

咸 ䷞ 31 Conjoining/ Uniting in Spirit XIAN

Excite, stimulate, influence; strong attraction; bring together what belongs together; the sacred River-Mountain place where sacrifice is offered; site of creative transformation.

MYTHS FOR CHANGE: THE STORY OF THE TIME

Charge to the Oracle: *There is Heaven and Earth, then there are the Myriad Beings. There are the Myriad Beings, then there is Man and Woman. There is Man and Woman, then there is Husband and Wife. There is Husband and Wife, then there is Father and Son. There is Father and Son, then there is Leader and Server. There is Leader and Server, then there is Above and Below. There is Above and Below, then there is a place to perfect the rites and nourish the righteous. Uniting in Spirit. Accept this and use the energy of Conjoining.*

Conjoining is an image of the sacred sites, the River-Mountain places, where the spirits dwell. They are places where rituals are offered to influence, attract and connect with the spirit and bring union among people, places where the *wu*-Intermediaries call and contact the *shen*. It is the *xian chi*, the pool at the base of the Sun Tree where the new sun is bathed and set on its journey. The implicit root of the word is heart, the heart moved and moving. The spirit influx fills, moves and transforms the heart. This is the attraction and union of contraries, man and woman, human and spirit. It is an influx, stirring sentiments, desires, ruling ideas and deep wellsprings of feeling.

The term also means 'to influence, to join with, to feel an influx', in the sense of 'I have a feeling in my bones'. It is a physical sensing of spirit moving, an 'ominous' experience in the body that moves us. The lines of the figure trace the path of the influence in the body, relating what happens when spirit appears in the different body parts and how to react. This is allied with the practice of the *wu* or mediums, the ancient sages of later tradition, who experienced the spirits and set out the omens for others. Another variant refers to sacrifice: the cutting or opening of the sacrificial victim that opened the gates to the spirits. Here, the same omens refer to opening parts of the victim's body, whether

animal or human, and the implications for action that are found there. Tradition saw this opening as the connection or influence between things that expressed how Heaven and Earth influences the hearts of the Myriad Beings. It was an influx of feeling that brought people together in sexual attraction and courtship.

In all of these, a central injunction is 'embrace the woman and the yin', that is, be open to the influence, submit and be moved. This is a basic idea in the inner Way, *wu-wei* or non-acting, the contrary to heroic efforts.

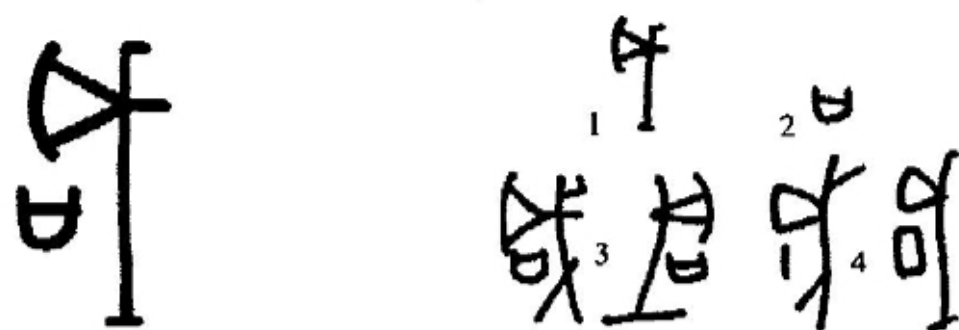
THE RESPONSE

Conjoining. Uniting in Spirit. Make an offering and you will succeed.

Advantageous Trial. Harvesting.

Embrace the woman. Wise Words! The Way is open.

Conjoin, XIAN: Excite, stimulate, influence, mobilize; strong attraction, connection; bring together what belongs together; touch, move, transform, trigger; all, totally, universal, harmonize; unite, conjunction (as planets); literally: a broken piece of pottery, the two halves of which are used to identify partners. Xian Wu is an important Shang ancestor. The character also suggests Yu the Great who united the Nine Provinces and cast the Nine Vessels. The old character shows an axe, used to cut into a sacrificial animal, and a mouth, the response from the spirits. It suggests the pervading influence of the sacrificial act and the spread of the spirit blessing.



XIAN (4381/30) shows an axe or halberd (1) and a mouth (2); alternate forms (3). It is an exchange for CHENG² (4), the personal name of Di Yi, founder of the Shang and the name of the new Zhou capital founded after the victory over Shang.

Conjoining describes your situation in terms of an influence that excites, mobilizes or triggers you into action. The way to deal with

it is to find the best way to bring things together. This influence is working to unite the separated parts of something that belongs together. Reach out, join things and allow yourself to be moved. This is pleasing to the spirits. Through it they will give you success, effective power, enjoyment and the capacity to bring the situation to maturity. Put your ideas to the trial. That brings profit and insight. The woman and the yin are the keys to the situation. Understanding, accepting and acting through the woman generates meaning and good fortune by releasing transformative energies.

