch, 2013, p. 2). Kirsch believes that the hexagram can often reveal her unconscious, and sometimes “the whole situation” and “the patient’s transference.” Generally, the process consists of three phases. First, when a particular situation is experienced, Kirsch spends time “to write

honestly and fully about the situation as I experienced it.” Then she tosses the coins to get a hexagram and finally “read[s] carefully and reflect[s] on its symbolic responses” (p. 5).

In the case Kirsch presented, the client was a professor who worked in California and was unhappy with his job: he felt trapped, like being in a prison, and he always needed to please others (Kirsch, 2013, p. 6). Before he told her about his big decision, they had worked on his dreams and discussed the client’s exploration of Jung’s work. The client told Kirsch he was planning to go to Zurich for Jungian analytic training: training in San Francisco would not really free him from his persona (p. 6).

The sudden notification was astonishing for Kirsch. When the therapeutic relationship started, they both felt rapport, but only after he told her his plan did she realize it was her inner desire for his psychological growth kindled by him in their relationship (her countertransference). To deal with the shock of the foreseeable end of the therapeutic rapport, she wrote down her reflections and inquiry to the *I Ching*:

I Ching, I have been caught by my own desire, and that I must try to avoid if I am to serve as a mirror to reflect this patient’s Self! Suddenly I have been forced to recognize my selfish desire for him to grow in a certain direction, which I have been projecting. It is as if in the process of feeling intensely close to him, the analysis has turned into a prism, aimed at my heart, igniting something in me that has never before caught fire. I too have longed to immerse myself in my dreams and my study! I see, though, that this analysis could become yet another prison for him, if I tried to hold him back or discouraged his desire. Respond, please, *I Ching*. Show me the way to conduct myself with him. (Kirsch, 2013, pp. 7–8)

She tossed three coins and arrived at hexagram 14—Dayou (大有), “Possession in Great Measure” (Kirsch, 2013, p. 9), made up of Li (離, fire, symbolizing the sun) and Qian (乾, sky and creation). Wilhelm writes, “The fire in heaven above shines far, and all things stand out in the light and become manifest” (Wilhelm & Baynes, 1977, p. 59). Kirsch notes a strong spiritual value in this image, which suggests that the client’s passion for Jung and his plan is not coming from an inflated transference projection but from creative progression (Kirsch, 2013, p. 9). She reflects on *The Judgement* of the hexagram based on Wilhelm’s commentary: “The time is favourable—a time of strength within, clarity and culture without” (Wilhelm & Baynes, 1977, p. 60). In thinking about the “culture” of analysis and her understanding of the superior man (君子), mentioned in *The Image* of the hexagram, as one who strives for individuation (p. 111), it suggests that the client has projected the superior man as sage or wise old man (in Jungian terms) on to Jung. And for the client, “Jung is the one whose psychology has touched his soul and ignited his desire” (p. 113). Kirsch eventually let the client determine his path and did not

intervene in his decision. Years later the client successfully finished his Jungian analytic training and attained his “Possession in Great Measure” (Kirsch, 2013, p. 14).

Eight Heart Methods of the I Ching

The Eight Heart Methods of the *I Ching* is the idea promoted by the *I Ching* scholar and practitioner Ba Bao in the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368) (Bao, 2005). According to the Jungian and Kleinian psychiatrist Mengchao Li (2019), the first Chinese Jungian analyst Heyong Shen psychologized Bao’s idea of practising the *I Ching* by providing a psychological perspective (Li, 2019, p. 483). Li uses four stages in his approach to the “moral interiorization method of the *I Ching* (《易经》道德内化方法).” A new version of the Eight Heart Methods of the *I Ching* developed by Shen appears in the stage of interpreting the hexagram (Li, 2019, p. 479). Li has a training background in both analytical psychology and object relations, and his clinical approach to the *I Ching* includes both.

The general question to an inquiry is, “In the current context, which way of reaction is in accordance with the way of therapy?” (Li, 2019, p. 484). After the hexagram is cast, the therapist starts the interpretation with the first stage (“定卦主: 易之门户, 乾坤定位, 主见分明”): “Confirm the major yin-yang status of the hexagram: it is the doorway of the *I Ching*, positioning through the hexagrams Qian and Kun, the dominant ones manifest clearly” (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483). Qian and Kun show the two extremes respectively for determining whether conscious or unconscious factors are dominating the current situation (pp. 484–485). Li discusses examples of former clients who got hexagram 2, Kun (坤, six divided lines), then Bian Gua (变卦, hexagram change⁸) into hexagram 7, Shin—The Army (师, one solid line on the second from the bottom of five divided lines). These clients were strongly driven by their unconscious when entering therapy and both had a fantasy that the therapist would provide free sessions in a fully receptive way in accordance with hexagram 2, Kun—The Receptive (p. 485).

