

The Return of the Sage

**A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY COSMOLOGY
MEETS THE WAY OF HEAVEN AND EARTH
IN THE *I CHING***

by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AHD American Heritage Dictionary
- CPT Yi Wu, *Chinese Philosophical Terms*. San Francisco: Great Learning Publishing, 1990.
- K Bernhard Karlgren, *The Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*. New York: Dover, 1974.
- L James Legge translation in Z D Sung, *The Text of Yi King (and its appendices)*: Chinese Original with English Translation. Shanghai 1935.
- NEB *New English Bible, New Testament*. Oxford & Cambridge: Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press, 1961.
- PR Alfred North Whitehead. *Process and Reality*, edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne. New York: Macmillan, Inc., 1978.
- R Radical number
- W L. Wieger, *Chinese Characters: Their Origin, Etymology, History, Classification and Signification*. New York: Dover, 1965. Citations are by lesson number reference
- W/B Richard Wilhelm and Cary Baynes (trans.), *I Ching*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977.
- W/I G.D Wilder and J.H. Ingram, *Analysis of Chinese Characters*. New York: Dover, 1974. Citations are by entry number.
- W/L Richard John Lynn (trans.), *The Classic of Changes: A New Translation of the I Ching as Interpreted by Wang Bi*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994..

From "The Canon of Yao" in the Book of History, circa 7th century BC

Examining into antiquity, we find that the emperor Yao [2357-2256? BC]...was reverential, intelligent, accomplished, and thoughtful, naturally and without effort. He was sincerely courteous and capable of all complaisance. The display of these qualities reached to the four extremities of the empire and extended from earth to heaven.

He was able to make the able and virtuous distinguished, and thence proceeded to the love of the nine classes of his kindred, who all became harmonious. He also regulated and polished the people of his domain, who all became brightly intelligent. Finally, he united and harmonized the myriad states of the empire, and lo! the black-haired people were transformed. The result was universal concord.

Thereupon Yao commanded Hsi and He, in reverent accordance with their observation of the wide heavens, to calculate and delineate the movements and appearances of the sun, the moon, the stars, and the zodiacal spaces, and so to deliver respectfully the seasons to the people.

He separately commanded the second brother Hsi to reside at Yu, in what was called the Bright Valley, and there respectfully to receive as a guest the rising sun, and to adjust and arrange the labors of the spring. "The day," he said, "is of the medium length and the star is in Niao; you may thus exactly determine mid-spring. The people begin to disperse, and birds and beasts breed and copulate.

He further commanded the third brother Hsi to reside at Nan Jiao, and arrange the transformations of the summer, and respectfully to observe the extreme limit of the shadow. "The day," said he, "is at its longest, and the star is in Huo. You may thus exactly determine mid-summer. The people are more dispersed, and birds and beasts have their feathers and hair thin and change their coats."

He separately commanded the second brother He to reside at the west, in what was called the Dark Valley, and there respectfully to convoy the setting sun, and to adjust and arrange the completing labors of the autumn. "The night," he said, "is of the medium length, and the star is Hsu; you may thus exactly determine mid-autumn. The people begin to feel at ease, and birds and beasts have their coats in good condition."

He further commanded the third brother He to reside in the northern region, in what was called the Sombre Capital, and there to adjust and examine the changes of the winter. "The day," said he, "is at its shortest, and the star is Mao. You may thus exactly determine mid-winter. The people keep their cosy corners, and the coats of birds and beasts are downy and thick."

The emperor said, "Ah! you, Hsi and He, a round year consists of three hundred, sixty, and six days. By means of an intercalary month do you fix the four seasons, and complete the determination of the year. Thereafter, in exact accordance with this, regulating the various officers, all the works of the year will be fully performed...."

The emperor said, "Go, and be reverent!"

Prologue

East Meets West

It was almost four o'clock when I reached the corner of East Blithedale and Lomita. Thick streams of traffic coursed in both directions and I wondered when rush hour in Mill Valley officially began. The stream divided abruptly as the stoplight turned red and on either side, the eastbound and westbound traffic—who knows how many tons of steel, gallons of gasoline and foot-pounds of horsepower—faced each other off like two great armies. Between them stretched a thin asphalt corridor like the Kuru field of justice in the Bhagavad-Gita, where the vast forces of the Pandavas and the Kauravas were drawn up on the threshold of their ancient war. The sun was slipping quickly down over my left shoulder as I watched smaller armies of children suddenly evacuated from school at day's end. They had burst upon the landscape with the energy of liberated prisoners. A small stalwart crossing guard stood at the center of the intersection and lifted his STOP sign like a huge crimson lollipop as a chattering throng of children surged heedlessly across the intersection.

I eyed the precise yellow lines, the corridor, and thought of Krishna giving Arjuna some of the world's most profound teachings in just such a brief and perilous space, bristling with incalculable danger. "It's a bardo," I said to myself, as the man withdrew and signaled the armies forward in their advance. "Technically," I reasoned, "a bardo is any transition between two moments. --*if* you are aware of the end and the beginning. Arjuna was surely in a bardo with Krishna."

The small man took up his post again on the street corner, his movements crisp, his demeanor serious. I pressed the WALK button and turned to him. "You are taking care of us," I commented. He stared forward, unblinking. Afraid that he thought I wanted him to help *me* across, I quickly added "The children, that is." He looked at me this time, still expressionless, and said "You live around here." It was not exactly a question. He was not exactly interested.

"I don't actually. I'm just visiting a friend."

"So where do you live." The traffic surged on and no children were in sight.

"Well I don't exactly live anywhere. I'm trying to finish my dissertation and I've been staying in a variety of places." I suppose that's a bardo of sorts too.

By now I had observed his Oriental features and I admit that I was secretly hoping that he would ask me what my topic was, although I had found that the majority of people I met outside academia didn't know exactly what a dissertation was so why should a crossing-guard be interested?

"Dissertation," he repeated. I surmised that he didn't know. Then--

"What is your theme? Your topic?" It was politely said. We were just whiling away a long red light. But he had asked.

"Chinese philosophy," I said.

I couldn't have been more amazed by the sudden transformation in the little man. He bent forward, lifted his right foot high into the air and in a wide exaggerated movement of his left arm snapped his fingers. "*I am Chinese*," he declared, as if the most extraordinary and unlikely coincidence had just occurred. As if we had discovered that he was my long lost brother. He briskly produced a business card and a pen (how did he do this while holding a huge STOP sign?). "Write down your phone number!" He was electric with excitement.

Guardedly I said, "I don't *have* a phone number. Sorry." Now he wanted to know exactly what my topic was. I gave my usual answer: "The Confucist commentary on the *I Ching*." But of course I wasn't talking to a usual person.

"Confucius didn't write the *I Ching*, Lao Tzu did." Delicately I suggested that while the *I Ching* had certainly inspired Taoists, Lao Tzu was not..." He immediately corrected himself, squinting at the Albertson's across the street as he called up his own education on the subject. "Excuse me," he said. "Fu Hsi-tzu* wrote the *I Ching*." We both smiled in agreement. "Yes," I said. "Fu Hsi."

"But Confucius didn't write anything on the *I Ching*," he insisted.

"That's true," I admitted. "Although it is said that Confucius did take up a study of the *I Ching* late in life and at 70 he said 'If 50 years were added to my life, I would spend it studying the *I Ching*.'" Even to myself I sounded pedantic. He looked unconvinced.

* *Tzu* is an honorific, "master," like Lao Tzu and Kung Fu Tzu (Confucius)

"Confucius only wrote the *Lun Yu*..."—those are the *Analects*—and he looked to be about to name the other three classics but a passel of children had arrived and he dashed to the center of the corridor, lollipop held high.

When he returned, he was still perplexed. "This bothers me," he said. "I can't understand what the text is." Again he magically produced the pen and another card. "Write the character please," he said. Ashamed, I realized that I hadn't learned to write the title of my text in Chinese after years of studying its characters. I wrote the romanized version but it didn't help much. *Chuan* can mean many things. A bus revved up, a horn honked... "You mean bamboo pieces tied together?" That was a possibility, like the old bamboo books. "A treatise. A commentary. An appendix," I tried. The words just bounced hollowly off the asphalt and he looked blank.

Anxious to distract him from my appalling ignorance of something so basic to my work I scrutinized the business card I was holding: STEPHEN X. SHEN, B.A., M.A. IN MUSIC, U.S.-SINO CULTURAL EXCHANGE MESSENGER AND TEACHING.

"Music," I said. "What instrument do you teach?"

"Voice!" he declared proudly and to my further astonishment, the little man threw back his head and burst into a tremulous operatic tenor rendition of "Come Back to Sorrento" in curiously accented Italian. This street corner—this "Kuru field of justice," this *bardo*—was turning into quite an entertaining interlude.

"Wow!" I said. "So you sing Western music?" He beamed. "Where are you from originally?"

"Hunan province," he said.

"Ah. Not the same as *Henan*, right?" He corrected my pronunciation.

"*He-nan*. That is the home of the *I Ching*," he said, his eyes gleaming.

The conversation had come full circle and I decided that this was a good place to end it.

"I've got to cross now," I said, and entered the corridor as the WALK sign flashed on. He stepped off the curb. "Please! Go carefully! Go carefully!" He was not speaking as a crossing guard but as a Chinese gentleman. A *chun-tzu*. The thought of the ancient sage-king Yao came to mind and I turned. I had reached the middle of the crosswalk and was only faintly aware of the humming and growling on either side.

"Go! And be reverent!" I answered smiling. He nodded and stepped back onto the curb as I hurried to the other side.

* * *

All of life is lived at just such an intersection between the potent forces of life and death. Most people abide unconsciously in this place and what befalls them there is simply a matter of fate. Of fortune. But life emerged at the intersection of heaven and earth and developed in ways that defied the static routine workings of habit and pattern. It had a creative power of its own that was aimed purposefully toward some higher, unifying point that eventually expressed itself through the powers of human consciousness.

Great spiritual teachings have come forth to individuals who have held that imperiled ground with deep intention and a profound awareness; who made decisions in that space that outfoxed "blind fortune" and carried a transcendent power that could reverberate through human consciousness down the generations.

Whether our human form evolved from primates or was created as is, humankind as we know it begins when the human is able to walk and talk with God; to occupy consciously the narrow corridor between heaven and earth, birth and death. As Adam or Fu Hsi or the myriad names of the great progenitors of native peoples, we are the beneficiaries of the legacy of the first knowing humans and the creative gift of the consciousness that names and seeks to explore the mystery of its originating power. Twentieth century scientists will call this "the self-organizing power" of the universe. The human raises this power to great heights in the generation of cultures and civilizations, art and law.

But the narrow intersection where the powers of earth and heaven press down upon the human never becomes less perilous, even when periods of peace and prosperity lull us into thinking otherwise. We have always depended on our warriors, saints and sages to hold the space with an enlightened courage, compassion and awareness; to help us in the crossing. Arjuna, the warrior-hero of the Bhagavad-Gita, makes that essential reflective pause before the battle begins to ask humanity's most crucial questions and to receive its most profound answers. The entire universe is opened up to Arjuna in that moment in the form of Krishna. This transcendent experience will become an illumination for countless future generations. During critical talks with the British viceroy over the future of India, Gandhi would return home and chant verses from the *Gita* to help him through his own crossing of the "Kuru field of justice" where Arjuna and Krishna had met.

The Christian mystery of the crucifixion and resurrection occurs dramatically at the profound intersection of death and life with the cross itself as its symbol. In the most ancient cultures, as well as aboriginal cultures that have survived into the present, we find the shaman's gift of crossing boundaries between the worlds to bring back healing powers to the people.

This capacity to make perilous crossings between worlds, to go from the known to the unknown, to enter new stages of being, is the human's most dangerous and priceless gift. It requires a sacrifice and an initiation. It requires a knowledge of the universe and a courage before its powers, as well as a reverence, which comes to only a few in an age: our greatest seers, saints, sages.

The intersection between heaven and earth is what is referred to in the *Ta Chuan*, the Great Commentary on the *I Ching*, as the field of action of the sage. A sage is a sage, not only because of the way in which he or she occupies that space, but also because of the way in which he or she *uses* it. Every moment, every intersection, is an opportunity to be used skillfully on behalf of the community as a whole or mindlessly, selfishly, beckoning destruction of the human and natural community. We may know intellectually that we live in an omniscient universe—one in which the universe expands at exactly the same rate from each individual point—but the uniqueness of the ancient Chinese

sages was that they had discovered that truth, intuitively, and regarded it as the ultimate human challenge and vocation.

The *I Ching* or *Book of Changes*, as we meet it in this Great Commentary, is a tool for divining the nature of a particular intersection of time and space and instructing us in the action proper to it. There is no counterpart in the world's literature to this work and perhaps for that reason, it remains very mysterious and in ways, unfathomable. The Great Commentary sought to elucidate the way in which the "ancient holy sages" made the Book of Changes and the fundamental principles behind it. We do not know the author of the text—although it is traditionally ascribed to Confucius, scholars now trace it to the third century BC—and we do not know exactly where its ideas originate. But they do bear the mark of the records of China's early sage-kings and a consistency of themes that reach a rich and fresh articulation in Confucius and echo through succeeding generations into the present.

It seems likely that what is remarkable about this work and the enduring value of the cryptic *Book of Changes* does not lie in the genius of any single author or age but in the many different ages it spans and the collective wisdom which it embraces. Indeed, according to its own story, its roots lie at the beginning of Chinese civilization itself. The legendary culture-hero Fu Hsi creates the eight trigrams along with agriculture and the other basics of a civilized life. In the Book of History, probably gathered in the 7th or 8th century BC, we find references to the tortoise divinations as far back as the time of Yao. Recent archaeological finds confirm the importance of divination by tortoise shell and animal bones during the height of the Shang dynasty over a millennium before Christ.

In a recent translation of the *I Ching*, Yi Wu titled his work *The Book of Changes and Virtues*. Virtue for the ancient Chinese was equated with the central feature of the universe itself; of Tao. Tao was without name and form but was visible in its function as virtue. That virtue was a singleness, a oneness, that was fundamental to the way of Earth and the way of Heaven. The way of the human was to live in harmony with those and virtue was its expression.

Introduction

The mind's deepest desire, even in its most elaborate operations, parallels man's unconscious feeling in the face of his universe: it is an insistence upon familiarity, an appetite for clarity. Understanding the world for a man is reducing it to the human, stamping it with his seal.

--Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1991, 17)

"The calendar," writes Eviatar Zerubavel..., "is the warp of the fabric of society, running lengthwise through time, and carrying and preserving the woof, which is the structure of relations among men, and the things we call institutions."

--Quoted by Alfred W. Crosby in *The Measure of Reality* (1997, 86)

CHAPTER 1: ANCIENT SAGES

Henan province lies in the north of China in what may be called the cradle of its civilization. Like all beginnings, these are shrouded in a legendary past that begins with China's first culture-hero, Fu Hsi. We too must begin with Fu Hsi because he is the first of the four great sages of the *I Ching*—Fu Hsi, King Wen, the Duke of Chou and Confucius—and the story of its beginnings is intimately woven into the origins of China itself. Legend it may be, but it explains the veneration in which the ancient Book of Changes has been held for millennia and the unique role played by the sage in the development of China's civilization. In Fu Hsi, we find the original template for the model of China's early sage-kings. Here he is described in Part 2 of the *Ta Chuan*—the "Great Treatise" on the *I Ching*:

When in early antiquity [Fu Hsi] ruled the world, he looked upward and contemplated the images in the heavens; he looked downward and contemplated the patterns of the earth. He contemplated the markings of birds and beasts and the adaptations to the regions. He proceeded directly from himself and indirectly from objects. Thus he invented the eight trigrams in order to enter into connection with the virtues of the light of the gods and to regulate the conditions of all beings. (Wilhelm 1977, 328)

Fu Hsi and the Legendary Sage-kings

In traditional Chinese history¹, Fu Hsi is the first of the original Five Emperors, followed by Shen Nung (the Divine Farmer), Huang-Ti (the Yellow Emperor), Shao Hao and Chuan Hsü. These semi-divine beings are followed by the first human ruler and sage-king, the Emperor Yao, described in the Book of History as having reigned from 2357-2256 BC (coinciding with the period of the great VIth Dynasty in Egypt of Pepi I, known to us from the Pyramid Texts). The character of Yao in this account provides the first historical example for the ancient sages of China. Whether Yao was real or legendary, it is rare for a figure of such antiquity to appear with such a fully delineated human character. We have seen in the opening passage how closely he followed the model of Fu Hsi described above, studying the movements of the heavens, the creatures and seasons of the earth, and bringing order and harmony to his people. He was likely the inspiration for the line in Hexagram 49, "He sets the calendar in order and makes the seasons clear"

(Wilhelm 1977, 190). This is the defining activity of the primordial sage: perceiving order in reality and arranging it in comprehensible dimensions so that "it functioned in ways that people could understand or to which they could reconcile themselves," as Alfred Crosby puts it in his excellent book, *The Measure of Reality* (Crosby 1997, 23). It was the movements of the sun and the moon, against the background of the stars, that were being measured. Of primary importance was the determination of the point at which the longest and shortest days were reached, and the points where day and night were of equal length—the solstices and equinoxes. While these "points" were spatial, (positions on the horizon), the first sages translated them into the temporal units of the calendar. Hunting, gathering and agriculture all required this ability to discern the patterns of heat and cold, darkness and light, drought and floods, as well as the most fertile periods for plants, trees and animals. The distinctly human capacity for calendar making separated the human from other animals and set it on its unique path toward culture and civilization. Humans could now anticipate and predict; they could further or alter the course of nature and thus enter into partnership with it.

In addition to providing the people with a clear demarcation of seasons and the propitious times for hunting, gathering and planting, Yao seeks to bring order and harmony into the relationships among his people. The virtues applied to him suggest a high degree of self-cultivation and refinement. In the Karlgren translation, he is described as "reverent, enlightened, accomplished, sincere, peaceful, respectful and modest" (Karlgren 1950, 1). In any period, these are rare qualities for a ruler. Equally unusual was his willingness to search throughout his realm for a wise and able counselor, selected strictly on the basis of his ability rather than family or rank. The great flood of China's ancient period is said to have come during his reign, threatening to obviate all of his labors to unite and organize his people for a higher standard of living and culture. Here again is the Book of History:

The Tî [The Emperor Yao] said, 'Who will search out (for me) a man according to the times, whom I can raise and employ?' Fang-ts'i said, '(Your) heirson...is highly intelligent.' The Tî said, 'Alas; he is insincere and quarrelsome--can he do?'

The Tî said, 'Who will search out (for me) a man equal to the exigency of my affairs?' Huan Tou said, 'Oh! The merits of the Minister of Works have just been displayed on a wide scale.'

The Tî said, 'Alas! When all is quiet, he talks; but when, employed, his actions turn out differently. He is respectful (only) in appearance. See! The floods assail the heavens!'

The Tî said, 'Ho! Destructive in their overflow are the waters of the inundation. In their vast extent they embrace the hills and overtop the great heights, threatening the heavens with their floods, so that the lower people groan and murmur. Is there a capable man to whom I can assign the correction (of this calamity)?' All (in the court) said, 'Ah! Is there not Kun?'

The Tî said, 'Alas! How perverse is he! He is disobedient to orders, and tries to injure his peers.' (The President of) the Mountains said, 'Well but--. Try if he can (accomplish the work).' (Kun) was employed accordingly.

The Tî said (to him), 'Go; and be reverent!'

For nine years he laboured, but the work was unaccomplished.

The Tî said, 'Ho! I have been on the throne seventy years. You can carry out my commands;--I will resign my place to you.' The Chief said, 'I have not the virtue; I should disgrace your place.' (The Tî) said, 'Show me some one among the illustrious, or set forth one from among the poor and mean.' All (then) said to the Tî, 'There is an unmarried man among the lower people, called Shun of You.' (Legge 1960)

Yao calls for Shun (meaning "benevolent and sage") and finds in him at last his able and gifted assistant. For three years, Yao observes the conduct of Shun in carrying out the difficult tasks set for him and is satisfied that Shun should be his successor, based solely on his virtue and ability. On Yao's death, Shun takes his place and once again, "sets the calendar in order." The first duty of a new king was to send out emissaries to the four directions of the kingdom to take astronomical sightings and make adjustments to the calendar as necessary. This is no small feat when one considers that by the time of Julius Caesar, Rome's official year had drifted so far from the solar year that the autumn equinox came in the winter. To correct this, Caesar declared that the year 46 BC would have 445 days, to synchronize it with the solar year. Following this "year of confusion" as it was called, the 365-day calendar was regularly corrected by an additional day every "leap year" (Crosby 1997, 30). As we saw in the "Canon of Yao," these early sage-kings were sophisticated astronomers whose task was to determine the heavenly order and then to put the human realm in accord with it. Here is a description from the "Canon of Shun" in which we see Yao's successor carrying on the tradition.

[Shun] examined the pearl-adorned turning sphere, with its transverse tube of jade, and reduced to a harmonious system (the movements of) the Seven Directors

[planets]... He set in accord their seasons and months, and regulated the days; he made uniform the standard-tubes, with the measures of length and of capacity, and the steelyards, he regulated the five (classes of) ceremonies. (Legge 1960)

Shun, described in the Shu Jing, the Book of History, as having reigned from 2255-2206 BC, continues to be faced with the devastations of the great flood and like Yao, searches the kingdom for a sagely advisor and helper. Eventually he finds Yü, who makes his mark on China's history as the brilliant and indefatigable engineer who triumphs over the great flood by building dikes and waterways. Following the example of Yao, Shun chooses him over his own heir to assume the throne upon his death. The "Counsel of Yü" in the Book of History details the virtues essential to a wise and benevolent ruler. "If the sovereign can realize the difficulty of his sovereignty," says Yü, "and the minister can realize the difficulty of his ministry, government will be well ordered, and the people will sedulously seek to be virtuous... Let this really be the case, and good words will nowhere lie hidden; no men of virtue and talents will be neglected away from court, and the myriad States will all enjoy repose. But to ascertain the views of all; to give up one's opinion and follow that of others; to refrain from oppressing the helpless, and not neglect the straitened and poor: it was only the emperor Yao who could attain to this" (ibid.). In addition to further defining the "kingly tao," Yü makes significant contributions to the successful ordering of the kingdom, although he is sometimes criticized in later histories for passing the throne to his son upon his death and thereby establishing China's first traditional dynasty, the Hsia.

According to the Book of History, the Hsia dynasty eventually falls into decay and its last ruler, the tyrant Chieh (1816-1766 BC), is overthrown by T'ang who becomes the founder of a new dynasty, the Shang (also called Yin).² T'ang (1766-1723 BC) is described as ruling during a period concurrent with the flourishing of the Minoan Empire in Greece. He models himself after the pattern of Yao and Shun, recalling the importance of finding a wise and able counselor to aid and guide him.

Then I sought for the great Sage, with whom I might unite my strength, to request the favour (of Heaven) for you, my multitudes...What Heaven appoints is without error;--brilliantly (now), like the blossoming of plants and trees, the millions of the people show a true reviving.

The good in you I will not dare to keep concealed; and for the evil in me I will not dare to forgive myself. I will examine these things in harmony with the mind of God. When guilt is found anywhere in you who occupy the myriad regions, let it rest on me, the One Man.³ When guilt is found in me, the One Man, it shall not attach to you who occupy the myriad regions. (Book IV, Legge 1960)

The Book of History indicates that the Shang dynasty reaches a golden age during the reign of Wu Ti, in the 13th century BC. Both dynasty and ruler were thought to be legendary until a major archaeological discovery at Anyang in the twentieth century confirmed their existence. The tomb of one of Wu Ting's consorts, Lady Fu Hao, was discovered intact with thousands of oracle bones, ritual bronze vessels, and what must have been the palace "antiques": prize objects from almost a thousand years before. The inscribed oracle bones provide us with detailed descriptions of aspects of the royal family. Lady Fu Hao, for example, not only managed one of her husbands' rural estates and directed ritual activity, but also was one of his generals, leading ten thousand Shang troops into battle.

King Wen and the Duke of Chou

The part of the Book of History that can be corroborated most thoroughly with other sources and evidence begins with the fall of the last king of the Shang dynasty, famous for his cruelty and debauchery. The Chou were a tribal vassal state under the Shang, living along the Wei River near Sian/Xian. Around 1100 BC, when this tyrant king had risen to rule over the Shang, the House of Chou had won the allegiance of several other vassal states and had extended their influence into the Han River region leading into the Yangtze Valley, threatening the Shang on the eastern plains. Clashes developed between the Shang and the Chou and the Chou chief of state, Hsi Pai [Xibai] was imprisoned by the Shang and later ransomed off.

The pivotal moment came when a number of rebellious Shang vassals were mobilized by one of Hsi Pai's sons for an eastward expedition to overthrow Shang rule and replace it with a new dynasty under the rule of the Chou. This was accomplished in 1027 BC⁴ and brought to rule the first great historical dynasty of China, destined to rule for 600 years, followed by the Han and the unification of China in the third century BC.

The importance of these events to the legacy of the *I Ching* becomes clearer when we realize the name that history bestowed posthumously on these historic figures: Hsi Pai would be honored with the title "The Cultured King" or "King Wen" and his son Fa, who led the military forces which defected from the Shang would be called "The Martial King" or "King Wu."

During the bitter struggle with the Shang (Yin), King Wen was imprisoned for seven years by the Shang ruler. He used the time to reflect on his own experiences and knowledge of the ancient tortoise shell oracle in order to establish a system of divination for overcoming the Shang dynasty and building a new country. He is said to have arranged the 64 hexagrams and devised their judgments and lines into what is later called the *Chou I*, thus becoming the second of the great *I Ching* sages. It is during the Chou dynasty also that the tortoise shell divination is largely replaced by the yarrow stalk oracle.

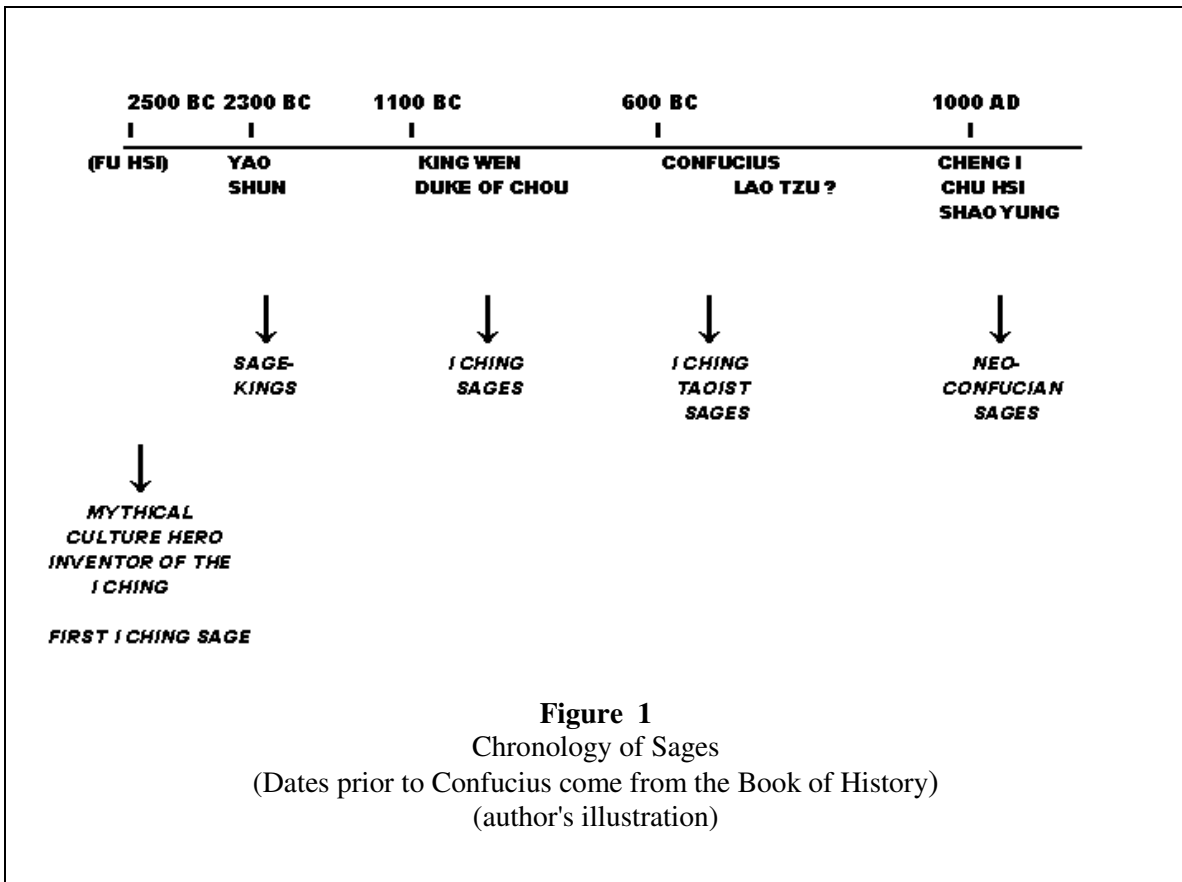
Hsi Pai's second son was destined to become the chief architect of the state institutions under the new dynasty as brother to King Wu and later regent to King Wu's young son and successor. History would remember him as the brilliant and illustrious Duke of Chou, third of the *I Ching* sages, who is said to have continued the work of his father by adding line statements to the text.

Confucius

The fourth *I Ching* sage, Kung Fu-tzu (Confucius) lived from 551 BC to 478 BC (contemporary with Pythagoras, Heraclitus and Buddha) in an era that saw the collapse of the feudal order and the disintegration of the old society into chaos and internecine wars. Confucius describes himself as related by bloodline to the House of Shang, but in spirit, to the Chou sages, King Wen and the Duke of Chou. Like the first sages, he sought a position of influence as advisor to a ruler but in the end, had to be content with his role as a teacher and later Minister of the Department of Lu. Early historical accounts tell us that Confucius undertook the prodigious tasks of researching and transmitting the rites of the three dynasties (Hsia, Shang and Chou) in his *Book of Rites*; arranging in order the events in the *Book of History* and editing the *Book of Odes*, a work said to have contained 3,000 pieces until Confucius trimmed it down to 305 pieces which he himself sang and played on the lute. In later years, according to traditional histories, he undertook a study of the

then 2,000-year-old *I Ching*, reportedly adding the great appendices or "Ten Wings" which have come down to us by way of the translations of James Legge and the Richard Wilhelm/Cary Baynes editions. Although these works are no longer attributed directly to Confucius, coming into form closer to the third century BC, most scholars agree that they bear the mark of his influence.

Scholars still debate how much of the story is apocryphal and which works were actually written by Confucius himself versus which were transmitted by his students (said in one account to have numbered 3,000 in his lifetime), but it is clear that he played a critical role at an axial moment of Chinese history, summarizing, synthesizing and expanding the great work of centuries of culture which preceded him. Out of this developed the essential guidelines for a national culture which would become consolidated in the Han Dynasty (202 BC-220 AD) and endure into the twentieth century.



Ssuma Ch'ien—The Grand Historiographer

We gain a sense of how important these sages remained through the history of China by looking at two important documents from later eras. The first is from around 100 BC by another of China's revered figures, the Grand Historian Ssuma Ch'ien (Sima Qian). Ssuma Ch'ien came from a long line of royal historians, an office handed down through a single family for centuries that had included astronomy and divination among its tasks. His story is an especially poignant one because he falls unjustly into royal disfavor and chooses a painful and humiliating castration over death so that he can complete the "great work" that has devolved upon him: a thorough and careful history of China from the time of Yao, based on access to royal documents preserved through centuries and his own travels through the realm to verify the information. Here is an autobiographical note in the introduction to his *Historical Record*, in which he writes of himself in the third person:

The Grand Historiographer remarked: "My father had a saying: 'Five hundred years from the death of the Duke of Chou there was Master Kung [Confucius]. From the death of Master Kung right up to now it is 500 years. There is the ability to persevere with the work of the far-sighted generations, to rectify the tradition of the Book of Changes, to continue the Spring and Autumn [Annals], to base oneself on a world defined by the Songs, Documents, Rites and Music.'" His thoughts were set upon these things! His thoughts were set upon these things! How dare his son draw back from them? (Qian 1994, 7)

We see here a profound example of what the Chinese call "filial piety," extending not only from father to son, parent to child, but also across the generations from the illustrious forbears who brought forth the cultural as well as genetic patterns of the family, clan and nation.

Cheng I and the Imperial Letter

There were a thousand years between the Duke of Chou and Ssuma Ch'ien, and another thousand years passes between the Grand Historiographer and the great Neo-Confucian philosophers of the Sung Dynasty, during China's cultural counterpart of our renaissance. In the following letter, we see that the model of the sage is still alive and

well. It is a daring memorial written in 1050 by the 17-year-old Ch'eng I to the Emperor Jen-tsung:

Your ignorant and worthless subject Ch'eng I, sincerely risking death and repeatedly saluting, offers this memorial to Your Majesty the Emperor. ...

What your subject has studied is the tao of the world's Great Mean. Sages take it as their nature and are sages. Worthies follow it and are worthies. Yao and Shun used it and were Yao and Shun. Confucius transmitted it and was Confucius. As tao it is utterly vast, but its practice is utterly easy. Through the Three Dynasties' there was no one who did not follow it. Since Ch'in [221-206 BC] it has declined without revival. The likes of Wei [220-264] and Chin [265-419] have far departed from it. Han [206 BC-220 AD] and T'ang [618-906] achieved a modest prosperity, but their practice was impure. From olden times many have studied it, but examining their attainments [we see] that they are few indeed. ...

... As for your subject, I live at the time of Your Sagely Brilliance. Thus, anxious over the world's danger and disorder, how could I in righteousness regard [only] my own body as good, without a word to enlighten Your Majesty? Therefore I said, "Advance and withdrawal being without constancy, one abides only in righteousness."

Your subject begs to discuss the affairs of the world. I do not know. Does Your Majesty consider the world today to be secure? In danger? Ordered? Disordered? How could one know that it is in danger and disordered without thinking of the way to deliver it! If you say "secure and ordered," then your subject begs to illuminate how this is not so. In all sincerity, how do present conditions differ from sleeping on a pile of firewood that contains a fire--because the fire has not yet broken into a blaze, does one then call it "secure"? The Book of Documents says, "The people are the root of the nation. If the root is strong, then the nation is peaceful." I would humbly suggest that the way of a strong root lies in securing the people. I would humbly suggest that the root of the kingly tao is benevolence (*jen*). ...

For two thousand years the kingly tao has not been practiced. People living in later times all doltishly say that the times are different and that things have changed, so that it cannot be practiced again. This is the depth of their ignorance.... But your subject observes Your Majesty's mind: it is not unanxious about the world. If Your Majesty uses your anxious mind to practice the kingly tao, then how can there be any difficulties?

[Offered by] your doltish subject (Ch'eng) I, entirely overstepping his bounds, in extreme agitation and fear, risking death, kowtowing, with cautious speech. (Smith, Bol, Adler and Wyatt 1990, 136)

Cheng I will go on to become one of China's greatest philosophers, taking much of his inspiration from studies of the *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan*. As his is one of the important

later commentaries on these works, we will have occasion to meet him again in the coming chapters.

The next thousand years brings us to our own moment and now, like Ssuma Ch'ien and Cheng I, we too look for a return of the sage.

CHAPTER 2: A NEW MILLENNIUM—BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

The Anvil of Modernity

What is the nature of our own moment in time—a transition so great that the future cannot be imagined and we can only name our present period postmodern, with its imbroglio of conflicting definitions?

Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Confucius and Buddha emerged together (though geographically far apart) at a similar crossroads in time to communicate their own lofty visions for a new age—a new way of seeing and being in the world. Philosophy itself was born out of that period and a finely articulated view of the human expressed through refined cultural forms as art, drama, poetry, rational inquiry, and enlightened definitions of human in relationship and community. The human had begun a public and collective sort of "dreaming" that could be given enduring form in enlightened and aesthetic ways.

East and West: Two Hemispheres of Awakening Consciousness

The lines of development out of the two hemisphere's of Earth's awakening consciousness would move in opposite and complementary directions: the East, refining inwardly, directed toward views of the moral and aesthetic whole; the West, inquiring outwardly, eager to understand all of the parts, setting off on long and fruitful voyages of discovery across every conceivable new frontier. Where the East fell into isolation, complacency and ossification of old forms, the West fell into wars and rivalries and too many pieces to put together into a coordinated and meaningful whole. Both entered the twentieth century in a moribund state as cultures but seething with new possibilities striving for life under the old.

The Western Trajectory

Richard Tarnas has devoted much care to tracing the story along its Western trajectory in order to understand and articulate the present crucial moment in its largest, most profound context. We will follow his concise and lucid description to set the background against which we may then take up the other thread of the ancient Chinese

sages whom our technological advances and "globalization" allow us to meet intimately through the classics that have been preserved, translated and are now widely available to us: The Book of Change (*I Ching*), The Book of History, Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* and the Confucian classics—the *Analects*, *Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Great Learning*. Consider it a "gathering of sages" at the intersection.

"The intensity of suffering that many people engaged in inner work are experiencing now," Tarnas suggests, "derives from the fact that we are not just doing our own personal work." We are engaged, rather, in a collective work; as if all of humanity, and the earth itself, are in a bardo together; a birth canal through which the future age will be born. "Perhaps the whole planet is in some sense going through a very powerful crisis, much as in Paul's letter to the Romans where he said that 'the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together'" (Tarnas 1998, 29).

Taking a long look over the history of our species, Tarnas describes the human as slowly moving out of a Primal Mind; an interconnected sentient fabric in which the human, with all of Nature, was embedded in what we speak of as a *participation mystique*.

In the primal worldview, soul or spirit is seen as permeating the entire world within which the self is embedded. The primal person walks through a world that is experienced as completely continuous between inner and outer. He or she sees spirits in the forest, sees meaning in the movement of eagles across the horizon, sees significance in the conjunction of two planets, sees and experiences a world in which the human soul is completely embedded in a larger being that is also ensouled. The human soul in some sense participates in a world soul, or *anima mundi*, and the language articulated within the *anima mundi* is the language of myth, the archetypal language of the human soul. (Tarnas 1998, 29)

As rational thought develops into an increasingly sophisticated tool, this early state is viewed by the "knowledgeable" as naïve, immature; a "projection of human realities onto the nonhuman world" as Tarnas puts it. The human now stands alone as a small island of consciousness in a universe devoid of meaning and purpose, "out there" to be coldly and dispassionately scrutinized. This is the world described by the existentialists; by Camus and Sartre; the theater of the absurd; a world emerging from a devastating, soul-numbing world war, soon to be followed by another.

A cultural schizophrenia develops between the inner and outer worlds of the human. The Romanticism of the nineteenth century and the popular New Age movements of the twentieth century revealed the human as being continuously sensitive to and moved by nature, feeling, aesthetics, spirituality, religion. The primal mind was not a thing of the past but something now split off from the objective, empirical mind of the present—heavily conditioned by mass media and advertising. The universe greeted by Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle as a living and meaningful whole, is now explained according to purely mechanistic principles in a way that would have surprised even the likes of Kepler and Newton who are credited with its origin. God was still present in their universe but has somehow escaped from ours.

The distinctive features of the "modern" world view are manifested in philosophy, says Tarnas, in the dramatic series of intellectual advances that began with Descartes and culminated in Kant.

For it was Descartes who first fully grasped and articulated the experience of the emerging autonomous modern self as being fundamentally distinct and separate from an objective external world that it seeks to understand and master.
(Tarnas 1991, 416)

Tarnas quotes philosopher John J. McDermott as saying that "Descartes woke up in a Copernican universe;" that is, one in which the Earth—and thus the human—were no longer centered but "irrevocably relativised," as Tarnas puts it. Kant seals the subjective-objective split with the final *coup de grace* of Cartesian logic, which completes the human isolation from direct access to the world. For Kant, the universe as apprehended by the human mind becomes merely an interpretation of the mind based on its own subjective structures. "Everything that the mind could perceive and judge would be to some undefined extent determined by its own character, its own subjective structures. The mind could experience only phenomena, not things in themselves; appearance, not an independent reality" (Tarnas 1991, 417).

What is so valuable about Tarnas's explanation is that he doesn't allow the story to end there but asks the deeper question: What is going on in the soul of the earth and the human, through the longer rhythms of cosmic unfolding? Where is the human path leading us?

Tarnas suggests that the human self or psyche, once embedded in nature's sentience, has been gradually differentiating out of the larger matrix of being.

Its autonomy, intellectual and moral, has been forged. It is self-determining; self-aware, self-revising; it even has an impulse toward self-transcendence. The autonomy of the rational mind is precious to every one of us.... We all have an allegiance, often unspoken and unrecognized, to this autonomous self, forged over many centuries of cultural, psychological and intellectual development.

At the same time, this autonomy has been purchased at a staggering price: the disenchantment of the universe. The high cost has been a voiding of all intelligence, all soul, all spirit, all meaning, all purpose from the entire world—now exclusively relocated in the human self, through what from this point of view can be seen as an extraordinary act of cosmic hubris.... It is probably a further act of human hubris to think that we were and are responsible for the disenchantment all by ourselves. There may be other, larger forces at work. (Tarnas 1998, 30)

This development reaches its climax in the extraordinary achievements of modern science, which has alleviated so much suffering, lifted our standard of living, provided us with brilliant forms of new seeing. But every great gift carries a great burden. The focus of knowledge has become, in Tarnas's words, prediction and control over a universe seen as utterly unconscious, impersonal and mechanistic. "The universe—the world, nature, animals, plants, and so on—is seen as being utterly without soul, without interiority, without subjectivity. Alone, we humans possess interiority—all else is made up of objects 'out there'" (ibid.).

China's Course

Along their own path, the ancient Chinese had decided early on that knowledge, just for the sake of knowledge, "hurt the spirit" as Chuang-Tzu put it. Chinese thought was directed toward being in harmony with the cosmos and was focused on the goal of human conduct. While Western philosophers would certainly find Chuang-Tzu's comment jarring and unfair, it is significant that the idea is repeated in Fung Yu-lan's *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, considered a leading text in the field.

Chinese philosophers for the most part have not regarded knowledge as something valuable in itself, and so have not sought knowledge for the sake of knowledge; and even in the case of knowledge of a practical sort that might have a direct bearing on human happiness, Chinese philosophers have preferred to apply this knowledge to actual conduct that would lead directly to this happiness,

rather than to hold what they considered to be empty discussions about it. (Fung 1953, vol.1, 2)

Such thinking naturally put the Chinese at a great disadvantage with respect to modernity and the sweeping technological improvements that followed the Industrial Revolution. China's venerable tradition of philosophy had failed to alleviate many of the economic and social problems of its people. The criticism most often leveled by the West against Chinese culture was that it lacked "science" and was therefore deficient in its ability to solve these basic problems. The Chinese had never developed an analytical or scientific methodology. It is no wonder that new directions in Chinese thought during the modern period favored the critical thinking that evolved from Descartes.

In many ways, the courses of Eastern and Western thought proceed out of their sixth century BC matrix as mirror images of one another, opposite, yet complementary. For example, the Kantian idea that the universe that we see is not the true reality and that we do not experience "things in themselves" has direct counterparts in Buddhist, Taoist and Hindu thought where the world is regarded as an illusion, based on nescience, from which the human could awaken through enlightenment. Thus the East responds to this dichotomy by turning inward to experience true reality. The West, by contrast, becomes increasingly outer directed and impelled by the empirical mysteries of the physical world, seeking the enlightenment of scientific discovery and a true reality "out there." As we shall see, in an organic and holistic model, such an ultimate separation cannot exist. Rather, what is within unfolds outward into manifest reality and then returns.

Chung-Ying Cheng points out that contemporary philosophy began in China as part of the response to the weakness, ossification and corruption of the Ching (Qing) dynasty near the end of the nineteenth century. Chinese intellectuals feared that foreign powers, particularly Japan and the West, would overwhelm Chinese culture. The New Culture and May Fourth Movements early in the century "embraced modernization and condemned Confucian culture as a source of weakness" (Cheng 2002, 5). The May Fourth period resulted in a rejection of the Chinese philosophical paradigm in favor of values expressed in the Western paradigm, from Cartesian method in mathematics, to the structured modes of logical and scientific discourse. "A demand for reform and rejection of traditional Confucian culture culminated in the New Culture Movement and the May

Fourth Movement, but this liberal movement was soon succeeded by the formation of the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist party" (Cheng 2002, 3). The upheaval in the next decades, and two decades of relative stability, were followed by the June Fourth 1989 Beijing massacre in Tianamen Square. According to Cheng, the despair and nihilism among intellectuals in the aftermath of the event, "have given way to cautious anticipations of consolidating reform, with Marxist, liberal and Confucian thinking contributing to the debate (4)." "We can see that the task of the contemporary Chinese philosopher is to seek forms of rationality that conform to science and democracy; the second is to find a suitable place and voice for traditional values (373)."

China's philosophical path out of the axial period was more of a centripetal movement that did not inspire the same outward-bound curiosity and exploration, adventure and innovation that characterized the Western path. China too reached its moment of crisis in the twentieth century and enters the intersection with us; the bardo before the birth into an unknown future for the soul of the human, the anima mundi, and the great and glittering cosmos that beckons us all, and has from the beginning of time. We are all at a turning point in the telling of a new story. We are each looking into the other's wisdom to complete our own self-reflection as a species, not simply of mechanical geniuses but of expanded and enlightened offspring of the universe's flowering.

CHAPTER 3: THE RETURN OF THE SAGE AS THE COSMOLOGICAL HUMAN

We are returning to our native place after a long absence, meeting once again with our kin in the earth community. For too long we have been away somewhere, entranced with our industrial world of wires and wheels, concrete and steel, and our unending highways, where we race back and forth in continual frenzy.

The world of life, of spontaneity, the world of dawn and sunset and glittering stars in the dark night heavens, the world of wind and rain, of meadow flowers and flowing streams, of hickory and oak and maple and spruce and pineland forests, the world of desert sand and prairie grasses ... ,—all this, this wilderness world recently rediscovered with heightened emotional sensitivity, is an experience not far from that of Dante meeting Beatrice at the end of the Purgatorio, where she descends amid a cloud of blossoms. It was a long wait for Dante, so aware of his infidelities, yet struck anew and inwardly "pierced," as when hardly out of his childhood, he had first seen Beatrice. The "ancient flame" was lit again in the depths of his being. In that meeting, Dante is describing not only a personal experience, but the experience of the entire human community at the moment of reconciliation with the divine after the long period of alienation and human wandering away from the center. (Berry 1990, 1)

This passage, which opens Thomas Berry's book *The Dream of the Earth*, is placed here as a contemporary counterpart to the opening passage from the ancient Chinese *Book of History*, which appears at the beginning of this study. While the moments they describe are separated in time by over four thousand years and half of the planet, the sensibility and comprehensive view of heaven, earth and the human which they depict are clearly resonant with one another. They provide useful brackets for this study of the "return" of the sage in all of the nuances of meaning that that phrase suggests.

One of the defining qualities of the ancient sages, as we will see in the next chapters on the *Ta Chuan*, is this capacity to take a comprehensive view of the earth, the human and the heavens. Today we would call it a cosmology, but unless we can redefine this word along the lines of these two passages, it will be inaccurate and insufficient. In response to a comment about the cosmology of the *I Ching*, Yi Wu replied, "There is no cosmology, in the Western sense, in Chinese philosophy." He was stressing that for the sages, the entirety of heaven, earth and the human was not an object of scientific observation. It was the ground and law of their being. It was their great field of action. "Finally," he said. "people will come to understand that the human is part of nature and

that the human should be in accord with nature. In other words, cosmology will become the way of heaven."⁵

Yet there is no doubt that these early figures in China's history are portrayed also as the first scientists. As we see in the "Canon of Yao", they used their observations of the heavens and of nature to bring order into the lives of their people. When present day archaeo-astronomers study the monuments of Stonehenge and other ancient astronomical markers throughout the world, they are bringing to light the work of people like Yao.

For these early scientists, however, their inner world and the world of their action were not divorced from their observations. Here is a description from the *Shuo Kua*—the Discussion of the Trigrams—that makes this clear. We will refer to this passage later as delineating "the three-fold task of the sage."

In ancient times the holy sages made the Book of Changes thus:
They invented the yarrow-stalk oracle in order to lend aid in a mysterious way to the light of the gods. ...

They put themselves in accord with tao and its power [*te*: virtue], and in conformity with this laid down the order of what is right. By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the law of their nature to the deepest core, they arrived at an understanding of fate [*ming*: destiny]. (Wilhelm 1977, 262)

--from the Eighth Wing of the *I Ching*

Redefining Cosmology

We can see the distinction that Yi Wu is making with regard to "cosmology" by noting the difference in our own definitions of cosmos and cosmology, which still reflect the schism described by Tarnas between the objective and subjective worlds:

cosmos

1. The universe regarded as an orderly, harmonious whole.
2. An ordered, harmonious whole.
3. Harmony and order as distinct from chaos.

cosmology

1. The study of the physical universe considered as a totality of phenomena in time and space. a. The astrophysical study of the history, structure, and constituent dynamics of the universe. b. A specific theory or model of this structure and these dynamics. (AHD)

According to these strict definitions, cosmologists are not studying the cosmos. They are studying only the physical universe as an object independent from their inner natures, their thoughts, their dreams, their behaviors, their relationships. This is a very prominent feature of the Western worldview in the twentieth-century and it is one that scientists themselves are beginning to question and transform. Here again is Thomas Berry:

Empirical inquiry into the universe reveals that from its beginning in the galactic system to its earthly expression in human consciousness the universe carries within itself a psychic-spiritual as well as physical-material dimension. Otherwise human consciousness emerges out of nowhere. The human is seen as an addendum or an intrusion and thus finds no real place in the story of the universe itself, its capacity to reflect on and celebrate itself in conscious self-awareness. (Berry 1990, 131)

If cosmology were in fact the study of the universe as an orderly, harmonious whole, distinct from chaos, then the ancient sages could be regarded as "cosmologists." But that would still be an insufficient description because the *I Ching* sages recognized the presence of chaos in the universe and understood their own role in bringing about order and harmony for the people. In this they were not students of cosmos but shapers of cosmos; not cosmologists but cosmos-makers, bent on bringing order, unity and meaning to the world around them through their daily lives and actions. They did this, as we saw with Yao, by applying their observations of the patterns of nature to establish the laws and rituals of human life in harmony with the whole.

The Twenty-first Century Challenge: A Participatory Worldview

This is an enormous and challenging shift in perspective. It places a huge burden of responsibility on the human, now returned to that sentient fabric with the greatly extended capacities of our evolved collective consciousness, and a possible loss of the connective natural sentience and sensibility of "the primal mind." The choices humans make—especially with their new and powerful capacities—accumulate and ripple through the cosmos, shiver through it as a living whole of which we are a part. It is not at all clear to us in this moment how we will integrate our brilliant empirical and

technological capacities with such an expanded view of the human role. But the urgency to do this is abundantly clear.

To recast Richard Tarnas's description in Chinese terms, as the twenty-first century begins, people in the most "advanced" cultures find themselves living inside of three, often conflicting, stories or descriptions. Using the Chinese designations of Heaven, Earth and Human, we can say that we have an Earth story that embraces the physical order and is described scientifically. We have a Heaven story that is nonphysical, nonscientific, and is described in the spiritual language of religious traditions. Then we have a Human story that is subjective, internal and is described in the language of literature or probed through our psychologies. It is not uncommon to live with no story at all. Then we have only the news and the Dow Jones Industrial Average to guide us and define us.

Heaven, Earth and Human have broken apart from one another and exist in mutually exclusive realms. This is reflected even in the physical order where one may go to a zoo or a park to observe the natural earth world; go to a church to experience the heaven realm; and observe the human realm as a media consumer—passively watching the rich, the famous, the newsworthy, the performer, the athlete and so on. Choices must constantly be made about which of these experiences one will enter, if any. It is not surprising that this has resulted in a sense of alienation among people in recent generations as well as a waning of interest in both science and religion in the later twentieth century. The appeal of technology—which is after all only one of many sciences—has nothing to do with the earth world but is rather an expansion of the human, observing and communicating with the human; entertaining itself.

It is difficult therefore to imagine a comprehensive worldview that would encompass all three. In fact the first wave of postmodernism assured us that no such metanarrative was possible. A second wave of postmodernism, sometimes called "constructive postmodernism," distinguished itself from its deconstructive predecessors by seeking a more integrative view and a redefinition of cosmology which is in fact more consonant with early cultures, traditions and religions while expanding those through the wider horizons of contemporary knowledge.

In their introduction to *The Universe Story*, Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme propose that many of our contemporary problems are derived from this lack of a comprehensive story of the universe or a description of what the Chinese would call the Way of Heaven. We have nothing in the modern period, at the level of our society (i.e. outside of diverse individual religions), comparable to the stories of native groups and classical civilizations, which gave meaning to life and existence and formed the basis of ritual celebration as well as a fundamental referent with regard to modes of personal and community conduct.

With all our learning and with all our scientific insight, we have not yet attained such a meaningful approach to the universe, and thus we have at the present time a distorted mode of human presence upon the Earth. We are somehow failing in the fundamental role of enabling the Earth and the universe entire to reflect on and to celebrate themselves, and the deep mysteries they bear within them, in a special mode of conscious self-awareness. (Swimme and Berry 1992, 1)

The Human Role in a Re-enchanted Cosmos

Swimme and Berry are paving the way here for a redefined "cosmology" or universe story that restores the fundamental role of the human to express the powers of the cosmos—what the ancient Chinese called Heaven-and-Earth—through a special mode of conscious awareness. This definition of the fundamental human role is elaborated upon in Chinese philosophy as the way of the sage, so deeply explored in the *Ta Chuan*—the Great Commentary (also called the "Great Treatise" or "Great Appendix" on the *I Ching*). The theme is taken up in the other Confucian classics, especially the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Great Learning*. But only the *Ta Chuan* tells the sage's story against the background of a cosmological story which is, in fact, three stories in one: the creation of the cosmos; the creation of the *I Ching*; and the creation of the sage, both as a self-creative refinement and the creative work of furthering all things and beings under heaven.

The New Cosmology of Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry

As we turn back in time, we should bear in mind the new definitions of "cosmology" that seek to reanimate and re-enchant the universe as a place of spirit and creative imagination. Later we can consider whether the definitions do in fact fold back and reach one another through time. Here is a useful redefinition from *The Universe Story* that we may find resonant in ways with the unusual account of creation that we are about to enter in the opening chapter of the *Ta Chuan*. In this passage, Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry are describing three fundamental characteristics of the unfolding universe: differentiation, autopoiesis and communion.

These three terms—differentiation, autopoiesis and communion—refer to the governing themes and the basal intentionality of all existence, and thus are beyond any simple one-line univocal definition.... Some synonyms for differentiation are diversity, complexity, variation, disparity, multiform nature, heterogeneity, articulation. Different words that point to the second feature are autopoiesis, subjectivity, self-manifestation, sentience, self-organization, dynamic centers of experience, presence, identity, inner principle of being, voice, interiority. And the third feature, communion, interrelatedness, interdependence, kinship, mutuality, internal relatedness, reciprocity, complementarity, interconnectivity, and affiliation all point to the same dynamic of cosmic evolution. (Swimme and Berry 1992, 71)

Charlene Spretnak expresses this redefined cosmology in her book *Resurgence of the Real*. She elucidates the movement of modernity as it emerged in the twentieth century and takes issue with the ensuing Deconstructive Postmodernism movement which invited a potentially dangerous relativism, failing to provide the imperative and guidance to check the spiritual, cultural and environmental decline which were setting off alarms across the spectrum of mainstream America and the world. We can see how her language deepens the view of cosmos in this lovely passage from her book:

The story of the universe is a mythic drama of creativity, allurements, relation and grace. Our species brings to it the capacity for self-reflexive awareness and responsible acts. Reflecting on our dynamic context, from the subatomic to the cosmological, we notice the essential roles of creative process, constitutive relationship, and the unitive ground of being. Our great spiritual traditions, speaking in thousands of languages, have set their sacred stories of ultimate mystery within the grand epic of orbiting planets, changing seasons, eclipses,

moontides, and meteor showers. In the midst of all this action, in the unspeakable beauty of the Garden Planet, the story of every person unfolds, nestled within the embedding stories of family, clan, bioregion, region, nation, continent, planet and cosmos. (Spretnak 1997, 183)

This cosmological description has a close affinity with the *Ta Chuan* in a way that the previous Western worldview did not and opens the way for our own deeper understanding of that text. What is of particular value to us, who live within the pivotal shift toward the new worldview, is to see how such a cosmology provided an actual model for human action and expression in society. Its subject is how the fully human person, in partnership with the cosmic process in which that person is embedded, increases his or her capacity for what Spretnak calls self-reflexive awareness and responsible acts.

