McLuhan and I Ching: An Interological Inquiry

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ABSTRACT This article explores under-examined resonances between I Ching and McLuhan’s work. It presents I Ching as a metamedium, shows that McLuhan’s four laws of the media have precursors in I Ching, and evaluates the relevance of I Ching in the age of digital mediation. The article illustrates that studying I Ching in comparison with McLuhan’s work opens up numerous opportunities for mutual illumination between the two.

KEYWORDS McLuhan; I Ching; Interality; Interology

If I were given a few more years so I could study The Book of Changes from the age of fifty, then I should be free from big mistakes. (Confucius, The Analects, author’s translation)

... things and events [are] properties of the ‘fields’ in which they occur. (Watts, 1962, p. 10)

The East goes outer with our old hardware as fast as we go on the inner cosmic trip of oriental fantasy with our new electric circuits and circuses. The West has “discovered” the I Ching and a concern with the processes of hidden environments. (McLuhan, 1970, p. 20)

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Introduction

*I Ching*, also known as *Yijing* or *The Book of Changes*, can mean different things depending on how one approaches it. For the rhetorical-minded, it is a book that coaches phronesis or prudential wisdom. For the hermeneut, it contains a distinctly Chinese hermeneutics. For the interologist (i.e., one who studies transformations in the interzone, or zone of proximity), it is infused with interological thinking. For one thing, the message of each hexagram is literally *between* the lines, *between* lines and the positions they occupy, *between* the trigrams, *between* the hexagram and the situation it illuminates. For the media ecologist, there are at least three mediums in *I Ching*: the sixty-four hexagrams, the binary number system, and the imagistic ancient Chinese language.

For contemporary Western readers, *I Ching* is not entirely exotic. Leibniz retrieved or reinvented the binary number system embedded in *I Ching* in developing his binary mathematics. Jung’s analytic psychology was profoundly influenced by *I Ching*. For him, *I Ching* offers a “method of exploring the unconscious” (Baynes, 1967, p. xxiii). In the 1950s, John Cage embraced chance in his musical compositions, which were directly informed by *I Ching*. In his 1957 book, *The Way of Zen*, Alan Watts suggested that consulting *I Ching* in making important decisions has the benefit of bringing the mind into a calm state where the intuition, or the peripheral vision of the mind, is felt to act more effectively. Philip K. Dick consulted *I Ching* in devising the plot of his 1962 novel, *The Man in the High Castle*. *I Ching* was also an important book for the 1960s counterculture. As Richard Rutt (2002) points out,

The Wilhelm-Baynes translation became a cult document for the hippy movement of the 1960s, leading to an explosion of popular interest in *Yijing* throughout the English-speaking world. (p. 79)

The title of Allen Ginsberg’s 1967 Book, *Consulting I Ching Smoking Pot Listening to the Fugs Sing Blake*, contains a perfect still life for the period. It indicates that there was an unmistakable Orientalization of the West in the air—a process that McLuhan attributes largely to electric media and that Flusser (2011) attributes to the loss of the alphabet with the rise of technical images, which he takes to be psychedelic in nature:

[T]echnical images can be regarded as a new form of ideogram ... With the loss of the alphabet, the West is dissolved in the East ... Technical images are psychedelic. (Flusser, 2011, pp. 138–139)

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, originally published in French in 1980, Michel de Certeau (1988) sees the sixty-four hexagrams of *I Ching* as containing an art of thinking and acting “other than the one that the articulation of a certain rationality has founded on the delimitation of a proper” (p. 39). Deleuze’s (1988) phrase, “a rigorous innocence without merit or culpability” (p. 4), sounds very similar to a line on the second hexagram (the Receptive, 坤): “In the Book of Changes [sic] it is said: ‘A tied-up sack. No blame, no praise.’ This counsels caution” (Baynes, 1967, p. 394). The original Chinese wording is: “《易》曰：‘扩囊，无咎，无誉．’ 盖言谨也．”

As the West’s descent into the electric maelstrom renders Western rationality obsolete, it badly needs a poetic wisdom, or a poet’s-eye view of things. As a potent way of encompassing radically volatile situations, the austerely poetic *I Ching* precisely
meets such a need and hence its relevance. The purpose of this article is to explore potential resonances between *I Ching* and McLuhan’s work, and to articulate the significance of such resonances for *I Ching* scholars and the media ecology community alike. As such, the mode of exploration is entirely interological. The article proceeds by resonance, rather than in a linear way. The discussion gravitates toward an examination of *I Ching* against the cultural ground of digital simulation and cybernetic control.

### Chance and necessity

The Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line card deck, co-designed by McLuhan and Harley Parker and released in 1969, is more or less a derivative of the yarrow stalks and hexagrams used by *I Ching*-informed diviners. These instructions came with the deck:

**RULES OF THE GAME**

In addition to conventional card games, the DEW Line deck performs as THE MANAGEMENT GAME. Proceed as follows:

a. Take any card. Relate the aphorism to your current hang-up.

b. Call to mind a private or corporate problem as you shuffle the cards. Select a card and apply its message.

c. Take three cards. Experiment with different arrangements of these until they yield new insights and patterns in your problem.

d. Deal yourself three cards. Pick a pair to maximize the comic side of your problem.

**TO OBTAIN YOUR SCORE**

1. If you get your breakthrough in thirty seconds or less, you are a top DEW Liner!

2. Those who get their million-dollar solution in less than two minutes have not yet been promoted to the level of their incompetence.

3. If it takes you three minutes or more, try another problem.

The deck helps one to see around the corner, get unstuck, and overcome one’s psychological blind spot. The benefit is a sense of “through-ness” (通), or what Kenneth Burke (1961) calls “the comic frame” (pp. 166–175). The deck coaches a playful, neo-primitive approach to problem solving. The problem one calls to mind as one shuffles the cards crystallizes who one is in that particular moment. The process of arranging the randomly drawn cards is a process of *making* sense. The implication is that the relative position of the cards matters, in the same way that the relative position of the divided and undivided lines in each hexagram matters. A different configuration betokens a different situation. The somewhat confusing second point under “TO OBTAIN YOUR SCORE” involves a basic principle of organizations: each person is promoted until he or she reaches the level of his or her incompetence.