The second stage (“二究卦义: 河图洛书, 五为心数, 遇心则悟”) is to “study the meaning of the hexagram: the River Map and the Luo Book, five is the number of heart, and heart brings enlightenment” (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483). Li suggests the importance of this phase is to reflect on the meaning of the current situation. The clients in question projected the image of the *Great Mother* onto the therapist, and Shih—The Army means that the therapist needs to act like a general (pp. 486–487), this being in accord with Wilhelm’s comment on hexagram 7 epitomized by the strong line in the

⁸ One of the most common and popular techniques of practising the *I Ching*.

second place as “the efficient general who maintains obedience in the army by his authority” (Wilhelm & Baynes, 1977, p. 32).

The third phase (“三求卦位: 触景生情, 八卦心性, 意象原型”) is to “look at each line for feelings through engagement, dispositions of the trigrams, image and archetypes” (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483). Li suggests each line reveals a relational pattern. He used the Na Jia technique introduced earlier in this paper and noticed that he identified with the offspring position (revealed in the Na Jia) in the case of hexagram Kun turning into Shih (Li, 2019, pp. 491–492). He believes that the hexagram Kun explains the reason the group of clients projected maternal images on him, while his offspring position as shown by the third and the sixth lines in the Na Jia method shows that he was not identifying with the maternal image as he felt being controlled and constrained. He got the offspring position, which means he was working as a younger generational figure while he was working with his clients.

The fourth stage (“四推中正: 时位义行, 坎离之要, 趋时趋中”) literally means “infer the middle: timing, positioning and meaning, as the essential of Kan and Li, find the moment and the middle” (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483). Much of the meaning of the two trigrams is derived from the yin or yang line being in the *middle* of the two opposite lines of the trigram. The work of this stage is to consider clearly the position of self and object as the ideal attitude for therapy. In the case of K'un turning into Shih, a yin line on the top of K'un suggests that the maternal projections are in the right position because it is a yin line in a natural position (even numbered line), but as a male therapist, he had difficulty identifying with the mother image (p. 493).

The fifth phase (“五究爻义: 咸恒之喻, 感应具在, 极深研几”) means “research in the lines: the metaphor of the hexagrams Xian (No. 31) and Heng (No. 32) shows the sympathetic connections behind⁹. Delve into the subtleties of things” (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483). For 32 Heng, thunder and wind are a constantly paired phenomenon. Li suggests that the point of this phase is to understand every line and the potential changes in clinical situations through the lines (p. 494).

The sixth phase (“六穷事理: 要在损益, 天道盈虚, 人间消息”) means “Understand the reason: it is important to know loss and benefit, on heaven the Dao is full of empty, means the same on earth” (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483). Li explains that in this stage the therapist takes action in a clinical context and makes moral choices (p. 496). In the case of K'un turning into Shih, he would refer the patients to other therapists or play a submissive role in therapy (p. 496). This practically finishes the clinical practice of the Eight Heart Methods of the *I Ching*.

⁹ Hexagram Xian is the pair of a young woman and a young man, and Heng is the pair of thunder and wind. The pairing shows the sympathetic connections between particular things.

I omit the last two stages (“七明易道：中行独复，孚信之寓，天地之心”¹⁰ and “八尽三易：既济未济，道达天心，心易无限”¹¹) (Shen, as cited in Li, 2019, p. 483) because they elaborate on the moral meaning and revelation of practising the *I Ching* and are not practical (pp. 497–500).

Dennis Merritt’s Approach

Jungian analyst Dennis Merritt has been researching the *I Ching* since around 1983 and presented his method in his paper “Use of the *I Ching* in the Analytic Setting” based on his conference presentation in China (2001). Merritt (2001) believes that the Chinese worldview depicted by the early Qing dynasty (1636–1912) scholar Wang Fu Ch’i and evident in Taoist and Buddhist thoughts is holistic (Merritt, 2001, p. 56). These ideas are considered parallel to the Jungian concept of *unus mundus* (one world) and physicist David Bohm’s perspective in the modern West (Merritt, 2001, p. 56). When considering the use of *I Ching* divination in the Jungian world, Merritt discovers that around 2000, the Chicago Jungian school were less engaged in *I Ching* divination compared to the Zurich school in the 1970s (Merritt, 2001, p. 57).

