

Keywords of Change

The World of Words and Ideas that lie behind the Practice of *Yijing*

Stephen Karcher PhD

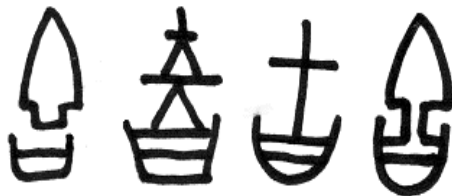
Keywords is a lexicon, introducing the ideas and practices that are central to the world of Change through the words that embody them. These are ideas and practices that permeated the old culture as ideals, rituals, characteristic ways of thinking and important experiences. The numbers following the name of Chinese characters cited in the text refer to the *Dictionnaire Ricci de caractères chinois*, giving the entry number and radical. The characters are shown are the oldest available versions.

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Divinatory Signs

The symbols (*xiang*) of the *Classic of Change* act in two different but related ways. They deepen awareness by introducing the mythic or archetypal background to a situation and, at the same time, offer specific advice about which things are helpful and which dangerous in a given situation. They do this through a special set of divinatory words or signs.

Wise Words! The Way is open (*ji*) suggests words coming from the mouth of a Sage that point the way to the experience of meaning and good fortune by releasing transformative energy.



JI (770/30), the Way is open or auspicious, shows a sage or scholar, a weapon or phallus and the sign for mouth. It is a good moon and wise words that give the ability to act in a potent fashion.

Trap! The Way is closed (*xiong*) suggests a pit or trap, where you are cut off from the flow of spirit and left open to danger. This is an open mouth ready to eat you!



XIONG (4592/17), the Way is closed, shows a praying figure with a cross on the face or mouth, or a pitfall: a trap where the connection to the spirit is cut off. It suggests fear and a desperate or unanswered prayer. Figure 2 shows *xiong*, elder brother, the one who makes the offerings.

A connection to the spirits (will carry you through) (*fu*) assembles a wide range of meanings, from blessing and prosperity through enlisting spirit aid to taking captives. It has the quality of being sincere and trustworthy. It is part of the Name of Figure 61, *Centering and Connecting to the Spirits/Opened Heart*.

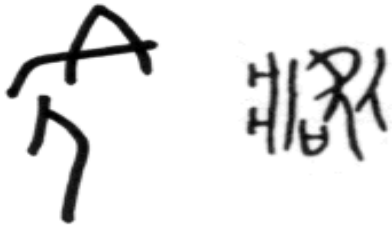
Center, ZHONG: inner, central, calm, stable; balanced, correct; put in the center, mediate, between; the inner life, the heart; a stable point that lets you face the vicissitudes of life. The old character shows an arrow or banner at the center of a target.

Connect, FU: accord between inner and outer; sincere, truthful, reliable, verified; have confidence; linked to and carried by the spirits; capture prisoners, take spoils; be successful; incubate, hatch. The old character shows the claws of the bird spirit or ancestor and its prey.



ZHONG (2719/2) shows a flag or arrow in the middle of a target, a 'center'. FU² (3565/9) shows a bird's claws grasping its young (*zi*, son or sonhood) or captives taken by the armies. It is an exchange character with FU (3581/39) sincere, trustworthy and FU (3628/113) blessings.

Mistake, *jiu*, used in the phrases **no mistake** or **this is not a mistake**, refers to trouble caused by faulty action and faulty awareness.



JIU (2147/30), mistake or fault, shows a foot and a person, a misstep. The foot is upside down, thus walking slowly, with difficulty, in shackles or hindered by worn-down shoes. This difficulty applies to the whole person.

Distress, *lin*, describes the shame and confusion of having lost the right way and a consequent desire for improvement.



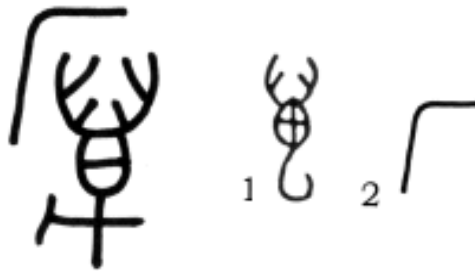
LIN (7108/30), distress, shows a foot in front of a mouth, a footstep of the spirit that blocks expression and induces reflection and repenting. These are words that have difficulty 'walking'.

Cause for sorrow, *hui*, seen in the phrases **no cause for sorrow** or **the cause for sorrow disappears**, points at an action or attitude that will bring misfortune and unhappiness. It includes the sense of repenting, or becoming aware of conduct that has led to unhappiness.



HUI (5067/61), cause for sorrow, shows a woman wearing a feather headdress. It means covered weather and the last moon-day and is exchangeable with MU, the ancestral mother and, with the heart radical, HUI, to regret. The original meaning was "growing plants", from "grass" and "mother." It means "many hearts," many scattered possibilities as opposed to the single focus of ZHEN, trial, and the sign the gods have given, thus many opportunities for regret.

Adversity, *lin*, means danger and hardship, particularly the danger caused by **hungry souls and angry ghosts**, things that return from the past to haunt you. This danger must be faced, endured or exorcised.



