

### 3. Chun | Difficulty at the Beginning



*Nuclear trigrams* K'EN  and K'UN 

In Chun the nine at the beginning and the nine in the fifth place are the rulers. These two are the only yang lines in the hexagram. The nine at the beginning is below and means the helper who can quiet the people. The nine in the fifth place is above; it can appoint the helper for the task of quieting the people.

#### **The Sequence of the Hexagrams<sup>1</sup>**

After heaven and earth have come into existence, individual beings develop. It is these individual beings that fill the space between heaven and earth. Hence there follows the hexagram of DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING. Difficulty at the beginning is the same as filling up. Chun does not really mean filling up. What is meant is the difficulty that arises when heaven and earth, the light and the shadowy principle, have united for the first time, and all beings are begotten and brought to birth. This produces a chaos that fills up everything, hence the idea of filling up is associated with the hexagram Chun.

#### **Miscellaneous Notes**

Chun is visible but has not yet lost its dwelling.

The grass has already pushed its tips out of the earth, that is, it is visible but still within the earth, its original dwelling place. The upper nuclear trigram, mountain, indicates visibility; the lower, earth, means dwelling.

#### **THE JUDGMENT**

DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING works supreme success,

Furthering through perseverance.

Nothing should be undertaken.

It furthers one to appoint helpers.

#### **Commentary on the Decision**

DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING: the firm and the yielding unite for the first time, and the birth is difficult.

The lower primary trigram is Chên, the eldest son, who comes into being when the light power and the dark power first draw together. This indicates the first union. K'an, the upper primary trigram, means difficulty, danger. This indicates the difficulty of the birth.

Movement in the midst of danger brings great success and perseverance.

The lower trigram, Chên, is movement; the upper, K'an, is danger. Hence we have movement in the midst of danger. By movement one gets out of the danger. This explains the words of the text:

"Supreme success, furthering through perseverance."

The movement of thunder and rain fills the atmosphere. If chaos and darkness prevail while heaven is creating, it is fitting to appoint helpers, without being oneself thereby lulled to rest.

This too describes the filling up of the atmosphere with the difficulties that prevail up to the point when a thunderstorm breaks. The final effect, however, is presaged in the fact that the two images are not instanced in the sequence [predicated by the structure of the hexagram] of K'an (clouds) above and Chên (thunder) below; instead, thunder is mentioned first and then the clouds, dissolved, are spoken of as rain.

Just as in a storm, thunder and darkening clouds precede release, so in the affairs of men a chaotic time precedes a period of order. At such a time a ruler entrusted with bringing order out of chaos needs efficient helpers. At first, however, the situation remains serious and difficult, and he must not try to rely wholly on others. This saying is suggested by the two rulers of the hexagram. The nine at the beginning indicates the efficient helper who should be appointed in such dangerous times; the nine in the fifth place means that there are still difficulties that preclude yielding to inaction. Because of the precarious conditions, the nine in the fifth place must still await the proper solution and may not yet rest.

### THE IMAGE

Clouds and thunder:

The image of DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING.

Thus the superior man

Brings order out of confusion.

While in the Commentary on the Decision the sequence is that of thunder and rain, to indicate the end condition brought about by the movement, here clouds and thunder are named in the sequence they follow in the structure of the hexagram. This specifies the condition before the rain, which symbolises danger (K'an). To overcome it, we must separate and combine, as happens when a thunderstorm breaks—first clouds above and thunder below, then thunder above and rain below.

### THE LINES

○ Nine at the beginning:

a) Hesitation and hindrance.

It furthers one to remain persevering.

It furthers one to appoint helpers.

- b) Although hesitation and hindrance still prevail, the aim of the work is nonetheless to carry out what is right. When an eminent man subordinates himself to his inferiors, he wins the hearts of all people.

This line is a ruler of the hexagram. It stands at the beginning, which indicates that the difficulties at the beginning remain unsolved. Here nothing can be accomplished suddenly; the confusion must be resolved gradually. The character and position of the line show the right way to this goal. It is by nature a light, firm line, hence eminent, and as such places itself below the weak yin lines, which cannot help themselves. To rule by serving is the secret of success. Thus this line is the efficient helper needed to overcome obstacles in times of difficulty at the beginning.

Six in the second place:

- a) Difficulties pile up.

Horse and wagon part.

He is not a robber;

He wants to woo when the time comes.

The maiden is chaste,

She does not pledge herself.

Ten years—then she pledges herself.

- b) The difficulty of the six in the second place is that it rests upon a rigid line.

Pledging herself after ten years means return to the general rule.

This line stands in the midst of the difficulties at the beginning. Its normal connection is with the nine in the fifth place, with which it has a relationship of correspondence. But this relationship is disturbed by the influence of the nine at the beginning, which stands below and through its importunities (it is moreover one of the rulers of the hexagram) causes doubt and uncertainty. But since the six in the second place is central and correct, these temptations are overcome, and when the time of difficulty is at an end ("ten years" indicates a complete cycle) the general rule obtains again, and the connection with the nine in the fifth place is established.

Six in the third place:

- a) Whoever hunts deer without the forester

Only loses his way in the forest.

The superior man understands the signs of the time

And prefers to desist.

To go on brings humiliation.

- b) "He hunts deer without the forester," that is, he desires the game.

"The superior man understands the signs of the time and prefers to desist.

To go on brings humiliation." It leads to failure.

The line is weak in character but occupies a strong place, being moreover at the top of the trigram of movement. Out of this arises the danger that its movement will be uncontrolled and disturbed by desire. Such movement must lead to failure.

In terms of the nuclear trigrams, the line belongs in one aspect to the lower nuclear trigram K'un, and in this position it has abandoned the ruler and leader and retains only movement. Here the saying in the hexagram K'un applies: "If one tries to lead, one goes astray." The forest is suggested by the upper nuclear trigram Kên, mountain, whose realm is entered here. Since the six in the third place does not have a corresponding line above, in the sixth place, it fails and does not find the game it is seeking.

Six in the fourth place:

a) Horse and wagon part.

Strive for union.

To go brings good fortune.

Everything acts to further.

b) To go only when bidden—this is clarity.

This line is in the relationship of correspondence to the nine at the beginning, and from this arises the idea of waiting until courted. The courting is expressed in the fact that the nine at the beginning subordinates itself to the six in the fourth place. This nine at the beginning is the active ruler of the hexagram; in contra-distinction to this, the six in the fourth place stands for an able man wise enough not to offer his services and to wait until bidden.

○ Nine in the fifth place:

a) Difficulties in blessing.

A little perseverance brings good fortune.

Great perseverance brings misfortune.

b) "Difficulties in blessing," because the benefaction is not yet recognized.

