

Why Is It Change Instead of Being? Meditating on the Interlogical Meaning of Change/Yi in the Book of Change

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ABSTRACT This article explores the multiple senses of yi or change in the Yi Jing or Book of Change, as a conception that denotes nothing but interality. By looking at the text interlogically, it tries to reveal that the underlying magnitude of the book is its focus on change as a study of interality (*jianxing* 间性), rather than Being, which thus became the foundation or point of departure of early Chinese thought.

KEYWORDS Change; Being; Yi Jing (I Ching); Interality; Interology; Chinese philosophy

RÉSUMÉ Cet essai explore les sens multiples du Yi ou les changements du Yi Jing ou Livre du changement comme conception qui n'exprime rien d'autre que l'intérialité (interality). Une analyse interlogique du texte tend à révéler que la magnitude sous-jacente du livre tient à sa focalisation sur le changement en tant qu'étude de l'intérialité (interality - *jianxing* 间性), plutôt que de l'Être, ce qui par conséquent devient le fondement ou point de départ de la pensée chinoise ancienne.

MOTS CLÉS Changement; Être; Yi Jing (I Ching); Intérialité (Interality); Intérialogie (Interology); Philosophie chinoise

Introduction

Heidegger famously asked, “Why are there beings rather than nothing?” He regarded this as the most important question of metaphysics, remarking, “[it] is first in rank for us first because it is the most far reaching, second because it is the deepest, and finally because it is the most fundamental of all questions” (Heidegger, 1959, p. 2). By comparison, the most fundamental of all questions in China has been the *nature of change*. In fact, the oldest text of Chinese philosophy is titled as such: *Yi Jing (The Book of Change)*. Upon reading this title, one might ask, “Why is it ‘change’ rather than ‘being?’” unwittingly evoking Heidegger. The answer is simple, perhaps disappointingly so: the question of “being” was never sought in early Chinese philosophy. The Yi¹ was concerned not with beings themselves but with how, where, and when beings occur in a process

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Canadian Journal of Communication Vol 41 (2016) 383-402
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of becoming. What I term “interality” is purely a manifestation of that ancient concept. Interology, or the study of interality, asserts that the fundamental question of the *Yi* is the nature of change *and all its extensions*, including space-time, nothingness, openness, process, relationship, order, and *constitution* that constitutes. Essentially, it is concerned with all that is trimmed off or discarded when we focus on being. Therefore, a Chinese mode of thought is implicitly an *interological* mode of thought. “Why is it change instead of being?” can be answered by investigating said mode.

The *Yi Jing* (or *I Ching*)² has been studied for millennia. More than a thousand of the three thousand or so classical *Yi* commentaries survive today. The book was introduced during the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries to the West, where it has since been perused by philosophers, scientists, psychologists, mystics, writers, artists, and laypeople alike. The practice of *Yi* interpretation, while vast and varied, can be generalized as two major schools: image-numeric/number (*xiangshu* 象数)³ and meaning-principle (*yili* 义理). The former school involves a kind of numerological exercise of deciphering lines and hexagrams to divine a particular fortune, while the latter takes up a more literary lens, viewing said lines and hexagrams as metaphors for the origin of heaven, earth, and beings as a whole.

What intrigues me the most about the *Yi* is neither its miraculous function of divination through images and numbers, nor its articulation of principle and meaning, but its sheer magnitude as a philosophical text; the *Yi* somehow became the seminal work of inquiry in China, begetting an entire culture and eventually a mode of thinking called “Chinese philosophy.” The sages who authored the *Yi* were greatly concerned with knowing the future by examining the status quo of the actual interality. They took it upon themselves to construct an “esoteric”—yet quite beautiful all the same—system of symbols to expose the nature of change, but on what grounds did they regard their system as valid? What do these lines, trigrams, and hexagrams signify? To what kind of reality do they correspond? Is it Being/Logos/Substance, as in Western ontology? If there is no study of being, what is it then? Or simply put, why is it change instead of Being? These questions have pulled me ever so deeply into the miraculous and beautiful *Yi*. Of course, this is not my first foray into the book; however, this time I come equipped with a special tool, a way of interpretation that is unique to either of the aforementioned schools. I have found that the *Yi* is in fact the first treatise on interology.⁴

This article aims to explore the multiple senses of *yi* or change in the *Yi Jing*, as a conception that denotes nothing but interality. It argues that the underlying magnitude of the book is its focus on change as a study of interality (*jianxing* 间性), rather than Being, which thus became the foundation or point of departure of early Chinese thought.

How is the *Book of Change* composed? Divination and the consciousness of angst—the original concern of sages

The *Yi Jing* is among the oldest texts in the world. Many believe its composition to have taken place around 2800 BCE. According to legend, the Emperor Fuxi (around 2800 BCE?) created the Eight Trigrams (*bagua*), a set of marks consisting of solid and broken lines (or a set of odd and even numbers) used to divine future happenings and make decisions accordingly. Over the centuries, the eight trigrams evolved into

the 64 hexagrams and allegedly were arranged systematically as *Lianshan* (连山) during the Xia Dynasty (2033?–1562? BCE) and *Guicang* (归藏) during the Shang Dynasty (1600–1046 BCE).

As stated in the oldest of all historical Chinese texts, the *Shi Ji*, it was King Wen of Zhou who (re)arranged the hexagrams into the current order. The section of the *Yi* dedicated to naming the 64 hexagrams was said to have been furnished by either King Wen (1152–1056 BCE) or his son Duke Zhou (1100–? BCE). This part of the book has been traditionally sanctified as *Jing* (经) or “Classic” (hence the alternative translation of the work as the “*Classic of Change*”). The other part of the *Yi*, called *Ten Wings* or *Appendixes of the Yi*, was added by Confucius and his pupils during the Spring-Autumn and Warring-States periods (600–200 BCE). The significance of the *Yi* cannot be overstated; it shaped how the Chinese understood the world, including matters of morality, politics, and religion. As noted earlier, the *Yi* has been studied since it was first completed, as attested by the 3,000 or so commentaries dedicated to it over time. Many sections and phrases in the book have been the subject of scholarly contention among readers, which has cemented the work as a timeless artifact of intellectual interest.

It is commonly held that the *Yi* is principally a book of divination, the function of which is to predict what is going to happen in the future. Such prediction is based on casting and counting stalks, in addition to reading cracks in oracle bones (*bu* 卜), which leads to prognostication (*shi* 筮). Overall, the book is an intricate manual on divination, including what is divined, the outcome of divination, and the three phases of time: past, present, and future. One can regard the *Yi* as the solution for man’s angst or anxiety toward an unknown future or events that *will* impact human life, so that one can enact possible responses to change the state of being in order to reach a favourable consequence. Angst, earnest concerns about practicality, possibility and predictability of the future, then, became the catalyst for the origin of Chinese philosophy, unlike curiosity or wonder that had lured pre-Socratic Greeks seeking to investigate things, substances, beings, hence, “*philosophy*” or “love of wisdom.”

