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1. POEM BY A SCHOLAR IN QUEST OF WISDOM

A long time ago, a scholar traveled to the farthest mountains trying to find wisdom. He saw many sunrises and many sunsets. He collected the knowledge of different peoples, and he talked with the most eminent men in the world, but he did not find wisdom. His time was finished and he had to return to his home. On his door, someone had left a message:

If you do not have
patience,
do not ask.
If you have patience
but lack courage,
you are yet in the middle
of the way.
If you have patience and
courage,
you will find peace of heart.

Now, go
and give your peace
to the first man
that you find
in your life.

2. INTRODUCTION TO THE YI JING

Why start this paper with a poem about a man in search of wisdom, and how does the message in this poem relate to the Yi Jing?

The Yi Jing is the first book in the world to establish a coherent system of wisdom based on the scientific laws of Nature. It is not necessary to seek any further than Nature around us to discover wisdom.

However, wisdom cannot be attained without the virtues of courage and patience. A sage, or a leader, who cultivates these virtues in himself, can lead with his example. The Yi Jing demonstrates leadership principles that are applicable to every situation in life.

Wisdom and leadership by themselves are valueless without ethics. The attainment of ethics is the ultimate goal of the sage. The Yi Jing is a systematic book of ethics in which ethical principles are intertwined with the laws of wisdom and the principles of leadership to create the essential foundation needed for success.

Only through the union of the three Yi Jing principles, wisdom, ethics and leadership, will men be able to craft their own destinies.

3. ORIGINS AND INFLUENCE OF YI JING IN CHINESE CULTURE

Zhang Liwen, Professor and Supervisor of the Institute of Confucianism Studies at Remin University of China, Beijing states:

“In sum, during the course of growth and development of the Chinese nation, the *Zhouyi* has been extremely significant and has exerted vital influence. It has permeated all layers of Chinese national culture and has profoundly affected Chinese national politics, economics, sciences, artistic and intellectual areas, axiology, ethics, and matters of the spirit, and ultimate concerns, among others.

For this reason, one who does not know the *Zhouyi* cannot really understand Chinese culture, or perceive the essence of Chinese culture, or correctly recognize its true features.

Therefore, the *Zhouyi* is a key to the door of Chinese culture.”¹

Yi Jing means “classic book” (Jing) of “Changes” (Yi). Yi also means “simple, easy and permanent.” Change and permanency should not be regarded as opposites, but as complementary. Life is always changing. To be successful in life, human beings need to recognize that change and adapt to it. The Chinese sages discovered the laws of change and explained them using the symbology of Nature. Their great gift to humanity was the Yi Jing.

The Yi Jing’s origins date back to 2852-2738 B.C. The work is attributed to four wise men: Fu Xi, considered the father of Chinese civilization, who created the graphic representation of the lines of the trigrams; King Wen, who combined the trigrams into hexagrams and added the remarks; King Wen’s son, the Duke of Zhou, who wrote the text pertaining to the individual lines; and Confucius, who added commentaries to the images and decisions. The Yi Jing is the first part, or ancient text, of the *Zhou Yi* (Changes of the Zhou dynasty) and comprises the 64 hexagrams, along with the remarks about the trigrams and hexagrams and the text pertaining to the individual lines. Later on, an appendix, *Yi Zhuang*, “The Ten Wings,” was added in the form of commentaries attributed to Confucius and his disciples.

4. WISDOM IN THE YI JING HEXAGRAMS

It may be hard to believe that wisdom could be learned from a line or a combination of lines. The lines in the Yi Jing are symbolical and graphical representations of natural laws of cause and effect, and those laws applied to the human level will give human beings the knowledge to control their own destiny.

¹ Zhang Liwen, 2006, “Influence of Yi Jing in Chinese Culture”, *Zhouyi Studies* (English Version) 4:1 (2006) pp. 26-42

