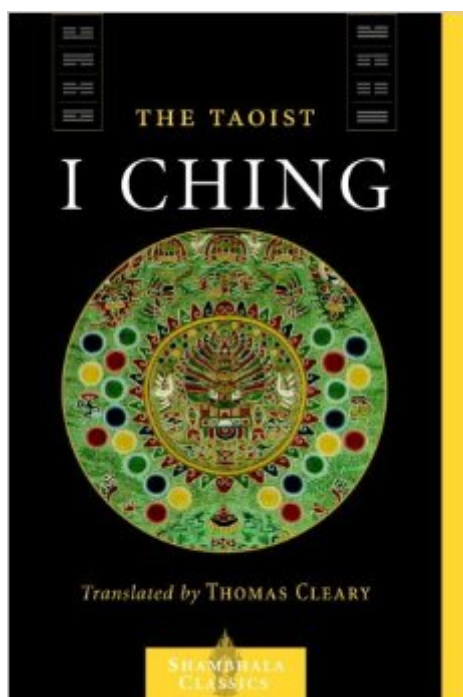


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The Taoist I Ching (Shambhala Classics)



Synopsis

The I Ching, or "Book of Change," is considered the oldest of the Chinese classics and has throughout history commanded unsurpassed prestige and popularity. Containing several layers of text and given numerous levels of interpretation, it has captured continuous attention for well over two thousand years. It has been considered a book of fundamental principles by philosophers, politicians, mystics, alchemists, yogins, diviners, sorcerers, and more recently by scientists and mathematicians. This first part of the present volume is the text of the I Ching properâ "the sixty-four hexagrams plus sayings on the hexagrams and their linesâ "with the commentary composed by Liu I-ming, a Taoist adept, in 1796. The second part is Liu I-ming's commentary on the two sections added to the I Ching by earlier commentators, believed to be members of the original Confucian school; these two sections are known as the Overall Images and the Mixed Hexagrams. In total, the book illuminates the Taoist inner teachings as practiced in the School of Complete Reality. Well versed in Buddhism and Confucianism as well as Taoism, Liu I-ming intended his work to be read as a guide to comprehensive self-realization while living an ordinary life in the world. In his attempt to lift the veil of mystery from the esoteric language of the I Ching, he employs the terminology of psychology, sociology, history, myth, and religion. This commentary on the I Ching stands as a major contribution to the elucidation of Chinese spiritual genius.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There seems to be a certain amount of confusion over the purpose of this version of the Yi-Ching. The publisher's blurb leaves it equally uncertain. Liu I-ming's text-commentary which appeared in 1796, effectively used the symbols of the Yi-Ching to indicate inner processes based on Taoist yoga. To put it another way, Liu I-ming's commentary, alludes to microcosmic energy cycles which mirror the macrocosmic cycles reflected in the Yi-Ching. Without the 'nei-kung' or inner teaching which animates the process, as it were, it is hard to see how anyone could make sense of Liu I-ming's comments. In Chinese Taoist circles, the need for such supplementary teachings would have been taken for granted. Up to a point, Cleary's translation of 'The Secret of the Golden Flower' satisfies such a requirement. He clearly disliked Wilhelm's version - not only stylistically, but because its material was a strange composite and incomplete. But - far better than either of these, is Lu K'uan Yu's (Charles Luk) translation of Chao Pi Chen's 'Secrets of Cultivating Essential Nature and Eternal Life.' (Weiser). Chao Pi Chen (b. 1860) was a practising Taoist, who not only had access to authentic Taoist materials, but Taoist masters in remote mountain locations, who had mastered the teaching. Lu K'uan Yu (b. 1898) also practised the Taoist yoga. His command of English - combined with his experience of the Yoga, enabled him to coin understandable English equivalents, helping to make the processes involved clear. It must be said that Taoists such as Liu-I-Ming or Chao Pi Chen did not intend to make their teachings too explicit. But knowing the threat to teachings such as Taoism and Buddhism - owing to the social climate in China, Lu K'uan Yu endeavored to make them available to Western people.

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