Divination is also a significant part of Chinese religiosity. China has never possessed a clear image of a divine being or god (especially after the Zhou Dynasty); people have tended to believe in a kind of fatalistic decree or destiny (famously, *tianming* 天命 or “mandate of heaven”) that determines their fortunes and the prosperity of the community. The stalks and hexagrams used for prognostication, along with the cracks found on oracle bones, are what the Chinese have called “divine” or “miraculous” (*shen* 神), believing them to provide traces (*ji* 几) that reveal possible consequences of change in human life. Whenever a grave decision needs to be made (e.g., conducting a sacrificial ceremony, selecting a ruler, or choosing a direction in diplomacy, warfare, aristocratic marriage, and so forth), the decision-maker would ask “scribe-diviners” to prognosticate in advance. In the *Yi*, many of the statements about hexagrams and lines seem to serve as records of what was divined before, with some proof of the actual consequences of actions and events. Notably, the entire book contains no mention of a supreme being, an other-world, or an afterlife. Thus, the *Yi* serves as evidence that the ancient Chinese were not very concerned with the *essence* of the mandate of heaven, but rather how we might follow it to live a full life.

The practices and applications of divination in the *Yi* are aimed at *this* life, in *this* world. Does this suggest that Chinese religiosity, situated in this kind of philosophical inquiry, originates from angst (*youhuan* 忧患) concerning the harmonious state of living in this world? Was this angst, at the outset of Chinese civilization, what compelled the ancient sages to pursue the way of the *Yi*, to create a *formalistic structure* of the world as well as a *normative instruction* for human behaviour? Is it evident that Chinese religious sentiment has sought the values of human behaviour and social practice that lead to the highest good (*shan* 善)? Did this angst become the motivation of the sages to probe and seek the wisdom of life?

Indeed, in the *Great Treatise* or *Xi Ci*, it is explicitly stated that the *Yi* arose from the angst of the sages. What concerned the sages so much that they would perform divination before making significant decisions? What made those ancient leaders so anxious? Were they preoccupied with the irrevocable consequences of actions? It seems quite obvious that the purpose of divination is to ensure that decisions are made in accord with divined instructions, and that such decisions would bring about purported outcomes (auspicious and prosperous, *ji* 吉 and *li* 利). But why were these ancients so worried? What caused their angst? One can assume it was the belief that the world is in constant, chaotic flux, and that there are only *chances* of success. It was the belief that there is no such thing as “logical” necessity or implication, no *modus ponens*, within such uncertainty. These beliefs resulted in the study of change, leading to the formation of the *Yi*, purposed to *ease* (*yi* 易) angst and *simplify* (*jian* 简) decision-making. The preponderance of this angst arose from the notion that the origin of all things is change. In this respect, the angst of dealing with a changing world could be construed as the primal impetus of Chinese thought.

After all, while Western philosophy started with wonder toward being, early Chinese thought started with angst toward change. Rather than ask what is (atomic substance/being, individual identity, essence, et cetera), the Chinese asked how and why change *happens*. It is no coincidence, then, that China’s oldest philosophical text elevates change to its highest level of scrutiny.

Change is the primary source of the world of becoming and sought as the paramount wisdom of life

The *Yi* is perhaps the only book in history whose sole subject is change. There are at least three meanings according to the common exegeses of the word: *change*, *unchange*, and *ease/simplicity*. The character 易 supposedly depicts a lizard that changes its colour over the course of seasons; hence its current meaning.

Similar to the great Greek philosopher Heraclitus, the ancient Chinese believed that all in the world undergoes change, and that change is the fundamental reality of the world. Since the world is constantly changing, the only unchanging fact, the grand ultimate (*taiji* 太极), is that change does not change the nature of change, ergo the non-ultimate (*wuji* 无极). The paradoxical expression “the grand ultimate is actually non-ultimate” often stands for the very beginning of the changing process of the universe, or the “transcendental concept” we use to understand such a universe. Unlike the ontological concept of Being/substance, change has no further ground for fixation and certainty but the ground of its own. From such a conceptualization of change, we

could conjecture that taking change as the primary source of all that exists is an approach toward *interology* wholly unlike the *ontology* of the West. Change *forms* being. Therefore, to know being is to know change, or that which is beneath, atop, or otherwise around being. The Yi affords an understanding of various attributes of change (e.g., space-time, constitution, condition, relation, void, contradiction, harmony) between and within being. As such, the Yi helps us determine the potentials, possibilities, directions, and regulations of being, allowing us to make decisions in accord with the “mandate of heaven.”

The various configurations of lines (*yao* 爻) constitute the eight trigrams and 64 hexagrams, in which images (*xiang* 象) and numeric/numbers (*shu* 数) are applied to imitate the patterns of change. This intricate tradition is said to ultimately inform mortals on how to obtain the best and avoid the worst in life. It implies that the regulations, norms, and principles of change are relatively unchanging, leading one to believe they can be predicted. Indeed, when we say “everything changes,” this statement itself cannot be changed. It turns out that the world of change is paradoxical in nature; the Yi treats this paradoxical nature as the very essence of reality (meanwhile, Plato trims change completely from reality).

Moreover, change changes from motion to motionlessness, from active to deceased, from no-thingness to things and goes on from the latter back to the former; thereby we see stagnant things (objects) within the process of change. These things are relatively still as if they were always “there.” While change was almost completely discarded by Parmenides and Plato, the Yi sees change as *change of interality*, or what is *between* change and things (*qi* 器), becoming (*sheng* 生) and being completed (*cheng* 成), permanence and impermanence, motion (*dong* 动) and motionlessness (*jing* 静). Change is itself interality as process, *way* or *dao*, order, arrangement, betweenness, exchange, interaction, relation, and throughness (*tong* 通 *heng* 亨), all of which are the necessary or unchanging conditions of becoming and being. In the Yi, for instance, lines represent motion, while the position or placement (*wei* 位) of lines is rather fixed or unchanging: from the bottom up, the first, third, and fifth of the six line spots are *yang* spots, while the rest are *yin* spots. The spots representing the positions and their order cannot be changed. As soon as a number of stalks (i.e., an odd number becomes a *yang* line and an even number a *yin* line) is drawn onto a specific line spot, it will gain a certain kind of function or virtuosity that is supposed to affect the state of affairs according to whether the line is in an appropriate position (*dangwei* 当位) or not (*budangwei* 不当位). This forms another interpretation of the phrase “change does not change.” To see change through the changeless, and the changeless through change, is the way of Yi that endeavours to expose and master the reality of change and becoming.

Many in the West, such as Heraclitus, Hegel, and Nietzsche, have advocated the idea that change and becoming are the nature of reality. However, when Plato drew his “divided line” and chose the side of being as the foundation of reality and knowledge, Western metaphysics marginalized the other side of becoming as either subsidiary or even an illusion of being. Contrary to the Platonic tradition, the Yi privileges the side of becoming. Reality is a flow of becoming before anything comes into being, a flow without distinction between being and non-being, thing and nothingness, sub-

stance and emptiness. In order to know anything, one needs to understand the becoming of that thing: where and how does it arise during the process of becoming. The Yi is thus the first effort to study change and becoming as the primordial source and nature of reality: “becoming and becoming again is called yi 生生之谓易” (Xi Ci, book 1, chap. 5). Neo-Confucians such as the Cheng brothers, Zhu Xi, and Dai Zhen developed the concept of becoming into the first principle (*li* 理) of Confucianism based on their readings of the Yi.