This line is one of the rulers of the hexagram, and being central and correct, it is capable of having a beneficial influence. However, this influence is impaired in several ways. First, the line stands in the middle of the trigram K'an, gorge, and as the image implies, is shut off at both sides by steep walls. Hence, as in the case of a river between steep banks, its influence cannot benefit the surroundings. Furthermore, the six in the second place, although in the relationship of correspondence to it, is too weak, while the nine at the beginning, the other ruler of the hexagram, is not in direct relationship to it. Therefore, from the individual standpoint of the nine in the fifth place, the ruler below is to be regarded rather as a rival. Finally, the line is at the top of the upper nuclear trigram Kên, whose attribute is keeping still, and which thus also obstructs its influence.

Six at the top:

a) Horse and wagon part.

Bloody tears flow.

b) "Bloody tears flow." How could one tarry long in this!

Like the second and fourth lines, this line is symbolized by a wagon that stops and is unhitched. But while the second line is related to both the first and the fifth line, and hence needs only to avoid a false tie, and the six in the fourth place corresponds with the nine at the beginning and finds in it a suitable

tie, the six at the top is entirely isolated, because there is no corresponding line in the third place. At the top of the trigram K'an, whose symbol is a defective wagon, it [the line as the traveller] is forced to unhitch. But no one comes to the rescue, and therefore the other symbols of the trigram K'an—water (tears) and blood—manifest themselves. However, the state of despair is not a lasting one. Indeed, since this top line is a six, it changes into its opposite, and out of the trigram for danger and gorge there develops the trigram Sun, which means wind, and which therefore overcomes the standstill. In this situation, therefore, one must quickly introduce a change.

NOTE. The hexagram as a whole has the character of difficulty at the beginning, and the individual lines represent different single situations at the time of this difficulty. As regards the position of the lines in relation to one another, neither their intrinsic character nor their positions in the hexagram as a whole are to be taken into account; the objective position in each case is all that matters. For instance, taking the hexagram as a whole, the nine in the fifth place and the nine at the beginning are the rulers, the former being the overlord who gives office to the latter as his vassal. But taken individually, the nine at the beginning is to be regarded not as a helper of the nine in the fifth place, but only as a rival—by virtue of its extrinsic position, deflecting the six in the second place, which has a relationship of correspondence with the nine in the fifth place. This rule for evaluating the individual lines is to be borne in mind throughout.

Another idea obtaining throughout the book is that each hexagram signifies a time situation. But the application of the hexagrams depends upon men. Here for example the time of DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING is indicated. The application will vary according to whether it is a ruler, an official, or a private person who is in this time situation. The fundamental lines of direction are of course the same, but they must always be fitted to the individual case.

A survey of the individual lines shows two possible courses at the time of DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING. In the case of some of the lines it is the individual's own activity, in the case of others it is external events that must overcome the difficulty at the beginning, and where these means of overcoming it fail, misfortune results. The strong places, the first, third, and fifth, represent hindrance due to one's own activity. The nine at the beginning and the nine in the fifth place are strong, hence the advice appropriate to these places is given: the nine at the beginning needs patience, stability, and helpers; the nine in the fifth place must learn to work gradually, step by step. On the other hand, the six in the third place lacks a directive, and therefore no success is augured for it.

The weak places, the second, fourth, and sixth, must fall back on outside help—"If only something would come along and take care of me!" The six in the second place and the six in the fourth place sooner or later find this help, like a girl who finds a suitor to rescue her. The six at the top, on the other hand, is too far outside and remains isolated, so that the difficulty at the beginning is not overcome. In this case it is advisable to make a complete break and to begin a new situation.

#### *Note*

1. [Hsü Kua: Ninth Wing. There is no text of this wing for the first two hexagrams.]

## 4. Mêng | Youthful Folly



*Nuclear trigrams* K'UN ☵☵ and CHÊN ☶☶

The nine in the second place and the six in the fifth are the rulers. The nine in the second place has a firm and central character, and the six in the fifth corresponds with it. The nine in the second place is in a low position; it is the teacher, capable of teaching others. The six in the fifth place is in a high position; it is able to honor the teacher and thus to teach men through him.

**The Sequence**

When, after difficulties at the beginning, things have just been born, they are always wrapped at birth in obtuseness. Hence there follows the hexagram of YOUTHFUL FOLLY. For youthful folly means youthful obtuseness. This is the state of things in their youth.

**Miscellaneous Notes**

YOUTHFUL FOLLY means confusion and subsequent enlightenment.

In early life the various qualities and aptitudes are as yet undifferentiated and undeveloped. Through education everything is differentiated, and clarity takes the place of obtuseness. Obtuseness is symbolized by the inner trigram, abyss, and clarity by the outer trigram, mountain.

**THE JUDGMENT**

YOUTHFUL FOLLY has success.

It is not I who seek the young fool;

The young fool seeks me.

At the first oracle I inform him.

If he asks two or three times, it is importunity.

If he importunes, I give him no information.

Perseverance furthers.

**Commentary on the Decision**

YOUTHFUL FOLLY shows danger at the foot of a mountain. Danger and standstill: this is folly. The image of the hexagram, a mountain with a watery abyss in front of it, as well as the attributes of the two primary trigrams, indicating a danger before which one pauses, suggests the idea of folly.

"Folly has success." One who succeeds hits upon the right time for his undertaking.

"It is not I who seek the young fool; the young fool seeks me." The two positions correspond.

"At the first oracle I answer," because the position is firm and central.

"If someone asks two or three times, it is importunity. If he importunes, I give no answer." To importune is folly. To strengthen what is right in a fool is a holy task.

The ruler of the hexagram is the strong second line. It is in the middle of the lower trigram, therefore in a central position. Since the line is strong and central, it meets with success by acting at the right time. It represents a sage in a lowly position, qualified to counsel wisely a youthful and inexperienced ruler. The youthful ruler is represented by the weak fifth line, which stands in the relationship of correspondence to the strong second line. The fifth line, which is weak in a superior place, and the second line, which is strong in an inferior place, together express the fact that the strong teacher does not seek out the young fool; rather, the latter approaches the teacher as one asking a favor. This is the correct relationship in education.

Because the second line is strong and central, it can answer the questions of the fifth, keeping within definite bounds of moderation. But if these bounds are over-stepped with importunate questions, the teacher in turn becomes disagreeable toward the pupil by refusing to answer.

The saying in the text, "Perseverance furthers," is amplified by the final comment, "To strengthen what is right in a fool is a holy task."

In addition to the second line, the strong line at the top is also occupied with driving out youthful folly, while the remaining four lines represent youthful fools of various kinds. The second line, which is in a central position, represents gentleness, while the strong top line stands for severity.

### THE IMAGE

A spring wells up at the foot of the mountain:

The image of YOUTH.

Thus the superior man fosters his character

By thoroughness in all that he does.

