



## Twelve Basic Concepts of Law in Kant and the Compound *Yijing*

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**Resumo:** Este quarto artigo de uma série de seis que correlacionam a filosofia kantiana e o *Yijing* começa por resumir os artigos precedentes: Ambos Kant e os 64 hexagramas (*gua*) do *Yijing* empregam uma argumentação “arquitetônica” para formar um sistema de quatro graus com  $0+4+12+(4 \times 12)$  elementos, o quarto grau de quatro conjuntos de doze, correlacionando-se ao modelo kantiano das quatro “faculdades” universais. Este artigo explora o segundo do duodécuplo conjunto, a faculdade da lei. A “ideia da razão” a guiar esta asa da análise comparativa é a imortalidade. Três das “quaternidades” correspondem a três conjuntos de quatro *gua* no *Yijing*: a quarta parte da natureza da alma na psicologia racional (como substancial, simples, unificada, espacialmente relacionada) corresponde aos *gua* 47, 6, 58, 10, respectivamente; os três “Artigos Definitivos” e o quarto, “Artigo Secreto”, na *Para a Paz Perpétua* correspondem aos *gua* 16, 5, 51, 21; e as quatro relações objetivas da lei do dever na *Metafísica dos Costumes* correspondem aos *gua* 25, 12, 17, 25. **Palavras-chave:** Immanuel Kant; *Yijing*; livro das mutações; filosofia política; psicologia racional; argumentações arquitetônicas; imortalidade da alma; paz; dever.

**Abstract:** This fourth article in a six-part series correlating Kant’s philosophy with the *Yijing* begins by summarizing the foregoing articles: both Kant and the *Yijing*’s 64 hexagrams (*gua*) employ “architectonic” reasoning to form a four-level system with  $0+4+12+(4 \times 12)$  elements, the fourth level’s four sets of 12 correlating to Kant’s model of four university “faculties”. This article explores the *second* twelvefold set, the *law* faculty. The “idea of reason” guiding this wing of the comparative analysis is *immortality*. Three of Kant’s “quaternities” correspond to three sets of four *gua* in the *Yijing*: the fourfold nature of the soul in *rational psychology* (as substantial, simple, unified, spatially related) corresponds to *gua* 47, 6, 58, 10, respectively; the three “Definitive Articles” and fourth, “Secret Article”, in *Perpetual Peace* correspond to *gua* 16, 35, 51, 21; and the four objective relations of law to duty in *Metaphysics of Morals* correspond to *gua* 45, 12, 17, 25.

**Keywords:** Immanuel Kant; *Yijing*; Book of Changes; political philosophy; rational psychology; architectonic reasoning; immortality of the soul; peace; duty.

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## 1. Mapping Kant's Changeless Architectonic onto the *Yijing's* Patterned Changes

Few philosophers in either the East or the West would think of the *Yijing*—the ancient Chinese classic, whose title can be translated as *Book of Changes*, most often used as a manual for fortune-telling—as a potential source of dialogue between Eastern and Western philosophy, especially the changeless, *a priori* theories defended in the transcendental philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). Nevertheless, if we focus on the *form* of these two systems of thought, rather than being preoccupied with their content or the way the two systems are typically *applied*, a striking similarity emerges. Both systems employ a rigid, mathematically-generated structure to determine the basic conceptual relationships that “count” as relevant. Whereas the *Yijing* consists of all possible variations of a six-line figure, each line being either solid (—) or broken (- -), and thus generates a total of 64 “hexagrams” or “*gua*” ( $2^6=64$ ), Kant’s infamous Table of Categories consists of two twofold distinctions ( $2 \times 2=4$ ), each being further broken down into a threefold synthesis (+, -, x), and thus generates a total of 12 “moments” ( $4 \times 3=12$ ).

Having previously argued that Kant’s Table of Categories provides the structure for what he calls the “architectonic” unity of his system, I limited my first attempt to compare Kant and the *Yijing* to the bare fact that both systems employ this same type of reasoning.<sup>2</sup> The first article introduced Kant’s method of architectonic reasoning, whereby predetermined distinctions are read *into* a given subject-matter, as its changeless (*a priori*) structure, as opposed to Aristotle’s “aggregate” reasoning, whereby an object’s characteristics are read *off* of the empirical world, *a posteriori*; it then defended the general claim that the *Yijing* uses the same reasoning method as Kant, whereby the interpreter reads one or more of the (fixed) 64 *gua* *into* the never-ending “changes” of human experience. In short, Aristotle’s method begins by observing objects of the type one wishes to understand and attempts to draw general conclusions about them, while the Kantian/*Yijing* method imposes a predetermined structure *onto* the object, creating a meaning that the object would not have, if we did not put it there.

When I first noticed the interesting fact that each of these two systems depends on a pre-established mathematical structure, I assumed the two structures were incommensurable, because the *Yijing* contains no threefold distinctions, yet threefold synthesis is *essential* to many of Kant’s systematic distinctions. However, as I was preparing a revised version of the first article (Palmquist 2010, revised in 2011), I came across an intriguing article (Hershock 2009), whose appendix proposes several non-standard ways of arranging the 64 *gua*. One of the alternatives, though not discussed at any length in that article, arranges the 64 *gua* in a way that involves the conspicuous occurrence of several patterns of 12 ( $=3 \times 4$ ). After developing a slightly revised version of that arrangement, I therefore wrote a second article (Palmquist 2012b), introducing what I named “the Compound *Yijing*”: an arrangement of the *Yijing's* 64 *gua* into four “levels”, exhibiting a  $0+4+12+(4 \times 12)=64$  pattern that can be “mapped” onto a previously-defended logical apparatus that I call the “Geometry of Logic” (see Figure 1):

2 See Palmquist 2010. For my previous argument regarding the role of Kant’s categories in his own understanding of “architectonic”, see Palmquist 2000a, Appendix II.

