

## The Embodiment of "Beauty" in Fengshui

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**Abstract:** As a necessary part of oriental civilization, fengshui is the basic guideline to guide the production and life of ancient Chinese society. It embodies the ideal beauty of ancient ancestors, shows a theoretical beauty, and is a practical beauty formed in the process of practice. Obviously, compared with modern scientific thinking, scientific beauty exists everywhere. Through analyzing and combing, this paper summarizes the universal value it possesses.

As a part of Chinese traditional culture, fengshui has been spread for thousands of years and has not declined, which shows its value. Certainly, the attitude towards this traditional culture is also very complex, with opposition and curiosity. Besides, the application of "fengshui" as "world intangible cultural heritage list" by South Korea, Japan and other countries further illustrates its value as an ancient heritage. In active investigation, it is found that fengshui, as an ancient art, embodies beauty everywhere.

### Ideal Beauty

**Keeping Safety.** Fengshui theory has developed from ancient times to today. According to the environment and geological conditions, the ancient people adopted the most primitive methods and made important contributions to site selection and building through continuous practice and summary. It can be said that fengshui is a combination of geography and astronomy, and contains great geographical knowledge, like mountains, geology, plains, deserts, weather, climate, etc. As an ancient culture accumulated in practice by ancient Chinese ancestors, it may have various aspects that are contrary to modern western cognitive method (science) or temporarily unexplainable. However, its essence is good, the purpose is to find a better place to live, for long-term stability. People think that fengshui has an important relationship with disease and health, which affects people's disaster and safety through residences. Based on practical observation, the sages have created the best residential model: the northern Xuanwu is a tall Zu mountain, the southern Zhuque with water, the left Qinglong is higher, the right white tiger is lower. According to this model, we can judge the geographical and ecological environment of human residence. Such a geographical and ecological environment is certainly an ideal place to live. Living in the environment surrounded by lush grass and green water will naturally make people happy and healthy. On the contrary, when people's bodies have problems, and when it is difficult to treat, this kind of "fengshui" is naturally in reason, which is the necessity of human reason. It's just that "fengshui" replaces the way people think and solve problems, whether or not it works is another matter. It is an ideal expression of people's pursuit of a healthy and good life.

**Blessing Prosperity.** Fengshui is the human instinct to choose the ideal environment, that is, free from the impact of natural disasters, a habitat rich in food and fast and effective reproduction and raising of offspring. Through discontinuous selection, construction, and migration, humans interconnect certain landscape features with consciousness. After a long period of accumulation, a concept of "fengshui" has been formed to guide people to use and transform nature and learn to live in peace with nature. Of course, this only way of cognition is also constantly migrating and expanding, and beginning to be used in all aspects. As a big agricultural country, China has a long history of farming-reading culture. Learning to be officials is the constant pursuit of learners, and hoping children to have a bright future will always be the persistent pursuit of parents. However,

changing from learners to officials is relatively difficult, which can be said that thousands of troops cross the "single-log bridge". Although people are struggling hard, they are different in reality, and some succeed but some fail. "Immortal soul" makes people believe that the quality of the burial place of ancestors affects not only their life in the land of souls, but also the future generations. If the burial place is good, it will be successful to official entry, or a prosperous official career. If not, it will affect the fate of future generations. Changing the ancestral graves or the living environment are also logical measures that people take at that time. After all, they can use low cost for their own fame, fortune or official luck, which is what everyone wants and hops, for under the circumstances at that time, there is no other cognitive tool or method to change the situation so quickly. The change of learning to be officials can be a reality for only a part of people, but not realistic for most people. This is an ideal of life and a pursuit of the state of life.

## **Theoretical Beauty**

Fengshui in China has a long history. It is about seeking good and avoiding bad, explaining the relationship between people and the natural environment, and bringing convenience to people's production and life. We should historically and objectively recognize this cultural form that has developed over thousands of years. Fengshui is based on a unique theoretical basis. The ancient Chinese theoretical system of Tao, Qi, Yin-yang, five elements and eight diagrams have theoretical feasibility at that time, even in the modern society.

**"Tao"**. "Tao", "exists before the formation of heaven and earth", and is "to be its own root". It embodies the highest law of all things in the universe, which must be followed by all things in the universe, certainly including human society. So how to grasp and understand "Tao"? It is further subdivided into "Yin-yang", embodied as "Qi".

