

the relatively young age of forty-four he wrote a series of articles and worked on a huge dictionary of Chinese, which remains in a manuscript of twenty-three volumes containing 50,000 characters on 7,500 pages located in the Archive of the Academy in Leningrad. Lundbæk describes Bayer as one of the "two towering figures" standing "at the gate of European academic sinology" (p. 1—the other figure is Fourmont).

Bayer's scholarly life, described in Lundbæk's fascinating study, is one of considerable frustration. That frustration stems in large part from the enormous difficulty of getting reliable information in 18th-century Europe, about China, and particularly about the Chinese language. The Jesuits had been in China for over a century and many of them had thoroughly mastered the Chinese language, but communication with them was slow and difficult. Moreover, according to Lundbæk, "it is hard to escape the impression of their positively guarding the mysteries of the Chinese language, for fear of other people reading their hands" (p. 2). Thus, while the Jesuits had access to Chinese scholars and a mountain of Chinese-language scholarship, European sinologists like Bayer were compelled to pursue their studies with only the most meager sources. For example, the chrestomathy, which formed a part of his *Museum Sinicum*, contained three of the four Chinese texts to which he had access: a short "Life of Confucius," the first chapter of the *Great Learning*, and a piece from a book called *Hsiao Erh Lun*. His fourth text was a transcription of the famous Nestorian monument. Just at the moment his *Museum Sinicum* was being completed, a copy of the *Five Classics* arrived in St. Petersburg, but he admits that "these works are far beyond the powers of my rudimentary knowledge of Chinese" (p. 100). In 1733, just five years before his death, Bayer established a correspondence with the Jesuits in China. While they complimented his sinological efforts, they assured him that Chinese "is like an ocean, it cannot be transmitted through the rivulets and channels of a correspondence" (p. 156).

The Jesuit Parrenin did, however, take time to inform Bayer that the latter's pet theory, a theory into which Bayer had poured most of his scholarly energy, was in error. Early in his life Bayer had apparently fallen under the influence of Leibniz's idea of an exact language which would use "a truly philosophical script based upon a kind of alphabet of human concepts derived directly from facts" (Leibniz as quoted on p. 102). In short, Bayer believed that the apparent chaos of Chinese characters could be reduced to a system that was built up from nine basic strokes. These basic building blocks were combined and recombined according to certain principles so as to derive "a certain system of analogies . . . a subtle indication of the meaning of the character, something about the use of something, or some quality." Bayer is not speaking here of a traditional Chinese system of radicals,

and he steadfastly rejects the theory that Chinese had a pictographic origin; he is speaking of very fundamental units of meaning (see pp. 115–123). When he finally began to doubt this theory, which had shaped his prodigious labors on the big dictionary, he could only write in dismay to Parrenin, "Were the books of Confucius written with these chaotic characters? And before that—if it was from before—the *Book of Changes*? . . . All these things have the highest consequence; I beg you, Reverend Father, to explain them to me" (p. 194).

Bayer's tragedy, given the scanty information available to him, was perhaps unavoidable. But it is, in some ways, a prototype of more avoidable tragedies to come. Chinese scholarship becomes readily available, there is no longer any monopoly on what "the Chinese have said;" and yet it is often purposely ignored. And the romance of the Chinese script lives on, attracting and usually deluding those who wish to find deep and precious secrets.

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*The Taoist I Ching*. Translated by THOMAS CLEARY. Pp. 332. Boston: SHAMBHALA PUBLICATIONS, 1986. \$9.95, paper.

*The Buddhist I Ching*. Translated by THOMAS CLEARY. Pp. xxi + 236. Boston: SHAMBHALA PUBLICATIONS, 1987. \$13.95, paper.

These two books are part of Thomas Cleary's projected four-volume translation of Chinese works on the *I ching*. Forthcoming are an abridged translation of the commentary of Ch'eng I (1033–1107), presumably to be called *The Confucian I Ching*, and a work on the *t'u* or diagrams of the Sung dynasty (see Cleary's remarks in *The Buddhist I Ching*, p. xvii).

