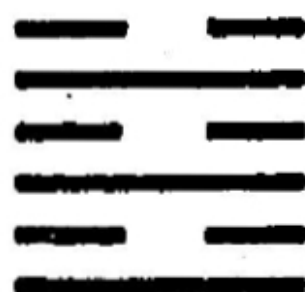


HEXAGRAM 63

CHI CHI AFTER COMPLETION



The component trigrams:

Below: LI, fire, brilliance, beauty.

Above: K'AN, water, a pit.

TEXT After Completion—success in small matters! Persistence in a righteous course brings reward. Good fortune at the start; disorder in the end!¹

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT This hexagram presages success in small matters. That right persistence will be rewarded is indicated by the correctness and suitable arrangement of the firm and yielding lines. Since the yielding (line 2) is central (to the lower trigram), it is clear that good fortune will accompany the start; but, ultimately, affairs will be halted amid disorder because the way peters out.²

SYMBOL This hexagram symbolizes water above fire.³ The Superior Man deals with trouble by careful thought and by taking advance precautions.

The Lines

9 FOR THE BOTTOM PLACE He brakes the wheel of his chariot and gets the rear part wet—no error! **COMMENTARY** This passage means that (since we manage to stop at the right moment) we are not to blame (for what happens).

6 FOR THE SECOND PLACE The lady loses the blind from her chariot window. She should not go in search of it, for she will recover it in seven days. **COMMENTARY** Her getting it back after seven days suggests that restraint or (moderation) will be rewarded.

9 FOR THE THIRD PLACE The Illustrious Ancestor (namely, the

Emperor Wu Ting, 1324 BC) carried out a punitive expedition in Kuei Fang (literally, the Land of Devils) and conquered it after three years—men of mean attainments would have been useless!⁴ COMMENTARY His taking three years to conquer it indicates great fatigue.⁵

6 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE Amidst the fine silk are ragged garments⁶—be cautious throughout the livelong day! COMMENTARY This indicates that doubt and suspicion are now prevalent.

9 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE In terms of benefits, the neighbour to the east gained less from sacrificing an ox than the neighbour to the west obtained from carrying out the spring sacrifice. COMMENTARY Because the former's sacrifice (though bigger) was less timely.⁷ The benefits obtained by the neighbour to the west betoken that good fortune is on its way to us.

6 FOR THE TOP PLACE His head gets wet—trouble! COMMENTARY But this sort of trouble can scarcely last long.⁸

NOTES (1) Perhaps persistence may help to lessen the disorder that threatens to come upon us after some initial success. (2) Hence, we should not try to advance very far. 'The way peters out' can also be taken to mean that our stock of merit becomes exhausted. (3) A reference to the component trigrams. (4) The Land of Devils was probably a territory inhabited by non-Chinese tribes. The implication is that only a man of outstanding capability should attempt any difficult task now. (5) Even if we do feel capable of undertaking an extremely difficult task, we must expect it to occupy us for so long as to make us feel exhausted. (6) This corrupt passage is variously interpreted in the additional commentaries. In any case it signifies a need for caution. (7) This is one of the favourite themes of the *Book of Change*, namely the importance of timeliness. A small effort at the right time will win for us more benefit than a gigantic effort at the wrong time. (8) We must expect some trouble, but perhaps not very serious and not likely to endure.