

# A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy

Chan, W. (1969). *A sourcebook in Chinese philosophy*.  
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

## CHAPTER 13— THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHANGE

A Book Review by S.A. Martin (2011)  
Confucius Teachings & Chinese Philosophy 808-327  
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# Introduction (p.262)

- The Book of Changes is one of the basic Confucian Classics
- Cherished by Taoists
- Divided into text and commentaries
  - Text consisting of 64 Hexagrams (based on 8 trigrams) and judgments on them
  - Commentaries...

# Overview of Chapter 13 (p.262)

- *The Book of Changes (I Ching)* grew out of the ancient practice of divination
- Offers no conclusive results
- Commentaries (ascribed to later scholars) outline a “Rational approach to a well-ordered and dynamic universe

# **“Change is Simple and Easy”** (p.262-263)

## ■ **Yin & Yang**

- Yin – the passive or the female element
- Yang – the active or male element

## ■ **The interaction gives rise to all multiplicity**

## ■ **Continuous change**

- This are forever infused and intermingled
- The universe is a realm of perpetual activity

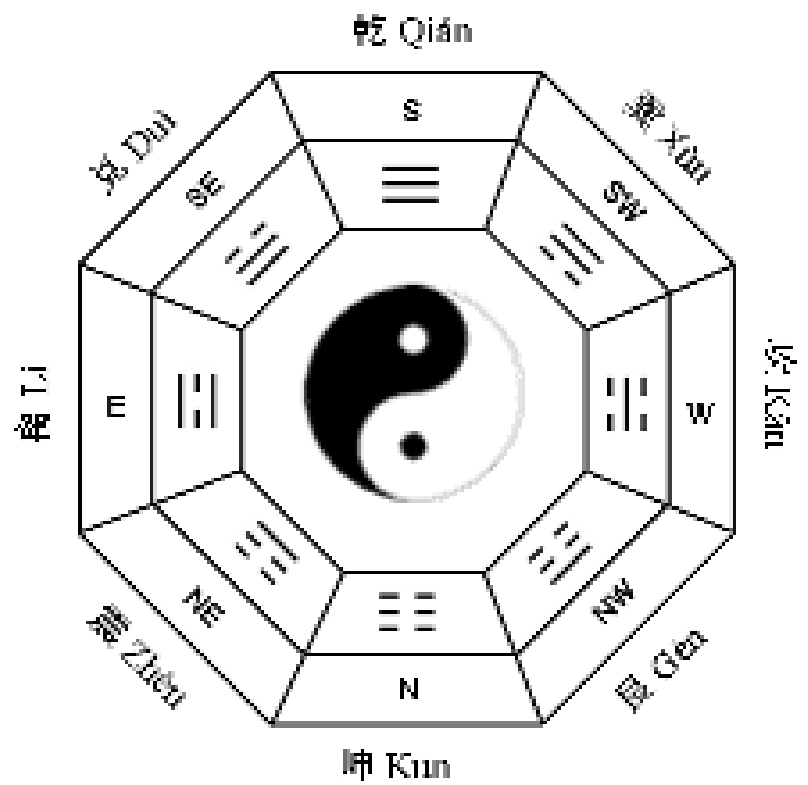
**“The universe is not just a well-ordered state of existence in which all things are correlated and man and nature for a unity”**

# The Form of Cycles (p.263)

- Interaction of Yin and Yang is its progressive direction leading to the development of society, morality, and civilization
- Yin and Yang give rise to the four forms
  - Major and minor Yin
  - Major and minor Yang
- “Form” (*hsiang*) connotes symbols, patterns, and ideas
- The interaction of the two cosmic forces (Yin & Yang), all patterns, ideas, systems, and culture are evolved.