LIN (6814/27), adversity (hungry souls and angry ghosts) shows a sheltering cliff or precipice and a stinging insect, emblematic of psychic and literal contagion.

Step into the Great Stream, *she da chuan*, refers to stepping into the stream of life with a purpose to begin a great enterprise or an adventure.



SHE DA CHUAN, step into the Great Stream, shows footprints on both sides of a river, the Great Person, and the flowing of the Ghost River.

Chastising, *zheng*, refers to enforcing discipline or punishing people and to setting out on a campaign or expedition with the aim of reducing things to order.



ZHENG (673/60), chastising or setting out on an expedition, shows a foot moving towards a walled city or a target, with an added graph for road.

A set of four divinatory terms, *yuan heng li zhen*, is found throughout the texts of Change in various combinations and forms part of the deep

structure of *Dazhuan*. When they appear together, they are translated as **Source of Success: an Advantageous Trial** or divination.

Source, *yuan*, means great, very much, potent, the head of a river and the source of thoughts, spring, the east and sunrise. It also occurs in the phrase *yuan ji*, the **Way to the Source is open**.



YUAN (13240/10), literally a person's head, indicates head, first, chief, great, primary, fundamental, good, originating. It shows the sign for person and for the One Above. The Yuan-sacrifice occurs in spring, the time of sowing the seeds and beginning growth.

Success, *heng*, also translated as **Make an offering and you will succeed**, refers to achievement through offering a sacrifice, to ripening and maturity, to things that are vigorous and effective, summer, the south, and the full light of day. It spreads and increases the effects of the spirit.



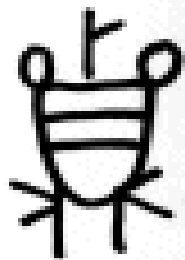
HENG (4177/8) is the summer sacrifice for the growing crops, offering the first fruits to implore the gods for a rich harvest. It means offering and receiving, bringing things to maturity. It suggests the field altar or ancestral altar where the sacrifice occurs and is an exchange character for XIANG, symbol and PENG, transformation through cooking.

Advantageous, *li*, refers to autumn and **harvesting**. It indicates what is beneficial, profitable, what will yield both a good outcome and insight into things, a base for incisive action. It often occurs in a phrase that indicates a given action will be of benefit to everything and everyone concerned, **nothing not advantageous**, *wu wu li*.



LI (6805/18) is harvest, a wheat-plant and a knife. It links profit and insight, benefit, furthering, interest.

Trial, *zhen*, refers to the act of divination and putting your ideas to the trial. It is connected with winter and finding the hidden seed or kernel, the pearl. It is a term of highest value, the means of submitting your wishes to the judgment of the spirits. It also suggests what is proven, just and true.



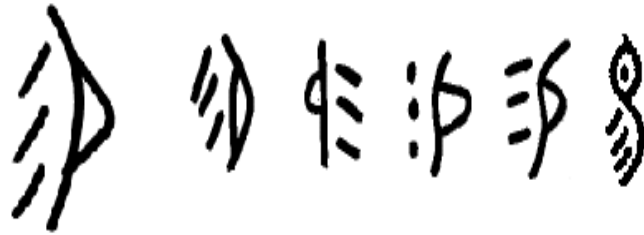
ZHEN (583/109 and 584) is a sacrificial vessel with the sign for divination. It means consulting the oracle and receiving a true and trustworthy answer that can be the measure of things, along with the perseverance needed to follow the advice of the gods and fix the omen in your heart. It is an exchange character for DING, the sacred vessel.

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A large group of keywords centers on the term **Change** (*yi*). Change is simultaneously a quality of the world we live in, an inner, creative energy and the name of a divination book, the *Change*, and the technique associated with it. It is also applied to the school that uses this mysterious quality as a spiritual Way. A primary meaning of the word is “trouble.” It indicates sudden, disastrous storms, unexpected losses or times of political upheaval when confusion intervenes. It is a time when structures break down and something extraordinary happens.

Another primary meaning of *Change* shows the response to trouble: versatility, imaginative mobility, openness and ease. It suggests a fluid personal identity, a fertile imagination and the capacity to move with the breakdown of normal values, a quality that is as mysterious, unpredictable and fertile as the *Dao*. The spirits and the symbols of the book called

Change connect *Change* in the universe to your own inner *Change*, your creative imagination, if you choose to use them.



YI (5333/72), change, shows the sun or moon with its rays emerging from behind a cloud. It is used to indicate a change of weather or time brought about by the ancestor spirits. The character at right was also seen as a chameleon.

The **Realizing Person** (*junzi*) is an ideal of conduct connected to Change, “the person who uses *Change* to follow the *Way* and thus accumulate the power and virtue (*De*) to become who he or she is intrinsically meant to be.” The oldest meaning of the term is “nobleman” or “son of the chief.” We see pictures of the *junzi* in the Book of Poetry, dating back to at least 1000 BCE and the “Golden Age” of the Zhou. The portrait of the nobleman is striking. He is not simply powerful. He is beautiful, desirable, highly skilled and quite refined, capable of profound thought, noble behavior and self-sacrifice. There is a numinous glow around him that represents *De*. He is someone who fully expresses what it is to be human.

