

21. Shih Ho | Biting Through



Nuclear trigrams K'AN ☵☵ and K'EN ☶☶

The ruler of the hexagram is the six in the fifth place. The Commentary on the Decision says of it: "The yielding receives the place of honor and goes upward."

The Sequence

When there is something that can be contemplated, there is something that creates union. Hence there follows the hexagram of BITING THROUGH. Biting through means union.

Miscellaneous Notes

BITING THROUGH means consuming.

Appended Judgments

When the sun stood at midday, the Divine Husbandman held a market. He caused the people of the earth to come together and collected the wares of the earth. They exchanged these with one another, then returned home, and each thing found its place. Probably he took this from the hexagram of BITING THROUGH.

The hexagram is here explained in the light of the meaning of the two trigrams Li and Chên. Li represents the sun high above, while Chên represents the turmoil of the market below. The inner structure of the hexagram is by no means as favorable as the outer form might lead one to conclude. It is true that clarity and movement are present, but between them, as opposing elements, there stand the nuclear trigrams K'an, danger, and Kên, Keeping Still,—both formed by reason of the one fateful line in the fourth place.

THE JUDGMENT

BITING THROUGH has success.

It is favorable to let justice be administered.

Commentary on the Decision

There is something between the corners of the mouth. This is called BITING THROUGH. "BITING THROUGH, and moreover, success." For firm and yielding are distinct from each other. Movement and clarity. Thunder and lightning are united and form lines. The yielding receives the place of honor and goes upward.

Although it is not in the appropriate place, it is favorable to let justice be administered.

The name of the hexagram is here explained on the basis of its structure. The top line and the lowest are the jaws. The nine in the fourth place stands between the two as an obstacle to be removed by biting through. This points to the necessity of using force. The firm yang lines and the yielding yin lines are clearly set apart one from the other, without falling asunder. This is the substance of the hexagram. In the same way, innocence and guilt are clearly distinguishable in the eyes of a just judge. Movement is the attribute of Chên, clarity that of Li; both tend upwards, thus uniting and forming clearly visible lines. The movements are separate, the coming together occurs in the heavens, whereupon the line of the lightning appears.¹

The ruler of the hexagram is yielding by nature, a quality desirable in legal proceedings, because it prevents cruelty. However, this yielding quality is compensated by the firmness of the place, hence does not turn into weakness.

THE IMAGE

Thunder and lightning:

The image of BITING THROUGH.

Thus the kings of former times made firm the laws

Through clearly defined penalties.

Thunder and lightning follow upon each other invariably. The phrase is "thunder and lightning," not "lightning and thunder," because the movement starts from below (however, the text according to Hsiang An Shih² on an old stone tablet reads, "Lightning and thunder"). The penal severity that serves to make men avoid transgressions should be as clearly defined as lightning. "Penalties" corresponds with the upper nuclear trigram K'an, danger. The strengthening of the laws, in order to intimidate the heedless, should ensue with the decisiveness of thunder. The laws are stable and stand rooted like a mountain (lower nuclear trigram Kên).

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

a) His feet are fastened in the stocks

So that his toes disappear.

No blame.

b) "His feet are fastened in the stocks, so that his toes disappear. No blame." He cannot walk.

Chên is foot; here it is below, hence toes. Chên also stands for the stocks. The line at the beginning is hard and stubborn, and must therefore be punished. But since it is seized at its first movement, it will improve under light punishment, hence there is no blame.

Six in the second place:

a) Bites through tender meat,

So that his nose disappears.

No blame.

b) "Bites through tender meat, so that his nose disappears." He rests upon a hard line.

The nuclear trigram Kên means nose. This is a yielding line in a yielding place, and it rests on the hard nine at the beginning; hence it goes a little too far in punishment.

Six in the third place:

a) Bites on old dried meat

And strikes on something poisonous.

Slight humiliation. No blame.

b) "Strikes on something poisonous." The place is not the appropriate one.

The nuclear trigram K'an means poison. The place is not appropriate—a weak line is in a strong place at a time of transition. Because of the lack of power, decisions are allowed to hang fire indefinitely.

Nine in the fourth place:

a) Bites on dried gristly meat.

Receives metal arrows.

It furthers one to be mindful of difficulties

And to be persevering.

Good fortune.

b) "It furthers one to be mindful of difficulties and to be persevering. Good fortune."

He does not yet give light.

Firmness in a yielding place points to meat with bones. This is dried by the sun (Li, in which this is the beginning line). The nuclear trigram K'an means arrows. The line is in the place of the official. It is strong, but in view of the weakness of its place, remains aware of the difficulties, hence the augury of good fortune. Although it is at the beginning of Li, the line does not yet give light, because it is in the middle of the nuclear trigram K'an.

O Six in the fifth place:

a) Bites on dried lean meat.

Receives yellow gold.

Perseveringly aware of danger.

No blame.

b) "Perseveringly aware of danger. No blame." He has found what is appropriate.

The line is yielding, hence "lean" meat, and in the middle of Li, hence "dried" meat. When it changes, the upper trigram becomes Ch'ien, which means metal. As the middle line of K'un, its color is yellow—hence "yellow gold." By reason of its mildness in the place of honor, it succeeds in biting through and receives yellow gold, the symbol of firmness and loyalty. Therefore in its verdict it hits upon what is right and appropriate, so that everything turns out properly.

Nine at the top:

a) His neck is fastened in the wooden cangue,

So that his ears disappear.

Misfortune.

b) "His neck is fastened in the wooden cangue, so that his ears disappear."

He does not hear clearly.

The top line indicates the head; the trigram Li, fetters. The nuclear trigram K'an means ear. The line is too hard, places itself arrogantly over the ruler of the hexagram, and does not heed him. It therefore does not heed the just sentence passed upon it, and because of this meets with the misfortune of being unable to hear any longer, even if it should desire to do so.

Notes

1. Today one would speak here of the coming together of positive and negative electricity, the resultant discharge producing lightning.
2. [Author of a treatise on the I Ching; died A.D. 1208.]

22. Pi | Grace



Nuclear trigrams CHÊN  and K'AN 

The rulers of the hexagram are the six in the second place and the nine at the top. The Commentary on the Decision refers to these when it says: "The yielding comes and gives form to the firm, the firm ascends and gives form to the yielding."

The Sequence

Things should not unite abruptly and ruthlessly; hence there follows the hexagram of GRACE.

Grace is the same as adornment.

Miscellaneous Notes

GRACE means being undyed.

The most perfect grace consists not in external ornamentation but in allowing the original material to stand forth, beautified by being given form. The upper trigram Kên, the mountain, is disposed to remain still; fire, Li, blazes up from below and illumines the mountain. This movement is strengthened by the nuclear trigram Chên, which likewise moves upward, while the resting weight of the mountain is activated to a falling movement by the lower nuclear trigram K'an. Thus the inner structure of the hexagram shows a harmonious equalization of movement, giving no excess of energies to the one side or the other. This hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one.

THE JUDGMENT

GRACE has success.

In small matters

It is favorable to undertake something.

"GRACE has success." The yielding comes and gives form to the firm; therefore, "Success." A detached firm line ascends and gives form to the yielding; therefore, "In small matters it is favorable to undertake something." This is the form of heaven. Having form, clear and still: this is the form of men. If the form of heaven is contemplated, the changes of time can be discovered. If the forms of men are contemplated, one can shape the world.

The text of the commentary does not appear to be intact. There seems to be a sentence missing before, "This is the form of heaven." Wang Pi¹ says: "The firm and the yielding unite alternately and construct forms: this is the form of heaven." This was taken as the original text, now missing, but Mao Ch'i Ling² takes another view and sees in it only an explanation of the foregoing sentence. But something of the sort must in fact be presupposed.

