

FENG SHUI – A DEFINITION:

An excerpt from the following article, now posted on my website, was recently printed in the New Zealand Herald. For many of you, the main points will be familiar, for others it may help to bring a fresh perspective to feng shui.

By tradition Chinese cosmology has always been predicated on the premise of Heaven above, Earth beneath and Man in between. This is reflected in every aspect of the culture and is the basis from which all of the explorations of the natural world were made by the proto-scientists of even the very earliest east-Asian cultures, right through to the scholars of the late imperial period.

This led to the generally accepted perspective on life of the *Three Lucks* informing the basis for human interaction with this matrix:

- Heaven's luck or Tien Chai infers that if an individual is fated to be rich they most likely will be, but if not, then all the resistance against Heaven's mandate still will not make one materially wealthy.
- Man's luck or Ren Chai is that luck which we create for ourselves and is best explained by the study of interactions related to the laws of cause and effect. Literally meaning that good deeds and working smart, not just hard, will bring positive results, whereas indolence, a poor understanding of the way in which the universe works (the Tao), and either individual or collective misdeeds will in their turn, only incur negative consequences.
- Earth Luck or Ti Chai is that luck which we acquire from the physical environment we occupy.

Naturally then, those with the best Heaven's luck tend to get the best Earth Luck while those with poorer Heaven's Luck, live amidst less salubrious environs.

Within this matrix, feng shui can then best be understood as a technology that Chinese scholars devised over millennia to both maximize the more positive aspects of one's Ti Chai while at the same time, and where possible, neutralizing the worst, most pernicious features. Real adepts spend years acquiring the requisite in-depth understanding of the feng shui perspectives on topography, geography, and to a lesser degree hydrology, along with the

uniquely Chinese study of Time/Space dynamics in order to display any real skill in the subject.

It is this latter Time/Space dynamic that forms the starting point of the 'Flying Stars School', and which is the most sophisticated of all the 'schools'. This school has as its underlying premise the notion that the only constant known to nature is change and that some of these changes are themselves cyclical. Since life depends on seasons; "No season's, no life!" as Master Raymond Lo of Hong Kong so succinctly puts it, then due to their cyclical nature, the changes are to a greater or lesser degree, predictable, depending of course on the skill of the individual master.

The 'Flying Stars', therefore, like no other feng shui school, illustrates the dynamism of Nature's forces and is predicated on a rotating pattern of knowable characteristics that take one hundred and eighty years to complete in their entirety. These in turn, can be broken down into individual twenty year periods or ages, then annual, monthly, daily and hourly influences. Ordinarily it is the twenty year - mid term periods or ages, that are taken into greater consideration when applying the 'Flying Stars School' for construction purposes or when analysing existing individual buildings.

These annual/monthly influences are then considered when examining the feng shui for any given year. It is these that can be used in what has become referred to as 'forensic' feng shui, that application of feng shui in which causes for particular events are sought and explained. This was done very notably for example, by Grand Master Raymond Lo of Hong Kong for the Boxing Day Tsunami.

<http://www.raymond-lo.com/ver2/aboutmasterlo/articles.asp?id=9>

Due to this predictive aspect, the 'Flying Stars School' is one of the most fascinating and rewarding to practice but also thanks to its complexity, is the hardest of all the schools to understand and master. Generally divided into a further set of sub-schools it can take years to master all of their intricacies. Since it is generally recognized that few if indeed any one master, ever truly conquers all the schools of classical feng shui, it can be hard for would-be practitioners to gain the requisite education. Indeed choosing the right master for oneself is one of the hardest of all conundrums when setting out on the road to learn feng shui. There is a saying amongst the Chinese that it takes 10years to know if the feng shui

was any good or not, by which time the master has long since gone, along with his fee. This is probably even truer for modern day students of the art selecting a teacher with whom to study. Long gone are the days of living in the Master's home, working for free in order to receive his insights.

