

## **CHAOS AND COSMOS**

### **THE MEANING OF GRAMMAR AND THE GRAMMAR OF MEANING**

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The function of language is communication. Clear communication needs to take place among participants in order to create meaning.

The better the communication, the clearer the meaning.

For example:

Carry great look the grown people up over its mountain and hearts single influence valley  
land below power tree gives sinking slowly their image spread aspect and lonely roots afar  
deep the visible on is aspect the in from and its their has to deep which to tree it.

Are the words above understandable? No, they are not.

However:

The single tree on the mountain is visible from afar, and its lonely aspect spreads its influence over the land. The tree has grown slowly, sinking deep roots, which gives it great power. People in the valley look up to the tree and carry its image in their hearts.<sup>1</sup>

The first group of words were chaotic; they existed in disorder and confusion. The second group of words are in “cosmos, existing clearly and in order.

In which group is the meaning clear?

#### THE MEANING OF GRAMMAR

Grammar takes all the words in the first paragraph and places them in order. The function of grammar is to organize words. However much people balk at learning grammar or applying it, the fact is that without order imposed by proper grammar, there is no understanding, no communication and no meaning.

#### THE GRAMMAR OF MEANING

Grammar is the creator of meaning. Once words are organized, they acquire meaning for people to hear, read or write them. Grammar is the orchestra director who turns words into a symphony. The more grammar one understands, the more beautiful the symphony.

1 Cristina Bertrand, *Yi Jing: Image, Concept and Action*. Hexagram 53. Gradual Progress, Shanghai Art and Literature Publishing House, Shanghai 2009.

I composed this poem some time ago:

**El caos no es sino un cosmos  
con un cabo suelto.  
Si unes sus extremos  
recobrarás la armonía.**

**Chaos is an unraveled  
and broken cosmos.  
Rejoin its ends  
and you will find harmony.**

I believe that grammar is the human tool we use to rejoin the broken ends of misunderstanding.