The yielding element that comes is the six in the second place. It places itself between the two firm lines and gives them success, gives them form. The strong element that detaches itself is the nine at the top. It places itself at the head of the two upper yielding lines and gives them the possibility of attaining form. In each case, the yang principle is the content, the yin principle the form. In the first case it is the yin line that bestows form directly and therefore brings about success, whereas the ascending yang line, by lending content, only indirectly provides the material on which the otherwise empty form of the yin lines can work itself out. Hence the effect is that it is favorable for "the small" to undertake something.

The form of heaven is symbolized by the four trigrams constituting the hexagram. The lower primary trigram Li is the sun, the lower nuclear trigram K'an is the moon; the upper nuclear trigram Chên by its movement represents the Great Bear, and the upper primary trigram Kên by its stillness represents the constellations. If one observes the rotation of the Great Bear, one knows the course of the year; through contemplation of the course of the sun and the phases of the moon, one recognizes the time of day and the periods of the month.

The form of human life results from the clearly defined (Li) and firmly established (Kên) rules of conduct, within which love (light principle) and justice (dark principle) build up the combinations of content and form. Here too love is the content and justice the form.

THE IMAGE

Fire at the foot of the mountain:

The image of GRACE.

Thus does the superior man proceed

When clearing up current affairs.

But he dare not decide controversial issues in this way.

This hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one. In the latter we find brightness and movement; these indicate a swift carrying out of penalties according to clearly understood laws. Here we have standstill (Kên) outside and clarity (Li) inside, and this means a theoretical, not a practical turn of mind. This attitude suffices for the application of the established rules of everyday affairs, but not for

extraordinary things. One ruler of the hexagram is too weak, the other too far outside to be capable of taking hold of the situation.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

- a) He lends grace to his toes, leaves the carriage, and walks.
- b) "He leaves the carriage and walks," for it accords with duty not to ride.

Being lowest, this line corresponds to the toes. The nuclear trigram K'an means a carriage. But the present line is below this trigram, hence does not ride. The six in the second place is the ruler of the hexagram; the nine in the beginning has no relationship with this ruler, so that it is not fitting for the line to ride. On the other hand, as a yang line, it possesses sufficient inner strength to be reconciled to the fate thus imposed.

O Six in the second place:

- a) Lends grace to the beard on his chin.
- b) "Lends grace to the beard on his chin": that is, he ascends with the one above.

The third line is the chin and the second is, as it were, merely its appendage. The upward movement that evokes grace takes place in the two lines together. The yielding element can adorn the strong, but cannot add to it any independent quality. This line has significance only in the hexagram taken as a whole; in its individual aspect it is not especially important.

Nine in the third place:

- a) Graceful and moist.
Constant perseverance brings good fortune.
- b) The good fortune of constant perseverance cannot, in the end, be put to shame.

The nine in the third place has content, because it is a strong line in a strong place; the six in the second place is in the relationship of holding together with it and adorns it. Hence grace. The nuclear trigram in which this line occupies the middle place is K'an, water, hence moistness. Moistness is the height of grace, and the line moreover stands at the highest point of the trigram Li, clarity. But since it also stands in the middle of the nuclear trigram K'an, the abyss, there is a danger that it may be submerged. Hence the praise of constant perseverance as a protection against this danger.

Six in the fourth place:

- a) Grace or simplicity?
A white horse comes as if on wings.
He is not a robber,
He will woo at the right time.
- b) The six in the fourth place is in doubt; this accords with its place.
"He is not a robber, he will woo at the right time." In the end, one remains free of blame.

The six in the fourth place stands outside the lower trigram and at the beginning of the upper one; hence, because of its weakness, some uncertainty arises. This is resolved by the quickly advancing first line, which is in the relationship of correspondence to it. The trigram Chên means a white horse, hence the image. White is the color of simplicity. In itself the intention of the approaching line is not quite clear, because the weak six in the fourth place is at the top of the nuclear trigram of danger. However, there is nothing to fear, because the inner relation to the oncoming line preponderates. It helps in warding off the danger of exaggerated grace and in returning to simplicity.

Six in the fifth place:

a) Grace in hills and gardens.

The roll of silk is meager and small. .

Humiliation, but in the end good fortune.

b) The good fortune of the six in the fifth place has joy.

The upper trigram Kên means a large hill; the nuclear trigram Chên means a grove. By a change in the line, there arises Sun, meaning a roll of silk. The fifth place really depends on the second, but in this instance there is no relationship with the line in that place, because it too is weak. Hence the alliance with the strong line at the top, in order to enjoy grace with it.

O Nine at the top:

a) Simple grace. No blame.

b) "Simple grace. No blame." The one above attains his will.

The top line stands outside, at the top of the trigram Kên, mountain. Its strong nature allows it to forego all ornament. It chooses plain white. With the six in the fifth place joining it, it succeeds in carrying out its wish for simplicity.

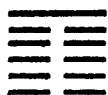
NOTE. The relationships of correspondence and holding together appear in this hexagram. The six in the fourth place and the nine at the beginning are in the relationship of correspondence; the nine at the beginning leaves the carriage and goes toward the six in the fourth place, which sees it approaching as a winged horse. The second line holds together with the third, so also the fifth with the top line. Thus all of the lines are related in one way or another, and in such a manner that it is always a reciprocal relationship between a firm and a yielding line that produces grace. Also to be noted is a tendency throughout the hexagram to counteract over-emphasis of form by means of content.

Notes

1. [A.D. 226—249.]

2. [A.D. 1623—1716.]

23. Po | Splitting Apart



Nuclear trigrams K'UN ☷☷ and K'UN ☷☷

The ruler of the hexagram is the nine at the top. Although the dark force splinters the light, the light principle cannot be wholly split apart; therefore it is the ruler of the hexagram.

The Sequence

When one goes too far in adornment, success exhausts itself. Hence there follows the hexagram of SPLITTING APART. Splitting apart means ruin.

Miscellaneous Notes

SPLITTING APART means decay.

The thought here, taken together with that in the next hexagram, shows the connection between decay and resurrection. Fruit must decay before new seed can develop.

The sinking tendency of the hexagram is very strong. Both nuclear trigrams as well as the lower primary trigram are K'un, whose movement is downward. In contrast with this the upper primary trigram Kên stands still, without motion. This leads to a loosening of the structure. The tendency of the five yin lines is to bring about the downfall of the yang line at the top, in that they sink down and thus take the ground from under it. Here too the fundamental trend of the Book of Changes is expressed: the light principle is represented as invincible because in its sinking it creates new life, as does a grain of wheat when it sinks into the earth.

THE JUDGMENT

SPLITTING APART. It does not further one
To go anywhere.

Commentary on the Decision

SPLITTING APART means ruin. The yielding changes the firm.

"It does not further one to go anywhere." Inferior people increase.

Devotion and keeping still result from contemplating the image. The superior man takes heed of the alternation of increase and decrease, fullness and emptiness; for it is the course of heaven.

The yielding element changes the strong by imperceptible gradual influence. The yin lines are about to increase. This gives us the attitude of the superior man in such times, an attitude that derives from the two trigrams. In accordance with the attribute of the trigram K'un, he is devoted; in accordance with that of Kên he is calm, which means that he undertakes nothing, because the time is not yet come. Thus he submits to the course of heaven, which alternates between decrease and increase, in that whatever is full decreases and whatever is empty increases.

The mountain rests on the earth:

The image of SPLITTING APART.

Thus those above can ensure their position

Only by giving generously to those below.

The broader the base of the mountain, the less is it liable to splitting apart. Here it is not so much the condition of splitting apart that is set forth as the condition that can prevent it. Hence also it is not the waning of the light principle and the waxing of the shadowy that are to be considered, but the solidity of the foundation. Through generous giving, such as lies in the nature of the earth (K'un), an assured calm, such as lies in the nature of the mountain Kên), is attained.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning:

a) The leg of the bed is split.

Those who persevere are destroyed.

Misfortune.

b) "The leg of the bed is split," in order to destroy those below.