The nature of change is *becoming*, the principal source from which all things come into being and cease to be. Prior to anything there is nothing but the flow of change. Change changes as an undifferentiated whole and differentiates itself into innumerable forms and movements: space-time, order, direction, relations between heaven and earth, hard and soft, light and dark, positive and negative. This is why the Yi begins with the first two of the eight trigrams and the 64 hexagrams as the guiding principle of change and gate to the world of becoming. As the “Tuan” or “Judgment” comments:

How great is *qian* as creativity and originality! All things owe to it their beginning; it rules and unites the universe. The clouds pass and rain is distributed; the various things flow into their forms. The end and the beginning appear in a glamorous luminosity, and the six lines are temporally accomplished. (*Qian*) thus mounts those six dragons and drives through the sky with time. The way of *qian* is to change and transform, so that everything obtains its correct nature and destiny as appointed; and great harmony is preserved in grand union. The result is what is advantageous, and correct and firm. [The sage] appears aloft, high above all things, and the myriad states all enjoy repose. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, “Tuan,” or “Judgment of Qian,” pp. 370–371, translation amended)

How great *kun* is as the receptive primo! In her riches and tender acquiescence to heaven she gives birth to all things. In her thickness she embraces everything and completes its nature into the harmonious boundless. She encompasses grandeur and illuminates throughout [the world] in which things of all kinds attain their excellence. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, “Judgment of Kun,” p. 386, translation amended)⁵

Along with this guiding principle, the rest of the hexagrams are descriptions and images of the process of change and becoming. What I have noted through these hexagrams is that none of them is about being/substance, but states, stages, patterns, relations of change and becoming that constitute, create, and transform the being/substance of things.

What is change, then? Do things change, or does change change things? Change, instead of static substances or beings (Parmenides), is the primordial nature of reality and *a priori* to all things. Change produces (*sheng* 生) and destroys (*si* 死) things. What is the nature of change, if it is not substance or being, then? In Greek ontology, being is everything that exists or is, and change is construed as either illusionary (Plato) or simply a property of substance (Aristotle). If being changes, what would it be turned into, non-being? This cannot be true, because it leads to a contradiction. For

the Yi, change is neither being/substance nor non-being/non-substance, but the *process between* two opposites. Change happens in and as *interality*; the manner in which change occurs is what determines what is or is-not. Given that the concept of change pertains to that of interality, the study of change could be conceived as the study of interality.

Taiji—Yin-yang or the union of opposites: Initiator of change

According to the *Ten Wings*, change is an effect of certain interactions between *yin* and *yang*, represented by the eight trigrams and 64 hexagrams.

By observing the vast sky with the sun and moon, the sages of antiquity observed the phenomena of light and darkness and came up with the image or idea of *yin* and *yang*, as the most permeating (universal) fact among all things. Without light nothing can be seen; without darkness light cannot be present. When sunlight is shed on mountains, what is brought into sight are not the mountains but the light and shadow of them. The contrast between light and shadow or darkness, illuminated and shaded, actually creates or animates a picture of mountains, and makes the mountains or substances take their forms that are perceivable to an observer. For these sages, therefore, the intercourse between light and dark, positive and negative, forward and backward, opening and closing, masculine and feminine, et cetera is construed as the origin or *taiji/wuji* or ultimate *Dao* of the changing world.

Taiji is the famous symbol used to represent the origin or primary source of the universe. It means, variously, “the grand ultimate,” “the very beginning,” “the ultimate middle,” “the free region,” and to flesh it out a bit, “the void in the middle/centre where all things come to pass.” Since there is no fixed boundary or beginning of the ultimate and void in a world of constant becoming, *taiji* is itself non-ultimate or *wuji*. This dual term *wuji-taiji* has been depicted as a circle, with black and white halves representing the union of *yin* and *yang*; the constant marriage and divorce of these elements are what initiate all change, which is ultimately responsible for the birth of new life.

Yin-yang also symbolizes the opposite function of the changing process: *wuji-taiji*. That is, the union of *yin* and *yang*, originating as a crack of interality and bringing forth heaven and earth. Between these all possible relations are interwoven. The interaction of *yin-yang* then constitutes the order and structure from which the world acquires its definite dimensions and seasons. Finally, movements between these dimensions and seasons generate the dynamic eightfold functions of becoming.

Based on such observations of what occurs *between* heaven and earth, the sages invented two basic lines, one solid (standing for *yang* or an odd number) and one broken (standing for *yin* or an even number). These lines represent the opposite facets of the world, and their tension is the primary source of change. As said in *The Book of Zhuangzi*, “the Yi studies *yin* and *yang*” (chap. 33), and in the *Great Treatise*: “One *yin* and one *yang* are called *Dao*” (book 1, chap. 5). Here, the “one” means a continuous exchange between the two ($1+1=1$). They are not two individual elements, but like one coin’s head and tail, they are opposite sides that cooperate and supplement each other to reach the point of balance and harmony, thereby providing the appropriate condition for the becoming of things.

Yin and *yang* symbolize the fusion and interaction between opposites, which is the origin, the middle interality, or great ultimate (*taiji*) of change and the entire world of becoming. *Yin-yang* and *taiji* are the most influential categories that have affected both the Chinese mode of thinking and way of life, even within the most popular spheres of the culture: sports, medicine, diet, *feng shui*, divination, and art. *Yin-yang* should not be understood as any substance, material, or conceptual entity, as many have misinterpreted. That is to say, *yin-yang* is not *qi* (spirit, energy, et cetera), though *qi* does have opposite phases and functions, as with everything else. Instead, *yin-yang* represents those very opposite phases and functions themselves. In a word, *yin-yang* represents the *interality* of change.

In sum, change or *yi* happens with the dynamic generated by the interaction between *yin* and *yang*. *Yin-yang* is not being but interality. The change of *yin-yang* results in becoming and affects the state of being. *Yao* 爻 or lines represent motion; trigrams represent/symbolize the conditions and attributes that mobilize and vary the process of change. The movement of *yao* shown in hexagrams represents the traces and signs of change.

