

20

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(guān) Gazing (Contemplation)

The hands have been washed, but they have not yet offered up the sacrifice. There is sincerity and solemnity.

- Six in the first place: The gaze of youth: for a minor person, no blame. For one worthy of authority, difficulties.
- Six in the second place: A peeping gaze: a woman's persistence is effective.
- Six in the third place: Gazing at my life: advances, retreats.
- Six in the fourth place: Gazing at the splendor of the nation: appropriate for the guest of the ruler.
- Nine in the fifth place: Gazing at my life: for one worthy of authority, no blame.
- Nine at the top: Gazing at their lives: for one worthy of authority, no blame.

Image

Winds move over the earth: the image of gazing. Thus former rulers traveled their realms, viewed the people, and issued instructions.

In the same untrammelled way that the winds move over the entire surface of the earth, unhindered by obstacles, undaunted by distance, anyone in a position of responsibility must let her gaze travel far, beyond her own concerns or those of the people who seem to speak most clearly. For this reason, the great and good rulers of China's halcyon past traveled among their people, observing their lives and conditions at close range. In this way, they were able to see for themselves the actual conditions of the people, and to meet many of them. In addition, the people were able to observe the ruler's concern with their lives, and to express their complaints and fears directly. Openness to forthright criticism from even the most lowly was considered essential. Only after learning from observing and listening to the people did these wise rulers dare to formulate their instructions to them.

This hexagram describes a time for gaining a broader perspective, a wider view. Such an endeavor is not always possible, so the time appropriate for it should be seized and used, and the knowledge gained from a wider gaze should be internalized, stored up for times when informed decisions must be made. The various lines of the hexagram describe the gazes of different kinds of people: the young, the petty, the responsible. Such contemplative gazing is essential for the continuing growth of our best qualities. At times we need to concentrate our gaze on the advances and retreats of our own lives, on the needs of our country, or on others' lives. Each changing line suggests a different direction, but

all encourage a broader vision, and clear, thoughtful viewing of many people and factors before advising others or making major decisions, or acting upon them.

Shaughnessy, 154–155, 319.

Lynn, 260–265.

Wilhelm/Baynes, 82–85.