

# ***Cosmologies of Change***

The Inscapes of the Classic of Change



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## Cosmologies of Change

The tradition or Way of the Classic of Change is like a great stream of symbols flowing back and forth through the present moment to connect the wisdom of ancient times with whatever the future may be. It is a language that everything speaks; through it everything is always talking to everything else. Things are always vanishing and coming into being, a continual process of creation that becomes knowable or readable at the intersection points embodied in the symbols of this language. These symbols or images of Change open a sacred cosmos that has acted as a place of close encounter with the spirit world for countless generations. Without this sort of contact our world shrinks and fades away, leaving us in a deaf and dumb wasteland, forever outside of things.



*31:32 Conjoining and Persevering* displays the process through which spirit enters and influences the human world, offering omens that, when given an enduring form, help the heart endure on the voyage of life.

This cosmos has the shape of the Numinous Turtle, swimming in the endless seas of the Way or Dao. Heaven is above, Earth and the Ghost River are below, the Sun Tree lies to the East, the Moon Tree is in the far West. The space between, spread to the Four Directions, is the world we live in, full of shrines and temples where we talk with the ghosts and spirits, hidden winds, elemental powers and dream animals. This

sacred cosmos, called Heaven and Earth or the All-under-Heaven, is where we are born, lead our lives, fulfill our destinies and return to the source of all.

Change doubles the ritual practices of this old sacred cosmos into its images and symbols, letting these images take on their old nature and quality as protectors and opening an elegant and mysterious imaginative world, a sort of Portable Altar, where our individual dialogue with destiny can take place. It help us acquire the inner realizing power to become who we are meant to be, no longer the victim of cultural stereotypes or the histories of rage, pain, need and betrayal passed on to us in our family histories.



*28 Great Transition* portrays the critical passage when we free ourselves from stereotypes, conventions and corrupt institutions to emerge as a true individual.

### **The Friendship of the Spirit**

Entering the sacred cosmos of Change shifts us from the literal world of concepts and predictions to the potent world of psycho-active symbols and helping spirits that lies hidden behind it. The individual experience of these symbols and spirits can make us

sage and clear-seeing, able to feel the friendship of the spirit and express compassion for our fellow beings. This Way of Change responds directly to our individual concerns, offering protection, insight and self-realization and in following this way we imitate the early spirit-intermediaries who could see and hear what is hidden, freely giving the bright spirits and the dark ghosts the attention and respect that is due them. This imaginative generosity allows a radiant spirit, the light of our destiny or *shenming*, to descend on us and take up a home in our hearts. The inner chapters of an early Daoist text (c. 400 BCE) give us a sense of this practice:

When your life-energy is put on the Way,  
it vitalizes you.  
When you are vitalized, you can imagine.  
When you imagine, you truly know.  
When you know, you stop.  
The hearts of all beings are shaped like this.  
If your thirst for knowing seeks to go farther,  
you will kill them.

There is a limit to knowing in the true sense and that limit is imagination. This way of working with ourselves puts us on the Way, vitalizes our imagining and opens our heart - and that is enough.

Look, there is a spirit within your person.  
Now it goes, now it comes.  
No one can capture it.  
But if you reverently clean its abode  
It will return of itself.  
You will recover your own true nature,  
fixed in you once for all.

### **Empowering the Sacred Cosmos**

Jung felt that the symbols of Change were “an answer to our spiritual needs, a sign that we are finally beginning to relate to the alien elements in ourselves”. And he insisted that his depth psychology in the strictest sense was bound up with “the whole practical use of the symbols of the I Ching”. This is because this “whole practical use of Change” cultivates and stores symbolic awareness, opening an inner space where the transformative energy of the symbols can arise and act spontaneously to reshape our minds and our hearts.



The wisdom of Change and its transformative imagery reflect the magic of the Three, a zone of fertile chaos or union of opposites that is contained in a Pair. This transformative energy lets us move back and forth across the river of life and death, and is the grandmother of all systems of Eastern medicine. Acupuncture, acupressure and all the other systems that make a diagnosis by examining the flow of energy (or *ji*) in the various organ orbits draw on the cosmology of Change and the energies of its divinatory practices and symbols. This sort of energy medicine seeks to locate disorders in the subtle body before they become embodied or somatized. If the embodiment has occurred, the method of treatment is to first desomatize the disorder, to move it back into the energy field of the symbols when it can be treated effectively.

Archetypal psychology calls this process *soul-making*, recreating the lost world of the soul or anima - the feminine mediating principle - that has disappeared in our culture. It is not so much somewhere we *go* but something we *do*. We de-literalize our problems, seeing through them to the symbols that are the real architects of our dreams and symptoms. When we do this we are creating an opportunity through which the world can be re-imagined. This sort of psychic connection is the central concern of divination itself: Not to learn something, but to experience something and be set right.

The images and processes you will encounter in the Cosmos of Change are first of all symbols. They reveal the energy dynamic of your situation, connecting what you

experience in the inner world and what you confront in the outer world. These symbols are not fixed but fluid like water and, as Heraclitus said, you can never put your foot into the same river twice. So we don't *believe* in these symbols as something that exists independent of us; we *entertain* them like a traditional animal dancer who puts on a mask and then moves into the situation by looking through its eyes.

The symbolic language of the cosmos of Change opens a mysterious realm *between* things, a realm that Jung called synchronicity, or the One World (*unus mundus*). It weaves a spell that re-enchants our mind, deconstructing the mental habits we usually depend on and drawing us into a place where our dreams and symptoms have a chance to speak and release their creative energy. This language mirrors the *hole* or lack in our lives, giving us the missing information that re-connects us to the *(w)hole*. In Jung's words, it is an *experience* that nothing can take away from us because it means more than the all the world.

## The Primary Systems

The cosmos of Change comes into being through the interaction of two basic systems that reflect the energies of the Two Primal Powers: Heaven and Earth, Dragon and Dark Animal Goddess, Inspiration and Realization, Great and Small, Yang and Yin. The Inspiring system is *Wu Xing*, the Five Processes called **Wood/Wind**, **Fire**, **Earth**, **Metal** and **Water** that give a quality to the flow of time in the world we live in, the All-under-Heaven.





### Five/ *Wu* (top character)

The old character portrays the two principles, yin and yang, begetting the five processes in the space between Heaven and Earth. The space/time it creates organizes the permutations of the hidden winds that produce and animate all being. This is expressed as the Five Processes, the Five Ancestral Spirits, the Five Ancestral Generations, the Five Royal Spouses, the Five Warrior Clans and the Five Planets. It is an intermediary temple and entrance to a cemetery where the dead dwell in peace and harmony.

### Process/Element/ *Xing* (bottom character)

The character shows a shape or form derived from the graph for the Well, the source of common humanity, and the shadow it cast. It represents embodied form, sensory appearance, the perceptible form of the shen or spirits and means to give form to or embody something. It is directly connected to the hidden winds that configure the body and provide the breath that renews it. It means visage, figure, physiognomy, configuration, terrain or situation, method and means, to appear and take form.

## Wood/Wind Process

### Rousing new growth springs up and opens out.

Wood/Wind signifies growth, budding, outward movement and expansion, springing up and opening out. It is origins, beginnings, the initial burst of energy and the rising sap, impulsive, vital, activating, enlivening and free flowing. Its action is to push through. It governs the capacity to respond and adapt, stimulating mind and emotion.



### Wood/ *Mu*

The Wood character shows young sprouts emerging and their roots penetrating the ground. These sprouts are the hidden triggers of change, like the Tree at the Earth

Altar, protector of the land and the World Tree or Bushy Mulberry. They are all things that sprout and grow, sign of the fertile chaos at the center of life.

## **Fire Process**

**Brightness and warmth spread beauty and change awareness.**

Fire is burning and combustion, warmth and light, joy and luxuriant growth, climax or zenith. It brings ease and accomplishment, joy, happiness, expansive feeling, movement and excitement. It expresses itself in the body as the Heart, the spirit that commands the blood and energy channels, bringing the spark of life to full growth.



## **Fire/Ho**

The character shows flames rising from a ritual base. It means flame, fire, offerings and rituals; to cook, clarify, illuminate, consume or transform by fire; expansion, originating inspiration, the spark of yang, the essence of breath; fever, anger, passions, pressing, urgent; companions, associates; a utensil or instrument.

## **Earth Process**

**Yield and serve, common labor produces concrete results.**

Earth is the center, the pivot of transformation in the alternation of yin and yang, and the point around which the seasons and directions revolve and through which they change. Her action is yielding and bringing forth, sowing, sprouting and harvesting. She transforms and distributes nourishment to assure a free flow of thought.



### Earth/ Tu

The character shows a tree and the ground from which it grows. It is the ancestral protector of the land that controls the four directions and their hidden winds, soil, cultivated fields, mounted soldiers and hunting grounds.

### Metal Process

**Destroying old forms and creating new relations.**

Metal is ore in the earth, gemstones and the melting, casting and working of metals. This is concentration and crystallization, insight and thought that restrains things into forms then strips away the mold. Metal is an interface that draws energy in and distributes it down, regulating the rhythms of life.



### Metal/ Jin

The character shows a cast bronze vessel and bronze weapons. It means all forms of metal, making bronze vessels and instruments; a standard or flag; valuable, precious, durable, resistant; gold, riches; transmutation, alchemical processes, perfection.

## **Water Process**

**Structures dissolve and you must risk, fall, labor and flow on.**

Water dissolves structures. It is streams, floods, rivers and all moving water; the flow of emotion and the underworld river of ghosts, secret, dark, mysterious; hidden depths and secret sources, cold and lonely toiling. It pushes the being to actualize its potential, holds individual fate, maintains the blood and regulates the body fluids.



## **Water/ Shui**

The character shows rivulets running side by side with the yang breath in the center. It means the source of a river; waters, springs, lakes, seas, rain; strong currents, deep attraction; the vital continuity of the body; unity, quality, worth; efficacious virtue that expands and vivifies; supple, tender; yield, give way.

## ***Si Fang: The Four Sides or Directions***

The Four Directions are the Realizing or structuring system that organizes the space in the world we live in, the All-under-Heaven. They form the Four Corners of the Square Earth and its Center



### **Four/Si (top character)**

The old character shows the square field of earth divided into two halves, the yin process of doubling and pairing. It creates the four territories or regions around the center and the four winds or hidden virtues of earth that make the four directions appear. These are the four spirit protectors of the life of the land that assist the Great Ancestor, the Four Seasons and the Four Pillars. It means all, everything connected with the power of Earth and the yin.

### **Directions/Sides/Powers/Fang (bottom character)**

The old character shows a plow or cultivator that opens the earth and establishes lines or furrows in its surface. It establishes the regions and places, the orientations and cardinal points and the sacrifices to the four directions. It means a goal, purpose or intention, a campaign to annex and occupy territory, a medical or therapeutic formula, special abilities, rights, justice, virtues and fixed rules. It is what is stable and dependable, constant, continual, regular, peaceful. It is the means and the expedient method, the right moment to act. It examines, judges, compares, makes categories and distinctions and governs arts and letters. It is a complete and harmonious song, chant or poem, the first stage in the revelation of the Mystery.

The Hidden Winds or breaths of these Four Directions circulate spirit-energy through the inner and outer worlds of our experience.

### **Winds/*Feng***



The oldest form of the character portrays a phoenix, the divine bird-spirit that animates and controls the winds and their hidden breaths, subtle, mysterious, and enigmatic powers that circulate in the world and in the body. They cause things to vibrate in accord with the power they carry and the influence of the ancient sages.