Fengshui can also be said to be the product of the combination of Qi and selective construction<sup>[1]</sup>. As a flowing and amorphous substance, "Qi, like floating qi", is the basic unit of all things in the world. "The life of people is the gathering of Qi; the gathering of Qi leads to life, and the dispersing of Qi leads to death." This kind of Qi that constitutes everything is also involved in fengshui<sup>[2]</sup>. It starts to work at the beginning, which is called "Yuanqi" that is in movement. Only "the combination of yin and yang of all things" can "excite each other into a new harmonious body". It can be seen that the movement of "Qi" has internal power, that is, "yin-yang".

**"Yin-yang"**. "Yin-yang" are initially observed in the usual production and life. It is simple to think that sun-ward is yang, and sun-back is yin; day is yang, and night is yin, which is just to extend the relationship between opposites and unity of all things. This is a dynamic relationship, a relationship of mutual movement. There is yang in yin, and yin in yang, which are unified. With the accumulation and development of knowledge, this change of "yin-yang" has developed into "five elements".

**"Five Elements"**. "Five elements" is composed of five basic elements of gold, wood, water, fire and earth. These five basic elements are related with mutual generation when following the order, and form a circle: wood makes fire, fire makes earth, earth makes gold, gold makes water, and water makes wood. However, they are reversed with mutual restraint, and also form a circle: fire restricts gold, earth restricts water, gold restricts wood, water restricts fire, wood restricts earth. This kind of relation shifts from one to another.

**"Eight Diagrams"**. For the universe to be unified, it must be able to express time and space at the same time. Then, a more advanced mode of cognition comes into being - "eight diagrams".

Eight diagrams are based on the two basic symbols of yang yao "—" and yin yao "--", and each three yaos forms one diagram to form eight diagrams, namely eight expressions, which is the most primitive and basic one. However, if six yaos are combined, 64 ways can be formed, that is, 64 diagrams. Then a perfect system is formed, and the movement and change of everything in time and space can be simulated and expressed by this abstract model.

People have set up related methods and techniques in building residences, site selection, construction of gardens, layout of houses, furniture placement. These have penetrated into people's daily lives and become a state of life.

This cultural system, which has been continuously tested in practice, embodies the orderly relationship between the heaven, earth and humans, and shows a harmonious and common prosperous scene. It must be said that it is the earliest practice of "community of destiny" in human society.

This theoretical method formed in natural practice conforms to nature, makes reasonable use of natural resources and makes people comfortable and healthy. In brief, it is to embed people in the natural environment and make them a part of the environment, instead of humanizing the natural environment step by step. This is a harmonious beauty tailored to local conditions, and is constantly being perfected in practice.

### **Practical Beauty**

Fengshui is formed based on yin -yang, five elements and eight diagrams, and improved in application. This kind of improvement has been refined in specific application, and different observation and application have formed different schools, mainly "topographical school" and "Liqi school". The "Liqi school" is based on the principles of five elements, eight diagrams, ten heavenly stems, and twelve earthly branches to estimate. The "topographical school" is mainly based on topographical features, investigates the four elements of dragon, sand, water and cave according to the ideal model. Although there are differences between the two schools, there are some common principles.

**The Principle of Wholeness.** It is the basic characteristic of fengshui to deal with the relationship between people and the environment with the principle of wholeness<sup>[3]</sup>. From another perspective, wholeness is order. The order of traditional cosmology is an important basis of fengshui's mechanism<sup>[4]</sup>, which is to consider the environment as a whole system, so that people can join the system of heaven and earth and become a part. In this system, each element is interrelated, restricted, dependent and transformed. In a word, it is a whole, reflecting a macro way of grasping.

**The Principle of Adaptation to Local Conditions.** It means "fit to shape and stop". It is similar to the scene when "Taigong looked at Yingqiu, the ground was full of bitterness with few people, so he persuaded female workers to be good at skills, fishing and salt." This principle is the governance principle based on different regional ecological characteristics and on-the-spot investigation and also a treatment method. It is of great significance to implement in places with large differences in climate and soil quality. The caves in the northwest and stilted buildings in the southwest are specific examples.