CHAPTER 4: THE *I CHING* AND ITS GREAT COMMENTARY

We find a working model of such a "cosmological human" in a text which has traditionally been ascribed to Confucius in his later life (though now dated from a later period), the *Ta Chuan* or Great Commentary (also called the *Hsi Tzu* or "appended fragments") on the *I Ching*, which constitutes the Fifth and Sixth of the Ten Wings or commentaries appended to the work since that period. The *Ta Chuan* deals profoundly with the qualities of being and knowledge that the "ancient holy sages" of China brought to the creation of the *I Ching* as a replica of a constantly changing cosmos unfolding according to certain abiding principles. The way (tao) of the sage was to inquire into these principles, including the investigation of his own nature, and then to embody them in his conduct. Indeed the universe could express itself through the sage and the sage, through his own being, could enlarge the Tao (the way of the whole); that is, directly affect the nature of the universe's unfolding.

In the language of Jungian and transpersonal psychology, the sage of the *I Ching* understands the principle of change and transformation as a process in which Heaven, Earth and the Human are mutually, inextricably engaged. Psyche and cosmos are one. The *Ta Chuan*, in exploring these themes at such depth, is both very ancient and radically new.

The *I Ching* itself has enjoyed an extraordinary revival through its translations into Western languages, particularly German and English. The monumental translation into English was the James Legge edition published in England in 1892. Richard Wilhelm translated the work into German with a rich and illuminating commentary. Since its publication in 1924, it has remained the centerpiece of *I Ching* studies, particularly following the publication in 1950 of its English edition with the translation of Cary Baynes and a Foreword by C.G. Jung. It was Jung, more than anyone in the West, who first stressed the importance of the *I Ching* as an aid to the exploration of the Unconscious. He used the work as the prototypical example of his theory of synchronicity, which he discussed in some detail in his Foreword. (The popularity of Jean Shinoda Bolen's book, *The Tao of Psychology: Synchronicity and the Self* in 1979 established the value of the work in psychotherapy.)

From the 1970s on, a proliferation of popular editions followed, many of which entered the New Age mainstream in entirely new versions that were often superficial and retained little of the original language or philosophy. Esoteric interpretations appeared, like *The Secrets of the I Ching* by Joseph Murphy along with books about speculative relationships with DNA (*The I Ching and the Genetic Code: The Hidden Key to Life* by Schonberger, 1979) and the Mayan calendar (*The Mayan Factor* by Jose Argüelles). These events were nothing new in the long history of the *I Ching*, which has been a mysterious source of speculation from its beginning some four thousand years ago.

In the West, bifurcation occurred between the loose popular versions used as an oracle and academic studies that dealt solely with *I Ching* scholarship and fine points of its philosophy. (This mirrored a similar separation among Chinese scholars from the time of Confucius between two schools in which the *I Ching* was treated as either a philosophical or oracular text.) Serious interest continued in the Jungian circles, particularly through the Eranos Seminars in Switzerland which have brought forth a series of interesting and important works over the years, including the work of Helmut Wilhelm, son of Richard Wilhelm—*Understanding the I Ching: The Wilhelm Lectures on the Book of Changes* ; *Change: Eight Lectures on the I Ching* ; *Heaven, Earth, and Man in the Book of Changes: Seven Eranos Lectures*. The most ambitious work to date generated by the Eranos Seminars is the recent publication of a translation with concordance of the *I Ching* by Rudolph Ritsema and Stephen Karcher (1994). This is a valuable tool for students, researchers and individuals who wish to approach the *I Ching* seriously as an oracle. It represents twenty years of research by the authors and offers some provocative new translations of the material. Stephen Karcher followed this with a book on the *Ta Chuan* which, unfortunately, was not available at the time of this study and approaches the work in a different way.

In all but a few of these publications, little or no attention was paid to the Confucian commentary (with the exception of Karcher's book) and the profound philosophical and cosmological import of the work. The commentary is included in the Legge and Wilhelm/Baynes translations and in the more recent translation by Richard

Lynn of the third century version of Wang Bi. Unfortunately, little if any serious interest is paid to these sections by the average reader.

In view of the scope of the *Ta Chuan* and its insight into the minds of the great sages of China's ancient past, this work also begs for a fresh revival and presentation. It is only through the Great Commentary that we begin to see the extent to which the sages developed the *I Ching* as a remarkably subtle mathematical, philosophical, psychological and symbolic representation of the constantly changing cosmos. It represents the universe as the on-going process of an inter-related and fully integrated system in a way that a present day "new cosmologist," quantum physicist, new biologist or deep ecologist can fully appreciate.

In addition to these qualities, the *Ta Chuan* introduces another vital element that is absent from our late-twentieth century scientific worldview: the deep and essential relationship between the sage's interior life, his or her external conduct, and his worldview or knowledge system. Together these comprise the wisdom that makes him the great sage.

Summary: The Qualities of the *I Ching* Sage

This work considers in some detail the way in which the ancient sages of the *I Ching* engaged the three-fold task of bringing into relationship the ways of Heaven, Earth and Human—as the deep nature of the individual self—in order to "put themselves in accord with tao and its virtue, and in conformity with this to lay down the order of what is right." "By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the law of their nature to the deepest core, they arrived at an understanding of fate [Wu: 'destiny']" (Wilhelm 1977, 262). The *Doctrine of the Mean* illuminates the meaning of this idea with the statement—"The way (tao) of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in a single sentence: They are without doubleness, and so they produce things in a manner that is unfathomable" (Legge 1971, 420). The sages, through their investigation of inner and outer nature, discover and embody this virtue of oneness as the foundation of their being and their action.

Here is a summary of the qualities of the sage as revealed through the following study of the *Ta Chuan*:

1. The realm of the human is at the center where Heaven and Earth meet, (the third and fourth lines of the *I Ching* hexagram). The sage occupies this position with conscious self-awareness. As the last line of chapter 1 (part 1) of the *Ta Chuan* says, he "grasps the principle" of Heaven-and-Earth and so completes the position of the center. Notice the theme echoed in Thomas Berry in the quote above: "the moment of reconciliation with the divine after the long period of alienation and human wandering away from the center." To grasp the center is to hold the tension of opposites in what C.G. Jung calls the *mysterium conjunctionis*. It is also to have patience with complexity and ambiguity, "sorting the tangled skein," as the *I Ching* says, to bring order out of the inchoate profusion of things seeking to find form. Thus the sage acts as the self-organizing principle in the human realm as he brings order into the world around him and makes the principles which he has discovered available as tools for others.
2. The sage studies the way of Heaven and the way of Earth—the Creative and the Receptive—to unite them in his person and embody them in the integrity of his action.
3. The sage applies the most careful discernment to make distinctions of value between things. He seeks out the wisest and most talented as his counselors and assistants.
4. The sage has reverence for all things above him, and compassion and concern for all things in his care.
5. The sage is centered and at rest in any position in which he finds himself at any moment, whether in the midst of calamity or tranquility, abundance or poverty.
6. The sage searches out the hidden seeds, the subtle beginnings of things and acts without hesitation in response.
7. The sage begins with the cultivation of his own nature and proceeds to the cultivation and fostering of the natures of other people, things and creatures, thus furthering the creative advance of the world.
8. The sage embodies the highest expression of *jen/ren* (humaneness, benevolence, love)—the way (tao) of the human—as described by Confucius: "It is, when you go abroad, to behave to everyone as if you were receiving a great guest; to employ

- the people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; not to do to others what you would not wish done to yourself" (*Analects* 12:2 in Legge 1971, 251).
9. The sage seeks to purify himself, "hide himself in the secret" of the unfathomable, so that he can penetrate to the light of spiritual virtue and "lend aid in a mysterious way to the light of the gods."
 10. The sage penetrates to the will of heaven and unites the wills of all the people, using his knowledge to nourish and foster all under heaven.

Linguistic Note

An effort has been made to help the reader through certain linguistic thickets in the study of the Chinese text. Two systems of transliteration of Chinese ideograms into the Roman alphabet are found in the literature: Wade-Giles and Pinyin. Although Pinyin was officially adopted by the People's Republic of China in 1979, the popular Wilhelm/Baynes translation and many of the major sources use the Wade-Giles system. For this reason, it has been chosen over Pinyin for this study. Pinyin equivalents are often given after a slash, like tao/dao. In the study of chapter 1 of the *Ta Chuan*, three of the major translations are given (James Legge, Wilhelm/Baynes and Wang Bi/Lynn) and both Wade-Giles and Pinyin romanizations are provided.

Part I:

The Creative Unfolding

The universe springs from a creative source whose primary action is one of unconditioned perception in the void which gives rise to the first, contextless distinctions and dualities. These dualities, which flow from the source, create an ever-changing context which then acts back on them to produce a continuing discrimination and differentiation.

—David Peat, *Synchronicity: The Bridge Between Matter and Mind* (1987)

In his penchant for precision, [physicist David Bohm] analyzed ways that our language deceives us about the true nature of reality. We generally consider ordinary language to be a neutral medium for communication that does not restrict our world view in any way. Yet Bohm showed that language imposes strong, subtle pressures to see the world as fragmented and static. He emphasized that thought tends to create fixed structures in the mind, which can make dynamic entities seem to be static. To illustrate with an example, we know upon reflection that all manifest objects are in a state of constant flux and change. So there is really no such thing as a thing; all objects are dynamic processes rather than static forms.

—Will Keepin, "Lifework of David Bohm—River of Truth" (1993)

CHAPTER 1: THE TEXT OF PART 1, CHAPTER 1 OF THE *TA CHUAN*
Ta Chuan – The Great Appendix
James Legge translation

- (1) Heaven is lofty and honourable; Earth is low. *Ch'ien* and *K'un* were determined in accordance with this.
- (2) Things low and high appear displayed in a similar relation; the noble and the mean had their places assigned accordingly.
- (3) Movement and rest are the regular qualities of their respective subjects. Hence comes the definite distinction of the lines as the strong and the weak.
- (4) Affairs are arranged together according to their tendencies, and things are divided according to their classes.
- (5) Hence were produced what is good and what is evil.
- (6) In the Heavens there are the figures there completed, and on the Earth there are the bodies there formed.
- (7) Corresponding to them were the changes and transformations exhibited in the I.
- (8) After this fashion a strong and a weak line were manipulated together till there were the eight trigrams, and these were added, each to itself and all the others.
- (9) We have the exciting forces of thunder and lightning; the fertilising influences of wind and rain;
- (10) and the revolutions of sun and moon, which give rise to cold and warmth.
- (11) The attributes expressed by *Ch'ien* constitute the male.
The attributes expressed by *K'un* constitute the female.
- (12) *Ch'ien* directs the great beginnings of things.
K'un gives to them their completion.
- (13) It is by the ease with which it proceeds that *Ch'ien* directs as it does, and by its unhesitating response that *K'un* exhibits such ability.
- (14) Ease will be easily understood, and freedom from laborious effort will be easily followed.
- (15) He who is easily understood will have adherents, and he who is easily followed will achieve success.
- (16) He who has adherents can continue long, and he who achieves success can become great.
- (17) To be able to continue long shows the virtue of the wise and able man;
- (18) To be able to become great is the heritage he will acquire.
- (19) With the attainment of such ease and such freedom of laborious effort, the mastery is got of all principles under the sky.
- (20) With the attainment of that mastery, the sage finds his position in the middle between Heaven and Earth. (Legge 1960, 271)

CHAPTER 2: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This opening chapter of the *Ta Chuan* provides us with an excellent point of entry into Chinese thought. It may seem at first to say nothing new, arresting or provocative to the Western reader. But on closer scrutiny, two very important themes are brought forward which are essential to understanding both the *I Ching* and Confucian thought in general. The first is that the text deals directly and deeply with the questions of duality, position, hierarchy and the concept of inferior and superior which are so troubling to Western readers. The second is that the chapter itself has the elements of a creation story in Chinese terms and therefore contains the outline of what is referred to in modern terms as a cosmology. Yet unlike cosmology in its literal definition, it is not intended as a purely objective account of the physical universe. It is rather the description of an awakening of the human to the nature of the cosmos and to the position and role of the human within it. How this can be accomplished in twenty lines can only be appreciated through examining the multifaceted imagery of the language: each character is itself a small story. In contemporary terms, the characters act as fractals of meaning.

A fundamental difference between Western and Chinese thought is implicit in the differing structure of the two languages. English, for example, has a rich fund of words that allows subtle distinctions between things as well as a technical precision so useful for scientific description. The Chinese sometimes defend the effectiveness of their language by pointing out that Western philosophy requires a whole book and the application of logic to expound its ideas, while in the case of Chinese philosophy, it is possible that one word, deeply understood, can be useful for your whole life. (This comment will become clearer as the study proceeds.) Conversely, if those characters become too familiar and static, they can lose their meaning altogether. Western languages, with their constant borrowings from one another, retain more possibility for novelty and freshness.

We will take seriously David Bohm's assertion that language can fix a structure of thought in our minds⁶ and see if we can apply a global brain that makes use of both approaches—the two hemispheres—in the hope that we may discover some new dimensions of perception and thought. To undertake this experiment, we will enter chapter one of the *Ta Chuan* through the imagery of its characters. This is not a linguistic

or etymological study and no attempt is being made to establish definitive meanings. It is designed as an excursion for the Western reader into a new (or very old) way of seeing the world. The characters themselves raise certain issues that are not apparent in the translation and may awaken deeper insight into the profound subject matter of the material.

CHAPTER 3: STUDY OF THE CHINESE TEXT

I. Duality: The Primordial Dyad

Table 1: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 1

- L:* Heaven is lofty and honourable; Earth is low. (Their symbols), *Ch'ien* and *K'un* (with their respective meanings) were determined (in accordance with this).
- W/B:* Heaven is high, the Earth is low; thus the Creative and the Receptive are determined.
- W/L:* As Heaven is high and noble and Earth is low and humble, so it is that Qian [Pure Yang, Hexagram I] and *K'un* [Pure Yin, Hexagram 2] are defined.

* Translations: L=Legge W/B=Wilhelm/Baynes W/L=Wang Bi/Lynn

Source: These tables and all linguistic tables which follow have been created by the author.

CHARACTER	天	尊	地	卑	乾	坤	定	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>t'ien</i> ¹	<i>tsun</i> ¹	<i>ti</i> ⁴	<i>pi</i> ¹	<i>Ch'ien</i> ²	<i>K'un</i> ¹	<i>ting</i>	<i>i/yi</i> ³
PINYIN	<i>tian</i> ¹	<i>zun</i> ¹	<i>di</i> ⁴	<i>bei</i> ¹	<i>qian</i> ²	<i>K'un</i> ¹	<i>ding</i>	<i>yi</i> ³
RADICAL #	37	41	32	24	5	32	40	111
ETYMOLOGY	vast extent of space 一 + above man 大	hand + wine 酉 (a vessel held with the right hand, reserved for sacrificial offerings) (W47C)	Earth 土 + 也	(originally depicted drinking vessel with the handled on the left, held by the left hand.) (W46E)	vapor 乙 + sun 日 (W117D)	Earth 土 + expanse 申	roof 宀 + 疋 roll, bolt of cloth, foot	(final particle indicating ending)
DEFINITIONS	Heaven sky	noble high	Earth	humble, low, mean	Heaven Receptive	Earth Receptive	fix, stop, tranquil, settle	

Heaven and Earth

尊
<i>tsun</i> ¹
<i>zun</i> ¹
41
hand 寸 + wine 酉 (a vessel held with the right hand, reserved for sacrificial offerings) (W47C;W/I69)
noble high

Heaven is high, the Earth is low

As the Old Testament begins with "God created the Heaven and the Earth," so too does the *Ta Chuan* begin with Heaven and Earth as its foundation. In the strictest sense of a genesis as a "coming into being," this chapter is also a genesis. But as we shall see, it is a genesis of a different kind, closer to Whitehead than the Old Testament, yet closer to the latter in its reverential spirit.

The character for "high" is 尊 (*tsun*¹). The character for "low" is 卑 (*pi*¹). *Tsun* contains the 41st radical 寸 for "hand," "measure" or "inch" with the phonetic element 酉(*chiu*¹/*jiu*). Technically, a phonetic element does not contribute to the meaning and is added to indicate the character's sound. Nevertheless, as we see often in the classic texts, the Chinese authors make use of an overall consistency of image, sound and meaning so we will consider the imagery of the phonetic as well for its suggestive possibilities.

卑
<i>pi</i> ¹
<i>bei</i> ¹
24
(originally depicted drinking vessel with the handle on the left, held by the left hand.) (W46E)
low, humble, mean

What is interesting about this character is that it mirrors a similar "separation" and offers a clue as to how Heaven and Earth come into being. Wilder and Ingram describe this phonetic element as wine or liquor (酒 *chiu*³) when the fermentation is over and the dregs are finally separated 八(*pa2/ba*)." (八 also means "eight" and will appear later in the chapter as the "eight trigrams.") Thus the character as a whole images spirits that have settled and are kept in a wine vessel, only used for sacrificial occasions. With the addition of an element which in the seal character is two hands, we have the idea of offering good spirits with both hands, reverently to a distinguished guest" (Wilder and Ingram 1974, 163). Karlgren makes a similar observation describing the opposite word, *pi**bei*, for "low." The

original character depicted a "simple cup held with one hand (the left, anciently the least

polite)" and he compares this to 尊 (*tsun/zun*) as "'honored', a fine cup presented with both hands" (Karlgren 1974, 100).

"There were, says the Glose, two wine vessels, the *tsun* 尊 and the *pi* 卑. The *tsun* was used for sacrifices and the *pi* was used every day" (Wieger 1965, Lesson 46E). Later the two characters were used in the abstract sense of "noble" and "vulgar" (the latter English word originally referring to the masses; the common people; ordinary).⁷

The metaphor implied by the character is the aging and use of wine. The image is not so much of an object as a process. A refinement is implied. Whether the metaphor is applied to human nature, society or the cosmos, it suggests a substance or entity which goes through a transformation (fermentation) which results in a separation of the heavier, lower or cruder elements (the dregs) from the lighter, subtler spirits which are then only used on rare occasions for "honored guests."

What is also implied in this image is the importance of the care and attention which attend the gesture. In our own times we would recognize this as a level of consciousness that is present in the activity. The cup is offered with two hands, suggesting the archetypal distinction between left as the instinctive side and right as the conscious side. While left is the naturally given, the right requires the reach essential to civilization. Working together they are the image of self-cultivation and refinement.⁸



Figure 2

This is a *tsun/zun* or bronze ceremonial vessel excavated from the Shang dynasty tomb of Lady Fu Hao (c.1200 BC), consort of the Emperor Wu Ting, in Anyang in 1976. Thought to be an owl figure, it contains archetypal cosmic motifs.

(National Gallery 2002)

Ch'ien and K'un

乾
<i>Ch'ien</i> ²
qian ²
5
vapor 乙 + sun 日
(W117D)
Heaven Receptive

...Thus the Creative and the Receptive are determined

With the separation of Heaven and Earth, a field is introduced as well as the two archetypal modes. They are identified here as *Ch'ien*, which corresponds to Heaven and *K'un*, which corresponds to Earth. Heaven and Earth, by their unique natures, have introduced two ways of being that are distinct from one another and develop qualities along distinct lines. The character for *Ch'ien* is built around the 5th radical for vapor—an image that is very important to this early cosmology and contained like a fractal within many of the significant words. *Ch'ien* includes the character for "sun" to imply the drying effect upon dampness.⁹ *K'un* depicts an expanse (申 shen¹) of Earth (tu³).

坤
<i>K'un</i> ¹
Kun ¹
32
Earth 土 + expanse 申
Earth Receptive

These are primordial archetypes that come into the language specifically through the *I Ching*. Each has a corresponding trigram and hexagram of all yang (*Ch'ien*) or all yin (*K'un*) lines. They become the enduring precipitates or patterns of this process as they are *ting*—"fixed, stopped, determined"—a character which depicts "order" within the "house." *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, therefore, are the fruits of the first ordering within the cosmos and within consciousness. The chapter will continue to develop their meaning.

II. Position: Establishing the Places

Table 2: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 2

- L: Things low and high appear displayed in a similar relation. The (upper and lower trigrams, and the relative positions of individual lines, as) noble and mean, had their places assigned accordingly.
- W/B: In correspondence with this difference between low and high, inferior and superior places are established.
- W/L: The high and the low being thereby set out, the exalted and the mean have their places accordingly.

CHARACTER	卑	高	以	陳	貴	賤	位	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>pi¹</i>	<i>kao¹</i>	<i>I(yi)³</i>	<i>ch'en²</i>	<i>kuai⁴</i>	<i>Ch'ien⁴</i>	<i>wei⁴</i>	<i>i/yi³</i>
PINYIN	<i>bei¹</i>	<i>gao¹</i>	<i>yi³</i>	<i>chen²</i>	<i>gui⁴</i>	<i>jian⁴</i>	<i>wei⁴</i>	<i>yi³</i>
RADICAL #	**	189	9	170	154	154	9	**
ETYMOLOGY		depicts a high pavilion on a lofty foundation (W172)	seal writing depicts exhalation of a breath; virtue that emanates as action; use (W85B,F)	hill mound fertile 阜 (阜) + 申 (phon) extend + 木 tree	basket + cowry shells 見 (W1234)	cowry shells 見 + halberd, lance 戈	man 人 + stand erect 立	
DEFINITIONS	humble, low, mean	high elevated	accordingly, to use, by means of	arrange, spread out display	honored valued	cheap worthless de-valued	position dignity seat rank (W25F; 60H)	(particle)

** See previous reference

Superior and Inferior

In the first part of this line, "low" is again a translation of *pi/bei*, also meaning humble. But a new character is introduced for "high": 高 (*kao/gao*). The character is derived from elements depicting a high pavilion on a lofty foundation and is defined as "lofty, eminent, noble, high-priced, excellent." The next character, 陳 (*ch'en/chen*), tells us that the underlying effect of this process of separation is an unfolding into space that "arranges, spreads out, displays itself; becomes manifest."¹⁰ The imagery of *ch'en* is of a fertile mound out of which a tree grows. Both the base—the mound—and the lofty, as the tree's branches, are essential parts of the picture. Higher and lower give dimension in space and in time, (like younger and older) and create the beginnings of the great field of action and creativity as the cosmos, the nation, the clan, the family and the individual life. Noble and humble had their places assigned accordingly.

From the original separation of Heaven and Earth are also derived the relative positions of the "noble and the mean [ignoble, unworthy]." Valuation comes into being from the very beginning. In the Wilhelm/Baynes translation the line reads, "In correspondence with this difference between high and low, the superior and inferior places are established."

And there is the rub for us! Technically, the use of the English words superior and inferior as translations of this separation and delineation of high and low positions is very accurate. The original Latin words were also intended to denote "upper" and "lower" and they evolved as designations for various ranking systems. We have an example of "pejoration," as that process by which the semantic status of a word changes for the worse over a period of time. In our own time, inferior is laden with social connotations and the psychological burden of feelings of "inferiority." For the ancient Chinese, this ranking was considered an essential form of ordering within family and clan which simply mirrored a similar ordering in nature. Nevertheless, valuation is **at also work** here in the human realm, which distinguishes the "noble" from the "base." Consider the characters:

kuei⁴/gui 貴 *ch'ien⁴/jian⁴* 賤

kuei⁴/gui (noble) depicts a basket of cowry shells. These were used as money until 300 BC and so the character refers to things valuable, costly, precious or dear.

Ch'ien⁴/jian⁴ (mean; worthless) is something which is cheap, mean, worthless. It contains the cowry shells denoting value with a doubling of elements meaning to exterminate, destroy: "The common work of two or many spears. Most of the characters containing this element have the sense of small, mean or to ruin, as 賤, cheap" (Wilder and Ingram, #679). The character suggests that something precious, something of value, has been destroyed or ruined.

The imagery of *tsun* and *pi* emphasizes something that may be rarefied, in the manner of wine, into a distillation of finer and baser elements. This is something which can occur in nature and can be seen primordially as the separation of the denser substance of earth from the lighter substance of heaven. In the imagery of *kuei* and *ch'ien*, something of value is depicted which can be debased through destructive forces or through cheapening.

The character *tsun* appears only twice in the *I Ching*, each time in the Confucian commentary. In Hexagram 14, Possession in Great Measure, the line reads "the weak (line) has the place of honor (*tsun*) and is grandly central" (Legge 1971, 67). This illustrates the subtlety with which the *I Ching* weaves these images. This is a yin line being honored.

In Hexagram 15, both *tsun* and *pi* appear, again in the Confucian commentary on the Judgment. This is the only incidence of *pi* in the *I Ching*. The passage offers some of the clearest language to describe the relation between Heaven and Earth as we meet them in this opening:

It is the way (tao) of Heaven to send down its beneficial influences below, where they are brilliantly displayed. It is the way (tao) of Earth, lying low, to send its influences upward and there to act. It is the way of Heaven to diminish the full and augment the humble. It is the way of Earth to overthrow the full and replenish the humble.... Humility in a position of honor (*tsun*) makes that still more brilliant; and in a low (*pi*) position men will not (seek to) pass beyond it (Legge, 71).

wei as Position

位
wei ⁴
wei ⁴
man 人 + stand erect 立
position dignity seat rank (W25F; 60H)

The division of Heaven and Earth is not a mechanical and creative "doing" but an activity of perception, discrimination and discernment. Hence we have the parallel and more finely articulated distinctions that follow from that to make a complete conscious world of qualities rather than purely of objects.

What is unfolding throughout the chapter resembles what is at work in the Pyramid Texts of ancient Egypt in its subtlety and its elevation from a purely folk mythology to the unique handiwork of sages. The priests of the VIth dynasty who inscribed the pyramid texts at Sakhara (ca. 2300 BC) were, like the *Ta Chuan* sages, raising the mythological to a subtle description of ascending consciousness. The

god Osiris in these texts becomes a synonym for a higher "god-like" level of consciousness to which a deceased person may "awaken":

"Hail Osiris (the deceased), stand up! Horus comes... He fills thee with his Eye, he makes it to complete thee. Horus opens for thee thine eye, thou seest with it... Thou livest, thou walkest every day, thou hast a soul in thy name of "Khut" (Horizon) wherein Ra (the Sun) appears,..." (Budge 1975:136).

A similar idea of awakening to a higher god-like consciousness is found in a surviving Nahautl account of the rites of death at Teotihuacan in the Valley of Mexico. The deceased was invoked as a "divine being":

"Awake, the sky is reddening
The dawn has broken
The flame-colored pheasants are singing
the butterflies [take wing]."

Hence the old men said that he who had died had become a god. They said he has wakened, he has become a god. (Leon-Portilla 1991:21)

The hieroglyph for Osiris contained two glyphs: one for "eye" and one for "seat or throne." It does not seem far-fetched to see in this glyph a representation of Osiris, the god-man, as a "seat of consciousness," a locus of spiritual or cosmic energy manifest as the mystery of seeing; of focused, "situated" being, and thus of consciousness. A further

indication of locality or position in space is the designation of soul as "the horizon where Ra appears." This identifies a particular place or position where enlightenment literally occurs as the emergence of the sun. The horizon where this occurs is the actual boundary of Heaven and Earth.

The idea that the deceased, as Osiris, is now filled with the Eye of Horus suggests a capacity for "seeing" that is a quality of the ancient sages of China. As we will discover in a later chapter, it is this capacity for seeing and discerning that raises the sage above even the meritorious "position" occupied by the "worthy man" introduced at the end of chapter one.

The character 位 (*wei*) bears some interesting resemblance to the glyph for Osiris inasmuch as it carries meanings of "position, seat, dignity, throne." Osiris is invoked to "stand up!" as the glyph for *wei* emphatically depicts a person standing upright, to his or her fullest extent.

The primary difference between the Chinese and Pyramid texts is that the movement of consciousness is traced in opposite directions. The *Ta Chuan* is not about a disembodied awakening of the spirit after death but about the enlightened embodiment of conscious discrimination and virtue in life; particularly in human affairs in society. Nevertheless, this text is tracing the development of humans in direct correlation with cosmic principles and their unfolding. At both the macrocosmic and microcosmic levels, the issue of position is literally "central."

Not only is *wei* a key to the origin of creation in chapter 1, it lies at the root of some of the most controversial elements in the *I Ching* for Western readers. Troublesome words to the twentieth century ear like inferior, superior and hierarchy are all derived from the question of position. The problem is exacerbated by the cultural picture of a society which became elaborately, and at times abusively, encrusted with rigidified ranks and rituals that grew stifling after millennia and represent the antithesis of the post-enlightenment emancipated democratic societies based on an equal opportunity to hold any position and offering the promise of upward mobility regardless of race, creed, color, religion or gender. To the new democracies, the proscriptive ranking systems of the East were anathema and were eventually overthrown from within by the communist revolution,

which succeeded largely because of the growing dissatisfaction with the Ching dynasty's failure at the end to transform successfully into the new era.

When the images for high and low are considered, particularly those involving wine and cowry shells, it seems clear that the positions do not represent a fundamental duality as much as an original unit which becomes subject to change and transformation which can be good or bad, refining or ruining. Once this process has been set in motion, distinctions must be made and things assigned to their places, even if these are only places "for the moment" for the entities which occupy them. This is the beginning of civilized society in China. The Chinese concepts of ethics and virtue will flow from the capacity to make such distinctions in value.

III. Movement and Rest as the Firm and the Yielding

Table 3: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 3

- L: Movement and rest are the regular qualities (of their respective meanings), and were determined (in accordance with this. Hence comes the definite distinction (of the several lines) as the strong and the weak.
- W/B: Movement and rest have their definite laws; according to these, firm and yielding lines are differentiated.
- W/L: There are norms for action and repose, which are determined by whether hardness or softness is involved.

CHARACTER	動	靜	有	常	剛	柔	斷	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>tung</i> ⁴	<i>ching</i> ⁴	<i>yu</i> ³	<i>ch'ang</i> ²	<i>kang</i> ¹	<i>jou</i> ²	<i>tuan</i>	<i>i/yi</i> ³
PINYIN	<i>dong</i> ⁴	<i>jing</i> ⁴	<i>you</i> ³	<i>chang</i> ²	<i>gang</i> ¹	<i>rou</i> ²	<i>duan</i>	<i>yi</i> ³
RADICAL #	19	174	74	50	18	75	69	**
ETYMOLOGY	force 力 + heavy thing (cart) 重 (W129K; W/I179)	original character depicted cessation of wrangling (W/I823)	right hand 又 + moon 月 (W46H) (W/I:43)	banner 巾 + general 尙	knife 刀 + moun- tain ridge 岡	slender 矛 + stem 木	threads 幺 + axe (cut) 斤	
DEFINITIONS	move action excite begin	repose still- ness	have, be yes there is	constant usual	firm strong	pliant soft supple tender flexible	break off, cut off, discon- tinue, decide	

From the separation of higher and lower, the text proceeds to the dyad of movement and rest, 動 *tung/dong*, and 靜 *ching/jing*.¹¹ Wang Bi gives the following note regarding *ching* in Hexagram 24: “When movement rests, then *ching*. *Ching* is not

relative to movement" (translated by Wu, 1990, 158). It is not, he is inferring, the antonym of movement but its foundation.

These terms remind us again that the theme is not the creation of objects but the slow accretion of a creative and purposeful process. In a state of stillness there is firmness, hardness, strength. As this gives way to movement in the course of change, there is a softening, a yielding, a movement into something else; an openness. Later we will see how directly these speak to the movement of the yin and yang lines in the *I Ching* hexagram. If there is an underlying foundation hinted at in this passage, it is surely in the word 常 (*ch'ang²/chang*) or "constancy." It is important to note here that the constancy in the *Ta Chuan* is not a constancy that can be characterized as a stillness or emptiness (as developed in later Taoist, Buddhist and Neo-Confucian thought) but a constancy of the patterns and rhythms of change. In this respect, the process is more scientific than mystical or meditative. The ancient sages looked for pattern in phenomena. The rest of the chapter makes this very clear.

...firm and yielding lines are differentiated.

剛	柔	斷	矣
<i>kang</i>	<i>jou</i>	<i>tuan</i>	<i>i/yi</i>
firm	yielding	differentiated	

The third character in the line, 斷 *tuan/duan* depicts an axe cutting through silk threads and is usually translated as "decide," "judge," from the idea of threads cut short, divided by two. In this context, this includes the idea of differentiation which develops through the next lines.

Our own words "conscious," "conscience," and "science" are similarly derived from an Indo-European root, *skei-*, which meant "to cut, to split," and led to the Latin *scire*, "to know" as "to separate one thing from another; to discern" (AHD 1973).

IV. Arranging and Organizing

Table 4: *Ta Chuan*: Part I - Chapter 1, Line 4

- L: (Affairs) are arranged together according to their tendencies.
- W/B: Events follow definite trends according to their nature.
- W/L: Those with regular tendencies gather according to kind.

CHARACTER	方	以	類	聚	物	以	群	分
WADE-GILES	<i>fang</i> ¹	<i>i/yi</i> ³	<i>lei</i> ⁴	<i>chü</i> ⁴	<i>wu</i> ⁴	<i>i/yi</i> ³	<i>ch'un</i> ²	<i>fen</i> ¹
PINYIN	<i>fang</i> ¹	<i>i/yi</i> ³	<i>lei</i> ⁴	<i>ju</i> ⁴	<i>wu</i> ⁴	<i>i/yi</i> ³	<i>qun</i> ²	<i>fen</i> ¹
RADICAL #	70	**	181	128	93	**	123	182
ETYMOLOGY	originally depicted the four directions of space		head + rice + dog	ear 耳 + take hold of	ox 牛 + not; flag 勿		sheep 羊 + prince giving orders	knife 刀 + divide 八
DEFINITIONS	square	by means of, according to	kind species	gather assemble	thing		flock class	divide

方 *fang*: Squaring

Fang yi lei chu: Squaring by gathering according to kind

A clear example of the difference between Western and Chinese language and thought can be seen in this sentence. All four English translations begin with a substantive although none is present in the original. This primacy of the noun underlines our need to begin with an object, (even when the noun itself is called a "subject").

Fang, the first of the four words, includes the odd meaning of "squared" among its primary definitions yet is translated in this context as "definite trends," "regular tendencies," "tendencies," "type." How do these translations relate to "square" or "squaring"?

Wilder and Ingram represent the figure as two boats lashed together so they form a square pontoon (503). More interesting is Wieger's description of the ancient form in the shape of a swastika depicting "the four regions of the space with two dimensions, the Earthly surface. By extension, square, regular, correct, a rule... (1174)."

While, as noted, no "subject" is present here as doing anything, a creation is nevertheless taking place. In its subtlety, it is hardly a Big Bang or even a "God created the Heaven and the Earth." Nevertheless, distinct elements of a creation account are present. There is an interesting parallel here with the Mayan creation myth as it has come down to us through the *Popol Vuh*. Note the squaring process as applied to Heaven and Earth:

the four-fold siding, four-fold cornering
measuring, four-fold staking,
halving the cord, stretching the cord,
in the sky, on the Earth,
the four sides, the four corners...

(Markman 1992, 106)

Even in the Mayan account, this activity is performed by a "Maker, Modeler, Mother-Father of Life, Humankind." As in most creation accounts, we have an objectified "subject" or agent as the creator.

While similar creative activity is at work in chapter 1 of the *Ta Chuan*, it is not undertaken by a creator. We have a regulation, an arrangement, a grouping as described by the translators. But "who" is doing it? It seems to be happening of itself; a form of self-organizing that is internally generated.

The Western reader is going to become increasingly frustrated with the text if the question of agency is paramount. It is best to deal with it right here in the first chapter, taking a clue from the leading scholars. "Events" and "affairs" are the nouns submitted to fill in this void in the text. The slipperiness of the subject here is reminiscent of the shift brought about by quantum physics in which the concreteness of electrons as discrete, microscopic objects melts away as they come to be seen rather as events around a point in a continuum.

As to the "who" that is "doing this," we come upon the fundamental linguistic differences which structure thinking in opposite ways. Western languages require a subject and a predicate, a noun and a verb. They require a doer of the action and

something to which it is done. We must recognize this linguistic prejudice for agency right from the outset. It is the fortress of the subject/object relationship in the West and with that the duality of self and other, Heaven and Earth, spirit and body, et cetera.¹²

Interestingly, the implied "who" of this passage is whoever is discerning it. Therefore it is the ancient sages, Confucius, the *I Ching* or the current reader of the passage. Understanding this concept also sheds light on the way the *I Ching* works as an oracle: the oracular moment is one in which the reader enters into partnership with the subjectivity of the sages and the universe itself to discern the quality of a given moment or condition.

Indeed this work would have remained unintelligible to the Western rational mind before certain remarkable advances in thought during the twentieth century: the work of Whitehead in philosophy, the discoveries of the quantum physicists like Heisenberg and Bohr, and the principle of autopoiesis first articulated by Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela.

Whitehead describes the subjective form of any entity as "determined by the subjective aim at further integration, so as to obtain the 'satisfaction' of the completed subject" (Whitehead 1978, 19). In both philosophies, these notions of creativity (in Chinese, *sheng*), completion and satisfaction (similar to *ch'eng* or "sincerity" in Chinese) are inextricable parts of a seamless process that includes the entirety of the universe. "Each creative act is the universe incarnating itself as one" (Whitehead, 245).

The creation unfolding in this passage is not the work of a craftsman-creator who makes/fashions objects out of nothing. This does not preclude the action of a Deity, as we will see later, but deity and divine action are not separate or outside of creation itself. In the *Ta Chuan*, the entire process is one of discernment, like a gradual awakening, similar to what is described in the West as a development or transformation of consciousness. Distinctions of positions and values are being made that will slowly complexify into the varied phenomena as "all things under Heaven." The first division into the two-fold higher and lower as Heaven and Earth is followed by the division into a squared four-fold space. This squaring represents the first activity of regulating, grouping, applying a ruler to the measure of phenomena, whether described as affairs, events or things. All of these words are to some degree prematurely anticipating the outcome of the process and don't

convey the subtlety of the text's unfolding. In its family of meanings, *fang* is similar to the Indo-European root *reg-* meaning "to move in a straight line" with such derivative meanings as "to direct in a straight line, lead, rule" (AHD 1973).

Yi lei: According to kind

方
<i>fa</i>
以
<i>yi</i>
類
<i>lei</i>
聚
<i>chu</i>

In both English and Chinese readings, it is common to give short shrift to prepositions in favor of the weightier import of other parts of speech. The next character, *i/yi* illustrates the impoverishment of such an approach when trying to understand an emergence that is taking place.

以 is defined by Karlgren as "use, take, adopt as, consider as, according, by (means of), in order to, departing from." The character has a more ancient form which derives from the radical meaning "self" (R.49:*chi*³). "This is a very ancient symbol, to represent the exhalations of a breath, the virtue that springs from an object, its action, its use, then use until exhaustion, to end, to pass away" (Wieger, 85B).

In Wieger there is a more detailed image of volutes of rolling clouds, passing away, returning (Wieger, 76). So rather than answer the question of who does the squaring, measuring or regulating, the text answers the question "by what means?" or "using what?" In English we might also say "By virtue of what" does this happen? This phrase carries some sense of the ancient form of *i/yi* as "the virtue that springs from an object" and touches on a theme that will be developed significantly in the *Ta Chuan* as we shall see later.

In this passage, the answer to "By what means?" is "according to kind, or class (*lei*)." In examining this character, we find once again that an abstract idea is represented by tangible objects. The character contains three elements depicting rice, a dog and the human head. It means "species, kind, class" and represents clearly in its imagery a fundamental taxonomy. The animal, vegetable and human groups are represented by a valued example of each: rice, the staple food; the dog, the animal most loyal to the human; the head, as source of human identity.

The fourth character, 聚 *chü/jü*, means to gather, to assemble. Containing the element for "ear," it originally suggested individuals gathered to hear someone speak, akin to the English expression "lend me your ear."

Wu yi chun fen: Divided according to class

物

wu

以

yi

群

chun

分

fen

The next line of four characters seems to express the same thing in different words. Is this repetition of an idea in different words simply a poetic device? Certainly an aesthetic effect was always a primary condition of ancient Chinese texts, but there is a subtle multivalent purpose often at work in these as if meaning and aesthetics, at the deepest level, are inextricable.

Wu yi chun fen describes further the process of discrimination and organization. We can begin to see where a single process builds layer upon layer from the less concrete to the more concrete.¹³

In the character 物 *wu*, we have an actual definition of "things." Real entities have been introduced as if precipitates of the process. *Wu* usually refers to an article or object. It is the 93rd radical depicting a cow or ox, creatures of great value among the ancient Chinese. Wiegner adds the meaning *beings*. He notes also that the ox was the largest of all creatures.¹⁴

This character is followed by 以 *i/yi*, "by means of, according to, using." 群 *chün* is another word that suggests a group. Is there a substantial difference here between *lei* and *chün*?¹⁵

According to Wilder and Ingram, "As sheep are orderly in their actions the above phonetic was adapted with 羊 (*yang*² "sheep") to represent a flock of sheep. It now means flock of any kind (830)." This meaning suggests a leadership or organizing principle of the flock. Consistent with the overall passage, no shepherd is implied in the term.

Now let us look at the two parallel lines and consider the question: Are they repetition or development?

<i>fang</i> squared; regulated; arranged L. “(Events) arranged...”	<i>yi</i> by means of, according to “according to...”	<i>lei</i> kind, class, species, nature 'their tendencies...	<i>ju</i> purposefully gathered ...together.“
<i>wu</i> thing, article, being L. 'things...	<i>yi</i> by means of, according to “according to...	<i>chun</i> flock; a group with a principle of order their classes...	<i>fen</i> divide, distinguish divided.”

To this point in the chapter, we have a totality (neither named nor described) which has been divided into two and is now, through squaring, divided into four. The division into four corresponds to the primordial separation of the four directions as a four-fold division of space. (This idea is developed throughout the work.) In line one, the distinction is not applied directly to objects but nevertheless implies the conscious act of dividing in the most fundamental way: That which is in front, behind and to either side. By extension, this becomes the four directions of the Earth and the sky. This implies abstract distinctions of categories. Phenomena (affairs, events) are similarly distinguished or gathered together according to tendencies or species, as in the animal, vegetable and human order.

In the second sentence, definite things are introduced and a subtle development can be seen. Further distinctions are made according to more subtle patterns of order within them. The first line describes a recognition of commonality as a purposeful gathering and grouping of similar things, the second emphasizes a division into their separate classes. These are two modes of distinction working toward the same end in the manner of other complementary processes such as analysis and synthesis or processes commonly grouped under right- and left-hemispheric tendencies. In either case, an important work of distinction and classification is taking place which we now identify as an activity of consciousness: taxonomy.

V. Good fortune and Misfortune

Table 5: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 5

L: Hence were produced (the interpretations in the Yi, concerning) what is good [or lucky] and evil [or unlucky].

W/B: In this way good fortune and misfortune come about.

W/L: So it is that good fortune and misfortune occurs.

CHARACTER	吉	凶	生	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>chi²</i>	<i>hsiung¹</i>	<i>sheng¹</i>	<i>i³</i>
PINYIN	<i>ji²</i>	<i>xiong¹</i>	<i>sheng¹</i>	<i>yi³</i>
RADICAL #	30	17	100	**
ETYMOLOGY	口 speech + 士 sage	乂 man rolling down + 凵 pit	earth 土 + growing plant 牛	
DEFINITIONS	good fortune, auspi- cious, lucky,	misfor- tune, unlucky, evil	birth, life, produce	{ final particle; comple- ting the sense)

This line introduces three of the most important characters in the *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan*. It is somewhat encouraging to note that *chi/ji*, the character for good fortune, occurs 192 times in the *I Ching* to 63 times for its opposite, *hsiung/xiong* or misfortune. While the more popular translations are "lucky" and "unlucky," as ideas that permeate Chinese culture to this day, their use in the context of these classical texts is best understood by examining the characters themselves.

hsiung chi: Good Fortune and Misfortune

The character for "good fortune," *chi/ji*, is comprised of elements for "speech" and for "scholar" or "sage." (This is not the "ancient holy sage" of the *I Ching* and *Ta Chuan* which is of a rarer order as *sheng jen*.) The character for "misfortune," *hsiung/xiong*, contains the image of a person falling 𠂔 (see Wieger, 24) into a pit 凵. This character also has the meaning of "accident" which would follow from the image. Hence the second character does seem to express random chance or fate, as do the popular translations of "lucky" and "unlucky." Yi Wu, however, states unequivocally to his students that "there is no such thing as fate in the *I Ching*, only a destiny to be fulfilled" (Author's class notes, 1992). The opposite character makes this more evident. "Good fortune" is equated with the words of a scholar or sage, suggesting that the sage is beyond fate and that his wisdom protects him from misfortune.

The element for "scholar/sage" (士 *shih*²) is further broken down by Wieger (24) into the elements for ten (十) and one (一). Ten is the number that contains all other simple numbers (in decimal numeration.). 十 is the symbol of extent (the two dimensions or axes) and the cardinal directions of north, south, east west and center. All things are comprised, Wieger explains, between the two terms of numeration, one (一) and ten (十). These two numbers also represent, in philosophical terms, the one and the many. In his book *Chinese Philosophical Terms*, Yi Wu defines *i/yi* as "one" with the philosophical meaning of Tao in action (Wu 1990, 1). Ten (*shih*⁴) is the number of totality in the phenomenal order. The "ten thousand things," a common Chinese expression which appears throughout classical texts, refers to "all things under Heaven" and thus every "thing" on Earth. By extension, this represents the domain of the scholar-sage; a man "pointed out by his learning to become an official" (Wieger, 24C). The character for official includes the character for the scholar-sage with the addition of the radical for "action." One might call it "sageliness in action," the ideal of the sage-official who was so sought after by means of the civil service examinations which continued in China from the time of Confucius for more than two millennia.

Producing Life 生

The third character in this line is no less important than the previous two. It is a pictograph of a plant rising out of the Earth—a graphic representation of the power of the Earth to "produce life." (When the element for heart-mind is added to it, it becomes *hsing*, meaning "human nature.") Its translations include birth, to give birth, produce. The Confucian commentary on Hexagram 2, *K'un*, leaves little doubt about its primordial meaning in this text: ¹⁶ "Complete is the great and originating (capacity) of *K'un*. The ten thousand things owe to it their birth" (Legge 1969, 16).

How then do the distinctions and separations between high and low positions, then by species, class or kind of phenomena "produce" the distinctions between good fortune and misfortune? As fundamental as these characters are to the *I Ching*, we should consider them carefully as they are introduced here at such an early and primordial stage.

It is in the character *chi/ji*, "good fortune," that we encounter the first hint of the sage in this text. A veiled statement is being made about the nature of fortune itself. Space is unfurling into the four directions and arising with it are the categories of things which themselves give rise to qualitative differences. The qualitative differences, however, are not inherent in the phenomena but in the character of the consciousness that is distinguishing relationships. It is the consciousness, after all, that is really coming into being here and the universe is not a thing apart from that. Hence the consciousness of the sage is exactly the one that perceives the natural dimensions of the world—its four directions, its center point and the unity through which the ten thousand things are produced. Good fortune, as the "speech of the sage," comes to the person who follows the teachings of the sage and thus develops the mind of the sage which is "far-seeing," thus "sees things in their unity." By contrast, the person fallen into the pit sees nothing; is closed off from the vision of the five directions in darkness. Yet there is a deeper implication here which connects directly with the previous lines. If the image of 十 represents the natural directions of the world, 爻 indicates a particularly human action: cutting. The second stroke in writing the character (from upper right to lower left) was an uncommon and almost unnatural one.

The entire passage to this point has been about dividing the cosmos into classifications. This is similar to the origin noted in the Western concept of consciousness

with roots in a similar cutting and dividing activity as developing discernment. Paradoxically, as in the Western account of Adam eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, this is also knowledge of good and evil and itself creates the possibility for evil and misfortune. With each division, the natural harmony is further broken; further challenged even as it is further understood. The mind of the sage, preserving a perspective on the totality and its order, can apply this clarity of vision to protect the harmony, or re-establish the harmony, of the whole. The person lacking this vision, falls prey to confusion and misfortune; falls into the pit.

VI. Images and Forms

Table 6: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 6

- L: In the Heavens there are the (different) figures there completed, and on Earth there are the (different) bodies there formed.
- W/B: In the Heavens phenomena *take form*; on Earth, shapes take form.
- W/L: In Heaven this [process] creates images, and on Earth it creates physical forms;

CHARACTER	在	天	成	象	在	地	成	形
WADE-GILES	<i>tsai</i> ⁴	<i>t'ien</i> ¹	<i>ch'eng</i> ²	<i>hsiang</i> ⁴	<i>tsai</i> ⁴		<i>ch'eng</i> ²	<i>hsing</i> ²
PINYIN	<i>zai</i> ⁴	<i>tian</i> ¹	<i>cheng</i> ²	<i>xiang</i> ⁴	<i>zai</i> ⁴		<i>cheng</i> ²	<i>xing</i> ²
RADICAL #	32	37	62	152	**	**	**	59
ETYMOLOGY	activity 才 + earth 土 (W96D)	extent 一 + human 大	halberd 戈 + nail 丁	(pictograph of an elephant)				feathers hair 彡 + 2 shields 开
DEFINITIONS	to be in, consist in,	Heaven	complete become perfect	image form appearance elephant				form shape

在 *tsai*: Within (Heaven and Earth)

In the first character of this line, 在 (*tsai/zai*), we encounter the element for Earth (土) which can easily be confused with the similar element for "scholar-sage" discussed in the previous line. This figure primitively expressed the soil and sub-soil (two horizontal lines) with things produced within it, (depicted by the vertical line). What the two figures have in common is the idea of expansion and extension which will be discussed later as a key idea of the text. 在 (*tsai/zai*) combines this image of the Earth

with an abbreviated element for "activity;" "activity within the Earth," which then translates into common usage as a preposition meaning "to be in, consist in" and similar ideas. One can see readily how the simple preposition can contain cosmological or ontological assumptions. There is implied here the idea that being and life are a "within-ness" that is on its way outward in a similar manner to *sheng*, depicting the plant rising up out of the Earth.

The first phrase refers to a within-ness in Heaven as if Heaven, like Earth, had such a capacity for germination and florescence comparable to that of a seed or plant under the Earth. The character for Heaven, we recall, similarly has the two lines, the lower line of which represents the arms (大) of the human figure. So we have on the one hand a rising up through the layers of the Earth and on another, a rising up beyond the extent of the human, into the sky: 天. (*t'ien/tian*).

象 *hsiang*: Images

What are coming into being in Heaven are introduced here as the images: 象 (*hsiang/xiang*). It is difficult to imagine how the pictograph of an elephant would come to represent images or emblems of things. One possibility, in keeping with the rest of the passage, is that the elephant is "larger than life"; the very largest extent of the category of animal. The element of the "ox" is often used to convey something of great size, as the animal itself was popularly venerated as an image of greatness. The ox was a creature of familiar importance in the everyday life of the countryside, essential to agriculture. The elephant, however, was not native to China although there were elephants introduced during the time of the great Emperor Yao. Yet it was an Earthly expression for something completed in Heaven, namely the higher, more abiding phenomena like the sun, moon and stars. Its use as "image" may also related to the fact that the ivory tusks of the elephant were favored for the carving of lasting images and works of art. The word has some resemblance in meaning to the Greek *arche* and to the ideal forms beyond the cave in Plato's Republic. This meaning is fully developed in chapter 11 of the text which we will explore in the next section. Yi Wu's definition of the term includes a passage from that chapter:

"Heaven creates spiritual things, and the sage follows them. Heaven and Earth change and transform, and the sage imitates them. Heaven displays (literally "hangs out") the *hsiang* which can be interpreted as omens of good fortune or bad fortune, and the sage makes *hsiang* from them." (sec.1, chapter 11). In this quotation, the first *hsiang* refers to the images displayed by Heaven. These have been explained by diviners as spirit-produced objects such as the Ho map (brought forth by the Yellow River) and the Lo Writing (a product of the Lo River); both were used in divination. The images have been explained by academicians as the natural phenomena of change and transformation in the universe. The former explanation became a part of supernatural or religious thought, the latter developed into science and philosophy. Images in the Book of Changes can be explained both ways. In divination, snow in June is *hsiang*; to scientists, an apple falling from a tree onto Newton's head also is *hsiang*. (Wu 1990, 122)

成 *ch'eng*: Becoming, Completing Perfecting

What does it mean that the forms are "completed" in Heaven? 成 (*ch'eng/cheng*) is described by Ingram and Wilder as a character comprised of an axe (or halberd) and a nail, or a boy. "When a boy is big enough to wield a battle axe, he is grown up or completed, a man (Wilder and Ingram, #193)"; what is inside as the seed reaches its maturity as the flower. Yet it is not so much a fixed point or product being alluded to as an on-going process, much in the way the maturity of the boy is not a sudden ending or abrupt finish. The sun, moon and stars "complete their courses" through the days, months and years but then return for the next phase of their cycle. It is through the *hsiang* that the ceaselessly changing universe first takes "shape" through the coalescence of light and pattern: the luminous bodies in space and the recurring cycles in time.

The second phrase parallels the first in the realm of Earth. This antiphonal style of the work is yet another example of the way single ideas tend to reverberate through shape, sound and pattern in the way of poetry and music. If the reader follows the work with all of his or her senses, it becomes clear that the dual movement is never an antagonistic duality. It is also true here as earlier, that the parallel phrase in the line is not redundant but subtly developmental. "Within Earth the (concrete) forms are completed." This is the stage of embodiment of the forms and patterns through the material dimensions of life on Earth. The rhythmic and significant development here corresponds to what Yi Wu has

noted in chapter 11 where the sage both perceives the *hsiang* of Heaven and embodies the *hsiang* on Earth. These are not two eternally parallel and separate courses, however. As we see in characters like *sheng*, the human represents the vertical connection through the two (horizontally represented) realms and connects them through his or her consciousness and actions. To put it in a different way, the human embodies both realms but the *Ta Chuan* is very detailed about the way in which this comes about.

形 *hsing*: Forms

The last character, 形 (*hsing/xing*), is said by Ingram and Wilder to represent two shields, side by side, ornamented with feathers: "An article not decorated is spoken of as lacking in appearance or shape (895)." What they see as shields, Wieger describes as two scales, giving no etymology for *hsing* itself (Wieger, 115). Karlgren (1974, 1084) offers a third interpretation, suggesting that the element seen as shields and scales is a slightly deformed version of the primitive character *ching* which depicted a village divided among eight families with the center preserved for the well (cf. Hexagram 40). This developed into a word for "plough," "cultivate" and by extension, Karlgren sees this as the basis for *hsing* which he defines as "contour, shape, form; figure, face; body; configuration; the state of; take shape, appear, show, depict." Wieger, Wilder and Ingram, and Karlgren all agree on the meaning of the word. Perhaps the common theme in their etymological descriptions is that an object or "thing" is pointed to that is part of mundane life. Certainly the idea of decorated shields would underline unique and individual personal experience and expression. The nuances of all of Karlgren's definitions suggest something that is transient in time, whether a body or a state, thus of an Earthly nature, as opposed to the Heavenly phenomena which constantly change but whose cycles endure.

VII. Change and Transformation

Table 7: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 7

- L: (Corresponding to them) were the changes and transformations exhibited (in the Yi).
- W/B: In this way change and transformation became manifest.
- W/L: This is how change and transformation manifest themselves.

