

A Storehouse of Changes

By Denis Mair

The *Zhouyi* (*Changes of Zhou*) took form early in the Zhou dynasty, approximately 3000 years ago. The text builds upon an older tradition of ceremonial divination which was used during the second millennium B.C. (during the Shang dynasty). In overall form, the *Zhouyi* is a collection of oracular statements which are appended to 64 six-lined figures with symbolic names called hexagrams. Consultation of the *Zhouyi* was documented in chronicles of the Spring and Autumn period (722-481 B.C.). Some time during the Warring States period (475-221 B.C.), explication and philosophical discussion of the text crystallized into a number of treatises. Early in the Han, ten of these treatises (the Ten Wings) were attached to the core text, making the *Yijing* (*Classic of Changes*). This classic was included among the Five Confucian Classics from the Han onward. When the Five Classics are enumerated, the *Yijing* is mentioned first. In the conventional phrase, it is “the head of the classics.”

Since the symbol matrix of the *Yijing* presents no discursive arguments, it is difficult to prove any one interpretation of a symbol. Much of the original text’s meaning (according to later strategies of interpretation) emerges from spaces of implication between symbolic elements. For those willing to probe such spaces, the *Yijing* presents a complex model of human experience in the face of universal change. It presents symbols within a matrix and invites us to consider the relations among them. Its laws as a relational system are designed to stimulate thinking about change, and its symbols refer to salient cruxes or junctures in people's experience of change. In this paper I will enumerate and briefly discuss certain resources offered by the *Yi*—a conceptual toolkit for thinking about change.

1. I believe that the structure of the *Yi* is based on fertility symbolism.[1] The forces that knit the world together are portrayed as two primordial tendencies—heaven/ expansion/ creativeness versus earth/ coalescence/ receptivity. #1 Qian ☰ and #2 Kun ☷ line up at the beginning of the text, and the subsequent exchange of lines between them results in all the other hexagrams. In other words, the symbolic armature represents an intertwining which produces the myriad situations of life. It is a dance of attraction in which each entity

is changed by its contact with the other. [2] The idea of passion for life is built into this system. It implies a world view in which each fiber of a living thing's being, each part of a dynamic system—however far down one goes[3]—exists in a relation of passion with other parts. (If the relation is not passion, it is at least an intense give and take, with commensurate feelings for the participants.) Since love is built into this matrix of symbols, it is no surprise that love would come back out during acts of interpretation. I have in mind traditional thinkers who viewed human affairs against the backdrop of a natural order animated by the life-fostering force called *ren* (benevolence). The Song-dynasty philosopher Zhu Xi wrote in his “Discourse on *Ren*”: “*Ren*, by its very nature, is the life-giving intention of heaven and earth. Its presence inheres in all beings, and as particular conditions arise, its function is without limit.” The modern scholar Yang Rubin explains this as follows: “Zhu Xi views *ren* as essential to the human heart/mind, and he also views it as the mind of heaven. More precisely, the distinguishing characteristic of the human heart/mind is ‘love’ or ‘sense of fellow-feeling,’ which is an expression of the ‘life-giving intention’ of heaven’s mind.”[4] It was also the habit of traditional historians to evaluate human action according to *ren*. The modern scholar Zhang Qian devotes the concluding chapter of his book on Sima Qian to that historian’s ideas of *ren*. Zhang writes that Sima Qian “inherited Confucius’ ideas on *ren* and used them to strengthen his positions; he undertook a critique of *ren* and anti-*ren* as these played out in human society.”[5] The phrase “benevolence of the heaven-mind,” (*tian xin zhi ren*) which is recurrent in Neo-Confucian ethical discourse, found its way into historical works. For instance, in the *Ming History*, the official Li Jun is quoted as pleading with the emperor to cut back the gift-tribute system, so as to lighten the economic burden on commoners and “embody the benevolence of the heaven-mind.”[6] I believe that the source of *ren* as a philosophical concept is ultimately rooted in the kind of cosmology which is found in the *Yijing*. [7] Since the *Yijing* has traditionally provided a framework for viewing change, I believe it is important to know that a bias toward life-fostering virtue may be built into it.