That the card is drawn randomly indicates that the deck is just one of the many tactics McLuhan employed to try to shake people loose from their assumptions, to dislodge their rigid patterns of perception. It would not be inappropriate to “read” the
deck the way someone would “read” the *I Ching* or a set of Zen koans. The brevity of response time implies that the randomly drawn card is supposed to give one the sting of perception and the shock of recognition almost immediately. The absence of any flash of insight means that one may not be in the right state of mind to benefit from the interface between the card and the problem. In that case, there is no point in forcing it. One might as well move on to a different problem. There is an affirmation of chance in the design spirit of the deck.

In a dialogue with me entitled “Eye and Ear: Musings on Media Ecology,” Eric McLuhan indicates that the DEW Line deck embodies the spirit of McLuhan’s probing approach to problem solving. As he points out,

> Introduce a probe into a situation and you may dislodge some insights. The probe upsets the established figure/ground balance and reveals things otherwise opaque. It is the principle on which the DEW Line deck of cards works to solve problems. Bring your problem and our saying into interface with each other, and pretty soon you get insight. (McLuhan & Zhang, 2012, pp. 151–165)

Similarly, bringing a hexagram to bear on a situation is a way to probe into the situation. The idea is to help size up, encompass, name, and thereby get a handle on the situation. As Wang Bi points out, “[The intelligent and perspicacious ones of antiquity] used the *Changes* to cast light on the Dao of Heaven and to probe into the conditions of the common folk” (Lynn, 1994, p. 65). In the same way that proverbs are about typical, recurrent situations, “[t]he sixty-four combinations of yin and yang lines and yin and yang positions schematically represent all the major kinds of situations found in life” (Lynn, 1994, p. 16). Behind the manipulation of yarrow stalks, the tossing of coins, or the dice throw, there is a belief in the fusion of chance and necessity. According to Wang Bi, “the way the yarrow stalks or coins fall—the particular configuration that results—is indicative of the shape of that particular moment” (Lynn, 1994, p. 18). This understanding was shared by many traditional commentators of *I Ching*. Deleuze (1983) has a passage in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that is highly relevant to the point here:

> Only a dicethrow, on the basis of chance, could affirm necessity and produce “the unique number which cannot be another.”... The dice which fall are a constellation, their points form the number “born of the stars.” The table of the dicethrow is therefore double, sea of chance and sky of necessity, midnight-midday. Midnight, the hour when the dice are thrown. (p. 32)

The practice of consulting *I Ching* is supported by Ernst Mach’s idea that “the whole universe is mysteriously present in each place and at each instant” (Virilio, 2000, p. 21). The epigraph by Watts quoted at the very beginning of this article echoes this same idea. That is to say, the cosmic is in the microcosmic; the universal and the particular are in line with each other. If the whole configures the parts, and the parts imply the whole, then one part (say, a hexagram obtained at a particular moment) must hold some clue about another (say, a microcosmic situation).
Carl Jung uses “synchronicity” to take account of the coincidence:

[S]ynchronicity takes the coincidence of events in space and time as meaning something more than mere chance, namely, a peculiar interdependence of objective events among themselves as well as with the subjective (psychic) states of the observer or observers. (Baynes, 1967, p. xxiv)

Jung’s notion implies a field-theoretic understanding of the world.

William Burroughs (1986) offers a de facto illustration of Jung’s notion in the following passage from The Adding Machine:

Take a walk around the block. Come back and write down precisely what happened with particular attention to what you were thinking when you noticed a street sign, a passing car or stranger or whatever caught your attention. You will observe that what you were thinking just before you saw the sign relates to the sign. The sign may even complete a sentence in your mind. You are getting messages. Everything is talking to you … Your surroundings are your surroundings. They relate to you. (pp. 103–104, emphasis in original)

To return to I Ching, a situation is always in flux or dynamic equilibrium. With its six lines in dynamic interplay both among themselves and with the positions they occupy, and with some of the lines subject to change (for example, old yang ultimately flips into young yin, whereas old yin ultimately flips into young yang, to beget a new hexagram; the top line eventually disappears from the “picture,” while a new line arises from the bottom), the hexagram is intricate enough to encompass not only the nature of the situation but also the tendency or propensity lurking in it. Regarding the interplay between the lines and their positions, Richard John Lynn (1994) (translator of I Ching as interpreted by Wang Bi) offers the following insight:

Yang lines “should” be in yang positions, and yin lines “should” be in yin positions, for this results in hexagrams that generally indicate facility and harmony. Lines “out of position” (yin in yang positions, yang in yin positions) result in hexagrams that generally indicate obstruction and disharmony. (p. 17)

Behind the manipulation of yarrow stalks or the tossing of coins lies a “primitive,” holistic, rather than “civilized,” analytic, approach to the grasping of situations—there is nothing pejorative about the word “primitive” in this context; it is used in the same sense in which Lévi-Strauss (1979) uses it and simply means “preliterate” (p. 15). McLuhan’s critique of the trained incapacity that comes with alphabetic literacy and his probing approach to problems and situations indicate that he is fairly appreciative of the primitive sensibility. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) rightly associate McLuhan with neoprimitivism.

There is a covert phenomenological, interological, or simply relational dimension to the I Ching-oriented approach to situations in the sense that a situation can never be purely objective; rather, it is always this or that kind of a situation in relation to a particular, more or less preoccupied sense-making subject. As such, a hexagram does not merely capture a situation as is; rather, it always actively shapes it. To borrow McLuhan’s language, consulting I Ching is not about “matching” so-called objective
situations with the right hexagrams. Instead, it is about “making” sense of situations at the suggestion of ritualistically obtained hexagrams. As such, hexagrams are the medium between situations and sense-making humans.

Comparatively speaking, the attitude behind the use of the DEW Line deck of cards seems to be more practical than “fatalistic.” A randomly drawn card is used as a probe or a heuristic to shed light on a situation. When a particular card does not seem to yield much insight, one simply discards it and draws another one. All that matters is whether the randomly drawn card seems to resonate with the situation for the person confronting it. That is to say, the principle of synchronicity, or the fusion of chance and necessity, does not seem to play as big of a role in McLuhan’s card deck. There is, however, at least one thing in common between the DEW Line deck of cards and the hexagrams: the mode of thinking is acoustic, resonant, interological, rather than visual, linear, or rational. This is also the way hendiadys (i.e., one by means of two) works (McLuhan & Zhang, 2012). In a short chapter on hendiadys, McLuhan and Wilfred Watson (1970) point out: “[t]he gap or abrading interface between such components seems to resonate with great power in mind, as ‘pop and mom,’ ‘the one and the many,’ ‘the egg and I,’ ‘counter-anarchy,’ ‘the flesh and the devil’” (p. 109). More space will be dedicated to the discussion of resonance in the section on interological thinking.