CHARACTER	變	化	見	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>pien⁴</i>	<i>hua⁴</i>	<i>ch'ien⁴</i>	<i>i/yi³</i>
PINYIN	<i>bian⁴</i>	<i>hua⁴</i>	<i>jian⁴</i>	<i>yi³</i>
RADICAL #	149	21	147	**
ETYMOLOGY	糸 threads + speech 言 + go forward 夂	person 人 + over- turn 匕	eye 目 + person 人	
DEFINITIONS	change	transform, metamor- phosis, change	see, observe	

變 *pien*: Change

變
<i>pien⁴</i>
<i>bian⁴</i>
149
threads + speech 言
change

The next three characters, *pien hua ch'ien*, introduce the theme of change into the passage, laying the foundation for the central concept of the *I Ching* or Book of Change. The first word, 變 (*pien/bian*), shows again in its upper figure the threads which appear in *tuan* ("to judge") with the element for speech 言. Wieger describes the upper figure (*luan⁴*) as originally depicting a hand disentangling three threads, modified later with the element of speech replacing the middle thread. Wieger states that "this action of disentangling any intricate matter, when done in common, leads to

impatience and quarreling, hence the character means "quarreling, trouble, discord (92D)." Karlgren, on the other hand, describes the same character (*luan*) as "several threads" and 𠄎 "command," defining the character as "to fasten, bind, put in order, arrange" (1974, 590). This precedent is followed by Fenn who defines it in his dictionary (1979) as "to bind; tie together." The radical rests atop the element 攴 *chih*, which is the 34th radical meaning "to step forward, to follow." It seems likely, given the characters and lines leading up to this point, that the sense of the word in this context would relate to "disentangling" threads, ordering and arranging. The character for speech, that unique capacity of human consciousness, further expresses the idea of inchoate things being gathered, separated, identified, organized: the fundamental work of language. We see this same theme and imagery developing in the first three hexagrams of the *I Ching* which have a direct correspondence to the processes at work throughout the *Ta Chuan* and clearly form the basis of the Confucian commentary here. In that sequence, we are entering the third phase expressed in the hexagram which Wilhelm/Baynes translates as "Difficulty at the Beginning."

Hexagram 3 as an Expression of Change

To fully appreciate the genesis of the key ideas of change and transformation, it is useful to look at the language of the Confucian commentary on Hexagram 3, *chun*, which Ritsema and Karcher define as "begin or cause to grow; assemble, accumulate, bring under control (1994, 114)" and Legge translates as "bursting" (1969, 23). In this Wilhelm/Baynes translation, it is described as "Difficulty at the Beginning."

In the sequence of the hexagrams—

After Heaven and Earth have come into existence, individual beings develop. It is these individual beings that fill [overflow] the space between Heaven and Earth. Hence there follows the hexagram DIFFICULTY AT THE BEGINNING. Difficulty at the beginning is the same as filling up. (Wilhelm 1977, 398)

The character *ying* means more literally to "overflow" and the passage seems better understood in this context. Moreover, that meaning can now be better visualized perhaps than it could in the time of Legge or Wilhelm since we have a new image of the origin of the universe as a burst (or "bang") that in its eruption creates space itself. The universe is

not a static "place" that "fills up" with creation but expands with creation itself. Hence the "ten thousand things" overflow into the space between Heaven and Earth and continually expand it. (This is the most literal translation of that line.)

The image, 象 (*hsiang/xiang*), of the hexagram is translated by Wilhelm/Baynes as "the superior man brings order out of confusion." Legge remains close to the original meaning of the characters by translating it—"the superior man, in accordance with this, (adjusts his measures of government) as in sorting the threads of warp and woof (24)." Wilhelm makes eloquent use of the imagery in his commentary on the line:

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.(17)

We could hardly find a more concise example of the use of *hsiang* described in the passage from chapter 11 quoted by Yi Wu. The most fully developed human is the one with the far-seeing capacity to discern the huge patterns at work in the Heavens and apply them in his or her own life. The character 變 (*pian/bian*) is itself a microcosm of this process. If we add to the sorting of the tangled threads through the human consciousness (implied by "speech") the element below for stepping forward, we have time added to this dynamic. Not only has the burst of profusion (whether Spring or the Big Bang itself) created space in its unfurling, but also time. This is consonant with the model of space-time with which we now view cosmological phenomena. So we have a "difficult" creative confusion **which the human moves through** as an organizing principle at work which, as a process, is defined as "transformation."

化 hua: Transformation

化
<i>hua</i> ⁴
<i>hua</i> ⁴
21
person 人 + over- turn 匕
transform, metamor- phosis, change

Wieger says of the character 化 (*hua*⁴) that its radical form 匕 depicts a man tumbling head over heels and explains that the primitive sense of this was "to die" (30D). With the addition of the abbreviated form of 人 (the human), Wieger extends the idea to mean the teaching of others. As a Jesuit priest, such a connection between converting and teaching may have followed naturally on the image.

Ritsema and Karcher, by contrast, describe the ideogram 化 (*hua*⁴) as depicting a person alive and dead, therefore "the life process." They define *p'ien* as "abrupt, radical, fundamental mutation from one state to another" as in the transformations of lines in hexagrams. *Hua*, on the other hand, is defined as "gradual metamorphosis; influencing someone (97)." (The deeper meanings of these terms will be further discussed in the chapter on change.)

見 ch'ien: Change and Transformation as the Manifest Universe

The last character, 見 (*ch'ien*/*jian*), combines elements for "person" and "eye" to depict the human capacity for seeing. It is usually translated as seeing or being seen. The same character is used for a similar word, *hsien*, which means "to manifest" or "to be manifest." Both meanings are important to the *I Ching* and *Ta Chuan*. Chapter one itself is about coming into manifestation. The world of the ten thousand things is a seen world and the qualities of the sage are directly related to his or her capacity for "seeing." It is the universe, with all of its changes and transformations, being seen that identifies the unique nature and role of human consciousness.

VIII. Relationship: Interaction and Penetration

Table 8: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 8

L: After this fashion a strong and a weak line were manipulated together (till there were the eight trigrams), and those eight trigrams were added, each to itself and to all the others, (till the sixty-four hexagrams were formed.)

W/B: Therefore the eight trigrams succeed one another by turns, as the firm and the yielding displace each other.

W/L: In consequence of all this, as hard and soft stroke each other, the eight trigrams activate each other.

CHARACTER	是	故	剛	柔	相	摩	八	卦	相	盪
WADE-GILES	<i>shih⁴</i>	<i>ku⁴</i>	<i>kang¹</i>	<i>jou²</i>	<i>hsiang¹</i>	<i>mo¹</i>	<i>pa¹</i>	<i>hua⁴</i>	<i>hsiang¹</i>	<i>tang⁴</i>
PINYIN	<i>shi4</i>	<i>gu⁴</i>	<i>gang¹</i>	<i>rou²</i>	<i>xiang¹</i>	<i>mo¹</i>	<i>ba¹</i>	<i>gua⁴</i>	<i>xiang¹</i>	<i>dang⁴</i>
RADICAL #	72	66	**	**	109	64	12		**	
ETYMOLOGY	sun 日 + right 正	cause, old + person 人			see 目 + tree 木	hand 手 + hemp flax 麻	depicts separation into two	to di- vine 卜 + jade tablet 圭		vessel 皿 + hot water 湯
DEFINITIONS	this these to be	there- fore, be- cause, old	firm hard	soft	each other; mutual exam- ine inspect	rub hone polish	eight sepa- rate par- take	tri- grams	mutual each other	wash bath- tub move oppose

是故 Shih ku: Therefore

The first two characters taken together mean "therefore." In the interest of exploring the imagery of characters and their resonance with the textual meaning, these two characters are interesting to consider.

The first character, 是 (*shih/shi*), is especially important in the language as what we would call the verb "to be." The image of the sun 日 in the centered or "right" place,

正, at the meridian reminds us of the idea of coming into fullness, the "becoming, completing, perfecting" that we have seen in 成 (*ch'eng/cheng*) as the boy who comes of age or fullness. We see the same idea in the development of the original characters expressed in the text of the images 象 (*hsiang/xiang*) which are taken by the superior person or sage as the model for his or her behavior. In Hexagram 55 appears the exhortation to "become like the sun at mid-day" and thus to express the fullness of one's being or nature.

The second character, 故 (*ku/gu*), is described by Wilder and Ingram (#17) as a combination of the elements for ancient, (also cause, purpose, old) and the element for person. The word "ancient" is ten 十 on top of 口, mouth, indicating words passed down through ten generations. Combined with the element for man, human, person, "we have man as cause, that is, doing, making." While the second character alone can mean "therefore," it is usually combined with *shih* for emphasis. Certainly the imagery implies the active agency of the human in fulfilling his or her nature.

摩 *mo*: rub, hone, polish

We have already encountered the characters for "firm" and "yielding" but in this line we find them in interaction and thus the whole chapter moves into the significant theme of inter-relationship. This is another indication that the dualities themselves are not polar opposites exclusive of or antagonistic toward one another but inherently related pairs whose interaction is essential to the creative process. "Thus it is that the firm and yielding polish (rub, stroke, hone) each other." An important shift has taken place here from an apparently hierarchical model to an equal and interactive syzygy. Which one is polishing? Which one is being polished? Once again the neat subject-object duality slithers away in this image. It is the very interaction of things that is creating them; affecting them; transforming them. This is the natural outcome of the introduction of change into the chapter and the theme is repeated throughout the Confucian classics. The change of any one thing results in the transformation of other things.

相 hsiang: mutuality, each other

The two key characters which express this concept here are *hsiang* and *mo*. To the postmodern reader, *hsiang* says important things about the interaction and inter-relationship of phenomena. Composed of the characters for "tree" and "eye" it originally meant "to examine; to inspect" (Wilder and Ingram, 106; W158B).

Wieger suggests that the meaning is derived from the idea of a person watching from behind a tree. In its evolved usage it carries the meaning of "reciprocity, mutuality, each other." This may arise from the kind of play on words of which the Chinese are so fond and reflects their multidimensional use of language to express meaning. Both characters have the same sound, *mu*⁴. It seems more plausible that what is being depicted is the human seeing and resonating with the tree. This combination of perception and resonance—an "engaged seeing"—describes the underlying activity that is at work throughout the *Ta Chuan*. It is closely related to the work of the sage.

The use of the word *mo* here is certainly an unexpected one to express the nature of the interaction: It combines the 64th radical for hand with the phonetic for hemp to form a word that means "to feel, to rub with the hand, to caress" (Wilder and Ingram, 752). As Wilder and Ingram note, "Painters use wads of hemp for rubbing oil into wood for painting." This character is closely related to and sometimes interchanged with a word for "grinding." In either case, it is clear that this is not a careless or random interaction. Something is being shaped, worked on, produced.

八卦 Eight Trigrams

The second part of the line, while continuing the use of a literary symmetry that is both analogous and developmental, makes its first direct reference to the creation of the *I Ching* itself.

From the image of hardness and softness "polishing" each other, the line moves to an interaction between the eight trigrams of the *I Ching* which is described as impacting (literally "washing") one another. How is that analogous to the polishing action which is going on between the hard and the soft? On the surface, it appears as another non sequitur.

The character for 8, 八 (*pa/ba*), is an ancient character which depicts, according to Wiegier (18A), a division into two parts and came to mean "to divide, to partake." Eight, he explains, can easily be divided into two entities of four, four being a number of completeness to the ancient Chinese as representing the square: an image of completeness. Wiegier is the only one to offer the second definition of "partake" but it adds an interesting layer of meaning to the word divide as to "divide among" in the way individuals, for example, are invited to partake of a feast. Speculative as this idea is, it does reflect the communal and interactive nature of Chinese life and a positive meaning for "divide" which one encounters in the *I Ching*. Thus we find in Wilhelm's commentary on the Image of Hexagram 3 (Difficulty at the Beginning), the beautiful line, "In order to find one's place in the infinity of being, one must be able both to separate and to unite (17)." The Confucian commentary to Hexagram 38, which Wilhelm translates as "Opposition," could be a summary of these lines of the *Ta Chuan*. Here is Legge's translation.

Heaven and Earth are separate and apart, but the work which they do is the same. Male and female are separate and apart, but with a common will they seek the same object. There is diversity between the myriad classes of beings, but there is an analogy between their several operations. Great indeed are the phenomena and the results of this condition of disunion and separation. (Legge 1969, 164)

Wilhelm's translation of this last line is "All beings stand in opposition to one another: what they do takes on order thereby" (574).

盪 *tang*: wash, shove, move, oppose

The *Ta Chuan* writer chose the word *tang* to express the interaction among the trigrams. The lower element depicts a vessel and the upper, hot water or broth. The character most literally represents a bath-tub and therefore carries a meaning of washing, bathing. Notice that the translators quoted here freely interpreted it as added, succeeded or activated each other. The Shaughnessy version preserves the more literal meaning: "the eight trigrams wash each other" (Shaughnessy 1996, 189). This translation makes sense in light of the organic and literal translation he gives to the entire line: "This is why the hard and soft rub against each other, and the eight trigrams wash across each other,

drumming them with thunder and lightning, moistening them with wind and rain, the sun and moon moving in cycles, one cold one hot" (ibid.).

It seems likely that *tang* has been chosen here after carefully considering how the eight trigrams would interact with each other as heaven, earth, wind, water, lake, mountain, thunder, and lightning. The subtly nuanced relationship between the natural cosmos and the *I Ching* which is expressed throughout the text can be seen in the problems which faced the translators here. When Legge translated the word as "manipulated," he was probably making the jump to the yarrow sticks used in the divination or perhaps imagining a Creator at work. Even the term "activation" carries a Western sense of agency and fails to convey the natural process which the original text is expressing.

Fertilizing Influences

Table 9: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 9

- L: We have the exciting forces of thunder and lightning; the fertilising influences of wind and rain;
- W/B: Things are aroused by thunder and lightning; they are fertilized by wind and rain.
- W/L: It [the Dao] arouses things with claps of thunder, moistens them with wind and rain.

CHAR-ACTER	鼓	之	以	雷	霆	潤	之	以	風	雨
WADE-GILES	<i>ku³</i>	<i>chih¹</i>	<i>i(yi)³</i>	<i>lei²</i>	<i>t'ing²</i>	<i>jun⁴</i>	<i>chih¹</i>	<i>i(yi)³</i>	<i>feng¹</i>	<i>yu³</i>
PINYIN	<i>gu³</i>	<i>zhi¹</i>	<i>yi³</i>	<i>lei²</i>	<i>ting²</i>	<i>run⁴</i>	<i>zhi¹</i>	<i>yi³</i>	<i>feng¹</i>	<i>yu³</i>
RADI-CAL	207	4	**	173	173	85	**	**	182	173
ETYMO-LOGY	drum + stick	originally a small plant + ground (W79B)		rainy clouds 雨 + fields 田	rain 雨 + loud noise	the king in the gateway 閨 + water 水			insects 虫 + vapor (K.36) or sun 日 + motion 乚 (W21B)	de-picts drops of water falling from a cloud hanging from the sky
DEFINI-TIONS	drum excite arouse	[geni-tive] of, 's		storm thunder	thun- der	moisten soak enrich benefit fertilize			wind breath usage	rain

鼓雷 *Drummed by thunder*

Here is a further example of the way in which the *Ta Chuan* moves through a symmetry of simple archetypal form—in this case the actual literary structure of the text which proceeds in pairs like a couplet—toward a gradual creative development; *hsiang* of Heaven becoming more concretely embodied as *hsiang* of Earth. The hard and the yielding and the eight trigrams (archetypal forms) are interacting and honing each other in the previous line. This line seems an embellishment of that as the forces of thunder and lightning, wind and rain. But in fact, a very significant movement has been made not only from the abstract to the concrete, but from the inorganic to the organic in the specific sense of biological life. Any contemporary scientist would be quick to point out that these are exactly the forces necessary to produce life. Both Legge and Wilhelm/Baynes underline this with their use of the word "fertilizing."

The character 雷 (*lei*) is the one used for "thunder" in the trigram for that element and in the commentary on the symbolism of hexagram 51 which results from doubling that trigram. Thunder is representative of the force that excites things to movement and is therefore the initiator of all change. In the *Shuo Kua*, or Treatise on the Trigrams, it is said that "God comes forth in the sign of the arousing" (Wilhelm/Baynes, 268). This is one of the very few occasions in the *I Ching* and its commentaries that the word God is used, borrowed from its ancient religious contexts. Clearly to the *I Ching* sages, God was in part synonymous with the coming forth of creation and life.

The use of the first word, *ku/gu*, is particularly effective in providing a palpable sense of this. The character is made up of elements for drum and stick. Both Shaughnessy and Wu Jing-Nuan translate this character literally as "drumming." Legge uses the word "exciting" and both Wilhelm/Baynes and Wang Bi/Lynn use the word "arouse." The word drumming perhaps more kinesthetically expresses the interactive resonance that corresponds with the "polishing" of the previous line.

潤風雨 *Fertilized by wind and rain*

The first character, with meanings of moisten and enrich, completes the sense of the quickening of life among the natural forces. Clouds, wind, thunder and rain all fill the space that has opened up between Heaven and Earth. They make way for the ten thousand things and for life itself. "Thunder serves to put things in motion; wind to scatter the genial seeds of them; rain to moisten them" (Legge, 342).

Sun and Moon Following Their Courses

Table 10: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 10

L: ...and the revolutions of sun and moon, which give rise to cold and warmth.

W/B: Sun and moon follow their courses and it is now hot, now cold.

W/L: Sun and moon go through their cycles, so now it is cold, now hot.

CHARACTER	日	月	運	行	一	寒	一	暑
WADE-GILES	<i>jih</i> ⁴	<i>yueh</i> ⁴	<i>chun</i> ¹	<i>hsing</i> ²	<i>i</i> ¹	<i>han</i> ²	<i>i</i> ¹	<i>shu</i> ³
PINYIN	<i>ri</i> ⁴	<i>yue</i> ⁴	<i>jun</i> ²	<i>xing</i> ²	<i>yi</i> ¹	<i>han</i> ²	<i>yi</i> ¹	<i>shou</i> ³
RADICAL #	72	74	159	144	1	40	**	72
ETYMOLOGY	[picto-graph of sun]	[picto-graph of moon]	carriage 車 + going and pausing 辶 (辶+止) + enclosed 勹 (W167)	picto-graph of foot-prints: one, left 彳 one, right (same but reversed) (W63C)		origi-nally roof + man + fuel + ice		sun 日 + (par-ti-cle)
DEFINITIONS	sun day daily time of	moon	revolve, succeed one another;	go walk act motion conduct	one	cold	one	hot

運行 *Chun hsing*: *The cycles of the sun and moon*

Notice in this line the subtle developments from and parallels to the opening line. Heaven itself is divided between the sun and the moon. As the first line contained significant right and left hand imagery in its characters, this one contains right and left foot imagery that is significant with regard to movement.

運 *Chun: A Primordial image of return*

The word 運 (*chun*) is made up of the primitive pictograph for a cart or carriage—a wheeled vehicle—which proceeds by a turning motion. Included is the element depicting the left footprint along with a variation in the image thought to represent the foot stopping, hence going and pausing. (In primitive times this may have derived from observations of the planets and the sun at solstice when it "pauses" before its return journey.) Wiegner describes this as carriages in file, denoting succession, connection (167). Added to this is the element 冫 which means to enclose. While this character can be used to denote a marching army, it is particularly effective here as further defining the process of pattern applied to movement and hence to time; the enclosure of movement by a patterned order. As an internal principle orders the movements of a flock of sheep, marching armies likewise imply an ordered movement (march) forward. In the realm of Heaven this defines a cosmological order.

hsing as human and cosmic action

The word 行 (*hsing²/xing²*) as movement could seem a redundancy here but true to the text so far, this is not the case. If *chun/jun* is an uncommon character, *hsing²* by contrast is one of the most important words in traditional Chinese philosophy. It can be defined as "go, walk, act, movement and conduct." It is made up of the primitive element for the left footprint which we have seen in the previous character. Added to this is the reversed element to depict the right footprint. The subtle detail of the left and right foot suggests a meaning similar to the left and right hand used for the cup of sacrifice discussed in the opening line: a deliberate, intentional, disciplined action. *Wu hsing* appears in ancient Chinese philosophy as a concept of major importance. It is translated as the Five Elements and is a key idea in Chinese medicine and alchemy as well. Angus Graham translates *wu hsing* literally as the Five Walkings and John Major compares them to phases rather than to substance. When Wilhelm/Baynes translate this as follow their courses or Wang Bi/Lynn as go through their cycles they are capturing this additional level of ordering implied by *hsing*: not just a blind turning or repetitive revolving but a

pattern which will lay the foundation of all of nature and contains something close to cosmic intention: a course. That the same word could be used for what we would call the fundamental elements, (not unlike the eight trigrams) shows the way in which ordered movement congeals into something highly stable which can structure phenomena.

hsing tao: Pursuing their courses

What is hinted at in this choice of characters closely parallels what is expressed in a passage from the *Doctrine of the Mean*: "All things are nourished together without their injuring one another. The courses of the seasons and the sun and moon are pursued without any collision among them" (Legge 1971:427). In that passage, Legge uses the word "courses" as a translation of tao and "pursued" as a translation of *hsing*. *Hsing* and *tao* often appear together in this classic so it is not surprising that we will see Tao make its first appearance in the next sentence of the *Ta Chuan*. For the Chinese, the very definition of an ordered universe is that phenomena establish themselves, not as fixed objects but as courses of development which can unfurl in time as singular threads, "untangled" from the rest, that can proceed in interaction with their environment without losing their integrity. The sun and moon do not bump into each other and Heaven and Earth can sustain their relative positions, yet all are intimately involved in one another and their interactions bring forth the constantly renewing 10,000 things. The embracing principle which allows this to be so is *tao*. The integrity of the unfolding of each individual thing is also *tao*. The next line speaks to the latter.

"The sun and the moon go through their cycles, so now it is cold, now hot." The literal translation of the second part of this line is "one cold, one hot." "One" always points to the integrity of individual things. The use of the integer here is also introducing an idea of the alternation of yin and yang lines. Things ripple out from initial phenomena (Heaven and Earth, *Ch'ien* and *K'un*) as all of the variations of the rhythmic interactions of yin and yang, like moon and sun, cold and hot. They stroke one another and incite each other, with a mutual, fertilizing energy, toward what will be the creation of new life.

The Way of the Male and Female

Table 11: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 11

L: The attributes expressed by *Ch'ien* constitute the male; those expressed by *K'un* constitute the female.

W/B: The way of the Creative brings about the male.
The way of the Receptive brings about the female.

W/L: The Dao of Qian forms the male; the Dao of *K'un* forms the female.

CHARACTER	乾	道	成	男	坤	道	成	女
WADE-GILES	<i>Ch'ien</i> ²	<i>tao</i> ⁴	<i>ch'eng</i> ²	<i>nan</i> ²	<i>K'un</i> ¹	<i>tao</i> ⁴	<i>ch'eng</i> ²	<i>nu</i>
PINYIN	<i>qian</i> ²	<i>dao</i> ⁴	<i>cheng</i> ²	<i>nan</i> ²	<i>Kun</i> ¹	<i>dao</i> ⁴	<i>cheng</i> ²	<i>nyu</i>
RADICAL #	5	162	**	2	32	162	**	38
ETYMOLOGY	vapor 乙 + sun 日 (W117D)	going and pausing 迂 + head + hair 首		strength force 力 + field 田	Earth 土 + expanse 申	go, walk 辵 + head with hair 首		picto- graph of woman in ritual posture
DEFINITIONS	Heaven Creative	Way path	complete become perfect	male	Earth Recep- tive	way path	complete become perfect	female

The way of ch'ien becomes the male; the way of k'un becomes the female

This line comes in the middle of the chapter and could be described as introducing the second half, although no such formal division exists. It reintroduces the two modes, *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, which are the trigrams and hexagrams for Heaven and Earth, the first containing all yang lines and the second, all yin.

In line one, the distinction between the positions of Heaven and Earth is described as "establishing *Ch'ien* and *K'un*." What was abstract form (*hsiang*) at the beginning of the first section (as the *hsiang* or images "completed in Heaven") are now assuming an

embodied form as *hsing* which are completed, or become, on Earth. We are likewise passing from inorganic to organic phenomena.

How exactly has this happened? Is there a significant condition which has led to this? If anything, it would have to lie in the principles of order and pattern that have developed systematically to this point since the establishment of the positions of Heaven and Earth and the interactive processes that flow from that and lead to arousing energy of lightning, thunder and the fertilizing affects of wind and rain which ensue from the measured sequences of night and day, heat and cold and the four seasons.

成 *ch'eng* as *Becoming*

Once again we encounter that important word 成 (*ch'eng/cheng*), "become, complete, perfect." The literal translation of the line is "The way (tao) of *Ch'ien* completes (becomes) the male. The way of *K'un* completes the female." The problem with Legge's translation, that the way of *Ch'ien* becomes the male and *K'un*, the female" is that it is open to the misperception that the two great cosmic powers can be reduced to male and female. This is like saying that human is a 40 year old adult rather than that a 40 year old is an adult human. *Ch'ien* and *K'un* are of a higher, "cosmic" order which precedes these distinctions or even the distinctions between sun and moon. They come into existence concurrently with the separation of Heaven and Earth in the primordial moment. (The primordial moment itself is ongoing.) Wilhelm's and Wang Bi's translations are more useful here: the Tao of each brings forth or forms the male and female.

道 *Tao*

It is interesting that Tao is introduced concurrently with the unfolding of *Ch'ien* and *K'un* into male and female. The word Tao appears relatively infrequently in the works of Confucius. Western readers who see Taoism and Confucianism as mutually exclusive opposites may not be surprised by this. But Taoism and Confucianism are as "interactive" as all of the pairs we have noted and could be described as two sides of the same coin, Taoism the more feminine, yin, introspective side and Confucianism the yang,

extroverted side, active in the world. It seems likely that Confucius is echoing Lao Tzu's admonition that "the Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao." But the Tao can be recognized at work in phenomena. Later in the *Ta Chuan* we find the line "that which let's now the light, now the dark appear is Tao" (Wilhelm 1977).

The character for Tao is made up of the elements for "walking," (carrying forward the idea of *hsing* and the five walkings) and head. The character for head is embellished with two strokes to indicate the hair, a refinement that may point to thought. While the Chinese locate the "mind" together with "heart" (*hsin*: heart-mind), it is likely that the head still carries here the connotation of the guiding or leading activity of thought and intelligence. A path or course is never an erratic or irrational movement.

The Tao that shapes the male and female is moving the text more clearly into the realm of human consciousness and life.

VII. Duration and Relationship

Ch'ien and K'un as Beginning and Completion

Table 12: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 12

- L: Chien (symbolizes Heaven, which) directs the great beginnings of things; *K'un* (symbolizes Earth, which) gives to them their completion.
- W/B: The Creative knows the great beginnings.
The Receptive completes the finished things.
- W/L: Qian [*Ch'ien*] has mastery over the great beginning of things and *K'un* acts to bring things to completion.

CHARACTER	乾	知	大	始	坤	作	成	物
WADE-GILES	<i>Ch'ien</i> ²	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>ta</i> ⁴	<i>shih</i> ³	<i>K'un</i> ¹	<i>tso</i> ¹	<i>ch'eng</i> ²	<i>wu</i> ⁴
PINYIN	<i>qian</i> ²	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>da</i> ⁴	<i>shi</i> ³	<i>Kun</i> ¹	<i>zuo</i> ¹	<i>cheng</i> ²	<i>wu</i> ⁴
RADICAL #	**	111	37	38	**	9	**	**
ETYMOLOGY		speak 口 + arrow 矢 (W131E)	depicts human at full exten- sion; hence grown- up; tall	woman 女 + emi- nence		human 人 + suddenly unex- pectedly 乍 (W/I: 149)		
DEFINITIONS	Heaven Creative	know, perceive be aware understand	great noble grown- up (W60A)	be- gin- ning" first	Earth Recep- tive	act, do make arise appear	com- plete become perfect accom- plish	things

知 *chih*: Knowledge; Awareness

It may seem at first as if this line has reverted to the abstractions of the first section and is not following up the introduction of male and female. A single word in the line tells us otherwise: 知 (*chih/zhi*). This is the character that identifies the presence of human awareness as "knowledge, awareness, understanding." It is made up of the elements for mouth (hence speech) and arrow. The image of an arrow appears frequently

in Chinese characters to express the same singularity of course that we find in Tao or One (*i/yi*) with the addition of intent, of "aim" as well as of penetration which are all key ideas. Notice that they are on the side of more conscious activity, rather than pure repetition of natural event, although it is natural event which brings them forth.

作 (*tso*): Acting; Doing

The second character which is introduced for the first time in this line is *tso*, usually translated as "do" or "make." Like *hsing*, it can also be translated as "act," but it has a subtly different significance in the *I Ching*. The character contains the radical for the human and a phonetic meaning "suddenly; for the first time." Ritsema and Karcher translate the word *tso* as "arise, excite, stir up, generate."

The appearance of *tso* in Hexagram 40 in connection with thunder and lightning links it to the preceding line of this text. (This hexagram is made up of the trigrams which image thunder and lightning.) "Thunder and rain perform their roles (*tso*): this is the image of Release" (Wang Bi/Lynn, 381). "Playing their roles" underlines the sense of a grand, coherent drama unfolding in which each element is playing its part in a larger ensemble.

Hexagram 40 follows the hexagrams for Opposition (#38) and Obstruction (#39) and can be seen as the conditions which are eased or released by the activity of thunder and lightning, much as we describe a storm as "clearing the air." The Confucian commentary on the Judgment carries the idea further:

When Heaven and Earth allow Release, thunder and rain play their roles; when thunder and rain play their roles, all the various fruits, shrubs and trees burgeon forth. (Wang Bi/Lynn, 380)

In the Wang Bi/Lynn translation, this is followed by further commentary from Wang Bi on the line.

When Heaven and Earth are stopped up, thunder and rain do not play their roles; it is only when intercourse between them, which moves them to free up, that thunder and rain play their roles. Once thunder and rain play their roles, what was dangerous and difficult will give way to prevailing ease, and what was stopped up will give way to freedom of process. This is why "all the various fruits, shrubs and trees burgeon forth." (Wang Bi/Lynn, 380)

The word *chieh*—which is translated in the title of the hexagram as Release or Deliverance—also means "to open." In the first part of the chapter, Heaven and Earth become separated from one another through the distinction of their relative positions. In this second part, we could say that the world of the ten thousand things is "opening up" between them through the processes of their interaction. In Legge's translation, when Heaven and Earth "are freed (from the grasp of winter), we have thunder and rain," suggesting that even the stoppage or obstructed interaction is a natural season or phase of the cycle.

The importance of *tso* in relation to the human can be fully appreciated by its use in the commentary (*Wen Yen*) on line 5: "The wise person (sage) acts (*tso*) and the ten thousand things (all under Heaven) behold it; see it." Now let us see exactly how the text uses these characters in relation to *Ch'ien* and *K'un*.

大始 (*ta shih*) The Great Beginnings

Ch'ien knows the great beginnings.

Wieger (131E) says of 知 (*chih/zhi*) that it is "the knowledge that makes a man able to 口 [mouth] give an opinion upon a subject, with the rapidity and precision of an 矢 arrow hitting the mark." We have seen this faculty at work in the chapter as the activity of discernment applied with great care to the observation of phenomena in their inter-relatedness to the whole rather than in small, disconnected units. While all things are in a constant state of fluctuation and change, patterns and connections can nevertheless be observed.

The *Ta Chuan* affirms in several places that the most valuable of all discernments is that of the "beginnings" of things. Throughout the *I Ching*, the ability to recognize things as they first arise is exactly what empowers an individual to act decisively, correctly and at the right time to avoid "misfortune." We see an example of this in Hexagram 2: "When there is hoarfrost underfoot, solid ice is not far off." The *I Ching* uses ordinary, simple events as guides to conduct within complex human situations. Yet it does so with a subtlety beyond simple folk-wisdom. It represents a highly developed level of consciousness.

The commentary on this line says "the frost one treads on becomes solid: Thus yin things begin to congeal. Obediently fulfilling its Dao [Tao], it ultimately becomes solid ice" (Wang Bi/Lynn, 146). That yin things begin to congeal in this way shows the transitioning constantly going on between heat and cold, hard and soft, firm and yielding, movement and rest. *K'un* is always on its way to *Ch'ien* and vice versa. The line helps to illustrate the kind of knowledge that is required to avert danger by recognizing how the "natural way" of a given thing is likely to be fulfilled and the consequences it can have. It also points to the versatility of the human who can perceive these subtle beginnings and refine his or her life by making equally subtle yet far-reaching responses. This is the great virtue of the Emperor Yao, applying these principles to ordering his kingdom.

What exactly are the great beginnings? Confucius uses a similar phrase in Chapter 3 of the *Great Learning*:

Things have their root and branches. Affairs have their end and their beginning. To know what is first and what is last will lead near to what is taught in the *Great Learning*. (Legge 1971, 357)

Ritsema and Karcher (96) indicate that this word for "beginning" (始 *shih/shi*) as used in the *I Ching* specifies a time-span that is ended by "completion" (*chung*). This is the character translated as "end" in the line from the *Great Learning* and is not to be confused with the other important character for "completion" which appears throughout this text: 成 (*ch'eng/cheng*). As Ritsema and Karcher have noted, *chung* refers to a time span with a beginning and end, (and therefore is usually translated as "end") while *ch'eng* describes the maturation of a process as something "becomes."

The character for "beginning" combines elements for "woman" and "eminence" suggesting by its very imagery an important birth or "great beginning." The fact that *shih* and *chung* as beginning and end are often paired in reverse, "the end and the beginning of things," suggests the deeper meaning of both: the beginning emerges out of an ending, hence the cycle of death and rebirth that is annually seen in nature. The ideogram for "end" is made up of "threads," "follow" and "ice." The "great" beginning, then, is the one that issues forth from winter and death and the ending that is a completion is the one that will give way to a renewal.

成 *ch'eng as completion*

K'un acts to bring things to completion.

Here is 成 (*ch'eng/cheng*) as completion or ripeness. And here is *tso*, "playing a role in" that completion, generating or enacting it. A literal translation would be "*K'un* plays its role (acts) by completing the ten thousand things." The "action" is in fact "embodiment" as concrete things, events or phenomena; bringing things into being that have been initiated by the conscious power of *Ch'ien*.

The Easy and the Simple

Table 13: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 13

- L: It is by the ease with which it proceeds that *Ch'ien* directs (as it does), and by its unhesitating response that *K'un* exhibits such ability.
- W/B: The Creative knows through the easy.
The Receptive can do things through the simple.
- W/L: Qian through ease provides mastery over things, and *K'un* through simplicity provides capability.

CHARACTER	乾	以	易	知	坤	以	簡	能
WADE-GILES	<i>Ch'ien</i> ²	<i>i(yi)</i> ³	<i>i(yi)</i> ⁴	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>K'un</i> ¹	<i>i(yi)</i> ³	<i>Ch'ien</i> ³	<i>neng</i> ²
PINYIN	<i>qian</i> ²	<i>yi</i> ³	<i>yi</i> ⁴	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>K'un</i> ¹	<i>yi</i> ³	<i>jian</i> ³	<i>neng</i> ²
RADICAL #	**	**	72	**	32	**	118	130
ETYMOLOGY			picto-graph of a lizard; probably a chameleon		Earth 土 + expanse 申		bamboo 筍 + between among 間	originally depicted large brown bear (W27J) W/I:357)
DEFINITIONS	Heaven Creative	through; by means of;	easy; change	know; aware understand	Earth Receptive	by means of	simple bamboo	able ability talent

For all of the "ease and simplicity" of this line, it is likely to elude the Western reader. Ease and simplicity are not characteristic of Western life and character. Challenge and complexity might provide a more accurate description. It is even more mystifying to see that the word for "easy" is identical to the word for "change," as in the Book of Changes which translates the title *I Ching*.

The line is somewhat clearer if taken in the context of the previous line. The presence of 以 (*i/yi*) tells us that it is answering that important question, "By what means?" In this case, by what means does *Ch'ien* "know"? And "by what means" does *K'un* have this capacity for acting, for bringing things to completion?

易 *i/yi* as "easy" and "change"

Ch'ien's capacity comes through "ease" and given the character, we might also consider its relation to "change." The character for "easy" and "change" is the primitive pictogram for a lizard, probably a chameleon. The characteristic for which the creature is known is its capacity to adapt itself to its environment; to "respond to change" in the conditions around it. From this perspective, one could imagine that such a quality of adaptability would "ease" the passage of any creature, including the human, through life. Indeed the Book of Changes is a manual for recognizing, dealing with and adapting to change. This is not the adaptability of "rolling with the punches" Western-style. It is an adaptability of discernment; catching wind of something in its *incipient* stages as described above.

Wilhelm, in his commentary on this line, says that "the Creative (*Ch'ien*) remains effortless, because it guides infinitesimal movements when things are smallest. Since the direction of movement is determined in the germinal stage of being, everything else develops quite effortlessly, of itself, according to the law of its nature (286)."

If the chameleon principle is invoked, something larger is being implied in the passage: not only is a single entity or event developing according to the law of its own nature, but according to the larger system of nature of which it is a part. In a given moment, the chameleon is green—not only in response to the law of its nature, but in response to the condition of its environment. So one can also say that it is the law of its nature to change according to its environment. This is a recognition that we are ecological beings co-evolving, co-arising with the entire system or unity of which we are a part. This is an important insight into the integrity of change in the *I Ching* and raises the possibility that that a third meaning of *I(Yi)* in the title is "One" which has the same sound but is imaged as the single line which we see throughout the *I Ching* as the solid yang lines which makes up *Ch'ien*.

知 (*chih/zhi*): *Ch'ien's* form of knowing

Such change for the chameleon is natural and easy, requiring no decision or reflection. Hence a very particular kind of knowing or 知 (*chih/zhi*) is pointed to as a

quality of *Ch'ien*. It is suggesting a deep intelligence in nature itself that is One with its course.

For the human, change is a much more complex business. Or so it seems. The sages of the *I Ching*, particularly Confucius here, (via the Confucian writer), are implying that the human, restoring the original relationship to nature and discerning its tao, could indeed "adapt" with the ease of the chameleon. To do so would require tapping into the intelligence or "knowledge" of *Ch'ien* which is what a querent of the *I Ching* is in fact doing.

簡 *Simplicity*

The character for "simple" is somewhat puzzling. It is derived from the 118th radical for bamboo combined with the element for "between" (間) which depicts the sun between the two leaves of a door or gate. Wilder and Ingram translate the entire character as "bamboo slip, abridge." In their description of it, "strips were made of the part of the bamboo between the joints and on these slips directions or descriptions were written; if the description was lengthy the slips were bound up in a book, and when the direction was kept within the limits of one slip of bamboo it was regarded as abridged and eventually the character took on this meaning" (Wilder and Ingram, 312). As it is used in the *Analects* (5.21), the character can imply something that is excessively abbreviated, hence slipshod, hasty and without judgment. It has a somewhat more positive meaning in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, chapter 33.

Simple, yet refined, warm-hearted yet principled. He knows the closeness of the distant, knows the origin of customs. He knows the manifestation of the subtle and can enter into virtue. The Book of Odes says:
Though the fish dive to the bottom
They can be seen. (Muller 2001)

能 (*neng*) *K'un's Ability*

The most literal translation of the second part of the line is Wu Jian's: "[*Ch'ien*] knows through the easy. *K'un* is able to do through the simple." We are learning something more about the capability of *K'un* to bring about the completion of things described in the last line. It is an ability (*neng*) that flows from simplicity.

Wilhelm explains this further by saying that the nature of *K'un*—"the Receptive"—is repose. "Through repose the absolutely simple becomes possible in the spatial world. This simplicity, which arises out of pure receptivity, becomes the germ of all spatial diversity (286)."

Unfortunately, Wilhelm's translation of the line appears to contradict this sense of repose and receptivity by saying that *K'un* "can do things" through the simple. This is a troublesome translation that saddles *K'un* with an agency that seems incompatible with receptivity and repose. The deceptive character here is 能 (*neng*) which Wieger says formerly meant the large brown bear "who because of his strength was extremely able" (W27J). Bears are common in China and were especially so in ancient times when brown bears, black bears, grizzlies and pandas abounded and bear paws were considered a delicacy. The character is derived from the radical for meat and contains the image of the bear's head and paws. Not only was the bear a traditional symbol of strength and bravery, it provided warmth and sustenance to early peoples of China as it did to Native Americans in the north.

Table 14: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 14

- L: (He who attains to this) ease (of Heaven) will be easily understood, and (he who attains to this) freedom from laborious effort (of the Earth) will be easily followed.
- W/B: What is easy, is easy to know; what is simple is easy to follow.
- W/L: As the former is easy, it is easy to know, and as the latter is simple, it is easy to follow.

CHARACTER	易	則	易	知	簡	則	易	從
WADE-GILES	<i>i(yi)</i> ⁴	<i>tse</i> ²	<i>i(yi)</i> ⁴	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>ch'ien</i> ³	<i>tse</i> ²	<i>i(yi)</i> ⁴	<i>ts'ung</i> ²
PINYIN	<i>yi</i> ⁴	<i>ze</i> ²	<i>yi</i> ⁴	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>jian</i> ³	<i>ze</i> ²	<i>yi</i> ⁴	<i>cong</i> ²
RADICAL #	72	18	**	**	118	**	**	60
ETYMOLOGY	picto-graph of a lizard; probably a chameleon	finer 貝 + muti-lations 刀 (penalty) (W.52C)			bamboo 筍 + between among 間			(depicts one man 人 walking 彳 behind another)
DEFINITIONS	easy; change	and so then consequently pattern rule	easy; change	know; aware	simple bamboo	and so then	easy; change	follow agree with obey family

易知 *i/yi chih/zhi*: *Easy to know*

"Easy then easy to know" follows naturally out of the previous line if we recall Wilhelm's comment: "since the direction of movement is determined in the germinal stage of being, everything else develops quite effortlessly, of itself, according to the law of its nature." Humans who are living out their own nature are always easier to know than those who have lost the thread of their own natures through deception, excessive artifice,

insecurity or confusion. In an extension of the idea, we could say that individuals with self-knowledge are easier to know or understand than those who lack it. Similarly, having self-knowledge (as insight into one's own nature), makes it easier to have insight into the nature of others.

易從 *Easy to follow*

"Simple, then easy to follow." The character for follow depicts two people walking, one behind the other. If people are walking this way, single file, the leader is obviously going to take the simplest path and not set off on some complicated and unpredictable route. If instructions are being given, it is best to give them in the simplest way possible so that they can be clearly understood and followed. (The designers of many instruction manuals could benefit from this "simple" principle of Chinese philosophy.)

Note that in this line the word for "easy"—易 (*i/yi*)—is equally applied to both *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, gathering both up under that rubric for change as the central concept of the *I Ching*. This helps to preserve the sense of fluidity between them and prevent the tendency to regard them as mutually exclusive opposites while preserving the sense of the efficacy of them as separate yet paired interactive principles.

Close Relationships and Merit

Table 15: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 15

- L: He who is easy to know attains fealty. He who is easy to follow attains works.
- W/B: He who is easily understood will have adherents, and he who is easily followed will achieve success.
- W/L: If one is easy to know, he will have kindred spirits; and if one is easy to follow, he will have meritorious accomplishments.

CHARACTER	易	知	則	有	親	易	從	則	有	功
WADE-GILES	<i>i(yi)</i> ⁴	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>tse</i> ²	<i>yu</i> ³	<i>ch'in</i> ¹	<i>i(yi)</i> ⁴	<i>ts'ung</i> ²	<i>tse</i> ²	<i>yu</i> ³	<i>k'ung</i> ¹
PINYIN	<i>yi</i> ⁴	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>ze</i> ²	<i>you</i> ³	<i>qin</i> ¹	<i>yi</i> ⁴	<i>cong</i> ²	<i>ze</i> ²	<i>you</i> ³	<i>gong</i> ¹
RADICAL #	**	**	18	**	147	**	60	**	**	19
ETYMOLOGY			fines 貝 + mutilations 刀 (W.52C)		see 見 + hazel shrub		depicts one man 人 walking 彳 behind another			strength 力 + (labor) 工*
DEFINITIONS	easy; change	know	and so then pattern rule	have, be yes there is	close rela- tion- ship	easy; change	follow agree with obey family	then	have	merit achieve

This line speaks to the "gathering" force, or the "organizing principle" of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*. *Ch'ien*'s "knowing" seems close to what we might refer to now as a "feminine" knowing; a natural awareness rather than an intellectual activity. It has been present since the opening of chapter one throughout all of the processes which have been developing to this point. Hence the knowing is "easy" because it is not a strained seeking of knowledge

as we speak of it, but rather an awareness of what is, as well as a recognition of its trajectory; the direction in which its phases are moving.

親 *ch'in*: *Close relationships*

The term "close relationships," however, moves the text into yet a different level of interaction. Line 4 is describing such a "gathering" action as the gathering or grouping of things according to kind and separation into categories. We noted that the word for group, *chun*, contains the idea of a "flock" or sheep that gather according to some internal principle. The term 親 (*ch'in/qin*) extends a similar idea to humans. It refers particularly to close relationships of kinship and clan.

Peter Hershock, in his excellent book on Ch'an Buddhism, *Liberating Intimacy*, explores 親 very deeply as a central theme of his book. (He translates the term as the "intimacy" which appears in his title.)

For the Chinese, intimacy (親 *ch'in*) is not primarily conceived in terms of a dyadic and typically exclusive relationship. While *ch'in*—like the Latin *intimus* (a superlative form of "within") from which the English "intimacy" derives—does imply nearness, this is seen in terms of the closeness of affection or kinship. Given the Chinese construal of personhood in terms of a field of relationships, kinship cannot be understood simply as a matter of blood or lineage, but of shared feeling and the dovetailing of unique contributions in the constitution of the harmony known as family (*chia*). Kinship in this sense is not something given with birth, but achieved and maintained—an orientation of conduct by means of which each member of a family realizes that virtue (*te* 德) which is uniquely his or her own. Thus, the term *ch'in* means not only being close, but "being related," "affection," "self," "in person," and "family." Intimacy does not, that is, join individuals in some special way, but marks the harmonious functioning of an entire family or clan and ultimately of the entire world. It is not psychological in nature but social. (Hershock 1996, 105)

Hershock is speaking to a new dimension which has been added to the meaning of "gathered according to kind." The cohesive energy has blossomed further into what can be called the affection which creates social units. This is not something suddenly new or arbitrarily introduced. It seems to flow easily from things steadily interacting together in ever more complex ways and expanding units. The movement could be described as proceeding from wholeness *inhering* in Heaven and Earth, to a *cohering* of things within and between their categories, to an *adhering* that develops through the lines leading up to

"following" as a particularly human quality. The glue of this "-hering" is an interiority based on the One out of which each entity unfolds. We will see this elaborated more fully in the next section.

Ch'in appears frequently in the Classics (*Analects*, *Doctrine of the Mean* and *Great Learning*). There is an interesting occurrence of it in the *Doctrine of the Mean* (19:4) in a chapter describing the worship of their father, King Wen, and their ancestors by King Wu and his brother, the Duke of Chou. (King Wen and the Duke of Chou, we should recall, are two of the four "*I Ching* sages.") This is also a specific example of the meaning and action of *tsun/zun*, as we encountered it in the opening line of chapter one as the cup used for honoring at the special ceremonies.

By means of the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they distinguished the royal kindred according to their order of descent. By ordering the parties present according to their rank, they distinguished the more noble and the less. By the arrangement of the services, they made a distinction of talents and worth.

In the ceremony of general pledging, the inferiors ["juniors"] presented the cup to their superiors ["seniors"]¹⁷ and thus something was given to the lowest to do. At the concluding feast, places were given according to the hair, and thus was made the distinction of the years.

They occupied the places of their forefathers, practiced their ceremonies, and performed their music. They revered those whom they honored, and loved those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they would have served the dead as they would have served them alive. (Legge 1971, 402)

In the line "they revered those whom they honored and loved those whom they regarded with affection," affection is a translation of *ch'in*. Legge clarifies in his footnote to this line that those whom they honored were their ancestors and those whom they loved were their descendants.

How could so "intimate" a thing as close relationships be applied through an extension of *Ch'ien* and *K'un* as a quality of the developing cosmic order which will serve as the foundation for the *I Ching*? A likely connection is hinted at in this passage from the *Doctrine of the Mean*. That which makes things endure, "long lasting" in the human realm, is the cohesion of *ch'in*. It is an extension of the principle that things which are alike resonate and are drawn to each other. It is abstract coherence embodied as human relationship.

In the *Wen Yen*, the Confucist Commentary on Hexagram 1, *ch'in* is specifically used in connection with Heaven and Earth.

The Master said: 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 follow the dragon, wind follows the tiger. Thus the sage rises, and all things follow them with their eyes. What is born of heaven feels related to [*ch'in*] what is above. What is born of earth feels related to [*ch'in*] what is below. Each follows its kind....

The great man accords in his character with heaven and earth; in his light, with the sun and moon; in his consistency with the four seasons. (W/B 382)

The axial moment of chapter one's "creation story" occurs here in line 15 where the human value becomes fully shaped as a realm between Heaven and Earth.

功 *k'ung*: Merit

The second part of this line simply extends the idea through *K'un* by saying that "he who is easily followed has success" (Legge, 273). The literal translation is "easy to follow then have merit." The character for "merit" (*k'ung*) is made up of "labor" plus "strength." This complements the powers of comprehension in *Ch'ien* with the strength of actual accomplishment through the capacity of *K'un*. Hence the word is also translated as "success" or "achievement." While complementary to *Ch'ien*, it is moving toward the same end: gathering followers, establishing relationships, forging bonds between things.

All three translations of this section (lines 14-16), while excellent, carry certain pitfalls for the modern reader which should be noted. Legge's translation in line 14, "(He who attains to this) ease (of Heaven) will be easily understood" contradicts the natural "ease" of the unfolding process by making it an "attainment." It is not an end to be attained but an ongoing quality of the process itself. He carries the same unfortunate word into the next line as "he who is easy to know attains fealty. He who is easy to follow attains works." This follows too closely the Western cause/effect principle which tends toward a mechanical model of discrete objects impacting each other in domino fashion. The orderliness of these lines seems to invite such an "if-then" interpretation. "If easy, then easy to follow, if easy to follow, then..." But this is deceptive if it is regarded

as a sequence in time. One can say that from the chicken then comes the egg, then comes the embryo then comes the chicken" but the process is circular and so the classic conundrum emerges: which comes first the chicken or the egg?

The real problem here arises with the translation of *yu/you* which is usually defined as "have." Unlike the English word "have" this word is used interchangeably with the verb "to be." English translations tend to emphasize its possessive rather than existential quality. This is the word which Legge is translating as "attain."

The same problem arises in Wilhelm's translation of line 16: "He who possesses attachment can endure for long and he who possesses works can become great." Wilhelm is translating *yu/you* as possesses which tends to misrepresent the meaning here. How one "possesses works" is not clear even in English.

Wilhelm's use of the word "attachment" also presents a problem. Since Wilhelm's translation, the West has been much more deeply sensitized to Eastern spiritual ideas and their language. Hence the word "attachment" in any Eastern philosophical text tends to carry the negative implication granted to it by Hindu and Buddhist teachings. Indeed the word in Chinese for the Buddhist non-attachment is *yu-wei*, or "not having" and conveys equally effectively the Buddhist idea of No-Self; *yu-wei* used here as without separate existence as self.

The word which Wilhelm is translating as "attachment" is again 親 (*ch'in/qin*), which we have seen as "intimacy" or "close relationships." 親 is made up of the root for seeing, perceiving and the phonetic element which means "hazel." Wilder and Ingram explain that hazel shrubs grow in clumps and so the character is used for people whom one sees constantly, as close relatives and friends (#309). The "close relationships" implied by 親 *ch'in* are very distinct from the negative connotations of the word "attachment" as it is used today. Wilhelm was no doubt trying to underline the connective or bonding power implicit in the word.

There is just a slight overtone of this problem in the Wang Bi/Lynn, but on the whole it's translation remains close to the original: "Once one has kindred spirits, one can endure. Once one has meritorious accomplishments, he can grow great." By adding the English word "once," as Lynn does here, it creates cause and effect rather than a gradual arising of qualities unfolding together. "Once" implies a sudden moment in time which is

not present in the original text. A literal reading would be "having kindred spirits, thus enduring," in which the conditions can co-arise rather than be separated in time. Lynn's use of the expression "grow great," though slightly awkward in English, is truer to the nature of the process in the Chinese sense.

To modern readers who find the continuous use of "he" prejudicially favors masculine, it is reassuring to note that no pronouns are present in the original text at all.

Duration and Greatness

Table 16: *Ta Chuan*: Part I - Chapter 1, Line 16

L: He who has adherents can continue long, and he who achieves success can become great.

W/B: He who possesses attachment can endure for long and he who possesses works can become great.

W/L: Once one has kindred spirits, one can endure.
Once one has meritorious accomplishments, he can grow great.

CHARACTER	有	親	則	可	久	有	功	則	可	大
WADE-GILES	yu ³	ch'in ¹	tse ²	k'e ³	chiu ³	yu ³	k'ung ¹	tse ²	ke ³	ta ⁴
PINYIN	you ³	qin ¹	ze ²	ke ³	jiu ³	you ³	gong ¹	ze ²	ke ³	da ⁴
RAD. #	**	**	**	30	4	**	19	**	**	**
ETYMOLOGY				mouth 口 + exclamation	depicts person walking slowly		strength 力 + (labor) 工*			
DEFINITION	have, be yes there is	close rela- tion- ship	then	able may can	endure; a long time time	have, be yes there is	merit achieve	then	able can may	great noble grown- up

We see clearly in this line how *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, Heaven and Earth, are combining in the human and contributing to the fullness of human development. It is equally true that the human is contributing to the fullness of the cosmos that is Heaven-and-Earth.

If we look again at the line quoted from the *Doctrine of the Mean*, we see how naturally this line follows the previous one: "they revered those whom they honored and loved those whom they regarded with affection (*ch'in*)." When Legge notes that "those whom they honored were their ancestors and those whom they loved were their

descendants" he is describing the basis for "duration" both in Chinese culture and society and in the cosmic order.

That is the point being made in this line which literally reads "Having close relationships then able to endure." It is honor and affection which place one in the stream of life between ancestors and descendants. It has also a spatial contiguity by creating a nearness, as Hershock points out, based on affection and kinship which is expressed as a harmony on levels from the family to the whole of Heaven-and-Earth; *Ch'ien-and-K'un*. We see this described in reverse in the next chapter of the *Doctrine of the Mean*.

Hence the sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character. Wishing to cultivate his own character, he may not neglect to serve his parents. In order to serve his parents, he may not neglect to acquire a knowledge of men. In order to know men, he may not dispense with a knowledge of Heaven. (*Doctrine of the Mean* 20:7 in Legge, 1971)

It is easy for modern individuals to dismiss this idea as one rooted in a particular tradition, time or place rather than being of archetypal or cosmological significance. It could be argued that families are not particularly models of harmony and honoring ancestors is a form of ancestor worship uniquely practiced in Oriental cultures. While there is truth to this, the challenge of the *Ta Chuan* is always to consider how its themes are related to the creative development of the unity of Heaven-and-Earth toward an increasingly rich, fecund and harmonious whole. We have to consider that the generation of close relationships as families, clans and communities was to provide mutual protection, sustenance, nurturance and celebration. Everyone is familiar to this day with the "awards ceremonies" that take place among various groups and organizations in which individuals are recognized for their various distinctions or awarded for their seniority of service. Family reunions are still times of honoring the elder generation and showing affection toward the younger.

The second part of the line literally reads "Have merit then able to be great." The antiphonal response between opposites that was established in the very beginning of the chapter has subtly braided together into a combined movement toward "greatness." Both "success, (merit, achievement) and "greatness" turn up structurally here on the side of

K'un, indicating that it is in no way an inferior partner but is working with equal efficacy and result toward bringing creation, particularly via the human here, to fullness.