THE SCHOLAR SPEAKS

The hexagram figure shows inner strength submitting to outer stimulation. Above the mountain there are the mists. Accept what is coming as the sign of something greater. This reflects the way the world is made. Relations are clarified and individuals have a way to order their hearts. Bring things and people together through emptiness, the empty yet fertile space within you. Make peace, spread satisfaction and agreement. Something is indeed influencing and exciting you. Through it you can move the hearts of others. The flexible and adaptable is above, the firm and persistent is below. They excite and invoke each other, moving through mutual interaction. The man is below, the woman above. Accepting, understanding and submitting to the woman and the yin is pleasing to the spirits. Through it they will give you success, effective power, profit and insight. When Heaven and Earth influence each other this way, the Myriad Beings change and give birth. When the sage influences people's hearts this way, the world is harmonized and made even. Contemplate the place where things can be influenced and touched. By doing so you can see what moves the hearts of Heaven, Earth and the Myriad Beings.

THE SHAMAN SPEAKS

Mists above Mountain. Conjoining in the Spirit.

This is a time when Noble One uses emptiness to accept the people.

Spirit words bind us and accomplish fate, speaking and spreading joy through the Intermediaries. These are the Operators, those who work

with the Spirit. Rising Mists above stimulate through joyous words that cheer and inspire while Mountain below limits and articulates what is complete to suggest what is beginning. It is Metal over Earth: outer stimulation that articulates the inner field, drawing down the spirit to the sacred place. The ideal Realising Person reflects this by emptying his heart. By exhibiting compassion for each person he encounters, he encourages them to draw near. Make the sacrifice. A cycle is ending.

TRANSFORMING LINES: CHANGE AT WORK

INITIAL SIX

The sacred place. Uniting in Spirit.

It conjoins your big toes.

The purpose is located outside you. You feel the first stirrings of creative desire. The influence is just beginning. There is no telling what will happen. This influence could change the way you see your life.

Direction: Revolution and renewal. You are coupled with a creative force.

SIX AT SECOND

The sacred place. Uniting in Spirit.

It conjoins your calves. Trap! The Way closes.

Wise Words! Abide in the dwelling and open the Way.

Yielding to this advice will not harm you. Don't get swept off your feet by this powerful influx. A hasty move will lead to nothing but trouble. Stay right where you are and you'll soon have what you want.

Direction: Don't be afraid to act alone. You are connected to a creative force.

NINE AT THIRD

The sacred place. Uniting in Spirit.

It conjoins your thighs. Hold on to your following!

Going on brings distress.

This means truly not abiding. A place to hold on to what is below! You are in danger of becoming obsessed by this influence. This will do

with the Spirit. Rising Mists above stimulate through joyous words that cheer and inspire while Mountain below limits and articulates what is complete to suggest what is beginning. It is Metal over Earth: outer stimulation that articulates the inner field, drawing down the spirit to the sacred place. The ideal Realising Person reflects this by emptying his heart. By exhibiting compassion for each person he encounters, he encourages them to draw near. Make the sacrifice. A cycle is ending.

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you no good. Hold on to yourself and what supports you. If you go on running after this, you will simply be covered in distress.

Direction: Gather resources for a great new project. Proceed step by step. Gather energy for a decisive new move.

NINE AT FOURTH

The sacred place. Uniting in the Spirit.

Trial: Wise Words! the Way is open.

The cause of sorrow disappears.

You waver back and forth, 'coming and going'.

Partners will simply follow your thoughts.

This is not a harmful influence, but the Great is not shining in it yet. Express your aims and desires. This is a very favourable influence. Your sorrow over the past will simply disappear. The Way is open. You go back and forth in your thoughts, trying to understand this new feeling. Have no fears. Your friends will be there for you.

Direction: Re-imagine the situation. Gather energy for a decisive new move.

NINE AT FIFTH

The sacred place. Uniting in Spirit.

It conjoins your neck, moves along the spine.

No cause for sorrow.

These are the tips of the purpose. This is a very deep connection that will endure over time. You are feeling the beginnings. This will wipe away past sorrows.

Direction: A transition. Be very small. Don't be afraid to act alone. You are connected to a creative force.

SIX ABOVE

The sacred place. Uniting in Spirit.

It conjoins your jaws, cheeks and tongue.

The mouth is loosened and bursts forth. This influence inspires you and you burst forth in passionate speech. It may not last long, so be ready to retreat when words run out.

Direction: Pull back. It will connect you with a creative force.