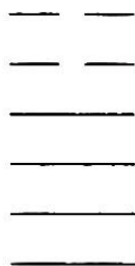


dazhuang/big injury 34

*Favourable augury.*

Base (9): Injured in the foot.

*Expeditions disastrous.
Sacrificing captives.*

(9) 2:

Augury AUSPICIOUS.

(9) 3:

*Injurious with the small;
with princes not at all.
Augury DANGEROUS.*

A ram butts a fence and injures his horns.

(9) 4:

*Augury AUSPICIOUS.
Troubles disappear.*

The fence is damaged, the ram unharmed.

Injured by the axle-case of a great carriage.

(6) 5: Losing sheep in Yi.

*No troubles.*Top (6): A ram butts a fence,
cannot pull out,
cannot push through.*Favourable for nothing.
In hardship, AUSPICIOUS.*

(34) **big injury**

The core of these oracles relates to a ram or goat forcing its way through a fence, possibly a barrier of piled thorn branches.

(Tag) *Da qiang*. The received text has *da zhuang* 'big, strong'. Gao (G256), with lengthy philological argument, and Kunst (R.306) take it as a loan for 'injury', though they apply it differently (see Diagram 13).

(2) This line has no oracle.

(3) 'For princes not at all' is Kunst's understanding; Gao (257) prefers 'For princes, worry.' Gao thinks the oracles of 3 and 4 belong together. Wen Yiduo sees them as complementary. Another possibility is: 'The little man uses his strength, the prince uses his wits.' (D629)

(4) Wen Yiduo comments on the grammar of this oracle. (W20)

Reference to rams in fences may reflect a reading of omens by those who kept sheep in an agricultural society; but the images are more likely to relate to sheep chosen for sacrifices.

Carriage and chariot wheel and axle omens occur also in 9:3, 26:2 and 44:base. Disorder or damage in a valuable vehicle, especially when preparing for war, would naturally be read as ominous.

(5) This refers to one of the five historical anecdotes identified by Gu Jiegang in his seminal *Gushibian* article (see page 29 and Translation Note 56:top). Wang Hai is a misty figure, a supposed ancestor of the royal house of Shang, who took his herds to pasture in Youyi (otherwise Yi). He was murdered there, either because he committed adultery with the local chieftain's wife, or because of a dispute over grazing grounds. He was later treated as a culture hero, the originator of cattle-breeding. See *Chuci* 'Tianwen' 109–20 (H52); Sarah Allan *The shape of the turtle* pages 53–5; and Anne Birrell *Chinese mythology* pages 105–8. In this line statement the herds are described as sheep instead of the more usual cattle, perhaps to harmonize with the other oracles.