The spring at the foot of the mountain is still small and in its youth. The superior man derives his course of action from the images of the two trigrams. In his nature he is thorough-going, and clear as a mountain spring. Hence he achieves a calmness in the face of danger that emulates the great calmness of a mountain on the edge of an abyss.

### THE LINES

Six at the beginning:

a) To make a fool develop

It furthers one to apply discipline.

The fetters should be removed.

To go on in this way brings humiliation.

b) "It furthers one to apply discipline"—that is, in order to give emphasis to the law.

The yielding line in the lower position is a youthful fool who as yet is following no settled course. He must be subjected to discipline by the strong line standing above him in the second place, in order that firm principles and good habits may be formed in him.

O Nine in the second place:

a) To bear with fools in kindness brings good fortune.

To know how to take women

Brings good fortune.

The son is capable of taking charge of the household.

b) "The son is capable of taking charge of the household," for firm and yielding are in union.

The yielding fifth line stands in a complementary relationship to the firm second line. Therefore the compliant master of the household permits the firm son to take over. The same holds true in public life as regards the relationship between prince and official. This line is the ruler of the hexagram.

Six in the third place:

a) Take not a maiden who, when she sees a man of bronze,

Loses possession of herself.

Nothing furthers.

b) One should not take the maiden because her conduct is not in accord with order.

The line is yielding in a strong place; besides, it is in the place of transition from the lower to the upper trigram. Hence it is not able to withstand the temptation to throw itself away, and thus it leaves the right path. An intimate union is therefore not favorable. The emendation of the text proposed by Chu Hsi, who wished to read "in accord with order" as "cautious," is superfluous.

Six in the fourth place:

a) Entangled youthful folly brings humiliation.

b) The humiliation of entangled youthful folly comes from the fact that it of all things is furthest from what is real.

A yielding line in a weak place, unrelated to a firm line and surrounded by other weak lines, is through these circumstances completely excluded from any relationship with a real, i.e., firm line, and therefore remains incurably entangled in its youthful folly.

O Six in the fifth place:

a) Child-like folly brings good fortune.

b) The good fortune of the child-like fool comes from his being devoted and gentle.

The fifth place is that of the ruler, but since the line is yielding and in relationship with the firm line in the second place, we have the idea of devotion, that is, courtesy of speech, and of gentleness, readiness to listen. The line stands at the top of the upper nuclear trigram K'un, which is by nature devoted.

Nine at the top:

a) In punishing folly

It does not further one

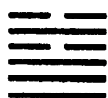
To commit transgressions.



The only thing that furthers

Is to prevent transgressions.

b) "It furthers to prevent transgressions," for then those above and those below conform to order. This strong line is in relationship with the weak third line, which has deviated from order and pushed ahead regardless of circumstances. It is vigorously sent back where it belongs by the top line, so that it conforms to order. But since the top line acts only defensively and does not exceed its limits, it does not itself deviate from order.

## 5. Hsü | Waiting (Nourishment)



*Nuclear trigrams* LI  and TUI 

The ruler of the hexagram is the nine in the fifth place. All transactions require patient waiting, and it is particularly essential for a ruler that his plans should be brought to fruition through continuous influence. The remark in the Commentary on the Decision—"Occupies the place of heaven and is central and correct in its behavior"—refers to the nine in the fifth place.

### The Sequence

When things are still small, one must not leave them without nourishment. Hence there follows the hexagram Hsü. Hsü means the way to eating and drinking.

The connection between the two meanings of the hexagram—nourishment and waiting—lies in the fact that we must wait to be nourished. Nourishment depends on heaven and the rain. It does not lie within the power of man.

### Miscellaneous Notes

WAITING means not advancing.

### THE JUDGMENT

WAITING. If you are sincere,

You have light and success.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

It furthers one to cross the great water.

### Commentary on the Decision

WAITING means holding back. Danger lies ahead. Being firm and strong, one does not fall into it.

The meaning is that one does not become perplexed or bewildered.

The lower trigram is Ch'ien, whose attribute is strength. The upper trigram is K'an, the abyss, danger; but since we feel secure in our own strength and do not act overhastily, we avoid perplexity.

"If you are sincere, you have light and success. Perseverance brings good fortune." For the ruling line occupies the place of heaven and is central and correct in its behavior.

"It furthers one to cross the great water." Through progress the work is accomplished.

The fifth line, the ruler of the hexagram, has the sincerity of water, of which it is the symbol (K'an is a watercourse between high banks). This line corresponds in its special quality with the meaning of the trigram Ch'ien, the Creative, heaven. In that it is a firm line in an uneven (i.e., yang) place, its place and character correspond, hence it is correct. Moreover, it is in the middle of the upper primary trigram and therefore central. All of these are relationships of the ruler of the hexagram that point to success.

Waiting does not mean giving up an undertaking, however. To defer is not to abandon. Therefore the work is accomplished.

### THE IMAGE

Clouds rise up to heaven:

The image of WAITING.

Thus the superior man eats and drinks,

Is joyous and of good cheer.

In the heavens, water takes the form of clouds. Once the clouds rise, it will not be long before rain falls. While frequently the second portion of the Image separates the attributes of the two trigrams, in order to show how a given situation can be overcome, we have in this instance an explanation of how to accept and adapt to the situation. Even as rain rises to the heavens, it is preparing to fall—whereby all life is nourished and refreshed. The superior man acts in accordance with this, and so masters the second meaning of the hexagram, for Hsü signifies nourishment as well as waiting. Further, the two nuclear trigrams—Li, clarity, and Tui, pleasure, joyousness—also play a part.

### THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

a) Waiting in the meadow.

It furthers one to abide in what endures.

No blame.

b) "Waiting in the meadow." One does not seek out difficulties over-hastily.

"It furthers one to abide in what endures. No blame."

One has not abandoned the general ground.

Because the lowest line is firm, it does not unduly press any matter in the face of a danger that is still remote (hence the image of the meadow), but is able to remain calm and collected as if nothing extraordinary lay ahead.

Nine in the second place:

a) Waiting on the sand.

There is some gossip.

The end brings good fortune.

b) "Waiting on the sand." One is calm, for the line is central.

Although this leads to some gossip, the end brings good fortune.

This line is even nearer to the danger symbolized in the upper trigram than the first line, therefore the waiting on the sand. But it is well balanced; the capability of its nature is mitigated by the yielding character of the place, which moreover is central. Therefore it remains calm despite minor discords (it is not in the relation of correspondence to the ruler of the hexagram, but rather, since the two lines are of the same category, in the relation of mutual repulsion), hence all goes well. Gossip is indicated by the nuclear trigram Tui.

Nine in the third place:

a) Waiting in the mud

Brings about the arrival of the enemy.

b) "Waiting in the mud." The misfortune is outside.<sup>1</sup>

"Brings about the arrival of the enemy." Seriousness and caution prevent defeat.