2. The eight trigrams are composed of mingled broken and unbroken lines. Each trigram has a fundamental potency and image drawn from the natural world, by which it represents a certain aspect of change. [8] For instance, the trigram *gen* ☶ has the potency of keeping still and is associated with the natural image of mountain. It refers to a settled state or the

result of a given action. In terms of broader processes, it represents the formation of fixed structures, or the sedimentation of history. This meaning of *gen* is seen clearly in #18 Spoiled Legacy ䷗. The trial-and-error penetration (or circulation) of the ䷗ trigram below comes up against the hardened formation of *gen* above, and the growth of *xun* is thereby stymied.[9]

Gen derives its meaning from its configuration as a binary figure. If we assume that changes move from the bottom up (a rule which derives from the binary expansion of trigrams) then the single yang line at the top of *gen* can go no further. In contrast, the trigram ䷲ *zhen*, with the natural image of thunder, represents the inception of a process. Its single yang line is at the bottom, suggesting that its path of development is still open. In each trigram the descriptive meaning can be related to the binary figure.[10] Here is a list of the eight trigrams with the aspect of process which each focuses on (based on my own inductive reading of the text). Trigrams are given in “family” order, with the parents first, followed by the sons and daughters. 1) ䷗ *qian*, the trigram of infinite relations; 2) ䷋ *kun*, the trigram of the nurturing substrate; 3) ䷲ *zhen*, the trigram of the triggering impulse; 4) ䷛ *kan*, the trigram of unpredictable flow; 5) ䷑ *gen*, the trigram of the residue of action [or settled formation]; 6) ䷐ *xun*, the trigram of the homeostatic field; 7) ䷌ *li*, the trigram of highlighted relations; 8) ䷗ *dui*, the trigram of self-offered richness.

3. Combination of trigrams into hexagrams is a way of showing two aspects of change in light of each other. Each of the 64 combinations constitutes a hermeneutic unit made up of two mutually conditioning halves. That is, the two juxtaposed trigrams become a portmanteau symbol in which each trigram’s significance is seen in light of the other. Associated meanings of the two trigrams feed into a hermeneutic loop like ingredients into a hopper. As mentioned above, the *xun* trigram takes on the meaning of stymied growth when it is situated below the *gen* trigram in #18 “Spoiled Legacy” ䷗. But this is only one way of looking at the symbol, i.e., the “fallen” meaning. The *xun* trigram, like a wind that stirs things up, can bring its original characteristics of homeostatic circulation and exploratory growth to the situation. (Zhang Huang speaks of these characteristics as the “heavenly principle” of the trigram.) Hence line 3 speaks of “dealing with a spoiled legacy, if there is a [worthy] young one, then the elders will be without blame.” The *gen* trigram can also contribute its “heavenly principle” in the form of resources available for

use. The slopes of the mountain are rich in timber, ore and game for hunting; the mountain itself makes a spectacular scene. One who is dealing with a stymied situation can avail himself of these things. From this we can see that although a trigram's characteristics contribute to making a situation what it is, they may have a further function of dealing with that situation.[11]


4. The two-trigram structure of the hexagram has a built-in implication of inwardness and externality. The lower, inner trigram is often used to indicate a subjective, inward state, while the outer trigram often indicates an external condition. For example in #5 Waiting , many commentators say that the lower trigram represents strength that is capable of self-restraint, while the outer trigram represents a dangerous condition. Sometimes the inner and outer trigrams are seen on a time continuum. For instance, Wang Fuzhi says that the two trigrams in #3 Difficulty  (*zhen*  and *kan* ) represent the first two stages of yang's interaction with yin. Thus this hexagram portrays the chaotic beginnings of creation, when Qian first collides with Kun.[12]

5. The six lines of a hexagram represent six aspects of a situation. Usually, as we move upward from the bottom, there is a progression that takes us deeper into the situation. Also, running concurrently with this, there is often a progression from latent to manifest. But latent-to-manifest is only an idealized, abstract scheme. Actually, each hexagram has its own particular scheme. For instance in #5 the first three lines represent "waiting" in settings which get progressively closer to something dangerous: 1) on the outskirts of town; 2) on the sand; and 3) in the mud. The next three lines represent three different attitudes which one takes while waiting: 1) grit your teeth and bear the danger, while looking for an exit; 2) practice conviviality to build communal ties; 3) hole up but try to be prepared for what may come.