Naturally, when examining the role classical feng shui plays in the day to day life of a normal Chinese person, we must take status, education and the level of infusion in the more traditional aspects of the culture into account. Not all Chinese automatically believe in feng shui, just because they are Chinese. For that matter, not everyone can afford to call in the feng shui master. Occasions when the feng shui master might be called in (often in considerable secrecy it might be added) following a series of accidents or illnesses, a significant disruption to the family harmony, untoward financial problems or other similar and unsettling factors manifesting in either a person's or family's lives or businesses. It is often said that the feng shui man only comes when trouble has already visited – hence the desire to keep his visits discreet. (I say he because it is normal for the feng shui master to be a male but it is not completely unheard of for women to take on the role of consultants.)

Conversely, many prefer to call in the master prior to undertaking a new commercial venture or when selecting a new home for the family to live in; the concept here of being better to forestall disaster than to try to remedy it once it has struck. Many clients request the master to provide auspicious dates for commencement or move-in dates. These are as much to try to ensure as smooth a flow to all proceedings as much as for any conviction that the given dates are the only dates on which such events can occur.

Sadly, most of what is presented today in the West as feng shui is barely recognisable within the framework of the time honoured schools; with an abundance of so called New-age or Western systems, that tend to confuse the lay person. There is even a 'School' for Southern Hemisphere, in spite of its palpable misconceptions. Even among the greater Chinese Diasporas there is much mythology and folklore in feng shui.

In selecting a consultant then, *caveat emptor* becomes a good basis from which to make your choice. Seek verifiable referrals and do any possible follow-ups before committing to any one consultant. Ask for written quotes and check exactly what it is you are paying for and can expect as part of the services you are paying for. It is good to check

whether there will be any additional merchandising. Genuine feng shui masters offer an advice based service only and do not try to foist unsolicited merchandise onto clients.

Finally, and for the sceptic, an astute perspective on all of this is provided by a quote from CJ Jung who while writing of Chinese Qi Gung practices in a foreword to the 'Secret of the Golden Flower', an even more ephemeral subject than feng shui, reminds us that:

"It is based on the practical insights of highly developed Chinese minds in which we have not the slightest justification for undervaluing."

QUOTE:

"I have failed to get this ideal of a productive school accepted, and it may be that I have seen the last of Shandan, and the last of China. One dies quite a number of times before the actual demise, I guess. We go in stages."

Rewi Allen, New Zealander extraordinaire.

Book Review

The Oracle Bones: By Peter Hessler

This book provides a fascinating insight to today's China and the tumultuous effects of the rapid changes that have been wrought there on some of her not so ordinary citizens. Hessler, a young American who having spent two years teaching English at an obscure university on the Yangtze river before moving to Beijing, ekes out a living as a would be journalist, and hanging out with a tough-guy Uigar money trader in the capital's backstreets, weaves a complex web around diverse and intriguing story lines. The thread that binds them all together is a mystery he uncovers concerning the suicide of a famous professor involved in unraveling the meaning of the Oracles Bones, ancient, inscribed bone fragments excavated from archeological sites which reveal China's ancient past. Another thread is the unfolding lives of some of the many university students that maintain contact with him as they too get caught up in the biggest wave of shifting human demographics in history. Part personal travel travelogue, part mystery thriller, part biography of those he comes in contact with it is a gripping read of East/West interactions. Hessler writes evocatively, and provokes thought on the state of modern China. I rate this book a five out of five.

Review of My Services:

- ☞ Land and Site Pre-Inspection/Advice
- ☞ Audits on Existing Buildings (Domestic, Commercial and Industrial)
- ☞ Full Four Pillars of Destiny Charts (Chinese Astrology)
- ☞ I-Ching Consultations
- ☞ Public Speaking Engagements

Produced and Distributed by:

Feng Shui Consultants New Zealand

09- 6257-888

fsc@fengshui88.co.nz

www.fengshui88.co.nz

International Copyrights apply