We have seen the dual principle shift subtly from a relationship of higher and lower to one of paired opposites like movement and rest, firm and yielding, sun and moon. Then we have seen interaction arise and produce the male and female principles. Then they are expanded as principles of conscious initiative and embodied completion. Then we see the enlarging effect of their attractive forces, by means of ease and simplicity, knowledge and capacity.

Endurance as the worthy person's virtue

Table 17: *Ta Chuan*, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 17

L: To be able to continue long shows the virtue of the wise and able man.

W/B: To endure is the disposition of the sage.

W/L: Being able to endure is a worthy man's virtue.

CHARACTER	可	久	則	賢	人	之	德
WADE-GILES	<i>ke</i> ³	<i>chiu</i> ³	<i>tse</i> ²	<i>hsien</i> ²	<i>jen</i> ²	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>te</i> ²
PINYIN	<i>ke</i> ³	<i>jiu</i> ³	<i>ze</i> ²	<i>xian</i> ²	<i>ren</i> ²	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>de</i> ²
RADICAL #	**	**	**	154	9	**	60
ETYMOLOGY		depicts person walking slowly		person bending low (subject) 臣 + right hand 又 + cowry shell 貝	pic- to- graph of per son		heart- mind 心 + straight one; true — + ten + eyes + walk;act 彳
DEFINITIONS	able may can	endure; a long time time	then	worthy virtuous	person man human		goodness virtue principles in action

In the last three lines, the chapter reaches its denouement. What has this entire process been evolving toward? Perhaps the most important thing to observe in this brief line is that this is the first time in the entire chapter that the human has been embodied as a character. In spite of the varied translations given for *hsien*, (sagely, wise and able, worthy), *jen/ren* is indisputably the character for the human being; traditionally the generic term "man" or "mankind" or the human of "humankind."

This line is brief but introduces one of the most important terms in all of Chinese philosophy: the *Te/de* of Lao Tzu's classic *Tao Te Ching*. The word *ching*, as in the *I Ching*, simply denotes a classic and is distinguished from the common word for book, *shu*. Legge explains that the term *ching* "is of textile origin, and signifies the warp threads of a web and their adjustment. An easy application of this is to denote what is regular and insures regularity" (Legge 1971, 1). This leaves only two words in the title—Tao and Te. The opening line of Lao Tzu's work reads "the tao that can be named is not the eternal Tao." Since the Tao is without name and form, the translator has a huge handicap from the start. (He or she can be somewhat encouraged by the fact that Lao Tzu nevertheless wrote eighty more chapters on the subject.)

But then there is *te*. To be paired with Tao tells us that it is a concept of cosmic importance. The most direct translation of the term in English is "virtue." When Waley was writing, and even today, the word "virtue" in a title would immediately have given the impression of a moral treatise in a period when people were recoiling from Victorian Age moralisms. By translating *te* as "power" he significantly enlarged the import of the word and raised it to a level of cosmic importance.

By the latter part of the twentieth century, the word "power" had begun to take on negative connotations of its own ("power trips") so *The Way and Its Power* was no longer thought to do justice to a subject matter centered in non-action or *wu-wei*. More recent translations simply leave the title untranslated to avoid the problem altogether.

In what way has the process that has been unfolding from the separation of Heaven and Earth reach a climax in *te*: virtue. Once again the image of the character provides useful clues.

德 (*te/de*) is composed of several elements. The first part is made up of an element with which we are now familiar: 彳, an abbreviated form of *hsing* which conveys walking or acting. On top of the character for seeing, (which appears sideways here) is the character for "ten". Underneath this is a single line, —, which we know now means "one" or "straight." Underneath this is the character *hsin* 心, which means "heart-mind." Wieger explains the origin of the character in an interesting way. The root element, (*chih*²), has 丨 representing the perpendicular of vertical and horizontal, ten and then eye. "Before the days of square and plumb-line, ten eyes were called on to test the straightness

of the frame of the house" (Wilder and Ingram, #99 after Wieger 10K). So we have the presence of an idea of "squaring" as we saw it in line 4. In this character, the perpendicular has been replaced with a single line as — (*i/yi*). A literal translation of this could be one (straight/true)-heartedness in action.

德 (*te/de*), in fact, describes the power or force by which what is on the inside comes forth to the outside. It could be described, in its largest terms, as the emergent quality of that process. It is related to the power of the seed as it unfolds into the flower. But the process in the flower is always singular and is sufficiently encompassed by the word Tao. *Te* 德 comes forward in the human realm because the human, as the most complex creation that has issued from this process, is free to depart from his or her nature; to proceed any number of ways outwardly that may not carry the force of his or her essential nature into the world. Hence 德 becomes, on the one hand, the action of that single-minded single-heartedness of an individual carried into practice in the world. But it also carries the social component of being a quality recognized and determined by a community of people. It has to be seen as being straight-forward and true. The entire enterprise of the human, and thus the challenge of the sage, is to cultivate this inner quality as effective action. This is the meaning, for example, of a line which appears both in the *I Ching* and the *Great Learning*, *ming ming te*: to make bright, bright virtue; to illuminate luminous virtue; or Legge's more awkward translation, to illustrate illustrious virtue. The character depicts the two great sources of light, the sun and the moon, together—明. Ming in another form, can also mean live, life, destiny, mandate (of Heaven); to "live" bright virtue (playing on the words). The point is that the *ming* or clarity and brightness of the inside is brought outside as the second *ming*. It is like the left hand and the right hand depicted in the opening characters; something given by nature and then consciously and deliberately cultivated and lived out as the whole or integral person.

The line here reads literally "to endure is the worthy man's virtue." The most poetic translation is Wilhelm's, "to endure is the disposition of the sage." The only problem with it, for our particular purpose, is that technically speaking the "sage" does not appear in this chapter at all. It is not wrong to translate hsien *jen* as "sage" but there is

another term which has been reserved for the most highly cultivated human, *sheng jen*, and it is surely significant that it does not make its appearance in this chapter yet will open chapter 2 as we will see later. Historically, a distinction was carefully made between a "worthy man" and a "sage." Mencius identified himself as a "worthy man" rather than "*sheng jen*," thus ranking himself under the great sages of China, the most recent of which, in his time, was Confucius. As we will see in Part III, the word "sage" as *sheng jen* was applied to a very high and rare order of human being; in particular, the "ancient, holy sages" who created the *I Ching*.

The word for "worthy" (also "virtuous") is composed of elements for value (the cowry shell), "subject" and "right hand." The character for "subject" was originally a pictogram for a man bending low 𠄎 (viewed from above the lowered head). With the element for "right hand," it suggests "having hold of one's subjects." Notice that it is the "right," (cultivated, conscious) hand. The graph of the cowry shell adds the element of value.

In what way can we see "duration, perseverance, long-lastingness" as a virtue of the worthy individual? Perhaps the answer lies in the contrast of this quality of enduring with the "change and transformation" introduced at the outset of the chapter. Allan W. Anderson has said that "underneath the Book of Changes is a book about what abides." How then did we get from "changing" to "enduring."

The preceding line says that it is through "having close relationships" that one "continues long" or endures. Clearly this is addressing a different order of things than the universe of constant change and transformation. Yet out of the flux of this change, certain patterns and principles are emerging which are on the side of the lasting or enduring. This second order of things, as presented in this chapter, is the work of the consciousness which has the capacity to discern and distinguish patterns; to group them together in ways that increase their resonance and congeal their similarities in forms and then concrete things. What is remarkable about the apparent ease and simplicity of this text is that we as readers have direct experience of the "evolution of consciousness" through the unfolding of the chapter from the implied unity from which Heaven and Earth separate, to the Ten Thousand Things, and finally the complex and multidimensional world of the human being. This is effectively achieved through the linguistic device that does not

distance the reader by speaking through another subject, or by having any fixed subject at all. It is not an "In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth" in which case we are reading an objective history; but rather a condition expressed without tense, thus effectively in the present, in which we are participants or at the least, observers. Yet even as observers, our observations are sharpening and organizing themselves throughout the passage.

An entire hexagram of the *I Ching*, Hexagram 32, is devoted to the theme of "duration," which is a translation of its title word, *heng*. The opening commentary says very simply, *heng* means *chiu*; which is to say the character used here for "enduring." Here is the Confucian commentary on that hexagram:

Sun and moon have Heaven and can therefore shine forever. The four seasons change and transform, and can forever bring to completion. The holy man remains forever in his course, and the world reshapes itself to completion. If we meditate on what gives duration to a thing, we can understand the nature of Heaven and Earth and of all beings.(Wilhelm 1977, 546)

VIII. The Great Work: Greatness as the field of action

Table 18: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 18

L: To be able to become great is the heritage he will acquire.

W/B: Greatness is the field of action of the sage.

W/L: And being able to grow great is inherent in the enterprise of the worthy man.

CHARACTER	可	大	則	賢	人	之	業
WADE-GILES	<i>ke</i> ³	<i>ta</i> ⁴	<i>tse</i> ²	<i>hsien</i> ²	<i>jen</i> ²	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>yeh</i> ⁴
PINYIN	<i>ke</i> ³	<i>da</i> ⁴	<i>ze</i> ²	<i>xian</i> ²	<i>ren</i> ²	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>ye</i> ⁴
RADICAL #	**	**	**	154	9	**	75
ETYMOLOGY					pic- to- graph of per son		木
DEFINITIONS	able can may	great grown- up	then	worthy	person man human		busi- ness, estate patri- mony

The variety of translations of this line alerts us to the likelihood that something subtle, elusive or ambiguous is pointed to by the characters; something not easily translatable. Wilhelm omits the reiteration of *ke* or "able" altogether, no doubt seeing it as a stylistic device more effective in Chinese than in English. When we look at the Legge and Wang Bi translations, we can see the pitfall of including it. Legge's To be able to become great seems unnecessarily wordy but also raises philosophical questions. Is "greatness" then on the side of "becoming"? Is it some increasing condition dependent upon ability? Certainly the original Chinese offers no character for this "becoming." Wang Bi, in Lynn's translation, similarly points to a "growing great" which is likewise an awkward idea, even in English, although it preserves the organicity of the work.

Wilhelm treats *ta/da*, "great; greatness," as a thing apart from the worthy man or "sage" which becomes his enterprise or field of action. This seems at variance with an idea of "becoming" great. A literal translation of the line shows the challenges the translators faced here: "able great/greatness then worthy man's estate/heritage/ business." Not a very inspiring sentence.

Looking once again at the character for "able," 可 (*ke*) as depicting "mouth" plus "exclamation" or outward breath, Karlgren offers translations of "approve; will do; can; may; practicable; possible (414)." In the overall chapter, these meanings cohere with the unfolding of a meaningful, unified ground of being which becomes increasingly articulated and reaches its climax of expression here in the embodiment of the worthy and talented individual. It would appear that isolating the quality of greatness in an individual, "becoming great," fails to acknowledge the over-all pattern of this chapter as the entirety of the universe itself blossoming into articulated, defined existence.

A similar variety of interpretations is found in the translation of 業 (*yeh*) as "field of action," "heritage" and "enterprise." Karlgren (229), after Wieger, notes the possibility that this character depicts a "big, flourishing tree" with definitions of "property, patrimony, estate, industry, business, profession;" in the last three cases, (Karlgrén notes) "what gives property." None of these definitions suggests the amplitude implied in the line. "Greatness" hardly seems like a heritage, profession or even enterprise. Yet the "big, flourishing tree" as an image of what has come forth at the end of the chapter from the separation of Heaven and Earth seems apt.

Wilhelm's translation, "Greatness is the field of action of the sage" offers the largest scope of meaning here. One might say that "greatness" has co-arisen with the "tree of life" itself as its emergent quality and likewise with the vast capacities of the human embodied as the individual of talent and worth and ultimately, the sage; (although it must be emphasized that the sage does not appear in this chapter and Wilhelm's use of the word here is misleading). The concise image of the character for "great," 大, reinforces this idea: the human, 人 (*jen*) has penetrated the upper realm of Heaven. Or in another explanation of the image, has expanded to his or her fullest extent.

Wilhelm's emphasis on *yeh* as the "realm of action" is consistent with the use of the word centuries later with the introduction of Buddhism into China. Hershock describes the meaning of *yeh* as a translation of the Sanskrit word Karma.

As focused by the concept of *yeh* 業, karma explicitly involves our occupation, business or profession, and so implies what kind of people we meet and work with and in what capacities. It implies the kind of status we enjoy or are barred from, the kinds of risks and challenges we encounter, the tools we use, the education to which we and our relatives are entitled, the range of possible partners we have in marriage, and so on. What karma signified for the Chinese was not, then, the just desserts of an individual's behavior, but rather the prosperity and way of life of an entire family—quite literally, the qualitative integrity of its entire world. Quite explicitly for the Chinese Buddhist, it is never just "your" or "my" experience that is marked by suffering or harmony, but our entire world which is gone awry or faring well (50).

It is easy to see how such an idea developed naturally out of Chinese thought that was deeply imprinted with the Confucianism of this text. Hershock's description redeems all of the translations of *yeh* while giving it ample ground in the entire world and including in that the full range of "close relationships."

Grasping the Principle Through Ease and Simplicity

Table 19: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 19

- L: With attainment of such ease and such freedom, the mastery is got of all principles under the sky.
- W/B: By means of the easy and the simple, we grasp the laws of the whole world.
- W/L: It is through such ease and simplicity that such principles of the world obtain.

CHARACTER	易	簡	而	天	下	之	理	得	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>i(yi)⁴</i>	<i>Ch'ien³</i>	<i>erh²</i>	<i>t'ien¹</i>	<i>hsia⁴</i>	<i>chih¹</i>	<i>li³</i>	<i>te²</i>	
PINYIN	<i>yi⁴</i>	<i>jian³</i>	<i>er²</i>	<i>tian¹</i>	<i>xia⁴</i>	<i>zhi¹</i>	<i>li³</i>	<i>de²</i>	
RADICAL #	**	**	**	37	1	**	102	60	**
ETYMOLOGY				vast extent of space — + above man 大	(W5B)		field 田 + Earth 土	see 見 + hand 寸	
DEFINITIONS	easy; change	simple bamboo	and and yet still but	Heaven sky	below	[geni- tive] of, 's	prin- ciple; pattern	gain grasp attain	

In the second to last chapter, another key idea in Chinese philosophy is introduced as if the entire chapter were the prelude to this event: 理 (*li*) which means pattern or principle. Appearing as it does at this point in the text, it seems to represent a natural development of *hsing* in line 6. Images in Heaven have taken concrete forms on Earth. Yet as the second half of the chapter initiates the knowing (知 *chih/zhi*) of *Ch'ien*, emphasis shifts subtly from the concrescence of form as the ten thousand things to something like a reversion to an awareness of the forms as images or patterns that are within phenomena. But the human adds a dimension to this process that keeps it from

being a simple synthesis/analysis relationship. The capacity to make qualitative distinctions, beginning with high and low, endows the emerging consciousness with a sensitivity to the difference between good fortune and misfortune, harmony and disharmony, precious and worthless, rare and common which refines as a sense of choice and ultimately as virtue. Thus it is only as the human emerges in the chapter that *li* can arise since it is the human consciousness which perceives the pattern and order and thus embodies it as language and culture.

Here again is the beautiful description of this in the Wilhelm/Baynes translation of the *Shuo Kua* or "Discussion of the Trigrams."

[The holy sages] put themselves in accord (harmony) with tao and its power (德 *te/de*: virtue), and in conformity with this laid down the order (理 *li*) of what is right. By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the law of their nature to the deepest core, they arrived at an understanding of fate (*ming*: life, destiny).(264).

The *Shuo Kua* constitutes the Eighth Wing of the *I Ching* and is described by Wilhelm as containing material of great antiquity put into commentary form by Confucius and his school. Notice here that 德 (*te/de*) is a quality directly ascribed to Tao in this passage, although in chapter one of the *Ta Chuan* it arises concurrently with the human. It is as if the human, becoming aware of and sensitive to a natural course of things (tao), embedded in a unified or heavenly course (Tao), surrenders to that rhythm like a dancer to the sound of music; seeks to express it through steadily refined and honed personal action and creative expression; a "new" resonance, synchrony and harmony with the whole that is the meaning of *te*.

In the *Doctrine of the Mean*, *te* is closely allied with the quality of *ch'eng*—"sincerity, integrity," or more literally, "an expression of completion." As the human increasingly senses both his or her natural course (tao) and the larger course (Tao) or Way of Heaven in which he or she is embedded—whether experienced in the inmost being or the external world—*te* arises as this force of virtue which is both the singular flowering of the individual nature and the quality of the universe coming into being.

Establishing the Center

Table 20: Ta Chuan, Part I - Chapter 1, Line 20

- L: With attainment of that mastery, (the sage) makes good his position in the middle (between Heaven and Earth).
- W/B: When the laws of the whole world are grasped, therein lies perfection.
- W/L: When the principles of all under Heaven are obtained, one can complete and establish the center.

CHARACTER	天	下	之	理	得
WADE-GILES	<i>t'ien</i> ¹	<i>hsia</i> ⁴	<i>chih</i> ¹	<i>li</i> ³	<i>te</i> ²
PINYIN	<i>tian</i> ¹	<i>xia</i> ⁴	<i>zhi</i> ¹	<i>li</i> ³	<i>de</i> ²
RADICAL #	37	1	4	102	60
ETYMOLOGY	vast extent of space 一 + above man 大	(W5B)	small plant + ground (W79B)	field 田 + Earth 土	see 見 + hand 寸
DEFINITIONS	Heaven sky	below	[genitive] of, 's	principle	gain grasp attain

CHARACTER	而	成	位	乎	其	中	矣
WADE-GILES	<i>erh</i> ²	<i>ch'eng</i> ²	<i>wei</i> ⁴	<i>hu</i> ¹	<i>ch'i</i> ²	<i>chung</i> ¹	
PINYIN	<i>er</i> ²	<i>cheng</i> ²	<i>wei</i> ⁴	<i>hu</i> ¹	<i>qi</i> ²	<i>zhong</i> ¹	
RADICAL #	**	**	**	4	12	2	**
ETYMOLOGY					(ori- ginal- ly de- picted a sieve)	square target □ + arrow	
DEFINITIONS	and and yet still but	complete become perfect	position dignity seat rank)	(ex- cla- ma- tion)	his hers its theirs	central inside midst middle	

In the last sentence, an interesting shift in description has been introduced that can only be appreciated in the original language. In place of the word Earth as the paired opposite of Heaven, the expression 天下 *t'ien hsia* is used: "under Heaven." This is, in fact, an idiomatic expression for Earth that appears frequently in the *Ta Chuan* and other classic texts. Whether it was intentionally reserved for this last line of the chapter is difficult to say but it certainly has the effect of mirroring the apogee of the process at work in the chapter as a whole. Moreover it distinctly alters, through its language, the original relationship of Heaven above and Earth below. Heaven has not changed. That is, the observable phenomena of Heaven—like the sun and the moon—retain the constancy of their forms whose "completion" is accomplished through patterns in time and alterations of position. Earth, however, through completing the forms by means of concrescence and embodiment accomplished through "change and transformation" and the endless cycles of life and death, is now the teeming place of the "ten thousand things" among which is the human.

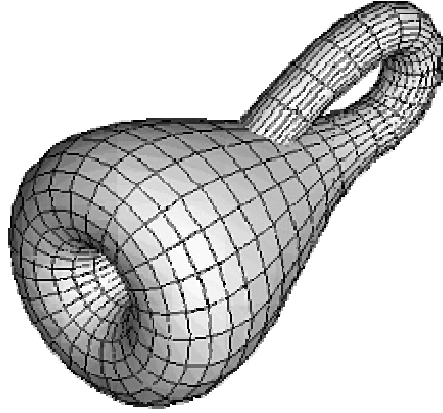
The shift in language from Earth to All Things Under Heaven is like a pronouncement of completion here. It occurs after the human appears as *jen* (hsien *jen*, "worthy person"). What has ultimately been effected by the change in the language is an erasure of the stark duality of Heaven and Earth. All things under Heaven is an expression of entirety, of completeness. It is not the same as the One or Tao that is "beyond name and form" but a fullness of name and form itself. As we shall see, it is the human that breaks open the duality just as it is the human that is the fruit of it.

In spite of Legge's parenthetical addition of "sage," the last two sentences have no direct "subject" in the English sense. This fact can be dismissed as a linguistic peculiarity of the Chinese language by a translator, much as it obviously was by Legge. Certainly the absence of subject throws the Western reader off-balance and the impulse indeed is to insert a subject where none exists. This problem only becomes more pronounced as the work continues. This would seem a trivial issue if it didn't have implications beyond the linguistic. What is revealed in this contrast is the predilection of the Western mind toward agency; a "someone who did it" whether it be God or the human. This is the natural

syntax of everyday life. It is also the perspective that flowers out of Judeo-Christian roots in Middle Eastern thought where Yahweh is seen as the Prime Mover.

To understand how the *I Ching* functions as an oracle is first to collapse this distance between subject and object, space and time. The oracular moment in which the *I Ching* offers up its counsel is the one in which the mind of the querent and the mind of "the ancient holy sages" and the *I Ching* are one. This is what is referred to in later Taoist texts as "having the mind of Tao." The Judeo-Christian tradition approaches this condition in its mystical teachings. The New Testament speaks of that which is "closer than hands and feet" and Meister Eckhardt explains that the eye through which we see God is the same eye through which God sees us, essentially erasing the subject-object duality.

Another way of putting this is to say that the oracular moment is one of complete "interiority." The subject-object or even subject-predicate relationship, after all, is based on the exteriorization of something "outside oneself." The first chapter of the *Ta Chuan*, inasmuch as it is a "creation story," is also about the "exteriorization" of the ten thousand things from their seeds in the invisibles forms. This exteriorization, however, does not necessarily effect a schism between inner and outer. The fact that is can becomes the issue of later Chinese philosophical and religious thought just as it does in the West. (The modern science of topology actually contains a "theoretical" image of this seamless relationship of inner and outer in the concept of the Klein bottle.) Hence we find, for example, Taoist texts which are aiming toward the restoration of the Mind of Tao, the original mind or nature that has been lost among the ten thousand things and conditioned by an exterior world.



The Klein Bottle

Figure 3

(Cervone 1999)

Both Wilhelm/Baynes and Wang Bi/Lynn avoid the temptation to insert a sage here where no sage is indicated. It is true that the human has entered the equation at this point but not as a single and independent subject. The "story" is of the emergence of something reflexive in the whole of *t'ien hsia* or "all under Heaven" which can see (perceive, discern) principles at work and actively "grasp" them.

From vague, inchoate beginnings, like a scene taking shape through thinning mist, a totality—(we would now say "cosmos")—is coalescing into parts, positions, qualities, values, patterns and principles. Our own conscious mind reading the chapter is mirroring in microcosm something akin to an unfolding cosmic consciousness, intelligence and articulation, of which the human is an emergent feature co-arising with its own perception in the seemingly impossible manner of the Klein bottle's topology. Not until the beginning of the next chapter, when this is "complete," will the Sage actually enter the scene. It is the sage, in fact, who will become the ultimate expression of this completion which should, in Chinese-style, be left open and without tense as an on-going "completing."

The centrality of position, among its many meanings, is foremost to be centered between the powers of Heaven and Earth, *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, where the pattern can be grasped. This pattern is singular in the way that Gregory Bateson describes it as the "pattern which connects." It is also holographic in the sense that it can be sensed in any of

the ten thousand things and in the individual human. It is, in fact, the human who consciously unites Heaven and Earth by a) discovering the *li* (principle) and b) displaying it through embodiment and action or conduct (*hsing*). It is "walking the talk" of the universe.

If we look again at the fundamental qualities which Swimme and Berry give to the "basal intentionality" of the unfolding universe, we feel the deep congruence between the ancient and contemporary language.

These three terms—differentiation, autopoiesis and communion—refer to the governing themes and the basal intentionality of all existence, and thus are beyond any simple one-line univocal definition.... Some synonyms for differentiation are diversity, complexity, variation, disparity, multiform nature, heterogeneity, articulation. Different words that point to the second feature are autopoiesis, subjectivity, self-manifestation, sentience, self-organization, dynamic centers of experience, presence, identity, inner principle of being, voice, interiority. And the third feature, communion, interrelatedness, interdependence, kinship, mutuality, internal relatedness, reciprocity, complementarity, interconnectivity, and affiliation all point to the same dynamic of cosmic evolution. (Swimme and Berry 1992, 71)

We will see in the next section how these ideas translate into the system of the *I Ching* itself. Then we will be ready to meet the sage directly in the next section to see how these ideas are embodied as the "great field of action"; the Great Work that is bestowed as the human gift and human task at the intersection.

Part II:

The Patterns Which Connect

My central thesis can now be approached: The pattern which connects is a megapattern. It is a pattern of patterns. It is that megapattern which defines the vast generalization that, indeed, it is patterns which connect.

Gregory Bateson, *Mind and Nature* (1988, 11)

All things are in constant flux, and yet are fundamentally related through a universal Logos, which is also manifest in the human being's power of reason... Heraclitus asserted that most human beings, by not understanding Logos, live as if asleep in a false dream of the world, and consequently in a state of constant disharmony. Human beings should seek to comprehend the Logos of life, and thereby awaken to a life of intelligent cooperation of the universe's deeper order.

But it was the Pythagoreans, perhaps above all other philosophical schools, who stressed the world's intelligibility, and especially taught the spiritual value of scientifically penetrating its mysteries to achieve ecstatic union between the human soul and the divine cosmos.

Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind* (1991, 45)

"Today, the world we see outside and the world we see within are converging. This convergence of two worlds is perhaps one of the most important cultural events of our age."

--Ilya Prigogine, Nobel Laureate in chemistry (Capra 1996, 193)

INTRODUCTION TO THE PATTERNS WHICH CONNECT

We had this old idea, that there was a universe out there, and here is man, the observer, safely protected from the universe by a six-inch slab of plate glass. Now we learn from the quantum world that even to observe so miniscule an object as an electron we have to shatter that plate glass; we have to reach in there.... So the old word observer simply has to be crossed off the books, and we must put in the new word participator. In this way we've come to realize that the universe is a participatory universe.

--John Wheeler in *A Question of Physics* (Peat 1987, 4)

If we live in a participatory universe, then a description of how it works, even an organic one, is insufficient to tell the whole story. If we are part of the picture, then we must know how it works through us. We must reach into ourselves. And since the picture is not a static one, but is constantly changing and evolving, then we would more accurately ask How is it working through us; how is it coming into being through us in every moment? The shift in definition from cosmos as the physical universe to cosmos as "whole, harmony" requires yet a further shift from noun to verb: whole-making and harmonizing. From integral to integrating, from one to one-ing. Only through understanding this radical shift in meaning, can the arcane language of the *Ta Chuan* be fully appreciated and understood. Only then can we see ourselves as participatory cosmos-makers in the midst of the most apparently trivial events of our lives.

While the opening chapter sets forth the fundamental principles of the creative unfolding of an organic universe in language that parallels an increasingly discerning consciousness, it is difficult to see its relationship with the structure of the *I Ching* and its sixty-four six line figures or hexagrams. Yet without understanding this we will have missed the *raison d'etre* of the *Ta Chuan* as the Great Commentary on the *I Ching*.

It is chapter eleven of part one which tells a story similar to the opening chapter while employing more directly the language of the *I Ching*. From the beginning of this chapter, when Confucius, the Master, speaks he is addressing what the *I Ching* does.

The master said:

"What is it, that the *I* [*Ching*] does? The *I* opens up things, accomplishes the undertakings of men, and embraces the ways of all things under the sky."

The last part of this would read literally, "The I opens things, completes affairs, embraces the tao of all under Heaven." While the Wilhelm/Baynes version uses "disclose" in place of "open" and thus makes the sentence less arcane, we need to follow the literal imagery of opening to fully understand the power and scope of the image in the Chinese original. How the I Ching completes things, how it embraces the Tao of all things, is what will be developed throughout the chapter.

The I Ching becomes the tool which the human uses at the center of Heaven and Earth to unite Heaven and Earth. This is the human's cosmic task and the key to how the position in the center is completed. While it is the task of every human, the sage is defined as the one who fully recognizes and perfects this cosmic participation and in doing so, models it for others to follow. We will particularly be looking for the way in which the following six major themes introduced in chapter one develop within the oracular system of the I Ching: duality, position, image and form, change and transformation, interpenetration and the great work or field of action.

CHAPTER 1: OPENING AND CLOSING

Thus the closing of a door may be pronounced analogous to *K'un*, and the opening of it to *Ch'ien*. The transition in between may be called a change; and the continuous passing of one state to the other may be called the constant course of things. The first appearance of anything is what we call an image; when it has received its complete form, we call it a definite thing. The divining-plant having been produced, the sages set it apart and laid down the method of divination: that we call the laws of divination. The advantage arising from it in external and internal matters, so that the people all use it, stamps it with a character we call spirit-like. (*Ta Chuan* I.11; James Legge 1998)

In chapter one, *Ch'ien* and *K'un* assume their positions along with Heaven and Earth and, as the chapter develops, come into relationship with and interact with one another to bring about the ten thousand things or "all things under Heaven."

Chapter 11 takes a closer look at the operation of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*. As the Western empirical enterprise was directed toward the smallest unit of matter, the *I Ching* sages begin with the smallest unit of cosmic process which is change as *p'ien*. Like the atom, the unit of change as *p'ien* is made up of paired constituents which operate together in a subtle integral way that is the seed of creative action and life. In place of particles with opposite charges, the proton and electron, we have the opposite processes of opening and closing. Thomas Berry gives a feeling of these opposite forces as they are expressed on the grand scale of the universe in his recent book *The Great Work*:

The universe solved its problem by establishing a creative disequilibrium expressed in the curvature of space that was sufficiently *closed* to establish an abiding order in the universe and sufficiently open to enable the wild creative process to continue. We perceive this creative power primarily in the intelligible order we observe in the universe. Such is the way of the philosopher. Such is the way of Saint John in the opening prologue to his gospel, "In the beginning was the Word," the principle of order and intelligibility. Or we can perceive the originating power itself in the disequilibrium of the universe, in the spirit world, in the wildness of things, in the dreams that come into our souls in the depths of the night, dreams that correspond in the human soul to the *openness* of the curve that holds the universe together and yet enables it to continue its infinite creativity. (52). [Italics added.]

Thomas Berry has captured the subtlety of opening and closing as a creative movement that impressed the ancient sages as well. Here is a closer look at the original of this passage:

Thus the closing of a door may be pronounced analogous to K'un, and the opening of it to Ch'ien. The transition in between may be called a change; and the continuous passing of one state to the other may be called the constant course of things.

是 故 闔 戶 謂 之 坤、
Is thus close door is called K'un

闢 戶 謂 之 乾、
open door is called Chien

一 闔 一 闢 謂 之 變、
one closing one opening is called change

往 來 不 窮 謂 之 通。
going coming without exhaustion is called interpenetration

Ta Chuan I.11-1

The key character here is 戶, which represents a door. This is doubled in the 169th radical to represent the two leaves of the traditional Chinese door or gate—門—and this forms the basis for many words that contain an idea of either closure, containment or opening. As an example, the character 悶 includes the character for heart-mind between the gates and means "depression, melancholy, cover."

In this passage, the character for "close" (*ho/he*) contains within the doors of the the gate, a cup with a removable lid, plus the element for vessel, tool or utensil (implying "use"). It has the implication of closing something, like the closing of a door or the placing of a lid on a cup (Karlgren 491). What is particularly interesting is that this character can also mean "whole, complete, family" (Wieger 798).

闔
close
<i>ho/he</i>

闢
open
<i>pi/bi</i>

The character for "open," 闢 *pi/bi*, also contains the character for door or gate. Within the gate is another character which means "sovereign, prince, law." Fenn notes that when this character is combined with 地 ("Earth") it means "open the Earth; creation" (404). There is an interesting implication here that the prince, sovereign or law is endowed with this capacity to "open" that which is closed. The prince rules with the mandate of Heaven as the "guiding principle" or "law" of the people. We see again the implied creativity of the guiding principle (*li*) as well as the role of the human in uniting Heaven and Earth through opening the passage between them.

These meanings shed light on the process at work here. There is a fundamental energy in the universe, *chi*, which is expressing itself in two modes congenial to the respective realms of Heaven and Earth, *Ch'ien* and *K'un*. As *chi* is "enclosed," (*ho/he*) an entity of some kind is "completed."

There is a wholeness which comes into particular form (*hsing*) through this closure. The fact that *ho*, as enclose, can also be applied to "family" underlines the fact that *hsing*--form-- is not limited to literal materialization or embodiment. A family is also a unit that has an inside and an outside, hence a conceptual boundary enclosing it. Thus the capacity of *K'un* is to give form to, enclose, make a unit, unify, whether through embodiment, materialization or some other integrative operation. But the closure itself is not an endpoint.

In the next sentence, we see the antipodal operation of "opening" the gate at work in the contrasting character of 闢 *pi/bi*, also meaning "burst forth; open up; begin; create." Where *ho/he* completes through closure, *pi/bi* depicts emergence, birth, disclosure, revelation. as day and night.

The next line reads Both operations are of equal value as complements of an on-going process. These are not split states of birth/death, creation/destruction, but a seamless process. Ho and *pi* are as complementary —

One closing, one opening is called change.

一 闔 一 闢 謂 之 變、
 one closing one opening is called change

The word for change here is *pien* which we met in chapter one. Its smallest unit is described as one closing and one opening. Why wouldn't just the closing or the opening be a change? Why both? The suggestion is that like yin and yang, upper and lower, inner and outer, they are inseparable features of an ongoing dynamic process. Opening implies that something had been closed and vice versa. The abstract idea here is that coming into and going out of manifest being is the ground for all change in the manner of David Bohm's implicate and explicate order.

The radical implications of Bohm's implicate order take some time to fully grasp, especially for Western minds that have been steeped in the Newtonian-Cartesian paradigm of classical physics that still dominates contemporary science. For example, it might be tempting to assume that the implicate order refers to a subtle level of reality that is secondary and subordinate to the primary explicate order, which we see manifest all around us. However, for Bohm, precisely the opposite is the case: the implicate order is the fundamental and primary reality, albeit invisible. Meanwhile, the explicate order--the vast physical universe we experience--is but a set of "ripples" on the surface of the implicate order. The manifest objects that we regard as comprising ordinary reality are only the unfolded projections of the much deeper, higher dimensional implicate order, which is the fundamental reality.(Keepin 1992)¹⁸

If one (— *i/yi*), is applied in its philosophical sense as "Tao in action," we might also extend the meaning to "one-ing through opening and one-ing through closing is called change." This amplifies the previous description of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*. It suggests that both are bent on an integrative process; creating "discreet" things in partnership with one another. This would be in line with Whitehead's view of the cosmos as moving towards ever more complex units of integration.¹⁹

We find a similar sentence in chapter I.5:

一 陰 一 陽 之 謂 道
 One yin one yang is called Tao.

This too might be read as one-ing through yin and one-ing through yang is called Tao, expressing the integrative movement of energy into units of all kinds fashioned through the two hands of yin and yang.²⁰

In this sense, the "gateway" is between the manifest and unmanifest, the phenomenal and what is before phenomenon. Wilhelm catches the subtle sense of this in his translation of this line: "That which let's now the dark, now the light appear is Tao."

The economy of the *I Ching* hexagram becomes apparent when the lines from chapters 5 and 11 are taken together. The straight, unbroken line used to denote yang is an open movement (identical to the character for "one") while the broken line of yin has two parts enclosing a space. Images themselves have to remain flexible, however, and are not rigidly applied in the *I Ching*. In another section it is said that *Ch'ien* moves in a straight line and *K'un* opens and closes (II.4). Nevertheless, the parallels between the development of the cosmic whole and the development of the structures of the *I Ching* are present throughout the *Ta Chuan* to display the genius of the ancient text.

Tao in the phenomenal world is the course of change itself. It moves both through a creative or light force which "opens" (opens the "gate" from the unmanifest) and through a complementary dark force which "closes," enters embodiment or expression in form. Even the word "force" here is inaccurate because it is not two dynamics in the sense that modern physics defines "force." This is why the images themselves convey the idea with greater subtlety.

Legge's translation of the next line--the continuous passing of one state to the other may be called the constant course of things—is shown below in its more literal translation.

<p>往來不窮之謂通 Coming going without exhaustion is called penetration <i>wang lai pu chiung chih wei t'ung</i></p>

The phrase, "coming and going without exhaustion" echoes the language of Hexagram 48, the Well, which may have inspired this section of the Great Commentary:

往來井井. This reads literally, "Coming or going the well is the well." The Confucian commentary on this is 井養而不窮也, literally "the well nourishes without exhaustion."

往
coming
wang

In the context of the whole passage, "coming and going" parallels the opening and closing action of *pien* as the movement of Tao. This also suggests the relation of the image of the well to Tao and underlines the importance of the central position of *chung* as discussed in the previous chapter. The center is "inexhaustible" because it is the threshold of Tao. When this process is unobstructed and rhythmical it is called *t'ung*: "penetration."

來
going
lai

T'ung is another key word in this text—the fifth of our major themes—which will be discussed in greater detail later. The simplest idea of penetration, however, is imaged here as a passage—a "coming and going"—through the doorway or gateway. Hence nameless, formless mystery, as it is described by Lao Tzu, "penetrates" into a phenomenal world and vice versa. In this case, vice versa refers to a reverse process which is the rare capacity of the sage who "penetrates" into what is "hidden" (closed), specifically through the gateway of the *I Ching*. As we will see in Part III, the Sage himself is the door at the threshold of Tao.

The idea that coming into and going out of visibility and phenomena—the passage through change as a constant interaction between yin and yang—is inexhaustible is coupled here with the idea of interpenetration. The implication is that through *tung*, a unity is established among the ten thousand things as All Things Under Heaven. *Tung* in this sense has a direct relation to Tao and to —, *i/yi*, as Tao in action through "one-ing." "One-ing" comes about naturally as both an opening and a closing process. It "opens" into various entities through penetration and yet never invades or disintegrates their nature but encloses them in a higher order of unity that is not a fixed permanence or even unchanging form but the "way" of the cosmos as Tao itself.

The ultimate unity beyond name and form that precedes even being and non-being is the mysterious realm addressed by Lao Tzu and is referred to in the *Ta Chuan* simply as "the unfathomable." But there is a unity likewise that exists in the phenomenal world in communication with all of its parts and the invisible order beyond it which is the concern of Confucius and the sages of the *I Ching*. The Tao that can be spoken of is not the eternal Tao, but the manner in which the human relates to the "one" that is "one-ing"—

seeks to understand, embody and "use" it—can be studied and perfected "to lend aid in a mysterious way to the power of the gods."

Thus the versatility of *tung* is that it both extends and gathers, ventures outward and embraces. It can be intimate or universal. It has both a feminine and a masculine quality and so bestrides the great dyad as its unifying process.

CHAPTER 2: USING IMAGE AND FORM

—*Ta Chuan* I.11.2

見 乃 謂 之 象 形 乃 謂 之 器
 seen then is called image formed then is called vessel
chien nai wei shih hsiang hsing nai wei shih chi

象
<i>hsiang</i> ⁴
<i>xiang</i> ⁴
152
(pictograph of an elephant)
image form appearance elephant

In chapter 1, following the first separation of Heaven and Earth, a self-organizing process is set in motion. Things are gathered according to kind, and separated according to group. "Within Heaven images (*hsiang*) are completed and within the realm of Earth, forms (*hsing*) are completed." What exactly do these distinctions imply about the coming into being of the created world?

Han Kingbo's commentary to this line, cited in the Wang Bi/Lynn translation, reads,

"Images" here are equivalent to sun, moon and the stars and "physical forms" here are equivalent to the mountains, the lakes, and the shrubs and trees. The images so suspended revolve on, thus forming the darkness and the light. Mountain and lake reciprocally circulate material force (*chi/qi*), thus letting clouds scud and rain fall. This is how change and transformation manifest themselves. (Wang Bi/Lynn, 47)

形
<i>hsing</i> ²
<i>xing</i> ²
59
feathers hair 彡 + 2 shields 开
form shape

Han Kingbo's language is taken directly from the Confucian commentary on the Judgment of Hexagram 1, *Ch'ien*, (Heaven; the Creative), as it speaks of the fundamental nature of *Ch'ien* which provides the beginnings of the myriad things. "It allows the clouds to scud and rain to fall and things in all their different categories to flow into forms (*hsing*)" (Wang Bi/Lynn, 129).

That the images (*hsiang*) created in Heaven refer to the sun, moon and stars is also suggested here in chapter 11: "Of the images suspended in the Heavens, there is none more light-giving than the sun and moon" (Wilhelm 1977, 318). But this chapter

takes the meaning of *hsiang* and *hsing* to a deeper level which illuminates the entire creative process at work in the *I Ching* as Cosmos..

In Legge's translation we find, "The (first) appearance of anything (as a bud) is what we call a semblance (*hsiang*); when it has received its complete form (*hsing*), we call it a definite thing [vessel]" (Legge 1969, 299). Simply put, this is the process by which "things in all their different categories flow into their forms" as expressed in the commentary on the Judgment of Hexagram 1.

This brings us to the "threshold" question of understanding how image and form fit into this process of opening and closing. If we hold to our assumption that the symmetry of language here is intentional, seeing and image are on the side of *Ch'ien*, opening and yang, as form and vessel are on the side of *K'un*, closing and yin. Since there are not, in fact, two separate entities operating here but two modes of a single process, we cannot make rigid or ultimate distinctions but speak rather of "tendencies." The above statements regarding these paired tendencies might be summarized as follows in Figure 4 (assuming always before and within them the unity of Tao):

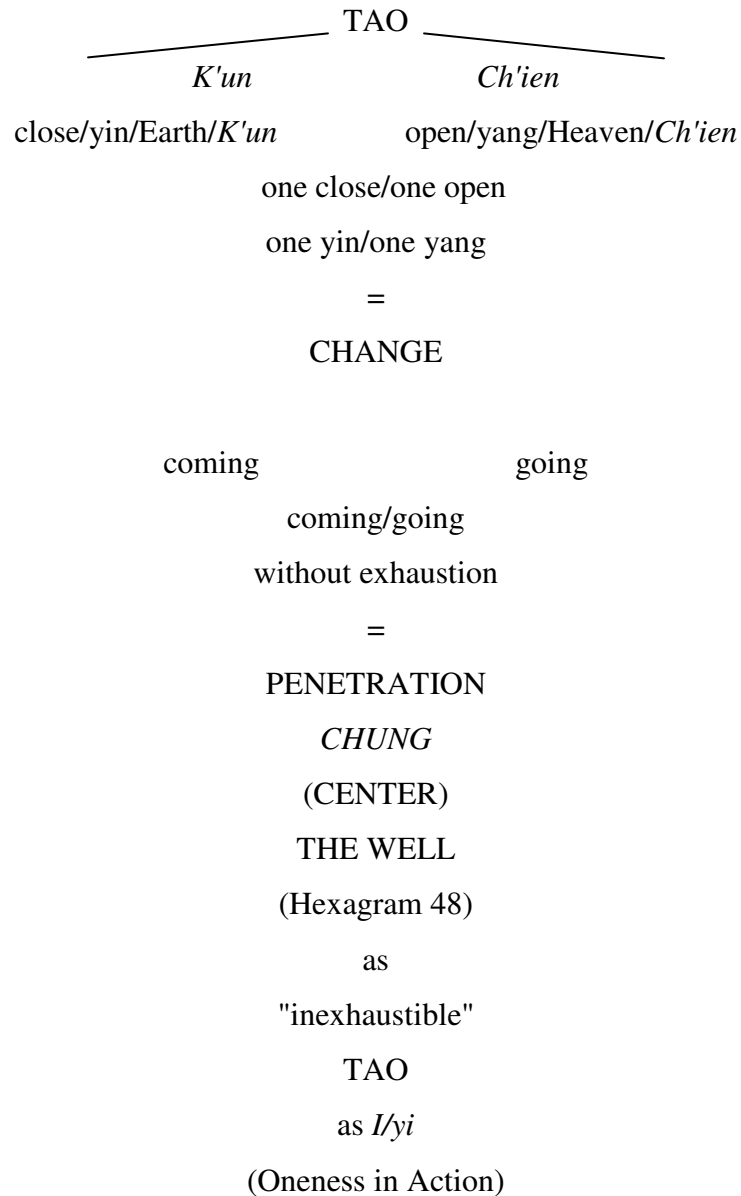


Figure 4
 Tao and the Two Modes
 (author's illustration)

Everything in the "center" of this diagram carries the meaning of "one" or "one-ing" including the word change expressed in the title of the work, *I/Yi* as depicted by our chameleon 易. Through the heavenly images of the sun, moon and stars, the basic alterations of darkness and light produce the four seasons. Their movements, interactions, appearing, disappearing, waxing and waning form patterns that flow into the concrete phenomena of *hsing*. Images are "displayed in Heaven." Embodied through Earth they form vessels which can be "used." Images are patterns (*li*) of *chi*. Forms are vessels of *chi*.

Ta Chuan I.11.3

What is established in usage they call a pattern. (Wilhelm/Baynes, 318)

(The divining plant having been produced, the sages) set it apart and laid down the method of its employment. (Legge 1969, 299)

To make use of all this in a systematic way is known as its method. (Wang Bi/Lynn, 68)

制 而 用 之 謂 之 法
regulate and use is called its method
chih erh yung chih wei chih fa
zhi er yong zhi wei zhi fa (Pinyin)

What we have seen to this point is an opening and closing, a coming and going which, in the language of Han Kingbo's commentary, refers to the fundamental energy of *ch'i/qi*. In this next sentence we see it "restrained, trimmed, regulated, established" (meanings of 制 *chih*) as a "means, model, law, plan, method, pattern" (法 *fa*) which will make it "fit for, apt for, focused, useful" (用 *yung/yong*). It may also be read that it is through use that the energy establishes itself as a pattern or method as Wilhelm/Baynes and Wang Bi/Lynn have translated it. One might almost say here that "method" is a

"pattern in action." The movement has been from image to form, as embodiment, to use, to pattern or method as a seamless flow, course (tao) or process.

Ta Chuan I.11.4

That which furthers on going out and coming in... (Wilhelm/Baynes, 318)

利 用 出 入


benefit use go out enter

li yung ch'u ju


li yong ju ru

The next sentence begins with a word that appears again and again in the *I Ching*: 利 (*li*), usually translated as "advantageous" or "beneficial." The character depicts a knife or reaping hook next to the element for standing grain. Wilder and Ingram say of this, "In order to secure the benefits from the grain, it was necessary to reap it. In other words 'to cut the stalks'" (709). This develops the previous idea where something (possibly *ch'i*) is trimmed, restrained or regulated to make it useful, exactly as we see Yao regulating the lives of the people according to the movements of the seasons; creating a calendar for sowing and reaping as the agricultural activity which seeds China's civilization. The following word here is again *yung*, "use," specifying something that is beneficial, furthering. Quite literally, this furthers the initial energy and keeps the whole process moving forward. Yao is furthering the processes of nature he has observed and furthering the people through placing them in harmony with these patterns.

The two characters which follow, 出入 (*ch'u ju*), which are also translated here with the sense of coming and going, are not the characters used previously for that idea—往来 (*wang lai*). Once again, the new characters are approximately synonymous with the previous pair but introduce a subtle development in the idea.


go out, issue, beget
<i>ch'u/chu</i>

出 (*ch'u/chu*), as "go out," depicts a small plant that has grown another pair of leaves. It also means "to spring from," "to issue," "to beget." The previous character for "going," 往 (*wang*), similarly depicted vegetation: "luxuriant vegetation which springs from the Earth in tufts here and there; rambling (Wilder and Ingram, 350)." Wilder and Ingram add that with the initial element for "walking" the character means "to go toward; towards." It does not have the same sense of begetting, or issuing forth from a central point that this second character, 出 (*ch'u/chu*) does.


coming in, enter- ing, (putt ing roots in the ground)
<i>ju/ru</i>

The paired word 入 (*ju/ru*), "coming in, entering," depicts roots going into the ground and is often used as the opposite of *ch'u/chu* to mean "enter" or "put into" as roots entering the ground. Thus the characters together express two modes of a plant's development: the deepening of its roots below and its blossoming and "begetting" above; in short, the complete process of life which connects any entity with its past and its future, beginning and end, followed by a return to its origin and a renewal of the process. Thus the beneficial use, the harvesting of focused *ch'i* serves to nourish and deepen the root and extend the flowering, the "issue" of new life.

Coming and going as elaborated in Chapter 5

The images of coming and going, themselves a development of opening and closing, are beautifully expanded upon in chapter II.5 of the *Ta Chuan* and it is worth quoting the passage in its entirety to appreciate the way a single image can be extended into myriad subtleties. This is the essence of the "methodology" of the *I Ching* sages. We can also see this as an elaboration of the simple description in line 10 of chapter 1: "Sun and moon follow their courses and it is now hot, now cold."

The sun goes(*wang*) and the moon comes(*lai*); the moon goes and the sun comes; sun and moon thus take the place each of the other and their shining is the result. The cold goes and the heat comes; the heat goes and the cold comes; it is by this mutual succession of cold and heat that the year is completed. That which goes becomes less and less, and that which comes waxes more and more; it is by the

mutual influence of this contraction and expansion that the advantages of the different conditions are produced (Legge 1969, 316).

The line translated "take the place of each other" more literally reads "push" or "rub" each other to produce "brightness" or a "day." Then cold and hot "push or rub" each other and produce a "year." This language is reminiscent of the polishing or honing that expresses the mutual interaction of the eight trigrams in chapter one.

"Going" is associated with a waning (屈 *ch'ü*) and "coming" with a waxing (信 *hsin*). But the literal translations for *ch'ü* are "to bend, wrong, oppression" (Fenn) and for *hsin*, "faith, sincerity, to believe in" (Wilder and Ingram) or "straight" (Yi Wu). It does seem that both straight and bent could apply to energy that is waxing and waning. In the character for "waning," the element for corpse 尸, combines with *ch'ü* 出, "to go out" suggesting that the life force is going out or in its waning stage. The character for "waxing" 信(*hsin*) depicts a human beside the element for speech as if the "expression" of the human was the increase of this life force. By extension, the force of sincerity or believing represents the heart-mind—(the same word, *hsin*, represented by a different character)--blossoming or waxing.

In the next paragraph, this idea is extended even further as the image, which began in the realm of Heaven as sun and moon, "takes form" in the realm of Earth as the caterpillar.

Ta Chuan II.5.2-3

That which goes becomes less and less, and that which comes waxes more and more;--it is by the mutual influence on each other of this contraction and expansion that the advantages (of different conditions) are produced. When the looper (caterpillar) coils itself up, it thereby straightens itself again; when worms and snakes go into the state of hibernation, they thereby keep themselves alive. (Legge, 316)

1. 往者屈也、來者信也。

going so waning coming so waxing
wang che ch'ü ye lai che hsin ye

2. 屈信相感而利生焉。

waning waxing mutually influence and further life
ch'ü hsin hsiang kan her li sheng yan

3. 尺蠖之屈, 以求信也。

looper caterpillar's bending is how it seeks straightening
chi ho chih ch'ü i ch'iu hsin ye

What is missed in the translation is a play on words in the original language which is actually an amplification of the linguistic dimension of the analogy at work here. For example, the character that Legge translates as "coils itself up" is once again 屈, *ch'ü* (meaning here bent, coiled up) and the expression "straightens itself up again" is the translation of 信 *hsin*. There is a profound significance in this language. Coming in and going out has moved from the opening and closing of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, to an idea of appearance and disappearance, to the waxing and waning of *ch'i* both as light and as life energy and as "sincerity, belief, straightness." (We should recall here that "straight" is also a translation of *i/yi* or "one.") Yet just as we might be tempted to read this as a dualistic scheme where waning is bad and life-threatening and waxing is good and life-

increasing, creatures are introduced for whom hibernation is essential to keeping them alive. That is to say, they know exactly how to use withdrawal and waning at the right time. Later we will see how this quality is directly equated with the superior person and the sage who perceive the exact timing for "advance and retreat."

If the looper caterpillar uses its innate knowledge of expanding and contraction (opening and closing) to further its life, what is the beneficial use of "going out and going in" which we have just seen in the passage we are exploring in chapter 11?:

As we return now to our original passage of that chapter, we find the answer.

That which furthers on going out and coming in, that which all men live by, they call the divine. (Wilhelm 1977, 318)

利 用 出 入

benefit use go out enter

li yung ch'ü ju

民 咸 用 之 謂 神

people all use is called divine (spiritual; deity)

min hsien yung chih wei shen

We have to deal very carefully now with this conundrum: How does opening and closing, coming and going, lead to something spiritual? How does the Cosmos of Heaven-and-Earth, which has developed without an external creative agency or a transcendent feature, come to be called "divine" or "spiritual" and thus indirectly associated with "deity"? The simplicity of the original language belies the rather remarkable answer to this question offered in the text: "The Tao that lets now the light, now the dark appear"—go "in and out" of manifestation—is meant to be used by all the people, in the same way that the caterpillar and the snake use going inward and outward, hibernating and emerging, for survival. Consider what this says about the Cosmos: As its creative action, manifest in constant change, is discerned and its principle (*li*) is followed, it leads to the flourishing of all things because the *li* can be used. Perception of the *li*, however, is itself inherent in the creative activity of Heaven-and-Earth in the way the chameleon instinctively responds to the change in color and lighting in the environment and thus *is* a chameleon. Creation and change then are a constant reverberation of perception, distinction (differentiation), repetition and "use" through embodiment, thus

entering into creativity at the level of *hsing*, the created forms. If the chameleon can respond usefully to change, how much more can the human being whose powers of perception and discernment are so much greater? We are back to the previous discussion of mutuality and reciprocity in the sense that things hone and polish each other as they constantly "rub against them."

What is called "spiritual" or "divine" is the power of the human (or any creature), in tandem with this creative process, to harvest the world; to make use of it, which then by definition furthers its creative advance. This is a difficult idea for a Western reader to grasp because we invariably contrast the pragmatic (utilitarian) with the spiritual in the same way that we contrast immanent with transcendent. Yet this is exactly what makes this a philosophy of organism, of wholeness. It overcomes that split so that "use" and "virtue" or "value" are not estranged from one another.

"Taking advantage of and putting to use the ins and outs involved, one provides all the common folk with the use of it and this is called numinous." This is the Wang Bi/Lynn translation of the line (65) and it demonstrates how shifting times invite shifting translations. Lynn's book, dating from 1994, is addressed to a wide contemporary community from varying traditions and it uses a word introduced by Jung as an expression of spiritual experience or the experience of the limitless whole which penetrates the limited time-space world of the human. This is essentially identical to the religious descriptions of the action of deity or "the divine."

On the Meaning of *yung* as "use"

It may be helpful if we look more closely at the word "use" and its origin since there is such a direct relationship here between use and spirit. The character 用 (*yung/yong*) derives from the same original character as 中 (*chung/zhong*) which means "center" or "middle." Wilder and Ingram point out that this originally meant "to hit the target." *Yung* preserves this idea with its meanings "to hit the center, to use, with, by" (Wilder and Ingram, 225). If we think back to the beginning of chapter one, we recall that the question was not, "who" or "what" created things but "by what means"? We noted

that the lowly preposition here, another *i/yi*, 以, appeared over and over again and should not be overlooked. To repeat the description from that chapter--

"以 is defined by Karlgren as "use, take, adopt as, consider as, according, by (means of), in order to, departing from." The character has a more ancient form ... which derives from the radical meaning 'self; (R.49:*chi*³). "This is a very ancient symbol, to represent the exhalations of a breath, the virtue that springs from an object, its action, its use, then use until exhaustion, to end, to pass away (Wieger, 85B)."

This is the key to the interdependent universe as an organism: each created thing, however small, serves as the means by which some other thing in the universe comes into being. We call this the "butterfly effect" in the natural world where the movement of a butterfly's wings in China may ultimately affect something on the other side of the world. Whitehead no doubt had this in mind when he asserted in his philosophy of organism that the satisfaction of an entity does not occur within that entity but as the ground of a new actual occasion. Thus something closes as an entity but opens up again as it is used by and constitutes the ground of something new. It is used to exhaustion and then passes away. But the very fact that it has been used means that the energy itself continues and finds new forms which it nourishes. Such a view redefines the human as a vessel enclosed through identity, ever perfecting through individuation, ever opening through use until the energy is exhausted and has been taken up, amplified, in new forms to nourish the advancing universe.