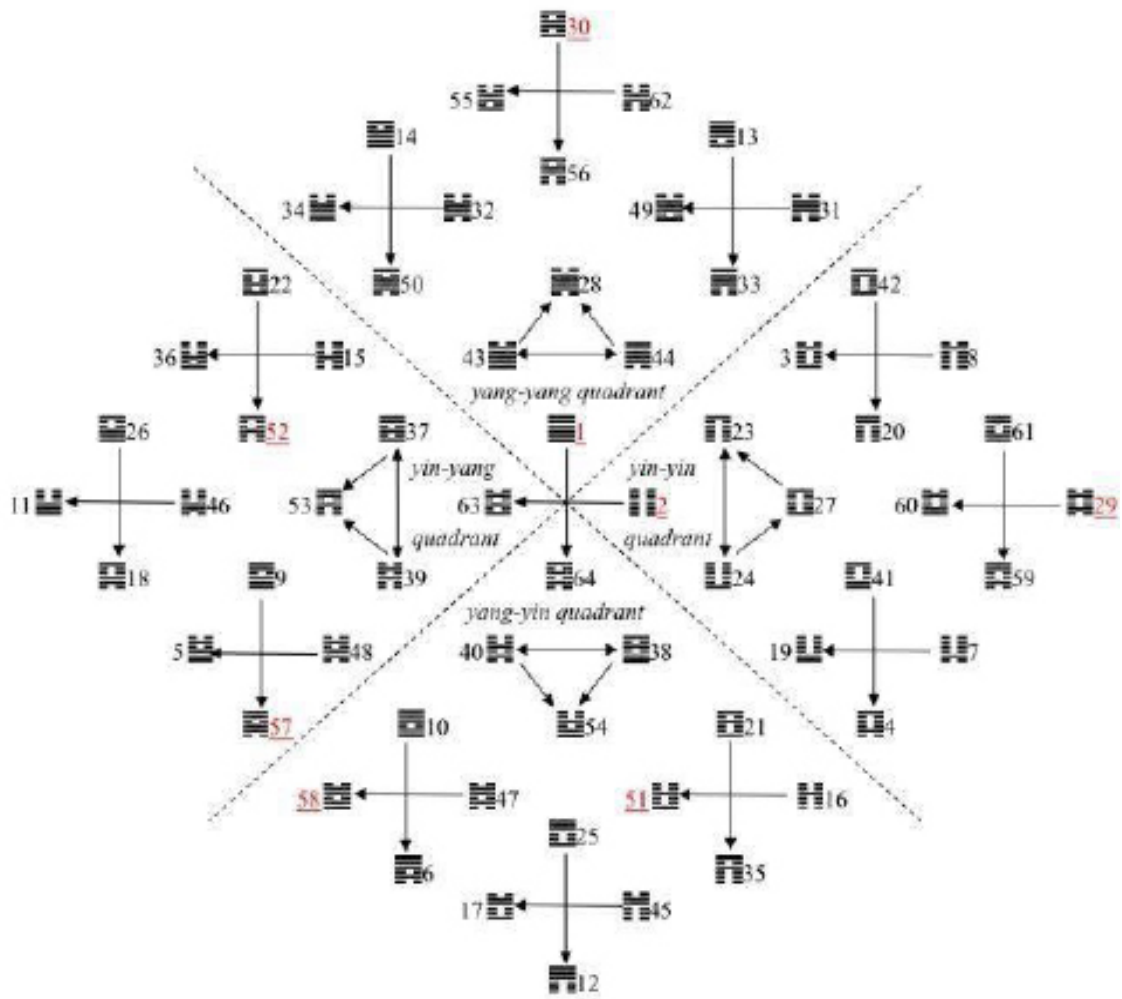


Figure 1: The Compound *Yijing*, showing all 64 *gua*

level (“0”) refers to the paradoxically foundational-yet-empty role played by the “*dao*” in ancient Chinese philosophy and by the “thing in itself” in Kant’s system: in both cases, nothing literally true can be said of the reality being named, yet that reality informs and perhaps even *creates* all knowable objects.<sup>3</sup> The second level consists of Kant’s four basic category headings (quantity, quality, relation, and modality), which can be mapped directly onto a cross that exhibits the same formal structure as the second level of the *Yijing*, consisting of *gua* 2, 64, 63, and 1, respectively. On the third level, Kant’s twelve categories (arranged in four sets of three) correspond to and share suggestive resonances with twelve *gua* that are derived from the initial four using several simple rules of mapping. The article concluded with a hypothetical sketch of how correlations might look on the *fourth* level, as follows. If the same mapping rules are used to arrange the remaining 48 *gua* into four sets of 12 (in a 3x4 pattern), then each set of 12 might end up exhibiting some significant correspondence to one of the four “faculties” in Kant’s model of the university: philosophy as the “lower” faculty, followed by law, medicine, and theology as the three “higher” faculties, correspond to the four quadrants of the Compound *Yijing*, headed by *gua* 2 (*yin-yin*), 64 (*yang-yin*), 63 (*yin-yang*), and 1 (*yang-yang*), respectively.

3 I have also explored this first parallel in Palmquist 2013.

My prediction in the final section of the second article paved the way for four additional articles, each exploring the extent to which *one* of the 12-fold patterns on the fourth level of the Compound *Yijing* correlates with three fourfold (categorical) tables presented by Kant in the corresponding wing of his philosophical system. The third article (Palmquist 2015) carried out the first of these four experiments, by relating three often neglected tables, one from each of Kant's three *Critiques*, to what I have labeled the "philosophy" wing of the Compound *Yijing*. The experiment was surprisingly successful: Kant's table of the four perspectives on "nothing" correlated well with the quaternity consisting of *gua* 8, 20, 3, and 42; his table of the four categories of freedom correlated with *gua* 7, 4, 19, and 41; and his table of the four moments in a judgment of taste correlated with *gua* 29, 59, 60, and 61.

While the first two articles in this series argued that Kant and the *Yijing* both *share* an architectonic approach to philosophy, the third article highlighted a key *difference* between these two ways of interpreting human experience. Kant's philosophy is *transcendental*, meaning that the truths generated by his architectonic system are *synthetic* (i.e., true because of their factual applicability to the world), yet their truth-status is *a priori* (i.e., its justification will not require an appeal to specific experiences). By contrast, the *Yijing's* form of architectonic reasoning is *hypothetical*: its truth-claims that are both *analytic* (i.e., true by virtue of the stipulated meanings we give to the relevant words) and *a posteriori* (i.e., its justification *will* require an appeal to specific experiences).<sup>4</sup> Thus, while the focus of *Kant's* architectonic method is to produce synthetic a priori knowledge (i.e., it has a *transcendental* aim: discovering the necessary conditions for the possibility of experience), the focus of the *Yijing's* architectonic method is to produce *analytic a posteriori belief* (i.e., it has a *hypothetical* aim: naming an ideal set of conditions that are in themselves contingent, but that—taken together—symbolically represent all possible types of experience). The third article then demonstrated that, by taking this radical difference into consideration, Kant's system and the *Yijing's* system do indeed share a commitment to architectonic reasoning that gives rise to numerous interesting correlations.