The strong line in the strong place is too energetic. It faces danger and plunges into it, thus inviting enemies. Only through caution is this harm to be avoided.

Six in the fourth place:

a) Waiting in blood.

Get out of the pit.

b) "Waiting in blood." He is yielding and obeys.

This is a weak line in a weak place; consequently, although in the midst of danger and hemmed in between two strong lines (K'an means pit and blood), it does not make things worse by pressing forward. Instead, it submits, and the storm passes over.

○ Nine in the fifth place:

a) Waiting at meat and drink.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

b) "Meat and drink. Perseverance brings good fortune,"

because of the central and correct character.

This line is the ruler of the hexagram. As such, it occupies the center of the upper primary trigram. It has a strong place corresponding with its strong character, hence it is correct. Moreover, it is at the top of the upper nuclear trigram Li, light, which gives it enlightenment. Altogether, this gives prospect of favorable conditions.

Six at the top:

a) One falls into the pit.

Three uninvited guests arrive.

Honor them, and in the end there will be good fortune.

b) "Uninvited guests arrive. If they are honored, in the end there will be good fortune."

Although the line is not in its proper place, at least no great mistake is made.

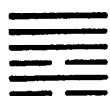
A yielding line at the high point of danger, at the very top of the hexagram, is not really in its proper place (K'an connotes a pit). Although to all appearances a weak line in a weak place is where it should be, a certain impropriety arises from the fact that it stands at the top, while the line corresponding with it, the strong third line, is below. The arrival of three uninvited guests is suggested by this third line and the two lower ones of the trigram Ch'ien, which hold together with it. Since by virtue of their strong natures they are not jealous, everything goes well, if the yin line follows its yielding nature and meets them deferentially.

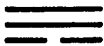

NOTE. The situation revealed in WAITING is one in which a strong, firm nature is faced with danger. What is required of the individual here is restraint. He must await the proper time; he must be yielding and remain calm. If he does not weigh the time conditions sufficiently and presses forward, ruthless, angry, and restless, he will certainly meet defeat. The nine at the beginning is still far from danger; hence if one holds to lasting things, one can avoid mistakes. The nine in the second place is approaching closer to danger, but it too can ultimately attain good fortune by yielding and by keeping to the middle way. The nine in the third place is actually under threat of danger, therefore it is said: "Seriousness and caution prevent defeat." The six in the fourth place has been overtaken by danger, but because it is yielding and peaceful, it gets out of the pit again. The six at the top is at the peak point of danger, but through deference it too finally attains good fortune. Thus during a time of waiting, self-control and deference are the means of avoiding harm. The significance of the time of danger is great.

#### *Note*

1. [Symbolised by the outer trigram.]

## 6. Sung | Conflict



*Nuclear trigrams* SUN  *and* LI 

The ruler of the hexagram is the nine in the fifth place. All the other lines represent persons quarrelling, and the nine in the fifth place stands for the person who overhears the quarrel. This is what is referred to by the following sentence from the Commentary on the Decision: " 'It furthers one to see the great man': thus his central and correct position is honored."

### **The Sequence**

Over meat and drink, there is certain to be conflict. Hence there follows the hexagram of CONFLICT.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

CONFLICT means not to love.

CONFLICT. You are sincere  
And are being obstructed.  
A cautious halt halfway brings good fortune.  
Going through to the end brings misfortune.  
It furthers one to see the great man.  
It does not further one to cross the great water.

### Commentary on the Decision

CONFLICT: strength is above, danger below. Danger and strength produce conflict.  
"The contender is sincere and is being obstructed." The firm comes and attains the middle.  
"Going through to the end brings misfortune." A conflict must not be allowed to become permanent.

"It furthers one to see the great man": thus his central and correct position is honored.

"It does not further one to cross the great water," for this would lead one into the abyss.

The name of the hexagram of CONFLICT is derived from the attributes of the two trigrams Ch'ien, strength, and K'an, danger. When strength is above and cunning below, conflict is sure to arise. Similarly, a person who is inwardly cunning and outwardly strong inclines to conflict with others. The contender, the second line, is sincere and feels himself obstructed. He is in the inner trigram, and therefore it is said, "He comes." Because the line is strong and occupies the center, it suggests sincerity, for it makes the middle "sound." It is obstructed because it is inclosed between the two yin lines. The great man is the central and correct line in the fifth place. The judge who must render the decision abides outside the dangerous situation. He can render a just decision only by remaining impartial. The abyss into which one would fall by crossing the great water is indicated by the trigram K'an, danger. Crossing of the great water is suggested by the fact that the nuclear trigram Sun, wood, is over the lower primary trigram K'an, water.

Structurally, this hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one: hence we have conflict here, forbearance there. Although the time meaning of the hexagram is that of conflict, it nevertheless teaches at every turn that conflict should be avoided.

### THE IMAGE

Heaven and water go their opposite ways:

The image of CONFLICT.

Thus in all his transactions the superior man

Carefully considers the beginning.

The movement of the upper trigram, heaven, goes upward, that of the lower, water, goes downward; thus the two draw farther and farther apart, and create conflict. To avoid conflict, all transactions (nuclear trigram Sun, work, undertaking) must be well considered at the beginning (K'an means being concerned, and the nuclear trigram Li means clarity; Ch'ien is the beginning of all things).

Six at the beginning:

- a) If one does not perpetuate the affair,

There is a little gossip.

In the end, good fortune comes.

- b) Not perpetuating the affair: one must not prolong the conflict.

Although "there is a little gossip," the matter is finally decided clearly.

The six is weak and at the very bottom. Therefore, although there is a brief altercation with the neighboring nine, which comes from without, the conflict cannot continue—the place and the character of the line are too weak. Since the nuclear trigram Li, standing above it, has clarity as its attribute, everything is finally decided justly—a fortunate thing in a conflict. As the six changes, there arises the trigram Tui, speech.

Nine in the second place:

- a) One cannot engage in conflict;

One returns home, gives way.

The people of his town,

Three hundred households,

Remain free of guilt.

- b) "One cannot engage in conflict: one returns home, gives way." Thus one escapes.

To contend from a lowly place with someone above brings self-incurred suffering.

One cannot engage in conflict, although in this hard line in the middle of the trigram K'an, the Abysmal, intention to contend with the nine in the fifth place is inherently present. This second line, being a nine, moves; that is, it changes into a yin line. Thereby it conceals itself, and with the two other yin lines it forms the town of three hundred families, who remain free of all entanglement.

Six in the third place:

- a) To nourish oneself on ancient virtue induces perseverance.

Danger. In the end good fortune comes.

If by chance you are in the service of a king,

Seek not works.

- b) "To nourish oneself on ancient virtue." To obey the one above brings good fortune.