About 400 BCE Confucius appropriated and re-defined this word. He turned it into a moral term, whereby it came to mean someone who was perfected in his moral discipline. Confucius idealized the early or Eastern Chou (1100 – c. 700 BCE) and tried to “reconstruct” its rites and rituals as a basis for moral behavior. His discipline consisted of introjecting this set of rules and rituals until they became automatic. Someone who did this was “superior” to those around him and deserved to rule them. Thus the common western translation of *junzi* as “superior man. These two meanings – “morally superior” and “one who uses *Change* to realize him or herself “ – as well as the shadow of the numinous nobleman, all exist in the term *junzi*.



JUNZI, the Noble One or Realising Person, consists of JUN, chief or lord (3147/30), a hand holding a sceptre, stick, or mace along with a mouth, and ZI son/sonhood (11906/39), figure for a child that is used in old language to show the appearance of an ancestor spirit. It is the suffix meaning sage or master in names such as Laozi, the “young-old master.”

Dao means “way” or “path.” In its oldest uses it denotes either a literal road or the life and behavior of a particular kind of person: a carpenter’s *dao*, a wife’s *dao*, a warrior’s *dao*. It developed into the most fundamental, mysterious and attractive term in Eastern thought: the "on-going process of the real" that traces a path for the entire universe and, at the same time, for each individual being in it. To be "in" *dao* is to be connected to the source of meaning and value, a religious experience of a high order. It brings joy, connection, spontaneity, creativity and compassion. The basic divinatory signs of *Change* reflect this: “the Way is open” or “the Way is closed.”



DAO (10535/162), the path or Way is a crossroads with a head and a foot at its center, suggesting the right choice that connects head and “going” or walking. The oldest form of the graph for head (at right) was an animal mask, the beast face of the totemic ancestors and their “paradise time.”

De, which I translate as power and virtue or potency, is another very old word. It is closely associated with *dao*, as in the *Daodejing* or *Way Power Classic*. *De* is the power or virtue that allows something to fully exist, a kind of realizing power that both people and objects can possess that can be accumulated and nurtured. In the human world, it is the charisma or inner power that makes a “great person,” a *Daren*. Powerful *de* makes a powerful person. Exalted *de* makes a Sage. Someone full of *de* is numinous because they have the power to realize *dao* in their person. By accumulating and refining *de*, you become “great,” that is, able to lead your own life. *Change* is a way to accumulate *de*.



DE (10574/60), power and virtue or actualizing Dao, shows an eye with a line indicating ‘straight’ progress on the road or way. With the heart radical, it exchanges with a character that suggests becoming what you are meant to be.

Symbol, *xiang*, is an image that has the power to connect things, to connect the visible world of your problem to the invisible world of the spirit. Change works through the symbols or *xiang*, which were created by the sages and shamans through a kind of imaginative induction that is also called *xiang*. We use *Change* to *xiang* something, to turn it into a symbol. A *xiang* is a magic spell, a figure or likeness that provides a pattern or model. We make the connection between the invisible world of the spirit and the visible world of our lives by playing with the symbols, by imitating them and acting them out.



XIANG (4215/152), symbol or figure, is the sign for an elephant. It is an exchange character for HENG, the summer sacrifice and also suggests a pig-offering to the underworld powers.

Heart or **heart-mind**, *xin*, is where the symbols work. It is the center of our being, the seat of images, affections, desires, intentions and will. The heart spontaneously produces images every day, and these images shape our desire. It is possible to train the heart and waken its latent powers, including the Sage-mind that lurks in its depths. As in many other things, Daoists and Confucians have different ideas on this awakening. Confucians would inscribe the rules of propriety in the heart and repress what opposes them. “Repressing yourself and returning to the rites is being human,” Confucius said. Daoists would empty the heart of all these rites, so we can see the truth that emerges spontaneously.



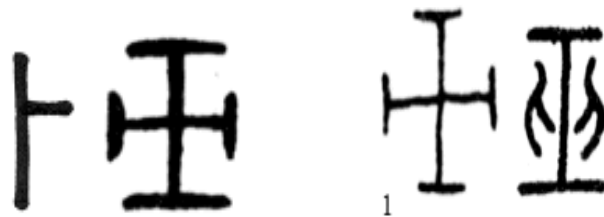
XIN (4493/61), heart-mind, shows a heart and its chambers, suggesting the circulation of spirit energy through the heart meridians.

Divination is how the process works. In context of *Dazhuan* and *Shuogua*, it refers to “yarrow-stalk divination,” the use of 50 yarrow-stalks to key the collection of divinatory symbols called *Yijing* or *Zhouyi*, the *Change*. Historically, the earlier counterpart to yarrow-stalk divination used the carefully prepared shoulder bone of an ox or the undershell of a tortoise. A series of shallow depressions was scooped in reverse side of the bone, and then a red-hot bronze rod was applied. The face of the bone would crack in a particular way, and the diviner would read the angle of the cracks. This form of scapulomancy is associated with the Shang court. There were also spirit-mediums, dream interpreters, temple-block oracles and specialists in reading signs and omens.