Note also the significant relationship of the character for use, 用 (*yung*) to the graphic character for "the well:" 井. The figure for "well" is said to represent the classic village layout in which eight houses were grouped around a central well. This wasn't a "religious" arrangement but a "useful" one. The well was for the nourishment of all the people. Yet we have discussed the deeper meaning of this in Hexagram 48 as the inexhaustible source of nourishment found at the "center." Hence to "use" something is to find the center of it where its essence—which has its source in the inexhaustible—is found.²¹

That the universe brings forth things which can be used by one another for nourishing, to abet a mutual flourishing, is really quite an extraordinary feature of its

creative evolution and process. Yet it is also, as we have seen, the character of the creative movement from the beginning. It is not simply a furthering mechanical principle but implies a tenderness or affection for that flourishing; a *desire* for its flourishing that gives rise to a generative power unavailable to the purely mechanical model and thus a seminally *organic* feature of the Cosmos. If one considers the human experience of Deity to have arisen out of the sense of this tenderness, this desire for creative furthering as its subjective aim,²² one can understand what Deity and divinity mean within the context of the *I Ching* and *Ta Chuan* cosmos.

We actually find the word "exhaust" used favorably when it is coupled with "use." To "exhaust" through "use" is the point of enclosing *chi*—capturing, embodying it in a vessel for creative use. To exhaust the use, then, is to harvest *chi* to the utmost extent of creativity. In this sense, "coming" and "going" can reflect the exhaustion and repotentialization of energy "at the center." "Coming and going, the well is the well."

This entire activity, when engaged in by the people and for the people, is called "spiritual" or "divine" or "numinous." It is important that the line doesn't speak of the individual use of this capacity but of its use by "all the people." We have our own expression of this at the heart of our democratic system as a government "of the people, for the people, by the people." The numinosity derives from the wholeness—the one-making--of the activity in the same way that Jung uses the word numinosity as the individual experience of the whole which has a transcendent quality in the midst of embodied life. The word for "people"—民 (*min*)—comes from a character that originally depicted "a floating plant, without roots, that ramifies and grows, like nymphaeaceae so common in China...that spring up from a grain, float first, then fix themselves and acquire in a short time a prodigious development. By extension, development, multiplication; a wandering horde of the primitive times, a clan, a family"(Wieger, 144A). If we compare this to the word for "opening" "going out," 出 (*chu*), and "going in" or "enter" as 入 (*ju/ru*) we may recall that the latter are paired as the process of extending roots below and "begetting" (out of a central point) above. The subtle analogy that can be drawn from this is that repetition through "use" establishes the pattern, as described above, and thus solidifies what is at first wandering, chaotic, rootless. The wandering plant without roots also lacks a center. The original meaning of *yung* is to "hit the center"

which may speak to the power of the loosely structured hordes beginning to self-organize into clans, families, et cetera. The overall image is one of huge amplification of energy as all of the wandering parts organize themselves into a whole, orchestrating the useful activity of its parts.

Thinking back again to chapter one, we might also notice the progression of the development of pattern through repetition (like the cycles of the sun and moon) to a considerable amplification of creative possibility when use is introduced in such a way that "survival" has a creative and variegating power in the inter-relationship, *tung*, of the living world.

Conversely, what we now call abuse would be introduced when mutuality, reciprocity and interdependence break down. Among the inferior possibilities of nature is the absence of the connective sense. In the human, the small or petty person is the one who sees the world as something to be used, not for the furthering of the whole or as an instrument of mutuality but for the furthering of oneself at the expense of others. Such distinctions are made throughout the *I Ching* and the teachings of Confucius, as we find in all of the other major spiritual teachings as well.. In this enlarged organic cosmic description, ethics arises as an essential requirement for the survival of the creative process and advance toward increasing meaning, value and wholeness.

The superior possibilities of nature are the discovery of creative uses of the world so that things and beings become tools for one another; instruments for watering, heating, cooling, protecting; for lake-building, forest-growing, meadow-making, cross-pollinating, protecting; for house-building, food-gathering, music, dance, story, craft, poetry, painting... The numinous effect of use in its higher form is beauty. Hence we find in the commentary on Hexagram 1, "Succeeding is the coming together of all that is beautiful" and in the same commentary—"The Creative (*Ch'ien*), by positing the beginning, is able to further the world with beauty" (Wilhelm 1977, 377). The Receptive (*K'un*) is no less numinous in its functioning because it is part of the same operation: "It embraces everything,' and its power to transform is light-giving" (Wilhelm 1977, 392). This can be said about *K'un* even as the supreme function of yin and darkness because it is yin and yang together which are life-giving and light-giving. In the commentary on the fifth line of *K'un* we find, "His beauty is within, but it gives freedom to his limbs and expresses

itself in his works. This is the perfection of beauty" (Wilhelm 1977, 395). Pragmatic is not regarded here as the antithesis of aesthetic. Both are characteristics of what Whitehead calls the creative advance toward complexification and integration.

Now the chapter retells the creation story yet again, carrying us with increasing specificity toward the images which will make up the cosmic system of the sixty-four hexagrams of the *I Ching*.

CHAPTER 3: T'AI CHI AND THE PRIMORDIAL PAIR

太
t'ai
tai
exceeding eminent too much very great supreme

Therefore there is in the Changes the Great Primal Beginning [t'ai chi]. This generates the two primary forces. The two primary forces generate the four images. The four images generate the eight trigrams.
 (Wilhelm 1977, 318)

Therefore in (the system of)the Yi there is the Grand Terminus, which produced the two elementary Forms. These two Forms produced the Four emblematic Symbols, which again produced the eight Trigrams.
 (Legge 1969, 299)

極
chi
tree 木
"between Heaven and Earth" 二 mouth □ hand 又
ultimate, extremity, extent

Therefore in change there is the great ultimate. This is what generates the two modes [the yin and yang]. The two basic modes generate the four basic images, and the four basic images, generate the eight trigrams.

(Wang Bi/Lynn, 65)

This next passage from chapter 11, Part I introduces the basis for the numbers upon which the structure of the *I Ching* is built. Through these seamless creative transitions, we see how the ancient sages, according to the *Ta Chuan*, developed the system of the 64 hexagrams to describe all of the processes under Heaven. This alone would give us reason to examine the passage closely as the foundation of a cosmology. But it also contains the first seed of an idea that would proliferate far

beyond its original context and enter the mainstream of twentieth century western culture as the popular Tai Chi symbol.



Figure 5 – T'ai Chi Symbol

T'ai Chi: The Supreme Ultimate

Chapter One, by beginning with Heaven and Earth, gives us no sense of their origin; of any invisible unity that lies behind them. Genesis has Yahweh and other accounts of creation have their Creator-God or gods. The fact that the *Ta Chuan* was likely a compendium of fragmentary texts may explain why it is only near the end of the first section that the complete scheme is presented. It is possibly the most important chapter of the entire work.

This passage of the chapter raises two puzzling questions: First, why did Confucius or his disciple introduce a new term here? Why not use the word Tao instead of T'ai Chi, 太極, the Supreme Ultimate? Second, why is the word chi used when it appears only twice in the Confucian Classics and twice in the *I Ching*? (This word is not to be confused with *chi/ji* as energy described before.) Why isn't the more obvious and common word 大 *ta/da* used as the superlative "great, grand, supreme"?

As to the first question, some scholars do make Tai Chi synonymous with Tao. After all, we have the line in this text that says "one yin, one yang is Tao." The problem, however, is that Tao itself does not "produce" things. As Lao-Tzu says, "The Tao does nothing yet nothing is left undone." It is not that one yin, one yang produce Tao or are produced *by* it but rather that Tao manifests within the course and rhythm of that alteration. Wilhelm captures the distinction beautifully with his translation, "That which lets now the light now the dark appear is Tao." Most importantly, Tao is before phenomena; even before being and non-being. This passage of the *Ta Chuan* is about things coming into being.

As to the second question, it seems most likely that a new term has been used here to describe something unique first touched upon in this text: the very edge of manifestation. Tao itself cannot be named but the first "subtle beginning" of it in phenomena can. In its relation to Tao, it has some similarity with the relation of the Shekinah of Hebrew thought to Yahweh, whose name is too holy to be spoken. T'ai Chi is not, however, an entity of any kind but rather the threshold and farthest reaches of creation in potentia. These furthest reaches have themselves been delineated, so to speak,

by the lapping of the waters at the highest tide of manifestation. The closest counterpart in modern Western thought may be Bohm's "explicate order," particularly because of its relationship to an implicate order which remains ineffable and mysterious: "The manifest objects [explicate order] that we regard as comprising ordinary reality are only the unfolded projections of the much deeper, higher dimensional implicate order, which is the fundamental reality" (Keepin 1993)

極 *chi*

The meanings of *chi* are extremity, furthest extent, utmost, extreme limit (Fenn 33). The character is made up of the radical for wood or tree, (木 "*mu*," which we have met before). The image of the phonetic, *chi*⁴, is described by Wilder and Ingram as a man who watches for a favorable opportunity of Heaven as the advantages of Earth." A man is seen in the seal writing. Between Heaven and Earth; he is striving with voice and hand to gain his end. With the addition of *mu*⁴, a tree, the character stands for extreme, the very top. The tree in its position between Heaven and Earth attains to a much higher altitude than does man" (Wilder and Ingram, 900).

While this may seem a somewhat imaginative reconstruction of a phonetic element, it is certainly resonant with the cosmic theme of the *Ta Chuan*, particularly with regard to ideas of extension and expansion. The tree as an image conveys the idea of a depth and rootedness as well as a height of flowering. It "fills" the space between Heaven and Earth with the fullness of its form as the human fills it with his or her expressions and actions. Both are driven to the "utmost" in giving form to the life force.

The most compelling idea that may be imaged here is that of stretching and expanding the space between Heaven and Earth; "filling it" with the ten thousand things toward which the passage is moving. We see the elements of stretching and expanding in two very important images which we have already encountered: *K'un* 坤, the name of the trigram for Earth and *shen* 神, divine, spiritual, deity. This expansion of images into forms that "stretch" the space between Heaven and Earth is a divine or spiritual activity.

Hence we find that Confucius, in one of the rare mentions of Tao in the *Analects*, makes this remarkable and unequivocal statement:

The human can enlarge the Tao but the Tao cannot enlarge the human. (15:28)

The Tao only gains extension and expression in the phenomenal order, particularly through the human.

So chi 極 is like a fecund potential, a range of possibility, which has as its boundaries Heaven and Earth. In another interpretation, the "extremes" are the extremes to which yin goes before it turns into yang and vice versa. This image replaces a single axis of duality with that of a field of activity bordered by opposites which, as they are pushed to their extremes, also enlarge the field of creativity and fold back upon themselves.

太 t'ai

T'ai can mean "excessive," "very" but it can also mean "supreme." Like the word *chi* it carries the idea of something almost beyond the limit: "the excessive extreme." And in a way, both translations of the word touch the same ineffable point where things must inevitably end or turn into their opposite; turn back. We will see later exactly how this "edge of the universe" is expressed in the *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan*.

The Two Modes: 兩儀 *liang i*

The fecund T'ai Chi produces two modes and here we enter into another linguistic mystery. It is a particularly important one to explore because it expresses the nature of a primordial duality out of which will come the entire created universe.

In Chinese, the phrase which is most often translated as "two modes" is 兩儀 *liang i*. The first character, *liang*, means "two." The second, *i/yi*, is the character usually translated as "righteousness" with the addition here of the radical for the human, a linguistic device to enlarge its meaning.

The Use of 兩 as Two

The commonly used word for two in Chinese is *er*/er 二. The word *liang* 兩, however, denotes more than simple numeration. It can also mean "both" or "ounce" and usually designates elements in relationship. The character depicts a standing scale and the idea of "both" may have come from the pans on either side. It suggests the basic principle of the scale as a measuring device: that the weight is measured by bringing two sides into equilibrium, counterbalancing the weight on one side with an equal weight on the other. (This is an on-going activity which never has a fixed, steady state.) The radical for the character is *ju* which we have met before as "going in" depicted by roots entering the ground. For our own purposes of signification, this is a useful image for depicting the abstract relationship of the primordial pair which are literally at the root of creation. The "ounce" which can be measured is a very subtle relationship of interactive balance between both.

The Use of 儀 as "modes"

The term used for "modes" is an enlargement of a key concept in Chinese philosophy, *yi* (*i/yi*)—usually translated as "righteousness." We have noted before that the word righteousness, as it has evolved in popular English, does not have a particularly favorable connotation and would never be applied as a primordial quality of the universe. Yi Wu's explanation of the Chinese term is helpful here and merits being borne in mind throughout this study.

I originally meant expression of personal or individual attitude, because the character has the radical for "self," meaning self as a model. 'I is self's majesty (Hsü Shen, *Explanation*). In the thought of Confucius and Mencius, *i* became an important virtue. (Wu 1990, 135)

The radical for self in the character points to a subjectivity that is expressed through the qualities associated with the second element of the character, sheep, which are associated with gentleness, mildness, harmony (Wilder and Ingram, 345). When 大 (*ta/da*), meaning

"great" or originally "human," combines with this element for sheep, 美 (*mei*), it has the meaning of "beauty, excellence, elegant." Hence the character for *i/yi* suggests an inner condition that finds natural expression in harmony with its exterior condition.

In chapter 20 of the *Doctrine of the Mean* we find the definitive statement "*i*(義) means *i* 直 [appropriateness]." Yi Wu notes that "here, *i* means rightness—that one should do everything at the right time, in the right place, and with the right relationships." It is perhaps easier for us to work with the translation "rightness" or "aptness" than "righteousness," although we should remember that it describes one of the major virtues of Confucian and Judeo-Christian cultures. It only becomes degraded when used in a corrupt form as a cudgel of arrogance or tyranny. We deplore the quality of self-righteousness when it is sanctimonious or hypocritical. Perhaps our contemplation of *i/yi* will help us rediscover the depth and genuine meaning of the English word.

Appropriateness or aptness as 直, (also pronounced *i/yi*), is a word that is often used synonymously with its cognate partner 義. Karlgren defines it as "to order aright, proper, fit, ought": "多 much between the roof 宀 and the floor 一" (196).

This is a puzzling etymology for a word that means appropriate, order aright, proper, fit, and can be used interchangeably with the word for righteousness, rightness, rectitude. But if we contemplate this more deeply, or perhaps just more practically, we find that if things are placed carefully in relationship to one another between the floor and the roof, the space can accommodate "much." Curiously, we are brought back to the issue of position. When packing a car or a storage locker, the trick is to get everything in just the right position in the space and then it is possible that "everything can have its place."

This is in fact the principle of Tao in action: if each thing unfolds according to its nature—follows its natural path ("position" in motion)—nothing will be injured but all will be in harmony with one another. The same kind of care used to fit things into a trunk or storage area is required to help quantities of people living together in family or society to find their place and "fit" with one another. Nature performs this task by determining the fixed paths of Heavenly bodies or the detailed patterns of nature itself. The sage studies these and learns how to fit himself or herself usefully into the cosmos. Every individual has a use, a place, an apt fit or demeanor appropriate to the personal and

cosmic nature. In philosopher-astrologer Dane Rudhyar's words, "Every individual is the answer to a particular problem of nature."

We begin to catch a hint here of the answer to our question about hierarchy and how each thing "fits into its place." It seems that the human has the free will to *choose* how he or she will achieve the right fit. But to do this requires both a deep understanding of the inner nature of the self and a moral commitment to expressing this harmoniously, "aptly," in the universe as one finds it in any given moment. To some extent, a highly organized and hierarchical culture which designates a place for everyone with appropriate roles and rituals and mutual respect, simplifies this process for everyone. The difficulty is that as the culture becomes increasingly complex, diverse and changing, these structures no longer serve. The compensating factor may be that the maturing and complexifying culture is also one which is becoming increasingly conscious and capable of making choices that are apt or fit in new ways while preserving underlying values. If the universe is a living organism, then harmonious relationship requires constant adjustment and adaptation, like the delicate and constant balancing of the scales. This can only happen collectively among humans if they regard themselves as part of the larger whole of which they are a part. It is not enough to have an organic description of the universe among scientists and philosophers. It has to be a feeling that permeates the people in such a way that it furnishes the foundation both for their values and their actions. This is the role played by religion in societies of all kinds throughout history and we are no less challenged now to seek and use whatever apparatus is mutually available to move us toward our higher purpose. The radical transition from a hierarchal to a democratic society must include the reshaping of whatever institutions promote that among us.

Now we can reconsider the character used to describe the two modes through which the T'ai Chi or Supreme Ultimate expresses itself. We simply add the radical for human to the character for rightness or aptness; a linguistic device, as we noted, often used simply to enlarge the meaning of a word. 儀 is also pronounced "i" (a sound closer to "yi") and it is usually defined as "demeanor" or "deportment" although it can also mean "model" or "match" or "apt." It is not a common word. Certainly it is curious here as the expression of the dual operation of T'ai Chi. It appears only once in the *I Ching*, in line six of Hexagram 53 which Wilhelm/Baynes translate as "Development; Gradual

Progress." All of the lines of this hexagram follow the rising progress of a wild goose. The wild goose was chosen—according to Wilhelm—as an image of conjugal fidelity because it is believed that the birds mate for life. Although only one goose appears in each of the lines, this "matedness" is also a metaphor for the two modes—liang i—since i can also mean "match" and liang, a pair. Through the six lines, the wild goose rises from the shore, to the cliff, to a plateau, to a tree, and in the fifth line, draws near to the summit. Finally, in the sixth line, "The wild goose gradually draws near the cloud heights. Its feathers can be used for the sacred dance." Wilhelm's commentary on this reads: "Here life comes to an end. A man's work stands completed. The path rises high toward Heaven, like the flight of wild geese when they have left the Earth far behind.... And if their feathers fall, they can serve as ornaments in the sacred pantomimes performed in the temples. Thus the life of a man who has perfected himself is a bright light for the people of the Earth, who look up to him as an example" (Wilhelm 1977, 208).

Legge gives the most literal translation to the line: "Their feathers can be used as ornaments [*i/yi*]" (226). Yet Wilhelm is getting at the subtler meaning of *i/yi*, which is what Legge translates as "ornaments." We remember that the word *hsing*—the embodied forms completed on Earth (in contrast to the images completed in Heaven), also contains the element for feathers; a sense of material embodiment with access to the powers of the heights; Earth in communication with Heaven. We see the ritual importance of feathers throughout Native American culture, particularly of the eagle as having the highest access. There is a very subtle relationship between ornament and demeanor, both meanings of *i/yi*. A demeanor is an image or a form in action. We tend to think of it somewhat superficially in English common usage, but it takes on considerable weight if we think that demeanor can also be applied to the way the universe is seen in every moment; not as a series of snapshots from the Hubble telescope but as the complete ensemble of creation in the midst of a graceful sacred dance. While this is an imaginative amplification of the *Ta Chuan* terms, we can see that Wilhelm's commentary on the hexagram line implies a microcosm in the human realm of the cosmic process and it sheds light on the importance given to ritual throughout ancient Chinese society as a way of harmonizing with the universe of Heaven-and-Earth.

The human gives form to the shining images in the Heavens through his or her own demeanor; through self-cultivation and self-completion. But as the *Doctrine of the Mean* says, the superior person not only completes himself, but other men and things also (XXV.3). This is because the embodied form, in its fullness, becomes an image to be embodied by another, as parents become images to their children. Line six of Hexagram 53 suggests that the highest form of this process expresses itself as the sacred dance in which a feather of that final completion is retained for the use of others. We may recall from chapter one that the word for "form," 形 (*hsing/xing*), is said to represent two shields, side by side, ornamented with feathers. "An article not decorated is spoken of as lacking in appearance or shape," according to Ingram and Wilder (895).

The two modes or demeanors of the universe which further this "shaping" process are primordially expressed as *yin* and *yang*. These are not separate entities but a matched pair completing a continuum, constantly balancing one another as an extreme is reached. Elsewhere in the text we find *yin* and *yang* paired in distinct ways within the three realms of Heaven, Earth and Human, also described as the Three Ultimates, implying that each has its own originating power and continuum granted to it by the Supreme Ultimate which produces them. The *Shuo Kua* tells us that in the realm of Heaven, *yin* and *yang* manifest as the dark and the light; on Earth, as the firm and the yielding; in the realm of the human, as love and rectitude.

To summarize: Why not the familiar word *ta/da* 大 as "great" rather than *t'ai* which also carries meanings of extremity or excess as "very" and "too" (*t'ai tou*, too much) as well as the relevant meanings here of exceedingly great, supreme, eminent? The answer implied here is the pushing of boundaries that reflects the creative expansion and stretching of space which is the key to the evolution of the universe and life within it. Creation is always "pushing the envelope" but never too far. Never to the point of total dispersion. A counterbalance, a return, always sets in to preserve the integrity of the whole.

Why isn't the word *Tao* used, when in every other context it has been sufficient to describe what is ultimate and beyond name and form? It would seem that *T'ai Chi* is NOT beyond name and form but expresses the furthest reaches of the phenomenal world. The Supreme Ultimate may be distinct from *Tao* as being a threshold of potentia between

Being and Non-Being in contrast to Tao itself as beyond the threshold of both Being and Non-being. Tao is present through the course of the entire enterprise but not identical with or dependent upon any specific phase.

Yin and Yang as a Continuum

fan as "Reversal"

When we speak of the Supreme Ultimate or the Three "Ultimates" of Heaven, Earth and Human, we are not speaking of a static endpoint or edge. What we find, rather, is that as phenomena reach their extreme, they begin to turn into their opposites. This is a central idea in the *I Ching* which will be demonstrated in the next chapter on the hexagrams. We find this expressed in the *Tao Te Ching* when Lao Tzu says "Reversal (*fan* 反) is the movement of the Way (Tao)" (ch.40).

Yi Wu observes that the whole work of Lao Tzu is suffused with the idea of *fan* (Wu 1990, 30). Among the examples he cites from the work are the following beautiful and enigmatic passages from chapters 25, 65 and 78 (Wu 1989).

To be great is to go on, to go on is to be far, to be far is to be *fan* (88).

The mystical virtue is deep and far. It *fan* with all things till they attain the great natural path (237).

True words sound like their *fan* (276).

If we look at the entire passage from chapter 25 of Lao Tzu, we can see how cosmic a concept this is. Here is Yi Wu's translation of the complete passage:

There was something formed in chaos.
It existed before Heaven and Earth.
Still and solitary,
It alone stands without change.
It is all-pervasive without being exhausted.
It may be the mother of the world.
I do not know its name, but name it the Way.
With reluctance I call it Great.
Great means on-going. On-going means far-reaching; far-reaching means reversing.
Therefore the Way is great;
Heaven is great;
Earth is great;
The king also is great.
In this realm there are four great things
and the king is one of them.²³
Man follows Earth;
Earth follows Heaven;

Heaven follows the Way.
The Way follows its nature.(88)

The first two lines of the next chapter (26) show the relationship of opposites as actual sources from one another, further emphasizing their interdependence. "Gravity is the root of lightness; stillness, the ruler of movement" (Legge translation).

It is this entire, often paradoxical but essential relationship between the opposites that describes the function of the two modes in the *Ta Chuan*. The line "on-going means far-reaching, far-reaching means reversing" as the description of the Tao, also defines the operation of the Two Modes within the Supreme Ultimate. Lao Tzu is "reluctant" to name it because, as he has said at the outset, it is "beyond name and form." The *Ta Chuan* preserves this cautious approach by avoiding the word Tao and creating the phrase T'ai Chi as something close to the "mother of all things." As Yi Wu says of the *I Ching*, "the entire subject matter of the Book of Changes is the flow and counter flow, the movements and returns of the universe and mankind; reversal is part of the process as revealed in the hexagrams" (Wu 1990, 27).

fan as "Return"

Fan has a second meaning that is equally significant to our understanding of Tai Chi and the Two Modes. While the first meaning can be translated as reversal, the second meaning, as noted by Wu, is "return."

In chapter 16 of the *Tao Te Ching* we find—

Practice emptiness to its ultimate [*chi* 極].
Maintain tranquility sincerely.
All things rise together;
I only contemplate their return.
All things flourish;
Each returns to its root.
To return to the root is tranquility;
It means to return to life.
To return to life is constancy;
To know constancy is enlightenment (57).

One can readily see this passage as an inspiration to later Taoists and Buddhists. It describes what is sometimes called the "reverse path of sages" which forms the core of many esoteric Taoist texts and Taoist alchemy. These later texts will also use the *I Ching* and *Ta Chuan* to develop this idea because they too were concerned with the Way of the Sage.

If "reversal" describes the function of energy along the continuum represented by the two modes, "return" speaks to the relationship between the phenomena expressed through the two modes and their relation to T'ai Chi, as their origin and root. Beyond that is the ineffable Tao but it must be remembered that Tao is also present in the active creativity of the modes as their course and alteration: "That which lets now the yin now the yang appear is Tao."

As we will see, the sage returns to the root by contemplating the entire process and tracing it back to its origin. The difference between the Confucian and the Taoist approach here is that Lao Tzu and the Taoists use a *via negativa* or negation to return to emptiness and use emptiness. The Confucian uses a *via positive* by examining the patterns of things, tracing them deeper and deeper to their unity, and then modeling that pattern through the cultivation of character and behavior. These are also two modes of the same thing. They both flow from the same source.

CHAPTER 4: COSMOLOGICAL SHORTHAND--THE *I CHING* HEXAGRAMS

Therefore in change there is the great ultimate. This is what generates the two modes [the yin and yang]. The two basic modes generate the four basic images, and the four basic images, generate the eight trigrams.

Ta Chuan chapter I:11 (Wang Bi/Lynn, 65)

Having explored the meanings of some major terms of the *I Ching* and *Ta Chuan*—*Ch'ien* and *K'un*, yin and yang, opening and closing, coming and going, emerging and entering—we are now ready to approach those terms as they bear directly on the development of the sixty-four hexagrams of the *I Ching*.

As chapter 11 continues, we enter into the technical language of the *I Ching* structure which can only be conveyed in its own language of solid and broken lines. Below is a description of how the terms translate into the actual scheme of the trigrams and hexagrams.

* * *

We begin with the One with its source in T'ai Chi, or "Tao in action" in the manifest world. The character for one is a single line.

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As suggested before, it is best to think of this character as a verb rather than a noun here: the action of Tao one-ing; creating the discreet entities of the universe in the manner we have been seeing.

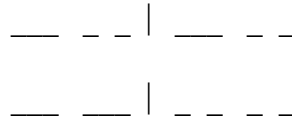
"The great ultimate generates the two modes."

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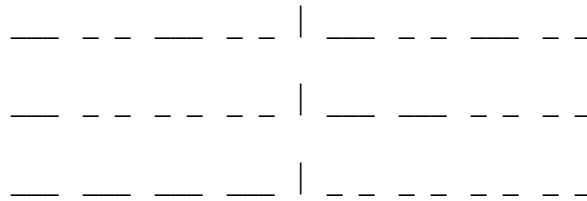
The two modes can be represented as the solid yang and broken yin lines.

The two basic modes generate the four basic images. That is, each mode itself behaves as a unit that subdivides into two modes or expressions of itself as polarities.

These correspond to the four seasons: two yang lines for summer; two yins for winter; the entrance of the yin line below as the darkening light of autumn; the entrance of the yang light below as the brightening light of spring. In space they represent the four directions.

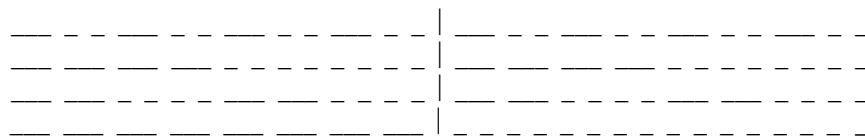


The four basic images generate the eight primary trigrams. Once again, each image becomes a unit that subdivides in the same order. Each new unit has the dual expression of the original. Here the new line is being added at the top.



Notice the simple symmetry here of the trigrams grouped on one side above the original yang line and on the other, above the original yin line. Each of the original four are repeated with the addition above of one yang and one yin line in each case. This is a classic example of "bifurcation" as we see it at work in nature, particularly in the DNA process.²⁴

If we were to continue in this fashion, each of the trigrams would divide again, accommodating each a new yang and yin line above.



If this process is completed through two more bifurcations, the sixty-four hexagrams result with a total of 384 lines which mirror the phenomenal world of the ten thousand things or conditions. (Ten thousand, in Chinese tradition, just means "all" but we will see that it is very close to the actual number of possible permutations.)

While sixty-four hexagrams are more commonly viewed as all of the various combinations of the eight trigrams placed above and below one another, this generation through bifurcation is clearly what is implied in chapter 11 as the manner in which the Supreme Ultimate generates the ten thousand things. Everything created is subject to the action of the dual modes, beginning with the modes themselves having their states of stillness and movement. Their interaction defines the phenomenal order as constantly bringing it into being. Through them, there is increasing complexification. Major phase changes occur at levels 4, 8 and 64: "squaring" of the four directions and the four seasons that fundamentally define Earth; the 8 trigrams that embody the formative images as building blocks of the hexagrams and of nature—chien: Heaven, kun: Earth, sun: wind/wood, kan: water/abyss, tui: lake/metal, ken: mountain, chen: thunder, *li*: fire. Then 8x8 as the entire 64 hexagram system, said to represent every condition under Heaven. Yet in its greatest complexity, the fundamental operation of the two modes is never left behind. Each of the 384 lines is also characterized by the potentialities of yin and yang.

At the eight trigram phase, we are told that fortune and misfortune come into being. We recall from chapter one that the trigrams are rubbing against one another, honing and polishing. Mechanically speaking, this produces friction which humanly speaking translates to conflict, seen in this analogy as an essential creative force. In human terms, it can also apply to caressing, suggesting possibilities of less abrasive interaction and the literal foreplay of creativity through sexual reproduction. Complexification of creation involves complexification of potential outcome. The possibility for things to go out of balance and harmony increases and brings about the various anxieties and triumphs, successes and failures, and the good and evil actions of human life. It is the activity of the superior person, particularly the sage, to trace backward through this process (*fan*) to find the underlying principles of harmony which return one to the origin in Tao.

Shao Yung

In the Confucianist revival of the Sung dynasty, Shao Yung (1011-1077) took up the passage and began to render it in numerical and schematic terms which made the system immediately and graphically apparent. Here first is his version of the passage:

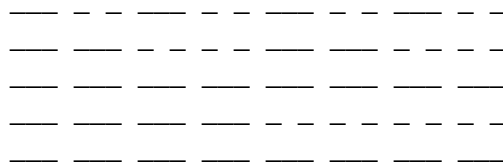
T'ai-chi having divided, the two modes (liang-i) were established. Yang rose and interacted with yin. Yin descended and interacted with yang. [Thus] four images were born.

Yang interacted with yin, yin interacted with yang, and they gave birth to the four images of Heaven. The firm interacted with the soft, the soft interacted with the firm, and they gave birth to the four images of Earth. Thereupon the eight trigrams were realized (completed). The eight trigrams interacted, and afterwards the ten-thousand things were born therein.

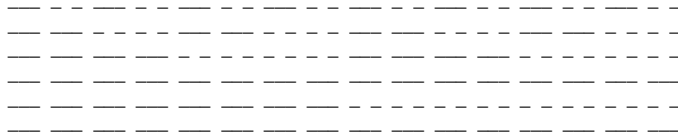
Thus one divides and makes two. Two divides and makes four. Four divides and makes eight. Eight divides and makes sixteen. Sixteen divides and makes thirty-two. Thirty-two divides and makes sixty-four. Therefore [the S'chuo-kua, section 21] says, "Divide yin, divide yang, alternately use soft and firm. Thus the I has its six ranks and attains its clarity."

Ten divides and makes one hundred. One hundred divides and makes a thousand. A thousand divides and makes ten-thousand. It is like the way a root has a trunk, a trunk has branches, a branch has leaves. The bigger they are, the fewer they are. The finer they are, the more they are. Unite them and it makes one. Spread them out and they make ten-thousand. Because of this at *Ch'ien* [Heaven trigram] it divides, at *K'un* [Earth trigram] it joins, at *Chen* [thunder trigram] it grows, at *Sun* [wind trigram] it diminishes. It grows and then divides. It divides and then diminishes. It diminishes and then joins." (Smith, Bol, Adler and Wyatt 1990, 111)²⁵

To understand Shao Yung's schematic approach to the passage, we will complete the process of bifurcation illustrated above using just the first four of that series where we left off and completing the process with those. Each of the four is doubled to add a yin and yang line at the top:



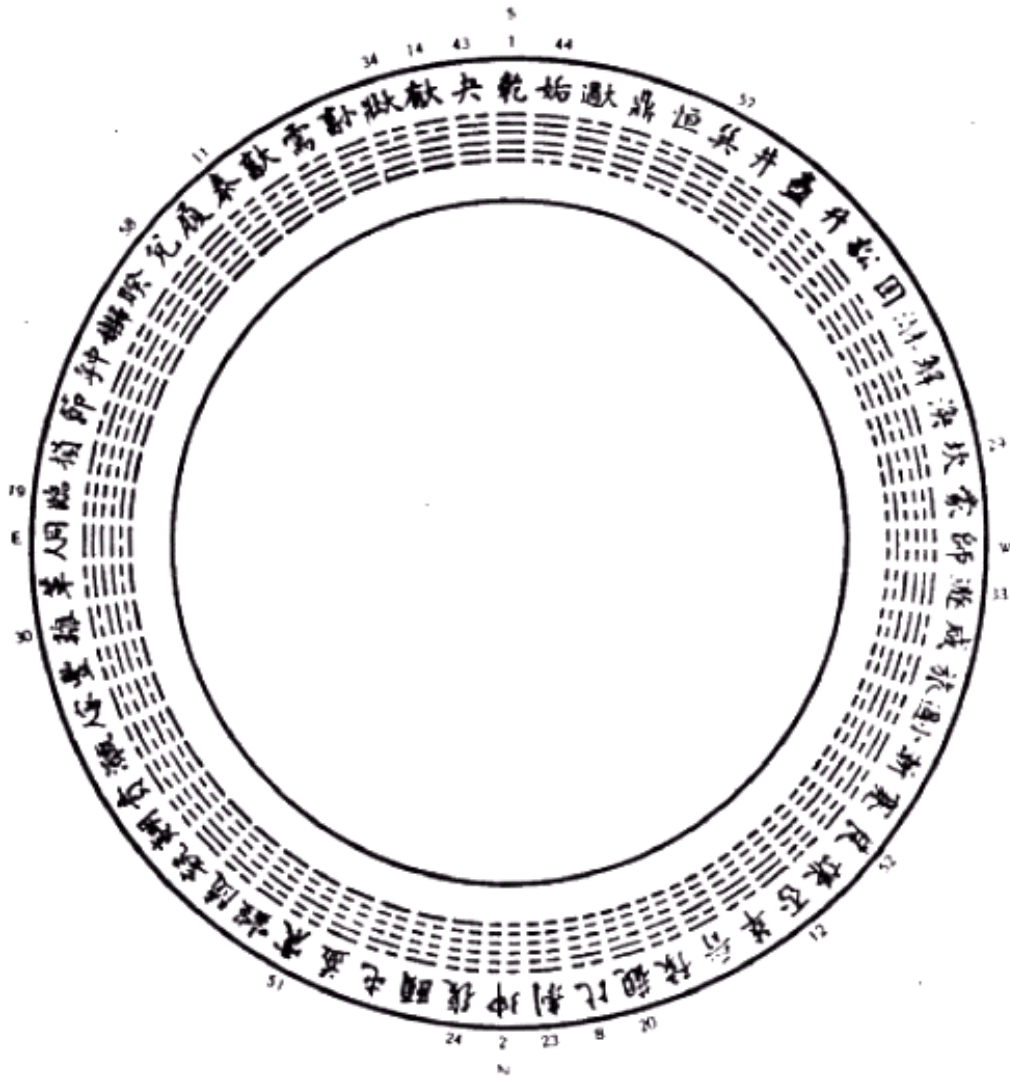
And then the final six alternating top yin and yang lines—



The figure on the following page shows Shao Yung's graphic representation of the passage just cited:

Ch'ien

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K'un

Figure 6
Hsien-t'ien diagram
(Fung 1953, 2:462)

Hexagram 1 (*Ch'ien*) is at the top, in the south, and the chart is read in a counter-clockwise direction. Notice that the first 8 hexagrams are those derived from our bifurcation process, as are the remainder of the 64. The south is placed at the top as the position of the sun at its zenith, (just as it is in astrological charts). This corresponds to the yang/light position at its maximum strength. Opposite this point, at the south node, is Hexagram 2 (*K'un*) which corresponds to the yin/darkness position at its maximum strength. On an astrological birth chart, these points archetypally correspond to noon and midnight.

The important point to be gleaned here is that Shao Yung was representing in this chart something that was already present and inherent in the *Ta Chuan's* description. It is not an arcane formula invented by Shao Yung, but the natural expression of the process of bifurcation. Yet by placing the hexagrams in this circular order, he is able to represent the important theme in the *Ta Chuan* that the changes move seamlessly forward through endings and beginnings in an enduring pattern. As he puts it, "Spread them out and they make ten-thousand. Because of this at *Ch'ien* it divides, at *K'un* it joins, at *Chen* it grows, at *Sun* it diminishes. It grows and then divides. It divides and then diminishes. It diminishes and then joins." He has taken something particle-like—the hexagrams—and arranged them to express something wave-like—the ebb and flow of energy and its phenomena.

More than six hundred year's later, Shao Yung's diagram came to the attention of the great seventeenth century German philosopher and mathematicians, Gottfried Leibniz (1646-1716). Leibniz had developed a binary or dyadic numeral system which was useful in addressing certain mathematical problems. Leibniz had anticipated the digital computer revolution by three centuries in doing this and actually produced a prototype computer.

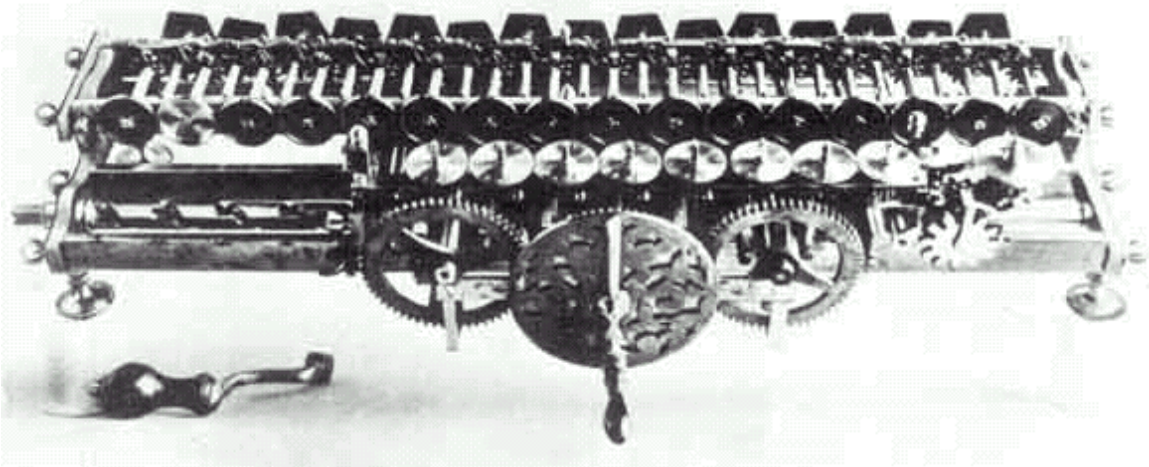


Figure 7

Leibniz's Prototype of the Computer
(O'Connor and Robertson 1998)

In Shao Yung's diagram, he was astonished to find his own binary number system perfectly expressed, although operating in a reverse manner as is often the case between Eastern and Western systems. Taking the broken yin line for 0 and the solid yang line for 1, he began with Kun as 0 at the beginning of sequence and so ended with 63 as the end.

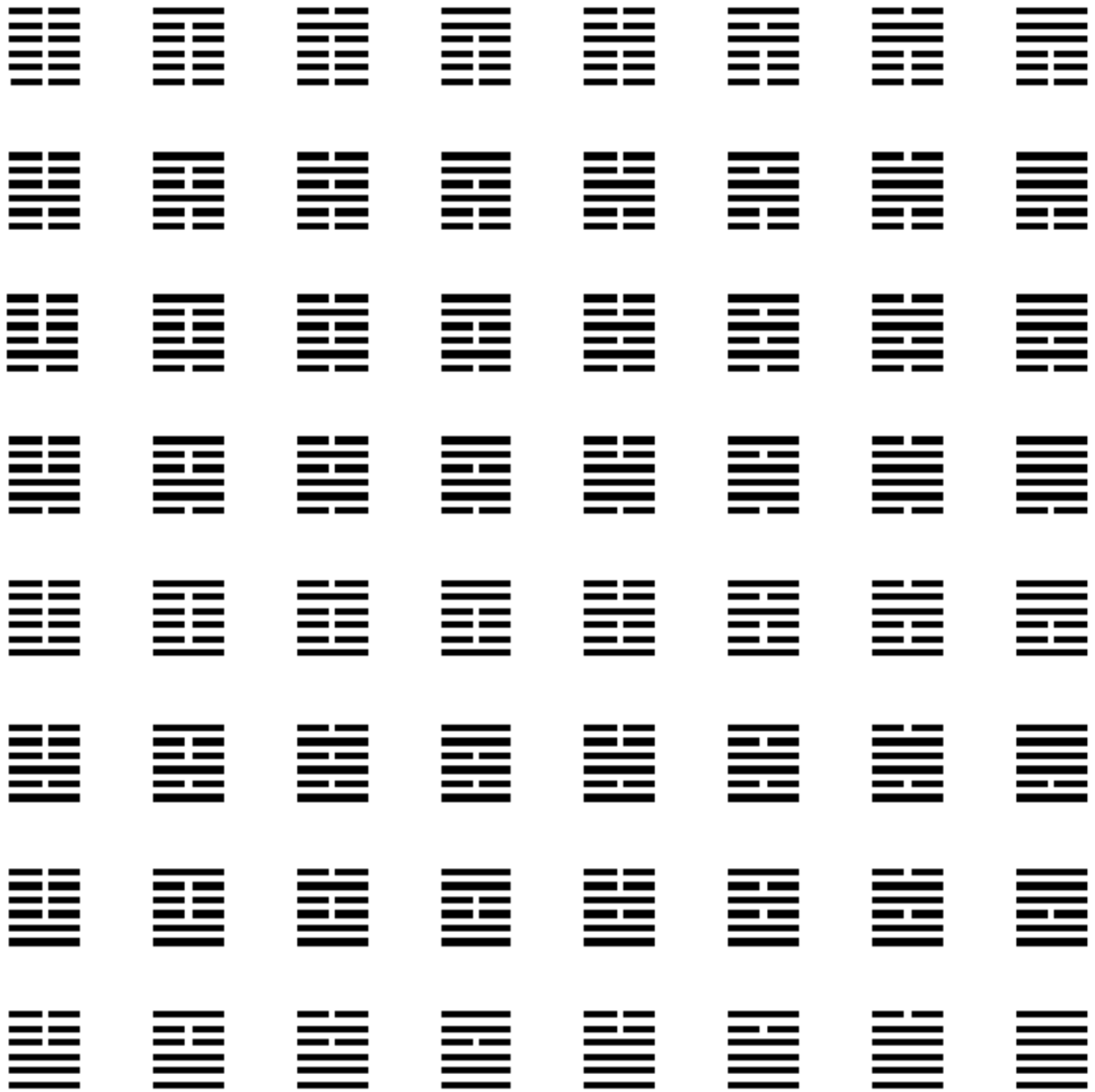


Figure 8

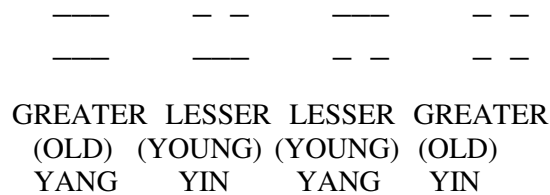
Shao Yung's Arrangement
(author's illustration)

The reason for demonstrating this correspondence so clearly is to underline the fact that the *Ta Chuan* has reached into some deep and basic underlying principles as it unfolds the movement from an unfathomable Tao through the creative action of the Two Modes. Neither Leibniz nor Shao Yung were looking for simple mechanical explanations. They were both as deeply interested in the spiritual aspect of numbers as in their material

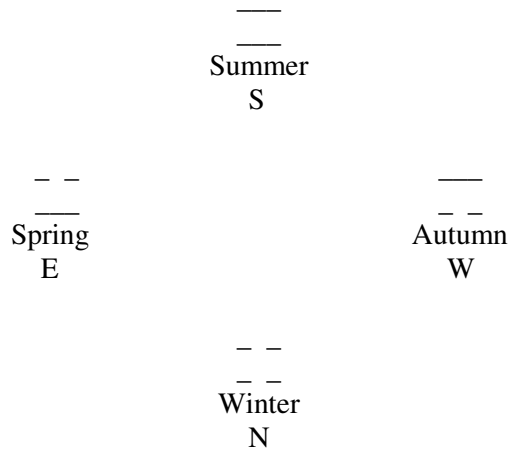
application. This they shared with a later philosopher-mathematician, Alfred North Whitehead. As we shall see in a later chapter, Shao Yung's accomplishment only begins with these numbers, as was equally true of his later counterparts.

Duality and the Lines

Each of the 384 lines has its own dual possibility: it can be "young or old." This means that it may be stable (firm, still) in its yin or yang energy or about to change into its opposite (yielding, moving). What determines this will be discussed in detail in a later chapter, but we can use a previous example to demonstrate this. When the two modes produce the four images, Shao Yung identifies the four figures in this way:



If we group the yin and yang together, however, we get a better feeling for what "old" and "young" means and how they can express the four seasons or four directions.

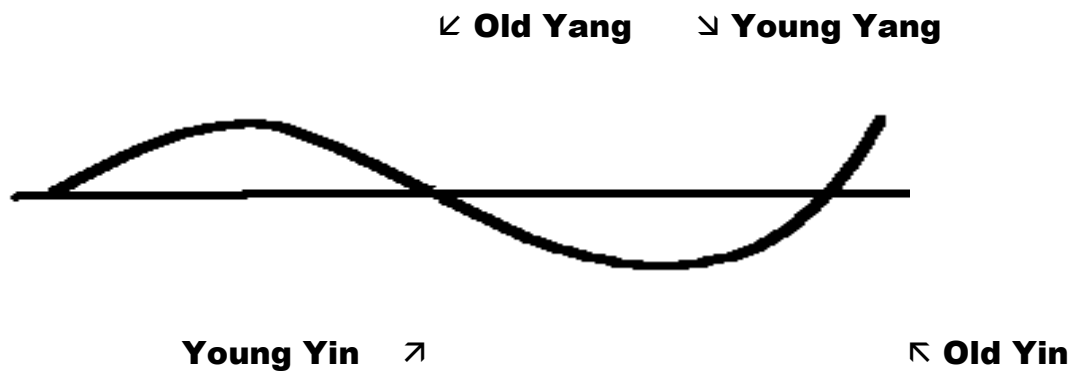


The two line complexes are not used in the *I Ching* so this is purely for the purpose of demonstrating, as Shao Yung did, the gradations that come about with the bifurcations. The idea represented is that in spring there is an increase in light/ yang on the way to the pure (old, mature) yang of summer and a diminishing of light on the way to the pure yin of winter. In this highly economical graphic, we can see the equinoxes,

where the dark and light are in balance; the positions of young yin (autumn) and young yang (spring) when one force begins to wax over another.

This means that at each of the six positions of the hexagram, there are actually four possibilities. We will investigate this in further detail in the chapter on Change in the hexagrams, but we might offer a new schematic to express this:

YANG



YIN

Figure 9
Yin-Yang Continuum
(author's illustration)

We could say that four phases of energy can move through the line space, from Yang through Old Yang which is dissipating as yin energy becomes stronger (Young Yin), reaches its maturity as Old Yin and then the process continues in reverse. In the later chapter, we will see how an old yin line "moves" as it becomes its opposite and vice versa.

This illustration suggests the wave-like quality of change that is as seamless as night and day, summer and winter. Yet the rhythmic duality continues throughout. This is the pulse of life itself, inhalation and exhalation. The oracular art is to refine an understanding of exactly where one is in a given moment with regard to six different

layers of process expressed by the hexagram. These are the six-fold coalescences which have been abstracted by the sages to display "all of the conditions under Heaven."

A graphic demonstration of the imagistic power of the hexagram figures can be seen as they were applied during the Han dynasty as correlations with the calendar year. Wilhelm makes passing reference to this with enigmatic statements like "This hexagram [#11:Peace] belongs to the first month (February-March), at which time the force of nature prepares for a new spring (48)." Readers cannot fully appreciate these parenthetical comments without seeing the images of those hexagrams laid out in the order of the twelve months as they are in Figure 10:













					
First month	Second month	Third month	Fourth month	Fifth month	Sixth month
Feb/Mar	Mar/Apr	Apr/May	May/June	June/July	July/Aug
PEACE	POWER OF THE GREAT	BREAK- THROUGH	CREATIVE	COMING TO MEET	RETREAT
#11	#34	#43	#1	#44	#33
					
Seventh month	Eighth month	Ninth month	Tenth month	Eleventh month	Twelfth month
Aug/Sep	Sep/Oct	Oct/Nov	Nov/Dec	Dec/Jan	Jan/Feb
STANDSTILL	CONTEM- PLATION	SPLITTING APART	RECEP- TIVE	RETURN	APPROACH
#12	#20	#21	#2	#24	#19

Figure 10
The Month Hexagrams (1)

A careful look at this sequence reveals several interesting things. Taken as a whole, it could be described as "the journey of the light," revealing its ebb and flow through the four seasons as the waxing and waning of the yang lines and vice versa. This is best seen by beginning with the fourth month (May-June) when the summer solstice occurs. One can see how Shao Yung was inspired to create the circular format.



Figure 11
 Month hexagrams (2)
 (author's illustration)

The previous diagram (Fig. 10), however, better illustrates the principle we have seen with regard to the Great Ultimate or Extremity and the manner in which its two modes function: when something reaches its extreme, it turns into its opposite. One can see in this figure that the upper and lower hexagrams, those which lie opposite each other or six months apart in the year, are mirror images of each other; the distribution of yin and yang lines is reversed. Like the Two Modes themselves, they are a matched pair. Each position has reached its opposite through a series of gradual changes. We can simply look at the opposing hexagrams of a pair and see a "digital polarity" or we can look at the whole and see an analogue model with its subtle gradations. The twelve units of the hexagrams point to the seamless process of the cycle of the seasons. Like light itself, change is both wave-like and corpuscular; fluid and discrete.

In the first and seventh months, the light and dark lines are evenly distributed and correspond in their timing to the equinoxes. The fourth and tenth months, the time of the summer and winter solstices, are represented by the Creative with its solid yang lines and the Receptive with its solid yin lines as the light and the dark forces reach their extreme or fullness.

Immediately following this solstice moment we have the subtly entry of the opposite force as a yang or a yin line enters the hexagram from below.

The Great Field of Action as the Great Work

Ta Chuan XI.6

The eight trigrams served to determine the good and evil issues of events, and from this determination was produced the successful prosecution of the great business of life.

八 卦 定 吉 凶、
eight trigrams determine good fortune misfortune

吉 凶 生 大 業
good fortune misfortune produce great work/field of action

This brings us to the last line of the passage where good fortune and misfortune—good and evil in Legge's translation here (299)—follow again upon the creation of the hexagrams as they do in chapter one. Inasmuch as the eight trigrams cannot be said to have either benevolence or malevolence, the translation of good and evil here seems unwarranted. Good and evil intentions and actions arise in the human realm, often as a response to or cause of good fortune and misfortune. In Western terms, we would say that it is here that the free will of the human is so clearly seen, but only if the human has sufficient awareness to discern the subtle beginnings or "springs of things," as Legge translates it.

In chapter 1, that "affairs are arranged together according to their tendencies, and things are divided according to their classes," produces the distinctions of fortune and misfortune. It is a further act of discrimination by the human consciousness which is developing through that chapter. The eight hexagrams are the result of the sages' "arranging and ordering" which provides the tool to evaluate circumstances and make determinations about whether their tendency is toward fortune or misfortune. Through recognition of the smallest seeds of things, conditions in their most *incipient* stages, the sage is able to avoid misfortune and ward off evil through the furthering of the good. Not all misfortune is within the power of an individual human to avoid, but in every instance

evil may be avoided through the conscious choice of an individual for the good. This, in fact, defines the collective enterprise of the human as a species and is why, according to Yi Wu, there is no "fate" in the *I Ching*, only a destiny to be fulfilled. The destiny can only be fulfilled by understanding the smallest constituents of circumstances moment by moment and making the "right" decision on that basis.

The Master said:--"Does not he who knows the springs of things possess spirit-like wisdom?...Those springs are the slight beginnings of movement, and the earliest indications of good fortune (or ill). The superior man sees them and acts accordingly without waiting for (the delay of) a single day.... The superior man knows the minute and the manifested; he knows what is weak and what is strong—he is a model to ten thousand." (*Ta Chuan* II.5, Legge 1969, 321).

The primordial activity of valuation which begins in chapter one with the separation of higher and lower, complexifies into the eight trigrams in that chapter and their interaction allows for unlimited outcomes. This is where the creative force of the human at the center becomes decisively important in making distinctions among those and, to use Whitehead's phrase, laboring "to further the creative advance" of the cosmos. The *I Ching* as an oracle was created for exactly that purpose: to see into the seeds of conditions in any given moment and to determine what the proper action might be to further this advance and either avoid misfortune, correct it, come to terms with it, or remove oneself from it.

Responding thoughtfully in this way to the oncoming rush of events in everyday life, searching out the seeds of things and furthering the good, is what is called here the great enterprise, the great business of life, the great field of action, the great work. This is the character *yeh* which we met in chapter one, translated by Wilhelm and Baynes as "greatness is the field of action of the sage."

易
i(yi) ⁴
yi ⁴
72
picto-graph of a lizard; probably a chameleon
change easy I (Ching)

CHAPTER 5: CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE HEXAGRAMS

Heaven is one, Earth is two; Heaven is three, Earth is four; Heaven is five, Earth is six; Heaven is seven, Earth is eight; Heaven is nine, Earth is ten.... The sum total of Heavenly numbers and Earthly numbers is fifty-five. It is this which completes the changes and sets demons and gods in movement.

(*Ta Chuan*, I.9, Wilhelm 1977, 308)

Change and transformation are the mysterious processes by which images flow into their embodied forms. They are the means by which images are completed in Heaven and forms are completed on Earth but also the way humanity is "completed" in the realm of the human which occurs through the seeing of the patterns of change and transformation and entering consciously into their process; refining them and completing them as an expression of their individual natures and the nature of the Cosmos.

We can now see this also as a description of the divination process and the sixty-four hexagrams of the *I Ching*. Notice that it is no longer sufficient merely to speak of the hexagrams as static emblems in a book or even as the counsels and commentaries on the lines. To understand the *I Ching* in action, as perceived and described by the *Ta Chuan*, we have first to realize that the subject of the work is "how the sages made the *I Ching*" and second, how the diviner imitates the sages in this activity and makes use of their wisdom.

What is the relationship of the yarrow stalks used in divination from the time of the Chou dynasty to the patterns of change and transformation mysteriously at work in the universe? How do our three friends *i/yi*, *pien* and *hua* enter into this as forms of change?

化
hua ⁴
hua ⁴
21
person 人 + over-turn 匕
transform, metamorphosis, change

變
pien ⁴
bian ⁴
149
threads + speech 言
change

Heaven is one, Earth is two; Heaven is three, Earth is four; Heaven is five, Earth is six; Heaven is seven, Earth is eight; Heaven is nine, Earth is ten.