Merritt believes that this subject should be discussed carefully (Merritt, 2001, p. 57). His approach concentrates on reading *I Ching* divinatory oracles as images appear in dreams, which “is similar to linking dream images to waking life situation” (Merritt, 2001, p. 58). Nevertheless, referring to Jung’s careful attitude towards *I Ching* divination, Merritt suggests that the *I Ching* should not be used as a tool to short-circuit the process of self-exploration (Merritt, 2001, p. 66). He also encourages analysts to use and explore symbolic and divinatory systems with an open attitude, without specific recommendations and predilection on the *I Ching* (Merritt, 2001, p. 66).

In his paper, Merritt demonstrates two methods of working with *I Ching* divination with his analysands; they will be delivered respectively. The first way of working with the *I Ching* is through a three-hour consultation with his client. This is the method predominantly for those clients who have a specific problem (Merritt, 2001, p. 58). Merritt normally uses the first hour to clarify the authentically important question before the client does the divinatory process, as Merritt (2001) writes:

Just knowing what question to ask is an important part of the therapeutic process—it is half the battle, as some would say. As I do with analysands, if I feel that this person

¹⁰ It means “Seventhly, to clear about the Dao of changes: walking on one’s own path and back to the starting point, the meaning of the hexagram Fu and inner truth, the heart of heaven and earth.”

¹¹ It means “Eighthly, comprehend the three principles of changes: the hexagram Jiji and Weiji, Dao reaches the heart of the heaven and the heart of changes are infinite.”

wants to use the *I Ching* to short circuit a thoughtful, soul-searching, wrestling with an issue, or has not gathered enough information, I discourage consulting the *I Ching*. This process of formulating the question reduces an issue to manageable size. (Merritt, 2001, p. 58)

The second hour of the first approach is to introduce the yarrow stalk method of *I Ching* consultation. Merritt believes that the yarrow stalk method is itself therapeutic: “It involves a sense of ritual and reassuring repetition, of participating in something very ancient. It is a hands-on process accompanied by the gentle sound of rustling sticks” (Merritt, 2001, p. 58). The high attention in this process is similar to meditation, in which the client needs to be less heavily focused on the question but clear the mind and stay with the question gently (Merritt, 2001, pp. 58–59).

The final hour is designed for reading *I Ching* oracles. Merritt uses three English translations for his work: the Richard Wilhelm and Cary Baynes version, the *I Ching Workbook* by R. L. Wing, and the third version of *A Guide to the I Ching* by Carol Anthony (Merritt, 2001, pp. 59–60). For the Wilhelm-Baynes translation, Merritt (2001) found it most difficult and imaginary, as Wilhelm uses “metaphors, symbols and analogies associated with weather, seasons, agricultural practices and other natural phenomena” (Merritt, 2001, p. 59). Here he focuses on interpreting each line of a hexagram, especially the relational meaning of the lines in a hexagram, trigram, and relations to other lines of the same hexagram (Merritt, 2001, p. 59).

As for the other two auxiliary books, Merritt (2001) suggests that the *I Ching Workbook* hints at something that is not eminent in other translations, while *A Guide to the I Ching* is considered too psychologized and too “Eastern,” which would not address issues to any possibility beyond personal psyche (Merritt, 2001, pp. 59–60). By the end of the last hour, interpretations from the three texts would be photocopied, and working with the consultation active imagination and meditation are encouraged. Dreams that occur around this period should be considered if they are relevant to the consultation (Merritt, 2001, p. 60).

The second method is for those clients who are familiar with *I Ching* divination. In such cases, the clients conduct *I Ching* divination between therapy sessions and bring the results to the next session (Merritt, 2001, p. 60). I will reference one of Merritt’s cases using this approach for a brief overview. This case begins with the starting period of analysis with a young man in his early thirties:

He smoked marijuana ... and felt that this facilitated psychological insight and personal development. Then he had a dream before his fourth session of a doctor, his age, and a nurse, involved with the delivery of a baby on the top floor of a high-risk hospital building. The baby was born dead. The doctor told the nurse that he suspected that the reason the baby was born dead was because he was stoned during the delivery of the baby. (Merritt, 2001, p. 61)

The dream shows the baby, which symbolizes a new beginning, is killed by the doctor's mistake, which reflects that marijuana is not beneficial for the client's personal development. He asked the *I Ching* about the impact of smoking marijuana and got Hexagram 12 (否)—Stand-still (Stagnation). In this hexagram, the upper trigram shows the three yang lines moving up while the lower trigram depicts three yin lines going down, meaning the disconnection of heaven and earth (Merritt 2001, p. 61). The sense of “getting high” as shown in the upper trigram is a way to “soar above depressive feelings, here represented by the lower ‘heavy’ trigram.” The client decided to stop smoking for four months after the consultation (Merritt, 2001, p. 61).