6. Changes of polarity in lines lead to a new situation/ hexagram. Knowledgeable commentators do not explain a line change as the result of a single cause. Instead, a line change is interpreted as resulting from a number of factors which come together and tip the line toward a change of polarity. Such factors include resonance, proximity, centrality, correctness, position, time, trigram potencies, inter-trigram dynamics, and the content of

line statements. There must be a buildup of such impingements before a line changes polarity, and a line at the point of changing exists in a state of tension between changing and not changing. Good commentators characterize such tension as it would affect a person caught in that situation.

7. A trigram is made of three lines, and three is the minimum number which includes a relation of “betweenness” or “centrality.” A hexagram is thus a figure composed of two clusters of variables, both of which have centers. The concept of “centrality” is the *Yijing*’s way of characterizing states of balance and equilibrium. The second line of a hexagram is the central line of the lower trigram, and the fifth line is the central line of the upper trigram. There are 128 central lines in the 64 hexagrams. Though central lines make up only one third of the total lines, approximately one half of the occurrences of the word *ji* (good fortune) appear in central lines. Thus centrality is seen as promising relatively good outcomes. A central line has access to more information than other lines: its betweenness lets it receive inputs from both companion lines. If we read through all the central lines of the *Yi* inductively, we find that states of balance are being described in many situations. Without prescribing moderation and balance, the system makes a case for it by an accumulation of perspectives on centrality.

For example, Hexagram #11  (Peace) depicts an ideal relation between yin and yang, where yang (the lower trigram) adjusts itself optimally to working within yin (the upper trigram). The coalescence of yin contains the expansive activity of yang within it. “Heaven and Earth are in stable interchange.” (“Judgment Treatise”) This is not just Peace, it is being fully alive. The focal point of yang's activity is Second Yang, the central line of the lower trigram. The line statement at Second Yang reads as follows: “Embrace the uncouth, set about fording rivers on foot; do not forsake what is remote; let go of clubby ties. Find [a higher] value in centered action.” The Ming commentator Jiao Hong writes: “Line Two is firm yet able to yield...it connects with the yin outside and resonates with it, like one who fords a stream without misgivings. Though yin is distant he does not forsake it; though yang is near he does not stick together with it. He alone leaves his friendly ties and acts in accord with the centered action of Line Five above.” The Ming commentator Zhang Huang writes, “Line Two is a firm line in a yielding place and holds the center, thus its capacious heart can be tolerant of others. It embodies the strength and firmness of the *qian* trigram,

thus it can resolutely ford a river. It appears in the Tai hexagram, where inner and outer have interchange and utmost *ren* [benevolence] is without exclusion, hence it does not forsake what is remote...The firm second line is matched with the yielding fifth line, thus [a higher] value is found in centered action.”[13]

In other words, the strong line at Second Yang has humbled itself; now it recognizes worth anywhere it may be found. It reaches out, even to the “lesser ones” who are on the outside. In this way “heaven” and “earth” come into interchange. To take the interpretation a bit further, the superior man at Line Two can recognize a person of worth at a center point which originally seemed unlikely. The superior man may need to recognize a “new” center point that is hidden in humble trappings. When it is time for interchange, the unassuming stranger or plain object one finds may play a pivotal role in bringing about peace.[14] Hence this line in the *Yijing* is analogous to this passage in *Zhuangzi*: “Master Easturb inquired of Master Chuang, saying ‘Where is the so-called Way present?’ ‘There’s no place that it’s not present,’ said Master Chuang. ‘Give me an example so that I can get an idea,’ said Master Easturb. ‘It’s in ants,’ said Master Chuang. ‘How can it be so low?’ ‘It’s in panic grass.’ ‘How can it be still lower?’ ‘It’s in tiles and shards.’ ‘How can it be still lower?’ ‘It’s in shit and piss.’” [15]

