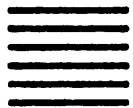


1. Ch'ien | The Creative



above CH'IEN THE CREATIVE, HEAVEN

below CH'IEN THE CREATIVE, HEAVEN

The first hexagram is made up of six unbroken lines. These unbroken lines stand for the primal power, which is light-giving, active, strong, and of the spirit. The hexagram is consistently strong in character, and since it is without weakness, its essence is power or energy. Its image is heaven. Its energy is represented as unrestricted by any fixed conditions in space and is therefore conceived of as motion. Time is regarded as the basis of this motion. Thus the hexagram includes also the power of time and the power of persisting in time, that is, duration.

The power represented by the hexagram is to be interpreted in a dual sense—in terms of its action on the universe and of its action on the world of men. In relation to the universe, the hexagram expresses the strong, creative action of the Deity. In relation to the human world, it denotes the creative action of the holy man or sage, of the ruler or leader of men, who through his power awakens and develops their higher nature.¹

THE JUDGMENT

THE CREATIVE works sublime success,

Furthering² through perseverance.

According to the original meaning, the attributes [sublimity, potentiality of success, power to further, perseverance] are paired. When an individual draws this oracle, it means that success will come to him from the primal depths of the universe and that everything depends upon his seeking his happiness and that of others in one way only, that is, by perseverance in what is right.

The specific meanings of the four attributes became the subject of speculation at an early date. The Chinese word here rendered by "sublime" means literally "head," "origin," "great." This is why Confucius says in explaining it: "Great indeed is the generating power of the Creative; all beings owe their beginning to it. This power permeates all heaven."³ For this attribute inheres in the other three as well.

The beginning of all things lies still in the beyond in the form of ideas that have yet to become real. But the Creative furthermore has power to lend form to these archetypes of ideas. This is indicated in the word success, and the process is represented by an image from nature: "The clouds pass and the rain does its work, and all individual beings flow into their forms."⁴

Applied to the human world, these attributes show the great man the way to notable success: "Because he sees with great clarity causes and effects, he completes the six steps at the right time and mounts

toward heaven on them at the right time, as though on six dragons." The six steps are the six different positions given in the hexagram, which are represented later by the dragon symbol. Here it is shown that the way to success lies in apprehending and giving actuality to the way of the universe [tao], which, as a law running through end and beginning, brings about all phenomena in time. Thus each step attained forthwith becomes a preparation for the next. Time is no longer a hindrance but the means of making actual what is potential.

The act of creation having found expression in the two attributes sublimity and success, the work of conservation is shown to be a continuous actualization and differentiation of form. This is expressed in the two terms "furthering" (literally, "creating that which accords with the nature of a given being") and "persevering" (literally, "correct and firm"). "The course of the Creative alters and shapes beings until each attains its true, specific nature, then it keeps them in conformity with the Great Harmony. Thus does it show itself to further through perseverance."

In relation to the human sphere, this shows how the great man brings peace and security to the world through his activity in creating order: "He towers high above the multitude of beings, and all lands are united in peace."

Another line of speculation goes still further in separating the words "sublime," "success," "furthering," "perseverance," and parallels them with the four cardinal virtues in humanity. To sublimity, which, as the fundamental principle, embraces all the other attributes, it links love. To the attribute success are linked the mores,⁵ which regulate and organize the expressions of love and thereby make them successful. The attribute furthering is correlated with justice, which creates the conditions in which each receives that which accords with his being, that which is due him and which constitutes his happiness. The attribute perseverance is correlated with wisdom, which discerns the immutable laws of all that happens and can therefore bring about enduring conditions. These speculations, already broached in the commentary called Wên Yen,⁶ later formed the bridge connecting the philosophy of the "five stages (elements) of change," as laid down in the Book of History (Shu Ching) with the philosophy of the Book of Changes, which is based solely on the polarity of positive and negative principles. In the course of time this combination of the two systems of thought opened the way for an increasingly intricate number symbolism.⁷

THE IMAGE

The movement of heaven is full of power.

Thus the superior man makes himself strong and untiring.

Since there is only one heaven, the doubling of the trigram Ch'ien, of which heaven is the image, indicates the movement of heaven. One complete revolution of heaven makes a day, and the repetition of the trigram means that each day is followed by another. This creates the idea of time. Since it is the same heaven moving with untiring power, there is also created the idea of duration both in and beyond time, a movement that never stops nor slackens, just as one day follows another in an unending course. This duration in time is the image of the power inherent in the Creative.

With this image as a model, the sage learns how best to develop himself so that his influence may endure. He must make himself strong in every way, by consciously casting out all that is inferior and

degrading. Thus he attains that tirelessness which depends upon consciously limiting the fields of his activity.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning⁸ means:

Hidden dragon. Do not act.

In China the dragon has a meaning altogether different from that given it in the Western world. The dragon is a symbol of the electrically charged, dynamic, arousing force that manifests itself in the thunderstorm. In winter this energy withdraws into the earth; in the early summer it becomes active again, appearing in the sky as thunder and lightning. As a result the creative forces on earth begin to stir again.

Here this creative force is still hidden beneath the earth and therefore has no effect. In terms of human affairs, this symbolizes a great man who is still unrecognized. Nonetheless he remains true to himself. He does not allow himself to be influenced by outward success or failure, but confident in his strength, he bides his time. Hence it is wise for the man who consults the oracle and draws this line to wait in the calm strength of patience. The time will fulfil itself. One need not fear lest strong will should not prevail; the main thing is not to expend one's powers prematurely in an attempt to obtain by force something for which the time is not yet ripe.

Nine in the second place means:

Dragon appearing in the field.

It furthers one to see the great man.

Here the effects of the light-giving power begin to manifest themselves. In terms of human affairs, this means that the great man makes his appearance in his chosen field of activity. As yet he has no commanding position but is still with his peers. However, what distinguishes him from the others is his seriousness of purpose, his unqualified reliability, and the influence he exerts on his environment without conscious effort. Such a man is destined to gain great influence and to set the world in order. Therefore it is favorable to see him.

Nine in the third place means:

All day long the superior man is creatively active.

At nightfall his mind is still beset with cares.

Danger. No blame.

A sphere of influence opens up for the great man. His fame begins to spread. The masses flock to him. His inner power is adequate to the increased outer activity.⁹ There are all sorts of things to be done, and when others are at rest in the evening, plans and anxieties press in upon him. But danger lurks here at the place of transition from lowliness to the heights. Many a great man has been ruined because the masses flocked to him and swept him into their course. Ambition has destroyed his integrity. However, true greatness is not impaired by temptations. He who remains in touch with the

time that is dawning, and with its demands, is prudent enough to avoid all pitfalls, and remains blameless.

Nine in the fourth place means:

Wavering flight over the depths.

No blame.