The remaining three sections of this fourth article in the series follow the strategy adopted in the third article: having selected three sets of fourfold distinctions that Kant employs in defending his *philosophy of law*, I shall relate these in turn to the three quaternities shown in the *yang-yin* (+-) quadrant of Figure 1.<sup>5</sup> Figure 2 highlights the derivation of this quadrant from the first three levels of the Compound *Yijing*. In preparation for this second step in the experiment of comparing Kant's philosophy with the fourth level of the Compound *Yijing*, let us recall that for Kant the *purpose* of the law faculty is to train lawyers to protect people's property rights, both during life and after death. Of Kant's three "ideas of reason", as we shall see, this task corresponds to *immortality*. In §2 I shall examine the extent to which the main quaternity proposed in the corresponding area of traditional rationalist metaphysics (i.e., in *rational psychology*)—the distinction between the four features of the soul, as substantial, simple, unified, and related to spatial objects<sup>6</sup>—corresponds to the *Yijing's* quaternity consisting of *gua* 47, 6, 58, and 10. In §3 I shall then examine how far the opposite quaternity, consisting of *gua* 16, 35, 51, and 21, can be taken as corresponding to Kant's

4 For a detailed account of these distinctions, see Chapter IV of Palmquist 1993. For the most up-to-date discussion of this rarely-discussed option, see Palmquist 2012a.

5 As explained in the second and third articles in this series (Palmquist 2012b and 2015), the names for each quadrant (in Figure 1) are taken from the two *middle lines* that remain unchanged throughout all the *gua* in that quadrant. So, the "yang-yin quadrant" consists of the 16 *gua* that have a solid line and a broken line in their fourth and third positions (counting from the bottom), respectively.

6 Kant 1781/1787 presents this fourfold distinction in tabular form in A341-405/B399-432.

vision of the ultimate political situation in *Toward Perpetual Peace* (1795); here I shall identify Kant's fourfold distinction as consisting of the three "Definitive Articles," with the "Secret Article" serving as the fourth component (*PP* 349,354,357,368). Finally, §4 will explore the possibility of relating the synthetic quaternity, consisting of *gua* 45, 12, 17, and 25, to the division introduced in the Doctrine of Right (the first part of the *Metaphysics of Morals*), between the four ways of relating law to duty objectively (*MM* 240-241).<sup>7</sup> A thorough study of each of these proposed correlations would require an article of its own, so my goal here will be merely to illustrate the above-mentioned similarity-in-difference by observing some initial correlations that arise within each quaternity.

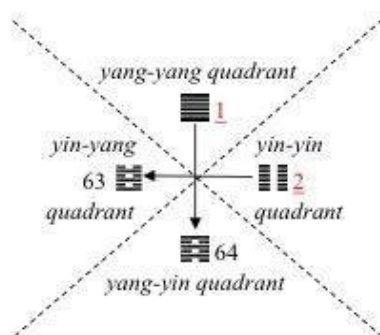
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7 In preparing this article I recognized that the correlations I predicted for this quadrant in Palmquist 2012b inverted the proper order of the quaternities presented in *Perpetual Peace* and *Metaphysics of Morals*. In each of Kant's triadic relations, the ideal component typically comes second; indeed, in this case, Kant wrote these two books in the same order as their logical (architectonic) relationship suggests. This article therefore follows that (correct) order, with the result that the correlations fit much more appropriately than if I had forced them into the originally-predicted order.

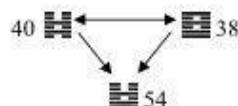
Zero Gua on  
the First Level

(The Dao)

The Four Gua on  
the Second Level



Three of the 12 Gua  
on the Third Level



The 12 "Yang-Yin" Gua  
out of 48 on the Fourth Level

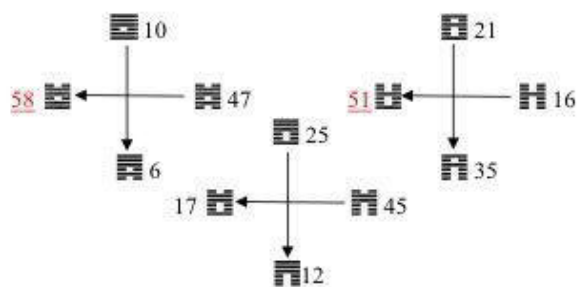


Figure 2: The Four Levels, Leading to the Law (Yang-Yin) Quadrant

faculties” of the ideal university): *politics* (cf. the faculty of law), *science* (cf. the faculty of medicine), and *religion* (cf. the faculty of theology), respectively. Given these architectonic correlations, the obvious place to look for a correlate to the first quaternity of the Compound *Yijing*’s *yang-yin* quadrant is the Paralogisms section of the first *Critique*. In that section, Kant presents several different fourfold distinctions, but they are all grounded in the first one (presented in the only section of the Paralogisms that was left unchanged in the second edition), where he analyzes what is entailed by the concept of a soul—i.e., the concept of a being who may be *governed by law*. I shall therefore take the table that appears at A344/B402 (together with the labels for each of the four features, provided in the paragraph immediately following the table) as the starting point for



the set of 12 correlations to be examined in this article. I supplement that material by referring to aspects of each feature that Kant presents in his quite different explanations in the two separate versions of the Paralogisms that were written for the *Critique's* two editions, especially the features described at A404 and B419.