The position at the beginning, as the lowest place, means the leg. What is split is the resting place, hence the image of a bed. The splitting begins below. Therein lies the danger.

Six in the second place:

a) The bed is split at the edge.

Those who persevere are destroyed.

Misfortune.

b) "The bed is split at the edge," because one has no comrade.

The splitting apart mounts upward from the leg of the bed. Now the edge is splitting. This line is isolated; it is neither in the relationship of correspondence to the lines around it nor in that of holding together. Already the attack is emerging from concealment into the open.

Six in the third place:

a) He splits with them. No blame.

b) "He splits with them. No blame." He loses the neighbor above and the one below.

This line is in the relationship of correspondence to the nine at the top and quarrels with its environment because it remains loyal to these original ties. Because of this relation with the nine at the top, the line becomes separated from the two neighboring lines, with which there is no relationship of holding together.

Six in the fourth place:

a) The bed is split up to the skin.

Misfortune.

b) "The bed is split up to the skin. Misfortune." This is a serious and immediate misfortune.

The trigram K'un below represents the bed, the resting place. The trigram Kên above represents the person resting. Here the splitting spreads from the resting place to the person resting on it; therefore misfortune is directly at hand.

Six in the fifth place:

a) A shoal of fishes. Favor comes through the court ladies.

Everything acts to further.

b) "Favor comes through the court ladies." In the end this is not a mistake.

When this line changes, the upper trigram becomes Sun, which means fish (the fish is associated with the shadowy principle). The line is in the ruler's place. Here, however, since the activity of the yin power becomes clearly manifest, it represents a queen, not a prince. The line stands in the relationship of holding together with the top line, hence there is no hostile activity; on the contrary, at the peak of its influence it subordinates itself to the yang line, which it approaches while leading the other four yin lines as though they were a shoal of fishes. These friendly relationships are represented in terms of the ruler's relationship to the court ladies and his queen.

○ Nine at the top:

a) There is a large fruit still uneaten.

The superior man receives a carriage.

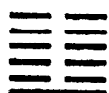
The house of the inferior man is split apart.

b) "The superior man receives a carriage." He is carried by the people.

"The house of the inferior man is split apart": he ends up as useless.

The one strong line at the top, containing the seed of the future, is seen in the image of a large fruit. K'un means a carriage. The collapse of the line through its change into a yin line is compared to the collapse of an inferior man's hut. The line is, so to speak, the roof of the whole hexagram. When it falls apart the whole collapses.

24. Fu | Return (The Turning Point)



Nuclear trigrams K'UN ☷☷ and K'UN ☷☷

The ruler of the hexagram is the nine at the beginning. This is the line referred to by the Commentary on the Decision in the statement, "The firm returns."

The Sequence

Things cannot be destroyed once and for all. When what is above is completely split apart, it returns below. Hence there follows the hexagram of RETURN.

RETURN means coming back.

Appended Judgments

RETURN is the stem of character. RETURN is small, yet different from external things. RETURN leads to self-knowledge.

The hexagram of RETURN, applied to character formation, contains various suggestions. The light principle returns: thus the hexagram counsels turning away from the confusion of external things, turning back to one's inner light. There, in the depths of the soul, one sees the Divine, the One. It is indeed only germinal, no more than a beginning, a potentiality, but as such clearly to be distinguished from all objects. To know this One means to know oneself in relation to the cosmic forces. For this One is the ascending force of life in nature and in man.

This hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one, and the movement tends very strongly upward from below—from the trigram Chên—going through the sinking trigram K'un.

THE JUDGMENT

RETURN. Success.

Going out and coming in without error.

Friends come without blame.

To and fro goes the way.

On the seventh day comes return.

It furthers one to have somewhere to go.

Commentary on the Decision

"RETURN has success." The firm returns.

Movement and action through devotion. Therefore, "Going out and coming in without error."

"Friends come without blame. To and fro goes the way. On the seventh day comes return." This is the course of heaven.

"It furthers one to have somewhere to go." The firm is on the increase.

In the hexagram of RETURN one sees the mind of heaven and earth.

This hexagram expresses the idea that the light force is the creative principle of heaven and earth. It is an eternal cyclic movement, from which life comes forth again just at the moment when it appears to have been completely vanquished. Through the re-entrance of the yang line into the hexagram below, movement develops (Chên, the lower trigram), and this movement acts through devotion (K'un, the upper trigram). Going out and coming in are without error. The yang force has indeed gone (cf. the foregoing hexagram, Po), but like a fruit falling to earth, it has not disappeared without a trace; it has left an effect behind. This effect shows itself in the re-entrance of the yang line. The friends who come are either the other yang lines about to enter the hexagram after this first line (according to Ch'êng Tzü), or the five yin lines, which meet the yang line cordially. The way of yang goes to and fro, up and down. After the light force begins to diminish in Kou, COMING TO MEET (44), it returns again in the hexagram Fu, after seven changes.

"It furthers one to have somewhere to go," that is, to undertake something. Both this sentence and the image of the friends occur in the text of the second hexagram, K'un, THE RECEPTIVE.

THE IMAGE

Thunder within the earth:

The image of THE TURNING POINT.

Thus the kings of antiquity closed the passes

At the time of solstice.

Merchants and strangers did not go about,

And the ruler

Did not travel through the provinces.

The hexagram is associated with the month of the winter solstice. From this are drawn the conclusions resulting in the right behavior at the time when the returning yang force is still weak and must therefore be strengthened by rest.

THE LINES

O Nine at the beginning:

a) Return from a short distance.

No need for remorse.

Great good fortune.

b) "Return from a short distance": thus one cultivates one's character.

The strong line at the bottom turns back at once. The first line of Chên is very mobile; hence the immediate turnabout before going too far. Confucius says about this line:

Yen Hui is one who will surely attain it. If he has a fault, he never fails to recognize it; having recognized it, he never commits the error a second time. In the Book of Changes it is said:

"Return from a short distance. No need for remorse. Great good fortune. "

Six in the second place:

a) Quiet return. Good fortune.

b) The good fortune of a quiet return depends on subordination to a good man.

This line is central and modest (yielding), and stands in the relationship of holding together with the ruler of the hexagram, the nine at the beginning. The good fortune depends on the resulting subordination to this good man.

Six in the third place:

a) Repeated return. Danger. No blame.

b) The danger of repeated return is, in its essential meaning, deliverance from blame.

This line is at the peak of movement. This points to a repeated turning back. The first turning back is from good to bad. The second is from bad to good once more. This line likewise turns as a friend to the nine at the beginning.

Six in the fourth place:

a) Walking in the midst of others,

One returns alone.

b) "Walking in the midst of others, one returns alone," and so follows the right way.

The fourth line is in the middle of the upper nuclear trigram K'un; it is moreover the top line of the lower nuclear trigram K'un and the lowest line of the upper primary trigram K'un. In a word, it is in the midst of weak lines, and is itself compliant and in a weak place. One might infer a lack of initiative. But this line is in the relationship of correspondence to the strong nine at the beginning, hence solitary return.

Six in the fifth place:

a) Noble-hearted return. No remorse.

b) "Noble-hearted return. No remorse." Central, therefore he is able to test himself.

This line is actually very far away from the nine at the beginning. But it is central; therefore it is possible for it to test itself and thus to find a way of turning back from all mistakes. The relationship with the nine at the beginning is not suggested by any external ties, hence it represents noble-hearted free decision.

Six at the top:

a) Missing the return. Misfortune.

Misfortune from within and without.

If armies are set marching in this way,

One will in the end suffer a great defeat,

Disastrous for the ruler of the country.

For ten years

It will not be possible to attack again.

b) The misfortune in missing the return lies in opposing the way of the superior man.

This line is at the end of the yin lines, hence there is no turning back for it. In refusing to turn back it defiantly seeks to attain its objective by force; thereby, however, owing to inner and outer misfortune, it loses for a long time all possibility of recuperating. The top line in the hexagram K'un, THE RECEPITIVE, has a similar judgment.

