Study Devices

To recognize the dialectics of the yin-yang philosophy operating in the world about us, make or invent several kinds of *I Ching* study devices. As an example, I will describe some original devices of my invention and explain how they can help to develop one's understanding of *I Ching* so it can be used as a very practical aid in coping with the variety of changes which seem to inundate us from day to day. As we work or play with different kinds of *I Ching* gadgets, we will come to recognize, through symbolic equation, techniques for exercising a more masterful control over our everyday affairs.

Here are a few of my patented *I Ching* study devices: the *I Ching* Universe-Cube; the Eight Houses Study Cubes and *I Ching* Oracle Disc. Since students and correspondents have most generously made me gifts of devices of their own making, I will include a couple of these in this presentation.
The I Ching Universe-Cube

One does not have to read I Ching for very long before it becomes apparent that the universe is always the deeper implication of all I Ching symbolism. "The Book of Changes contains the measure of heaven and earth; therefore it enables us to comprehend the Tao of heaven and earth and its order."¹ Another part of this section of Ta Chuan [The Great Treatise], as translated by James Legge, reads:

(Through the Yi), he comprehends as in a mould or enclosure the transformations of heaven and earth without any error; by an ever-varying adaptation he completes (the nature of) all things without exception; he penetrates to a knowledge of the course of day and night (and all other connected phenomena);—it is thus that his operation is spirit-like, unconditioned by place, while the changes which he produces are not restricted to any form.²

In the preface to one of his books Z. D. Sung writes:

The uses of Yi have been kept as esoteric secrets by philosophers mainly as a precaution against abuses, and therefore as yet remain a mystery . . . these symbols, when they are together cover one whole, and when separate, cover its parts, and when once assigned with a concept of our universe, they may be applied to entities such as, space, matter, force and time, as marks representing the Changes with which the said Yi King mainly treats as its principle philosophy.³

From these and corresponding paragraphs the idea was born to construct a cube model that would reflect the relationships and interrelationships of the symbols of I Ching within the universe. The cube form seemed to be the truest way to represent comprehension of the transformation of heaven and earth "as in a mould or enclosure. . . ." The device is structured as an open shell divided to hold four two-inch cubes on a lower level, and four identical cubes on an upper level, as shown in the photographs which follow.
I Ching Universe Cube with Kua Assignment.
Now visualize a cube with its corners numbered from 1 to 8, in such a way that 1 is diagonally opposite 8; 2 is diagonally opposite 7; 3 is diagonally opposite 6; and 4 is diagonally opposite 5. Corner 1 is Ch’ien; 2 is Tui; 3 is Li; 4 is Chên; 5 is Sun; 6 is K’an; 7 is Kên; and 8 is K’un. Paragraph two of chapter six of “The Material,” reads:

Looking upward, we contemplate with its help the signs in the heavens; [1 - Ch’ien], looking down, we examine the lines of the earth. [8 - K’un]. Thus we come to know the circumstances of the dark [6 - K’an], and the light. [3 - Li]. Going back to the beginnings of things [4 - Chên], and pursuing them to the end, [5 - Sun], we come to know the lessons of birth and of death. The union of seed and power produces all things; [7 - Kên], the escape of the soul brings about change. [2 - Tui]. Through this we come to know the conditions of outgoing and returning spirits.  

There are innumerable exercises that one can perform with this I Ching Universe-Cube. It can be used to get a visual picture of the mechanics of some philosophical or psychological principle, which may be difficult to grasp intellectually. It is also
very helpful in interpreting meanings when one is consulting I Ching regarding a specific matter. The Universe-Cube is an interesting physio-mental exercise for relaxing, by seeing how many different combinations of changes you can create by turning the cubes about in the shell.

The Eight Houses Study Cubes

This study kit consist of 64 one-inch cubes in a compartmented box (interior measurement 8” x 11” x 1-1/4”). The box has right and left flaps, each 8” x 11”. A top flap, 8” x 11” with a fold down lip 1-1/4” along the 11” length. A lower flap, 8” x 11” completes the box. Each of the 64 one-inch cubes is imprinted on all sides. Side 1 has the linear kua; 2 has the Chinese name; 3 has the English name; 4 has its number; 5 has the two nuclear kua; and 6 has the Chinese character for the kua. The interior of the box is divided into an 8” x 8” compartment, and a 3” x 8” compartment designed to hold a manual of explanation, instructions and suggestions. The 64 one-inch cubes fill the larger compartment, being arranged by houses or any other arrangement desired by the user. On the inner side of flap #4 there is the “Diagram of Cosmic Evolution.” The outer side is imprinted with a chart of the calendrical arrangement of the kua. Flap #1 has the “Circular Arrangement” of the kua imprinted on the inner side, with markings indicating the monthly kua and the kua for the solstices and equinoxes. The outer side has a chart of correspondences between the Western astrological zodiac and the appropriate kua. Flap #2’s inner side is imprinted with the Buddhist wheel of the “Eight-fold Path” and I Ching correspondences. The outer side pictures the eight immortals and the appropriate image of the pa kua. Flap #3’s inner side has drawings of the head and hand with the pa kua assigned to the appointed areas of each, with a briefly printed legend explaining the meanings. The outer side is decorated with the name of the device: I Ching Eight Houses Study Cubes.