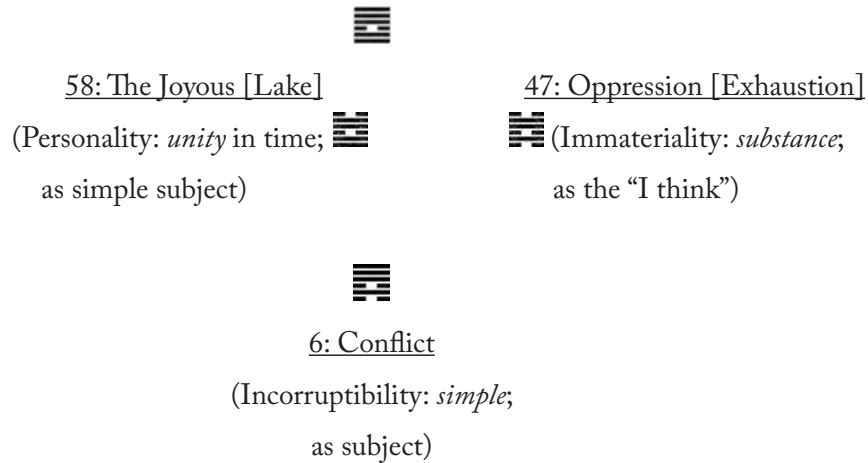
Before examining how Kant's theory of the fourfold nature of the soul correlates with the quaternity consisting of *gua* 47 (☱), 6 (☲), 58 (☳), and 10 (☴), we must note the important point that the middle two lines of *all twelve* of the *gua* to be considered in this article are identical. In each case, line three is broken and line four (immediately above it) is solid. These correspond to the "dark" and "light" forces in the symbolism of the *Yijing*; so we can say that for each of the twelve *gua* to be considered below, the light force is *above* the dark force. This relationship between the two central lines symbolizes *governing* and is precisely the reason that each *gua* considered here can be taken as having implications for a philosophy of law: *law* pertains in human society only when we are in a situation where light (e.g., rationality) is superimposed over darkness (e.g., our embodiment). The soul is therefore related to law in this sense: *politics* pertains to *agreements* between rational beings, whereby an intellectual (i.e., non-physical, "light", soulful) principle is placed in a governing position over empirical (i.e., physical, "dark", embodied) beings. As such, law can be regarded as the academic field that governs *relations between embodied souls*.

The first feature of the concept of a "soul", according to Kant, is that it is a *substance* that is entirely non-material. This fundamental *immateriality* in our nature is what gives rise to the "I think" that we attach to all our knowledge, and that Descartes so infamously regarded as the basis for proving that the mind exists as a substance independent from the body. Kant elsewhere calls this "I think" *transcendental apperception*, arguing (contra Descartes) that it has absolutely no content and, indeed, cannot itself be an object of knowledge, for it consists of pure subjectivity. The second feature is the soul's *incorruptibility*: that is, it is *simple* in the sense that we cannot divide a soul into parts; an individual cannot consist of *multiple* pure subjectivities. The third feature is what Kant calls *personality*, which he goes on to describe in terms of "*unity* in time". In his moral writings, this is the feature of human nature that makes us *responsible* for our actions, but the point being made in the first *Critique* is more basic: because I am a "simple subject", what happened to me ten years ago or what will happen to me ten years from now relates to the *same* "me" as is whatever happens to me today. Kant defines the fourth feature of the soul, its *spirituality*, in a rather surprising way: this feature refers not to the *unrelatedness* of a human being to the objects that inhabit the empirical world of physical nature, but to our *relatedness* to all possible objects in space. In other words, "spirituality" grounds us in *space* in the same way "personality" grounds us in *time*. Taken together, these two factors should make it more evident that Kant's theory of the soul is not one that refers only to the "light" (rational) side of our nature, but one that refers to the fact that humans are "dark" (embodied) beings who are (or *ought* to be) *governed* by the "light" of rationality.

In attempting to correlate Kant's account of the four features of the soul with the first quaternity in the *yang-yin* quadrant of the Compound *Yijing*, the following map can serve as our guide:

10: Treading [Conduct]

(Spirituality: *related to possible spatial objects*;  
as identical subject in every thought-state)



**Figure 3: Kant’s Four Features of the Immortal Soul**

This way of arranging the four relevant *gua* (like all the diagrams used in this article) follows the mapping rules that I defended in the second article in this series.<sup>8</sup> It is based on a system of mapping that I call “the Geometry of Logic”, with lines 6 and 1 of each *gua* defining the fourfold logical relation that I normally represent using the four symbols: --, +-, -+, and ++ (see e.g., Lectures 13-14 of Palmquist 2000b).

At first the feature of immateriality (i.e., the transcendental “I think”) seems totally unrelated to *gua* 47 (☱☵), “Oppression [Exhaustion]” (*kun*, 困), which appears in the first (i.e., the --) position of the first *yang-yin* quaternity. Detecting a correlation is particularly difficult, because the *Yijing* commentaries tend to focus on *specific* (often political) implications of each of the 64 ideal types of life-situation, not on metaphysical theories of the soul. However, as is often the case when interpreting the *Yijing*, when we look more closely at the two trigrams that make up the hexagram, some interesting resonances do emerge. In this case, the “lake” trigram appears in the upper position, while the “water” trigram appears below it. The commentary starts by observing that “the lake is empty, dried up”, and that this represents “exhaustion” because “a dark line is holding down two light lines” (*Yijing*, 181). What is obvious from this symbolism, however, is that the empty (dry) condition of the lake is only temporary, since water wells up underneath it, as in an underground cavern. Thus, the Judgment states that, although “oppression” exists in the current situation, one who perseveres will achieve “success”. This insight on its own has nothing to do with the soul, yet we can observe a parallel symbolism that *is* present in Kant’s fourfold distinction. For the “I think” is exhausted or *empty*, when taken by itself; we can use it for the successful production of empirical knowledge in the world only when it remains connected to the empirical objects that appear to us in space and time. We can associate the lower trigram with the immaterial substance, the “I think”, that can breathe life (i.e., *knowledge*) into the otherwise lifeless (i.e., unknown) objects in the dry lake of the upper trigram, just as the water waits underground, ready to quench the dryness of the “oppressed” lake. The primary message of the commentary on *gua* 47 is *inner strength*, even in times of adversity; likewise, there is no deeper source of a person’s interior nature in Kant’s philosophy than the “I think”—or “pure apperception”, as he sometimes called it.

Occupying the second position on this first *yang-yin* quaternity, *gua* 6 (☱☰) is called “Conflict” (*song*, 訟) because the top trigram (“heaven”) tends upwards while and the bottom

<sup>8</sup> See note 4, above. The same rules govern the map corresponding to “Level Two” in Figure 2, above. A summary of these rules is provided in the Appendix, below.



trigram (“water”) tends downwards (*Yijing*, 28). Again, this *gua* seems at first to highlight the very opposite of the corresponding component of Kant’s table, the soul’s incorruptibility. However, the entire commentary for *gua* 6 focuses on how to *avoid* conflict in situations involving competing forces; and *given* the soul’s embodiment, exactly the same situation applies to its second feature, the simplicity that *makes* it incorruptible. That is, physical bodies are *not* incorruptible, because they can be split apart—a topic with problems of its own, which Kant considers in the Second Antinomy (A434f/B462f). But if the soul is to retain its fundamental features, it must take the wisdom of *gua* 6 into account, so that conflict (self-splitting) can be avoided.