Hot and cool
There is a strong parallel between yang vs. yin and hot vs. cool. Yang is to yin as hot is to cool. Yang radiates energy; yin sucks energy. Similarly, hot media such as the phonetic alphabet and the printing press create an aggressive, explosive energy. We may as well call them yang media. Cool media such as TV and pointillist painting involve the audience and suck its energy. They are implosive in nature. We may as well call them yin media.

Yang is solid, continuous; yin is broken, discontinuous. The mechanical age rested on the principle of continuity and connectedness. The electric age has witnessed a revival of discontinuity, resonance, uncertainty, indeterminacy, and undecidability. The mechanical age was a yang age, which emphasized form, stability, matter, ontology, closure, solidity, and the actual; the electric age is a yin age, which emphasizes antiform, fluidity, information, interality (间性), open-endedness, emptiness, and the virtual. The actual and the virtual, however, are both real. The literate, mechanical age was exclusive; it dispelled magical and mythical thinking. In contrast, the postliterate, electric age is inclusive; it has revived the preliterate sensibility and found a place for the mechanical sensibility. I Ching and numerology (数字命理学) are among the things recuperated in the electric age.

When the yang and the yin interface with one another, a vortex of energy (known as “Qi,” “Chi,” “Ki,” or “气” in East Asia) is created. Perhaps that explains why the most elegant styles of writing have emerged at the juncture between orality and literacy, and between literacy and postliteracy. The assumption is that the age of literacy is yang in nature, whereas the ages of orality and postliteracy are yin in nature.

The solid yang line is the equivalent of one; the broken yin line is the equivalent of zero. One and zero (yang and yin) are the constitutive elements of the cosmos. Ones and zeroes also make up the codes behind all digital media. If digital media are the
dominant media of our age, then *I Ching* must be a relevant source to consult. Yet is there a difference in kind between *I Ching* and digitally contrived models of the future? This is a point we will revisit and problematize in a later section.

The original *I Ching* is an extremely “cool” book. With its cryptic hexagrams and intrinsically ambiguous and polysemous text, which comes in the form of archaic Chinese, the book demands maximum participation on the part of the reader. Although its translation into English has hotted up the book significantly, with its exotic images and extra-logical mode of reasoning, the book is by no means transparent after the translation. The reading process perhaps feels more like a psychedelically induced trip than anything else. The Wilhelm-Baynes version has a Confucian tonality; Lynn’s translation is based on Wang Bi’s Taoist interpretation; Thomas Cleary, a prolific translator of religious texts, translated at least three versions: *The Taoist I Ching* by Liu Yiming (刘一明), *The Buddhist I Ching* by Chih-hsu Ou-i (蕅益智旭), and the version interpreted by Cheng Yi, the eleventh-century idealist. But these are just a few examples of all of the versions out there. The coexistence of multiple versions in multiple languages destabilizes the text, creates interlingual and intertextual intervals, and turns *I Ching* into an interlogical happening. The lack of a single authoritative version makes the book cool. McLuhan, too, writes in a cool, suggestive, aphoristic, discontinuous style. From his books, one can get a poet’s-eye view of the psychic and social postures of entire cultures during particular historical periods.

*I Ching* and McLuhan’s work are the equivalents of signs and hieroglyphs, the meanings of which are not supposed to be single-leveled or easily exhaustible. They are meant as encounters, rather than something to be merely recognized. The kind of reading is supposed to be meditative and contemplative, in the same way engagement with a koan is supposed to be meditative and contemplative. Since a cool style of writing tends to bring forth creativity on the part of the reader, the second persona of *I Ching* and McLuhan’s work alike is the active, creative reader.

**Interological thinking**

As suggested earlier, *I Ching* and McLuhan’s work are both interological in nature. That is to say, both are interested in the interactions, interplays, and interanimations that transpire in the interzone, or the resonating interval between “things.” *I Ching* does not study positions, lines, trigrams, or hexagrams in isolation from other positions, lines, trigrams, or hexagrams. It is more interested in what happens in between, and the transition or transformation from one state to another. Its worldview is not static or ontological, but dynamic and interological. Take this quote from the Wilhelm-Baynes version of *I Ching*: “[a]s the firm and the yielding lines displace one another, change and transformation arise” (Baynes, 1967, p. 288). The quote captures how one hexagram transitions into another, how one state evolves into another. We can borrow the syntax here and apply it to hot and cool media: as hot and cool media displace one another, change and transformation arise. The interfacing between hot and cool media (i.e., hot and cool cultural milieus), and the hybrid energy created as a result, are central to McLuhan’s explorations.

In explaining Wang Bi’s approach to *I Ching*, Lynn (1994) points out:

Some lines respond to each other and resonate together—signifying har-
monious relationships—and some lines repel and clash—signifying opposition and divergence of interests—and this resonance or clash produces movement and change. (p. 16)

This quote captures well the interplay between different lines within the hexagram, and typifies the interological preoccupation of *I Ching*.

Likewise, McLuhan is interested in the interface and interplay between media and humans (i.e., extensions and extended), media and cultures (e.g., hybrid energy emerges if a hot medium is introduced into a cool culture, and vice versa), media and media (e.g., under the pressure of a new medium, the old medium diverges—under the pressure of photography, painting diverged into Impressionism, and, under the pressure of so-called “realistic” media, literature diverged into fantasy), environment (e.g., one created by a particular medium) and anti-environment (e.g., one created by art), figure and ground, artifact and audience, probe and probed, plot and subplot, poetry and painting (the resonating interval in between is the *modus operandi* of *Through the Vanishing Point*), etc. His media ecological explorations are thoroughly interological.

McLuhan perceives a symbiotic, or contrapuntal, relationship between humans and machines. Put in analogical form, humans are to machines as bees are to flowers; put differently, humans and machines are really one organism. To borrow Samuel Butler’s syntax, humans are machines’ way of making more machines. That is to say, we are the machines’ reproductive system. This symbiotic or contrapuntal understanding is interological and ecological in nature. It is also found in Jakob von Uexküll (2010), Gilles Deleuze (1994), and Vilém Flusser (2003). The process through which humans become symbiotic with machines is also the process of humans’ transformation, for better or for worse, while inhabiting the zone of proximity or the larger milieu created by machines. Interfacing with machines triggers such transformations. Humans and machines co-evolve in each other’s proximity, so to speak. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use “aparallel evolution” or “involution” (p. 11) to refer to transformations in the interzone. Involution is precisely the central concern of interology. A person extended differently is a different person entirely. To know about a person is to know about the machinic assemblages of which he or she is an element. Humans are radically extendable and incomplete. Interology is our way of being. That is to say, being is interbeing. There is Zen in this understanding.