YI JING: WISDOM, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

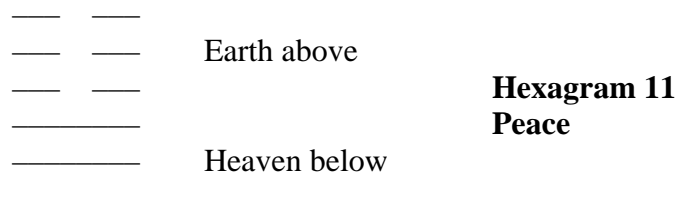
The Yi Jing began as a book of divination. People went to the soothsayer for an answer to a specific question. After performing a ritual involving animal bones or turtle shells, the soothsayer provided a yes or no answer. The opposing principles were designated as *yang* and *yin*, and assigned either an unbroken line (*yang* ———) or a broken line (*yin* — —). The unbroken line was a “yes” to the question asked and the broken line a “no”. However, a simple yes or no was a static answer. The sages understood that life was a complex and dynamic process, always evolving and transforming into its contrary, and they added a second line to include that complexity and change. Each answer, then, would include a yes with a no, and a no with a yes. Thus, adding the dialectic law of transformation of the contraries, the Yi Jing became a book of wisdom.



The sages assigned the superior line to Heaven and the inferior line to Earth. But human beings stood between heaven and earth, so a third line was created in the middle: the line of Human Beings. With these three lines the figure of the trigram was born.



Nature and human beings are always changing and the trigrams must reflect that movement, being placed sometimes above and sometimes below. Based on the dialectic laws, the sages duplicated the trigrams to create a hexagram.



Multiplying all possible combinations of lines and positions of above and below, the 64 hexagrams of the Yi Jing were constructed to represent a compendium of wisdom and transformation in the natural and human world.

Prediction vs. divination

Divination comes from the Latin word *divinare*, which means to foresee or to be inspired by a god. It relates to the divine, the realm of gods. Divination attempts to gain insight into a situation through a supernatural or occult process or ritual, and it cannot be systematically learned or taught. Prediction comes from the Latin *pre*, before, and *dicere*, to tell, meaning to tell beforehand or to foretell. In the Yi Jing, prediction is based on the scientific laws of cause and effect and is, therefore, knowable.

The Yi Jing reveals the image of an event in *statu nascendi*, that is, at the very start of its development, in its seed. The sages who composed the Yi Jing knew the seed, which is the link between the visible and the invisible world. The sages also understood the laws connecting the two worlds of the visible and the invisible. But this knowledge had nothing to do with magic or superstition. If we plant the seed of an orange tree, we will have an orange tree, although it may be invisible at first. If we hold a sheet of paper in our hands and we decide to let go, we can use the law of gravity to predict the sheet will fall to the ground. The future, the effect, can be predicted if we know the seed, the cause.

Accordingly, wisdom in the Yi Jing is situational, knowable and predictable. Each hexagram contains the wisdom for a specific situation only; deciding whether or not to follow the wisdom outlined by the Yi Jing is left entirely to the free will of the individual who consults the book.

5. LEADERSHIP IN THE YI JING HEXAGRAMS

Each hexagram in the Yi Jing can refer to a specific situation at a personal, business or social level. So too, the virtues of a leader must be in accordance with the specific project to be accomplished. A huge project plagued with difficulties will require the strength of the Thunder in movement, while a small project which requires consultation

and agreement will be better led using the characteristics of Wind and the flexibility of Water.

A leader, then, should exercise wisdom, first, to comprehend the situation and the predictable outcome, then to understand the people he is leading and the means to accomplish the objective: and, finally, he must possess the character values necessary for the specific situation that requires his leadership.

6. ETHICS IN THE YI JING HEXAGRAMS

The Yi Jing ethics is universal, based on principles that can be applied as a universal rule of conduct. It parallels the Kantian categorical imperative, “Act in such a way that the rule of your action can be considered as a universal principle of conduct” and the Confucian golden rule, “Do not do to others what you don’t want others do to you.” As opposed to a relativistic ethics in which the end sometimes justifies the means, the Yi Jing ethics never justify an unethical mean.

Although the thread uniting all the ethical conduct in the Yi Jing is a universal rule, each hexagram applies a specific, or situational, ethics. Thus it is an ethics of the “three rights.” Do the right thing, in the right way, at the right time. At the right time means that correct ethical behavior should be in synchrony with the situation we are faced with. Being a good person is not enough if we fail to take the right action in a given situation. The Yi Jing analyzes each situation and gives the appropriate ethical guidance in each case.

Finally, the Yi Jing ethics is an ethics of “being,” not just of “doing.” Doing is not enough if it is not accompanied by the inner cultivation of virtue. Each situation gives the person involved the opportunity of becoming a better person, and only a good person, according to the Yi Jing, could be successful.