8. As a whole, the *Yi*’s symbol matrix is a model of complex interwovenness in nature. A hexagram can be read as two trigrams; it can be read as a progression of six lines; it can be read as an intersection of vectors with various outcomes; it can be read as a binary number; it can be part of a symmetry of binary numbers [the received sequence has many of these]; it can belong to this or that hexagram cluster. These perspectives do not rule each other out. There is no cornerstone or first cause or “groundstuff” from which the whole system can be built up. Each element of the system, at whatever level, is conditioned both formally and semantically by its relation to other elements. The significance of each content-bearing element is over-determined. All the determinants of meaning are densely overlaid and interwoven. In this respect, the system resembles the order of complex systems like neural networks, genomes, and social systems.

I believe that the *Zhouyi* text was ahead of its time with respect to certain features of its structure, including this feature of complex patterning and interwovenness. In the past there was no empirical language to describe such a feature. Many structural features were teased

out and recognized only gradually down through the tradition.[16] For instance, only in the Ming dynasty did such people as Lai Zhide and Chen Xitong point out the weighting of *zhenggua* (i.e., the trigrams *qian*, *kun*, *kan*, and *li*) toward the first half of the text.[17] Only in the 20th Century did mathematicians discover extensive numerical symmetries in the received hexagram sequence.[18]

The dense interlocking patterns in the text show a mode of organization that results when things come together naturally, according to organic principles, without a single aim or fixed purpose. Whoever put this system together had no dogmatic axe to grind; if they had, their minds would not have been gardens wherein such a system could grow; it would never have come together. In this system, the multi-valence pertains to symbols, but it mirrors the multi-valence of elements in massively connected natural systems. The best parallel I can think of is gender in the biological world. Why is there such a thing as male and female all through the animal and vegetable kingdoms? Why do the two genders show such markedly different physical and behavioral characteristics? Biologists have devoted some intriguing thoughts to this question. Matt Ridley, in his book *The Red Queen*, sums up some of their discussion on this issue. He brings up several different answers, each of which is supported by a great deal of scientific evidence.[19] The point he makes is that in complex natural systems, things do not happen for a single reason. It often happens that several purposes are served at the same time. It is intriguing that Ridley chooses the example of genders to make this point. The *Yijing* also talks about the strangely ubiquitous role of gender in nature. Like a good biology text, it complicates the idea of gender and shows it to be a composite construct, having no single purpose, emerging from interchange. For the *Yijing*, gender is more than just male or female, it is a basis for extended metaphors that embrace many types of complementarity in the natural world. In other words, the *Yijing* uses gender to think philosophically about the interplay of contraries in nature. It avoids a simple-minded position about the purpose or basis of gender. In this sense, it is an excellent symbolic, pre-scientific model of many things that science is concerned with. The *Yijing* is above all else a system of interlocking contraries (or complementary pairs). That makes it a plausible framework for describing change, because contraries in the natural world have a way of tipping—over time—into different phases, where other states of equilibrium or disequilibrium obtain.

9. After years of reading the *Yijing*, I have found that the also *Yi* addresses experiences of change in a less obvious way, or rather I should say in a way so obvious as to be hidden in the plain daylight of the reader's existential predicament. That is, the *Yi* deals in deeply personal terms with the experience of embodiment.