One way to read this passage is say that Earth is the realm where new forms are constantly being created through the process of life and Heaven is the realm where they are united, integrated in the one-ing action of *Ch'ien*. *K'un* also has the capacity for one-ing through the creation and enclosure of each of the ten thousand things, followed by an opening in which the form perishes and the energy returns. But Earth's unique capacity is in two-ing, or separation through the parturition of birth. This echoes Wilhelm's comment on Hexagram 3 (17), "one must be able both to separate and to unite." This is a simplified version of Whitehead's description of increasing complexification as higher levels of coherence and value are attained. Two here is integrated in the three. Two divided creates the four. Four integrated, creates the five (like the central point of the four directions; the quincunx.) Three, each dividing, creates the six. Six is integrated in seven, (archetypally regarded as a number of spirit). Four divides and makes eight. Eight is integrated in the nine. When five divides it creates a new level which unites Heaven and Earth as ten; (a higher power of one).

To understand the role played by these numbers, we need to make reference to the Ho T'u or Yellow River Map (Figure 12) said to have originated with the legendary Fu Hsi.

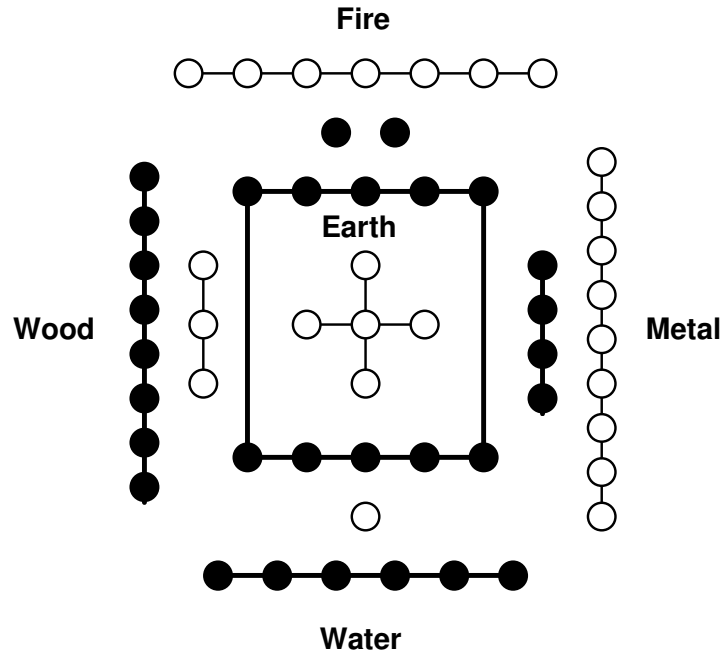


Figure 12
 The Yellow River Map
 (diagram created by the author after
 Chu Hsi, Chou-I pen-i, (1978, 6)

Contemplation of this image reveals myriad possibilities of relationship which have been explored in depth by scholars from the Han dynasty onward. Shao Yung wrote about it extensively. The *Ta Chuan* makes direct reference to it in the same chapter (I.11) that introduces the Supreme Ultimate.

Seen in the light of this image, and the numbers in chapter 9, we can see how each number represents a unity. At the center is the 5 of Heaven (the 5 Heavenly numbers) all of which point back to the central One imaged as the center of the quincunx and of the entire field of the diagram.

The Heavenly five are contained within the unity of the ten of Earth which "completes" the figure and is indicated as a pair of fives: the 5 of Earth "reproducing" the 5 of Heaven. To put this in another way, the odd numbers represent Heaven and the even ones, Earth. The number 10 would be even in the sequence, hence Earth, but it contains the 1 and two 5's associated with Heaven so the number joins both realms. Within the

field of the 10 we see the creative activity of Heaven-and-Earth as the Great Field of Action of the manifest world: the Ten Thousand things.

Outside of this unity of Heaven-and-Earth lie the abstract numbers of the powers and creative functions which generate the manifest order in their midst: The One and Two, which lie respectively below and above the Ten (5+5), express the Two Modes. On the left, the Three expresses the Three Powers or Ultimates: Heaven, Earth, Human. On the right, the Four expresses the seasons, directions (also called the Four Images). For the 5, we are referred back to the center in a recursive fashion characteristic of the entire process.

The outermost numbers (6,7,8,9) represent the extremity of the four directions. While they are still ordered (squared) features of the entirety and express the integrity of the figure as a whole, they are not contained within the manifest field of the 10 of Earth which is the outline of concrete form. These are the numbers which relate to the changing qualities of the individual lines. They are the edge or extreme where change takes place; change as it is fixed in a given position or moment. They assume no concrete form in the yarrow stick manipulation and yet are the concrescence or precipitates of it as the derived numbers. They are that which is divined; a "seeing," not so much into the future as to the "furthest edges" of the present where the change is about to take place which will characterize the next condition and can thus be either counteracted or prepared for. The whole purpose of divination is to see beyond or behind the concrete order to the spirit of things at work. These seem to represent the furthest reach (t'ai chi) of the dynamic order as the invisible processes at work in change.

Yet since the ultimate number in the sequence is 10, from the outer 9 we are again referred back to the central figure and to the central One from which the whole field (which is also One) emanates. The total number of yin and yang units is 55. From the central core of 5 emerges the number of the Great Expansion which is 50, represented by the total number of yarrow stalks.

The last feature we might mention of this map is that there is no clear distinction between inner and outer. The recursion of both 5 and 10 to the center of the diagram suggest in numerical relationships the subtlety of the Klein bottle.

Heaven's numbers come to 25 [1+3+5+7+9]. Earth's numbers come to 30 [2+4+6+8+10]. The total sum of Heaven and Earth's numbers is 55. These indicate how change and transformation are brought about and how gods and spirits are activated. (*Ta Chuan* I.9; Wang Bi/Lynn, 60)

Kinesthetic Imaging: The Yarrow-stalk Oracle

The master said: 'He who knows the method of change and transformation may be said to know the works of the gods'. (*Ta Chuan* I.9; Wilhelm/Baynes, 313)

To appreciate the yarrow-stalk divination, we have once again the advantage of our own discoveries of fractals and holography to aid us in imagining the principle at work. In a manner of speaking, the diviner, in taking up the stalks, is "taking up the world." Will Keepin, in a lecture describing the "Mandelbrot Bug" which emerges as a fractal pattern repeated in the microcosmic and macrocosmic versions of the fractal pattern known as the Mandelbrot set, concludes that the possibility therefore exists that if the pattern is impacted at the microcosmic level, one might expect it to influence the design on the higher scales as well.²⁶

Similarly, the numbers described above take on concrete form and can be acted upon within the present psychic field of the human as a microcosm of the whole. More accurate than concrete would be organic, as a description of the yarrow-stalk plant being used to embody the process. As we follow the process outlined in the *Ta Chuan*, we see the diviner literally acting as "cosmos-maker," mirroring cosmic process in the subtle manipulation of the stalks.

The numbers of the Great Expansion make 50, of which only 49 [yarrow stalks] are used in divination. (Legge 1969, 291)

According to the *Ta Chuan* description, the diviner first takes up the One and sets it aside: Tai Chi, the "ridge-pole of the world" as it is later called. Here is Wang Bi's comment on this line from the 3rd century AD:

After expanding the numbers of Heaven and Earth, we find that the ones that are of benefit to us number fifty, and of these we actually use forty-nine, thus leaving one unused. Although this one is not used, yet through it the use of the other numbers becomes readily possible, and, although this one is not one of the numbers, yet through it the other numbers are formed. As this one represents the supreme ultimate of change, the other forty-nine constitute the ultimate numbers.

Nonbeing cannot be brought to light by means of nonbeing but must take place through being. Therefore by applying ourselves to this ultimate among things that have being, we shall surely bring to light the primogenitor from which all things derive. (Wang Bi/Lynn, 61)

Not only does the single stalk allow the diviner to hold and honor the One of origin, but its removal creates the disequilibrium that we now know is essential to the creativity of the cosmos.

The stalks... are divided into two heaps to represent the two (emblematic lines, or heaven and earth). One is then taken from the heap on the right and placed (between the little finger of the left hand and the next), that there may thus be symbolized the three (powers of heaven, earth and man). (Legge, 292)

Imagine! One is now holding in one's hand the three realms of Heaven, Earth and the Human. The separation of the stalks into two bundles corresponds to the first division in chapter 1 of Heaven and Earth, *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, and the Two Modes of chapter I.11. This first separation is purely random: there is no counting or imposition of consciousness on the process. It is the movement of Chance. The most persistent and common view of change resides in this moment. For the unawakened human, the process stops here and fate takes its course.

This is illustrated by a traditional Chinese "game of chance," especially popular among Chinese immigrants in America, called Fantan. Here is a description of it from a popular novel: "Fantan was a simple game.... A handful of buttons out of a bowl went down onto the table, and was immediately covered by a second bowl. Bets were made on one of four numbers, after which the buttons were raked away four at a time until four or fewer were left—the winning number" (Daley, 209). The player is engaged in a process similar to the counting off by four of the yarrow stalks and the game may have origins in this ancient activity.

In the traditions of both East and West, even into the present time, luck, chance, fate and fortune form the bedrock of the common human view of life. Also into the present time, the *I Ching* is used as the tool of fortune tellers and can often be found in Western bookstores in the "games" section. The "playful" element preserved in such games is not entirely alien to the *Ta Chuan*. In chapter two of Part I we find a line which Legge translates as "Therefore the superior man, when living quietly, contemplates the

emblems and studies the explanation of them" (275). None of the English translations of this passage hint at the word *wan* 玩 whose primary meaning is "play" or "toy." Like the English word, it can also mean "to play with an idea; toy with it." Literally, the superior person contemplates the images and "plays with" their meanings.

The use of games to mirror cosmic process appears in ancient cultures around the globe. Two of the most common traditional games--chess and checkers—are both played on a board of 64 squares with two opposing sets of dark and light pieces. The possible moves and strategies are endless but they nevertheless depict the human engaged in the project of searching out principles that will allow him or her to win over chance; to ultimately achieve "good fortune."

In the next lines from chapter 9 we can see the origin of this tradition. In the hands of the *I Ching* sages, it is not a game of chance, but the conscious entry of the human into the cosmic activity to order and organize so that humans are NOT the pawns of random fate.²⁷ In the hands of the sages, it becomes an increasingly conscious interaction with the process as we see in the next lines of the description of the process in chapter 9. It is easy to see where the "game of chance" came from:

The heaps on both sides are manipulated by fours to represent the four seasons; and then the remainders are returned, and placed between the two middle fingers of the left hand, to represent the intercalary month. In five years there are two intercalations, and therefore there are two operations; and afterwards the whole process is repeated.

The numbers required for *Ch'ien* amount to 216, those for *K'un* to 144. Together they are 360, corresponding to the days of the year. (Legge, 292)

This parallels Yao's activity in putting the calendar in order, as numbers grow out of the expanding T'ai Chi as the interweaving of darkness and light across the three realms. In the yarrow stalk operations, the constituents of the present moment—as the numbers making up the lines—are not the symmetric and predictable fours but the "remainder" after the fours have been counted off. Herein lies the creative novelty of the moment that is being discerned.

The sage does not *wager* with these. He *uses* them. He enters into a continuously refined relationship with them based upon cosmic principles expressed through number. In this, the sage moves out of the realm of chance and into the realm of the scientist,

mathematician, savant. Beyond this, he is moving into the realm of cosmic action and his objective is neither to win, to be lucky nor to guarantee good fortune. It is to share in the cosmic secret that perpetuates life and endures beneath the constant change. As Wilhelm says in his comment on Hexagram 47, even in the midst of an adversity one can remain true to oneself. "This concerns the deepest stratum of [one's] being, for this alone is superior to all external fate" (Wilhelm 1977,182).

From the initial movements of 變 (*pien/bian*) as the smallest changes emerging out of chance and chaos, we arrive at the six lines of the hexagram. Each of these six lines is also a dynamic possibility of alternating yin or yang energy. 變 (*pien/bian*) has been described by Angus Graham as "change from movement to rest, Spring to Summer" and other regular alternations that are images of the displacement of the sun and moon in their regular courses. The alternations of the sun and moon are themselves images or manifestations of the alternation of yin and yang.

Depending on the numbers from which each of the six lines are derived, we may have young yang, young yin, old yang, old yin. These indicate the position between the "Two Extremes" that characterizes the energy at the given moment: yang and yin at the beginning of their phases and thus strongly accentuated (we might say waxing); or one of them about to reverse into its opposite; close to its "extreme" point.

If the hexagram is regarded as a molecule of process, then these lines are analogous to unstable atoms in a compound which make it particularly vulnerable to specific changes. The outermost valence or electron shell of the atom, if it does not have its complete number, is vulnerable to change—losing or gaining an electron until it is completely filled, according to the "stable configuration" which defines its nature. It is through combining with other atoms, "penetrating," that this happens.

The phrase "in order to attain a stable configuration" suggests the major difference between the images of the hexagram as a molecule of process and the chemical compound as a molecule of matter: one is a unit of change and the other a unit of stability. These reflect, in turn, opposing (yet complementary) views of reality. In the atomic model, things are moving toward a solid state which is tangible and real. In the other, the cosmos is in a constant state of change and flux but there are principles to

their interaction which can be grasped. The object is not to "*pin* things down once and for all" but to understand the nature of the changes at work and the response appropriate to each of these that preserves the harmony of the whole and ensures its duration. The difference is largely one of perspective since both acknowledge a process "seeking completion."

"One opening and one closing is called change"

The second stage of change at work as 變 (*pien/bian*) is in the dynamic flow of energy within each position. There is both an analogue and digital quality about this; wave-like and particle-like in a manner familiar to modern science.

On the one hand, we have the statement "one opening and one closing is called change (變)." The closing off of *chi* energy leads to both stillness and enclosure of the energy in embodiment; qualities of yin and Earth. Opening up for the flow of *chi* as force leads to movement and creative action as yang and Heaven. At each of the six positions this alternation is at work and moment by moment gives birth to the energetic configurations of trigrams and hexagrams. If we consider the statement "one yin one yang is Tao," then the hexagram is a complex unit of Tao's expression; a moment of the Way seen across the field of the three realms.

The existence of the four categories of lines as young yin, young yang, old yin and old yang gives us a more wave-like view of what is happening at each of the six positions: energy is moving across a field between opposites and when it reaches one extreme or the other it will "return." Once again we have to remind ourselves of the subtle difference between the Eastern and Western view of this: in the western "position" we are trying to identify something fixed and stable so that we can say what is "really" true. But in the Book of Changes what matters is the change because understanding the direction of the change is to "see into the future." It is to know that "when hoarfrost is underfoot solid ice is not far off."

The "analogical and digital," to borrow those words from modern science, are resolved through perception. It is the increasing powers of perception provided by the instruments of modern science that have carried us more and more deeply into the sub-atomic realm and farther and farther outward into the macrocosmic view of distant

galaxies. It is not unlike the movement in chapter one from the simple duality to the ten-thousand things in all of their categories and subtle gradations. It is a movement of increasing discernment or perception.

To grasp the phase of change at each line position, the meaning of the entire hexagram—its image—and the relationship of the positions must always be taken into consideration in the same way that a physician, examining the condition of one organ is always keeping in mind the body of which it is a part. Thus we have not only a range for each individual line but a range that extends across the six-fold field making that particular unit of process quite complex in its possibilities and character.

To demonstrate this, we can examine Hexagram 31, Influence, Wooing which actually uses the parts of the body to represent the six positions. Notice first how the meaning of the hexagram is derived not only from the image of its trigrams but of its "position" among the other sixty-four hexagrams as well. In the arrangement that has come down to us, Hexagram 31 is said to begin the second half or lower canon of the *I Ching*. Here is Wilhelm's comment:

The name of the hexagram means "universal," "general," and in a figurative sense "to influence," "to stimulate." The upper trigram is Tui, the Joyous; the lower is Ken, Keeping Still. By its persistent, quiet influence, the lower, rigid trigram stimulates the upper, weak trigram which responds to this stimulation joyously. Ken, the lower trigram is the youngest son; the upper, Tui is the youngest daughter. Thus the universal mutual attraction between the sexes is represented. In courtship, the masculine principle must seize the initiative and place itself below the feminine principle. (Wilhelm/Baynes, 22)

Just as the first part of the book begins with the hexagrams of Heaven and Earth as the foundation of all that exists, the second part begins with the hexagrams of courtship and marriage, the foundations of all social relationships.

- -	Line 6: The influence shows itself in the JAWS, CHEEKS AND TONGUE.	The most superficial way to influence others is through talk but no indication here of good fortune or bad.
---	Line 5: The influence shows itself in the BACK OF THE NECK. No remorse.	As the most rigid part of the body, here the will remains firm.
---	Line 4: Perseverance brings good fortune. Remorse disappears. If a man is agitated in mind [HEART-MIND], and his thoughts go hither and thither, only those friends on whom he fixes his conscious thoughts will follow.	Influence that springs from the heart is the most important, thus the influence must be constant and good in spite of the danger of the heart's susceptibility.
---	Line 3: The influence shows itself in the THIGHS. Holds to that which follows it. To continue is humiliating.	What the heart desires the thighs run after. Avoid running precipitately toward influencing, stimulating others.
- -	Line 2: The influence shows itself in the CALVES OF THE LEGS. Misfortune. Tarrying brings good fortune.	Calf must follow the foot. Since the movement is not self-governed it bodes ill.
- -	Line 1: Influence shows itself in the BIG TOE.	Influence present but not apparent to others.

Table 21 – Hexagram 32, The Lines (created by author)

This hexagram shows us the interaction of the positions in relation to the whole. It is important to remember that the hexagram can be created through a combination of 7s and 8s (young yin and young yang lines), 6s and 9s (old yin and old yang lines) or a combination of both. If the yarrow stalk operations produce only sevens and eights, none of the lines is read. The process is at its beginning and only the Image and its Judgment apply. If a 6 or a 9 produces any of the lines, a state of change is in effect which may undermine or enhance the condition. What makes the superior person superior and the

sage sagely, is the capacity to "catch" this moment and to consciously intervene with an enlightened response.

The *Ta Chuan* does not speak specifically of a second hexagram formed by the changing lines but the implication that certain lines are "on their way to their opposite" or "about to reverse" provides the inference that has led to the customary reading of the hexagram formed through this change.

If all of the lines of Hexagram 31 are changing lines (sixes and nines), the condition of the first hexagram is moving toward its opposite, Ken or Keeping Still, over Tui the Joyous. Every yin and yang line has changed into its opposite which in this particular case results in a reversal of the position of the original trigrams as well in the hexagram for Decrease, #41. But depending on the exact combination of old and young, yin and yang lines, this hexagram could turn into any of the 63 other hexagrams, emphasizing the fluidity and unpredictability of life and the universe. So while the potential of each position is either yin or yang, the hexagram as a whole can contain all of the other hexagrams and thus the entire reach and potential of the ten thousand things of Heaven-and-Earth.

hua as Transformation

Up to this point in our discussion of change as 變 (*pian/bian*), there is nothing to suggest that the process of change is anything but random and chaotic. Yet if that were the case, nothing would cohere or endure at all. The use of *hua* in the *Ta Chuan* carries us forward to the next level of change which we will call Transformation in the sense that it applies a meaningful and coherent movement of change in a specific, creative direction. This comes close to Whitehead's idea of a "subjective aim" inherent in the process of becoming. In *Process and Reality* (1978, 25), he describes "becoming" as "the transformation of incoherence into coherence" which, in each particular instance, "ceases with attainment."

We find an expression of this in chapter 1:12 of the *Ta Chuan*: "Transformation and shaping is what we call change" (Legge, 301) and in the same chapter, "Transformation and shaping is continued through, preserved by the changes."²⁸ There is

a circularity to this which is aggravating to the Western logical mind: which comes first, the change or the transformation, the chicken or the egg. One cannot exist without the other and in fact they are all a part of the larger process of change which is *i/yi* or the entirety at work.

We are told in chapter I.4 that that the sage "comprehends as in a mold or enclosure the transformations of Heaven and Earth without any error" (Legge, 279). That the transformations can be contained within an "enclosure" points both to the boundaries implied in the Supreme Ultimate and the Three Extremes as well as the principles of change which are themselves enduring. The hexagrams are also "enclosures" within the larger enclosure of the system of the 64 hexagrams as the *I Ching*.

In II.5 the *Ta Chuan* tells us that "the ten thousand things transform and reach maturity." The word which Legge translates as maturity (*chun*) literally means "rich wine," reminding us of the opening images of chapter one in which wine is the image of the refinement and cultivation that is taking place between Heaven and Earth. So the changes are indeed moving toward a completion, a perfection just as each process has a development within the hexagram which defines it. It is moving toward a completion; an integrity.

The human plays an essential role in this process through comprehending the changes and transforming himself/herself and others through the quality of his or her actions. The act of comprehension, of consciousness, is the critical role of the human at the central meeting place of Heaven and Earth. It is this role which we will be exploring with great care in the next section on the sage.

Change as *i/yi*

This brings us to the largest context of change which is *i/yi* itself. With its synonymous meaning of One, this word for Change or The Changes (as in the Book of Changes) encompasses the "great field of action" that constitutes the phenomenal world which issues from the Supreme Ultimate. We can imagine it as The Great Chameleon because in its organic integrity and constantly shifting movement it is far closer to a living creature—a created/creative entity—than to a concept or unifying idea. To speak only in the realm of ideas is to neglect entirely the central fact of images flowing into,

being embodied, in forms in a process that sustains and preserves the universe through constant change. Bohm suggests that the movement of thought is a kind of artistic process that yields ever-changing form and content. "There can no more be an ultimate form of such thought [a unified theory] than there could be an ultimate poem (that would make all further poems unnecessary)" (Keepin 1993).

Notice how closely Bohm's idea of a holomovement corresponds with *i/yi* both as One (wholeness) and as the "Great Chameleon" of Change that the *I Ching* reproduces:

Bohm postulates that the ultimate nature of physical reality is not a collection of separate objects (as it appears to us), but rather it is an undivided whole that is in perpetual dynamic flux. For Bohm, the insights of quantum mechanics and relativity theory point to a universe that is undivided and in which all parts "merge and unite in one totality." This undivided whole is not static but rather in a constant state of flow and change, a kind of invisible ether from which all things arise and into which all things eventually dissolve. Indeed, even mind and matter are united: "In this flow, mind and matter are not separate substances. Rather they are different aspects of one whole and unbroken movement." (Keepin 1993).

The images of the *I Ching* differ from those in Plato's allegory of the cave, outside of which exist the "ideal forms," as well as from Whitehead's concept of the eternal objects which in both cases imply a separation between eternal and ephemeral or phenomenal. (Whitehead's eternal objects are closer to the *li* or principles in their constancy.) There is a manifest and unmanifest side to the Supreme Ultimate and behind that, an unfathomable Tao which is before even Being and Non-Being. But every form, *hsing*, that comes into being, even in the most ephemeral way, is also an image *hsiang* that may be seen, imitated and thus sustained.

In a statement from chapter I.5 of the *Ta Chuan* we see this idea concisely stated as a key concept the *I Ching*:

生 生 之 謂 易
Production and reproduction are called change.

Sheng (生) is an eloquent character that graphically portrays the idea of growth. Its most common meanings are "to produce, to be born, to live, growth." The bottom line

of the figure represents the Earth and the rest of the figure, 艸 depicts a plant growing out of it. The single bottom line could also be seen as the "one" (*i/yi*) out of which the "many" flower. It is the repetition of this character that implies "production and reproduction." The primary meaning is clearly the biological one related to the reproduction of life which creates the continuity of nature. A secondary meaning in this context is the reproduction of images which similarly sustain the ongoing manifest world.

Angus Graham summarizes the meaning of *sheng* in the *Ta Chuan* from the perspective of the Neo-Confucian philosophers of the eleventh century:

The Sung philosophers do not conceive the origin of things as "creation" by Someone standing outside the universe, but as "breeding" "growth" [*sheng*] from Something at the root of the universe. The analogy behind their thinking is not a man making a pot, but rather a tree growing from its hidden root and branching out. (108)

This process is exactly what we see at work in chapter I.11 as the numerical emergence out of one (Tai Chi) into the images of the trigrams, hexagrams and finally the complete, interactive system of the *I Ching* as it mirrors the processes of "all things under Heaven." These are all various descriptions of the creative process of the universe, sustained through repetition yet always in the midst of creating the new.

In the same chapter, Graham specifically discusses the Sung philosopher Ming-Tao's interpretation of this line in chapter I.5, "Production and reproduction are called change":

The Changes (*I/Yi* 易) are the cyclical replacements which proceed between Heaven and Earth, sun giving place to moon, day to night, heat to cold, reflected in the replacement of one diagram with another in the divinations of the Book of Changes.... Ming-Tao takes the definition as proof that what is important in the Changes is not the cyclic motion of constant things such as the Heavenly bodies, but the endless generation of new things in the place of the old. (ibid.)

Both *pien* and *hua* are implied in this description but subsumed within the larger process of *i/yi* as "the endless generation of new things in the place of the old." The "cyclical replacements" (*pien*) would not in themselves create something new. It is the process of life and growth (*sheng*) which produces and reproduces in a way that is at once constant and novel. In modern terms, the perfect analogy is the replication of life through the process of the splitting and reproduction of DNA, which remarkably also contains a

system of 64 codons. The principle of DNA process is constant and the patterns ("information") contained within it are also enduring. We might say that these correspond to the actual images which the trigrams carry as Tui can be "lake, mouth, joyousness" and so forth. But the particular combination that is generated is always novel and unpredictable. We must remember that the *I Ching* is an oracle which is "completed" by the moment of time in the life of the querent and the manner in which the querent enters into relationship with that moment. At every instant, the universe (as Heaven and Earth) and the individual (as human) are new and unique. But they bring to bear on that moment the repeated patterns of billions of years as substantial memory and principle. The precise intersection of these two conditions—established pattern and a uniquely open present—is where the *I Ching* operates, both as an oracle and a book of wisdom. If it is used only as a book of wisdom, it fails to be informed by the present. If it is used only as an oracle, without studying its wisdom, it fails to be informed by the past.

The phase of change most applicable to this "oracular moment" is *hua*, seen in this context as transformation. The *Ta Chuan* says that "to fathom the spirit-like *hua* (transformations) is the fullness of virtue.(II.5)" Graham notes that shen 神 (translated here as spirit-like) is more often used in the *I Ching* appendices as an adjective than a noun; (a quality, not a thing or person.) He takes the rather unfortunate step from this to a translation of shen as "psychic or psychicity," admitting that it is the "least unsatisfactory English equivalent." Presumably he was trying to avoid the reduction of shen to a religious term but "psychic" raises problems of its own with its connotation of the paranormal; the opposite of what is being described as the essence of natural process of Heaven and Earth.²⁹ Yet as Graham notes, shen is applied to the Way, the Changes, the divining stalks, the sage, and "the inner power or 'mana' (tê, usually translated 'virtue')."³⁰

When a great scholar like Angus Graham admits such difficulty with a word, we know that its meaning is in some way outside our ken. But that is exactly what shen is about: the invisible and ineffable element, like the mercury in the alchemical process, which changes mere repetition into transformation. Another problem here for the western mind is that "spiritual" is seen as opposed in meaning to "biological"; to natural process. In the *Ta Chuan*, it is the secret of life itself.

Therefore of all things that furnish models and visible figures, there are none greater than Heaven and Earth; of things that change and extend an influence, there are none greater than the four seasons; of things suspended in the sky with their images displayed clear and bright, there are none greater than the sun and moon; of the honoured and exalted there are none greater than he who is the rich and noble one; in preparing things for practical use, and inventing and making instruments for the benefit of all, there are none greater than the sages; to explore what is complex, search out what is hidden, to hook up what lies deep and reach what is distant, thereby determining the issues for good or ill of all events, and completing all men's strenuous endeavours under Heaven, there are none greater than the I. (Legge 1969, 300)

Part III: The Sage, Heaven and Earth

"Education at the human level [will] be the sensitizing of the human to those profound communications made by the universe around us, by the sun and moon and stars, the clouds and rain, the contours of the Earth, and all its living forms."

--Thomas Berry, *The Great Work* (1999, 64)

"The center of the self is at the center of the universe because we are the same power.... In each moment a being emerges out of the All-Nourishing Abyss. At each moment of emergence there is also a touch of present and future. The centered person is keenly aware of that touch and has a sense of commission; knowing what they are about; having a deep confidence that the mission is rooted in the heart of the universe."

--Brian Swimme, Sequoia Seminar, June 28, 1996
(author's notes)

CHAPTER 1: ENTER THE SAGE

聖
<i>sheng</i>
ear 耳 + speech 口 + human 人 + earth 土
holy, sagely

Chapter two of the *Ta Chuan* opens with the characters for sage, *sheng jen*, as if all of chapter one were simply a prologue to his arrival. Or as if its unfolding of consciousness and an ever more detailed discernment was an account of the inner awakening of the sage. In ways that is true: surely like all classics, the *Ta Chuan* itself is the work of a sage or sages, whether it be Confucius or someone whose name is lost to history. It is addressed to the sage within ourselves and aimed toward a similar awakening of sensibility and awareness.

The word for sage, *sheng jen*, 聖人, directly images this increased sensibility which alone is capable of so sensitive a level of discernment. *Sheng* shows us a person standing in his or her place on the earth, listening to the information that comes from all directions. According to Wilder and Ingram, "Wise men, are those who listen (耳 *er*³) to the information(口 *kou*³) of those under them in office and so become wise" (#202).³¹ The lower element, (*ting*²), is said to depict a man 人 at his place on the ground or earth: 土 [*tu*³]. Hall and Ames (1987) speak of the clairaudience of the sage:

人
<i>jen</i>
<i>ren</i> ¹
picto- graph of a person standing
person

That "sage" was perceived as acutely aural is an inescapable consequence of its etymology. As Kenneth DeWoskin observes, this association between the sage and "hearing" is borne out in the traditional representation of the sage as having large, pendant ears. Furthermore, throughout the classics, the sage is portrayed as the premier musicologist: one who can listen to music and discern in it the original details and quality of an age and its culture....Lau in the Introduction to his translation [of the *Analects*] observes that hearing has a central role in Confucius' project of self-cultivation (258).

We often think of the sage in terms of "words of wisdom" but less often for the gifted capacity of listening. Nevertheless, Hall and Ames add that the sage is also acutely oral, pointing to an element in the character which means "one who manifests and discloses." As we noted in an earlier chapter, "disclose" means literally "to open" and this

particular meaning connects the sage with that primordial process of "opening and closing." The sage is the door at the threshold of Tao who opens through his discernment, his disclosure of principles, his open-heartedness toward other people and the desire to unite them; to bring harmony into their lives.

Fenn translates the word *sheng* as "sacred, holy." Clearly the phrase points to an individual of highest knowledge, excellence, and spiritual force. Both Wilhelm and Blofield translate it as "the holy sage." In the next chapters we will explore the way in which the sage embodies and images all of the key ideas which we have so far applied to the Cosmos and to the *I Ching* hexagrams.

CHAPTER 2: THE THREE-FOLD TASK OF THE SAGE

They contemplated the changes in the dark and the light and established the hexagrams in accordance with them. They brought about movements in the firm and the yielding, and thus produced the individual lines.

They put themselves in accord with tao and its power, and in conformity with this laid down the order of what is right. By thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, and by exploring the law of their nature to its deepest core, they arrived at an understanding of fate [destiny].

(Shuo Kua, Wilhelm 1977, 262)

Looking upward, we contemplate with its help the signs in the heavens; looking down we examine the lines of the earth. Thus we come to know the circumstances of the dark and the light. Going back to the beginnings of things and pursuing them to the end, we come to know the lessons of birth and death.

(Ta Chuan, I.4, Wilhelm 1977, 294)

The first passage, from the *Shuo Kua*, is addressing itself to the manner in which the ancient holy sages made the *I Ching* or Book of Changes. The second passage from the *Ta Chuan*, addresses itself to the way in which the *I Ching* aids us in understanding our own Cosmos in the deepest possible way. Remembering that the original text has no pronouns, we can see again how the work is multivocal, "many-voiced," and through it our own minds can become one with the sage.

It is irresistible to see in the character for "holy, wise" (聖) a resemblance in the lower element to the three realms of heaven, earth and the human imaged in the three-lined figure of the trigram and the character for king (and also jade). Karlgren (1974) tells us that the two characters are entirely distinct from one another but have often been confused in derivatives. The sage may indeed be positioned on earth, but what he is most listening for is the mandate of heaven; the underlying Way of all things. We see him situated in that middle position between heaven and earth as the audient and expressive consciousness which can unite and use them, not only for the good of the people, but for the good of "all things under heaven." As it is phrased in the last line of Chapter 1, "he grasps the principle of the center."

The sage looks upward to contemplate the signs of the heavens and downward to examine the lines of the earth. This is the work of the central position—to understand and relate to what is above and below, heaven and earth. This is the sage-scientist observing and trying to understand phenomena in the heavens and on earth. It is the sage-psychologist who, after thinking through the order of the outer world to the end, explores the law of his or her own nature to the deepest core. It is the sage-philosopher who arrives at an understanding of destiny and comes to know the lessons of birth and death. It is the sage-holy person who puts himself/herself in accord with tao and its *te* (power, virtue); it is the sage/lawmaker or teacher or minister who being thus in accord with tao—the hidden source of the universe—lays down the order of what is right. What makes the ancient sages "holy" and exceptional, is this three-fold task which is not only an intellectual one, but one that requires deep self-examination and a moment by moment practice of life that embodies all that he or she contemplates and understands.

Heaven and earth are joined in the sage as they are in all humans. We have seen this in the fact that of the six lines of the hexagram, the middle two—as the highest line of earth and the lowest line of heaven—are the realm of the human. But how is this expressed in concrete terms that we can understand within the context of human life?

The second quote above comes from chapter I.4 of the *Ta Chuan* which provides us with the most clear portrait of the human qualities ascribed to the sage. We begin to understand what it means to embody in real life the virtues that belong to the two great modes.

CHAPTER 3: DUALITY AS RELATIONSHIP EMBODIED BY THE SAGE

It is impossible to speak of the sage and duality together. The fundamental definition of the sage is his oneness and through this his capacity to unite disparate things. As the *Doctrine of the Mean* says, "The possessor of sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality, he completes other men and things also" (XXV.3; Legge 1971, 419). In the same text we find, "The way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in one sentence: they are without doubleness, and so complete in a manner that is unfathomable" (XXVI.7; Legge, 420). The early sage-kings described themselves as *i jen*--the One Man; the "Integral and Integrating Human."

As we follow this passage from chapter Four of Part I, we see how these qualities are embodied by the sage.

The Sage in Chapter I.4³²

The first thing that is revealed through the sage's examination of the patterns (*wen*) of heaven and earth is the "circumstance of the dark and the light." This is the earliest manifestation of the duality of phenomena seen in the heavens as the cycles of the heavenly bodies, and on earth as the changes of the four seasons. By extension, this evokes the mystery of the dark and the light within ourselves which is interwoven with the cosmic chiaroscuro.

"Going back to the beginnings of things and pursuing them to the end, we come to know birth and death" echoes a similar passage in chapter one which says that *Ch'ien* knows the great beginnings and *K'un* completes the finished things. By tracing this action between the two great forces, the sage comes to an understanding of the cycles of things, how they come to be and pass away. He would observe this in the waxing and the waning of the light. He would observe this in the beginnings of life in spring, through their blossoming in summer, through their death in winter. He would look for a similar pattern in his own life: where have things had their subtle, inconspicuous beginnings, when did they seem to surge into fullness, and then deteriorate and die away? This is a pattern he

could observe in projects, in relationships, in creative activities, in bodily energies. He would observe this in every birth and death. If he can see in the present the *incipient* moment of a future consequence, he can act upon it in its early stages to avoid or mitigate suffering and misfortune.

The next lines speak to a subtle knowledge which today we would call esoteric and form the esoteric tradition of many cultures. This text became an important source for later centuries of Taoist alchemy.

The union of seed {*hsing* 精, essence} and power [*chi* 氣, energy] produces all things; the escape of the soul [*hun* 魂, spirit of the dead] brings about change [*p'ien* 變]. Through this we come to know the conditions of outgoing and returning spirits [*kuei shen* 鬼神]. (Wilhelm 1977, 294)

This is the only appearance in the *Ta Chuan* of the expression *kuei shen*, popular in Chinese lore and tradition. It is treated seriously here as a subject into which the sage has insight as the most subtle manifestations of birth and death. This introduces into the human sphere the cosmic circulation of *chi* energy and the opening and closing of *Ch'ien* and *K'un* which release and trap energy, in the latter case giving rise to form as matter and life. This is, in fact, knowledge of how matter coalesces and dissipates; the same mystery that has haunted modern physicists and driven their explorations of the subatomic world. The line was studied with great interest by later Chinese philosophers. The Sung dynasty Neo-Confucian Chu Hsi reports the explanation of this own master, Ch'ang: "The *kuei-shen* are the energetic operations of Heaven and Earth, and the traces of production and transformation." Legge adds that according to another scholar, Chang, "The *kuei-shen* are the easily acting powers of the two breaths (literally "two *chi*") of natures" (Legge 1971, 398n).

Since in this way man comes to resemble heaven and earth, he is not in conflict with them. (*Ta Chuan* I.4; Wilhelm, 294)

The human here recognizes that he or she is made up of the same stuff and processes as the universe; the cosmos of Heaven and Earth. Since the human is a part of that process, an embodiment of it, how can he or she be in conflict with it? Although Wilhelm says that the human comes to resemble heaven and earth, such an idea of "becoming similar" is not present in the Chinese and is misleading. It implies that at some

moment they were different. The literal translation of the line is simply "With heaven and earth, they resemble each other, thus there is no opposition."

His wisdom embraces all things and his tao brings order into the whole world, therefore he does not err. (Ibid.)

This could also be read as "He understands the wholeness of the ten thousand things and his tao assists/furtheres all under heaven, therefore he does not err (exceed, overpass, overlook/commit the sin of ignorance [Wilder and Ingram,119])." By understanding the wholeness of things, the sage perceives the way, the natural course of each thing and is able to foster its nature, to assist its growth and flourishing the way a good farmer or gardener understands the unique nature of a fruit or a plant and can thus help it to maturity and fruition. To err would be to "miss" this understanding and so to go against the grain of the whole.

He is active everywhere but does not let himself be carried away. (Ibid.)

More literally, this might be read "he goes outward in all directions yet does not drift/overflow." Anyone may recognize this as a rare skill, combining openness and spontaneous response to all things that arise in the environment with the capacity to preserve a sense of focus and limitation. We can also see a parallel with the manifest universe as Tai Chi, constantly unfolding and stretching the field but always folding back from the edge, reversing, never dissipating.

He rejoices in heaven and has knowledge of fate, therefore he is free of care. (Ibid.)

He rejoices in heaven, understanding that its ultimate activity is the creation of life and light. This is what is meant by his understanding of *ming*, more accurately translated here—according to Yi Wu—as "destiny." The word "fate" infers a kind of random force that is not in keeping with the heavenly tao which radiates a spiritual brightness and purposeful creativity as its virtue. *Ming* is also "life" so it is the life-giving force also in which the sage rejoices. That things come to an end, that living creatures die, does not impede the enduring creative flow of the universe. It is an ultimate understanding and acceptance of this that leaves the sage free from sorrow.

He is content with his circumstances and genuine in his kindness, therefore he can practice love. (Ibid.)

This is a literal translation with the exception of the word "practice" which can mislead the twenty-first century reader in a time when "personal practice" is an increasingly common phrase. The sentence reads simply that being tranquil upon the earth and being genuine in his kindness, he is able to love. It is not that the sage practices this but that it is a capacity that flows naturally from his tranquility and benevolence or kindness (*jen/ren* 仁). This brings us to another of the most important concepts of Chinese philosophy and the central virtue taught by Confucius as humaneness or benevolence. It is *jen* that provides the answer to how the sage accomplishes one-ing—the deep self-organizing power of the human—expressed as human relationship.

仁 *jen/ren* as the Tao of the Human

The character for *jen* provides the most helpful clue to its meaning. It is made up of the character for "two," (also denoting Heaven and Earth)—

—
—

combined with the abbreviated radical for the human 人:

仁

The earliest Chinese dictionary says simply that *jen* means "to love each other" and adds that "it is the benevolence that must link each person (人) with his neighbor (二); mutual, reciprocal." The character also shows the human embodying Heaven and Earth and in doing so, bringing the two realms into interpenetration as an expression of one's life.

In the *I Ching*, the same economy of line and meaning is used to express the idea at a cosmic level. As we have seen, the *I Ching* hexagram has a two-fold division in which the upper trigram is in the place of Heaven and the lower, in the place of Earth. It also has a three-fold division in which the human realm emerges at the center, composed

of a line of Heaven and a line of Earth and fusing the two as the expression of human nature.



Figure 13
Heaven, Earth and Human in the Hexagram
(author's illustration)

We have noted that these are referred to in the *Ta Chuan* as the Three Powers, or the Three Ultimates (expressions of the Supreme Ultimate) placing the human in a position of equal responsibility with Heaven and Earth in the creative activity of the cosmos. The three powers act in harmony to bring to fruition the potential of each in a constant process of perfecting and completing one another. The process is captured in the character of 誠 (*ch'eng/cheng*) which contains elements for speech and complete or perfect. *Ch'eng* is usually translated as "sincerity" but is more literally an "expression of completing/perfecting." Nothing is complete but is always being completed and perfected in the process of creation itself. The highest destiny of the human is consciously to fulfill the position at the center of Heaven and Earth; to "follow the path of the Great Mean" which is the way of the sage. This clarifies the meaning of the line quoted above from the *Doctrine of the Mean*—

The possessor of sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality, he completes other men and things also (Legge 1971, 418).

Yi Wu adds that the development of other people's nature and assisting in the transforming and nourishing of Heaven and Earth are the essence of *jen* as the way, the tao, of humanity.

One difficulty in catching hold of the deeper meanings of *jen* lies in our tendency to place it either in the inner or outer world—as a subjective quality or as an outward behavior divorced from the inner condition of an individual. As Peter Hershock points out, "The central value of the Confucian Chinese view of humanity resides neither in the inner cloister of the 'self' nor in the outer personality of the 'public,' but must be seen as an orientation toward what lies vibrantly in between" (Hershock 1996, 163). The person of *jen* is one of deep self-knowledge capable of responding compassionately and generously to the world from an inner authority rather than merely reacting to the world based on its collective conditions, consensus and pressures.

The hexagram is able to image this for us as a field whose extent encompasses the inner and outer worlds, another designation of the lower and upper trigrams respectively. In Hexagram 1, for example, we see the *Chün* tzu (superior person, "completing human") developing through six phases of change from the lowest or most interior point of line one, "Hidden dragon. Do not act," to the fullest expression of line 5: "Flying dragon in the heavens. It furthers one to see the great man." While *Chün* tzu has been most frequently translated into English as "the superior man," this does poor justice to the term, given our current associations with "superiority," and "man" as gender rather than species. It has also been translated as "the profound person," the "noble person," and "the exemplar." But above all, the *Chün* tzu is the "fully complete human," the "integral human," or "the person of *jen*" who expands "humanness,"—the innate capacities of the human—to the furthest extent.

The third and fourth lines of a hexagram are often the most difficult as lying at the juncture of the two realms—Heaven and Earth, inner and outer, below and above, feminine and masculine. But this is also the ground upon which the exercise of humanness takes place. Here the essential self-awareness must be forged that can integrate opposite forces and bridge the chasms of opposing natures. The fullest expression of this integration occurs in the rulership of the fifth line where a position of authority is attained which allows the person to become an integrating force for others;

"to complete oneself and other people and things also." Line 6, however, usually shows someone who has strayed too far from the inner root as in Hexagram 1-- "Arrogant dragon has cause to repent." The arrogant or ambitious person has lost the sensitive responsiveness to the whole field and exceeded his or her role.

This returns us to the idea of *jen* as a field, a place of meeting where the entirety of cosmos, nature and humanity comes to bear on every moment of individual experience and to define each individual human through his or her response. In its broadest expression, it becomes civilization itself as the refined interactions of humanity. Yet *jen* is also very intimate and its smallest fractal is the touch and gesture of the human hand or an expression of the face. Not surprisingly, it is used to define the first quality of being a Buddha when Buddhism arrives in China.

We know that the quality of *jen*, however, predates both Confucius and Buddha as the essential virtue of the ancient sages who created the *I Ching* and are part of China's most remote past, beginning with the legendary Fu Hsi: Fu Hsi extended his awareness into all three realms to lay the groundwork for the *I Ching* and the model of the Sage. Yao stretched not only his knowledge but his sense of human responsibility from his closest kindred, through the ends of his realm, to the sun, moon and stars of the cosmos. Here is a dramatic example of the role of the human at the center of heaven and earth quite literally acting as the "organizing principle" of the whole. In his observations of nature and the correlation of its seasons with the behavior of birds, animals and humans, his *jen* encompasses--gives order and meaning to--the entire living world. Particularly unusual and moving in the account of Yao in the Book of History is the expression "respectfully to receive as a guest the rising sun." To receive as a guest is a translation of the word *pin*. K.C. Chang points out that in the oracle bone inscriptions of the Shang Dynasty, the dead ancestors of the king were often seen to *pin* Shang Ti, "in the course of which the kings' requests from the profane world were turned over to the Supreme Being" (Chang 1976, 161).

One enters into the oracular inquiry of the *I Ching* in the posture of *pin*, as Yao directed his brother "to respectfully receive as a guest the rising sun." It is a lovely image, at once intimate and vast. If we are awake and aware, if we are *jen*, each time we open our doors onto the outside world we *pin* our neighbor, whoever that might be, even as we

receive as a guest the higher counsel that comes to us through our inquiry into the oracle or approach the Supreme God through our prayers. To be human is to know how to step into holy space and speak with God.

"Great indeed was Yao as a sovereign!" Confucius declared some 1500 years later. "How vast was his virtue! The people could find no name for it." It is the generous, enlightened and reverent humanity of Confucius that transforms the ancient virtue of sage-kings into the supreme cultural value of *jen*. We meet *pin* again in one of his many descriptions of *jen* in the *Analects* : "It is, when you go abroad, to behave to everyone as if you were receiving a great guest; to employ the people as if you were assisting at a great sacrifice; not to do to others what you would not wish done to yourself" (12:2 in Legge 1971, 251).

We must be careful not to confine *jen* and Confucian thought to a benevolent humanism. To do so is to betray its deepest calling to us as neighbors in the creative cosmos of heaven, earth and humanity: It is profoundly challenging and demands our fullest and most courageous commitment to the expression of our capacities as human beings. The true person of *jen*, Confucius declares in the *Analects* , is one who is willing to sacrifice his or her life to complete and perfect humanity (*jen*). If this is a philosophical paradox difficult to penetrate, living it is even more difficult. Yet only in the living of it can the paradox be embraced.

In the context of the *Ta Chuan*, *jen/ren* 仁 can be seen as a development of 親 (*ch'in/qin*), "close relationships," from chapter one. There we found the theme developed from the pair of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*.

Ch'ien with ease, understands
K'un, through its simplicity, is capable
With ease comes ease of understanding
With simplicity, comes ease in following
Ease of understanding brings close relationships
Ease in following, brings merit
To have close relationships is to endure
To have merit is to be capable of greatness
The ability to endure shapes the worthy person's inner force (virtue)
The ability to be great, forms the worthy person's estate
Through ease and simplicity all under heaven's principle is grasped

As all under heaven's principle is grasped
Then the position at its center is completed/fulfilled.
(Author's translation)

We can now see this passage as a remarkable movement from the primal duality of *Ch'ien* and *K'un* through a very "easy and simple" blending process to an ultimate realization of the role of the human "at the center." This is the worthy person's estate; his or her great field of action. The movement is accomplished in fourteen lines, as if to demonstrate that both knowledge/wisdom/understanding and human capacity can develop without intense effort and coercion. Complexification is achieved without complication.

These ideas are all important to an understanding of how the sage arrives at benevolence or humanity. It is the sage's ease in understanding that makes such a person easy to understand and through this, to have close relationships with others. The sage is not off on an intellectual quest that leads away from other human beings. This is not an ivory tower knowledge, which does not mean that he or she doesn't at times withdraw into solitude. But the openness pointed to as the ability to move in all directions without getting carried away, is also what makes the sage open and easy enough to understand and to follow.

As the repetition of heavenly cycles provides an endurance of pattern in the seasons, so too—within the human sphere—does this capacity for close relationships with others allow the human enterprise to endure through marriage, family, clan, community and nation. We would now add to that planet as we enter a period of global communication, travel and interaction. The humanity of *jen* is greater than the close relationships of 親 (*ch'in/qin*) because it identifies a conscious posture rather than a circumstance; a human quality with the inner force of 德 (*te/de*) or virtue. .

Another interpretation of the character *jen* is that it represents the force that draws two people together as "their humanity toward one another." It seems probable that Wilhelm inserted the word "practice" to remove the word "love" from the limited inferences of personal romantic feeling that the word so quickly invokes in the West. He was likely trying to convey an idea of "love in action" in a more universal sense. *Jen* is etymologically closer to the English word "neighbor" which indicates an intensification of feeling and a sense of mutual experience and responsibility that the word implies.

The passage in chapter I.4 suggests that "fellow feeling" is a precursor to the highest form of love practiced by the sage as a natural expression of his nature, his knowledge, and the deep inquiries he has undertaken into the world about him and the experiences of his inner life.

Throughout chapter 1 we were seeing higher and higher orders of relationship develop that culminate here in the sage. They are represented in Figure 14. We will meet the highest level of relationship in the last chapter on the sage and *tung*.

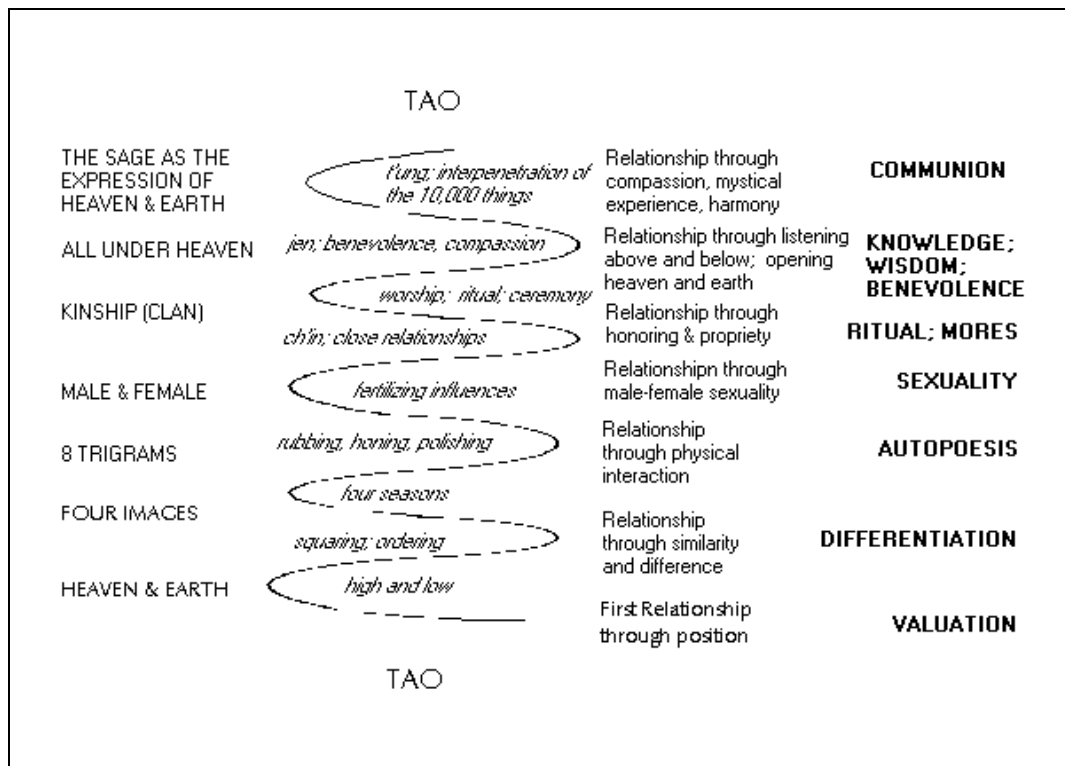


Figure 14
Spiral of Relationships
(created by the author)

CHAPTER 4: THE POSITION OF THE SAGE

Heaven's great virtue is called producing life. The sage's great treasure is called position.

(Ta Chuan, II.1, Author's translation)

Heaven and earth determine the places (wei). The holy sages fulfill the possibilities of the places.

(Ta Chuan II:2 Wilhelm 1977, 354)

We can understand that heaven's great virtue is its creativity, but how does it follow that the sage's great treasure is his position? The latter seems like a non-sequitur unless we consider it in the light of the second passage from the last chapter of part two. We know that the positions of heaven and earth and their relationship to one another bring about the cosmic creative process. We also know that the human realm exists at the intersection of heaven and earth. This meeting ground is fertile and portentous. It is, in fact, "the great field of action" of the sage where his sageliness is realized, given form. Every human being occupies that position existentially, but only the sage has sufficient awareness of it to treasure it and use it for the sake of the people. It is one thing to be in the position, it is another to grasp the position. To grasp it is to use its potentialities.

In our previous discussion of *wei* in its cosmic context, we noted the critical importance given to correct position, both in place and time. This is a key idea also in the *I Ching* hexagrams. A strong line in a weak position is rarely given a good augury. The same is true of a weak line in a strong position. For example, in I.8 of the *Ta Chuan* we find this comment on the sixth line of Hexagram 1: "The Master said: 'He who is noble and has no corresponding position, he who stands high and has no following, he who has able people under him who do not have his support, that man will have cause for regret at every turn.'" (Wilhelm 1977, 307). Ironically, this person is too high. His excess has led to arrogance and separated him from the people.

In II.5 of the *Ta Chuan* we find this commentary on the fourth line of Hexagram 50: "Weak character (德 (*te/de*): virtue) in an honored place, meager knowledge with large plans, limited powers with heavy responsibilities will seldom escape disaster" (Wilhelm 1977, 341). This contrasts with the honorable or noble person in a weak place

which we just saw in line six of hexagram one. Neither of these lines is speaking of the sage because the sage's virtue is always to sense the right position and timing for his actions. Yet they do show the negative effects of the lack of correct position or the lack of virtue in using the correct position when it is attained.

As is true throughout the *Ta Chuan*, there are two orders being described. One is the phenomenal world where everything is subject to change in every moment and the other is the realm where abiding principles have been laid down as the foundation of an enduring order. To understand *wei* in relation to the sage, we must determine which of those orders is being addressed. In the phenomenal world, "catching" the right moment and the right position and using it appropriately is the essential issue. For this, the sage must have that delicate sense of discernment and the far-reaching vision that allows him to "penetrate the subtle beginnings of things" and thus understand right timing and the correct position to make best use of them for the aid of the people.

In the realm of abiding principle, however, the sage may need to know when to retreat; when to withdraw from a position; when to turn inward and preserve the higher principle of his own being to follow the way of heaven. These require the sage's courage and tranquility of mind; his capacity for detachment. They require his "ease" with the way of all things under heaven.

An excellent example of the correct fulfillment of a favorable position can be seen in Hexagram 55 where, as we have seen, the sun itself is in the middle of the heavens and presides over a period of abundance. Hence we have the exhortation to "be like the sun at mid-day." But this image carries the further idea that the sage-king who has entered this position also understands that it is not a lasting one and that he must make the best use of the propitious time and not be sad or anxious at the imminent waning.

The abundance of Hexagram 55 flows from the perfect centering of heaven, earth and the human in the person of the King, as "son of heaven." The king occupies the most important "position" in the realm of the human. The sun represents the brightest of heavenly qualities. The central position in the sky at mid-day.

Grasping the Center

Let us return now to the last passage from chapter one to explore its relevance to the condition of Hexagram 55 and the sage's relation to the central position.