The trigram Chên means a general, K'un means crowd, hence "to set armies marching." K'un means nation, Chên means ruler. Ten is the number belonging to the earth.

NOTE. Missing the return (six at the top) is the opposite of return from a short distance (nine at the beginning). The first line is not far off and comes back. Quiet return (six in the second place) and solitary return (six in the fourth place) resemble each other; both lines are related to the ruler of the hexagram. Repeated return (six in the third place) and noble-hearted return (six in the fifth place) are opposites: in the one there is going back and forth, the other shows calm consistency.

25. Wu Wang | Innocence
(The Unexpected)

无妄



Nuclear trigrams SUN ☰ and KÊN ☶

The rulers of the hexagram are the nine at the beginning and the nine in the fifth place. The nine at the beginning is the first movement of the light principle as well as the first movement of the sincere heart of man. The nine in the fifth place symbolises the essence of the Creative, as well as the tirelessness of the supremely sincere. Therefore it is said in the Commentary on the Decision: "The firm comes from without and becomes the ruler within." This refers to the first line. And further: "The firm is in the middle and finds correspondence." This refers to the fifth line.

The Sequence

By turning back one is freed of guilt. Hence there follows the hexagram of INNOCENCE.

Miscellaneous Notes

THE UNEXPECTED means misfortune from without.

Innocence frees itself of mistakes, so that no misfortune of internal origin can overtake it. When misfortune comes unexpectedly, it has an external origin, therefore it will pass again.

The hexagram has a very strong ascending tendency; both the upper and the lower trigram have an upward movement. This fact suggests movement in harmony with heaven, which is man's true and original nature. The two nuclear trigrams, Kên, Keeping Still, mountain, and Sun, the Gentle, wind (tree), yield the idea of the functioning and development of the primal trends.

THE JUDGMENT

INNOCENCE. Supreme success.

Perseverance furthers.

If someone is not as he should be,

He has misfortune,

And it does not further him

To undertake anything.

Commentary on the Decision

INNOCENCE. The firm comes from without and becomes the ruler within. Movement and strength. The firm is in the middle and finds correspondence.

"Great success through correctness": this is the will of heaven.

"If someone is not as he should be, he has misfortune, and it does not further him to undertake anything." When innocence is gone, where can one go? When the will of heaven does not protect one, can one do anything?

The firm element coming from without is the lowest line, a yang line. It comes from heaven (Ch'ien). The Receptive, in approaching the Creative for the first time, receives the first line of Ch'ien and gives birth to Chên, the eldest son. Applied to man, this means that he receives the primal divine spirit as his guide and master. The attribute of the lower trigram, Chên, is movement, that of the upper, Ch'ien, is strength. The firm line in a central position that finds correspondence is the upper ruler of the hexagram, the nine in the fifth place, and the six in the second place corresponds with it. This all leads to success, because it shows man in the proper relationship to the divine, without ulterior designs and in primal innocence. Thus man is in harmony with heavenly fate, the will of heaven, just as the lower trigram harmonizes in movement with the upper.

But where the natural state is not this state of innocence, where desires and ideas are astir, misfortune follows of inner necessity. This hexagram differs from P'i, STANDSTILL (12), only in having a firm line at the beginning. If this should lose its firmness, the whole situation would change.¹

THE IMAGE

Under heaven thunder rolls:

All things attain the natural state of innocence.

Thus the kings of old,

Rich in virtue, and in harmony with the time,

Fostered and nourished all beings.

"Under heaven thunder rolls: all things attain the natural state of innocence." This image is explained by the saying in the Discussion of the Trigrams: "God comes forth in the sign of the Arousing." This is the beginning of all life. Here we have the Creative above in association with movement. The upper nuclear trigram is wood, the lower is mountain.

"Rich in virtue" refers to the strength of the Creative. "The time" derives from the trigram Chên (east and spring)—the trigram in which life comes forth. Fostering and nourishing are indicated by the nuclear trigram Kên, mountain. The fact that this influence extends to everything is symbolized by the nuclear trigram Sun, meaning wind and universal penetration.

THE LINES

○ Nine at the beginning:

a) Innocent behavior brings good fortune.

b) Innocent behavior attains its will.

Innocence is symbolized by the light character of the line, which enters as ruler below the two dark lines. Coming from heaven, it bears within itself the warrant of success. It attains its goal with intuitive certainty.

Six in the second place:

a) If one does not count on the harvest while ploughing,

Nor on the use of the ground while clearing it,

It furthers one to undertake something.

b) Not ploughing in order to reap: that is, one does not seek wealth.

The trigram Chên means wood, hence a prow, and the second place is that of the field. The nuclear trigram Kên means hand, hence the image of clearing a field.

This line is central and correct. On the one hand, it is in the relationship of holding together with the nine at the beginning; on the other, it is in the relationship of correspondence to the nine in the fifth place. But being central and correct, it does not allow itself to be deflected by these relationships. It is the lowest line in the nuclear trigram Kên, Keeping Still, hence it keeps a calm mind; but it is also in the middle of the trigram Chên, movement, hence may undertake something.

Six in the third place:

a) Undeserved misfortune.

The cow that was tethered by someone

Is the wanderer's gain, the citizen's loss.

b) If the wanderer gets the cow, it is the citizen's loss.

This line stands at the high point of movement and at the beginning of the nuclear trigram Sun, wind. Therefore it is in its movements not in harmony with the time. It is equally far from both rulers of the hexagram and hence does not find the right connection anywhere. Through change in this line, the trigram Li, meaning cow, develops below.

Nine in the fourth place:

a) He who can be persevering

Remains without blame.

b) "He who can be persevering remains without blame," for he possesses firmly.

The nine in the fourth place is originally neither correct nor central. However, as the lowest line in the trigram Ch'ien, it is able to preserve the firmness belonging to the Creative. By this means it remains free of the blame otherwise to be feared.

O Nine in the fifth place:

a) Use no medicine in an illness

Incurred through no fault of your own.

It will pass of itself.

b) One should not try an unknown medicine.

Medicine is suggested by the two nuclear trigrams, wood and stone (mountain). The illness is innocently incurred because this line, as the middle line of the Creative, represents a person by nature free of illness; that he appears ill comes from his way of taking the illnesses of others upon himself. His central, correct, and ruling position predisposes him to allow the ills of others, vicariously taken upon himself, to work themselves out in him.

Nine at the top:

a) Innocent action brings misfortune.

Nothing furthers.

b) Action without reflection brings about the evil of bewilderment.

This line is related to the weak, restless six in the third place. Thoughtless action brings misfortune. The line is at the end, in a time when action is no longer appropriate. To go on thoughtlessly leads to bewilderment. The line describes a situation similar to that of the top line of THE CREATIVE.

NOTE. In this hexagram the six lines are all innocent, that is, naive, without ulterior motives. The nine at the beginning is in its appropriate place and is the ruler of the trigram of movement; this indicates that the time has come to act. Hence action brings good fortune. The nine at the top is not in the right place and stands outer-most in the trigram Ch'ien. The time to act has already passed. Hence action, even though innocent, brings misfortune. Everything depends on the time. The line at the beginning has good fortune, the second is favorable; this is due to the time. The third line bears an augury of misfortune, the fifth of illness, the top line of misfortune. All this does not happen by plan, but is likewise the result of the time conditions. It is possible for the first and second lines to advance. The time has come for them to move. The fourth should remain steadfast, the fifth should use no medicine, the top line has misfortune if it acts: all this indicates that for these lines the time has come to remain quiet.

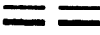

Note

1. In this hexagram there appear ideas that correspond with the mystical interpretations of the legends of Paradise and the fall of man.