The so-called “medium bias” or “medium specificity” is not an ontological issue but an interological one. When we speak of the bias of TV, we mean its bias in relation to our sensory apparatus. It is a function of our affectability. By default, we see ourselves as the measure of all things, including media. For the blind but light-temperature-and-mammal-sensitive tick, TV has a different bias entirely. The tick would be totally indifferent to the image of a mammal on TV. For the sensory apparatus of the tick, the image of a mammal on TV is nothing like a mammal. As far as the tick is concerned, the crucial difference between the two is the presence or absence of butyric acid. If ethology is the study of the interplay between animals and their Umwelts, then media ecology McLuhan style is not that far from ethology because it studies the interplay between humans and their artificial environments. In this mode of inquiry, perpect and affect (i.e., the power to affect and be affected) precede concept.
Percept and affect are the ground, whereas concept is the figure. The relationship in between is interological.

Resonance is a key notion in McLuhan’s work. It goes with the acoustic sensibility. For him, the literate age is an age of visual connection, whereas the preliterate age and the post-literate electric age are ages of acoustic resonance. In The McLuhan DEW-LINE 1.5, McLuhan (1968) explains his intellectual debt to Linus Pauling:

[I]n 1939, Linus Pauling opened his classic *The Nature of the Chemical Bond* with the heading, “Resonance and the Chemical Bond.” Thus, quantum mechanics ended the lineal bond, and “introduced into chemical theory a new concept: that of ‘resonance.’ ” This basic shift from connection to interval—from the continuum of visual space to the interval of acoustic space—is a take-over that has affected every form of human organization, inner and outer, individual and corporate. (n.p.)

In the same context, McLuhan (1968) points out: “It is this world of the interval, and not the world of the ‘connection’ that is decisive in all matters of change” (n.p.). Resonance, after all, is an interological happening. It is worth pointing out that the notion of resonance has been taken up and inflected by a whole constellation of thinkers, such as Gilbert Simondon, for whom “[i]nternal resonance is the most primitive mode of communication between realities of different orders” (Young, Genosko & Watson, 2013, p. 260); Gilles Deleuze, for whom resonance is “the mode of relation between two disjunctive series” (Young, Genosko & Watson, 2013, p. 260); René Thom, for whom resonance is “the mode of production of linguistic meaning, described as an encounter between two dynamical systems, the utterance and the brain, that react similarly to two tuning forks which, when brought close together, begin to vibrate at the same rate” (Young, Genosko & Watson, 2013, p. 261); and Félix Guattari, who reworks René Thom’s notion of resonance to “conceptualize the way capitalism superimposes the semiotic triangle onto the Oedipal triangle” (Watson, 2009, p. 84).

The idea of resonance, however, did not start with quantum mechanics. A precursor of it can be found in the 31st hexagram (咸) in the immemorial *I Ching*, which is translated as “Influence” in the Wilhelm-Baynes version, and “Reciprocity” in the Lynn version. Xu Zhirui (徐志锐) uses “感应” and “感通” to explain “咸.” These are the Chinese equivalents of resonance, clairvoyance, clairaudience, telepathy, ESP, and smoothness or through-ness in communion. That is to say, “咸” is a matter of resonance. Receptivity and responsiveness to vibes are the material basis of it. Alfred Huang (1998) translates the hexagram as “Mutual Influence” and points out: “Hui-yuan, an eminent monk of the Eastern Jin Dynasty … says the root of the *I Ching* is mutual influence” (p. 268). This line says a lot about the interological nature of *I Ching*. The hexagram in question is where *I Ching* becomes self-reflexive. It captures the spirit of *I Ching*. The Chinese character “感,” which has a radical that refers to the mind-heart (心), indicates that mutual influence or resonance happens through the mind-heart, or psyche. Had there been more characters in the Chinese language when *I Ching* was written, the name of the hexagram in question could well be “感.” In this sense, it was insightful of Jung to read *I Ching* as psychology. It is worth mentioning here that the subject matter of McLuhan’s explorations is precisely the psychic and social consequences of media.
Analytics of change

I Ching and McLuhan’s work each offer an analytics of change. If, as Meaghan Morris (1998) suggests, the “object of study” of cultural studies is change (p. 19), then I Ching and McLuhan’s work can both serve as heuristics for the student of culture.

The overarching theme of I Ching is change. The first character in the Chinese title of I Ching is “易,” which literally means a lizard (蜴). “Change” is the derivative meaning. Each of the sixty-four hexagrams always already contains the seeds of change. The situation keeps shifting as one moves from the first (i.e., bottom) to the sixth (i.e., top) line. Although each hexagram as a whole names a particular situation, it also captures a propensity, or a tendency toward a new situation since old yang lines may turn into young yin lines, and old yin lines may turn into young yang lines in the next moment. As such, the hexagrams are more like Mona Lisa’s smile—change mummified, as it were.

Similarly, McLuhan would say, the future is always already immanent in the present. As he puts it, “if you examine the present deeply enough you will find all possible futures” (McLuhan, 2003, p. 93). Yet most of us only see what is in the rearview mirror as we drive into the future. Artists, in contrast, are diviners. “[T]he experimental artist is all the time building models of future situations which afford reliable beacons for the social navigator” (McLuhan, 2003, p. 14). This quote from McLuhan applies to the hexagrams as well. For what are the hexagrams if not models of future situations which afford reliable beacons for the social navigator? Experimental art is the equivalent of the hexagrams. To survive in the electric age, for example, one can contemplate Picasso’s paintings. A true master of I Ching can do without yarrow stalks or coins, and read a hexagram out of a particular art piece. As Watts (1957) puts it,

[A]n expert in the I Ching … can ‘see’ a hexagram in anything—in the chance arrangement of a bowl of flowers, in objects scattered upon a table, in the natural markings on a pebble. (p. 14)