With the attainment of such ease and such freedom from laborious effort, the mastery is got of all principles under the sky. With the attainment of that mastery, (the sage) makes good his position in the middle (between heaven and earth). (Legge 1969, 273)

"Makes good" is Legge's translation of 成 (*ch'eng/cheng*), "complete, perfect." So the sage does not simply occupy a position, he completes it; a process of perfecting what has come into being before him as well as what is constantly coming into being around and through him. As Confucius says in the *Analects*, the human can enlarge the Tao and such an enlargement seems close to what is expressed in this line. How indeed does the human enlarge the Tao? How does the sage complete and perfect that "position" between heaven and earth: *chung*, the center.

The question is partially answered in this last section of chapter one: the worthy person has "grasped" (Legge: "gained mastery of") "all principles under the sky." It is through this grasp of principle that the center is completed, but that remains a fairly abstruse concept for the Western mind.

Te *li*, grasping principle, is the key to *chung wei*, "completing the central position." What we see in Hexagram 55 is the image of *jih/ri chung* 日中, the sun in the middle of the sky: noon; the time of greatest brightness, clarity, energy and abundance. In the human realm, the king (王) is likened to the sun with the language "the king attains it" or "the king has reached the point" (of the center). This is also a metaphor for the "ultimate manifestation" just as the full moon is also the ultimate manifestation of the lunar cycle. All of its phases are important, like its seeding while hidden in darkness. This condition corresponds to "the dragon hidden in the field" of the first line of Hexagram 1. Every stage is important in the unfolding of the process and in Hexagram 1, as in most others, the process reaches its fullness of "completion" at the center of the upper trigram; the center of the position of heaven which is imaged by the noonday sun. It is here that

the unity of heaven, earth and human is attained and a numinous energy flows from heaven into the ten thousand things: The time of abundance.

The character for "reaches, attains"—假 *chia/jia*—is said to have originally depicted a "second skin" (Karlgren, 345; Wieger 43I; Wilder and Ingram, 229). Wilder and Ingram note that the character for shrimp, *hsia*, uses this element as a suggestive phonetic: "It sheds one skin while gradually growing another (229)." This is an interesting image in its correspondence to the Confucian idea that the worthy or superior person cultivates his or her nature in such a way that it achieves expression on the "outside" by means of conduct that carries an inner force of 德 (*te/de*); the "straight-heartedness" or single-mindedness in action that reflects the broader meaning of virtue. Hence we find in both *The Great Learning* and the *I Ching* the phrase *ming ming te*: "to brighten bright virtue." The illumination that was on the inside now shines on the outside. According to Yi Wu, the first *ming* is given in the essence or nature of the person at birth. (Class notes 1993³³). The second is the result of personal effort and cultivation.

The character 假 *chia*, translated as "approaches (i.e. his temple) appears only once in the *Doctrine of the Mean* but in a significant context further illuminated by Legge's note.

It is said in the Book of Poetry "In silence is the offering presented and the spirit approached to [*chia*].

(*Doctrine of the Mean* 33:4 in Legge 1971, 432)

Legge tells us that the ode describes the royal worship of T'ang, the founder of the early Shang dynasty. He explains that the first clause represents the sovereign's demeanor and the second, the effect of this on the assistants in the service. "They were awed to reverence and had no striving among themselves" (229). He notes that the original stanza in the Book of Poetry used, in place of *chia*, the word *ko* that similarly means "arrive, reach" but also "pattern, model." To these definitions of the original word (*ko*) Wieger adds "to examine, a frame, rule" and Fenn, "wise, research, science." These are a curious and confusing lot of definitions for a word signifying "the king's approach."

What the king "attains" or "approaches" in Hexagram 55 is the central position. A similar expression is used in Hexagram 59 when "the king approaches his temple." The word for "temple" is derived from elements meaning "morning, morning rites, audience"

and "house." In one interpretation it is "the place where the king has audience with the gods." The king who fulfills his position is "audient" (like the sage) in both directions, because it was also customary for the king to give audience to the people. Wilhelm's comment on this image says that "his central position denotes the inner concentration which enables him to hold together the elements striving to break asunder.(690)" In Legge's translation, "the king's (mind) is without deflection," likewise implying his capacity mentally to remain centered. In each case in the *I Ching* in which the king approaches his temple, there is a yang line in the fifth place, suggesting the inner strength of the king entering into the presence of heavenly power on the outside. We can see the direct association here with the idea of *pin*. In the Shang Dynasty, the King approached his temple to *pin* Shang Ti—the High Lord or God.

This image of the king's approach is carried into Hexagram 37 where the yang line in the fifth place reads "as a king he approaches his family" suggesting that the family too becomes a central holy ground if approached in the manner that the king approaches his temple; that is, a place where the inner illumination of the father may be realized; personal power (as *te*, virtue) meets position and fulfills both the individual and the place in a single creative movement.

In Hexagrams 55 and 59, the individual pictured is approaching a numinous point. This "approaching" is a movement from the inner center of the person to an outer center in the world. In a sense, it is an emanation, a radiation of his own center that finds resonance outside itself through something like a communion with the way of heaven. In the image from the Book of Poetry, from the point of view of the way of earth, the king is providing a "frame" for the experience that can be entered into, participated in by others, like his assistants in the ceremony described above. Artists and poets, researchers and scientists, have a similar goal to frame phenomena in such a way that others can experience and understand them. When a scientist "attains" or "approaches" his "aha," he creates a rule or a pattern or a model which others can use in order to experience the same "aha" that he or she did. None of this would be possible if the inner experience were not attained, approached to, in the outer world. But there is also another Klein bottle effect here because the point attained to is both inside and outside—an inner temple and an outer one—which is to say that the unity is felt as the resonance between the two. It is as

if a common aperture opened up between the realms of heaven, earth and the human through which a single energy flowed in the manner portrayed in the symbol of the king: ䷊. The aperture must be in the middle, in the human realm, to allow the energy to flow in both directions, which is another way we might see the vertical line of the figure. The center *is* the temple. In heaven, it is the zenith, occupied by the sun. On earth, it is the well, with its "inexhaustible" source of water.

It is not surprising that the image of Hexagram 55 reads "Greatness. Illuminating by means of movement/arousing." It is the king, the human, who "moves" and so completes the illumination and arouses others to fullness. He "completes" the position by this action.

Hexagram 55 belongs to the phenomenal order in its expression of the stage of a cycle or process. Inevitably there will follow a condition like that of Hexagram 36 in which the light has sunk under the earth in "the darkening of the light," also called "the injury of the bright." The sixth line says—

Not light but darkness.
First he climbed up to heaven,
Then he plunged into the depths of the earth.
(Wilhelm 1977, 142)

The correlative in human life is found in the great periods of success and happiness that are followed by periods of failure, calamity, dark despair. The Dow goes up, the Dow goes down. This is the roller coaster experience of life that is the common lot of all people, riding the swings of the pendulum through change. How could it be different?

To answer this, we have to shift to the other order of reality here that is the secret of the sage. It is the world of the principle that abides; the world of duration and enduring. Each of the two orders requires, above all, an understanding of *wei*. In the order of changing phenomena, the superior person understands the impermanence of conditions. He or she greets each one in its appropriate moment, enjoying the abundance of the sun in its fullness, while preserving an awareness that even in its fullness it is beginning to wane; biding with the descent of the brightness into darkness, preserving an awareness that in the darkest moment it is about to ascend again. Throughout the process, such an

individual is not sad or filled with anxiety, but tranquilly accepts this as the natural course of heaven and earth.

There is another way to grasp the center, and that is "to grasp the principle." The person who has accepted the course of things is doing just that: greeting each thing as it comes with "equanimity" which we can also describe as the equilibrium provided by the central position. Here the centrality is an abiding at the center of the pendulum's swing and not riding it in its swooning rises and dips. But we still haven't clarified exactly what it means to "grasp the principle."

There is a wonderful discussion of this phrase by A.C. Graham in *Two Philosophers* in which he is presenting the ideas of the eleventh century philosopher Cheng I on the subject. (We may recall Cheng I as the author of the imperial letter cited in the introduction.) It is a discussion of the words for "grasp" and "virtue" which are homophones, each with the sound *te/de*. He explains that all principles are in the nature, but many are "hidden from us" by the impurity of our *chi*. As long as a principle cannot be seen by introspection, we can only have an "everyday knowledge" of it from external sources so that following it involves conscious effort.

But as soon as it is "grasped" (*te* A 得) inwardly, it is followed without effort—"true knowledge." It is then a *te* B (德), an inward force. The word, which was assumed to be derived from *te* A, is generally translated "virtue." (Graham, 80).

Following this, Graham quotes directly from Cheng I: "Whoever grasps the real principles in his mind stands out from others. Those who merely repeat what they hear do not really see them with the mind...(ibid.)." Cheng I gives the following personal anecdote as an example:

"I once saw a peasant who had been wounded by a tiger. When someone said that a tiger had been attacking people, everyone was startled; but the peasant reacted differently from the rest. Even a child knows that tiger's are dangerous, but it is not true knowledge; it is only true knowledge if it is like the peasant's." (ibid.)

So the principle that is present in the nature must be awakened within the consciousness in an experiential, rather than a purely intellectual way. The awakening of the principle, whether through intuitive insight or catalytic experience, results in an inward force; the inner brightness of *ming* described above which is now available to express itself outwardly as the *ming* of enlightened conduct.

Other Implications of the Central Position

Hexagram 55 does not have the image of the king, probably because there is a yin rather than a yang line in the fifth place. For several reasons (see Wilhelm 1977, 673), the line is nevertheless positive and announces that blessing and fame are imminent. This comes from the overall theme of the hexagram and from the lower trigram *li* which is light. This reminds us that the *I Ching* itself can never be reduced to a simple scheme but is complex in its nuances.

As an example, here are some of the other meanings of *chung* as it appears in the *I Ching* and bears on sagely conduct.

- To see the great man. In Hexagram 6, "Conflict," the advice is given "to see the great man," which the Confucian commentary describes as meaning "to honor/value what is central and correct."
- To achieve one's purpose. In Hexagram. 9 we find the line, "The strong is central and its will (purpose) is done/acts."
- To unite the wills/purposes of all under heaven. In Hexagram 13 we see that "correct position" is as subtle as the I itself. Here the ruling line of the hexagram is the yin line in the second place amid five yang lines. In any hexagram where there is only one yin or yang line, it becomes the ruler through its virtue of being able to unite the others with its singularity. Being in the middle of the lower trigram further empowers it to unite those around it into a "Fellowship of Men" as Wilhelm/Baynes have named it.
- Ease and accessibility. Hexagram. 14 is the inverse of Hexagram.13, having its single yin line in the fifth place: "He whose truth is accessible yet dignified has good fortune," to which the Confucian commentary adds "by his trustworthiness, he kindles the will of others. The good fortune of his dignity comes from the fact that he acts easily, without prearrangement." This line is surely an example of the description from chapter one, "Easy, then easy to know; simple then easy to follow."

Wilhelm notes that it does this "because it holds to the great middle."
Wilhelm/Baynes have titled this, "Possession in Great Measure."

- Modesty. The centrality of Hexagram 15, Modesty, is expressed in its image: the mountain in the middle of the earth. "Modesty creates success because it is the way of heaven to shed its influence downward and to create light and radiance. It is the way of earth to be lowly and go upward," reads the Confucian commentary (Wilhelm 1977, 462). It is the virtue of the middle position with its movement in both directions.
- Resting in the center. Hexagram.17, "Following," is the image of "Thunder in the middle of the lake." Here the superior person withdraws into his house, resting his energy like "thunder hidden in the lake." Also depicted is the sage and ruler withdrawn into retirement; a strength of character which, according to Wilhelm, safeguards them from conforming to those beneath them, from whom no good could come to them (475). The Confucian commentary reads, "'Sincere in the good.' Good fortune.' The place is correct and central." (It is a yang line in a yang place.)
- Firmness of heart. In Hexagram 29, Danger, the firm line in the center of the doubled trigram kan (thus in the second and fifth places) indicates the firm heart in the midst of danger. "If you are sincere, you have success in your heart."
- Strength of character. Hexagram 39, Obstruction, carries the commentary on the fifth line, "he is in the central position and possesses the requisite virtue" (Legge,174).
- Sweet limitation. This is the description of the fifth line of Hexagram. 60, following the previous line's "galling limitation." This depicts a person acting comfortably within the mean or middle. As the Confucian commentary reads, "The good fortune of sweet limitation comes from remaining central in one's own place" (Wilhelm 1977, 697).
- Inner truth. In Hexagram 61, "Inner Truth," it is the two yin lines at the center of the hexagram which give the image of the inner truth or sincerity depicted by the whole figure. The middle lines of both hexagrams are

strong. The second line reads, "A crane calling in the shade. Its young answers it. I have a good goblet. I will share it with you." To this the Confucian commentary adds, "This is the affection of the inmost heart" (Wilhelm/Baynes, 701). In the upper middle line, "he possesses truth which links together" because the position, again, is central and correct. This illustrates again the movement from within the innermost heart to a truth which "links together" in the outer world.`

Rings of Jade

The two orders of reality—the world of phenomena as things that come to be and pass away and the abiding world of principle—are beautifully expressed in the last two lines of Hexagram 50, the Cauldron. This hexagram, like Hexagram 1 and others, proceeds through the six lines as a developmental process. Hexagram 1 describes the trajectory of the great man and the creative process in the world. Imaged as the dragon, he begins as "hidden" in the first line and by the fifth, the flying dragon is in the heavens and "it furthers one to see the great man" with the suggestion that the great man (or the greatness within the man) is no longer hidden but visible. Wilhelm comments that here the great man has joined the heavenly beings. He notes that "Confucius says of this line, 'Thus the sage arises, and all creatures follow him with their eyes' (9)." It seems inaccurate to say, however, that the great man "has joined the heavenly beings" because this is still simply a position in a process that we are "seeing" unfold through the six places. To join the heavenly beings is to move out of the temporal and phenomenal world. The hexagram definitely depicts a cycle that is beginning to ebb by the sixth line. There is still the possibility that the great man's power can intoxicate him and lead him to arrogance. The hexagram is about the career of energy and light, as well as the great man and sage, through the phenomenal world.

Hexagram 50, by contrast, is about a vessel. The Ting, which it depicts, was a ritual vessel used in ancient China. The Confucian commentary reads:

The cauldron is the image of an object. When one causes wood to penetrate fire, food is cooked. The holy man cooks in order to sacrifice to God the Lord, and he cooks feasts in order to nourish the holy and the worthy. (Wilhelm 1977, 642)

The various lines depict the phases of relationship to this vessel, which is described in the Sequence of the Hexagrams as the greatest of the hexagrams "for transforming substances."

As a vessel, it is on the side of earth and certainly begins its career through the lines amid the imperfections of the ordinary, phenomenal world.

Line 1: A ting with its legs upturned.
Furthers removal of stagnating stuff.

Line 2: There is food in the ting.

Line 3: The handle of the ting is being altered.

Line 4: The legs of the ting are broken. The prince's meal is spilled and his person is soiled.

Line 5: The ting has yellow handles. Golden carrying rings.

Line 6: The ting has rings of jade. Great good fortune. Nothing that would not act to further.

(Wilhelm 1977, 645)

One could almost say here that the vessel is a human life, directed toward transformation. The human life itself, in its highest expression, is an offering to "God the Lord" as the text says. The process is one of refinement and transformation, not unlike the process implied in the first terms of the *Ta Chuan* for above and below *tsun/zun* and *pi/bei* in which the characters' images are of the distillation of wine and the offering of it in sacrifice.

The process is not entirely a worldly one but one that moves from ordinary values to enduring ones. Like the fifth line of Hexagram. 1, the fifth line of this hexagram carries a beautiful image and one would think the highest one: golden carrying rings. Gold is the metal associated with the sun and would be like the sun in its greatest brightness at mid-day.

But there is a higher value and a more precious material and that is jade. In both the Chinese and Mesoamerican cultures, it was the most precious material because it was enduring and indestructible. When Aztec princes were buried, a piece of jade was put in their mouths as a symbol of immortality. In China, the emperor's seat was called "the Jade Throne." The character for jade is 玉 (yü), which is said to depict a string of jade beads associated with the ruler and possibly the origin of that character as well. Although the etymological sources do not refer to this idea of joining the three realms, one can nevertheless see it as an important metaphor for the transformation in the three realms expressed in terms of the highest and most enduring excellence that belongs to the realm of abiding principle.

The Confucian commentary on the line says "The jade rings in the highest place show the firm and the yielding complementing each other properly." Wilhelm adds here that "it is possible for the sage to impart his teaching because the six in the fifth place (yin) meets him halfway with the proper receptivity" (Wilhelm 1977, 646). This is one of the rare occasions in the *I Ching* when the sage is inferred by the position of the sixth line. It is in part the balance between yin and yang implied in this that gives the line its supreme strength and good fortune. This is also implied by the two carrying handles: the mutual support of a pair, like the great pair of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*, which carry between them the imperishable unity of the Supreme Ultimate.



Figure 15
Bronze *ting* from the Shang Dynasty
(National Palace Museum Taipei 2003)

The Positionless Position

Unless the sage happens to be a sage-king (like the emperors Fu Hsi and King Wen), the sage has no fixed position in the *I Ching* and no fixed position in the world. Fu Hsi was a legendary ruler and King Wen is regarded as having given us his additions to the *I Ching* while he was in prison, having been divested of his "position." Confucius was never able to fulfill his dream of occupying a significant position in the government of China from which to disseminate his teachings. Nevertheless, each is remembered "immortally" for the profound wisdom which they left behind as sages of the *I Ching*. The teachings of Confucius that traveled down through subsequent centuries in the Confucian classics became central to the training of administrators of local and national government for 2000 years.

If the fulfillment of position is so important, what position did they fulfill? We find the answer to this eloquently expressed in chapter 14 of the *Doctrine of the Mean*:

The superior man does what is proper to the station (*wei*) in which he is; he does not desire to go beyond this.

In a position of wealth and honor, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honour. In a poor and low position, he does what is proper to a poor and low position. Situated among barbarous tribes, he does what is proper to a situation among barbarous tribes. In a position of sorrow and difficulty, he does what is proper to a position of sorrow and difficulty. The superior man can find himself in no position in which he is not himself. (Legge 1971, 395)

This description only refers to the superior person, however, so we would expect something more from the sage. The superior person "remains himself" in any position. This means that he does not, as Cheng I pointed out, depend upon the external world for his truth. He has the inner force of 德 (*te/de*). With this, he can center himself in any situation.

The sage occupies a different center which is at the center of three realms; the center of the Supreme Ultimate. His spiritual force, therefore, is such that he himself becomes the center wherever he goes. He is the organizing force at the center of the three realms and his consciousness is always bringing the world into being, fresh and numinous.

Heaven and Earth determine the places. The sage fulfills the possibilities of the places.

In the next chapters, we will follow the sage's mysterious Way to understand how this happens.

CHAPTER 5: IMAGE, FORM AND THE SAGE

象
hsiang ⁴
xiang ⁴
(pictograph of an elephant)
image form appearance elephant
形
hsing ²
xing ²
feathers hair 彡 + 2 shields 开
form shape

*They come flying on the wing, those owls,
And settle on the trees about the college;
They eat the fruit of our mulberry trees,
And salute us with fine notes.
So awakened shall be those tribes of the Huai;
They will come presenting their precious things,
Their large tortoises
and their elephants' teeth,
And great contributions of the southern metals.*

--From *The Book of Poetry* (Legge 2000)

It seems appropriate to begin our chapter on image, form and the sage with this poem from the ancient Book of Poetry. Confucius himself was said to have been an editor of this work in his time and it is frequently quoted in the Confucian classics. Poetry has always been the language of image, whatever the culture or era. And we should remember that the aesthetic forms of art and poetry were always

essential to traditional China and inextricable from its philosophy. It was understood that artistic beauty would help philosophic truths to survive, so the language was elegant and the calligraphy of the characters graceful. Like the Homeric hymns which were flourishing through a similar period, they were easy to memorize and pleasurable to recite.

The images in the poem have significant meaning in relation to the themes we find in the *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan*. The owls that settle on the tree about the college are like those sages who reach toward the unfathomable depths of things beyond the light of ordinary people. Yet they come, gathering around the place of learning "to eat the fruits of our mulberry trees and salute us with fine notes." The mulberry tree is precious because out of it the silkworm will weave its fine threads. The owls' song will so awaken the tribes of Kuai that they will come, bearing their precious things.

The precious things that they bring are their large tortoises and their elephants' teeth. The tortoise and the elephant are semi-magical figures and have both a historic and

emblematic relation to the *I Ching*, which began as a tortoise shell divination. In Hexagram 27 we find the line, "You let your magic tortoise go and look at me with the corners of your mouth drooping" (Wilhelm/Baynes, 109).

As we noted before, there are currently no elephants in China, but in ancient times, they were present in some of the remoter regions, like those inhabited by the tribes of the Huai of which the poem speaks. The verse is quoted here also to remind us that the word 象 (*hsiang/xiang*) or image is derived from the image of an elephant; something very large that is real yet carries an element of unreality as well. It is on the ivory of the elephant's tusk that the ancient Chinese carved some of their most beautiful images.

Lao Tzu uses the word *hsiang* in chapter four of the *Tao Te Ching* in reference to the Tao:

Deep but clear, it seems to exist and not exist.
I do not know whose son it is
It symbolizes ["it is the 象 of"]
that which precedes the Creator.
(Wu 1989,16)

Elsewhere, Lao Tzu describes the Way as elusive and evasive and says that "within there is image, elusive and evasive" (chap.21, Wu 1989, 74). Yet in chapter thirty-five he tells us that—

He who holds to the great image
Will be followed by the people of the world.
They will go unharmed,
In safety, calm and peace.
(Wu 1989, 127)

Yi Wu's note on this line reads, "We cannot grasp the Way because the Way is without form. But the functioning of the Way shows us its 'image', to which we can hold."

This is Lao Tzu's description of the sage as the one who "holds the great image" even though in chapter forty-one he tells us that "the greatest image has no form (形 *hsing/xing*)." The language of all of these passages points to something at the very edge of the manifest order, out there at the border of the Tai Chi as the "furthest reach" of our reality. Only the sage has such a range that he or she can go to that edge and bring what is

out there into form for us. Put another way, it is the sage who holds the greatest, broadest image of the cosmos. Legge catches the feel of this when he translates it: "To him who holds in his hands the Great Image (of the invisible Tao), the whole world repairs. Men resort to him, and receive no hurt, but (find) rest, peace, and the feeling of ease."

This is why, as chapter I.8 of the *Ta Chuan* tells us,

The holy sages were able to survey all the confused diversities under heaven. They observed forms (*hsing*) and phenomena, and made representations of things (*hsiang*) and their attributes. These were called the Images (*hsiang*). (Wilhelm 1977, 304)

There is an interesting subtlety in this text that is often overlooked. What the sages first observe are called *hsing*, forms. The representations they make of those forms are called *hsiang*, images. In chapter one, we have the line, "In heaven the *hsiang* are completed and on earth the forms are completed." This would seem to be a confusion of terms. Which are the images and which are the forms? To make matters more confusing, we have the "four images" generated by the Two Modes when really the eight trigrams are technically "the images" as they are described in the *I Ching*. Even Wilhelm was daunted by this apparent inconsistency and suggested in his translation of chap 11 that a mistake had been made: "The text says 'four images'; this is carried over by error from section 5 ["the two primary forces generate the four images"]. Here 'images' refer to the eight trigrams, which show situations in their interrelation.(321)." Wilhelm may be correct in saying that there is an error but if so, the error persisted in the Mawangdui manuscript as well (cf. Shaughnessy 1992, 201).

The use of the terms image and form as *hsiang* and *hsing* may be less confusing if we think of them as actions in a process rather than as "things." It is true that the word *hsing* is applied to the final state of concrete things but their creation is also the last stage of this process. We might look at this as beginning with Lao Tzu's "greatest image which has no form" or Tao. Then there is the "great image" which is held by the sage and can be followed (given "form" to) by the people of the world. Where does the sage get the "great image"? In the language of the *Ta Chuan*, he gets it by surveying all of the confused diversities under heaven. He observes "forms" (*hsing*) and phenomena and makes representations of them as *hsiang*. What seems to be at work here is the integrative consciousness of the sage which observes inchoate phenomena and finds pattern or form

in it to which he gives a name. We conspicuously do this all the time in contemporary astronomy when strange phenomena swim into the view of ever more powerful instruments and are seen for the first time, given shape, and names. These then enter the metaphorical language of humankind as icons of galactic structure, star-formation, supernovae, comet tails and so on.

If we are seeing a process by which ineffable and invisible things slowly take form out of a Tao beyond name and form and are reproduced as images, then we can perhaps understand why even the first productions of the two primal forces are called "images" and the eight trigrams which they in turn produce are also called images. Out of the eight trigrams come the sixty-four hexagrams and they too are described as images. What is being "produced and reproduced" out of the Supreme Ultimate is exactly this: images. They reverberate and resonate through each other with the first energy.

The *Ta Chuan* gives an explicit definition of image in chapter I.11: "One closing and one opening is called change. Coming and going without exhaustion is called penetration. Seen (manifest) it is called image." It is as if the friction of the Two Modes interacting produces light and that allows the first images to be seen. What is brilliant about what we would call this ancient Chinese cosmology is that it includes the Unmanifest and the darkness of potential energy as the precursor to light and manifestation. It recognizes the ineffability of all that precedes the manifest world and its spirit-like quality. The *I Ching* takes up the moment when the first things are seen as images because it is at this point that they can be used and become part of the great field of action that is the human enterprise.

If we are looking narrowly for a source of material things, we are confined to "the building blocks of matter." If we are looking instead for a source of consciousness or cosmic imagination that forms out of the simplest archetypes or patterns, then we are looking for images or something close to what contemporary chaos and complexity scientists would call fractals.

In the *I Ching* cosmos, what precedes the images are forms of energy which begin to coalesce as the "images" which become associated with the four seasons or four phases of light, representing the first distribution of energy in time and space. Because this is the beginning of images that can be grasped and imitated by the sages, this is where the *I*

Ching begins and this is why the line in chapter 8 may not be in error in its original form: "In the Changes there are four images, in order to reveal; there are judgments appended, in order to interpret; good fortune and misfortune are determined, in order to decide." This may be intended as a subtle description of the fact that every phase of manifestation—from its primal beginning to the everyday affairs of humans—is encompassed by the *I Ching*.

Thus the first role of the *I Ching* sages was to examine as extensively as possible even the seemingly incoherent and "confused diversities" and find in them a coherence; a pattern. In this task, they are the self-organizing power at the "center" between heaven and earth.

Completing Images and Forms

At this point it may be helpful for us to review some of the material from Part III in which we carefully examined the original text of chapter 11 to understand its description of *hsiang* and *hsing*.

In Legge's translation we found that "The (first) appearance of anything (as a bud) is what we call a semblance (*hsiang*); when it has received its complete form (*hsing*), we call it a definite thing [vessel]" (Legge 1969, 299). To quote from our summary in that chapter—"There is a fundamental energy in the universe, *chi*, which is expressing itself in two modes congenial to the respective realms of Heaven and Earth, Chien and Kun. As *chi* is "enclosed," an entity of some kind is "completed." There is a wholeness which comes into particular form (*hsing*) through this closure. The fact that he (closure) can also be applied to "family" underlines the fact that *hsing* is not limited to literal materialization or embodiment. A family is also a unit that has an inside and an outside, hence a conceptual boundary enclosing it. Thus the capacity of *K'un* is to give form to, enclose, make a unit, unify, whether through embodiment, materialization or some other integrative operation."

In another line from chapter 11, we saw that the *chi* was "restrained, trimmed, regulated, established" as a "means, model, law, plan, pattern" (*fa*) which made it "fit for, apt for, focused, useful" (*yung/yong*). It is through use that the energy establishes itself as

a pattern or method. The movement of the passage is from image to form (embodiment), to use, to pattern or method as the seamless flow of Tao manifesting in phenomena.

Literally translating the next line, we have "harvesting or reaping the benefits through use brings tranquility to the self by means of reverence." The character for reverence contains elements meaning "reveal" or "illuminate" depicting the sun, moon and stars and the character 出 (*ch'ü*), "go out, emerge, beget;" an image of a "going out" as begetting and blossoming, as if the sun, moon and stars themselves were giving birth as the images in heaven blossom forth and are "completed" as the embodied forms of earth's ten thousand things.

This is followed by our now familiar word, 德 (*te/de*), as virtue or power. Applying the benefits or reaping the harvest of the entire process through use brings tranquility to the self by means of its reverent or lofty virtue. As we observed earlier, what is called "spiritual" or "divine" is the power of the human (or any creature) to harvest the world; to make use of it.

This is exactly the work that the ancient holy sages were about in their creation of the images of the *I Ching*. We must remember that in its original form, only the images existed. It was the work of later sages to add the judgments and the words of the lines and the commentaries, including the *Ta Chuan*.

Modeling the Images

What we are seeing in the sage might be called "cosmic imagination" if imagination is taken as the original activity of consciousness: the making of coherent shapes and then meaningfully connecting them into patterns, numbers and finally language and ideas. If we look more closely at the passage from chapter I.8 quoted above in the Wilhelm/Baynes translation, we can see that the original language carries a greater degree of subtlety. We might make the following more literal translation:

The sage possesses the means of seeing
all under heaven's diversities and similarities
All of their forms and faces.
He images their appropriateness as things.

Therefore they are called images.
The sage possesses the means of seeing
all under heaven's movement
and contemplating its interpenetrating system.
The means to enact its rules and proprieties.
(Author's translation)

(*Ta Chuan* I.8)

聖人有以見天下之賾、

Sage possesses the means of seeing all under heaven's diversities

而擬諸其形容..

and similarities; all of their forms and faces.

象其物宜。是故謂之象、

He imagines their suitable objectification. Therefore called their images.

聖人有以見 天下之動

sage possesses the means of seeing all under heaven's movements

而觀其會通。

and contemplating their interpenetrating system

以行其典禮

The means to enact its rules and proprieties.

The imaging process described here is common to every individual who has stood at the edge of a new frontier, from the great explorers, to the great artists and poets; from composers capturing inwardly heard music to biologists involved in mapping the human genome; from particle physicists peering ever deeper into matter, to the astronomers we have described before, seeing something new and unknown, classifying it, naming it; trying to "make out" something in the far distance. This is the fundamental activity of human consciousness, making use of the vessel of the human body, to image the reality of the universe.

The sage also sees sequences of movements and possesses the ability to regard them as an interpenetrating system; to perceive the relationship of each to the whole. Yet how strange the last five characters which seem appended as an odd afterthought: literally this would be "to walk its rules and ceremonies." The last two characters, tien/dian *li*, are very common words in Chinese tradition referring to "the rites and ceremonies." How does this imaging possibly lead so directly to ritual and ceremonial action?

The answer to this may lie in the three-fold levels of the sage's activity. Up to this point, the sage has been engaged in a "seeing" which we can recognize as the objective process of observation. But where the Chinese sage and the western "observer" differ is that the sage's process and field of action is also subjective. A movement is taking place in his heart-mind which gives rise simultaneously to images and the reverence they invoke within him; an awe for their spirit-like origins. We can begin to see reverence itself as the meeting of inner *shen* with outer *shen* or the resonance of the unfathomable within the sage, at the "deepest core" of his being, with the unfathomable depths of the universe as a moving, spirit-filled whole: the great image within the sage is identical to the great image within Tao. He "holds it in his hand." The sage and the Tao are one, just as a Christian mystic, or a mystic in any tradition, experiences a oneness with God, divinity. This invokes a response, which is reverence, and a responding gesture, which is ritual or celebration in order to give "image" to it and to awaken the image in others.

Hence we find in chapter I.8 the line, "Heaven creates divine (*shen*) things; the holy sage takes them as models. Heaven and earth change and transform; the holy sage imitates them" (Wilhelm 1977, 320). We can see here that what is most fundamentally being regarded as divine are the images generated out of the unfathomable mystery of Tao and T'ai Chi as the manifest order of creation.

The act of the sage is more than observation, more even than organizing and ordering. It is a modeling and imitating which is itself a form of reproduction, as we have noted earlier. The sage embodies the divine images, preserving their spirit-like numinosity through rules and ceremonies. If we "contemplate the image" of those characters it might be helpful.

典 禮

The first character is defined as "dictionary," "records" and is described by Wilder and Ingram as depicting bamboo books placed upon a table. The second character contains the element for spirit and an ornamental vessel that was used for sacrificial offerings. On the one hand, we might see the sage's act of receiving and recording images as similar to the way a dictionary records words and contains the language through which a culture expresses itself. The decorated vessel used in sacrifice suggests the way in which the sage returns what has been received, recirculates the numinosity of the original gift so that human, image and Tao remain in harmony. This is essentially what artists do when they receive an inspiration and create out of that an image or object which carries the feeling or numen of the original inspiration and returns it to the world having transformed it within the vessel of his or her own life and imagination.

In Part II.2, we see the sage about this work in a very concrete way in the person of Pao Hsi (Fu Hsi), the legendary inventor of the *I Ching*:

When in early antiquity Pao Hsi ruled the world, he looked upward and contemplated the images in the heavens; he looked downward and contemplated the patterns on earth. He contemplated the markings of birds and beasts and the adaptations to the regions. He proceeded directly from himself and indirectly from objects. Thus he invented the eight trigrams in order to enter into connection with the virtues of the light of the gods and to regulate the conditions of all beings. (Wilhelm 1977, 329)

The sage is never a passive *recipient* of knowledge or a philosophical recluse. He or she is always a conduit of the highest insights charged with the task of translating these into tools for the use of the people. The chapter which follows this passage is labeled in the Wilhelm edition "History of Civilization." In it, Pao Hsi (Fu Hsi), as culture hero, uses the images of the *I Ching* hexagrams as inspiration for making nets, boats, plowshares, markets and other essential tools to improve the lot of the people and to bring peace and order to their lives.

While Pao Hsi is a mythical figure and the History of Civilization a mythical record, the value of the sage's activity in emulating the virtue of heaven is a constant thread through ancient Chinese thought and tradition. The poem with which we opened this chapter is actually an ode celebrating the virtue of the Marquis of Lu and his conquest of the barbarous tribes of Huai. Here is the rest of the poem which precedes the last first quoted above.

Pleasant is the semi-circular water,
And we will gather the mallows about it.
The marquis of Lu has come to it,
And in the college he is drinking.
He is drinking the good spirits;
And may there be given him the old age that is seldom enjoyed!
May he accord with the grand ways,
So subduing to himself all the people!

Very admirable is the marquis of Lu,
Reverently displaying his virtue,
And reverently watching over his department,
The pattern of the people.
With great qualities truly civil and martial,
Brilliantly he affects his meritorious ancestors.
In everything entirely filial,
He seeks the blessing for himself.

Very intelligent is the marquis of Lu,
Making his virtue illustrious.
He has made this college with its semicircle of water,
And the tribes of the Huai will submit in consequence. (Legge 2000)

CHAPTER 6: CHANGE, TRANSFORMATION AND THE SAGE

易
i (yi) ⁴
yi ⁴
picto- graph of a lizard; probably a chameleon
change easy I (Ching)

In the pattern of heaven-and-earth there has never been anything that could be long-lasting by not moving. By moving, "it ends and then begins again." This is how it is long-lasting without becoming exhausted. There has never been anything produced by heaven-and-earth, even the solidity and depth of great mountains, that is able not to change. Therefore lasting long is not being set (i ting). If it were set it would not last long. The constant tao lies only in changing according to the times (sui-shih-pien-i).

--Ch'eng I (Smith, Bol at al, 163)

變
pien ⁴
bian ⁴
threads + speech 言
change

The sage, indeed every human, is faced with two forms of change. The first is the ever-changing environment of the immediate world and of the universe itself. Cheng I's understanding with regard to the constant flux of the world, one that is rooted in the *Ta Chuan* and the *I Ching*, anticipates a view made clear to us by the discoveries of science centuries later. The human body is never the same from one minute to the next. A solid mountain is made up of elementary particles in constant motion. Any biologist would assert with Cheng I that if this motion were to cease, the body would die. As to the changing subatomic world within the mountain, the cessation of this is unimaginable. The mountain can crumble, yes, but how can one "cease" the play of energy that makes atoms and molecules and their shifting career as matter through its phases?

化
hua ⁴
hua ⁴
21
person 人 + over-turn 匕
transform, metamor- phosis, change

The work of the sage at this level is one of adaptability. It is to convert a helpless life of "reaction to fate" into one of "correct response" which shapes the circumstance of each moment into a tool that fashions or completes the individual destiny which in turn funds the destiny of others and the whole. It is at the level of response that the second form

of change is encountered: the conscious and deliberate work of transformation undertaken by the individual as "self-cultivation"; the task of illuminating the inner nature through the virtue of enlightened action; the task of "completing one's nature."

Finding the Minutest Springs of Things as *pien*

To accomplish this, the sage must be capable of the three-fold action described previously: to carefully follow the movements of the heavens, of the earth and of his inmost nature. What he is observing are the patterns of change and their "minutest springs" as they take shape and interact within himself, among others and throughout nature both terrestrial and cosmic. In doing this, as we noted in the chapter on the yarrow stalk operations, the sage enters into ever more subtle realms of phenomena to find the seeds of change. He enters the realm of "random chance," the first glimmers of change as *pien*, and thereby has the opportunity to use that phenomenon as an instrument of transformation, not just for himself, but for all under heaven.

Western science has followed a similar course in its investigation of things. The more we understand about the operation of things at a microscopic level, the minutest springs of things, the more we can intervene at that level and contravene the "laws" of that operation. But this is an interesting point: when we have discovered the law of how the gene operates, it is no longer "random chance." Yet the moment we have discovered that law, we are prepared to alter it and substitute a new one through our own genetic engineering, which in a sense makes us the author of a new "randomness" that defies a law. It suggests that laws or principles are themselves intertwined with our own experience of nature. There is a Chinese saying that when things go well, that is destiny. When they go badly, that is fate. If we and the universe are one in a truly organic sense, there really is not a separate random world and then a sensible one of laws we have detected and reinforced. From the perspective of human consciousness, which is the only one we know, the patterns of the universe arise with our engagement of it. And that engagement is wise, reverent and virtuous with enlightened action, or it is chaotic and fraught with the baser motives of the inferior side of humanity. If that is the case, nature itself will take a turn in that direction. The universe needs the human to give aid to the light of gods and human failure brings on darkness and a regression, a dissolution.

Shao Yung: "The mind is the Supreme Ultimate"

Shao Yung, in his contemplation of the *Ta Chuan* and the way of the sage, takes a step that is generally followed, in one way or another, by most of the other Sung philosophers and is implied by the Klein bottlish quality of the original text:

"The mind is the Supreme Ultimate."

"The Supreme Ultimate is one, unmoving. It produces two; when there are two is *shen*."

"*Shen* produces number, number images, when images, instruments."

"The Preceding Heaven learning is a training of the mind; therefore the charts are all developed from the centre. The innumerable transformations and activities are born in the mind. (Graham 1992, 154)

This is a huge shift for us, for whom for centuries such a subjective relationship to the Cosmos would have been deemed a scientific heresy. But that perspective has shifted since the quantum revolution. There is a certain irony to the fact that some avant-garde physicists like Amit Goswami have shifted their views toward the Buddhist model of reality as a way of accommodating the blur created by the double vision of separate objective and subjective realities. The Sung philosophers were also challenged by the flourishing of Buddhism—introduced into China in the first century AD—to give new life and breadth to Confucian thought. Although the *Ta Chuan* makes no statement to the effect that the Supreme Ultimate is in the mind, it is not inconsonant with a reality which was always seen as emanating from the human rather than from some purely objective nonhuman direction.

Certainly Shao Yung's language helps us move away from our traditional view of cause and effect as an external mechanism beyond our control. What if the random changes in our environment are somehow seen as issuing from a still-point in the Supreme Ultimate which is within us, yet also cleaving itself into the myriad things right here between our bones? Then the entire process which we followed in the yarrow-stalk chapter, from the smallest level of change as *pien*, to the macrophase changes of the universe as the chameleon *i*, are happening within and through us in every moment. Strange idea.

Strange it may be, but the *I Ching* is based upon a perspective that is not far off from this. How else is it possible that I could pose a question to an oracle composed over

two thousand years ago and receive an answer about something intimate in my twenty-first century life? It is a relationship between change and principle, between what passes away and what abides, out of which I am the flowering and so is within me. The *I Ching* will merely resonate with that because it was created around the same fundamental seed.

The Reverse Path of Sages

The reverse path of the sage is always to move back from the ten thousand things, through the 64 conditions of change, through the eight basic images of the trigrams, through the four primary images, the realm of number and spirit that arise with the two modes, to the great image that has no form; to the Supreme Ultimate itself. For Taoists and Buddhists especially this was attained through the process of quieting the mind. Neo-Confucianism, though articulating itself over against both, was less in opposition to this approach than complementary to it. All three traditions, in their highest forms, were teaching and refining the way of the sage but expressing them in different realms. Of the three, Confucian thought was the one most dedicated to the action of the sage in the world and on the world. To return to the Supreme Ultimate through an act of the mind was to "put oneself in accord with Tao and its power," as Wilhelm/Baynes translate the opening chapter of the Eighth Wing, "The Discussion of the Trigrams" (262). But we should not overlook the fact that the word they translate as "power" is *te*, which is also "virtue" as the constantly emergent quality of its "one-ing."

While Shao Yung was writing his major works in Loyang in the 1060s and 70s, a Taoist named Chang Po-Tuan was meeting the great Taoist master Liu Ts'ao nearby in western China in the year 1069. Chang Po-Tuan became the author of an important classic of Taoist alchemy *Wu Chen P'ien*, translated into English by Thomas Cleary in 1987 as *Understanding Reality*, with a 17th century commentary by Liu I-ming. Taoist alchemy was the polar opposite of the engaged Confucianism of the philosophers of Loyang, yet it shares roots in elements of the *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan*. In Cleary's introduction to the book, we can see a similar concern with addressing change through a reverse movement of the human mind. There is a distinction first between "the mind of Tao" and "the human mind."

According to the *Chung Ho Chi*, the mind of Tao is the "shining mind," while the human mind is the "wandering mind." What the Taoist tries to do in these terms, is to still the wandering mind and sustain the shining, effecting thereby a stabilization of lucid awareness. (Cleary 1987, 5)

We can recognize *shen* in this language as the spirit-like and numinous. In the fundamental precepts of the work, indeed of Taoist alchemy in general, we find a familiar phrase from chapter I.4 of the *Ta Chuan: hsing ming*, used to describe the whole process as the study of "essence and life."

The mind of Tao and the human mind are also associated with "real knowledge" and "conscious knowledge." Real knowledge is held to be non-discursive, immediate knowing, originally inherent in the human being and not the product of learning. Conscious knowledge is the everyday awareness of ordinary life, formed by training and experience.

Real knowledge and conscious knowledge are in turn associated with "sense and essence." Essence is the essence of fundamental nature or consciousness itself; sense is its function. In the conditioned state, essence is frozen into personality and temperament, while sense wanders into feelings. The effort here is to join sense and essence; this may be described as developing a sense of the real essence of mind, and sensing reality directly from the essence of consciousness rather than through the acquired configurations of temperament. (Cleary 1987, 6)

The subtle practice of this work involved "blending and transcending yin and yang" so that in the end there is no fixed duality between stillness and movement. In a later commentary on the work, this process is summarized by a phrase from the *I Ching*: "Tranquil and unperturbed, yet sensitive and effective (8)." Obviously this transcendence of the dual modes returns one to the still poise of the Supreme Ultimate which may open into its possibilities, take up its tools, in a responsive gesture to the next moment.

To reach this point, according to Cleary's description, one must employ "reversal" rather than "going along." In this instance, reversal is related to the Five Elements. In the conditioned state, these "Five Walkings" have associations in the human personality as temperament (wood), volatility (fire), arbitrary intentions (earth), feelings (metal), desire (water). In the primordial state, wood stands for essence, fire for open consciousness, earth for true intent, metal for true sense and water for real knowledge. The classic order of overcoming of these elements is earth-water-fire-metal-wood, each element literally

capable of overcoming the next one. In the conditioned equivalents this means that temperament overcomes will so that will degenerates into arbitrary intentions; arbitrary intentions overcome real knowledge so that it degenerates into desire. Desire overcomes consciousness so that it becomes volatile and unstable. Volatility overcomes sense so that it fragments into feelings. Feelings overcome essence so that it is molded into temperament and the circle of conditioning is complete.

By reversing that direction, essence overcomes feelings so that they return to true sense. True sense overcomes volatility so that it returns to clear consciousness. Clear consciousness overcomes desire so that it returns to real knowledge. Real knowledge overcomes willfulness so that it returns to true intent. True intent overcomes temperament so that it returns to essence (9).

This is an impressive example of exploring our inner nature to its deepest core and "grasping" the seeds of our thoughts and actions. According to Cleary, the goal of the study of essence and life, *hsing ming*, is the inner and outer integration of the human being. We too have come round full circle to *ming ming te*: "To brighten one's bright virtue" so that an inner brightness shines through to an outer brightness of conduct which aids and inspires the people.

I Ching hexagrams are used to describe phases of the alchemical process and Taoist texts speak of the "crucible of the eight trigrams." The "gold" was to attain the original, uncorrupted energy beyond yin and yang in that moment when the two are transcended. As aspiring European alchemists were sometimes consumed by the delusion that they were after the wealth of material gold, so aspiring Chinese alchemists sometimes imagined their goal as overcoming death with an immortal, imperishable body. Yet the true Taoist alchemists made significant contributions to the importance of the body and physical practices which included The Eight-Step Brocade and T'ai Chi Chuan, the latter introduced by the Ming Dynasty Taoist adept Chang San-feng.

We find a beautiful expansion on the *Ta Chuan* passage on change in chapter 11 from a 13th century Taoist text by Li Tao-ch'un, *The Book of Balance and Harmony*. It follows as a description of how "the primordial true awareness should be brought to the center of consciousness" through the Mind of Tao. The passage is entitled "On Cultivating Openness."

The Tao is fundamentally utterly open;
 Open nonreification produces energy,
 One energy divides into two modes:
 The one above, clear, is called heaven;
 The one below, opaque, is called earth.
 Heaven is round and unmoving;
 The north star, never shifting, governs motion.
 The eastward flow, never exhausted, governs stillness.
 The "north star" is the heart of heaven and earth.
 The "eastward flow" is the energy of heaven and earth.
 When the heart is nurtured by openness, It thereby becomes still;
 When energy is nurtured by openness, it thereby circulates.
 When the human mind is calm and quiet,
 Like the north star not shifting,
 The spirit is most open and aware.
 For one who sees this
 The celestial Tao is within oneself.
 ...
 Responding to the time and people,
 One rests the spirit in openness,
 Acts in openness,
 Reveals the state of openness in speech.
 When openness reveals the point
 Where there is not even any "openness,"
 Then all logic ends.
 When you plunge into openness,
 Heaven and earth come to you.
 With open heart and upright bearing,
 Be like the green bamboo;
 This is the foremost device for cultivating openness.
 (Cleary 1989, 91)

All three Chinese traditions—Taoist, Confucian and Buddhist—become very complex and ornate in their systems over time. Ornamentation, ritual, the rules of propriety, elaborate mathematical and philosophical categories all become encrusted with layers and hierarchies that eventually stifle the breathing of new life which is at the heart of the *Ta Chuan* and the *I Ching*. Certainly throughout this time, a lineage of genuinely inspired scholars and adepts persisted, but in the mainstream of Chinese life, an inability to adapt to changing times and to generate novelty doomed these traditions in their more static forms so that they would probably not have survived the twentieth century intact even without the Maoist revolution. They violated the number one edict of these texts: change.

Change and Transformation in the Contemporary West

A thousand years later, how do we on the other side of the world from Loyang look at these ideas and the concept of change? Is the sage a constant who can be resurrected in any time and culture and bear the gifts of his or her wisdom to "the people"? If the adaptability that is the core idea of both the *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan* is carried forward, then the answer should of course be Yes. But our culture, true to its antipodal relation to the East, is far more likely to be drowned in its own change than crumble from its ossified traditions. If anything, change is moving too fast for our wisdom, let alone our virtue, to keep apace.

Tens of thousands of English versions of Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* have been sold in the west as an antidote to our own extremes of rational aridity and mindless rush. Tens of thousands of copies of the *I Ching* have also been published in English and consumed by readers longing for other modes of inquiry and insight. What are the valuable insights in the *Ta Chuan* that may await us fresh and waiting to be reborn, here on the other side of the world? It seems that it would be 1) to come into the right relationship with change and 2) to learn how to use change as a tool for the good of the people.

When chapter one says that heaven and earth establish their places and change takes place within them, this means that change takes place within an ultimate principle or unity from which heaven and earth have themselves emerged. Granted the principle, as Tao, is without name and form but it is clearly One. This means that the cosmos is not a chaos, although chaos is one of its phases. This is true also of a creator God from whom all of creation issues as an ultimately meaningful and benevolent event, even when it complexifies to a point that generates good fortune and misfortune, goodness and evil. Heaven and Earth, as the first "offspring" of the one ineffable ultimate, are close to that benevolent and creative or originating power. It is for this reason that the sage strives to "imitate" the virtues of Heaven and Earth through embodying the images of *Ch'ien* and *K'un*.

The first and second hexagrams, as the images of Heaven and of Earth, provide the most direct language for how this imaging process is undertaken. Together they

provide a blueprint for the sage's response to change. The most poetic and lucid language comes from their commentaries, the *Wen Yen*.

The way of the Creative works through change and transformation, so that each thing receives its true nature and destiny and comes into permanent accord with the Great Harmony: this is what furthers and what perseveres.
(Wilhelm 1977, 371)

This restates the fact that change is the shaping instrument of an on-going creation. This is what is meant in chapter I.12 of the *Ta Chuan* which says in one place, "Transformation and shaping are what is meant by change (*pien*)" and elsewhere in the chapter, "Transformation and shaping are accomplished through change."

The Hexagram Lines as Six Phases of Change

Hexagram 1 demonstrates the literal meaning of this as it displays six stages of change or *pien*.

Because the holy man is clear as to the end and the beginning, as to the way in which each of the six stages completes itself in its own time, he mounts on them toward heaven as on six dragons.(Ibid.)

The six dragons are the yang energy that activates in turn each of "the six empty spaces" of the hexagram. Here are selections from the description of each of those six positions or stages of change as they appear in the *Wen Yen* or commentary of Hexagram 1 (Wilhelm/Baynes, 379). In each case, counsel is provided for both levels of change which the superior person or sage is encountering. It will become very clear that the sage recognizes the condition, the time, the proper response to the time, and the way to use the time to further his or her own character.

1. Hidden dragon. Do not act...The Master said: This means a person who has the character of a dragon but remains concealed. He does not change to suit the outside world; he makes no name for himself. He withdraws from the world, yet is not sad about it. He receives no recognition, yet is not sad about it. If lucky, he carries out his principles; if unlucky, he withdraws with them. Verily he cannot be uprooted. He is a hidden dragon.... The superior man acts in accordance with the character that has become perfected [completed] within him. This is a way of life that can submit to scrutiny on any day."

2. Dragon appearing in the field. The Master said, "This means a man who has the character of a dragon and is moderate and correct. Even in ordinary speech he is reliable. Even in ordinary actions he is careful. He does away with what is false and preserves his integrity. He improves his era and does not boast about it. His character is influential and transforms men.... Through him the whole world attains beauty and clarity. The superior man learns in order to gather material; he questions in order to sift it. Thus he becomes generous in his nature and kindly in his actions.
3. All night long the superior man is creatively active. At nightfall his mind is still beset with cares. Danger. No blame. The Master said: The superior man improves his character and labors at his task. It is through loyalty and faith that he fosters his character. By working on his words so that they rest firmly on truth, he makes his work enduring. He knows how this is to be achieved and achieves it; in this way he is able to plant the right seed. He knows how it is to be brought to completion and so completes it; thereby he is able to make it truly enduring. For this reason he is neither proud in his superior position nor disappointed in an inferior one.... The nine in the third place shows redoubled firmness and is moreover not in a central place. On the one hand it is not yet in the heavens above; on the other, it is no longer in the field below. Therefore one must be creatively active and, as circumstances demand, careful. Then, despite the danger, no mistake is made.
4. Wavering flight over the depths. No blame. The Master said: In ascent or descent there is no fixed rule, except that one must do nothing evil. In advance or retreat, no sustained perseverance prevails, except that one must not depart from one's nature. The superior man fosters his character and labors at this task, in order to do everything at the right time. Therefore he makes no mistake. "Wavering flight over the depths. He tests his powers.... Here the way of the Creative is about to transform itself.
5. Flying dragon in the heavens. It furthers one to see the great man. The Master said: Things that accord in tone vibrate together.... The great man accords in his character with heaven and earth; in his light, with the sun and moon; in his consistency with the four seasons; in the good and evil fortune which he creates, with gods and spirits. When he acts in advance of heaven, heaven does not contradict him. When he follows heaven, he adapts himself to the time of heaven. If heaven itself does not resist him, how much less do men, gods and spirits!
6. Arrogant dragon has cause to repent. The Master said: He who is noble and has no corresponding position, he who stands high and has no

following; he who has able people under him who do not have his support, that man will have cause for regret at every turn.... Everything that goes to extremes meets with misfortune. "Arrogant dragon will have cause to repent." In time he exhausts himself.... Arrogance means that one know how to press forward but not to draw back, that one knows existence but not annihilation, knows something about winning but nothing about losing. It is only the holy man who knows how to press forward and how to draw back, who knows existence and annihilation as well, without losing his true nature. The holy man alone can do this.

All of these lines are "positions" in which one may find oneself which are also moments in the temporal cycle of a process, seen here as sequential. A person graduating from college enters into the world complete with qualifications but is not recognized immediately. The yang energy is ready but the position is not right yet to act. Sometimes much more serious conditions, like a country at war or in economic depression prevent a person from being recognized or given a position to act. Or perhaps to show oneself is dangerous under the conditions. Perhaps one still has too much vulnerability. The line counsels patience and that it is timely to remain hidden.

As the dragon emerges, there are good times and bad times which are experienced; times of recognition and encouragement, times of resistance, confusion or adversity. But at each stage, the superior person responds from the higher or superior level of the self and steadily refines his character. He senses the appropriate timing of action and withdrawal, of perseverance and of rest.

How the sage "rests" within change

The sage "rests" in every position and in every action. Here is the commentary of our young memorialist, Cheng I, as the mature commentator addressing Hexagram.52, "Keeping Still:"

Of the myriad things and the multiple affairs, each has its [proper] place. If it gets its place, it is peaceful. If it loses its place, it is disorderly. That by which the sages could cause the world to be well governed is not that they could set rules for things. They only rested each in its proper place, that is all. (Smith et al 1990, 145)

Cheng I was echoing a statement of Confucius in the *Great Learning* that gives importance both to the idea of position and of rest as the key to "abiding in change.":

In the Book of Poetry it is said, "The royal domain of a thousand *li* is where the people rest." In the Book of Poetry it is said, "The twittering yellow bird rests on a corner of the mound." The Master said, "When it rests, it knows where to rest. Is it possible that a man should not be equal to this bird?"

In the Book of Poetry it is said, "Profound was King Wen. With how bright and unceasing a feeling of reverence did he regard his resting places!" As a sovereign he rested in benevolence. As a minister, he rested in reverence. As a son, he rested in filial piety. As a father, he rested in kindness. In communication with his subjects, he rested in good faith. (Legge 1971, 362)

CHAPTER 7: EXPANSION, PENETRATION AND THE SAGE

申
R.102
<i>shen</i> ¹
<i>shen</i> ¹
picto- graph of two hands stretching a rope
extend stretch explain

The versatility of tung is that it both extends and gathers, ventures outward and embraces. It can be intimate or universal. It has both a feminine and a masculine quality and so bestrides the great dyad as its unifying process. If we think in terms of the later emblem from the Han dynasty period, the Tai Chi symbol which has become popular in the west, tung is the white dot penetrating the black field and vice versa.
(From chapter 6)

Hexagram 1, as we have seen, depicts in its imagery the phases leading up to and following the dragon's appearance in the field. In line one, he is hidden. In line two, he emerges and is seen in his competent role in daily affairs. Then he is in the field but unrecognized. Then he has begun to lift himself into a new realm in a "wavering flight over the depths," entering a new transformation. Then he is high above the field and all look up to him. Then Icarus-like, he has flown too high and "will have cause to repent" unless he has the profound understanding of the sage of the time to withdraw; unless he understands "existence and annihilation."