Embodiment can only happen to an individual, and because embodiment is an important subject of the *Yi*, the *Yi* presents a private world that other ancient texts do not touch upon. For example, #38 Divergence ☵☴ deals with the dialectic of separateness vs. union in a relationship. One can neither escape the relationship nor give oneself fully to it. In this state of tension, one's thoughts and perceptions flit off in odd directions. Hence First Yang says "go down a narrow alley to meet your leader." Top Yin talks about mistaking people for muddy pigs and demons, and even being ready to shoot an arrow at them. This conveys a moment when rationality is not fully in charge, due to impulses of fear and revulsion. Another example is First Yin of #47 Predicament ☷: "In a predicament with your buttocks on a fallen log, there in a secluded valley, for three years you will not rise up." Second Yang of the same hexagram says, "In a predicament at meat and drink; the one wearing a crimson official tunic is coming." A sense of powerlessness makes the person in First Yin sit on that log, not any external coercion. Moreover, for many people it is enjoyable to sit at meat and drink, and to meet with officials is an ordinary thing. But the person in Second Yang clearly has reasons, based on his own private history, to feel oppressed by what is happening. The second half of the *Yijing* is full of pungent phrases that relate to a person's bodily, perceptual, emotional involvement in a situation: "flayed in the buttocks" (#43); "walk with a halting stride" (#43); "laughing wildly and then wailing" (#37); "a bond of trust like clasped hands" (#61); "bound as if by oxhide" (#49); "riding and carrying baggage at the same time" (#40); "changing one's stripes like a tiger" (#49); "shooting at prey, down in a burrow, with a tethered arrow" (#62), and many more.

I believe the *Yijing* can be read as a framework for describing the vicissitudes of an embodied being as it makes its way through the *daoti* (the Dao as a system of unfolding relations). The themes of some hexagrams bear directly on embodiment. For instance, #24 Renewal ☱☳ shows a spark of yang acting within a material (all yin) body to animate it.[20] The hexagram Tai (#11 ☵☲) shows an ideal configuration of yang within yin, which also relates to this theme. Here is what Zhang Huang has to say about #11 in contrast to #12

Stagnation ☷☷: “*Kun* below and *qian* above make the hexagram Stagnation, which gets its meaning because heaven and earth are cut off and do not have interchange. The hexagram statement speaks of ‘the inhumanness of stagnation.’ It does not say that heaven and earth are stagnant, but lays blame on people who are inhuman... To say that the superior depart and the inferior come is to say that yang goes outward and yin comes inward. This refers to the hexagram structure with *kun* below and *qian* above. What makes people human is that they ‘bear yin like a burden and embrace yang within.’ But now this hexagram has yin inside and yang outside, which is an image of being inhuman.”[21] Notice that Zhang Huang refers to a passage of the *Daode Jing* which relates to embodiment.[22] Living things actualize themselves to the extent that they embrace their true nature within and bear the burden of their material endowment. This is like saying that they stay pliant and mild outwardly, but keep their true nature (yang) centered inwardly. If one’s yin, material tendencies take over inside and yang converts to mere external strength, one becomes “inhuman” or a “tyrant.” The crucial hexagram #11 evokes the possibility of an ideal interchange of yin and yang—the marriage of Qian and Kun—but this ideal is dogged by a shadow, hexagram #12, which is failure at having such an interchange.

10. When we consider something, we tend to hold that thing up in front of our mind’s eye and look at it first from one side and then the other. When this process is continued, our minds tend to work out a tree structure of possibilities. Eventually, since we have our own favored pathways of thought, a pruned tree of characteristic thoughts will be inscribed in our minds. In the same way, out of the welter of impingements acting on any given element in the symbol system, we can sculpt our own interpretation of why a change happens. We can “discern the signs” of latent trends that will become actual. Whether by hindsight or foresight, our understanding of the course of change is an act of interpretation which we are responsible for. If the “medium is the message,” then the *Yi*’s reticence in prescriptive matters can be viewed as encouragement to face that responsibility.

