

HEXAGRAM 49

KÔ REVOLUTION¹, LEATHER, SKIN



Component trigrams:

Below: LI, fire, brilliance, beauty.

Above: TUI, a body of water, pool, marsh, joy.

TEXT Revolution. Not before the day of its completion will men have faith in it—sublime success! Determination in a righteous course brings reward; regret vanishes!

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT In this hexagram, water and fire extinguish each other,² behaving like two women who live together but whose wills conflict—such is the nature of revolution. That faith is not reposed in it until the day of its completion means that revolution must come first, whereafter public faith in it will be established. A civilized and enlightened attitude brings joy; great success makes it possible to put all things to rights. Upon the achievement of a necessary [or proper] revolution, regret vanishes. The renovating activities of the celestial and terrestrial forces produce the progress of the four seasons. T'ang and Wu³ rebelled in accordance with Heaven's decree) and the people responded to them. The timely application of this hexagram is of vast importance.

SYMBOL This hexagram symbolizes fire rising from a marshy lake.² The Superior Man regulates the calendar and thus ensures that men are

The Lines

9 FOR THE BOTTOM PLACE For strength, use yellow oxhide. **COMMENTARY** (Such aids to strength are necessary, for) this line cannot suit itself to its position.⁴

6 FOR THE SECOND PLACE On the day the revolution is completed, to advance brings good fortune and is free from error.⁵ **COMMENTARY** This line presages great blessings.⁶

9 FOR THE THIRD PLACE To advance now would bring misfortune and persistence would lead to (further) troubles. When talk of revolution has thrice arisen, then act with confidence.⁷ **COMMENTARY** What else could we do (under the circumstances)?

9 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE Regret vanishes and confidence is established. A change of government brings good fortune.⁸ **COMMENTARY** Good fortune in the sense that people will put their faith in our objectives.

9 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE The great man accomplishes the change like a tiger;⁹ he is so confident that he does not need to employ divination. **COMMENTARY** His accomplishing the change 'like a tiger' means in a brilliantly civilized manner.

6 FOR THE TOP PLACE The Superior Man brings about the change like a leopard⁹ and lesser men promptly switch their allegiance. To advance now brings misfortune. Righteous persistence brings good fortune to those who remain where they are. **COMMENTARY** The Superior Man brings about the change 'like a leopard' means that he does so in a manner that is exceedingly graceful. That lesser men promptly switch their allegiance means that they readily accept his lead.

NOTES (1) Very often, this means renovation, as of character, etc. But it may also mean exactly what it says; Confucius, though he regarded loyalty to the ruler as one of the highest virtues, recognized that evil men forfeit their right to rule by their excesses, and it is probable that this notion antedates him by many centuries. (2) A reference to the component trigrams. (3) Two greatly admired historical figures. (4) We cannot adapt ourselves to the present situation; we must increase our strength so as to be able to combat it. (5) We must not advance further until certain major changes have been completed. (6) Unexpected good fortune. (7) We must make very sure that a rumoured change will occur before we take further action. (8) Taken out of its political context, this may presage a great change in some other walk of life. (9) 'Like a tiger' and 'like a leopard' do not have any connotation of fierceness. The striped skin of the former and the spotted hide of the latter symbolize brilliance and beauty respectively.