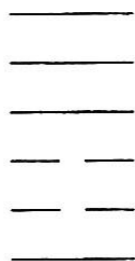


25 wuwang/unexpected



*Supreme offering.
 Augury favourable.
 If it is not right,
 sad is our plight.
 Not favourable when there is somewhere to go.*

Base (9): Unexpected journey.

AUSPICIOUS.

(6) 2: 'Reaping without first having ploughed,
 tilling without first having cleared.'

Thus favourable when there is somewhere to go.

(6) 3: Unexpected, mortified!
 Someone tied an ox outside.
 A passer-by was gratified,
 a citizen was mortified.

(9) 4:

Augury possible.
 NO MISFORTUNE.

(9) 5: Unexpected sickness.

*Give no medicine.
 The outcome will be happy.*

Top (9): Unexpected journey.

*Catastrophe will occur.
 Unfavourable for nothing.*

(25) **unexpected**

(Tag) *Wu* is a negator and *wang* means 'reckless' or 'disorderly', hence Gao takes *wuwang* to mean 'not out of order' or 'fitting, appropriate'; but this is somewhat strained. Waley, from his interpretation of Line 3, thought *Wuwang* was the name of a disease demon. I have followed Kunst and others in taking *wang* as a loan character for *wang* 'expect'.

(Hexagram statement) For the 'four qualities' see page 126.

(2) The balanced jingle about farming the fields may be an ancient rhyme and is probably proverbial, indicating either good results for little effort or success because of good luck.

(3) The oracle in prose reads: 'Unexpected disaster! Someone tethered an ox. A passer-by's gain, a resident's disaster.' The rhyming is unsophisticated. *Zai* 'disaster' has the fire radical, but does not refer only to fires.

Waley (A131) thought this oracle dealt with a ritual in which an ox was used as a scapegoat, because he found evidence of such a practice in the 'Yueling' section of *Liji*. The demon was tied to an ox that took the disease from the settlement and gave it to passers-by. According to Gao's interpretation (G232), the disaster is a house fire. The tied ox naturally (*wuwang*) runs away, to the benefit of its finder, while the villager who owns it suffers loss.

(5) Waley took this oracle to mean no medicine could be applied to the disease caused by the *wuwang* demon.