7. CONCLUSION

Each hexagram of the Yi Jing starts with a description of two natural elements, the trigrams, which together form an **Image** of nature or a situation in life. The wisdom contained in that hexagram, the **Concept**, explains the underlying laws of cause and effect pertaining to the situation, while providing guidance for obtaining a desired result. Finally, this result will only be successful if it is obtained through ethical **Action** that is reflected in the external world and also in the growth of human being's inner virtue.

CASE STUDY

YI JING: WISDOM, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS FOR BUSINESS GREATVIEW ASEPTIC PACKAGING COMPANY

THE COMPANY

Greatview Aseptic Packaging Company is one of a select few integrated providers of aseptic packaging material and related services globally. The company is committed to providing leading dairy and non-carbonated soft drink producers with customized, high quality and competitively priced aseptic packaging that is fully compatible with standard roll-fed filling machines.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Aseptic packages

System supplier for aseptic packaging

Filling machine

Equipment parts

Quality Control

Technical Service

ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

Simple diligence is not enough for achieving social and environmental compliance.

Social and environmental sustainability are integral to our processes. Our business and manufacturing activities do burden the environment and impact society.

We are committed to minimizing our impact, conforming or surpassing both environmental and regulatory laws, as well as other requirements in those markets where we operate.

Promote Sustainable Forest

Sustainable Forest Management means protecting water quality, soil, wildlife and precious resources as well as human health. Greatview Aseptic Packaging is a leader in the use of certified fibers – PEFC, SFI and FSC.

Reduce Carbon Emissions

1. Carbon Footprint Accounting and Neutralization Initiative: Greatview Aseptic Packaging is confirmed by Poyri as a pioneer in China in accounting for the carbon footprints for a project before it is constructed. In 2010 Greatview Aseptic Packaging has also neutralized the carbon emissions during the construction of its Helinger factory with tree plantation programs either by Greatview Aseptic Packaging 's own volunteers, or by contracted NGOs
2. Greatview Aseptic Packaging Advocates Green Trips: All Greatview Aseptic Packaging factories provide free chargers in parking sheds for employees' electric scooters.

Saving Energy

1. Water Source Heating: A thermal energy converter takes as its heat source the solar energy stored in the shallow underground water.
2. Solid-cast Transformers: This low-attrition, power-saving device is environmentally friendly. It can reduce annually 52.83 tons of carbon dioxide emissions.
3. Natural Lighting Windows
4. T5 Energy-Saving Tube
5. Solar Energy Heater

Treasure Waste

1. Artificial Lake with Rain Collecting System
2. Walls, Ceilings and Windows frames and decorations made of wood and plastic leftovers
3. Oriented strand boards made of leftover wooden pieces used for furniture.

Green with Native Plants

Greatview Aseptic Packaging selected native plants to protect local ecological environment with less maintenance demand.

GREATVIEW ASEPTIC PACKAGING COMPANY: WISDOM, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

To understand how the Yi Jing can serve as a guide for business decisions, we will analyze the case of Greatview Aseptic Packaging using the Yi Jing's wisdom, leadership and ethics for guidance. We will follow the paragraph order of the book *Yi Jing: Image, Concept and Action*,² and we will apply it to some of the Greatview Aseptic Packaging's decisions.

IMAGE

GREATVIEW ASEPTIC PACKAGING COMPANY: GOAL TO ACCOMPLISH

The company's stated goal is "to follow the laws of gravity." This can be accomplished through two means:

1. To overcome the monopoly in the aseptic packaging industry and to transform the industry into a free-competition field; and
2. To prevent monopolistic barriers artificially erected by other companies in the aseptic packaging sector by opening up the market, while protecting the laws of international property.

Companies are able to maintain their monopoly in an industry by impeding their competitors' access to the market, but also, indirectly, through the practice of "tie-ins," which obligate suppliers to buy exclusively from them and customers to purchase only their product brand. This practice is common in many industries. Examples are ink cartridges for specific printers or spare parts for car models only available from that one

Bertrand, C., 2009, *Yi Jing: Image, Concept and Action*. Shanghai: Shanghai Art and Literature Publishing House

car manufacturer. Such practices can lead to abusive behavior on the part of the monopolistic company, negatively affecting suppliers and customers, as well as the maker of the products or raw materials.

