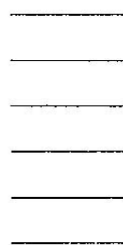


1 qian/active



*Supreme offering.
Favourable augury.*

Base (9): A dragon lies beneath the lake.
No action take.

(9) 2: Lo, on the fields a dragon bides.
To meet with great men well betides.

(9) 3: A prince is active all day long
and after dark still stays alert.

DANGEROUS.
NO MISFORTUNE.

(9) 4: Sometimes it leaps above the tides.

NO MISFORTUNE.

(9) 5: A dragon through the heavens glides.
To meet with great men well betides.

Top (9): A dragon soaring away.

There will be trouble.

All (9): See dragons without heads.

AUSPICIOUS.

(1) **active**

Six of the seven line statements mention *long* 'dragons', which were powerful sky and water spirits, emblematic of *yang* power. They fertilized the earth with rain.

Though they are a common element in the decoration of Shang and Zhou bronzes, *long* are rare in early writings. They do not occur in the Odes in their own right, only as decorations (on shields in 128.2; on banners in 283.1, 300.3 and 303.30) and in the name of a waterweed, 'floating dragon' (Ode 84.2). Nor are dragons mentioned in any part of the Book of Documents that is believed to be of Western Zhou date or earlier. This tends to justify the idea,

mentioned above, that the dragon motif in Hexagram 1 may be a late entry into *Zhouyi*.

Wen Yiduo (W48) first suggested a connection between these line statements and the asterism known to the Chinese as *Canglong* 'Green Dragon'. *Canglong* is not the western astronomist's constellation called Draco, but a long series of star groups that does not coincide with any Western constellation. They spread in an undulating line from two stars in Virgo, known in Chinese as *Jiao* 'horns', through Libra to Scorpio, including star-groups called *Kang* 'neck', *Xin* 'heart' and *Wei* 'tail'. The seasonal progress of the crops was marked by this Dragon's progress across the sky.

Though there is no clear evidence of the name of the Dragon asterism from the time *Zhouyi* was written, it probably was already in use. The oracles may have been written with the stars in mind or a connection may have been developed later. Wen Yiduo's perception was refined and developed by Edward Shaughnessy (S269–85), whose thesis underlies the following notes.

(Tag) The tag character is discussed below, in the note on Line 3, from which it is taken.

(Hexagram statement) For the 'four qualities' see page 126. The same expressions occur in the same way in Hexagram Statements 3, 17, 19, 25 and 49.

(Base) Around 800 BC in midwinter at dusk the Dragon stars were all invisible below the horizon, supposedly under water. (See Translation Note 36:Top.)

(2) In early spring the Horn stars were visible above the horizon. The head of the Dragon might look as though it were in the far fields. The character *tian* 'cultivated fields' appears elsewhere in *Yi* with another meaning, referring to hunting (7:5, 32:4, 40:2, 57:4).

The second part of the couplet, translated as it is for the sake of rhyme, is simply the standard formula: 'Favourable for seeing great men.' (See page 219.)

(3) The key word in this line is *qian* (**gjian*). It is not found with this pronunciation anywhere else in pre-Confucian writings, though the same character appears, pronounced *gan* (**kan*) and meaning 'sundried'. In Hexagram 21:4 and 5 it refers to meat; in Ode 69.1 to plants; and in Ode 165.5 to dried provisions. Hellmut Wilhelm used this meaning when he translated the oracle as 'At the end of the day, oh dry, oh dry!' He thought the dragon had been out of the water, in the sunshine of the fields (*Journal of the American Oriental Society* 7.4 (1958) page 275 n2). This is a pleasing fancy, but no more than a guess, backed up by a further guess that *junzi* and the clause about alertness after dark were post-Confucian additions. There is in fact no reason to suppose that the oracle as we have it could not have been composed in the 9th century BC, and no argument from the rhyming would support Hellmut's theory.

Qian is the name of the trigram (three whole lines) that is doubled to make Hexagram 1. The moral glosses on the trigrams in the 8th Wing (Section 7, see page 441) characterize the *Qian* trigram as *jian* (**kjan*) ‘strong, constant’, written in a form that contains the ‘man’ radical. In the *Daxiang* commentary on Hexagram 1 (see page 384) this same *jian* character occurs in the place regularly occupied by the tag character in entries for other hexagrams. This means that by the time the Ten Wings were written *qian* was understood to mean ‘strong, constant’.

In the Mawangdui manuscript yet another character is used both for the tag and in Line 3: *jian*, ‘door-bolt’. *Jian* resembles the ‘strong/constant’ character except that it has the metal radical instead of the man radical. It is an example of the Mawangdui editor’s delight in elaborate variant forms. (See Diagram 15.)

Grammatically, *qianqian* must be a verb or adjectival verb. Some have thought it means ‘sad and fearful’ – a sombre meaning derived by implication from the second part of the oracle (about anxiety at night) and the prognostic of danger; but this is mere supposition. Since Wang Bi’s commentary, it has usually been taken to mean ‘diligent’ or ‘vigorous’.

Kunst points out that reduplicated adjectival verbs occur after *junzi* ‘prince’ in 43:3 (*junzi guaiguai* ‘prince hustles and bustles’) and in Ode 67, where both stanzas begin with a similar formula (*junzi yangyang* ‘prince is happy’ and *junzi yaoyao* ‘prince is merry’). Possibly the reduplication represents a descriptive verb for a sustained manner or continued activity. (For reduplicated forms see page 137–8.)

Most English translations for *qianqian* risk imposing inappropriate nuances – a work ethic or paternalism in ‘diligent’ or ‘busy’, fear in ‘anxious’, physicality in ‘vigorous’. The best translation is probably the least highly charged. I have used the colourless ‘active’, entrusting the nuance of continuousness to the adverbial expression ‘all day long’. This takes account of the 8th Wing’s *jian*, and, by happy chance, matches later philosophical understanding too.

(4) In late spring the stars of the neck and the top of the Dragon’s body appeared over the horizon. By early summer the Heart was visible.

‘Tides’ (used for its rhyme) is literally ‘deep water’, and does not imply either sea or tidal movement.

(5) At midsummer the whole asterism of the Dragon would arch across the sky with the tail well above the horizon.

For the rhyming indication see the Translation Note to Line 2.

(Top) With the coming of autumn the head of the Dragon began to disappear below the horizon. The dragon would disappear in a manner that would equally well fit other possible translations of this line: ‘Dragon in a ditch’; or ‘Headless dragon’.

(All (9)) See page 130 on the supernumerary line statements.