Originally, divination was a way to ask the spirits if they approved of an action. It was used to time the great sacrifices and the activities of the king. It developed into a strategic tool, then became a method of spiritual transformation as it became available to people outside the royal courts. The creative ferment and the very real dangers of the Warring States period led to a great interest in what divination is and does.



Bu, the oldest character for divination in general, shows the crack in an oracle bone produced when a concave depression scooped in the reverse side of an ox scapula or tortoise plastron was heated. The sound produced by the cracking is the phonetic pronunciation of the character.



BU SHI (9772/118), yarrow-divination or yarrow-shaman, shows the graph for divination (*bu*) and the graph for *shi*, diviner, a person at the center - in the old form, *wu*, shaman.



In the modern character the bamboo radical is added. The yi-diviners were “book-shamans”, and China’s first books were written on strips of bamboo bound together.



SHI (9721/30 and 9711), diviner, is the “book shaman” in charge of chronicles, histories and oracle books, the one who “eats ancient virtue.” The characters show a hand with a bow drill used to “open” spaces on the oracle bones, creating a space in language for divine guidance and the spirit voice.

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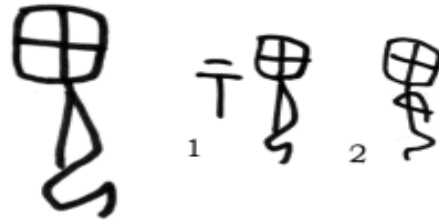
The process of Change divination acts on and through the **Guishen**, the “ghosts and spirits.” In old Chinese thought *gui*, the dark ghosts, and *shen*, the bright spirits, are the two basic categories of categories of imaginal or other-life beings. In us, they are related to the two parts of the soul that unite to form a human being and separate at death: the *po*-soul attached to the passionate body or body of fate, and the *hun*-soul or wandering spirit that carries the mandate or destiny of the person, the primary personality.

The expression *Guishen*, ghosts and spirits, is made up of the characters *gui*, ghost, and *shen*, spirit.



Gui or “ghosts” are the problems we confront. They are the passion bodies or bodies of fate who cannot find release in the tomb, attached to living out their rage, their passionate loves, their hungers and their unresolved needs. Through this unresolved life force, they can haunt living beings, bringing plague and miasma, They represent compulsive negative emotions and pain that can easily poison a person or a situation, causing a paralysis of the personality that can lead to literal or spiritual death. On a moral level, they represent a deep negativity, pain and anger that we must come to grips with. Confronted with the *gui*, we can witness their suffering, offering them

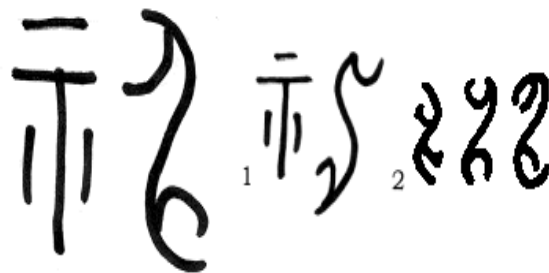
images and means of release; exorcize them, chasing them out of their fixation, or construct an appropriate image to satisfy and house them.



GUI (6407/194), ghost, shows a person (male or female) with a fearsome head, someone who is possessed. It sometimes includes the sign for altar.

Shen, the “bright spirits” who carry the symbols, are our allies in this process of Change. By invoking a bright spirit and focusing its light through a symbol, we can release the *gui* and move their fixation in ourselves. In this, we have spirit helpers of two kinds, described in *Shuogua*: the Intermediaries, the Lady of Fates and the Joyous Dancer, who find the hidden influences and give the spirits voice, and the Operators, the Rouser and the Sacrificer, who rouse new energies and dissolve our fixation on the past.

Shen is **bright spirit** (*shenming*), very potent and very mobile. In the oldest thought, *shen* existed entirely outside the individual. Sages went through elaborate ceremonies to induce the *shen* to take up residence in their bodies. Through this “in-dwelling” they acquired a helping-spirit. The *shen* confers intensity, clarity and depth on the soul. The *shen* also make *Change* work and are “conjured” by its numbers.



SHEN (9654/112), spirit or spirits, shows an altar, the sign for the One Above and a lightning bolt.

The job of the oracle is to move the *gui*, to transform the fixed emotion, so that the process of living can go on. Divination focuses the bright spirit of the *shen* directly into the problem, the heart of the dark bound up *gui*. It offers the knot of pain and compulsion a chance to be mirrored in the symbolic order. It brings to light what is hidden and offers ways to deal with it in everyday life. As it moves and transforms the problem, we are released from compulsive emotions.