Bagua or the eight trigrams as the “properties” and functions of change: Heaven, earth, thunder, wind, water, fire, mountain, and swamp

When a third line is invited to form a trigram, the abstract equity between the two breaks into eight different patterns of combinations and change actually takes place and eight images of phenomena are constructed. As *Shuogua* or *Discussion of the Trigrams* recorded:

In ancient times, the sages invented the yarrow-stalk oracle to search the mystic assistant in light of the divine. By numerating heaven with three and earth with two they established the system of numbers. By observing the interchanges between *yin* and *yang* they worked out the trigrams and hexagrams. By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the laws of their nature to the deepest core, they brought about the movements in the firm and yielding, and thus produced the individual lines. They put themselves in accord with *dao* and its virtuosity, and in conformity with this laid down the order of what is right. By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the laws of their nature to the deepest core, they arrived at an understanding of fate. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, chap. 1, p. 262, translation amended)

The eight trigrams were formed by the legendary Emperor Fu Xi based on the interaction between *yin* and *yang*. As *Xi Ci* articulated:

Therefore the *Yi* contains the Great Ultimate, which gave birth to the two primaries. The two primaries gave birth to the four images, which gave birth to the eight trigrams. The eight trigrams determine good fortune and misfortune. Good fortune and misfortune create the great field of action. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 1, chap. 11, p. 318, translation amended)⁶

The eight trigrams, each composed of three lines (the number imitates heaven, earth, and humans in between), represent or symbolize the most fundamental qualities

or essential features of change. The interaction of *yin-yang* produces four bigrams (old and young *yin-yang* symbolize the four seasons and time in general), and then eight trigrams: *qian* 乾, *kun* 坤, *zhen* 震, *xun* 巽, *kan* 坎, *li* 离, *gen* 艮, *dui* 兑, as the basic properties of change. The images of them are heaven/space-time, earth, thunder, wind, water, fire, mountain, and swamp. The meanings of these images refer not to things or material phenomena but types of underlying forces and functions in the process of change. Heaven, for instance, is the image of the vital force of becoming (*jian* 健), while earth the force of compliance as the nutrient soil of become (*cheng* 成). Thunder means moving (*dong* 动), wind penetrating (*ru* 入), water stuck (*xian* 陷), fire shining (*li* 丽), mountain stable (*zhi* 止), and swamp delightful (*yue* 悦).

The eight are not things but attributes or *qi* (not physical gas) of change:

Heaven and earth place the [provisional-temporal] positions (*dingwei* 定位).
Mountain and lake inter-penetrate through their breath (*tongqi* 通气). Thunder
and wind arouse each other. Water and fire do not repulse one another. Thus
are the eight trigrams intermingled. (*Discussion of the Trigrams*, chap. 2)

It is the interaction amongst the eight trigrams that triggers different movements and brings about various changes. Again, the eight trigrams are not things or being; they are possible positions and functions of *yin-yang*. When the *yin-yang* lines move and position themselves into certain places, they constitute one of the trigrams. On the other hand, as the eight trigrams encounter each other, they initiate numerous types of change and processes of becoming.

The situations or scenarios of change: The 64 hexagrams

“Therefore the eight trigrams succeed one another by turns, as the firm (lines of *yang*) and the yielding (lines of *yin*) displace each other” (Xi Ci, book I, chap. 2). The 64 doubles of the eight trigrams become the 64 hexagrams that represent or symbolize all kinds of possible positions, conditions, orders, relations, and stages of change that could cause either fortunate, virtuous, misfortunate, or vicious consequences. Each hexagram is composed of six lines and each line occupies a specific position in a trifold of *tian* 天 (two upper lines), *di* 地 (two lower lines) and *ren* 人 (two middle lines). In short, the placement, position, timing, direction, distance, relation, and combination of a total of 384 lines in configuration are the factors that determine the specific function, potency, direction, and virtue/fortune or situation of things and events.

The further interaction of the eight trigrams constitutes 64 hexagrams that are believed to exhaust all the characteristics and possible situations of change. Multiplying the opposite *yin-yang* lines causes the eight trigrams to grow into 64 hexagrams, allowing for 384 different positions of *yin-yang* movement. Each hexagram with six lines, a combination of two trigrams, imitates one of the possible situations of change. More importantly, every hexagram has its relation to others. The actual function or virtue of a hexagram lies not in itself but in that of the previous or succeeding ones, for it is itself both the result of the previous ones and the precondition of the later ones. A sage would like to observe and contemplate the hexagram within the context of the other hexagrams as a whole to detect the latent trend or potential direction of changes.

Dun 遯 (hexagram #33), for example, shows the image of *qian* or heaven above and *gen* or mountain below, which means retreat of heaven from the growth of mountain. The function of the *dun* hexagram is the continuation of the previous *heng* 恒 or duration hexagram (#32). *Heng* also means constant balance, thunder above and wind below, as an enduring state of harmony and unification. Since the duration cannot stay permanently, the *yin* rises as mountain rises and causes heaven to retreat backward. If we follow the movement of heaven to retreat instead of competing with the rise of mountain, not only shall we break the balance but also exhaust our energy and put ourselves in an inappropriate position that would result in misfortune. By the proper behaviour of withdrawing, the situation proceeds to prosperity or the next hexagram *dazhuang* 大壯, great vigour/vitality (#34). Retreat is good inasmuch as it nurtures and preserves the strength by struggling against the rise of the opposite.

Pure *yang* (*qian* #1) and *yin* (*kun* #2), the first two trigrams and hexagrams, are described as the gate of the *Yi* and conceived of as *ben* 本 or ground/source/root of change, while the remaining 62 hexagrams are actual functions (*yong* 用) or virtues (*de* 德) that are specific manifestations of *yin-yang*. *Qian* and *kun* are the gate to study change from which the rest of the hexagrams reveal the specific states, orders, proportions, positions, interchanges, and interactions in the course of change. The message conveyed in a hexagram should be read not in the hexagram itself but in the relations: succession, correspondence, continuation, side-penetration (*pangtong* 旁通) between above and below, near and far, inside/internal and outside/external, and the constitution of hexagrams and the placement of lines.

With the understanding of the characteristics of change as the dynamic process of rises/falls and intercourse of *yin-yang* or yielding-firm, we are able to cope with the given situations wisely and peacefully: retreat does not always mean failure or loss; it could also have the chance to obtain the great vigour/vitality. The whole arrangement of the 64 hexagrams illustrates the similar logic or reasoning that is based on relationality or *interality* among all hexagrams. And all of the images of hexagrams are about these interlogical factors that have become the central themes in the later development of Chinese philosophy. The majority of categories used by classics stemmed from the *Book of Change*, in which the interlogical orientation was *chosen* at the outset of Chinese philosophy. There are also some philosophical terms, such as sign or trace (*ji* 幾), potentiality (*shi* 勢), becoming/creativity (*sheng* 生), thoroughness (or *tong* 通), et cetera, that still intrigue many scholars in the study of the *Yi* as well as Chinese philosophy today.

The arrangement and order of the hexagrams: Change changes and thus brings about relations; it is interality and change of interality, not the substance or being-itself that makes up the relations

Although divination started with one specific hexagram, or sometimes even one specific line, a skilled diviner would also read these symbols within the context of other lines and hexagrams to detect the signs of fortune. For all the lines relate to one another, and a hexagram is formed by various relations and variations of six lines; further, each hexagram itself relates to one another to present an overall image of the changing world. There are various relations among lines and hexagrams (e.g., opposite, reverse,

up and down, similarity and difference, near and far, firm and yielding/soft, superior and inferior, positive and negative, ruler and ruled, and so on). There are also various ways or means of relations, such as *gan* 感 or feel (synchronicity), affection, attraction and repulsion, conflict and reconciliation, marriage and separation, intimacy and indifference, and so forth. According to the Yi, all the relations and ways of relating are created by the change of the arrangement of lines, trigrams, and hexagrams.