26. Ta Ch'u | The Taming Power of the Great

大畜



Nuclear trigrams CHÊN  and TUI 

The rulers of the hexagram are the six in the fifth place and the nine at the top. These are the lines referred to when it is said in the Commentary on the Decision: "The firm ascends and honors the worthy."

The Sequence

When innocence is present, it is possible to tame. Hence there follows THE TAMING POWER OF THE GREAT.

Holding fast to heavenly virtue is the prerequisite for innocence. On the other hand, innocence is the indispensable condition for being able to hold fast to pristine heavenly virtue.

Miscellaneous Notes

THE TAMING POWER OF THE GREAT depends on the time.

The movements of the two trigrams are toward each other. The Creative below presses powerfully upward, and Keeping Still above holds it fast. The nuclear trigrams Chên and Tui also have a tendency

to rise, the upper more so than the lower. These are the latent forces that are intensified by the holding fast. The two weak lines occupying the ruler's and the minister's place restrain the strong lines below, while showing recognition and liberality toward the strong line above. This hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one.

THE JUDGMENT

THE TAMING POWER OF THE GREAT.

Perseverance furthers.

Not eating at home brings good fortune.

It furthers one to cross the great water.

Commentary on the Decision

THE TAMING POWER OF THE GREAT. Firmness and strength. Genuineness and truth.

Brilliance and light. Daily he renews his virtue.

The firm ascends and honors the worthy. He is able to keep strength still; this is great correctness.

"Not eating at home brings good fortune," for people of worth are nourished.

"It furthers one to cross the great water," because one finds correspondence in heaven.

The upper trigram Kên is firm, the lower, Ch'ien, is strong; the upper is genuine, the lower is true: the upper is brilliant, the lower light. Thus the two trigrams complement each other. Through keeping still (Kên), the powers of character (Ch'ien) are so strengthened that a daily renewal takes place. This refers to the effect of the personality. Here the first meaning of the hexagram is given—keeping still and collecting oneself.

The firm element that ascends is the nine at the top. It mounts above the six in the fifth place—the place of the ruler—and this ruler honors it in its ascent because it is worthy. The upper trigram Kên, Keeping Still, is able to hold fast the lower, Ch'ien, the strong. This explains the words of the Judgment: "Perseverance furthers." Here we have the second meaning of the hexagram—holding fast and keeping still.

Not eating at home, that is, entering public service, brings good fortune, because the six in the fifth place represents a ruler who nourishes people of worth. This gives the third meaning—holding fast and nourishing.

"It furthers one to cross the great water." This idea is suggested by the two nuclear trigrams—Chên, which also means wood, over Tui, lake. This dangerous action is possible because the ruler of the hexagram, the six in the fifth place, is in the relationship of correspondence to the nine in the second place, the central line of the lower trigram, heaven (Ch'ien).

THE IMAGE

Heaven within the mountain:

The image of THE TAMING POWER OF THE GREAT.

Thus the superior man acquaints himself with many sayings of antiquity

And many deeds of the past,

In order to strengthen his character thereby.

Heaven (Ch'ien) points to character, virtue. Strengthening is suggested by the mountain (Kên). The means to this strengthening of character are hidden in the nuclear trigrams: the lower, Tui, mouth, suggests words; the upper, Chên, movement, suggests deeds.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

a) Danger is at hand. It furthers one to desist.

b) "Danger is at hand. It furthers one to desist." Thus one does not expose oneself to danger.

This strong line, which is in its proper place, would like to advance. But it is in the relationship of correspondence to the six in the fourth place, which is one of the two obstructing lines. This indicates danger that would hold it back if it should try to advance; but since the line is still just at the beginning, it allows itself to be held back and so escapes the danger.

Nine in the second place:

a) The axletrees are taken from the wagon.

b) "The axletrees are taken from the wagon." In the middle there is no blame.

Ch'ien is round, hence the image of the wheel. Tui, the nuclear trigram, indicates breaking. The nine in the second place is central, hence able to control itself. It is held back by the six in the fifth place, to which it is related.

Nine in the third place:

a) A good horse that follows others.

Awareness of danger,

With perseverance, furthers.

Practice chariot driving and armed defense daily.

It furthers one to have somewhere to go.

b) "It furthers one to have somewhere to go." The will of the one above is in agreement.

Ch'ien is a good horse; the nuclear trigram Chên, in which this is the beginning line, is movement, hence advance. This line stands in the relationship of congruity to the nine at the top, hence the agreement in will between them. But the fourth and the fifth line still create separation and danger, which must be borne in mind. The chariot is suggested by the trigram Ch'ien, the weapons by the nuclear trigram Tui, meaning metal and breaking.

Six in the fourth place:

a) The head-board of a young bull.

Great good fortune.

b) The great good fortune of the six in the fourth place consists in the fact that it has joy.

This line constitutes the horns of the nuclear trigram Tui, which to be sure means sheep and not horned cattle. The line easily restrains the nine at the beginning before it has begun to be dangerous, hence the joy.

○ Six in the fifth place:

a) The tusk of a gelded boar.

Good fortune.

b) The good fortune of the six in the fifth place consists in the fact that it has blessing.

Another interpretation reads: "The tethering post of a young pig." The meaning is doubtless that of an indirect check before the danger grows formidable. An old commentary connects the pig of this line, as well as the bull of the preceding line, with sacrificial rites, hence the good fortune and the blessing. In any case, the blessing comes from the relationship of this line to the middle line of the lower trigram, heaven.

○ Nine at the top:

a) One attains the way of heaven. Success.

b) "One attains the way of heaven." Truth works in the great.

The top line is honored as a sage by the six in the fifth place. It stands in the relationship of congruity to the nine in the third place, which is, however, the top line of the trigram Ch'ien, heaven. The upper trigram Kên means a way.

NOTE. In this hexagram, the relationships between the yin and the yang lines are not those of correspondence and furtherance, but, in accordance with the character of the hexagram, those of obstruction. The lines of the lower trigram are obstructed, those of the upper trigram are the obstructors. Only the third and the top line, which, as two yang lines, are in harmony, are free of the idea of obstruction.

The persons represented by the first two lines are still eating at home and still obstructed in crossing the great water. The fourth and fifth lines operate by obstructing the two misbehaving lines—this is easy for the one, more difficult for the other. The third line advances, though with caution and under difficulties. The top line alone has a clear path ahead, and the obstacles disappear. It stands for the person of worth who can achieve great things and who is nourished.

27. I | The Corners of the Mouth (Providing Nourishment)



Nuclear trigrams K'UN ☷☷ and K'UN ☷☷

The rulers of the hexagram are the six in the fifth place and the nine at the top. These are the lines referred to in the Commentary on the Decision: "He provides nourishment for men of worth and thus reaches the whole people."

The Sequence

When things are held fast, there is provision of nourishment. Hence there follows the hexagram of THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH. "The corners of the mouth" means the providing of nourishment.

Miscellaneous Notes

THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH means providing nourishment for what is right.

The two primary trigrams are opposed in movement. Kên, the upper, stands still; Chên, the lower, moves upward. This suggests the jaws and teeth. The upper jaw is immobile, the lower moves; hence the designation of the hexagram as THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH. In contrast to Hsü, WAITING (5), which also deals with provision of nourishment but emphasises man's dependence on nourishment, the theme of the hexagram I is rather the human role in the providing of nourishment. A secondary meaning is that of providing nourishment first for men of worth, in order that thereby the people also may be nourished. The two hexagrams therefore present provision of nourishment as a natural process (Hsü, WAITING) and as a social problem (I, THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH). A similar contrast obtains between the two hexagrams denoting nourishment in itself—Ching, THE WELL (48), the water necessary for nourishment, and Ting, THE CALDRON (50), the food necessary for nourishment.

THE JUDGMENT

THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

Pay heed to the providing of nourishment

And to what a man seeks

To fill his own mouth with.

