

HEXAGRAM 56
LÜ THE TRAVELLER



Component trigrams:

Below: XÊN, a mountain, hard, obstinate, perverse.

Above: LI, fire, brilliance, beauty.

TEXT The Traveller—success in small matters. Persistence with regard to travelling brings good fortune.

COMMENTARY ON THE TEXT This hexagram presages success in small things, for a yielding line gains the centre (of the upper trigram) and freely accords with the firm lines to either side. Stubbornness and beauty conjoined¹ make for success in small matters and ensure good fortune to determined travellers. The timely application of this hexagram is of vast importance.

SYMBOL This hexagram symbolizes fire upon a mountain.¹ The Superior Man employs wise caution in administering punishments and does not suffer the cases (brought before him) to be delayed.

The Lines

6 FOR THE BOTTOM PLACE Trifling with unimportant matters, the traveller draws upon himself calamity. **COMMENTARY** The calamity attendant upon having no will of our own.

6 FOR THE SECOND PLACE The traveller reaches an inn with his valuables still nestling safely in the bosom of his robe.² He gains the loyalty of a young servant. **COMMENTARY** The latter sentence implies an assurance that there will be no trouble to the very end.

9 FOR THE THIRD PLACE Owing to the traveller ('s lack of caution), the inn is burnt down and he no longer enjoys the young servant's loyalty. Persistence now would lead to trouble.³ **COMMENTARY**

By causing the inn to burn down, he injures the young servant. The implication is that, travelling on a downward path, our sense of duty and fitness is impaired.

9 FOR THE FOURTH PLACE The traveller reaches a place where he obtains the money needed for his expenses, yet laments that there is no joy in his heart.⁴ **COMMENTARY** His wandering to that place is indicated by the unsuitable position of this line; his obtaining money for expenses brings him no joy.

6 FOR THE FIFTH PLACE While pheasant shooting, he loses an arrow. In the end he wins praise and attains to office.⁵ **COMMENTARY** Both of these are bestowed from above.

9 FOR THE TOP PLACE A bird manages to burn its own nest. At first the traveller laughs, but then (has cause to) shout and weep.⁶ A cow is lost through carelessness—misfortune! **COMMENTARY** The top of this hexagram signifies burning.⁷ The loss of a cow through carelessness means that no news will ever be obtained of something we have lost (or are about to lose).

NOTES (1) A reference to the component trigrams. (2) This implies that we need fear no loss upon our journey. (3) Our carelessness leads us into such difficulties that it would be folly to proceed with our plans. (4) Were we to travel or continue to travel now, though material difficulties would not arise, we should not experience any happiness. (5) The whole of this passage indicates that, after suffering a small loss, we shall receive considerable benefits from those above us. (6) Presumably, someone's carelessness causes him misfortune which excites our mirth—until we discover that we ourselves are deeply involved in the resulting loss. (7) A reference to the upper component trigram.