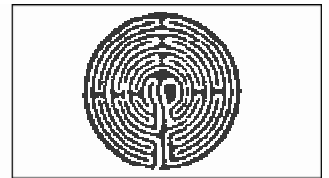




LUDWIG-  
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UNIVERSITÄT  
MÜNCHEN

INTERFAKULTÄRER STUDIENGANG  
RELIGIONSWISSENSCHAFT



Interdisziplinäres Hauptseminar SoSe 2014  
„I Ging“  
Venice International University  
9.–13.05.2014

Partizipierende Lehrstühle

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Berner (Religionswissenschaft, Universität Bayreuth)  
Prof. Dr. Michael von Brück (Religionswissenschaft, Universität München)  
Prof. Dr. Stephan Peter Bumbacher (Sinologie, Universitäten Tübingen, Zürich und Basel)  
Prof. Dr. Martin Lehnert (Sinologie, Universität München)  
Prof. Dr. Karl-Heinz Pohl (Sinologie, Universität Trier)  
Prof. Dr. Dennis Schilling (Sinologie, Universität München)

Seminarbeschreibung

I Ging. Historical Dimensions and Religious/Philosophical Interpretations

The I Ging is one of the classics of Chinese culture dating back to the first millennium B.C. Highly revered by Confucians and authors of all walks of life it became known in the West as a classic of immortal wisdom, a mysterious book that contained the secret knowledge of everything. It became a book that was commented upon by sinologists, philosophers, psychotherapists and others. What actually is it?

First of all the I Ging might be regarded as a book of oracles on the basis of a magic of numbers and forms which in their construction processes would reveal the basic patterns of the universe. The one who knows to handle it would be able to tell the future so that fortune and misfortune, success and the opposite of it could be determined. The higher powers of deities would make known their intentions through the structures that could be deciphered by the scholar or sage who is able to handle it. The I Ging has been regarded also a book of wisdom for personal and administrative guidance (it was used by the kings of Zhou, later by rulers all over), used since at least the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. From the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. on commentaries were written to amplify the earliest level of the text, and by the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE. there were 10 such levels of exposition, some more philosophical in their attitude. The “Book of Changes” was believed to reflect the structure of cosmic movements, and hence it became an object of reverent contemplation in itself. Its earliest levels antedated all the philosophical schools in China, so it belonged to none, though the Confucians later claimed it as a classic. The polarity of *ch’ien* and *k’un* provided a model for the *yang* and *yin*, first discussed in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The I Ging’s sometimes obscure formulations gave impetus to philosophical speculations throughout the later history of Chinese thought. Its ideas became not only the basis for later cults of the state and the institution of the Chinese emperors, but also the source for religion, science and aesthetics. Also, the I Ging provided a codex for rulers including the practice of oracles.

Jesuit missionaries brought the I Ging to the West in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The first translation here was into Latin. The West was impressed that the explanation of the principles of reality was not based primarily on mental principles of transcendental reality but on an explanation and exposition of the principle laws of nature or the cosmos. Thus, the I Ging made possible an interpretation of the unity of reality in its material and mental or psychological aspects. Moreover, the mutual interdependency of social and individual realities was demonstrated here.

Based on the translation of Richard Wilhelm, Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung interpreted it in a psychological-anthropological way in order to support his theory of the universal archetypes. Other authors such as John Blofeld read the text as a matrix symbolizing the esoteric wisdom of a perennial philosophy. The world famous German author who turned to be Buddhist, Lama Anagarika Govinda, wrote a cryptic commentary to this "Book of Transformations" highly praised by famous Zen masters such as Baker Roshi who writes in his Foreword to Lama Govinda's interpretation: "The I Ching is probably the most subtle structural representation of the active inter-dependency of the human mind and the phenomenal world that has yet been made by man. Although language awakens us to develop possibilities of common thought, still language guides our thought into the predictable and repetitious. By contrast, the I Ching summons the mind to its more inherent possibilities, without the conscription of names and syntax."

So what is this world famous classic, the I Ging? Sinologists and scholars in Religious Studies have worked out different strategies of understanding and reading the seminal work. Different perspectives of interpretation will be represented by the different professors in this interdisciplinary seminar. We will read the text in historical and hermeneutical perspective taking into account also some of the recent interpretations.

### Bibliographie

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Sonstiges

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|-------------------------|---|
| Seminarbeginn:          | Freitag, 09.05.2014, 15 Uhr   |
| Seminarende:            | Dienstag, 13.05.2014, 13 Uhr  |
| Ort:                    | Venice International University, Venedig  |
| Unterrichtssprache:     | Deutsch   |
| Teilnahmevoraussetzung: | Das Hauptseminar ist für Studierende im fortgeschrittenen Studium geeignet. Seminaranmeldung in einem persönlichen Gespräch mit Herrn Prof. von Brück erbeten. Terminvereinbarung für ein Gespräch unter <a href="mailto:mareile.vaupel@lmu.de">mareile.vaupel@lmu.de</a> . |