Because the line is weak in a strong place, it is not correct. Above and below are strong lines hemming it in. Moreover, being in a place of transition, it is inwardly restless. All these circumstances constitute elements of danger. Still, everything goes well, provided the line rests content with what it has honorably acquired from its ancestors. It corresponds with the third line of the "mother" hexagram, K'un; hence the oracle for this line in K'un is repeated here in part.

Nine in the fourth place:

- a) One cannot engage in conflict.

One turns back and submits to fate,  
 Changes one's attitude,  
 And finds peace in perseverance.  
 Good fortune.

- b) "One turns back and submits to fate, changes one's attitude, and finds peace in perseverance."  
 Thus nothing is lost.

This line is neither central nor correct, and therefore originally intended to quarrel. But it cannot do so. Over it is the strong judge in the fifth place, with whom one may not quarrel. Below it is the weak line in the third place, and standing in the relationship of correspondence to it is the weak line at the beginning, neither of which gives cause for quarrel. Its position in a yielding place gives this line the possibility of being converted and of turning away from conflict.

O Nine in the fifth place:

- a) To contend before him  
 Brings supreme good fortune.

- b) "To contend before him brings supreme good fortune," because he is central and correct.

This line is the ruler of the hexagram; it occupies the place of honor, is central, correct, and strong. All this fits it for the task of settling the quarrel, so that great good fortune comes about through it.

Nine at the top:

- a) Even if by chance a leather belt is bestowed on one,  
 By the end of a morning  
 It will have been snatched away three times.

- b) To attain distinction through conflict is, after all, nothing, to command respect.

A strong line at the high point of CONFLICT seeks to win distinction through conflict. But this does not last.

NOTE. The nine in the fifth place is the judge, the other lines the contenders, but only the strong lines really contend. The weak lines in the first and the third place hold back. The strong lines in the second and the fourth place are inclined by nature to contend, but cannot quarrel with the judge in the fifth place, and the weak lines below them offer no resistance. Therefore they too withdraw from the conflict in good time. Only the strong top line carries the conflict through to the end and, being in the relationship of correspondence to the weak line in the third place, it triumphs and receives a distinction. Yet the line is analogous to the top line—the "arrogant dragon"—of the hexagram Ch'ien. It will have cause to rue the matter. What is won by force is wrested away by force.

## 7. Shih | The Army



*Nuclear trigrams* K'UN ☷☷ and CHÊN ☵☵

The rulers of the hexagram are the nine in the second place and the six in the fifth. The former, positioned below, is the strong man, while the latter, being above, has capacity to employ the strong man.

**The Sequence**

When there is conflict, the masses are sure to rise up. Hence there follows the hexagram of THE ARMY. Army means mass.

**Miscellaneous Notes**

THE ARMY means mourning.

**THE JUDGMENT**

THE ARMY. The army needs perseverance

And a strong man.

Good fortune without blame.

**Commentary on the Decision**

THE ARMY means the masses. Perseverance means discipline.

The man who can effect discipline through the masses may attain mastery of the world.

The strong one is central and finds response.

One does a dangerous thing but finds devotion. The man who thus leads<sup>1</sup> the world is followed by the people. Good fortune. How could this be a mistake?

This hexagram consists of a mass of yielding lines in the midst of which, in a central although subordinate place, is a single strong line. As a general, not as a ruler, it holds the others under control. From this arises the idea of the mass (the many yielding lines) and of the army—a disciplined multitude. The firm line in the second place finds support, because of correspondence, in the yielding line in the fifth place, the place of the ruler. The danger of the action is indicated by the lower trigram, K'an, and devotion by the upper, K'un.

**THE IMAGE**

In the middle of the earth is water:

The image of THE ARMY.

Thus the superior man increases his masses

By generosity toward the people.

Owing to the compulsory military service customary in antiquity, the supply of soldiers available from the populace was as plentiful as water underground. Hence fostering the people ensured an efficient army.

Great expanse is the attribute of the earth, which also represents the masses. Water stands for serviceability; everything flows toward water.

### THE LINES

Six at the beginning:

- a) An army must set forth in proper order.

If the order is not good, misfortune threatens.

- b) "An army must set forth in proper order."<sup>2</sup> Losing order is unfortunate.

This line is at the very bottom and therefore indicates the beginning, the marching forth of the army.

The water trigram indicates order and the correct use of the army. If the line changes, the lower trigram becomes Tui, joyousness, whereby of course order is upset, for joyousness is not the proper frame of mind for the onset of war.

O Nine in the second place:

- a) In the midst of the army.

Good fortune. No blame.

The king bestows a triple decoration.

- b) "In the midst of the army. Good fortune." He receives grace from heaven.

"The king bestows a triple decoration." He has the welfare of all countries at heart.

The second place is that of the official, in this case a general, as this is the hexagram of THE ARMY.

The grace of heaven derives from the six in the fifth place, which, occupying a place in the sphere of heaven, stands in the relationship of correspondence to this line. The triple decoration derives from the three lines all of like kind composing the upper trigram K'un.

Six in the third place:

- a) Perchance the army carries corpses in the wagon.

Misfortune.

- b) "Perchance the army carries corpses in the wagon." This is quite without merit.

The upper trigram is K'un, whose image is the wagon. This line is weak; it stands at the peak of danger, and in the middle of the nuclear trigram Chên, agitation. All of these are circumstances suggesting a severe defeat.

Six in the fourth place:

- a) The army retreats. No blame.

- b) "The army retreats. No blame," for it does not deviate from the usual way.

Literally the text reads: "The army turns to the left." In war, "to the right" is the equivalent of "in the vanguard," and "to the left" is the equivalent of "in the rear." The line is extremely weak, because it is

weak by nature and also in a weak place. Yet it is in the place appropriate to it; hence retreat, for which it is not to be censured.

O Six in the fifth place:

a) There is game in the field.

It furthers one to catch it.

Without blame.

Let the eldest lead the army.

The younger transports corpses;

Then perseverance brings misfortune.

b) "Let the eldest lead the army," because he is central and correct.

"The younger transports corpses." Thus the right man is not put in charge.

The trigram K'an means pig; the "field" is the earth (K'un). To the inside of the trigram K'un (field) is K'an (pig, i.e., game). Therefore it furthers one to catch it. The literal rendering would be: "To explain his mistakes." This interpretation, however, is not as satisfactory.<sup>3</sup> The "eldest" is the strong nine in the second place, and it is this line that ought to lead the army. If some other without experience leads it (the reference is to the six in the third place), the result will be that corpses must be transported—that is to say, there will be a defeat.

Six at the top:

a) The great prince issues commands,

Founds states, vests families with fiefs.

Inferior people should not be employed.

b) "The great prince issues commands," in order to reward merit properly.

"Inferior people should not be employed," because they are certain to cause confusion in the country.