### **East Wind**



The **East** is seen as the sun appearing at the horizon, shining through the trees. Its root is a speaking mouth. This is the moment when life surges in, the vital movement of all beings. It is the source, the first cause, the wellspring of thoughts and authority, a ritual area where things are motivated and put into action.

## South Wind



The **South** is seen as a hanging brass percussion instrument that spreads the words of the spirit to all, whose root means all or complete. It is the time when everything grows luxuriant and abundant in the waxing light and heat, a ritual area where spirit spreads, penetrating and increasing all things, bringing them to their full grown form.

## West Wind



The **West** is seen as a bird sitting on its nest in the light of the setting sun. Its root is a cover, covering. It marks a time of descent and return, the declining sun, a ritual area that presides over harvest, reaping and gathering, insight, acuity and profit, seen as the sharp edge of a knife and a sheaf of ripe grain. It is the Western Paradise presided over by the Queen Mother of the West, Queen of the Dead and Lady of the Beasts.

## North Wind



The **North** is seen as two people who turn their backs on each other. It is the gate of misfortune, a glacial wind that brings death. It marks a time of separation, opposition, defeat, ruptured communications, rebellion and division, the black or hidden sun. This is the ritual area of obscure yin that protects and defends hidden reserves and resources, a time of proving things through trial and finding the kernel, the pearl, what is pure and undefiled.

## Center



The **Center** of the Four Directions is seen as a flag placed at the center of ritual space that collects the four directions or an arrow that hits the center of the target. Its root is a thread that runs through all. It is the great Intermediary, the depth of the heart and the inner life, a harmonious influx that acts as the animating spirit of each being.



Each of these Directions is connected with a Season, a Process, specific Trigrams in the system of the *Bagua* or Eight Spirit Helpers and one of the Pillars that form the system of Four Pillars astrology.

<b>Direction</b>	<b>Season</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Trigrams</b>	<b>Pillar</b>
<b>East</b>	Spring	Wood	Groundbreaker Matchmaker	Generational Mission
<b>South</b>	Summer	Fire	Visionary	Self Image
<b>West</b>	Fall	Metal	Creator Mediator	Life Manager
<b>North</b>	Winter	Water	Navigator	Hidden Face
<b>Center</b>	Transitions	Earth	Midwife Gatekeeper	Field

## The Ten Heavenly Stems

The system of the Ten Heavenly Stems links each Process or Element to the Yin-Yang dynamic and articulates the Five Processes and the Four Directions into a system of Five Heavenly Palaces, the Four Quarters of the Sky and the central Field of Earth beneath it.

### Stem/ *Jing*



The character is made of the graph for grass and the graph for a model or norm put in practice. It is seen as an underground current or wind waves on water. It means a direct route, expedient means, direct, simple. It is traveling or voyaging on a north-south path through a defile, gorge or mountain pass.

The Ten Stems were seen as ten Heavenly Ancestors or Royal Lineages from which humanity and culture arose. The system portrays these spirit energies as contained in Four Star Palaces connected with the sacred cosmos of the overarching Heavens, the Flat Earth spread to the Four Sides below them and the Ghost River running beneath all.

### **The 10 Heavenly Stems**

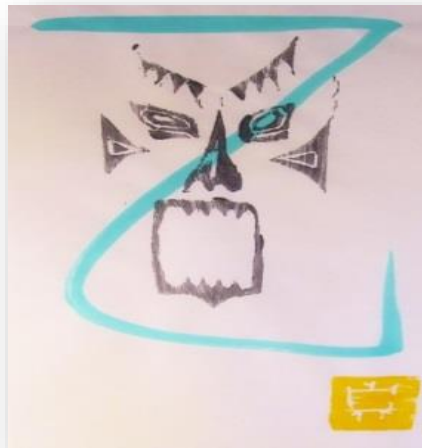
The Ten Heavenly Stems grow out of the Five Palaces and the Five Processes they represent, coupling them with the Two Powers, Yin and Yang. These Stems themselves go back to at least the Shang dynasty (c. 1500 bce) and are the names of the 10 days of the earliest ritual week. They connect Dragon or Heaven energy to the various parts of the All-under-Heaven, the world we live in, and to the various orbits, organs and meridians in our bodies.

#### **1 Yang Wood Jia**



**1 Yang Wood Jia** suggests armor, warriors and weapons, the East where all things emerge, the first, the commencement, the hard protective envelope of a seed, shell or carapace, claws and fingernails. Its season is Spring/Seedburst. It is imaged as tall, upright trees growing slowly and surely to reach the sunlight, cut timber, all vigorous, thrusting growth. Connected to your first 12 years of growth, it gives you the creative power that separates you from conventional ideas and the capacity to act decisively.

#### **2 Yin Wood Yi**



**2 Yin Wood Yi** is all that is hunched over with the work of breaking through, like young sprouts pushing through the crust of earth, making a mark in the world. It is the East where all things emerge and its season is Spring/Sprouting, imaged as flexible bamboo, low shrubs, vines, grasses, flowers, creepers, and ferns, what is adaptable, tough, enduring. **Yi Wood** creates a shrewd, adaptable intelligence, learned and original, that creates networks by entwining itself with other people, ideas and projects. It is particularly connected to your first 12 years of growth and gives you the potential to succeed in any type of undertaking, a free flow of energy and emotion that slips through obstacles with remarkable resilience.

### **3 Yang Fire Bing**



**3 Yang Fire Bing** suggests all things that are brilliant, fiery, shining and manifest, imaged as a fire on a roof or a shimmering fish's tail. It is the South where all things ripen, resplendent in their glory. Its season is Summer's Brilliance, imaged as the sun, sunlight, burning wood, forest fires, furnaces, lightning, inner illumination and the fire

of the sun essential to the growth of all things. Connected to the growth period between 12-24 and your search for real ideals, it will give you an uncanny ability to recognize opportunity and avoid danger.

#### **4 Yin Fire Ding**



**4 Yin Fire Ding** suggests things that are strong, robust and able struck by a sudden creative illness. It is the South where all things ripen. Its season is Summer's Force, imaged as the Moon, moonlight, the flame of a lamp, candlelight, starlight, twilight, and flickering light. **Ding Fire** creates the patience, intuition and deep understanding of the human psyche of the visionary who can influence and motivate others. Connected to the growth period between 12-24 and your search for real ideals, it offers you a quiet center in which the spirits can find a voice.

#### **5 Yang Earth Wu**



**5 Yang Earth Wu** suggests all things abundant, flourishing and luxuriant. It is the Central Place where the Six Stems and the Five Dragons conjoin. Its season is the Transition between things, imaged as tall mountains, rocks, boulders, passageways, crusty parched soil, desert, sand. Connected with the growth period 24-36, it makes

you a fighter and survivor guided by high moral principles who is determined to articulate and improve the world we live in by facilitating the free flow of ideas.

### 6 Yin Earth Ji



**6 Yin Earth Ji** suggests individual identity, personal desires and passions along with the capacity to govern and moderate them. Its season is the Transition between things, imaged as a lush valley, rich soil in which food is grown, garden soil, pottery, stoneware clay. **Ji Earth** creates an intelligence that is artistic, inventive, nurturing, peaceful, extravagant and grounded in the material world. It is connected with the growth period 24-36 and gives you the ability to help people solve their problems without fault-finding or judgment.

### 7 Yang Metal Geng



**7 Yang Metal Geng** suggests maturation, repair, justice and equality as well as joy, happiness, alcoholic beverages and the hottest days of summer. Its season is

Fall/Transmission, imaged as sharp weapons, blades, knives, swords, axes and ores in the earth. Connected with the growth period 36-48, **Geng Metal** creates a disciplined, focused, penetrating and analytical intelligence deeply concerned with justice and equality that will follow goals with fervor and passion. Loyal, strong-willed and enduring, it wavers between responsibility and perfectionism.

### **8 Yin Metal Xin**



**8 Yin Metal Xin** suggests sorrow, affliction, bitterness, cruelty and punishment as well as flowing tears and renewal. Its season is Fall/Sacrifice, imaged as a cauldron, vessel, kettle, cast or worked jewelry, gold and silver, clasps, needles, rings and bracelets. Connected with the growth period 36-48, **Xin Metal** creates a penetrating, sensitive and intellectually compelling intelligence with an excellent memory, an acerbic tongue, a very low tolerance for fools or sluggards and a need to be intellectually challenged.

### **9 Yang Water Ren**



**9 Yang Water Ren** portrays two dragons mating and suggests all that is grand, magnificent and solemn, conception and pregnancy, a pregnant woman about to give birth, eloquence, flattery and intrigue. Its season is Winter/Conception, imaged as a deep ocean, cresting waves, sea water, great lakes, rapid rivers, storms, tempests. Connected with the growth period 48-60+, **Ren Water** creates a resourceful, artistic and freedom-loving intelligence, reflective and wise, that combines the flow of a rushing river and the still depths of a deep lake, dynamic, focused, empathetic, compassionate and attentive.

### 10 Yin Water Gui



**10 Yin Water Gui** suggests evaluating, measuring and making conjectures. It is water flowing from the four directions into the center and its name is a pun on “ghost.” Its season is Winter/Limits, imaged as clear running brooks, pools, ponds, fresh water, gentle rain, dew, clouds, mist, and fogs. Connected with the growth period 48-60+, **Gui Water** creates a kind, disciplined, nurturing and deeply insightful intelligence that is both reflective and wise.

## The Twelve Earthly Branches

The Twelve Earthly Branches or Year Animals show how the Heavenly Influences and the Hidden Winds are embodied in the flow of experience. They connect directly with the Spirit Helpers or trigrams (*bagua*) of the Classic of Change and with the Profiles that describe their characteristic energies and activities.

### Branch/Zhi



The old character shows a hand holding a branch. It is part of the circulation of vital energy and also refers to the 12 double hours, each described as an animal, that make up the Chinese clock. It means to support, carry, maintain, measure, furnish, endure, dispense, count or separate from. It is the branch of a tree or a river and the branch of a family and its descendants.

## The 12 Earthly Branches

The 12 Earthly Branches are a bit harder to find than the Stems. One problem is that many people think that the Animal is the Branch; in actuality the Animals came in quite a bit later. The original Branches are most probably names of the 12 monthly rituals determined by the moon's changes and may be the names of very old star-clusters. An omen in the Change refers to one of these rituals as when "the moon is almost facing" or almost full. At this time priestesses of the ancient Moon Cult would dance, go into trance and read out the changes to come. Here are the 12 original Branches.

### Branch I Tzu/Zi: Commencement/Descendants

*Recalibrating the Great Yang*





This is an Inspiring time associated with the first lunar month, Mid-Winter and finding the seeds of the new. It relocates and recharges the critical nodes where creative potential can be activated in the future. It is a time when the ice thickens, the ground splits open, the dawn herald no longer crows and tigers begin mating. Earthworks or working the soil are prohibited, for if the ground is broken Earth vapors will dissipate, hibernating insects die and epidemics spread. Inspect and shutter the doors and windows and close all the inner gates so that Earth and Heaven will be in harmony.

