47 kun/beset

Offering.
Auspicious augury with great men.
NO MISFORTUNE.
There will be complaints, not to be heeded.

Base (6): Buttocks beset by a wooden mace.
Retiring to a hidden place.
For several years not glimpsed.

(9) 2: Beset while taking food and beer,
when scarlet-girded men appear.
Favourable for offering sacrifice.
For military expeditions DISASTROUS.
NO MISFORTUNE.

(6) 3: Beset by stones, clutching thorny boughs.
Entering his house,
sees not his spouse.
DISASTROUS.

(9) 4: Slowly, slowly, from afar.
Beset by a great and burnished car.
Distress has an end.

(9) 5: They mutilate his feet and nose.
Beset: red-girt men round him close.
Slowly set free.
Favourable for offering sacrifice.

Top (6): Beset by creeping plants and vines.
Tripping on tree stumps, till progress is arduous.
There will be troubles.
For an expedition: AUSPICIOUS.

(47) **beset**

This is the longest set of appended statements: 95 characters.

(Tag) English synonyms might be 'hindered', 'impeded', 'hampered', 'thwarted', 'bothered'. 'Beset' fits the circumstances of all the lines.

(Base) Gao (G293) takes the mace as a paddle used to beat a prisoner, and the 'hidden place' as a prison.

The Mawangdui text adds the prognostic 'Disastrous'.

(2) 'Beer' answers the rhyme, and is also a more technically accurate designation than the usual translation, 'wine', for the alcoholic drinks in question were grain-based. Gao (G294) compares the vocabulary with that of Analects 9.17. He concludes that the meaning here is 'befuddled by food and drink', and that a messenger arrives to bestow the honorific red insignia on the subject.

(2) and (5) For the word *fu* see Diagram 16. Early texts contain six characters that are treated by Chinese glossarists as interchangeable. Four of them are pronounced *fu* (**pjwet*):

(a) with the grass radical (K501a-c, D176);
(b) with the silk radical (K276k; in *Zhouyi* Hexagram 47);
(c) with the dressed-leather radical (K276l);
(d) also meaning 'emblematically decorated' (K276m, D176). The remaining two both have the dressed-leather radical:
(e) *ge* or *jia* (K675j, D286) and
(f) *bi* (K407m, D31).

Chinese dictionaries explain them all as 'ceremonial garments that cover the knees'. Translators use 'apron' (Legge and Waley), 'knee-covers'(Karlgren), 'greaves' or 'demi-jambes' (Waley) even 'knee-caps' (though that is strictly an anatomical term), all of which 'cover the knees'.

Schuessler defines *fu* as 'ceremonial apron'. In the Zuo Commentary (Duke Huan 2, Legge 38/40), *fu*(d) appears as a garment proper for a ruler, as it does at sacrifices in Analects 8.21. The Han ritual text *Liji* (section Yuzao 21, Legge's version II p13) describes *fu*(c) and later editors add drawings of aprons. Zhou Xibao *Zhongguo gudai fushishi* 'history of ancient Chinese costume' (Beijing 1984; 34, 35, 44) takes *fu* to mean an apron worn by an emperor. In Ode 213 *ge*(e) is worn by a ruler.

In the Odes *fu*(a) is worn by leaders, often military, and is always red (Odes 151.1; 178.2; 189.8; 222.3). Western Zhou bronze inscriptions mention worthy men being invested with *fu*, using three words for red. (See Edward Shaughnessy *Sources of western Zhou history* 82, 85.) Two of these words are mentioned here in Hexagram 47. Gao (G294) thought the scarlet apron in Line 2 was an award from the king, while the red one in Line 5 betokened danger of punishment. Perhaps vermilion *fu* were for royalty, a duller red for commoners. It is probable that *chi*, used to decribe furs, was a rusty or brownish red and *zhu* was vermilion or bright scarlet (see Ode 154.3).

In Ode 222 *fu* covers the thighs – perhaps as breeches or breech-cloth – while the shins are wrapped in puttees. Ode 147.2 and the description of the capping ceremony at the beginning of *Yili* use *bi*(f) for leggings or puttees, undyed, perhaps intended for mourning wear. The same passage mentions red leather *bi*. Schuessler defines *bi* (**pjit*) as 'leggings' (K407m, D31).

Diagram 17 APRON / LEGGINGS

FU	FU	FU	FU	FU	GE/JIA	BI
501a	501c	276k	276l	276m	675j	407m

Serial numbers are from Karlgren *Grammata Serica Recensa*

Chinese lexicographers note that *fu*(b) with the silk radical, used in this hexagram, means a cord or ribbon by which a seal or jade ornament hangs from the belt – an apron-string?. Seals are not known to have come into wide use before the Warring States Period, but Shang examples have been found, possibly used for marking ceramics or bronze-casting moulds. See Allan *The shape of the turtle* (1991) pages 89 and 91.

In sum, *fu* suggests rank and authority. My translation is biased against legwear; and I have implied several wearers, but the Chinese may equally mean that only one apron-wearer appears.

Kunst (R333) thinks that in line 2 *fu* is 'Vermilion Kneeshields', the name of a border state (*fang*) which will provide sacrificial victims. *Fang*, however, can be taken with the following verb to mean 'just then'.

(3) The obvious sense is of a rocky and overgrown path, as in the Top Line of the same hexagram. Wen Yiduo, however, takes the stone to be singular and mean a pillory (See 16:2), while the thorny boughs are a metaphor for imprisonment (See 29:top). (W33) He also suggests that in this instance the thorns were arranged on top of the compound wall, like modern barbed wire. (W586)

(4) Chariots (more than one may be intended in this oracle) were indeed splendid, even awe-inspiring, but could move well only on level dry surfaces. The burnished bronze was decorative, perhaps leaving little wood showing, but the chariot was made of wood.

(5) For 'red-girt', see (2) above. The number of red-girt men is not clear: there may be only one.

Gao (G295) suggests a different story, in which a man wearing the red insignia is ill at ease and in danger. The indication then means that he can tactfully leave off the insignia, relinquishing power and getting out of danger.

(Top) 'Till' translates *yue*. See note to 26:3.