Commentary on the Decision

"THE CORNERS OF THE MOUTH. Perseverance brings good fortune." If one provides nourishment for what is right, good fortune comes.

"Pay heed to the providing of nourishment," that is, pay heed to what a man provides nourishment for.

"To what he seeks to fill his own mouth with," that is, pay heed to what a man nourishes himself with.

Heaven and earth provide nourishment for all beings. The holy man provides nourishment for men of worth and thus reaches the whole people. Truly great is the time of PROVIDING NOURISHMENT.

As an image the hexagram is conceived as a whole—as the image of an open mouth; consequently there is no need of explaining how it came to mean provision of nourishment. But it stresses the idea that as regards the manner of providing nourishment, everything depends on its being in harmony with what is right. In accord with the character of the two trigrams—movement and keeping still—there is

no relation of correspondence between the relevant lines of the lower and the upper trigram. The lower trigram seeks nourishment for itself, the upper affords nourishment for others.

THE IMAGE

At the foot of the mountain, thunder:

The image of PROVIDING NOURISHMENT.

Thus the superior man is careful of his words

And temperate in eating and drinking.

Thunder is the trigram in which God comes forth; the mountain is the trigram in which all things are completed. This is the image of PROVIDING NOURISHMENT. From the hexagram as a whole, as representing an open mouth, are derived the movements of the mouth, speech and the taking in of food. This movement corresponds with the character of the trigram Chên. It must be moderated if it is to be correct. This is in correspondence with the character of the trigram Kên.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

a) You let your magic tortoise go,

And look at me with the corners of your mouth drooping.

Misfortune.

b) "You . . . look at me with the corners of your mouth drooping": this is really not to be respected.

Structurally the whole hexagram recalls the trigram Li, the Clinging, hence the image of a tortoise.

The hexagram contains three ideas—nourishing oneself, nourishing others, and being nourished by others. The strong line at the top, the ruler of the hexagram, provides nourishment for others. The weak middle lines are obliged to depend on others to provide them with nourishment. The strong line below should indeed be able to provide nourishment for itself (the magic tortoise needs no earthly food but can nourish itself on air). Instead, however, it too moves toward the general source of nourishment and wants to be fed with the rest. This is contemptible and disastrous. "You" is the nine at the beginning, "me" is the nine at the top.

Six in the second place:

a) Turning to the summit for nourishment,

Deviating from the path

To seek nourishment from the hill.

Continuing to do this brings misfortune.

b) If the six in the second place continues to do this, it brings misfortune,

because in going it loses its place among its kind.

The six in the second place could seek nourishment from its peer, the nine at the beginning. Instead, it turns aside from this path and seeks nourishment at the summit, that is, from the upper ruler of the hexagram (the upper trigram is Kên, mountain). This brings misfortune.

Another interpretation reads: "To seek to be provided with nourishment the other way round (by the nine at the beginning) or, leaving the path, to seek nourishment from the hill (the nine at the top) brings misfortune."

Six in the third place:

a) Turning away from nourishment.

Perseverance brings misfortune.

Do not act thus for ten years.

Nothing serves to further.

b) "Do not act thus for ten years," because it is all too contrary to the right way.

This line also, standing at the top of the trigram Chên, movement, seeks nourishment from the nine at the top instead of from the nine at the bottom. "Ten years" is implied by the nuclear trigram K'un, whose number is ten. The reason why this behavior is so severely criticized is that the line seeks personal advantages on the basis of its relationship of correspondence, which is not valid in this hexagram.

Six in the fourth place:

a) Turning to the summit

For provision of nourishment

Brings good fortune.

Spying about with sharp eyes

Like a tiger with insatiable craving.

No blame.

b) The good fortune in turning to the summit to be provided with nourishment inheres in the fact that the one above spreads light.

This line likewise turns to the nine at the top to be provided with nourishment, but because it belongs to the same trigram as the latter, this brings good fortune, in contrast to the fate of the six in the second place. "Spying about with sharp eyes" derives from the form of the hexagram, which is reminiscent of Li. The trigram Li also means eye.

○ Six in the fifth place:

a) Turning away from the path.

To remain persevering brings good fortune.

One should not cross the great water.

b) The good fortune in remaining persevering comes from following the one above devotedly.

This line is in the place of the ruler, but as a yielding, submissive line, it stands in the relationship of receiving to the strong line above it. Hence it devotedly places itself below the latter. (When the hexagram changes into the next one, the upper trigram Kên becomes Tui, lake. The fifth line then gets into the middle of the water, hence it is not favorable to cross the great water.)

O Nine at the top:

a) The source of nourishment.

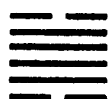
Awareness of danger brings good fortune.

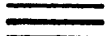
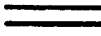
It furthers one to cross the great water.

b) "The source of nourishment. Awareness of danger brings good fortune." It has great blessing. The danger comes from the responsibility of the position at the top of the hexagram and from the fact that, in addition, the line receives authority and honor from the yielding ruler in the fifth place. But in this position it dispenses great blessing. Being thus aware of the danger, it is able to undertake great enterprises, such as crossing the great water. (When the hexagram changes into the following one, this line is on the surface of Tui, the lake, hence, unlike the preceding line, not in danger of drowning.)

28. Ta Kuo |

Preponderance of the Great



Nuclear trigrams CH'IEN  *and* CH'IEN 

The rulers of the hexagram are the nine in the second place and the nine in the fourth. The nine in the second place is firm, central, and not too heavy. The nine in the fourth place is a beam that does not sag to the breaking point.

The Sequence

Without provision of nourishment one cannot move; hence there follows the hexagram of PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT.

Nourishing without putting to use finally evokes movement. Movement without end leads finally too far, to over-weighting.

Miscellaneous Notes

PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT is the peak.

The peak refers to the image of the ridgepole mentioned in the Judgment. The hexagram shows great strength within. Both the nuclear trigrams are Ch'ien, whose attribute is strength.

But underneath is the gentle Sun, penetrating indeed, but ethereal as well, while above is the joyous Tui, the lake. Thus the outer ends are not equal to the weight of the strong structure within; hence the great in preponderance. This hexagram is the opposite of the preceding one.

Appended Judgments

In ancient times the dead were buried by covering them thickly with brushwood and placing them in the open country, without burial mound or grove of trees. The period of mourning had no definite duration. The holy men of a later time introduced inner and outer coffins instead. They probably took this from the hexagram of PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT.

The hexagram represents wood that has penetrated below ground water; this gives the coffin image. Another explanation holds that the two yin lines (above and below) represent the earth and trees of the

burial place, while the yang lines between indicate the coffin. When the dead are thus well cared for, they enter (Sun) the earth and are happy (Tui). This hexagram is the opposite of the preceding one in this further respect, that the former shows the provisions of nourishment for the living, and the present one shows the care provided for the dead.

THE JUDGMENT

PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT.

The ridgepole sags to the breaking point.

It furthers one to have somewhere to go.

Success.

Commentary on the Decision

PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT. The great preponderates. The ridgepole sags to the breaking point because beginning and end are weak.

The firm preponderates and is central. Gentle and joyous in action: then it furthers one to have somewhere to go, then one has success.

Great indeed is the time of PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT.

The name is explained on the basis of the structure. The great, that is, the yang element, outnumbered with its four lines the two lines of the yin element. This by itself would not mean preponderance, but the great is within, although it belongs without. Similarly, the small preponderates (cf. hexagram 62) when weak lines are in the majority and without, for by their nature they belong within. As representing preponderance of the great, the hexagram suggests the image of a ridgepole, the top beam of a house, on which the whole roof rests. Since beginning and end are weak, there arises the danger of a too great inner weight and of consequent sagging to the breaking point.

Despite this extraordinary situation, action is important. If the weight were to remain where it is, misfortune would arise. By means of movement, however, one gets out of the abnormal condition, chiefly because the ruler in the lower trigram is central and strong. The attributes of the trigrams, joyousness and gentleness, also indicate the right behavior for successful action.