**Branch II Ch'ou/Chou: Grasping/Closure**  
*Controlling the Great Yin*



This is a Realizing time associated with the second lunar month, the transition from Winter to Spring, imaged as a hand tying a knot. It is a return of the spirit that supplies security and receptivity at critical times in a clown-like or festive way. Imagine it as the time wild geese fly northward, magpies build their nests, pheasants and gannets cry out, hens sit on eggs, the dark colts are eager, birds of prey become ferocious, the sun finishes its course, the Moon completes its cycle and the Year gives way to the beginning of another, a Grand Exorcism that disperses the Winter Vapors.

**Branch III: Yin/Reverence**  
*Establishing the Spirits*



This is an Inspiring time associated with the third lunar month, early Spring that brings dynamic new growth to everything. Spirit stirs in the subterranean waters, breaking through old patterns and opening the field to new energy to be enshrined in a containing image. Imagine it as a time when wild geese go to their northern lands, pheasants call out, drumming their wings, fish rise, high winds blow, the wintry sun changes the frozen wastes and fruit trees blossom. The plowing ceremony is held to open the fields and work begins, for Heaven and Earth are in harmony.

**Branch IV Mao: Dividing/Marking Off**  
*Opening Heaven's Gates*



This is a Realizing time associated with the fourth lunar month and Full Spring that brings flourishing new growth. It facilitates a decisive parting from the past that eliminates hidden compulsions and opens new possibilities. Imagine it as a time when

rains begin, peach trees blossom, the oriole sings, the swallows return and find their nests and sacrifices are made to gods of marriage and birth. The equinox occurs, thunder wakes and lightning strikes and no animals may be offered in sacrifice.

### **Branch V Ch'en/Chen: Filling/Conjunction**

*The Signs of the Times*



This is an Inspiring time associated with the fifth lunar month and the transition from Spring to Summer, when the fruits appear. It is a source of dynamic images and tireless intuitive power that mark the propitious moments in the stream of time. Imagine it as the time when field rats change into quails, pigeons coo, rainbows are seen again, duckweed covers the water, plantain and trumpet-flower flourish. Silkworm culture begins now; young people gather mulberry leaves and tend the hatcheries. The King journeys up the river to the Ancestral Temple to make offerings for a good grain harvest and the Great Spring Music is heard and attended by all.

### **Branch VI Ssü/Szu: Snake/Display**

*Enfolding and Deploying*



This is a Realizing time associated with the sixth lunar month and Summer's beginning and the growth of the fruits and grains. It facilitates the emergence of potent hidden symbols through insight, elegance and clarity. Imagine it as a time when green frogs croak, cicadas chirp, earthworms appear, corn sprouts, melons ripen, the yew weed flourishes and obscures everything. The Pleiades appear and at dusk the Southern Gates open. Use this time to teach ritual music, collect medicinal herbs, clear the fields of wild animals, catch and break in colts and forgive minor crimes.

**Branch VII Wu: Fixing the Midpoints**  
*Establishing the Crossings*



This is an Inspiring time associated with the seventh lunar month and Full Summer that ripens the fruits. It activates the symbols of change through insight, elegance and clarity. Imagine it as a time when the mantis appears, the magpie cries out and gnats grow abundant. Orion is seen, days are longest and the Great Fire Star appears in the Heart Mansion. Use this time to repair all the musical instruments. Light no exposed fires. Do not make charcoal or bleach cloth in the sun. No customs duties are to be levied at markets. Hermits must keep to their cells.

**Branch VIII Wei: Sun Declines/Regulating Ruin**  
*Ripening the Futures*



This is a Realizing time associated with the eighth lunar month and the transition from Summer to Autumn. It supplies the inner security and receptivity that brings things to a good end. Imagine it as a time when the cricket sits in the walls and young hawks seize their prey and the Great Ladle is exactly upright at dusk. Use this time to destroy crocodiles and noxious lizards, gather tortoises for divination and turtles for food. Dye the silk according to the ancient rules and colors. Do not make earthworks or send troops to war. If any great undertaking is started or men are taken from work in the fields now, Heaven will send floods and calamities.

**Branch IX/Shen: Enfolding Power**  
*Retaining the Bright Spirits*



This is an Inspiring time associated with the ninth lunar month, Autumn and harvesting the crop, a source of great intuitive power and inspiring images. Imagine it as a time when the cool winds blow, bright and intense. White frost appears, the

cicada chirps, wild cats begin to roam, and birds of prey take to the fields. The Weaver Girl is in the Eastern Heaven and the Great Ladle points down at dawn. This is a time to repair the containing structures, make sure justice prevails, gather taxes, and inspect walls and embankments.

**Branch X/Yu: Handle of the Ladle/Libation**

*Gates of Fall*



This is a Realizing time associated with the tenth lunar month, Autumn and the Harvest Festivals that eliminate the sorrows of the past. Imagine it as a time the wine is mature and we host the ancestors and celebrate the harvest. Stormy winds blow, wild geese arrive and the swallows depart for the South. Thunder ceases, the equinox occurs, decaying forces increase, active forces decrease. Use this time to care for the aged and poor, review the laws, make sure the judges are just and celebrate what you have been given.

**Branch XI/Hsü/Xu: Controlling the Lesser Virtues**

*Perfecting Weapons*



This is an Inspiring time associated with the eleventh lunar month and Autumn's culmination. It stills and stabilizes, destroys and annihilates. Imagine it as a time when the wild geese call out on their way south, the swallows dive into the Great Water to become mollusks, bears, panthers, martens and weasels go into their caves and beautiful chrysanthemums adorn the graves. As the white frost thickens, all field work stops. Use this time to test ritual music and prepare the new calendar.

### **Branch XII/Hai: Controlling the Greater Virtues**

*Receiving Darkness*



This is a Realizing time associated with the twelfth lunar month, Early Winter and finding the seed of the new. It offers the receptive strength necessary at critical moments. Imagine it as a time when water begins to freeze, pheasants enter the Great Water to become irises, nights are long and rainbows are no longer seen. Heaven and Earth do not work together for their ways are closing. This is the time for the Great Divination, using tortoise shells and yarrow-stalks, and the Great Prayer for the following year. Focus on training in archery and chariot driving and inspect the rivers and waterways.

## The 12 Branch Animals and the Eight Trigrams

Though the Stems and Branches (as opposed to the Animals) were used by military and political strategists in a highly secret form of prediction as early as 600 BCE, no one knows when the Animals themselves entered the cultural imagination, nor from where they came. They connect with the wide range of animals used in ancestral sacrifice and ritual art such as the Ding Vessels in the Three Dynasties period and before and the 28 Animals connected with the Lunar Mansions in the early Han (c. 175 BCE). There are several almost identical fables about calling the Animals, all of which focus on the number 12 and imply the “consent” required of an animal as it approaches a sacrifice. The oldest “calling” is attributed by religious Daoists to Huang Di, the Yellow Emperor (2637 BCE); another, much later version is attributed to the Jade Emperor, King of Heaven, probably in the Song Dynasty (c. 1200 CE); yet another to Buddha in the Tang Dynasty, (c. 600 CE). All involve the same set of stories about rats, cats and oxen whose aim seems to be to establish Rat’s cunning as the originating energy of the Great Year. The conclusive appearance of the set of 12 Animals occurs in the late Tang (c. 850 CE) on bronze divining mirrors, just as today the major use of the animals is probably in Four Pillars astrology, where they show how the cosmic energies of Heaven and Earth manifest in the individual personality and how that individual will experience the great round course of life.

There is also an interesting connection between the Animals and the tradition of Change in the *Shuogua* or Explanation of the Diagrams (trigrams), one of the Ten Wings to Change assembled from oral traditions in the early Han. *Shuogua* mentions several, though not all, of the 12 Animals but one connection is quite astounding. The Animal associated with trigram Li/Radiance Bright Omens, a trigram directly associated with the clarifying of the heart- mind through accepting the Dream Animals as guides, is the Turtle. This alludes to both the old Turtle Oracle used in the Shang and early Zhou dynasties and to the cosmological Turtle, swimming the seas of the Dao. This Turtle’s upper round shell is the round Heaven from which the Stems descend, its flat under shell is the flat Earth and its oracles and the soft flesh between them is us, the All-under-Heaven. To my mind this links the trigrams of the Change as the transformative Three with the tradition of the Dream Animals and opens a way to further integrate the hexagrams of Change and the verses of Daodejing with the tradition of the Dream Animals.

Another interesting reflection on the 12 Animals is how they are balanced between Wild and Domestic, another reflection of the magic Pairing, the Two and the Three. There are 5 Wild Animals – Rat, Tiger, Hare, Snake and Monkey – that cluster in the first part of the sequence and 5 Domesticated Animals that cluster in the later part of the Sequence. Between them, in the middle, are two Animals that partake of both worlds – the Dragon as a transcendent creature of myth and the Goat/Sheep who, like us as we work with these great images, exists both in the sheepfold of conventional reality and climbing the magic mountains in search of transcendent experience.



## The 12 Branch Animals and Trigrams

**Rat** ☰☷



### **Intuitive Navigator – risk, venture, toil.**

**Kan/Ghost River** is the Navigator who dissolves all things. His function is to control the flow, inspiring the courage and labor necessary at critical times.

**Year Influence:** The Rat gives you the foresight to plan, invest wisely, overcome obstacles and relate to people in all walks of life without being duped. Rat is the ultimate survivor.

**Hour:** 11 pm - 1 am. Kidneys/Water/Winter. This is the start of the cycle, the entrance to the night world. The Rat gathers the life force and pushes the organism to actualize potential. He controls the flow of emotions, particularly courage and fear and transforms essence into available energy for the long journey ahead.

**Hidden Element:** Yang **Water**.

**Ox** ☰☷



### **Perceptive Midwife – collect, manifest, produce.**

**Kun/ Field** is the Midwife and Realizer. Her function is to supply the inner security that produces concrete results. She is the Mother as the essence of yin.

**Year Influence:** The Ox gives you the strength to work hard, value family, accomplish things for the common good and succeed through caring for others.

**Hour:** 1 am – 3 am. Stomach/Spleen/Earth/Transition. This is the seed's struggle to break out and sprout. It is a transition from the dark flow of Water to the

emerging force of Wood. The Ox stabilizes and transforms nourishment, governs the free flow of ideas, controls and protects central energy.

**Hidden Element:** Yin **Earth**.

## *Tiger* ☰☷



### **The Groundbreaker – challenge, inspire, invigorate.**

**Zhen/Thunder** is the Groundbreaker and Exorcist, rousing energy that brings things out of concealment. His function is to eliminate old patterns and open the field to new creative energy. He clears the feeling function, releasing people from painful memories.

**Year Influence:** The Tiger gives you the creative power that separates you from conventional ideas and the talent to impress others, gather friends, and relate well to different types of people.

**Hour:** 3 am – 5 am. Liver/Wood/Early Spring. This is driving energy breaking free and the onset of dreaming. Tiger governs flow of energy and emotion, purifies the blood, links eyes and sexual organs, desire and anger, vision and motivation, giving the capacity to act decisively.

**Hidden Element:** Yang **Wood**.

## *Hare* ☰☷



### **The Matchmaker – find, explain, release, awaken.**

**Sun/ Penetrating** is the Matchmaker and Analyzer who enters from below to find the disorders that block emerging energy and connect people with their destiny. Her function is to eliminate hidden sickness and awaken inner wisdom.

**Year Influence:** the Hare gives you the grace to be kind, gentle, soft-spoken and adaptable along with the potential to succeed in any type of undertaking and environment.