McLuhan is interested in the following changes, among other things: how each medium changes the ratio among our senses; how each medium changes the “temperature” of the cultural milieu; how each medium, as a hidden ground, changes people’s taste, disposition, sensibility, or second nature; over time, as the dominant medium changes, how entire cultures shift from an acoustic mode to a visual mode or the other way around. The tetrad is an analytic tool McLuhan invented to map out the fourfold transformation (enhancement, obsolescence, retrieval, and reversal) that each medium brings about. According to this tetradic mode of thinking, what is obsolesced by one medium can be retrieved by another (for example, the acoustic sensibility was obsolesced by the phonetic alphabet and the printing press, but retrieved by electric media); any tendency, if pushed to an extreme, reverses into its opposite. In the following case presented by McLuhan and Nevitt (1972), reversal coincides with a specific retrieval:

At a time when the age of reason and enlightenment was at its peak of literacy and decorum, there came that sudden flip into romantic and mythic imagination that coincided with the recovery of the sacramental doctrine of work. (p. 70)
I Ching is full of processes of enhancement, obsolescence, retrieval, and reversal (or chiasmus). The hexagrams “Progress” (晉) and “Pushing Upward” (升) are examples of enhancement. The hexagram “Standstill” (否) implies a situation where “[t]he way of inferior people is in ascent; the way of superior people is on the decline” (Baynes, 1967, p. 53). Put differently, the former is being enhanced, whereas the latter is being obsolesced. There is a striking similarity between the hexagram “Return” (復, the previous hexagram being “Splitting Apart,” 剃) and the process of retrieval. According to the Wilhelm-Baynes version, “[t]hings cannot be destroyed once and for all. When what is above is completely split apart, it returns below” (Baynes, 1967, p. 504).

For an example of reversal, take this line:

That which is excessively yang, transforms into yin and vice versa ...

Therefore, when consulting the oracle the most important lines are the changing ones, those that, because they are excessively yin or excessively yang are turning into their opposites. (Persico, 2005, p. 10)

“That which is excessively yang, transforms into yin” immediately calls to mind McLuhan’s chapter title in Understanding Media (1964), “Reversal of the Overheated Medium.” According to the logic of I Ching, “an extreme situation must change to make room for opposite elements” (Huang & Huang, 1987, p. 35). Behind I Ching lies a cyclic, as opposed to linear, view of change. “[N]othing is forever, and all things run their cycle, only to begin anew” (Huang & Huang, 1987, p. 35). McLuhan and Nevitt (1972) point out in Take Today: The Executive as Dropout,

Every process pushed far enough tends to reverse or flip suddenly. This is the chiasmus pattern, perhaps first noted by ancient Chinese sages in I Ching: The Book of Changes. (p. 6, emphases in the original)

In the same book, McLuhan and Nevitt cite a very similar line from I Ching: “[b]y the law of change, whatever has reached its extreme must turn back” (p. 22). The bibliography of Take Today indicates that McLuhan used the Wilhelm-Baynes version, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul in London in 1951. In a newly written dialogue with me entitled “Of Media and Man,” Eric McLuhan says, “I know that my father read through the I Ching once (at least) ... My father did not own a copy of the I Ching and so there is not one in the archive.” The coincidence between the thought pattern behind I Ching and that behind Laws of Media (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1972) gives us a good reason to believe that McLuhan must have envisioned Laws of Media under the inspiration of I Ching. Laws of Media can be understood as a retrieval and repurposing of I Ching.

Ground orientation

The term “ground” comes from Gestalt Theory. It means the opposite of “figure.” I Ching and McLuhan’s work both have a ground orientation. Both are attentive to the total situation rather than just a thin slice of it.

I Ching is more interested in “what goes with what” than “what causes what.” The former orientation discloses pattern, design, structure, and figure/ground interplay. In reference to I Ching, Watts (2000) points out, “[i]t is a way of looking at life that focuses on not so much the causal relationship between the events, as the pattern of
events as a whole” (p. 82). *I Ching* coaches ground awareness and a sense of prudence that comes with it. The “superior man” (君子) that *I Ching* constitutes is a *phronimos*—one who knows what social posture to assume in what position, in what situational context, and in what moment. For the superior man that *I Ching* constitutes, the ground is everything. He is supposed to pay attention to what moment the cosmos is in, whether conditions on the ground are auspicious or not, and whether the sentiments and attitudes of fellow humans are favorable or not. Taking action without regard to the larger ground is a sure formula for misfortune. The latter orientation (“what causes what”) is a symptom of linear thinking and figure orientation. It is driven by the ideology of efficient causality, only sees a causal relationship between figure and figure, and is blind to side effects and unintended consequences.

McLuhan treats each medium not as a mere gadget, a figure, but as an environment, a milieu, or an in-forming ground. He wants us to think of each “medium” not as an efficient cause, but as a formal cause. The tetrad is his way of mapping out the fourfold consequences of each medium as a formal cause (i.e., an environmental cause). The object of study of media ecology McLuhan style is not figure without ground, but rather figure/ground interplay. Between figure and ground, McLuhan definitely sees more power in the latter and would argue that the ground is invisible and therefore invincible. Thus, obsolescence can be a highly paradoxical process. Things tend to become all powerful when they are pushed to the ground (i.e., when they are obsolesced). For McLuhan, the poem or ad is the figure, whereas the audience is the ground; the joke is the figure, whereas the grievance is the ground; Stravinsky’s music is the figure, whereas the industrial sonicscape is the ground; the hula-hoop or the retrieval of *I Ching* (and other occult books) is the figure, whereas the electric age is the ground.

*I Ching* emerged from a cultural milieu in which the ideology of efficient causality (i.e., sequential causality) was out of the question; McLuhan’s work emerged from a cultural milieu in which the ideology of efficient causality had become a hindrance. Both cultural milieus were favorable to right-hemisphere thinking.

The ground *I Ching* implies is the entire cosmos as a holistic field of information, in which chance and synchronicity rule supreme, while the ground McLuhan’s work explores is the artificial milieu issuing from this or that technology—a programmed environment, so to speak. *I Ching* presumes a world in which social man is cosmic man, in which man, the social cosmos, and the larger cosmos are in tune with one another. McLuhan’s work precisely examines the disparity and incongruity between man’s biological makeup and technological milieu, between cosmic man and mediated man, and ways to bridge the gap, and hence his notion of “art as survival in the electric age” (McLuhan, 2003, pp. 206–224). For McLuhan, figure orientation itself is the effect of a particular ground—the ground created by the phonetic alphabet and intensified by the printing press. Similarly, the revival of ground orientation is the effect of another ground—the one created by electric media.