*The Taoist I Ching* translates the *Chou-i ch'an-chen* 周易闡真 (Expounding the Truth of the Book of Change) of Liu I-ming 劉一明 (preface dated 1798), as edited by his disciple Chang Yang-ch'uan 張陽全. This is found as part of Liu's *Tao-shu shih-erh chung* (Twelve Writings on Taoism) (1890 woodblock edition). Liu comments on the hexagram and line statements, on the *Hsiang-chuan* (Commentary on the Image), and on the *Tsa-kua* (Miscellany of Hexagrams). Cleary's translation renders each Chinese word moderately well, but it remains awkward, especially in dealing with Liu's long strings of clauses. Here, for example, is his translation of Liu's remarks on hexagram #24 Fu (return), to which I have added (in parentheses) some of the Chinese terms:

This hexagram represents the return of yang within primordial yin (*hsien-t'ien yin*); it follows on the previous hexagram *adornment* (Pi 賁, hexagram #22). *Adornment* is being clear-minded and resting in the proper place, thereby to nurture clarity and operate the "fire" to gather primordial true yang. Gathering true yang is the path of returning yang in the midst of yin, reordering personal affairs, by which one can appropriate the creativity of nature (to 奪 *tsao-hua*) and comprehend life and death, so that return is unfailingly developmental (*heng 亨*). (pp. 108-9)

Cleary omits the phrase "*pieh li ting-lu chih tao*" (separately establishing the way of the cauldron and stove [by which the exilir is heated, according to the usage of the *Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i*]), which comes just after "reordering personal affairs." Otherwise the translation is generally accurate word by word.

*The Buddhist I Ching* translates the *Chou-i ch'an-chieh* 周易禪解 (A Zen Explanation of the Book of Change) of Chih-hsü Ou-i 智旭滿益 (1599-1655), one of the four Dragon-Elephants of late Ming Buddhism. The text can be found as volume 67 of the *I-ching chi-ch'eng* (Complete Collection of the Book of Change), which reproduces a 1915 woodblock edition. Here Cleary is forced by considerations of space to omit Ou-i's comments on the *Hsi-ts'u-chuan* and *Shuo-kua*. This translation is less accurate than that of *The Taoist I Ching*. It mistranslates terms and omits numerous references to other texts. For example, the opening passage of Ou-i's comments on hexagram #1 Ch'ien reads in Cleary's version:

*Heaven* is strength. In the sky it is the sun; in the earth it is firmness. In people it is knowledge and duty. In the essence of mind it is awareness. In spiritual practice it is observation.

Also, in the material world it is what covers. In the physical body it is the head, the higher ruler. In the family it is the head of the household. In a country it is the king; in an empire it is the emperor.

Some interpret this in terms of the Tao of nature, some in terms of the Tao of government. Either way is biased, for it only brings out one aspect.

When strong, acts are uninhibited, so "the creative is successful." (p. 1)

I would propose translating this passage as follows:

The six lines are all yang; therefore it is called Ch'ien. Ch'ien is vigor. In heaven it is yang. On earth it is hardness [*kang*, an allusion to the pairing of yang and *kang* in *Shuo-kua* 2]. In man it is knowledge and righteousness. In human nature it is illumination. In

[religious] practice it is contemplation (*vipāśyanā*). As well, in the material realm it is the cover [of things]. Among bodily organs it is the head, the heavenly lord. In the family it is the husband. In the state it is the king. In all-under-heaven it is the emperor.

Some interpret it using the *tao* of heaven, some using the *tao* of the ruler. Both are partial, holding up one corner [without inferring the other three, in reference to *Analects* 7.8].

Since it is vigorous, what it does is without obstruction [*wu-ai*, an allusion to the four stages of Hua-yen realization]. Therefore it is "primally successful" (*yüan-heng 元亨*). (p. 12)

Other parts of the translation are more precise than this passage, and in places Cleary has found ingenious or thought-provoking ways to render a Chinese term. But overall the work seems rushed and careless.

While issues of accuracy play a role in the evaluation of Cleary's translations, they are ultimately less important than a set of three linked questions. For whom are these translations intended? How can they be used? And what do these texts mean? The first—for whom are they intended—has two overlapping answers: scholars and the general public.

Scholars may find these books useful for occasional reference. The major obstacle to greater use is not the quality of Cleary's translation, however, but his inability and unwillingness to address what these texts mean. While I do not condemn him for writing in a non-scholarly mode, I would like to indicate four levels on which this journal's readership will find his work disappointing. First, Cleary does not identify his material. His books contain no footnotes, bibliography, or even the titles of the Chinese texts he has translated. He thus provides no access to their original contexts. Second, he does not explain how these texts work. We are not told what they do, how they do it, or why we might care about it. Perhaps Cleary hopes that they will speak for themselves. Third, he makes no apparent use of the growing body of secondary scholarship on Taoism and Buddhism, some of which is excellent.