**Hour:** 5 am – 7 am. Liver/Wood/Full Spring. This is effortless growth in magical spring light, linking the dream time to waking life. The Hare assures the free flow of energy and emotion, purifies the blood, links eyes and sexual organs, vision and motivation, giving the capacity to act decisively.

**Hidden Element:** Yin **Wood**.

**Dragon** ☰



**Perceptive Creator – create, imagine, empower.**

**Qian, Heaven/Dragon** is the Creator who challenges people to grapple with their creative spirit. His function is to be a source of tireless transformative power and dynamic, inspiring images.

**Year Influence:** The Dragon adds intensity, drama and excitement to life. He gives you the ability to plan, work hard and complete projects. He assures success.

**Hour:** 7 am – 9 am. Lungs/Skin/Fall/Metal/Spring to Summer. This is vigorous expansion, creative energy moving into the day life. Dragon regulates the rhythm of life, dispersing energy and connecting the surface with the central nervous system, sexual stimulation and the power of inner images.

**Hidden Element:** Yang **Earth**.

**Snake** ☵



### **Intuitive Visionary – clarify, energize, support.**

**Li/ Bright Omens** is the Visionary. Her function is to reveal new possibilities, leading through beauty, elegance and the clarity that brings people together.

**Year Influence:** The Snake gives you the patience, intuition and understanding of the human psyche that can turn you into a dynamic leader who succeeds in all.

**Hour:** 9 am - 11 am. Heart/Fire/Summer. This is a moment when plants complete their growth and vigor and power turn inward. Snake commands the pathways of the blood, brings the spark of life and offers a quiet center in which the spirits find a voice.

**Hidden Element:** Yin **Fire**.

### **Horse** ☲



### **Instinctive Visionary – clarify, energize, support.**

**Li/ Bright Omens** is the Visionary. Her function is to reveal new possibilities, leading through beauty, elegance and the clarity that brings people together.

**Year Influence:** The Horse gives you uncanny awareness, enabling you to recognize opportunity and avoid danger, along with an adventuresome spirit, a dash of daring, and the inner joy to be popular and well liked.

**Hour:** 11 am - 1pm. Heart/Fire/Summer. This is the moment when the sun is strongest and plants reach full maturity, the apex of the day life, bright, open and cheerful. Horse commands the pathways of the blood, brings the spark of life and offers a quiet center in which the spirits find a voice.

**Hidden Element:** Yang **Fire**.

## Goat ☰ ☷



### **Inventive Midwife – ground, collect, manifest, produce.**

**Kun/ Field** is the Midwife and Realizer. Her function is to supply the inner security that produces concrete results. She is the Mother as the essence of yin.

**Year Influence:** The Goat will make you artistic, inventively creative and peaceful. She gives you the ability to help people solve their problems without fault-finding or judgment.

**Hour:** 1 pm - 3 pm. Stomach/Spleen/Earth/Transition. This is a transition from Fire energy to Metal energy, when things take their final form. Plants ripen and all is peaceful and assured. Goat stabilizes and transforms nourishment, governs the free flow of ideas, controls and protects central energy.

**Hidden Element:** Yin **Earth**.

## Monkey ☰ ☶



### **Inventive Creator – create, imagine, empower.**

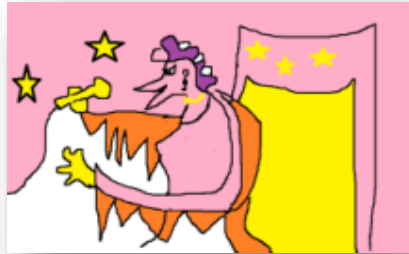
**Qian, Heaven/Dragon** is the Creator who challenges people to grapple with their creative spirit. His function is to be a source of tireless transformative power and dynamic, inspiring images.

**Year Influence:** The Monkey gives you the ability to succeed in variety of occupations and be a dynamic salesman, witty, charming and highly inventive.

**Hour:** 3 pm - 5 pm. Lungs/Skin/Metal/Summer to Fall. This is the moment when crops are ready and the harvest is prepared. Monkey regulates the rhythm of life, disperses energy and connects the surface with the central nervous system, sexual stimulation and the power of inner images.

**Hidden Element:** Yang **Earth/ Metal**.

## Rooster ☰



### **The Mediator – connect, express, liberate.**

**Dui, Mists/Lake**, is the Mediator and Communicator, the expressive spirit of the inner life. Her function is to join people together by expressing the spirit in the human community, giving answers that cheer and inspire.

**Year Influence:** The Rooster gives you strong will, determination, the ability to handle money well, be skeptical or suspicious when necessary, and work hard to achieve success.

**Hour:** 5 pm - 7 pm. Lungs/Skin/Metal/ Full Autumn. This is a moment of harvest, prosperity and responsibility, the fruition of the day life. Rooster regulates rhythm of life, disperses energy and connects the surface with central nervous system, sexual stimulation and the power of inner images.

**Hidden Element:** Yin **Metal**.

## Dog ☰



**The Gatekeeper – fix limits, articulate form, make the system better.**

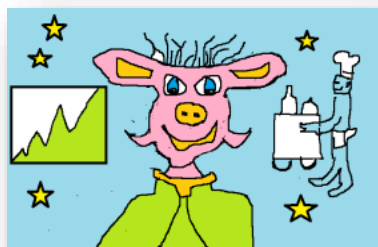
**Gen/Mountain** is the Gatekeeper and Completer who brings things to an end through accomplishing words. His function is to set limits that still and stabilize, reflecting on the past to articulate the future.

**Year Influence:** The Dog gives you the ability to be loyal and true, a fighter and survivor guided by high moral principles who can determine what is feasible.

**Hour:** 7 pm – 9 pm. Stomach/Spleen/Earth/ Transition. This is the transition from the forms of metal to the dark flow of water, when plants disintegrate and the night life is prepared. Dog stabilizes and transforms nourishment, governs the free flow of ideas, controls and protects central energy.

**Hidden Element:** Yang **Earth**.

## **Boar** ☰



### **Instinctive Navigator – risk, venture, toil.**

**Kan/Ghost River** is the Navigator who dissolves all things. His function is to control the flow, inspiring the courage and labor necessary at critical times.

**Year Influence:** The Boar gives you natural sensitivity and creativity, the knack of enjoying life, sharing easily with others, finding contentment in a faith that people can overcome all obstacles through correct guidance and nurturing.

**Hour:** 9 pm - 11 pm. Kidneys/Water/ Early Winter. This is a moment when earth is at rest and the night life awaits. Boar conserves life and transforms experience into available energy, controlling the flow of emotions, particularly courage and fear.

**Hidden Element:** Yin **Water**.

## **The Eight Trigrams or Spirit Helpers**

The Eight Trigrams or Spirit Helpers of the Change that move these Animals represent the transformative forces that lie just behind the world of appearance. These Eight Trigrams are fundamental units of eastern thought, describing energies, processes or spirits that activate the world we live in.



**The Groundbreaker – challenge, inspire, invigorate.**

**Zhen/Thunder** is the Groundbreaker and Exorcist, rousing energy that brings things out of concealment. His function is to eliminate old patterns and open the field to new creative energy. He clears the feeling function, releasing people from painful memories.



**The Lady of Fates or Matchmaker – find, explain, release, awaken.**

**Sun/ Penetrating/Wind and Wood** is the Matchmaker who enters from below to find the disorders that block emerging energy and connect people with their destiny. Her function is to eliminate hidden sickness and awaken inner wisdom.



**The Visionary – clarify, energize, support.**

**Li/ Fire/Bright Omens** is the Visionary and Leader who reveals new possibilities, leading through beauty, elegance and the clarity that brings people together.





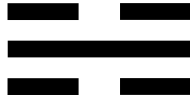
**The Midwife/Field/Earth – ground, collect, manifest, produce.**  
**Kun/ Field** is the Midwife and Realizer who supplies the inner security that produces concrete results. She is the Mother as the essence of yin.



**The Joyous Dancer – connect, express, liberate.**  
**Dui, Mists/Lake**, is the Joyous Dancer, the expressive spirit of the inner life. Her function is to join people together by expressing the spirit in the human community, giving answers that cheer and inspire.



**The Creator – create, imagine, empowering images.**  
**Qian, Heaven/Dragon** is the Creator who challenges people to grapple with their creative spirit. He is a source of tireless transformative power and dynamic, inspiring images.



**The Navigator – risk, venture, toil.**

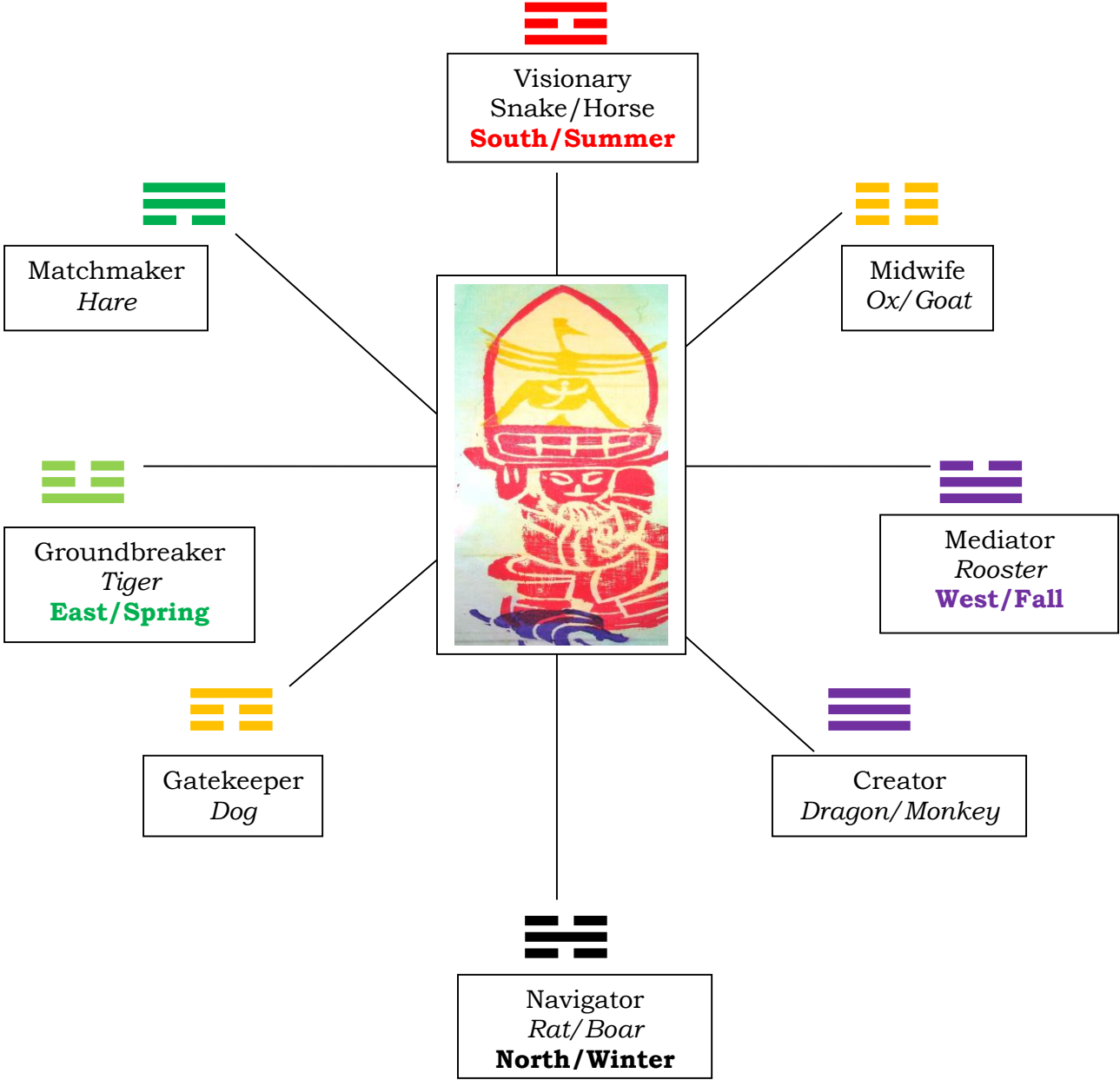
**Kan/Ghost River** is the Navigator who dissolves all things and streams on. He controls the flow, inspiring the courage and labor necessary at a critical time.