A place of transition has been reached, and free choice can enter in. A twofold possibility is presented to the great man: he can soar to the heights and play an important part in the world, or he can withdraw into solitude and develop himself. He can go the way of the hero or that of the holy sage who seeks seclusion. There is no general law to say which of the two is the right way. Each one in this situation must make a free choice according to the inner law of his being. If the individual acts consistently and is true to himself, he will find the way that is appropriate for him. This way is right for him and without blame.

O Nine in the fifth place¹⁰ means:

Flying dragon in the heavens.

It furthers one to see the great man.

Here the great man has attained the sphere of the heavenly beings. His influence spreads and becomes visible throughout the whole world. Everyone who sees him may count himself blessed. Confucius says about this line:

Things that accord in tone vibrate together. Things that have affinity in their inmost natures seek one another. Water flows to what is wet, fire turns to what is dry. Clouds (the breath of heaven) follow the dragon, wind (the breath of earth) follows the tiger. Thus the sage arises, and all creatures follow him with their eyes. What is born of heaven feels related to what is above. What is born of earth feels related to what is below. Each follows its kind.

Nine at the top means:

Arrogant dragon will have cause to repent.

When a man seeks to climb so high that he loses touch with the rest of mankind, he becomes isolated, and this necessarily leads to failure. This line warns against titanic aspirations that exceed one's power. A precipitous fall would follow.

When all the lines are nines, it means:

There appears a flight of dragons without heads.

Good fortune.

When all the lines are nines, it means that the whole hexagram is in motion and changes into the hexagram K'un (2), THE RECEPTIVE, whose character is devotion. The strength of the Creative and the mildness of the Receptive unite. Strength is indicated by the flight of dragons, mildness by the fact that their heads are hidden. This means that mildness in action joined to strength of decision brings good fortune.

Notes

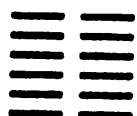
1. The hexagram is assigned to the fourth month, May-June, when the light-giving power is at its zenith, i.e., before the summer solstice has marked the beginning of the year's decline. [The German text reads "April—May"; this is obviously a skip, for the first month of the Chinese lunar year extends approximately from the beginning of February to the beginning of March. New Year is a variable date, falling around February 5. Two or three other slips of this sort occurring later in the book have been similarly corrected, but without special mention.]
2. [The German word used here is *fördernd*, literally rendered by "furthering." It occurs again and again as a key word in Wilhelm's rendering of the Chinese text. To avoid extreme awkwardness, the phrase "is favorable" is occasionally used as an alternative.]
3. [This quotation and those following are from commentary material on this hexagram appearing in bk. III. It will be noted here, as well as in a number of other instances, that the wording of the passages is not identical in the two books.]
4. Cf. Genesis 2:1 ff., where the development of the different creatures is also attributed to the fall of rain.
5. ["Mores" is the word chosen to render the German word *Sitte*, when the latter refers, as in the present instance, to what the Chinese know as *li*. However, neither "mores" nor any other available English word, such as "manners", or "customs," conveys an adequate idea of what *li* stood for in ancient China, because none of them necessarily denotes anything more than behavior growing out of and regulated by tradition. The ideas for which *li* stands seem to have had their origin in a religious attitude to life and in ethical principles developing out of that attitude. On the religious side *li* meant the observance with true piety of the ritual through which the "will of heaven" was interpreted and made to prevail on earth. On the moral side it meant the sense of propriety—understood to be innate in man—that, through training, makes possible right relationships in personal life and in society. *Li* was the corner-stone upon which Confucius built in his effort to bring order out of chaos in his era (see *The Sacred Books of the East*, XXVII: *The Li Ki*). Obedience to the code of *li* was entirely self-imposed as regards the "superior man," who in feudal times was always a man of rank. The conduct of the "inferior man"—the lower-class individual—was governed by law.]
6. [See Introduction to *The Material*, bk. II, in .pdf Material1. The text of the *Wên Yen* (Commentary on the Words of the Text) appears in bk. III.]
7. The Creative causes the beginning and begetting of all beings, and can therefore be designated as heaven, radiant energy, father, ruler. It is a question whether the Chinese personified the Creative, as the Greeks conceived it in *Zeus*. The answer is that this problem is not the main one for the Chinese. The divine-creative principle is supra-personal and makes itself perceptible only through its all-powerful activity. It has, to be sure, an external aspect, which is heaven, and heaven, like all that lives, has a spiritual consciousness, God, the Supreme Ruler. But all this is summed up as the Creative.
8. The lines are counted from the bottom up, i.e., the lowest is taken as the first. If the person consulting the oracle draws a seven, this is important in relation to the structure of the hexagram as a whole, because it is a strong line, but inasmuch as it does not move [change] it has no meaning as an individual line. On the other hand, if the questioner draws a nine, the line is a moving one, and a

special meaning is attached to it; this must be considered separately. The same principle applies in respect to all the other strong lines [and also as regards moving and non-moving weak lines, i.e., sixes and eights]. The two lowest lines in each hexagram stand for the earth, the two in the middle for the world of man, and the upper two for heaven. [Further details as to the meaning of the nines and sixes are given in *On Consulting the Oracle*, in .pdf IChing1.]

9. [The upper trigram is considered to be "outside," the lower "inside" (see *The Structure of the Hexagrams*, in .pdf IChing1). This distinction underlies the constant juxtaposition, to be observed throughout bks. I and III, of inner, mental states and external actions or events, of subjective and objective experiences. From this also arise the frequent comparisons between ability and position, form and content, outer adornment and inner worth.]

10. [The circle indicates that this line is a governing ruler of the hexagram. Constituting rulers are marked by a square. For explanation of governing and constituting rulers, see *The Structure of the Hexagrams*, in .pdf IChing1.]

2. K'un | The Receptive



above **K'UN THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH**

below **K'UN THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH**

This hexagram is made up of broken lines only. The broken line represents the dark, yielding, receptive primal power of yin. The attribute of the hexagram is devotion; its image is the earth. It is the perfect complement of THE CREATIVE—the complement, not the opposite,¹ for the Receptive does not combat the Creative but completes it. It represents nature in contrast to spirit, earth in contrast to heaven, space as against time, the female-maternal as against the male-paternal. However, as applied to human affairs, the principle of this complementary relationship is found not only in the relation between man and woman, but also in that between prince and minister and between father and son. Indeed, even in the individual this duality appears in the coexistence of the spiritual world and the world of the senses.

But strictly speaking there is no real dualism here, because there is a clearly defined hierarchic relationship between the two principles. In itself of course the Receptive is just as important as the Creative, but the attribute of devotion defines the place occupied by this primal power in relation to the Creative. For the Receptive must be activated and led by the Creative; then it is productive of good. Only when it abandons this position and tries to stand as an equal side by side with the Creative, does it become evil. The result then is opposition to and struggle against the Creative, which is productive of evil to both.

