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Books

Waley: The Book of Changes



Waley's article (BMFEA #5 1933 121-142) argues that the Yi includes, as one of its layers, "an omen or peasant interpretation text," along with "a divination text probably of later date and certainly of far more sophisticated nature;" the omen text "is entirely in verse." Waley is inclined to put the beginnings of the text in the Shang dynasty.

Whatever theory of the Yi one may hold, it is convenient to have access to Waley's folklore proposals. His article gives hexagram numbers, but arranges its material in a narratively consecutive order. We here provide an index in hexagram order, indicating the general type of omen involved.

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02	[association with Earth is secondary]	p141
03	color of horse ridden by new bride	p124
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05	insect or worm	p127
06	prisoner (as in oracle bones; cf #08, 40; contrast ant #09 etc)	p126
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08	prisoner (as in oracle bones; cf #06, 40; contrast ant #09 etc)	p126
09	ant (cf #14, 17, 20, 49, 64; contrast prisoner #06, 08, 40)	p125-126
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49	ant (cf #09, 14, 17, 20, 64; contrast prisoner #06, 08, 40)	p125-126
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61	cranes [obscure]	p129
63	[reference to Shang campaign against the state of Gwei]	p139
64	fox crossing stream	p124-125
64	ant (cf #09, 14, 17, 20, 49; contrast prisoner #06, 08, 40)	p125-126
64	[reference to Shang campaign against the state of Gwei]	p139

As to the order of the hexagrams, Waley notes in concluding (p141) that "the text was probably cut up and shuffled a good many times before it reached its present order." A cognate possibility is being explored in a pending Project publication.



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