



Göttinger Vorträge zum modernen China

The Notion of Time in the *Yijing* Philosophy

Dennis C. H. Cheng
European Chair in Chinese Studies, IIAS, Leiden University

Ort: Waldweg 26, ERZ 8.116
Zeit: Donnerstag, 7. Juli 2011, 18.15 - 19.45 Uhr

Abstract

Though many *Yijing* scholars in the past century saw the *Yijing* as not much more than a divination manual, the philosophy embedded within the text and the commentaries occupies a central position in China's cultural tradition. The notion of "time" as the basic component of the philosophy of the *Yijing* (*I Ching* or *Zhouyi*, The Book of Changes) is best represented by the dialectic relationship of "yin" (negative) and "yang" (positive), and illustrated by the ideas "chu, zhong" (初, 終, beginning and ending) in the *Yijing* text and the idea "zhong shi" (終始) in the *Yijing* Commentaries. Professor Cheng will also take the lately excavated text "Taiyi sheng shui" (太一生水, the Great One gives birth to water) of the Guodian bamboo slips (郭店楚簡) as an example to illustrate how changes of space illustrate the extension of time. Besides, the idea "shixing" (時行, acting at the appropriate point in time) in the *Yijing* Commentaries and the "Wuxing" (五行, the five phases) in the Guodian bamboo slips (郭店楚簡) also illustrates how the philosophy of "time" has been applied to interpret the principle of moral acts in ancient Chinese philosophy.