

## 10 Treading/Mating with the Tiger LU



10



TREADING

Step, path; make your way; conduct, support, sustain; good cheer, good luck; meeting the spirit, acquiring a destiny and identity; site of creative transformation.

### MYTHS FOR CHANGE: THE STORY OF THE TIME

**Charge to the Oracle:** *When beings accumulate, they enshrine the fates given by the Hidden Lord. The Joyous Dancer mates with the spirit. Accept this and use the energy of Treading.*

The accumulated power of the Small sets out to find a new fate. Treading is centre of a complex series of myths and rituals linking sexual intercourse, fertility, intercourse with spirits and the *wu* who facilitate it, the Hidden Temple and the Earth Altar. It includes the spring and autumn River-Mountain festivals, exorcisms, the birth of medicine and the miraculous birth of First Ancestor. The character also suggests grass, thus life, birth and sprouts. It implies the corpse-embodier and those who work with the dead and the spirits who control the 'winds'. It is the dangerous process of directing a ritual invocation. It is waking the Earth to open the fields in spring, and the ge-vine sandals of marriage. It is the birth of the Founding Ancestor described in the Odes:

. . . the birth of our people from Lady Yuan of Jiang.  
How did it happen? She made sacrifice at the Hidden Temple  
to exorcize the childless demon. She trod on the big toe of  
Di's footprint. She conceived in awe.  
Good birth, she bore Prince Ji  
She bore Hou Ji, Ancestor Millet.

The site of this occurrence, the Mountain Shrine, is the hidden hollow of a high mountain, the 'lower hidden' (*xia mi*) below the summit where the Tiger Spirit dwells. Since antiquity this land of hidden shrines and retreats has had the power to enlighten and inseminate. Altars were founded there to make the *jiao*-sacrifice to the High Lord, sites of conception in the spirit. The ones who

did this were the 'Wu who Tread in the Footprints', walking in the steps of the god. Such a ritual opens the fields in the month of Hibernating Insects, when the King sacrifices the red bull and treads the fields, ploughing the first furrows. It is the birth of great souls with special destinies, 'bringing in the fates'.

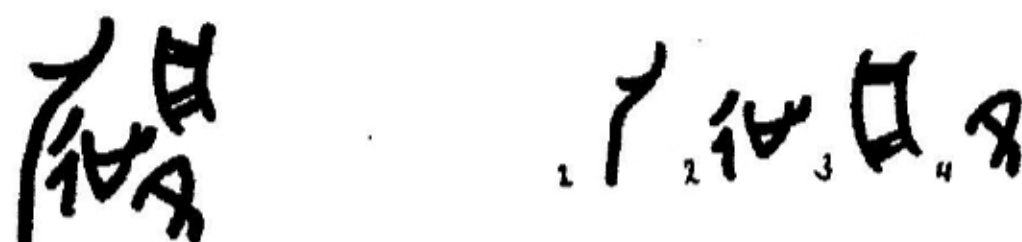
Treading is the figure of the Joyous Dancer, the Young Ancestress Wu who goes out to the Mountain Shrine to mate with the Tiger Spirit and Sky. She calls the spirit down. She is an Intermediary, a person who can make the invisible visible, who dances to call down the bright spirits into her body, a skilled technician of the sacred. She exorcises demons and prays for blessings: long life, wealth, health, fertility and the power and virtue that ennobles a life lived according to *ming*, the Mandate from Heaven that she carries.

## THE RESPONSE

**Treading on the Tiger's tail.**

**It does not maul you. Make an offering and you will succeed.**

**Tread**, *LU*: walk, step; path, track, way; find your way, develop, cultivation; act, practice, accomplish; social cultivation; in the steps of, the Ancestor's footprints; opening the fields, marriage procession; accomplish a rite or ritual, a dangerous step; salary, position, means of subsistence; happiness, prosperity, luck; virtue, rite, hold an office or domain; *also*: dignity, durable happiness; the paths of the stars and planets. The old character shows a person walking a path that moves back and forth, possibly the 'impersonator' of a deceased ancestor. It includes the body, three footsteps, a shoe and the graph for walk.



*LÜ*<sup>3</sup> (7485/44): The character represents a corpse or sitting man (1) impersonating the ancestor at a sacred meal; a foot on a road (2), a shoe or boat (3), and another foot (4).

Treading describes your situation in terms of how you find and make your way. The way to deal with it is to proceed step by step. The path is there. Practise. Think about the right way to act and how to gain



your livelihood. You are walking in the tracks of a tiger, a powerful and dangerous being. If you are careful, this being will give you what you need to exist and frighten off what is trying to harm you. Speak with it and partake of its power and intelligence. Don't do anything to make it bite you. You can't afford to sneer and scold. This is pleasing to the spirits. Through it they will give you success, effective power and the capacity to bring the situation to maturity.