Fate or mandate, *ming*, is what emerges from this process. The term's two meanings are both quite old, and they interconnect in a special way. As fate, *ming* shows us an individual destiny, marked off by the great limits of birth and death, given a texture by character and articulated through significant events. This fate is not implacable, but it is very hard to see, buried as it is in the body and the unconscious. As mandate, *ming* shows us a clear command from *Tian* or Heaven. Heaven's Mandate (*Tianming*) is a very important phrase in eastern thought. It is both the power given by Heaven to a line of rulers, allowing them to rule with justice and compassion, and an in-dwelling part of each of us, the "true destiny" fate that heaven allots at birth.

Divination, symbolic perception and imagination connect these two meanings. Through using *Change* and working with its symbols you learn to recognize what Heaven asks of you. You transform yourself from being a victim of fate into a carrier of a mandate from heaven. Through this you can be fully yourself and live in the *dao*.



MING (79/17/30), mandate, shows a sign for man that also suggests a seal, sign of Heaven's approval, and a mouth under a big roof, articulating Heaven's commands. It is identical with the character *ling* or fate.

Fate or mandate, *ming*, is interchangeable in many situations with its cognate, **Ming/brightness**:

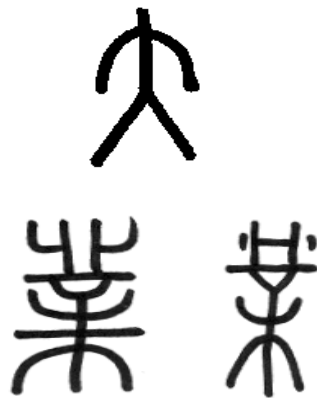


MING (79/19/72), brightness, shows a moon and a sun and a mirror, the mirroring surface of water.

From this comes the expression *shenming*, the light of the spirits that reveals fate or Heaven’s Mandate.



Great Work or **Great Enterprise**, *Daye*, describes the process of spiritual transformation inherent in the New Way of divination that originated in the Warring States period that gave birth to *Dazhuan* and *Shuogua*. “Raising Change into awareness and setting it out fore all the people to use, that we call the Great Enterprise.” It is both an individual process through which you acquire a helping spirit and “become sage” and a social process made up of “politically potent actions” through which the world can return to the Way. It is the effort on the part of the practitioners of the New Way to make it available to others.



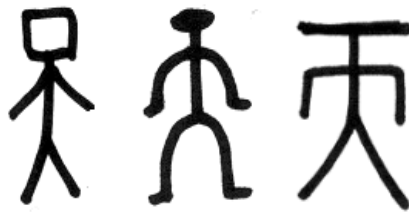
DA YE, Great Enterprise: the character above is DA, great or the great person and his/her power to protect and encourage. Beneath, YE (12584/75), enterprise, in two variant forms, shows a great cause or undertaking as a tree crowded with foliage: the deeds of a man, the affairs upon which he exerts his activity, and what he acquires by his doings, merits, goods, titles. The serrated decoration at the top also suggests a suspended bronze bell or drum that spreads the sound.

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Another set of keywords and meanings clusters around the terms for the two fundamental powers that create and limit the world we live in. They are united in the term *Tiandi*, Heaven-and-Earth.

Heaven and Earth, *Tian Di*, is the name for universe, for everything that exists. It comes into being when the sky power and the earth power couple. One image for *Tian Di* is a turtle, happily swimming in the fertile waters of chaos. His upper shell is the overarching heaven above us; his lower shell is the flat earth beneath us. We are the soft flesh in between. The specifically human world is called All-under-Heaven (*Tian hsia*). I have translated this as “the world we live in.”

Early divination focused on learning the will of Heaven and the feelings of the royal ancestors who reside there. The Way of Heaven was the path that good men sought to follow, for “if you depart from Heaven, what good can you do?” The pair Heaven-and-Earth connects with the long series of similar pairs describing the primal opposites.



TIAN (10917/37), Heaven, shows a person with the sign for the One Above as his/her head. It is what is “overhead”: sky, heaven, god, day, weather.

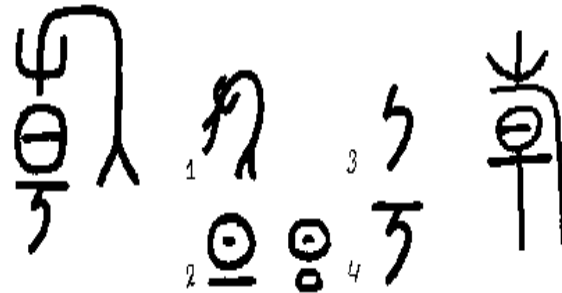


DI (10624/32), earth, in its various forms, shows an earth altar, a tree and a water jug for oblations. The oldest forms of the character (*ta*, at right) suggest both a snake and the female sexual organ.

Gates of Change is a pair of words, *Qian* and *Kun*, the Dragon and the Dark Animal Goddess, that symbolize and invoke the two Primal Powers of Heaven and Earth as they exist within *Change*. They appear as the names of the first two divinatory Figures of Change and are used as a pair for the first time in the *Dazhuan*. Here are some of their possible meanings.