THE JUDGMENT

THE RECEPTIVE brings about sublime success,
Furthering through the perseverance of a mare.
If the superior man undertakes something and tries to lead,
He goes astray;
But if he follows, he finds guidance.
It is favorable to find friends in the west and south,
To forego friends in the east and north.
Quiet perseverance brings good fortune.

The four fundamental aspects of the Creative—"sublime success, furthering through perseverance"—are also attributed to the Receptive. Here, however, the perseverance is more closely defined: it is that of a mare. The Receptive connotes spatial reality in contrast to the spiritual potentiality of the Creative. The potential becomes real and the spiritual becomes spatial through a specifically qualifying definition. Thus the qualification, "of a mare," is here added to the idea of perseverance. The horse belongs to earth just as the dragon belongs to heaven. Its tireless roaming over the plains is taken as a symbol of the vast expanse of the earth. This is the symbol chosen because the mare combines the strength and swiftness of the horse with the gentleness and devotion of the cow.

Only because nature in its myriad forms corresponds with the myriad impulses of the Creative can it make these impulses real. Nature's richness lies in its power to nourish all living things; its greatness lies in its power to give them beauty and splendor. Thus it prospers all that lives. It is the Creative that begets things, but they are brought to birth by the Receptive. Applied to human affairs, therefore, what the hexagram indicates is action in conformity with the situation. The person in question is not in an independent position, but is acting as an assistant. This means that he must achieve something. It is not his task to try to lead—that would only make him lose the way—but to let himself be led. If he knows how to meet fate with an attitude of acceptance, he is sure to find the right guidance. The superior man lets himself be guided; he does not go ahead blindly, but learns from the situation what is demanded of him and then follows this intimation from fate.

Since there is something to be accomplished, we need friends and helpers in the hour of toil and effort, once the ideas to be realized are firmly set. The time of toil and effort is indicated by the west and the south, for west and south symbolize the place where the Receptive works for the Creative, as nature does in summer and autumn. If in that situation one does not mobilize all one's powers, the work to be accomplished will not be done. Hence to find friends there means to find guidance. But in addition to the time of toil and effort, there is also a time of planning, and for this we need solitude. The east symbolizes the place where a man receives orders from his master, and the north the place where he reports on what he has done. At that time he must be alone and objective. In this sacred hour he must do without companions, so that the purity of the moment may not be spoiled by factional hates and favoritism.

THE IMAGE

The earth's condition is receptive devotion.

Thus the superior man who has breadth of character

Carries the outer world.

Just as there is only one heaven, so too there is only one earth. In the hexagram of heaven the doubling of the trigram implies duration in time, but in the hexagram of earth the doubling connotes the solidity and extension in space by virtue of which the earth is able to carry and preserve all things that live and move upon it. The earth in its devotion carries all things, good and evil, without exception. In the same way the superior man gives to his character breadth, purity, and sustaining power, so that he is able both to support and to bear with people and things.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning means:

When there is hoarfrost underfoot,

Solid ice is not far off.

Just as the light-giving power represents life, so the dark power, the shadowy, represents death. When the first hoarfrost comes in the autumn, the power of darkness and cold is just at its beginning. After these first warnings, signs of death will gradually multiply, until, in obedience to immutable laws, stark winter with its ice is here.

In life it is the same. After certain scarcely noticeable signs of decay have appeared, they go on increasing until final dissolution comes. But in life precautions can be taken by heeding the first signs of decay and checking them in time.

○ Six in the second place means:

Straight, square, great.

Without purpose,

Yet nothing remains unfurthered.

The symbol of heaven is the circle, and that of earth is the square. Thus squareness is a primary quality of the earth. On the other hand, movement in a straight line, as well as magnitude, is a primary quality of the Creative. But all square things have their origin in a straight line and in turn form solid bodies. In mathematics, when we discriminate between lines, planes, and solids, we find that rectangular planes result from straight lines, and cubic magnitudes from rectangular planes. The Receptive accommodates itself to the qualities of the Creative and makes them its own. Thus a square develops out of a straight line and a cube out of a square. This is compliance with the laws of the Creative; nothing is taken away, nothing added. Therefore the Receptive has no need of a special purpose of its own, nor of any effort; yet everything turns out as it should.

Nature creates all beings without erring: this is its straightness. It is calm and still: this is its foursquareness. It tolerates all creatures equally: this is its greatness. Therefore it attains what is right for all without artifice or special intentions. Man achieves the height of wisdom when all that he does is as self-evident as what nature does.

Six in the third place means:

Hidden lines.

One is able to remain persevering.

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

Seek not works, but bring to completion.

If a man is free of vanity he is able to conceal his abilities and keep them from attracting attention too soon; thus he can mature undisturbed. If conditions demand it, he can also enter public life, but that too he does with restraint. The wise man gladly leaves fame to others. He does not seek to have credited to himself things that stand accomplished, but hopes to release active forces; that is, he completes his works in such a manner that they may bear fruit for the future.

Six in the fourth place means:

A tied-up sack. No blame, no praise.

The dark element opens when it moves and closes when at rest.² The strictest reticence is indicated here. The time is dangerous, because any degree of prominence leads either to the enmity of irresistible antagonists if one challenges them or to misconceived recognition if one is complaisant. Therefore a man ought to maintain reserve, be it in solitude or in the turmoil of the world, for there too he can hide himself so well that no one knows him.

Six in the fifth place means:

A yellow lower garment brings supreme good fortune.

Yellow is the color of the earth and of the middle; it is the symbol of that which is reliable and genuine. The lower garment is inconspicuously decorated—the symbol of aristocratic reserve. When anyone is called upon to work in a prominent but not independent position, true success depends on the utmost discretion. A man's genuineness and refinement should not reveal themselves directly; they should express themselves only indirectly as an effect from within.

Six at the top means:

Dragons fight in the meadow.

Their blood is black and yellow.

In the top place the dark element should yield to the light. If it attempts to maintain a position to which it is not entitled and to rule instead of serving, it draws down upon itself the anger of the strong. A struggle ensues in which it is overthrown, with injury, however, to both sides. The dragon, symbol of heaven, comes to fight the false dragon that symbolizes the inflation of the earth principle. Midnight blue is the color of heaven; yellow is the color of the earth. Therefore, when black and yellow blood flow, it is a sign that in this unnatural contest both primal powers suffer injury.³

When all the lines are sixes, it means:

Lasting perseverance furthers.

When nothing but sixes appears, the hexagram of THE RECEPITIVE changes into the hexagram of THE CREATIVE. By holding fast to what is right, it gains the power of enduring. There is indeed no advance, but neither is there retrogression.

