

## The I Ching

*Translated by James Legge*  
*New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1963,*  
*Six plates, xxi + pp. 448, Paperbound \$ 2. 45.*

“The I Ching, or the Book of Changes, as it is usually called in English, is one of the very important books in the history of oriental culture. Its basic text seems to have been prepared before 1000 B. c., in the last days of the Shang Dynasty and the first part of the Chou Dynasty. It was one of the Five Classics edited by Confucius;

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who is reported to have wished he had fifty more years of life to study it. Since the time of Confucius it has never lost its enormous significance; it has been used by Confucianists and Taoists alike, by learned scholars and street shamans, by the official state cult and by private individuals.

“Basically, the I Ching is a manual of divination, founded upon what modern scholars . . . have called the synchronistic concept of the universe. This means that all things happening at a certain time have certain characteristic features which can be isolated, so that in addition to vertical causality one may also have horizontal linkages. According to tradition, King Wan and his son the Duke of Chou spent their lives analyzing the results of divination in terms of interacting polar forces

and six-variable hexagrams, correlating an observed body of events with prediction. Whether this account is true or not, the I Ching still retains its primacy in Chinese thought.

“ . . . the I Ching is very important in the history of religions . . . It is one of the very few divination manuals that have survived into modern times . . .

“This present work is the standard English translation by the great Sinologist James Legge, prepared for the Sacred Books of the East series. (XVI) It contains the basic text attributed to King Wan and the Duke of Chou, the ten appendices usually attributed to Confucius, a profound introduction by Legge, and exhaustive footnotes explaining the text for a Western reader.”

(W. P. W.)

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