Inspiring Force/Dragon, QIAN: spirit, creative energy, active transforming power, inspiration; the “key”, the male sexual organ and masculine drive; activate, animate, command and guide; strong, tenacious, untiring, firm, stable; *also*: destroy, dry up, exhaust, clear away, clean out.

Dragon is the rainmaker, the yang force awakening life. He suggests the abysmal waters where the sunbirds bathe and the sun-tree or world tree from which they fly. He is gate to the unseen world of spirit, the dark bird who is the ancestor of dynasties, and the One, the origin, and principle of fate in all the Myriad Beings. The old character shows the graphs for sun at dawn, a three-leaved sprout and lush vegetation and energy flowing from Sky that disperses and spreads to nourish the All-Under Heaven.



QIAN (1621/5) is composed of 1, YAN³: hanging vegetation, jungle (1); DAN⁴, dawn, the sun just above the horizon (2); and YI³: vapors or breath (3, 4).

Field/Yielding, KUN: the earth, the world, space, concrete existence, the power to give things form and existence; moon, mother, wife, belly, servants, ministers; supple, adaptable, receptive, yielding; welcome, consent, respond to, agree, follow; give birth to, bear fruit; nourish, provide for, serve, work. The old character shows the tree at the earth altar and two hands making sacrifice to the Ghost River. In its oldest version it is a double spiral, symbol of the primordial waters and rhythm of birth and death.



KUN¹ (6477/32) is composed of 1: TU³, earth, an earth altar (1) and SHEN¹, spirit, ghost, power of expression (2).

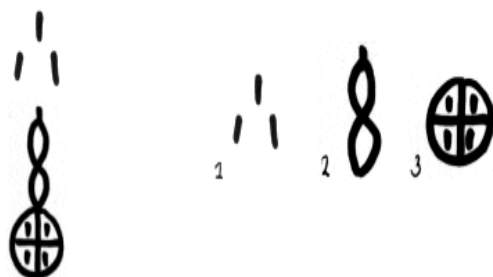
These words connect with the many paired words that describe the two primary powers that interact to create the Ten Thousand Things or Myriad beings (*Wanwu*) of the world we live in: dark (*yin*) and light (*yang*), Great and Small, strong and supple, sun and moon, transformation and continuity. The texts we are considering suggest that all of the powers and changes in the world we live in are a product of the mysterious process embodied in *Change* through its incorporation or participation in these two primal

powers. Their interaction is the basic image underlying *Dazhuan* and *Shuogua*.

Probably the most important of these sets of opposites is Great (*Da*) and Small (*Xiao*), the earliest terms for yin and yang. In *Change*, we first meet the term Small in the name of Figure 9, *Small Accumulates* or *Gathering the Ghosts*.

Small, XIAO: little, flexible, adaptable; humility, what is common to all; adapt to whatever happens; make things smaller, lessen; yin energy; the ghost world; secondary ancestors, families of common people who till the soil. The old character shows a river dividing two banks, the undifferentiated flow of life between the worlds.

Accumulate, CHU: take care of, support, tolerate, encourage; help one another, overcome obstacles; tame, train; domesticate, raise, bring up; gather, collect, hoard, retain; seed, shell, carapace, protection of a germ broken through in spring, protection in the womb. The old character shows a field and two bundles of silk or grass, harvested and stored.

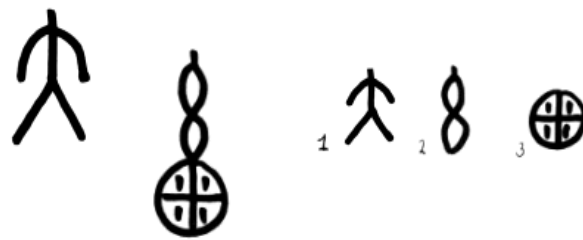


XIAO³, the character above, shows three grains of rice or sand or a river between two banks. The character below, CHU⁴ or XÜ⁴ (2538/102), is composed of silk bundles SI¹ (2) and field with plants TIAN² (3): the harvest of silk and crops, also read as XUAN², profound or dark, mystic, mysterious.

The parallel would be Figure 26, *Great Accumulates*, which contains an echo of the central transforming line reading in *Dazhuan*, the omen of the reception of Heaven's Blessing at 14.6, *Great Being*.

Great, DA: big, noble, important; able to protect others; orient your will to a self imposed goal; venerable, powerful, ancestor; yang energy. The old character shows the great person and his power to protect and shelter.

Accumulate, CHU: take care of, support, tolerate, encourage; help one another, overcome obstacles; tame, train; domesticate, raise, bring up; gather, collect, hoard, retain; seed, shell, carapace, protection of a germ broken through in spring, protection in the womb. The old character shows a field and two bundles of silk or grass, harvested and stored.



DA⁴ (10210/37) shows the great person and his ability to support and protect. The character CHU⁴ or XÜ⁴ (2538/102) is composed of silk bundles SI¹ (2) and field with plants TIAN² (3): the harvest of silk and crops, also read as XUAN², profound or dark, mystic, mysterious.