Notes

1. [Hexagrams that are opposites in structure are not necessarily opposites in meaning.]
2. [See Ta Chuan, Part I, Chapter VI, sec. 2, in .pdf Material2.]
3. While the top line of THE CREATIVE indicates titanic pride and forms a parallel to the Greek legend of Icarus, the top line of THE RECEPITIVE presents a parallel to the myth of Lucifer's rebellion against God, or to the battle between the powers of darkness and the gods of Valhalla, which ended with the Twilight of the Gods.

3. Chun | Difficulty at the Beginning



above **K'AN** **THE ABYSMAL, WATER**

below **CHÊN** **THE AROUSING, THUNDER**

The name of the hexagram, Chun, really connotes a blade of grass pushing against an obstacle as it sprouts out of the earth— hence the meaning, "difficulty at the beginning." The hexagram indicates the way in which heaven and earth bring forth individual beings. It is their first meeting, which is beset with difficulties. The lower trigram Chên is the Arousing; its motion is upward and its image is thunder. The upper trigram K'an stands for the Abysmal, the dangerous. Its motion is downward and its image is rain. The situation points to teeming, chaotic profusion; thunder and rain fill the air. But the chaos clears up. While the Abysmal sinks, the upward movement eventually passes beyond the danger. A thunderstorm brings release from tension, and all things breathe freely again.

THE JUDGMENT

DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING works supreme success,

Furthering through perseverance.

Nothing should be undertaken.

It furthers one to appoint helpers.

Times of growth are beset with difficulties. They resemble a first birth. But these difficulties arise from the very profusion of all that is struggling to attain form. Everything is in motion: therefore if one perseveres there is a prospect of great success, in spite of the existing danger. When it is a man's fate to undertake such new beginnings, everything is still unformed, dark.

Hence he must hold back, because any premature move might bring disaster. Likewise, it is very important not to remain alone; in order to overcome the chaos he needs helpers. This is not to say,

however, that he himself should look on passively at what is happening. He must lend his hand and participate with inspiration and guidance.

THE IMAGE

Clouds and thunder:

The image of DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING.

Thus the superior man

Brings order out of confusion.

Clouds and thunder are represented by definite decorative lines; this means that in the chaos of difficulty at the beginning, order is already implicit. So too the superior man has to arrange and organize the inchoate profusion of such times of beginning, just as one sorts out silk threads from a knotted tangle and binds them into skeins. In order to find one's place in the infinity of being, one must be able both to separate and to unite.

THE LINES

○ Nine at the beginning means:

Hesitation and hindrance.

It furthers one to remain persevering.

It furthers one to appoint helpers.

If a person encounters a hindrance at the beginning of an enterprise, he must not try to force advance but must pause and take thought. However, nothing should put him off his course; he must persevere and constantly keep the goal in sight. It is important to seek out the right assistants, but he can find them only if he avoids arrogance and associates with his fellows in a spirit of humility. Only then will he attract those with whose help he can combat the difficulties.

Six in the second place means:

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.

We find ourselves beset by difficulties and hindrances. Suddenly there is a turn of affairs, as if someone were coming up with a horse and wagon and unhitching them. This event comes so unexpectedly that we assume the newcomer to be a robber. Gradually it becomes clear that he has no evil intentions but seeks to be friendly and to offer help. But this offer is not to be accepted, because it does not come from the right quarter. We must wait until the time is fulfilled; ten years is a fulfilled cycle of time. Then normal conditions return of themselves, and we can join forces with the friend intended for us.

Using the image of a betrothed girl who remains true to her lover in face of grave conflicts, the hexagram gives counsel for a special situation. When in times of difficulty a hindrance is encountered and unexpected relief is offered from a source unrelated to us, we must be careful and not take upon ourselves any obligations entailed by such help; otherwise our freedom of decision is impaired. If we bide our time, things will quiet down again, and we shall attain what we have hoped for.¹

Six in the third place means:

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.

If a man tries to hunt in a strange forest and has no guide, he loses his way. When he finds himself in difficulties he must not try to steal out of them unthinkingly and without guidance. Fate cannot be duped; premature effort, without the necessary guidance, ends in failure and disgrace. Therefore the superior man, discerning the seeds of coming events, prefers to renounce a wish rather than to provoke failure and humiliation by trying to force its fulfilment.

Six in the fourth place means:

Horse and wagon part.

Strive for union.

To go brings good fortune.

Everything acts to further.

We are in a situation in which it is our duty to act, but we lack sufficient power. However, an opportunity to make connections offers itself. It must be seized. Neither false pride nor false reserve should deter us. Bringing oneself to take the first step, even when it involves a certain degree of self-abnegation, is a sign of inner clarity. To accept help in a difficult situation is not a disgrace. If the right helper is found, all goes well.

○ Nine in the fifth place means:

Difficulties in blessing.

A little perseverance brings good fortune.

Great perseverance brings misfortune.

An individual is in a position in which he cannot so express his good intentions that they will actually take shape and be understood. Other people interpose and distort everything he does. He should then be cautious and proceed step by step. He must not try to force the consummation of a great undertaking, because success is possible only when general confidence already prevails. It is only through faithful and conscientious work, unobtrusively carried on, that the situation gradually clears up and the hindrance disappears.

Six at the top means:

Horse and wagon part.

Bloody tears flow.

The difficulties at the beginning are too great for some persons. They get stuck and never find their way out; they fold their hands and give up the struggle. Such resignation is the saddest of all things. Therefore Confucius says of this line: "Bloody tears flow: one should not persist in this."

Notes

1. A different translation is possible here, which would result in a different interpretation:

Difficulties pile up.

Horse and wagon turn about.

If the robber were not there,

The wooer would come.

The maiden is faithful, she does not pledge herself.

Ten years—then she pledges herself.

4. Mêng | Youthful Folly



above KÊN KEEPING STILL, MOUNTAIN

below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

In this hexagram we are reminded of youth and folly¹ in two different ways. The image of the upper trigram, Kên, is the mountain, that of the lower, K'an, is water; the spring rising at the foot of the mountain is the image of inexperienced youth. Keeping still is the attribute of the upper trigram; that of the lower is the abyss, danger. Stopping in perplexity on the brink of a dangerous abyss is a symbol of the folly of youth. However, the two trigrams also show the way of overcoming the follies of youth. Water is something that of necessity flows on. When the spring gushes forth, it does not know at first where it will go. But its steady flow fills up the deep place blocking its progress, and success is attained.

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.

In the time of youth, folly is not an evil. One may succeed in spite of it, provided one finds an experienced teacher and has the right attitude toward him. This means, first of all, that the youth himself must be conscious of his lack of experience and must seek out the teacher. Without this modesty and this interest there is no guarantee that he has the necessary receptivity, which should express itself in respectful acceptance of the teacher. This is the reason why the teacher must wait to be sought out instead of offering himself. Only thus can the instruction take place at the right time and in the right way.