THE IMAGE

The lake rises above the trees:

The image of PREPONDERANCE OF THE GREAT.

Thus the superior man, when he stands alone,

Is unconcerned,

And if he has to renounce the world,

He is undaunted.

The ideas of standing alone and of renunciation of the world are derived from the situation indicated by the hexagram as a whole. Standing alone unconcerned is suggested by the symbol of Sun, the tree, and undauntedness by the attribute of Tui, joyousness.

Six at the beginning:

a) To spread white rushes underneath.

No blame.

b) "To spread white rushes underneath": the yielding is underneath.

The yielding line under the strong ruler of the hexagram, the nine in the second place, indicates that the load is set down with caution. Confucius says about this line: It does well enough simply to place something on the floor. But if one puts white rushes underneath, how could that be a mistake? This is the extreme of caution. Rushes in themselves are worthless, but they can have a very important effect. If one is as cautious as this in all that one does, one remains free of mistakes.

○ Nine in the second place:

a) A dry poplar sprouts at the root.

An older man takes a young wife.

Everything furthers.

b) "An older man takes a young wife." The extraordinary thing is their coming together.

The trigram for wood stands under the trigram for water, hence the image of the poplar, which grows near water. This line, the ruler of the hexagram, has the relationship of holding together with the six at the beginning. On the one hand, this produces the image of a root sprouting afresh from below and so renewing the life process; on the other hand, it represents an older man (the nine in the second place) who takes a young girl to wife (the six at the beginning). Although this is something out of the ordinary, everything is favorable.

Nine in the third place:

a) The ridgepole sags to the breaking point.

Misfortune.

b) The misfortune of the sagging and breaking of the ridgepole is due to its finding no support.

The third and the fourth line, occupying the middle of the hexagram, represent the ridgepole. The nine in the third place is a firm line in a firm place, which gives too much firmness for an exceptional time, hence the misfortune of bending and breaking threatens. For through obstinacy one cuts oneself off from the possibility of support.

○ Nine in the fourth place:

a) The ridgepole is braced. Good fortune.

If there are ulterior motives, it is humiliating.

b) The good fortune of the braced ridgepole lies in the fact that it does not sag downward and break.

This line is in better state than the preceding one. It does not sag down and break. While the nine in the third place is too strong and restless, the firmness of the nine in the fourth place is modified by the yieldingness of its position. While the nine in the third place is exposed to the danger of breaking

because it is the top line of the trigram Sun, which is open underneath and hence weak, the nine in the fourth place rests at the bottom of the trigram Tui, which is open at the top; hence its security.

"Ulterior motives" is implied by the fact that this line is related by correspondence to the six at the beginning, but here no conclusions may be drawn from that fact, because the chief thing to be considered about this line is its position, as minister, in relation to the ruler in the fifth place.

Nine in the fifth place:

a) A withered poplar puts forth flowers.

An older woman takes a husband.

No blame. No praise.

b) "A withered poplar puts forth flowers." How could this last long?

"An older woman takes a husband." It is nevertheless a disgrace.

This line stands in contrast to the nine in the second place. In the latter an older man marries a young girl, here an older woman takes a husband. There the poplar puts forth sprouts at the root; here it puts forth flowers. There the relation of correspondence is with the line below, hence a sprouting root; here it is with the line above, hence the flowers. There the strong nine in the second place is the man who marries a young girl (the six at the beginning); here the six at the top is the old woman who marries the nine in the fifth place.

Six at the top:

a) One must go through the water.

It goes over one's head.

Misfortune. No blame.

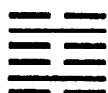
b) One should not join blame to the misfortune of going through the water.

The upper trigram Tui is a lake, hence the water. The nuclear trigram is Ch'ien, the head. The upper nuclear trigram ends with the nine in the fifth place; thus the six at the top shows water reaching above the head. However, one ought not to join blame to the misfortune, because it is due to the time, and the intention is good. This oracle, "Misfortune. No blame," is among the noblest thoughts possible about the overcoming of fate.

NOTE. As in the hexagram I (42), Chung Fu (61), and Hsiao Kuo (62), the relationship of correspondence is not valid in this hexagram; instead, the upper and lower lines, reckoned from the middle, stand in contrast to one another. Thus the third and the fourth line both symbolise the ridgepole. But the third, a firm line in a firm place, is unlucky, and the ridgepole sags and breaks, while the fourth, a firm line in a yielding place, is lucky; the ridgepole is braced. The second and the fifth line are both old poplars. The second, a firm line in a yielding place, is lucky; it "sprouts at the root." The fifth, a firm line in a firm place, is unlucky; it begins to blossom and consumes its last remnant of strength. The lowest line, which is yielding in a firm place, is lucky by dint of great caution; the top line, which is yielding in a yielding place, is unlucky by reason of courage and stubborn tenacity. All the lines standing in places opposed to their natures are lucky, because place and character

complement each other. All the lines standing in places that accord with their natures are unlucky, for this creates over-weighting.

29. K'an | The Abysmal (Water)



Nuclear trigrams KĒN ☵☵ and CHĒN ☷☷

The rulers of the hexagram are the two yang lines in the second and the fifth piece. The fifth, however, is ruler in a more marked degree; it represents water, which flows on when it has filled up a given place.

The Sequence

Things cannot be permanently in an over-weighted state. Hence there follows the hexagram of THE ABYSMAL. The Abysmal means a pit.

Miscellaneous Notes

THE ABYSMAL is directed downward.

Water moves from above downward; it comes from the earth but here it is in the heavens, hence its tendency to return earthward.

This hexagram is one of the eight formed by doubling of a trigram. The trigram K'an contains the middle line of the Creative (in the Inner-World Arrangement this trigram has shifted to the north, the piece occupied by the Receptive in the Primal Arrangement¹). Therefore this hexagram and the next following one, Li—which bears the same relation to the Receptive that K'an bears to the Creative—stand together at the end of part I, which begins with THE CREATIVE and THE RECEPTIVE.

THE JUDGMENT

The Abysmal repeated.

If you are sincere, you have success in your heart,

And whatever you do succeeds.

Commentary on the Decision

The Abysmal repeated is two-fold danger. Water flows on and nowhere piles up; it goes through dangerous places, never losing its dependability.

"You have success in your heart," for the firm form the middle.

"Whatever you do succeeds": advancing brings about achievements.

The danger of heaven lies in the fact that one cannot climb it. The dangers of earth are the mountains and rivers, hills and heights. The kings and princes make use of danger to protect their realms. The effects of the time of danger are truly great.

This hexagram is explained in two ways. First, man finds himself in danger, like water in the depths of an abyss. The water shows him how to behave: it flows on without piling up anywhere, and even in dangerous places it does not lose its dependable character. In this way the danger is overcome. The trigram K'an further means the heart. In the heart the divine nature is locked within the natural inclinations and tendencies, and is thus in danger of being engulfed by desires and passions. Here likewise the way to overcome danger is to hold firmly to one's innate disposition to good. This is indicated by the fact that the firm lines form each the middle in one of the trigrams. Hence action results in good. Second, danger serves as a protective measure—for heaven, earth, and the prince. But it is never an end in itself. Therefore it is said: "The effects of the time of danger are great."

THE IMAGE

Water flows on uninterruptedly and reaches its goal:

The image of the Abysmal repeated.

Thus the superior man walks in lasting virtue

And carries on the business of teaching.

Water is constant in its flow; thus the superior man is constant in his virtue, like the firm line in the middle of the abyss. And just as water flows on and on, so he makes use of practice and repetition in the business of teaching.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning:

a) Repetition of the Abysmal.

In the abyss one falls into a pit.

Misfortune.

b) "Repetition of the Abysmal." One falls into the abyss because one has lost the way; this brings misfortune.

