

#31 Influence (Wooing)

Progression:

First Yin feels stimulation at the tips of his feet. This impulse is first felt in “that by which things move.” [Zhu Xi expands this image beyond the literal “feeling in the big toe.”] So this is an impulse from an extremity or sensitive appendage. Second Yin shows a reflex of locomotion, or jerky partial motion toward something. The reflex is not fully oriented toward a goal, but it can be so directed. At Third Yang one feels a call to follow something. Being in the grip of this feeling, one moves with definite strides: one tracks something intently as if led by a cord. Fourth Yang makes a back-and-forth movement due to focusing on relationships---what do one’s associates want or expect? He may also dwell on how to optimize his status or reputation. Because different groups of friends expect different things, his thoughts dart back and forth. Cheng Yi interprets this to mean: “back and forth in a preoccupied manner; one’s thoughts are directed toward attachments.” Wang Bi thinks that one’s friends have formed a clique around oneself, and that *they* are following *one’s* thoughts. I don’t think so, because the word *chong-chong* is a kind of earnest expectation that people will care about what you feel. Thus Cheng Yi says this is contrived behavior---trying to make friendships happen. Fifth Yang is feeling directed toward the unseen---things for which we have no perceptual equipment. This is “feeling with the nape of one’s neck”---a fine, compressed image. You feel something may be there; though you lack the concepts to describe it, you can intuit. You intuit it directly through the gap in your world-scheme, and perhaps you reach out to it in feeling. Top Yin is becoming completely immersed in the act of speech, seeming almost to be ‘swept away’ on a stream of words. Many people notice a sign of maturation in their lives: early in life they are totally engaged by first-order emotions. Later they find gratification in discussing feelings as a process, rather than simply throwing themselves into the emotional feelings again. In the top line, this conversion goes toward its extreme---feelings exist to be transformed to speech. One’s existence is defined in a universe of discourse.

All these layers of feeling are nestled together in a person’s complete experience, with the higher one’s building upon the lower ones.

Xingqing:

The *gen* (mountain) trigram below cares only to maintain its particular solidarity and structure. But through proximity to the *dui*, it finds itself involved in something it hadn’t known (fruitfulness and self-giving). *Gen’s* solidity can also give *dui* a new vantage point, so that its giving is no longer uninformed or blind. By association with each other, they compose a state of feeling that neither could have had alone. In nature

there is no such landform as a marsh on top of a mountain, so we are clearly dealing with a symbolic relation.

Centrality:...

It seems odd that reflex (Second Yin) could be central between impulse and tracking. Yet actually most of our repertoire of behavior is built upon reflex. A person consciously learns certain responses, and these become so familiar they are performed automatically. Isolated reflexes are linked by practice and primed by intention to make movements. Any complex behavior is like a symphony in which the reflexes are analogous to notes. (Even in the brain's functioning, a network of reflex arcs is necessary for consciousness.)

The tips of the feet are used to symbolize impulse, because they are both a sensory feeler and an extremity used in locomotion. The calves are used to symbolize reflex, because they are a part of the body which move subconsciously, showing impatience or nervousness. Reflex is intermediate between impulse and tracking behavior. As sports physiologists know, separate reflexes are integrated into coordinated motion through trial and error and a conscious "sculpting" process. Reflexes are the building blocks from which intended tracking behaviors are built.

In the upper trigram, feeling turns more a social context. Fourth Yang is earnestly engaged at any given moment, but he jumps from this object to the next. That is to say, what Four's feeling are conditioned by a shifting motivational model, with assumptions of which he may not be aware. Six has no interest in the textures of immediate feeling. She wants to live in fully mediated world of verbal signs and language categories. Between Four and Six, Five stretches his intuition, trying to attune to things beyond its present perceptual model ("feeling with the nape of one's neck"). Such attunement is a balancing corrective to both Four and Six.