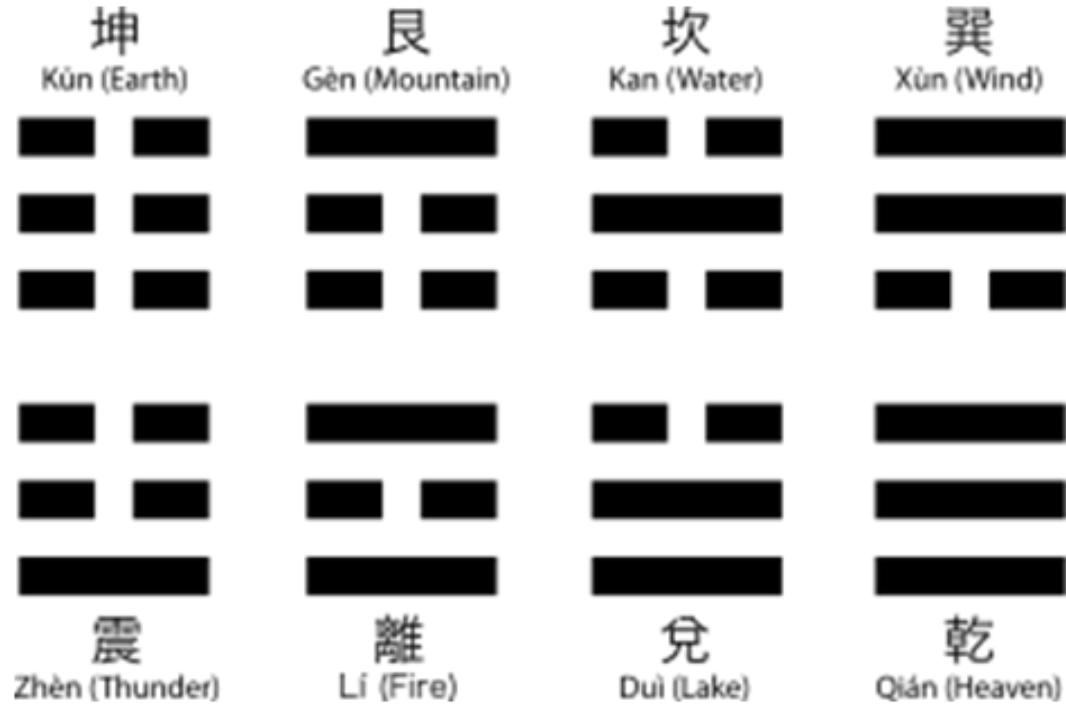
- The meaning of the *Trigrams* shift from “good and evil fortune” to “cosmic forces”
- Shift from the “spiritual” and the divination” to a “natural operation of forces which can be determined and predicted objectively”
- The term “spirit” shifts from “spiritual being” to “natural forces” or “natural law”
- **Rational characteristic of the book** – Numbers are used to reduce existence to the simplest formula

- Eight Trigrams (each with 3 lines) multiply themselves to create 64 hexagrams
- 64 hexagrams represent all possible forms of change, situations, possibilities, and institutions

















































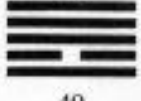



















# 8 Trigrams



	Trigram Figure	Name	Translation (Wilhelm) [1]	Image in Nature	Direction	Attribute	Stage/ State	Animal
1	☰	乾 qián	the Creative, Force	heaven, sky 天	northwest	strong	creative	馬 horse
2	☱	兌 duì	the Joyous, Open	swamp, marsh 澤	west	pleasure	tranquil (complete devotion)	羊 sheep, goat
3	☲	離 lí	the Clinging, Radiance	fire 火	south	light-giving, dependence	clinging, clarity, adaptable	雉 pheasant
4	☳	震 zhèn	the Arousing, Shake	thunder 雷	east	inciting movement	initiative	龍 dragon
5	☴	巽 xùn	the Gentle, Ground	wind 風	southeast	penetrating	gentle entrance	雞 fowl
6	☵	坎 kǎn	the Abysmal	water 水	north	dangerous	in-motion	豕 pig
7	☶	艮 gèn	Keeping Still, Bound	mountain 山	northeast	resting, stand- still	completion	狗 wolf, dog
8	☷	坤 kūn	the Receptive, Field	earth 地	southwest	devoted, yielding	receptive	牛 cow

							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
							
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
							
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32
							
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
							
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
							
49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
							
57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64

# Concluding Thoughts

- Change is simple and easy
- Reduce change to a simple formula
- The universe is a realm of perpetual activity