Yao 爻 or “line” stands for the initiative of motion (*dong* 动), represented as *yin* or *yang*. The alternative meaning of *yao* is *jiao* 交, meaning “to meet,” “to interact,” “to coalesce,” or “to have intercourse (with its opposite or other lines).” A line cannot generate any change until it moves to meet another line or lines in reference to the spot or position of a hexagram it enters. The way in which it meets others, from low, left, or near to high, right, or far, and the nature of other lines, represented as *yin* or *yang*, will function differently and result in various consequences. When a solid line meets or encounters (*yu* 遇) a *yin* line, for example, it will create a state of *throughness* (*tong* 通); when a solid line encounters a *yang* line, the path will be blocked. As an example, consider hexagram #26, *dachu* 大畜: the first and second lines from the bottom are both *yang* lines, which is why they are all “blocked,” as it were; the third *yang* line is “unblocked,” since the fourth line met by the third is a *yin* line.⁷ The consequences of the third line’s movement will affect that of the other lines, and thus the order and arrangement of all lines is changed, resulting in a particular kind of hexagram. The change imitated by the hexagram suggests the possible outcomes of becoming (being), or possible variations of a state of affairs (and state of being).

Yi completes itself with six lines and each line represents positions in the world: first and second symbolize the earth, third and fourth the human, fifth and top heaven. The order of the positions ought to be altered or destructed so that order could remain available and provides space-time within which the lines are able to move constantly for the change of situations. Take a look at the first hexagram *qian* or heaven, for example. The image of the first line is called “a hidden dragon” because the line is in a low position on earth. When it has ascended to the second line, the dragon becomes visible because it rises in the field (high point of the earth). With this respect, the magnitude of *yi* or change sets up the order and arrangement of positions in a domain of interality between heaven, earth, and the human world. The change of a proper order of *yin-yang* position could often cause chaos and turmoil.

The lines move through space-time: each of the six lines represents a spot or *wei* 位 in space-time, and each trigram or hexagram has its own space-time spots as well. Change changes through space-time: from east to west, from spring to winter based on a predetermined order. If a line moves along to occupy a position or spot in space-time, it will function or gain its function differently according to the position or spot. Although change changes in space-time, space-time itself does not go with it. The positions are set in all hexagrams. For example, line 1 (called “bottom” or “beginning,” *chu* 初), line 3, and line 5 are positions of *yang*, and 2, 4, 6 (called “top,” *shang* 上) positions of *yin*. When a *yin* line is in a *yin* position and a *yang* line in a *yang* position as shown in a hexagram, the lines are in proper positions, *dangwei* 当位, otherwise not proper, *bu-dang* 不当. A line that is in a proper position gains a positive function and virtuosity

of the move and vice versa. By examining the positions occupied by lines in the hexagrams, whether proper or not, one can easily detect what has happened and will happen in the future. Among all the positions, the middle or centre, *zhong* 中, such as number 2 and number 5 of a hexagram, is considered the best spot of all. If a line occupies a proper spot and gains the middle position called *dezhong* 得中, nothing will go wrong. According to the Yi, the middle place is better than a proper position. Cheng Yi once commented on this, "A proper (position) is not necessarily the middle, the middle on the contrary cannot be improper. Gaining a proper position in the six lines does not necessarily lead to a good fortune; yet line 2 and line 5 in the middle are always positive" (see Huang & Zhang, 2004, p. 619). The functions and consequences of the actions of *yin-yang* are dependent on whether they are properly located in the order of space-time.

On top of the above patterns, there are other kinds of possible relations among lines that could alter the function and outcome of changes. For example, a line lying above another is called riding (*cheng* 乘); if a *yin* line rides above a *yang* line, as a situation of weak overpowering firm, inferior taking charge of superior, the result would mostly be negative or unfavourable. That the line below follows the line right above is called following or succeeding (*cheng* 承); if a *yin* line follows or condescends to a *yang* line, the result of the action would be favourable. The relationships between each adjacent line in a consecutive order is called contrast (*bi* 比), which places a line in the middle between lines above and below to see whether its position is proper. Usually, if *yin* is in the middle of two *yin* lines, the situation could hardly be favourable. The proper relationship between lines 1 and 4, 2 and 5, 3 and 6 is called correspondence (*ying* 应). When the pairs *yin* and *yang* are correspondent to each other, such as in the hexagram *tai* 泰 or peace (#11), with all lines of *yin-yang* correspondent to one another, the state of peace and harmony is reached. Speaking of the hexagrams, the interaction between trigrams that constitute a specific hexagram, the way hexagrams are arranged in a certain order, and their relations to other hexagrams are also important to the meanings and functions of a hexagram. A hexagram is often a period or part of the changing process that cannot be read and understood merely by that hexagram itself. The multiple and variable meanings of a hexagram must be sought also in its opposite hexagram (*duigua* 对卦; 56 of the hexagrams except the eight basic or pure hexagrams, 八纯卦, have their opposite hexagrams), in its variation hexagram (*biangua* 变卦) determined by its variable lines (*bianyao* 变爻), or in its reversal hexagram (*fangua* 反卦) derived by turning itself upside down. An experienced diviner or sage could apply all these means to comprehend what is meant by lines and hexagrams in the context of other hexagrams as a whole. Within a hexagram, the lower trigram is called inner-gram (*neigua* 内卦) while the upper trigram is called outer-gram (*waigua* 外卦). The position of inner-gram usually designates little success, while the outer-gram designates grand accomplishment. Both of them indicate the gradual progression from low to high, small to big, near to far, and within to without.

The space-time has its order with or without substance. Just like the six lines of a hexagram begin from the bottom to the top, imitating the growth of things on earth, and the trigrams are listed in the way the sun goes from the east to the west, from

spring to winter, the hexagrams are also arranged as the process of change goes from the beginning to the end, from difficulty to easiness, from progress to recession, from positive to negative, et cetera. The positions within space-time are distinguished or differentiated into superior and inferior (*zunbei* 尊卑), firm and soft, strong and weak, high and low, et cetera. In the human world, we have a hierarchical order of relations between emperor and ministers, parents and children, siblings and friends, individuals and community, and so forth. When things or persons enter into a given state of interality (e.g., position, season, relationship, direction, location), the situation, condition, behavior, even nature of them could be changed accordingly.