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Another set of meanings clusters around the word for the diagrams, the three and six line figures that create the matrix of Change.

Gua or **diagram** literally means a pile of things, the pile of lines that make up what we call a trigram (three lines) or a hexagram (six lines). In *Change*, the six-line diagrams serve to organize and display the divinatory texts and give access to them through the process of consultation, creating a matrix that interrelates the *xiang* or symbols. They also have a weight and meaning of their own, an element in the interpretive process that shows you the configuration of yin and yang energies.

The three-line diagrams evolved in a sort of parallel stream that connects the way of the Sage and the Way of the Shaman. The eight possible three-line diagrams were arranged in various combinations that carry their own metaphysical meanings. They became the *Bagua*, the Eight Diagrams or Spirit Helpers. This system is described in *Shuogua*. It became the base for medical, scientific and divinatory techniques of “correlative thinking.” Names and characters for the Eight Trigrams (*Bagua*) or Spirit Helpers are given in *Shuogua*. They are an important part of the world of Change, for their interaction drives the matrix and the deep process of Change.



GUA (6202/25), diagram shows two “crossings” of the spirit, one above the other as are the trigrams in a hexagram, and the sign for to divine (*bu*). It was also seen as a sundial.

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The process of Change in the world we live in is also expressed in more “abstract” terms, centered on the interplay of the two words used to describe what we might call the interaction of the gradual and the quantum process of metamorphosis in the World We Live In (*Tian hsia*).

Gradual and cumulative change or *hua*, describes a gradual change within a being or moment of time, the slow changes over time inherent in all things that permit their manifestation and evolution. It is a gradual and more or less predictable passage from one stage to another, a “normal” change that occurs in the natural course of life. It suggests digestion and assimilation, the growth of an embryo in the womb; to instruct, educate or reform the character; to spread the word and change the way people think. It is the slow *growth and maturation* of the yin and the yang.



HUA (4896/21), changes, shows a live person and, inverted, a dead person, suggesting the changes that gradually occur through the passage of a life.

Transformation or *bian*, with the root name or command, describes a quantum change, a sudden and radical change of state. It is a spiritual transformation, a conversion, as well as a sudden, unexpected death or accident. *Bian* is not “normal;” it is extraordinary, a marvelous happening. It is the *conversion* of yin and yang. The two terms are often coupled in the phrase *bianhua*, change and transformation, gradual change that leads to a sudden change of form.



BIAN (9054/149), transformation, shows a hand, an offering and the fruit of a divination. Alternate versions show bells on the trappings of horses, associated with a wedding procession, and a hand with stick, beating a drum. It suggests the change of a musical note, to reform oneself or to change one’s place. *Bianhua* is a fixed expression for change and transformation; *guabian* is the transformation of one hexagram into another.

The process of change and transformation is of great interest to diviners, for the behavior of things in transitional states is exactly what they want to understand. The book and technique of Change connects the transformations in the world and in the soul directly to the calling (*yao*) or transforming (*bian*) lines of the *gua*. When a line changes form from yang to yin or yin to yang, it pinpoints where transformation may occur in the situation about which you are inquiring.

Moment or **subtle beginning**, *ji*, shows the point at which the transformation first manifests itself. It is a sign, a warning, a strategy and a symbol. Along with *xiang*/symbol or figure and *shi*/ moment and strategy, the word *ji* is central to the operation of Change and its divinatory magic. It represents what we perceive and experience when we use Change and the sort of energy the symbols can release.

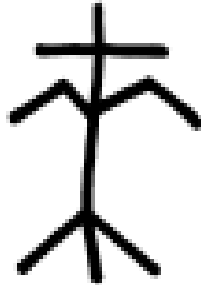
Ji is the source of the movement and the repose of the Way, the opening and closing of the gates of Heaven and Earth. It is the Mysterious Female, the Dark Animal Goddess, the source and spring of the transformations called *Yi* or Change, where all movement originates. It is the infinitely small moment of equilibrium, the change between having and losing, rising and descending. It acts without being born, it dies without dying, it puts Heaven and Earth into movement, sprouting, intertwining and connecting. It is the door of all marvels and mysteries, the opening of the way, the celestial music situated at the heart of reality. The Ten Thousand Things issue from and return to the *Ji*, the source of the Way, the spring of Heaven and Earth. They surge from the *Ji* into life, entering the transformations of yin and yang.



JI (794/52), subtle beginnings, in several versions that show linked grains of rice or silk cocoons, the hidden graph for “great”, a frontier guard and a halberd or emblem ax, sign of power.

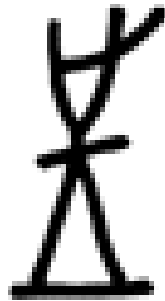
These all proceed on the river of time, the Great River that continually crosses and re-crosses the boundaries of life and death. In Chinese thought this is expressed as *wang lai*, “goings and comings,” the incessant movement on the stream of time that flows from the future into the past, where it reconnects with the Ghost River and re-emerges as the Eternal Round. The seeds and symbols of all things, the *ji*, flow toward us on this river.