Fourth, Cleary does not indicate what role these texts play within the larger Chinese tradition. What do they tell us about Taoism and Buddhism? How do they relate with other texts on the *I ching*? These books suggest numerous good questions of this sort. For example, Liu I-ming begins his preface by claiming that the *Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i*, attributed to Wei Po-yang, sets the meaning for the significant terms of the *I ching* (*The Taoist I Ching*, p. 24). Liu's preface also provides over two-dozen *t'u* or diagrams, which Cleary's translation does not mention. Many but not all of these derive from Shao Yung. (Perhaps these will be the subject of the fourth volume of Cleary's works on the *I ching*.) To take a simple example from *The Buddhist I Ching*, Cleary men-

tions Chih-hsü Ou-i's broad acquaintance with his culture's major literary and philosophical texts. Thus, when the *Hsiang-chuan* to hexagram #35 Chin (advance) ends with the phrase "The superior man uses self-illumination to make his virtue shine" (*ming-te* 明德), Ou-i reads this phrase as an allusion to the *Ta-hsüeh* (Great Learning). But Cleary does not draw our attention to these kinds of textual and intellectual relationship. Such issues do not interest him, nor does he aspire to the scholarship that would allow him to explore them.

Cleary and Shambhala Publications surely intend these books for a general readership. But the needs of the public do not differ so greatly from the needs of scholars. The real question is the nature of responsible communication, to which the academic style is but one answer. Returning now to my three concerns of audience, application, and meaning, we should inquire how general readers will be able to use these texts, and what they might mean to them. The response differs with each of the translations under consideration here.

*The Taoist I Ching* is an esoteric text. It assumes an acquaintance with both its language and system. Cleary provides an eight-page glossary of technical terms, which may or may not be on target—I am by no means an expert on Taoist alchemy. However, even a flawless glossary is not an explanation of a system of thought and practice, and Cleary's twenty-six page introduction is more a collection of related texts than the exposition of a way of thinking. The reader will still end up guessing what Liu is talking about. Perhaps he or she will guess right. Perhaps he or she will guess wrong, but still be provoked to new insights into spiritual practice. It seems a very hit-or-miss proposition. Personally I feel it somewhat irresponsible to dangle Taoist alchemical texts before Western devotees of the *I ching* without explaining what is really at stake. On the other hand, perhaps in ten or twenty years an educated public for this material will develop.

*The Buddhist I Ching* is for several reasons more accessible. For one, it is only partially aimed at adepts, and American audiences are in any case better prepared to read Buddhist than Taoist texts. It is also explicitly organized around concerns Cleary calls politics (*shih-tao* 世道), Buddhism (*fo-hua* 佛化), and contemplating mind (*kuan-hsin* 觀心). Ou-i makes nuanced and penetrating remarks in all three areas, and those with no interest in spiritual matters may still find themselves drawn to his views of politics. From these perspectives, Cleary's translation is a success.

I would like to conclude by considering a final question: why translate an *I ching* commentary in the first place? Certainly there are sound commercial reasons, and *The Taoist I Ching* is among Shambhala's current best-sellers. But Chinese commentaries only rarely expound the principles on

which they are based or address the systematic views of text and world that lie implicit within them. They depend instead on the commentator's other writings to suggest how they should be read.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, the very structure of the *I*'s sixty-four hexagrams encourages the commentator to produce a series of sixty-four (or 386) distinct essays, often in dialogue with absent enemies and/or other texts. As outsiders to this tradition, we need all the help a translator can provide. Each of Cleary's introductions is a gesture in this direction, but both are filled with unfocused half-truths and neither prepares the reader for what is to follow. Nonetheless, the way the *I ching* is used may somewhat vitiate my objections. It is not a book one reads straight through. Instead one consults it, browses in it, wanders about, ponders. This mode of reading encourages an on-going relationship with the text. It may allow a student to find new applications that the author, translator, or I could never imagine, and this may indeed constitute an important part of a commentary's usefulness.

In sum, these books will dissatisfy scholars for many reasons. *The Taoist I Ching* will probably frustrate other readers as well. *The Buddhist I Ching*, however, may prove attractive to anyone with serious amateur interest in the *I* or Chinese Buddhism. Both books are handsomely produced and error-free, for which the Shambhala staff deserves high praise.

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<sup>1</sup> This is surely one reason why there have been so few translations of Chinese commentaries—only two recent versions of Wang Pi's notes on the *Lao Tzu* come to mind. An extremely important exception to this rule of silence is the *Chou-i lüeh-li* (Principles of the Book of Change), which Wang Pi appends to his *I ching* commentary.

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*Kinship Organization in Late Imperial China, 1000–1940.*

Edited by PATRICIA BUCKLEY EBREY and JAMES L. WATSON.  
Pp. xvi + 319, with tables and illustrations. Berkeley:  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS. 1986. \$40.00

In addition to sinologists in general, many historians and social scientists will find much in this volume to interest them, not the least factor being that it is an important contribution to a much wider theoretical debate. This debate crops up in the form of opposing views on the relationship between political/economic and broadly defined cultural factors in explaining the origin of specific forms of social