Here we have arrived at a point that is unusual within our Western perspective: change changes arrangement (constitution) and order (chaos) in the process, and then brings about the change of things and the state of affairs. Change does not mean “change of being”; change changes beings by changing their arrangement, order, constitution, relation—i.e., interality—which is construed as the origin of becoming and beings. The Yi presents a mode of thinking peculiar to the conventional thinking: interality makes things happen or come into being and determines what they actually *are*. Space-time, constitution, order, relation or relationality are “properties,” “qualities,” and functions or virtuosities of interality, with or without substance or being. As *Xi Ci* clearly states, “The divine/miraculous has no squared measure; yi or change has no body/substance” (book 1, chap. 4, my translation).⁸

In the Yi, the change of arrangement and order of space-time represented by lines and hexagrams can be delivered or described without stressing any question of being or things. Through things that are wandering around, the sages found interality among them and came up with interalogical terms such as up/down, high/low, prior/posterior, and so forth to set up orders and positions associated with the process of change for the becoming of things. All these interalogical terms are not necessarily the properties of things or substances; on the contrary, they could be construed as something independent of things or substances. Space-time, for instance, could be independent of substance, for we could take out all things but not space-time itself. So is relation: a thing-in-itself does not create nor possess any relation until it meets or interacts with other things and situations. Relations could be there prior to the existence of things. In other words, relations between high/low, superior/inferior, before/after, now/then, et cetera could exist and act independently of the existence of being. As a matter of fact, when things enter into interality, they occupy spots and posit themselves in some specific places in space-time to gain their relational position (e.g., high/low, fast/slow, firm/yielding). Their forms or patterns of existence and presence correspond or even conform to the placement, arrangement, and order they take part in.

Affection or virtuosity of change: *Tong*/Throughness—the ideal state of interality that brings about the good state/value of being/event/action

The cause of change is change itself. Change changes; beings are outcomes of change or becoming. If we pay enough attention to all the hexagrams and lines in them, we realize that none of them indicates the nature of being, but the process of change and the possible effects of change that will affect the state of becoming, i.e., auspicious

(*ji* 吉), disastrous (*xiong* 凶), regretful (*hui* 悔), unsuccessful (*lin* 吝). Depending on the pattern and thoroughness of change, things are able to come into existence or cease to be. The state of thoroughness would determine how things or states of affairs exist, i.e., good/bad, success/failure, healthy/ill, happy/regretful, and so on. The Yi's concern lies not in the essence or being of things, but in possible states of being brought about through the process of change and becoming.

As commonly understood, there are four ideal states of change or virtuosities of becoming: *yuan* 元 or original/creative, *heng* 亨 or through, *li* 利 or harmonious effect, and *zhen* 贞 or just/upright. In my interpretation, the four are different aspects of *thoroughness*. The ultimate function and ideal state of change is thoroughness. In the Yi, change happens when *yin* and *yang* encounter, interact, affect, ride, follow, and correspond with one another. If all these actions between *yin-yang* are properly cast in accordance with the right space-time, order, position, trend, situation, and other conditions of interality, the state of thoroughness is very likely to be actualized. With the state of thoroughness, change or becoming undergoes its original course and opens all the possibilities of creation, hence "origin." If the flow of change continues to be through, things will gain their form and nature and come into existence, hence "effect" or "benefit." *Zhen* 贞 means divination in origin, but is commonly interpreted as just, upright, perseverance in terms of correctness and rightness. Correctness here corresponds not to the essence of an object or entity but the state of thoroughness that allows change to go through the right channel, allowing for the most favorable outcome of change.

Therefore, what connects and unites all the hexagrams and lines into harmony is *thoroughness*. As the *Great Treatise* states:

Therefore the sages called the closing of the gates *kun* or earth, and the opening of the gate *qian* or heaven. The alternation between closing and opening they called change. The going forward and backward without ceasing they called thoroughness. What manifests itself to the present they called image; what has bodily form they called a thing. What manages things in usage they called law. That which furthers on going out and coming in, that which all men live by, they called the divine. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 1, chap. 11, p. 318, translation amended)

Yi means: change when desperate (blocked); change brings about thoroughness; and it is thoroughness that endures. (易穷则变, 变则通, 通则久. *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 2, chap. 2, p. 331, translation amended)

As previously mentioned, in Chinese philosophy, the original meaning of *Dao* or way is thoroughness with the image of walking or going through, which contains a cluster of meanings such as harmony, unity, openness, clearing, and oneness.⁹ Speaking of the Yi, the *Dao* of Yi is also aimed at thoroughness, which opens the *interality* between heaven and earth, human beings and the natural world, the intelligible and the mystic, coming and going, opening and closing, becoming and become, motion and stillness, and so forth. In the state of thoroughness, change originates the origin of all existence and guarantees the best outcome of the process of becoming. And without through-

ness the *dao* of change would be blocked, jammed, or overflowed from its regular course and cause misfortunes or even disastrous consequences. In the *Yi*, especially in the *Appendixes* or *Ten Wings*, throughness has been developed and emphasized as a fundamental category that designates the ideal state of interality.

Now we come to the third meaning of *yi* as simple and easy. Change makes for throughness; when there is throughness there is no problem as regards the origin, development, and well-being of things in the process of becoming, so that everything will become *simple* and *easy* for the cultivation and completion of existence.

The essence of the *Book of Yi* is to adapt to change and to probe *ji* by diving into the abysmal depth

Everything comes out of becoming, and becoming is the process of change. In order to predict the future, it is important to see the *ji* 幾, or sign, potential, chance, trace (process), mechanism/magnitude of possibility of changes from which becoming takes place. Change changes, but change does not necessarily lead to becoming—it also leads to destroying, blocking, or ceasing to be. *Ji* is a sign of “no sign,” for its physical or conceptual form has not yet formed and we need to dive deeper and deeper into all signs to find it.

In the *Great Treatise*, book 2, chapters 7, 8, and 10, a brief summary of the *Yi* was made thus:

The *Yi* as a book cannot be left in distance. Its *dao* is forever changing, never fixed; it flows through the six voids all around. It shows that ups and downs are impermanent, firm and yielding/soft transform each other. There is neither doctrine nor principle to fixate; it merely adapts to the flux of change. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 2, chap. 7, p. 348, translation amended)

The essence of the *Yi* is to enquire into the origins and comprehend the magnitude of ends. The six lines blend into each other for they are symbols of matters in/of time. The beginning [line] is hard to understand and the top [end line] easy to apprehend. For they stand in the relationship of root and branches. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 2, chap. 8, p. 349, translation amended)

The *Yi* is a book vast and great with all contained including the *dao* of heaven, the *dao* of the earth and the *dao* of humans. It combines these three primal domains and doubles them to set up six lines. ... The time the *Yi* came to appear was that in which the House of Yin came to an end and the house of Zhou was rising, that is, the time when King Wen and the tyrant Zhou were pitted against each other. This is why the words of the *Yi* frequently warn against danger. He who is conscious of danger creates peace for himself; he who takes things lightly creates his own downfall. The *dao* of the *Yi* is too great to miss anything. It takes care of beginning and end with caution; hence it is able to avoid any blame. This is indeed the *dao* of the *Yi*. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 2, chap. 10, p. 351, translation amended)

From the words cited above, we notice that the Yi is all about the changing process, from the beginning *through* end. As a book of guidance to help us understand and cope with changes, it puts the main focus on the realm of interality, rather than being and substance of things. This is also why the Yi is the philosophy created by sages who had dived into the depth (*jishen* 极深) of the abysmal interality to detect the trace or sign of beginning (*yanji* 研幾) of change. According to the Yi, things and events of substance or being are not the whole of reality; they are mere phenomenal elements within the domain of interality. The *dao* that enables us to grasp the whole picture of reality through interality is beyond the form of things, or being of beings. A sage contemplates what lies beneath or beyond the present and finds the traces (*ji*) and *daos* of change/becoming. The traces are not inherent parts of things-in-themselves, but interalogical potentials and possibilities that create and constitute the interality of all things.