YI JING IMAGE

There are two hexagrams in the Yi Jing that could be applied to this monopolistic situation:

Hexagram 23: Disintegration. Mountain over Earth

The steep-sided mountain rising abruptly from the earth will suffer erosion, lapsing eventually into a plain. Only the smooth-based mountain can resist time's passage and the battering of nature.

A business that relies upon steep and rapid growth based on a monopolistic advantage will, sooner or later, suffer its own disintegration through the dynamics of internal dialectic laws, which always tend toward a state of equilibrium: To take what it is full and fill what it is empty. To achieve lasting success, growth must have a broad base, benefiting as many as possible.

Hexagram 34: Power in Great Measure. Thunder over Heaven

The power of thunder exceeds its limits, and the mountain, which has gained strength from the thunder, has almost invaded the sky. We cannot attain so high a peak, but if we tarry too long at the mountain's base, we will become paralyzed. Nature sustains man, but it can also destroy him. It is in our hands to restrain the excesses of the mountain.

The barriers erected by a monopolistic company cannot be dismantled frontally. Excess is overpowering. Therefore, to be successful in this situation, a new direction should be taken, one that avoids the oppressive mountain mass in front. That direction is the concept, or idea, behind the image.

CONCEPT

GREATVIEW ASEPTIC PACKAGING COMPANY CONCEPT: IDEAS BEHIND THE PROJECT

A company's growth is more sustainable the more it benefits others, either in the direct form of products or services rendered, or in an indirect way, such as protecting the environment where people live. The idea behind Greatview Aseptic Packaging is:

1. To reestablish among the players in the milk industry the equilibrium that was undermined by the monopolistic packaging company. The supply chain that runs from milk producers to aseptic packaging to suppliers and customers must exist in a state of equilibrium. If one element, such as monopolistic packaging company, is able to set a very high price, repercussions are felt by farmers, who are forced to lower prices to stay competitive, and the suppliers and customers who have to pay an excessive price. Reestablishing equilibrium means that all benefit equally, with the result that growth can be sustained over time.
2. To protect innovation by other companies, thus opening the field to competition and better conditions for all the constituents in the industry.

YI JING CONCEPT

The hexagram to be followed in order to neutralize the effects of the rapid, unsustainable growth of Disintegration and Excessiveness is:

52. Mountain, Quietude. Mountain over Mountain

Two mountains are united. The mountain is powerful because it represents quietude. If two mountains unite, the force of quietude becomes invincible.

The power needs to be leveled, and the base broadened to allow all the constituents in the business chain to benefit. If two, or all, powers converge and are in equilibrium, their growth can be long lasting.

This hexagram also symbolizes quietude; not a lack of movement, but the exercise of reason that allows us to achieve inner quietude and respond to the situation in a timely way according to the circumstances. That is why Action should be carefully considered and studied before making any decision.

ACTION

GREATVIEW ASEPTIC PACKAGING COMPANY: WISDOM, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

1. WISE BUSINESS DECISIONS

In order to neutralize the power of a monopolistic company, clear judgment is needed. Greatview Aseptic Packaging accomplished this in two ways:

1. Distinguishing themselves through a different approach in doing business.
2. Leveraging their capacity by “smart power,” utilizing the resources at hand in the most efficient way.

The wise decision taken was to acquire allies. Their allies were the customers, who were anxious to obtain better prices for the final product. The barrier—the dam—created by a monopolistic company cannot be breached by a single entity attempting to punch a hole in the barrier. Essentially, the company enlisted the help of their customers to open a passage for the water run freely again. In order to accomplish this, they had to present their customers with an image of reliability and staying power over the long run. They bought an existing factory for the production of their line of aseptic packaging materials and asked their loyal customers to stand behind them. At the same time, to avoid rupturing the equilibrium, they took extreme care to comply with intellectual property patent laws.

When customers asked about the capacity of Greatview Aseptic Packaging to fulfill orders, its cofounder and chairman, Hong Gang, responded with this motto of company

operations: “Yes, we are small enough to be tactful and flexible, but we are big enough to have a critical job done.”