Coming, lai, is the stream as it flows towards us, carrying the symbols that will unfold into events. It means what is arriving from the future, attracting good influences, what comes from Heaven and the High Lord. It is the Tree on the Earth Altar. It gives us the seeds, the spirits (*shen*) and the symbols (*xiang*) through which they unfold into events.



LAI (6620/75), coming, shows a wheat plant and the sign for the One Above. It suggests growing, hope for the future and a good omen.

Going, wang, represents what is leaving the field of awareness. It is the stream as it flows away from us, carrying away what is finished. It suggests the past, the dead and the waters of the dead. It means leave, flee, as well as go in the direction of, and is reflected in the *wang*-sacrifice, an exorcism of noxious influences.



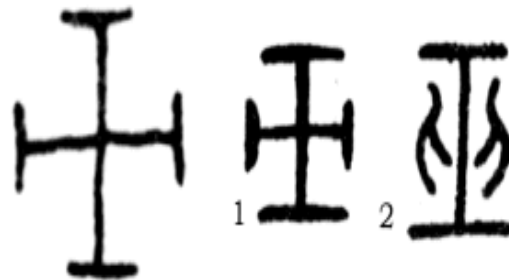
WANG (12095/60), going, shows the graphs for king and for foot. It suggests dissolving the fixations of the past and proceeding on through the guidance of Heaven.

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The Warring States figure of the Diviner or Master of Change who seeks to give us access to these processes of individual and cultural transformation, to “raise Change into awareness and set it out for all the people to use,” represents a fusion of two ancient figures at the heart of eastern religion.

The **spirit-medium, wu,** the Chinese version of the shaman, is the oldest religious figure in the culture. Mediums invite the spirit to enter and use

their bodies and voices, presenting the spirit to the human world. The activity of the medium is connected with a meal shared by humans, ancestors and spirits, during which the medium “embodies” the spirit or ancestor. *Change* gives a symbol for such a meal in *50 Vessel, Ting*. Mediums, who gave the spirits a voice in human affairs, were regarded as the first Sages. They probably produced many of the divinatory symbols collected in *Change*. The medium’s function became an image of the act of divination.



WU (12335/48), shaman or spirit-medium, shows the character for bamboo strips laid in a cross as the prop for the diviner. It refers to the four Wu spirits of the Hidden Lands (*Fang*) to whom sacrifices were made, and suggests the assistants of the great ancestor/ancestress Di and to the ritual dance and the Di-sacrifice and ritual dance with animal masks that invoked the four Wu spirits. The female shaman (2) is a dancing sorceress with long sleeves.

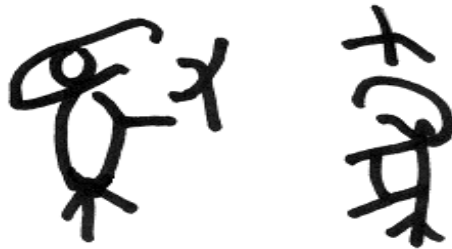
The **Ancient Sage** and the **Sage-Mind** (*shengren*) he or she represents is an ideal of development, a person who has not only realized himself but passed into ways of deep understanding usually unavailable to humans. The ancient sages are the source of all wisdom and culture. There is both a human and a non-human aspect to the Sage. In the oldest thought, a Sage was a spirit-medium who had obtained the aid of a powerful helping spirit or *shen*.

Everything that is of worth in our world was generally seen as descending from the *shengren* or Sage People, who lived in a time before history began. *Dazhuan* and *Shuogua* suggest that this Sage-Mind exists both inside and outside the flow of time. The Ancient Sages may or may not have been “real” people, but the mind that made them sage exists now as well as then. This Sage-Mind is seen as identical with *Change*. The emergence of *Change* into existence is a product of the Sage-Mind at work through the mediums and diviners who set it forth.



SHENG (9700), sage, shows an ear, a mouth and a carrying pole, which is also the name of the Ninth Heavenly Stem (5553). Another version (*ting*) shows a man standing on the earth from which he has grown. This character is now written as REN (10980), person, people or humanity. The expression suggests a sage, saint, emperor, genius and is used to mean holy, sacred, august, imperial, eminent.

The goal in human character development represented by this fusion of the shaman and the sage might be best expressed in the Daoist formula *wu-wei*, “not-acting.” This represents suspension of the rational power drive that leads to focused, directed, planned action (*wei*). It thus opens a space in the heart-mind (*xin*) for the symbols (*xiang*) and spirits (*shen*) of the Way to emerge, shaping our lives and our interaction with the world.



WEI (12164/87), act or activate, shows a hand leading an elephant, sign for the symbols that approach on the stream of time. It suggests forceful, planned, directed action to reach a clear goal.



WU (12363), without, is a very strong negative, meaning does not possess or completely lacking. The character shows a person dancing with ox-tails in his/her hands, having, as it were, killed the force and drive of the bull. This may allude to the spring sacrifice of the Red Bull that opens the fields.