Let us take a look at another excerpt from book 1, chapter 13 of the same treatise:

What is above/beyond form is called *dao*; what is present with a form is called a thing. What transforms and arranges is called change, what can be put to action is called throughness, what ought to be raised up and set forth for the service of people under heaven is called enterprise. (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, book 1, chap. 13, p. 323, translation amended)¹⁰

The phrase “above form” or *xingershangzhe* 形而上者 has been commonly interpreted in the modern age as a description of *dao* parallel to the Greek term “metaphysical.” This is part of the reason why many have taken for granted that *dao* could be conceived as a metaphysical or ontological term in Chinese philosophy. In my reading of the Chinese classics, this interpretation is not correct. *Dao*, in its original meaning, means walking through (*tong*) to reach (*da* 达) a certain destination. It is an interalogical term. The excerpt above clearly indicates that the study of the *dao* of change (*yidao* 易道), as well as the *Dao* in general, is the study of interality, which is above or beyond things and beings.

Conclusion: Why is it change instead of being?

Now let us return to our original question: why is it change instead of being? It is clear in the Yi that change is the cornerstone of all things and phenomena. In contrast to Western philosophy, grounded in the concept of being or substance, Chinese philosophy grew from the soil of a changing world. In what follows, the following section draws on the analysis above to answer the question: why is it change rather than being?

1. The underlying presupposition of *The Yi Jing* is that reality is change; the tradition of divination and the consciousness of angst are responsive to the conviction that change is the origin of all things and the nature of the world.
2. A thing changes; this is a usual understanding of change as one of the properties of being/substance. In the Yi, however, change changes things. Change always happens as the movement of interality (i.e., the order, arrangement of space-time, hierarchy, relation), which creates things and changes them by switching their positions and situations. If we consider *taiji*, lines of yin-yang, and the trigrams and hexagrams, we do not get much information about things (entity/product 器), but situations and conditions (interality) that open ways (*dao*) to possibilities of becoming.

3. The inquiry of the Yi is not what a thing or being is but what and how change changes. It is obvious in the Yi that change of space-time is prior to the becoming of things. Change or yi operates in between heaven (*qian*) and earth (*kun*) as long as the two are positioned (Xi Ci, book 1, chap. 6).¹¹ The teaching of the Yi is described as vast (*da* 大) and remote (*yuan* 远). It obtains serenity and rightness while examining the near. It covers all [changes], *en masse*, because it focuses on the interality between heaven and earth (Xi Ci, book 1, chap. 6).¹² Instead of discussing what a thing or being is, the Yi takes into account the movement of space-time, e.g., distance (near/far), size (big/small), order (high/low), process (first/last). According to the Yi, the change of space-time creates the necessary conditions of becoming and being. Nothing can exist beyond space-time, including ideas and dreams. On the contrary, space-time remains even if there is nothing.¹³ Yin-yang, for example, originated from the images of sun and moon, day (light) and night (dark) as two opposite faces and functions of interality through space-time. It is the movement/change of space-time, not Being, that gives birth to all things. Observing changes of things and events with a perspective of interality as space-time has characterized the interalogical mode of thinking in China, and this is owed to the Yi.
4. All the lines and hexagrams within which the lines are placed or located represent sequences, orders, and arrangements of space-time (hence, interality). We know that everything is a composite of other things. Although we are interested in asking *what* things are composed of, we are not accustomed to asking *how* compositions happen (including organization, arrangement, system, structure, et cetera). Composition composes things but not things-in-themselves. Composition is the arrangement and order of interality, just as hexagrams depict. When elements, mass, and energy gain their place in the order of interality, they acquire certain types of form and duration and are realized as things. Therefore, the composition of things, from the perspective of the Yi, exists prior to things-in-themselves. The order, direction, position, location, and neighbouring of lines and hexagrams are situations and conditions that determine the state of beings and affairs.
5. Terms or categories such as *taiji*, *yin-yang*, trigrams, hexagrams, ten-thousand-things are representations of processes of change and becoming. How change takes place is dependent upon the change of *yin-yang* lines in processes. Opposition/contradiction, exchange, interplay, becoming, interaction, intercourse, and so forth are not things, or rather, they cannot be expressed ontologically in terms of Being. They are the moves and functions of *interality between* becoming and being in the process of passing through space-time. The atomic concept of being analyzed in traditional ontology does not include the above-mentioned moves and functions; being does not change. In the Yi, nothing is unchanging and nothing is outside the process of change. Hence, the contemplation of Being without change (or, further, interality) is a vain pursuit.
6. The Yi attempts to describe what kind of state a being can enter. The state itself is less important than the attributes of that being's change (duration,

expansion, decay, et cetera). Traditionally, the best state is “virtuosoic” (*de* 德) or “good” (*shan* 善). The purpose of the Yi, then, is to show us how to achieve the four *de* of change (original/creative, through, harmonious/effective, and just) and eliminate the negative effects (catastrophic 凶, obstructive 吝, regretful 悔, guilty 咎), which are all possible values produced by human actions or reactions to the various states of interality.

7. Yi is *jianyi* 簡易, or ease/simplicity. The Yi makes it easier for us to predict the future. How? The system itself provides a simple way of calculating numbers and observing images to explore the deep, dark, profound, and subtle aspects of life, represented as interality itself. To do so, it notes the traces 迹 and signs of change 幾, the miraculous 神 and wondrous 妙 phenomena that are owed to interality and not Being alone. These terms have been applied and studied by most of the subsequent thinkers, regardless of their schools.
8. The ultimate concern of the Yi is to seek the ideal state of interality: *throughness*. Throughness brings harmony, peace, balance, success, flow, and flourishing to the world of becoming and change. *Dao* “throughs” all in the process of change into one unified totality, in which all opposites and differences connect, communicate, affect, and transform one another. The state of throughness, or the philosophy of throughness implied in the Yi, does not fixate its perspective in terms of Being, substance, truth, God, Logos, essence, and so on. Instead, the Yi argues that the throughness of interality is what actually effects, shapes, and constitutes the aforementioned terms of reality.

Finally, this article concludes with a comment on the two schools of the study of the Yi: the schools of *xiangshu* 象数 and *yili* 义理. Both are necessary aspects that are aimed at how to understand the changing world. As Wang Bi pointed out long ago, the hidden meaning of the text can be understood by virtue of images and (numerical) numbers, just as the earliest version of the Yi contained lines, trigrams, and hexagrams without words attached. In order to further interpret the images and numbers, sages such as King Wen and Confucius added their own commentaries. In other words, the words interpret images and numbers, the images and numbers represent or symbolize the meanings of change. Therefore, when images and numbers are understood, one should forget about the words; when the meaning of Yi is obtained, one should forget about images and numbers. The meaning one receives is the understanding of the reality of change, which discloses the way or *dao* of total interality.