YI JING ACTION: WISDOM

The action of a small, emergent company trying to break a monopolistic situation can only be achieved through very wise decisions, which are reflected in the following Yi Jing hexagram:

30. Fire. That Which Adheres. Fire over Fire

Fire produces brightness and attaches to the things it burns, assuming their shapes. Hence, fire adapts and illuminates at the same time. It can be the sun or lightning. It is the light that illuminates every corner of the land, and it ascends from the earth. Fire symbolizes transformative nature.

Fire, symbolizing wisdom, requires a careful analysis of each situation. Intelligence should illuminate the path, but reflection must precede action. Clarity of judgment, employed with excessive zeal, could paralyze action, but, once the proper conclusion has been reached, action should be taken decisively and with energy, persevering until success is attained.

2. LEADERSHIP APPROACH

The quality of a leader must be paired with the circumstances. In this specific situation, Greatview Aseptic Packaging used the leadership approach that also presides over the company in general: the equilibrium of Yin and Yang. The partnership of the founders, Mr. Hong Gang and Mr. Bi Hua, converts the shortcomings of one into the strength of the other. Mr. Hong is a strategist, always seeing the whole picture. He has a soft heart, and he is moved by people; his strategy is to know the right thing to do. Mr. Bi exerts strength in the day-to-day operations. He has good negotiation skills, discipline and patience. His tactic is to do things right. Both have strong wills.

Seeing the vision, dealing with complexity, and applying moderation, Mr. Hong will act. Mr. Hong will also deal with strategic and “diplomatic” (i.e. alliance) issues, while Mr. Bi will crack the hard nuts and solve most of day-to-day challenges.

But the line that unites both is sharing the same vision and mission for their company, which goes even further than the success of the company itself. They define success as the end of the monopoly in the aseptic packaging business. However, they believe that even if their company were to fail, or possibly even disappear from the market, other companies would be able to continue their legacy, thus guaranteeing the continuity of success.

YI JING ACTION: LEADERSHIP

The image that best describes the leadership approach of the owners of Greatview Aseptic Packaging is:

1-2. Heaven, the Creative, Heaven over Heaven; Earth the Receptive, Earth over Earth.

Heaven and Earth unite in an infinite line. The nature of Heaven is ascendant, and the nature of Earth is descendent. United, their forces converge and this union generates life. Creativity is the characteristic of Heaven. Creativity is required to generate ideas for achieving proposed goals. And strength is needed to make those ideas a reality. Finally, patience is required to keep success, once achieved, in the proper perspective.

Earth takes the creativity of Heaven and gives it form in practice. Projects and tasks are completed; things are accomplished. Earth has devotion and acceptance and also the endurance and strength needed to successfully combine elements so that they can reach their full potential.

Heaven proposes, Earth disposes. Through the union of Heaven and Earth there is nothing in space or time that we cannot achieve.

3. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICS

Ethics goes beyond corporate responsibility. Corporate responsibility results in actions that do positive things for people, society, and the environment. It exists in the world of actions –the realm of “doing.” Ethics also is reflected in actions, but it goes beyond because it deals with the inner nature of individuals, the realm of “being.” A company may carry out charity programs or donate millions for good causes, but if the inner nature of its executives and employees is not virtuous, that company is lacking in ethics.

The owners of Greatview Aseptic Packaging try to be role models in their personal lives and extend exemplary conduct to the actions of the company. Their several programs of corporate responsibility are well documented in their company profile, described at the beginning of this paper. Individually, they strive to be better persons, knowing that one’s inner nature will necessarily reflect upon external actions. Only through appropriate, ethical conduct can individuals serve as role models for others and other companies as well.

All companies have encountered difficulties or make mistakes at some point in the development of their business. How a mistake is dealt with reveals a company’s inner nature. Four examples provided by Greatview Aseptic Packaging serve as illustrations of ethical behavior on the part of the company’s co-founders.

1. In the process of developing their business, Greatview Aseptic Packaging unknowingly acquired a company that had infringed upon the intellectual property of another company. As soon as this discovery was made, Greatview Aseptic Packaging recalled the affected products already on the market and even confiscated the products in their own facility. Losses were substantial, but the company accepted full responsibility. In addition, they made a personal visit to the CEO of the company that had suffered the damage to explain the situation and to apologize and acknowledge their responsibility. The CEO of that company responded that he was unaware that this particular violation of intellectual