*Gua* 58 (䷛), “The Joyous [Lake]” (*dui*, 兌), is one of the eight hexagrams in the *Yijing* that is formed by repeating the same trigram twice: in this case, the trigram meaning “lake”. A lake under a lake gives rise to the *joyous* situation of water that does not easily dry up. Related to the human personality, the symbol (i.e., two solid lines, with a broken line on top—*doubled*) depicts the joy that arises out of “firmness and strength within, manifesting itself outwardly as yielding and gentle” (*Yijing*, 224). This can be taken as another way of saying that the essence of a person remains the same—i.e., the person experiences *unity*—when entering the realm of time, as occurs whenever we engage in social exchanges (a main theme of the commentary on this *gua*). Just as doubling a lake only makes it a greater lake, so also the soul retains its nature as a simple substance even when it relates to other souls, in time.

Finally, *gua* 10 (䷌), “Treading [Conduct]” (*li*, 履), implies a political situation where the strong are “treading” on the weak (*Yijing*, 44): the upper trigram (representing “heaven”) consists entirely of “light” lines, while the lower trigram (“lake”) has a “dark” line at the top, indicating a weaker role. The commentary emphasizes the inherent “difference of elevation” between heaven (the highest trigram symbol) and lake (the lowest), noting that the treading of the strong on the weak that is suggested by this symbolism “does not hurt the weak”, because it is done “in good humor” (*Yijing*, 45,44). Once again, the explicit focus on political relations in the *Yijing* commentary makes it somewhat difficult to see clear correlations between this *gua* and the corresponding feature in Kant’s theory of the soul. Nevertheless, a correlation emerges, once we realize that the spiritual nature of the soul is “heavenly” and the spatial nature of empirical objects is as “low” (i.e., empirical) as one can get; as such, *gua* 10 can indeed be regarded as a suitable symbolic depiction of the feature of the soul that requires it to be related to objects in space, as an absolute subject that presents itself as *identical* in each and every empirical relation.

### 3. The second yang-yin quaternity: the four “articles” leading to perpetual peace

Kant’s most influential publication that explicitly addresses political relations *as such* and in detail is his 1795 work, *Toward Perpetual Peace*. In this short book, Kant outlines his vision of the ultimate political situation (PP 349,354,357,368). As I have commented at some length on this work elsewhere,<sup>9</sup> I shall not attempt a discussion of the entire work here. Instead, it will suffice to provide a brief introduction to the four “articles” that form the architectonic backbone of his argument. Kant argues that, in order to put in place the conditions whereby peace between nations might come about, *all* nations (or at least, all those that submit to the system of *international law* that he envisions) must *explicitly* accept three “definitive articles” into their state constitution, and must *implicitly* adhere to a fourth, “secret article”.

The first three articles are: (1) “The civil constitution of every state should be republican” (PP 349); (2) “The law of nations shall be founded on a *federation* of free states” (PP 354); and (3)

9 See Palmquist 2008; some relevant passages are also discussed in Palmquist 2005.

“The law of world citizenship shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality” (PP 357). That these three stand in a *synthetic* relationship (just like the first three *gua* shown on *each* cross in Figure 1), Kant explains in a footnote (PP 349n) that comes just before he introduces the first article, where he says “[e]very juridical constitution” must include three types of law: (1) “the civil law of men in a nation”; (2) “the law of nations in their relation to one another”; and (3) “the law of world citizenship”—i.e., “cosmopolitan” law. He then insists: “This division is not arbitrary”; indeed, (1) plays the role of the *thesis* (+), (2) functions as the *antithesis* (-) that limits the thesis, and (3) is the *synthesis* (x) that combines and transcends (1) and (2). Any nation that does not wish to remain in a “state of nature” (i.e., in a situation that is not governed by *law*) must graft each of these three types of law into its constitution.

Kant’s fourth (“secret”) article combines and confirms the ultimate purpose of the initial three: “The opinions of philosophers on the conditions of the possibility of public peace shall be consulted by those states armed for war” (PP 368). Since the ultimate purpose of any laws based on the first three articles is to pave the way for world peace, and because the articles as such (though *not* the specific laws that may be based on them) are *philosophical* articles, every state that genuinely hopes for peace must adopt the *practice* of consulting with philosophers if it seems that the laws are not succeeding in bring about the *purpose* of perpetual peace. It might seem that Kant is being ironic, in suggesting that this fourth article be “secret”; but I think his claim here should be taken quite seriously. Philosophers must remain separate from the actual implementation of public policies (i.e., their job is not to draft the actual laws that are based on each of the three definitive articles, but rather to tell the politicians what these fundamental principles themselves *are*), so the *secrecy* of their influence on the sovereign is a way of safeguarding their independence. That is, philosophers are to make themselves *available to* politicians, for consultation on crucial matters such as whether or not a war is necessary, but without making themselves *part of* the political system. Bringing wisdom and impartiality to such considerations, good philosophers can guide kings (or anyone in a decision-making role) to reflect on whether there may be some alternative to war that would be more consistent with the three definitive articles.

Having briefly examined Kant’s theory of the ideal conditions for peaceful relations between human beings under the rule of law, let us now consider to what extent these conditions can be symbolized by the four *gua* in the second quaternity of the *yang-yin* quadrant of the Compound *Yijing*, as proposed in the second article in this series.

### 21: Biting Through

(*secret article:*

consult philosophers before going to war)



### 51: Arousing (Shock, Thunder)

(*third article:*

universal hospitality)

### 16: Enthusiasm

(*first article:*

republican constitution)



### 35: Progress

(*second article:*

#### Figure 4: Kant's Four Articles for Peaceful Political Constitutions

As the second quaternity in the *yang-yin* quadrant, these four *gua* function as the direct antithesis to those that make up the first quaternity. Whereas the first quaternity deals with what must be presupposed in order for law to arise in the first place (i.e., the human soul, as an *individual reality*), this second quaternity aims to make explicit the types of law that should govern the *ideal* relations between *different* human beings, when we come together in groups. As the *Yijing* commentaries are explicitly oriented toward political applications of the 64 *gua*, identifying relevant correlations in this case will be considerably easier than in the previous quaternity.

