

The February 22nd Christchurch Earthquake; the tragedy of the 5 Yellows roused.

Almost immediately after the March 6.3 scale Christchurch quake e-mails and phone calls started pouring in with clients and students contacting me to comment and ask more about the feng shui of the tragedy; especially from those who were at my Feb 17th Feng Shui Talk. Clearly interest in big picture feng shui was aroused during the talk and the feng shui of this most recent earthquake resonated with many of you from that.

How dreadful of course for those living in Christchurch and those parts of Canterbury affected by the latest devastation. Knowing however, that the **5 Yellows** were to be in the East this year, there was always a pretty big chance that something like this was going to happen. Let's take a look at what, from a feng shui perspective, has been going on.

Due to the on-going nature of the after shocks from the September 2010 quake there was always a high likelihood they would continue into the new year and then be in danger of triggering the **5 Yellows** which were due to shift from the Southwest to the East come 4th Feb 2011. It seems that this is exactly what has happened.

For those of you familiar with annual feng shui checks, you will know that one of the biggies each year to be avoided is arousing or angering the **5 Yellows**; a shifting influence that rotates its way around the compass in a path that reflects the Lo Su pattern. It is always advisable to leave it well alone and not arouse it by vibrating the walls of the house or disturbing the land in its direction. Neither is it considered to be good to have an important door or room in the affected sector for that year, especially a door facing the proscribed direction.

In the case of 2011 during which the **5 Yellows** are in the East, we would not want to have a main used door in the East sector of the house and if we did, it is at least ameliorated somewhat if that door does not also face due East. If the door faces North say, then the negative effects can be said to be softened.

Worse still however is if the land or the house itself is disturbed by construction or vibration such as with heavy industrial machinery in the direction, even some distance away. It is therefore always advisable to hang a copper wind chime on the outside of the

building and to avoid all such disturbances. Once aroused however, the effects can be very difficult to stop and can be quite devastating in their affects. (A copper wind chime is recommended as the **5 Yellows** are an earth natured element within Chinese Yin Yang **5 Element** theory and since earth produces metal, the sound of metal clashing on metal begins to drain away the earth of the pernicious **5 Yellows**, rendering them ineffectual. Copper is usually best.

Although at the domestic level, the **5 Yellows** are usually considered to be a sickness star, when aroused on the national scale they can be very calamitous in deed.

Looking at the detail of the feng shui of the exact moment of the quake we see that beyond the **5 Yellows** being in the East and therefore, the need to keep the East of the country calm for the year:

- The month of February was an **8** centred month which puts monthly star **2** (Earthquakes) to the south, the location of the epicentre- the Port Hills.
- The day was a **9** (fire) centred day and long smouldering fires were a real factor in the CBD.
- The hour (12:50 midday) was 4 centred with Hourly star **2** (Earthquakes) in East.

It is my belief therefore, that we have seen the **5 Yellows** aroused on a national scale in New Zealand and due to the ongoing nature of the aftershocks, we are likely to see yet more damage from this particularly nasty aspect of annual feng shui. If we do, it is most probably going to show up somewhere between Whakatane in the North Island and Banks Peninsula in the South Island, both of which define the upper and lower reaches of the East of the country. However, it may also express itself in other nasty ways that could potentially affect the whole country. Let's all just hope I am wrong!



Christchurch immediately after the Feb 22nd quake; dramatically showing the Eastern suburbs caught in its 5 Yellows grip.

A Great Big Thank You to My Readers:

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I'd like to extend a great big '*Thank You*' to all who were kind enough to give of their time and feedback in my recent newsletter survey. These newsletters are a good way for me to keep in touch with many of you, to offer alerts of up-coming events and to remind you of the importance of regularly checking the well being of your feng shui. They also provide me with a vehicle for continuing your feng shui education and to discuss aspects of feng shui that you individually may not previously have come across.

None of that would be possible if you my valued clients, weren't willing to take the necessary time required to read and assimilate the information presented here. So I was very grateful for and pleased with the feedback I received from you. The conclusion was basically more of the same please, with perhaps a greater simplification of some of the more technical aspects presented and a few more pictures. Another was that many of you would like to see slightly more than the three issues I had managed last year and the year before, and that between 4 and 6 issues a year would be about right, but not more. The last suggestion I received was that from time to time you would also be happy to receive a slightly longer edition than the usual one sheet, two pages, especially if there were something particularly noteworthy happening.

Therefore, you will notice that this issue is a three page one with the up date on Christchurch.

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The following is the first part of a new article, the second half of which will appear in my next issue.

Some initial thoughts on the importance of critical thinking and feng shui:

One frequently hears of the concept of *Critical Thinking* when looking at ways of addressing social and scientific issues (*think global warming and the contentious arguments for and against as to whether or not manmade carbon emissions are a significant contributor towards it*). Political and moral questions, e.g. abortion and the death penalty are two hot potatoes in which opposing factions frequently each lay claim to the use of critical thinking as the means by which they have reached their respective and supposedly scientifically and/or morally correct conclusions. *Critical thinking* is often cited as an effective antidote to conspiracy theories and is for the most part deemed to be a fairly modern construct.

Here are three widely accepted definitions:

- the ability to analyse facts, generate and organise ideas, defend opinions, make comparisons, draw inferences, evaluate arguments and solve problems. (Chance, 1986, p6)
- Reasonable, reflective thinking focussed on deciding what to believe or do. (Ennis, 1992)
- Skilful, responsible thinking that facilitates good judgement because it (1) relies upon criteria, (2) is self-correcting and (3) is sensitive to context. (Lipman, 1995, pg 146.