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Notes:

[1] I make this statement based on numerous symbolic features of the first two hexagrams. One item of evidence is an alternate name for hexagram #1, *jian* 建, used in the Mawangdui silk manuscript version of the *Yijing*. Edward Shaughnessy points out in his *I Ching* translation that *jian*

is an ideograph for a wooden pillar which presumably had phallic significance in ancient rites. I offer structural evidence in "The Dance of Qian and Kun," *Sino-Platonic Papers*, #152. June 2005.

If we are to listen to skeptics, then the line statements of the *Zhouyi* are randomly related fragments. We have only to leaf through Gao Heng's books to find disparaging comments about the lack of meaningful relations among the lines. He ignores obvious contextual features such as contrasting themes in hexagram pairs and progressions from top to bottom lines. He also ignores meaningful analogies between lines in #1 or #2 and lines of like polarity and position elsewhere. If the text is such a bundle of fragments, as he claims it to be, then it is hard to see what purpose would be served by explicating it. In the course of such context-free explication, one philologist will explain a word according to one ancient usage, and another philologist will explain it by another ancient usage. For instance, some scholars define the hexagram name of #15 as "Giant Hamster," and others define it as "Humility." I believe that understanding the symbolic context (and the cumulative meaning of line statements) gives us a basis for choosing among the possible usages of words.

[2] The theme of ebb and flow (based on rationalized ideas of yin and yang which philosophers have found in the *Yijing*) is only a tiny part of the symbolism of the book as a whole. I believe that Qian and Kun in the *Yijing* are analogous to the world-creating dance of Shiva in the Hindu tradition.

[3] A tension or dialectic between contraries is an unmistakable feature in the wording of many line statements. For instance, #11.3—"No level ground not followed by a slope; no going forth that does not return..."; #11.6—"The city wall falls into the moat." On a macrocosmic scale, the interplay of contraries is represented by hexagrams #1 and #2. To find this same feature within single lines suggests that the symbolic structure is holographic, and that certain symbolic features can be extended indefinitely along a vector of greater or lesser graininess.

[4.] Quoted and discussed in Yang, Rubin, "Zhuzi lun 'ren'", web-published at www.eastasia.ntu.edu.tw/chinese/data/broadcast/朱子論仁-引言-楊儒賓. Another Confucian philosopher who spoke of *ren* in this sense was Zhang Zai: "Heaven is embodied in things without fail, just as *ren* is embodied in affairs and is nowhere missing... You will nowhere find a creature that is without *ren*." From Zhang Zai, *Zheng meng*, Chapter 3.

[5] Zhang Qiang, *Sima Qian xueshu sixiang tanyuan*, p.467. Renmin Press, Beijing. 2004

[6] *Ming Shi*, "Liezhuan" #68, juan 180.

[7] The *Yijing* is concerned with beings which exist in a web of relationships. It represents a spontaneous, ongoing cosmogony in which all entities, through their interplay with each other, act as agents of co-creation.

[8] I have found the discussion of metaphor in George Lakoff's book *Philosophy in the Flesh* to offer useful insights that I can use to talk about the *Yijing*. Lakoff says that metaphor begins with formative perceptual experiences that people have during childhood. Generalizations formed from early perceptual learning form a source domain, which is mapped onto the target domain of various abstract concepts. I think the trigrams have a broad range of implication because their core concepts belong squarely to the perceptual source domain from which human metaphors are commonly formed. Each one of the trigrams is first of all "about" a perceptual or experiential state. The natural images and potencies cluster around this as a way to broaden the sphere of correlation. Such a core concept is treated like a template---we can correlate the same symbol with multi-level referents. The really interesting things happen when the two clusters of implication interact, because the possibilities for abstract reference are multiplied.

[9] My discussion of #18 here and below is based on Zhang Huang, *Zhouyi Xiangyi*, p. ..., *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, Jing Section, Vol. 9.

[10] See my essays "Associations on the Trigrams" and "Rationale of the Yang Trigrams" on my website: yijingpoetics.net

[11] The dual function (i.e., Janus-nature) of trigram characteristics is also seen in the Judgment Treatise of #36 ䷛: "Brightness has gone into the earth: this is "Wounded Brightness." Patterned brightness is within while acceptance is without—and thus exposed to great adversity: such was King Wen." In other words, the *kun* ䷁ trigram is both the obscuring circumstance and a person's acceptance of the circumstance.