**I Ching as a medium and a metamedium**

As the collective utterance of the Chinese people, *I Ching* embodies this people’s poetic and prudential wisdom sedimented over the course of thousands of years. As a discursive milieu, it has permeated the Chinese people’s consciousness and collective
unconscious and informed their way of life since time immemorial. As a cultural artifact, *I Ching* lends itself to a mediumistic study. Put simply, *I Ching* is a medium of communication between the cosmic sphere and the human sphere. The hexagrams were invented by ancient Chinese sages so that humans could communicate with spiritual agencies, which, for Jung, are simply “unconscious elements or forces … that have been projected as gods” (Baynes, 1967, p. xxviii). People who are into psychedelics—a species of medium—tend to think of certain sacred plants as transmitters of ancestral wisdom. For the Chinese people, the sacred plant is yarrow. As Richard Wilhelm puts it,

This procedure [of learning the nature of a situation through the manipulation of yarrow stalks] was regarded as mysterious … simply in the sense that the manipulation of the yarrow stalks makes it possible for the unconscious in man to become active. All individuals are not equally fitted to consult the oracle. It requires a clear and tranquil mind, receptive to the cosmic influences hidden in the humble divining stalks. As products of the vegetable kingdom, these were considered to be related to the sources of life. The stalks were derived from sacred plants. (Baynes, 1967, p. liv)

Speaking of psychedelics, it is worth noting that McLuhan (1966) sees LSD as the lazy person’s route to altered perception, the preferred route being art. Also notable is the Deleuze and Guattari (1987) notion of “[d]runkenness as a triumphant irruption of the plant in us” (p. 11). Put differently, inebriation for Deleuze and Guattari means the dis-inhibition of the rhizomatic potential that is in us but is often inhibited or repressed. If *I Ching* points in the direction of the cosmic, then so does the rhizomatic, the cosmic being the absolutization of the rhizomatic. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) raise the provocative question,

Could what the drug user … obtains also be obtained in a different fashion … so it would even be possible to use drugs without using drugs, to get soused on pure water, as in Henry Miller’s experimentations? (p. 166)

Consulting *I Ching* is a way of obtaining the effects of psychedelics without using psychedelics.

Behind the hexagrams lies a dynamic, all-sided, non-rationalistic, non-scientistic view of the world. If, as McLuhan suggests, each medium massages us and bewitches us with its bias, so that we become fixated upon the kind of knowledge it valorizes, then hexagrams can extricate us from the bias, from “the knowledge that knows,” and awaken us to “the knowledge that does not know” (Watson, 1964, p. 54), to borrow Chuang Tzu’s language. To approach a situation through the lens of “the knowledge that knows” is to succumb to the bias of the medium that carries the knowledge. To consult *I Ching*, in contrast, is to get unstuck from the bias or learned incapacity to which we are accustomed, and, in a ritual moment of communion with the cosmos, let the play of chance determine the hexagram or perspective the situation deserves. The focal point of *I Ching* as a medium is to not have a focal point, or to produce a random focal point. As such, it can provide a productive modulation of the knowledge-shaping medium and disrupt its bewitchment or hypnotization of the mind. In this
sense, *I Ching* is a metamedium—a medium that disrupts the bias of each particular medium and dissolves its own bias through the affirmation of chance. Therein lies the wisdom of the Chinese people. At a practical level, a ritualistically derived hexagram often illuminates one’s psychological blind spot.

A similar ethos is found in McLuhan’s probing attitude toward problems and his nonattachment to his own observations. This ethos is well captured by two of McLuhan’s signature phrases: “the Cyclopean and encyclopedic scanning of the total field by the omission of the private point of view,” and “the deliberate organization of ignorance” (McLuhan & Nevitt, 1972, p. 10). In a different context, McLuhan points out, “I am an investigator. I make probes. I have no point of view. I do not stay in one position” (Stearn, 1967, p. xiii). Whether McLuhan was practicing neoprimitivism, or reviving the spirit of *I Ching*, or doing both, I cannot tell. But I do know that there is something wise and liberating about the letting go of rational bearing. In *Take Today: The Executive as Dropout* (McLuhan & Nevitt, 1972), there is a section on serendipity. The section heading, “Dislocating the Mind into Perception,” captures well what the hexagrams are all about. McLuhan’s point about serendipity dovetails with the notion of *I Ching* as a metamedium. As he puts it,

“Serendipity” is now a popular word for the game of random by-passing of ingrained habits and concepts. The word [comes from] *The Three Princes of Serendip*, the heroes of which were always making discoveries, by accident and sagacity, of things they were not in quest of. (p. 102)

It bears mentioning that this is the very context where McLuhan and Nevitt (1972) introduce the DEW Line card deck as a technique for problem solving. As they point out:

The cards can be dealt out to any group. The mélange of wacky aphorisms puts any group or committee into a relaxed and confident posture. If the members are then invited to relate the aphorisms to their top problems, new answers appear from every direction. (p. 102)

The unstated principle here is to let go and let chance decide what perspective to bring to bear on the problem. *I Ching* coaches the same state of mind. Taoists and Zen Buddhists call it wuxin (无心). While a Zen master may achieve wuxin through spiritual discipline, the hexagrams and the DEW Line card deck can be used as practical ways of achieving a comparable result.

Insofar as the DEW Line card deck is an artifact, it lends itself to being studied as a medium. The bias of this medium is very similar to that of *I Ching*. It suspends one’s trained incapacity or habitual ways of thinking, and invites one to entertain, play with, and make do with the frames of interpretation one chances by, thereby making one resourceful, even if the game is a *controlled* game of chance, instead of a game of *pure* chance. It coaches a selfless or egoless Way (i.e., “Tao”) of problem solving. The rationale is that solutions will emerge by serendipity once the self is lost in play, thus transforming problem solving into a joyful game. The kind of wuxin the DEW Line card deck helps to achieve is a deliberate wuxin. Therein lies the paradoxical nature of the deck.
The Book of Changes in the age of digital mediation

Although each divided line in a particular hexagram can stand for either young yin (少阴, with a numerical value of 8) or old yin (太阴, with a numerical value of 6), and each undivided line can stand for either young yang (少阳, with a numerical value of 7) or old yang (太阳, with a numerical value of 9), contemporary hermeneuts tend to ignore the fine distinctions and treat the divided and undivided lines (爻) as equivalents of the zeroes and ones that make up the code behind computers and other digital devices—the very code that defines the digital age. Leibniz played a pivotal role in this regard. “In his first full discourse on binary integers, published in 1703, he acknowledged their origin in ‘the ancient Chinese diagrams of Fohy (Fuxi)’” (Huang & Huang, 1987, p. 41). The reference here is the Fuxi (伏羲) hexagrams, which are arranged in such a way that they coincide with the binary numbers 0 through 63. Imagine how shocked Leibniz was when he first saw them! Leibniz is rightfully referred to as the father of the digital revolution.