*Gua* 16 (䷗), “Enthusiasm” (*yu*, 豫), corresponds to the requirement made by Kant’s first definitive article, that the civil constitution of every (peaceful) state “should be republican” (*PP* 349). By this, Kant means that the consent of the people must be obtained in order for them to be required to submit to national law. In other words, the people must *agree* to be governed by the set of laws that their government institutes. This first *gua* expresses this requirement symbolically, by depicting one solid line, at the base of the top trigram, with all other lines being broken or “weak”—in the sense of being *obedient* or *compliant*. The text interprets this one solid line in *gua* 16 as representing “the leading official” (*Yijing*, 67) who inspires “obedience and devotion” in all who are under that person’s authority; as such, the *gua* as a whole represents “the law for natural events and for human life.” When it comes to relations between citizens of a nation, this is precisely what Kant refers to as a republican constitution. In other words, whereas the one strong line in ancient Chinese society represented the emperor or one of his “leading officials”, that same role is filled in modern nation-states by the republican constitution. *All* who live in the nation must enthusiastically comply.

The next component of this second quaternity is *gua* 35 (䷥), “Progress” (*jin*, 晉), and corresponds to an international situation that in Kant’s day could only be hoped for. Kant looks forward to a day when relations between nation-states would progress to the point where each nation allowed itself to be governed by a higher law, in the same way that citizens in nation-states had already become accustomed to being governed by a national law by the late nineteenth century: just as citizens agree to be bound by and enthusiastically obedient to their nation’s constitution, so also *groups* of nations must agree to be bound by and obedient to international law—*this* being the true mark of *progress* on the road to world peace. Along these lines, the *Yijing* commentary (*Yijing*, 136) interprets *gua* 35 as picturing “a time when a powerful feudal lord rallies the other lords around the sovereign and pledges fealty and peace.” Again, the context for interpreting this symbolism was very different in ancient China, so we cannot expect it to be expressed in terms that correspond exactly to Kant’s; nevertheless, the parallel here is remarkable. Just as the second step in Kant’s four-step path to peace requires the sovereign of each nation to give way to a higher, international law, so also *gua* 35 depicts peace as coming only when lower-level rulers give up some of their power in mutual obedience to a higher political authority. The *gua* symbolizes precisely this type of progress by depicting the fourth line (representing the nation’s sovereign in Kant’s day, or the feudal lord in ancient China) as remaining in place (just as in *gua* 16), while an additional strong line (an additional law) has been added at the very top—one that governs *all* relations that fall under it.

*Gua* 51 (䷲), called “The Arousing (Shock, Thunder)” (*zhen*, 震), corresponds to Kant’s

third definitive article, whereby cosmopolitan law is “limited to conditions of universal hospitality” (PP 357). The arousing shock that gives this *gua* its name is derived from the fact that the trigrams are identical (like the two that form *gua* 58, in the third position of the first quaternity in this *yang-yin* quadrant), both representing *thunder*. The main feature of this *gua* (aside from the repetition of the trigram, suggesting that thunder echoes throughout the land) is that the solid line that was at the top of the previous *gua* has now moved to the very bottom, to line 1. While it is possible to see this as symbolizing a *coup d'état*, as the *Yijing* suggests,<sup>10</sup> it can also be taken to represent the need to be inwardly *prepared* for any such shocking external events: in response to the “fear and trembling” aroused by the shock of a double bolt of thunder (*Yijing*, 198), “The superior man sets his life in order / And examines himself.” The deepest symbolism here is that, whereas the previous *gua* highlighted the need for an *external* (international) law, in order for peace between nations to occur, this *gua* highlights the need for *inner* peace through the rule of the law of love in one’s *heart*: and this is the essence of what Kant calls “hospitality”. It is important to note that Kant’s third article does not command hospitality *as such*; rather, it requires nations to protect the *conditions for hospitality* by law. What prevents most people from being hospitable, especially in their relations with people from foreign countries, is the inner *fear* that is aroused at the thought of the *shock* that such persons might bring to one’s comfortable lifestyle. This third *gua*, just like Kant’s third definitive article, requires the “superior man”—cf. the constitution of a peace-loving state—to *prepare* for the shocks that may occur as a result of openness to foreign influence.

Finally, *gua* 21 (䷗), entitled “Biting Through” (*shibe*, 噬嗑), corresponds to the “secret article” whereby any ruler who is preparing for war must consult philosophers for guidance (PP 368). This *gua* combines all key elements of the previous three, in the sense that it includes all strong lines that appeared in any of the other three *gua* in this quaternity: the strong line in the fourth position (representing the republican constitution), the strong line in the sixth position (representing international law), and the strong line in the first position (representing the internal readiness to be hospitable) all come together at this point. As such, the three solid and three broken lines in this *gua* aptly symbolize the philosopher’s awareness of and expertise in all three definitive articles. Similarly, the *Yijing* commentary relates this *gua* to a situation where one must have “recourse to law” (*Yijing*, 86) in order to overcome “the disturbances of harmonious social life caused by criminals and slanderers.” The name for this *gua* comes from the image of the upper trigram, which looks like an open mouth, whose two lips are prevented from coming together by some obstruction. The advice given in the “judgment” is that “biting through” will bring “success” (*Yijing*, 86): “It is favorable to let justice be administered.” This upper trigram is also the symbol for “fire” (or in this context, “lightening”), so the “shock” presented by the previous *gua* is now being balanced by a legal response (e.g., punishment for a crime) in this *gua*. While this might seem at first to be an *invitation to war* if the perceived wrong-doer is a foreign nation, in the context of international law it is rather an invitation to seek guidance from the “judge” who *established the definitive articles*—i.e., to let philosophers advise the sovereign whether war is justified in the current situation.

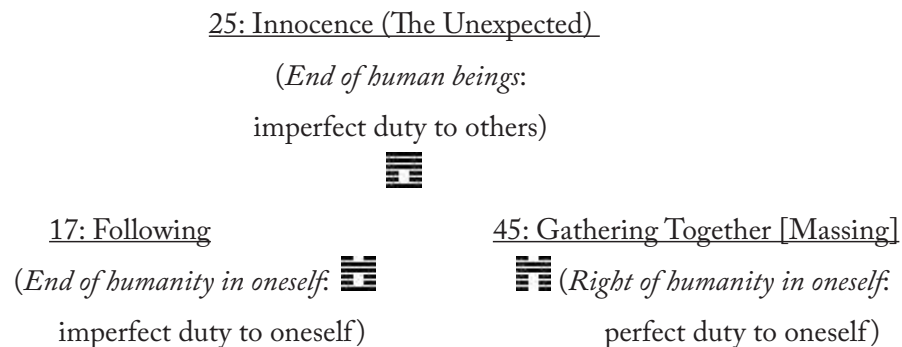
10 Thus, the commentary in the English translation (*Yijing*, 197) takes the symbolism of each trigram of *gua* 51 to represent “the eldest son, who seizes rule with energy and power.”