A teacher's answer to the question of a pupil ought to be clear and definite like that expected from an oracle; thereupon it ought to be accepted as a key for resolution of doubts and a basis for decision. If mistrustful or unintelligent questioning is kept up, it serves only to annoy the teacher. He does well to ignore it in silence, just as the oracle gives one answer only and refuses to be tempted by questions implying doubt.

Given in addition a perseverance that never slackens until the points are mastered one by one, real success is sure to follow. Thus the hexagram counsels the teacher as well as the pupil.

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.

A spring succeeds in flowing on and escapes stagnation by filling up all the hollow places in its path. In the same way character is developed by thoroughness that skips nothing but like water, gradually and steadily fills up all gaps and so flows onward.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning means:

To make a fool develop

It furthers one to apply discipline.

The fetters should be removed.

To go on in this way brings humiliation.

Law is the beginning of education. Youth in its inexperience is inclined at first to take everything carelessly and playfully. It must be shown the seriousness of life. A certain measure of taking oneself in hand, brought about by strict discipline, is a good thing. He who plays with life never amounts to anything. However, discipline should not degenerate into drill. Continuous drill has a humiliating effect and cripples a man's powers.

O Nine in the second place means:

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.

These lines picture a man who has no external power, but who has enough strength of mind to bear his burden of responsibility. He has the inner superiority and strength that enable him to tolerate with kindness the shortcomings of human folly. The same attitude is owed to women as the weaker sex. One must understand them and give them recognition in a spirit of chivalrous consideration. Only this combination of inner strength with outer reserve enables one to take on the responsibility of directing a larger social body with real success.

Six in the third place means:

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

Loses possession of herself.

Nothing furthers.

A weak, inexperienced man, struggling to rise, easily loses his own individuality when he slavishly imitates a strong personality of higher station. He is like a girl throwing herself away when she meets a strong man. Such a servile approach should not be encouraged, because it is bad both for the youth and the teacher. A girl owes it to her dignity to wait until she is wooed. In both cases it is undignified to offer oneself, and no good comes of accepting such an offer.

Six in the fourth place means:

Entangled folly brings humiliation.

For youthful folly it is the most hopeless thing to entangle itself in empty imaginings. The more obstinately it clings to such unreal fantasies, the more certainly will humiliation overtake it.

Often the teacher, when confronted with such entangled folly, has no other course but to leave the fool to himself for a time, not sparing him the humiliation that results. This is frequently the only means of rescue.

O Six in the fifth place means:

Childlike folly brings good fortune.

An inexperienced person who seeks instruction in a childlike and unassuming way is on the right path, for the man devoid of arrogance who subordinates himself to his teacher will certainly be helped.

Nine at the top means:

In punishing folly

It does not further one

To commit transgressions.

The only thing that furthers

Is to prevent transgressions.

Sometimes an incorrigible fool must be punished. He who will not heed will be made to feel. This punishment is quite different from a preliminary shaking up. But the penalty should not be imposed in

Six in the fourth place means:

Waiting in blood.

Get out of the pit.

The situation is extremely dangerous. It is of utmost gravity now — a matter of life and death. Bloodshed seems imminent. There is no going forward or backward; we are cut off as if in a pit. Now we must simply stand fast and let fate take its course. This composure, which keeps us from aggravating the trouble by anything we might do, is the only way of getting out of the dangerous pit.

O Nine in the fifth place means:

Waiting at meat and drink.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

Even in the midst of danger there come intervals of peace when things go relatively well. If we possess inner strength we shall take advantage of these intervals to fortify ourselves for renewed struggle. We must know how to enjoy the moment without being deflected from the goal, perseverance is needed to remain victorious.

This is true in public life as well; it is not possible to achieve everything all at once. The height of wisdom is to allow people enough recreation to quicken pleasure in their work until the task is completed. Herein lies the secret of the whole hexagram. It differs from Chien, OBSTRUCTION (39), in the fact that in this instance, while waiting, we are sure of our cause and therefore do not lose the serenity born of inner cheerfulness.

Six at the top means:

One falls into the pit.

Three uninvited guests arrive.

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

The waiting is over; the danger can no longer be averted. One falls into the pit and must yield to the inevitable. Everything seems to have been in vain. But precisely in this extremity things take an unforeseen turn. Without a move on one's own part, there is outside intervention. At first one cannot be sure of its meaning; is it rescue or is it destruction? A person in this situation must keep his mind alert and not withdraw into himself with a sulky gesture of refusal, but must greet the new turn with respect. Thus he ultimately escapes danger, and all goes well. Even happy turns of fortune often come in a form that at first seems strange to us.

Notes

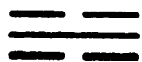
1. [In the German translation, this secondary name does not appear in bk. I. See Commentary on hexagram 5, Bk. III.]

2. [The upper trigram is considered to be in front of the lower. See The Structure of the Hexagrams in .pdf IChing1]

6. Sung | Conflict



above CH'IEN THE CREATIVE, HEAVEN



below K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER

The upper trigram, whose image is heaven, has an upward movement; the lower trigram, water, in accordance with its nature, tends downward. Thus the two halves move away from each other, giving rise to the idea of conflict.

The attribute of the Creative is strength, that of the Abysmal is danger, guile. Where cunning has force before it, there is conflict.

A third indication of conflict, in terms of character, is presented by the combination of deep cunning within and fixed determination outwardly. A person of this character will certainly be quarrelsome.

THE JUDGMENT

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.

Conflict develops when one feels himself to be in the right and runs into opposition. If one is not convinced of being in the right, opposition leads to craftiness or high-handed encroachment but not to open conflict.

If a man is entangled in a conflict, his only salvation lies in being so clear-headed and inwardly strong that he is always ready to come to terms by meeting the opponent halfway. To carry on the conflict to the bitter end has evil effects even when one is in the right, because the enmity is then perpetuated. It is important to see the great man, that is, an impartial man whose authority is great enough to terminate the conflict amicably or assure a just decision. In times of strife, crossing the great water is to be avoided, that is, dangerous enterprises are not to be begun, because in order to be successful they require concerted unity of forces. Conflict within weakens the power to conquer danger without.

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 image indicates that the causes of conflict are latent in the opposing tendencies of the two trigrams. Once these opposing tendencies appear, conflict is inevitable. To avoid it, therefore, everything must be taken carefully into consideration in the very beginning. If rights and duties are exactly defined, or if, in a group, the spiritual trends of the individuals harmonize, the cause of conflict is removed in advance.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning means:

If one does not perpetuate the affair,

There is a little gossip.

In the end, good fortune comes.

While a conflict is in the incipient stage, the best thing to do is to drop the issue. Especially when the adversary is stronger, it is not advisable to risk pushing the conflict to a decision. It may come to a slight dispute, but in the end all goes well.