The top place shows the victorious end of war. The great prince is the six in the fifth place. Here, as occasionally elsewhere in the case of a six at the top, an additional statement concerning the line in the fifth place is given—from the outward, objective standpoint. The merit rewarded is that of the nine in the second place; the inferior people are represented by the six in the third place.

### Notes

1. In the text, the character for "leads" is written *tu*, which means "to poison," but should be read *tan*, "to lead."

2. The word *lü*, "order," in its original sense means a reed-like musical instrument. The literal meaning would be: "The army marches forth to the sound of horns. If the horns are not in tune, it is a bad sign."

3. The sentence *li chih yen* is best translated by taking the word *yen* (meaning "to speak," "to explain") simply as the equivalent of an exclamation point, which it frequently is in the Book of Odes. This yields the translation, "It furthers one to hold fast, to catch" (the game).

## 8. Pi | Holding Together (Union)



*Nuclear trigrams* K'EN ☵☵ and K'UN ☷☷

The ruler is the nine in the fifth place, for the hexagram is so organized that it contains only one yang line, which occupies the place of honor and holds together with all the yin lines above and below it.

**The Sequence**

Among the masses there is surely a reason for uniting. Hence there follows the hexagram of HOLDING TOGETHER. Holding together means uniting.

**Miscellaneous Notes**

HOLDING TOGETHER is something joyous.

**THE JUDGMENT**

HOLDING TOGETHER brings good fortune.

Inquire of the oracle once again

Whether you possess sublimity, constancy, and perseverance;

Then there is no blame.

Those who are uncertain gradually join.

Whoever comes too late

Meets with misfortune.

**Commentary on the Decision**

"HOLDING TOGETHER brings good fortune." Holding together means mutual help. Those below are devoted and obedient.

This hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one. In the latter the general, the nine in the second place, is the center, while here the center is the nine in the fifth place, the strong, central, and correct prince. All the other lines are yielding, hence the relationship of mutual supplementation and assistance. The yielding lines are the subordinates who obey. Thus the name of the hexagram is explained through its structure.

"Inquire of the oracle once again whether you possess sublimity, constancy, and perseverance.

Then there is no blame," because of the firmness and central position.

"Those who are uncertain gradually join." Above and below are in correspondence.

"Whoever comes too late meets with misfortune." His way is at an end.

The line to which everything relates is the prince in the fifth place. All the yielding lines below correspond with it. These five lines mutually hold together; thereby they attain power, and it is a

joyous matter. The only one that stays apart and does not enter into the general union is the six at the top; it insists on going its own way, which leads to nothing.

The hexagram Pi, HOLDING TOGETHER, like the hexagram Ts'ui, GATHERING TOGETHER (45), has the trigram K'un below, but instead of Tui, the lake, here there is K'an, water, above. There is very little difference in meaning between the two hexagrams. "Sublimity, constancy, and perseverance" apply here to the whole hexagram, while in Ts'ui they apply only to the nine in the fifth place.

In the hexagram Mêng, YOUTHFUL FOLLY (4), there is a reference to "the first oracle," and the commentary relates it to the firm central line. There K'an, meaning wisdom, darkness, oracle, is below, and the firm line appears in the first trigram. Here it is said: "Inquire of the oracle once again." The explanation in the commentary points likewise to the firm central line. But here K'an is above, hence the firm line appears in the second, that is, the upper trigram.

### THE IMAGE

On the earth is water:

The image of HOLDING TOGETHER.

Thus the kings of antiquity

Bestowed the different states as fiefs

And cultivated friendly relations

With the feudal lords.

The water on the earth holds together with it. From this fact a double lesson is deduced. As water penetrates and gives moisture to the earth, so should fiefs be distributed from above; and as waters flow together on the earth, so should the organization of society show union.

### THE LINES

Six at the beginning:

a) Hold to him in truth and loyalty;

This is without blame.

Truth, like a full earthen bowl:

Thus in the end

Good fortune comes from without.

b) The six at the beginning of HOLDING TOGETHER encounters good fortune from another quarter.

This line stands at the bottom; it is weak and in no direct relation to the ruler of the hexagram. But since the attitude in the holding together is sincere—the line is at the bottom of the trigram K'un, whose attribute is devotion—it will attain what it strives for, and this unexpectedly from the outside. The earth has for its symbol the kettle, the utensil for receiving the blessing that comes from above.

Six in the second place:

a) Hold to him inwardly.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

b) "Hold to him inwardly." Do not lose yourself.

This yielding line of the inner trigram, which stands in the relationship of correspondence to the ruler of the hexagram, suggests the idea of holding together inwardly. But just because this holding together bespeaks an inner affinity and hence is inevitable, it does not depend on unworthy external maneuvers.

Six in the third place:

a) You hold together with the wrong people.

b) "You hold together with the wrong people." Is this not injurious?

The line is weak and in the place of transition, that is, restless, not central, and not correct. The lines below and above it, as well as the six at the top, with which there is a relation, are all dark lines. Here they denote evil people.

Six in the fourth place:

a) Hold to him outwardly also.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

b) Hold outwardly also to people of worth, in order thus to follow the one above.

The firm line in the fifth place is a worthy ruler, while the yielding line in the fourth place represents the minister. A minister may show outwardly his loyalty to his worthy ruler. This situation differs from that of the six in the second place, the official as yet without a post. Such a man must be reserved in order not to lose dignity, but the minister firmly established in an official relationship may safely show his attachment. Since the line is not attracted by the six at the beginning, it is free to follow the one above with undivided allegiance.

O Nine in the fifth place:

a) Manifestation of holding together.

In the hunt the king uses beaters on three sides only

And foregoes game that runs off in front.

The citizens need no warning.

Good fortune.

b) The good fortune resulting from "manifestation of holding together" inheres in the fact that the position is correct and central.

Discarding those who resist, accepting the devoted: this is the meaning of "foregoes game that runs off in front."

"The citizens need no warning," for the one above makes them central.

This is the image of a ruler whose followers gather around him from natural instinct. He merely makes manifest what is inherent in each individual. The spontaneity of this holding together is presented in an image of the royal hunt and its customs. The quarry accepted are the lower lines, which voluntarily offer themselves. The quarry that resists and hence is not taken into consideration is the six at the top. Here again, as in the preceding hexagram, an image of the hunt is used, but in the latter the game is pursued, while here it is allowed to go free. There the lower nuclear trigram is Chên, whose movement

goes upward; here the upper nuclear trigram is Kên, Keeping Still; therefore the movement, starting with the nine in the fifth place, is downward only, not upward.

Six at the top:

a) He finds no head for holding together.

Misfortune.

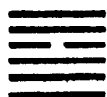
b) "He finds no head for holding together." Therefore he also fails to find the right end.


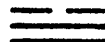
This line takes its position above the ruling yang line. While the lower yielding lines find their head in this yang line, the yin line at the top has no head to follow and must therefore go astray, particularly because it stands at the top of the trigram K'an, danger.