**The Principle of Standing by Mountains and Water.** Mountains are skeletons, and water embodies vitality. Without water, we can't survive, let alone develop. If the ground is unstable, frequent earthquakes will also hinder people's living. This requires geological inspection, grasping the soil with hands, smelling and tasting with mouth, or even need to dig deeper. For example, "Guanzi Dizhen" believes that soil quality determines water quality, judging the quality of water from its color. If the water is white, it is sweet, if yellow, it is smelly, if black, it is bitter. Thus, "hunting for the dragon recognizes Qi and tasting the water. If its color is green, it is sweet, fragrant and superior. If its color is white, it is clear, mild and good. If its color is light, it is pungent, its Qi is strong and inferior. If it is bitter and acrid, it is not worth mentioning." It can be seen that the importance of water and soil quality plays a role in human survival. When the above conditions are met, sunlight is required.

**The Principle of Facing South back to North.** Facing south back to north is suitable to live. China's monsoon climate requires people to avoid the northwest cold winds in winter, and to require cool winds in summer. Then, this kind of direction can realize this desire. These practical problems enable people gradually accumulate and develop the theory of fengshui. Practice and theory complement each other. The theory is completed in practice, embodied in practice, and practice embodies the beauty of fengshui in essence.

### **Scientific Beauty**

From the perspective of science originated in the west, fengshui is also adaptable. Although there are differences in the methods and angles of understanding, they still have commons and embody the beauty of science.

**Compass and Geomagnetic Principle.** The orientation of compass embodies the principle of magnetic field. Modern geomagnetics holds that the earth is a strong magnetic field with north and south poles as terminals. This magnetic field plays an important role in stabilizing the earth's rotational balance and the stability of the earth's surface<sup>[5]</sup>. We know that the compass has three planes, namely "heaven, earth and man", and "the main buildings of the ancient royalty and the government offices are all facing south". All these indicate that the ancients have realized the positive and negative effects of various factors, information and energy on the earth and the universe. To study laws of the influence of these energies and information on human life, and to find out methods of seeking advantages and avoiding disadvantages, seeking fortune and avoiding evil, it is necessary to study the human body itself and the law of human life information<sup>[6]</sup>. Similarly, the expression of "mingge" is the understanding of different life information, energies and organizational structures.

**Hydrogeological Principle.** In hydrogeology, it is embodied in the strict investigation of water flow, water quality, geology etc, because modern hydrogeology tells us that mountains and rivers, water quality, soil quality, rock structure. These geological structures contain a variety of visible and invisible organic and inorganic chemical elements. Because of different contents and combination structures of these chemical elements, they will have different positive and negative effects on human beings<sup>[7]</sup>. The method of fengshui is to investigate the direction of the mountains, observe the color of the soil, pinch the soil and taste the smell of water. This is because the degree to which the water tastes sweet and bitter will determine whether the place is auspicious or not. Although it seems to be not scientific in modern times, it has played a positive role in ancient times in investigating and improving human settlements. This kind of good, positive factors in the accumulation also affect the Chinese character and culture. Just as Mr. Yu Kongjian said "it is not the theory of fengshui that leads to the ideal model (landscape model) of Chinese. Instead, it is the kind of ideal landscape model deep in their heart and culture that triggers an intuitive speculation of fengshui of its theory, and then attaches a whole set of explaining systems based on Chinese philosophy"<sup>[8]</sup>.

It can be said that the traditional fengshui theory in the ancient times without a scientific investigation system, as a theory of Chinese birth, has begun to develop like other nations in the world. It protects the prosperity of the Chinese nation and the physical and mental health of the generations. Thus, it must be said that it is a scientific beauty<sup>[9,10]</sup>.

With a pragmatic attitude, the author makes an objective analysis of the positive aspects of fengshui culture, and finds its "beauty". In fact, fengshui, as a way for ancient Chinese to understand and change the world, has an undeniable guiding significance in life. As for the superstitious part, it also appears in modern society. This is because interest groups and superstitions are always combined, and superstitions will appear when interest subjects subjectively expand or distort facts for the sake of interests.

Through the above analysis, it is found that fengshui is more universal in the summary of life experience to understand our national culture and behavior patterns. To a great degree, the pattern emphasized by fengshui is due to the common spatial aesthetics of ancients, that is, the spatial aesthetics generates the theory of fengshui art<sup>[11]</sup>. This kind of theory develops and matures in the generation, which is also the process of knowledge accumulation and fusion. Only by discovering beauty from the positive and active side can we notice the humanistic value of this culture, and inherit and develop this kind of cultural heritage well. To be honest, from a cultural perspective, even belief activities have their most basic material factors<sup>[7]</sup>. It can be seen that only by discovering the values can we objectively analyze and eliminate the outdated and bad factors, can we discard the false and retain the true, and can we show the characteristics and wisdom and beauty of the oriental civilization.

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