The *dao* of Yi thus understood leads to a Kantian conclusion: the Yi constructed a transcendental *a priori* ideal for the Chinese that formed a special mode of thinking (constructing sense data and experiences). From the Yi we can locate the foundation of Chinese thought: interality. Most of the *a priori* categories (*yi*, *dao*, *yin-yang*, et cetera) as well as the fundamental inquiries developed in Chinese philosophy are interalogical terms representing different aspects of interality. The greatest contribution of the Yi is as such: it initiated a very unique way of interpreting reality in respect to interalogy, rather than ontology. In general, the interalogical mode of thinking positions interality as the foundation for interpreting the world. Therefore, it is change or interality that

gathers, arranges, and gives birth to the becoming of the ten thousand things, including the conjunction and being of beings as a whole.

Perhaps this is why it is change instead of being!?

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my friend Aaron Hobson at University of California Berkley for editing the article a couple of weeks after his daughter Lucy Li Hobson was born.

Notes

1. This article translates the Yi as the *Book of Change* rather than the *Book of Changes*, as first translated by Richard Wilhelm. First, Yi in Chinese has no countable form, unlike its English equivalent. Second, the book studies change more as a philosophical concept than a tangible, countable phenomenon. The 64 hexagrams do not describe disparate changes away from each other but different phases, stages, and variations of the process of change or moves, functions, and efficacies of interality. “Change,” rather than “changes,” better exhibits the philosophical nature of the book.

2. This article uses “the Yi” to abbreviate *The Book of Changes*, and lower case yi for the term yi itself. *Ten Wings* 十翼 are: 1 & 2. *Tuan Zhuan* 彖传, *Commentary on the Hexagrams* (Commentary on the Decision [or Judgment]); 3 & 4. *Xiang Zhuan* 象传, *Commentary on the Images* (The Image); 5 & 6. *XiCi Zhuan* 系辞传, *Commentary on the Attached Verbalizations* (Appended Judgments or Great Treatise); 7. *Wen Yan* 文言, *Elegant Words* (Commentary on the Words of the Hexagrams of Qian and Kun); 8. *Shuo Gua* 说卦, *Remarks on the Trigrams* (Discussion of the Trigrams); 9. *Xu Gua* 序卦, *The Ordered Hexagrams* (The Sequence) [I would put “Ordering/Organizing Hexagrams”]; and 10. *Za Gua* 杂卦, *the Miscellany of Hexagrams* (Miscellaneous Notes on Hexagrams). The translation above is based on *Sung Dynasty Uses of the I Ching* (Smith, Bol, Adler, & Wyatt, 1990).

3. What is meant by 象数? According to recent scholar Gao Heng (1998), the connotation of *xiang* is twofold: 1) the image of trigrams and hexagrams that imitate different position, situation, relation, and temporality among changing things and events; 2) the image of two lines (*yin* and *yang*) imitating motions and attributes of interality through the appearances of things and events, such as heaven and earth, firm and soft/yielding, dragon and cow, et cetera. “Numeric” or “number” connotes 1) number of *yin* and *yang*; the former is an even number and the latter odd; 2) numeric of lines that designates the position or seat of a line in a hexagram. When we read a hexagram, we need to follow a numeric order of the lines from the bottom up: first, 2, 3, 4, 5, and top/6th. Each numeric represents either a *yin* position (2, 4, 6) or a *yang* position (1, 3, 5) ready for a line to swing in and out (《周易大传今注》, p. 12). If the numeric position of *yin-yang* does not match the line of *yin* or *yang*, it shows a sign of disharmony and negative fortune.

4. The image-numeric system has made the early practice of divination simple and the interpretation of the hidden meanings of lines and hexagrams divined easy and clear. Remember, the image-numeric system of the Yi was created or constituted as early as the invention of the written language. At that time, the meanings and messages of the hexagrams were conveyed by virtue of images and numbers. Although the school of image-numeric that has over-emphasized the image and numeric phase of the text, they are indispensable for the study of the Yi. For the meanings and regularities of change as interality cannot be extracted merely by language.

5. “Interality” or *jianxinglun* 间性论 and “interality” or *jianxing* 间性 were coined by myself a few years ago to designate another domain, other than Being, of the reality that includes space-time, interval, arrangement or constitution, order, process, change, relation, and other phenomena that are about, between/among, in and out of things or beings and substance in the Western terms. The detailed description of the terms can be found in my other essay “Interality Shows Through: An Introduction to Interality” (Shang, 2015).

6. 《象》曰：大哉乾元！万物资始，乃统天。运行雨施，品物流形。大明终始，六位时成，时乘六龙以御天。乾道变化，各正性命，保合太和，乃利贞。首出庶物，万国咸宁。 And for Kun: 至哉坤元

万物资生，乃承顺天。坤厚载物，德合无疆。含宏光大，品物咸亨。易有太极，是生两仪，两仪生四象，四象生八卦，八卦定吉凶，吉凶生大业。

7. Shang Binghe 尚秉和, one of the best recent Chinese scholars of the Yi, even pointed out that “it will go *through* when yang meets yin” (陽遇阴则通) is “the marrow of the entire Yi” (《周易尚氏学》) (p. 6, 1980).
8. 故神无方而易无体. The Wilhelm and Baynes translation reads: “Therefore the spirit is bound to no one place, nor the Book of Changes to any one form” (*The I Ching or Book of Changes*, 1997, p. 296). Here, *fang* does not just mean “place” or “home” but also “regulation,” “regularity,” or “law,” as a squared measure, that can be intelligible by reason or discursive thinking, for *shen* refers to the happenings and functions that are beyond our intelligibility and sensibility. The meaning of *ti* in this context is “body,” reminiscent of Aristotle’s “substance”; “form” does not render the meaning well enough.
9. The detailed study of the concept of throughness is in my book *Zhuangzi: Dancing with the World* (Shang, 2010).
10. 形而上者谓之道，形而下者谓之器，化而裁之谓之变，推而行之谓之通，举而错之天下之民谓之事业。(系辞上，11章)
11. 天地设位，易行乎其中矣。(系辞上，6章)
12. 夫易广矣大矣。以言乎远则不御；以言乎迩则静而正；以言乎天地之间则备矣。(系辞上，6章). The message we can get here is quite clear: the domain or the centre of attention of the Yi is *tiandizhijian*, or interality between heaven and earth. We have failed to realize the key is *jian* (interality) instead of heaven and earth. The Yi is all about what happens in *jian*/interality rather than the things within it.
13. Space-time should not be seen as a property of substance, as Aristotle argued, but one of the primal “properties” or parts of interality. Interestingly, the Chinese translation for space-time is often *shijiankongjian* 时间空间, which is essentially the space-time of interality or *jian*.

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