**The Gatekeeper – fix limits, articulate form, learn the lessons of the past**  
**Gen/Mountain** is the Gatekeeper who brings things to an end through accomplishing words. He sets limits that still and stabilize, reflecting on the past to articulate the future.

The *Bagua* or Spirit Helpers represent an old shamanic tradition that fused early on with the developing tradition of Change. They produce change and transformation throughout the Cosmos of Change, portraying a world of experience in constant action and interaction with no inner symmetry or fixed mathematical logic.

**The King Wen or Facilitating Cycle of the Trigrams**



## The Five Palaces and the Lunar Mansions

These are the Palaces built by the Stems and Branches that order the cosmos and orient the individual to it through the Lunar Mansions they contain.

### Yellow Dragon Palace

Earth: The Central Gate



The **Central Palace** is opened through the act of **writing**. This writing opens a **shamanic field** where the **images of the changing moon** are cleansed by **spirit-birds** and become symbols in the sacred language of **Earth**.

The **Central Palace** connects the **Earth** with the Pole Star through the **Northern Ladle**, the cluster of seven stars we know as the Big Dipper or Great Bear. It interconnects the Four Palaces and opens an old sacred cosmos that acts as a place of close encounter with the spirit world. By doing so, it defines the **Playing Field of Earth** where your dialogue with destiny takes place.

## Yellow Dragon Palace: The Field Altar



The **act of writing** opens the **Tiger's Mouth** and constellates the demons of the organs, **Stomach**, **Liver**, **Heart**, **Lungs** and **Kidneys**. It uses **deep animal powers** to drum up an **Inner Fire** that calls the **cleansing bird-spirits** who release the **sparks of intelligence** contained in each organ.

The Field Altar sets off any part of the Yellow Dragon Palace and the field of Earth as a high ritual site. Its mysterious energy puts together what has been torn apart, re-creating a space where the workings of the Dao can arise spontaneously in the heart.

## Yellow Dragon Palace: The Field Gates and the Northern Ladle



The **Field Gates** are two carriages set up to define a portal, the method used in old Chinese ritual to create the equivalent of a temple or high ritual space. This portal opens to the **Northern Ladle**, the great direction-finder and link between Heaven and Earth.



The Northern Ladle rotates on the axis of Heaven-Earth and points at one of the 28 Lunar Mansions each day, giving the beings born into that day a Bright Omen of their Hidden Destiny. It works through the power of **Fire** and the Visionary.



**Li/ Bright Omens** is the **Visionary** who reveals new possibilities, leading through beauty, elegance and the clarity that brings people together. She is the Middle Daughter, mature and supportive.

The stars of the **Northern Ladle** recharge life with meaning by connecting us to the **Center**.



The **Center** is seen as a flag placed at the center of ritual space that collects the four directions or an arrow that hits the center of the target. Its root is a thread that runs through all. It is the great Intermediary, the depth of the heart and the inner life, a harmonious influx that acts as the animating spirit of each being.

# Stars of the Northern Ladle

## 1 Heaven's Ax/ *Tian Shu*



**Heaven's Ax**, also seen as the Morning Star, channels the power of **Heaven** and the creative power of the **Dragon**. It is seen as a war ax with a bronze head and cutting edge mounted on a bundled wood or bamboo handle. Two of these go in front of a war chariot to open its way by cutting through all obstacles.



**Qian, Heaven/Dragon** is the **Creator** who challenges people to grapple with their creative spirit. His function is to be a source of tireless transformative power and dynamic, inspiring images. He is the Father as essence of yang.

**Heaven's Ax** empowers the central Engines of Change: 27:28 *Tiger's Mouth and Great Transition* and 61:62 *Opened Heart and Flying Bird*. Here the Anima Intermediaries who make the soul connections and the Animus Operators who clear thinking and feeling join to clear the inner channels.



## Stars of the Northern Ladle

### 2 Heaven's Jade Pivot/ *Tian Xuan*



**Heaven's Jade Pivot** constellates the power and receptive strength of the **Earth** and the Empress. It is seen as a jade ornament held in the hand and turned to all sides, a path or way that constantly turns and returns.



**Kun/ Field** is the **Midwife** who sponsors service undertaken together, supplying the inner security and receptivity that can bring things to a good end through common labor. She is the Mother as the essence of yin.

The **Jade Pivot** connects our inner and outer lives, linking **Fire** above the **Earth** and **Water** below the **Earth** to establish the inner Axis of Change 29:30 *Ghost River and Bright Omens* and create 63:64 *Burning Water*, the prima materia of all change.

## Stars of the Northern Ladle

### 3 Heaven's Trigger/ *Tian Ji*



**Heaven's Triggers** channels the power of **Fire** as it is born from **Wood**. It governs the internal chaos by activating the hidden triggers, motives, motors and strategies that enable our profound nature to respond to spiritual impulses.



**Zhen/Thunder** is the **Groundbreaker** who brings things out of concealment, eliminating old patterns and opening the field to new creative energy. He is the Oldest Son, energetic and inspiring.

**Heaven's Triggers** empowers the process of transition and initiation, the threshold and the favorable moment. It links the structure of the family 37 *Dwelling People* with a new vision of spirit 50 *Vessel* and empowers 21 *Biting Through* to produce 49 *Revolution* that skins away old forms.

## Stars of the Northern Ladle Heaven's Balance/ *Tian Quan*



**Heaven's Balance** channels the power of **Water** and the **Ghost River**. It is an image of the weights on a balance and is the rising force behind power, authority, depth of judgment and punishments. It means to evaluate, compare, examine in view of the actual circumstances and find what is just and right.



**Kan, Water** and the **Ghost River** is the **Navigator** who dissolves all things and streams on. His function is to control the flow, inspiring the courage and labor necessary at a critical time. He is the Middle Son, courageous and venturesome.

**Heaven's Balance** is the heart of the world of the Four Pillars. It helps us acquire the inner power and virtue to become who we are meant to be, driving the forces that dissolve old forms and create new relations.

## Stars of the Northern Ladle

### 5 Jade Yoke/ Yu Heng



**Heaven's Yoke** channels the power of **Earth** and the **Mountain**. It is government in harmony, gems of all kinds that come from earth and the sign of beautiful women, the Palace Jewels or Jade Maidens. Its image is a yoke or horn board, like the horn board for the Red Bull raised for the Spring Sacrifice. It represents inner equilibrium, balanced and mobile energy, the just choice, right and correct. It is also a support for the urns that offer sustenance to the departed ones.



**Gen/Mountain** is the **Gatekeeper** who brings things to an end through accomplishing words. His function is to set limits that still and stabilize, reflecting on the past to articulate the future. He is the Youngest Son, fixing the final forms.

**Heaven's Yoke** shows the change necessary to power the process of transition and initiation, acting through *15 Humbling* that rebalances inner yin and yang and *22 Adorning* that brings new beauty to an ancestral house and line.

## Stars of the Northern Ladle

### 6 Opening Gates/*Kai Yang*



Opening Gates channels the power of **Wood** and bright yang energy as it is born from **Water**. It is the gates of the granaries. It opens the imagination to the spirit and clarifies communication between inside and outside, beginning, founding, liberating and reclaiming.



**Sun/ Penetrating** is the **Matchmaker** who enters from below to find the disorders that block emerging energy. She releases people from hidden disorders and awakens inner wisdom. She is the Oldest Daughter, influencing and nourishing.

**Opening Gates** shows how your inner and outer lives can be re-connected. It liberates creative energy from past patterns through *40 Deliverance* and *59 Dispersing*. It opens a new world through *3 Sprouting* that reconnects us with common human strengths and feeling through *48 Well*.

## Stars of the Northern Ladle

### Jade's Brilliance/ Yao Guang



**Jade's Brilliance** channels the power of **Metal** as it is born in the **Earth**, ores, gems and precious stones. The image is a person kneeling in front of a low altar made of lustrous jade with their head filled with light and spirit, a celestial brilliance that illuminates all existence.



**Dui, Mists, Lake** is the **Mediator**, the expressive spirit of the inner life. Her function is to join people together by expressing the spirit in the human community, giving answers that cheer and inspire. She is the Youngest Daughter, light-hearted and magical.

This Star frames the overall process of Change and focuses on a breakthrough point. It establishes *11:12 High Rituals of the New King and Old King*, connects the *19 Nearing* of a new spirit with *45 Gathering* the resources for a great project, *10 Treading* out to meet the new destiny that leads to *43 Breakthrough*.

## Faces of the Moon

The Four Directional Palaces - Azure Dragon, Vermillion Bird, White Tiger and Black Tortoise - are the four quadrants of the Heavens. These Four Hidden Lands and the square earth beneath them revolve around an axis that connects Heaven, Earth and the rushing Ghost River beneath, an *axis mundi* or zone of absolute reality where there is perfect access to the spirit world. This center of the world is where the dead rest in peace and receive the great offerings, the place from which their blessings flow. This sacred cosmos also reflects the shape of the human heart (*xin*). This axis is defined by the star cluster known as the Northern Ladle and it can be established or invoked at any site where the high ritual or divination is performed.



The Northern Ladle rotates on the Axis of Heaven-Earth, the center of the round Heaven. The stars of the Ladle recharge life with meaning by connecting us to energies of Heaven, Earth and the Spirit Helpers. It does this through the 28 star clusters around the ecliptic, the circumference, of the round Heaven



that the moon passes through in its 28 day cycle. These are the Lunar Mansions (*Xiu*) and each of the Four Palaces contains seven of them.

### **Lunar Mansions/*Xiu***



The old character shows the moon entering the lunar mansions. It means to spend a night in an inn or way station, to establish a guard, renew defenses, do your duty and be faithful. It is something that is first, ancient, perpetual, predestined, latent, proving an anterior existence. It is the plants that grow on a grave and the circumstances you encounter, and a bird in its nest. Above all it is an offering of spirits to the unending cycles of the moon.

These Lunar Mansions are the deep symbols of the moon's journey, transformational symbols in the night sky. They are the agents of the dream-work that turns the snares of fate into the bright omens of destiny by deliteralizing our personal suffering and opening it to the imaginal world of the heart-mind. The Northern Ladle points at one of them each day and, used as a divining instrument, it can point out which of these mansions is the activating dream-force behind any situation.



# Azure Dragon Palace

## The Eastern Gate

Yang **Wood**: Spring/Seedburst

Yin **Wood**: Spring/Sprout



Here **deep animal powers** drum up rousing new energy. The hidden **Dragon** releases this creative force into the **Ancestral Line**, which burst forth as the **leaping fish**, new energy breaking the surface of the underworld waters.