Besides Merritt's practical method, he also believes that the opinions from the *I Ching* can support sustaining an alchemical container for deep transformation (Merritt, 2001, p. 64). He also further discussed moral support in political situations and spiritual guidance which the *I Ching* could provide in non-clinical contexts (Merritt, 2001, pp. 60, 64–65). As those discussions are beyond the focus of this paper, I will not explore these aspects further.

Reflections

Jean Kirsch's approach to the *I Ching* demonstrates with one case all three dimensions of Jung's use of the book. The way Kirsch consults the *I Ching* can be considered psychological, similar to Jung's way of treating the *I Ching* as an animated being for answering questions from humans (Jung, 1950/1975, para. 975; Kirsch, 2013, pp. 7–8). The revelation of her countertransference using Wilhelm's commentary corresponds with Jung's use of a psychological dimension (Kirsch, 2013, p. 9; Wilhelm & Baynes, 1977, p. 62). The client eventually attained his *Great Measure* by becoming a Jungian analyst, illustrating the physical side of using the *I Ching* (Kirsch, 2013, p. 14).

However, there are a few issues in her understanding of the *I Ching*: her quotes from the *I Ching* show that she was unaware of whether she is citing the original text or Wilhelm's commentary (Kirsch, 2013, p. 10). Parts of her discussion and reflections are based on the connections between Jungian ideas and ancient Chinese philosophical ideas that might be confusing. For example, she seems unaware of the differences between particular Jungian and Chinese philosophical terms and potential translation issues in her understanding of the superior man (君子), the sage (圣人), and the wise old man (as a Jungian archetype)¹².

Li (2019) attempts in his practice to integrate Kleinian and Jungian ideas and various techniques in *I Ching* divination. Though his approach is derived from Heyong Shen's psychological interpretation of Ba Bao's Eight Heart Methods of the *I Ching*, some parts of Shen's version of the Eight Heart Methods are not in

¹² For example, the word “君子” does not contain the meaning of superior in Chinese.

accordance with Li's practice. The second stage of Shen's approach may be confusing: he talks about the number five, the heart, and the enlightenment but Li suggests the point is to understand the current situation (Li, 2019, pp. 491–492).

In comparison with Jung, Li's method does not give credit to a physical level and mostly emphasizes practical use from a psychological level. Li does not put forth a clear methodology of extensive methods of *I Ching* divination; using Na Jia in some cases and hinting that it is open to use of other interpretive books of the *I Ching* (Li, 2019, pp. 487–489). His approach is creative and systematic, but when he is integrating different elements into his practice, he does not differentiate boundaries between them. His emphasis on understanding projections and positions is Kleinian, the “Great Mother” and the hero are Jungian archetypal terms, and ideas I neglected in stages seven and eight are purely Confucian (Li, 2019, pp. 484–501). It would be easier for readers to understand if Li would have a separate and clear discussion of the different bases of his practical methods.

Dennis Merritt (2001) has developed two systematic ways of practising *I Ching* divination in clinical and non-clinical contexts. Compared to Jung, Merritt's approach is physical and psychological, although it is uncertain whether he considers the psychical aspects or spirits in *I Ching* divination since no reference was given. Starting from a holistic worldview, he believes that “In Jungian terms, one could say that the *I Ching* originates from the archetypal depths of the human psyche and the psychoid dimensions of the Self” (Merritt, 2001, p. 55). However, this perspective is questionable from a Chinese cultural standpoint. Scholar Ko (2011) in his book *Jung on Synchronicity and Yijing: A Critical Approach* suggests that the natural correspondence rooted in the worldview of the *I Ching* “does not assume any transcendental realm of time” (Ko, 2011, p. 135). Merritt's paper overlooks the study of metaphysical differences between Chinese and Western traditions or any confluences with the ecopsychological view he possesses.