In a sense, I Ching contains and bridges two code systems: the digital and the ideographic. Western civilization proper is built on a different code: the alphanumeric. There has been a profound Orientalization of the Occident, though: on the one hand, the digital has pushed the alphanumeric toward the margins and established itself as the primary code behind Western civilization as we know it today; on the other hand, technical images, which are ideographic in nature, are rendering alphabetic literacy obsolete. As Flusser (2002) puts it, “[w]ritten lines, although appearing even more frequently than before, are becoming less important than surfaces to the mass of people” (p. 22). By “surfaces” he means images, as opposed to alphabetic texts. It bears mentioning that to read I Ching in Chinese is to encounter images or surfaces sequentially, like watching a motion picture. If the medium is the message, then it is only a matter of course that the mode of consciousness proper to I Ching is being revived in the age of digital media and technical images, whether people realize it or not.

This revival manifests itself in numerous guises, including the rise of Gestalt Theory, analytic psychology, and probabilistic thinking; the grasp of time as being rhythmic and kairotic instead of linear and homogeneous; the increasing appreciation of Nietzsche’s notions of the dice throw and the eternal return of the same (the latter is a recurring motif in Deleuze [1990], Flusser [2013], and Jeremy Rifkin [1987]); enthusiasm toward Deleuze’s notion of difference and repetition; McLuhan’s tetrad; Burke’s pentad (the “scene” is the ground; the act needs to correspond to the scene; depending on what scene one invokes, one may imagine man as a citizen of heaven, man in nature, man in the jungle, or man in society); John Cage’s use of I Ching in his experimental musical composition (Dhiegh, 1973); Jensen Chung’s Chi-based theory of communication (Chung & Ho, 2009); and the emerging philosophical exploration of interality (间性) being conducted by Geling Shang, Stephen Rowe, and myself, among other things.2

What is old seems to have become new again. Yet there is a flip side to this that tends to be under-examined: whatever comes back does so with a new face. For one thing, there is a difference in kind between the type of chance I Ching implies and the type of “chance” simulated by computers. One can take one’s time and go through the ritual of obtaining a hexagram through the manipulation of yarrow stalks or the
tossing of coins, or encounter a hexagram as it pops up “randomly” on a Web page. In the former case, the hexagram obtained is organically of the cosmos and captures the quality of the cosmos in that moment. In the latter case, the “randomness” is programmed, and the hexagram obtained is a function of a self-contained system that is out of sync with the rhythms of the cosmos. In like fashion, the ads that “randomly” pop up on “my” Facebook are actually orchestrated by an algorithm that feeds on bits of information about me that the system has gleaned. Information about me is used to determine what ads are shown to me. Ads shown to me work to program my behaviour. They tell me nothing about the quality of the cosmos in this moment to guide my conduct. Thus, a closed feedback loop is formed. Flusser (2013) would say this is a fascist, as opposed to a dialogic, way of using telematics. A perfect feedback loop does nothing but reinforce one’s inclinations, so much so that one would wish that there were a benign catastrophe to give one a break and extricate one from oneself. Boredom is the price we pay for using Facebook—we often mistake it for the reason we use Facebook. Narcissism is a paradox: at once self-love and self-suffocation. An organically obtained hexagram opens one up to the cosmos; an algorithmically generated one is mere stuff, or worse than that.

The ones and zeroes Leibniz supposedly recuperated from I Ching have become the lingua franca of our age—an age of “ultimate two-bit wittedness,” to use the phraseology of McLuhan and Nevitt (1972, p. 110). The paradigmatic technology that speaks this language is the computer, which is first and foremost a technology of control. It was Deleuze (1995) who pointed out that “control societies function with … information technology and computers,” and that “[t]he various forms of control … [form] a system … whose language is digital” (pp. 178–180). In Laws of Media, McLuhan and McLuhan (1988) have a tetrad on computer. On the retrieval side, there is a curious line: “projections of present as future, of future as present: retrieval of now as alltime” (p. 188). The implication is that, with computers, humans can program or even foreclose the future so that it becomes a perpetuation of the present, or, they can allow a projected or simulated future to over-determine the present. Either way, the future is no longer imagined as flowing from the present, nor is it imagined as indeterminate (as in “The future is not ours to see”). Instead, it is now programmable, manipulable, and controllable. This is a radical departure from the kind of universe I Ching implies.

I Ching teaches us to dance with the world as it shifts, whereas computers coach us to program the world and control it with “the knowledge that knows” (Watson, 1964, p. 54). The risk is twofold. On the one hand, real chance, and therefore serendipity and a genuine future, can be programmed out of existence. On the other hand, “the knowledge that does not know,” since it is repressed, will not be used to save us from what Virilio (2012) calls “the integral accident” (p. 92). I Ching and computers point in opposite directions: the one in the direction of prudential wisdom and human agency, the other in the direction of conditioning. McLuhan and Nevitt (1972) have it right when they say, “men are faceless tentacles of computers” (p. 129). As a metamedium, I Ching can help us slip the trap of computers. It offers what Deleuze (1995) calls “lines of flight” (p. 22). Yet, as Saint-Exupéry (1952) points out, “no gift comes to [us] unprepared-for. And that visitation comes not, if there be no house ready
to receive it” (p. 206). We must prepare ourselves, so that *I Ching*, “the poem, as by a miracle, can thrill through [us] like a tongue of fire” (p. 206).

Digital media have a maximalist bias. Busyness has now become a cultural syndrome. Thanks to digital media, humans have evolved into *homo distractus*, to be distracted from distraction by distraction, fed up with being fed up. As such, we all could benefit tremendously from the practical wisdom contained in the at once oppositional and complementary terms, yin and yang. Cleary (2005) points out, “[i]n The Buddhist *I Ching*, yin and yang commonly stand for concentration and insight, thought-stopping and thought-cultivating exercises” (p. 106). Put otherwise, yin is the equivalent of *samādhi* (定), whereas yang is the equivalent of prajñā (慧). The point here is that, in the digital age, most of us are oblivious to the value of *samādhi* or śūnyatā (i.e., emptiness), and the benefit that comes with the fasting of the mind. We want to have it all, all the time, and end up finding everything tasteless and wearying. A solid understanding of the implications of yin and yang will leave us in a better position.