Nine in the second place means:

One cannot engage in conflict;

One returns home, gives way.

The people of his town,

Three hundred households,

Remain free of guilt.

In a struggle with an enemy of superior strength, retreat is no disgrace. Timely withdrawal prevents bad consequences. If, out of a false sense of honor, a man allowed himself to be tempted into an unequal conflict, he would be drawing down disaster upon himself. In such a case a wise and conciliatory attitude benefits the whole community, which will then not be drawn into the conflict.

Six in the third place means:

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.

This is a warning of the danger that goes with an expansive disposition. Only that which has been honestly acquired through merit remains a permanent possession. It can happen that such a possession may be contested, but since it is really one's own, one cannot be robbed of it. Whatever a man possesses through the strength of his own nature cannot be lost. If one enters the service of a superior, one can avoid conflict only by not seeking works for the sake of prestige. It is enough if the work is done: let the honor go to the other.

Nine in the fourth place means:

One cannot engage in conflict.

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

This refers to a person whose inner attitude at first lacks peace. He does not feel content with his situation and would like to improve it through conflict. In contrast to the situation of the nine in the second place, he is dealing with a weaker opponent and might therefore succeed. But he cannot carry on the fight, because, since right is not on his side, he cannot justify the conflict to his conscience. Therefore he turns back and accepts his fate. He changes his mind and finds lasting peace in being at one with eternal law. This brings good fortune.

○ Nine in the fifth place means:

To contend before him
 Brings supreme good fortune.

This refers to an arbiter in a conflict who is powerful and just, and strong enough to lend weight to the right side. A dispute can be turned over to him with confidence. If one is in the right, one attains great good fortune.

Nine at the top means:

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.

Here we have someone who has carried a conflict to the bitter end and has triumphed. He is granted a decoration, but his happiness does not last. He is attacked again and again, and the result is conflict without end.

7. Shih | The Army



above **K'UN THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH**

below **K'AN THE ABYSMAL, WATER**

This hexagram is made up of the trigrams K'an, water, and K'un, earth, and thus it symbolizes the ground water stored up in the earth. In the same way military strength is stored up in the mass of the people—invisible in times of peace but always ready for use as a source of power. The attributes of the two trigrams are danger inside and obedience outside. This points to the nature of an army, which at the core is dangerous, while discipline and obedience must prevail outside.

Of the individual lines, the one that controls the hexagram is the strong nine in the second place, to which the other lines, all yielding, are subordinate. This line indicates a commander, because it stands in the middle of one of the two trigrams. But since it is in the lower rather than the upper trigram, it represents not the ruler but the efficient general, who maintains obedience in the army by his authority.

THE JUDGMENT

THE ARMY. The army needs perseverance

And a strong man.

Good fortune without blame.

An army is a mass that needs organization in order to become a fighting force. Without strict discipline nothing can be accomplished, but this discipline must not be achieved by force. It requires a strong man who captures the hearts of the people and awakens their enthusiasm. In order that he may develop his abilities he needs the complete confidence of his ruler, who must entrust him with full responsibility as long as the war lasts. But war is always a dangerous thing and brings with it destruction and devastation. Therefore it should not be resorted to rashly but, like a poisonous drug, should be used as a last recourse.

The justifying cause of a war, and clear and intelligible war aims, ought to be explained to the people by an experienced leader. Unless there is a quite definite war aim to which the people can consciously pledge themselves, the unity and strength of conviction that lead to victory will not be forthcoming. But the leader must also look to it that the passion of war and the delirium of victory do not give rise to unjust acts that will not meet with general approval. If justice and perseverance are the basis of action, all goes well.

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.

Ground water is invisibly present within the earth. In the same way the military power of a people is invisibly present in the masses. When danger threatens, every peasant becomes a soldier; when the war ends, he goes back to his plow. He who is generous toward the people wins their love, and a people living under a mild rule becomes strong and powerful. Only a people economically strong can be important in military power. Such power must therefore be cultivated by improving the economic condition of the people and by humane government. Only when there is this invisible bond between government and people, so that the people are sheltered by their government as ground water is sheltered by the earth, is it possible to wage a victorious war.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning means:

An army must set forth in proper order.

If the order is not good, misfortune threatens.

At the beginning of a military enterprise, order is imperative. A just and valid cause must exist, and the obedience and coordination of the troops must be well organized, otherwise the result is inevitably failure.

○ Nine in the second place means:

In the midst of the army.

Good fortune. No blame.

The king bestows a triple decoration.

The leader should be in the midst of his army, in touch with it sharing good and bad with the masses he leads. This alone makes him equal to the heavy demands made upon him. He needs also the recognition of the ruler. The decorations he receives are justified, because there is no question of personal preferment here: the whole army, whose center he is, is honored in his person.

Six in the third place means:

Perchance the army carries corpses in the wagon.

Misfortune.

Here we have a choice of two explanations. One points to defeat because someone other than the chosen leader interferes with the command; the other is similar in its general meaning, but the expression, "carries corpses in the wagon," is interpreted differently. At burials and at sacrifices to the dead it was customary in China for the deceased to whom the sacrifice was made to be represented by a boy of the family, who sat in the dead man's place and was honored as his representative. On the basis of this custom the text is interpreted as meaning that a "corpse boy" is sitting in the wagon, or, in other words, that authority is not being exercised by the proper leaders but has been usurped by others. Perhaps the whole difficulty clears up if it is inferred that there has been an error in copying. The character fan, meaning "all," may have been misread as shih, which means "corpse." Allowing for this error, the meaning would be that if the multitude assumes leadership of the army (rides in the wagon), misfortune will ensue.

Six in the fourth place means:

The army retreats. No blame.

In face of a superior enemy, with whom it would be hopeless to engage in battle, an orderly retreat is the only correct procedure, because it will save the army from defeat and disintegration. It is by no means a sign of courage or strength to insist upon engaging in a hopeless struggle regardless of circumstances.

○ Six in the fifth place means:

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.

Game is in the field—it has left its usual haunt in the forest and is devastating the fields. This points to an enemy invasion. Energetic combat and punishment are here thoroughly justified, but they must not degenerate into a wild melee in which everyone fends for himself. Despite the greatest degree of perseverance and bravery, this would lead to misfortune. The army must be directed by an experienced leader. It is a matter of waging war, not of permitting the mob to slaughter all who fall into their hands; if they do, defeat will be the result, and despite all perseverance there is danger of misfortune.

Six at the top means:

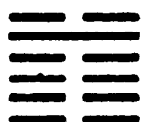
The great prince issues commands,

Founds states, vests families with fiefs.

Inferior people should not be employed.

The war has ended successfully, victory is won, and the king divides estates and fiefs among his faithful vassals. But it is important that inferior people should not come into power. If they have helped, let them be paid off with money, but they should not be awarded lands or the privileges of rulers, lest power be abused.