Another issue in his paper is that the Eastern way of *I Ching* divination, as depicted in *A Guide to the I Ching*, is believed too focused on the psychological dimension, as the author uses terms like “anxieties” and “fears” to replace “inferior people” (Merritt, 2001, p. 60). This is a Western translation that deviates from the normal English translations and Chinese divinatory practices. Assuming that this specific translation represents the Chinese way of divination is suspicious and, in fact, incorrect¹³. However, overall, Merritt's interpretive procedure is clear and structural, and his interpretations are integrative (with Jungian analysis), flexible, and intuitive. Merritt's approach demonstrates how *I Ching* divination can be combined within the analytic work setting.

¹³ For a Chinese theory of divination, see Lackner, 2017, “Introduction.”

Conclusion

In this paper I discussed the *I Ching* as a Jungian application from a historical and practical perspective. The *I Ching* has its own history and development in Chinese culture and within its development, various techniques and two separate schools emerged. The Chinese development provides an understanding of the *I Ching* in its traditional context.

I described three dimensions of Jung's practical use of the *I Ching* through decades of his engagement beginning in 1921: physical, psychological, and psychical, with some debate about Jung's understanding of the psychical dimension.

Jung inspired Jungians to practise the *I Ching* in the clinical context as shown by Jean Kirsch, Mengchao Li and Dennis Merritt's approaches. This demonstrates that the *I Ching* has the potential to be adopted as a Jungian application in contemporary times, but numerous issues of intercultural communication must be clarified to prevent misunderstandings.

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 TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT

Le psychiatre suisse Carl Jung s'est intéressé tout au long de sa vie au *Yi-King* après l'avoir découvert en 1919. L'intérêt de Jung pour le *Yi-King* est sans doute plus pratique que purement théorique ou intellectuel, et des références à la divination avec le *Yi-King* apparaissent fréquemment dans ses diverses publications, séminaires, lettres

et écrits en lien avec la pratique clinique. Après quelques observations sur l'histoire de l'étude du *Yi-King* en Chine, je classe les trois utilisations du *Yi-King* par Jung: l'utilisation physique (pour avoir un aperçu des potentiels futurs de la réalité extérieure), l'utilisation psychologique (pour révéler son propre état psychologique) et l'approche psychique (pour s'impliquer avec le divin à travers '神' [Shen, instances spirituelles]). Enfin, je traite de l'engagement jungien actuel en apportant des cas cliniques de l'époque contemporaine. Certains analystes jungiens pratiquent la divination avec le *Yi-King* pour obtenir des éclairages sur l'état physique et psychologique des relations thérapeutiques et pour le développement personnel. Cet article est un engagement historique et critique de la pratique jungienne de la divination avec le *Yi-King*.

Mots clés: Carl Jung, *Yi-King*, Chine, histoire, pratique divinatoire, thérapie

Der Schweizer Psychiater Carl Jung hatte ein lebenslanges Interesse am *I Ging*, nachdem er es 1919 entdeckt hatte. Jungs Interesse am *I Ging* ist möglicherweise mehr praktisch als rein theoretisch oder intellektuell. Verweise auf *I Ging*-Deutungen tauchen häufig in seinen verschiedenen Veröffentlichungen, Seminaren, Briefen und klinischen Aufzeichnungen auf. Nach einigen Betrachtungen zur Geschichte des Studiums des *I Ging* in China kategorisiert der Autor Jungs drei Verwendungen des *I Ging* als physische Verwendung (um zukünftige Potentiale der äußeren Realität zu erkunden), psychologische Verwendung (um einen psychologischen Zustand zu enthüllen) und einen psychischen Ansatz (um mit dem Göttlichen durch "神" ["shen", spirituelle Instanzen] Verbindung herzustellen). Schließlich diskutiert der Autor die aktuelle jungianische Auseinandersetzung, indem er klinische Fälle aus heutiger Zeit heranzieht. Einige jungianische Analytiker praktizieren *I Ging*-Deutungen, um Einblicke in den physischen und psychologischen Zustand therapeutischer Beziehungen sowie zur persönlichen Entwicklung zu erhalten. Dieser Artikel ist eine historische und kritische Auseinandersetzung mit der jungianischen Praxis der *I Ging*-Deutung.