- property rights had taken place, adding that while his company's rights had been infringed upon numerous times, no one had ever taken the trouble to apologize.
2. In order to avoid similar mistakes in future, the company held an urgent training session on New Years Eve for all employees of the Shandong factory. The session was lead by top Chinese intellectual property experts. They stressed the high expectations the company held for its workers and explained that ignorance could never be used as an excuse for poor judgment or faulty work. They also warned that anyone who exceeded the bounds of company ethics by accepting a bribe would be fired.
 3. For a company to be ISO certified, it must pass an audit performed by external auditors. The ink used on the milk cartons by the Greatview Aseptic Packaging was water based and did not require special disposal. However, the cleaning of the printer machine used to print the cartons had to be done with materials that polluted the water. Once the machine was cleaned, the residual polluted water had to be taken to an authorized treatment center. A factory-level environmental officer decided to "cut corners" and send the polluting materials to another factory, which gave assurances they would be disposed of properly, and for less money. A subsequent inspection in the other factory revealed pollutants in the sewage water with products which that company was not using. Greatview Aseptic Packaging was identified as the source of the pollutants. As a result, Greatview Aseptic Packaging fired the environmental officer, as well as the external auditor who had failed to discover the problem. Since then, Greatview Aseptic Packaging has established a standard of ethical conduct for all their suppliers by the means of periodic auditing. This practice represents a higher cost to the company, but, from an ethical point of view, it is the right thing to do.
 4. The standards for the ink printing on aseptic packaging are not well defined. Regulations establish only that printing on the packaging use "safe" ink, not specifying the exact meaning of "safe." Solvent-based ink is much cheaper

because it dries quickly, but it is a pollutant. Water-based ink takes longer to dry, increasing the final cost of the packaging. Using water-based ink was a financial burden on the company, especially during its start-up phase. But, for ethical reasons, Greatview Aseptic Packaging voluntarily decided to use only water-based ink on its products. This is an example of the universal Yi Jing ethic that the end doesn't justify the means. If Greatview Aseptic Packaging had chosen the "end," fast growth without regard to environmental consequences, the path would not have been an ethical one.

YI JING ACTION: ETHICS

The Yi Jing shows how to make ethical choices even in trying times or times of need.

The chapter is:

41. Decrease. Mountain over Lake

The lake rests at the base of the mountain, but the mountain overwhelms it, taking moisture to enrich itself. The lake shrinks, growing smaller; then, stealthily, it occupies one of the mountain's hollows.

Decrease has two sides, one applied to external situations and one applied to the building of character. When dealing with external situations, Yi Jing advises a decrease or cessation of any action that negatively impacts other people, society, or the environment. In the building of character, one has to work on minimizing defects in order to increase virtue. Dialectically, both decreases will eventually change to increase, resulting in more beneficial and lasting conditions for all.

IMAGE

GREATVIEW ASEPTIC PACKAGING: GOAL ACCOMPLISHED

The Yi Jing ending of a situation –hexagram– is the beginning of a new one, because life is always changing. The Greatview Aseptic Packaging started with a goal to pursue and successful steps to accomplish it. Its conduct can exert a lasting effect on other individuals and businesses, and in society in general.

YI JING IMAGE

The image that shows us the proper conduct is:

10. Conduct. Heaven over Lake

Heaven and lake occupy different levels. Heaven is above and lake sits in the middle of the earth. They exist, according to their essence, in perfect equilibrium. There are no storm clouds on the horizon, and the two regard each other in a serene landscape.

Sometimes in life growth has to be limited, even though slow growth may be well below expectations and the abilities of the company to move ahead. However, the situation has its advantages because it allows time for the development of correct and proper conduct free from the pressures attached to a higher position. With patience, waiting for the time to become more propitious, a company can assume a leadership role that will have a beneficial influence on others.

If the **Greatview Aseptic Packaging Company** continues its practice of adhering to proper conduct, both in the practicality of its business operations and in the internal cultivation of ethical behavior, it is bound to achieve substantial and sustainable success that will confer lasting benefits to society in general.

YI JING: WISDOM, LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS



23. Disintegration
Mountain over Earth



34. Power in Great Measure
Thunder over Heaven



52. Mountain, Quietude
Mountain over Mountain



30. Fire, That Which Adheres
Fire over Fire



1. Heaven, the Creative
Heaven over Heaven
2. Earth, the Receptive
Earth over Earth



41 Decrease
Mountain over Lake



10. Conduct
Heaven over Lake