The **Azure Dragon** is the epitome of the **East**, the sun appearing at the horizon, shining through the trees whose root is a speaking mouth. It is the moment when life surges in, the vital movement of all beings. It is the source, the first cause, the wellspring of thoughts and authority, a ritual area where things are motivated and put into action. It is connected with Spring, the moment when vegetation revives and things are put in motion; with Wood that governs the capacity to respond and adapt; and with the East Wind that disseminates the new and dissipates the old.

## Year Pillar: Generational Mission



The **Azure Dragon Palace** is the inner core of the Year Pillar or **Generational Mission**. This is your primary sense of “us”, your first social bonding. It is how you see yourself and others see you. You can see how it is formed by looking at your reactions to experiences in late childhood, adolescence and early adulthood.

*Year/Nian*



The old character shows the graph for grain over the graph for person or people. Later it included the character for thousand, the thousand grains and the ten thousand or myriad beings. It is a year, an age, a period in one's life, a period in history. Its basic meanings are harvest, the annual crop, and the years of your life. Its hidden root shows a pestle, suggesting both grinding grain and the grinding force of collective destiny.

## Azure Dragon Palace

### The Seven Lunar Mansions or Star Clusters of Spring

#### Lunar Mansion 1 Great Horn/*Da Jue*

**Element:** Wood **Planet:** Jupiter

**Animal:** Smooth Dragon **Polarity:** (+Opening)



This is spring's beginning, emerging creative energy that brings rains and floods.

Deep **Wood energy enters with the strength of a horse**. The **shamans who connect Heaven and Earth** link the new world, producing a **great flowering**. Birds and beasts mate, buds burgeon.

This sign rules over agriculture and gardening, a time to begin work, acquire land or marry. It is the sound of military trumpets and means to attack at strategic points. It also is the name of a bronze tripod wine vessel with two heads or beaks that pour the wine in two directions.

## Azure Dragon Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 2 Dragon's Neck/*Kang*

**Element:** Water    **Planet:** Mercury

**Animal:** Dragon    **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign is seen as a person's extended neck and the throat of a bird. It signifies a solar eclipse. It is the patron of alchemy; its root is to enter into, to go within, a symbolic death.

The center of the sign is the **Great Yin Protector**, with the sign for **blocked communication** below and flanked by **imprisoned ancestors** to be released. **Green harvesters** move through the mansion, carrying out the judgments.

The sign presides over judgments and punishments and the release of prisoners or the freeing of animals. When it is clouded or adversarial it brings illness, inflexibility, hyperactivity, excess and pride, drought and dust storms. When clear it means partners, loyal ministers and peace in the country.

## Azure Dragon Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 3 Base/Roots/*Di*

**Element:** Earth **Planet:** Saturn

**Animal:** Marten **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign presides over the calamities that are due to the failure to perform proper rituals to ancestors or lack of respect for elders. It brings the sweet rains of spring as well as spring illnesses, tempests, gales and forced labor.

The **armadillos of silence** carry **the hidden shamanic power** that comes to **a head, bursts forth and gives voice**, surrounded by **new green flowering and messengers of change** that spread the word.

The hidden spirit of this mansion has the power to search out the secrets of magic remedies. It means to get to the root of something, to eliminate family and clan corruption, to terminate, finish, set limits and find a destination.

## Azure Dragon Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Mansion 4 Room/Chamber/*Fang*

**Element:** Fire/Wood      **Planet:** Sun

**Animal:** Hare      **Polarity:** (+Opening)



This sign is the Dragon's Stomach, opener of what is closed, chariot of the sun and commander of the armies.

The **Hidden Spirit Power** at the center is protected by **Field Gates** that set off high ritual space and contain the **nesting bird of silence**. The power that emerges from this hidden spirit manifests as **Spirit Visitors** who carry the messages from the creative center.

The sign presides over building, increasing holdings and land, happiness and longevity, health and the help of the ancestors. It is a low altar in the shape of a building through which offerings were made to the generations of the ancestors, a chamber, an alcove, a chapel or monastic cell, the branch of a family, a cell in an organism and a door or window.



## Azure Dragon Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 5 Heart/*Xin*

**Element:** Fire/Earth    **Planet:** Moon

**Animal:** Fox    **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This is the sign of the Dream Fox, the shape-shifter who navigates through liminal boundaries.

A **deep inner fire** empowers the work of the **Bamboo-shamans** who read the signs of Change. The power of the signs they reveal is carried by a **great fire-horse** surrounded by the **small green fish** that signify riches hidden in the stream of events.

The sign deals with the correct expression of inner feelings, motives, resolutions, passions and intelligence; it is the seat of the feeling and thought that animates a being. It also means “me”, imaged as a spine or sharp thorn, for the heart is doubled, good and bad. The inner genius of the heart seen here can conduct us through the hazards of life on the narrow path between our inner nature and our particular destiny. Its name is a synonym of the Dao or Way.

## Azure Dragon Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Mansion 6 Tail/ Wei

**Element:** Fire      **Planet:** Mars

**Animal:** Tiger      **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This is the sign for the heir apparent, the new king, and the women's quarters where he is brought up. It is a dam, a dike or a wooden boat, whatever what separates wood from water.

The **Heir at the center** who contains the future in embryo is protected by a **zone of intense shamanic activity** and surrounded by the **elephants** whose minds carry all the great symbols of change.

The sign represents the succession of power and inheritance as a passage through the feminine. It means downstream, a gulf that dumps water into the sea, the end of pursuit, to arrive at a goal, a relic or remains. Its action is to yoke or link animals together in a team or chain.



## Azure Dragon Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 7 Wincrowing Basket/*Ji*

**Element:** Water/Wood **Planet:** Mercury

**Animal:** Leopard **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is both a Wincrowing Basket in which grain is separated from chaff and a Dung Basket in which fertilizer is gathered and spread.

The central **enclosure** that contains the **green fish** of hidden riches is carried by **dark porters representing the Ghost River**. Beneath it is the sign for the **Source** that manifests as the **leaping fish of new growth** emerging from the waters.

This sign is a time of good fortune, excellent for beginnings, a time in which herds multiply, granaries are gorged and industry is rewarded. Its root is bamboo, the magic wood on which the oracle books were written, and the source of ancient wisdom. It points at eliminating the evil wind that comes from the mouths and tongues that spread vicious gossip, rumors and slander.

# Vermillion Bird Palace

## The Southern Gate

Yang **Fire**: Summer/Brilliance

Yin **Fire**/Summer/Force



Here the **soul is released** into the deep heart of the **Queen Mother** who activates the transformative **Powers of Fire** and releases the **Magical Bird** of the Bright Omens.

The **Vermillion Bird** is the epitome of the **South**, seen as a hanging brass percussion instrument that spreads the words of the spirit to all, whose root means all or complete. It is the time when everything grows luxuriant and abundant in the waxing light and heat, a ritual area where spirit spreads, penetrating and increasing all things, bringing them to their full grown form. It is connected with Summer, that ripens the fruits; with Fire that brings the spark of life to full growth; and with the South Wind that spreads warmth and abundance and gathers people together.

## Day Pillar: Self Image



The **Vermillion Bird Palace** is the inner core of the Day Pillar or **Self Image**. This is your “Me”, your conscious image of who you are and how you do things. It is your ally in the battles of identity. You can see how it is formed by reflecting on your experiences in early childhood. The strength or weakness of your Self Image is a key to your conscious development.

Day/TIAN



The old character shows a person with a head filled with spirit, the spirit of Heaven and the Dragon. It means day, sky and heaven, the power that regulates the seasons, the times and the climate of things. It bestows the innate nature and power of each thing, what is great, celestial, divine and spontaneous, perfect yang power.

## **Vermillion Bird Palace**

### **The Seven Lunar Mansions or Star Clusters of Summer**

#### **Lunar Mansion 22 Eastern Well/*Jing***

**Element:** Water    **Planet:** Jupiter

**Animal:** Tapir    **Polarity:** (+/-) Variable



This sign presides over cleaning, ablutions, purifications, expurgations, repairs and refurbishments. It cleanses away criminal acts and restores proper order.

The center is the **pair of Reconciled Brothers**, the rejoining of the opposites. Beneath them the **Tigers** prowl to eat away any corruption that can block the flow of spirit while the **Footprints of the Ancestors** move through the whole.

This is a time to open the doors and the water-ways, to work in the garden, take examinations and raise silkworms, a time when flocks grow fat and prosper. It suggests the underlying structure or network, resources held in common, the source of life-water welling up from the depths, life and community in good order.

## Vermillion Bird Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 23 Ghost Cart/ *Yu Gui*

**Element:** Metal **Planet:** Venus

**Animal:** Sheep/Goat **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This is the Ghost Cart that collects and transports ghosts and demons and the miasmas they spread. It is the sign for the last day of a ritual period when divinations were made to eliminate threatening forces that might harm the new beginning.

The **Tiger's Mouth** at the center is ready to devour and transform the two **Prisoners** brought by the **Ghost Cart** above, empowering the work of the **Harvesters** beneath.

This sign presides over dire fates, departed spirits and places where men have been killed, battlefields, horses, soldiers, death and loss. It is also treasure buried during war, hidden jewels and accumulated wealth that a journey to the ghost world can reveal.

## Vermillion Bird Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 24 Willow/*Liu*

**Element:** Earth    **Planet:** Saturn  
**Animal:** Buck    **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign connects with Mansion 18 Pleiades/Closed Door as presiding over sacrificial rites and offerings that aid the sun when it is dark, eclipsed or obscured.

Protected in the **Tower** of contemplation from the **forces of corruption**, the **Hidden Feminine** power envisions a **new flowering**.

It wards off poisons, stills pain and is connected to the act of divination, for the original instruments used to consult the Change were probably willow wands. It is also the weeping willow, intense sadness and tears, and further evokes the willow-world of sexuality, the pleasure houses and dissipation. It is imaged as the catafalque covering a coffin on the funeral cart.



## Vermillion Bird Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 25 Bird/Seven Stars/*Niao*

**Element:** Variable    **Planet:** Sun

**Animal:** Horse    **Agency:** (+/-) Variable



This Mansion contains the Bird, the determinative star that gives its name to the Vermillion Palace.

The **Soul is released** into the sign of the **Vermillion Bird**, producing a ring of **flying birds** that spread its creative power.

This sign marks the summer solstice, the bridge between the two halves of the year, and presides over bridges, fords, passages and the dangers on journeys.

## Vermillion Bird Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Mansion 26 Spreading/Drawn Bow/*Chang*

**Element:** Variable    **Planet:** Moon  
**Animal:** Deer    **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is seen as a spreading net, the string of a bow and the string of a musical instrument. It represents game collected for a feast, gifts and music, cooking and preparing food.

Carried by the **Dragon Boat**, the deep **Feminine Power** shoots forth in a **burst of flowering energies**.

This is a sign of right conduct rewarded, flourishing like the industrious silkworm in a net of harmonious relations and the acquisition of new properties. It means to extend, deploy, fix in place; to escape or separate from noxious influences; to arrange and prepare something great, vast and prosperous.



## Vermillion Bird Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Mansion 27 Wings/ Yi

**Element:** Fire **Planet:** Mars

**Animal:** Snake **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign portrays the Grand Assembly and the Emperor's speech of praise and admonishment that culminates in a Grand Concert of the music of the season.