Schlüsselwörter: Carl Jung, das *I Ging*, China, Geschichte, Deutungspraxis, Therapie

Lo psichiatra svizzero Carl Jung ha coltivato per tutta la sua vita un interesse per l'*I Ching*, dopo averlo scoperto nel 1919. L'interesse di Jung per l'*I Ching* sembra essere stato più pratico che puramente teorico o intellettuale, ed i riferimenti alle sentenze dell'*I Ching* sono frequenti nelle sue varie pubblicazioni, e nei seminari, nelle lettere e negli appunti clinici. Dopo alcune osservazioni sulla storia dello studio dell'*I Ching* in Cina, l'Autore identifica tre approcci con cui Jung ha utilizzato l'*I Ching*, ovvero per la realtà fisica (per prevedere potenzialità nella realtà esterna), per l'utilizzo psicologico (per far luce su uno stato psicologico di una persona), e l'approccio psichico (per rapportarsi con il divino attraverso "神" ["shen", la spiritualità]). Infine, l'Autore discute l'attuale l'approccio junghiano con dimostrazioni di casi clinici dei nostri giorni. Alcuni analisti junghiani utilizzano l'*I Ching* per ottenere insight riguardanti le condizioni fisiche e psicologiche delle relazioni terapeutiche, e per lo sviluppo personale. Questo articolo offre una prospettiva storica e critica sull'utilizzo dell'*I*

Chung nella pratica junghiana.

Parole chiave: Carl Jung, l'*I Ching*, Cina, storia, pratica divinatoria, terapia

Pознакомившись с «Книгой перемен» в 1919 году, швейцарский психиатр Карл Юнг до конца жизни сохранял интерес к ней. Его интерес, вероятно, был скорее практическим, чем чисто теоретическим или интеллектуальным, и в публикациях, семинарах, письмах и клинических записях Юнга часто встречаются упоминания о гадании по «Книге перемен». После ряда замечаний об истории изучения «Книги перемен» в Китае я выделяю три способа ее использования Юнгом: физический (для предсказания о возможном будущем во внешней реальности), психологический (для выявления психологического состояния человека) и духовный (для взаимодействия с божественным через “神” [шэнь, духовные органы]). Наконец, я обсуждаю ее использование в современном юнгианском анализе и демонстрирую актуальные клинические случаи. Некоторые юнгианские аналитики прибегают к гаданию по «Книге перемен», чтобы получить представление о физическом и психологическом состоянии терапевтических отношений и для личного развития. Данная статья представляет собой историческое и критическое исследование юнгианской практики гадания по «Книги перемен».

Ключевые слова: Карл Юнг, «Книга перемен» (И-Цзин), Китай, история, гадательная практика, терапия

El psiquiatra suizo Carl Jung se interesó durante toda su vida por el *I Ching* tras descubrirlo en 1919. Podría decirse que el interés de Jung por el *I Ching* es más práctico que puramente teórico o intelectual, y las referencias a la adivinación con el *I Ching* aparecen con frecuencia en sus diversas publicaciones, seminarios, cartas y registros de práctica clínica. Luego de algunas observaciones sobre la historia del estudio del *I Ching* en China, el autor categoriza los tres usos que Jung daba al *I Ching* en: uso físico (para prever potenciales futuros de la realidad exterior), uso psicológico (para revelar el propio estado psicológico) y abordaje psíquico (para relacionarse con lo divino a través del “神” [“shen”, agencias espirituales]). Por último, el autor analiza la utilización Junguiana actual mediante la demostración de casos clínicos en la época contemporánea. Algunos analistas Junguianos practican la adivinación *I Ching* para obtener información acerca del estado físico y psicológico de las relaciones terapéuticas y para su desarrollo personal. Este artículo es un compromiso histórico y crítico de la práctica Junguiana de la adivinación *I Ching*.

Palabras clave: Carl Jung, el *I Ching*, China, historia, práctica adivinatoria, terapia

《易经》作为荣格学派的工具:历史与实践的视角

瑞士精神科医生卡尔·荣格在1919年得知《易经》之后,对之保持着毕生的兴趣。荣格对《易经》的兴趣可以说更倾向于实践,而非理论和知识。在荣格的众多发表物,讲

座,信件和床记录中,经常出现使用《易经》占卜的引用。作者在观察了《易经》在中国的使用历史之后,将荣格对《易经》的使用划分为三种类型:客观使用(对外在现实的未来倾向性的预示),心理使用(展现个体心理状态),灵性使用(用以通过神(灵性的媒介)连接灵性)。最后,作者通过当代的临床个案,讨论了当代荣格学派对《易经》的使用。一些荣格分析家用《易经》占卜,以洞察治疗关系中的身心状态,或是用以洞察个体发展。本文从历史与实践的视角讨论了荣格派实践中对《易经》占卜的使用。

关键词:卡尔·荣格,易经,中国,历史,占卜实践,治疗