8. Pi | Holding Together (Union)



above **K'AN** **THE ABYSMAL, WATER**

below **K'UN** **THE RECEPTIVE, EARTH**

The waters on the surface of the earth flow together wherever they can, as for example in the ocean, where all the rivers come together. Symbolically this connotes holding together and the laws that regulate it. The same idea is suggested by the fact that all the lines of the hexagram except the fifth, the place of the ruler, are yielding. The yielding lines hold together because they are influenced by a man of strong will in the leading position, a man who is their center strong and guiding personality the others, finding in them the complement of his own nature.

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.

What is required is that we unite with others, in order that all may complement and aid one another through holding together. But such holding together calls for a central figure around whom other persons may unite. To become a center of influence holding people together is a grave matter and fraught with great responsibility. It requires greatness of spirit, consistency, and strength. Therefore let him who wishes to gather others about him ask himself whether he is equal to the undertaking, for anyone attempting the task without a real calling for it only makes confusion worse than if no union at all had taken place.

But when there is a real rallying point, those who at first are hesitant or uncertain gradually come in of their own accord. Late-comers must suffer the consequences, for in holding together the question of the right time is also important. Relationships are formed and firmly established according to definite inner laws. Common experiences strengthen these ties, and he who comes too late to share in these basic experiences must suffer for it if, as a straggler, he finds the door locked.

If a man has recognized the necessity for union and does not feel strong enough to function as the center, it is his duty to become a member of some other organic fellowship.

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.

Water fills up all the empty places on the earth and clings fast to it. The social organization of ancient China was based on this principle of the holding together of dependents and rulers. Water flows to unite with water, because all parts of it are subject to the same laws. So too should human society hold together through a community of interests that allows each individual to feel himself a member of a whole. The central power of a social organization must see to it that every member finds that his true interest lies in holding together with it, as was the case in the paternal relationship between king and vassals in ancient China.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning means:

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.

Fundamental sincerity is the only proper basis for forming relationships. This attitude, symbolized by a full earthen bowl, in which the content is everything and the empty form nothing, shows itself not in

clever words but through the strength of what lies within the speaker. This strength is so great that it has power to attract good fortune to itself from without.

Six in the second place means:

Hold to him inwardly.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

If a person responds perseveringly and in the right way to the behests from above that summon him to action, his relations with others are intrinsic and he does not lose himself. But if a man seeks association with others as if he were an obsequious office hunter, he throws himself away. He does not follow the path of the superior man, who never loses his dignity.

Six in the third place means:

You hold together with the wrong people.

We are often among people who do not belong to our own sphere. In that case we must beware of being drawn into false intimacy through force of habit. Needless to say, this would have evil consequences. Maintaining sociability without intimacy is the only right attitude toward such people, because otherwise we should not be free to enter into relationship with people of our own kind later on.

Six in the fourth place means:

Hold to him outwardly also.

Perseverance brings good fortune.

Here the relations with a man who is the center of union are well established. Then we may, and indeed we should, show our attachment openly. But we must remain constant and not allow ourselves to be led astray.

O Nine in the fifth place means:

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.

In the royal hunts of ancient China it was customary to drive up the game from three sides, but on the fourth the animals had a chance to run off. If they failed to do this they had to pass through a gate behind which the king stood ready to shoot. Only animals that entered here were shot; those that ran off in front were permitted to escape. This custom accorded with a kingly attitude; the royal hunter did not wish to turn the chase into a slaughter, but held that the kill should consist only of those animals which had so to speak voluntarily exposed themselves.

There is depicted here a ruler, or influential man, to whom people are attracted. Those who come to him he accepts, those who do not come are allowed to go their own way. He invites none, flatters

none—all come of their own free will. In this way there develops a voluntary dependence among those who hold to him. They do not have to be constantly on their guard but may express their opinions openly. Police measures are not necessary, and they cleave to their ruler of their own volition. The same principle of freedom is valid for life in general. We should not woo favor from people. If a man cultivates within himself the purity and the strength that are necessary for one who is the center of a fellowship, those who are meant for him come of their own accord.

Six at the top means:

He finds no head for holding together.

Misfortune.

The head is the beginning. If the beginning is not right, there is no hope of a right ending. If we have missed the right moment for union and go on hesitating to give complete and full devotion, we shall regret the error when it is too late.

9. Hsiao Ch'u |

The Taming Power of the Small



above

SUN

THE GENTLE, WIND

below

CH'IEN

THE CREATIVE, HEAVEN

This hexagram means the force of the small—the power of the shadowy—that restrains, tames, impedes. A weak line in the fourth place, that of the minister,¹ holds the five strong lines in check. In the Image it is the wind blowing across the sky. The wind restrains the clouds, the rising breath of the Creative, and makes them grow dense, but as yet is not strong enough to turn them to rain. The hexagram presents a configuration of circumstances in which a strong element is temporarily held in leash by a weak element. It is only through gentleness that this can have a successful outcome.

THE JUDGMENT

THE TAMING POWER OF THE SMALL

Has success.

Dense clouds, no rain from our western region.

This image refers to the state of affairs in China at the time when King Wên, who came originally from the west, was in the east at the court of the reigning tyrant Chou Hsin. The moment for action on a large scale had not yet arrived. King Wên could only keep the tyrant somewhat in check by friendly persuasion. Hence the image of many clouds, promising moisture and blessing to the land, although as yet no rain falls. The situation is not unfavorable; there is a prospect of ultimate success, but there are still obstacles in the way, and we can merely take preparatory measures. Only through the small

means of friendly persuasion can we exert any influence. The time has not yet come for sweeping measures. However, we may be able, to a limited extent, to act as a restraining and subduing influence. To carry out our purpose we need firm determination within and gentleness and adaptability in external relations.

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 can indeed drive the clouds together in the sky; yet, being nothing but air, without solid body, it does not produce great or lasting effects. So also an individual, in times when he can produce no great effect in the outer world, can do nothing except refine the expression of his nature in small ways.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning means:

Return to the way.

How could there be blame in this?

Good fortune.

It lies in the nature of a strong man to press forward. In so doing he encounters obstructions. Therefore he returns to the way suited to his situation, where he is free to advance or to retreat. In the nature of things this will bring good fortune, for it is wise and reasonable not to try to obtain anything by force.

Nine in the second place means:

He allows himself to be drawn into returning.

Good fortune.

One would like to press forward, but before going farther one sees from the example of others like oneself that this way is blocked. In such a case, if the effort to push forward is not in harmony with the time,² a reasonable and resolute man will not expose himself to a personal rebuff, but will retreat with others of like mind. This brings good fortune, because he does not needlessly jeopardize himself.

Nine in the third place means:

The spokes burst out of the wagon wheels.

Man and wife roll their eyes.