### THE SCHOLAR SPEAKS

The hexagram figure shows an outer struggle met by cheerful self-expression. Heaven is above, the mists are below. Find supportive people. Everyone must amass enough to live on. You must find the right way to do this. Don't stay where you are. Treading and finding your way is the foundation of your ability to realise the Way. It harmonizes and develops your capacity to move in accord with the Way. Carefully differentiate what is above you and what is below you. Set your purpose right. Clarify your relation to the desires that everyone holds in common. The inner stimulation to movement that you feel now can connect you with a powerful creative force. It is like treading on a tiger's tail. You don't want the tiger to bite you. The centre of your desire is solid and correct. You are walking with the highest power. Don't be disheartened. Continuing your efforts to illuminate the situation will bring a real change in awareness.

### THE SHAMAN SPEAKS

**Heaven above, mists below. Treading.**

**A time when Noble One differentiates above and below,  
setting right the common purpose.**

*Spirit speaks and spreads joy through the Intermediaries as it wars in Heaven above. The Intermediaries are working with the Force. Heaven struggles above, persistent and unwearied, while Mists rising from below stimulate and fertilize it, joyous words that cheer and inspire. This is the Metal Moment: inner stimulation feeds outer struggle, articulating the path step by step. The ideal Realising Person reflects this by articulating the place of above and below, using their connection to set right our commons needs. Work through the receptive and the power of Earth. Announce the omen and part from the past.*



## TRANSFORMING LINES: CHANGE AT WORK

### INITIAL NINE

**Treading.** Going simply in white silk shoes.

**This is not a mistake.**

*Solitary and moving with your desire.* Go your own way. Be simple and pure about your efforts. Move with your real desire. How could this be a mistake?

*Direction:* Retire from conflicts. Stay in the family and the dwelling. Gather energy for a decisive new move.

### NINE AT SECOND

**Treading the Way,** smoothing it, smoothing it.

**Trial:** Wise Words!

**The Way is open to the Mountain People, hidden in the shadow.**

*This is centred and does not originate in disorder.* You are treading the Way, so be calm about everything. Your work and your life are fine. This is not the time to come out of hiding. Stay in the shade for now, hidden away. You are moving toward the spirit that will reveal your destiny. Your time will come.

*Direction:* Disentangle yourself. Re-imagine the problem. Gather energy for a decisive new move.

### SIX AT THIRD

**Treading.** Someone squints and thinks they can see.

**Someone limps and thinks they can Tread.**

**Someone-treads on the Tiger's tail and it mauls them.**

**Trap!** The Way closes.

**This is a soldier acting as a Great Leader.**

*Not the place to use brightness, not the time to move with the group. Not an appropriate situation unless you are a Great Chief with a strong purpose.* This is not the way to act. You are presuming on inadequate powers. Go on like this and the tiger will maul you. You are not the leader, so don't presume to be one. It would be a useless sacrifice.

*Direction:* You are confronting a powerful and dangerous force.



## NINE AT FOURTH

**Treading on the Tiger's tail. Joyous Dancer mates with the spirit.**

**Carefully, carefully present your petition.**

**Bring this to completion. Wise Words! The Way opens.**

*Your purpose is moving. You meet the Great Person, the hidden spirit, the source of power. Present your case clearly and persuasively. Don't be intimidated. The Way is open. Your purpose is moving. Here you acquire your destiny.*

*Direction: Connect your inner and outer life. Take things in. Be open to the new and provide what is needed.*

## NINE AT FIFTH

**Treading and parting. Be decisive.**

**Trial: adversity, hungry souls and angry ghosts.**

*It is right to correct this situation. This next step takes courage. You must decisively separate yourselves from the dangerous past influence that brought you here. Have no fear. Announce the oracle and your new destiny. Correcting the situation is definitely the right thing to do.*

*Direction: Turn conflict into creative tension. The situation is already changing.*

## NINE ABOVE

**Treading. Look at your steps and watch the omens.**

**The predecessors are blessing you.**

**Wise Words! Their eternal return opens the Way.**

*The source above opens the Way. There is a great reward. If you look at the things you have been doing, you will see that they connect with something larger than your personal desires. Keep to this path, for the ancestors bless you. Learn to respect them, for it is their presence that opens the Way.*

*Direction: Express yourself joyously. Find supportive friends. Gather energy for a decisive new move.*