The expression "no head" occurs also in the hexagram of THE CREATIVE. There it has a favorable meaning, because the hexagram has nothing but strong lines, and thus the expression signifies humility. Here it is unfavorable, because the line is yielding. A yielding element with "no head" bodes ill, because there is nothing to steady it.

## 9. Hsiao Ch'u |

### The Taming Power of the Small



*Nuclear trigrams* LI  *and* TUI 

The six in the fourth place is the constituting ruler of the hexagram, and the nine in the fifth place its governing ruler.<sup>1</sup>

The six in the fourth place, as the only yin line, restrains the yang lines. The Commentary on the Decision refers to this as follows: "The yielding obtains the decisive place, and those above and those below correspond with it." The nine in the fifth place accords in attitude with the six in the fourth place, thus to perfect the restraint; hence it is said in the Commentary on the Decision: "The strong is central and its will is done."

#### The Sequence

Through holding together, restraint is certain to come about. Hence there follows THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL

#### Miscellaneous Notes

THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL is slight.

This refers to the fact that "the small" here occupies the place of the official. Compare the hexagram Ta Yu, POSSESSION IN GREAT MEASURE (14), in which the small and yielding element is in the ruler's place.

**THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL**

Has success.

Dense clouds, no rain from our western region.

**Commentary on the Decision**

**THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL.** The yielding obtains the decisive place, and those above and those below correspond with it: this is called **THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL.**

Strong and gentle: the strong is central and its will is done, therefore "success."

"Dense clouds, no rain": the movement goes still further.

"From our western region": the influence has not yet set in.

The small, yielding line in the place of the minister holds the decisive place. The firm lines above and below all correspond with it. This structure explains the name of the hexagram. Success is due to the character of the two trigrams, inner strength coupled with outer gentleness. This is the way to achievement. Moreover, the ruler is central and his will is done. The upper trigram Sun, wind, has enough strength to condense the mists rising up from the lower trigram Ch'ien, and so to form clouds, but its strength does not suffice to cause rain. "Westem region" is suggested by the original position of Sun, in the west (in the arrangement of the trigrams called the Sequence of Earlier Heaven<sup>2</sup>; in the Sequence of Later Heaven, Tui, the lake, has the position in the west). When Tui stands over Ch'ien, we have the hexagram of **BREAKTHROUGH** (43); in the latter case the water vapor is already condensed and will descend easily. In the present hexagram Tui appears over Ch'ien only as a nuclear trigram, not yet separated from it. In China, the rain clouds always come from the east, from the direction of the sea, not from the west.

**THE IMAGE**

The wind drives across heaven:

The image of **THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL.**

Thus the superior man

Refines the outward aspect of his nature.

The wind penetrates everywhere; this means refinement. The lower trigram is heaven; this means the essence of character. The upper nuclear trigram is Li, form. This refinement of outer form, as contrasted with the carrying out of fundamental principles, is "the small."

**THE LINES**

Nine at the beginning:

a) Return to the way.

How could there be blame in this?

Good fortune.

b) "Return to the way." This is something that bodes well.

This strong yang line, belonging to the rising trigram Ch'ien, naturally tends upward, but it is held back by the yielding line in the fourth place. As it stands in the relationship of correspondence to the latter, it retreats again without offering opposition, so that all struggle is avoided. The good augury is based on this.

Nine in the second place:

- a) He allows himself to be drawn into returning.

Good fortune.

- b) Being drawn into returning derives from the central position. Also, he does not lose himself.

This line is higher than the first and likewise tends upward by nature. But because of its central and moderate position in the lower trigram Ch'ien, it attaches itself to the first line and retreats without a struggle. Thus it assumes an attitude that saves it from losing itself or throwing itself away, as would be the case if it offered itself despite its being checked by the fourth line.

Nine in the third place:

- a) The spokes burst out of the wagon wheels.

Man and wife roll their eyes.

- b) When "man and wife roll their eyes," it is a sign that they cannot keep their house in order.

The idea of the spokes bursting out of the wagon wheels is suggested by the fact that Ch'ien, being round, symbolises a wheel, and that Tui, the lower nuclear trigram, means breaking apart. Li, the upper nuclear trigram, means eyes, and Sun, the upper primary trigram, means much white in the eyes; hence the rolling of the eyes.

This line has the same upward tendency as the two preceding ones, but while the latter renounce conflict and retreat voluntarily, this line (too strong because it is strong in a strong place, unstable because it is in a place of transition) tries to push on by force. The yielding fourth line represents the wife, who allows the spokes of the wheels, belonging to the third line, her husband, to get broken. The man looks at her fiercely in his rage, and she returns the look. Inasmuch as the third line thus abandons its family (the two lower lines), it shows that it cannot maintain order.

Σ Six in the fourth place:

- a) If you are sincere, blood vanishes and fear gives way.

No blame.

- b) "If you are sincere. . . fear gives way," because the one at the top agrees in attitude.

This line, in the midst of the strong lines, is empty within, that is, sincere (cf. hexagram 61, INNER TRUTH). It is the middle line of the nuclear trigram Li, which is the opposite of K'an, blood and fear; hence the absence of blood and fear. The fourth place is that of the minister. It has the difficult task of controlling with weak powers the upward-striving lower lines. This is necessarily associated with danger and fear, but because the line is sincere (yielding in a yielding place, and empty within) the prince, the nine in the fifth place, stands by it and gives it the needed support.

O Nine in the fifth place:

a) If you are sincere and loyally attached,

You are rich in your neighbor.

b) "If you are sincere and loyally attached," you will not be alone in your riches.

The fifth line is in the place of honor, in the middle of the trigram Sun, riches. Sun also means a bond, and therefore the line is attached to the six in the fourth place, its neighbor. In that the two complement each other and share their wealth, they are rich indeed.

Nine at the top:

a) The rain comes, there is rest.

This is due to the lasting effect of character.

Perseverance brings the woman into danger.

The moon is nearly full.

If the superior man persists,

Misfortune comes.

b) "The rain comes, there is rest." This is the continuously cumulative effect of character.

"If the superior man persists, misfortune comes," for there might be doubts.

Because the line moves, being a nine, the trigram Sun, wind, becomes the trigram K'an, rain and moon. The line stands at the top of Sun—gentle and devoted—which has gradually accumulated within itself the powers of the Creative, so that the desired effect has been achieved. When this effect of the Gentle is attained, it must suffice. Should it insistently presume upon its success, danger might ensue. Persistence would lead to a doubtful situation, because restraint would then turn into suppression, and this the strong Ch'ien would certainly not tolerate.

### Notes

1. [See The Structure of the Hexagrams, in .pdf IChing1.]
2. [See sec.3 in Shuo Kua, Discussion of the Trigrams, in .pdf Material1, bk.II.]

