

64

䷿ 未濟

WÈI JÌ

NOT YET ACROSS

Not yet across.

Blessed.

Unfavorable for the little fox:

He gets his tail wet
just before he reaches the shore.

One is in midstream on a dangerous ford. Success is certain for all but someone small and weak, who will drown before reaching the shore. This “little fox” gets his showy tail wet and it drags him under. Fording a river symbolizes any uncertain and dangerous sequence of events.^{1, 2}

Lines

first line/6 — — He gets his tail wet.
Trouble.

When he is in deep water midway across the ford, the little fox’s bushy tail gets wet and begins to drag him under. He should not have come so far. The weak line (— —) at the bottom of the hexagram symbolizes someone small and weak. This bottom line of the trigram Kǎn ䷮ Pit is almost always inauspicious, especially at the bottom of a hexagram.²

line two/9 — His wheels drag.
Keeping on will bring good fortune.

The wheels of his carriage drag in the mud of the river bottom, but he is still able to forge ahead. His horses will pull the carriage free.

This is an active line (—) in the place of the subject, who is aided by his ruler.³

line three/6 — — Not yet across.
It is inauspicious to march to war,
But favorable to undertake the crossing of a
great river.

As long as his advance is peaceful and not aggressive, he will succeed. Line three is usually inauspicious. This inauspiciousness is mitigated here, perhaps by the fact that the line's being at midstream in the hexagram accords so well with the hexagram's overall meaning.

line four/9 — — Keeping on brings good fortune.
Regrets will pass.
When the Thunderer attacked the Land of Gui,
In three years he had a reward from the Great
Nation.

Though it takes great effort, he will succeed. The "Great Nation" is Shang. The "Thunderer" probably refers to the Zhou ancestor who fought for Shang against Gui. This is said to have been Duke Jili 周公季歷, the father of King Wen. Line four is the place of the officer.^{4, 5, 6}

line five/6 — — Keeping on brings good fortune.
No regrets.
When the lord is glorious,
It is auspicious to bear him allegiance.

Loyalty to the ruler ensures success. Line five is the place of the ruler. The passive line (— —) suggests passive acceptance of the ruler's authority. The upper trigram Luó ䷔ Shining Light symbolizes a glorious ruler.

top line/9 — — Allegiance to someone who drinks.
No harm.
But if he gets his head wet,
Allegiance will miss the mark.

It is all right to bear allegiance to a ruler who goes a bit too far, but not to one who completely breaks the bounds of proper conduct. That the Shang drank too much was one of the accusations that the

Zhou used to justify rebellion. The top line of a hexagram often has to do with going too far and with conflict between subject and ruler.

STRUCTURE ☲ 離 Luó Shining Light (shining, shone upon)

☵ 坎 Kǎn Pit (difficulties, a river)

He is in the midst of difficulties (lower trigram ☵), but allegiance to a shining ruler will get him through (upper trigram ☲).

SEQUENCE The protagonist of the previous hexagram JÌ JÌ (63) ALREADY ACROSS had completed the crossing of one river, but was not yet ready to start across another. The protagonist of NOT YET ACROSS is in midstream. Whether the two hexagrams refer to the same person and the same river is unclear. Perhaps ALREADY ACROSS shows someone who has found a place in the new regime and NOT YET ACROSS shows him improving that place. Perhaps ALREADY ACROSS shows someone who can hope for nothing better under the present regime and prepares to cross the river toward rebellion. In that case, NOT YET ACROSS shows someone else who can indeed hope for higher position even under the present regime. In either case, the *Changes* does not end statically. Its protagonist is in motion, not yet at the end of the present movement of his fate.

Notes

1. NOT YET ACROSS — Compare with JÌ JÌ (63) ALREADY ACROSS.

2. “gets his tail wet” (opening text and first line) — See also ALREADY ACROSS.

3. “his wheels drag” (line two) — See also line three of KUÍ (38) ESTRANGEMENT and the first line of ALREADY ACROSS.

4. “the Thunderer” (line four) — This line can also be read: “Like a thunderbolt we attacked the land of Gui and in three years had a reward from the Great Nation.”

5. “the Land of Gui” (line four) — See line three and note 6 of ALREADY ACROSS.

6. “the Great Nation” (line four) — During the early years of the Zhou Dynasty, Shang was still referred to as the Great Nation. Use of such an expression is one of the things that suggests an early Zhou date for at least part of the *Changes*.