


漸

53. Chien / Development (*Gradual Progress*)

	<i>above</i>	SUN	THE GENTLE, WIND, WOOD
	<i>below</i>	KÊN	KEEPING STILL, MOUNTAIN

This hexagram is made up of Sun (wood, penetration) above, i.e., without, and Kên (mountain, stillness) below, i.e., within. A tree on a mountain develops slowly according to the law of its being and consequently stands firmly rooted. This gives the idea of a development that proceeds gradually, step by step. The attributes of the trigrams also point to this: within is tranquillity, which guards against precipitate actions, and without is penetration, which makes development and progress possible.

THE JUDGMENT

DEVELOPMENT. The maiden
Is given in marriage.
Good fortune.
Perseverance furthers.

The development of events that leads to a girl's following a man to his home proceeds slowly. The various formalities

must be disposed of before the marriage takes place. This principle of gradual development can be applied to other situations as well; it is always applicable where it is a matter of correct relationships of co-operation, as for instance in the appointment of an official. The development must be allowed to take its proper course. Hasty action would not be wise. This is also true, finally, of any effort to exert influence on others, for here too the essential factor is a correct way of development through cultivation of one's own personality. No influence such as that exerted by agitators has a lasting effect.

Within the personality too, development must follow the same course if lasting results are to be achieved. Gentleness that is adaptable, but at the same time penetrating, is the outer form that should proceed from inner calm.

The very gradualness of the development makes it necessary to have perseverance, for perseverance alone prevents slow progress from dwindling to nothing.

THE IMAGE

On the mountain, a tree:

The image of DEVELOPMENT.

Thus the superior man abides in dignity and virtue,
In order to improve the mores.

The tree on the mountain is visible from afar, and its development influences the landscape of the entire region. It does not shoot up like a swamp plant; its growth proceeds gradually. Thus also the work of influencing people can be only gradual. No sudden influence or awakening is of lasting effect. Progress must be quite gradual, and in order to obtain such progress in public opinion and in the mores of the people, it is necessary for the personality to acquire influence and weight. This comes about through careful and constant work on one's own moral development.

THE LINES

Six at the beginning means:

The wild goose gradually draws near the shore.

The young son is in danger.
There is talk. No blame.

All the individual lines in this hexagram symbolize the gradual flight of the wild goose. The wild goose is the symbol of conjugal fidelity, because it is believed that this bird never takes another mate after the death of the first.

The initial line suggests the first resting place in the flight of water birds from the water to the heights. The shore is reached. The situation is that of a lonely young man who is just starting out to make his way in life. Since no one comes to help him, his first steps are slow and hesitant, and he is surrounded by danger. Naturally he is subjected to much criticism. But these very difficulties keep him from being too hasty, and his progress is successful.

○ Six in the second place means:

The wild goose gradually draws near the cliff.
Eating and drinking in peace and concord.
Good fortune.

The cliff is a safe place on shore. The development has gone a step further. The initial insecurity has been overcome, and a safe position in life has been found, giving one enough to live on. This first success, opening up a path to activity, brings a certain joyousness of mood, and one goes to meet the future reassured.

It is said of the wild goose that it calls to its comrades whenever it finds food; this is the symbol of peace and concord in good fortune. A man does not want to keep his good luck for himself only, but is ready to share it with others.

Nine in the third place means:

The wild goose gradually draws near the plateau.
The man goes forth and does not return.
The woman carries a child but does not bring it forth.
Misfortune.
It furthers one to fight off robbers.

The high plateau is dry and unsuitable for the wild goose. If it goes there, it has lost its way and gone too far. This is contrary to the law of development.

It is the same in human life. If we do not let things develop quietly but plunge of our own choice too rashly into a struggle, misfortune results. A man jeopardizes his own life, and his family perishes thereby. However, this is not at all necessary; it is only the result of transgressing the law of natural development. If one does not willfully provoke a conflict, but confines himself to vigorously maintaining his own position and to warding off unjustified attacks, all goes well.

Six in the fourth place means:

The wild goose gradually draws near the tree.

Perhaps it will find a flat branch. No blame.

A tree is not a suitable place for a wild goose. But if it is clever, it will find a flat branch on which it can get a footing. A man's life too, in the course of its development, often brings him into inappropriate situations, in which he finds it difficult to hold his own without danger. Then it is important to be sensible and yielding. This enables him to discover a safe place in which life can go on, although he may be surrounded by danger.

○ Nine in the fifth place means:

The wild goose gradually draws near the summit.

For three years the woman has no child.

In the end nothing can hinder her.

Good fortune.

The summit is a high place. In a high position one easily becomes isolated. One is misjudged by the very person on whom one is dependent—the woman by her husband, the official by his superior. This is the work of deceitful persons who have wormed their way in. The result is that relationships remain sterile, and nothing is accomplished. But in the course of further development, such misunderstandings are cleared away, and reconciliation is achieved after all.

Nine at the top means:

The wild goose gradually draws near the cloud heights.

Its feathers can be used for the sacred dance.

Good fortune.

Here life comes to its 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. There they fly, keeping to the order of their flight in strict formation. And if their feathers fall, they can serve as ornaments in the sacred dance 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.