[12] Wang Fuzhi, *Zhouyi neizhuan* (p.51-54). Jiuzhou chubanshe, Beijing. 2004.

[13] Jiao Hong's quote is from his commentary *Yi quan* republished in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, Jing Section, Vol. 11, p. 32. Shanghai Guji Chubanshe. 1984. The Zhang Huang quote is from his commentary *Zhouyi xiangyi*, republished in *Xuxiu siku quanshu*, Jing Section, Vol. 9, p. 309.

[14] When I contemplate Second Yang of #11, I sometimes picture the floating focal point of a Chinese landscape painting [as opposed to fixed focal perspective of Western painting.] Somehow this fits the imagery of the line, in which one traverses distances toward a point which is not determined ahead of time.

There is another hexagram in which a central line takes on new importance in a shifting situation. Second Yang of #59 Dispersion ䷺ reads: "In a time of Dispersion run to the platform." The word 机 is this line may be interchangeable with 機, so the line can take on many intriguing meanings: "In a time of Dispersion, run toward the X," where X could mean a nexus of change, a point from which events unfold, a crux of development, the most organically alive point of a system, the point in a chaotic system which most affects the outcome.

[15] Quoted from the translation by Victor Mair: p. 217, *Wandering on the Way*, Bantam Books, New York. 1994.

[16] I believe that the Yi's internal structural features were obscured by an overlay of numerological correspondences that proliferated since the Han era. As far as I can tell, the later numerological systems do not have the elegant, interwoven quality and referential character (about experience) that the original symbol matrix has. The numerology seems cranked out according to numerous formulae which basically use numbers to generate other numbers and derive five-element correspondences. (Hence the relevance to fortune telling, which uses the numbers of one's birth date.) For instance, the *guaqi* system strives to reconcile the 60-step cycle of earthly stems and heavenly branches with the 64 hexagrams. In order to fit in the extra four hexagrams, a system of epicycles is introduced. The epicycles cannot be used to contemplate any human situation or change of situation. In the original symbol matrix, everything refers to experience in some sense. Numerology marks a different direction of intellectual effort from the probing of symbols.

[17] See my discussion of Chen Xitong in "Further Implications of the Sequence" at my website: www.yijingpoetics.net. Lai Zhide's commentary contains discussion of the relative placement of *zhenggua* [the trigrams *qian, kun, kan, li*] and *weigua* [the trigrams *zhen, gen, xun, dui*] in the hexagram sequence.

[18] See the discussion of Olsvanger's symmetries in Richard Rutt's *The Book of Changes (Zhouyi)*, Curzon Press, Surrey. 1996.

[19] Matt Ridley, *The Red Queen*, Chapter 1-5. Penguin Books. 1995. The hypotheses he discusses to explain gender include, for instance: the need to shuffle the genome, the need for regular transcription and correction of data on the chromosomes, the need to keep ahead of parasites, the need to avoid genetic warfare during exchanges of genes, the convenience of haploid packaging during exchanges, the operation of positive feedback cycles under selective pressure).

[20] The name of this hexagram, and the overall theme, anticipates a passage from the *Daode Jing*: “Far into emptiness, grounded in quietude, the myriad beings rise up, and in this way, I observe *renewal*.”(Chapter 16)

[21] From Zhang Huang’s *Zhouyi xiangyi*, p. 311.

[22] *Daode Jing*, Verse 42: “...The myriad creatures bear yin like a burden and embrace yang within. They make space for *qi*-energy and thereby achieve harmony. That which all under heaven hate most is to be orphaned, destitute, and hapless. Yet kings and dukes call themselves thus. Things may be diminished by being increased, increased by being diminished...‘The tyrant does not die a natural death.’ I take this [sentence] as my mentor.” (Adapted from the translation by Victor Mair)