## 10. Lü | Treading (Conduct)



*Nuclear trigrams* SUN ☰ and LI ☲

The constituting ruler of the hexagram is the six in the third place; the nine in the fifth place is the governing ruler. The six in the third place, as the only yielding line among the numerous firm ones, enters their midst with fear and trembling. Therefore the hexagram bears the name TREADING.

Whoever holds an honored place must especially be constantly mindful of danger and fear. Because of this the judgment on the nine in the fifth place couples the idea of danger with perseverance. The

Commentary on the Decision says of this line: "Strong, central, and correct, he treads into the place of the ruler and remains without blame."

### **The Sequence**

When beings are subjected to restraint the mores arise; hence there follows the hexagram of CONDUCT.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

That which treads does not stay.

### **Appended Judgments<sup>1</sup>**

TREADING shows the basis of character. It is harmonious and attains its goal. It brings about harmonious conduct.

This hexagram is the inverse of the preceding one. The movement of the two primary trigrams is upward, hence the idea that the one strides behind the other. The youngest daughter walks behind the father.

## **THE JUDGMENT**

TREADING. Treading upon the tail of the tiger.

It does not bite the man. Success.

### **Commentary on the Decision**

TREADING: the yielding treads upon the firm. Joyous, and in the relationship of correspondence to the Creative; hence, "Treading upon the tail of the tiger. It does not bite the man. Success."

Strong, central, and correct, he treads into the place of the ruler and remains without blame: his light shines bright.

The yielding that treads upon the firm is the lower trigram Tui, which follows the trigram Ch'ien.

Thus the forms of the two trigrams explain the name of the hexagram.

Joyousness is the attribute of Tui, the lower trigram, which moves in the same direction as the Creative, the strong; hence the image of treading upon the tail of the tiger (Tui stands in the west, which is symbolized by the tiger). The tiger's tail is mentioned because the weak line in Tui comes behind the three lines of Ch'ien. In addition, it is to be noted that the yielding line in the lower trigram stands over the two firm lines.

The comment "strong, central, and correct" refers to the ruler of the hexagram, the central line of the upper trigram, Ch'ien; this line occupies a place in the sphere of heaven, hence the place of the ruler. Light is the primary characteristic of the trigram Ch'ien; furthermore, the nuclear trigram Li, whose attribute is light, is contained in the hexagram.

## **THE IMAGE**

Heaven above, the lake below:

The image of TREADING.

Thus the superior man discriminates between high and low,

And thereby fortifies the thinking of the people.

Heaven represents what is highest, the lake represents what is lowest; these differences in elevation provide a rule for conduct and mores. Thus the superior man creates in society the differences in rank that correspond with differences in natural endowment, and in this way fortifies the thinking of the people, who are reassured when these differences accord with nature.

### THE LINES

Nine at the beginning:

- a) Simple conduct. Progress without blame.
- b) The progress of simple conduct follows in solitude its own bent.

TREADING means behavior. Good behavior is determined by character. This line is at the beginning of the hexagram, hence simplicity is the right thing for it. It progresses independently. Not being related to the other lines, it goes its way alone, but since it is strong, this agrees exactly with its inclination.

Nine in the second place:

- a) Treading a smooth, level course.  
The perseverance of a dark man  
Brings good fortune.

b) "The perseverance of a dark man brings good fortune." He is central and does not get confused. This line is light, but occupies a dark place, hence the image of a dark man. However, since he walks in the middle of the road—the line is central—he does not meet with danger, but progresses along an even path and is not led astray by wrong relationships.

Σ Six in the third place:

- a) A one-eyed man is able to see,  
A lame man is able to tread.  
He treads on the tail of the tiger.  
The tiger bites the man.  
Misfortune.  
Thus does a warrior act on behalf of his great prince.
- b) "A one-eyed man is able to see," but not enough for clarity.  
"A lame man is able to tread," but not enough to tread with others.  
The misfortune in the biting of the man is due to the fact that the place is not appropriate.  
"Thus does a warrior act on behalf of his great prince," because his will is firm.

This line stands in both the nuclear trigrams, Li, eye, and Sun, leg. But since it is not correct—being weak in a strong place—its seeing and treading are defective. Furthermore, the place is in the very mouth of Tui, the lower trigram, hence the idea that the tiger bites. As a weak line it occupies a strong place and rests upon a firm line. Since it is at the high point of joyousness (Tui), it is light-minded and fails to retreat despite the danger of the situation. This suggests that it treads on the tail of the tiger and

is injured. When the line changes, the lower trigram becomes Ch'ien. This suggests the warrior who pushes on ruthlessly in order to serve his prince.

Nine in the fourth place:

a) He treads on the tail of the tiger.

Caution and circumspection

Lead ultimately to good fortune.

b) "Caution and circumspection lead ultimately to good fortune," because what is willed is done.

This line is related to the nine at the beginning, therefore it is careful when treading on the tail of the tiger. Its quality is the exact opposite of that of the foregoing line: in the latter, we have inner weakness coupled with outward aggressiveness, which leads into danger, here we have inner strength with outward caution, which leads to good fortune.

○ Nine in the fifth place:

a) Resolute conduct.

Perseverance with awareness of danger.

b) "Resolute conduct. Perseverance with awareness of danger."

The place is correct and appropriate.

The ruler of the hexagram, correct, central, strong, positioned in the ruler's place, is pledged to resolute action. At the same time he is aware of danger. Hence the good result announced in the judgment on the hexagram as a whole.

Nine at the top:

a) Look to your conduct and weigh the favorable signs.

When everything is fulfilled, supreme good fortune comes.

b) "Supreme good fortune" in the topmost place carries great blessing.

The line stands at the end of TREADING and therefore treads upon nothing further. Hence it looks back over its conduct. Since it has a strong character because of its nature (a strong line) and knows caution because of its place, good fortune is assured.

NOTE. This hexagram means conduct, with the secondary meaning of good manners. In practice, good manners depend on modesty and possession of a gracious ease. The hexagram consists of the Joyous below, related to the Creative, the strong, above. Thus the subordinate is cautious in the service of his superior.

Strange to note, although the hexagram as a whole, owing to the character of its two trigrams, contains the idea that the tiger on whose tail the man treads does not harm him, the line that evokes this idea, the six in the third place, is the very line whose individual fate it is to be bitten by the tiger. The reason is that on the one hand, when the hexagram is considered as a whole, the lower trigram as a unit is taken as joyous and obedient; on the other, however, in the judgment on the individual line, the latter is evaluated according to its unfavorable position, which bodes ill for it. Very often in the Book of

Changes one can note such a difference between the judgment pertaining to the hexagram as a whole and that pertaining to an individual line.

*Note*

1. [From chap. VII of the Great Commentary: Fifth Wing, Sixth Wing. See .pdf Material3, bk.II, for the sentences quoted.]