The shrine of the **Dragon Power** empowers the **Twin Ancestors** and the **Vermillion Bird**, creating a ring of **Great People** with the power to protect and serve all.

This is the wing of a bird, the wing you will rise and fall on, that aids and protects, bringing things to completion and perfection and repulsing negative influences. It represents the handles of the great ritual vessel called the *Ding* in which the sacred meal was prepared that reunites spirits, ancestors and noble humans, signifying a new relation between the visible and the invisible.

## Vermillion Bird Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 28 Celestial Carriage/*Chen*

**Element:** Water    **Planet:** Mercury  
**Animal:** Worm    **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is the image of a car or chariot on a path that continually turns and returns. It controls the winds, master of swiftness, and presides over travel and vehicles.

The **Great Grey Rat**, sign of the activation of deep animal powers, reveals the **Ancestor** who is blessed by **Heaven's Messenger**. This connection releases a **circle of new descendants and protectors**.

The influence of this sign spreads like the master tone that emanates from the plucked string of a lute, gathering tribute from foreign lands. It signifies the advent of wealth from numerous and abundant sources and blesses those married on its day with a dragon child of extreme talent who brings glory and riches to his family.

# White Tiger Palace

## The Western Gate

Yang **Metal**:

Yin **Metal**:



The **Tiger's Mouth** is the Gate of the Palace. Supported by the **Tiger energies** that **eliminate inner corruption** it produces the **magical Mountain Goat** who can circulate freely through the worlds of thought and imagination.

The **White Tiger** is the epitome of the **West**, seen as a bird sitting on its nest in the light of the setting sun. Its root is a cover, covering. It marks a time of descent and return, the declining sun, a ritual area that presides over harvest, reaping and gathering, insight, acuity and profit, seen as the sharp edge of a knife and a sheaf of ripe grain. It is the Western Paradise presided over by the Queen Mother of the West, Queen of the Dead and Lady of the Beasts. It is connected with Fall, harvest, labor and agility at the critical moment; with Metal, the insight and thought that creates inner space and regulates the life rhythms; and with the West Wind that brings decline, descent and return.

## Month Pillar: Life Manager



The **White Tiger Palace** is the inner core of the Month Pillar or **Life Manager**. This is your “I”, your sense of ordering life and doing business. It is your main ally in the battles of life. You can see how it is formed by looking at your reactions to the parenting you received.

Month/YUE



The old character shows the graph for moon, which also suggests a boat and a journey by water. It means, the moon, a lunar month, the spiraling path of the moon and the menstrual cycle. It is the process of yin, the realizing power, as it waxes and wanes.

## White Tiger Palace

### The Seven Lunar Mansions or Star Clusters of Fall

#### Lunar Mansion 15 Astride/*Kui*

**Element:** Wood    **Planet:** Jupiter  
**Animal:** Wolf    **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign is the Arsenal of the Emperor where gathered riches are locked away. It is a temple situated between the exterior and interior gates of a cemetery, astride life and death like a man astride a horse.

The power of the **War Duke** is held in the **lock of the center**. The **old identity** is pulled in, to be stripped by the scavenging **Birds of Prey**.

The sign gathers energy in and locks it up. Sickness takes a firm grip locking us into all the old family quarrels and discord. We are called to follow the retreating energy and confront the causes of inner corruption.

## White Tiger Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 16 Mound/Fish Net/Lou

**Element:** Metal    **Planet:** Venus  
**Animal:** Dog    **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This is the sign of the rites of harvest, the fall River-Mountain festivals of celebration, music and thanksgiving presided over by the Joyous Dancer.

**Animal Powers** drum up inner energy while the **Signifying Shaman** reveals the **Harvesters** and the significance of the **bird omens** that carry the **fish of hidden riches**.

Music and joy abound now. Men and women come together joyously and those who have been separated are re-united. This is the sign of a good harvest and peace in the empire, family concord and opening doors.

## White Tiger Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 17 Stomach/Storehouse/ Wei

**Element:** Earth    **Planet:** Saturn

**Animal:** Pheasant    **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is the celestial granary where the harvest of insight, joy and connection is concentrated and connected to the ancestral energies. It is the Grand Embankment that channels the flow of the river of life, prevents flooding and lets you find your true name.

The **Ram** of animal power is held in the **Sacred Vessel**. This lets the **Storyteller** reveal the **spirit visitors** and the **sparks of insight** they carry.

This sign recalls Yu the Great, the culture founder who created the waterways that drained the earth after the Ghost River had flooded it. He gave the people writing and the sacred vessels to differentiate between the bright and the dark spirits.



## White Tiger Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 18 Closed Door/Pleiades/*Mao*

**Element:** Variable    **Planet:** Sun

**Animal:** Cockerel    **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This Mansion shows a closed door surmounted by the dark sun. It is the ears and eyes of Heaven, represented as the flickering of the Pleiades that presides over the conclusion of criminal and judicial proceedings and untimely death.

The **Treasure Bearer** carries hidden **shamanic power** through the world, changing the **elephant mind** of the symbols into **new animal powers**.

This is the determining constellation of the White Tiger Palace, displaying the results of misjudged actions and the nets of fate that await it.



## White Tiger Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 19 Hunting Net/*Bi*

**Element:** Variable      **Planet:** Moon

**Animal:** Crow      **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is seen as a hunting net with a long handle used to capture the Hares and Birds that represent the causes of hidden sickness and the Bright Omens they reveal.

A **Daimonic Power** rises from the **hidden mountain** surrounded by the focused strength of **the Warriors** and guided by the **Black Dog** of the Ghost River.

The sign means to finish, achieve, complete something, to make it whole. It is a net that catches all sorts of game rather than the spear of aggression and compulsion. Its heart theme is a cultivated field, inner cultivation.

## White Tiger Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 20 Turtle's Beak/ *Zhui*

**Element:** Fire      **Planet:** Mars

**Animal:** Monkey      **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign is seen as a large pointed metal object like an awl or large needle that penetrates and punctures things and the stiff bristling hair of an animal that is challenged or threatened.

**Wild Oxen** rouse the power of the **Intermediaries** to call energy out of the **Mountain Shrine**, surrounded by the **Black Dogs** of the Ghost River and the **two faces of the Tiger's Mouth**.

The sign presides over flocks, herds and groups of people under protection. Its sharp beak continually punctures certainties and its woeful portents are stern warnings about the results of wrongdoing. This process readies the being to receive higher energies and confers the ability to make real choices.

## White Tiger Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Mansion 21 Orion/Warrior/Three Stars/Shen

**Element:** Water    **Planet:** Mercury  
**Animal:** Ape    **Polarity:** (+/-) Variable



The sign of the Warrior, constellation of winter and the darkest hour, is the gate through which you emerge from the White Tiger's Palace. The Mansion shows the three stars of his head and the sword hanging from his belt. This sword is the Razor's Edge, the path you must walk between his two aspects.

The **Great Yin Protector** rises out of the **sign for ritual insight**, flanked by **messengers of war** and crowned by a **new feminine power** surrounded by **messengers of new flourishing**.

The sign presides over decapitations, executions and massacres on the one hand and fortresses and frontiers on the other; destruction or protection, according to your own actions. The heart of the character shows someone wound up into himself like a silkworm in a cocoon, totally self-absorbed, private and selfish. The sword cuts into this isolation, demanding a sacrifice of personal desires.

# Black Turtle Palace

## The Northern Gate

Yang **Water:**

Yin **Water:**



**Two Warriors** guard the **Black Dog** of hidden yin and support the **containing arms of darkness** that enclose the **Revealing Shaman** and the **Bird of hidden insight**. A **harvester** moves through to dissolve and eliminate the **imprisoned ghosts**.

The **Black Turtle** is the epitome of the North, seen as two people who turn their backs on each other. It is the gate of misfortune, a glacial wind that brings death. It marks a time of separation, opposition, defeat, ruptured communications, rebellion and division, the black or hidden sun. This is the ritual area of obscure yin that protects and defends hidden reserves and resources, a time of proving things through trial and finding the kernel, the pearl, what is pure and undefiled. It is connected with Winter, finding the seed of the new by grinding away the old; with Water, the flow of emotion and the

underworld river of souls; and with the North Wind and profound yin, the great reserves hidden in the ferment of life.

## Hour Pillar: Hidden Face



The **Black Turtle Palace** is the inner core of the Hour Pillar or **Hidden Face**. This is a hidden nature or energy that influences all your other stems through their hidden elements. It carries your destiny and expresses itself synchronistically, reflecting mature adulthood, artistic desires and love-life.

Hour/SHI



The old character shows the graph for day (a hand and a mouth) and the graph for temple, a seat of inner power that guards and conserves. It represents a double hour in the Chinese clock, each of which is identified with one of the Twelve Branch Animals. It is a hidden trigger, a chance or opportunity, a favorable moment when

things transform and the efficacious strategy that comes from watching the spirit of the time and adapting to it.

## **Black Turtle Palace**

### **The Seven Lunar Mansions or Star Clusters of Winter**

#### **Lunar Mansion 8 Southern Ladle/*Nan Du***

**Element:** Wood   **Planet:** Jupiter  
**Animal:** Unicorn   **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign shows the head of the tortoise used as a measure for liquid, more specifically distilled spirits, and mean recompense, satisfaction, completion and reward.

The **stories of the time**, told and re-told create a **sacred space** where the **Hidden Ancestor** charges the **old wisdom books** with the power to create insight and penetration.

The sign presides over wine and wine merchants and is a thanksgiving offered to the spirits for their benefactions. It suggests a wooden vase that holds the water used to wash a corpse. It represents something steep, abrupt and

sudden, the ability to discriminate between right and wrong and the littlest thing, the insignificant beginning of profound change.



## Black Turtle Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 9 Draught Ox/*Qian Niu*

**Element:** Metal      **Planet:** Venus  
**Animal:** Ox      **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign is part of the story of the Ox Boy and the Weaving Maiden who were married and, because they become so taken up with each other, had to be separated and live on opposite shores of the Milky Way, seeing each other only once a year.

The sign for **ritual insight**, flanked by the **groups of descendants** opens the **Tiger's Mouth**. The **Jade Maiden** enters, carrying with her the **birds of creative power**.

The sign presides over roads, paths, fields and barriers. It warns against the inability to let go of the past that brings sickness and starvation, discord and separation, broken marriages and disappearing resources.



## Black Turtle Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 10 Serving Maiden/*Xu Nu*

**Element:** Earth      **Planet:** Saturn

**Animal:** Bat      **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign shows young girls who offer sacrifice and play the flute on the night of the summer solstice festival, asking for a good dowry and a good husband.

The **ducks of marital happiness** release a **fertilizing messenger and guide** who carries the **maidens' wishes** through the dark field of events.

The sign presides over weaving, marriages and textiles. Its animal, the Bat, indicates good fortune through dark means, the magic of darkness.

## Black Turtle Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 11 Void/*Xu*

**Element:** Variable      **Planet:** Sun

**Animal:** Rat      **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign is the determinative star of the Northern Palace. It is the source of rains, snows and storms; its images are a tomb, sepulcher, wild place or wasteland.

Flanked by the **Heralds**, the **Source** energy opens the **Dark Mirror** with the **Sage** staring through it to the **Center**, circumambulated by the **footprints of the Ancestor**. A **dark water bird** enters this center, releasing the **Wind Spirits** and the **Demons**.

