

HEXAGRAM 8

PI UNITY, CO-ORDINATION¹

Component trigrams:

Below: K'UN, earth, female, passive, etc.

Above: K'AN, water, a pit.

TEXT Unity (or co-ordination). Good fortune! Further consultation of the oracle will provide an omen of great and lasting value. No error! Those whose hearts are troubled assemble. The laggards suffer disaster.

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT Unity (or co-ordination) brings good fortune by ensuring the support and willing obedience of subordinates. What is said about renewed consultation of the oracle is indicated by the strong line in the middle (of the upper trigram). Those in trouble will be drawn together because of the accord between those in command and those who obey. The laggards will suffer because their stock of Tao² is exhausted.

SYMBOL The hexagram symbolizes water lying upon the land—co-ordination.³ The ancient rulers strengthened the realm by being on affectionate terms with the feudal lords.⁴

The Lines

6 FOR THE BOTTOM PLACE Where there is confidence, the work of unification is carried on faultlessly, for confidence is like a flowing bowl. There is a windfall yet to come. **COMMENTARY** Six for the bottom place here indicates unexpected good fortune.

6 FOR THE SECOND PLACE Unification (or co-operation) should proceed from within our own circle. Righteous persistence will bring good fortune. **COMMENTARY** When unification (or co-operation)

proceeds from within our own circle, the results will not be disappointing.

6 FOR THE THIRD PLACE He joins himself with evil-doers.
COMMENTARY If we do this, how can we fail to suffer for it?

6 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE He co-operates with people beyond his immediate circle. Righteous persistence will bring good fortune.
COMMENTARY Co-operation with such people and leading them into virtuous ways must be accomplished by working through their leaders.

9 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE Relying on his people's co-operation, the King pursues game which is enclosed on three sides, but loses the quarry ahead. This is because the local people were not warned.⁵ Righteous persistence brings good fortune. **COMMENTARY** This good fortune is indicated by the central position of the ruling line [i.e. central to the upper trigram]. Leaving alone those difficult to catch and following where the chances seem good, the King nevertheless loses the game in front of him. This means that, although the local people were not warned, the ruler adopts a fair and liberal policy.⁶

6 FOR THE TOP PLACE Attempts to bring about unity when there is no one at the head result in disaster. **COMMENTARY** No one at the head means no one to complete the work of administration.⁷

NOTES (1) Just as the last hexagram deals ostensibly with military affairs, so does this one largely concern administration. For divination purposes, it should be regarded figuratively—unless a problem of administration is actually involved in the enquiry. (2) Here Tao means innate virtue and merit. (3) This is indicated by the nature of the component trigrams. It is by co-operation between the fertile earth and the water which irrigates it that growth is achieved. (4) This may suggest dealing kindly with immediate subordinates, but in certain rare cases it may be taken to mean that a friendly nobleman, if rightly approached, would prove helpful. (5) This would seem to suggest that our loss is not due to disloyalty but to our having failed to take people into our confidence. (6) The implication is that such a policy is required for the success of our plans. (7) This suggests a general lack of co-ordination due to poor leadership.