But an interesting question to ask is just how modern are the basic ideas that underlie the concepts enveloped by *Critical Thinking*?

Buddhist teachers talk of the ideals presented within the Noble Eight Fold Path, so named because it is composed of eight categories:

- Right Understanding
- Right Thought
- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Livelihood
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration

In particular it is the categories of *Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Mindfulness* and *Right Concentration* that mesh comfortably with the modern concepts of *Critical Thinking*.

So just why is something like *Critical Thinking* important when considering something like feng shui? Let's take the last definition and see how *Critical Thinking* might help us evaluate the efficacy and reliability of classical Chinese feng shui within the confines of Lipman's definition.

Skilful responsible thinking that facilitates good judgement: First off, we need to consider carefully just what it is we might be trying to judge or assess about feng shui? Let's say we are trying to decide whether or not feng shui is centred on anything consistently reliable and may have at least some scientific basis, or is just simply all superstition. First of all I think we cannot legitimately claim that feng shui is a science. There are simply too many variables currently in its application and not enough known about any scientific reasons for why it seems to work, for us to make this claim. I do think however we can claim that it is *based* on scientific principles, by which I mean it is clearly founded on nature's own laws and that those laws are demonstrable. How can we justifiably make that claim?

Well to quote one of today's real feng shui masters, Grand Master Raymond Lo who says: 'Whatever is based on natural principles is predictable', we need to examine whether or not the effects of feng shui, consistently applied across a broad spectrum of recognised criteria, are in fact, predictable. This includes both diagnostic and the remedial aspects of feng shui. Literally it means that if x can be found in every situation that is defined by the rules of feng shui as being innate to x , and the accepted prescribed feng shui remedy of m can be proven to result in alleviating the recognised symptoms of x in every, or almost every case, then we can say we have a consistently predictable or repeatable factor.

Let me give you a simple but common example. Take a house which has a view right through the building from its main used entrance. A properly trained feng shui master would in 99.9% of all such cases, predict that the occupants will have trouble saving money. This is either provable or not. If it can indeed be substantiated in 99.9% of all cases encountered, and the prescribed remedy (an appropriate screening of the views in the right place) can then also be proven to relieve the problem, and those same occupants can then demonstrate that they indeed do have more money at the end of the month on a consistent basis than they had previous to the feng shui being adjusted, we can *begin* to say we just *might* have a consistently repeatable factor. Now of course all of this is assuming that the occupants of house b are operating under the same circumstances as the occupants of say house y with the same factor also found in it, (a view directly back out again at the main point of entry, same domestic economy, same income levels etc.). And here is the rub, because of course, there are enormous and terribly difficult to extrapolate differing circumstances: personal, psychological, financial and otherwise at work in each individual house and group of occupants. This is an example of why at present, it is impossible to say feng shui is an exact science. I think we can safely say however, supported by a great deal of circumstantial and anecdotal evidence, that feng shui is a time honoured *technology*, that provides what appears to be a reasonably consistent and reliable template for defining and assessing certain recognisable factors in an around our physical environment. Another example we might use is that trade always occurs at the boundary of water where no view to the mouth (entranceway) of that water can be seen. This is just the macro example of the same micro principle demonstrated above but it is perhaps more easily proven in the macro. When it comes to

defining proven and acceptable criteria for Flying Stars School feng shui, however, the game suddenly notches up a whole different level and will eventually take a great deal of skill indeed to be able to organise and collate acceptable methodologies for scientifically proving the flying star's veracity.

So what would help to start collating and extrapolating all this theoretical material?

One recognised method would be to collate an empirical record of all such factors. There are in fact many of these that have been kept over many hundreds of years by the Chinese but they have yet to be collated and their results extrapolated in a modern and more recognisably scientific manner.

The above is, I hope an example of Lipman's '*skilful responsible thinking that facilitates good judgement*'.

Relies upon criteria: The application of pre-set criteria when analysing feng shui should be that feng shui must fit the profiles of at least one of two classically recognised and accepted Chinese systems; known generally within a Chinese cultural context as *schools*: The San He and San Yuen Schools. These classical feng shui schools set out and define the generally accepted criteria by which the principles of feng shui may and may not be applied. These have been empirically tested and recorded consistently since at least AD 25; the only weakness by so called modern western standards being that so far, the system lacks any recognised, systematic method of peer review. There have however, been many cases of highly respected masters writing up their theories and experiences and publishing them for others to have access to. Not quite the same thing I accept, as the modern practice of peer review but still it's been open to some pretty rigorous debate historically.

Another preset criterion we could use is training. The properly trained feng shui consultant needs considerable skill in his or her practice of geomantic principles, none less than in their thought processes. In order to be able to accurately assess, analyze and order the regulating of the myriad known effects of the environment on those for whom they practise feng shui, they need to have had a great deal of guided thought. This thinking needs to have been moulded and shaped by thoughtful, experienced feng shui teachers who are able to impart through (often years of) rigorous systematic training, the definitions of the boundaries and roles that the principles of classical Chinese feng shui can and cannot achieve for their clients. These traditional thought processes form very strict criteria which, when applied properly, do in no small way, help to regulate the standards by which the technology is supposed to be administered. Much

work is currently being done by senior Chinese feng shui masters to clean up the training field and to ensure long term professionalism within feng shui: yet another example of *recognised* criteria.

To be continued or you may read the full article on my website at: <http://www.fengshui88.co.nz>

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