We have met the word for "field" embedded in many characters, but here it appears by itself.

通
<i>tung</i> ¹
<i>tong</i> ¹
blossom 甬 + go 辶
go every- where interpene- trate through universal



In the language of archetypal forms, the figure contains the intersection of the two axes, horizontal and vertical, often described as the meeting of heaven and earth. The two intersecting lines alone form radical 24 and the number 10:

十

Ten is often seen as the number 1 expressed at a higher level. In the language of the *Ta Chuan*, it is the sum of the numbers for heaven and earth (5+5) and thus, once again, expresses the two realms. It is the number of completed "manifestation"; the ten thousand things. It appears above the element for seeing in the character for virtue--

德 (te/de)

meaning "ten eyes have seen it and called it true." It can express, therefore, the completion of inner nature in outward manifestation, whether it is the universe, an individual, a process or a conceptual form.

Two radicals—numbers 32 and 33--are formed by the appearance of the crossing lines above a bottom line indicating the earth.

土 32 士 33

There is obviously only a slight difference between them based on the size of the upper horizontal line. The first radical also forms the character meaning "earth, ground, soil, territory" and is described by Karlgren (1974), after the *Shuo Wen*, as depicting the two layers of earth with a plant growing out of it (1129). There is a similar etymology to the character 生 which means "to live; to bear; to produce; to produce life; new; student; scholar" (Karlgren 1974,874). Radical 33 is also the word for "officer; scholar;

gentleman" explained by Karlgren as depicting one person — out of 十 (877). It is cognate with a word meaning "affairs" and is also seen as a mastery of "all things one through ten" which would also suggest the officer, scholar or gentleman.

The character for "field" shows the figure enclosed on four sides which further emphasizes the idea of the four directions and the manifest realm of earth where the ten thousand things unfold and interact. Given all of these implications, we see how effectively it conveys also the idea of "the field of action" of the sage referred to at times in the *Ta Chuan* as "the great field of action" and which we have extended to the meaning of "the great work:" the work of completion.

In a more active sense, we find our familiar figure for expansion



This is derived, according to Wieger, from the character for "field" although it is said to have come originally from a pictograph of two hands stretching a rope. It means to "extend, stretch" and is also a cyclical number in a decimal sequence, "the ninth" (Wilder and Ingram, 227). "The ninth" is the number of fullness that completes one cycle before another begins. We could say that the space between heaven and earth is being stretched, expanded, filled. When the character appears as a phonetic in *shen* 神, it is described by Wilder and Ingram as the expansion of the numinous light from the sun, moon and stars, thus "spirit" or "God" (ibid.).

What is common to all of these characters is a "central point" where heaven and earth meet, or where the four directions are integrated, or the origin of expanding energy across a "field." Let us look at the characters we have encountered that contain some form of this theme:

十	土	士	田	申
ten	earth	scholar officer	field	extend expand
坤	神	用	通	井
<i>kun/gun</i> The Receptive Earth. Hexagram 2	<i>shen</i> spirit gods	<i>yung/yong</i> use	<i>tung/dong</i> interpene- tration	<i>ching/jing</i> well

The one character which seems dissimilar to the rest is the last character for the well because in this case the center is "empty" but is still literally indicated as the central feature as the tenth plot, located at the center of a village, reserved for the well, to be shared by all. It forms the image of the hexagram by that name, #48, in the *I Ching*. In all of these is contained the one (as the center) and the many in some form of integration of heaven and earth extended as the field of action of human life. Each of the characters has a relation to the people, and to "all under heaven" as the manifest world of the ten thousand things. This is the field of human affairs; the great field of action of the sage.

Tung has an important relationship to all of the characters above. It is most closely allied with "use" since it has that character as its root and can be literally described as depicting the blossoming of use in action. We have to remember too that the word *use* itself is a variation of the word 中 (*chung/zhong*), "middle, central" suggesting a target pierced in the center by an arrow (Wilder and Ingram, 21). This implies the capacity to hit the mark or find the appropriate, fit action. Archetypally, we also have a masculine and feminine image of the focused creative force being received by the round center of the receptive. Opposites meet in an energy that expresses itself in creative, useful activity. Karlgren's definition of the main element of *tung* is "to burst forth" (1974, 262). With the element for walking added to that we have the picture of a continuous, active, creative process.

As the central point is penetrated, something also bursts forth from it: the inexhaustible energy of the well. Hence we find in the *Ta Chuan* (I.11) the line "coming and going without exhaustion is called interpenetration" or *tung*. This follows the line that says "one opening and one closing is called change (*pien*)" suggesting that what comes and goes through the opening is inexhaustible and related to the bursting forth of penetration itself; an act of "using" the middle.

What is the relation of the sage to *tung*?

The ancient Chinese dictionary, the *Shuo Wen*, actually defines the first character in the word for sage, *sheng*, in this way:

Sheng 聖 means *t'ung*: to communicate with, to commune with, to be conversant with, to penetrate, to connect. (Hall and Ames 1987, 257)

Hall and Ames add to this the Pai-Hu-t'ung's definition:

Sheng means *T'ung* (to communicate, to connect, to penetrate through), *tao* (the process of becoming and the mode through which it unfolds, to speak), *sheng* (to sound, sound [a homophone of the first *sheng* above]). There is nothing that is not in communication by virtue of his *tao*; there is nothing that is not elucidated by virtue of his understanding. Hearing a sound he knows a thing's nature and conditions. He is one in potency (*te*) with heaven and earth, one in brilliance with the sun and moon, one in order with the four seasons, and one in propitiousness with the gods and spirits. (258)

Here are some of the contexts in the *Ta Chuan* in which the words "sage" and *T'ung* appear together:

- In chapter I.4 in which we find the description of the sage it says, "He penetrates the Tao of day and night and thus understands it" (Wilhelm 1977, 296). This implies that understanding must itself follow upon an act of penetration that gives rise to it.
- In I.8, the sages contemplated all the movements under heaven, the way in which "they met and became inter-related (*tung*), to take their course according to eternal laws" (Wilhelm 1977, 304). To contemplate the inter-relationship of movements in the heavens is to see their pattern. To see their pattern, to observe how they inter-penetrate, is to see how the disparate become one through their similarities. This is expressed in

Hexagram 1 with the comment that things of the same tone vibrate together. It corresponds to the discerning process of chapter one which separates inchoate phenomena into kinds and species. It is the meaning of the comment on Hexagram 3, "things must both separate and unite." It is a "penetrating" faculty of consciousness that upon distinguishing two things, at the same time unites them in the thought. It is a human capacity that is presented here as mirroring a cosmic and creative one.

- In I.10, we are told, "the Changes are what has enabled the sages to reach all depths and grasp the seeds of things. Only through what is deep can one penetrate all wills [aims, purposes] on earth. Only through the seeds can one complete all affairs on earth" (Wilhelm 1977, 316). To complete the blossoming of the nature, one must first know its seeds. There is a certain trajectory of development contained in the seed, an imprint of its completed form. The purpose of the acorn is to become an oak. The purpose of a winged maple seed is to develop into a maple tree. The purpose of each human being is similarly unique based upon the individual's nature. The sage has the power of discernment to "penetrate" to that point and further it. He is penetrating from his nature and will, to that of another which is the precursor to uniting them. It is a breaking down of the barriers between them through a deep understanding. In chapter I.11 the idea is developed further by saying that the sage uses the Changes (*I Ching*) to penetrate all purposes on earth. This cannot be a matter of discerning ten thousand different purposes, but rather of penetrating to the level where those purposes meet in common aims, like the production and preservation of life; harmony and tranquility.
- In II.2, we find "change (*pien*), then penetration (*tung*); penetration then duration."

The Sage and *Shen*

One of the splits that has come down through the modern West is the separation of sacred and secular. We can regard this in part as the discriminating function of consciousness which distinguishes between things. If we were to inquire into the seeds of this, we consider the emergence of the scientific mind which required a separation of objectivity and subjectivity to discover and apply its empirical laws. We might think further of the religious wars and oppressions that gave rise to religious freedoms and separation of church and state in modern democracies.

Yet if we follow the direction of the *I Ching* and its commentaries, we see that things separate in order to unite and that the sage descends to the roots of both of these conditions and "penetrates them" to find and embody the ground where they meet.

The *I Ching* and the *Ta Chuan* are not religious texts and yet they are permeated with what we call spiritual language. How can this be? The answer is that the sages regarded life itself to be numinous, as well as the universe's capacity to create and renew the ten thousand things. The foundation of the entire created order was itself spirit-like and unfathomable, and thus filled them with awe and reverence. The inference is that if one can penetrate to the unfathomable origin of things, one enters a holy and spirit-filled space: the presence of the Oneness that has provided the numinous experience for every culture.

This should interest us. The twenty-first century opened on the question of the relationship between science and spirituality. It is not clear exactly where that dialogue will go or how the gulf will be bridged. But the human has always been the ground upon which opposites meet and cooperate, however paradoxically. So whatever is to be said objectively about the meeting of Science and Spirituality or Religion, we can certainly speak about an individual sense and experience of the numinous while retaining an appropriate respect for rational investigation. The sages bridged these in their persons. If we leave aside current language here and follow the language of the *Ta Chuan*, the three-fold inquiry of the sage is undertaken with at least as much rigor as is applied by modern science. Even their exploration of the self to "its deepest core" is a level of self-inquiry and awareness that would still be considered rare. It is when the sages reach the "furthest

extent" of their inquiry—the depths of things—that they touch upon the spirit-like qualities that are beyond name and form as a profound integrative principle. Knowledge of this then infuses their whole being and their whole view so that when they take up the invention of the *I Ching*, it must also infuse that system.

We find a beautiful description in chapter I: 11 of the way the sages approached this task:

In this way the holy sages purified their hearts, withdrew and hid themselves in the secret. They concerned themselves with good fortune and misfortune in common with other men. (Wilhelm 1977, 316)

"In this way" refers to the previous lines in which we are told that the virtue of the yarrow stalks is round and spiritual and the wisdom of the hexagrams is square and wise. This refers to the shape of both but also may have a deeper meaning. The yarrow stalks, as we have seen, can mirror the cosmos itself. One of them is set aside to represent the entirety or T'ai Chi. The first operations (as manipulations of the yarrow stalks) begin in the realm of chance as the first stirring of phenomena; of *pien*. Behind Tai Chi there is Tao, unmanifest and unfathomable, but it is not on that account separate from the manifest world. It enters into and is present in every "oneness," each of the ten thousand entities as the Tao of each, expressed as its unfolding nature. Thus the *Ta Chuan* tells us that "that which is unfathomable in the yin and the yang is called spirit (I.5)." Since the word *shen* contains the element for "expand, extend," we can consider that *shen* IS the power which makes the expansion across the field of the Cosmos, to the Furthest Extent, possible.

It takes eighteen such manipulations to form the hexagram. This provides the units which can be used to distinguish between conditions. It corresponds to the lines in chapter one: "squared according to their tendencies." The round, spiritual versatility of the yarrow stalks, which can reach into the subtlest beginnings of things, is transformed through change (*pien*) into a unit that expresses the workings of the day to day mundane world; the affairs of humans. Thus it is square, like earth, seen as "square" in its four directions.

The sages themselves used the yarrow stalks to purify their hearts. That they "withdrew and hid themselves in the secret" may refer to the realm they entered as they

took up the yarrow stalks: they were in the secret unfathomable realm before the beginning of things. If, as Shao Yung said, the Supreme Ultimate is within, then they would have reached into the deepest recesses of their own being, probably through meditation and fasting, as a way to cleanse or purify their minds (*hsin*: heart-minds). This one sentence in the *Ta Chuan* alone would make it resonant with later Buddhism and Taoism. Yet in its sheer simplicity it is without dogma which would isolate it.

Wang Bi's interpretation of this line is somewhat different. In the Lynn translation it reads, "The sages used these [yarrow stalks, hexagrams and lines] to purify hearts and minds [of the myriad creatures]." No doubt both readings of the line are relevant. The next line of this translation reads "When it is retired, it becomes hid among its secrets" (Wang Bi/Lynn, 64). The line is applied to the *I Ching* rather than to the sages. This only underlines the principle that the language of the *Ta Chuan* can be applied in three ways: to the cosmos of Heaven-and-Earth; to the system of the *I Ching*; and to the sage. In the oracular moment, it is also extended to the querent, who must likewise purify his or her own heart and mind when entering into it.

The lines which follow in chapter I.11 we have met before. Let us consider them carefully now in the light of the sage's *shen*.

They concerned themselves with good fortune and misfortune in common with other men. They were divine [*shen*], hence they knew the future; they were wise, hence they stored up the past. Who is it that can do all this? Only the reason and clear-mindedness of the ancients, their knowledge and wisdom, their unremitting divine [*shen*] power. (Wilhelm 1977, 317)

In connection with the previous lines, we are seeing the capacity of the sages to abide in the secret depths of things and also to be concerned about the affairs and fortunes of other humans. This is a rather remarkable combination of sanctity (like the spiritual virtue of Christian, Buddhist or Taoist monks), high intelligence (like the scientist or historian) and humaneness or compassion (like the social worker or a Mother Theresa).

The word that Wilhelm and Baynes translate as divine is *shen*. The sages are carrying the numinous energy of the unfathomable Tao, or the unfathomable qualities of yin and yang, into the realm of people's lives. How does *shen* allow them to know the future? The word for future is *lai* which literally meanings "coming." In our previous study of image and form in this chapter, we found this word paired with *wang* meaning

"going" with the implication of things coming and going into and out of form. This is a process with a pattern of phases as we saw in Hexagram 1 where the dragon, as yang energy, rises through the six lines. It is not an oracular magic which allows the sage to know the future, but his observation of and mastery of the patterns of change. The sage knows, for example, that flowering will be followed by a decline. If he understands the various conditions in effect at a given time, he or she can also see where they are in the natural phases of change and have an understanding of where they are "going" and what is "coming." This is in fact a highly complex knowledge of the nature of things and their "subtle beginnings."

We find later in the same chapter that "They raised spiritual things before the people for their use," in particular "the beneficial use of going out and coming in." The subtle beginnings of things represent the point where they are "just coming in" and if one can discern that moment one can use that awareness to avert danger or to foster potential good fortune. Thus we find lines like the Image of Hexagram 64: "If the little fox, after nearly completing the crossing, gets his tail in the water, there is nothing that would further" (Wilhelm 1977, 249). This is as pithy an observation as any fable might offer and certainly has its origins in a natural folk wisdom. It is the evolved system of the *I Ching* and the commentaries appended to it over time that raise it to a higher level, grounded in so simple and immediate a "seeing."

The following paragraph in chapter I.11 summarizes the sages' "great work" with the *Ta Chuan's* characteristic simplicity and in a few sentences could be said to outline a "participatory cosmology" that unites the Way of Heaven with the Way of Earth through the Way of the enlightened human as sage:

Therefore they fathomed the tao of heaven and understood the situations of men.
Thus they invented these divine things in order to meet the needs of men. The
holy sages fasted for this reason in order to make their natures divinely clear.
(Wilhelm/Baynes, 317)

Wilhelm's translation, "they invented the divine things," underlines the awkwardness of viewing the text in Western terms. It is an oxymoron (or worse yet a heresy) to speak of "inventing divine things" since "divine" in English is an adjective that distinguishes God from the human. It is more literal and accurate to say that they "raised up these spiritual things before the people for their use." The word *hsing/xing*) which

Wilhelm translates as "invent," is a character depicting hands raised in a joint effort and has meanings of "lift, raise, rise originate, begin, elation, joy, joyful, desire, passion" (Karlgrén, 1150). The sages, from their hidden place in the secret of things—their unfathomable beginnings reached through the purification of their hearts and minds, and a profound examination of the inner and outer world—are able to be guided by their knowledge of the Way of Heaven toward insight into the situations of their fellow-humans. There is a feeling of mutuality to the word *hsing* which suggests that the spiritual tool of the *I Ching* emerges from this, lifted up before the people, for the use of the people. It is only through the use of it by the people that it will be activated, sustained and completed. The *I Ching*, as it is depicted in this text, leads to a kind of communal elevation, reminiscent of those opening lines of the Canon of Yao: Through the wisdom and virtue of his leadership, the people of his domain were "regulated and polished" (like the eight trigrams in chapter one), becoming "brightly intelligent... And lo! The black-haired people were transformed." People who have consulted the *I Ching* in the contemporary West have experienced this sense of being lifted to a higher level of themselves by the language of the text, even when it is arcane or elusive in its meaning. As a tool for the use of the people, it has the power to elevate them and bring them into touch with the numinous; open up for them momentarily "the shining Mind of Tao." Like the comment on the trigram for Thunder in the *Ta Chuan*, "God comes forth in the sign of the arousing," "God comes forth" here through the purity and effort of the sages, in solitude then in concert with the people, to give form to the numinous images through the tool of the *I Ching*, to move into the future with a right action that will lead to a prospering; to a harvest.

A similar idea is expressed in the previous chapter, I.10, with interesting and revealing nuances in the Wang Bi/Lynn translation:

It is by means of the Changes that the sages plumb the utmost profundity and dig into the very *incipience* of things. It is profundity alone that allows one to penetrate the aspirations of all the people in the world; and it is the numinous alone that allows one to make quick progress without hurrying and reach goals without forcing one's way. (Wang Bi/Lynn, 63)

* * *

So the universe divides and subdivides with the efficiency of the cell in mitosis, but carried throughout this is the reintegrative power of the one as *shen*, guaranteeing its "return" to wholeness. The whole-making power of *shen* is also behind the organizing principle that "penetrates" or opens up free course between things. It is the human patterning of meanings that can unite the smallest spermatozoa with the elephant in the categorical system that arranges the species into families, families into orders, and so on. All of this is a form of clarity, luminosity, "enlightenment" that inspires and impels the human within the experience of consciousness.

Therefore for modeling images there is none greater than Heaven and Earth; for transforming and penetrating, there is none greater than the four seasons; for imaging a high position and manifesting brightness, there is none greater than the sun and the moon; of that which is revered and honored, there is none greater than abundance and nobility.

For preparing things to be used as vessels through which things come into being for all under Heaven's benefit, there is none greater than the sage.

For exploring what is complex, for searching out what is hidden, for gathering what is deep, for approaching what is far, in order to determine all under Heaven's good fortune and misfortune and to complete all below heaven's resolve, there is none greater than the yarrow stalks and the tortoise shell.

(*Ta Chuan* I.11.7; Author's translation)

The Sage as Mystic

Traditional Chinese philosophers would eschew the description of "mystic" for the *I Ching* sage as it is usually defined in the West. Since the word is generally associated with a transcendental or unearthly experience, it is understandably distinct from the engaged and active way of the sage, who uses both "advance and withdrawal" in their proper timing. Nevertheless, two twentieth century writers—both early and significant participants in revisioning the Western "cosmos" story—seem to express beautifully the ideas conveyed here by the interpenetration of *T'ung* and the numinosity of *shen*. Each expresses access to the highest quality of being and relationship that is the Great Work of the sage.

Here first is Henri Bergson, writing in *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*:

True mystics simply open their souls to the oncoming wave. Sure of themselves, because they feel within them something better than themselves, they prove to be great men of action, to the surprise of those for whom mysticism is nothing but

visions, and raptures and ecstasies. That which they have allowed to flow into them is a stream flowing down and seeking through them to reach their fellow men; the necessity to spread around them what they have received affects them like an onslaught of love. A love which each one of them stamps with his own personality. A love which is in each of them an entirely new emotion, capable of transposing human life into another tone (1954, 99).

On our scale of ascending relationships through the creative unfolding of the *Ta Chuan* (represented in Figure 14), this is the very highest moment in which something within the self penetrates through the ten thousand things, experiencing them within a single interiority that is the presence of One in and through all; interpenetrating, "piercing"—as Thomas Berry described Dante's being "inwardly pierced" by his final sight of Beatrice and compares that to the experience of all humanity, returned to its native place in the cosmos in reconciliation with the divine.

Here is the experience beautifully expressed by Teilhard de Chardin in his Hymn of the Universe:

When all things around me, while preserving their own individual contours, their own special savours, nevertheless appear to me as animated by a single secret and therefore as diffused and intermingled within a single element, infinitely close, infinitely remote; and when, locked within the jealous intimacy of a divine sanctuary, I yet feel myself to be wandering at large in the empyrean of all created beings: then I shall know that I am approaching that central point where the heart of the world is caught in the descending radiance of the love of God. (Teilhard de Chardin 1961, 35)

Part IV:
The Return of the Sage

"Epistemologically, we are not ultimately separated from the world, projecting our structures and meanings onto an otherwise meaningless world. Rather, we are an organ of the universe's self-revelation. We are beginning to see that we play a crucial role in the universe's unfolding.... Our own inner work—our moral awareness and responsibility, our confrontation with our shadow, our integration of the masculine and feminine—plays a critical role in the universe that we create."

--Richard Tarnas, "The Great Initiation" (1998, 58)

The Supreme Critic on the errors of the past and the present, and the only prophet of that which must be, is that great nature in which we rest, as the earth lies in the soft arms of the atmosphere; that Unity, that Over-soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart, of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission; that overpowering reality which confutes our tricks and talents, and constrains every one to pass for what he is, and to speak from his character, and not from his tongue, and which evermore tends to pass into our thought and hand, and become wisdom, and virtue, and power, and beauty. We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Over-soul" (2002)

CHAPTER 1: THE COSMOS AS THE GREAT FIELD OF ACTION

The universe as we see it in the twenty-first century has expanded vastly since the time of the earliest sages. Or has it? Anyone gazing at the night skies experiences the sense of countless worlds and unfathomable spaces. It is rather the extent and depth of our perception that has so expanded. Our human responsibility, as always, is to locate ourselves within the expanded space through meaning: bringing the enlarged field into ever greater focus, clarity and articulation; bringing its new forms into our collective consciousness; expanding the furthest extent of ourselves and the world; above all, "grasping the center" of it. This movement of human consciousness has a rhythm of its own of expansion and contraction, leaving high water marks on history that continuously define and challenge what we think of as our collective nature and culture and of civilization itself.

But it is at this point where we must pause and consider the proper posture for this position. Are we here simply to discover the field? What does that mean? Since the fifteenth century, to discover something invariably meant to claim it. To run a flag up and say "It now belongs to us." Yet no one felt, when we put the American flag on the moon, that the moon was now American. Americans had simply set the first human foot upon it.

Are we there to conquer the field? Here a subtle difference enters between our words field and meadow. Meadow carries a particular aesthetic feeling as a treasure of nature. One wouldn't think of conquering a meadow. But battlefields are plentiful and littered with the dead as a meadow is pregnant with the living. We should bear in mind that the field, for the ancient Chinese as for our own forbears, was an agricultural unit responsible for the sustenance of a family's life and under the well-field system for the community and the kingdom.

From those agricultural beginnings, the posture of the human before the field, the world, the universe was to learn from it, order it, seed it, harvest it, and renew it. To this day, every good farmer the world over understands his or her responsibility for renewal of the soil and partnership with nature. The cultivated human follows this model. Hence Yi Wu translates *Chün tzu* as "the cultivated person."

In the case of the meadow—a natural, not an agricultural unit—Thomas Berry describes the importance of a boyhood meadow to his own "completion": He came to it to be taught by it; to be deepened and expanded by its beauty. We need to see this as an essential feature of human life; beauty as the invisible food upon which the soul nourishes and expands itself. "Succeeding is the coming together of all that is beautiful" says the commentary on *Ch'ien*. "His beauty is within, but it gives freedom to his limbs and expresses itself in works. This is the perfection of beauty," says the commentary on *K'un*. This is the highest value toward which the two hands of Tai Chi move.

Through this seeing of the universe, the sage follows his nature to the deepest core because the universe is his core. He is not a thing apart. As the Navajo understood, to see the beauty is to be the beauty. Beauty itself is completed and perfected in the seeing and rendering of it through the human artistic capacity and the embodiment of it in all the subtle detail and nuance of human demeanor when it is infused by its grace.

CHAPTER 2: THE INTERSECTION—WHERE TWO PATHS MEET

We can now put the two separate paths—Eastern and Western—into an integrated perspective. Richard Tarnas has described a historical movement from the human's embeddedness in nature in a *participation mystique* to an individuating separateness which develops into a distinctly autonomous, creative individual whose developing consciousness defines self against other, subject against object, in the way we see things differentiating and honing one another in chapter one of the *Ta Chuan*. This is an essential movement toward a conscious seeing and self-reflection. For Swimme and Berry, this allows the universe to celebrate itself. For the ancient sages, it allows them to observe and gain increasing clarity about the way or Tao of the universe and so to "lay down the order of what is right;" that is, to create the laws, principles and rituals by which humans become civilized, flourish, and culture develops. The sage, like Thomas Berry, is taught by the field and uses what is learned from it "to lend aid to the light of the gods" and to lift up the lives of fellow humans in what Whitehead calls the creative advance of the world.

This individuating movement—which we can now see as another expression of the one-ing movement of *i/yi* (一) as Tao in action through change (*i/yi* 易)—finally leads to the brilliant empiricism of the West, which will bring forth the myriad wonders of modern science. It also brings forth an articulation of the inalienable rights of the individual human, not only to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but to education, health, development and the quest for enlightenment. These represent increasing valuation among smaller and smaller units—more and more individuals—that may lead to the greater flourishing of greater numbers of people, as envisioned by the founding figures of both ancient Chinese civilization and our modern American democracy. Following Whitehead's model, (and countless poets and sages before him from Plato to Emerson), progress must be measured in this increased "valuation." Progress of this kind often requires sacrifice to preserve its higher orders. This contrasts with the narrower definition of a purely material progress that secures us from sacrifice or struggle, at the cost of the higher civilized values that made such progress possible in the first place..

But something else happens as this defining of self against other, subject against object, reaches the extreme end of the pendulum; something which expresses itself as

much in religion as in science: God, nature and the universe likewise become objectified. A chasm opens up between the human and the numinous field and an angst sets in; an isolation, a loneliness. That chasm is the individuating consciousness itself. The human is no less embedded physically in nature, and no less a creature of the spiritual movement of creation whether as God, Tao or the unnamable One. But the consciousness has become "closed."

On the darkest side, this separation leads to hubris and the illusion that nature is the instrument of the human rather than of God; of the Supreme One or Supreme Ultimate as Tai Chi of which the cosmos is the ceaselessly creative reverberation. The human becomes incarcerated in a narrow egoic selfhood, cemented into the delusional pursuit of a private satisfaction. He "falls into a pit" and becomes heir to the fortunes and misfortunes of blind fate. He becomes closed off from the revivifying energy of the center. He loses reverence and no longer "receives as a guest" the numinous universe coming towards him in each moment.

The chasm of consciousness allows the human to reject God and turn against the Way of Heaven. But even this is simply an event in consciousness, not a fundamental change in the universe. It is a closing off. Since the human—through consciousness especially—is one of the powers of the universe, the human can oppose rather than aid the gods; destroy rather than further nature, and contribute to the fears and sufferings of "all under heaven."

CHAPTER 3: THE TURNING POINT—*FAN* AND THE 21ST CENTURY

How does this translate into our contemporary condition? First of all, having reached historically the extreme of this separation, it seems that the twenty-first century finds us in the midst of *fan*—a major reversal after the turning point of the extreme; the winter solstice of the long planetary season of human life, declared at its peak by Nietzsche's announcement that "God is dead:" an existential description of a meaningless universe and the scientist's sovereignty over dead and soulless matter; what we now speak of as the disenchantment of the universe. Such material achievement in a soulless universe has the numbing effect of winning the lottery and having all of the "things" we wanted; a condition we now recognize as a brief exaltation that plummets quickly to depression.

The depth psychologies of the twentieth century were the Western means of "studying our natures to the deepest core." With Jung's model of the individuating human, so resonant with the "self-completion" of the sage, the human journey can be seen as the microcosm of the planetary and cosmic journeys with its own microphase seasons and dark nights of the soul. The discovery of holography reinforces this idea that the image of the whole can be contained within each part as fractals generated in mathematics are patterns that occur on both microcosmic and macrocosmic scales. When we add to this the discovery in quantum physics that the "observer" impacts the phenomena under study at the subatomic level, we have a paradigmatic shift comparable to the Copernican revolution yet so subtle as to be invisible to the public mind. The human, so marginalized in the mechanistic universe, is slowly being restored in the worldview to a critically significant position.

CHAPTER 4: BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH: AUTOPOESIS AND PERSON-MAKING

Having studied in some depth the language of chapters one and eleven in Part I of the *Ta Chuan*, we can recognize in it a certain affinity with the language of the emerging sciences of the mid-twentieth century. If we take the word autopoiesis, which Swimme and Berry have used to define a fundamental "cosmological" property, we find it defined by its authors—Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela—as a "network of production processes, in which the function of each component is to participate in the production or transformation of other components in the network. In this way the entire network continually 'makes itself'" (Capra 1995, 98). Compare this with a discussion by Hall and Ames of *jen/ren* as "person-making" in their book *Thinking Through Confucius*. They begin by citing a Han dynasty Confucian scholar, Tung Chung-shu:

The difference between *yi* [義, righteousness; rightness] and *jen* is that while *jen* is outward-directed, *yi* means proceeding inward; while *jen* emphasizes what is distant, *yi* stresses what is close at hand; while love invested in others is *jen*, being appropriate to one's achieved personhood is *yi*; the focus of *jen* is mainly on others while that of *yi* is one's person. (Ames and Hall 1987, 118)

Tung Chung-shu, the authors note, despairs of the tendency of people to reverse the functions of *jen* and *yi*, "wrongly interpreting *yi* [righteousness] as a means of projecting oneself outward as a standard on which to evaluate others, and *jen* as a way of bringing others in to make much of oneself" (Hall and Ames, 117). This provides a succinct description of how righteousness degenerates into self-righteousness and how relationships with others become self-serving. But it also identifies an axial position in which inner and outer, subjective and objective, radiate from a single point of consciousness within the human: *chung*, the position of the center. This central position is the focus of meaning and of "self-making" (Jung's individuation). Here is the summary offered by Hall and Ames of this idea:

Reflecting on the human being as a focus of meaning unbounded by a notion of discrete and discontinuous selfhood, person is then an indivisible continuum between "self" and "other," between "I" and "we," between "now" and "then." ...

The importance and influence of a person becomes measurable in terms of the extension into and integration with the selves of others. That is, a person is meaningful and valuable as a function of his participation in the field of selves that constitutes his community, and the quality of his own person in turn is a function of both the richness and diversity of the contributing selves that he has brought into his particular focus, and the extent that he has been successful in maximizing their creative possibilities. (119)

This passage amplifies the statement from the *Doctrine of the Mean* that the self-cultivating person not only completes himself but other men and things also. It suggests a correlation in the human subjective realm with the "objective fact" of autopoiesis as a "network of production processes, in which the function of each component is to participate in the production or transformation of other components in the network." The entire network continually "makes itself," as Maturana and Varela put it, in the same way that the world of heaven-earth-and-human is constantly completing and perfecting itself in the language of the *Ta Chuan*.

That correlations, however tenuous, are beginning to appear between the language and images of science, psychology and the classics of philosophical and religious traditions, suggests that injurious schisms between the worlds of heaven, earth and human are being bridged in new ways. What is still missing is a more directly articulated view of the role of human consciousness and conduct in these processes. The new sciences of chaos and complexity theory, for example, show that throughout the living world, chaos is constantly being transformed into order.³⁴ Ilya Prigogine, in his theory of dissipative structures, identifies a bifurcation point that is a threshold of stability at which the dissipative structure may either break down or break through to one of several new states of order. For Jung, this would describe the key point in the psychic life of an individual where a peak of tension can lead to psychosis and breakdown or regeneration and rebirth as the psyche breaks through to a higher level of awareness and creativity.

According to Prigogine, what happens at the bifurcation point is dependent on the system's previous history. "Living structure is always a record of previous development" (Capra 1996, 191). This is exactly what is meant by saying that the structure of an individual snowflake is the shape of its journey; its "one-ing" that makes it so unique.

At the bifurcation point, the dissipative structure also shows an extraordinary sensitivity to small fluctuations in its environment. A tiny random fluctuation, often called "noise," can induce the choice of path. Since all living systems exist in continually fluctuating environments, and since we can never know which fluctuation will occur at the bifurcation point at the "right" moment, we can never predict the path of the system. (Ibid.)

CHAPTER 5: THE WEST AT THE THRESHOLD—A DEATH-BIRTH INITIATION INTO A NEW WORLDVIEW

We can imagine a correlation between sensitivity to small fluctuations in the environment and the sage's ability to perceive subtle beginnings, the seeds of things, and to seize the right moment for the right response. This is what we have defined earlier as the self-organizing power of the human positioned at the center between heaven and earth. The scientist has the extraordinarily amplified capacity, aided by sophisticated techniques and instruments, to enter these processes at a minute level. Yet this is only one human capacity which should itself be guided by a yet more subtle capacity to determine what direction in any given moment is most "healthy," "beautiful" or furthering for the system of which he or she is a part. By definition, the sage would have the furthest "seeing" and respond to the largest "whole."

The religious context enters here with its affirmation that the human can mysteriously experience the cosmic whole; can be moved by the Mind of Tao. The Hindu sage is moved by Brahman and the Bodhisattva by the Buddha-mind toward an experience of the "whole" that includes an active compassion for all created beings as its most immediate manifestation. In Jesus' last prayer before surrendering to the events of the crucifixion, he prays, "May they all be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, so also may they be in us.... The glory which thou gavest me I have given to them, that they may be one, as we are one; I in them and thou in me, may they be perfectly one" (John 17:20-26; [NEB184]). Jesus at this moment is sacrificing himself to the higher value which is thus kept alive in the civilization with his passing.

The most developed human, entering into the highest levels of relationship, is constantly at this threshold of decision with the possibility of moving toward increasing order, creativity, integration and harmony, even as the least developed human impulse leads toward violence and disorder. If the human is indeed embedded in a system of interrelationships, then he or she shares in the "history" of each moment not only personally but collectively. This brings us full circle to Richard Tarnas's description of our collective historical moment: a bifurcation point of great magnitude and import that calls upon the sageliness in us to respond at the right time and in the right way, from that ground where *jen* and *yi*, love and rectitude, meet. In Tarnas's words—

I'd like to suggest that we seem to be moving toward the possibility of a new world view, as a result of going through a global death-rebirth initiation. I think we can now begin to realize that this disenchanted universe we find ourselves in is a transition to a much deeper realization. It is a birth canal to a new heaven and a new Earth.

We seem to be moving toward a new vision of the universe, one reflected in the many scientific and philosophical impulses working today toward a participatory holistic paradigm. We seem to be coming to a place where the human self is both highly autonomous and differentiated, yet re-embedded in a participatory relationship to a meaning-laden universe. Something new is being forged: it's not a mere regression to a premodern state. The human self has been forged into an autonomous intellectual and moral self, and is now in a position to recognize itself as being a creative intelligent nexus embedded within the larger context of the *anima mundi*. (Tarnas 1998, 57)

CHAPTER 6: CHINA AT THE THRESHOLD—BLENDING SCIENCE AND TRADITION

In latter nineteenth century China, voices were being raised simultaneously with voices in the West that were also heralding a change larger than nations or even continents. On both sides of the planet, worldviews were opening up as if to anticipate and accommodate a world that would be both creatively and disastrously flung wide open through global wars, through space exploration, through the unthinkable miracles of modern communication and transportation. As Whitehead and the burgeoning generations of holistically oriented systems thinkers were leaning in the direction of the organic model resonant with the ancient Chinese cosmos, so too were the Chinese thinkers seeking to arouse their country out of its long isolation and stagnation, leaning in the direction of the remodeled, post-enlightenment institutions of the West.

For the first time, we are beginning to hear the counterpoint story from the other side of the world after the blackout of information during the cultural revolutions which shook China in its own twentieth century tumult. A new book (2002) edited by Cheng Chung-Ying and Nicholas Bunnin, *Contemporary Chinese Philosophy*, fills in gaps for us. Cheng confirms that "At the beginning of the modern era, Chinese science and education were backward and out-of-date. There was simply no systematic research to develop scientific knowledge...."

"During the May Fourth Period, many Chinese intellectuals completely rejected the Chinese paradigm of philosophy because of its Confucian or Daoist content and enthusiastically embraced the values expressed by the Western paradigm of philosophy. Hu Shi introduced the pragmatic experimentalism of Dewey and advocated a program of piecemeal reform on the basis of a scientific critique of the basis of the tradition paradigm. Zhang Dongsun borrowed heavily from Bergson's philosophy of creative evolution and argued for a pluralistic structural epistemology. Li Dazhao and Chen Duxiu accepted Marxist historical and dialectical materialism and criticized and condemned the Chinese tradition. Although Western liberalism and philosophical scientism have slowly taken root in modern Chinese society, the Confucian and Daoist vision of reality and ethics of virtue have not been absolutely forsaken. Confucianism as a moral-metaphysical paradigm, as a spiritual philosophy, and as a system of moral values and *Yijing* [*I Ching*] Taoism as a metaphysics of change and creativity have been deeply consolidated in the minds. (Cheng and Bunnin 2002, 377)

We can now see the two cultures as mirror images, developing from the unique talents of their separate hemispheres, coming out of isolation, turning at their "utmost extreme" and moving slowly back toward one another. Yet as the center is approached, each rediscovers the seeds of its own native genius and begins the agonizing struggle to integrate the two hemispheres in a higher resolution. A thousand years after Cheng I challenged the emperor's actions in the name of Yao, Shun and Confucius— becoming himself one of the great sages of the Sung Dynasty—the ancient sages again enter the conversation as Yao's search for the person to meet the times, the new sage, goes on.

CHAPTER 7: HEXAGRAM 24—THE RETURN AFTER THE SOLSTICE

What possible design has been afoot in all of this struggle if the universe is truly and meaningfully designed and moves purposefully forward toward increasing organization and coherence through its *one-ing*? That is a question only a god could answer, but we might consider it in the microphase of a life.

At the extreme of the night, the winter, the nadir of the chasm—the dark night of the soul—a yearning opens up of the self for the Self; a yearning and a prescience for light that is itself the dawning of light. Wilhelm describes this beautifully in his commentary on the hexagram of Return (24: *Fu*, The Turning Point) which describes the pivotal moment of *fan*:

After a time of decay comes the turning point. The powerful light that has been banished returns. There is movement, but it is not brought about by force. The upper trigram *K'un* is characterized by devotion; thus the movement is natural, arising spontaneously. For this reason the transformation of the old becomes easy. The old is discarded and the new is introduced. Both measures accord with the time; therefore no harm results.... The idea of RETURN is based on the course of nature. The movement is cyclic, and the course completes itself. Therefore it is not necessary to hasten anything artificially. Everything comes of itself at the appointed time. This is the meaning of heaven and earth. (Wilhelm and Baynes 1977, 97)

In the language of the hexagram, the six lines have been completed, their use "exhausted." The six spaces are empty, waiting, as a new "field of action" opens up and a new work is begun. From the tiniest seeds, the "minutest springs of things"—*pien* by *pien*, *hua* by *hua*—the great *I/yi* lives and grows as the ever-flowering cosmos; the great chimerical chameleon. Gesture by gesture, transformation by transformation, our beings move, "one-ing" through their river of change toward higher and higher interpenetrations and harmonies, as ever new images flow into ever new forms to hone one another, struggle with one another, and finally embrace in higher levels of meaning and form, returning always—at the end of a breath, a thought, a day, a year, a life, or one long turning of the earth that is an age—to their unfathomable root in the One.

In our own language and our own time, a similar return is heralded by Thomas Berry in the Introduction to this work and now fittingly brings it to a close as a hopeful summary of our own return to the center and reconciliation in a re-enchanted cosmos.

We are returning to our native place after a long absence,... For too long we have been away somewhere, entranced with our industrial world of wires and wheels, concrete and steel, and our unending highways, where we race back and forth in continual frenzy....

All this, this wilderness world recently rediscovered with heightened emotional sensitivity, is an experience not far from that of Dante meeting Beatrice at the end of the Purgatorio, where she descends amid a cloud of blossoms....The "ancient flame" was lit again in the depths of his being. In that meeting, Dante is describing not only a personal experience, but the experience of the entire human community at the moment of reconciliation with the divine after the long period of alienation and human wandering away from the center. (Berry 1990,1)

The ancient flame that is lit again in the depths of Dante's being is the revivifying energy of the "center:" the omniscient cosmos reflected in Earth's balance and harmony and in the *jen* or perfected humanity of each enlightened person. This is the Way of the Great Mean lamented by Cheng I to his emperor as having been lost for millennia, since the time of the sage-kings and the *I Ching* sages. This is the way of the human as "cosmos-maker" in the sense that Tarnas has described it: "Our own inner work—our moral awareness and responsibility, our confrontation with our shadow, our integration of the masculine and feminine—plays a critical role in the universe that we create."

Perhaps between us, with the aid of China's long tradition of sages and the emancipated, creative genius of the West, we can bring about a return of the sage through the restoration of the human as the ground upon which Earth and Heaven meet to refine and reflect themselves as the *one-ing* of the Way of Heaven flourishes through the Ten Thousand things.

Epilogue

In the end, the real wisdom is often hidden between the lines. It cannot be pinned down to this way or that way; this idea or that idea. It has insight into what can't be seen and understanding of what can't be said. It is to be guided by the shining mind rather than the wandering mind, and that is not easy in a world of proliferating distractions. Above all, it is to be centered and at rest in that place which is at the center of all—the still well of being—tranquil and unmoving amid the turmoil and tumult; attentive, waiting, listening, and then allowing the response to flow through naturally, effortlessly, uncoerced—like Yao, who was reverent, intelligent and accomplished "naturally and without effort."

No amount of information or knowledge can take us to that place. That is our problem. We do not issue from a center but are divided into endless departments and specialties hither and yon. Individually, we suffer from what Anne Morrow Lindbergh described in *Gift from the Sea* as "zarissenheit:"torn-to-pieces-hood." From harried housewives to overworked managers, we are frantic in our busy-ness, frantic with our news and information.

We are too large, diverse and complex to go to the well at the center of our community to draw up water from the earth to refresh ourselves and chat with our neighbors in the fresh morning light—hearing their news, their stories, telling our own. We are too sophisticated and advanced to pause in the fields at day's end in the last golden light to hear the Angelus tolled from the nearby church and bow our heads in thanks for the earth and in hope of a harvest.

The town can be moved but the well cannot be moved. There must be a stillpoint. There must be a place of nourishment and rest in the center where we are open to the shine; to the One Mind that moves the sun, moon and stars and binds us together, no matter how diverse, how complex.

Every flower, every tree, issues from a center of invisible life in the seed which arises on a unique journey through particular soil, weather, and eco-community in such a

way that the central vivifying force interpenetrates root, stem, leaves, pistil, stamen, corolla... If the interpenetration—the flow of life from the center—is cut off to any part, that part soon withers and dies. The organizing center in the human life is an invisible thing but is experienced within every individual as their uniqueness; their well of being.

The last few centuries of our stupendous scientific advances would not even show up on the calendar of the world which took over four billion years to shape a flower and two hundred million more years to shape us. The Mind of God, the Mind of Tao, is in no hurry and has forever and moves with great care.

Our supremely clever cerebral cortices are like Rolls Royces that carry us here and there in grand style. We may spend a lot of pleasurable and productive time in them but they are not *us*. Not the essence of who we are, who carry within us the unhurried flowering of the planetary ages and the universe's invisible but exquisite design.

It is wisdom, the gift of the center—the *holy* gift—which guides the *use* we make of the knowledge and information we so brilliantly generate to carry us fruitfully into the harvest. What can this mean for us in a nonagricultural industrial society?

But *are* we a nonagricultural society? Do we savor the ripe fruits of summer any less than our most distant ancestors on the human family tree? Can we nourish ourselves with a single one of our proliferating industrial products?

Agriculture is from the Latin word meaning "cultivation of the field." The legendary sage-king who follows Fu Hsi is called the Divine Husbandman or the Divine Farmer. Why was the Farmer called *divine*? Because he mastered the great field of action—the *living field itself*—for the good of all under heaven.

We too have used our collective self-organizing capacities in the creation of self-governing institutions and infrastructures which provide each of us with electricity, water, communication, heating and plumbing. Yet we take even these essential interconnections for granted. And who goes to a power station or a water treatment plant for a morning chat or an evening prayer?

The more important question is—What happens if the electricity goes off and the water stops coming so gratuitously into our homes? If our world is unplugged, who are we and what are the keys to survival? What if *we* are suddenly the parts of the plant to which energy is no longer being delivered? It is then that we will need a return to the

inner sage which is the original shaper of tools and well of nourishment. But we need images of that now. Models. Who are they? What do they look like? Show us? Who will, as Yao said, "search out for us a person of the times whom we can raise up and employ?"

We will need to return to our old rituals or make new ones. We will need to look up and watch the sun and the moon and the stars in their courses. We will need to look down at the earth, at all of its forms of life—naming and learning them again, studying their changes through the seasons and learning from them the tricks of survival. We will have to look inward, to our deepest core, and find once again there the deep order of things. We will need to put our lives back in accord with these rhythms and so develop a sense of what is right and what is not.

We will find that place again, grasping the center of it, leaning into it; gathering in close relationship with those we love. Receiving as a guest the stranger, the creatures of the earth, the rising sun, the waxing moon, the circling planets, the flow of one-ing towards us, through us. Then we will lift our voices and our hands—stretching to fill the space between earth and heaven, ferrying our songs and prayers and the souls of our newly born and our newly departed across the perilous intersection. We will stretch everything in our being—not just to live, but to rejoice and celebrate all we can see and feel and know of the vast extreme ultimate of the universe. We will lend aid, in our mysterious, uniquely human way, to the light of the gods.

Mr. Shen—music teacher and U.S-Sino cultural exchange messenger—stands with me at the intersection, bidding you to STOP, for just a few moments to consider these things and then—

Go! And be reverent!

ENDNOTES

¹ The phrase "traditional Chinese history" refers primarily to accounts in the Shu Ching or Book of History, that was purportedly a collection of records kept through the Hsia, Shang and Chou dynasties. We know that some form of this work came down to Confucius, who edited and rearranged it. Scholars agree that it is a compendium from various ages, the oldest parts dating from the Shang. Other than that, no specific date may be given. While the authenticity of its accounts may be in question, (including the exactitude of the dates), it is significant nevertheless as being integral to the cultural fabric and world view of China over the centuries. Confucius refers with admiration to the first emperors, and holds them up as examples in his teaching.

² Legge's note reads: The ruling House traced its origin into the remote times of antiquity, through Hsieh, whose appointment by Shun to be Minister of Instruction is related in the Canon of Shun. For his services Hsieh was invested with the principality of Shang, corresponding to the present small department of the same name in Shen-hsi. From Hsieh to Tang, the founder of the dynasty, there are reckoned fourteen generations, and we find Tang, when he first becomes prominent in history, a long way from the ancestral fief, in 'the southern Po,' corresponding to the present district of Shang-khiû, department Kwei-teh, Ho-nan. <<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cfu/sbe03/shu04.htm>>

³ Legge notes, "There was a tradition in the Chou dynasty, given with variations by Hsün-Tzu, Ssu-ma Chien, and others, which may be quoted to illustrate these noble sentiments of Tang. For seven years after his accession to the throne, B.C. 1766-1760, there was a great drought and famine. It was suggested at last that some human being should be offered in sacrifice to Heaven, and prayer made for rain. Tang said, 'If a man must be the victim, I will be he.' He fasted; cut off his hair and nails, and in a plain carriage, drawn by white horses, clad in rushes, in the guise of a sacrificial victim, he proceeded to a forest of mulberry trees, and there prayed, asking to what error or crime of his the calamity was owing. He had not done speaking when a copious rain fell]" <<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cfu/sbe03/shu04.htm>>.

⁴ Dates for this event vary to as early as 1111 BC.

⁵ Personal conversation with Yi Wu, 1994.

⁶ This idea is not original, of course, with Bohm. Whitehead stressed it often in his work, particularly in relation to his philosophy of organism as set forth in *Process and Reality*, (See p.12).

⁷ [From American Heritage online dictionary, op. cit.] "The word vulgar brings to mind off-color jokes, but this was not always so. Ironically the word vulgar is itself an example of pejoration, the process by which the semantic status of a word changes for the worse over a period of time. The ancestor of vulgar, the Latin word *vulgaris* (from *vulgus*, the common people), meant of or belonging to the common people, everyday, as well as belonging to or associated with the lower orders. *Vulgaris* also meant ordinary, common (of vocabulary, for example), and "shared by all." Its only sense of the sort we might expect was related to the notion of general sharing, that is, "sexually promiscuous." Our word, first recorded in a work composed in 1391, entered English during the Middle English period, and in Middle English and later English we find not only the senses mentioned above but also related senses. What is common can be seen as debased, and in the 17th century we begin to find instances of vulgar that made very explicit what was already

implicit. Vulgar now meant "deficient in taste, delicacy, or refinement." From such use vulgar has gone downhill, and at present "rudely indecent" is probably one of the first senses of vulgar that occurs to many when the word is used."

⁸ Confucius develops this same theme to greater depth in the *Doctrine of the Mean*. One passage in particular is worth noting in its relation to the distinction between tsun/zun and pi/bei as it extols the filial piety of King Wu and his brother, the Duke of Chou for their father, King Wen and all of their ancestors.

By means of the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they distinguished the royal kindred according to their order of descent. By ordering the parties present according to their rank, they distinguished the more noble and the less. By the arrangement of the services, they made a distinction of talents and worth.

In the ceremony of general pledging, the inferiors presented the cup to their superiors and thus something was given to the lowest to do. At the concluding feast, places were given according to the hair, and thus was made the distinction of the years. They occupied the places of their forefathers, practiced their ceremonies, and performed their music. They revered those whom they honored, and loved those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they would have served the dead as they would have served them alive. (XIX:4-5: Legge 1971, 403)

Here the character tsun/zun is literally being employed as the cup which the inferiors are presenting to their superiors. The passage makes clear that the ordering of parties present according to their rank or position was to distinguish 'the more noble (*Kuei*) and the less (*chien*). This phrase is important to our understanding of chapter 1 of the Great Commentary because the same characters appear in the next paragraph of that work, translated by Legge as "noble and mean" and Wilhelm/Baynes as "superior and inferior."

⁹ Wilder and Ingram, however, insist that the term refers to the cloudy sky rather than the blue firmament (137).

¹⁰ Swimme and Berry also speak of the creative display of energy as a feature of the ongoing cosmological story.

¹¹ Wilder and Ingram translate these as action and repose. Yi Wu notes that the word *ching*, tranquility, relative to *tung*, movement, does not appear in the *Analects* or the Mencius or in any of the 64 hexagrams of the *Book of Changes* (Wu 1990, 158) where concrete terms were more useful. However, both *ching* and *tung* appear often in the more abstract Ten Wings.

¹² Whitehead too found this syntactic structure an obstacle to the expression of a philosophy of organism: "If the subject-predicate form of statement be taken to be metaphysically ultimate, it is then impossible to express the doctrine of feelings and their superject." (*Process and Reality*, 222)

¹³ Cf. Whitehead's theory of concrescence developed in *Process and Reality*.

¹⁴ Lindqvist (1991, 131) points out that the people of the Shang period decorated their homes with animal skulls and this practice continues in southwest China today where the ox is a symbol of wealth and power. The ox, she adds, was essential to agriculture for drawing the plow. Taoists regarded the ox as a symbol of spiritual strength. According to legend, Lao Tzu left this world and set off westward toward paradise riding an ox.

¹⁵ Interestingly, none of the words which we have so far encountered is used for the "superior man" who plays such a significant role in the *I Ching*. The Chinese words for this are chun tzu as "superior man." Chun is described by Wieger (#44C) as 尹, a hand that exerts authority, plus a mouth 口 that makes the law, ergo: Prince. (See Wieger p.9).

¹⁶ 至哉坤元，萬物資生，乃順承天。坤厚載物，德合無疆。含弘光。

¹⁷ See Legge's note on this page (402) for a clarification of the meanings of "inferior" and "superior" here and a more detailed description of the ceremony.

¹⁸ Will Keepin's article on Bohm touches on several ideas with parallels in the *Ta Chuan*.

¹⁹ Here is Whitehead's description from *Process and Reality*. "The term 'one' does not stand for 'the integral number one,' ... It stands for the singularity of an entity. The term 'many' presupposes the term 'one' and the term 'one' presupposes the term 'many.' ... 'Creativity'...is the ultimate principle by which the many, which are the universe disjunctively, become the one actual occasion, which is the universe conjunctively. It lies in the nature of things that the many enter into a complex unity (PR, 21)."

²⁰ As Lao Tzu says in his opening of the *Tao Te Ching*, the Tao itself is "beyond name and form." In a later chapter he says that it has its source in "mystery" but is the "gateway to myriad subtleties."

²¹ For Taoists and Buddhists, this images the essential emptiness at the center to which one returns through meditation.

²² Whitehead describes a fundamental "subjective aim at further integration so as to obtain the "satisfaction" of the completed subject." See Whitehead, PR, 18 and 224.

²³ Lao-Tzu is specifically referring here to the sage-king who is in the position to unite Heaven and Earth.

²⁴ See *The I Ching and the Genetic Code: The Hidden Key to Life* by Martin Schonberger, New York: ASI, 1979.

²⁵ This book is highly recommended for an in-depth discussion of Shao Yung's work along with the other great Sung dynasty commentators on the *I Ching*, particularly Cheng I and Chu Hsi.

²⁶ From a class lecture at the California Institute of Integral Studies, 1998.

²⁷ "Randomness is... assumed to be a fundamental but inexplicable and unanalyzable feature of nature, and indeed ultimately of all existence. . . (134) [However,] what is randomness in one context may reveal itself as simple orders of necessity in another broader context (133) It should therefore be clear how important it is to be open to fundamentally new notions of general order, if science is not to be blind to the very important but complex and subtle orders that escape the coarse mesh of the "net" on current ways of thinking (136)." (Peat 1987)

²⁸ "化而裁之存乎變,"

²⁹ This book was published in 1952 when the word spiritual was seen largely in religious contexts and when Jung's use of the word psyche opened up fresh nuances of meaning. This is an example of the way in which every translation needs to be made relevant to its moment and context. It shows also how any "new and relevant" translation may run the risk over time of becoming old and outdated. The marvel is that certain works resurface again and again through the ages and become our "classics."

³⁰ Here is Graham's translation of a passage from chapter 11 which illustrates this:

We observe that by the psychic Way of Heaven, the four seasons do not err. When the sage establishes teaching according to the psychic Way, the world submits to him.

Therefore the power of the stalks, being "round" [without beginning or end, like the circumference of a stalk] is psychic; the power of the diagrams, because it is "square" [making distinctions like the separate sides of the square diagrams], is wise... The sage is psychic and thereby knows the future, wise and thereby stores up the past. (112)

³¹ One of the great virtues of the sage-kings, beginning with the example of Yao, is that they sought the counsel of someone wiser than themselves, emphasizing the importance of pi as the virtue of the lower position, following the example of the higher: even the "highest" figure in the social order, the king, must seek out yet a higher authority for himself, be it human or spiritual. Yao sought and "listened to" Shun; Shun sought and "listened to" Yu, and so on.

³² 易與天地準、故能彌綸天地之道。

仰以觀於天文、俯以察於地理、是故知幽明之故。原始反終、故知死生之說。精氣爲物、遊魂爲變、是故知鬼神之情狀。與天地相似、故不違。知周乎萬物而道濟天下、故不過。旁行而不流、樂天知命、故不憂。安土敦乎仁、故能愛。

範圍天地之化而不過、曲成萬物而不遺、通乎晝夜之道而知。故神无方而易无體

³³ This was a course in "Confucius and Neo-Confucianism" at the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco.

³⁴ See Capra 1996, 190.

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