The sign means empty, nothing, original chaos, an infinite space-time with no origin purified of all passions, desires and cognitive thought. It is the empty center, the true nature of things that has no appearance. It welcomes all the hidden winds or breaths and the imaginal beings that ride them.

## Black Turtle Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 12 Danger/Wilderness/Wei

**Element:** Earth    **Planet:** Moon

**Animal:** Swallow    **Polarity:** (-) Enclosing



This sign shows the three day market held at the Winter Solstice and suggests temples and places of worship. It is a building whose roof is too high and a person who is exposed to danger on the high roof.

A **blood sacrifice** releases the power of the **Wild Ox** and the **War Duke**, filling the **Ghost Cart** that carries dire fates.

The character means dangerous, peril, a high, elevated cliff, danger from authorities, hard labor and suffering, wounds and pernicious influences. At the same time it contains the subtle beginnings of what is correct, right, just and powerful.

## Black Turtle Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 13 Palace Fire/*Ying Shi*

**Element:** Fire

**Planet:** Mars

**Animal:** Pig

**Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is the Arsenal and Regulator, a house full of riches that contains a ceremonial pyre where fire offerings are made that carry our needs and prayers to the ancestors who live in the Sacred Mountain.

Deep within, a **Fire Shaman** opens the **Field Gates** to the high **Hidden Shrine** that brings the rituals of **abundance** and spreads the **messengers of change**.

This is a time to instigate new ventures, a time when the Emperor bestows his favor and Heaven showers blessings on the fortunate person.

## Black Turtle Palace: Lunar Mansions

### Lunar Mansion 14 Eastern Rampart/*Dong Bi*

**Element:** Water **Planet:** Mercury

**Animal:** Porcupine **Polarity:** (+) Opening



This sign is the residence of the God of Wealth and Literature, the treasury of ancient virtue and power. It is a wall, a sheer precipice, a rampart or fortress that protects the archives, libraries and literary works.

The **Great Protector** emerges from a **Portal of Heaven**, Guarded by the **Bear Shaman** and circled by **Heaven's Dragon Messengers**.

The sign brings riches and recognition through respectful offerings to elders and ancestors. It is also seen as a jade *bi*-disc, a symbol of the Gate to Heaven that has been placed in tombs since the early Neolithic.



## The Matrix of Change

The first step in the transformation the way of Change seeks to work in us is the opening of an inner field where a new center of awareness can be created. This is where the process of converting what Blake called the “mind-forged manacles” begins.



Here the signs of the **subtle beginnings** of all things emerge from the **Ghost River**, surrounding the new awareness in an ongoing dance of feedback and iteration that opens pathways in the imagination to the source of transformation.



The **symbol of Change** at the top literally shows the rays of the sun and moon emerging from the storm clouds, a profound change of weather brought about by a new connection with ancestral energies. Its meanings include all forms of change and transformation, but particularly what we might call trouble - destabilizing change. The trouble it brings links the quality of change in the world and the creative energy of change in the psyche with its symbolizing power. Here that deconstructive power manifests as the **Tiger's Mouth**, a ferocious purifying energy that clears the yin channels in the body through which spirit flows by devouring the fixed clusters of pain and rage that are passed to us through what we might call our family histories. A new center of the personality emerges, the **Realizing Person**, seen here as a mouth, an ax and the mysterious sign of new birth that is both young and old. This is who Change will talk to.



The **hidden triggers of transformation** called *Ji* emerge deep in the psyche, in the space between all things. Surrounded by the images of **war and conflict**, they slowly gather the radical energy of change.



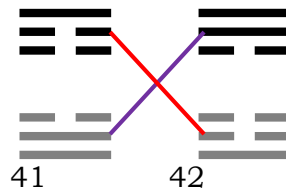
**These triggers or Ji** are the source of the movement and the repose of the Way, the opening and closing of the gates of Heaven and Earth, coming and going, living and dying, condensing and dispersing. They are the Mysterious Female, the Valley Spirit, the Dark Animal Goddess, the source and spring of transformation where all movement originates, the infinitely small moment of equilibrium, the change between having and losing, rising and descending. They act without being born, die without dying. All the Ten Thousand Things emerge from them. The roots of ten thousand affairs issue from them. They are the doors of all marvels and mysteries, the place of emergence and the hole in the world, the celestial music situated at the heart of reality. The Matrix of Change symbolizes these triggers as Pairs of Hexagrams. For example:



## 41:42 Pair Process

The Pair holds the two Primal Powers in a single effective image, an interchange between Inspiration and Realization. It provides a unifying model for your situation as a whole and traces the hidden paths of transformative energy.

**41:42 Diminishing and Augmenting** is concerned with gradual change. It shows a sacrifice of personal goals that calls down a flow of blessing from the Ancestors, inspiring you to give up old patterns of aggression and need and open yourself to the blessing that results.



- **Outer to Inner:** The process of the pair first turns the outer *Gatekeeper* trigram, your need to manage the flow and flux of events, into the inner *Groundbreaker* trigram and the shock of inner enlightenment.
- **Inner to Outer:** This interiorisation transforms the inner *Joyous Dancer* trigram and inner self reflection into the outer *Lady of Fates* trigram, giving you the ability to find a place where you can influence the world you live in.

### Dynamics of the Crosslines

**Lines at Limits** (1/6 : 6/1) frame the process and focus on a breakthrough point.

- Earth works with the Ghost River to embody the courage to face danger. This connects your struggle to emerge into the world (33:34) with the time when you become an adult and received the ancestor's blessings (19:20).

**Lines at Centers** (2/5 : 5/2) show how inner and outer can be re-connected.

- This is a Transformative Zone where you pass through the Tiger's Mouth (27) to open the heart anew (61). Male and Female Operators join to clear the inner channels.

**Lines at Thresholds** (3/4 : 4/3) show the change necessary to power the process.

- Inspiring Force works with Fire to produce illumination and insight. This disentangles you from the ghost of the past and lets you accumulate ancient wisdom (25:26) that can help you in your struggle to found a family and professional identity (37:38).

### Karmic Nodes

The interconnected lines of the pair constellate a series of Karmic Nodes that represent ages in the Symbolic Life, past and future, that are directly relevant to the current situation. They point out painful experiences or screen memories that trap creative energy and establish real future goals. Put your actual age into the sequence to determine what is past and what calls to you from the future.

3:4	19:20	25:26 27	37:38	61
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The Matrix arranges the Pairs in a multi-dimensional sequence of Decades (five sets of paired hexagrams) that models the course of the Symbolic Life. The Decades portray the stages of life and the rituals that mark rites of passage from one stage to another.



Each unit or Pair in this matrix portrays a birth, death and re-birth process that enables us to accumulate *De*, the actualizing power that lets an individual connect his or her own identity to the Ancestral foundation of life. The movement through these Decades can be simultaneously imagined as a personal experience; as a progressive reorganization of the intelligence and the nervous system; as a step in the evolution of culture; and as an experience of the *creatio continua*, the continuous creation of life and spirit.

## **Knowing Change**

The Way of Change aims at adding something crucial to our awareness that can connect us to what the old sages called the *Dao*, the on-going process of the Real. We can imagine it as a stream of images or symbols flowing back and forth through the present moment to connect the wisdom of ancient times with whatever the future may be. Its job is to make us deeply aware of the now, the present moment, and what is at play in the everyday events of our lives.

Understanding this wisdom is possible because of a deep symbolic community, a sort of inner thesaurus of meanings within each of us. To open this inner thesaurus, we must let the symbols inform and transform our imagination so that their meanings can arise. This direct experience lets the symbols break through the conceptual structures of what the old sages call our “monkey-mind”, a group of chattering voices within us that is always creating fictional pasts and futures.

## **Taking a Chance**

To experience this kind of direct contact with the symbols, we need to access the world of Change through a divinatory technique, a random or synchronistic generator that lets Change itself choose the answers it wants us to see. This chance or random operation creates a hole or rupture in the linear chains of cause and effect our inner monkeys are so happy with. It opens a synchronistic field where the symbols can interact directly with our problems and open us to new kinds of meaning. This sort of practice creates an ongoing dance of feedback and iteration that opens pathways in the imagination that lead to and from what the hidden triggers of Change. When constellated synchronistically, the hidden language of symbols contained in Change mirrors the *hole* or lack in our lives, the “missing information” that might re-connect us to the *(w)hole*. This is an experience that, in Jung’s words, nothing can take it away from us because it means more than the whole world.

## **The Playing Field**

The real center of the cosmos of Change is an area set off in the heart-mind. What we do here will re-organize the entire cosmos of Change in response to our individual need to know. The ground of this Matrix is the dynamic of an interconnected Pair of hexagrams and their Nuclear Figures or Heart Themes.



The area where the consultation occurs grows out of this ground.



It is supported and enabled by our willingness to submit our concerns to the judgment of the spirits. This offering up of our personal desires and need for control sets the Eight Spirit Helpers in action.

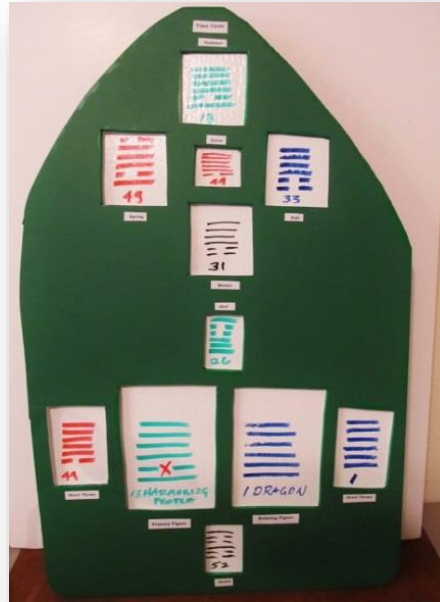


### **The Reading Matrix**

The Reading Matrix is created by the interconnections from the individual reading, empowered by the Eight Spirit Helpers. It is our vehicle to enter the great field of the Change.



This Matrix is created by the interconnections between the Primary Figure we create in a reading and all the other hidden pathways of Change.



## Fishes and Birds

If we were to sum up the process of reading the answers Change gives us, we might see it through the old metaphor of Fishes and Birds. In the early Chinese cosmologies, all animals went through a seasonal metamorphosis. Fish, for example, became birds in the summer and birds wintered as fishes. This is the symbol of a fundamental sacrificial and ritual process. As we enter the world of Change we dim or darken our habitual awareness and our conscious identity, a process of entering the Ghost River analogous to the birds of spirit becoming fish hidden in the waters of night and winter, the river of souls. This is the awakening in spring and emergence into the bright full light of summer, where the fishes, the riches hidden in the dark stream of events, become bright omens that let us find real directions in life.





Here the **Heart Fire** deep in the **Waters** transforms the **hidden fishes** or purified psychic contents into **bright birds of omen** that awaken and illuminate the symbolic power of the Four Sides or Directions and vitalize their Hidden Winds - **Fall/West** and **Spring/East**, **Summer/South** and **Winter/North** - that define the playing field of our life.

### The Cosmos of Change

The following are photos taken at the Tara Mandala Retreat that show you a little of the cosmos of Change as a stage. You can also see a brief slide show of the ritual cosmos in action at: [insert link](#).



## **The Mediator or Joyous Dancer**



## **The Altar of the Eight Spirit Helpers**





## **The Groundbreaker and Heaven's Hidden Triggers**



## **Paper Horses: The Burning Ritual**



## **Sending off the Horses**