Following the example of Carl Jung, I consulted *I Ching* with this question in mind: what's the role of *I Ching* in the age of cybernetic control? The hexagram I got was the 33rd hexagram, Retreat (遁), the fifth line being old yang—its flip into young yin yields the 56th hexagram, The Wanderer (旅). The message seems to be that cybernetics makes an alien, hostile environment for *I Ching*, so a strategic retreat on the part of *I Ching* is in order. Such a retreat, however, is a sign of strength. As Wang Bi points out, “[t]he concept underlying Withdrawal is that only by withdrawing will one [eventually] prevail” (Lynn, 1994, p. 340). The implied hexagram, The Wanderer, more or less confirms this read of the situation. As of now, *I Ching* inhabits a tactical position vis-à-vis computers, the Internet, and digital media in general.

**Tetrad on *I Ching***

The above discussion has paved the way for a tetrad on *I Ching* as a medium or a formal cause, as examined from our present-day cultural horizon.

*Enhances:* a dynamic view of the world, ground awareness, interological thinking, prudential wisdom, pattern recognition, correct attitude and action, human agency.

*Obsolesces:* a static view of the world, psychological blind spots, isolation of figure from ground.

*Retrieves:* oneness between man and the cosmos, a sense of kairos.

If taken the wrong way, it reverses into cybernetic control, depletion of chance and serendipity, foreclosure of the future.

**Concluding remarks***

This inquiry is interological in the sense that it allows us to reexamine *I Ching* through the lens of McLuhan's work, and vice versa. It has been a fruitful exercise so far. For one thing, we realize that the term “interology” captures a crucial dimension of McLuhan's work, and media ecology in general. “Media ecology as interology” is a topic that deserves the space of a full-length article. It is a project I need to finish next. Furthermore, I would not have realized that *I Ching* is a metamedium if I had not started this inquiry. This emergent understanding sheds light on the DEW Line card deck, which embodies the *modus operandi* of McLuhanesque explorations. Although
aligning “hot vs. cool” with “yang vs. yin” seems to be the most natural move to make, I would not have made the move if it were not for this project. Incidentally, although the subtitle of Laws of Media is “The New Science,” this inquiry shows that “The Book of Changes” may not be a bad alternative, after all, especially when the book is translated into Chinese.

My attraction to McLuhan’s work dates back to graduate school, when I was pondering the notion of “looking at” communication as opposed to “looking through” communication. The “irritant” came from Dr. Robert Terrill, who sees McLuhan as one who “looks at” media instead of “looking through” media. As I found out later, this distinction comes from Richard Lanham, the rhetorician and media ecologist in disguise. My admiration for McLuhan has increased over the years as I become more familiar with his work. I appreciate his mental agility, poetic wisdom, encyclopedic knowledge, and his amazing capacity to encapsulate and repurpose the works of other people, dead or alive. Over the years, I have seen traces of Lao Tzu and Confucius in McLuhan’s work. Then, as I was studying Laws of Media (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1972), I suddenly recognized the I Ching in him, which led me to undertake this inquiry.

Since most scholars tend to shy away from I Ching, when I was asking around to try to strike up a fruitful conversation on the topic over the years, I was able to do so with only a few people: Dr. Eric McLuhan, with whom I’ve been corresponding since 2011; Dr. Geling Shang, the pioneer interologist who coined the terms “interality” and “interology”; Dr. Guo-ming Chen, the I Ching scholar also known for his work on intercultural communication; Dr. Gou Xiaoquan, the philosopher and a longtime friend I was able to see again in Shanghai in June 2013; Blake Seidenshaw, who has a wide range of intellectual interests; and Bill Guschwan, who sees himself as a field philosopher (“field” calls to mind the military expression “field warfare” or “野战”). I have also been lucky enough to encounter Dr. Gary Genosko, one of the foremost Guattari scholars, who also has an intimate familiarity with both I Ching and McLuhan’s work. Without his extensive input, the article would not have taken its current shape. I feel deeply indebted to these maverick and generous intellectuals for the stimulating conversations that have enriched this article.

I write this article for a multifold purpose—partly to satiate my own intellectual curiosity, partly to rekindle interest in I Ching in the international media ecology community, partly to suggest to like-minded scholars that there is an under-articulated intellectual kinship between the immemorial I Ching and McLuhan, the metaphysician of media, and partly to put interology to practice. Yet the real stake that calls this inquiry into being is not theoretical, or intellectual, but ethical and existential, and hence the section on I Ching in the age of digital mediation and cybernetic control. I hope this comparative study or interological inquiry has created numerous opportunities for mutual illumination between I Ching and McLuhan’s work. Looking forward, I can envision a series of comparative studies on I Ching, including I Ching and traditional Chinese medicine, I Ching and Zen (drawing on The Taoist I Ching and The Buddhist I Ching, among other works), I Ching and Leibniz, I Ching and Nietzsche, I Ching and Jung, I Ching and Watts, I Ching and Flusser, I Ching and Deleuze, I Ching and ethics, I Ching and rhetoric (with an emphasis on prudential wisdom and constitutive rhetoric),
I Ching and quantum mechanics, I Ching and interology, and much more. A coterie of boundary-crossing scholars is needed to take these projects forward.

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Notes
1. Here’s how McLuhan (1966) puts it:
   There was a young LSD experimenter up in our area a few months ago, and I happened to be reading a passage of Finnegans Wake out loud for his amusement, and he looked quite startled. He said, “You know, that’s just like LSD. All that sensory cavorting about and crossing sensory boundaries that you’re getting in that passage is just like LSD.” I haven’t tried LSD but he’s right, and there are other ways of approaching the problem, you could say, LSD is the poor man’s art or the lazy man’s art. Too lazy to acquire this sort of perception by artistic means, he gets it by direct physiological means. I’m not sure that it’s invalid or ill-fated or ill-advised. I’m not sure. I just don’t know. But LSD does have this effect of yanking people out of their environments, which is the artist’s job—to dislocate people out of the environmental situation. (p. 31)

2. We are working on a special section on interality for China Media Research.

3. The context in which Dr. Geling Shang (2012) first introduced the terms was an article in Chinese entitled “Dao and Interality” (《道通与间性》). He adopted “interalogy” instead of “interology.”

References
[Original work published in French, 1980]