Here an attempt is made to press forward forcibly, in the consciousness that the obstructing power is slight. But since, under the circumstances, power actually lies with the weak, this sudden offensive is doomed to failure. External conditions hinder the advance, just as loss of the wheel spoke stops the

progress of a wagon. We do not yet heed this hint from fate, hence there are annoying arguments like those of a married couple. Naturally this is not a favorable state of things, for though the situation may enable the weaker side to hold its ground, the difficulties are too numerous to permit of a happy result. In consequence even the strong man cannot so use his power as to exert the right influence on those around him. He experiences a rebuff where he expected an easy victory, and he thus compromises his dignity.

Σ Six in the fourth place means:

If you are sincere, blood vanishes and fear goes way.

No blame.

If one is in the difficult and responsible position of counselor to a powerful man, one should restrain him in such a way that right may prevail. Therein lies a danger so great that the threat of actual bloodshed may arise. Nonetheless, the power of disinterested truth is greater than all these obstacles. It carries such weight that the end achieved, and all danger of bloodshed and all fear disappear.

O Nine in the fifth place means:

If you are sincere and loyally attached,

You are rich in your neighbor.

Loyalty leads to firm ties because it means that each partner complements the other. In the weaker person loyalty consists in devotion, in the stronger it consists in trustworthiness. This relation of mutual reinforcement leads to a true wealth that is all the more apparent because it is not selfishly hoarded but is shared with friends. Pleasure shared is pleasure doubled.

Nine at the top means:

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.

Success is at hand. The wind has driven up the rain. A fixed standpoint has been reached. This has come about through the cumulation of small effects produced by reverence for a superior character. But a success thus secured bit by bit calls for great caution. It would be a dangerous illusion for anyone to think he could presume upon it. The female principle, the weak element that has won the victory, should never persist in vaunting it—that would lead to danger. The dark power in the moon is strongest when the moon is almost full. When it is full and directly opposite the sun, its waning is inevitable. Under such circumstances one must be content with what has been achieved. To advance any further, before the appropriate time has come, would lead to misfortune.

Notes

1. [See The Structure of the Hexagrams, in .pdf IChing1.]

2. [See The Structure of the Hexagrams, in .pdf IChing1, for an explanation of what is meant by the "time."]

10. Lü | Treading (Conduct)



above CH'IEN THE CREATIVE, HEAVEN

below TUI THE JOYOUS, LAKE

The name of the hexagram means on the one hand the right way of conducting oneself. Heaven, the father, is above, and the lake, the youngest daughter, is below. This shows the difference between high and low, upon which composure, correct social conduct, depends. On the other hand, the word for the name of the hexagram, TREADING,¹ means literally treading upon something. The small and cheerful [Tui] treads upon the large and strong [Ch'ien]. The direction of movement of the two primary trigrams is upward. The fact that the strong treads on the weak is not mentioned in the Book of Changes, because it is taken for granted. For the weak to take a stand against the strong is not dangerous here, because it happens in good humor [Tui] and without presumption, so that the strong man is not irritated but takes it all in good part.

THE JUDGMENT

TREADING. Treading upon the tail of the tiger.

It does not bite the man. Success.

The situation is really difficult. That which is strongest and that which is weakest are close together. The weak follows behind the strong and worries it. The strong, however, acquiesces and does not hurt the weak, because the contact is in good humor and harmless.

In terms of a human situation, one is handling wild, intractable people. In such a case one's purpose will be achieved if one behaves with decorum. Pleasant manners succeed even with irritable people.

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 and the lake show a difference of elevation that inheres in the natures of the two, hence no envy arises. Among mankind also there are necessarily differences of elevation; it is impossible to bring about universal equality. But it is important that differences in social rank should not be arbitrary and unjust, for if this occurs, envy and class struggle are the inevitable consequences. If, on

the other hand, external differences in rank correspond with differences in inner worth and if inner worth forms the criterion of external rank, people acquiesce and order reigns in society.

THE LINES

Nine at the beginning means:

Simple conduct. Progress without blame.

The situation is one in which we are still not bound by any obligations of social intercourse. If our conduct is simple, we remain free of them. We can quietly follow our predilections as long as we are content and make no demands on people.

The meaning of the hexagram is not standstill but progress. A man finds himself in an altogether inferior position at the start. However, he has the inner strength that guarantees progress. If he can be content with simplicity, he can make progress without blame. When a man is dissatisfied with modest circumstances, he is restless and ambitious and tries to advance, not for the sake of accomplishing anything worth while, but merely in order to escape from lowliness and poverty by dint of his conduct. Once his purpose is achieved, he is certain to become arrogant and luxury-loving. Therefore blame attaches to his progress. On the other hand, a man who is good at his work is content to behave simply. He wishes to make progress in order to accomplish something. When he attains his goal, he does something worth while, and all is well.

Nine in the second place means:

Treading a smooth, level course.

The perseverance of a dark man²

Brings good fortune.

The situation of a lonely sage is indicated here. He remains withdrawn from the bustle of life, seeks nothing, asks nothing of anyone, and is not dazzled by enticing goals. He is true to himself and travels through life unassailed, on a level road. Since he is content and does not challenge fate, he remains free of entanglements.

Σ Six in the third place means:

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.

A one-eyed man can indeed see, but not enough for clear vision. A lame man can indeed tread, but not enough to make progress. If in spite of such defects a man considers himself strong and consequently exposes himself to danger, he is inviting disaster, for he is undertaking something beyond his strength. This reckless way of plunging ahead, regardless of the adequacy of one's powers, can be justified only in the case of a warrior battling for his prince.

Nine in the fourth place means:
He treads on the tail of the tiger.
Caution and circumspection
Lead ultimately to good fortune.

This text refers to a dangerous enterprise. The inner power to carry it through is there, but this inner power is combined with hesitating caution in one's external attitude. This line contrasts with the preceding line, which is weak within but outwardly presses forward. Here one is sure of ultimate success, which consists in achieving one's purpose, that is, in overcoming danger by going forward.

O Nine in the fifth place means:
Resolute conduct.
Perseverance with awareness of danger.

This refers to the ruler of the hexagram as a whole. One sees that one has to be resolute in conduct. But at the same time one must remain conscious of the danger connected with such resoluteness, especially if it is to be persevered in. Only awareness of the danger makes success possible.

Nine at the top means:
Look to your conduct and weigh the favorable signs.
When everything is fulfilled, supreme good fortune comes.

The work is ended. If we want to know whether good fortune will follow, we must look back upon our conduct and its consequences. If the effects are good, then good fortune is certain. No one knows himself. It is only by the consequences of his actions, by the fruit of his labors, that a man can judge what he is to expect.

Notes

1. [Auftreten, the German word used for the name of the hexagram, means both "treading" and "conduct."]
2. [See explanation of this line in The Commentaries, bk. III.]