#### 4. The third *yang-yin* quaternity: the four objective relations of law to duty

We have now seen that, whereas the first of the three Kantian quaternities under consideration in this article seemed only indirectly reflected by the four corresponding *gua* in the Compound *Yijing*, the second Kantian quaternity turned out to correspond very closely to the symbolic meanings raised in the *Yijing*'s discussion of the four relevant *gua*. The remaining task is to examine the table that Kant presents near the end of the Introduction to his 1797 book, *Metaphysic of Morals*, in order to determine the extent to which the four objective relations that he there portrays as holding between law and duty (see *MM* 240) are in any way symbolically reflected by the corresponding *gua* in the third quaternity of the *yang-yin* quadrant of the Compound *Yijing*. As usual, I shall begin with a brief account of Kant's fourfold distinction, then examine each potential correlation one by one.

Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), one of his last published works, was intended to fulfill a *synthetic* function in the architectonic plan of the practical wing of his philosophical system.<sup>11</sup> Its two main parts, on *right* and *virtue*, examine the laws governing groups of people in political situations and the laws governing individuals in ethical situations, respectively. Since the former corresponds to the political theory presented (in its ideal form) in *Perpetual Peace* and the latter to the rational theory of the soul presented in the Dialectic of the first *Critique*, the *synthetic* function of this late book can best be seen in a table that includes both the external (group) and the internal (individual) aspects of Kant's concern. This is precisely what we find in Kant's table, entitled "Division in Accordance with the Objective Relation of Law to Duty" (*MM* 240). Here Kant applies two dyadic distinctions to each other, with each of the resulting four elements relating to both duty and law: either "perfect" or "imperfect" laws/duties; and laws/duties that relate either "to Oneself" or "to Others". The resulting quaternity defines the four possible ways of relating law to duty. A law can express: (1) "The right of humanity in our own person"; (2) "The right of human beings" in general; (3) "The end of humanity in our own person"; or (4) "The end of human beings" in general. The first two are externally-oriented (*legal*), while both members of the second pair are internally-oriented (*ethical*).

We can now summarize the proposed correlations between Kant's theory of the four possible relations of law to duty and the four *gua* that appear in the third quaternity of the *yang-yin* quadrant of the Compound *Yijing* in terms of the following diagram.



<sup>11</sup> For a detailed account and justification of this claim, see Palmquist 1986, revised and republished as Chapter III in Palmquist 1993.





12: Standstill [Stagnation]

(*Right of human beings:*  
perfect duty to others)

**Figure 5: Kant's Four Relations of Law to Duty (as Right or End)**

As above, I shall consider each of these proposed correlations in turn, to assess whether the *type* of law designated by each of these four classifications resonates in any way with the symbolism presented in the commentary for the corresponding *gua*. As usual, we obviously must not expect the text of the *Yijing* to present Kant's theory as such; rather, we are looking for symbolic features of the main hexagram, its two component trigrams, and/or the individual six lines that had implications, in the minds of those who wrote the text of the *Yijing*, similar to those Kant had in mind for the relevant type of legal relation. An important point to note at this point is that this quaternity consists of the only four *gua* that have two solid lines above two broken lines in the central four positions (i.e., in lines 2-5). This suggests that each *gua* will depict a sharp contrast between the phenomenal (the external, "solid" side of human nature) and the noumenal (the internal, "broken" side)—the very contrast that Kant himself highlights in the paragraph just before he introduces his fourfold distinction.

*Gua* 45 (䷆), called "Gathering Together [Massing]" (*cui*, 萃), starts off this final quaternity of the *yang-yin* quadrant with a symbol that, according to my proposal, should correlate to the legal *rights* people have, as a result of the fact that each person has a "perfect duty to oneself" (*MM* 240). The name for this *gua* comes from the fact that it consists of two trigrams that represent a lake on top, and the earth underneath: hence, the image is of water gathering where it should, but with the ever-present danger of overflowing (*Yijing*, 175): "Precautions must be taken to prevent this." Due to the military concerns that dominated the authors of the *Yijing*, a situation characterized by "gathering together" (*Yijing*, 175) will be one in which "we must arm promptly to ward off the unexpected." However, an internal, moral application is also given: when *people* are gathering together, "strife is likely to arise" (*Yijing*, 175), and the leader must therefore "first of all be collected within himself." Just as Kant claims that the collective recognition of *human rights* is the starting-point for realizing one's perfect duty to oneself, so also the *Yijing* makes a surprisingly similar claim at this point (*Yijing*, 175): "Only collective *moral* force can unite the world." Law is grounded in our awareness of what we owe to ourselves, as human. Only on this basis can we accurately judge when one person needs to be punished for causing the boundaries of the social "lake" to overflow.

Next, *gua* 12 (䷆), entitled "Standstill [Stagnation]" (*pi*, 否), should correlate with Kant's theory of the legal rights human beings have *as such*, as a result of the fact that each person has a perfect duty to *others*. This *gua* is ominous, as its two trigrams, representing heaven (three unbroken lines) on top and earth (three broken lines) on the bottom, symbolically point in opposite directions (*Yijing*, 52): "The creative powers are not in relation." However, such times of potential "disintegration" (*Yijing*, 55) are precisely the reason that modern nation-states need *laws*, according to Kant's theory. Just as "the great man calmly bears the consequences of the standstill" (*Yijing*, 54), when such seemingly absolute political oppositions occur, so also Kant's political theory requires that *laws* be implemented to protect those who are in danger of being harmed during times of transition, when "[w]eakness is within, harshness without" (*Yijing*, 53).

In other words, *Kant's* solution to the problem being faced, when *gua* 12 applies to a situation and those who hold political power are not moral (so that “the superior people” can “remain faithful to their principles” only by “withdraw[ing] into seclusion” [*Yijing*, 53]), is to implement laws that protect those whose human rights are being violated by the “standstill”.