This line stands at the bottom and is divided, i.e., in the bottom of the abyss there is still another pit. This repetition of danger leads to habituation to danger. Being weak, the line does not possess the inner strength to withstand such temptation. Hence at the very start it falls away from the right path.

○ Nine in the second place:

a) The abyss is dangerous.

One should strive to attain small things only.

b) "One should strive to attain small things only." For the middle has not yet been passed.

This line is strong and central and could therefore of its own nature accomplish something great. But it is still hemmed in by danger, hence there is nothing to be done. And its strength lies in the very fact that it does not seek the impossible but knows how to adapt itself to circumstances.

Six in the third place:

e) Forward and backward, abyss on abyss.

In danger like this, pause at first and wait,
 Otherwise you will fall into a pit in the abyss.
 Do not act in this way.

b) "Forward and backward, abyss on abyss": here any effort ends up as impossible.

This line is weak, and not in its proper place. It is in the midst of danger and moreover stands in the middle of the nuclear trigram Chên, movement; hence it is not only surrounded by danger but also full of inner disquiet. Hence the warning not to act, as the nature of the line suggests.

Six in the fourth place:

a) A jug of wine, a bowl of rice with it;
 Earthen vessels
 Simply handed in through the window.
 There is certainly no blame in this.

b) "A jug of wine, a bowl of rice with it." It is the boundary line between firm and yielding.

The trigram K'an means wine. The nuclear trigram Chên means ritual vessels. The whole is conceived as a simple sacrifice. K'an stands in the north and is often coupled with the idea of sacrifice. Despite its simplicity, the sacrifice is accepted, because the attitude is sincere. The fourth line is in the relationship of holding together with the upper ruler of the hexagram—hence the close relationships that can dispense with ceremonious outer form.

O Nine in the fifth place:

a) The abyss is not filled to overflowing.
 It is filled only to the rim.
 No blame.

b) "The abyss is not filled to overflowing," for the central line is not yet great.

The ruler of the hexagram, being moreover strong and in a strong place, might easily feel himself to be great and powerful. But his central position prevents this; therefore it is enough for him merely to extricate himself from the danger. This is the line referred to by the sentence in the Commentary on the Decision: "Water flows on and nowhere piles up.",

Six at the top:

a) Bound with cords and ropes,
 Shut in between thorn-hedged prison walls:
 For three years one does not find the way.
 Misfortune.

b) The six at the top has lost the way. This misfortune continues for three years.

In contrast to the six at the beginning, which is caught in a pit within the abyss, this line is at the top, hence enclosed by a wall behind thorn hedges (prison walls in China are arranged in this way to prevent escape). Thorns are indicated by the trigram K'an. The unfortunate situation of the line is due to the fact that it rests upon a hard line, the nine in the fifth place. For minor offenses, where

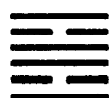
repentance was shown, pardon was granted after a year, for more serious ones after two years, and for very grave ones after three years, so that here it is question of an extremely serious entanglement.

NOTE. The whole hexagram of THE ABYSMAL is based on the idea that the light lines are enclosed by the dark lines, and thus endangered. This idea of danger not only gives the hexagram its character, but also dominates the individual lines. It appears that the two strong lines (the second and the fifth) fare better than the others and have the prospect of getting out of danger, while the six at the beginning and the six in the third place fall into abyss after abyss, and the six at the top sees no way out for three years. Thus the danger threatening the dark lines is even greater. It often happens, however, that the idea of a given hexagram as a whole is differently expressed in some of the lines.

Note

1. [See sec.3, Shuo Kua, in .pdf Material1, bk. II.]

30. Li | The Clinging, Fire



Nuclear trigrams TUI  and SUN 

The rulers of the hexagram are the two yin lines in the second and the fifth place; of these, the line in the second place is ruler in a more marked degree, for fire is brightest when it first flames up.

The Sequence

In a pit there is certain to be something clinging within. Hence there follows the hexagram of THE CLINGING. The Clinging means resting on something.

Miscellaneous Notes

THE CLINGING is directed upward.

Appended Judgments

Fu Hsi made knotted cords and used them for nets and baskets in hunting and fishing. He probably took this from the hexagram of THE CLINGING.

This hexagram, divided within and closed without, is an image of the meshes of a net in which animals remain snared.¹ It is the opposite of the preceding hexagram, not only in structure but also in its entire meaning.

THE JUDGMENT

THE CLINGING. Perseverance furthers.

It brings success.

Care of the cow brings good fortune.

Clinging means resting on something. Sun and moon cling to heaven. Grain, plants, and trees cling to the soil.

Doubled clarity, clinging to what is right, transforms the world and perfects it.

The yielding clings to the middle and to what is right, hence it has success. Therefore it is said:

"Care of the cow brings good fortune."

Here the co-operation of the two world principles is shown. The light principle becomes visible only in that it clings to bodies. Sun and moon attain their brightness by clinging to heaven, from which issue the forces of the light principle. The plant world owes its life to the fact that it clings to the soil (the Chinese character here is t'u, not ti²), in which the forces of life express themselves. On the other hand, bodies are likewise needed, that the forces of light and of life may find expression in them. It is the same in the life of man. In order that his psychic nature may be transfigured and attain influence on earth, it must cling to the forces of spiritual life. The yielding element in Li is the central line of the Receptive, hence the image of the strong but docile cow.

THE IMAGE

That which is bright rises twice:

The image of FIRE.

Thus the great man, by perpetuating this brightness,

Illumines the four quarters of the world.

Fire flames upward, hence the phrase, "That which is bright rises." Twice is implied by the doubling of the trigram. In relation to the spiritual realm, brightness means the innate light-imbued predispositions of man, which through their consistency illumine the world. The trigram Li stands in the south and represents the summer sun, which illumines all earthly things.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

a) The footprints run criss-cross.

If one is seriously intent, no blame.

b) Seriousness when footprints run criss-cross serves in avoiding blame.

The first line means the morning. The fire at first burns fitfully—an image of the restless confusion of daily business. The line is firm, hence the possibility of seriousness.

○ Six in the second place:

a) Yellow light. Supreme good fortune.

b) The supreme good fortune of yellow light lies in the fact that one has found the middle way.

This line is the middle one of the lower trigram, hence "the middle way." Yellow is the color of the middle, here specially mentioned because the line originates as the middle line of the trigram K'un, the Receptive.

Nine in the third place:

- a) In the light of the setting sun,
Men either beat the pot and sing
Or loudly bewail the approach of old age.
Misfortune.

- b) How can one wish to hold for long the light of the setting sun?

The third line ends the lower trigram, hence the image of the setting sun. The line is simultaneously in the nuclear trigram Tui, which indicates autumn, and in the nuclear trigram Sun, meaning growth. But Tui also means joyousness and Sun also means sighing.

Nine in the fourth place:

- a) Its coming is sudden;
It flames up, dies down, is thrown away.
- b) "Its coming is sudden,." Yet in itself it has nothing that would cause it to be accepted.

The fourth line is restless at the point of intersection of the two nuclear trigrams. It is oppressed from below and rejected from above.

O Six in the fifth place:

- a) Tears in floods, sighing and lamenting.
Good fortune.
- b) The good fortune of the six in the fifth place clings to king and prince.

The fifth place is that of the ruler. Since the line is yielding, it is not arrogant but humble and sad (it is at the top of the nuclear trigram Tui, mouth, hence the lament). Therein lies its good fortune.

Nine at the top:

- a) The king uses him to march forth and chastise.
Then it is best to kill the leaders
And take captive the followers. No blame.
- b) "The king uses him to march forth and chastise": in order to bring the country under discipline.

The ruler of the hexagram, the six in the fifth place, is the king. He uses the top line to lead the armed forces (the trigram Li has weapons for its symbol). Since it is at the top and strong, the line is correct, and therefore does not push the business of war too far. It shows the light at its height.

Notes

1. [Literally, "clinging."]
2. [Ti means the earth.]