*Gua* 17 (䷗), called “Following” (*sui*, 隨), should correspond to Kant’s theory of the *end* (or purpose) of humanity in oneself, and this *ethical* end arises out of the imperfect duty that all human persons have to themselves. The image formed by the two trigrams symbolizes “Thunder in the middle of the lake” (*Yijing*, 72), which in turn conjures up the notion of “following”—not in the sense of the “superior man” *following others*, but rather in the sense of *attracting* a following. The only way to attract a following, the text suggests, is by doing the right thing, in service to others (*Yijing*, 72): “If a man would rule, he must first learn to serve; for only in this way does he secure from those below him the joyous assent that is necessary if they are to follow him.” While such service might seem at first to be closer to what Kant has in mind by the fourth element in his quaternity (i.e., “imperfect duty to others”) than to the third element (“imperfect duty to oneself”), upon closer examination we can see that the focus of this *gua* is in fact on *self*-development. That is, the ultimate goal of the value that is depicted by *gua* 17 is not service to others, but rather developing *oneself* into the sort of person that others will want to emulate. As such, the proposed correlation once again fits very well.

Finally, *gua* 25 (䷗), entitled “Innocence (The Unexpected)” (*wuwang*, 無妄), is constructed out of trigrams representing “heaven” on top and “thunder” (or “movement”) below. The name stems from the idea that, “[w]hen...movement follows the law of heaven, man is innocent” (*Yijing* 100). Relating the resulting image of spontaneous innocence to good governance (as usual), the text interprets the image as follows (*Yijing* 101): “Thus the kings of old, / Rich in virtue, and in harmony with the time, / Fostered and nourished all beings.” In contrast to the previous *gua* in this quaternity, the focus of the movement in question here is precisely what Kant’s fourfold distinction leads us to expect: our imperfect duty to foster the ends of other human beings. In other words, just as Kant’s virtuous person has a duty not only to develop his or her own talents but also to foster the ends of others (i.e., to work toward other people’s happiness as well as one’s own), so also the *Yijing* here insists that one whose self-development has earned him the right to be a leader must *also* use his power as king to foster the self-development of all under his governance. Once again, the correlation here is truly remarkable, given the lack of evidence that the *Yijing* had any historical influence on Kant’s thinking. The only plausible explanation, as I suggested in the second article in this series (see Palmquist 2012b, 190), is that both Kant and the *Yijing* are appealing to the same architectonic structure that naturally informs the way human beings form systematic distinctions.

In conclusion, let me highlight the significance of the observation made in the third article in this series, that Kant’s emphasis throughout his application of architectonic reasoning is on identifying transcendental truths that establish the boundary-conditions for each realm of human experience under consideration, to the (apparent, but not actual) exclusion of hypothetical reasoning, whereas the *Yijing's* emphasis is on the latter to the (apparent, but not actual) exclusion of the former. Those who fail to recognize the architectonic nature of the *Yijing*, but who instead treat it as a system providing the type of knowledge that Kant calls “aggregate” (i.e., knowledge based on generalization from *observed* experiences), inevitably tend to employ the ancient system in a superstitious way, such that it ceases to have any serious philosophical value. One who consults the *Yijing* with the latter outcome in mind does so not in order to gain *wisdom* but in order to gain *information*. My approach to the *Yijing* in this series of articles

reverses this trend, and in so doing treats the *Yijing* as a philosophical text whose appearance of randomness can serve as a helpful counterbalance to the appearance of absolute necessity that Kant gives his readers.

Herein lies the key to a proper understanding of the correlations I have suggested between Kant and the Compound *Yijing*: I have sought *parallel* relations, not relations of exact identity. When philosophers adopt an architectonic approach of the Kantian (transcendental) variety, the results of their inquiry should be *necessary and universal*; to search for a feature of *Kant's* architectonic that *could be otherwise* (i.e., a feature that might somehow *change*) would be a hopeless cause. One does not understand what “transcendental” *means*, if one asks how it might change, for what is transcendental is the *changeless* pattern that we *must* read onto our experience in order to have it at all. Likewise, one would misunderstand what “hypothetical” *means*, if one were to ask for a feature of the *Yijing's* architectonic that could *not* be otherwise (i.e., a feature of the 64-*gua* system that could *never change* into some other feature of the same system). Just as the whole point of interpreting the *Yijing* is that it is always hypothetical and is therefore *constantly subject to change*, so also the whole point of interpreting Kant's philosophical system is that it is always transcendental and is therefore *never subject to change*. Yet, the two systems accomplish these opposite (i.e., *complementary*) goals by applying an architectonic method that is in another sense virtually identical: each produces its respective system by imposing a predetermined formal/mathematical pattern *onto* the object under consideration, rather than reading the pattern *off of* the object. This, as I have demonstrated above, makes their conclusions surprisingly amenable to analogical correlation. So much so, that it raises anew the age-old question of Heraclitus: whether there is any *essential* difference between change and the changeless.

## Appendix:

### Mapping Rules Used in Applying the Geometry of Logic to the Compound *Yijing*

1. The core quaternary of the Compound *Yijing* consists of the four most extreme *gua*: first two (perfectly “pure”) *gua* and the last two (perfectly “mixed”) *gua*.
2. Lines 3 and 4 of each *gua* within the same quadrant remain fixed and thus serve to *identify* all 16 *gua* that are located on levels 2-4 of that quadrant.
3. Positions of the *gua* on each of the four triads that make up the third level are derived from the corresponding second-level *gua* by changing first its top line (to define the “thesis” *gua*), then changing its bottom line (to define the “antithesis” *gua*), then changing both its top and bottom lines (to define the “synthesis” *gua*).
4. The variation in lines 1 and 6 of each *gua* determines the position where each *gua* is placed on its cross: regardless of where a cross appears in the overall system, *yang* (+) is always placed above and to the left of *yin* (-), so that the order (moving clockwise from the 3 o'clock position to the 12 o'clock position) is always --, +-, -+, ++.
5. On the fourth level, lines 2 and 5 in each *gua* distinguish the three quaternities in a given

quadrant from the other two quaternities in that quadrant. To derive these lines from the relevant third-level *gua* (i.e., from the *gua* positioned closest to the relevant fourth-level quaternity), compare that *gua* with the second-level *gua* in the same quadrant. If line 2 and/or line 5 *changes*, when moving from the second level to the third, that/those line(s) remain(s) unchanged for each of the four *gua* in the relevant fourth-level quaternity; if line 2 and/or line 5 remain(s) *unchanged*, that/those line(s) will change for each fourth-level *gua* in that quaternity.

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